The German Classics of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Volume 06 eBook

The German Classics of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries, Volume 06

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A Lyrical Intermezzo. Translators: T. Brooksbank, Sir Theodore Martin, J.E. Wallis, Richard Garnett, Alma Strettell, Franklin Johnson, Charles G. Leland, Charles Wharton Stork

Sonnets. Translators: T. Brooksbank, Edgar Alfred Bowring

Poor Peter. Translated by Alma Strettell

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The Return Home. Translators: Sir Theodore Martin. Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker, James Thomson, Elizabeth Barrett Browning

Twilight. Translated by Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker

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THE LIFE OF HEINRICH HEINE

By William guild Howard, A.M.
Assistant Professor of German, Harvard University

I.

The history of German literature makes mention of few men more self-centered and at the same time more unreserved than Heinrich Heine. It may be said that everything which Heine wrote gives us, and was intended to give us, first of all some new impression of the writer; so that after a perusal of his works we know him in all his strength and weakness, as we can know only an amiable and communicative egotist; moreover, besides losing no opportunity for self-expression, both in and out of season, Heine published a good deal of frankly autobiographical matter, and wrote memoirs, only fragments of which have come down to us, but of which more than has yet appeared will perhaps ultimately be made accessible. Heine's life, then, is to us for the most part an open book. Nevertheless, there are many obscure passages in it, and there remain many questions not to be answered with certainty, the first of which is as to the date of his birth. His own statements on this subject are contradictory, and the original records are lost. But it seems probable that he was born on the thirteenth of December, 1797, the eldest child of Jewish parents recently domiciled at Duesseldorf on the Rhine.

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The parentage, the place, and the time were almost equally significant aspects of the constellation under which young Harry Heine—for so he was first named—began his earthly career. He was born a Jew in a German city which, with a brief interruption, was for the first sixteen years of his life administered by the French. The citizens of Duesseldorf in general had little reason, except for high taxes and the hardships incident to conscription in the French armies, to complain of the foreign dominion. Their trade flourished, they were given better laws, and the machinery of justice was made much less cumbersome than it had been before. But especially the Jews hailed the French as deliverers; for now for the first time they were relieved of political disabilities and were placed upon a footing of equality with the gentile population. To Jew and gentile alike the military achievements of the French were a source of satisfaction and admiration; and when the Emperor of the French himself came to town, as Heine saw him do in 1810, we can easily understand how the enthusiasm of the boy surrounded the person of Napoleon, and the idea that he was supposed to represent, with a glamor that never lost its fascination for the man. To Heine, Napoleon was the incarnation of the French Revolution, the glorious new-comer who took by storm the intrenched strongholds of hereditary privilege, the dauntless leader in whose army every common soldier carried a field marshal's baton in his knapsack. If later we find Heine mercilessly assailing the repressive and reactionary aristocracy of Germany, we shall not lightly accuse him of lack of patriotism. He could not be expected to hold dear institutions of which he felt only the burden, without a share in the sentiment which gives stability even to institutions that have outlived their usefulness. Nor shall we call him a traitor for loving the French, a people to whom his people owed so much, and to whom he was spiritually akin.

French influences, almost as early as Hebrew or German, were among the formative forces brought to bear upon the quick-witted but not precocious boy. Heine's parents were orthodox, but by no means bigoted Jews. We read with amazement that one of the plans of the mother, ambitious for her firstborn, was to make of him a Roman Catholic priest. The boy's father, Samson Heine, was a rather unsuccessful member of a family which in other representatives—particularly Samson's brother Salomon in Hamburg—attained to wealth and prominence in the world of finance.

[Illustration: W. *Krauskopf Heinrich Heine* After a Drawing in the Possession of Mr. Carl Meinert in Dessau]

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Samson Heine seems to have been too easy-going, self-indulgent, and ostentatious, to have made the most of the talents that he unquestionably had. Among his foibles was a certain fondness for the pageantry of war, and he was in all his glory as an officer of the local militia. To his son Gustav he transmitted real military capacity, which led to a distinguished career and a patent of nobility in the Austrian service. Harry Heine inherited his father's more amiable but less strenuous qualities. Inquisitive and alert, he was rather impulsive than determined, and his practical mother had her trials in directing him toward preparation for a life work, the particular field of which neither she nor he could readily choose. Peira, or Betty, Heine was a stronger character than her husband; and in her family, several members of which had taken high rank as physicians, there had prevailed a higher degree of intellectual culture than the Heines had attained to. She not only managed the household with prudence and energy, but also took the chief care of the education of the children. To both parents Harry Heine paid the homage of true filial affection; and of the happiness of the home life, *The Book Le Grand* and a number of poems bear unmistakable witness. The poem "My child, we were two children" gives a true account of Harry and his sister Charlotte at play.

In Duesseldorf, Heine's formal education culminated in attendance in the upper classes of a Lyceum, organized upon the model of a French Lycee and with a corps of teachers recruited chiefly from the ranks of the Roman Catholic clergy. The spirit of the institution was rationalistic and the discipline wholesome. Here Heine made solid acquisitions in history, literature, and the elements of philosophy. Outside of school, he was an eager spectator, not merely of stirring events in the world of politics, but also of many a picturesque manifestation of popular life—a spectator often rather than a participant; for as a Jew he stood beyond the pale of both the German and the Roman Catholic traditions that gave and give to the cities of the Rhineland their characteristic naive gaiety and harmless superstition. Such a poem as *The Pilgrimage to Kevlaar* would be amazing as coming from an unbeliever, did we not see in it evidence of the poet's capacity for perfect sympathetic adoption of the spirit of his early environment. The same is true of many another poetic expression of simple faith, whether in Christianity or in the mythology of German folk-lore.

Interest in medieval Catholicism and in folk-lore is one of the most prominent traits in the Romantic movement, which reached its culmination during the boyhood of Heine. The history of Heine's connection with this movement is foreshadowed by the circumstances of his first contact with it. He tells us that the first book he ever read was *Don Quixote* (in the translation by Tieck). At about the same time he read *Gulliver's Travels*,

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the tales of noble robbers written by Goethe's brother-in-law, Vulpius, the wildly fantastic stories of E.T.A. Hoffmann, Schiller's *Robbers*; but also Uhland's ballads, and the songs collected by Arnim and Brentano in *The Boy's Magic Horn*. That is to say: At the time when in school a critical and skeptical mind was being developed in him by descendants of the age of enlightenment, his private reading led him for the most part into the region of romanticism in its most exaggerated form. At the time, furthermore, when he took healthy romantic interest in the picturesque Dusseldorf life, his imagination was morbidly stimulated by furtive visits to a woman reputed to be a witch, and to her niece, the daughter of a hangman. His earliest poems, the *Dream Pictures*, belong in an atmosphere charged with witchery, crime, and the irresponsibility of nightmare. This coincidence of incompatible tendencies will later be seen to account for much of the mystery in Heine's problematic character.

It having been decided, perhaps because the downfall of Napoleon shut the door of all other opportunity, that Heine should embark upon a mercantile career, he was given a brief apprenticeship, in 1815 at Frankfurt, in the following years at Hamburg, under the immediate patronage of his uncle Salomon who, in 1818, even established the young poet in a dry goods business of his own. The only result of these experiments was the demonstration of Heine's total inaptitude for commercial pursuits. But the uncle was magnanimous and offered his nephew the means necessary for a university course in law, with a view to subsequent practice in Hamburg. Accordingly, after some brushing up of Latin at home, Heine in the fall of 1819 was matriculated as a student at the University of Bonn.

In spite of failure to accomplish his immediate purpose, Heine had not sojourned in vain at Hamburg. He had gained the good will of an opulent uncle whose bounty he continued almost uninterruptedly to enjoy to the end of his days. But in a purpose that lay much nearer to his heart he had failed lamentably; for, always sensitive to the charms of the other sex, Heine had conceived an overpowering passion for his cousin Amalie, the daughter of Salomon, only to meet with scornful rebuffs at the hands of the coquettish and worldly-minded heiress. There is no reason to suppose that Amalie ever took her cousin's advances seriously. Her father certainly did not so take them. On the other hand, there is equally little reason to doubt the sincerity and depth of Heine's feelings, first of unfounded hope, then of persistent despair that pursued him in the midst of other occupations and even in the fleeting joys of other loves. The most touching poems included among the *Youthful Sorrows* of his first volume were inspired by Amalie Heine.

At Bonn Heine was a diligent student. Though never a roysterer, he took part in various extra-academic enterprises, was a member of the *Burschenschaft*, that democratic-patriotic organization so gravely suspected by the reactionary governments, and made many friends. He duly studied history and law; he heard Ernst Moritz Arndt interpret the

Germania of Tacitus; but more especially did he profit by official and personal relations with A.W. Schlegel, who taught Heine what he himself knew best, namely, the secret of literary form and the art of metrical expression.

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The fall of 1820 saw Heine at Goettingen, the Hanoverian university to which, shortly before, the Americans Ticknor and Everett had repaired and at which in that very year Bancroft had attained his degree of doctor of philosophy. Here, however, Heine was repelled by the aristocratic exclusiveness of the Hanoverian squires who gave the tone to student society, as well as by the mummified dryness of the professors. In marked contrast to the patriotic and romantic spirit of Bonn he noted here with amazement that the distinguished Germanist Benecke lectured on the *Nibelungenlied* to an auditory of nine. His own residence was destined this time to be brief; for serious quarrels coming to the ear of the faculty, he was, on January 23, 1821, advised to withdraw; and in April he enrolled himself as a student at the University of Berlin.

The next three years were filled with manifold activities. As a student Heine was deeply impressed by the absolute philosophy expounded by Hegel; as a Jew he lent a willing hand to the endeavors of an association recently founded for the amelioration of the social and political condition of the Hebrews; in the drawing room of Rahel Levin, now the wife of Varnhagen von Ense, he came in touch with gifted men and women who were ardent admirers of Goethe, and some of whom, a quarter of a century before, had befriended Friedrich Schlegel; and in the subterranean restaurant of Lutter and Wegener he joined in the revels of Hoffmann, Grabbe, and other eccentric geniuses. Heine now began to be known as a man of letters. After having, from 1817 on, printed occasional poems in newspapers and magazines, he published in December, 1821 (with the date 1822), his first volume, entitled simply *Poems*; he wrote newspaper articles on Berlin and on Poland, which he visited in the summer of 1822; and in the spring of 1823 he published *Tragedies together with a Lyrical Intermezzo*—two very romantic and undramatic plays in verse, separated in the volume by a short series of lyrical poems.

Meanwhile Amalie Heine had been married and Harry's parents had moved to Lueneburg. Regret for the loss of Amalie soon gave way to a new passion for a very young girl, whose identity remains uncertain, but who was probably Amalie's little sister Therese. In any case, Heine met the new love on the occasion of a visit to Lueneburg and Hamburg in the spring of 1823, and was haunted by her image during the summer spent at Cuxhaven. Here Heine first saw the sea. In less exalted moods he dallied with fisher maidens; he did not forget Amalie; but the youthful grace and purity of Therese dominate most of the poems of this summer. The return from the watering place gave Heine the title *The Return Home* for this collection of pieces which, when published in 1826, was dedicated to Frau Varnhagen von Ense.

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Uncle Salomon, to whom the *Tragedies* had been affectionately inscribed, was not displeased with the growing literary reputation of his nephew. But he saw no sense in the idea that Heine already entertained of settling in Paris. He insisted that the young man should complete his studies; and so, in January, 1824, Heine once more betook himself to Goettingen, where on the twenty-first of July, 1825, he was duly promoted *Doctor utriusque Juris*. In the summer of 1824 he made the trip through the Hartz mountains which served as the basis of *The Journey to the Hartz*; immediately before his promotion he submitted to baptism in the Lutheran church as Christian Johann Heinrich Heine.

Submission is the right word for this conversion. It was an act of expediency such as other ambitious men found unavoidable in those days; but Heine performed it in a spirit of bitterness caused not so much by a sense of apostasy as by contempt for the conventional Christianity that he now embraced. There can be no sharper contrast than that presented by such a poem as *The Pilgrimage to Kevlaar* and sundry satirical pieces not included in this volume.

Two vacations at Norderney, where Heine renewed and deepened acquaintance with his beloved North Sea, not very resolute attempts to take up the practice of law in Hamburg, a trip to London, vain hopes of a professorship in Munich, a sojourn in Italy, vacillations between Hamburg, Berlin, and the North Sea, complete the narrative of Heine's movements to the end of the first period of his life. He was now Heine the writer: poet, journalist, and novelist. *The Journey to the Hartz*, first published in a magazine, *Der Gesellschafter*, in January and February, 1826, was issued in May of that year by Campe in Hamburg, as the first volume of *Pictures of Travel*, beginning with the poems of *The Return Home* and concluding with the first group of hymns to the North Sea, written at Norderney in the previous year. *Pictures of Travel II*, issued in 1827, consisted of the second cycle of poems on the *North Sea*, an account in prose of life on the island, entitled *Norderney, The Book Le Grand*, to which epigrams by Immermann were appended, and extracts from *Letters from Berlin* published in 1822. *Pictures of Travel III* (1830) began with experiences in Italy, but degenerated into a provoked but ruthless attack upon Platen. *Pictures of Travel IV* (1831) included *English Fragments*, the record of Heine's observations in London, and *The City of Lucca*, a supplementary chapter on Italy. In October, 1827, Heine collected under the title *Book of Songs* nearly all of his poems written up to that time.

The first period in Heine's life closes with the year 1831. The Parisian revolution of July, 1830, had turned the eyes of all Europe toward the land in which political experiments are made for the benefit of mankind. Many a German was attracted thither, and not without reason Heine hoped to find there a more promising field for the employment of his talents than with all his wanderings he had discovered in Germany. Toward the end of May, 1831, he arrived in Paris, and Paris was thenceforth his home until his death on the seventeenth of February, 1856.

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In the preface to the second edition of the *Book of Songs*, written at Paris in 1837, Heine confessed that for some time past he had felt a certain repugnance to versification; that the poems therewith offered for the second time to the public were the product of a time when, in contrast to the present, the flame of truth had rather heated than clarified his mind; and expressed the hope that his recent political, theological, and philosophical writings—all springing from the same idea and intention as the poems—might atone for any weakness in the poems. Heine wrote poetry after 1831, and he wrote prose before 1831; but in a general way what he says of his two periods is correct: before his emigration he was primarily a poet, and afterwards primarily a critic, journalist, and popular historian. In his first period he wrote chiefly about his own experiences; in his second, chiefly about affairs past and present in which he was interested.

As to the works of the first period, we might hesitate to say whether the *Pictures of Travel* or the *Book of Songs* were the more characteristic product. In whichever way our judgment finally inclined, we should declare that the *Pictures of Travel* were essentially prosified poems and that the poems were, in their collected form, versified *Pictures of Travel*; and that both, moreover, were dominated, as the writings after 1831 were dominated, by a romantically tinged longing for individual liberty.

The title *Pictures of Travel*, to which Heine gave so definite a connotation, is not in itself a true index to the multifarious contents of the series of traveler's notes, any more than the volumes taken each by itself were units. Pages of verse followed pages of prose; and in the *Journey to the Hartz*, verse interspersed in prose emphasizes the lyrical character of the composition. Heine does indeed give pictures of some of the scenes that he visits; but he also narrates his passage from point to point; and at every point he sets forth his recollections, his thoughts, his dreams, his personal reaction upon any idea that comes into his head; so that the substance, especially of the *Journey to the Hartz*, is less what was to be seen in the Hartz than what was suggested to a very lively imagination; and we admire the agility with which the writer jumps from place to place quite as much as the suppleness with which he can at will unconditionally subject himself to the genius of a single locality. For Heine is capable of writing straightforward descriptive prose, as well-ordered and as matter-of-fact as a narrative of Kleist's. But the world of reality, where everything has an assignable reason for its being and doing, is not the world into which he most delights to conduct us. This world, on the contrary, is that in which the water "murmurs and rustles so wonderfully, the birds pour forth broken

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love-sick strains, the trees whisper as if with a thousand maidens' tongues, the odd mountain flowers peep up at us as if with a thousand maidens' eyes, stretching out to us their curious, broad, drolly scalloped leaves; the sunrays flash here and there in sport, the herbs, as though endowed with reason, are telling one another their green legends, all seems enchanted"—in other words, a wonderland disturbed by no doubts on the part of a rationalistic Alice. And a further secret of this fascinating, though in the long run exasperating style, is the sublime audacity with which Heine dances now on one foot and now on the other, leaving you at every moment in amused perplexity, whether you shall next find him standing firmly on mother earth or bounding upward to recline on the clouds.

"A mixture of description of nature, wit, poetry, and observation a la Washington Irving" Heine himself called the *Journey to the Hartz*. The novelty lay in the mixture, and in the fact that though the ingredients are, so to speak, potentized in the highest degree, they are brought to nearly perfect congruence and fusion by the irresistible solvent of the second named. The *Journey to the Hartz* is a work of wit, in the present sense, and in the older sense of that word. It is a product of superior intelligence—not a *Sketch Book*, but a single canvas with an infinitude of details; not a *Sentimental Journey*—although Heine can outdo Sterne in sentimentality, he too persistently outdoes him also in satire—the work, fragmentary and outwardly formless, is in essence thoroughly informed by a two-fold purpose: to ridicule pedantry and philistinism, and to extol nature and the life of those uncorrupted by the world.

A similar unity is unmistakable in the *Book of Songs*. It would be difficult to find another volume of poems so cunningly composed. If we examine the book in its most obvious aspect, we find it beginning with *Youthful Sorrows* and ending with hymns to the North Sea; passing, that is to say, from the most subjective to the most objective of Heine's poetic expressions. The first of the *Youthful Sorrows* are *Dream Pictures*, crude and grotesque imitations of an inferior romantic *genre*; the *North Sea Pictures* are magnificent attempts in highly original form to catch the elusive moods of a great natural element which before Heine had played but little part in German poetry. From the *Dream Pictures* we proceed to *Songs* (a very simple love story told in forms as nearly conventional as Heine ever used), to *Romances* which, with the notable exception of *The Two Grenadiers* and *Belshazzar*, are relatively feeble attempts at the objectivation of personal suffering; and thence to *Sonnets*, direct communications to particular persons. Thereupon follow the *Lyrical Intermezzo* and the *Return Home*, each with a prologue and an epilogue, and with several series of pieces which,

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like the *Songs* above mentioned, are printed without titles and are successive sentences or paragraphs in the poet's own love story. This he tells over and over again, without monotony, because the story gains in significance as the lover gains in experience, because each time he finds for it a new set of symbols, and because the symbols become more and more objective as the poet's horizon broadens. Then come a few pieces of religious content (culminating in *The Pilgrimage to Kevlaar*), the poems in the *Journey to the Hartz* (the most striking of which are animated by the poetry of folk-lore)—these poems clearly transitional to the poetry of the ocean which Heine wrote with such vigor in the two cycles on the North Sea. The movement is a steady climax.

The truth of the foregoing observations can be tested only by an examination of the entire *Book of Songs*. The total effect is one of arrangement. The order of the sections is chronological; the order of the poems within the sections is logical; and some poems were altered to make them fit into the scheme. Each was originally the expression of a moment; and the peculiarity of Heine as a lyric poet is his disposition to fix a moment, however fleeting, and to utter a feeling, of however slight consequence to humanity it might at first blush seem to be. In the *Journey to the Hartz* he never lost an opportunity to make a point; in his lyrical confessions he suppressed no impulse to self-revelation; and seldom did his mastery of form fail to ennoble even the meanest substance.

Some of Heine's most perfect products are his smallest. Whether, however, a slight substance can be fittingly presented only in the briefest forms, or a larger matter calls for extended treatment, the method is the same, and the merit lies in the justness and suggestiveness of details. Single points, or points in juxtaposition or in succession, not the developed continuity of a line, are the means to the effect which Heine seeks. Connecting links are left to be supplied by the imagination of the reader. Even in such a narrative poem as *Belshazzar* the movement is *staccato*; we are invited to contemplate a series of moments; and if the subject is impiety and swift retribution, we are left to infer the fact from the evidence presented; there is neither editorial introduction nor moralizing conclusion. Similarly with *The Two Grenadiers*, a presentation of character in circumstance, a translation of pictorial details into terms of action and prophecy; and most strikingly in *The Pilgrimage to Kevlaar*, a poem of such fundamentally pictorial quality that it has been called a triptych, three depicted scenes in a little religious drama.

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It is in pieces like these that we find Heine most successfully making of himself the interpreter of objects in the outside world. The number of such objects is greater than is everywhere believed—though naturally his success is surest in the case of objects congenial to him, and the variety of these is not great. Indeed, the outside world, even when he appears to treat it most objectively, proves upon closer examination to be in the vast majority of cases only a treasure-trove of symbols for the expression of his inner self. Thus, *Poor Peter* is the narrative of a humble youth unfortunate in love, but poor Peter's story is Heine's; otherwise, we may be sure, Heine would not have thought it worth the telling. Nothing could seem to be less the property of Heine than *The Lorelei*; nevertheless, he has given to this borrowed subject so personal a turn that instead of the siren we see a human maiden, serenely indifferent to the effect of her charms, which so take the luckless lover that, like the boatman, he, Heine, is probably doomed ere long to death in the waves.

Toward the outside world, then, Heine's habitual attitude is not that of an interpreter; it is that of an artist who seeks the means of expression where they may be found. He does not, like Goethe and Moerike, read out of the phenomena of nature and of life what these phenomena in themselves contain; he reads into them what he wishes them to say. *The Book of Songs* is a human document, but it is no document of the life of humanity; it is a collection of kaleidoscopic views of one life, a life not fortified by wholesome cooeperation with men nor nourished with the strength of nature, but vivifying nature with its own emotions. Heine has treated many a situation with overwhelming pathos, but none from which he was himself so completely absent as Moerike from the kitchen of The *Forsaken Maiden*. Goethe's "Hush'd on the hill" is an apostrophe to himself; but peace which the world cannot give and cannot take away is the atmosphere of that poem; whereas Heine's "The shades of the summer evening lie" gets its principal effectiveness from fantastic contributions of the poet's own imagination.

The length to which Heine goes in attributing human emotions to nature is hardly to be paralleled before or since. His aim not being the reproduction of reality, nor yet the objectivation of ideas, his poetry is essentially a poetry of tropes-that is, the conception and presentation of things not as they are but as they may be conceived to be. A simple illustration of this method may be seen in *The Herd-Boy*. Uhland wrote a poem on a very similar subject, *The Boy's Mountain Song*. But the contrast between Uhland's hardy, active, public-spirited youth and Heine's sleepy, amorous individualist is no more striking than the difference between Uhland's rhetorical and Heine's tropical method. Heine's poem is an elaboration of the single metaphor with which it begins:

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“Kingly is the herd-boy’s calling.” The poem *Pine and Palm*, in which Heine expresses his hopeless separation from the maiden of whom he dreams—incidentally attributing to Amalie a feeling of sadness and solitude to which she was a stranger—is a bolder example of romantic self-projection into nature. But not the boldest that Heine offers us. He transports us to India, and there—

The violets titter, caressing,
  Peeping up as the planets appear,
And the roses, their warm love confessing,
  Whisper words, soft perfumed, to each ear.

Nor does he allow us to question the occurrence of these marvels; how do we know what takes place on the banks of the Ganges, whither we are borne on the wings of song? This, indeed, would be Heine’s answer to any criticism based upon Ruskin’s notion as to the “pathetic fallacy.” If the setting is such as to induce in us the proper mood, we readily enter the non-rational realm, and with credulous delight contemplate wonders such as we too have seen in our dreams; just as we find the romantic syntheses of sound and odor, or of sound and color, legitimate attempts to express the inexpressible. The atmosphere of prose, to be sure, is less favorable to Heine’s habitual indulgence in romantic tropes.

Somewhat blunted by over-employment is another romantic instrument, eminently characteristic of Heine, namely, irony. Nothing could be more trenchant than his bland assumption of the point of view of the Jew-baiter, the hypocrite, or the slave-trader. It is as perfect as his adoption of childlike faith in *The Pilgrimage to Kevlaar*. Many a time he attains an effect of ironical contrast by the juxtaposition of incongruous poems, as when a deification of his beloved is followed by a cynical utterance of a different kind of love. But often the incongruity is within the poem itself, and the poet, destroying the illusion of his created image, gets a melancholy satisfaction from derision of his own grief. This procedure perfectly symbolizes a distracted mind; it undoubtedly suggests a superior point of view, from which the tribulations of an insignificant individual are seen to be insignificant; but in a larger sense it symbolizes the very instability and waywardness of Heine himself. His emotions were unquestionably deep and recurrent, but they were not constant. His devotion to ideals did not preclude indulgence in very unideal pleasures; and his love of Amalie and Therese, hopeless from the beginning, could not, except in especially fortunate moments, avoid erring in the direction either of sentimentality or of bitterness. But Heine was too keenly intellectual to be indulgent of sentimentality, and too caustic to restrain bitterness. Hence the bitter-sweet of many of his pieces, so agreeably stimulating and so suggestive of an elastic temperament.

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There is, however, a still more pervasive incongruity between this temperament and the forms in which it expressed itself. Heine's love poems—two-thirds of the *Book of Songs*—are written in the very simplest of verses, mostly quatrains of easy and seemingly inevitable structure. Heine learned the art of making them from the *Magic Horn*, from Uhland, and from Eichendorff, and he carried the art to the highest pitch of virtuosity. They are the forms of the German Folk-song, a fit vehicle for homely sentiments and those elemental passions which come and go like the tide in a humble heart, because the humble heart is single and yields unresistingly to their flow. But Heine's heart was not single, his passion was complex, and the greatest of his ironies was his use of the most unsophisticated of forms for his most sophisticated substances. This, indeed, was what made his love poetry so novel and so piquant to his contemporaries; this is one of the qualities that keep it alive today; but it is a highly individual device which succeeded only with this individual; and that it was a device adopted from no lack of capacity in other measures appears from the perfection of Heine's sonnets and the incomparable free rhythmic verses of the *North Sea* cycles.

Taken all in all, *The Book of Songs* was a unique collection, making much of little, and making it with an amazing economy of means.

III

Heine's first period, to 1831, when he was primarily a literary artist, nearly coincides with the epoch of the Restoration (1815-1830). Politically, this time was unproductive in Germany, and the very considerable activity in science, philosophy, poetry, painting, and other fine arts stood in no immediate relation to national exigencies. There was indeed plenty of agitation in the circles of the *Burschenschaft*, and there were sporadic efforts to obtain from reluctant princes the constitutions promised as a reward for the rising against Napoleon; but as a whole the people of the various states seemed passive, and whatever was accomplished was the work of individuals, with or without royal patronage, and, in the main, in continuation of romantic tendencies. But with the Revolution of July, 1830, the political situation in Germany became somewhat more acute, demands for emancipation took more tangible form, and the so-called "Young Germans "—Wienbarg, Gutzkow, Laube, Mundt, Boerne, and others-endeavored in essays, novels, plays, and pamphlets to stir up public interest in questions of political, social, and religious reform.

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Many passages in Heine's *Pictures of Travel* breathe the spirit of the Young German propaganda—the celebrated confession of faith, for example, in the *Journey to the Hartz*, in which he declares himself a knight of the holy spirit of iconoclastic democracy. In Paris he actively enlisted in the cause, and for about fifteen years continued, as a journalist, the kind of expository and polemic writing that he had developed in the later volumes of the *Pictures of Travel*. Regarding himself, like many an expatriate, as a mediator between the country of his birth and the country of his adoption, he wrote for German papers accounts of events in the political and artistic world of France, and for French periodicals more ambitious essays on the history of religion, philosophy, and recent literature in Germany. Most of the works of this time were published in both French and German, and Heine arranged also for the appearance of the *Pictures of Travel* and the *Book of Songs* in French translations. To all intents and purposes he became a Frenchman; from 1836 or 1837 until 1848 he was the recipient of an annual pension of 4,800 francs from the French government; he has even been suspected of having become a French citizen. But he in no sense curbed his tongue when speaking of French affairs, nor was he free from longing to be once more in his native land.

In Germany, however, he was commonly regarded as a traitor; and at the same time the Young Germans, with the more influential of whom he soon quarreled, looked upon him as a renegade; so that there was a peculiar inappropriateness in the notorious decree of the Bundesrat at Frankfurt, voted December 10, 1835, and impotently forbidding the circulation in Germany of the writings of the Young Germans: Heine, Gutzkow, Laube, Wienbarg, and Mundt—in that order. But the occupants of insecure thrones have a fine scent for the odor of sedition, and Heine was an untiring sapper and miner in the modern army moving against the strongholds of aristocrats and priests. A keen observer in Hamburg who was resolved, though not in the manner of the Young Germans, to do his part in furthering social reform, Friedrich Hebbel, wrote to a friend in March, 1836: "Our time is one in which action destined to be decisive for a thousand years is being prepared. What artillery did not accomplish at Leipzig must now be done by pens in Paris."

During the first years of his sojourn in Paris Heine entered gleefully into all the enjoyment and stimulation that the gay capital had to offer. "I feel like a fish in water" is a common expression of contentment with one's surroundings; but when one fish inquires after the health of another, he now says, Heine told a friend, "I feel like Heine in Paris." The well-accredited German poet quickly secured admission to the circle of artists, journalists, politicians, and reformers, and became a familiar figure on the boulevards. In October,

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1834, be made the acquaintance of a young Frenchwoman, Crescence Eugenie Mirat, or Mathilde, as he called her, and fell violently in love with her. She was a woman of great personal attractiveness, but entirely without education, frivolous, and passionate. They were soon united; not for long, Heine thought, and he made efforts to escape from her seductive charms, but ineffectually; and like Tannhaeuser, he was drawn back to his Frau Venus with an attachment passing all understanding. From December, 1835, Heine regarded her as his wife, and in 1841 they were married. But Mathilde was no good housekeeper; Heine was frequently in financial straits; he quarreled with his relatives, as well as with literary adversaries in Germany and France; and only after considerable negotiation was peace declared, and the continuation of a regular allowance arranged with Uncle Salomon.

[Illustration: HEINRICH HEINE E. HADER]

Moreover, Heine's health was undermined. In the latter thirties he suffered often from headaches and afflictions of the eyes; in the middle of the forties paralysis of the spinal cord began to manifest itself; and for the last ten years of his life he was a hopelessly stricken invalid, finally doomed for five years to that "mattress grave" which his fortitude no less than his woeful humor has pathetically glorified. His wife cared for him dutifully, he was visited by many distinguished men of letters, and in 1855 a ministering angel came to him in the person of Elise von Krinitz ("Camille Selden") whom he called "*Die Mouche*" and for whom he wrote his last poem, *The Passion Flower*, a kind of apology for his life.

Meantime contentions, tribulations, and a wasting frame seemed only to sharpen the wits of the indomitable warrior. *New Songs* (1844) contains, along with negligible cynical pieces, a number of love songs no whit inferior to those of the *Book of Songs*, romances, and scorching political satires. The *Romanzero* (1851) is not unfairly represented by such a masterpiece as *The Battlefield of Hastings*. And from this last period we have two quasi-epic poems: *Atta Troll* (1847; written in 1842) and *Germany* (1844), the fruit of the first of Heine's two trips across the Rhine.

Historically and poetically, *Atta Troll* is one of the most remarkable of Heine's works. He calls it *Das letzte freie Waldlied der Romantik* ("The last free forest-song of romanticism.") Having for its principal scene the most romantic spot in Europe, the valley of Roncesvaux, and for its principal character a dancing bear, the impersonation of those good characters and talentless men who, in the early forties, endeavored to translate the prose of Young Germany into poetry, the poem flies to the merriest, maddest height of romanticism in order by the aid of magic to kill the bear and therewith the vogue of poetry degraded to practical purposes. Heine knew whereof he spoke; for he had himself been a mad romanticist, a Young German, and a political poet; and he was a true prophet; for, though he did not himself enter the promised land, he lived to

see, in the more refined romanticism of the Munich School and the poetic realism of Hebbel and Ludwig, the dawn of a new day in the history of German literature.

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Heine did not enter the promised land. Neither can we truthfully say that he saw it as it was destined to be. His eye was on the present, and in the present he more clearly discerned what ought not to be than what gave promise of a better future. In the war for the liberation of humanity he professed to be, and he was, a brave soldier; but he lacked the soldier's prime requisite, discipline. He never took a city, because he could not rule his spirit. Democracy was inscribed upon his banner, sympathy for the disenfranchised bound him to it, but not that charity which seeketh not her own, nor the loyalty that abides the day when imperfection shall become perfection. Sarcasm was his weapon, ridicule his plan of campaign, and destruction his only accomplishment.

We shall not say that the things destroyed by Heine deserved a better fate. We shall not think of him either as a leader or as a follower in a great national movement. He was not the one man of his generation through whom the national consciousness, even national discontent, found expression; he was the man whose self-expressions aroused the widest interest and touched the tenderest chords. To be called perhaps an alien, and certainly no monumental German character, Heine nevertheless made use, with consummate artistry, of the fulness of German culture at a time when many of the after-born staggered under the weight of a heritage greater than they could bear.

[Illustration: THE LORELEI FOUNTAIN In NEW YORK BY HERTER]

HEINRICH HEINE

* * * * *

DEDICATION[1] (1822)

I have had dreams of wild love wildly nursed,
Of myrtles, mignonette, and silken tresses,
Of lips, whose blames belie the kiss that blesses,
Of dirge-like songs to dirge-like airs rehearsed.

My dreams have paled and faded long ago,
Faded the very form they most adored,
Nothing is left me but what once I poured
Into pathetic verse with feverish glow.

Thou, orphaned song, art left. Do thou, too, fade!
Go, seek that visioned form long lost in night,
And say from me—if you upon it light—
With airy breath I greet that airy shade!

* * * * *

SONGS (1822)

1 [2]

Oh, fair cradle of my sorrow,
  Oh, fair tomb of peace for me,
Oh, fair town, my last good-morrow,
  Last farewell I say to thee!

Fare thee well, thou threshold holy,
  Where my lady’s footsteps stir,
And that spot, still worshipped lowly,
  Where mine eyes first looked on her!

Had I but beheld thee never,
  Thee, my bosom’s beauteous queen,
Wretched now, and wretched ever,
  Oh, I should not thus have been!

Touch thy heart?—I would not dare that:
  Ne’er did I thy love implore;
Might I only breathe the air that
  Thou didst breathe, I asked no more.

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Yet I could not brook thy spurning,
  Nor thy cruel words of scorn;
Madness in my brain is burning,
  And my heart is sick and torn.

So I go, downcast and dreary,
  With my pilgrim staff to stray,
Till I lay my head aweary
  In some cool grave far away.

2 [3]

Cliff and castle quiver grayly
  From the mirror of the Rhine
Where my little boat swims gaily;
  Round her prow the ripples shine.

Heart at ease I watch them thronging—
  Waves of gold with crisping crest,
Till awakes a half-lulled longing
  Cherished deep within my breast.

Temptingly the ripples greet me
  Luring toward the gulf beneath,
Yet I know that should they meet me
  They would drag me to my death.

Lovely visage, treacherous bosom,
  Guile beneath and smile above,
Stream, thy dimpling wavelet's blossom
  Laughs as falsely as my love.

3[4]

I despaired at first—believing
  I should never bear it. Now
I have borne it—I have borne it.
  Only never ask me How.

* * * * *

A LYRICAL INTERMEZZO (1822-23)

1[5]

’Twas in the glorious month of May,
When all the buds were blowing,
I felt—ah me, how sweet it was!—
Love in my heart a-growing.

’Twas in the glorious month of May,
When all the birds were quiring,
In burning words I told her all
My yearning, my aspiring.

2[6]

Where’er my bitter tear-drops fall,
The fairest flowers arise;
And into choirs of nightingales
Are turned my bosom’s sighs.

And wilt thou love me, thine shall be
The fairest flowers that spring,
And at thy window evermore
The nightingales shall sing.

3[7]

The rose and the lily, the moon and the dove,
Once loved I them all with a perfect love.
I love them no longer, I love alone
The Lovely, the Graceful, the Pure, the One
Who twines in one wreath all their beauty and love,
And rose is, and lily, and moon and dove.

4[8]

Dear, when I look into thine eyes,
My deepest sorrow straightway flies;
But when I kiss thy mouth, ah, then
No thought remains of bygone pain!

And when I lean upon thy breast,
No dream of heaven could be more blest;
But, when thou say’st thou lovest me,
I fall to weeping bitterly.

5[9]

Thy face, that fair, sweet face I know,
I dreamed of it awhile ago;

It is an angel’s face, so mild—
And yet, so sadly pale, poor child!

Only the lips are rosy bright,
But soon cold Death will kiss them white,
And quench the light of Paradise
That shines from out those earnest eyes.

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6[10]

Lean close thy cheek against my cheek,
That our tears together may blend, love,
And press thy heart upon my heart,
That from both one flame may ascend, love!

[Illustration: SPRING'S AWAKENING *From the Painting by Ludwig von Hofmann.*]

And while in that flame so doubly bright
Our tears are falling and burning,
And while in my arms I clasp thee tight
I will die with love and yearning.

7[11]

I'll breathe my soul and its secret
In the lily's chalice white;
The lily shall thrill and reecho
A song of my heart's delight.

The song shall quiver and tremble,
Even as did the kiss
That her rosy lips once gave me
In a moment of wondrous bliss.

8[12]

The stars have stood unmoving
Upon the heavenly plains
For ages, gazing each on each,
With all a lover's pains.

They speak a noble language,
Copious and rich and strong;
Yet none of your greatest schoolmen
Can understand that tongue.

But I have learnt it, and never
Can forget it for my part—
For I used as my only grammar
The face of the joy of my heart.

9[13]

On the wings of song far sweeping,
  Heart's dearest, with me thou'lt go
Away where the Ganges is creeping;
  Its loveliest garden I know—

A garden where roses are burning
  In the moonlight all silent there;
Where the lotus-flowers are yearning
  For their sister beloved and fair.

The violets titter, caressing,
  Peeping up as the planets appear,
And the roses, their warm love confessing,
  Whisper words, soft-perfumed, to each ear.

And, gracefully lurking or leaping,
  The gentle gazelles come round:
While afar, deep rushing and sweeping,
  The waves of the Ganges sound.

We'll lie there in slumber sinking
  Neath the palm-trees by the stream,
Rapture and rest deep drinking,
  Dreaming the happiest dream.

10[14]

The lotos flower is troubled
  By the sun's too garish gleam,
She droops, and with folded petals
  Awaiteth the night in a dream.

'Tis the moon has won her favor,
  His light her spirit doth wake,
Her virgin bloom she unveileth
  All gladly for his dear sake.

Unfolding and glowing and shining
  She yearns toward his cloudy height;
She trembles to tears and to perfume
  With pain of her love's delight.

[Illustration: FLOWER FANTASY *Train the Painting by Ludwig von Hofmann.*]

11[15]

The Rhine's bright wave serenely
  Reflects as it passes by

Cologne that lifts her queenly
  Cathedral towers on high.

A picture hangs in the dome there,
  On leather with gold bedight,
Whose beauty oft when I roam there
  Sheds hope on my troubled night.

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For cherubs and flowers are wreathing
Our Lady with tender grace;
Her eyes, cheeks, and lips half-breathing
Resemble my loved one’s face.

12[16]

I am not wroth, my own lost love, although
My heart is breaking—wroth I am not, no!
For all thou dost in diamonds blaze, no ray
Of light into thy heart’s night finds its way.

I saw thee in a dream. Oh, piteous sight!
I saw thy heart all empty, all in night;
I saw the serpent gnawing at thy heart;
I saw how wretched, O my love, thou art!

13[17]

When thou shalt lie, my darling, low
In the dark grave, where they hide thee,
Then down to thee I will surely go,
And nestle in beside thee.

Wildly I’ll kiss and clasp thee there,
Pale, cold, and silent lying;
Shout, shudder, weep in dumb despair,
Beside my dead love dying.

The midnight calls, up rise the dead,
And dance in airy swarms there;
We twain quit not our earthly bed,
I lie wrapt in your arms there.

Up rise the dead; the Judgment-day
To bliss or anguish calls them;
We twain lie on as before we lay,
And heed not what befalls them.

14[18]

A young man loved a maiden,
But she for another has sigh’d;
That other, he loves another,
And makes her at length his bride.

The maiden marries, in anger,
The first adventurous wight
That chance may fling before her;
The youth is in piteous plight.

The story is old as ages,
Yet happens again and again;
The last to whom it happen'd,
His heart is rent in twain.

15[19]

A lonely pine is standing
On the crest of a northern height;
He sleeps, and a snow-wrought mantle
Enshrouds him through the night.

He's dreaming of a palm-tree
Afar in a tropic land,
That grieves alone in silence
'Mid quivering leagues of sand.

16[20]

My love, we were sitting together
In a skiff, thou and I alone;
'Twas night, very still was the weather,
Still the great sea we floated on.

Fair isles in the moonlight were lying,
Like spirits, asleep in a trance;
Their strains of sweet music were sighing,
And the mists heaved in an eery dance.

And ever, more sweet, the strains rose there,
The mists flitted lightly and free;
But we floated on with our woes there,
Forlorn on that wide, wide sea.

17[21]

I see thee nightly in dreams, my sweet,
Thine eyes the old welcome making,
And I fling me down at thy dear feet
With the cry of a heart that is breaking.

Thou lookest at me in woful wise
With a smile so sad and holy,

And pearly tear-drops from thine eyes
Steal silently and slowly.

Page 20

Whispering a word, thou lay’st on my hair
A wreath with sad cypress shotten;
awake, the wreath is no longer there,
And the word I have forgotten.

* * * * *

SONNETS (1822)

TO MY MOTHER

1[22]

I have been wont to bear my head on high,
Haughty and stern am I of mood and mien;
Yea, though a king should gaze on me, I ween,
I should not at his gaze cast down my eye.
But I will speak, dear Mother, candidly:
When most puffed up my haughty mood hath been,
At thy sweet presence, blissful and serene,
I feel the shudder of humility.

Does thy soul all unknown my soul subdue,
Thy lofty soul that pierces all things through
And speeds on lightning wings to heaven’s blue?
Or am I racked by what my memories tell
Of frequent deeds which caused thy heart to swell—
That beauteous heart which loved me, ah! too well.

2[23]

With foolish fancy I deserted thee;
I fain would search the whole world through to learn
If in it I perchance could love discern,
That I might love embrace right lovingly.
I sought for love as far as eye could see,
My hands extending at each door in turn,
Begging them not my prayer for love to spurn—
Cold hate alone they laughing gave to me.
And ever search’d I after love; yes, ever
Search’d after love, but love discover’d never,
And so I homeward went with troubled thought;
But thou wert there to welcome me again,

And, ah, what in thy dear eye floated then
That was the sweet love I so long had sought.

* * * * *

[Illustration: POOR PETER *From the Painting by P. Grotjohann*]

POOR PETER[24] (1822)

1

Grete and Hans come dancing by,
They shout for very glee;
Poor Peter stands all silently,
And white as chalk is he.

Grete and Hans were wed this morn,
And shine in bright array;
But ah, poor Peter stands forlorn,
Dressed for a working-day.

He mutters, as with wistful eyes
He gazes at them still:
"'Twere easy—were I not too wise—
To do myself some ill...."

2

"An aching sorrow fills my breast,
My heart is like to break;
It leaves me neither peace nor rest,
And all for Grete's sake.

"It drives me to her side, as though
She still could comfort me;
But in her eyes there's something now
That makes me turn and flee.

"I climb the highest hilltop where
I am at least alone;
And standing in the stillness there
I weep and make my moan."

3

Poor Peter wanders slowly by;
So pale is he, so dull and shy,

The very neighbors in the street
Turn round to gaze, when him they meet.

Page 21

The maids speak low: “He looks, I ween,
As though the grave his bed had been.”
Ah no, good maids, ye should have said
“The grave will soon become his bed.”

He lost his sweetheart—so, may be,
The grave is best for such as he;
There he may sleep the years away,
And rest until the Judgment-day.

* * * * *

THE TWO GRENADIERS[25] (1822)

To France were traveling two grenadiers,
  From prison in Russia returning,
And when they came to the German frontiers,
  They hung down their heads in mourning.

There came the heart-breaking news to their ears
  That France was by fortune forsaken;
Scattered and slain were her brave grenadiers,
  And Napoleon, Napoleon was taken.

Then wept together those two grenadiers
  O’er their country’s departed glory;
“Woe’s me,” cried one, in the midst of his tears,
  “My old wound—how it burns at the story!”

The other said: “The end has come,
  What avails any longer living
Yet have I a wife and child at home,
  For an absent father grieving.

“Who cares for wife? Who cares for child?
  Dearer thoughts in my bosom awaken;
Go beg, wife and child, when with hunger wild,
  For Napoleon, Napoleon is taken!

“Oh, grant me, brother, my only prayer,
  When death my eyes is closing:
Take me to France, and bury me there;
  In France be my ashes reposing.

“This cross of the Legion of Honor bright,
  Let it lie near my heart, upon me;
Give me my musket in my hand,
  And gird my sabre on me.

“So will I lie, and arise no more,
  My watch like a sentinel keeping,
Till I hear the cannon’s thundering roar,
  And the squadrons above me sweeping.

“Then the Emperor comes! and his banners wave,
  With their eagles o’er him bending,
And I will come forth, all in arms, from my grave,
  Napoleon, Napoleon attending!”

[Illustration: THE TWO GRENADIERS *From the Painting by P. Grotjohann*]

* * * * *

BELSHAZZAR[26] (1822)

To midnight now the night drew on;
In slumber deep lay Babylon.

The King’s house only was all aflare,
For the King’s wild crew were at revel there.

Up there in the King’s own banquet hall,
Belshazzar held royal festival.

The satraps were marshaled in glittering line
And emptied their beakers of sparkling wine.

The beakers they clinked, and the satraps’ hurras
in the ears of the stiff-necked King rang his praise.

The King’s hot cheeks were with revel dyed,
The wine made swell his heart with pride.

Page 22

Blind madness his haughty stomach spurred,
And he slandered the Godhead with sinful word,

And strutting in pride he blasphemed, the crowd
Of servile courtiers applauding loud.

The King commanded with haughty stare;
The slave was gone, and again was there.

Much wealth of gold on his head bare he;
'Twas reft from Jehovah's sanctuary.

And the King took hold of a sacred cup
With his impious hand, and they filled it up;

And he drank to the bottom in one deep draught,
And loud, the foam on his lips, he laughed:

"Jehovah! Thy glories I spit upon;
I am the King of Babylon!"

But scarce had the awful words been said
When the King's heart withered with secret dread.

The boisterous laughter was stifled all,
And corpselike still did wax the hall;

Lo! lo! on the whited wall there came
The likeness of a man's hand in flame,

And wrote, and wrote, in letters of flame,
And wrote and vanished, and no more came.

The King stark-staring sat, a-quail,
With knees a-knocking, and face death-pale,

The satraps' blood ran cold—none stirred;
They sat like statues, without a word.

The Magians came; but none of them all
Could read those letters of flame on the wall.

But in that same night of his vaunting vain
By his satraps' hand was Belshazzar slain.

* * * * *

THE PILGRIMAGE TO KEVLAAR[27] (1823)

1

The mother stood at the window;
Her son lay in bed, alas!
“Will you not get up, dear William,
To see the procession pass?”

“O mother, I am so ailing,
I neither can hear nor see;
I think of my poor dead Gretchen,
And my heart grows faint in me.”

“Get up, we will go to Kevlaar;
Your book and your rosary take;
The Mother of God will heal you,
And cure your heart of its ache.”

The Church’s banners are waving,
They are chanting a hymn divine;
’Tis at Koeln is that procession,
At Koeln upon the Rhine.

With the throng the mother follows;
Her son she leads with her; and now
They both of them sing in the chorus,
“Ever honored, O Mary, be thou!”

2

The Mother of God at Kevlaar
Is drest in her richest array;
She has many a cure on hand there,
Many sick folk come to her today.

And her, for their votive offerings,
The suffering sick folk greet
With limbs that in wax are molded,
Many waxen hands and feet.

And whoso a wax hand offers,
His hand is healed of its sore;
And whoso a wax foot offers,
His foot it will pain him no more.

To Kevlaar went many on crutches
  Who now on the tight-rope bound,
And many play now on the fiddle
  Had there not one finger sound.

Page 23

The mother she took a wax taper,
  And of it a heart she makes
“Give that to the Mother of Jesus,
  She will cure thee of all thy aches.”

With a sigh her son took the wax heart,
  He went to the shrine with a sigh;
His words from his heart trickle sadly,
  As trickle the tears from his eye.

“Thou blest above all that are blest,
  Thou virgin unspotted divine,
Thou Queen of the Heavens, before thee
  I lay all my anguish and pine.

“I lived with my mother at Koeln,
  At Koeln in the town that is there,
The town that has hundreds many
  Of chapels and churches fair.

“And Gretchen she lived there near us,
But now she is dead, well-a-day!
O Mary! a wax heart I bring thee,
  Heal thou my heart’s wound, I pray!

“Heal thou my heart of its anguish,
  And early and late, I vow,
With its whole strength to pray and to sing, too,
  ‘Ever honored, O Mary, be thou!’”

3

The suffering son and his mother
  In their little bed-chamber slept;
Then the Mother of God came softly,
  And close to the sleepers crept.

She bent down over the sick one,
  And softly her hand did lay
On his heart, with a smile so tender,
  And presently vanished away.

The mother sees all in her dreaming,
  And other things too she marked;

Then up from her slumber she wakened,
So loudly the town dogs barked.

There lay her son, to his full length
Stretched out, and he was dead;
And the light on his pale cheek flitted
Of the morning's dawning red.

She folded her hands together,
She felt as she knew not how,
And softly she sang and devoutly,
"Ever honored, O Mary, be thou!"

* * * * *

THE RETURN HOME (1823-24)

1[28]

Once upon my life's dark pathway
Gleamed a phantom of delight;
Now that phantom fair has vanished,
I am wholly wrapt in night.

Children in the dark, they suffer
At their heart a spasm of fear;
And, their inward pain to deaden,
Sing aloud, that all may hear.

I, a madcap child, now childlike
In the dark to sing am fain;
If my song be not delightsome,
It at least has eased my pain.

2[29]

We sat at the fisherman's cottage,
And gazed upon the sea;
Then came the mists of evening,
And rose up silently.

The lights within the lighthouse
Were kindled one by one,
We saw still a ship in the distance
On the dim horizon alone.

We spoke of tempest and shipwreck,
  Of sailors and of their life,
And how ’twixt clouds and billows
  They’re tossed, ’twixt joy and strife.

Page 24

We spoke of distant countries
  From North to South that range,
Of strange fantastic nations,
  And their customs quaint and strange.

The Ganges is flooded with splendor,
  And perfumes waft through the air,
And gentle people are kneeling
  To Lotos flowers fair.

In Lapland the people are dirty,
  Flat-headed, large-mouthed, and small;
They squat round the fire and, frying
  Their fishes, they shout and they squall.

The girls all gravely listened,
  Not a word was spoken at last;
The ship we could see no longer,
  Darkness was settling so fast.

3[30]

You lovely fisher-maiden,
  Bring now the boat to land;
Come here and sit beside me,
  We'll prattle hand in hand.

Your head lay on my bosom,
  Nor be afraid of me;
Do you not trust all fearless
  Daily the great wild sea?

My heart is like the sea, dear,
  Has storm, and ebb, and flow,
And many purest pearl-gems
  Within its dim depth glow.

4[31]

My child, we were two children,
  Small, merry by childhood's law;
We used to creep to the henhouse,
  And hide ourselves in the straw.

We crowed like cocks, and whenever
  The passers near us drew—
“Cock-a-doodle!” They thought
  ’Twas a real cock that crew.

The boxes about our courtyard
  We carpeted to our mind,
And lived there both together—
  Kept house in a noble kind.

The neighbor’s old cat often
  Came to pay us a visit;
We made her a bow and courtesy,
  Each with a compliment in it.

After her health we asked,
  Our care and regard to evince—
(We have made the very same speeches
  To many an old cat since).

We also sat and wisely
  Discoursed, as old folks do,
Complaining how all went better
  In those good old times we knew—

How love, and truth, and believing
  Had left the world to itself,
And how so dear was the coffee,
  And how so rare was the pelf.

The children’s games are over,
  The rest is over with youth—
The world, the good games, the good times,
  The belief, and the love, and the truth.

5[32]

E’en as a lovely flower,
  So fair, so pure thou art;
I gaze on thee, and sadness
  Comes stealing o’er my heart.

My hands I fain had folded
  Upon thy soft brown hair,
Praying that God may keep thee
  So lovely, pure, and fair.

6[33]

I would that my love and its sadness
  Might a single word convey,
The joyous breezes should bear it,
  And merrily waft it away.

They should waft it to thee, beloved,
  This soft and wailful word,
At every hour thou shouldst hear it,
  Where’er thou art ’twould be heard.

Page 25

And when in the night's first slumber
  Thine eyes scarce closing seem,
Still should my word pursue thee
  Into thy deepest dream.

7[34]

The shades of the summer evening lie
  On the forest and meadows green;
The golden moon shines in the azure sky
  Through balm-breathing air serene.

The cricket is chirping the brooklet near,
  In the water a something stirs,
And the wanderer can in the stillness hear
  A plash and a sigh through the furze.

There all by herself the fairy bright
  Is bathing down in the stream;
Her arms and throat, bewitching and white,
  In the moonshine glance and gleam.

8[35]

I know not what evil is coming,
  But my heart feels sad and cold;
A song in my head keeps humming,
  A tale from the times of old.

The air is fresh and it darkles,
  And smoothly flows the Rhine;
The peak of the mountain sparkles
  In the fading sunset-shine.

The loveliest wonderful maiden
  On high is sitting there,
With golden jewels braiden,
  And she combs her golden hair.

With a golden comb sits combing,
And ever the while sings she
A marvelous song through the gloaming
Of magical melody.

It hath caught the boatman, and bound him
In the spell of a wild, sad love;
He sees not the rocks around him,
He sees only her above.

The waves through the pass keep swinging,
But boatman or boat is none;
And this with her mighty singing
The Lorelei hath done.

[Illustration: ROCKY COAST *From the Painting by Ludwig von Hofmann.*]

* * * * *

TWILIGHT[36] (1825-26)

By the dim sea-shore
Lonely I sat, and thought-afflicted.
The sun sank low, and sinking he shed
Rose and vermilion upon the waters,
And the white foaming waves,
Urged on by the tide,
Foamed and murmured yet nearer and nearer—
A curious jumble of whispering and wailing,
A soft rippling laughter and sobbing and sighing,
And in between all a low lullaby singing.
Methought I heard ancient forgotten legends,
The world-old sweet stories,
Which once, as a boy,
I heard from my playmates,
When, of a summer's evening,
We crouched down to tell stories
On the stones of the doorstep,
With small listening hearts,
And bright curious eyes;
While the big grown-up girls
Were sitting opposite
At flowery and fragrant windows,
Their rosy faces
Smiling and moonshine-illumined.

* * * * *

HAIL TO THE SEA[37] (1825-26)

Thalatta! Thalatta!
Hail to thee, thou eternal sea!

Hail to thee, ten thousand times, hail!
With rejoicing heart
I bid thee welcome,
As once, long ago, did welcome thee
Ten thousand Greek hearts—
Hardship-battling, homesick-yearning,
World-renowned Greek hearts.

Page 26

The billows surged,
They foamed and murmured,
The sun poured down, as in haste,
Flickering ripples of rosy light;
Long strings of frightened sea-gulls
Flutter away shrill screaming;
War-horses trample, and shields clash loudly,
And far resounds the triumphant cry:
Thalatta! Thalatta!

Hail to thee, thou eternal sea!
Like accents of home thy waters are whispering,
And dreams of childhood lustrous I see
Through thy limpid and crystalline wave,
Calling to mind the dear old memories
Of dear and delightful toys,
Of all the glittering Christmas presents,
Of all the red-branched forests of coral,
The pearls, the goldfish and bright-colored shells,
Which thou dost hide mysteriously
Deep down in thy clear house of crystal.

Oh, how have I languished in dreary exile!
Like unto a withered flower
In the botanist's capsule of tin,
My heart lay dead in my breast.
Methought I was prisoned a long sad winter,
A sick man kept in a darkened chamber;
And now I suddenly leave it,
And outside meets me the dazzling Spring,
Tenderly verdant and sun-awakened;
And rustling trees shed snowy petals,
And tender young flowers gaze on me
With their bright fragrant eyes,
And the air is full of laughter and gladness,
And rich with the breath of blossoms,
And in the blue sky the birds are singing—
Thalatta! Thalatta!

Oh, my brave Anabasis-heart!
How often, ah! how sadly often
Wast thou pressed hard by the North's fair Barbarians!
From large and conquering eyes
They shot forth burning arrows;

With crooked words as sharp as a rapier
They threatened to pierce my bosom;
With cuneiform angular missives they battered
My poor stunned brains;
In vain I held out my shield for protection,
The arrows hissed and the blows rained down,
And hard pressed I was pushed to the sea
By the North's fair Barbarians—
And, breathing freely, I greet the sea,
The sea my deliverer, the sea my friend—
Thalatta! Thalatta!

[Illustration: PLAY OF THE WAVES *From the Painting by Arnold Boecklin*]

* * * * *

IN THE HARBOR[38] (1825-26)

Happy is he who hath reached the safe harbor,
Leaving behind him the stormy wild ocean,
And now sits cosy and warm
In the good old Town-Cellar of Bremen.

How sweet and homelike the world is reflected,
In the chalice green of Rhinewine Rummer.
And how the dancing microcosm
Sunnily glides down the thirsty throat!
Everything I behold in the glass—
History, old and new, of the nations,
Both Turks and Greeks, and Hegel and Gans,
Forests of citron and big reviews,
Berlin and Shilda, and Tunis and Hamburg;
But, above all, thy image, Beloved,
And thy dear little head on a gold-ground of Rhenish!

Page 27

Oh, how fair, how fair art thou, Dearest!
Thou art as fair as the rose!
Not like the Rose of Shiras,
That bride of the nightingale, sung by Hafis,
Not like the Rose of Sharon,
That mystic red rose, exalted by prophets—
Thou art like the “Rose, of the Bremen Town-Cellar,”
Which is the Rose of Roses;
The older it grows the sweeter it blossoms,
And its breath divine it hath all entranced me,
It hath inspired and kindled my soul;
And had not the Town-Cellar Master gripped me
With firm grip and steady,
I should have stumbled!

That excellent man! We sat together
And drank like brothers;
We spoke of wonderful mystic things,
We sighed and sank in each other’s arms,
And me to the faith of love he converted;
I drank to the health of my bitterest foes,
And I forgave all bad poets sincerely,
Even as I may one day be forgiven;

I wept with devotion, and at length
The doors of salvation were opened unto me,
Where the sacred Vats, the twelve Apostles,
Silently preach, yet oh, so plainly,
Unto all nations.

These be men forsooth!
Of humble exterior, in jackets of wood,
Yet within they are fairer and more enlightened
Than all the Temple’s proud Levites,
Or the courtiers and followers of Herod,
Though decked out in gold and in purple;
Have I not constantly said:
Not with the herd of common low people,
But in the best and politest of circles
The King of Heaven was sure to dwell!

Hallelujah! How lovely the whisper
Of Bethel’s palm-trees!
How fragrant the myrtle-trees of Hebron!

How sings the Jordan and reels with joy!
My immortal spirit likewise is reeling,
And I reel in company, and, joyously reeling,
Leads me upstairs and into the daylight
That excellent Town-Cellar Master of Bremen.

Thou excellent Town-Cellar Master of Bremen!
Dost see on the housetops the little angels
Sitting aloft, all tipsy and singing?
The burning sun up yonder
Is but a fiery and drunken nose—
The Universe Spirit's red nose;
And round the Universe Spirit's red nose
Reels the whole drunken world.

* * * * *

A NEW SPRING (1831)

1[39]

Soft and gently through my soul
Sweetest bells are ringing,
Speed you forth, my little song,
Of springtime blithely singing!

Speed you onward to a house
Where sweet flowers are fleeting!
If, perchance, a rose you see,
Say, I send her greeting!

2[40]

Thy deep blue eyes enchant me,
So lovingly they glow;
My gazing soul grows dreamy,
My words come strange and slow.

Thy deep blue eyes enchant me
Wherever I may go:
An ocean of azure fancies
O'erwhelms me with its flow.

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3[41]

Was once an ancient monarch,
Heavy his heart, his locks were gray,
This poor and aged monarch
Took a wife so young and gay.

Was once a page-boy handsome,
With lightsome heart and curly hair,
The silken train he carried
Of the queen so young and fair.

Dost know the old, old story?
It sounds so sweet, so sad to tell—
Both were obliged to perish,
They loved each other too well.

* * * * *

ABROAD[42] (1834)

Oh I had once a beauteous Fatherland!
High used to seem
The oak—so high!—the violets nodded kind—
It was a dream.

In German I was kissed, in German told
(You scarce would deem
How sweetly rang the words): “I love thee well!—”
It was a dream.

* * * * *

THE SPHINX[43] (1839)

It is the fairy forest old,
  With lime-tree blossoms scented!
The moonshine with its mystic light
  My soul and sense enchanted.

On, on I roamed, and, as I went,
  Sweet music o’er me rose there;
It is the nightingale—she sings
  Of love and lovers’ woes there.

She sings of love and lovers' woes,
  Hearts blest, and hearts forsaken:
So sad is her mirth, so glad her sob,
  Dreams long forgot awaken.

Still on I roamed, and, as I went,
  I saw before me lowering
On a great wide lawn a stately pile,
  With gables peaked and towering.

Closed were its windows, everywhere
  A hush, a gloom, past telling;
It seemed as though silent Death within
  These empty halls were dwelling.

A Sphinx lay there before the door,
  Half-brutish and half-human,
A lioness in trunk and claws,
  In head and breasts a woman.

A lovely woman! The pale cheek
  Spoke of desires that wasted;
The hushed lips curved into a smile,
  That wooed them to be tasted.

The nightingale so sweetly sang,
  I yielded to their wooing;
And as I kissed that winning face,
  I sealed my own undoing.

The marble image thrilled with life,
  The stone began to quiver;
She drank my kisses' burning flame
  With fierce convulsive shiver.

She almost drank my breath away;
  And, to her passion bending,
She clasped me close, with her lion claws
  My hapless body rending.

Delicious torture, rapturous pang!
  The pain, the bliss, unbounded!
Her lips, their kiss was heaven to me,
  Her claws, oh, how they wounded.

The nightingale sang: "O beauteous Sphinx!
  O love, love! say, why this is,

That with the anguish of death itself
Thou minglest all thy blisses?

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“Oh beauteous Sphinx, oh, answer me,
That riddle strange unloosing!
For many, many thousand years
Have I on it been musing!”

GERMANY[44] (1842)

Germany’s still a little child,
But he’s nursed by the sun, though tender;
He is not suckled on soothing milk,
But on flames of burning splendor.

One grows apace on such a diet;
It fires the blood from languor.
Ye neighbors’ children, have a care
This urchin how ye anger!

He is an awkward infant giant;
The oak by the roots uptearing,
He’ll beat you till your backs are sore,
And crack your crowns for daring.

He is like Siegfried, the noble child,
That song-and-saga wonder;
Who, when his fabled sword was forged,
His anvil cleft in sunder!

To you, who will our Dragon slay,
Shall Siegfried’s strength be given.
Hurrah! how joyfully your nurse
Will laugh on you from heaven!

The Dragon’s hoard of royal gems
You’ll win, with none to share it.
Hurrah! how bright the golden crown
Will sparkle when you wear it!

* * * * *

ENFANT PERDU[45] (1851)

In Freedom’s War, of “Thirty Years” and more,
A lonely outpost have I held—in vain!

With no triumphant hope or prize in store,
  Without a thought to see my home again.

I watched both day and night; I could not sleep
  Like my well-tented comrades far behind,
Though near enough to let their snoring keep
  A friend awake, if e’er to doze inclined.

And thus, when solitude my spirits shook,
  Or fear—for all but fools know fear sometimes—
To rouse myself and them, I piped and took
  A gay revenge in all my wanton rhymes.

Yes! there I stood, my musket always ready,
  And when some sneaking rascal showed his head,
My eye was vigilant, my aim was steady,
  And gave his brains an extra dose of lead.

But war and justice have far different laws,
  And worthless acts are often done right well;
The rascals’ shots were better than their cause,
  And I was hit—and hit again, and fell!

That outpost is abandoned; while the one
  Lies in the dust, the rest in troops depart;
Unconquered—I have done what could be done,
  With sword unbroken, and with broken heart.

* * * * *

THE BATTLEFIELD OF HASTINGS[46] (1855)

Deeply the Abbot of Waltham sighed
  When he heard the news of woe:
How King Harold had come to a pitiful end,
  And on Hastings field lay low.

Asgod and Ailrik, two of his monks,
  On the mission drear he sped
To search for the corse on the battle-plain
  Among the bloody dead.

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The monks arose and went sadly forth,
  And returned as heavy-hearted.
“O Father, the world’s a bitter world,
  And evil days have started.

“For fallen, alack! is the better man;
  The Bastard has won, and knaves
And scutcheoned thieves divide the land,
  And make the freemen slaves.

“The veriest rascals from Normandy,
  In Britain are lords and sirs.
I saw a tailor from Bayeux ride
  With a pair of golden spurs.

“O woe to all who are Saxon born!
  Ye Saxon saints, beware!
For high in heaven though ye dwell,
  Shame yet may be your share.

“Ah, now we know what the comet meant
  That rode, blood-red and dire,
Across the midnight firmament
  This year on a broom of fire.

“‘Twas an evil star, and Hastings’ field
  Has fulfilled the omen dread.
We went upon the battle-plain,
  And sought among the dead.

“While still there lingered any hope
  We sought, but sought in vain;
King Harold’s corse we could not find
  Among the bloody slain.”

Asgod and Ailrik spake and ceased.
  The Abbot wrung his hands.
Awhile he pondered, then he sighed,
  “Now mark ye my commands.

“By the stone of the bard at Grendelfield,
  Just midway through the wood,
One, Edith of the Swan’s Neck, dwells
  In a hovel poor and rude.

“They named her thus, because her neck
  Was once as slim and white
As any swan’s—when, long ago,
  She was the king’s delight.

“He loved and kissed, forsook, forgot,
  For such is the way of men.
Time runs his course with a rapid foot;
  It is sixteen years since then.

“To this woman, brethren, ye shall go,
  And she will follow you fain
To the battle-field; the woman’s eye
  Will not seek the king in vain.

“Thereafter to Waltham Abbey here
  His body ye shall bring,
That Christian burial he may have,
  While for his soul we sing.”

The messengers reached the hut in the wood
  At the hour of midnight drear.
“Wake, Edith of the Swan’s Neck, rise
  And follow without fear.

“The Duke of Normandy has won
  The battle, to our bane.
On the field of Hastings, where he fought,
  The king is lying slain.

“Arise and come with us; we seek
  His body among the dead.
To Waltham Abbey it shall be borne.
  ’Twas thus our Abbot said.”

The woman arose and girded her gown,
  And silently went behind
The hurrying monks. Her grizzly hair
  Streamed wildly on the wind.

Barefoot through bog and bush and briar
  She followed and did not stay,
Till Hastings and the cliffs of chalk
  They saw at dawn of day.

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The mist, that like a sheet of white
  The field of battle cloaked,
Melted anon; with hideous din
  The daws flew up and croaked.

In thousands on the bloody plain
  Lay strewn the piteous corses,
Wounded and torn and maimed and stripped,
  Among the fallen horses.

The woman stopped not for the blood;
  She waded barefoot through,
And from her fixed and staring eyes
  The arrowy glances flew.

Long, with the panting monks behind,
  And pausing but to scare
The greedy ravens from their food,
  She searched with eager care.

She searched and toiled the livelong day,
  Until the night was nigh;
Then sudden from her breast there burst
  A shrill and awful cry.

For on the battle-field at last
  His body she had found.
She kissed, without a tear or word,
  The wan face on the ground.

She kissed his brow, she kissed his mouth,
  She clasped him close, and pressed
Her poor lips to the bloody wounds
  That gaped upon his breast.

His shoulder stark she kisses too,
  When, searching, she discovers
Three little scars her teeth had made
  When they were happy lovers.

The monks had been and gotten boughs,
  And of these boughs they made
A simple bier, whereon the corse
  Of the fallen king was laid.

To Waltham Abbey to his tomb
  The king was thus removed;
And Edith of the Swan's Neck walked
  By the body that she loved.

She chanted litanies for his soul
  With a childish, weird lament
That shuddered through the night. The monks
  Prayed softly as they went.

* * * * *

THE ASRA[47] (1855)

Every evening in the twilight,
To and fro beside the fountain
Where the waters whitely murmured,
Walked the Sultan's lovely daughter.

And a youth, a slave, was standing
Every evening by the fountain
Where the waters whitely murmured;
And his cheek grew pale and paler.

Till one eve the lovely princess
Paused and asked him on a sudden:
"I would know thy name and country;
I would know thy home and kindred."

And the slave replied, "Mohammed
Is my name; my home is Yemen;
And my people are the Asras;
When they love, they love and die."

* * * * *

THE PASSION FLOWER[48] (1856)

I dreamt that once upon a summer night
  Beneath the pallid moonlight's eerie glimmer
I saw where, wrought in marble dimly bright,
  A ruin of the Renaissance did shimmer.

Yet here and there, in simple Doric form,
  A pillar like some solitary giant
Rose from the mass, and, fearless of the storm,
  Reared toward the firmament its head defiant.

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O’er all that place a heap of wreckage lay,
  Triglyphs and pediments and carven portals,
With centaur, sphinx, chimera, satyrs gay—
  Figures of fabled monsters and of mortals.

A marble-wrought sarcophagus reposed
  Unharmed ’mid fragments of these fabled creatures;
Its lidless depth a dead man’s form inclosed,
  The pain-wrung face now calm with softened features.

A group of straining caryatides
  With steadfast neck the casket’s weight supported,
Along both sides whereof there ran a frieze
  Of chiseled figures, wondrous ill-assorted.

First one might see where, decked in bright array,
  A train of lewd Olympians proudly glided,
Then Adam and Dame Eve, not far away,
  With fig-leaf aprons modestly provided.

Next came the people of the Trojan war—
  Paris, Achilles, Helen, aged Nestor;
Moses and Aaron, too, with many more—
  As Judith, Holofernes, Haman, Esther.

Such forms as Cupid’s one could likewise see,
  Phoebus Apollo, Vulcan, Lady Venus,
Pluto and Proserpine and Mercury,
  God Bacchus and Priapus and Silenus.

Among the rest of these stood Balaam’s ass—
  A speaking likeness (if you will, a braying)—
And Abraham’s sacrifice, and there, alas!
  Lot’s daughters, too, their drunken sire betraying.

Near by them danced the wanton Salome,
  To whom John’s head was carried in a charger;
Then followed Satan, writhing horribly,
  And Peter with his keys—none e’er seemed larger

Changing once more, the sculptor’s cunning skill
  Showed lustful Jove misusing his high power,
When as a swan he won fair Leda’s will,
  And conquered Danae in a golden shower.

Here was Diana, leading to the chase
  Her kilted nymphs, her hounds with eyeballs burning;
And here was Hercules in woman's dress,
  His warlike hand the peaceful distaff turning.

Not far from them frowned Sinai, bleak and wild,
  Along whose slope lay Israel's nomad nation;
Next, one might see our Savior as a child
  Amid the elders holding disputation.

Thus were these opposites absurdly blent—
  The Grecian joy of living with the godly
Judean cast of thought!—while round them bent
  The ivy's tendrils, intertwining oddly.

But—wonderful to say!—while dreamily
  I gazed thereon with glance returning often,
Sudden methought that I myself was he,
  The dead man in the splendid marble coffin.

Above the coffin by my head there grew
  A flower for a symbol sweet and tragic,
Violet and sulphur-yellow was its hue,
  It seemed to throb with love's mysterious magic.

Tradition says, when Christ was crucified
  On Calvary, that in that very hour
These petals with the Savior's blood were dyed,
  And therefore is it named the passion-flower.

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The hue of blood, they say, its blossom wears,
  And all the instruments of human malice
Used at the crucifixion still it bears
  In miniature within its tiny chalice.

Whatever to the Passion's rite belongs,
  Each tool of torture here is represented
The crown of thorns, cup, nails and hammer, thongs,
  The cross on which our Master was tormented.

'Twas such a flower at my tomb did stand,
  Above my lifeless form in sorrow bending,
And, like a mourning woman, kissed my hand,
   My brow and eyes, with silent grief contending.

And then—O witchery of dreams most strange!—
  By some occult and sudden transformation
This flower to a woman's shape did change—
  'Twas she I loved with soul-deep adoration!

'Twas thou in truth, my dearest, only thou;
  I knew thee by thy kisses warm and tender.
No flower-lips thus softly touched my brow,
  Such burning tears no flower's cup might render!
Mine eyes were shut, and yet my soul could see
  Thy steadfast countenance divinely beaming,
As, calm with rapture, thou didst gaze on me,
  Thy features in the spectral moonlight gleaming.

We did not speak, and yet my heart could tell
  The hidden thoughts that thrilled within thy bosom.
No chaste reserve in spoken words may dwell—
  With silence Love puts forth its purest blossom.

A voiceless dialogue! one scarce might deem,
  While mute we thus communed in tender fashion,
How time slipped by like some seraphic dream
  Of night, all woven of joy and fear-sweet passion.

Ah, never ask of us what then we said;
  Ask what the glow-worm glimmers to the grasses,
Or what the wavelet murmurs in its bed,
  Or what the west wind whispers as it passes.

Ask what rich lights from carbuncles outstream,
  What perfumed thoughts o’er rose and violet hover—
But never ask what, in the moonlight’s beam,
  The sacred flower breathed to her dead lover.

I cannot tell how long a time I lay,
  Dreaming the ecstasy of joys Elysian,
Within my marble shrine. It fled away—
  The rapture of that calm untroubled vision.

Death, with thy grave-deep stillness, thou art best,
  Delight’s full cup thy hand alone can proffer;
The war of passions, pleasure without rest—
  Such boons are all that vulgar life can offer.

Alas! a sudden clamor put to flight
  My bliss, and all my comfort rudely banished;
’Twas such a screaming, ramping, raging fight
  That mid the uproar straight my flower vanished.

Then on all sides began a savage war
  Of argument, with scolding and with jangling.
Some voices surely I had heard before—
  Why, ’twas my bas-reliefs had fall’n a-wrangling!

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Do old delusions haunt these marbles here,
  And urge them on to frantic disputations?
The terror-striking shout of Pan rings clear,
  While Moses hurls his stern denunciations.

Alack! the wordy strife will have no end,
  Beauty and Truth will ever be at variance,
A schism still the ranks of man will rend
  Into two camps, the Hellenes and Barbarians.

Both parties thus reviled and cursed away,
  And none who heard could tell the why or whether,
Till Balaam's ass at last began to bray
  And soon outbawled both gods and saints together.

With strident-sobbing hee-haw, hee-haw there—
  His unremitting discords without number—
That beast so nearly brought me to despair
  That I cried out—and wakened from my slumber.

* * * * *

THE JOURNEY TO THE HARZ[49] (1824)

BY HEINRICH HEINE

TRANSLATED BY CHARLES GODFREY LELAND

"Nothing is permanent but change, nothing constant but death. Every pulsation of the heart inflicts a wound, and life would be an endless bleeding were it not for Poetry. She secures to us what Nature would deny—a golden age without rust, a spring which never fades, cloudless prosperity and eternal youth."—BOeRNE.

Black dress coats and silken stockings,
  Snowy ruffles frilled with art,
Gentle speeches and embraces—
  Oh, if they but held a heart!

Held a heart within their bosom,
  Warmed by love which truly glows;
Ah! I'm wearied with their chanting
  Of imagined lovers' woes!

I will climb upon the mountains,
  Where the quiet cabin stands,
Where the wind blows freely o'er us,
  Where the heart at ease expands.

I will climb upon the mountains,
  Where the sombre fir-trees grow;
Brooks are rustling, birds are singing,
  And the wild clouds headlong go.

Then farewell, ye polished ladies,
  Polished men and polished hall!
I will climb upon the mountains,
  Smiling down upon you all.

The town of Goettingen, celebrated for its sausages and its University, belongs to the King of Hanover, and contains nine hundred and ninety-nine dwellings, divers churches, a lying-in hospital, an observatory, a prison for students, a library, and a "Ratskeller," where the beer is excellent. The stream which flows by the town is called the Leine, and is used in summer for bathing, its waters being very cold, and in more than one place it is so broad that Lueder was obliged to take quite a run ere he could leap across. The town itself is beautiful, and pleases most when one's back is turned to it. It must be very ancient, for I well remember that five years ago, when I matriculated there (and shortly after received notice to quit), it had already the

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same gray, prim look, and was fully furnished with catch-polls, beadles, dissertations, *thes dansants*, washerwomen, compendiums, roasted pigeons, Guelphic orders, graduation coaches, pipe-heads, court-councilors, law-councilors, expelling councilors, professors ordinary and extraordinary. Many even assert that, at the time of the Great Migrations, every German tribe left behind in the town a loosely bound copy of itself in the person of one of its members, and that from these descended all the Vandals, Frisians, Suabians, Teutons, Saxons, Thuringians,[50] and others, who at the present day still abound in Goettingen, where, separately distinguished by the color of their caps and pipe-tassels, they may be seen straying singly or in hordes along the Weender Street. They still fight their battles on the bloody arena of the *Rasenmill, Ritschenkrug*, and *Bovden*, still preserve the mode of life peculiar to their savage ancestors, and still, as at the time of the migrations, are governed partly by their *Duces*, whom they call "chief cocks," and partly by their primevally ancient law-book, known as the *Comment*, which fully deserves a place among the *leges barbarorum*.

The inhabitants of Goettingen are generally divided into Students, Professors, Philistines, and Cattle, the points of difference between these castes being by no means strictly defined. The "Cattle" class is the most important. I might be accused of prolixity should I here enumerate the names of all the students and of all the regular and irregular professors; besides, I do not just at present distinctly remember the appellations of all the former gentlemen; while among the professors are many who as yet have no name at all. The number of the Goettingen "Philistines" must be as numerous as the sands (or, more correctly speaking, as the mud) of the seashore; indeed, when I beheld them of a morning, with their dirty faces and clean bills, planted before the gate of the collegiate court of justice, I wondered greatly that such an innumerable pack of rascals should ever have been created by the Almighty.

[Illustration: MARKET PLACE GOeTTINGEN]

* * * * *

It was as yet very early in the morning when I left Goettingen, and the learned ——, beyond doubt, still lay in bed, dreaming as usual that he wandered in a fair garden, amid the beds of which grew innumerable white papers written over with citations. On these the sun shone cheerily, and he plucked up several here and there and laboriously planted them in new beds, while the sweetest songs of the nightingales rejoiced his old heart.

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Before the Weender Gate I met two small native schoolboys, one of whom was saying to the other, “I don’t intend to keep company any more with Theodore; he is a low blackguard, for yesterday he didn’t even know the genitive of *Mensa*.” Insignificant as these words may appear, I still regard them as entitled to be recorded—nay, I would even write them as town-motto on the gate of Goettingen, for the young birds pipe as the old ones sing, and the expression accurately indicates the narrow, petty academic pride so characteristic of the “highly learned” Georgia Augusta.[51] The fresh morning air blew over the highroad, the birds sang cheerily, and, little by little, with the breeze and the birds, my mind also became fresh and cheerful. Such refreshment was sorely needed by one who had long been confined in the Pandect stable. Roman casuists had covered my soul with gray cobwebs; my heart was as though jammed between the iron paragraphs of selfish systems of jurisprudence; there was an endless ringing in my ears of such sounds as “Tribonian, Justinian, Hermogenian, and Blockheadian,” and a sentimental brace of lovers seated under a tree appeared to me like an edition of the *Corpus Juris* with closed clasps. The road began to take on a more lively appearance. Milkmaids occasionally passed, as did also donkey-drivers with their gray pupils. Beyond Weende I met the “Shepherd” and “Doris.” This is not the idyllic pair sung by Gessner, but the duly and comfortably appointed university beadles, whose duty it is to keep watch and ward so that no students fight duels in Bovden, and, above all, that no new ideas (such as are generally obliged to remain in quarantine for several decades outside of Goettingen) are smuggled in by speculative private lecturers. Shepherd greeted me as one does a colleague, for he, too, is an author, who has frequently mentioned my name in his semi-annual writings. In addition to this, I may mention that when, as was frequently the case, he came to cite me before the university court and found me “not at home,” he was always kind enough to write the citation with chalk upon my chamber door. Occasionally a one-horse vehicle rolled along, well packed with students, who were leaving for the vacation or forever.

In such a university town there is an endless coming and going. Every three years beholds a new student-generation, forming an incessant human tide, where one semester-wave succeeds another, and only the old professors stand fast in the midst of this perpetual-motion flood, immovable as the pyramids of Egypt. Only in these university pyramids no treasures of wisdom are buried.

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From out the myrtle bushes, by Rauschenwasser, I saw two hopeful youths appear ... singing charmingly the Rossinian lay of “Drink beer, pretty, pretty ’Liza!” These sounds I continued to hear when far in the distance, and after I had long lost sight of the amiable vocalists, as their horses, which appeared to be gifted with characters of extreme German deliberation, were spurred and lashed in a most excruciating style. In no place is the skinning alive of horses carried to such an extent as in Goettingen; and often, when I beheld some lame and sweating hack, which, to earn the scraps of fodder which maintained his wretched life, was obliged to endure the torment of some roaring blade, or draw a whole wagon-load of students, I reflected: “Unfortunate beast! Most certainly thy first ancestors, in some horse-paradise, did eat of forbidden oats.”

* * * * *

Beyond Noerten the sun flashed high in heaven. His intentions toward me were evidently good, and he warmed my brain until all the unripe thoughts which it contained came to full growth. The pleasant Sun Tavern in Noerten is not to be despised, either; I stopped there and found dinner ready. All the dishes were excellent and suited me far better than the wearisome, academical courses of saltless, leathery dried fish and cabbage *rechauffe*, which were served to me in Goettingen. After I had somewhat appeased my appetite, I remarked in the same room of the tavern a gentle man and two ladies, who were about to depart. The cavalier was clad entirely in green; he even had on a pair of green spectacles which cast a verdigris tinge upon his copper-red nose. The gentleman’s general appearance was like what we may presume King Nebuchadnezzar’s to have been in his later years, when, according to tradition, he ate nothing but salad, like a beast of the forest. The Green One requested me to recommend him to a hotel in Goettingen, and I advised him, when there, to inquire of the first convenient student for the Hotel de Bruebach. One lady was evidently his wife —an altogether extensively constructed dame, gifted with a rubicund square mile of countenance, with dimples in her cheeks which looked like spittoons for cupids. A copious double chin appeared below, like an imperfect continuation of the face, while her high-piled bosom, which was defended by stiff points of lace and a many-cornered collar, as if by turrets and bastions, reminded one of a fortress. Still, it is by no means certain that this fortress would have resisted an ass laden with gold, any more than did that of which Philip of Macedon spoke. The other lady, her sister, seemed her extreme antitype. If the one were descended from Pharaoh’s fat kine, the other was as certainly derived from the lean. Her face was but a mouth between two ears; her breast was as inconsolably comfortless and dreary as the Lueneburger heath; while her absolutely dried-up figure reminded one of a charity table for

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poor theological students. Both ladies asked me, in a breath, if respectable people lodged in the Hotel de Bruebach. I assented to this question with a clear conscience, and as the charming trio drove away I waved my hand to them many times from the window. The landlord of The Sun laughed, however, in his sleeve, being probably aware that the Hotel de Bruebach was a name bestowed by the students of Goettingen upon their university prison.

Beyond Nordheim mountain ridges begin to appear, and the traveler occasionally meets with a picturesque eminence. The wayfarers whom I encountered were principally peddlers, traveling to the Brunswick fair, and among them there was a group of women, every one of whom bore on her back an incredibly large cage nearly as high as a house, covered over with white linen. In this cage were every variety of singing birds, which continually chirped and sung, while their bearers merrily hopped along and chattered together. It seemed droll thus to behold one bird carrying others to market.

The night was as dark as pitch when I entered Osterode. I had no appetite for supper, and at once went to bed. I was as tired as a dog and slept like a god. In my dreams I returned to Goettingen and found myself in the library. I stood in a corner of the Hall of Jurisprudence, turning over old dissertations, lost myself in reading, and, when I finally looked up, remarked to my astonishment that it was night and that the hall was illuminated by innumerable over-hanging crystal chandeliers. The bell of the neighboring church struck twelve, the hall doors slowly opened, and there entered a superb colossal female form, reverentially accompanied by the members and hangers-on of the legal faculty. The giantess, though advanced in years, retained in her countenance traces of severe beauty, and her every glance indicated the sublime Titaness, the mighty Themis. The sword and balance were carelessly grasped in her right hand, while with the left she held a roll of parchment. Two young *Doctores Juris* bore the train of her faded gray robe; by her right side the lean Court Councilor Rusticus, the Lycurgus of Hanover, fluttered here and there like a zephyr, declaiming extracts from his last hand-book of law, while on her left her *cavalier servente*, the privy-councilor of Justice Cujacius, hobbled gaily and gallantly along, constantly cracking legal jokes, himself laughing so heartily at his own wit that even the serious goddess often smiled and bent over him, exclaiming, as she tapped him on the shoulder with the great parchment roll, “You little scamp, who begin to trim the trees from the top!” All of the gentlemen who formed her escort now drew nigh in turn, each having something to remark or jest over, either a freshly worked-up miniature system, or a miserable little hypothesis, or some similar abortion of their own insignificant brains. Through the open door of the hall many strange gentlemen now entered, who announced themselves as the remaining

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magnates of the illustrious Order—mostly angular suspicious-looking fellows, who with extreme complacency blazed away with their definitions and hair-splittings, disputing over every scrap of a title to the title of a pandect. And other forms continually flocked in, the forms of those who were learned in law in the olden time—men in antiquated costume, with long councilors' wigs and forgotten faces, who expressed themselves greatly astonished that they, the widely famed of the previous century, should not meet with special consideration; and these, after their manner, joined in the general chattering and screaming, which, like ocean breakers, became louder and madder around the mighty goddess, until she, bursting with impatience, suddenly cried, in a tone of the most agonized Titanic pain, "Silence! Silence! I hear the voice of the beloved Prometheus. Mocking cunning and brute force are chaining the Innocent One to the rock of martyrdom, and all your prattling and quarreling will not allay his wounds or break his fetters!" So cried the goddess, and rivulets of tears sprang from her eyes; the entire assembly howled as if in the agonies of death, the ceiling of the hall burst asunder, the books tumbled madly from their shelves. In vain did Muenchhausen step out of his frame to call them to order; it only crashed and raged all the more wildly. I sought refuge from this Bedlam broken loose in the Hall of History, near that gracious spot where the holy images of the Apollo Belvedere and the Venus de Medici stand near each other, and I knelt at the feet of the Goddess of Beauty. In her glance I forgot all the wild excitement from which I had escaped, my eyes drank in with intoxication the symmetry and immortal loveliness of her infinitely blessed form; Hellenic calm swept through my soul, while above my head Phoebus Apollo poured forth, like heavenly blessings, the sweetest tones of his lyre.

Awaking, I continued to hear a pleasant, musical sound. The flocks were on their way to pasture, and their bells were tinkling. The blessed golden sunlight shone through the window, illuminating the pictures on the walls of my room. They were sketches from the War of Independence, which faithfully portrayed what heroes we all were; further, there were scenes representing executions on the guillotine, from the time of the revolution under Louis XIV., and other similar decapitations which no one could behold without thanking God that he lay quietly in bed drinking excellent coffee, and with his head comfortably adjusted upon neck and shoulders.

After I had drunk my coffee, dressed myself, read the inscriptions upon the window-panes, and settled my bill at the inn, I left Osterode.

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This town contains a certain quantity of houses and a given number of inhabitants, among whom are divers and sundry souls, as may be ascertained in detail from Gottschalk's "Pocket Guide-Book for Harz Travelers." Ere I struck into the highway, I ascended the ruins of the very ancient Osteroder Burg. They consisted merely of the half of a great, thick-walled tower, which appeared to be fairly honeycombed by time. The road to Clausthal led me again uphill, and from one of the first eminences I looked back once more into the dale where Osterode with its red roofs peeps out from among the green fir-woods, like a moss-rose from amid its leaves. The sun cast a pleasant, tender light over the whole scene. From this spot the imposing rear of the remaining portion of the tower may be seen to advantage.

There are many other ruined castles in this vicinity. That of Hardenberg, near Noerten, is the most beautiful. Even when one has, as he should, his heart on the left—that is, the liberal side—he cannot banish all melancholy feeling on beholding the rocky nests of those privileged birds of prey, who left to their effete descendants only their fierce appetites. So it happened to me this morning. My heart thawed gradually as I departed from Goettingen; I again became romantic, and as I went on I made up this poem:

Rise again, ye dreams forgotten;
  Heart-gate, open to the sun!
Joys of song and tears of sorrow
  Sweetly strange from thee shall run.

I will rove the fir-tree forest,
  Where the merry fountain springs,
Where the free, proud stags are wandering,
  Where the thrush, my darling, sings.

I will climb upon the mountains,
  On the steep and rocky height,
Where the gray old castle ruins
  Stand in rosy morning light.

I will sit awhile reflecting
  On the times long passed away,
Races which of old were famous,
  Glories sunk in deep decay.

Grows the grass upon the tilt-yard,
  Where the all-victorious knight
Overcame the strongest champions,
  Won the guerdon of the fight.

O’er the balcony twines ivy,
  Where the fairest gave the prize,
Him who all the rest had vanquished
  Overcoming with her eyes.

Both the victors, knight and lady,
  Fell long since by Death’s cold hand;
So the gray and withered scytheman
  Lays the mightiest in the sand.

After proceeding a little distance, I met with a traveling journeyman who came from Brunswick, and who related to me that it was generally believed in that city that their young Duke had been taken prisoner by the Turks during his tour in the Holy Land, and could be ransomed only by an enormous sum. The extensive travels of the Duke probably originated this tale. The people at large still preserve that traditional fable-loving train of ideas which is so pleasantly

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shown in their “Duke Ernest.” The narrator of this news was a tailor, a neat little youth, but so thin that the stars might have shone through him as through Ossian’s misty ghosts. Altogether, he was made up of that eccentric mixture of humor and melancholy peculiar to the German people. This was especially expressed in the droll and affecting manner in which he sang that extraordinary popular ballad, “A beetle sat upon the hedge, *summ, summ!*” There is one fine thing about us Germans—no one is so crazy but that he may find a crazier comrade who will understand him. Only a German *can* appreciate that song, and in the same breath laugh and cry himself to death over it. On this occasion I also remarked the depth to which the words of Goethe have penetrated the national life. My lean comrade trilled occasionally as he went along—“Joyful and sorrowful, thoughts are free!” Such a corruption of text is usual among the multitude. He also sang a song in which “Lottie by the grave of Werther” wept. The tailor ran over with sentimentalism in the words—

“Sadly by the rose-beds now I weep,
Where the late moon found us oft alone!
Moaning where the silver fountains sleep,
Once which whispered joy in every tone.”

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The hills here became steeper, the fir-woods below were like a green sea, and white clouds above sailed along over the blue sky. The wildness of the region was, as it were, tamed by its uniformity and the simplicity of its elements. Nature, like a true poet, abhors abrupt transitions. Clouds, however fantastically formed they may at times appear, still have a white, or at least a subdued hue, harmoniously corresponding with the blue heaven and the green earth; so that all the colors of a landscape blend into one another like soft music, and every glance at such a natural picture tranquilizes and reassures the soul. The late Hofmann would have painted the clouds spotted and chequered. And, like a great poet, Nature knows how to produce the greatest effects with the most limited means. She has, after all, only a sun, trees, flowers, water, and love to work with. Of course, if the latter be lacking in the heart of the observer, the whole will, in all probability, present but a poor appearance; the sun is then only so many miles in diameter, the trees are good for firewood, the flowers are classified according to their stamens, and the water is wet.

A little boy who was gathering brushwood in the forest for his sick uncle pointed out to me the village of Lerrbach, whose little huts with gray roofs lie scattered along for over a mile through the valley. “There,” said he, “live idiots with goitres, and white negroes.” By white negroes the people mean “albinos.” The little fellow lived on terms of peculiar understanding with the trees, addressing them like old acquaintances, while they in turn seemed by their waving and rustling to return

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his salutations. He chirped like a thistle-finch; many birds around answered his call, and, ere I was aware, he had disappeared amid the thickets with his little bare feet and his bundle of brush. “Children,” thought I, “are younger than we; they can remember when they were once trees or birds, and are consequently still able to understand them. We of larger growth are, alas, too old for that, and carry about in our heads too many sorrows and bad verses and too much legal lore.” But the time when it was otherwise recurred vividly to me as I entered Clausthal. In this pretty little mountain town, which the traveler does not behold until he stands directly before it, I arrived just as the clock was striking twelve and the children came tumbling merrily out of school. The little rogues, nearly all red-cheeked, blue-eyed, flaxen-haired, sprang and shouted and awoke in me melancholy and cheerful memories—how I once myself, as a little boy, sat all the forenoon long in a gloomy Catholic cloister school in Duesseldorf, without so much as daring to stand up, enduring meanwhile a terrible amount of Latin, whipping, and geography, and how I too hurrahed and rejoiced, beyond all measure when the old Franciscan clock at last struck twelve. The children saw by my knapsack that I was a stranger, and greeted me in the most hospitable manner. One of the boys told me that they had just had a lesson in religion, and showed me the Royal Hanoverian Catechism, from which they were questioned on Christianity. This little book was very badly printed, so that I greatly feared that the doctrines of faith made thereby but an unpleasant blotting-paper sort of impression upon the children’s minds. I was also shocked at observing that the multiplication table—which surely seriously contradicts the Holy Trinity—was printed on the last page of the catechism, as it at once occurred to me that by this means the minds of the children might, even in their earliest years, be led to the most sinful skepticism. We Prussians are more intelligent, and, in our zeal for converting those heathen who are familiar with arithmetic, take good care not to print the multiplication table in the back of the catechism.

I dined at The Crown, at Clausthal. My repast consisted of spring-green parsley-soup, violet-blue cabbage, a pile of roast veal, which resembled Chimborazo in miniature, and a sort of smoked herring, called “Bueckings,” from the inventor, William Buecking, who died in 1447, and who, on account of the invention, was so greatly honored by Charles V. that the great monarch in 1556 made a journey from Middleburg to Bievlied in Zealand for the express purpose of visiting the grave of the great man. How exquisitely such dishes taste when we are familiar with their historical associations!

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In the silver refinery, as has so frequently happened in life, I could get no glimpse of the precious metal. In the mint I succeeded better, and saw how money was made. Beyond this I have never been able to advance. On such occasions mine has invariably been the spectator's part, and I verily believe that, if it should rain dollars from heaven, the coins would only knock holes in my head, while the children of Israel would merrily gather up the silver manna. With feelings in which comic reverence was blended with emotion, I beheld the new-born shining dollars, took one in my hand as it came fresh from the stamp, and said to it, "Young Dollar, what a destiny awaits thee! What a cause wilt thou be of good and of evil! How thou wilt protect vice and patch up virtue! How thou wilt be beloved and accursed! How thou wilt aid in debauchery, pandering, lying, and murdering! How thou wilt restlessly roll along through clean and dirty hands for centuries, until finally, laden with tresspasses and weary with sin, thou wilt be gathered again unto thine own, in the bosom of an Abraham, who will melt thee down, purify thee, and form thee into a new and better being, perhaps an innocent little tea-spoon, with which my own great-great-grandson will mash his porridge."

I will narrate in detail my visit to "Dorothea" and "Caroline," the two principal Clausthaler mines, having found them very interesting.

Half an hour away from the town are situated two large dingy buildings. Here the traveler is transferred to the care of the miners. These men wear dark and generally steel-blue colored jackets, of ample girth, descending to the hips, with pantaloons of a similar hue, a leather apron tied on behind, and a rimless green felt hat which resembles a decapitated nine-pin. In such a garb, with the exception of the "back-leather," the visitor is also clad, and a miner, his "leader," after lighting his mine-lamp, conducts him to a gloomy entrance resembling a chimney-hole, descends as far as the breast, gives him a few directions relative to grasping the ladder, and requests him to follow fearlessly. The affair is entirely devoid of danger, though it at first appears quite otherwise to those unacquainted with the mysteries of mining. Even the putting on of the dark convict-dress awakens very peculiar sensations. Then one must clamber down on all fours, the dark hole is so *very* dark, and Lord only knows how long the ladder may be! But we soon remark that this is not the only ladder descending into the black eternity, for there are many, of from fifteen to twenty rounds apiece, each standing upon a board capable of supporting a man, and from which a new hole leads in turn to a new ladder. I first entered the "Caroline," the dirtiest and most disagreeable Caroline with whom I ever had the pleasure of becoming acquainted. The rounds of the ladders were covered with wet mud. And from one ladder we descend to another with the guide ever

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in advance, continually assuring us that there was no danger so long as we held firmly to the rounds and did not look at our feet, and that we must not for our lives tread on the side plank, where the buzzing barrel-rope runs, and where two weeks ago a careless man was knocked down, unfortunately breaking his neck by the fall. Far below is a confused rustling and humming, and we continually bump against beams and ropes which are in motion, winding up and raising barrels of broken ore or of water. Occasionally we pass galleries hewn in the rock, called “stulms,” where the ore may be seen growing, and where some solitary miner sits the livelong day, wearily hammering pieces from the walls. I did not descend to those deepest depths where it is reported that the people on the other side of the world, in America, may be heard crying, “Hurrah for Lafayette!” Between ourselves, where I did go seemed to me deep enough in all conscience; there was an endless roaring and rattling, uncanny sounds of machinery, the rush of subterranean streams, sickening clouds of ore-dust continually rising, water dripping on all sides, and the miner’s lamp gradually growing dimmer and dimmer. The effect was really benumbing, I breathed with difficulty, and had trouble in holding to the slippery rounds. It was not *fright* which overpowered me, but, oddly enough, down there in the depths, I remembered that a year before, about the same time, I had been in a storm on the North Sea, and I now felt that it would be an agreeable change could I feel the rocking of the ship, hear the wind with its thunder-trumpet tones, while amid its lulls sounded the hearty cry of the sailors, and all above was freshly swept by God’s own free air—yes, sir! Panting for air, I rapidly climbed several dozens of ladders, and my guide led me through a narrow and very long gallery toward the “Dorothea” mine. Here it was airier and fresher, and the ladders were cleaner, though at the same time longer and steeper, than in the “Caroline.” I felt revived and more cheerful, particularly as I again observed traces of human beings. Far below I saw wandering, wavering lights; miners with their lamps came upwards one by one with the greeting, “Good luck to you!” and, receiving the same salutation from us, went onwards and upwards. Something like a friendly and quiet, yet, at the same time, painful and enigmatical recollection flitted across my mind as I met the deep glances and earnest pale faces of these young and old men, mysteriously illuminated by their lanterns, and thought how they had worked all day in lonely and secret places in the mines, and how they now longed for the blessed light of day and for the glances of wives and children.

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My guide himself was an absolutely honest, thoroughly loyal German specimen. With inward joy he pointed out to me the “place” where the Duke of Cambridge, when he visited the mines, dined with all his train, and where the long wooden table yet stands; with the accompanying great chair, made of ore, in which the Duke sat. “This is to remain as an eternal memorial,” said the good miner, and he related with enthusiasm how many festivities had then taken place, how the entire “stulm” had been adorned with lamps, flowers, and decorations of leaves; how a miner boy had played on the cithern and sung; how the dear, delighted, fat Duke had drained many healths, and what a number of miners (himself especially) would cheerfully die for the dear, fat Duke, and for the whole house of Hanover. I am moved to my very heart when I see loyalty thus manifested in all its natural simplicity. It is such a beautiful sentiment, and such a purely *German* sentiment! Other people may be wittier, more intelligent, and more agreeable, but none is so faithful as the real German race. Did I not know that fidelity is as old as the world, I would believe that a German heart had invented it. German fidelity is no modern “Yours very truly,” or “I remain your humble servant.” In your courts, ye German princes, ye should cause to be sung, and sung again, the old ballad of *The Trusty Eckhart and the Base Burgund* who slew Eckhart’s seven children, and still found him faithful. Ye have the truest people in the world, and ye err when ye deem that the old, intelligent, trusty hound has suddenly gone mad, and snaps at your sacred calves!

And, like German fidelity, the little mine-lamp has guided us quietly and securely, without much flickering or flaring, through the labyrinth of shafts and stulms. We ascend out of the gloomy mountain-night—sunlight flashes around—“Good luck to you!”

Most of the miners dwell in Clausthal, and in the adjoining small town of Zellerfeld. I visited several of these brave fellows, observed their little households, heard many of their songs, which they skilfully accompany with their favorite instrument, the cithern, and listened to old mining legends, and to their prayers which they are accustomed to offer daily in company ere they descend the gloomy shaft; and many a good prayer did I offer up with them! One old climber even thought that I ought to remain among them, and become a man of the mines; but as I took my leave notwithstanding, he gave me a message to his brother, who dwelt near Goslar, and many kisses for his darling niece.

Tranquil even to stagnation as the life of these people may appear, it is, nevertheless, a real and vivid life. That ancient trembling crone who sits behind the stove opposite the great clothes-press may have been there for a quarter of a century, and all her thinking and feeling is, beyond a doubt, intimately blended with every corner of the stove and the carvings of the press. And clothes-press and stove *live*—for a human being hath breathed into them a portion of her soul.

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It was only in such deeply contemplative life as this, in such “direct relationship” between man and the things of the outer world, that the German fairy tale could originate, the peculiarity of which consists in the fact that in it not only animals and plants, but also objects apparently inanimate, speak and act. To thoughtful harmless people in the quiet homeliness of their lowly mountain cabins or forest huts, the inner life of these objects was gradually revealed; they acquired a necessary and consistent character, a sweet blending of fantastic humor and purely human sentiment, and thus we find in the fairy tale—as something marvelous and yet at the same time quite natural—the pin and the needle wandering forth from the tailor’s home and losing their way in the dark; the straw and the coal seeking to cross the brook and coming to grief; the dust-pan and broom quarreling and fighting on the stairs. Thus the mirror, when interrogated, shows the image of the fairest lady, and even drops of blood begin to utter obscure and fearful words of the deepest compassion. And this is the reason why our life in childhood is so infinitely significant, for then all things are of the same importance, nothing escapes our attention, there is equality in every impression; while, when more advanced in years, we must act with design, busy ourselves more exclusively with particulars, carefully exchange the pure gold of observation for the paper currency of book definitions, and win in *breadth* of life what we lost in depth.

Now, we are grown-up, respectable people, we often inhabit new dwellings; the housemaid daily cleans them and changes at her will the position of the furniture, which interests us but little, as it is either new or may belong today to Jack, tomorrow to Isaac. Even our very clothes are strange to us; we hardly know how many buttons there are on the coat we wear—for we change our garments as often as possible, and none of them remains deeply identified with our external or inner history. We can hardly remember how that brown vest once looked, which attracted so much laughter, and yet on the broad stripes of which the dear hand of the loved one so gently rested!

The old dame who sat behind the stove opposite the clothes-press wore a flowered dress of some old-fashioned material, which had been the bridal robe of her departed mother. Her great-grandson, a fair-haired boy, with flashing eyes, clad in a miner’s dress, sat at her feet and counted the flowers on her dress. It may be that she has narrated to him many a story connected with that dress—many serious and pretty stories, which the boy will not readily forget, which will often recur to him when he, a grown-up man, works alone in the midnight galleries of the “Caroline,” and which he in turn will narrate when the dear grandmother has long been dead, and he himself, a silver-haired, tranquil old man, sits amid the circle of *his* grand-children behind the stove, opposite the great clothes-press.

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I lodged that night too in The Crown, where the Court Councilor B——, of Goettingen, had arrived meanwhile, and I had the pleasure of paying my respects to the old gentleman. After writing my name in the book of arrivals, I turned over the leaves of the month of July and found therein, among others, the much loved name of Adalbert von Chamisso, the biographer of the immortal *Schlemihl*. The landlord remarked of Chamisso that the gentleman had arrived during one terrible storm and departed in another.

The next morning I had again to lighten my knapsack, and threw overboard an extra pair of boots; then I arose and went on to Goslar, where I arrived without knowing how. This much alone do I remember, that I sauntered up hill and down dale, gazing upon many a lovely meadow vale; silver waters rippled and murmured, sweet woodbirds sang, the bells of the flocks tinkled, the many shaded green trees were gilded by the sun, and, over all, the blue silk canopy of heaven was so transparent that one could look through the depths even to the Holy of Holies, where angels sit at the feet of God, studying thorough-bass in the features of the eternal countenance. But I was all the time lost in a dream of the previous night, which I could not banish from my thoughts. It was an echo of the old legend—how a knight descended into a deep fountain beneath which the fairest princess of the world lay buried in a deathlike magic slumber. I myself was the knight, and the dark mine of Clausthal was the fountain. Suddenly innumerable lights gleamed around me, watchful dwarfs leapt from every cranny in the rocks, grimacing angrily, cutting at me with their short swords, blowing shrilly on horns, which summoned more and ever more of their comrades, and frantically nodding their great heads. But as I hewed them down with my sword the blood flowed, and I for the first time remarked that they were not really dwarfs, but the red-blooming, long-bearded thistle-tops, which I had the day before hewed down on the highway with my stick. At last they all vanished, and I came to a splendid lighted hall, in the midst of which stood my heart's loved one, veiled in white, and immovable as a statue. I kissed her mouth, and then—O Heavens!—I felt the blessed breath of her soul and the sweet tremor of her lovely lips. It seemed that I heard the divine command, "Let there be light!" and a dazzling flash of eternal light shot down, but at the same instant it was again night, and all ran chaotically together into a wild turbulent sea! A wild turbulent sea, indeed, over whose foaming waves the ghosts of the departed madly chased one another, their white shrouds floating in the wind, while behind all, goading them on with cracking whip, ran a many-colored harlequin—and I was the harlequin! Suddenly from the black waves the sea monsters raised their misshapen heads, snatched at me with extended claws, and I awoke in terror.

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Alas, how the finest fairy tales may be spoiled! The knight, in fact, when he has found the sleeping princess, ought to cut a piece from her priceless veil, and when, by his bravery, she has been awakened from her magic sleep and is again seated on her golden throne in her palace, the knight should approach her and say, “My fairest princess, dost thou not know me?” Then she will answer, “My bravest knight, I know thee not!” And then he shows her the piece cut from her veil, exactly fitting the deficiency, and she knows that he is her deliverer, and both tenderly embrace, and the trumpets sound, and the marriage is celebrated. It is really a very peculiar misfortune that *my* love-dreams so seldom have so fine a conclusion.

[Illustration: OLD IMPERIAL PALACE, GOSLAR]

The name of Goslar rings so pleasantly, and there are so many very ancient and imperial associations connected therewith, that I had hoped to find an imposing and stately town. But it is always the same old story when we examine celebrities too closely. I found a nest of houses, drilled in every direction with narrow streets of labyrinthine crookedness, and amid which a miserable stream, probably the Gose, winds its sad and muddy way. The pavement of the town is as ragged as Berlin hexameters. Only the antiquities which are imbedded in the frame or mounting of the city—that is to say, its remnants of walls, towers, and battlements—give the place a piquant look. One of these towers, known as the “Zwinger,” or donjonkeep, has walls of such extraordinary thickness that entire rooms are excavated therein. The open place before the town, where the world-renowned shooting matches are held, is a beautiful large plain surrounded by high mountains. The market is small, and in its midst is a spring fountain, the waters from which pours into a great metallic basin. When an alarm of fire is raised, they strike several times on this cup-formed basin, which gives out a very loud vibration. Nothing is known of the origin of this work. Some say that the devil placed it once during the night on the spot where it stands. In those days people were as yet fools, nor was the devil any wiser, and they mutually exchanged gifts.

The town hall of Goslar is a whitewashed guard-room. The Guildhall, hard by, has a somewhat better appearance. In this building, equidistant from roof and ceiling, stands the statues of German emperors. Blackened with smoke and partly gilded, in one hand the sceptre, and in the other the globe, they look like roasted college beadles. One of the emperors holds a sword instead of a sceptre. I cannot imagine the reason of this variation from the established order, though it has doubtless some occult signification, as Germans have the remarkable peculiarity of meaning something in whatever they do.

In Gottschalk’s *Handbook* I had read much of the very ancient cathedral, and of the far-famed imperial throne at Goslar. But when I wished to see these curiosities, I was informed that the church had been torn down, and that the throne had been carried to Berlin. We live in deeply significant times, when millennial churches are destroyed and imperial thrones are tumbled into the lumber-room.

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A few memorials of the late cathedral of happy memory are still preserved in the church of St. Stephen. These consist of stained glass pictures of great beauty, a few indifferent paintings, including a Lucas Cranach, a wooden Christ crucified, and a heathen altar of some unknown metal. The latter resembles a long square coffer, and is upheld by caryatides, which in a bowed position hold their hands above their heads in support, and are making the most hideous grimaces. But far more hideous is the adjacent large wooden crucifix of which I have just spoken. This head of Christ, with its real hair and thorns and blood-stained countenance, represents, in the most masterly manner, the death of a *man*—but not of a divinely-born Savior. Nothing but physical suffering is portrayed in this image—not the sublime poetry of pain. Such a work would be more appropriately placed in a hall of anatomy than in a house of the Lord.

The sacristan's wife—an artistic expert—who led me about, showed me a special rarity. This was a many-cornered, well-planed blackboard covered with white numerals, which hung like a lamp in the middle of the building. Oh, how brilliantly does the spirit of invention manifest itself in the Protestant Church! For who would think it! The numbers on this board are those of the Psalms for the day, which are generally chalked on a common black tablet, and have a very sobering effect on an esthetic mind, but which, in the form above described, even ornament the church and fully make up for the want of pictures by Raphael. Such progress delights me infinitely, since I, as a Protestant and a Lutheran, am ever deeply chagrined when Catholic opponents ridicule the empty, God-forsaken appearance of Protestant churches.

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The churchyard at Goslar did not appeal to me very strongly, but a certain very pretty blonde-ringleted head which peeped smilingly from a parterre window *did*. After dinner I again sought out this fascinating window, but, instead of a maiden, I beheld a glass containing white bellflowers. I clambered up, stole the flowers, put them quietly in my cap, and descended, unheeding the gaping mouths, petrified noses, and goggle eyes, with which the people in the street, and especially the old women, regarded this qualified theft. As I, an hour later, passed by the same house, the beauty stood by the window, and, as she saw the flowers in my cap, she blushed like a ruby and started back. This time I had seen the beautiful face to better advantage; it was a sweet, transparent incarnation of summer-evening breeze, moonshine, nightingale notes, and rose perfume. Later, in the twilight hour, she was standing at the door. I came—I drew near—she slowly retreated into the dark entry. I followed, and, seizing her hand, said, "I am a lover of beautiful flowers and of kisses, and when they are not given to me I steal them." Here I quickly snatched a kiss, and, as she was about to flee, whispered

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soothingly, “Tomorrow I leave this town, probably never to return.” Then I perceived a faint pressure of the lovely lips and of the little hand and I—hurried smilingly away. Yes, I must smile when I reflect that unconsciously I uttered the magic formula by which our red-and blue-coated cavaliers more frequently win female hearts than by their mustachioed attractiveness—“Tomorrow I leave, probably never to return.”

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During the night which I passed at Goslar, a remarkably curious occurrence befell me. Even now I cannot think of it without terror. I am not cowardly by nature and Heaven knows that I have never experienced any special anguish when, for example, a naked blade has sought to make acquaintance with my nose or when I have lost my way at night in a wood of ill repute, or when, at a concert, a yawning lieutenant has threatened to swallow me—but *ghosts* I fear almost as much as the *Austrian Observer*[52]. What is fear? Does it originate in the brain or in the emotions? This was a point which I frequently disputed with Dr. Saul Ascher, when we accidentally met in the Cafe Royal in Berlin, where for a long time I used to take dinner. The Doctor invariably maintained that we feared anything, because we recognized it as fearful, by a certain process of reasoning, for reason alone is an active power—the emotions are not. While I ate and drank my fill, the Doctor continued to demonstrate to me the advantages of reason. Toward the end of his demonstration, he was accustomed to look at his watch and remark conclusively, “Reason is the highest principle!” Reason! Never do I hear this word without recalling Dr. Saul Ascher, with his abstract legs, his tight-fitting transcendental-grey long coat, his forbidding icy face, which could have served as frontispiece for a textbook of geometry. This man, deep in the fifties, was a personified straight line. In his striving for the positive, the poor man had, by dint of philosophizing, eliminated all the splendid things from life, such as sunshine, religion, and flowers, so that there remained nothing for him but the cold positive grave. The Apollo Belvedere and Christianity were the two special objects of his malice, and he had even published a pamphlet against the latter, in which he had demonstrated its unreasonableness and untenableness. In addition to this, he has written a great number of books, in all of which *Reason* shines forth in all its peculiar excellence, and as the poor Doctor meant what he said in all seriousness, he was, so far, deserving of respect. But the great joke consisted precisely in this, that the Doctor invariably cut such a seriously absurd figure when he could not comprehend what every child comprehends, simply because it is a child. I visited the Doctor of Reason several times in his own house, where I found him in company with very pretty girls; for Reason, it seems, does not prohibit the enjoyment of the things of this world. Once, however, when I called, his servant told me the “Herr Doctor” had just died. I experienced as much emotion on this occasion as if I had been told that the “Herr Doctor” had just moved.

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To return to Goslar. "The highest principle is Reason," said I soothingly to myself, as I slid into bed. But it availed me nothing. I had just been reading in Varnhagen von Ense's *German Tales,* which I had brought with me from Clausthal, that terrible story of the son who went about to murder his father and was warned in the night by the ghost of his mother. The wonderful truthfulness with which this story is depicted, caused, while reading it, a shudder of horror in all my veins. Ghost-stories invariably thrill us with additional horror when read during a journey, and by night in a town, in a house, and in a room where we have never been before. We involuntarily reflect, "How many horrors may have been perpetrated on this very spot where I now lie!" Meanwhile, the moon shone into my room in a doubtful, suspicious manner; all kinds of uncalled-for shapes quivered on the walls, and as I raised myself in bed and glanced fearfully toward them, I beheld—

There is nothing so uncanny as when a man accidentally sees his own face by moonlight in a mirror. At the same instant there struck a deep-booming, yawning bell, and that so slowly and wearily that after the twelfth stroke I firmly believed that twelve full hours must have passed and that it would begin to strike twelve all over again. Between the last and next to the last tones, there struck in very abruptly, as if irritated and scolding, another bell, which was apparently out of patience with the slowness of its colleague. As the two iron tongues were silenced, and the stillness of death sank over the whole house, I suddenly seemed to hear, in the corridor before my chamber, something halting and shuffling along, like the unsteady steps of an old man. At last my door opened, and there entered slowly the late departed Dr. Saul Ascher. A cold fever ran through me. I trembled like an ivy leaf and scarcely dared to gaze upon the ghost. He appeared as usual, with the same transcendental-grey long coat, the same abstract legs, and the same mathematical face; only this latter was a little yellower than usual, the mouth, which formerly described two angles of 22-1/2 degrees, was pinched together, and the circles around the eyes had a somewhat greater radius. Tottering, and supporting himself as usual upon his Malacca cane, he approached me, and said in his usual drawling accent but in a friendly manner, "Do not be afraid, nor believe that I am a ghost. It is a deception of your imagination, if you believe that you see me as a ghost. What is a ghost? Define one. Deduce for me the conditions of the possibility of a ghost. What reasonable connection is there between such an apparition and reason? Reason, I say, *Reason!"* Here the ghost proceeded to analyze reason, cited from Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*, part II, section I, book 2, chap. 3, the distinction between phenomena and noumena, then went on to construct a hypothetical system of ghosts, piled one syllogism

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on another, and concluded with the logical proof that there are absolutely no ghosts. Meanwhile the cold sweat ran down my back, my teeth clattered like castanets, and from very agony of soul I nodded an unconditional assent to every assertion which the phantom doctor alleged against the absurdity of being afraid of ghosts, and which he demonstrated with such zeal that once, in a moment of distraction, instead of his gold watch he drew a handful of grave-worms from his vest-pocket, and remarking his error, replaced them with a ridiculous but terrified haste. “Reason is the highest—!” Here the clock struck *one*, but the ghost vanished.

The next morning I left Goslar and wandered along, partly at random, and partly with the intention of visiting the brother of the Clausthal miner. Again we had beautiful Sunday weather. I climbed hill and mountain, saw how the sun strove to drive away the mists, and wandered merrily through the quivering woods, while around my dreaming head rang the bell-flowers of Goslar. The mountains stood in their white night-robes, the fir-trees were shaking sleep out of their branching limbs, the fresh morning wind curled their drooping green locks, the birds were at morning prayers, the meadow-vale flashed like a golden surface sprinkled with diamonds, and the shepherd passed over it with his bleating flock.

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After much circuitous wandering I came to the dwelling of the brother of my Clausthal friend. Here I stayed all night and experienced the following beautiful poem—

Stands the but upon the mountain
  Where the ancient woodman dwells
There the dark-green fir-trees rustle,
  Casts the moon its golden spells.

In the but there stands an arm-chair,
  Richly carved and cleverly;
He who sits therein is happy,
  And that happy man am I.

On the footstool sits a maiden,
  On my lap her arms repose,
With her eyes like blue stars beaming,
  And her mouth a new-born rose.

And the dear blue stars shine on me,
  Wide like heaven’s great arch their gaze;

And her little lily finger
  Archly on the rose she lays.

Nay, the mother cannot see us,
  For she spins the whole day long;
And the father plays the cithern
  As he sings a good old song.

And the maiden softly whispers,
  Softly, that none may hear;
Many a solemn little secret
  Hath she murmured in my ear.

“Since I lost my aunt who loved me,
  Now we never more repair
To the shooting-lodge at Goslar,
  And it is so pleasant there!

“Here above it is so lonely,
  On the rocks where cold winds blow;
And in winter we are always
  Deeply buried in the snow.

“And I’m such a timid creature,
  And I’m frightened like a child
At the evil mountain spirits,
  Who by night are raging wild”

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Silent falls the winsome maiden,
  Frightened by her own surmise,
Little hands, so white and dimpled,
  Pressing on her sweet blue eyes.

Louder now the fir-trees rustle,
  Spinning-wheel more harshly drones;
In their pauses sounds the cithern,
  And the old song's simple tones:

"Do not fear, my tender nursling,
  Aught of evil spirits' might;
For good angels still are watching
  Round thy pathway day and night."

Now the fir-tree's dark-green fingers
  Tap upon the window low,
And the moon, a yellow listener,
  Casts within her sweetest glow.

Father, mother, both are sleeping,
  Near at hand their rest they take;
But we two, in pleasant gossip,
  Keep each other long awake.

"That thou prayest much too often,
  Seems unlikely, I declare;
On thy lips there is a quiver
  Which was never born of prayer.

"Ah! that heartless, cold expression
  All my being terrifies—
Though my darkling fear is lessened
  By thy frank and honest eyes.

"Yet I doubt if thou believest
  What is held for truth by most;
Hast thou faith in God the Father,
  In the Son and Holy Ghost?"

"Ah, my darling! when an infant
  By my mother's knee I stood,
I believed in God the Father,
  In the Ruler great and good.

“He who made the world so lovely,
  Gave man beauty, gave him force,
And to sun and moon and planets
  Pre-appointed each its course.

“As I older grew, my darling,
  And my way in wisdom won,
I in reason comprehended,
  And believe now in the Son—

“In the well-loved Son, who, loving,
  Oped the gates of Love so wide;
And for thanks—as is the custom—
By the world was crucified.

“Now, that I in full-grown manhood
  Reading, travel, wisdom boast;
Still my heart expands, and, truly
  I believe the Holy Ghost,

“Who bath worked the greatest wonders—
  Greater still he’ll work again;
He bath broken tyrants’ strongholds,
  Broken every vassal’s chain.

“Ancient deadly wounds he healeth,
  He renews man’s ancient right;
All to him, born free and equal,
  Are as nobles in his sight.

“Clouds of evil flee before him,
  And those cobwebs of the brain
Which forbade us love and pleasure,
  Scowling grimly on our pain.

“And a thousand knights in armor
  Hath he chosen and required
To fulfil his holy bidding—
  All with noblest zeal inspired.

“Lo! I their precious swords are gleaming,
  And their banners wave in fight!
What! Thou fain would’st see, my darling,
  Such a proud and noble knight?

“Well, then, gaze on me, my dearest;
  I am of that lordly host,

Kiss me! and you kiss a chosen
Champion of the Holy Ghost!”

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Silently the moon conceals her
  Down behind the sombre trees,
And the lamp which lights our chamber
  Flickers in the evening breeze.

But the starry eyes are beaming
  Softly o’er the dimpled cheeks,
And the purple rose is glowing,
  While the gentle maiden speaks.

“Little people—fairy goblins—
  Steal away our meat and bread;
In the chest it lies at evening,
  In the morning it has fled.

“From our milk the little people
  Steal the cream and all the best;
Then they leave the dish uncovered,
  And our cat drinks up the rest.

“And the cat’s a witch, I’m certain,
  For by night, when storms arise,
Oft she seeks the haunted hill-top
  Where the fallen tower lies.

“There was once a splendid castle.
  Home of joy and weapons bright,
Where there swept in stately pageant
  Lady, page, and armed knight.

“But a sorceress charmed the castle,
  With its lords and ladies fair;
Now it is a lonely ruin,
  And the owls are nesting there.

“But my aunt hath often told me,
  Could I speak the proper word,
In the proper place up yonder,
  When the proper hour occurred,

“I should see the ruins changing
  Swiftly to a castle bright,
And again in stately dances
  Dame and page and gallant knight.

“He who speaks the word of power
  Wins the castle for his own,
And the knight with drum and trumpet
  Loud will hail him lord alone.”

So the simple fairy pictures
  From the little rose-mouth bloom,
And the gentle eyes are shedding
  Star-blue lustre through the gloom.

Round my hand the little maiden
  Winds her gold locks as she will,
Gives a name to every finger,
  Kisses, smiles, and then is still.

All things in the silent chamber,
  Seem at once familiar grown,
As if e’en the chairs and clothes-press,
  Well of old to me were known.

Now the clock talks kindly, gravely,
  And the cithern, as ’twould seem,
Of itself is faintly chiming,
  And I sit as in a dream.

Now the proper hour is striking,
  Here the charm should now be heard;
Child, how would’st thou be astonished,
  Should I speak the magic word!

If I spoke that word, then fading
  Night would thrill in fearful strife;
Trees and streams would roar together
  As the mountains woke to life.

Ringing lutes and goblin ditties
  From the clefted rock would sound,
Like a mad and merry spring-tide
  Flowers grow forest-high around.

Thousand startling, wondrous flowers,
  Leaves of vast and fabled form,
Strangely perfumed, wildly quivering,
  As if thrilled with passion’s storm.

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In a crimson conflagration
  Roses o’er the tumult rise;
Giant lilies, white as crystal,
  Shoot like columns to the skies.

Great as suns, the stars above us
  Gaze adown with burning glow;
Fill the lilies’ cups gigantic
  With their lights’ abundant flow.

We ourselves, my little maiden,
  Would be changed more than all;
Torchlight gleams o’er gold and satin
  Round us merrily would fall.

Thou thyself would’st be the princess,
  And this hut thy castle high;
Ladies, lords, and graceful pages
  Would be dancing, singing by.

I, however, I have conquered
  Thee, and all things, with the word!
Serfs and castle—lo! with trumpet
  Loud they hail me as their Lord!

The sun rose. The mists flitted away like phantoms at the third crow of the cock. Again I wandered up hill and down dale, while above me soared the fair sun, ever lighting up new scenes of beauty. The Spirit of the Mountain evidently favored me, well knowing that a “poetical character” has it in his power to say many a fine thing of him, and on this morning he let me see his Harz as it is not, most assuredly, seen by every one. But the Harz also saw me as I am seen by few, and there were as costly pearls on my eyelashes as on the grass of the valley. The morning dew of love wet my cheeks; the rustling pines understood me; their twigs parted and waved up and down, as if, like mute mortals, they would express their joy with gestures of their hands, and from afar I heard beautiful and mysterious chimes, like the sound of bells belonging to some hidden forest church. People say that these sounds are caused by the cattle-bells, which, in the Harz ring with remarkable clearness and purity.

It was noon, according to the position of the sun, as I chanced upon such a flock, and its shepherd, a friendly, light-haired young fellow, told me that the great hill at whose base I stood was the old, world-renowned Brocken. For many leagues around there is no house, and I was glad enough when the young man invited me to share his meal. We sat down to a *dejeuner dinatoire*, consisting of bread and cheese. The sheep snatched up our crumbs, while pretty glossy heifers jumped around, ringing their bells roguishly,

and laughing at us with great merry eyes. We made a royal meal, my host appearing to me every inch a king; and as he is the only monarch who has ever given me bread, I will sing his praises right royally:

Kingly is the herd-boy’s calling,
  On the knoll his throne is set,
O’er his hair the sunlight falling
  Gilds a living coronet.

Red-marked sheep that bleat so loudly
  Are his courtiers cross-bedight,
Calves that strut before him proudly
  Seem each one a stalwart knight.

Goats are actors nimbly springing,
  And the cows and warblers gay
With their bell and flute-notes ringing
  Form the royal orchestra.

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And whene’er the music hushes,
  Soft the pine-tree murmurs creep;
Far away a cataract rushes—
  Look, our noble king’s asleep!

Meanwhile through the kingdom bounding
  Rules the dog as minister,
Till his bark from cliffs rebounding
  Echoes to the sleeper’s ear.

Yawning syllables he utters—
  “Ruling is too hard a task.
Were I but at home,” he mutters,
  “With my queen ’tis all I’d ask.

“On her arm my head reposes
  Free from care, how happily!
And her loving glance discloses
  Kingdom wide enough for me."[53]

We took leave of each other in a friendly manner, and with a light heart I began to ascend the mountain. I was soon welcomed by a grove of stately firs, for which I entertain great respect in every regard, for these trees have not found growing to be such an easy business, and during the days of their youth it fared hard with them. The mountain is here sprinkled with a great number of blocks of granite, and most of the trees were obliged either to twine their roots over the stones, or to split them in two, and thus laboriously to search for the soil from which to draw their nourishment. Here and there stones lie on top of one another, forming, as it were, a gate, and over all rise the trees, twining their naked roots down over the stone portals, and only laying hold of the soil when they reach its base, so that they appear to be growing in the air; and yet, as they have forced their way up to that startling height and grown into one with the rocks, they stand more securely than their comfortable comrades, who are rooted in the tame forest soil of the level country. So it is in life with those great men who have strengthened and established themselves by resolutely overcoming the obstacles and hindrances of their early years. Squirrels climbed amid the fir-twigs, while, beneath, yellow deer were quietly grazing. I cannot comprehend, when I see such a noble, lovable animal, how educated and refined people can take pleasure in hunting and killing it. Such a creature was once more merciful than man, and suckled the pining Schmerzenreich of the holy Genofeva. Most beautiful were the golden sun-rays shooting through the dark-green of the firs. The roots of the trees formed a natural stairway, and everywhere my feet encountered swelling beds of moss, for the stones are here covered foot-deep, as if with light-green velvet cushions. Everywhere a pleasant freshness and the dreamy murmur of streams. Here and there we see water rippling silver-clear amid the rocks, washing the bare roots and fibres of trees. Bend

down toward all this ceaseless activity and listen, and you will hear, as it were, the mysterious history of the growth of the plants, and the quiet pulsations of the heart of the mountain. In many places the water jets strongly up amid rocks and roots, forming little cascades. It is pleasant to sit in such places. There is such a wonderful

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murmuring and rustling, the birds pour forth broken lovesick strains, the trees whisper as if with a thousand maidens' tongues, the odd mountain flowers peep up at us as if with a thousand maidens' eyes, stretching out to us their curious, broad, drolly-scalloped leaves; the sun-rays flash here and there in sport; the herbs, as though endowed with reason, are telling one another their green legends; all seems enchanted and it becomes more and more mysterious; an old, old dream is realized—the loved one appears! Alas, that she so quickly vanishes!

The higher we ascend, so much the shorter and more dwarflike do the fir-trees become, shrinking up, as it were, within themselves, until finally only whortleberries, bilberries, and mountain herbs remain. It is also sensibly colder. Here, for the first time, the granite boulders, which are frequently of enormous size, become fully visible. These may well have been the balls which evil spirits cast at one another on the Walpurgis night, when the witches come riding hither on brooms and pitchforks, when the mad, unhallowed revelry begins, as our credulous nurses have told us, and as we may see it represented in the beautiful Faust pictures of Master Retsch. Yes, a young poet, who, while journeying from Berlin to Gottingen passed the Brocken on the first evening in May, even noticed how certain ladies who cultivated *belles-lettres*, were holding their esthetic tea-circle in a rocky corner, how they comfortably read aloud the *Evening Journal*, how they praised as universal geniuses their poetic billy-goats which hopped bleating around their table, and how they passed a final judgment on all the productions of German literature. But when they at last fell upon *Ratcliff* and *Almansor*, utterly denying to the author aught like piety or Christianity, the hair of the youth rose on end, terror seized him—I spurred my steed and rode onwards!

In fact, when we ascend the upper half of the Brocken, no one can well help thinking of the amusing legends of the Blocksberg, and especially of the great mystical German national tragedy of Doctor Faust. It ever seemed to me that I could hear the cloven foot scrambling along behind, and some one breathing humorously. And I verily believe that "Mephisto" himself must breathe with difficulty when he climbs his favorite mountain, for it is a road which is to the last degree exhausting, and I was glad enough when I at last beheld the long-desired Brocken house.

[Illustration: "THE WITCHES DANCING GROUND"]

This house, as every one knows from numerous pictures, is situated on the summit of the mountain, consists of a single story, and was erected in the year 1800 by Count Stolberg-Wernigerode, in behalf of whom it is managed as a tavern. On account of the wind and cold in winter its walls are incredibly thick. The roof is low. From its midst rises a towerlike observatory, and near the house lie two little out-buildings, one of which in earlier times served as shelter to the Brocken visitors.

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On entering the Brocken house, I experienced a somewhat unusual and unreal sensation. After a long solitary journey amid rocks and pines, the traveler suddenly finds himself in a house amid the clouds. Far below lie cities, hills, and forests, while above he encounters a curiously blended circle of strangers, by whom he is received, as is usual in such assemblies, almost like an expected companion—half inquisitively and half indifferently. I found the house full of guests, and, as becomes a wise man, I first thought of the night, and of the discomfort of sleeping on straw. With the voice of one dying I called for tea, and the Brocken landlord was reasonable enough to perceive that the sick gentleman must be provided with a decent bed. This he gave me in a narrow room, where a young merchant—a long emetic in a brown overcoat—had already established himself.

In the public room I found a full tide of bustle and animation. There were students from different universities. Some of the newly arrived were taking refreshments. Others, preparing for departure, buckled on their knapsacks, wrote their names in the album, and received Brocken bouquets from the housemaids. There was pinching of cheeks, singing, springing, trilling; questions asked, answers given, fragments of conversation such as—fine weather—footpath—*prosit*—luck be with you!—Adieu! Some of those leaving were also partly drunk, and these derived a twofold pleasure from the beautiful scenery, for a tipsy man sees double.

After recruiting my strength I ascended the observatory, and there found a little gentleman with two ladies, one of whom was young and the other elderly. The young lady was very beautiful—a superb figure, flowing locks, surmounted by a helm-like black satin *chapeau*, amid whose white plumes the wind played; fine limbs, so closely enwrapped by a black silk mantle that their exquisite form was made manifest, and great free eyes, calmly looking down into the great free world.

When a boy I thought of naught save tales of magic and wonder, and every fair lady who had ostrich feathers on her head I regarded as an elfin queen. If I observed that the train of her dress was wet I believed at once that she must be a water-fairy. Now I know better, having learned from natural history that those symbolical feathers are found on the most stupid of birds, and that the train of a lady’s dress may become wet in a very natural way. But if I had, with those boyish eyes, seen the aforesaid young lady in the aforesaid position on the Brocken, I would most assuredly have thought—“that is the fairy of the mountain, and she has just uttered the charm which has caused every thing down there to appear so wonderful.” Yes, at the first glance from the Brocken everything appears in a high degree marvelous. New impressions throng in on every side, and these, varied and often contradictory, unite in our soul in an as yet undefined uncomprehended

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sensation. If we succeed in grasping the sensation in its conception we shall comprehend the character of the mountain. This character is entirely German as regards not only its advantages but also its defects. The Brocken is a German. With German thoroughness he points out to us—sharply and accurately defined as in a panorama—the hundreds of cities, towns, and villages which are principally situated to the north, and all the mountains, forests, rivers, and plains which extend endlessly in all directions. But for this very reason everything appears like a sharply designed and perfectly colored map, and nowhere is the eye gratified by really beautiful landscapes —just as we German compilers, owing to the honorable exactness with which we attempt to give all and everything, never appear to think of giving the details in a beautiful manner.

[Illustration: THE BROCKEN INN ABOUT 1830]

The mountain, in consequence, has a certain calm, German, intelligent, tolerant character, simply because he can see things so distant yet so distinctly. And when such a mountain opens his giant eyes, it may be that he sees somewhat more than we dwarfs, who with our weak eyes climb over him. Many indeed assert that the Blocksberg is very Philistian, and Claudius once sang “The Blocksberg is the lengthy Sir Philistine;” but that was an error. On account of his bald head, which he occasionally covers with a cloud-cap, the Blocksberg has indeed a somewhat Philistian aspect, but this with him, as with many other great Germans, is the result of pure irony; for it is notorious that he has his wild student and fantastic periods, as, for instance, on the first night of May. Then he casts his cloud-cap uproariously and merrily into the air, and becomes, like the rest of us, romantic mad, in real German fashion.

I soon sought to entrap the beauty into a conversation, for we begin to fully enjoy the beauties of nature only when we talk about them on the spot.

* * * * *

While we conversed twilight stole, the air grew colder, the sun sank lower and lower, and the tower platform was filled with students, traveling mechanics, and a few honest citizens with their spouses and daughters, all of whom were desirous of witnessing the sunset. It is truly a sublime spectacle, which tunes the soul to prayer. For a full quarter of an hour all stood in solemn silence, gazing on the beautiful fire-ball as it gradually sank in the west; our faces were bathed in the rosy light; our hands were involuntarily folded; it seemed as if we, a silent congregation, stood in the nave of a giant cathedral, that the priest raised the body of the Lord, and the Palestrina’s immortal hymns poured forth from the organ.

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As I stood thus, lost in devotion, I heard some one near me exclaim, “Ah, how beautiful Nature is, as a general thing!” These words came from the sentimental heart of my room-mate, the young merchant. They brought me back to my week-day frame of mind, and I was now able to say a few neat things to the ladies about the sunset and to accompany them, as calmly as if nothing had happened, to their room. They permitted me to talk an hour longer with them. Our conversation, like the earth’s course, was about the sun. The mother declared that the sun, as it sank in the snowy clouds, seemed like a red glowing rose, which the gallant heaven had thrown upon the white outspreading bridal-veil of his loved earth. The daughter smiled, and thought that a frequent observation of such phenomena weakened their impression. The mother corrected this error by a quotation from Goethe’s *Letters of Travel*, and asked me if I had read *Werther*. I believe that we also spoke of Angora cats, Etruscan vases, Turkish shawls, maccaroni, and Lord Byron, from whose poems the elder lady, daintly lisping and sighing, recited several passages about the sunset. To the younger lady, who did not understand English, and who wished to become familiar with those poems, I recommended the translation of my fair and gifted countrywoman, the Baroness Elise von Hohenhausen. On this occasion, as is my custom when talking with young ladies, I did not fail to declaim against Byron’s godlessness, heartlessness, cheerlessness, and heaven knows what besides.

After this business I took a walk on the Brocken, for there it is never quite dark. The mist was not heavy, and I could see the outlines of the two hills known as the Witch’s Altar and the Devil’s Pulpit. I fired my pistol, but there was no echo. Suddenly, however, I heard familiar voices and found myself embraced and kissed. The newcomers were fellow-students from my own part of Germany, and had left Goettingen four days later than I. Great was their astonishment at finding me again, alone on the Blocksberg. Then came a flood tide of narrative, of astonishment, and of appointment-making, of laughing, and of recollecting, and in the spirit we found ourselves again in our learned Siberia, where refinement is carried to such an extent that the bears are tied up in the taverns, and the sables wish the hunter good evening.[54]

In the great room we had supper. There was a long table, with two rows of hungry students. At first we indulged in the usual topic of university conversation—duels, duels, and once again duels. The company consisted principally of Halle students, and Halle formed, in consequence, the nucleus of their discourse. The window-panes of Court-Councilor Schuetz were exegetically illuminated. Then it was mentioned that the King of Cyprus’ last levee had been very brilliant; that the monarch had chosen a natural son; that he had married with the left hand a princess of the house of Lichtenstein;

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that the State-mistress had been forced to resign, and that the entire ministry, greatly moved, had wept according to rule. I need hardly explain that this all referred to certain beer dignitaries in Halle. Then the two Chinese, who two years before had been exhibited in Berlin, and who were now appointed lecturers on Chinese esthetics in Halle, were discussed. Then jokes were made. Some one supposed a case in which a live German might be exhibited for money in China, and to this end a placard was fabricated, in which the mandarins Tsching-Tschang-Tschung and Hi-Ha-Ho certified that the man was a genuine Teuton, including a list of his accomplishments, which consisted principally of philosophizing, smoking, and endless patience. It concluded with the notice that visitors were prohibited from bringing any dogs with them at twelve o'clock (the hour for feeding the captive), as these animals would be sure to snap from the poor German all his titbits.

A young *Burschenschafter*, who had recently passed his period of purification in Berlin, spoke much, but very partially, of this city. He had frequented both Wisotzki and the theatre, but judged falsely of both. "For youth is ever ready with a word," *etc*. He spoke of the sumptuousness of the costumes, of scandals among actors and actresses, and similar matters. The youth knew not that in Berlin, where outside show exerts the greatest influence (as is abundantly evidenced by the commonness of the phrase "so people do"), this ostentation must flourish on the stage preeminently, and consequently that the special care of the management must be for "the color of the beard with which a part is played" and for the truthfulness of the costumes which are designed by sworn historians and sewed by scientifically instructed tailors. And this is indispensable. For if Maria Stuart wore an apron belonging to the time of Queen Anne, the banker, Christian Gumpel, would with justice complain that thereby all illusion was destroyed; and if Lord Burleigh in a moment of forgetfulness should don the hose of Henry the Fourth, then the War-Councilor Von Steinzopf's wife, *nee* Lilienthau, would not get the anachronism out of her head for the whole evening.... But little as this young man had comprehended the conditions of the Berlin drama, still less was he aware that the Spontini Janissary opera, with its kettledrums, elephants, trumpets, and gongs, is a heroic means of inspiring our enervated people with warlike enthusiasm—a means once shrewdly recommended by Plato and Cicero. Least of all did the youth comprehend the diplomatic significance of the ballet. It was with great trouble that I finally made him understand that there was really more political science in Hoguet's feet than in Buchholz's head, that all his *tours de danse* signified diplomatic negotiations, and that his every movement hinted at state matters; as, for instance, when he bent forward anxiously, stretching

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his hands out wide and grasping at the air, he meant our Cabinet; that a hundred pirouettes on one toe without quitting the spot alluded to the German Diet; that he was thinking of the lesser princes when he tripped around with his legs tied; that he described the European balance of power when he tottered hither and thither like a drunken man; that he hinted at a Congress when he twisted his bended arms together like a skein; and finally, that he sets forth our altogether too great friend in the East, when, very gradually unfolding himself, he rises on high, stands for a long time in this elevated position, and then all at once breaks out into the most terrifying leaps. The scales fell from the eyes of the young man, and he now saw how it was that dancers are better paid than great poets, and why the ballet forms in diplomatic circles an inexhaustible subject of conversation. By Apis! how great is the number of the esoteric, and how small the array of the esoteric frequenters of the theatre! There sit the stupid audience, gaping and admiring leaps and attitudes, studying anatomy in the positions of Lemiere, and applauding the *entrechats* of Roehnisch, prattling of “grace,” “harmony,” and “limbs”—no one remarking meanwhile that he has before him in chronological ciphers the destiny of the German Fatherland.

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The company around the table gradually became better acquainted and much noisier. Wine banished beer, punch-bowls steamed, songs were sung, and brotherhood was drunk in true student fashion. The old “Landsfather toast” and the beautiful songs of W. Mueller, Rueckert, Uhland, and others rang out with the exquisite airs of Methfessel. Best of all sounded our own Arndt’s German words, “The Lord, who bade iron grow, wished for no slaves.” And out of doors it roared as if the old mountain sang with us, and a few reeling friends even asserted that he merrily shook his bald head, which caused the great unsteadiness of the floor of our room.

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During this crazy scene, in which plates learned to dance and glasses to fly, there sat opposite me two youths, beautiful and pale as statues, one resembling Adonis, the other Apollo. The faint rosy hue which the wine spread over their cheeks was scarcely noticeable. They gazed on each other with infinite affection, as if the one could read in the eyes of the other, and in those eyes there was a light as though drops of light had fallen therein from the cup of burning love, which an angel on high bears from one star to the other. They conversed softly with earnest trembling voices, and narrated sad stories, through all of which ran a tone of strange sorrow. “Lora is dead now too!” said one, and, sighing, proceeded to tell of a maiden of Halle who had loved a student, and who, when the latter left Halle, spoke no more to any one, ate but little, wept day and night, gazing over on the canary-bird which her lover had given

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her. “The bird died, and Lora did not long survive it,” was the conclusion, and both the youths sighed as though their hearts would break. Finally the other said, “My soul is sorrowful; come forth with me into the dark night! Let me inhale the breath of the clouds and the moon-rays. Companion of my sorrow! I love thee; thy words are musical, like the rustling of reeds and the flow of rivulets; they reecho in my breast, but my soul is sad!”

Both of the young men arose. One threw his arm around the neck of the other, and thus they left the noisy room. I followed, and saw them enter a dark chamber, where the one by mistake, instead of the window, threw open the door of a large wardrobe, and both, standing before it with outstretched arms, expressing poetic rapture, spoke alternately. “Ye breezes of darkening night,” cried the first, “how ye cool and revive my cheeks! How sweetly ye play amid my fluttering locks! I stand on the cloudy peak of the mountain; far below me lie the sleeping cities of men, and blue waters gleam. List! far below in the valley rustle the fir-trees! Far above yonder hills sweep in misty forms the spirits of our fathers. Oh, that I could hunt with ye on your cloud-steeds through the stormy night, over the rolling sea, upwards to the stars! Alas! I am laden with grief, and my soul is sad!” Meanwhile, the other had also stretched out *his* arms toward the wardrobe, while tears fell from his eyes as he cried to a pair of yellow leather pantaloons which he mistook for the moon, “Fair art thou, daughter of heaven! Lovely and blessed is the calm of thy countenance. Thou walkest in loveliness! The stars follow thy blue path in the east! At thy glance the clouds rejoice, and their dark forms gleam with light. Who is like unto thee in heaven, thou the night-born? The stars are ashamed before thee, and turn away their sparkling eyes. Whither, ah, whither, when morning pales thy face, dost thou flee from thy path? Hast thou, like me, thy Halle? Dwellest thou amid shadows of sorrow? Have thy sisters fallen from heaven? Are they who joyfully rolled with thee through the night now no more? Yea, they have fallen down, oh! lovely light, and thou hidest thyself often to bewail them! Yet the night must come at last when thou too will have passed away, and left thy blue path above in heaven. Then the stars, that were once ashamed in thy presence, will raise their green heads and rejoice. But now art clothed in thy beaming splendor and gazest down from the gate of heaven. Tear aside the clouds, oh! ye winds, that the night-born may shine forth and the bushy hills gleam, and that the foaming waves of the sea may roll in light!”

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I can bear a tolerable quantity—modesty forbids me to say how many bottles—and I consequently retired to my chamber in tolerably good condition. The young merchant already lay in bed, enveloped in his chalk-white night-cap and saffron yellow night-shirt of sanitary flannel. He was not asleep, and sought to enter into conversation with me. He was from Frankfurt-on-the-Main, and consequently spoke at once of the Jews, declared that they had lost all feeling for the beautiful and noble, and that they sold English goods twenty-five per cent. under manufacturers' prices. A fancy to humbug him came over me, and I told him that I was a somnambulist, and must beforehand beg his pardon should I unwittingly disturb his slumbers. This intelligence, as he confessed the following day, prevented him from sleeping a wink through the whole night, especially since the idea had entered his head that I, while in a somnambulistic state, might shoot him with the pistol which lay near my bed. But in truth I fared no better myself, for I slept very little. Dreary and terrifying fancies swept through my brain....

From this confusion I was rescued by the landlord of the Brocken, when he awoke me to see the sun rise. On the tower I found several people already waiting, and rubbing their freezing hands; others, with sleep still in their eyes, stumbled up to us, until finally the whole silent congregation of the previous evening was reassembled, and we saw how, above the horizon, there rose a little carmine-red ball, spreading a dim, wintry light. Far around, amid the mists, rose the mountains, as if swimming in a white rolling sea, only their summits being visible, so that we could imagine ourselves standing on a little hill in the midst of an inundated plain, in which here and there rose dry clods of earth. To retain what I saw and felt, I sketched the following poem:

In the east 'tis ever brighter,
  Though the sun gleams fitfully;
Far and wide the mountain summits
  Swim above the misty sea.

Had I seven-league boots for travel,
  Like the fleeting winds I'd rove
Over valley, rock, and river,
  To the home of her I love.

From the bed where now she's sleeping
  Soft the curtain I would slip;
Softly kiss her childlike forehead,
  Kiss the ruby of her lip.

Yet more softly would I whisper
  In the little lily ear,
"Think in dreams we still are loving,
  Think I never lost thee, dear."

Meanwhile my longing for breakfast was also great, and, after paying a few compliments to my ladies, I hastened down to drink coffee in the warm public room. It was full time, for all within me was as sober and as sombre as in the St. Stephen's Church at Goslar. But with the Arabian beverage, the warm Orient thrilled through my limbs, Eastern roses breathed forth their perfumes, sweet bulbul songs resounded, the students were changed to camels, the Brocken housemaids, with their Congreverocket-glances, became *houris*, the Philistine noses, minarets, *etc*.

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But the book which lay near me, though full of nonsense, was not the Koran. It was the so-called “Brocken-book,” in which all travelers who ascend the mountain write their names—most inscribing their thoughts, or, in default thereof, their “feelings.” Many even express themselves in verse. In this book one may observe the horrors which result when the great Philistine host on opportune occasions, such as this on the Brocken, becomes poetic. The palace of the Prince of Pallagonia never contained such absurdities as are to be found in this book. Those who shine in it with especial splendor are Messrs. the excise collectors, with their moldy “high inspirations;” counter-jumpers, with their pathetic outgushings of the soul; old German revolution dilettanti with their Turner-Union phrases, and Berlin school-masters with their unsuccessful efforts at enthusiasm. Mr. Snobbs will also for once show himself as author. In one page the majestic splendor of the sunrise is described, in another complaints occur of bad weather, of disappointed hopes, and of the mists which obstruct the view. A “Caroline” writes that in climbing the mountain her feet got wet, to which a naive “Nanny,” who was impressed by this, adds, “I too, got wet while doing this thing.” “Went up wet without and came down wet within,” is a standing joke, repeated in the book hundreds of times. The whole volume smells of beer, tobacco and cheese; we might fancy it one of Clauren’s novels.

* * * * *

And now the students prepared to depart. Knapsacks were buckled, the bills, which were moderate beyond all expectation, were settled, the susceptible housemaids, upon whose countenances the traces of successful amours were plainly visible, brought, as is their custom, their Brocken-bouquets, and helped some to adjust their caps; for all of which they were duly rewarded with either kisses or coppers. Thus we all went down the mountain, albeit one party, among whom were the Swiss and Greifswalder, took the road toward Schierke, and the others, about twenty men, among whom were my fellow “countrymen” and myself, led by a guide, went through the so-called “Snow Holes” down to Ilsenburg.

Such a head-over-heels, break-neck piece of business! Halle students travel quicker than the Austrian militia. Ere I knew where I was, the bald summit of the mountain, with groups of stones strewed over it, was behind us, and we went through the fir-wood which I had seen the day before. The sun poured down a cheerful light on the merry Burschen, in gaily colored garb, as they merrily pressed onward through the wood, disappearing here, coming to light again there, running across marshy places on trunks of trees, climbing over shelving steeps by grasping the projecting tree-roots; while they thrilled all the time in the merriest manner and received as joyous an answer from the twittering wood-birds, the invisibly plashing rivulets, and the resounding echo. When cheerful youth and beautiful nature meet, they mutually rejoice.

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[Illustration: THE FALLS OF THE ILSE]

The lower we descend the more delightfully did subterranean waters ripple around us; only here and there they peeped out amid rocks and bushes, appearing to be reconnoitring if they might yet come to light, until at last one little spring jumped forth boldly. Then followed the usual show—the bravest one makes a beginning, and then to their own astonishment the great multitude of hesitators, suddenly inspired with courage, rush forth to join the first. Myriads of springs now leaped in haste from their ambush, united with the leader, and finally formed quite an important brook, which, with its innumerable waterfalls and beautiful windings, ripples down the valley. This is now the Ilse—the sweet, pleasant Ilse. She flows through the blest Ilse vale, on whose sides the mountains gradually rise higher and higher, being clad even to their base with beech-trees, oaks, and the usual shrubs, the firs and other needle-covered evergreens having disappeared; for that variety of trees grows preferably upon the “Lower Harz,” as the east side of the Brocken is called in contradistinction to the west side or Upper Harz. Being in reality much higher, it is therefore better adapted to the growth of evergreens.

It is impossible to describe the merriment, simplicity, and charm with which the Ilse leaps down over the fantastically shaped rocks which rise in her path, so that the water strangely whizzes or foams in one place. amid rifted rocks, and in another pours forth in perfect arches through a thousand crannies, as if from a giant watering-pot, and then, lower down, trips away again over the pebbles like a merry maiden. Yes, the old legend is true; the Ilse is a princess, who, in the full bloom of youth, runs laughing down the mountain side. How her white foam garment gleams in the sunshine! How her silvered scarf flutters in the breeze! How her diamonds flash! The high beech-trees gaze down on her like grave fathers secretly smiling at the capricious self-will of a darling child; the white birch-trees nod their heads like delighted aunts, who are, however, anxious at such bold leaps; the proud oak looks on like a not over-pleased uncle, who must pay for all the fine weather; the birds joyfully sing their applause; the flowers on the bank whisper, “Oh, take us with thee, take us with thee, dear sister!” But the merry maiden may not be withheld, and she leaps onward and suddenly seizes the dreaming poet, and there streams over me a flower-rain of ringing gleams and flashing tones, and my senses are lost in all the beauty and splendor, and I hear only the voice, sweet pealing as a flute—

I am the Princess Ilse,
  And dwell in Ilsenstein;
Come with me to my castle,
  Thou shalt be blest—and mine!

With ever-flowing fountains
  I’ll cool thy weary brow;

Thou’lt lose amid their rippling
The cares which grieve thee now.

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In my white arms reposing,
  And on my snow-white breast,
Thou'lt dream of old, old legends,
  And sing in joy to rest.

I'll kiss thee and caress thee,
  As in the ancient day
I kissed the Emperor Henry,
  Who long has passed away.

The dead are dead and silent,
  Only the living love;
And I am fair and blooming—
  Dost feel my wild heart move!

And as my heart is beating,
  My crystal castle rings,
Where many a knight and lady
  In merry measure springs.

Silk trains are softly rustling,
  Spurs ring from night to morn,
And dwarfs are gaily drumming,
  And blow the golden horn.

As round the Emperor Henry,
  My arms round thee shall fall;
I held his ears—he heard not
  The trumpet's warning call.

We feel infinite happiness when the outer world blends with the world of our own soul, and green trees, thoughts, the songs of birds, gentle melancholy, the blue of heaven, memory, and the perfume of herbs, run together in sweet arabesques. Women best understand this feeling, and this may be the cause that such a sweet incredulous smile plays around their lips when we, with scholastic pride, boast of our logical deeds—how we have classified everything so nicely into subjective and objective; how our heads are provided, apothecary-like, with a thousand drawers, one of which contains reason, another understanding, the third wit, the fourth bad wit, and the fifth nothing at all—that is to say, the *Idea*.

As if wandering in dreams, I scarcely observed that we had left the depths of the Ilsethal and were now again climbing uphill. This was steep and difficult work, and many of us lost our breath; but, like our late lamented cousin, who now lies buried at Moelln, we

thought in advance of the descent, and were all the merrier in consequence. Finally we reached the Ilsenstein.

This is an enormous granite rock, which rises boldly on high from out a glen. On three sides it is surrounded by high woody hills, but on the fourth, the north side, there is an open view, and we gazed past the Ilsenburg and the Ilse lying below us, far away into the low lands. On the towerlike summit of the rock stands a great iron cross, and in case of need there is also room here for four human feet. And as Nature, through picturesque position and form, has adorned the Ilsenstein with fantastic charms, so legend likewise has shed upon it a rosy shimmer. According to Gottschalk, “People say that there once stood here an enchanted castle, in which dwelt the rich and fair Princess Ilse, who still bathes every morning in the Ilse. He who is fortunate enough to hit upon the exact time and place will be led by her into the rock where her castle lies and receive a royal reward.” Others narrate a pleasant legend of the lovers of the Lady Ilse and of the Knight of Westenberg, which has been romantically sung by one of our most noted poets in the *Evening Journal*. Others again say that it was the Old Saxon Emperor Henry who had a royal good time with the water-nymph Ilse in her enchanted castle.

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A later author, one Niemann, Esq., who has written a *Guide to the Harz* in which the height of the hills, variations of the compass, town finances, and similar matters are described with praiseworthy accuracy, asserts, however, that “what is narrated of the Princess Ilse belongs entirely to the realm of fable.” Thus do all men speak to whom a beautiful princess has never appeared; but we who have been especially favored by fair ladies know better. And the Emperor Henry knew it too! It was not without cause that the Old Saxon emperors were so attached to their native Harz. Let any one only turn over the leaves of the fair *Lueneburg Chronicle,* where the good old gentlemen are represented in wondrously true-hearted woodcuts sitting in full armor on their mailed war-steeds, the holy imperial crown on their beloved heads, sceptre and sword in firm hands; and then in their dear mustachiod faces he can plainly read how they often longed for the sweet hearts of their Harz princesses, and for the familiar rustling of the Harz forests, when they sojourned in distant lands—yes, even when in Italy, so rich in oranges and poisons, whither they, with their followers, were often enticed by the desire of being called Roman emperors, a genuine German lust for title, which finally destroyed emperor and empire.

I, however, advise every one who may hereafter stand on the summit of the Ilsenstein to think neither of emperor nor empire nor of the fair Ilse, but simply of his own feet. For as I stood there, lost in thought, I suddenly heard the subterranean music of the enchanted castle, and saw the mountains around begin to stand on their heads, while the red-tiled roofs of Ilsenburg were dancing, and green trees flew through the air, until all was green and blue before my eyes, and I, overcome by giddiness, would assuredly have fallen into the abyss, had I not, in the dire need of my soul, clung fast to the iron cross. No one who reflects on the critically ticklish situation in which I was then placed can possibly find fault with me for having done this.

[Illustration: VIEW FROM ST. ANDREASBERG]

* * * * *

BOYHOOD DAYS[55]

By Heinrich Heine

Translated by Charles Godfrey Leland

The town of Duesseldorf is very beautiful, and if you think of it when far away, and happen at the same time to have been born there, strange feelings come over your soul. I was born there, and feel as if I must go straight home. And when I say *home* I mean the *Bolkerstrasse* and the house in which I was born. This house will some day be a great curiosity, and I have sent word to the old lady who owns it that she must not for her life sell it. For the whole house she would now hardly get as much as the tips

which the distinguished green-veiled English ladies will one day give the servant girl when she shows them the room where I was born, and the hen-house wherein my father generally imprisoned me for stealing grapes, and also the brown door on which my mother taught me to write with chalk—O Lord! Madame, should I ever become a famous author, it has cost my poor mother trouble enough.

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(1823-1826)

But my fame as yet slumbers in the marble quarries of Carrara; the waste-paper laurel with which they have bedecked my brow has not yet spread its perfume through the wide world, and the green-veiled English ladies, when they come to Duesseldorf as yet leave the celebrated house unvisited, and go directly to the market-place and there gaze on the colossal black equestrian statue which stands in its midst. This is supposed to represent the Prince Elector, Jan Wilhelm. He wears black armor and a long wig hanging down his back. When a boy, I heard the legend that the artist who made this statue became aware, to his horror, while it was being cast, that he had not metal enough to fill the mold, and then all the citizens of the town came running with all their silver spoons, and threw them in to make up the deficiency; and I often stood for hours before the statue wondering how many spoons were concealed in it, and how many apple-tarts the silver would buy. Apple-tarts were then my passion—now it is love, truth, liberty, and crab-soup—and not far from the statue of the Prince Elector, at the theatre corner, generally stood a curiously constructed bow-legged fellow with a white apron, and a basket girt around him full of delightfully steaming apple-tarts, whose praises he well knew how to call out in an irresistible high treble voice, “Here you are! hot apple-tarts! just from the oven—smelling deliciously!” Truly, whenever in my later years the Evil One sought to get the better of me, he always spoke in just such an enticing high treble voice, and I should certainly have never remained twelve full hours with the Signora Giulietta, if she had not thrilled me with her sweet perfumed apple-tart tones. And, in fact, the apple-tarts would never have so sorely tempted me if the crooked Hermann had not covered them up so mysteriously with his white apron; and it is aprons, you know, which—but I wander from the subject. I was speaking of the equestrian statue which has so many silver spoons in it, and no soup, and which represents the Prince Elector, Jan Wilhelm.

He was a brave gentleman, ’tis reported, a lover of art and handy therein himself. He founded the picture-gallery in Duesseldorf; and in the observatory there, they still show us an extremely artistic piece of work, consisting of one wooden cup within another which he himself had carved in his leisure hours, of which latter he had every day four-and-twenty.

[Illustration: JOHANN WILHELM MONUMENT, DUeSSELDORF]

In those days princes were not the harassed creatures they now are. Their crowns grew firmly on their heads, and at night they drew nightcaps over them besides and slept in peace, and their people slumbered calmly at their feet; and when they awoke in the morning they said, “Good morning, father!” and the princes replied, “Good morning, dear children!”

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But there came a sudden change over all this, for one morning when we awoke in Duesseldorf and wanted to say, “Good morning, father!” the father had traveled away, and in the whole town there was nothing but dumb sorrow. Everywhere there was a sort of funereal atmosphere, and people crept silently through the market and read the long placard placed on the door of the City Hall. The weather was dark and lowering, yet the lean tailor Kilian stood in the nankeen jacket, which he generally wore only at home, and in his blue woolen stockings, so that his little bare legs peeped out dismally, and his thin lips quivered as he murmured the words of the placard to himself. An old invalid soldier from the Palatine read it in a somewhat louder tone, and at certain phrases a transparent tear ran down his white, honorable old mustache. I stood near him, and wept with him, and then asked why we wept; and he replied, “The Prince Elector has abdicated.” Then he read further, and at the words “for the long-manifested fidelity of my subjects,” “and hereby release you from your allegiance,” he wept still more. It is a strange sight to see, when so old a man, in faded uniform, with a scarred veteran’s face, suddenly bursts into tears. While we read, the Princely Electoral coat-of-arms was being taken down from the City Hall, and everything began to appear as oppressively desolate as though we were waiting for an eclipse of the sun. The city councilors went about at an abdicating, slow gait; even the omnipotent beadle looked as though he had had no more commands to give, and stood calmly indifferent, although the crazy Aloysius again stood upon one leg and chattered the names of French generals, with foolish grimaces, while the tipsy, crooked Gumpertz rolled around the gutter, singing, “Ca ira! Ca ira!” But I went home, weeping and lamenting because “the Prince Elector had abdicated!” My mother tried hard to comfort me, but I would hear nothing. I knew what I knew, and went weeping to bed, and in the night dreamed that the world had come to an end—that all the fair flower gardens and green meadows were taken up from the ground and rolled away, like carpets; that a beadle climbed up on a high ladder and took down the sun, and that the tailor Kilian stood by and said to himself, “I must go home and dress myself neatly, for I am dead and am to be buried this afternoon.” And it grew darker and darker—a few stars glimmered meagrely on high, and these too, at length, fell down like yellow leaves in autumn; one by one all men vanished, and I, poor child, wandered around in anguish, and finally found myself before the willow fence of a deserted farmhouse, where I saw a man digging up the earth with a spade, and near him an ugly, spiteful-looking woman, who held something in her apron like a human head—but it was the moon, and she laid it carefully in the open grave—and behind me stood the Palatine invalid, sighing, and spelling out “The Prince Elector has abdicated.”

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When I awoke the sun shone as usual through the window, there was a sound of drums in the street, and as I entered the sitting-room and said “good morning” to my father, who was sitting in his white dressing-gown, I heard the little light-footed barber, as he dressed his hair, narrate very minutely that allegiance would be sworn to the Grande Duke Joachim that morning at the City Hall. I heard, too, that the new ruler was of excellent family, that he had married the sister of the Emperor Napoleon, and was really a very respectable man; that he wore his beautiful black hair in flowing locks, that he would shortly make his entrance into the town, and, in fine, that he was sure to please all the ladies. Meanwhile the drumming in the streets continued, and I went out before the house-door and looked at the French troops marching in that joyous people of glory, who, singing and playing, swept over the world, the serious and yet merry-faced grenadiers, the bear-skin shakoes, the tri-colored cockades, the glittering bayonets, the *voltigeurs*, full of vivacity and *point d’honneur*, and the omnipotent giant-like silver-laced tambour major, who could cast his *baton* with a gilded head as high as the first story, and his eyes even to the second, where also there were pretty girls sitting at the windows. I was so glad that soldiers were to be quartered in our house—in which my mother differed from me—and I hastened to the market-place. There everything looked changed, somewhat as though the world had been newly whitewashed. A new coat-of-arms was placed on the City Hall, its iron balconies were hung with embroidered velvet drapery. French grenadiers stood as sentinels; the old city councilors had put on new faces, and donned their Sunday coats, and looked at each other Frenchily, and said, “*Bonjour!*” Ladies gazed from every window, curious citizens and glittering soldiers filled the square, and I, with other boys, climbed on the great bronze horse of the Prince Elector, and thence stared down on the motley crowd.

Our neighbors, Pitter and the tall Kunz, nearly broke their necks in accomplishing this feat, and it would have been better if they had been killed outright, for the one afterwards ran away from his parents, enlisted as a soldier, deserted, and was finally shot at Mayence; while the other, having made geographical researches in strange pockets, was on this account elected active member of a public treadmill institute. But having broken the iron bands which bound him to the latter and to his fatherland, he safely crossed the channel, and eventually died in London through wearing an all too tight neck-tie which automatically drew together, when a royal official removed a plank from beneath his feet.

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Tall Kunz told us that there was no school today on account of the ceremonies connected with taking the oath of allegiance. We had to wait a long time ere these commenced. Finally, the balcony of the City Hall was filled with gaily dressed gentlemen, with flags and trumpets, and our burgomaster, in his celebrated red coat, delivered an oration, which stretched out like Indian rubber, or like a knitted nightcap into which one has thrown a stone—only that it was not the philosopher's stone—and I could distinctly understand many of his phrases—for instance, that "we are now to be made happy;" and at the last words the trumpets sounded out, the flags were waved, the drums were beaten, the people cried, Hurrah! and while I myself cried hurrah, I held fast to the old Prince Elector. And it was really necessary that I should, for I began to grow giddy. It seemed to me as if the people were standing on their heads, because the world whizzed around, while the old Prince Elector, with his long wig, nodded and whispered, "Hold fast to me!" and not till the cannon reechoed along the wall did I become sobered, and climbed slowly down from the great bronze horse.

As I went home, I saw the crazy Aloysius again dancing on one leg, while he chattered the names of French generals, and I also beheld crooked Gumpertz rolling in the gutter and growling, "Ca ira, ca ira," and I said to my mother, "We are all to be made happy; on that account there is no school today."

II

The next day the world was again all in order, and we had school as before, and things were learned by heart as before—the Roman kings, dates, the *nomina* in *im*, the *verba irregularia*, Greek, Hebrew, geography, German, mental arithmetic—Lord! my head is still giddy with it!—all had to be learned by heart. And much of it was eventually to my advantage; for had I not learned the Roman kings by heart, it would subsequently have been a matter of perfect indifference to me whether Niebuhr had or had not proved that they never really existed. And had I not learned those dates, how could I ever, in later years, have found out any one in big Berlin, where one house is as like another as drops of water or as grenadiers, and where it is impossible to find a friend unless you have the number of his house in your head! At that time I associated with every acquaintance some historical event, which had happened in a year corresponding to the number of his house, so that the one recalled the other, and some curious point in history always occurred to me whenever I met any one whom I visited. For instance, when I met my tailor, I at once thought of the battle of Marathon; when I saw the well-groomed banker, Christian Gumpel, I immediately remembered the destruction of Jerusalem; when I caught sight of a Portuguese friend, deeply in debt, I thought at once of the flight of Mahomet; when I met the university judge, a man whose

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probity is well known, I thought of the death of Haman; and as soon as I laid eyes on Wadzeck, I was at once reminded of Cleopatra. Ah, heaven! the poor creature is dead now; our tears are dry, and we may say of her with Hamlet, “Taken all in all, she was an old woman; we oft shall look upon her like again!” But, as I said, dates are necessary. I know men who had nothing in their heads but a few dates, and with their aid knew where to find the right houses in Berlin, and are now already regular professors. But oh, the trouble I had at school with the multitude of numbers; and as to actual arithmetic, that was even worse! I understood best of all subtraction, and for this there is a very practical rule: “Four can’t be taken from three, therefore I must borrow one”; but I advise all in such a case to borrow a few extra groschen, for no one can tell what may happen.

But oh, the Latin! Madame, you can really have no idea of how complicated it is. The Romans would never have found time to conquer the world if they had been obliged first to learn Latin. Lucky dogs! they already knew in their cradles which nouns have their accusative in *im*. I, on the contrary, had to learn them by heart, in the sweat of my brow, but still it is well that I know them. For if I, for example, when I publicly disputed in Latin in the College Hall of Goettingen, on the 20th of July, 1825—Madame, it was well worth while to hear it—if I on that occasion had said *sinapem* instead of *sinapim*, the blunder would have been evident to the Freshmen, and an endless shame for me. *Vis, buris, sitis, tussis, cucumis, amussis, cannabis, sinapis*—these words, which have attracted so much attention in the world, effected this, inasmuch as they belonged to a distinct class, and yet withal remained an exception; therefore I highly respect them, and the fact that I have them ready at my fingers’ ends when I perhaps need them in a hurry, often affords me in life’s darkened hours much internal tranquillity and consolation. But, Madame, the *verba irregularia*—they are distinguished from the *verbis regularibus* by the fact that the boys in learning them got more whippings—are terribly difficult. In the musty archways of the Franciscan cloister near our schoolroom there hung a large Christ—-crucified of grey wood, a dismal image, that even yet at times rises in my dreams and gazes sorrowfully on me with fixed bleeding eyes. Before this image I often stood and prayed, “Oh, Thou poor and also tormented God, I pray Thee, if it be possible, that I may get by heart the irregular verbs!”

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I will say nothing of Greek, otherwise I should vex myself too much. The monks of the Middle Ages were not so very much in the wrong when they asserted that Greek was an invention of the devil. Lord knows what I suffered through it! It went better with Hebrew, for I always had a great predilection for the Jews, although they crucify my good name up to the present hour, and yet I never could get as far in Hebrew as my watch did, which had much intimate intercourse with pawnbrokers and in consequence acquired many Jewish habits—for instance, it would not go on Saturday, and it also learned the sacred language, subsequently even studying it grammatically; for often when sleepless in the night I have, to my amazement, heard it industriously ticking away to itself: *katal, katalta, katalti, kittel, kittalta, katalti-pokat, pokadeti-pikat, pik, pik*.

Meanwhile I learned more of German than of any other tongue, though German itself is not such child's play, after all. For we poor Germans, who have already been sufficiently vexed with having soldiers quartered on us, military duties, poll-taxes, and a thousand other exactions, must needs, over and above all this, bag Mr. Adelung and torment one another with accusatives and datives. I learned much German from the old Rector Schallmeyer, a brave, clerical gentleman, whose protege I was from childhood. But I also learned something of the kind from Professor Schramm, a man who had written a book on eternal peace, and in whose class my school-fellows quarreled and fought more than in any other.

And while I have thus been writing away without a pause and thinking about all sorts of things, I have unexpectedly chattered myself back among old school stories, and I avail myself of this opportunity to mention, Madame, that it was not my fault if I learned so little of geography that later in life I could not make my way in the world. For in those days the French displaced all boundaries; every day the countries were recolored on the world's map; those which were once blue suddenly became green, many indeed were even dyed blood-red; the old stereotyped souls of the school-books became so confused and confounded that the devil himself would never have recognized them. The products of the country were also changed; chickory and beets now grew where only hares and country gentlemen pursuing them were once to be seen; even the character of the nations changed; the Germans became pliant, the French paid compliments no longer; the English ceased making ducks and drakes of their money, and the Venetians were not subtle enough; there was promotion among princes, old kings received new uniforms, new kingdoms were cooked up and sold like hot cakes; many potentates were chased, on the other hand, from house and home, and had to find some new way of earning their bread, and some therefore went at once into trade, and manufactured, for instance, sealing wax, or—Madame, this paragraph must be brought to an end, or I shall be out of breath—in fine, in such times it is impossible to advance far in geography.

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I succeeded better in natural history, for there we find fewer changes, and we always have standard engravings of apes, kangaroos, zebras, rhinoceroses, *etc*., *etc*. And having many such pictures in my memory, it often happens that at first sight many mortals appeared to me like old acquaintances.

I also did well in mythology, and took a real delight in the mob of gods and goddesses who, so jolly and naked, governed the world. I do not believe that there was a schoolboy in ancient Rome who knew the principal points of his catechism—that is, the loves of Venus—better than I. To tell the plain truth, it seems to me that if we must learn all the heathen gods by heart, we might as well have kept them from the first; and we have not, perhaps, gained so much with our New-Roman Trinity or still less with our Jewish unity. Perhaps the old mythology was not in reality so immoral as we imagine, and it was, for example, a very decent idea of Homer to give to much-loved Venus a husband.

But I succeeded best in the French class of the Abbe d'Aulnoi, a French *emigre*, who had written a number of grammars, and wore a red wig, and jumped about very nervously when he lectured on his *Art poetique* and his *Histoire Allemande*. He was the only one in the whole gymnasium who taught German history. Still, French has its difficulties, and to learn it there must be much quartering of troops, much drumming, much *apprendre par coeur*, and, above all, no one must be a *bete allemande*. There was here, too, many a hard nut to crack; and I can remember as plainly as though it happened but yesterday that I once got into a bad scrape through *la religion*. I was asked at least six times in succession, "Henry, what is French for 'the faith?'" And six times, with an ever increasing inclination to weep, I replied, "It is called *le credit*." And after the seventh question the furious examinator, purple in the face, cried, "It is called *la religion*"—and there was a rain of blows and a thunder of laughter from all my schoolmates. Madame, since that day I never hear the word *religion* without having my back turn pale with terror, and my cheeks turn red with shame. And to tell the honest truth, *le credit* has during my life stood me in the better stead than *la religion*. It occurs to me just at this instant that I still owe the landlord of The Lion in Bologna five dollars. And I pledge you my sacred word of honor that I would willingly owe him five dollars more if I could only be certain that I should never again hear that unlucky word, *la religion*, as long as I live.

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Parbleu, Madame! I have succeeded tolerably well in French; for I understand not only *patois*, but even patrician, governess French. Not long ago, when in an aristocratic circle, I understood nearly one-half of the conversation of two German countesses, each of whom could count at least sixty-four years, and as many ancestors. Yes, in the *Cafe Royal* in Berlin, I once heard Monsieur Hans Michel Martens talking French, and could understand every word he spoke, though there was no understanding in anything he said. We must know the *spirit* of a language, and this is best learned by drumming. *Parbleu*! how much do I not owe to the French drummer who was so long quartered in our house, who looked like a devil, and yet had the good heart of an angel, and withal drummed so divinely!

He was a little, nervous figure, with a terrible black mustache, beneath which red lips sprang forth defiantly, while his wild eyes shot fiery glances all round.

I, a young shaver, stuck to him like a burr, and helped him to clean his military buttons till they shone like mirrors, and to pipe-clay his vest—for Monsieur Le Grand liked to look well—and I followed him to the guard house, to the roll-call, to the parade-ground—in those times there was nothing but the gleam of weapons and merriment—*les jours de fete sont passes*! Monsieur Le Grand knew but a little broken German, only the three principal words, “Bread,” “Kiss,” “Honor”—but he could make himself very intelligible with his drum. For instance, if I knew not what the word *liberte* meant, he drummed the *Marseillaise*—and I understood him. If I did not understand the word *egalite*, he drummed the march—

“Ca ira, ca ira, ca ira,
Les aristocrats a la lanterne!”

and I understood him. If I did not know what Betise meant, he drummed the Dessauer March, which we Germans, as Goethe also declares, drummed in Champagne—and I understood him. He once wanted to explain to me the word *l’Allemagne* (or Germany), and he drummed the all too *simple* melody which on market-days is played to dancing-dogs, namely, *dum-dum-dum*! I was vexed, but I understood him for all that!

In like manner he taught me modern history. I did not understand, it is true, the words which he spoke, but as he constantly drummed while speaking, I knew what he meant. This is, fundamentally, the best method. The history of the storming of the Bastile, of the Tuileries, and the like, cannot be correctly understood until we know how *the drumming* was done on such occasions. In our school compendiums of history we merely read: “Their Excellencies the Barons and Counts and their noble spouses, their Highnesses the Dukes and Princes and their most noble spouses were beheaded. His Majesty the King, and his most illustrious spouse, the Queen, were beheaded.”—But when you hear the red march of the guillotine drummed,

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you understand it correctly for the first time, and with it the how and the why. Madame, that is really a wonderful march! It thrilled through marrow and bone when I first heard it, and I was glad that I forgot it. People are apt to forget things of this kind as they grow older, and a young man has nowadays so much and such a variety of knowledge to keep in his head—whist, Boston, genealogical registers, decrees of the Federal Council, dramaturgy, the liturgy, carving—and yet, I assure you that really, despite all the jogging up of my brain, I could not for a long time recall that tremendous time! And only to think, Madame! Not long ago I sat one day at table with a whole menagerie of counts, princes, princesses, chamberlains, court-marshalesses, seneschals, upper court mistresses, court keepers of the royal plate, court hunters' wives, and whatever else these aristocratic domestics are termed, and *their* under-domestics ran about behind their chairs and shoved full plates before their mouths; but I, who was passed by and neglected, sat idle without the least occupation for my jaws, and kneaded little bread-balls, and drummed with my fingers, from boredom, and, to my astonishment, I found myself suddenly drumming the red, long-forgotten guillotine march.

"And what happened?" Madame, the good people were not in the least disturbed, nor did they know that *other* people, when they can get nothing to eat, suddenly begin to drum, and that, too, very queer marches, which people have long forgotten.

Is drumming now an inborn talent, or was it early developed in me? Enough, it lies in my limbs, in my hands, in my feet, and often involuntarily manifests itself. At Berlin, I once sat in the lecture-room of the Privy Councilor Schmaltz, a man who had saved the state by his book on the *Red and Black Coat Danger*. You remember, perhaps, Madame, that in Pausanias we are told that by the braying of an ass an equally dangerous plot was once discovered, and you also know from Livy, or from Becker's *History of the World*, that geese once saved the Capitol, and you must certainly know from Sallust that by the chattering of a loquacious *putaine*, the Lady Fulvia, the terrible conspiracy of Catiline came to light. But to return to the mutton aforesaid. I was listening to the law and rights of nations, in the lecture-room of the Herr Privy Councilor Schmaltz, and it was a lazy sleepy summer afternoon, and I sat on the bench, and little by little I listened less and less—my head had gone to sleep—when all at once I was awakened by the noise of my own feet, which had *not* gone to sleep and had probably heard that just the contrary of the law and rights of nations was being taught and constitutional principles were being reviled, and which with the little eyes of their corns had seen better how things go in the world than the Privy Councilor with his great Juno eyes—these poor dumb feet, incapable of expressing their immeasurable meaning by words, strove to make themselves intelligible by drumming, and they drummed so loudly that I thereby came near getting into a terrible scrape.

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Cursed, unreflecting feet! They once played me a little trick, when I, on a time in Goettingen, was temporarily attending the lectures of Professor Saalfeld, and as this learned gentleman, with his angular agility, jumped about here and there in his desk, and wound himself up to curse the Emperor Napoleon in regular set style—no, my poor feet, I cannot blame you for drumming *then*—indeed, I would not have blamed you if in your dumb *naivete* you had expressed yourselves by still more energetic movements. How dare I, the scholar of Le Grand, hear the Emperor cursed? The Emperor! the Emperor! the great Emperor!

When I think of the great Emperor, all in my memory again becomes summer-green and golden. A long avenue of lindens in bloom arises before me, and on the leafy twigs sit nightingales, singing; the waterfall murmurs, in full round beds flowers are growing, and dreamily nodding their fair heads. I was on a footing of wondrous intimacy with them; the rouged tulips, proud as beggars, condescendingly greeted me; the nervous sick lilies nodded to me with tender melancholy, the wine-red roses laughed at me from afar; the night-violets sighed; with the myrtle and laurel I was not then acquainted, for they did not entice with a shining bloom, but the mignonette, with whom I am now on such bad terms, was my very particular friend.—I am speaking of the Court garden of Duesseldorf, where I often lay upon the grass and piously listened there when Monsieur Le Grand told of the martial feats of the great Emperor, beating meanwhile the marches which were drummed while the deeds were performed, so that I saw and heard it all vividly. I saw the passage over the Simplon—the Emperor in advance and his brave grenadiers climbing on behind him, while the scream of frightened birds of prey sounded around, and the glaciers thundered in the distance; I saw the Emperor with glove in hand on the bridge of Lodi; I saw the Emperor in his grey cloak at Marengo; I saw the Emperor on horseback in the battle of the Pyramids, naught around save powder, smoke, and Mamelukes; I saw the Emperor in the battle of Austerlitz—ha! how the bullets whistled over the smooth, icy road! I saw, I heard the battle of Jena-dum, dum, dune; I saw, I heard the battle of Eylau, of Wagram—no, I could hardly stand it! Monsieur Le Grand drummed so that my own eardrum nearly burst.

III

But what were my feelings when my very own eyes were first blessed with the sight of him, *him*—Hosannah! the Emperor.

It was precisely in the avenue of the Court garden at Duesseldorf. As I pressed through the gaping crowd, thinking of the doughty deeds and battles which Monsieur Le Grand had drummed to me, my heart beat the “general march”—yet at the same time I thought of the police regulation that no one should dare ride through the middle of the avenue under penalty of five dollars fine. And the Emperor

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with his *cortege* rode directly through the middle of the avenue. The trembling trees bowed toward him as he advanced, the sun-rays quivered, frightened, yet curious, through the green leaves, and in the blue heaven above there swam visibly a golden star. The Emperor wore his unpretentious-green uniform and the little world-renowned hat. He rode a white palfrey, which stepped with such calm pride, so confidently, so nobly—had I then been Crown Prince of Prussia I would have envied that horse. The Emperor sat carelessly, almost laxly, holding his rein with one hand, and with the other good-naturedly patting the neck of the horse. It was a sunny marble hand, a mighty hand—one of the pair which subdued the many headed monster of anarchy, and regulated the conflict of nations—and it good-naturedly patted the neck of the horse. Even the face had that hue which we find in the marble Greek and Roman busts, the traits were as nobly proportioned as those of the ancients, and on that countenance was plainly written “Thou shalt have no gods before me!” A smile, which warmed and tranquilized every heart, flitted over the lips—and yet all knew that those lips needed but to whistle *et la Prusse n’existait plus*—those lips needed but to whistle and the entire clergy would have stopped their ringing and singing—those lips needed but to whistle, and the entire Holy Roman Empire would have danced. And these lips smiled, and the eye too smiled. It was an eye clear as heaven; it could read the hearts of men; it saw at a glance all things in the world at once, while we ordinary mortals see them only one by one, and then only their colored shadows. The brow was not so clear, the phantoms of future battles were nestling there, and from time to time there was a quiver which swept over this brow, and those were the creative thoughts, the great seven-league-boots thoughts, wherewith the spirit of the Emperor strode invisibly over the world; and I believe that every one of those thoughts would have furnished a German author plentiful material to write about all the days of his life.

The Emperor rode calmly, straight through the middle of the avenue; no policeman stopped him; behind him proudly rode his cortege on snorting steeds and loaded with gold and ornaments. The drums rolled, the trumpets pealed; near me crazy Aloysius spun round, and snarled the names of his generals; not far off bellowed the tipsy Gumpert, and the multitude cried with a thousand voices, “Es lebe der Kaiser!”—Long live the Emperor!

IV

The Emperor is dead. On a waste island in the Indian Sea lies his lonely grave, and he for whom the world was too narrow lies silently under a little hillock, where five weeping willows shake out their green hair, and a gentle little brook, murmuring sorrowfully, ripples by. There is no inscription on his tomb; but Clio, with unerring style, has written thereon invisible words, which will resound, like ghostly tones, through the centuries.

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Britannia, the sea is thine! But the sea hath not water enough to wash away the shame which that mighty one hath bequeathed to thee in dying. Not thy wind bag, Sir Hudson—no; thou thyself wert the Sicilian bravo whom perjured kings lured that they might secretly revenge on the man of the people that which the people had once openly inflicted on one of themselves. And he was thy guest, and had seated himself by thy hearth.

Until the latest times the boys of France will sing and tell of the terrible hospitality of the *Bellerophon*, and when those songs of mockery and tears resound across the strait, there will be a blush on the cheek of every honorable Briton. But a day will come when this song will ring thither, and there will be no Britannia in existence—when the people of pride will be humbled to the earth, when Westminster's monuments will be broken, and when the royal dust which they inclosed will be forgotten. And St. Helena is the holy grave whither the races of the east and of the west will make their pilgrimage in ships, with pennons of many a hue, and their hearts will grow strong with great memories of the deeds of the worldly savior, who suffered and died under Sir Hudson Lowe, as it is written in the evangelists, Las Cases, O'Meara, and Autommarchi.

Strange! A terrible destiny has already overtaken the three greatest enemies of the Emperor: Londonderry has cut his throat, Louis XVIII has rotted away on his throne, and Professor Saalfeld is still, as before, professor in Goettingen.

* * * * *

ENGLISH FRAGMENTS[56]

BY HEINRICH HEINE

TRANSLATED BY CHARLES GODFREY LELAND

DIALOGUE ON THE THAMES

The sallow man stood near me on the deck, as I gazed on the green shores of the Thames, while in every corner of my soul the nightingales awoke to life. "Land of Freedom!" I cried, "I greet thee! Hail to thee, Freedom, young sun of the renewed world! Those older suns, Love and Faith, are withered and cold, and can no longer light or warm us. The ancient myrtle woods, which were once all too full, are now deserted, and only timid turtle-doves nestle amid the soft thickets. The old cathedrals, once piled in towering height by an arrogantly pious race, which fain would force its faith into heaven, are crumbling, and their gods have ceased to believe in themselves. Those divinities are worn out, and our age lacks the imagination to shape others. Every power of the human breast now tends to a love of Liberty, and Liberty is, perhaps, the religion

of the modern age. It is a religion not preached to the rich, but to the poor, and has in like manner its evangelists, its martyrs, and its Iscariots!"

"Young enthusiast," said the sallow man, "you will not find what you seek. You may be in the right in believing that Liberty is a new religion which will spread over all the world. But as every race of old, when it received Christianity, did so according to its requirements and its peculiar character, so, at present, every country adopts from the new religion of liberty only that which is in accordance with its local needs and national character.

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The English are a domestic race, living a sequestered, peaceable, family life, and the Englishman seeks in the circle of those connected with and pertaining to him that easy state of mind which is denied to him through his innate social incapacity. The Englishman is, therefore, contented with that liberty which secures his most personal rights and guards his body, his property, and his conjugal relations, his religion, and even his whims, in the most unconditional manner. No one is freer in his home than an Englishman, and, to use a celebrated expression, he is king and bishop between his four walls; and there is much truth in the common saying, 'My house is my castle.'

"If the Englishman has the greatest need of personal freedom, the Frenchman, in case of necessity, can dispense with it, if we only grant him that portion of universal liberty known as equality. The French are not a domestic, but a social, race; they are no friends to a silent *tete-a-tete*, which they call *une conversation anglaise;* they run gossiping about from the *cafe* to the casino, and from the casino to the *salons*; their light champagne-blood and inborn talent for company drive them to social life, whose first and last principle, yes, whose very soul, is equality. The development of the social principle in France necessarily involved that of equality, and if the ground of the Revolution should be sought in the Budget, it is none the less true that its language and tone were drawn from those wits of low degree who lived in the *salons* of Paris, apparently on a footing of equality with the high *noblesse*, and who were now and then reminded, it may have been by a hardly perceptible, yet not on that account less exasperating, feudal smile, of the great and ignominious inequality which lay between them. And when the *canaille roturiere* took the liberty of beheading that high *noblesse*, it was done less to inherit their property than their ancestry, and to introduce a noble equality in place of a vulgar inequality. And we are the better authorized to believe that this striving for equality was the main principle of the Revolution, since the French speedily found themselves so happy and contented under the dominion of their great Emperor, who, fully appreciating that they were not yet of age, kept all their *freedom* within the limits of his powerful guardianship, permitting them only the pleasure of a perfect and admirable equality.

"Far more patient than the Frenchman, the Englishman easily bears the glances of a privileged aristocracy, consoling himself with the reflection that he has a right which renders it impossible for others to disturb his personal comfort or his daily requirements. Nor does the aristocracy here make a show of its privileges, as on the Continent. In the streets and in places of public resort in London, colored ribbons are seen only on women's bonnets, and gold and silver

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signs of distinction on the dresses of lackeys. Even that beautiful, colored livery which indicates with us military rank is, in England, anything but a sign of honor, and, as an actor after a play hastens to wash off the rouge, so an English officer hastens, when the hours of active duty are over, to strip off his red coat and again appear like a gentleman, in the plain garb of a gentleman. Only at the theatre of St. James are those decorations and costumes, which were raked from the off-scourings of the Middle Ages, of any avail. There we may see the ribbons of orders of nobility; there the stars glitter, silk knee-breeches and satin trains rustle, golden spurs and old-fashioned French styles of expression clatter; there the knight struts and the lady spreads herself. But what does a free Englishman care for the Court comedy of St. James, so long as it does not trouble him, and so long as no one interferes when he plays comedy in like manner in his own house, making his lackeys kneel before him, or plays with the garter of a pretty cook-maid? *'Honi soit qui mal y pense!'*

"As for the Germans, they need neither freedom nor equality. They are a speculative race, ideologists, prophets, and sages, dreamers who live only in the past and in the future, and who have no present. Englishmen and Frenchmen have a *present*; with them every day has its field of action, its struggle against enemies, its history. The German has nothing for which to battle, and when he began to realize that there might be things worth striving for, his philosophizing wiseacres taught him to doubt the existence of such things. It cannot be denied that the Germans love liberty, but it is in a different manner from other people. The Englishman loves liberty as his lawful wife, and, even if he does not treat her with remarkable tenderness, he is still ready in case of need to defend her like a man, and woe to the red-coated rascal who forces his way to her bedroom—let him do so as a gallant or as a catchpoll. The Frenchman loves liberty as his bride. He burns for her; he is a flame; he casts himself at her feet with the most extravagant protestations; he will fight for her to the death; he commits for her sake a thousand follies. The German loves liberty as though she were his old grandmother."

Men are strange beings! We grumble in our Fatherland; every stupid thing, every contrary trifle, vexes us there; like boys, we are always longing to rush forth into the wide world, and, when we finally find ourselves there, we find it too wide, and often yearn in secret for the narrow stupidities and contrarieties of home. Yes, we would fain be again in the old chamber, sitting behind the familiar stove, making for ourselves, as it were, a "cubby-house" near it, and, nestling there, read the *German General Advertiser*. So it was with me in my journey to England. Scarcely had I lost sight of the German shore ere there awoke in me a curious after-love for the German nightcaps

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and forest-like wigs which I had just left in discontent; and when the Fatherland faded from my eyes I found it again in my heart. And, therefore, it may be that my voice quivered in a somewhat lower key as I replied to the sallow man—"Dear sir, do not scold the Germans! If they are dreamers, still many of them have conceived such beautiful dreams that I would hardly incline to change them for the waking realities of our neighbors. Since we all sleep and dream, we can perhaps dispense with freedom; for our tyrants also sleep, and only dream their tyranny. We awoke only once—when the Catholic Romans robbed us of our dream-freedom; then we acted and conquered, and laid us down again and dreamed. O sir! do not mock our dreamers, for now and then they speak, like somnambulists, wondrous things in sleep, and their words become the seeds of freedom. No one can foresee the turn which things may take. The splenetic Briton, weary of his wife, may put a halter round her neck and sell her in Smithfield. The flattering Frenchman may perhaps be untrue to his beloved bride and abandon her, and, singing, dance after the Court dames (*courtisanes*) of his royal palace (*palais royal*). But the German will never turn his old grandmother quite out of doors; he will always find a place for her by his fireside, where she can tell his listening children her legends. Should Freedom ever vanish from the entire world—which God forbid!—a German dreamer would discover her again in his dreams."

While the steamboat, and with it our conversation, swam thus along the stream, the sun had set, and his last rays lit up the hospital at Greenwich, an imposing palace-like building which in reality consists of two wings, the space between which is empty, and a green hill crowned with a pretty little tower from which one can behold the passers-by. On the water the throng of vessels became denser and denser, and I wondered at the adroitness with which they avoided collision. While passing, many a sober and friendly face nodded greetings—faces whom we had never seen before, and were never to see again. We sometimes came so near that it was possible to shake hands in joint welcome and adieu. One's heart swells at the sight of so many bellying sails, and we feel strangely moved when the confused hum and far-off dance-music, and the deep voices of sailors, resound from the shore. But the outlines of all things vanished little by little behind the white veil of the evening mist, and there remained visible only a forest of masts, rising long and bare above it.

The sallow man still stood near me and gazed reflectively on high, as though he sought for the pale stars in the cloudy heaven. And, still gazing aloft, he laid his hand on my shoulder, and said in a tone as though secret thoughts involuntarily became words—- "Freedom and equality! they are not to be found on earth below nor in heaven above. The stars on high are not alike, for one is greater and brighter than another; none of them wanders free, all obey a prescribed and iron-like law—there is slavery in heaven as on earth!"

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“There is the Tower!” suddenly cried one of our traveling companions, as he pointed to a high building which rose like a spectral, gloomy dream above the cloud-covered London.

* * * * *

LONDON

I have seen the greatest wonder which the world can show to the astonished spirit; I have seen it, and am still astonished; and still there remains fixed in my memory the stone forest of houses, and amid them the rushing stream of faces of living men with all their motley passions, all their terrible impulses of love, of hunger, and of hatred—I mean London.

Send a *philosopher* to London, but, for your life, no poet! Send a philosopher there, and station him at a corner of Cheapside, where he will learn more than from all the books of the last Leipzig fair; and as the billows of human life roar around him, so will a sea of new thoughts rise before him, and the Eternal Spirit which moves upon the face of the waters will breathe upon him; the most hidden secrets of social harmony will be suddenly revealed to him; he will hear the pulse of the world beat audibly, and see it visibly; for if London is the right hand of the world—its active, mighty right hand—then we may regard that route which leads from the Exchange to Downing Street as the world’s pyloric artery.

But never send a poet to London! This downright earnestness of all things, this colossal uniformity, this machine-like movement, this troubled spirit in pleasure itself, this exaggerated London, smothers the imagination and rends the heart. And should you ever send a German poet thither—a dreamer, who stares at everything, even a ragged beggar-woman, or the shining wares of a goldsmith’s shop—why, then, at least he will find things going right badly with him, and he will be hustled about on every side, or perhaps be knocked over with a mild “God damn!” *God damn!*—damn the knocking about and pushing! I see at a glance that these people have enough to do. They live on a grand scale, and though food and clothes are dearer with them than with us, they must still be better fed and clothed than we are—as gentility requires. Moreover, they have enormous debts, yet occasionally, in a vainglorious mood, they make ducks and drakes of their guineas, pay other nations to box about for their pleasure, give their kings a handsome *douceur* into the bargain; and, therefore, John Bull must work to get the money for such expenditure. By day and by night he must tax his brain to discover new machines, and he sits and reckons in the sweat of his brow, and runs and rushes, without much looking around, from the Docks to the Exchange, and from the Exchange to the Strand; and therefore it is quite pardonable if he, when a poor German poet, gazing into a print-shop window, stands bolt in his way on the corner of Cheapside, should knock the latter sideways with a rather rough “God damn!”

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But the picture at which I was gazing as I stood at Cheapside corner was that of the French crossing the Beresina.

And when I, jolted out of my gazing, looked again on the raging street, where a parti-colored coil of men, women, and children, horses, stagecoaches, and with them a funeral, whirled groaning and creaking along, it seemed to me as though all London were such a Beresina Bridge, where every one presses on in mad haste to save his scrap of life; where the daring rider stamps down the poor pedestrian; where every one who falls is lost forever; where the best friends rush, without feeling, over one another's corpses; and where thousands in the weakness of death, and bleeding, grasp in vain at the planks of the bridge, and are shot down into the icy grave of death.

How much more pleasant and homelike it is in our dear Germany! With what dreaming comfort, in what Sabbath-like repose, all glides along here! Calmly the sentinels are changed, uniforms and houses shine in the quiet sunshine, swallows flit over the flagstones, fat Court-counciloresses smile from the windows; while along the echoing streets there is room enough for the dogs to sniff at each other, and for men to stand at ease and chat about the theatre, and bow deeply—oh, how deeply!—when some small aristocratic scamp or vice-scamp, with colored ribbons on his shabby coat, or some Court-marshal-low-brow struts along as if in judgment, graciously returning salutations.

I had made up my mind in advance not to be astonished at that immensity of London of which I had heard so much. But I had as little success as the poor schoolboy who determined beforehand not to feel the whipping which he was to receive. The facts of the case were that he expected to get the usual blows with the usual stick in the usual way on the back, whereas he received a most unusually severe licking on an unusual place with a cutting switch. I anticipated great palaces, and saw nothing but mere small houses. But their very uniformity and their limitless extent impress the soul wonderfully.

These houses of brick, owing to the damp atmosphere and coal smoke, are all of an uniform color, that is to say, of a brown olive-green, and are all of the same style of building, generally two or three windows wide, three stories high, and finished above with small red tiles, which remind one of newly extracted bleeding teeth; while the broad and accurately squared streets which these houses form seem to be bordered by endlessly long barracks. This has its reason in the fact that every English family, though it consist of only two persons, must still have a house to itself for its own castle, and rich speculators, to meet the demand, build, wholesale, entire streets of these dwellings, which they retail singly. In the principal streets of the city, where the business of London is most at home, where old-fashioned buildings are mingled with the new, and where the fronts of the houses are

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covered with signs, yards in length, generally gilt, and in relief, this characteristic uniformity is less striking—the less so, indeed, because the eye of the stranger is incessantly caught by the new and brilliant wares exposed for sale in the windows. And these articles do not merely produce an effect, because the Englishman completes so perfectly everything which he manufactures, and because every article of luxury, every astral lamp and every boot, every teakettle and every woman's dress, shines out so invitingly and so *finished*. There is also a peculiar charm in the art of arrangement, in the contrast of colors, and in the variety of the English shops; even the most commonplace necessities of life appear in a startling magic light through this artistic power of setting forth everything to advantage. Ordinary articles of food attract us by the new light in which they are placed; even uncooked fish lie so delightfully dressed that the rainbow gleam of their scales attracts us; raw meat lies, as if painted, on neat and many-colored porcelain plates, garlanded about with parsley—yes, everything seems painted, reminding us of the highly polished yet modest pictures of Franz Mieris. But the human beings whom we see are not so cheerful as in the Dutch paintings, for they sell the jolliest wares with the most serious faces, and the cut and color of their clothes is as uniform as that of their houses.

On the opposite side of the town, which they call the West End—"*the west end of the town*"—and where the more aristocratic and less occupied world lives, the uniformity spoken of is still more dominant; yet here there are very long and very broad streets, where all the houses are large as palaces, though anything but remarkable as regards their exterior, unless we except the fact that in these, as in all the better class of houses in London, the windows of the first *etage* (or second story) are adorned with iron-barred balconies, and also on the *rez de chaussee* there is a black railing protecting the entrance to certain subterranean apartments. In this part of the city there are also great "squares," where rows of houses like those already described form a quadrangle, in whose centre there is a garden, inclosed by an iron railing and containing some statue or other. In all of these places and streets the eye is never shocked by the dilapidated huts of misery. Everywhere we are stared down on by wealth and respectability, while, crammed away in retired lanes and dark, damp alleys, Poverty dwells with her rags and her tears.

The stranger who wanders through the great streets of London, and does not chance right into the regular quarters of the multitude, sees little or nothing of the fearful misery existing there. Only here and there at the mouth of some dark alley stands a ragged woman with a suckling babe at her weak breast, and begs with her eyes. Perhaps, if those eyes are still beautiful, we glance into them, and are

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shocked at the world of wretchedness visible within. The common beggars are old people, generally blacks, who stand at the corners of the streets cleaning pathways—a very necessary thing in muddy London—and ask for “coppers” in reward. It is in the dusky twilight that Poverty and her mates, Vice and Crime, glide forth from their lairs. They shun daylight the more anxiously since their wretchedness there contrasts more cruelly with the pride of wealth which glitters everywhere; only Hunger sometimes drives them at noonday from their dens, and then they stand with silent, speaking eyes, staring beseechingly at the rich merchant who hurries along, busy, and jingling gold, or at the lazy lord who, like a surfeited god, rides by on his high horse, casting now and then an aristocratically indifferent glance at the mob below, as though they were swarming ants, or rather a mass of baser beings, whose joys and sorrows have nothing in common with his feelings. Yes—for over the vulgar multitude which sticks fast to the soil there soars, like beings of a higher nature, England’s nobility, to whom their little island is only a temporary resting-place, Italy their summer garden, Paris their social salon, and the whole world their inheritance. They sweep along, knowing nothing of sorrow or suffering, and their gold is a talisman which conjures into fulfilment their wildest wish.

Poor Poverty! how agonizing must thy hunger be, where others swell in scornful superfluity! And when some one casts with indifferent hand a crust into thy lap, how bitter must the tears be wherewith thou moistenest it! Thou poisonest thyself with thine own tears. Well art thou in the right when thou alliest thyself to Vice and Crime! Outlawed criminals often bear more humanity in their hearts than those cool, reproachless town burghers of virtue, in whose white hearts the power of evil, it is true, is quenched—but with it, too, the power of good. And even vice is not always vice. I have seen women on whose cheeks red vice was painted, and in whose hearts dwelt heavenly purity. I have seen women—I would that I saw them again!—

WELLINGTON

The man has the bad fortune to meet with good fortune everywhere, and wherever the greatest men in the world were unfortunate; and that excites us, and makes him hateful. We see in him only the victory of stupidity over genius—Arthur Wellington triumphant where Napoleon Bonaparte is overwhelmed! Never was a man more ironically gifted by Fortune, and it seems as though she would exhibit his empty littleness by raising him high on the shield of victory. Fortune is a woman, and perhaps in womanly wise she cherishes a secret grudge against the man who overthrew her former darling, though the very overthrow came from her own will. Now she lets him conquer again on the Catholic Emancipation question—yes, in the very fight in which George Canning was destroyed.

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It is possible that he might have been loved had the wretched Londonderry been his predecessor in the Ministry; but it happens that he is the successor of the noble Canning—of the much-wept, adored, great Canning—and he conquers where Canning was overwhelmed. Without such an adversity of prosperity, Wellington would perhaps pass for a great man; people would not hate him, would not measure him too accurately, at least not with the heroic measure with which a Napoleon and a Canning are measured, and consequently it would never have been discovered how small he is as man.

He is a small man, and smaller than small at that. The French could say nothing more sarcastic of Polignac than that he was a Wellington without celebrity. In fact, what remains when we strip from a Wellington the field-marshal's uniform of celebrity?

I have here given the best apology for Lord Wellington—in the English sense of the word. My readers will be astonished when I honorably confess that I once praised this hero—and clapped on all sail in so doing. It is a good story, and I will tell it here:

My barber in London was a Radical, named Mr. White—poor little man in a shabby black dress, worn until it almost shone white again; he was so lean that even his full face looked like a profile, and the sighs in his bosom were visible ere they rose. These sighs were caused by the misfortunes of Old England—by the impossibility of paying the National Debt.

"Ah!" I generally heard him sigh, "why need the English people trouble themselves as to who reigns in France, and what the French are a-doing at home? But the high nobility, sir, and the High Church were afraid of the principles of liberty of the French Revolution; and to keep down these principles John Bull must give his gold and his blood, and make debts into the bargain. We've got all we wanted out of the war—the Revolution has been put down, the French eagles of liberty have had their wings cut, and the High Church may be cock-sure that none of these eagles will come a-flying over the Channel; and now the high nobility and the High Church between 'em ought to pay, anyway, for the debts which were made for their own good, and not for any good of the poor people. Ah! the poor people!"

Whenever Mr. White came to the "poor people" he always sighed more deeply than ever, and the refrain then was that bread and porter were so dear that the poor people must starve to feed fat lords, stag-hounds, and priests, and that there was only one remedy. At these words he was wont to whet his razor, and as he drew it murderously up and down the strop, he murmured grimly to himself, "Lords, priests, hounds!"

[Illustration: THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON]

But his Radical rage boiled most fiercely against the Duke of Wellington; he spat gall and poison whenever he alluded to him, and as he lathered me he himself foamed with rage. Once I was fairly frightened when he, while barbering away at my neck, burst out in wonted wise against Wellington, murmuring all the while, “If I only had him *this* way under my razor, *I’d* save him the trouble of cutting his own throat, as his brother in office and fellow-countryman, Londonderry, did, who killed himself that-a-way at North Cray in Kent—God damn him!”

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I felt that the man's hand trembled and, fearing lest he might imagine, in his excitement, that I really was the Duke of Wellington, I endeavored to allay his violence, and, in an underhand manner to soothe him, I called up his national pride; I represented to him that the Duke of Wellington had advanced the glory of the English, that he had always been an innocent tool in the hands of others, that he was fond of beefsteak, and that he finally—but the Lord only knows what fine things I said of Wellington as I felt that razor tickling around my throat!

What vexes me most is the reflection that Wellington will be as immortal as Napoleon Bonaparte. It is true that, in like manner, the name of Pontius Pilate will be as little likely to be forgotten as that of Christ. Wellington and Napoleon! It is a wonderful phenomenon that the human mind can at the same time think of both these names. There can be no greater contrast than the two, even in their external appearance. Wellington, the dumb ghost, with an ashy-gray soul in a buckram body, a wooden smile on his freezing face—and, by the side of *that*, think of the figure of Napoleon, every inch a god!

That figure never disappears from my memory. I still see him, high on his steed, with eternal eyes in his marble-like, imperial face, glancing calm as destiny on the Guards defiling past—he was then sending them to Russia, and the old Grenadiers glanced up at him so terribly devoted, so all-consciously serious, so proud in death—

"Te, Caesar, morituri, salutant."

There often steals over me a secret doubt whether I ever really saw him, if we were ever contemporaries, and then it seems to me as if his portrait, torn from the little frame of the present, vanished away more proudly and imperiously in the twilight of the past. His name even now sounds to us like a word of the early world, and as antique and as heroic as those of Alexander and Caesar. It has already become a rallying word among races, and when the East and the West meet they fraternize on that single name.

I once felt, in the deepest manner, how significantly and magically that name can sound. It was in the harbor of London, at the India Docks, and on board an East India-man just arrived from Bengal. It was a giant-like ship, fully manned with Hindoos. The grotesque forms and groups, the singularly variegated dresses, the enigmatical expressions of countenance, the strange gestures, the wild and foreign ring of their language, their shouts of joy and their laughter, with the seriousness ever rising and falling on certain soft yellow faces, their eyes like black flowers which looked at me as with wondrous woe—all of this awoke in me a feeling like that of enchantment; I was suddenly as if transported into Scherezade's story, and I thought that broad-leaved palms, and long-necked camels, and gold-covered elephants, and other fabulous trees and animals must forthwith appear. The supercargo who was on the vessel, and who understood as little of the language as I myself, could not, in his truly English narrow-mindedness, narrate to me enough of what a ridiculous race they were, nearly all pure

Mohammedans collected from every land of Asia, from the limits of China to the Arabian Sea, there being even some jet-black, woolly-haired Africans among them.

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To one whose whole soul was weary of the spiritless West, and who was as sick of Europe as I then was, this fragment of the East which moved cheerfully and changingly before my eyes was a refreshing solace; my heart enjoyed at least a few drops of that draught which I had so often tasted in gloomy Hanoverian or Royal Prussian winter nights, and it is very possible that the foreigners saw in me how agreeable the sight of them was to me, and how gladly I would have spoken a kind word to them. It was also plain from the very depths of their eyes how much I pleased them, and they would also have willingly said something pleasant to me, and it was a vexation that neither understood the other's language. At length a means occurred to me of expressing to them with a single word my friendly feelings, and, stretching forth my hands reverentially as if in loving greeting, I cried the name, "Mohammed!"

Joy suddenly flashed over the dark faces of the foreigners, and, folding their arms as reverentially in turn, as a cheerful greeting they exclaimed, "Bonaparte!"

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LAFAYETTE[57] (1833)

By HEINRICH HEINE

TRANSLATED BY CHARLES GODFREY LELAND

PARIS, January 19, 1832.

The *Temps* remarks today that the *Allgemeine Zeitung* now publishes articles which are hostile to the royal family, and that the German censorship, which does not permit the least remark to be leveled at absolute kings, does not show the least mercy toward a citizen-king. The *Temps* is really the shrewdest and cleverest journal in the world! It attains its object with a few mild words much more readily than others with the most blustering polemics. Its crafty hint is well understood, and I know of at least one liberal writer who no longer considers it honorable to use, under the permission of the censorship, such inimical language of a citizen-king as would not be allowed when applied to an absolute monarch. But in return for that, let Louis Philippe do us one single favor—which is to remain a citizen-king; for it is because he is becoming every day more and more like an absolute king that we must complain of him. He is certainly perfectly honorable as a man, an estimable father of a family, a tender spouse and a good economist, but it is vexatious to see how he allows all the trees of liberty to be felled and stripped of their beautiful foliage that they may be sawed into beams to support the tottering house of Orleans. For that, and that only, the Liberal press blames him, and the spirits of truth, in order to make war on him, even condescend to lie. It is melancholy and lamentable that through such tactics even the family of the King must suffer, although its members are as innocent as they are amiable. As regards this, the

German Liberal press, less witty but much kinder than its French elder sister, is guilty of no cruelties. “You should at least have pity on the King,” lately cried the good-tempered *Journal des Debats*. “Pity on Louis Philippe!” replied the *Tribune*. “This man asks for fifteen millions and our pity! Did he have pity on Italy, on Poland?”—*et cetera*.

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I saw a few days ago the young orphan of Menotti, who was hanged in Modena. Nor is it long since I saw Senora Luisa de Torrijos, a poor deathly-pale lady, who quickly returned to Paris when she learned on the Spanish frontier the news of the execution of her husband and of his fifty-two companions in misfortune. Ah! I really pity Louis Philippe.

La Tribune, the organ of the openly declared Republican party, is pitiless as regards its royal enemy, and every day preaches the Republic. The *National*, the most reckless and independent journal in France, has recently chimed in to the same air in a most surprising manner. And terrible as an echo from the bloodiest days of the Convention sounded the speeches of those chiefs of the *Societe des Amis du Peuple* who were placed last week before the court of assizes, "accused of having conspired against the existing Government in order to overthrow it and establish a republic." They were acquitted by the jury, because they proved that they had in no way conspired, but had simply uttered their convictions publicly. "Yes, we desire the overthrow of this feeble Government, we wish for a republic." Such was the refrain of all their speeches before the tribunal.

While on one side the serious Republicans draw the sword and growl with words of thunder, the *Figaro* flashes lightning, and laughs and swings its light lash most effectually. It is inexhaustible in clever sayings as to "the best republic," a phrase with which poor Lafayette is mocked, because he, as is well known, once embraced Louis Philippe before the Hotel de Ville and cried, "Vous etes la meilleure republique!" The *Figaro* recently remarked that we of course now require no republic, since we have seen the best. And it also said as cruelly, in reference to the debates on the civil list, that "*la meilleure republique coute quinze millions*." The Republican party will never forgive Lafayette his blunder in advocating a king. They reproach him with this, that he had known Louis Philippe long enough to be aware beforehand what was to be expected of him. Lafayette is now ill—*malade de chagrin*—heart-sick. All! the greatest heart of two worlds must feel bitterly the royal deception. It was all in vain that he in the very beginning continually insisted on the *Programme de l'Hotel de Ville*, on the republican institutions with which the monarchy should be surrounded, and on similar promises. But he was out-cried by the *doctrinaire* gossips and chatterers, who proved from the English history of 1688 that people in Paris in July, 1830, had fought simply to maintain the Charter, and that all their sacrifices and struggles had no other object than to replace the elder line of the Bourbons by the younger, just as all was finished in England by putting the House of Orange in place of the Stuarts. Thiers, who does not think with this party, though he now acts as their spokesman, has of late given them a

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good push forward. This indifferentist of the deepest dye, who knows so admirably how to preserve moderation in the clearness, intelligence, and illustration of his style, this Goethe of politics, is certainly at present the most powerful defender of the system of Perier, and, in fact, with his pamphlet against Chateaubriand he well-nigh annihilated that Don Quixote of Legitimacy, who sat so pathetically on his winged Rosinante, whose sword was more shining than sharp, and who shot only with costly pearls instead of good, piercing, leaden bullets.

In their irritation at the lamentable turn which events have taken, many of the enthusiasts for freedom go so far as to slander Lafayette. How far a man can go astray in this direction is shown by the book of Belmontet, which is also an attack on the well-known pamphlet by Chateaubriand, and in which the Republic is advocated with commendable freedom. I would here cite the bitter passages against Lafayette contained in this work, were they not on one side too spiteful, and on the other connected with a defense of the Republic which is not suitable to this journal. I therefore refer the reader to the work itself, and especially to a chapter in it entitled “The Republic.” One may there see how evil fortune may make even the noblest men unjust.

I will not here find fault with the brilliant delusion of the possibility of a republic in France. A royalist by inborn inclination, I have now, in France, become one from conviction. For I am convinced that the French could never tolerate any republic, neither according to the constitution of Athens or of Sparta, nor, least of all, to that of the United States. The Athenians were the student-youths of mankind; their constitution was a species of academic freedom, and it would be mere folly to seek to introduce it in this our matured age, to revive it in our senile Europe. And how could we put up with that of Sparta, that great and tiresome manufactory of patriotism, that soldiers’ barrack of republican virtue, that sublimely bad kitchen of equality, in which black broth was so vilely cooked that Attic wits declared it made men despise life and defy death in battle? How could such a constitution flourish in the very *foyer* of gourmands, in the fatherland of Very, of Vefour, and of Careme? This latter would certainly have thrown himself, like Vatel, on his sword, as a Brutus of cookery and as the last gastronome. Indeed, had Robespierre only introduced Spartan cookery, the guillotine would have been quite superfluous, for then the last aristocrats would have died of terror, or emigrated as soon as possible. Poor Robespierre! you would introduce stern republicanism to Paris—to a city in which one hundred and fifty thousand milliners and dressmakers, and as many barbers and perfumers, exercise their smiling, curling, and sweet-smelling industries!

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The monotony, the want of color, and the petty domestic citizens' life of America would be even more intolerable in the home of the "love of the spectacular," of vanity, fashion, and novelties. Indeed, the passion for decorations flourishes nowhere so much as in France. Perhaps, with the exception of August Wilhelm Schlegel, there is not a woman in Germany so fond of gay ribbons as the French; even the heroes of July, who fought for freedom and equality, afterward wore blue ribbons to distinguish themselves from the rest of the people. Yet, if I on this account doubt the success of a republic in Europe, it still cannot be denied that everything is leading to one; that the republican respect for law in place of veneration of royal personages is showing itself among the better classes, and that the Opposition, just as it played at comedy for fifteen years with a king, is now continuing the same game with royalty itself, and that consequently a republic may be for a short time, at least, the end of the song. The Carlists are aiding this movement, since they regard it as a necessary phase which will enable them to reestablish the absolute monarchy of the elder branch; therefore they now bear themselves like the most zealous republicans. Even Chateaubriand praises the Republic, calls himself a Republican from inclination, fraternizes with Marrast, and receives the accolade from Beranger. The *Gazette*—the hypocritical *Gazette de France*—now yearns for republican state forms, universal franchise, primary meetings, *et cetera*. It is amusing to see how these disguised priestlings now play the bully-braggart in the language of Sans-culottism, how fiercely they coquet with the red Jacobin cap, yet are ever and anon afflicted with the thought that they might forgetfully have put on in its place the red cap of a prelate; they take for an instant from their heads their borrowed covering and show the tonsure unto all the world. Such men as these now believe that they may insult Lafayette, and it serves as an agreeable relaxation from the sour republicanism, the compulsory liberty, which they must assume.

But let deluded friends and hypocritical enemies say what they will, Lafayette is, after Robespierre, the purest character of the French Revolution, and, next to Napoleon, its most popular hero. Napoleon and Lafayette are the two names which now bloom most beautifully in France. Truly their fame is each of a different kind. The latter fought for peace, not victory; the former rather for the laurel wreath than for that of oak leaves. It would indeed be ridiculous to measure the greatness of the two heroes with the same metre, and put one on the pedestal of the other, even as it would be absurd to set the statue of Lafayette on the Vendome column—that monument made of the cannon conquered on so many fields of battle, the sight of which, as Barbier sings, no French mother can endure. On this bronze column place Napoleon, the man of iron, here, as in life, standing on his fame, earned by cannon, rising in terrible isolation to the clouds, so that every ambitious soldier, when he beholds him, the unattainable one, there on high, may have his heart humbled and healed of the vain love of celebrity, and thus this colossal column of metal, as a lightning conductor of conquering heroism, will do much for the cause of peace in Europe.

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Lafayette has raised for himself a better column than that of the Place Vendome, and a better monumental image than one of metal or marble. Where is there marble as pure as the heart of old Lafayette, or metal as firm as his fidelity? It is true that he was always one-sided, but one-sided like the magnetic needle, which always points to the north, and never once veers to south or west. So he has for forty years said the same thing, and pointed constantly to North America. He is the one who opened the Revolution with the declaration of the rights of man; to this hour he perseveres in this belief, without which there is no salvation and no health to be hoped for—the one-sided man with his one-sided heavenly region of freedom. He is indeed no genius, as was Napoleon, in whose head the eagles of inspiration built their nests, while the serpents of calculation entwined in his heart; but then he was never intimidated by eagles nor seduced by serpents. As a young man he was wise as a graybeard, as a graybeard fiery as a youth, a protector of the people against the wiles of the great, a protector of the great against the rage of the people, compassionating yet combating, never arrogant and never discouraged, equally firm and mild—the unchangeable Lafayette! and so, in his one-sidedness and equanimity, he has remained on the same spot from the days of Marie Antoinette to the present hour. And, as a trusty Eckart of liberty, he still stands leaning on his sword before the entrance to the Tuileries, warning the world against that seductive Venusberg, whose magic tones sing so enticingly, and from whose sweet snares the poor wretches who are once entangled in them can never escape.

It is certainly true that the dead Napoleon is more beloved by the French than is the living Lafayette. This is perhaps because he is dead, which is to me the most delightful thing connected with him; for, were he alive, I should be obliged to fight against him. The world outside of France has no idea of the boundless devotion of the French people to Napoleon. Therefore the discontented, when they determine on a decided and daring course, will begin by proclaiming the young Napoleon, in order to secure the sympathy of the masses. Napoleon is, for the French, a magic word which electrifies and benumbs them. There sleep a thousand cannon in this name, even as in the column of the Place Vendome, and the Tuileries will tremble should these cannon once awake. As the Jews never idly uttered the name of their God, so Napoleon is here very seldom called by his, and people speak of him as *l'homme*, "the man." But his picture is seen everywhere, in engravings and plaster casts, in metal and wood. On all boulevards and carrefours are orators who praise and popular minstrels who sing him —the Man—and his deeds. Yesterday evening, while returning home, I came into a dark and lonely lane, in which there stood a child some three years old, who, by a candle stuck into the earth, lisped

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a song praising the Emperor. As I threw him a sou on the handkerchief spread out, something slid up to me, begging for another. It was an old soldier, who could also sing a song of the glory of the great Emperor, for this glory had cost him both legs. The poor man did not beg in the name of God, but implored with most believing fervor, "*Au nom de Napoleon, donnez-moi un sou.*" So this name is the best word to conjure with among the people. Napoleon is its god, its cult, its religion, and this religion will, by and by, become tiresome, like every other.

Lafayette, on the contrary, is venerated more as a man or as a guardian angel. He, too, lives in picture and in song, but less heroically; and—honorably confessed!—it had a comic effect on me when, last year, on the 28th July, I heard in the song of *La Parisienne* the words—

"Lafayette aux cheveux blancs,"

while I saw him in person standing near me in his brown wig. It was the Place de la Bastille; the man was in his right place, but still I needs must laugh to myself. It may be that such a comic combination brings him humanly somewhat nearer to our hearts. His good-nature, his *bonhomie*, acts even on children, and they perhaps understand his greatness better than do the grown people. And here I will tell a little story about a beggar which will show the characteristic contrast between the glory of Lafayette and that of Napoleon. I was lately standing at a street corner before the Pantheon, and as usual lost in thought in contemplating that beautiful building, when a little Auvergnat came begging for a sou, and I gave him half-a-franc to be rid of him. But he approached me all the more familiarly with the words, "*Est-ce que vous connaissez le general Lafayette?*" and as I assented to this strange question, the proudest satisfaction appeared on the naive and dirty face of the pretty boy, and with serio-comic expression he said, *"Il est de mon pays,"* for he naturally believed that any man who was generous enough to give him ten sous must be, of course, an admirer of Lafayette, and judged me worthy that he should present himself as a compatriot of that great man. The country folk also have for Lafayette the most affectionate respect, and all the more because he chiefly busies himself with agriculture. From this, result the freshness and simplicity which might be lost in constant city life. In this he is like one of those great Republicans of earlier days who planted their own cabbages, but who in time of need hastened from the plough to the battle or the tribune, and after combat and victory returned to their rural work. On the estate where Lafayette passes the pleasant portion of the year, he is generally surrounded by aspiring young men and pretty girls. There hospitality, be it of heart or of table, rules supreme; there are much laughing and dancing; there is the court of the sovereign people; there any one may be presented who is the son of his own works and has never made mesalliance with falsehood—and Lafayette is the master of ceremonies. The name of this country place is Lagrange, and

it is very charming when the hero of two worlds relates to the young people his adventures; then he appears like an epos surrounded by the garlands of an idyll.

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But it is in the real middle-class more than any other, that is, among tradespeople and small shop-keepers, that there is the most veneration for Lafayette. They simply worship him. Lafayette, the establisher of order, is their idol. They adore him as a kind of Providence on horseback, an armed tutelary patron of public peace and security, as a genius of freedom, who also takes care in the battle for freedom that nothing is stolen and that everybody keeps his little property. The great army of public order, as Casimir Perier called the National Guard, the well-fed heroes in great bearskin caps into which small shopmen's heads are stuck, are drunk with delight when they speak of Lafayette, their old general, their Napoleon of peace. Truly he is the Napoleon of the small citizen, of those brave folks who always pay their bills—those uncle tailors and cousin glove-makers who are indeed too busy by day to think of Lafayette, but who praise him afterward in the evening with double enthusiasm, so that one may say that it is about eleven o'clock at night, when the shops are shut, that his fame is in full bloom.

I have just before used the expression "master of ceremonies." I now recall that Wolfgang Menzel has in his witty trifling called Lafayette a master of ceremonies of Liberty. This was when the former spoke in the *Literaturblatt* of the triumphal march of Lafayette across the United States, and of the deputations, addresses, and solemn discourses which attended such occasions. Other much less witty folk wrongly imagine that Lafayette is only an old man who is kept for show or used as a machine. But they need hear him speak only once in public to learn that he is not a mere flag which is followed or sworn by, but that he is in person the *gonfaloniere* in whose hands is the good banner, the oriflamme of the nations. Lafayette is perhaps the most prominent and influential speaker in the Chamber of Deputies. When he speaks, he always hits the nail, and his nailed-up enemies, on the head.

When it is needed, when one of the great questions of humanity is discussed, then Lafayette ever rises, eager for strife as a youth. Only the body is weak and tottering, broken by age and the battles of his time, like a hacked and dented old iron armor, and it is touching when he totters under it to the tribune and has reached his old post, to see how he draws a deep breath and smiles. This smile, his delivery, and the whole being of the man while speaking on the tribune, are indescribable. There is in it all so much that is winsome and yet so much delicate irony, that one is enchained as by a marvelous curiosity, a sweet, strange enigma. We know not if these are the refined manners of a French marquis or the straightforward simplicity of an American citizen. All that is best in the *ancien regime*, the chivalresque courtesy and tact, are here wondrously fused with what is best in the modern *bourgeoisie*,

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love of equality, simplicity, and honesty. Nothing is more interesting than when mention is made, in the Chamber, of the first days of the Revolution, and some one in *doctrinaire* fashion tears some historical fact from its true connection and turns it to his own account in speech. Then Lafayette destroys with a few words the erroneous deduction by illustrating or correcting the true sense of such an event by citing the circumstances relating to it. Even Thiers must in such a case strike sail, and the great historiographer of the Revolution bows before the outburst of its great and living monument, General Lafayette.

There sits in the Chamber, just before the tribune a very old man, with long silvery hair falling over his black clothing. His body is girted with a very broad tricolored scarf; he is the old messenger who has always filled that office in the Chamber since the beginning of the Revolution, and who in this post has witnessed the momentous events of the world's history from the days of the first National Assembly till the *juste milieu*. I am told that he often speaks of Robespierre, whom he calls *le bon Monsieur Robespierre*. During the Restoration the old man suffered from colic, but since he has wound the tricolored scarf round his waist he finds himself well again. His only trouble now, in the dull and lazy times of the *juste milieu*, is drowsiness. I once even saw him fall asleep while Mauguin was speaking. Indeed, the man has, doubtless, in his time heard better than Mauguin, who is, however, one of the best orators of the Opposition, though he is not found to be very startling or effective by one *qui a beaucoup connu ce bon Monsieur de Robespierre*. But when Lafayette speaks, then the old messenger awakes from his twilight drowsiness, he seems to be aroused like an old war-horse of hussars when he hears the sound of a trumpet—there rise within him sweet memories of youth, and he nods delightedly with his silver-white head.

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THE ROMANTIC SCHOOL[58] (1833-35)

BY HEINRICH HEINE

TRANSLATED BY CHARLES GODFREY LELAND

But what was the Romantic School in Germany? It was nothing else but the reawakening of the poetry of the Middle Ages, as it had shown itself in its songs, images, and architecture, in art and in life. But this poetry had risen from Christianity; it was a passion-flower which had sprung from the blood of Christ. I do not know whether the melancholy passion-flower of Germany is known by that name in France, or whether popular legend attributes to it the same mystical origin. It is a strange, unpleasantly colored blossom, in whose calyx we see set forth the implements which were used in

the crucifixion of Christ, such as the hammer, pincers, and nails—a flower which is not so much ugly as ghostly, and even whose sight awakens in our soul a shuddering pleasure, like the convulsively agreeable sensations which come from pain itself. From this view the flower was indeed the fittest symbol for Christianity itself, whose most thrilling chain was the luxury of pain.

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Though in France only Roman Catholicism is understood by the word Christianity, I must specially preface that I speak only of the latter. I speak of that religion in whose first dogmas there is a damnation of all flesh, and which not only allows to the spirit power over the flesh, but will also kill this to glorify the spirit. I speak of that religion by whose unnatural requisitions sin and hypocrisy really came into the world, in that by the condemnation of the flesh the most innocent sensuous pleasures became sins, and because the impossibility of a man's becoming altogether spiritual naturally created hypocrisy. I speak of that religion which, by teaching the doctrine of the casting away of all earthly goods and of cultivating a dog-like, abject humility and angelic patience, became the most approved support of despotism. Men have found out the real life and meaning (*Wesen*) of this religion, and do not now content themselves with promises of supping in Paradise; they know that matter has also its merits, and is not all the devil's, and they now defend the delights of this world, this beautiful garden of God, our inalienable inheritance. And therefore, because we have grasped so entirely all the consequences of that absolute spiritualism, we may believe that the Christian Catholic view of the world has reached its end. Every age is a sphinx, which casts itself into the abyss when man has guessed its riddle.

Yet we do in no wise deny the good results which this Christian Catholic view of the world established in Europe. It was necessary as a wholesome reaction against the cruelly colossal materialism which had developed itself in the Roman realm and threatened to destroy all spiritual human power. As the lascivious memoirs of the last century form the *pieces justificatives* of the French Revolution, as the terrorism of a *comite du salut public* seems to be necessary physic when we read the confessions of the aristocratic world of France, so we recognize the wholesomeness of ascetic spiritualism when we read Petronius or Apuleius, which are to be regarded as the *pieces justificatives* of Christianity. The flesh had become so arrogant in this Roman world that it required Christian discipline to chasten it. After the banquet of a Trimalchion, such a hunger-cure as Christianity was a necessity.

Or was it that as lascivious old men seek by being whipped to excite new power of enjoyment, so old Rome endured monkish chastisement to find more exquisite delight in torture and voluptuous rapture in pain? Evil excess of stimulant! it took from the body of the state of Rome its last strength. It was not by division into two realms that Rome perished. On the Bosphorus, as by the Tiber, Rome was devoured by the same Jewish spiritualism, and here, as there, Roman history was that of a long dying agony which lasted for centuries. Did murdered Judea, in leaving to Rome its spiritualism, wish to revenge itself on the victorious foe, as did the dying centaur who craftily left to the son of Hercules the deadly garment steeped in his own blood? Truly Rome, the Hercules among races, was so thoroughly devoured by Jewish poison that helm and harness fell from its withered limbs, and its imperial war-voice died away into the wailing cadences of monkish prayer and the soft trilling of castrated boys.

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But what weakens old age strengthens youth. That spiritualism had a healthy action on the too sound and strong races of the North; the too full-blooded barbarous bodies were spiritualized by Christianity, and European civilization began. The Catholic Church has in this respect the strongest claims on our regard and admiration, for it succeeded by subduing with its great genial institutions the bestiality of Northern barbarians and by mastering brutal matter.

The Art-work of the Middle Ages manifests this mastery of mere material by mind, and it is very often its only mission. The epic poems of this period may be easily classed according to the degree of this subjection or influence. There can be no discussion here of lyrical and dramatic poems, for the latter did not exist, and the former are as like in every age as are the songs of nightingales in spring.

Although the epic poetry of the Middle Ages was divided into sacred and profane, both were altogether Christian according to their kind; for if sacred poesy sang of the Jewish race and its history, the only race which was regarded as holy, or of the heroes and legends of the Old and New Testaments, and, in brief, the Church—still all the life of the time was reflected in profane poetry with its Christian views and action. The flower of the religious poetic art in the German Middle Ages is perhaps *Barlaam and Josaphat*, in which the doctrine of abnegation, of abstinence, and the denial and contempt of all worldly glory, is set forth most consistently. Next to this I would class the *The Eulogium of St. Hanno (Lobgesang auf den heiligen Anno)* as the best of the religious kind; but this is of a far more secular character, differing from the first as the portrait of a Byzantine saint differs from an old German one. As in those Byzantine pictures, so we see in *Barlaam and Josaphat* the utmost simplicity; there is no perspective side-work, and the long, lean, statue-like forms and the idealistic serious faces come out strongly drawn, as if from a mellow gold ground. On the other hand, in the song of praise of St. Hanno, the side-work or accessories are almost the subject, and, notwithstanding the grandeur of the plan, the details are treated in the minutest manner, so that we know not whether to admire in it the conception of a giant or the patience of a dwarf. But the evangel-poem of Ottfried, which is generally praised as the masterpiece of sacred poetry, is far less admirable than the two which I have mentioned.

In profane poetry we find, as I have already signified, first the cycle of sagas of the *Nibelungen* and the *Heldenbuch*, or *Book of Heroes*. In them prevails all the pre-Christian manner of thought and of feeling; in them rude strength has not as yet been softened by chivalry. There the stern Kempe-warriors of the North stand like stone images, and the gentle gleam and the more refined breath of Christianity have

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not as yet penetrated their iron armor. But little by little a light dawns in the old Teutonic forest; the ancient idolatrous oak-trees are felled, and we see a brighter field of battle where Christ wars with the heathen. This appears in the saga-cycle of Charlemagne, in which what we really see is the Crusades reflecting themselves with their religious influences. And now from the spiritualizing power of Christianity, chivalry, the most characteristic feature of the Middle Ages, unfolds itself, and is at last sublimed into a spiritual knighthood. This secular knighthood appears most attractively glorified in the sagacycle of King Arthur, in which the sweetest gallantry, the most refined courtesy, and the most adventurous passion for combat prevail. Among the charmingly eccentric arabesques and fantastic flower-pictures of this poem we are greeted by the admirable Iwain, the all-surpassing Lancelot du Lac, and the bold, gallant, and true, but somewhat tiresome, Wigalois. Nearly allied and interwoven with this cyclus of sagas is that of the Holy Grail, in which the spiritual knighthood is glorified; and in this epoch we meet three of the grandest poems of the Middle Ages, the *Titurel*, the *Parsifal*, and the *Lohengrin*. Here indeed we find ourselves face to face with Romantic Poetry. We look deeply into her great sorrowing eyes; she twines around us, unsuspectingly, her fine scholastic nets, and draws us down into the bewildering, deluding depths of medieval mysticism.

At last, however, we come to poems of that age which are not unconditionally devoted to Christian spiritualism; nay, it is often indirectly reflected on, where the poet disentangles himself from the bonds of abstract Christian virtues and plunges delighted into the world of pleasure and of glorified sensuousness; and it is not the worst poet, by any means, who has left us the principal work thus inspired. This is *Tristan and Isolde*; and I must declare that Gottfried von Strassburg, the composer of this most beautiful poem of the Middle Ages, is perhaps also its greatest poet, towering far above all the splendor of Wolfram von Eschenbach, whom we so admire in *Parsifal* and the fragments of *Titurel*. We are at last permitted to praise Gottfried unconditionally, though in his own time his book was certainly regarded as godless, and similar works, among them the *Lancelot*, were considered as dangerous. And some very serious results did indeed ensue. The fair Francesca da Polenta and her handsome friend had to pay dearly for the pleasure of reading on a summer day in such a book; but the trouble came not from the reading, but from their suddenly ceasing to read.

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There is in all these poems of the Middle Ages a marked character which distinguishes them from those of Greece and Rome. We characterize this difference by calling the first Romantic and the other Classic. Yet these appellations are only uncertain rubrics, and have led hitherto to the most discouraging, wearisome entanglements, which become worse since we give to antique poetry the designation of “Plastic,” instead of “Classic.” From this arose much misunderstanding; for, justly, all poets should work their material plastically, be it Christian or heathen; they should set it forth in clear outlines; in short, plastic form should be the main desideratum in modern Romantic art, quite as much as in the ancient. And are not the figures in the *Divina Commedia* of Dante or in the pictures of Raphael as plastic as those in Virgil? The difference lies in this, that the plastic forms in ancient art are absolutely identical with the subject or the idea which the artist would set forth, as, for example, that the wanderings of Ulysses mean nothing else than the journeyings of a man named Odysseus, who was son of Laertes and husband of Penelope; and further, that the Bacchus which we see in the Louvre is nothing else than the graceful, winsome son of Semele, with audacious melancholy in his eyes and sacred voluptuousness on his soft and arching lips. It is quite otherwise in Romantic art, in which the wild wanderings of a knight have ever an esoteric meaning, symbolizing perhaps the erring course of life. The dragon whom he overcomes is sin; the almond which from afar casts comforting perfume to the traveler is the Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, which are three in one, as shell, fibre, and kernel make one nut. When Homer describes the armor of a hero, it is a good piece of work, worth such and such a number of oxen; but when a monk of the Middle Ages describes in his poems the garments of the Mother of God, one may be sure that by this garb he means as many virtues, and a peculiar significance lies hidden under this holy covering of the immaculate virginity of Maria, who, as her son is the almond-kernel, is naturally sung as the almond-flower. That is the character of the medieval poetry which we call Romantic.

Classic art had only to represent the finite or determined, and its forms could be one and the same with the idea of the artist. Romantic art had to set forth, or rather signify, the infinite and purely spiritual, and it took refuge in a system of traditional, or rather of parabolistic symbols, as Christ himself had sought to render clear his spiritualistic ideas by all kinds of beautiful parables. Hence the mystical, problematic, marvelous, and transcendental in the artwork of the Middle Ages, in which fantasy makes her most desperate efforts to depict the purely spiritual by means of sensible images, and invents colossal follies, piling Pelion on Ossa and *Parsifal* on *Titurel* to attain to heaven.

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Among other races where poetry attempted to display the infinite, and where monstrous fancies appeared, as, for instance, among the Scandinavians and Indians, we find poems which, being romantic, are given that classification.

We cannot say much as to the music of the Middle Ages, for original documents, which might have served for our guidance, are wanting. It was not till late in the sixteenth century that the masterpieces of Catholic church music, which cannot be too highly praised, appeared. These express in the most exquisite manner pure Christian spirituality. The recitative arts, which are spiritual from their very nature, could indeed flourish fairly in Christianity, yet it was less favorable to those of design, for as these had to represent the victory of mind over matter, and yet must use matter as the means wherewith to work, they had to solve a problem against Nature. Hence we find in sculpture and painting those revolting subjects—martyrdoms, crucifixions, dying saints, and the flesh crushed in every form. Such themes were martyrdom for sculpture; and when I contemplate those distorted images in which Christian asceticism and renunciation of the senses are expressed by distorted, pious heads, long thin arms, starveling legs, and awkwardly fitting garments, I feel an indescribable compassion for the artists of that time. The painters were indeed more favored, for the material for their work, because of its susceptivity to varied play of color, did not antagonize spirituality so obstinately as the material of the sculptors, and yet they were obliged to load the sighing canvas with the most repulsive forms of suffering. In truth, when we regard many galleries which contain nothing but scenes of bloodshed, scourging, and beheading, one might suppose that the old masters had painted for the collection of an executioner.

But human genius can transform and glorify even the unnatural; many painters solved this problem of making what was revolting beautiful and elevating—the Italians, especially, succeeding in paying tribute to beauty at the expense of spirituality, and in rising to that ideality which attained perfection in so many pictures of the Madonna. As regards this subject the Catholic clergy always made some concession to the physical. This image of immaculate beauty which is glorified by maternal love and suffering had the privilege of being made famous by poets and painters, and adorned with all charms of the sense, for it was a magnet which could attract the multitude to the lap of Christianity. Madonna Maria was the beautiful *dame du comptoir* of the Catholic Church, who, with her beautiful eyes, attracted and held fast its customers, especially the barbarians of the North.

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Architecture had in the Middle Ages the same character as the other arts, as indeed all the manifestations of life then harmonized so marvelously with one another. The tendency to parable shows itself here, as in poetry. When we now enter a Gothic cathedral, we hardly suspect the esoteric sense of its stone symbolism; only a general impression pierces our soul; we realize an elevation of feeling and mortification of the flesh. The interior is a hollow cross, and we wander among the instruments of martyrdom itself; the variegated windows cast on us red and green light, like blood and corruption; funeral songs wail about us; under our feet are mortuary tablets and decay; and the soul soars with the colossal columns to a giddy height, tearing itself with pain from the body, which falls like a weary, worn-out garment to the ground. But when we behold the exteriors of these Gothic cathedrals, these enormous buildings which are wrought so aerially, so finely, delicately, transparently, cut as it were into such open work that one might take them for Brabant lace in marble, then we feel truly the power of that age which could so master stone itself that it seems spectrally transfused with spiritual life, and thus even the hardest material declares Christian spirituality.

But arts are only the mirror of life, and, as Catholicism died away, so its sounds grew fainter and its lights dimmer in art. During the Reformation Catholic song gradually disappeared in Europe, and in its place we see the long-slumbering poetry of Greece re-awakening to life. But it was only an artificial spring, a work of the gardener, not of the sun, and the trees and flowers were in close pots, and a glass canopy protected them from cold and northern winds.

In the world's history no event is the direct result of another; all events rather exert a mutual influence. It was by no means due only to the Greek scholars who emigrated to Europe after the fall of Byzantium that a love for Grecian culture and the desire to imitate it became so general among us; a similar Protestantism prevailed then in art as well as in life. Leo X., that splendid Medici, was as zealous a Protestant as Luther, and as there was a Latin prose protest in Wittenberg, so they protested poetically in Rome in stone, color, and *ottaverime*. And do not the mighty marble images of Michelangelo, the laughing nymphs of Giulio Romano, and the joyous intoxication of life in the verses of Ludovico Ariosto form a protesting opposition to the old, gloomy, worn-out Catholicism? The painters of Italy waged a polemic against priestdom which was perhaps more effective than that of the Saxon theologian. The blooming rosy flesh in the pictures of Titian is all Protestantism. The limbs of his Venus are more thorough *theses* than those which the German monk pasted on the church door of Wittenberg. Then it was that men felt as if suddenly freed from the force and pressure of a thousand years; the artists, most of all, again breathed freely as the nightmare of Christianity seemed to spin whirling from their breasts, and they threw themselves with enthusiasm into the sea of Greek joyousness from whose foam rose to them goddesses of beauty. Painters once more limned the ambrosial joys of Olympus; sculptors carved, with the joy of yore, old heroes from the marble; poets again sang the house of Atreus and Laius; and so the age of new classic poetry began.

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As modern life was most perfectly developed in France under Louis XIV., so the new classic poetry received there its most finished perfection, and, in a measure, an independent originality. Through the political influence of that great king this poetry spread over Europe; in Italy, its home, it assumed a French color, and thence the heroes of French tragedy went with the Anjous to Spain; it passed with Henrietta Maria to England, and we Germans, as a matter of course, built our clumsy temples to the powdered Olympus of Versailles. The most famous high-priest of this religion was Gottsched, that wonderful long wig whom our dear Goethe has so admirably described in his memoirs.

Lessing was the literary Arminius who delivered our theatre from this foreign rule. He showed us the nothingness, the laughableness, the flat and faded folly of those imitations of the French theatre, which were in turn imitated from the Greek. But he became the founder of modern German literature, not only by his criticism, but by his own works of art. This man pursued with enthusiasm and sincerity art, theology, antiquity, and archaeology, the art of poetry, history—all with the same zeal and to the same purpose. There lives and breathes in all his works the same great social idea, the same progressive humanity, the same religion of reason, whose John he was, and whose Messiah we await. This religion he always preached, but, alas! too often alone and in the desert. And there was one art only of which he knew nothing—that of changing stones into bread, for he consumed the greatest part of his life in poverty and under hard pressure—a curse which clings to nearly all great German geniuses, and will last, it may be, till ended by political freedom. Lessing was more inspired by political feelings than men supposed, a peculiarity which we do not find among his contemporaries, and we can now see for the first time what he meant in sketching the duo-despotism in *Emilia Galotti*. He was regarded then as a champion of freedom of thought and against clerical intolerance; for his theological writings were better understood. The fragments *On the Education of the Human Race*, which Eugene Rodrigue has translated into French, may give an idea of the vast comprehensiveness of Lessing's mind. The two critical works which exercised the most influence on art are his *Hamburg Dramatic Art (Hamburgische Dramaturgie)*, and his *Laokoon, or the Limits of Painting and Poetry*. His most remarkable theatrical pieces are *Emilia Galotti, Minna von Barnhelm,* and *Nathan the Wise*.

Gotthold Ephraim Lessing was born at Camenz in Lausitz, January 22, 1729, and died in Brunswick, February 15, 1781. He was a thorough-going man who, when he destroyed something old in a battle, at the same time always created something new and better. "He was," says a German author, "like those pious Jews, who, during the second building of the Temple, were often troubled by attacks of the enemy, and so fought with one hand while with the other they worked at the house of God." This is not the place where I can say more of Lessing, but I cannot refrain from remarking that he is, of all who are recorded in the whole history of literature, the writer whom I love best.

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I will here mention another author who worked in the same spirit, with the same object, as Lessing, and who may be regarded as his successor. It is true that his eulogy is here also out of place, since he occupies an altogether peculiar position in literature, and a unique relation to his time and to his contemporaries. It is Johann Gottfried Herder, born in 1744 at Mohrungen, in East Prussia, and who died at Weimar in the year 1803.

Literary history is the great “Morgue” where every one seeks his dead, those whom he loves or to whom he is related. When I see there, among so many dead who were of little interest, a Lessing or a Herder, with their noble, manly countenances, my heart throbs; I cannot pass them by without hastily kissing their dead lips.

Yet if Lessing did so much to destroy the habit of imitating French second-hand Greekdom, he still, by calling attention to the true works of art of Greek antiquity, gave an impulse to a new kind of ridiculous imitations. By his battling with religious superstition he advanced the sober search for clearer views which spread widely in Berlin, which had in the late blessed Nicolai its chief organ, and in the General German Library its arsenal. The most deplorable mediocrity began to show itself more repulsively than ever, and flatness and insipidity blew themselves up like the frog in the fable.

It is a great mistake to suppose that Goethe, who had already come before the world, was at once universally recognized as a writer of commanding genius. His *Goetz von Berlichingen* and his *Werther* were received with a degree of enthusiasm, to be sure; but so, too, were the works of common bunglers, and Goethe had but a small niche in the temple of literature. As I have said, *Goetz* and *Werther* had a spirited reception, but more on account of the subject-matter than their artistic merits, which very few appreciated in these masterworks. *Goetz* was a dramatized romance of chivalry, and such writings were then the rage. In *Werther* the world saw the reproduction of a true story, that of young Jerusalem, who shot himself dead for love, and thereby, in those dead-calm days, made a great noise. People read with tears his touching letters; some shrewdly observed that the manner in which Werther had been banished from aristocratic society had increased his weariness of life. The discussion of suicide caused the book to be still more discussed; it occurred to several fools on this occasion to make away with themselves, and the book, owing to its subject, went off like a shot. The novels of August Lafontaine were just as much read, and, as this author wrote incessantly, he was more famous than Wolfgang von Goethe. Wieland was the great poet then, with whom perhaps might be classed the ode-maker, Rambler of Berlin. Wieland was honored idolatrously, far more at that time than Goethe. Iffland ruled the theatre with his dreary *bourgeois* dramas, and Kotzebue with his flat and frivolously witty jests.

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It was in opposition to this literature that there sprang up in Germany, at the end of the last century, a school which we call the Romantic, and of which August Wilhelm and Friedrich Schlegel have presented themselves as managing agents. Jena, where these and many other souls in like accord found themselves “off and on,” was the centre from which the new esthetic doctrine spread. I say doctrine, for this school began with judgments of the art-works of the past and recipes for art-works of the future, and in both directions the Schlegel school rendered great service to esthetic criticism. By judging of such works of art as already existed, either their faults and failures were indicated, or their merits and beauties brought to light. In controversy and in indicating artistic shortcomings, the Schlegels were entirely imitators of old Lessing; they obtained possession of his great battle-blade, but the arm of August William Schlegel was too tenderly weak and the eyes of his brother Friedrich too mystically clouded for the former to strike so strongly and the latter so keenly and accurately as Lessing. True, in descriptive criticism, where the beauties of a work of art are to be set forth—where it came to a delicate detection of its characteristics and bringing them home to our intelligence—then, compared to the Schlegels, old Lessing was nowhere. But what shall I say as to their recipes for preparing works of art? There we find in the Schlegels a weakness which we think may also be detected in Lessing; for the latter is as weak in affirming as he is strong in denying. He rarely succeeds in laying down a fundamental principle, still more seldom a correct one. He wants the firm basis of a philosophy or of a philosophical system. And this is still more sadly the case with the brothers Schlegel.

Much is fabled as to the influence of Fichtean Idealism and Schelling’s Philosophy of Nature on the Romantic school, which is even declared to have sprung from it. But I see here, at the most, only the influence of certain fragments of thoughts from Fichte and Schelling, and not at all that of a philosophy. This may be explained on the simple ground that Fichte’s philosophy had lost its hold, and Fichte himself had made it lose its interest by a mingling of tenets and ideas from Schelling; and because, on the other hand, Schelling had never set forth a philosophy, but only a vague philosophizing, an unsteady, vacillating improvisation of poetical philosophemes. It may be that it was from the Fichtean Idealism—that deeply ironical system, where the I is opposed to the not—I and annihilates it—that the Romantic school took the doctrine of irony which the late Solger especially developed, and which the Schlegels at first regarded as the soul of art, but which they subsequently found to be fruitless and exchanged for the more positive axioms of the Theory of Identity of Schelling. Schelling, who then taught in Jena, had indeed a great personal influence on the Romantic school; he is, what is not generally known in France, also a bit of a poet; and it is said that he was in doubt whether he should not deliver all his philosophical doctrines in a poetic or even metrical form. This doubt characterizes the man.

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THE RABBI OF BACHARACH[59] (1840)

With kindly greeting, the Legend of the Rabbi of Bacharach is dedicated to his friend HENRY LAUBE by the AUTHOR

A FRAGMENT

TRANSLATED BY CHARLES GODFREY LELAND

TRANSLATION REVISED BY PAUL BERNARD THOMAS

CHAPTER I

On the Lower Rhine, where its banks begin to lose their smiling aspect, where the hills and cliffs with their romantic ruined castles rise more defiantly, and a wilder, sterner majesty prevails, there lies, like a strange and fearful tale of olden times, the gloomy and ancient town of Bacharach. But these walls, with their toothless battlements and blind turrets, in whose nooks and niches the winds whistle and the sparrows build their nests, were not always so decayed and fallen, and in these poverty-stricken, repulsive muddy lanes which one sees through the ruined gate, there did not always reign that dreary silence which only now and then is broken by the crying of children, the scolding of women, and the lowing of cows. These walls were once proud and strong, and these lanes were alive with fresh, free life, power and pomp, joy and sorrow, much love and much hate. For Bacharach once belonged to those municipalities which were founded by the Romans during their rule on the Rhine; and its inhabitants, though the times which came after were very stormy, and though they had to submit first to the Hohenstaufen, and then to the Wittelsbach authority, managed, following the example of the other cities on the Rhine, to maintain a tolerably free commonwealth. This consisted of an alliance of separate social elements, in which the patrician elders and those of the guilds, who were subdivided according to their different trades, both strove for power; so that while they were bound in union to resist and guard against outside robber-nobles, they were, nevertheless, constantly having domestic dissensions over disputed interests. Consequently there was but little social intercourse, much mistrust, and not infrequently actual outbursts of passion. The ruling governor sat in his lofty castle of Sareck, and swooped down like his falcon, whenever he was called, and often when not called. The clergy ruled in darkness by darkening the souls of others. One of the most forsaken and helpless of the social elements, which had been gradually bound down by local laws, was the little Jewish community. This had first settled in Bacharach in the days of the Romans, and during the later persecution of the Jews it had taken in many a flock of fugitive co-religionists.

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The great oppression of the Jews began with the crusades, and raged most furiously about the middle of the fourteenth century, at the end of the great pestilence, which, like all other great public disasters, was attributed to the Jews, because people declared they had drawn down the wrath of God, and, with the help of the lepers, had poisoned the wells. The enraged populace, especially the hordes of Flagellants, or half-naked men and women, who, lashing themselves for penance and singing a mad hymn to the Virgin, swept over South Germany and the Rhenish provinces, murdered in those days many thousand Jews, tortured others, or baptized them by force. There was another accusation which in earlier times and all through the Middle Ages, even to the beginning of the last century, cost much blood and suffering. This was the ridiculous story, recurring with disgusting frequency in chronicle and legend, that the Jews stole the consecrated wafer, and pierced it with knives till blood ran from it; and to this it was added that at the feast of the Passover the Jews slew Christian children to use their blood in the night sacrifice.

[Illustration: BACHARACH ON THE RHINE]

Consequently on the day of this festival the Jews, hated for their wealth, their religion, and the debts due to them, were entirely in the hands of their enemies, who could easily bring about their destruction by spreading the report of such a child-murder, and perhaps even secretly putting a bloody infant's corpse in the house of a Jew thus accused. Then at night they would attack the Jews at their prayers, and murder, plunder, and baptize them; and great miracles would be wrought by the dead child aforesaid, whom the Church would eventually canonize. Saint Werner is one of these holy beings, and in his honor the magnificent abbey of Oberwesel was founded. The latter is now one of the most beautiful ruins on the Rhine, and with the Gothic grandeur of its long ogival windows, proud and lofty pillars, and marvelous stone-carving, it strangely enchants us when we wander by it on some bright, green summer's day, and do not know the story of its origin. In honor of this saint there were also three great churches built on the Rhine, and innumerable Jews murdered and maltreated. All this happened in the year 1287; and in Bacharach, where one of these Saint Werner's churches stood, the Jews suffered much misery and persecution. However, they remained there for two centuries after, protected from such outbreaks of popular rage, though they were continually subject to spite and threats.

Yet the more they were oppressed by hate from without, the more earnestly and tenderly did the Jews of Bacharach cherish their domestic life within, and the deeper was the growth among them of piety and the fear of God. An ideal example of a life given to God was seen in their Rabbi Abraham, who, though still a young man, was famed far and wide for his learning. He was born in Bacharach, and his father, who had been

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the rabbi there before him, had charged him in his last will to devote his life to that office and never to leave the place unless for fear of life. This command, except for a cabinet full of rare books, was all that his parent, who had lived in poverty and learning, left him. Rabbi Abraham, however, was a very rich man, for he had married the only daughter of his father's brother, who had been a prosperous dealer in jewelry, and whose possessions he had inherited. A few gossips in the community hinted now and then that the Rabbi had married for money. But the women all denied this, declaring that the Rabbi, long ere he went to Spain, had been in love with "Beautiful Sara," and recalling how she had awaited his return for seven years, while, as a matter of fact, he had already wedded her against the will of her father, and even without her own consent, by the betrothal-ring. For every Jew can make a Jewish girl his lawful wife, if he can succeed in putting a ring on her finger, and say at the same time: "I take thee for my wife, according to the law of Moses and Israel." And when Spain was mentioned, the same gossips were wont to smile in the same significant manner, all because of a vague rumor that Rabbi Abraham, though he had studied the holy law industriously enough at the theological school in Toledo, had nevertheless followed Christian customs and become imbued with habits of free thinking, like many of the Spanish Jews who at that time had attained a very remarkable degree of culture.

And yet in the bottom of their hearts these gossips put no faith in such reports; for ever since his return from Spain the daily life of the Rabbi had been pure, pious, and earnest in every way. He performed every detail of all religious customs and ceremonies with painstaking conscientiousness; he fasted every Monday and Thursday—only on Sabbaths and feast days did he indulge in meat or wine; his time was passed in prayer and study; by day he taught the Law to students, whom his fame had drawn to Bacharach; and by night he gazed on the stars in heaven, or into the eyes of Beautiful Sara. His married life was childless, yet there was no lack of life or gaiety in his home. The great hall in his house, which stood near the synagogue, was open to the whole community, so that people went in and out without ceremony, some to offer short prayers, others to gather news, or to hold a consultation when in trouble. Here the children played on Sabbath mornings while the weekly "section" was being read; here people met for wedding and funeral processions, and quarreled or were reconciled; here, too, those who were cold found a warm stove, and those who were hungry, a well-spread table. And, moreover, the Rabbi, as well as his wife, had a multitude of relatives, brothers and sisters, with their wives and children, and an endless array of uncles and cousins, all of whom looked up to the Rabbi as the head of the family, and so made themselves at home in his house, never failing to dine with him on all great festivals.

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Special among these grand gatherings in the Rabbi's house was the annual celebration of the Passover, a very ancient and remarkable feast which the Jews all over the world still hold every year in the month Nissen, in eternal remembrance of their deliverance from Egyptian servitude. This takes place as follows:

As soon as it is dark the matron of the family lights the lamps, spreads the table-cloth, places in its midst three flat loaves of unleavened bread, covers them with a napkin, and places on them six little dishes containing symbolical food, that is, an egg, lettuce, horse-radish, the bone of a lamb, and a brown mixture of raisins, cinnamon, and nuts. At this table the father of the family sits with all his relatives and friends, and reads to them from a very curious book called the *Agade*, whose contents are a strange mixture of legends of their forefathers, wondrous tales of Egypt, disputed questions of theology, prayers, and festival songs. During this feast there is a grand supper, and even during the reading there is at specified times tasting of the symbolical food and nibbling of Passover bread, while four cups of red wine are drunk. Mournfully merry, seriously gay, and mysteriously secret as some old dark legend, is the character of this nocturnal festival, and the traditional singing intonation with which the *Agade* is read by the father, and now and then reechoed in chorus by the hearers, first thrills the inmost soul as with a shudder, then calms it as mother's lullaby, and again startles it so suddenly into waking that even those Jews who have long fallen away from the faith of their fathers and run after strange joys and honors, are moved to their very hearts, when by chance the old, well-known tones of the Passover songs ring in their ears.

And so Rabbi Abraham once sat in his great hall surrounded by relatives, disciples, and many other guests, to celebrate the great feast of the Passover. Everything was unusually brilliant; over the table hung the gaily embroidered silk canopy, whose gold fringes touched the floor; the plates of symbolic food shone invitingly, as did the tall wine goblets, adorned with embossed pictures of scenes in holy legends. The men sat in their black cloaks and black low hats, and white collars, the women, in wonderful glittering garments of Lombard stuffs, wore on their heads and necks ornaments of gold and pearls, while the silver Sabbath lamp cast its festive light on the cheerful, devout faces of parents and children. On the purple velvet cushions of a chair, higher than the others, reclined, as custom requires, Rabbi Abraham, who read and sang the *Agade*, while the gay assembly joined in, or answered in the appointed places. The Rabbi also wore the prescribed black festival garment, his nobly-formed, but somewhat severe features had a milder expression than usual, his lips smiled through his dark-brown beard as if they would fain say something kind, while in his eyes

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one could see happy remembrances combined with some strange foreboding. Beautiful Sara, who sat on the high velvet cushion with her husband, as hostess, had on none of her jewelry—nothing but white linen enveloped her slender form and innocent face. This face was touchingly beautiful, even as all Jewish beauty is of a peculiarly moving kind; for the consciousness of the deep wretchedness, the bitter ignominy, and the evil dangers amid which their kindred and friends dwell, imparts to their lovely features an expression of soulful sadness and watchful, loving anxiety, which particularly charms our hearts. So on this evening Beautiful Sara sat looking into the eyes of her husband, yet glancing ever and anon at the beautiful parchment book of the *Agade* which lay before her, bound in gold and velvet.

[Illustration: HOUSE IN BACHARACH]

It was an old heirloom, with ancient wine stains on it, and had come down from the days of her grandfather; and in it there were many boldly and brightly-colored pictures, which as a little girl she had often looked at so eagerly on Passover evenings. They represented all kinds of Bible incidents—Abraham breaking with a hammer the idols of his father and the angels appearing to him; Moses slaying Mizri; Pharaoh sitting in state on his throne, and the frogs giving him no peace even at the table; his death by drowning—the Lord be praised!—the children of Israel cautiously crossing the Red Sea, and then standing open-mouthed, with their sheep, cows, and oxen, before Mount Sinai; pious King David playing the harp; and, finally, Jerusalem, with its towers and battlements, shining in the splendor of the setting sun.

The second wine-cup had been served, the faces and voices of the guests were growing merrier, and the Rabbi, as he took a loaf of unleavened bread and raised it with a cheerful smile, read these words from the *Agade*: “Behold! This is the food which our fathers ate in Egypt! Let every one who is hungry come and enjoy it! Let every one who is sorrowful come and share the joy of our Passover! This year we celebrate it here, but in years to come in the land of Israel. This year we celebrate it as servants, but in the years to come as sons of freedom!”

Then the hall door opened, and two tall, pale men, wrapped in very loose cloaks, entered and said:

“Peace be with you. We are men of your faith on a journey, and wish to share the Passover-feast with you!” And the Rabbi replied promptly and kindly:

“Peace be with you! Sit ye down near me!” The two strangers immediately sat down at the table, and the Rabbi read on. Several times while the others were repeating a sentence after him, he said an endearing word to his wife; once, alluding to the old humorous saying that on this evening a Hebrew father of a family regards himself as a

king, he said to her, “Rejoice, oh my Queen!” But she replied with a sad smile, “The Prince is wanting,”

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meaning by that a son, who, as a passage in the *Agade* requires, has to ask his father, with a certain formula of words, what the meaning of the festival is? The Rabbi said nothing, but pointed with his finger to an opened page of the *Agade*, on which was a pretty picture, showing how the three angels came to Abraham, announcing that he would have a son by his wife Sara, who, meanwhile, urged by feminine curiosity, is slyly listening to it all behind the tent-door. This little sign caused a threefold blush to color the cheeks of Beautiful Sara, who first looked down, and then glanced pleasantly at her husband, who went on chanting the wonderful story how Rabbi Jesua, Rabbi Eliezer, Rabbi Asaria, Rabbi Akiba, and Rabbi Tarphen sat reclining in Bona-Brak, and conversed all night long of the Exodus from Egypt, till their disciples came to tell them that it was daylight, and that the great morning prayer was being read in the synagogue.

While Beautiful Sara sat devoutly listening to and looking at her husband, she saw his face suddenly assume an expression of agony or horror, his cheeks and lips become deathly pale, and his eyes harden like two balls of ice; but almost immediately he regained his previous composure and cheerfulness, his cheeks and lips grew ruddy, and he looked about him gaily—nay, it seemed as if a strange, wild humor, such as was foreign to his nature, had seized him. Beautiful Sara was frightened as she had never been before in all her life, and a cold shudder went through her—due less to the momentary manifestation of dumb horror which she had seen in her husband's face, than to the cheerfulness which followed it, and which was now gradually developing into jubilant hilarity. The Rabbi cocked his cap comically, first on one ear, then on the other, pulled and twisted his beard ludicrously, and sang the *Agade* texts as if they were tavern-songs; and in the enumeration of the Egyptian plagues, where it is usual to dip the forefinger in the full wine-cup and flip off the drops that adhere, he sprinkled the young girls near him with the red wine, so that there was great wailing over spoiled collars, combined with loud laughter. Every moment Beautiful Sara was becoming more amazed by this convulsive merriment of her husband, and she was oppressed with nameless fears as she gazed on the buzzing swarm of gaily glittering guests who were comfortably enjoying themselves here and there, nibbling the thin Passover cakes, drinking wine, gossiping, or joyfully singing aloud.

Then came the time for supper. All rose to wash, and Beautiful Sara brought the large silver basin, richly adorned with embossed gold figures, which was held before all the guests in turn, while water was poured over their hands. As she was doing this for the Rabbi, he gave her a significant glance, and quietly slipped out of the door. When Beautiful Sara walked out after him, he grasped her hand, and in the greatest haste hurried her through the dark lanes of Bacharach, out of the city gate to the highway which leads along the Rhine to Bingen.

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It was one of those spring nights which, to be sure, are mild and starry enough, yet which inspire the soul with strange, uncanny feelings. There was something funereal in the odor of the flowers, the birds chirped spitefully and at the same time apprehensively, the moon cast malicious yellow stripes of light over the dark murmuring stream, the lofty banks of the Rhine looked like vague, threatening giants' heads. The watchman on the tower of Castle Strahleck blew a melancholy blast, and with it rang in jarring discord the funeral bell of Saint Werner's.

Beautiful Sara still had the silver basin in her right hand, while the Rabbi held her left, and she felt that his fingers were ice-cold, and that his arm was trembling; but still she went on with him in silence, perhaps because she had become accustomed to obey her husband blindly and unquestioningly—perhaps, too, because her lips were mute with fear and anxiety.

Below Castle Sonneck, opposite Lorch, about the place where the hamlet of Nieder Rheinbach now lies, there rises a cliff which arches out over the Rhine bank. The Rabbi ascended this with his wife, looked around on every side, and gazed on the stars. Trembling and shivering, as with the pain of death, Beautiful Sara looked at his pale face, which seemed ghastly in the moonlight, and seemed to express by turns pain, terror, piety, and rage. But when the Rabbi suddenly snatched from her hands the silver basin and threw it far out into the Rhine, she could no longer endure the agony of uncertainty, and crying out "*Schadai*, be merciful!" threw herself at his feet and conjured him to explain the dark mystery.

At first unable to speak, the Rabbi moved his lips without uttering a sound; but finally he cried, "Dost thou see the Angel of Death? There below he sweeps over Bacharach. But we have escaped his sword. God be praised!" Then, in a voice still trembling with excitement, he told her that, while he was happily and comfortably singing the *Agade*, he happened to glance under the table, and saw at his feet the bloody corpse of a little child. "Then I knew," continued the Rabbi, "that our two guests were not of the community of Israel, but of the army of the godless, who had plotted to bring that corpse into the house by stealth so as to accuse us of child-murder, and stir up the people to plunder and murder us. Had I given a sign that I saw through that work of darkness I should have brought destruction on the instant down upon me and mine, and only by craft did I save our lives. Praised be God! Grieve not, Beautiful Sara. Our relatives and friends shall also be saved; it was only my blood which the wretches wanted. I have escaped them, and they will be satisfied with my silver and gold. Come with me, Beautiful Sara, to another land. We will leave misfortune behind us, and so that it may not follow us I have thrown to it the silver ewer, the last of my possessions, as an offering. The God of our fathers will not forsake us. Come down, thou art weary. There is Dumb William standing by his boat; he will row us up the Rhine."

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Speechless, and as if every limb were broken, Beautiful Sara sank into the arms of the Rabbi, who slowly bore her to the bank. There stood William, a deaf and dumb but very handsome youth, who, to support his old foster-mother, a neighbor of the Rabbi, caught and sold fish, and kept his boat in this place. It seemed as if he had divined the intention of Abraham, and was waiting for him, for on his silent lips there was an expression of tender sympathy, and his large blue eyes rested as with deep meaning on Beautiful Sara, as he lifted her carefully into the boat.

The glance of the silent youth roused Beautiful Sara from her lethargy, and she realized at once that all which her husband had told her was not a mere dream. A stream of bitter tears poured over her cheeks, which were as white as her garment. Thus she sat in the boat, a weeping image of white marble, and beside her sat her husband and Dumb William, who was busily rowing.

Whether it is due to the measured beat of the oars, or to the rocking of the boat, or to the fresh perfume from those steep banks whereon joy grows, it ever happens that even the most sorrowful heart is marvelously relieved when on a night in spring it is lightly borne along in a small boat on the dear, limpid waters of the Rhine. For, in truth, kind-hearted, old Father Rhine cannot bear to see his children weep, and so, drying their tears, he rocks them on his trusty arm, and tells them his most beautiful stories, and promises them his most golden treasures, perhaps even the old, old, long-sunk Nibelungen hoard. Gradually the tears of Beautiful Sara ceased to flow; her extreme sorrow seemed to be washed away by the whispering waves, while the hills about her home bade her the tenderest farewell. But especially cordial seemed the farewell greeting of Kedrich, her favorite mountain; and far up on its summit, in the strange moonlight, she imagined she saw a lady with outstretched. arms, while active little dwarfs swarmed out of their caverns in the rocks, and a rider came rushing down the side in full gallop. Beautiful Sara felt as if she were a child again, and were sitting once more in the lap of her aunt from Lorch, who was telling her brave tales of the bold knight who freed the stolen damsel from the dwarfs, and many other true stories of the wonderful Wisperthal over there, where the birds talk as sensibly as men, and of Gingerbread Land, where good, obedient children go, and of enchanted princesses, singing trees, crystal castles, golden bridges, laughing water-fairies.... But suddenly in the midst of these pleasant tales, which began to send forth notes of music and to gleam with lovely light, Beautiful Sara heard the voice of her father, scolding the poor aunt for putting such nonsense into the child’s head. Then it seemed to her as if they set her on the little stool before her father’s velvet-covered chair, and that he with a soft hand smoothed her long hair, smiling as if well pleased, while he rocked

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himself comfortably in his loose, Sabbath dressing-gown of blue silk. Yes, it must be the Sabbath, for the flowered cover was spread on the table, all the utensils in the room were polished like looking-glasses, the white-bearded usher sat beside her father, eating raisins and talking in Hebrew; even little Abraham came in with a very large book, and modestly begged leave of his uncle to expound a portion of the Holy Scripture, that he might prove that he had learned much during the past week, and therefore deserved much praise—and a corresponding quantity of cakes.... Then the lad laid the book on the broad arm of the chair, and set forth the history of Jacob and Rachel—how Jacob raised his voice and wept when he first saw his cousin Rachel, how he talked so confidingly with her by the well, how he had to serve seven years for her, and how quickly the time passed, and how he at last married and loved her for ever and ever.... Then all at once Beautiful Sara remembered how her father cried with merry voice, “Wilt thou not also marry thy cousin Sara like that?” To which little Abraham gravely replied, “That I will, and she shall wait seven years too.” These memories stole like twilight shadows through the soul of the young wife, and she recalled how she and her little cousin—now so great a man and her husband—played together as children in the leafy tabernacle; how delighted they were with the gay carpets, flowers, mirrors, and gilded apples; how little Abraham caressed her more and more tenderly, till little by little he began to grow larger and more self-interested, and at last became a man and scarcely noticed her at all.... And now she sits in her room alone on a Saturday evening; the moon shines in brightly. Suddenly the door flies open, and cousin Abraham, in traveling garb, and as pale as death, enters, grasps her hand, puts a gold ring on her finger, and says, solemnly, “I hereby take thee to be my wife, according to the laws of God and of Israel.” “But now,” he adds, with a trembling voice, “now I must go to Spain. Farewell! For seven years thou must wait for me.” With that he hurried away, and Sara, weeping, told the tale to her father, who roared and raged, “Cut off thy hair, for thou art now a married woman.” Then he wanted to ride after Abraham to compel him to write a letter of divorce; but Abraham was over the hills and far away, and the father silently returned to his house. And when Beautiful Sara was helping him to draw off his boots, and trying to soothe him, saying that Abraham would return in seven years, he cursed, and cried, “Seven years shalt thou be a beggar,” and shortly after he died.

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And so old memories swept through her soul like a hurried play of shadows, the images intermixing and blending strangely, while between them came and went half-familiar, half-strange bearded faces, and large flowers with marvelously spreading foliage. Then the Rhine seemed to murmur the melodies of the *Agade*, and from its waters the pictures, as large as life, but wild and distorted, came forth one by one. There was Father Abraham anxiously breaking the idols into pieces which immediately flew together again; Mizri defending himself fiercely against the maddened Moses; Mount Sinai flashing and flaming; King Pharaoh swimming in the Red Sea, holding his pointed gold crown tightly in his teeth, while frogs with human faces swam along behind, in the foaming, roaring waves, and a dark giant-hand rose up threatening from below.

Yonder was the Mouse Tower of Bishop Hatto, and the boat was just shooting through the Bingen Eddy. By this time Beautiful Sara had somewhat awakened from her dreams, and she gazed at the hills on the shore, on the summits of which lights of castles were gleaming, and at the foot of which the mist, shimmering in the moonlight, was beginning to rise. Suddenly she seemed to see her friends and relatives, as they, with corpse-like faces and flowing shrouds, passed in awful procession along the Rhine.... The world grew dark before her eyes, an icy current ran through her soul, and, as if in sleep, she only heard the Rabbi repeating the night-prayer slowly and painfully, as if at a deathbed. Dreamily she stammered the words, “Ten thousand to the right, ten thousand to the left, to protect the king from the terrors of the night.”

Then all at once the oppressive gloom and terror passed away, the dark curtain was torn from heaven, and far above there appeared the holy city Jerusalem, with its towers and gates; the Temple gleamed in golden splendor, and in its fore-court Sara saw her father in his yellow Sabbath dressing-gown, smiling as if well pleased. All her friends and relatives were looking out from the round windows of the Temple, cordially greeting her; in the Holy of Holies knelt pious King David, with his purple mantle and golden crown; sweetly rang his song and the tones of his harp, and smiling happily, Beautiful Sara awoke.

CHAPTER II

As Beautiful Sara opened her eyes they were almost dazzled by the rays of the sun. The high towers of a great city rose before her, and Dumb William, with his oar upright, was standing in the boat, pushing and guiding it through the lively confusion of many vessels, gay with their pennons and streamers, whose crews were either gazing idly at passers-by, or else were busily loading with chests, bales, and casks the lighters which were to bear them to the shore. And with it all was a deafening noise, the constant halloh cry of steersmen, the calling of traders from the shore, and the scolding of the custom-house officials who, in their red coats and with their white maces and white faces, jumped from boat to boat.

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“Yes, Beautiful Sara,” said the Rabbi, cheerfully smiling to his wife, “this is the famous, free, imperial, and commercial city of Frankfort-on-the-Main, and we are now passing along the river Main. Do you see those pleasant-looking houses up there, surrounded by green hills? That is Sachsenhausen, from which our lame Gumpert brings us the fine myrrh for the Feast of the Tabernacles. Here you see the strong Main Bridge with its thirteen arches, over which many men, wagons, and horses can safely pass. In the middle of it stands the little house where Aunty Taeubchen says there lives a baptized Jew, who pays six farthings, on account of the Jewish community, to every man who brings him a dead rat; for the Jews are obliged to deliver annually to the State council five thousand rats’ tails for tribute.”

At the thought of this war, which the Frankfort Jews were obliged to wage with the rats, Beautiful Sara burst out laughing. The bright sunlight, and the new gay world now before her, had driven all the terrors and horrors of the past night from her soul, and as she was helped ashore from the boat by Dumb William and her husband, she felt inspired as with a sense of joyful safety. Dumb William for a long time fixed his beautiful, deep-blue eyes on hers, half sadly, half cheerfully, and then, casting a significant glance at the Rabbi, sprang back into his boat and was soon out of sight.

“Dumb William much resembles my brother who died,” said Beautiful Sara. “All the angels are alike,” answered the Rabbi; and, taking his wife by the hand, led her through the dense crowd on the shore, where, as it was the time of the Easter Fair, a great number of wooden booths had been erected by traders. Then passing through the gloomy Main Gate, they found themselves in quite as noisy a crowd. Here, in a narrow street, the shops stood close beside one another, every house, as was usual in Frankfort, being specially adapted to trade. There were no windows on the ground floor, but broad, open arches, so that the passer-by, looking in, could see at a glance all there was for sale. And how astonished Beautiful Sara was at the mass of magnificent wares, and at the splendor, such as she had never seen before! Here stood Venetians, who offered cheaply all the luxuries of the Orient and Italy, and Beautiful Sara was enchanted by the sight of the ornaments and jewels, the gay caps and bodices, the gold bangles and necklaces, and the whole display of finery which women so admire and love to wear. The richly embroidered stuffs of velvet and silk seemed fairly to speak to Beautiful Sara, and to flash and sparkle strange wonders back into her memory, and she really felt as if she were a little girl again, and as if Aunty Taeubchen had kept her promise and taken her to the Frankfort Fair, and as if she were now at last standing before the beautiful garments of which she had heard so much. With a secret joy she reflected what she should take back with her to Bacharach, and which of her two little

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cousins, Posy and Birdy, would prefer that blue silk girdle, and whether the green stockings would suit little Gottschalk. But all at once it flashed on her, “Ah, Lord! they are all grown up now, and yesterday they were slain!” She shuddered, and the pictures of the previous night filled her soul with all their horror again. But the gold-embroidered cloths glittered once more with a thousand roguish eyes, and drove the gloomy thoughts from her mind, and when she looked into her husband’s face she saw that it was free from clouds, and bore its habitual, serious gentleness. “Shut your eyes, Sara!” said the Rabbi, and he led his wife on through the crowd.

What a gay, active throng! Most prominent were the tradesmen, who were loudly vying one another in offering bargains, or talking together and summing on their fingers, or, following heavily loaded porters, who at a dog-trot were leading the way to their lodgings. By the faces of others one could see that they came from curiosity. The stout councilman was recognizable by his scarlet cloak and golden chain; a black, expensive-looking, swelling waistcoat betrayed the honorable and proud citizen. An iron spike-helmet, a yellow leather jerkin, and rattling spurs, weighing a pound, indicated the heavy cavalry-man. Under little black velvet caps, which came together in a point over the brow, there was many a rosy girl-face, and the young fellows who ran along after them, like hunting-dogs on the scent, showed that they were finished dandies by their saucily feathered caps, their squeaking peaked shoes, and their colored silk garments, some of which were green on one side and red on the other, or else striped like a rainbow on the right and checkered with harlequin squares of many colors on the left, so that the mad youths looked as if they were divided in the middle.

Carried along by the crowd, the Rabbi and his wife arrived at the Roemer. This is the great market-place of the city, surrounded by houses with high gables, and takes its name from an immense building, “the Roemer,” which was bought by the magistracy and dedicated as the town-hall. In it the German Emperor was elected, and before it tournaments were often held. King Maximilian, who was passionately fond of this sport, was then in Frankfort, and in his honor the day before there had been great tilting in the Roemer. Many idle men still stood on or about the scaffolding, which was being removed by carpenters, telling how the Duke of Brunswick and the Margrave of Brandenburg had charged one another amid the sound of drums and of trumpets, and how Lord Walter the Vagabond had knocked the Knight of the Bear out of his saddle so violently that the splinters of the lances flew high into the air, while the tall, fair-haired King Max, standing among his courtiers upon the balcony, rubbed his hands for joy. The golden banners were still to be seen on the balconies and in the Gothic windows of the town-hall. The other houses of the market-place were still likewise

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festively bedecked and adorned with shields, especially the Limburg house, on whose banner was painted a maiden with a sparrow-hawk in her hand, and a monkey holding out to her a mirror. Many knights and ladies standing on the balcony were engaged in animated conversation, or looking at the crowd below, which, in wild groups and processions, surged back and forth. What a multitude of idlers of all ages and ranks were crowded together here to gratify their curiosity! There was laughing, grumbling, stealing, rib-poking, hurrahing, while every now and then blared the trumpet of the mountebank, who, in a red cloak and with his clown and monkey, stood on a high stand loudly boasting of his own skill, and sounding the praises of his marvelous tinctures and salves, ere he solemnly examined the glass of urine brought by some old woman, or applied himself to pull a poor peasant's tooth. Two fencing-masters, dancing about in gay ribbons and brandishing their rapiers, met as if by accident and began to cut and pass with great apparent anger; but after a long bout each declared that the other was invincible, and took up a collection. Then the newly-organized guild of archers marched by with drummers and pipers, and these were followed by the constable, who was carrying a red flag at the head of a flock of traveling strumpets, hailing from the brothel known as "The Ass," in Wuerzburg, and bound for Rosendale, where the highly honorable authorities had assigned them quarters during the fair. "Shut your eyes, Sara," said the Rabbi. For indeed these fantastic, and altogether too scantily clad women, among whom were a few really beautiful girls, behaved in a most immodest manner, baring their bold, white breasts, chaffing those who went by with shameless words, and swinging their long walking sticks; and using the latter as hobby-horses, they rode down toward the gate of St. Katherine, singing in shrill tones the witch-song —

"Where is the goat? the hellish beast;
Where is the goat? Oh bring him quick!
And if there is no goat, at least
We'll ride upon the stick."

This wild sing-song, which rang afar, was finally drowned out by the long-drawn, sacred tones of a church procession. It was a solemn train of bare-headed and bare-footed monks, who carried burning wax tapers, banners with pictures of the saints, and large silver crucifixes. Before it ran boys clad in red and white gowns, bearing censers of smoking frankincense. In the middle of the procession, under a beautiful canopy, marched priests in white robes adorned with costly lace, or in bright-colored, silk stoles; one of them held in his hand a sun-like, golden vessel, which, on arriving at a shrine by the market-corner, he raised on high, while he half-sang, half-spoke in Latin—when all at once a little bell rang, and all the people around, becoming silent, fell to their knees and made the sign of the cross. "Shut your eyes, Sara!" cried the Rabbi again, and he hastily drew her away through a labyrinth of narrow, crooked streets, and at last over

the desolate, empty place which separated the new Jewish quarter from the rest of the city.

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Before that time the Jews dwelt between the Cathedral and the bank of the Main, that is, from the bridge down as far as the Lumpenbrunnen, and from the Mehlwage as far as Saint Bartholomew's. But the Catholic priests obtained a Papal bull forbidding the Jews to live so near the high church, for which reason the magistrates assigned them a place on the Wollgraben, where they built their present quarter. This was surrounded by high walls, the gate of which was held by iron chains to keep out the rabble. For here, too, the Jews lived in misery and anxiety, and with far more vivid memories of previous suffering than they have at present. In 1240 the unrestrained populace had caused awful bloodshed among them, which people called the first Jewish massacre. In 1349, when the Flagellants, in passing through the town, set fire to it, and accused the Jews of the deed, the latter were nearly all murdered or burned alive in their own houses; this was called the second Jewish massacre. After this the Jews were often threatened with similar slaughter, and during the internal dissensions of Frankfort, especially during a dispute between the council and the guilds, the mob was often on the point of breaking into the Jewish quarter, which, as has been said, was surrounded by a wall. The latter had two gates in it, which on Catholic holidays were closed from without and on Jewish holidays from within, and before each gate was a watch-house with city soldiers.

When the Rabbi with his wife came to the entrance to the Jewish quarter, the soldiers, as one could see through the open windows, lay on the wooden bench inside the watch-house, while out before the door in the sunshine sat the drummer beating capriciously on his large drum. He was a heavy, fat fellow, wearing a jerkin and hose of fiery yellow, greatly puffed out at his arms and thighs, and profusely dotted with small red tufts, sewed on, which looked as if innumerable tongues were protruding from him. His breast and back were padded with cushions of black cloth, against which hung his drum. He had on his head a flat, round black cap, which in roundness and flatness was equaled by his face, and the latter was also in keeping with his dress, being an orange-yellow, spotted with red pimples, and distorted into a gaping grin. So the fellow sat and drummed to the melody of a song which the Flagellants had sung at the Jewish massacre, while he gurgled, in a coarse, beery voice—

"Our dear Lady true
Walked in the morning dew,
Kyrie eleison!"

"Hans, that is a terrible tune," cried a voice from behind the closed gate of the Jewish quarter. "Yes, Hans, and a bad song too-doesn't suit the drum; doesn't suit it at all—by my soul—not the day of the fair and on Easter morning—bad song—dangerous song—-Jack, Jacky, little drum—Jacky boy—I'm a lone man—and if thou lovest me, the Star, the tall Star, the tall Nose Star—then stop it!"

These words were uttered by the unseen speaker, now in hasty anxiety, now in a sighing drawl, with a tone which alternated between mild softness and harsh

hoarseness, such as one hears in consumptive people. The drummer was not moved, and went on drumming and singing—

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“There came a little youth,
His beard had run away, in truth,
Halleluja!”

“Jack,” again cried the voice of the invisible speaker, “Jack, I’m a lone man, and that is a dangerous song, and I don’t like it; I have my reasons for it, and if you love me, sing something else, and tomorrow we will drink together.”

At the word “drink” Jack ceased his drumming and singing, and said in friendly tone, “The devil take the Jews! But thou, dear Nose Star, art my friend, I protect thee; and if we drink together often enough I shall have thee converted. Yea, I shall be thy godfather, and when thou art baptized thou shalt be eternally happy; and if thou hast genius and wilt study industriously under me, thou mayest even become a drummer. Yes, Nose Star, thou mayest yet become something great. I will drum the whole catechism into thee when we drink together tomorrow. But now open the gate, for here are two strangers who wish to enter.”

“Open the gate?” cried Nose Star, and his voice almost deserted him. “That can’t be done in such a hurry, my dear Jack; one can’t tell—one can never tell, you know—and I’m a lone man. Veitel Oxhead has the key, and he is now standing in the corner mumbling his eighteen-prayer, and he must not be interrupted. And Jaekel the Fool is here too, but he is making water; I’m a lone man.”

“The devil take the Jews!” cried the drummer, and, laughing loudly at this, his one and only joke, he trudged off to the guard-room and lay down on the bench.

While the Rabbi stood with his wife before the locked gate, there rose from behind it a snarling, nasal, somewhat mocking voice. “Starry—don’t groan so much. Take the keys from Oxheady’s coat pockets, or else go stick your nose in the keyhole, and so unlock the gate. The people have been standing and waiting a long time.” “People!” cried the anxious voice of the man called Nose Star, “I thought there was only one! I beg you, Fool—dear Jaekel Fool—look out and see who is there.”

A small, well-grated window in the gate opened, and there appeared in it a yellow cap with two horns, and the funny, wrinkled, and twisted jest-maker’s face of Jaekel the Fool. The window was immediately shut again, and he cried angrily, “Open the gate—it is only a man and a woman.”

“A man and a woman!” groaned Nose Star. “Yes, but when the gate’s opened the woman will take her skirt off, and become a man; and then there’ll be two men, and there are only three of us!”

“Don’t be a hare,” replied Jaekel the Fool. “Be a man and show courage!”

“Courage!” cried Nose Star, laughing with bitter vexation. “Hare! Hare is a bad comparison. The hare is an unclean animal. Courage! I was not put here to be courageous, but cautious. When too many come I am to give the alarm. But I alone cannot keep them back. My arm is weak, I have a seton, and I’m a lone man. If one were to shoot at me, I should be a dead man. Then that rich man, Mendel Reiss, would sit on the Sabbath at his table, and wipe the raisin-sauce from his mouth, and rub his belly, and perhaps say, ’Tall Nose Star was a brave fellow after all; if it had not been for him, perhaps they would have burst open the gate. He let himself be shot for us. He was a brave fellow; too bad that he’s dead!’”

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Here the voice became tender and tearful, but all at once it rose to a hasty and almost angry tone. "Courage! and so that the rich Mendel Reiss may wipe away the raisin-sauce from his mouth, and rub his belly, and call me a brave fellow, I'm to let myself be shot! Courage! Be a man! Little Strauss was a man, and yesterday went to the Roemer to see the tilting, thinking they would not know him because he wore a frock of violet velvet—three florins a yard-covered with fox-tails and embroidered with gold—-quite magnificent; and they dusted his violet frock for him till it lost its color, and his own back became violet and did not look human. Courage, indeed! The crippled Leser was courageous, and called our scoundrel of a magistrate a blackguard, and they hung him up by the feet between two dogs, while Jack drummed. Courage! Don't be a hare! Among many dogs the hare is helpless. I'm a lone man, and I am really afraid."

"That I'll swear to," cried Jaekel.

"Yes; I *have* fear," replied Nose Star, sighing. "I know that it runs in my blood, and I got it from my dear mother"—

"Yes, yes," interrupted Jaekel, "and your mother got it from her father, and he from his, and so all thy ancestors one from the other, back to the forefather who marched under King Saul against the Philistines, and was the first to take to his heels. But look! Oxheady is all ready—he has bowed his head for the fourth time; now he is jumping like a flea at the Holy, Holy, Holy, and feeling cautiously in his pocket."

In fact the keys rattled, the gate grated and creaked and opened, and the Rabbi led his wife into the empty Jews' Street. The man who opened it was a little fellow with a good-naturedly sour face, who nodded dreamily, like one who did not like to be disturbed in his thoughts, and after he had carefully closed the gate again, without saying a word he sank into a corner, constantly mumbling his prayers. Less taciturn was Jaekel the Fool, a short, somewhat bow-legged fellow, with a large, red, laughing face, and an enormous leg-of-mutton hand, which he now stretched out of the wide sleeve of his gaily-chequered jacket in welcome. Behind him a tall, lean figure showed, or rather, hid itself—the slender neck feathered with a fine white cambric ruff, and the thin, pale face strangely adorned with an incredibly long nose, which peered with anxious curiosity in every direction.

"God's welcome to a pleasant feast-day!" cried Jaekel the Fool. "Do not be astonished that our street is so empty and quiet just now. All our people are in the synagogue, and you have come just in time to hear the history of the sacrifice of Isaac read. I know it—-'tis an interesting story, and if I had not already heard it thirty-three times, I would willingly listen to it again this year. And it is an important history, too, for if Abraham had really killed Isaac and not the goat, then there would be more goats in the world now—-and fewer Jews." And then with mad, merry grimaces, Jaekel began to sing the following song from the *Agade*:[60]

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“A kid, a kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid!
A kid!

There came a cat which ate the kid, which my father
bought for two pieces of money. A kid!

There came a dog, who bit the cat, who ate the kid, which my father
bought for two pieces of money. A kid!

There came a stick, which beat the dog, who bit the cat, who ate the
kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!

There came a fire, which burnt the stick, which beat the dog, who bit
the cat, who ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money.
A kid! A kid!

There came the water, which quenched the fire, which burnt the stick,
which beat the dog, who bit the cat, who ate the kid, which my father
bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!

There came an ox, who drank the water, which quenched the fire, which
burnt the stick, which beat the dog, who bit the cat, who ate the kid,
which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!

There came the butcher, who slew the ox, who drank the water, which quenched the fire, which burnt the stick, which beat the dog, who bit the cat, that ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!“Then came the Angel of Death, who slew the butcher, who killed the ox, who drank the water, which quenched the fire, which burnt the stick, which beat the dog, who bit the cat, who ate the kid, which my father bought for two pieces of money. A kid! A kid!"[61]

“Yes, beautiful lady,” added the singer, “and the day will come when the Angel of Death will slay the slayer, and all our blood come over Edom, for God is a God of vengeance.”

But all at once, casting aside with a violent effort the seriousness into which he had involuntarily fallen, Jaekel plunged again into his mad buffoonery, and went on in his harsh jester tones, “Don’t be afraid, beautiful lady, Nose Star will not harm you. He is only dangerous to old Schnapper-Elle. She has fallen in love with his nose—which, faith! deserves it. Yea, for it is as beautiful as the tower which looketh forth toward Damascus, and as lofty as a cedar of Lebanon. Outwardly it gleameth like gold loaf and syrup, and inwardly it is all music and loveliness. It bloometh in summer and in winter it is frozen up—but in summer and winter it is petted and pulled by the white hands of Schnapper-Elle. Yes, she is madly in love with him. She nurses him, and feeds him, and for her age she is young enough. When he is fat enough, she means to marry him;

and whoever comes to Frankfort, three hundred years hence, will not be able to see the heavens for Nose Stars."

"Ah, you are Jaekel the Fool," exclaimed the Rabbi, laughing. "I mark it by your words. I have often heard of you."

"Yes—yes," replied Jaekel, with comical modesty. "Yes, that is what reputation does. A man is often known far and wide as a bigger fool than he himself has any idea of. However, I take great pains to be a fool, and jump and shake myself to make the bells ring; others have an easier time. But tell me, Rabbi, why do you journey on a holiday?"

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“My justification,” replied the Rabbi, “is in the Talmud, where it says, ‘Danger drives away the Sabbath.’”

“Danger!” screamed the tall Nose Star, in mortal terror. “Danger! danger! Drummer Jack!—drum, drum. Danger! danger! Drummer Jack!” From without resounded the deep, beery voice of Drummer Jack, “Death and destruction! The devil take the Jews. That’s the third time today that you’ve roused me out of a sound sleep, Nose Star! Don’t make me mad! For when I am mad I’m the very devil himself; and then as sure as I’m a Christian, I’ll up with my gun and shoot through the grated window in your gate—-and then fellow, let everybody look out for his nose!”

“Don’t shoot! don’t shoot! I’m a lonely man,” wailed Nose Star piteously, pressing his face against the wall, and trembling and murmuring prayers in this position.

“But say, what has happened?” cried Jaekel the Fool, with all the impatient curiosity which was even then characteristic of the Frankfort Jews.

But the Rabbi impatiently broke loose from them, and went his way along the Jews’ Street. “See, Sara!” he exclaimed, “how badly guarded is our Israel. False friends guard its gates without, and within its watchers are Folly and Fear.”

They wandered slowly through the long empty street, where only here and there the head of some young girl showed itself in a window, against the polished panes of which the sun was brilliantly reflected. At that time the houses in the Jewish quarter were still neat and new, and much lower than they now are, since it was only later on that the Jews, as their number greatly increased, while they could not enlarge their quarter, built one story over another, squeezed themselves together like sardines, and were thus stunted both in body and soul. That part of the Jewish quarter which remained standing after the great fire, and which is called the Old Lane, those high blackened houses, where a grinning, sweaty race of people bargains and chaffers, is a horrible relic of the Middle Ages. The older synagogue exists no more; it was less capacious than the present one, which was built later, after the Nuremberg exiles were taken into the community, and lay more to the north.

The Rabbi had no need to ask where it was. He recognized it from afar by the buzz of many loud voices. In the court of the House of God he parted from his wife, and after washing his hands at the fountain there, he entered the lower part of the synagogue where the men pray, while Sara ascended a flight of stairs and entered the place reserved for women. The latter was a kind of gallery with three rows of seats painted a reddish brown, whose backs were fitted with a hanging board, which held the prayer-books, and which could be raised and lowered. Here the women either sat gossiping or stood up in deep prayer. They often went and peered with curiosity through the large grating on the eastern side, through the thin, green

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lattice of which one could look down on the lower floor of the synagogue. There, behind high praying-desks, stood the men in their black cloaks, their pointed beards shooting out over white ruffs, and their skull-capped heads more or less concealed by a four-cornered scarf of white wool or silk, furnished with the prescribed tassels, and in some instances also adorned with gold lace. The walls of the synagogue were uniformly white-washed, and no ornament was to be seen other than the gilded iron grating around the square stage, where extracts from the Law were read, and the holy ark, a costly embossed chest, apparently supported by marble columns with gorgeous capitals, whose flower-and leaf-work shot up in beautiful profusion, and covered with a curtain of purple velvet, on which a pious inscription was worked in gold spangles, pearls, and many colored gems. Here hung the silver memorial-lamp, and there also rose a trellised dais, on whose crossed iron bars were all kinds of sacred utensils, among them the seven-branched candlestick. Before the latter, his countenance toward the ark, stood the choir-leader, whose song was accompanied, as if instrumentally, by the voices of his two assistants, the bass and the treble. The Jews have banished all instrumental music from their church, maintaining that hymns in praise of God are more edifying when they rise from the warm breast of man, than from the cold pipes of an organ.

Beautiful Sara felt a childish delight when the choir-leader, an admirable tenor, raised his voice and sounded forth the ancient, solemn melodies, which she knew so well, in a fresher loveliness than she had ever dreamed of, while the bass sang in harmony the deep, dark notes, and, in the pauses, the treble's voice trilled sweetly and daintily. Such singing Beautiful Sara had never heard in the synagogue of Bacharach, where the presiding elder, David Levi, was the leader; for when this elderly, trembling man, with his broken, bleating voice, tried to trill like a young girl, and in his forced effort to do so, shook his limp and drooping arm feverishly, it inspired laughter rather than devotion.

A sense of pious satisfaction, not unmingled with feminine curiosity, drew Beautiful Sara to the grating, where she could look down on the lower floor, or the so-called men's division. She had never before seen so many of her faith together, and it cheered her heart to be in such a multitude of those so closely allied by race, thought, and sufferings. And her soul was still more deeply moved when three old men reverentially approached the sacred ark, drew aside the glittering curtain, raised the lid, and very carefully brought forth the Book which God wrote with His own hand, and for the maintenance of which Jews have suffered so much—so much misery and hate, disgrace and death—a thousand years' martyrdom. This Book—a great roll of parchment—was wrapped like a princely child in a gaily embroidered scarlet cloak

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of velvet; above, on both wooden rollers, were two little silver shrines, in which many pomegranates and small bells jingled and rang prettily, while before, on a silver chain, hung gold shields with many colored gems. The choir-leader took the Book, and, as if it really were a child—a child for whom one has greatly suffered, and whom one loves all the more on that account—he rocked it in his arms, skipped about with it here and there, pressed it to his breast, and, thrilled by its holy touch, broke forth into such a devout hymn of praise and thanksgiving, that it seemed to Beautiful Sara as if the pillars under the holy ark began to bloom; and the strange and lovely flowers and leaves on the capitals shot ever higher, the tones of the treble were converted into the notes of the nightingale, the vaulted ceiling of the synagogue resounded with the tremendous tones of the bass singer, while the glory of God shone down from the blue heavens. Yes, it was a beautiful psalm. The congregation sang in chorus the concluding verse, and then the choir-leader walked slowly to the raised platform in the middle of the synagogue bearing the holy Book, while men and boys crowded about him, eager to kiss its velvet covering, or even to touch it. On the platform, the velvet cover, as well as the wrappings covered with illuminated letters, were removed, and the choir-leader, in the peculiar intonation which in the Passover service is still more peculiarly modulated, read the edifying narrative of the temptation of Abraham.

Beautiful Sara had modestly withdrawn from the grating, and a stout, much ornamented woman of middle age, with a forward, but benevolent manner, had with a nod invited her to share her prayer-book. This lady was evidently no great scholar, for as she mumbled to herself the prayers as the women do, not being allowed to take part in the singing, Sara observed that she made the best she could of many words, and skipped several good lines altogether. But after a while the watery blue eyes of the good woman were languidly raised, an insipid smile spread over her red and white porcelain face, and in a voice which she strove to make as genteel as possible, she said to Beautiful Sara, “He sings very well. But I have heard far better singing in Holland. You are a stranger, and perhaps do not know that the choir-leader is from Worms, and that they will keep him here if he will be content with four hundred florins a year. He is a charming man, and his hands are as white as alabaster. I admire beautiful hands; they make one altogether beautiful.” Having said this, the good lady laid her own hand, which was really a fine one, on the shelf before her, and with a polite nod which intimated that she did not like to be interrupted while speaking, she added, “The little singer is a mere child, and looks very much worn out. The basso is too ugly for anything; our Star once made the witty remark: ’The bass singer is a bigger fool than even a basso is expected to be!’ All three eat in my restaurant—perhaps you don’t know that I’m Elle Schnapper?”

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Beautiful Sara expressed thanks for this information, whereupon Schnapper-Elle proceeded to narrate in detail how she had once been in Amsterdam, how she had been subjected to the advances of men on account of her beauty, how she had come to Frankfort three days before Whit-suntide and married Schnapper, how he had died, and what touching things he had finally said on his deathbed, and how hard it was to carry on the restaurant business and keep one's hands nice. Several times she glanced aside with a contemptuous air, apparently at some giggling girls, who seemed to be eyeing her clothes. And the latter were indeed remarkable enough—a very loose skirt of white satin, on which all the animals of Noah's Ark were embroidered in gaudy colors; a jacket of gold cloth, like a cuirass, with sleeves of red velvet, yellow slashed; a very high cap on her head, with a mighty ruff of stiff white linen around her neck, which also had around it a silver chain hung with all kinds of coins, cameos, and curiosities, among them a large picture of the city of Amsterdam, which rested on her bosom.

But the dresses of the other women were no less remarkable. They consisted of a variety of fashions of different ages, and many a woman there was so covered with gold and diamonds as to look like a wandering jeweler's shop. It is true that there was at that time a fashion of dress prescribed by law to the Frankfort Jews, and to distinguish them from Christians the men had to wear yellow rings on their cloaks, and the women very stiff, blue-striped veils on their caps. However, in the Jewish quarter the law was little observed, and there, in the synagogue, especially on festival days, the women put on as much magnificent apparel as they could—partly to arouse envy of others, and partly to advertise the wealth and credit of their husbands.

While passages from the Books of Moses are being read on the lower floor of the synagogue, the devotion is usually somewhat lulled. Many make themselves comfortable and sit down, whispering perhaps business affairs with a friend, or go out into the court to get a little fresh air. Small boys take the liberty of visiting their mothers in the women's balcony; and here worship is still more loosely observed, as there is gossiping, chattering, and laughing, while, as always happens, the young quizz the old, and the latter censure the light-headedness of the girls and the general degeneracy of the age.

And just as there was a choir-leader on the floor below, so was there a gossip-leader in the balcony above. This was Puppy Reiss, a vulgar, greenish woman, who found out about everybody's troubles, and always had a scandal on her tongue. The usual butt of her pointed sayings was poor Schnapper-Elle, and she could mock right well the affected genteel airs and languishing manner with which the latter accepted the insincere compliments of young men.

"Do you know," cried Puppy Reiss, "Schnapper-Elle said yesterday, 'If I were not beautiful and clever, and beloved, I had rather not be alive.'"

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Then there was loud tittering, and Schnapper-Elle, who was not far distant, noting that this was all at her expense, lifted her nose in scorn, and sailed away, like a proud galley, to some remote corner. Then Birdie Ochs, a plump and somewhat awkward lady, remarked compassionately that Schnapper-Elle might be a little vain and small of mind, but that she was an honest, generous soul, and did much good to many folk in need.

“Particularly to Nose Star,” snapped Puppy Reiss. And all who knew of this tender relation laughed all the louder.

“Don’t you know,” added Puppy spitefully, “that Nose Star now sleeps in Schnapper-Elle’s house! But just look at Susy Floersheim down there, wearing the necklace which Daniel Flaesch pawned to her husband! Flaesch’s wife is vexed about it—*that* is plain. And now she is talking to Mrs. Floersheim. *How* amiably they shake hands!—and hate each other like Midian and Moab! How sweetly they smile on each other! Oh, you dear souls, *don’t* eat each other up out of pure love! I’ll just steal up and listen to them!”

And so, like a sneaking wildcat, Puppy Reiss crept up and listened to the two women bewailing to each other how they had worked all the past week to clean up the house and scour the kitchen things, and complaining about all they had to do before Passover, so that not a crumb of leavened bread should stick to anything. And such troubles as they had baking the unleavened bread! Mrs. Flaesch had special cause for complaint—for she had had no end of trouble over it in the public bakery, where, according to the ticket she drew, she could not bake till the afternoon of the very last day, just before Passover Eve; and then old Hannah had kneaded the dough badly, and the maids had rolled it too thin, and half of it was scorched in baking, and worst of all, rain came pouring through the bake-house roof; and so, wet and weary, they had had to work till late in the night.

“And, my dear Mrs. Floersheim,” said Mrs. Flaesch, with gracious friendliness most insincere, “you were a little to blame for that, because you did not send your people to help me in baking.”

“Ah! pardon,” replied the other. “My servants were so busy—the goods for the fair had to be packed—my husband”—

“Yes, I know,” interrupted Mrs. Flaesch, with cutting irony in her speech. “I know that you have much to do—many pledges and a good business, and necklaces”—

And a bitter word was just about to slip from the lips of the speaker, and Dame Floersheim had turned as red as a lobster, when Puppy Reiss cried out loudly, “For God’s sake!—the strange lady lies dying—water! water!”

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Beautiful Sara lay in a faint, as pale as death, while a swarm of excited women crowded around her, one holding her head, another her arm, while some old women sprinkled her with the glasses of water which hung behind their prayer desks for washing the hands in case they should by accident touch their own bodies. Others held under her nose an old lemon full of spices, which was left over from the last feast-day, when it had served for smelling and strengthening the nerves. Exhausted and sighing deeply, Beautiful Sara at last opened her eyes, and with mute glances thanked them for their kind care. But now the eighteen-prayer, which no one dared neglect, was being solemnly chanted below, and the busy women hurried back to their places and offered the prayer as the rite ordains, that is, standing up with their faces turned toward the east, which is that part of the heavens where Jerusalem lies. Birdie Ochs, Schnapper-Elle, and Puppy Reiss stayed to the last with Beautiful Sara—the first two to aid her as much as possible, the other two to find out why she had fainted so suddenly.

Beautiful Sara had swooned from a singular cause. It is a custom in the synagogue that any one who has escaped a great danger shall, after the reading of the extracts from the Law, appear in public and return thanks for his divine deliverance. As Rabbi Abraham rose to his feet to make his prayer, and Beautiful Sara recognized her husband's voice, she noticed that his voice gradually subsided into the mournful murmur of a prayer for the dead. She heard the names of her dear kinsfolk, accompanied by the words which convey the blessing on the departed; and the last hope vanished from her soul, for it was torn by the certainty that those dear ones had really been slain, that her little niece was dead, that her little cousins Posy and Birdy were dead, that little Gottschalk too was dead—all murdered and dead! And she, too, would have succumbed to the agony of this realization, had not a kind swoon poured forgetfulness over her senses.

CHAPTER III

When Beautiful Sara, after divine service was ended, went down into the courtyard of the synagogue, the Rabbi stood there waiting for her. He nodded to her with a cheerful expression, and accompanied her out into the street, where there was no longer silence but a noisy multitude. It was like a swarm of ants—bearded men in black coats, women gleaming and fluttering like gold-chafers, boys in new clothes carrying prayer-books after their parents, young girls who, because they could not enter the synagogue, now came bounding to their parents, bowing their curly heads to receive their blessing—all gay and merry, and walking up and down the street in the happy anticipation of a good dinner, the savory odor of which—causing their mouths to water—rose from many black pots, marked with chalk, and carried by smiling girls from the large community kitchens.

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In this multitude particularly conspicuous was the form of a Spanish cavalier, whose youthful features bore that fascinating pallor which ladies generally attribute to an unfortunate—and men, on the contrary, to a very fortunate—love affair. His gait, although naturally carefree, had in it, however, a somewhat affected daintiness. The feathers in his cap were agitated more by the aristocratic motion of his head than by the wind; and his golden spurs, and the jeweled hilt of his sword, which he bore on his arm, rattled rather more than was necessary. A white cavalier's cloak enveloped his slender limbs in an apparently careless manner, but, in reality, betrayed the most careful arrangement of the folds. Passing and repassing, partly with curiosity, partly with an air of a connoisseur, he approached the women walking by, looked calmly at them, paused when he thought a face was worth the trouble, gave to many a pretty girl a passing compliment, and went his way heedless as to its effect. He had met Beautiful Sara more than once, but every time had seemed to be repelled by her commanding look, or else by the enigmatical smile of her husband. Finally, however, proudly conquering all diffidence, he boldly faced both, and with foppish confidence made, in a tenderly gallant tone, the following speech: "Senora!—list to me!—I swear—by the roses of both the kingdoms of Castile, by the Aragonese hyacinths and the pomegranate blossoms of Andalusia! by the sun which illumines all Spain, with its flowers, onions, pea-soups, forests, mountains, mules, he-goats, and Old Christians! by the canopy of heaven, on which this sun is merely a golden tassel! and by the God who abides in heaven and meditates day and night over the creation of new forms of lovely women!—I swear that you, Senora, are the fairest dame whom I have seen in all the German realm, and if you please to accept my service, then I pray of you the favor, grace, and leave to call myself your knight and bear your colors henceforth in jest or earnest!"

A flush of pain rose in the face of Beautiful Sara, and with one of those glances which cut the deeper when they come from gentle eyes, and with a tone such as is bitterest coming from a beautiful voice, the lady answered, as one deeply hurt:

"My noble lord, if you will be my knight you must fight whole races, and in the battle there will be little thanks to win and less honor; and if you will wear my colors, then you must sew yellow rings on your cloak, or bind yourself with a blue-striped scarf, for such are my colors—the colors of my house, the House of Israel, which is wretched indeed, one mocked in the streets by the sons of fortune."

A sudden purple red shot into the cheeks of the Spaniard; an inexpressible confusion seemed to have seized him as he stammered—

"Senora, you misunderstood me—an innocent jest—but, by God, no mockery, no scorn of Israel. I myself am sprung from that house; my grandfather was a Jew, perhaps even my father."

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“And it is very certain, Senor, that your uncle is one,” suddenly exclaimed the Rabbi, who had calmly witnessed this scene; and with a merry, quizzical glance, he added, “And I myself will vouch that Don Isaac Abarbanel, nephew of the great Rabbi, is sprung from the best blood of Israel, if not from the royal race of David!”

The chain of the sword rattled under the Spaniard’s cloak, his cheeks became deadly white, his upper lip twitched as with scorn in which there was pain, and angry death grinned in his eyes, as in an utterly changed, ice-cold, keen voice he said:

“Senor Rabbi, you know me. Well, then, you know also who I am. And if the fox knows that I belong to the blood of the lion, let him beware and not bring his fox-beard into danger of death, nor provoke my anger. Only he who feels like the lion can understand his weakness.”

“Oh, I understand it well,” answered the Rabbi, and a melancholy seriousness came over his brow. “I understand it well, how the proud lion, out of pride, casts aside his princely coat and goes about disguised in the scaly armor of the crocodile, because it is the fashion to be a grinning, cunning, greedy crocodile! What can you expect the lesser beasts to be when the lion denies his nature? But beware, Don Isaac, *thou* wert not made for the element of the crocodile. For water—thou knowest well what I mean—is thy evil fortune, and thou shalt drown. Water is not thy element; the weakest trout can live in it better than the king of the forest. Hast thou forgotten how the current of the Tagus was about to draw thee under—?”

Bursting into loud laughter, Don Isaac suddenly threw his arms round the Rabbi’s neck, covered his mouth with kisses, leapt with jingling spurs high into the air, so that the passing Jews shrank back in alarm, and in his own natural hearty and joyous voice cried—

“Truly thou art Abraham of Bacharach! And it was a good joke, and more than that, a friendly act, when thou, in Toledo, didst leap from the Alcantara bridge into the water, and grasp by the hair thy friend, who could drink better than he could swim, and drew him to dry land. I came very near making a really deep investigation as to whether there is actually gold in the bed of the Tagus, and whether the Romans were right in calling it the golden river. I assure you that I shiver even now at the mere thought of that water-party.”

Saying this the Spaniard made a gesture as if he were shaking water from his garments. The countenance of the Rabbi expressed great joy as he again and again pressed his friend’s hand, saying every time—

“I am indeed glad.”

“And so, indeed, am I,” answered the other. “It is seven years now since we met, and when we parted I was as yet a mere greenhorn, and thou—thou wert already a staid and serious man. But whatever became of the beautiful Dona who in those days cost thee so many sighs, which thou didst accompany with the lute?”

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“Hush, hush! the Dona hears us—she is my wife, and thou thyself hast given her today proof of thy taste and poetic skill.”

It was not without some trace of his former embarrassment that the Spaniard greeted the beautiful lady, who amiably regretted that she, by expressing herself so plainly, had pained a friend of her husband.

“Ah, Senora,” replied Don Isaac, “he who grasps too clumsily at a rose must not complain if the thorns scratch. When the star of evening reflects its golden light in the azure flood”—

“I beg of you!” interrupted the Rabbi, “to cease! If we wait till the star of evening reflects its golden light in the azure flood, my wife will starve, for she has eaten nothing since yesterday, and suffered much in the mean-while.”

“Well, then, I will take you to the best restaurant of Israel,” said Don Isaac, “to the house of my friend Schnapper-Elle, which is not far away. I already smell the savory odors from the kitchen! Oh, didst thou but know, O Abraham, how this odor appeals to me. This it is which, since I have dwelt in this city, has so often lured me to the tents of Jacob. Intercourse with God’s people is not a hobby of mine, and truly it is not to pray, but to eat, that I visit the Jews’ Street.”

“Thou hast never loved us, Don Isaac.”

“Well,” continued the Spaniard, “I like your food much better than your creed—which wants the right sauce. I never could rightly digest you. Even in your best days, under the rule of my ancestor David, who was king over Judah and Israel, I never could have held out, and certainly I should some fine morning have run away from Mount Zion and emigrated to Phoenicia or Babylon, where the joys of life foamed in the temple of the gods.”

“Thou blasphemest, Isaac, blasphemest the one God,” murmured the Rabbi grimly. “Thou art much worse than a Christian—thou art a heathen, a servant of idols.”

“Yes, I am a heathen, and the melancholy, self-tormenting Nazarenes are quite as little to my taste as the dry and joyless Hebrews. May our dear Lady of Sidon, holy Astarte, forgive me, that I kneel before the many sorrowed Mother of the Crucified and pray. Only my knee and my tongue worship death—my heart remains true to life. But do not look so sourly,” continued the Spaniard, as he saw what little gratification his words seemed to give the Rabbi. “Do not look at me with disdain. My nose is not a renegade. When once by chance I came into this street at dinner time, and the well-known savory odors of the Jewish kitchen rose to my nose, I was seized with the same yearning which our fathers felt for the fleshpots of Egypt—pleasant tasting memories of youth came back to me. In imagination I saw again the carp with brown raisin sauce

which my aunt prepared so sustainingly for Friday eve; I saw once more the steamed mutton with garlic and horseradish, which might have raised the dead, and the soup with dreamily swimming dumplings in it—and my soul melted like the notes of an enamored nightingale—and since then I have been eating in the restaurant of my friend Dona Schnapper-Elle."

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Meanwhile they had arrived at this highly lauded place, where Schnapper-Elle stood at the door cordially greeting the strangers who had come to the fair, and who, led by hunger, were now streaming in. Behind her, sticking his head out over her shoulder, was the tall Nose Star, anxiously and inquisitively observing them. Don Isaac with an exaggerated air of dignity approached the landlady, who returned his satirical reverence with endless curtsies. Thereupon he drew the glove from his right hand, wrapped it, the hand, in the fold of his cloak, and grasping Schnapper-Elle's hand, slowly drew it over his moustache, saying:

"Senora! your eyes rival the brilliancy of the sun! But as eggs, the longer they are boiled the harder they become, so *vice versa* my heart grows softer the longer it is cooked in the flaming flashes of your eyes. From the yolk of my heart flies up the winged god Amor and seeks a confiding nest in your bosom. And oh, Senora, wherewith shall I compare that bosom? For in all the world there is no flower, no fruit, which is like to it! It is the one thing of its kind! Though the wind tears away the leaves from the tenderest rose, your bosom is still a winter rose which defies all storms. Though the sour lemon, the older it grows the yellower and more wrinkled it becomes, your bosom rivals in color and softness the sweetest pineapple. Oh, Senora, if the city of Amsterdam be as beautiful as you told me yesterday, and the day before, and every day, the ground on which it rests is far lovelier still."

The cavalier spoke these last words with affected earnestness, and squinted longingly at the large medallion which hung from Schnapper-Elle's neck. Nose Star looked down with inquisitive eyes, and the much-bepraised bosom heaved so that the whole city of Amsterdam rocked from side to side.

"Ah!" sighed Schnapper-Elle, "virtue is worth more than beauty. What use is my beauty to me? My youth is passing away, and since Schnapper is gone—anyhow, he had handsome hands—what avails beauty?"

With that she sighed again, and like an echo, all but inaudible, Nose Star sighed behind her. "Of what avail is your beauty?" cried Don Isaac. "Oh, Dona Schnapper-Elle, do not sin against the goodness of creative Nature! Do not scorn her most charming gifts, or she will reap most terrible revenge. Those blessed, blessing eyes will become glassy balls, those winsome lips grow flat and unattractive, that chaste and charming form be changed into an unwieldy barrel of tallow, and the city of Amsterdam at last rest on a spongy bog." Thus he sketched piece by piece the appearance of Schnapper-Elle, so that the poor woman was bewildered, and sought to escape the uncanny compliments of the cavalier. She was delighted to see Beautiful Sara appear at this instant, as it gave her an opportunity to inquire whether she had quite recovered from her swoon. Thereupon she plunged into lively chatter, in which she fully

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developed her sham gentility, mingled with real kindness of heart, and related with more prolixity than discretion the awful story of how she herself had almost fainted with horror when she, as innocent and inexperienced as could be, arrived in a canal boat at Amsterdam, and the rascally porter, who carried her trunk, led her—not to a respectable hotel, but oh, horrors!—to an infamous brothel! She could tell what it was the moment she entered, by the brandy-drinking, and by the immoral sights! And she would, as she said, really have swooned, if it had not been that during the six weeks she stayed in the disorderly house she only once ventured to close her eyes.

"I dared not," she added, "on account of my virtue. And all that was owing to my beauty! But virtue will stay—when good looks pass away."

Don Isaac was on the point of throwing some critical light on the details of this story when, fortunately, Squinting Aaron Hirschkuh from Homburg-on-the-Lahn came with a white napkin on his arm, and bitterly bewailed that the soup was already served, and that the boarders were seated at table, but that the landlady was missing.

(The conclusion and the chapters which follow are lost, not from any fault of the author.)

THE LIFE OF FRANZ GRILLPARZER

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Franz Grillparzer is the greatest poet and dramatist among the Austrians. Corresponding to the Goethe Society at Weimar, the Grillparzer Society at Vienna holds its meetings and issues its annual; and the edition of Goethe's works instituted by the Grand Duchess Sophie of Weimar is paralleled by an edition of Grillparzer's works now in process of publication by the city of Vienna. Not without a sense of local pride and jealousy do the Viennese extol their fellow-countryman and hold him up to their kinsmen of the north as worthy to stand beside Goethe and Schiller. They would be ungrateful if they did not cherish the memory of a man who during his life-time was wont to prefer them, with all their imperfections upon their heads, to the keener and more enterprising North Germans, and who on many occasions sang the praises of their sociability, their wholesome naturalness, and their sound instinct. But even from the point of view of the critical North German or of the non-German foreigner, Grillparzer abundantly deserves his local fame—and more than local fame; for a dozen dramas of the first class, two eminently characteristic short stories, numerous lyrical poems, and innumerable studies and autobiographical papers are a man's work entitling their author to a high place in European, not merely German, literature.

It is, however, as an Austrian that Grillparzer is primarily to be judged. Again and again he insisted upon his national quality as a man and as a poet, upon the Viennese atmosphere of his plays and his poems. He was never happy when away from his native city, and though his pieces are now acceptably performed wherever German is spoken, they are most successful in Vienna, and some of them are to be seen only on the Viennese stage.

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What are, then, the distinguishing features of the Austrians, and of Grillparzer as one of them? Grillparzer said these features are an open heart and a single mind, good sense and reliable intuition, frankness, naivete, generosity, modest contentment with being while others are up and doing. The Austrians are of mixed blood, and partake of South European characteristics less prominent among the purer blooded Teutons of the north. They have life on easier terms, are less intellectual, are more sensuous, emotional, more fanciful, fonder of artistic enjoyment, more sensitive to color and to those effects called “color,” by contrast to form, in other arts than that of painting. The art of music is most germane to the Austrian spirit; and we have a ready key to the peculiarities of the Austrian disposition in the difference between Haydn, Mozart, Schubert, and Johann Strauss, on the one hand, and Haendel, Beethoven, Schumann, and Wagner on the other. Moreover, the Austrians are in all respects conservative, in literary taste no less than in politics and religion. The pseudo-classicism of Gottsched maintained its authority in Austria not merely after the time of Lessing, but also after the time of Schiller. Wieland was a favorite long before Goethe began to be appreciated; and as to the romantic movement, only the gentle tendencies of such a congenial spirit as Eichendorff found a sympathetic echo on the shores of the Danube. Romance influences, however, more particularly Spanish, were manifest there even before the time when they became strong upon Grillparzer.

Franz Grillparzer was born in Vienna on the fifteenth of January, 1791. His father, Wenzel Grillparzer, a self-made man, was a lawyer of the strictest probity, who occupied a respectable position in his profession; but, too scrupulous to seize the opportunities for profit that lawyers easily come upon, he lived a comparatively poor man and in 1809 died in straitened circumstances. At home he was stern and repressive.

[Illustration: FRANZ GRILLPARZER]

Both his legal habit of mind and also his true discipleship of the age of enlightenment in which he grew up disposed him to intellectual tyranny over everything that looked like sentimentality or foolish fantasy in wife or children. His own hobbies, however, such as long walks in the country and the cultivation of flowers or—strangely enough—the reading of highly romantic novels, he indulged in as matters of course. It is with some surprise that we find him married to a woman of abnormal nervousness, who was given to mysticism and was feverishly devoted to music. Marianne Grillparzer, born Sonnleithner, belonged to a substantial middle-class family. Her father was a friend of Haydn and Mozart and was himself a composer of music; her brothers became men of note in the history of the Viennese operatic stage; and she herself shared in the artistic temperament of the family, but with ominously pathological over-development in one direction. She took her own life in 1819 and transmitted to her sons a tendency to moodiness and melancholy which led to the suicide of one and the haunting fear of insanity in that other who is the subject of this sketch.

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That Franz Grillparzer was destined to no happy childhood is obvious, and it is equally clear that he needed a strong will to overcome not merely material obstacles to progress but also inherited dispositions of such antithetical sort. The father and the mother were at war in his breast. Like the mother in sensitiveness and imaginativeness, he was the son of his father in a stern censoriousness that was quick to ridicule what appeared to be nonsense in others and in himself; but he was the son of his father also in clearness of understanding and devotion to duty as he saw it.

Grillparzer once said that his works were detached fragments of his life; and though many of their themes seem remote from him in time and place, character and incident in them are unmistakably enriched by being often conceived in the light of personal experience. Outwardly, however, his life was comparatively uneventful. After irregular studies with private tutors and at school, Grillparzer studied law from 1807 to 1811 at the University of Vienna, gave instruction from 1810 to 1813 to the sons of various noblemen, and in 1813 began in the Austrian civil service the humdrum career which, full of disappointments and undeserved setbacks, culminated in his appointment in 1832 to the directorship of the *Hofkammerarchiv,* and lasted until his honorable retirement in 1856. He was a conscientious official; but throughout this time he was regarded, and regarded himself, primarily as Grillparzer the poet; and in spite of loyalty to the monarchy, he was entirely out of sympathy with the antediluvian administration of Metternich and his successors. Little things, magnified by pusillanimous apprehension, stood in his way. In 1819 he expressed in a poem *The Ruins of Campo Vaccino* esthetic abhorrence of the cross most inappropriately placed over the portal of the Coliseum in Rome, and was thereafter never free of the suspicion of heresy. In 1825 membership in a social club raided by the police subjected him to the absurd suspicion of plotting treason. Only once do we find him, during the first half of the century, *persona gratissima* with the powers that be. Grillparzer firmly disapproved the disintegrating tendencies of the revolution of 1848, and uttered his sense of the duty of loyal cooeperation under the Habsburgs in a spirited poem, *To Field-Marshal Count Radetzky*. For the moment he became a national hero, especially in the army. His latter years were indeed years of honor; but the honor came too late. He was given the cross of the order of Leopold in 1849, was made *Hofrat* and a member of the House of Lords in 1856, and received the grand cross of the order of Franz Josef upon the celebration of his eightieth birthday in 1871. He died on the twenty-first of January, 1872.

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Grillparzer led for the most part a solitary life—for the last third of his life he was almost a hermit—and he was rather an observer than an actor in the affairs of men; but nevertheless he saw more of the world than a mere dreamer would have cared to see, and the circle of his friends was not inconsiderable. Besides making the trip to Italy, already alluded to, in 1819, he journeyed in 1826 to North Germany, seeing Goethe in Weimar, in 1836 to Paris, in 1837 to London, in 1843 down the Danube to Athens, and in 1847 again to Berlin and to Hamburg. No one of these trips gave him any particular poetic impetus, except perhaps the first, on which he found in the classical atmosphere of Rome a refreshing antidote to the romantic miasma which he hated. Nor did he derive much profit from the men of letters whom he visited in various places, such as Fouque, Chamisso, and Heine. He dined with Goethe, but was too bashful to accept an indirect invitation to spend an evening with Goethe alone. He paid his respects to Uhland, whom he esteemed as the greatest German poet of that time (1837); but Uhland was then no longer productive and was never a magnetic personality. Indeed, there was hardly more than one man, even in Vienna, who exerted a strong personal influence upon Grillparzer, and this was Josef Schreyvogel, journalist, critic, playwright, from 1814 to 1831 secretary of the *Burgtheater*. A happy chance gained for Grillparzer in 1816 the friendship of this practical theatre manager, and under Schreyvogel's auspices he prepared his first drama for the stage.

On another side, Grillparzer's character is illumined for us by the strange story of his relations with four Viennese women. He was not a handsome man, but tall, with an abundance of blond hair, and bewitching blue eyes that made him very attractive to the other sex. He, too, was exceedingly sensitive to sexual attraction and in early youth suffered torments from the pangs of unsatisfied longing. From the days when he knew that he was in love, but did not yet know with whom, to the time of final renunciation we find him irresolute, ardent, but apparently selfish in the inability to hazard the discovery that the real might prove inferior to his ideal. Thus his critical disposition invaded even the realm of his affections and embroiled him not merely with the object of them, but also with himself. Charlotte von Paumgarten, the wife of a cousin of Grillparzer's, Marie Daeffinger, the wife of a painter, loved him not wisely, but too well; and a young Prussian girl, Marie Piquot, confessed in her last will and testament to such a devotion to him as she was sure no other woman could ever attain, wherefore she commended "her Tasso" to the fostering care of her mother. Grillparzer had experienced only a fleeting interest in Marie Piquot; so much the more lasting was the attachment which bound him to her successful rival, Katharina Froehlich. Katharina, one of four daughters of a Viennese manufacturer

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who had seen better days, and, like her sisters, endowed with great artistic talent and practical energy, might have proved the salvation of Grillparzer's existence as a man if he had been more capable of manly resolution, and she had been less like him in impetuosity and stubbornness. They became engaged, they made preparations for a marriage which was never consummated and for years was never definitely abandoned; mutual devotion is ever and anon interrupted by serious or trivial quarrels, and the imperfect relation drags on to the vexation of both, until Grillparzer as an old man of sixty takes lodgings with the Froehlich sisters and, finally, makes Katharina his sole heir.

Grillparzer's development as a poet and dramatist follows the bent of his Austrian genius. One of the first books that he ever read was the text to Mozart's *Magic Flute*. Music, opera, operetta, and fairy drama gave the earliest impulse to his juvenile imagination. Even as a boy he began the voluminous reading which, continued throughout his life, made him one of the best informed men of his time in European literature. History, natural history, and books of travel are followed by the plays of Shakespeare, Lessing, Goethe, and Schiller, while Gesner's idyls charm him, and he absorbs the stories and romances of Wieland. In 1808 he reads the early works of Schiller and admires the ideal enthusiasm of *Don Carlos*.

[Illustration: FRANZ GRILLPARZER AND KAETHI FROeHLICH IN 1823]

In 1810 he revolts from Schiller and swears allegiance to Goethe. In the ensuing years he learns English, Greek, and Spanish; Shakespeare supplants Goethe in his esteem, and he is attracted first to Calderon and then to Lope de Vega in whom, ere long, he discovers the dramatic spirit most closely akin to his.

We read of Grillparzer, as of Goethe, that as a child he was fond of improvising dramatic performances with his playmates. Occasionally he was privileged to attend an operetta or a spectacular play at one of the minor theatres. When he reached adolescence he experimented with a large number of historical and fantastic subjects, and he left plans and fragments that, unoriginal as most of them are, give earnest of a talent for scenic manipulation and for the representation of character. These juvenile pieces are full of reminiscences of Schiller and Shakespeare. Grillparzer's first completed drama of any magnitude, *Blanca of Castile* (1807-09), is almost to be called Schiller's *Don Carlos* over again, both as to the plot and as to the literary style—though of course the young man's imitation seems like a caricature. The fragments *Spartacus* (1810) and *Alfred the Great* (1812), inspired by patriotic grief for Austria humiliated by Napoleon, are Shakespearean in many scenes, but are in their general disposition strongly influenced by Schiller's *Robbers and Maid of Orleans*. In all three of these pieces, the constant reference to inscrutable fate proves that Grillparzer is a disciple of Schiller and a son of his time.

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There is, therefore, a double significance in the earliest play of Grillparzer's to be performed on the stage, *The Ancestress* (1816)—first, in that, continuing in the direction foreshadowed by its predecessors, it takes its place beside the popular dramas of fate written by Werner and Muellner; and secondly, because at the same time the poet, now yielding more to the congenial impulse of Spanish influences, establishes his independence even in the treatment of a more or less conventional theme. Furthermore, *The Ancestress* marks the beginning of Grillparzer's friendship with Schreyvogel. Grillparzer had translated some scenes of Calderon's *Life is a Dream* which, published in 1816 by an enemy of Schreyvogel's who wished to discredit the adaptation which Schreyvogel had made for the *Burgtheater,* served only to bring the two men together; for Schreyvogel was generous and Grillparzer innocent of any hostile intention. As early as 1813 Grillparzer had thought of *The Ancestress*. Schreyvogel encouraged him to complete the play, and his interest once again aroused and soon mounting to enthusiasm, he wrote in less than a month the torrent of Spanish short trochaic verses which sweeps through the four acts of this romantic drama. Schreyvogel was delighted; but he criticized the dramatic structure; and in a revised version in five acts Grillparzer so far adopted his suggestions as to knit up the plot more closely and thus to give greater prominence to the idea of fate and retribution. The play was performed on the thirty-first of January, 1817, and scored a tremendous success.

Critics, to be sure, were not slow to point out that the effectiveness of *The Ancestress* was due less to poetical qualities than to theatrical—unjustly; for even though we regard the play as but the scenic representation of the incidents of a night, the representation is of absorbing interest and is entirely free from the crudities which make Muellner's dramas more gruesome than dramatic. But Grillparzer nevertheless resolved that his next play should dispense with all adventitious aids and should take as simple a form and style as he could give it. A friend chanced to suggest to him that the story of Sappho would furnish a text for an opera. Grillparzer replied that the subject would perhaps yield a tragedy. The idea took hold of him; without delay or pause for investigation he made his plan; and in three weeks his second play was ready for the stage. Written in July, 1817, *Sappho* was produced at the *Hofburgtheater* on April 21, 1818. Grillparzer said that in creating *Sappho* he had plowed pretty much with Goethe's steer. In form his play resembles *Iphigenia* and in substance it is not unlike *Tasso;* but upon closer examination *Sappho* appears to be neither a classical play of the serene, typical quality of *Iphigenia* nor a *Kuenstlerdrama* in the sense in which *Tasso* is one. Grillparzer

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was not inspired by the meagre tradition of the Lesbian poetess, nor yet by anything more than the example of Goethe; he took only the outline of the story of Sappho and Phaon; his play is almost to be called a romantic love story, and the influence strongest upon him in the writing of it was that of Wieland. The situation out of which the tragedy of Sappho develops is that of a young man who deceives himself into believing that admiration for a superior woman is love, and who is undeceived when a *naive* maiden awakens in him sentiments that really are those of love. This situation occurs again and again in the voluminous works of Wieland—most obviously perhaps in the novelette *Menander and Glycerion* (1803), but also in the novel *Agathon* (1766-1767), and in the epistolary novel *Aristippus* (1800-1802). Moreover, it is the essential situation in *Mme*. de Stael's *Corinne* (1807). In the third place, this situation was Grillparzer's own, and it is so constantly found in his dramas that it may be called the characteristic situation for the dramatist as well as for the man. In this drama, finally, we have a demonstration of Grillparzer's profound conviction that the artistic temperament is ill suited to the demands of practical life, and in the solitary sphere to which it is doomed must fail to find that contentment which only life can afford. Sappho is not assailed by life on all sides as Tasso is; but she makes an egregious mistake in her search for the satisfactions of womanhood, thereby unfitting herself for the priesthood of poetry as well as forfeiting her life.

Sappho was as successful on the stage as *The Ancestress* had been, and the dramatist became the lion of the hour. He was received in audience by Prince Metternich, was lauded in high social circles in Vienna, and was granted an annual pension of 1000 florins for five years, on condition that the *Hofburgtheater* should have the right to first production of his forthcoming plays. It was, therefore, with great enthusiasm and confidence that he set to work upon his next subject, *The Golden Fleece.* The story of Jason and Medea had long been familiar to him, not only in the tragedies of Euripides and Seneca, but also in German dramas and operas of the eighteenth century which during his youth were frequently produced in Vienna. The immediate impulse to treat this story came to him when, in the summer of 1818, he chanced upon the article *Medea* in a mythological lexicon. His plan was soon formed and was made to embrace the whole history of the relations of Jason and Medea. For so comprehensive a matter Grillparzer, like Schiller in *Wallenstein,* found the limits of a single drama too narrow; and as Schiller said of *Wallenstein*—

"His camp alone explains his fault and crime,"

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so Grillparzer rightly perceived that the explanation to modern minds of so incredible a crime as Medea's must be sought and presented in the untoward circumstances under which her relations with Jason began. Accordingly, he showed in *The Guest Friend* how Phryxus, obedient to what he believed to be the will of the gods, bore the Golden Fleece to Colchis, only to meet death at the hands of AEetes, the king of that land, who coveted the precious token. Medea, the king's daughter, vainly tries to prevent the crime, but sees herself included in the dying man's curse; for she shares her father's desire for the treasure and is appalled only by the sense of outraged hospitality, even to a haughty intruder. When, in *The Argonauts,* Jason comes to recover the Fleece, Medea, still an Amazon and an enchantress, is determined with all her arts to aid her father in repulsing the invaders. But the sight of the handsome stranger soon touches her with an unwonted feeling. Against her will she saves the life and furthers the enterprise of Jason; they become partners in the theft of the Fleece; whereupon Jason, fascinated by the dark-eyed barbarian and gratified with the sense of subjugating an Amazon, assures her of his love and takes her and the Fleece in triumph away from Colchis.

[Illustration: GRILLPARZER'S HOUSE IN THE SPIEGELGASSE]

Four years elapse before the action of *Medea* commences. Medea has borne two sons to Jason; as a husband and father he returns to Greece with the object of his quest. But he is now received rather as the husband of a sorceress than as the winner of the Fleece. Ostracism and banishment accentuate the humiliation of marriage to a barbarian. Medea has sacrificed all to serve him; without her aid his expedition would have been fruitless, but with her he cannot live in the civilized community where she has no place. She frantically endeavors to become a Greek, but to no purpose. Jason strives to overcome a growing repugnance and loyally makes common cause with her; but he cannot follow her in banishment from Corinth, nor appreciate the feelings of the wife who sees him about to marry Creusa, and of the mother who sees her children prefer Creusa to herself. Then the barbarian in Medea reasserts herself and the passion of a just revenge, stifling all other feeling, moves her to the destruction of all her enemies and a final divorce from her heartless husband. To Jason she can give no other words of comfort than that he may be stronger in suffering than he has been in acting.

Such an eminently personal tragedy Grillparzer constructed on the basis of a mythological story. The Fleece, like the hoard of the Nibelungen, is the occasion, but the curse attached to it is not the cause, of crimes; this cause is the cupidity of human nature and the helplessness of the individual who allows the forces of evil to gain sway over him. Jason, in overweening self-indulgence, attaches himself to

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a woman to whom he cannot be true. Medea, in too confident self-sufficiency, is not proof against the blandishments of an unscrupulous adventurer and progresses from crime to crime, doing from beginning to end what it is not her will to do. An unnatural and unholy bond cannot be severed even to make way for a natural and holy one. And the paths of glory lead not to the grave but to a living death in the consciousness of guilt and the remorse for misdeeds.

Grillparzer never again wrote with such tumultuous passion as swayed him at the time of his work on the first half of *The Golden Fleece.* His illicit love of Charlotte Paumgarten gave him many a tone which thrills in the narrative of Jason and Medea; the death of his mother brought home to him the tragedy of violence and interrupted his work in the midst of *The Argonauts;* his visit to Rome enabled him to regain composure and increase his sense of the local color of ancient civilization; so that when he completed *Medea,* in the fall and early winter of 1819-20, he wrote with the mastery of one who had ventured, suffered, observed, and recovered. In his own person he had experienced the dangers of the *vita activa* against which *The Golden Fleece* is a warning.

Mention has already been made of Grillparzer's pride in the history of Austria. In 1809 he wrote in his diary, "I am going to write an historical drama on Frederick the Warlike, Duke of Austria." A few stanzas of a ballad on this hero were written, probably at this time; dramatic fragments have survived from 1818 and 1821. In the first two decades of the nineteenth century vigorous efforts were made, especially by Baron von Hormayr and his collaborators, to stir up Austrian poets to emulate their North-German colleagues in the treatment of Austrian subjects. With these efforts Grillparzer was in hearty sympathy. The Hanoverian A.W. Schlegel declared in a lecture delivered at Vienna in 1808 that the worthiest form of the romantic drama was the historical; and made special mention of the house of Habsburg. In 1817 Matthaeus von Collin's play *Frederick the Warlike* was published, as one of three (*Leopold the Glorious, Frederick the Warlike*, and *Ottocar*) planned as a cycle on the house of Babenberg. Collin's *Frederick* interested Grillparzer; Ottocar, who married Frederick's sister and whose fate closely resembled Frederick's, appealed to him as a promising character for dramatic treatment; a performance of Kleist's *Prince Frederick of Homburg,* which Grillparzer witnessed in 1821, may well have stimulated him to do for the first of the Habsburgs, Ottocar's successful rival, what Kleist had done for the greatest of the early Hohenzollerns; and particularly the likeness of Ottocar's career to that of Napoleon gave him the point of view for *King Ottocar's Fortune and Fall,* composed in 1823.

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Ottocar is remarkable for the amount of matter included in the space of a single drama, and it gives an impressive picture of the dawn of the Habsburg monarchy; but only in the first two acts can it be said to be dramatic. The middle and end, though spectacular, are rather epic than dramatic, and our interest centres more in Rudolf the triumphant than in Ottocar the defeated and penitent. The play is essentially the tragedy of a personality. Ottocar is a *parvenu,* a strong man whom success makes too sure of the adequacy of his individual strength, ruthless when he should be politic, indulgent when stern measures are requisite, an egotist even when he acts for the public weal. Grillparzer treated his case with great fulness of sensuous detail, but without superabundance of antiquarian minutiae, in spite of careful study of historical sources of information. "Pride goeth before destruction," is the theme, but Grillparzer was far from wishing either to demonstrate or illustrate that truth. *Ottocar* is the tragedy of an individual unequal to superhuman tasks; it does not represent an idea, but a man.

After having been retained by the censors for two years, lest Bohemian sensibilities should be offended, *Ottocar* was finally freed by order of the emperor himself, and was performed amid great enthusiasm on February nineteenth, 1825. In September of that year the empress was to be crowned as queen of Hungary, and the imperial court suggested to Grillparzer that he write a play on a Hungarian subject in celebration of this event. He did not immediately find a suitable subject; but his attention was attracted to the story of the palatin Bancbanus, a national hero who had found his way to the dramatic workshop of Hans Sachs in Nuremberg, had been recommended to Schiller, and had recently been treated in Hungarian by Joseph Katona. Grillparzer knew neither of the plays of his predecessors. In connection with this subject he thought rather of Shakespeare's *King Lear* and *Othello*, of Byron's *Marino Faliero*—he had early experimented with this hero himself—and this was the time of his first thorough study of Lope de Vega. In November and December, 1826, he wrote *A Faithful Servant of His Master.* This is a drama of character triumphant in the severest test to which the sense of duty can be put. Bancbanus, appointed regent while his sovereign goes to war, promises to preserve peace in the kingdom, and keeps his promise even when his own relatives rise in arms against the queen's brother who has insulted Bancbanus' wife and, they think, has killed her. We have to do, however, not merely with a brilliant example of unselfish loyalty; we have a highly special case of individualized persons. Bancbanus is a little, pedantic old man, almost ridiculous in his personal appearance and in his over-conscientiousness. Erny, his wife, is a childlike creature, not displeased by flattery, too innocent to be circumspect, but faithful

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unto death. And Otto von Meran, the princely profligate, is one of Grillparzer's boldest creations—not bad by nature, but utterly irresponsible; crafty, resourceful, proud as a peacock and, like a monkey in the forest, wishing always to be noticed. He cannot bear disregard; contempt makes him furious; and a sense of disgrace which would drive a moral being to insanity reduces him to a state of stupidity in which, doing good deeds for the first time and unconsciously, he gradually acquires consciousness of right and wrong. It is Bancbanus who brings about this transformation in the character of Otto, who holds rebellious nobles and populace in check, who teaches his master how to be a servant of the State, and who, by saving the heir to the throne and praying that he may deserve the loyalty shown his father, points forward to the better day when feudalism shall give way to unselfish enlightened monarchy.

[Illustration: GRILLPARZER'S ROOM IN THE HOUSE OF THE SISTERS FROeHLICH]

This play, a glorification of patriotic devotion and, in spite of the self-repressive character of the hero, as full of stirring action as any German historical play whatever, was presented on the twenty-eighth of February, 1828, and was received with applause by high and low. The emperor caused a special word of appreciation to be conveyed to the poet. How great was Grillparzer's astonishment, therefore, when, on the following day, the president of police summoned him and informed him that the emperor was so well pleased with the play that he wished to have it all to himself; wherefore the dramatist would please hand over the manuscript, at his own price! Dynastic considerations probably moved the emperor to this preposterous demand. The very futility of it—since a number of copies of the manuscript had already been made, and one or the other was sure to escape seizure—is a good example of the trials to which the patience of Austrian poets was subjected during the old regime. Grillparzer was at this time depressed enough on his own account, as his poems *Tristia ex Ponto* bear witness. This new attempt at interference almost made him despair of his fatherland. "An Austrian poet," he said, "ought to be esteemed above all others. The man who does not lose heart under such circumstances is really a kind of hero."

Grillparzer was not a real hero. But in the midst of public frictions, personal tribulations, apprehension that his powers of imagination were declining, and petulant surrenders to discouragement, he kept pottering along with compositions long since started, and by 1831 he had completed two more plays, *A Dream is Life* and *Waves of the Sea and of Love*.

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Like *The Ancestress*, *A Dream is Life* is written in short trochaic verses of irregular length and with occasional rhyme. The idea was conceived early, the first act was written at the time of *The Ancestress,* and the title, though chosen late, being a reversal of Calderon's *Life is a Dream*, suggests the connection with that Spanish drama. Grillparzer's principal source for the plot, was, however, Voltaire's narrative entitled *White and Black*. In the psychology of dreams he had long been interested, and life in the dream state formed a large part of the opera text *Melusina* which, in 1821-23, he wrote for Beethoven. A particular flavor was doubtless given to the plot by the death of Napoleon on May fifth, 1821, and the beginning of Grillparzer's friendship with Katharina Froehlich shortly before; for *A Dream is Life* represents in the dream of a harmless but ambitious young man such a career of conquest as Napoleon was thought to have exemplified, and the hero, waking after a nightmare of deceits and crimes that were the stepping stones to success, is warned of the dangers that beset enterprise and taught to prefer the simple life in union with a rustic maiden. There are two actions, corresponding to the waking and sleeping states, the actors in the latter being those of real life fantastically transformed; but there is no magic or anything else super-natural, and the most fascinating quality in the drama is the skill with which the transformation is made in accordance with the irrational logic of dreams. Accompanied by the weird music of Gyrowetz and exquisitely staged, this is the most popular of Grillparzer's plays in Vienna. But it is by no means merely theatrical. There is profound truth in the theory upon which it is constructed: a dream is the awakening of the soul; dreams do not create wishes, they reveal them, and the actions of a dreamer are the potentialities of his character. Moreover, the quietistic note of renunciation for the sake of peace to the soul and integrity of personality is the final note of *The Golden Fleece* no less than of this fantasmagoria. *Waves of the Sea and of Love* is a far-fetched and sentimental title for a dramatization of the story of Hero and Leander. Grillparzer chose the title, he said, because he wished to suggest a romantic treatment that should humanize the matter. The play really centres in the character of Hero and might much better be called by her name. In it Grillparzer's experiences with Charlotte von Paumgarten and Marie Daeffinger are poetically fructified, and his capacity for tracing the incalculable course of feminine instincts attains to the utmost of refinement and delicacy. The theme is the conflict between duty to a solemn vow of sacerdotal chastity and the disposition to satisfy the natural desire for love. But Grillparzer has represented no such conflict in the breast of Hero. Her antagonist is not her own conscience but the representative of

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divine law in the temple of which she is priestess. The action of the play therefore takes the form of an intrigue on the part of this representative to thwart the intrigue of Hero and Leander. This external collision is, however, far from supplying the chief interest in a drama unquestionably dramatic, although its main action is internal. Hero is at the beginning a Greek counterpart to the barbarian Medea. She has the same pride of station and self-assurance. Foreordained to asceticism, she is ready to embrace it because she thinks it superior to the worldliness of which she has no knowledge. When worldliness presents itself to her in the attractive form of Leander, she is first curious, then offended, apprehensive of danger to herself and to him, only soon to apprehend nothing but interruption of the new rapture to which she yields in oblivion of everything else in the world. Only a poet of the unprecedented *naivete* of Grillparzer could so completely obliterate the insurgency of moral scruples against this establishment of the absolute monarchy of love.

In spite of admirable dramatic qualities and the most exquisite poetry even in the less dramatic passages, this play on Hero and Leander disappointed both audience and playwright when it was put upon the stage in April, 1831. Other disappointments were rife for Grillparzer at this time. But he put away his desires for the unattainable, and with the publication of *Tristia ex Ponto* in 1835, took, as it were, formal leave of the past and its sorrow. Indeed, he seemed on the point of beginning a new epoch of ready production; for he now succeeded, for the first time since 1818, in the quick conception and uninterrupted composition of an eminently characteristic play, the most artistic of German comedies, *Woe to the Liar*. It was the more lamentable that when the play was enacted, on the sixth of March, 1838, the brutal behavior of an unappreciative audience so wounded the sensitive poet that he resolved never again to subject himself to such ignominy—and kept his word. In 1840 he published *Waves of the Sea and of Love, A Dream is Life*, and *Woe to the Liar*; but the plays which he wrote after that time he kept in his desk.

The year 1838, accordingly, sharply divides the life of Grillparzer into two parts—the first, productive and more or less in the public eye; the second, contemplative and in complete retirement from the stage. To be sure, the poet became conspicuous once more with his poem to Radetzky in 1848; in 1851 Heinrich Laube, recently appointed director of the *Hofburgtheater*, instituted a kind of Grillparzer revival; and belated honors brought some solace to his old age. But he had become an historical figure long before he ceased to be seen on the streets of his beloved Vienna, and the three completed manuscripts of plays that in 1872 he bequeathed to posterity had lain untouched for nearly twenty years.

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Two of these posthumous pieces, *Brothers' Quarrels in the House of Habsburg* and *Libussa*, undoubtedly reveal the advancing years of their author, in a good and in a bad sense. They lack the theatrical self-evidence of the earlier dramas. But on the other hand, they are rich in the ripest wisdom of their creator, and in significance of characterization as well as in profundity of idea they amply atone for absence of the more superficial qualities. Kaiser Rudolf II. in *Brothers' Quarrels* is one of the most human of the men who in the face of inevitable calamity have pursued a Fabian policy. Even to personal predilections, like fondness for the dramas of Lope, he is a replica of the mature Grillparzer himself. *Libussa* presents in Primislaus a somewhat colorless but nevertheless thoroughly masculine representative of practical cooeperation and progress, and in Libussa, the heroine, a typical feminine martyr to duty.

[Illustration: FRANZ GRILLPARZER In his Sixtieth Year]

The third of the posthumous pieces, however, *The Jewess of Toledo*, may perhaps be said to mark the climax of Grillparzer's productive activity. It is an eminently modern drama of passion in classical dignity of form. Grillparzer noted the subject as early as 1813. In 1824 he read Lope de Vega's play on it, and wrote in trochees two scenes of his own; in 1848-49—perhaps with Lola Montez and the king of Bavaria in mind—he worked further on it, and about 1855 brought the work to an end. The play is properly called *The Jewess of Toledo*; for Rachel, the Jewess, is at the centre of the action, and is a marvelous creation—"a mere woman, nothing but her sex"; but the king, though relatively passive, is the most important character. He is attracted to Rachel by a charm that he has never known in his coldly virtuous English consort, and, after an error forgivable because made comprehensible, is taught the duty of personal sacrifice to morality and to the state. In doctrine and in inner form this drama is comparable to Hebbel's *Agnes Bernauer*; it is a companion piece to *A Faithful Servant of his Master*, and the sensuality of Rachel contrasts instructively with the spirituality of Hero. The genuine dramatic collision of antithetical forces produces, furthermore, a new synthesis, the effect of which is to make us wish morality less austere and the sense of obligation stronger than they at first are in two persons good by nature but caused to err by circumstances. In the series of dramas thus passed in review there is a great variety of setting and incident, and an abundance of dramatic *motifs* that show Grillparzer to have been one of the most opulent of playwrights. The range of characters, too, each presented with due regard for *milieu*, is seen to be considerable, and upon closer examination would be seen to be more considerable still. The greatest richness is found in the characters of women. Grillparzer himself lacked

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the specifically masculine qualities of courageous enterprise and tenacity of purpose. His men are rather affected by the world than active creators of new conditions, and their contact with conditions as they are leaves them with the scars of battle instead of the joy of victory. No one, however, could attribute a feministic spirit to Grillparzer; or, if so, it must be said that the study of reaction is no less instructive than the study of action and that being is at least as high an ideal as doing. Being, existence in a definite place amid the tangible surroundings of personal life, Grillparzer gives us with extraordinary abundance of sensuous details. The drama was for him what Goethe said it should always be, a present reality; and for the greater impressiveness of this reality he is fond of the use of visible objects—whether they be symbols, like the Golden Fleece in *Medea*, the lyre in *Sappho*, the medallion in *The Jewess of Toledo*, or characteristic weapons, accoutrement, and apparel. Everything expressive is welcome to him, gesture or inarticulate sound reinforces the spoken word or replaces it. Unusually sensuous language and comparative fulness of sententious passages go hand in hand with a laconic habit which indulges in many ellipses and is content to leave to the actor the task of making a single word convey the meaning of a sentence.

Grillparzer's plays were written for the stage. He abhorred what the Germans call a book drama, and had, on the other hand, the highest respect for the judgment of a popular audience as to the fact whether a play were fit for the stage or not. The popular audience was a jury from which there was no appeal on this question of fact. A passage in *The Poor Musician* gives eloquent expression to Grillparzer's regard for the sure esthetic instinct of the masses and, indirectly, to his own poetic *naivete.* But his plays are also poems; they are all in verse; and like the plays of his French prototype, Racine, they reveal their full merit only to connoisseurs. They are the work of a man who was better able than most men of his generation to prove all things, and who held fast to that which he found good. His art is not forward-looking, like that of Kleist, nor backward-looking, like that, say, of Theodor Koerner. It is in the strictest sense complementary and co-ordinate to that of Goethe and Schiller, a classicism modified by romantic tendencies toward individuation and localization. He did not aim at the typical. He felt, and rightly, that a work of art, being something individual, should be created with concentrated attention upon the attainment of its perfection as an individual; this perfection attained, the artist would attain to typical, symbolical connotation into the bargain. From anything like the grotesqueness of exaggerated characterization Grillparzer was saved by his sense of form. He had as fertile an imagination and as penetrating an intellect as Kleist, and he excelled Kleist in the

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reliability of his common sense. It was no play upon words, but the expression of conviction when he wrote, in 1836: “Poetry is incorporation of the spirit, spiritualization of the body, feeling of the understanding, and thought of the feeling.” In its comprehensive appeal to all of these faculties a work of art commends itself and carries its meaning through its existence as an objective reality, like the phenomena of nature herself. A comprehensive sensitiveness to such an appeal, whether of art or of nature, was Grillparzer’s ideal of individual nature and culture. He thought the North Germans had cultivated their understanding at the expense of their feeling, and had thereby impaired their esthetic sense. He thought the active life in general inevitably destroyed the harmony of the faculties and substituted an extrinsic for an intrinsic good. In the mad rush of our own time after material wealth and power we may profitably contemplate the picture which Grillparzer drew of himself in the following characteristic verses:

THE ANGLER

Below lies the lake hushed and tranquil,
And I sit here with idle hands,
And gaze at the frolicking fishes
Which glide to and fro o’er the sands.

They come, and they go, and they tarry;
But if I now venture a cast,
Of a sudden the playground is empty,
As my basket remains to the last.

Mayhap if I stirred up the water,
My angling might lure the shy prey.
But then I must also give over
The sight of the fishes at play.

[Illustration: THE GRILLPARZER MONUMENT AT VIENNA.]

FRANZ GRILLPARZER

* * * * *

MEDEA

A TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

CREON, *King of Corinth*

CREUSA, *his daughter*

JASON

MEDEA

GORA, *Medea's aged nurse*

A herald of the Amphictyons

A peasant

Medea's children

Slaves and slave-women, attendants of the King, etc.

MEDEA (1822)

TRANSLATED BY THEODORE A. MILLER, PH.D.

ACT I

Before the walls of Corinth. At the left, halfway up stage, a tent is pitched; in the background lies the sea, with a point of land jutting out into it, on which is built a part of the city. The time is early morning, before daybreak; it is still dark.

At the right in the foreground a slave is seen standing in a pit digging and throwing up shovelfuls of earth; on the opposite side of the pit stands MEDEA, before a black chest which is strangely decorated with gold; in this chest she keeps laying various utensils during the following dialogue.

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MEDEA. Is it, then, done?

SLAVE. A moment yet, my mistress.

[GORA *comes out of the tent and stands at a distance*.]

MEDEA. Come! First the veil, and then the goddess' staff.
I shall not need them more; here let them rest.
Dark night, the time for magic, is gone by,
And what is yet to come, or good or ill,
Must happen in the beamy light of day.—
This casket next; dire, secret flames it hides
That will consume the wretch who, knowing not,
Shall dare unlock it. And this other here,
Full-filled with sudden death, with many an herb,
And many a stone of magic power obscure,
Unto that earth they sprang from I commit.

[*She rises*.]

So! Rest ye here in peace for evermore.
Now for the last and mightiest thing of all!

[Illustration: MEDEA *From the Painting by Anselm Feuerbach*]

[*The slave, who has meanwhile climbed out of the pit and taken his stand behind the princess awaiting the conclusion of her enterprise, now turns to help her, and grasps at an object covered with a veil and hanging from a lance that has been resting against a tree behind MEDEA; the veil falls, revealing the banner, with the Golden Fleece glowing radiantly through the darkness.*]

SLAVE (*grasping the Fleece*). 'Tis this?

MEDEA. Nay, hold thy hand! Unveil it not.

(*Addressing the Fleece*.)

Once more let me behold thee, fatal gift
Of trusting guest-friend! Shine for one last time,
Thou witness of the downfall of my house,
Bespattered with my father's, brother's blood,
Sign of Medea's shame and hateful crime!

[*She stamps upon the lance-haft and breaks it in two*.]

So do I rend thee now, so sink thee deep
In earth's dark bosom, whence, a bane to men,
Thou sprang'st.

[*She lays the broken standard in the chest with the other objects and shuts down the cover*.]

GORA (*comes down*).

What does my mistress here?

MEDEA. Thou seest.

GORA. Wilt thou, then, bury in the earth that Fleece,
The symbol of thy service to the gods,
That saved thee, and shall save thee yet again?

MEDEA (*scornfully*).

That saved me? 'Tis because it saved me not,
That here I lay it. I am safe enough.

GORA (*ironically*).

Thanks to thy husband's love?

MEDEA (*to the slave, ignoring Gora's taunt*).

Is all prepared?

SLAVE. Yea, mistress.

MEDEA. Come!

[*She grasps one handle of the chest, the slave the other, and together they carry it to the pit.*]

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GORA (*observing them from a distance*).

Oh, what a task is this
For a proud princess, daughter of a king!

MEDEA. Nay, if it seem so hard, why dost not help?

GORA. Lord Jason's handmaid am I—and not thine!
Nor is it meet one slave another serve.

MEDEA (*to the slave*).

Now lay it in, and heap the earth upon it.

[*The slave lets the chest down into the pit and shovels in the earth upon it. MEDEA kneels at one side of the pit as he works.*]

GORA (*standing in the foreground*).

Oh, let me die, ye gods of Colchis, now,
That I may look no more on such a sight!
Yet, first hurl down your lightning-stroke of wrath
Upon this traitor who hath wrought us woe.
Let me but see him die; then slay me too!

MEDEA (*to the slave*).

'Tis finished. Stamp the earth about it close,
And go.—I charge thee, guard my secret well.
Thou art a Colchian, and I know thee true.

[*The slave departs.*]

GORA (*calling after him with grim scorn*).

If thou shalt tell thy master, woe to you both!

(*To MEDEA.*)

Hast finished?

MEDEA. Ay. At last I am at peace!

GORA. The Fleece, too, didst thou bury?

MEDEA. Even the Fleece.

GORA. Thou didst not leave it in Iolcos, with
Thine husband's uncle?

MEDEA. Nay, thou saw'st it here.

GORA. Thou hadst it still—and now hast buried it!
Gone, gone! And naught is left; all thy past life
Vanished, like wreaths of vapor in the breeze!
And naught's to come, and naught has been, and all
Thou seest is but this present fleeting hour!
There *was* no Colchis! All the gods are dead!
Thou hadst no father, never slew thy brother I
Thou think'st not of it; lo, it never happened!—
Think, then, thou art not wretched. Cheat thyself
To dream Lord Jason loves thee yet. Perchance
It may come true!

MEDEA (angrily).

Be silent, woman!

GORA.

Nay!
Let her who knows her guilty lock her lips,
But I *will* speak. Forth from my peaceful home
There in far Colchis, thou hast lured me here,
To be thine haughty paramour's meek slave.
Freeborn am I, yet see! mine arms are chained!—
Through the long, troubled nights, upon my couch
I lie and weep; each morn, as the bright sun
Returns, I curse my gray hairs and my weight
Of years. All scorn me, flout me. All I had
Is gone, save heavy heart and scalding tears.—
Nay, I will speak, and thou shalt listen, too!

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MEDEA. Say on.

GORA. All I foretold has come to pass.
'Tis scarce one moon since the revolted sea
Cast you ashore, seducer and seduced;
And yet e 'en now these folk flee from thy face,
And horror follows wheresoe'er thou goest.
The people shudder at the Colchian witch
With fearful whispers of her magic dark.
Where thou dost show thyself, there all shrink back
And curse thee. May the same curse smite them all!—
As for thy lord, the Colchian princess' spouse,
Him, too, they hate, for his sake, and for thine.
Did not his uncle drive him from his palace?
Was he not banished from his fatherland
What time that uncle perished, none knows how?
Home hath he none, nor resting-place, nor where
To lay his head. What canst thou hope from him?

MEDEA. I am his wife!

GORA. And hop'st—?

MEDEA. To follow him
In need and unto death.

GORA. Ay, need and death!
AEtes' daughter in a beggar's hut!

MEDEA. Let us pray Heaven for a simple heart;
So shall our humble lot be easier borne.

GORA. Ha!—And thy husband—?

MEDEA. Day breaks. Let us go.

GORA. Nay, thou shalt not escape my questioning!—One
comfort still is left me in my grief,
And only one: our wretched plight shows clear
That gods still rule in Heaven, and mete out
To guilty men requital, late or soon.
Weep for thy bitter lot; I'll comfort thee.
Only presume not rashly to deny
The gods are just, because thou dost deny

This punishment they send, and all this woe.—
To cure an evil, we must see it clear.
Thy husband—tell me—is he still the same?

MEDEA. What should he be?

GORA. O, toy not so with words!
Is he the same impetuous lover still
Who wooed thee once; who braved a hundred swords
To win thee; who, upon that weary voyage,
Laughed at thy fears and kissed away thy grief,
Poor maid, when thou wouldst neither eat nor drink,
But only pray to die? Ay, all too soon
He won thee with his passionate, stormy love.
Is he thy lover still?—I see thee tremble.
Ay, thou hast need; thou knowest he loves thee not,
But shudders at thee, dreads thee, flees thee, *hates* thee!
And as thou didst betray thy fatherland,
So shalt thou be betrayed—and by thy lover.
Deep in the earth the symbols of thy crime
Lie buried;—but the crime thou canst not hide.

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MEDEA. Be silent!

GORA. Never!

MEDEA (*grasping her fiercely by the arm*).

Silence, dame, I say!
What is this madness? Cease these frantic cries!
’Tis our part to await whate’er may come,
Not bid it hasten.—Thou didst say but now
There is no past, no future; when a deed
Is done, ’tis done for all time; we can know
Only this one brief present instant, Now.
Say, if this Now may cradle a dim future,
Why may it not entomb the misty past?
My past! Would God that I could change it—now!
And bitter tears I weep for it, bitterer far
Than thou dost dream of.—Yet, that is no cause
To seek destruction. Rather is there need
Clearly to know myself, face honestly
The thing I am. Here to these foreign shores
And stranger folk a god hath driven us;
And what seemed right in Colchis, here is named
Evil and wickedness; our wonted ways
Win hatred here in Corinth, and distrust.
So, it is meet we change our ways and speech;
If we may be no longer what we would,
Let us at least, then, be e’en what we can.—
The ties that bound me to my fatherland
Here in earth’s bosom I have buried deep;
The magic rites my mother taught me, all
Back to the Night that bare them I have given.
Now, but a woman, weak, alone, defenseless,
I throw me in my husband’s open arms!
He shuddered at the Colchian witch! But now
I am his true, dear wife; and surely he
Will take me to his loving, shelt’ring arms.—
Lo, the day breaks, fair sign of our new life
Together! The dark past has ceased to be,
The happy future beckons!—Thou, O Earth,
The kind and gentle mother of us all,
Guard well my trust, that in thy bosom lies.

[*As she and* GORA *approach the tent, it opens, and* JASON *appears, talking with a Corinthian rustic, and followed by a slave.*]

JASON. Thou saw'st the king himself?

RUSTIC. I did, my lord.

JASON. How went thy tale?

RUSTIC. I Said, "One waits without,
A guest-friend of thy house, well-known to thee,
Yet so hedged round is he with traitorous foes,
He dares not enter, ere thou promise him
Peace and protection."

JASON. And his answer?—Speak!

RUSTIC. He comes, my lord, to meet thee. All this folk
Make pious offering to Poseidon here
Upon the seashore. Soon in festal train
They come with garlands and fair gifts, the king
Leading his daughter by the hand. 'Tis then,
As they pass by, that he will speak with thee.

JASON. Thou hast done well. I thank thee.

MEDEA (*coming up to him*).

Jason, hail!

JASON. Hail to thee, too!

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(*To the slave.*)

Go, thou, and all the others,
And pluck green branches from the budding trees
To mark you suppliants. 'Tis the custom here.
And keep a quiet, peaceful mien. Dost hear?
Now go.

[*They depart.*]

MEDEA. Thou'rt full of thought?

JASON. Ay, full.

MEDEA. Thou givest
Thyself no rest.

JASON. A fugitive—and rest?
There is no rest for such, but only flight.

MEDEA. Last night thou didst not close thine eyes in sleep,
But wand'redst forth in the murky night, alone.

JASON. I love the night; the sunlight hurts my eyes.

MEDEA. And thou hast sent a message to the king.
Will he receive us kindly?

JASON. That I wait
To hear.

MEDEA. He is thy friend?

JASON. He was.

MEDEA. Then sure
His heart will soften.

JASON. Even the kindest men
Shun friendship with the accurst. And thou dost know
How all the world doth flee us, since the death
Of my false uncle, Pelias, whom some god
In devilish sport caused to be strangled. Thus
The people whisper that I slew him, I,

Thy husband, from that land of magic come.
Dost thou not know this?

MEDEA. Yea.

JASON. Here's cause enough
To wake and wander all the dark night through.—
But what hath brought thee forth, before the sun
Is up? What seek'st thou in this darkling hour?
Calling old friends from Colchis?

MEDEA. Nay.

JASON. Speak truth!

MEDEA. I say, I am not.

JASON. And I say to thee,
Better for thee if thou forget all such.
Pluck no more herbs, brew no more poison-drinks,
Nor commune with the moon, let dead men's bones
Rot in their graves at peace! Such magic arts
This folk here love not,—and I hate them, too!
This is not Colchis dark,—but sunny Greece;
Not hideous monsters, but our fellow-men
Dwell round about us. Come, henceforth, I know,
Thou wilt give o'er these rites and magic spells;
I have thy promise, and I know thee true.—
That crimson wimple bound about thy hair
Calls long-forgotten scenes to memory.
Why wilt not wear our country's wonted dress?
I was a Colchian on thy Colchian soil;
Be thou a Greek, now I have brought thee home.
The past is dead. Why call it back to life?
Alas! It haunts us yet, do what we will!

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[MEDEA *silently removes the veil and gives it to* GORA.]

GORA (*whispering*).

Scorn'st thou thy homeland thus—and all for him?

JASON (*catching sight of* GORA).

What! Art thou here, thou ancient beldame? Ha!
I hate thee most of all this Colchian crew.
One glance at thy dim eyes and wrinkled brow,
And lo! before my troubled sight there swims
The dusky shore of Colchis! Why must thou
Be ever hovering close beside my wife?
Begone!

GORA (*grumblingly*).

Why should I?

JASON. Go!

MEDEA. Begone, I pray.

GORA (*sullenly to* JASON).

Am I thy purchased slave, that thou shouldst speak
So lordly?

JASON. Go! My hand, of its own will,
Is on my sword! Go, while there yet is time!
Often ere this I have thought to make essay
If that stern brow be softer than it seems!

[MEDEA *leads the reluctant* GORA *away, whispering words of comfort as they go.* JASON *throws himself on a grass-bank, and strikes his breast.*]

JASON. O, heart of mine, burst from thy prison-house,
And drink the air!—
Ay, there they lie, fair Corinth's lofty towers,
Marshalled so richly on the ocean-strand,
The cradle of my happy, golden youth!
Unchanging, gilded by the selfsame sun
As then. 'Tis I am altered, and not they.
Ye gods! The morning of my life was bright

And sunny; wherefore is my eventide
So dark and gloomy? Would that it were night!

[MEDEA *has brought the two children out of the tent, and now leads them by the hand to* JASON.]

MEDEA. See, Jason, thy two babes, who come to greet thee.
Come, children, give your sire your little hands.

[*The children draw back, and stand shyly at one side.*]

JASON (*stretching out his hands yearningly toward the little group.*)

Is this the end, then? Do I find myself
Husband and father of a savage brood?

MEDEA. Go, children.

ONE CHILD. Father, is it true thou art
A Greek?

JASON. And why?

CHILD. Old Gora says thou art,
And calls the Greeks bad names.

JASON. What names, my boy?

CHILD. Traitors she says they are, and cowards, too.

JASON (*to* MEDEA).

Dost hear?

MEDEA. 'Tis Gora's foolish tales that they
Have heard, and treasured, child-like. Mark them not.

[*She kneels beside the two children, whispering in the ear now of one, now of the other.*]

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JASON. I will not.

[*He rises from the grass.*]

There she kneels—unhappy fate!—
Bearing two burdens, hers, and mine as well.

[*He paces up and down, then addresses* MEDEA.]

There, leave the babes awhile, and come to me.

MEDEA (*to the children*).

Now go, and be good children. Go, I say.

[*The children go.*]

JASON. Think not, Medea, I am cold and hard.
I feel thy grief as deeply as mine own.
Thou’rt a brave comrade, and dost toil as truly
As I to roll away this heavy stone
That, ever falling backwards, blocks all paths,
All roads to hope. And whether thou’rt to blame,
Or I, it matters not. What’s done is done.

[*He clasps her hands in one of his, and with the other lovingly strokes her brow.*]

Thou lov’st me still, I know it well, Medea.
In thine own way, ’tis true; but yet thou lov’st me.
And not this fond glance only—all thy deeds
Tell the same tale of thine unending love.

[MEDEA *hides her face on his shoulder.*]

I know how many griefs bow this dear head,
How love and pity in thy bosom sit
Enthroned.—Come, let us counsel now together
How we may ’scape this onward-pressing fate
That threatens us so near. Here Corinth lies;
Hither, long years agone, a lonely youth,
I wandered, fleeing my uncle’s wrath and hate;
And Creon, king of Corinth, took me in,—
A guest-friend was he of my father’s house—
And cherished me ev’n as a well-loved son.

Full many a year I dwelt here, safe and happy.
And now—

MEDEA. Thou'rt silent!

JASON. Now, when all the world
Flouts me, avoids me, now, when each man's hand
In blind, unreasoning rage is raised to strike,
I hope to find a refuge with this king.—
One fear I have, though, and no idle one.

MEDEA. And what is that?

JASON. Me he will shelter safe—
That I hold certain—and my children, too,
For they are mine. But thee—

MEDEA. Nay, have no fear.
If he take them, as being thine, then me,
Who am thine as well, he will not cast away.

JASON. Hast thou forgotten all that lately chanced
There in my home-land, in my uncle's house,
When first I brought thee from dark Colchis' shores?
Hast thou forgot the scorn, the black distrust
In each Greek visage when it looked on thee,
A dark barbarian from a stranger-land?
They cannot know thee as I do,—true wife
And mother of my babes;—homekeepers they,
Nor e'er set foot on Colchis' magic strand
As I.

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MEDEA. A bitter speech. What is the end?

JASON. The worst misfortune of mankind is this:
Calm and serene and unconcerned to court
Fate's heaviest blows, and then, when these have fallen,
To whine and cringe, bewailing one's sad lot.—
Such folly we will none of, thou and I.
For now I seek King Creon, to proclaim
My right as guest-friend, and to clear away
These clouds of dark distrust that threaten storm.—
Meanwhile, take thou the babes and get thee hence
Without the city walls. There wait, until—

MEDEA. Till when?

JASON. Until—Why hidest thou thy face?

MEDEA. Ah, say no more! This is that bitter fate
Whereof my father warned me! Said he not
We should torment each other, thou and I?
But no!—My spirit is not broken yet!
All that I was, all that I had, is gone,
Save this: I am thy wife! To that I'll cling
Even to death.

JASON. Why twist my kindly words
To a false meaning that I never dreamed of?

MEDEA. Prove that I twist thy words! I'll thank thee for it.
Quick, quick! The king draws nigh.—Let thy heart speak!

JASON. So, wait we here the breaking of the storm.

[GORA *comes out of the tent with the two children*; MEDEA *places herself between the children, and at first waits in the distance, watching anxiously all that passes. The* KING *enters with his daughter and attended by youths and maidens who carry the vessels for the sacrifice.*]

KING. Where is this stranger?—Who he is, my heart,
By its wild beating, warns me; wanderer,
And banished from his homeland, nay, mayhap
E'en guilty of those crimes men charge him with.—
Where is the stranger?

JASON. Here, my lord, bowed low
Before thee, not a stranger, though estranged.
A suppliant I, and come to pray thine aid.
Thrust forth from house and home, by all men shunned,
I fly to thee, my guest-friend, and beseech
In confidence the shelter of thy roof.

CREUSA. Ay, it is he! Look, father, 'tis Prince Jason!

[*She takes a step toward him.*]

JASON. Yea, it is I. And is this thou, Creusa,
Crowned with a yet more gentle, radiant grace,
But still the same? O, take me by the hand
And lead me to thy father, where he stands
With thoughtful brow, fixing his steady gaze
Upon my face, and dallies with his doubt
Whether to greet me kindly. Is he wroth
At me, or at my guilt, which all men cry?

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CREUSA (*taking* JASON's *hand and leading him to her father*).

See, father, 'tis Prince Jason!

KING. He is welcome.

JASON. Thy distant greeting shows me clear what place
Now best beseems me. Here at thy feet I fall
And clasp thy knees, and stretch a timid hand
To touch thy chin. Grant me my prayer, O King!
Receive and shelter a poor suppliant wretch!

KING. Rise, Jason.

JASON. Never, till thou—

KING. Rise, I say.

[*Jason rises to his feet.*]

KING. So, from thine Argo-quest thou art returned?

JASON. 'Tis scarce one moon since I set foot on land.

KING. What of the golden prize ye sought? Is't won?

JASON. The king who set the task—he hath it now.

KING. Why art thou banished from thy fatherland?

JASON. They drove me forth—homeless I wander now.

KING. Ay, but why banished? I must see this clear.

JASON. They charged me with a foul, accursed crime.

KING. Truly or falsely? Answer me this first.

JASON. A false charge! By the gods I swear, 'tis false!

KING (*swiftly grasping* JASON's *hand and leading him forward*).

Thine uncle perished?

JASON. Yea, he died.

KING. But how?

JASON. Not at my hands! As I do live and breathe,
I swear that bloody deed was none of mine!

KING. Yet Rumor names thee Murderer, and the word
Through all the land is blown.

JASON. Then Rumor lies,
And all that vile land with it!

KING. Dream'st thou then
I can believe thy single tale, when all
The world cries, "Liar!"

JASON. 'Tis the word of one
Thou knowest well, against the word of strangers.

KING. Say, then, how fell the king?

JASON. 'Twas his own blood,
The children of his flesh, that did the deed.

KING. Horror of horrors! Surely 'tis not true?
It cannot be!

JASON. The gods know it is truth.
Give ear, and I will tell thee how it chanced.

KING. Nay, hold. Creusa comes. This is no tale
For gentle ears. I fain would shield the maid
From knowledge of such horror. (*Aloud.*) For the moment
I know enough. We'll hear the rest anon.
I will believe thee worthy while I can.

CREUSA (*coming up to* KING CREON).

Hast heard his tale? He's innocent, I know.

KING. Go, take his hand. Thou canst without disgrace.

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CREUSA. Didst doubt him, father? Nay, I never did!
My heart told me these tales were never true,
These hideous stories that men tell of him.
Gentle he was, and kind; how could he, then,
Show him so base and cruel? Couldst thou know
How they have slandered thee, heaped curse on curse!
I've wept, to think our fellow-men could be
So bitter, false. For thou hadst scarce set sail,
When, sudden, all men's talk throughout the land
Was of wild deeds and hideous midnight crimes—
The fruit of witchcraft on far Colchis' shores—
Which thou hadst done.—And, last, a woman, dark
And dreadful, so they said, thou took'st to wife,
Brewer of poisons, slayer of her sire.
What was her name? It had a barbarous sound—

MEDEA (*stepping forward with the children*).

Medea! Here am I.

KING. Is 't she?

JASON (*dully*).

It is.

CREUSA (*pressing close to her father*).

O, horror!

MEDEA (*to* CREUSA).

Thou'rt wrong. I never slew my sire.
My brother died, 'tis true; but ask my lord
If 'twas my doing.

[*She points to* JASON.]

True it is, fair maid,
That I am skilled to mix such magic potions
As shall bring death or healing, as I will.
And many a secret else I know. Yet, see!
I am no monster, no, nor murderess.

CREUSA. Oh, dreadful, horrible.

KING. And is she thy—wife?

JASON. My wife.

KING. Those children there?

JASON. They are mine own.

KING. Unhappy man!

JASON. Yea, sooth!—Come, children, bring
Those green boughs in your hands, and reach them out
To our lord the King, and pray him for his help,

[*He leads them up by the hand.*]

Behold, my lord, these babes. Thou canst not spurn them!

ONE CHILD (*holding out a bough timidly to the* KING).

See, here it is.

KING (*laying his hands gently on the children's heads*).

Poor tiny birdlings, snatched from out your nest!

CREUSA (*kneeling compassionately beside the children*).

Come here to me, poor, homeless, little orphans!
So young, and yet misfortune bows you down
So soon! So young, and oh! so innocent!—
And look, how this one has his father's mien!

[*She kisses the smaller boy.*]

Stay here with me. I'll be your mother, sister.

MEDEA (*with sudden fierceness*).

They are not orphans, do not need thy tears
Of pity! For Prince Jason is their father;
And while Medea lives, they have no need
To seek a mother!

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(*To the children.*)

Come to me-come here.

CREUSA (*glancing at her father*).

Shall I let them go?

KING. She is their mother.

CREUSA. Run
To mother, children.

MEDEA (to children).

Come! Why stand ye there
And wait?

CREUSA (*to the children, who are clasping her about the neck*).

Your mother calls, my little ones.
Run to her quick!

[*The children go to* MEDEA.]

JASON (*to the* KING).

My lord, what is thy will?

KING. Thou hast my promise.

JASON. Thou wilt keep me safe?

KING. I have said it.

JASON. Me and mine thou wilt receive?

KING. Nay, *thee* I said, not *thine*.—Now follow on,
First to the altar, to our palace then.

JASON (*as he follows the king, to* CREUSA).

Give me thy hand, Creusa, as of yore!

CREUSA. Thou canst not take it as of old thou didst.

MEDEA. They go,—and I am left, forgot! Oh, children,
Run here and clasp me close. Nay, closer, tighter!

CREUSA (*to herself, turning as they go*).

Where is Medea? Why does she not follow?

[*She comes back, but stands at a distance from* MEDEA.]

Com'st thou not to the sacrifice, then home
With us?

MEDEA. Unbidden guests must wait without.

CREUSA. Nay, but my father promised shelter, help.

MEDEA. Thy words and his betokened no such aid!

CREUSA (*approaching nearer*).

I've grieved thee, wounded thee! Forgive, I pray.

MEDEA. Ah, gracious sound! Who spake that gentle word?
Ay, many a time they've stabbed me to the quick,
But none e'er paused, and, pitying, asked himself
If the wound smarted! Thanks to thee, sweet maid!
Oh, when thou art thyself in sore distress,
Then may'st thou find some tender, pitying soul
To whisper soft and gracious words to thee,
To give one gentle glance—as thou to me!

[MEDEA *tries to grasp* CREUSA's *hand, but the princess draws back timidly.*]

Nay, shudder not! 'Tis no plague-spotted hand.—
Oh, I was born a princess, even as thou.
For me the path of life stretched smooth and straight
As now for thee; blindly thereon I fared,
Content, where all seemed right.—Ah, happy days!
For I was born a princess, even as thou.
And as thou stand'st before me, fair and bright
And happy, so I stood beside my father,
The idol of his heart, and of his folk.
O Colchis! O my homeland! Dark and dread
They name thee here, but to my loving eyes
Thine is a shining shore!

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CREUSA *(taking her hand)*.

Poor, lonely soul!

MEDEA. Gentle art thou, and mild, and gracious too;
I read it in thy face. But oh, beware!
The way *seems* smooth.—One step may mean thy fall!
Light is the skiff that bears thee down the stream,
Advance upon the silvery, shining waves,
Past gaily-flowered banks, where thou would'st pause.—
Ah, gentle pilot, is thy skill so sure?
Beyond thee roars the sea! Oh, venture not
To quit these flowery banks' secure embrace,
Else will the current seize thy slender craft
And sweep thee out upon the great gray sea.—
Why that fixed gaze? Dost shudder at me still?
There was a time when I had shuddered, too,
At thought of such a thing as I'm become!

[She hides her face on CREUSA's neck.]

CREUSA. She is no wild thing! Father, see, she weeps!

MEDEA. I am a stranger, from a far land come,
Naught knowing of this country's ancient ways;
And so they flout me, look at me askance
As at some savage, untamed animal.
I am the lowest, meanest of mankind,
I, the proud child of Colchis' mighty king!—
Teach me what I must do. Oh, I will learn
Gladly from thee, for thou art gentle, mild.
'Tis patient teaching, and not angry scorn,
Will tame me.—
Is't thy wont to be so calm
And so serene? To me that happy gift
The gods denied. But I will learn of *thee*!
Thou hast the skill to know what pleases him,
What makes him glad. Oh, teach me how I may
Once more find favor in my husband's sight,
And I will thank thee, thank thee!

CREUSA. Look, my father!

KING. Ay, bring her with thee.

CREUSA. Wilt thou come, Medea?

MEDEA. I'll follow gladly, whereso'er thou goest.
Have pity on me, lone, unfriended, sad,
And hide me from the king's stern, pitiless eyes!

(*To the* KING.)

Now may'st thou gaze thy fill. My fears are fled,
E'en while I know thy musings bode me ill.
Thy child is tenderer than her father.

CREUSA. Come!
He would not harm thee. Come, ye children, too.

[CREUSA *leads* MEDEA *and the children away*.]

KING. Hast heard?

JASON. I have.

KING. And so, that is thy wife!
That thou wert wedded, Rumor long since cried,
But I believed not. Now, when I have seen,
Belief is still less easy. She—thy wife?

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JASON. 'Tis but the mountain's peak thou seest, and not
The toilsome climb to reach it, nor those steps
By which alone the climber guides his feet.—
I sailed away, a hot, impetuous youth,
O'er distant seas, upon the boldest quest
That e'er within the memory of man
Was ventured. To this life I said farewell,
And, the world well forgot, I fixed my gaze
Solely upon that radiant Golden Fleece
That, through the night, a star in the storm, shone out.
And none thought on return, but one and all,
As though the hour that saw the trophy won
Should be their last, strained every nerve to win.
And so, a valorous band, we sailed away,
Boastful and thirsting deep for daring deeds,
O'er sea and land, through storm and night and rocks,
Death at our heels, Death beckoning us before.
And what at other times we had thought full
Of terror, now seemed gentle, mild, and good;
For Nature was more awful than the worst
That man could do. And, as we strove with her,
And with barbarian hordes that blocked our path,
The hearts of e'en the mildest turned to flint.
Lost were those standards whereby men at home
Judge all things calmly; each became a law
Unto himself amid these savage sights.—
But that which all men deemed could never be
Came finally to pass, and we set foot
On Colchis' distant and mysterious strand.
Oh, hadst thou seen it, wrapped in murky clouds!
There day is night, and night a horror black,
Its folk more dreadful even than the night.
And there I found—*her*, who so hateful seems
To thee. In sooth, O king, she shone on me
Like the stray sunbeam that some prisoner sees
Pierce through the crannies of his lonely cell!
Dark though she seem to thee, in that black land
Like some lone, radiant star she gleamed on me.

KING. Yet wrong is never right, nor evil good.

JASON. It was some god that turned her heart to me.
Fast friend was she in many a dangerous pass.
I saw how in her bosom love was born,

Which yet her royal pride bade firm restrain;
No word she spake betrayed her—'twas her looks,
Her deeds that told the secret. Then on me
A madness came, like to a rushing wind.
Her silence but inflamed me; for a new
And warlike venture then I girded me,

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For love I struggled with her—and I won!
Mine she became.—Her father cursed his child;
But mine she was, whether I would or no.
'Twas she that won me that mysterious Fleece;
She was my guide to that dank horror-cave
Where dwelt the dragon, guardian of the prize,
The which I slew, and bore the Fleece away.
Since then I see, each time I search her eyes,
That hideous serpent blinking back at me,
And shudder when I call her wife!—
At last
We sailed away. Her brother fell.

KING (*quickly*).

She slew him?

JASON. The gods' hand smote him down. Her aged father,
With curses on his lips for her, for me,
For all our days to come, with bleeding nails
Dug his own grave, and laid him down to die,
So goes the tale—grim victim of his own
Rash passion.

KING. Dread beginning of your life
Together!

JASON. Ay, and, as the days wore on,
More dreadful still.

KING. Thine uncle—what of him?

JASON. For four long years some god made sport of us
And kept us wandering far from hearth and home
O'er land and sea. Meanwhile, pent up with her
Within the narrow confines of our bark,
Seeing her face each moment of the day,
The edge of my first shuddering fear grew blunt.
The past was past.—So she became my wife.

KING. When home thou camest, what befell thee there?

JASON. Time passed; the memory of those ghastly days
In Colchis dimmer grew and mistier.
I, the proud Greek, now half barbarian grown,
Companioned by my wife, barbarian too,
Sought once again my home-land. Joyfully
The people cried Godspeed! as forth I fared
Long years agone. Of joyfuller greetings now,
When I returned a victor, I had dreamed.
But lo, the busy streets grew still as death
When I approached, and whoso met me, shrank
Back in dismay! The tale, grown big with horrors,
Of all that chanced in Colchis had bred fear
And hatred in this foolish people's hearts.
They fled my face, heaped insults on my wife—
Mine she was, too; who flouted her, struck me!
This evil talk my uncle slily fed;
And when I made demand that he yield up
The kingdom of my fathers, stolen by him
And

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kept from me by craft, he made reply
That I must put away this foreign wife,
For she was hateful in his eyes, he feared
Her dark and dreadful deeds! If I refused,
My fatherland, his kingdom, I must flee.

KING. And thou—?

JASON. What could I? Was she not my wife,
That trusted to my arm to keep her safe?
Who challenged her, was he not then my foe?
Why, had he named some easier behest,
By Heaven, I had obeyed not even that!
Then how grant this? I laughed at his command.

KING. And he—?

JASON. Spake doom of banishment for both.
Forth from Iolcos on that selfsame day
We must depart, he said. But I would not,
And stayed.
Forthwith a grievous illness seized
The king, and through the town a murmur ran
Whisp'ring strange tidings: How the aged king,
Seated before his household shrine, whereon
They had hung the Fleece in honor of the god,
Gazed without ceasing on that golden prize,
And oft would cry that thence his brother's face
Looked down on him,—my father's, whom he slew
By guile, disputing of the Argo-quest.
Ay, that dead face peered down upon him now
From every glittering lock of that bright Fleece,
In search of which, false man! he sent me forth
To distant lands, in hope that I should perish!
At last, when all the king's house saw their need,
To me for succor his proud daughters came,
Begging my wife to heal him by her skill.
But I cried, "No! Am I to save the man
Who plotted certain death for me and mine?"
And those proud maidens turned again in tears.
I shut me up within my house, unheeding
Aught else that passed. Weeping, they came again,

And yet again; each time I said them nay.
And then one night, as I lay sleeping, came
A dreadful cry before my door! I waked
To find Acastus, my false uncle's son,
Storming my portal with loud, frenzied blows,
Calling me murderer, slayer of his sire!
That night the aged king had passed from life.
Up from my couch I sprang, and sought to speak,
But vainly, for the people's howls of rage
Drowned my weak cries. Then one among them cast
A stone, then others. But I drew my blade
And through the mob to safety cut my way.
Since then I've wandered all fair Hellas o'er,
Reviled of men, a torment to myself.
And, if thou, too, refuse to succor me,
Then am I lost indeed!

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KING. Nay, I have sworn
And I will keep my oath. But this thy wife—

JASON. Hear me, O king, before thou end that speech!
Needs must thou take us both, or none at all!
I were a happy man,—ay, born anew—
Were she but gone forever. But no, no!
I must protect her—for she trusted me.

KING. These magic arts she knows—'tis them I fear.
The power to injure, spells the will to do it.
Besides, these strange, suspicious deeds of hers—
These are not all her guilt.

JASON. Give her one chance.
Then, if she stay not quiet, hound her forth,
Hunt her, and slay her, me, and these my babes.
Yet, till that time, I pray thee let her try
If she can live at peace with this thy folk.
This boon I crave of thee by mightiest Zeus,
The god of strangers—ay, and call upon
The ancient bond of friendship that, long since,
Our fathers formed, mine in Iolcos, thine
In Corinth here. On that long-vanished day
They dreamed there might fall need of such a tie.
And, now that need is here, do thou thy part
And succor me, lest in like evil pass
Thou make the same request, and meet denial.

KING. 'Tis the gods' will; I yield, against my judgment,
And she shall stay. But, look you, if she show
One sign that those wild ways are not forgot,
I drive her forth from out this city straight
And yield her up to those who seek her life!
Here in this meadow, where I found thee first,
A sacred altar shall be raised, to Zeus,
The god of strangers, consecrate and to
Thy murdered uncle Pelias' bloody shades.
Here will we kneel together and pray the gods
To send their blessing on thy coming here,
And turn to mercy that which bodes us ill.—
Now to my royal city follow swift.

[*He turns to his attendants, who approach.*]

See my behests are faithfully obeyed.

[*As they turn to depart, the curtain falls.*]

ACT II

A chamber in CREON'S *royal palace at Corinth*. CREUSA *is discovered seated, while* MEDEA *occupies a low stool before her, and holds a lyre in her arm. She is clad in the Greek fashion.*

CREUSA. Now pluck this string—the second—this one here.

MEDEA. So, this way?

CREUSA. Nay, thy fingers more relaxed.

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MEDEA. I cannot.

CREUSA. ’Tis not hard, if thou’lt but try.

MEDEA. I have tried, patiently; but ’tis no use!

[*She lays the lyre aside and rises.*]

Were it a spear-haft, or the weapons fierce
Of the bloody hunt, these hands were quick enough.

[*She raises her right hand and gazes at it reproachfully.*]

Rebellious fingers! I would punish them!

CREUSA. Perverse one! When my heart was filled with joy
At thinking how ’twould gladden Jason’s heart
To hear this song from thee!

MEDEA. Ay, thou art right.
I had forgot that. Let me try once more.
The song will please him, think’st thou, truly
please him?

CREUSA. Nay, never doubt it. ’Tis the song he sang
When he dwelt here with us in boyhood days.
Each time I heard it, joyfully I sprang
To greet him, for it meant he was come home.

MEDEA (*eagerly*).

Teach me the song again!

CREUSA. Come, listen, then.
’Tis but a short one, nor so passing sweet;
But then—he knew to sing it with such grace,
Such joy, such lordly pride—ay, almost scorn!

[*She sings.*]

“Ye gods above, ye mighty gods,
Anoint my head, I pray;
Make strong my heart to bear my part
Right kingly in the fray,

To smite all foes, and steal the heart
Of all fair maids away!”

MEDEA. Yea, yea, all these the gods bestowed on him!

CREUSA. All what?

MEDEA. These gifts, of which the song doth tell.

CREUSA. What gifts?

MEDEA. “To smite all foes, and steal the heart
Of all fair maids away!”

CREUSA. Is’t so? I never thought on that before;
I did but sing the words I heard him sing.

MEDEA. ‘Twas so he stood on Colchis’ hostile strand;
Before his burning glance our warriors cringed,
And that same glance kindled a fatal fire
In the soft breast of one unhappy maid;
She struggled, fled—until at last those flames,
So long hid deep within her heart, burst forth,
And rest and joy and peace to ashes burned
In one fierce holocaust of smoky flame.
’Twas so he stood, all shining strength and grace,
A hero, nay, a god—and drew his victim
And drew and drew, until the victim came
To its own doom; and then he flung it down
Careless, and there was none would take it up.

CREUSA. Art thou his wife, and speak’st such things of him?

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MEDEA. Thou know'st him not; I know his inmost soul.—
In all the wide world there is none but he,
And all things else are naught to him but tools
To shape his deeds. He harbors no mean thoughts
Of paltry gain, not he; yet all his thoughts
Are of himself alone. He plays a game
with Fortune—now his own, and now another's.
If bright Fame beckon, he will slay a man
And do it gaily. Will he have a wife?
He goes and takes one. And though hearts should break
And lives be wasted—so he have his will,
What matters it to him? Oh, he does naught
That is not right—but right is what he wants!
Thou knowest him not; I've probed his inmost soul.
And when I think on all that he has wrought,
Oh, I could see him die, and laugh the while!

CREUSA. Farewell!

MEDEA. Thou goest?

CREUSA. Can I longer stay
To list such words?—Ye gods! to hear a wife
Revile her husband thus!

MEDEA. She should speak truth,
And mine is such an one as I have said.

CREUSA. By Heaven, if I were wedded to a man,
E'en one so base and vile as thou hast named—
'Though Jason is *not* so—and had I babes,
His gift, each bearing in his little face
His father's likeness, oh, I would love them dear,
Though they should slay me!

MEDEA. Ay, an easy task
To set, but hard to do.

CREUSA. And yet, methinks,
If easier, 'twere less sweet.—Have thou thy way
And say whate'er thou wilt; but I must go.
First thou dost charm my heart with noble words
And seek'st my aid to win his love again;
But now thou breakest forth in hate and scorn.

I have seen many evils among men,
But worst of all these do I count a heart
That knows not to forgive. So, fare thee well!
Learn to be better, truer!

MEDEA. Art thou angry

CREUSA. Almost.

MEDEA. Alas, thou wilt not give me up,
Thou, too? Thou wilt not leave me? Be my help,
My friend, my kind protector!

CREUSA. Now thou'rt gentle,
Yet, but a moment since, so full of hate!

MEDEA. Hate for myself, but only love for him!

CREUSA. Dost thou love Jason?

MEDEA. Should I else be here?

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CREUSA. I've pondered that, but cannot understand.—
Yet, if thou truly lov'st him, I will take thee
Back to my heart again, and show thee means
Whereby thou mayst regain his love.—I know
Those bitter moods of his, and have a charm
To scatter the dark clouds. Come, to our task!
I marked this morning how his face was sad
And gloomy. Sing that song to him; thou'lt see
How swift his brow will clear. Here is the lyre;
I will not lay it down till thou canst sing
The song all through. [*She seats herself.*]
Nay, come! Why tarriest there

MEDEA. I gaze on thee, and gaze on thee again,
And cannot have my fill of thy sweet face.
Thou gentle, virtuous maid, as fair in soul
As body, with a heart as white and pure
As are thy snowy draperies! Like a dove,
A pure, white dove with shining, outspread wings,
Thou hoverest o'er this life, nor yet so much
As dipp'st thy wing in this vile, noisome slough
Wherein we wallow, struggling to get free,
Each from himself. Send down one kindly beam
From out thy shining heaven, to fall in pity
Upon my bleeding breast, distraught with pain;
And all those ugly scars that grief and hate
And evil fortune e'er have written there,
Oh, cleanse thou these away with thy soft hands,
And leave thine own dear picture in their place!
That strength, that ever was my proudest boast
From youth, once tested, proved but craven weakness.
Oh, teach me how to make my weakness strong!

[*She seats herself on the low stool at CREUSA's feet.*]

Here to thy feet for refuge will I fly,
And pour my tale of suffering in thine ear;
And thou shalt teach me all that I must do.
Like some meek handmaid will I follow thee,
Will pace before the loom from early morn,
Nay, set my hand to all those lowly tasks
Which maids of noble blood would scorn to touch
In Colchis, as but fit for toiling serfs,
Yet here they grace a queen. Oh, I'll forget

My sire was Colchis' king, and I'll forget
My ancestors were gods, and I'll forget
The past, and all that threatens still!

[*She springs up and leaves* CREUSA's *side.*]

But no!
That can I not forget!

CREUSA (*following her*).

Why so distressed?
Men have forgotten many an evil deed
That chanced long since, ay, even the gods themselves
Remember not past sorrows.

MEDEA (*embracing her*).

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Say’st thou so?
Oh, that I could believe it, could believe it!

JASON *enters.*

CREUSA (*turning to him*).

Here is thy wife. See, Jason, we are friends!

JASON. ’Tis well.

MEDEA. Greetings, my lord.—She is so good,
Medea’s friend and teacher she would be.

JASON. Heaven speed her task!

CREUSA. But why these sober looks?
We shall enjoy here many happy days!
I, sharing ’twixt my sire and you my love
And tender care, while thou and she, Medea,—

JASON. Medea!

MEDEA. What are thy commands, my lord?

JASON. Hast seen the children late?

MEDEA. A moment since;
They are well and happy.

JASON. Look to them again!

MEDEA. I am just come from them.

JASON. Go, go, I say!

MEDEA. If ’tis thy wish—

JASON. It is.

MEDEA. Then I obey.

[*She departs.*]

CREUSA. Why dost thou bid her go? The babes are safe.

JASON. Ah..! ho, a mighty weight is rolled away
From off my soul, and I can breathe again!
Her glance doth shrivel up my very heart,
And all that bitter hate, hid deep within
My bosom, well nigh strangles me to death!

CREUSA. What words are these? Oh, ye all-righteous gods!
He speaks now even as she a moment since.
Who was it told me, wife and husband ever
Do love each other?

JASON. Ay, and so they do,
When some fair, stalwart youth hath cast his glance
Upon a maid, whom straightway he doth make
The goddess of his worship. Timidly
He seeks her eyes, to learn if haply she
Seek his as well; and when their glances meet,
His soul is glad. Then to her father straight
And to her mother goes he, as is meet,
And begs their treasure, and they give consent.
Comes then the bridal day; from far and near
Their kinsmen gather; all the town has part
In their rejoicing. Richly decked with wreaths
And dainty blossoms, to the altar then
He leads his bride; and there a rosy flush,
Of maiden shyness born, plays on her cheek
The while she trembles with a holy fear
At what is none the less her dearest wish.
Upon her head her father lays his hands
And blesses her and all her seed to come.
Such happy wooing breeds undying love
'Twixt wife and husband.—'Twas of such I

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dreamed.
Alas, it came not! What have I done, ye gods!
To be denied what ye are wont to give
Even to the poorest? Why have I alone
No refuge from the buffets of the world
At mine own hearth, no dear companion there,
My own, in truth, my own in plighted troth?

CREUSA. Thou didst not woo thy wife as others, then?
Her father did not raise his hand to bless?

JASON. He raised it, ay, but armed with a sword;
And 'twas no blessing, but a curse he spake.
But I—I had a swift and sweet revenge!
His only son is dead, and he himself
Lies dumb in the grave. His curse alone lives still—
Or so it seems.

CREUSA. Alas, how strange to think
Of all the change a few brief years have wrought!
Thou wert so soft and gentle, and art now
So stern. But I am still the selfsame maid
As then, have still the selfsame hopes and fears,
And what I then thought right, I think right still,
What then I blamed, cannot think blameless now.—
But thou art changed.

JASON. Ay, thou hast hit the truth!
The real misfortune in a hapless lot
Is this: that man is to himself untrue.
Here one must show him master, there must cringe
And bow the knee; here Justice moves a hair,
And there a grain; and, at his journey's end,
He stands another man than he who late
Set out upon that journey. And his loss
Is twofold—for the world has passed him by
In scorn, and his own self-respect is dead.
Naught have I done that in itself was bad,
Yet have had evil hopes, bad wishes, ay,
Unholy aspirations; and have stood
And looked in silence, while another sinned;
Or here have willed no evil, yet joined hands

With sin, forgetful how one wicked deed
Begets another.—Now at last I stand,
A sea of evils breaking all about,
And cannot say, “My hand hath done no wrong!”—
O happy Youth, couldst thou forever stay!
O joyous Fancy, blest Forgetfulness,
Time when each moment cradles some great deed
And buries it! How, in a swelling tide
Of high adventure, I disported me,
Cleaving the mighty waves with stalwart breast!
But manhood comes, with slow and sober steps;
And Fancy flees away, while naked Truth
Creeps soft to fill its place and brood upon
Full

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many a care. No more the present seems
A fair tree, laden down with luscious fruits,
'Neath whose cool shadows rest and joy are found,
But is become a tiny seedling which,
When buried in the earth, will sprout and bud
And bloom, and bear a future of its own.
What shall thy task in life be? Where thy home?
What of thy wife and babes? What thine own fate,
And theirs?—Such constant musings tantalize
the soul. [*He seats himself.*]

CREUSA. What should'st thou care for such? 'Tis all decreed,
All ordered for thee.

JASON. Ordered? Ay, as when
Over the threshold one thrusts forth a bowl
Of broken meats, to feed some begging wretch!
I am Prince Jason. Spells not that enough
Of sorrow? Must I ever henceforth sit
Meek at some stranger's board, or beg my way,
My little babes about me, praying pity
From each I meet? My sire was once a king,
And so am I; yet who would care to boast
He is like Jason? Still—[*He rises.*]
I passed but now
Down through the busy market-place and through
Yon wide-wayed city. Dost remember how
I strode in my young pride through those same streets
What time I came to take farewell of thee
Long since, ere sailed the Argo? How the folk
Came thronging, surging, how each street was choked
With horses, chariots, men—a dazzling blaze
Of color? How the eager gazers climbed
Up on the house-tops, swarmed on every tower,
And fought for places as they would for gold?
The air rang with the cymbals' brazen crash
And with the shouts of all that mighty throng
Crying, "Hail, Jason!" Thick they crowded round
That gallant band attired in rich array,
Their shining armor gleaming in the sun,
The least of them a hero and a king,
And in their midst the leader they adored.

I was the man that captained them, that brought
Them safe to Greece again; and it was I
That all this folk did greet with loud acclaim.—
I trod these selfsame streets an hour ago,
But no eye sought me, greeting heard I none;
Only, the while I stood and gazed about,
I heard one rudely grumbling that I had
No right to block the way, and stand and stare.

CREUSA. Thou wilt regain thy proud place once again,
If thou but choose.

JASON. Nay, all my hopes are dead;
My fight is fought, and I am down, to rise
No more.

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CREUSA. I have a charm will save thee yet.

JASON. Ay, all that thou would'st say, I know before:
Undo the past, as though it ne'er had been.
I never left my fatherland, but stayed
With thee and thine in Corinth, never saw
The Golden Fleece, nor stepped on Colchis' strand,
Ne'er saw that woman that I now call wife!
Send thou her home to her accursed land,
Cause her to take with her all memory
That she was ever here.—Do thou but this,
And I will be a man again, and dwell
With men.

CREUSA. Is that thy charm? I know a better;
A simple heart, I mean, a mind at peace.

JASON. Ah, thou art good! Would I could learn this peace
Of thee!

CREUSA. To all that choose, the gods will give it.
Thou hadst it once, and canst have yet again.

JASON. Dost thou think often on our happy youth?

CREUSA. Ay, many a time, and gladly.

JASON. How we were
One heart, one soul?

CREUSA. I made thee gentler, thou
Didst give me courage.—Dost remember how
I set thy helm upon my head?

JASON. And how
Because it was too large, thy tiny hands
Did hold it up, the while it rested soft
Upon thy golden curls? Creusa, those
Were happy days!

CREUSA. Dost mind thee how my father
Was filled with joy to see it, and, in jest,
Did name us bride and bridegroom?

JASON. Ay—but that
Was not to be.

CREUSA. Like many another hope
That disappoints us.—Still, what matters it?
We mean to be no less good friends, I trust!

[MEDEA *reenters.*]

MEDEA. I've seen the children. They are safe.

JASON (*absently*).

'Tis well.

(*Continuing his revery.*)

All those fair spots our happy youth once knew,
Linked to my memory with slender threads,
All these I sought once more, when first I came
Again to Corinth, and I cooled my breast
And dipped my burning lips in that bright spring
Of my lost childhood. Once again, methought,
I drove my chariot through the market-place,
Guiding my fiery steeds where'er I would,
Or, wrestling with some fellow of the crowd,
Gave blow for blow, while thou didst stand to watch,
Struck dumb with terror, filled with angry fears,
Hating, for my sake, all who raised a hand
Against me. Or again I seemed to be
Within the solemn temple, where we knelt
Together, there, and there alone, forgetful
Each of the other, our soft-moving lips
Up-sending to the gods from our two breasts
A single heart, made one by bonds of love.

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CREUSA. Dost thou remember all these things so well?

JASON. They are the cup from which, in greedy draughts,
I drink the only comfort left me now.

MEDEA (*who has gone silently up-stage and taken up again the discarded lyre*).

Jason, I know a song!

JASON (*not noticing her*).

And then the tower!
Know'st thou that tower upon the sea-strand there,
Where by thy father thou didst stand and weep,
What time I climbed the Argo's side, to sail
On that far journey? For thy falling tears
I had no eyes, my heart but thirsted deep
For deeds of prowess. Lo, there came a breeze
That loosed the wimple bound about thy locks
And dropped it on the waves. Straightway I sprang
Into the sea, and caught it up, to keep
In memory of thee when far away.

CREUSA. Hast thou it still?

JASON. Nay, think how many years
Are gone since then, and with them this, thy token,
Blown far by some stray breeze.

MEDEA. I know a song!

JASON (*ignoring her*).

Then didst thou cry to me, "Farewell, my brother!"

CREUSA. And now my cry is, "Brother, welcome home!"

MEDEA (*plaintively*).

Jason, I know a song.

CREUSA. She knows a song
That thou wert wont to sing. I pray thee, listen,
And she will sing it thee.

JASON. A song? Well, well!
Where was I, then?—From childhood I was wont
To dream and dream, and babble foolishly
Of things that were not and could never be.
That habit clung to me, and mocks me now.
For, as the youth lives ever in the future,
So the grown man looks alway to the past,
And, young or old, we know not how to live
Within the present. In my dreams I was
A mighty hero, girded for great deeds,
And had a loving wife, and gold, and much
Goodly possessions, and a peaceful home
Wherein slept babes of mine.

(*To* MEDEA.)

What is it thou
Wouldst have with me?

CREUSA. She asks to sing a song
That thou in youth wert wont to sing to us.

JASON (*to* MEDEA).

And *thou* hast learned it?

MEDEA. I have done my best.

JASON. Go to! Dost think to give me back my youth,
Or happiness to win again for me,
By singing me some paltry, childish tune?
Give o'er! We will not part, but live together;
That is our fate, it seems, as things have chanced;
But let me bear no word of foolish songs
Or suchlike nonsense!

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CREUSA. Let her sing, I pray.
She hath conned it o'er and o'er, to know it well,
Indeed she hath!

JASON. Well, sing it, sing it then!

CREUSA (*to* MEDEA).

So, pluck the second string. Thou know'st it still?

MEDEA (*drawing her hand across her brow as if in pain*).

I have forgotten!

JASON. Ay, said I not so?
She cannot sing it.—Other songs are hers,
Like that which, with her magic arts, she sang
Unto the dragon, that he fell asleep.
That was no pure, sweet strain, like this of thine!

CREUSA (*whispering in* MEDEA's *ear*).

"Ye gods above, ye mighty gods—."

MEDEA (*repeating it after her*).

"Ye gods above—"
O gods in heaven, O righteous, mighty gods!

[*She lets the lyre fall to the ground, and clasps both hands before her eyes.*]

CREUSA. She weeps! Canst be so stern and hard?

JASON (*holding* CREUSA *back from* MEDEA).

Thou art

A child, and canst not know us, what we are!
The hand she feels upon her is the gods',
That reacheth her e'en here, with bloody gripe!
Then strive not thou to balk the gods' just doom.
O, hadst thou seen her in the dragon's cave,
Seen how she leaped to meet that serpent grim,
Shot forth the poisonous arrows of her tongue,
And darted hate and death from blazing eyes,

Then were thy bosom steeled against her tears!—
Take thou the lyre, sing thou to me that song,
And exorcise the hateful demon here
That strangles, chokes me! Thou canst sing the song,
Mayhap, though she cannot.

CREUSA. Ay, that I will.

[*She stoops to take up the lyre.*]

MEDEA (*gripping* CREUSA's *arm with one hand and holding her back, while with the other she herself picks up the lyre*).

Let be!

CREUSA. Right gladly, if thou'lt play.

MEDEA. Not I!

JASON. Thou wilt not give it her?

MEDEA. No!

JASON. Nor to me?

MEDEA. No!

JASON (*striding up to her and grasping at the lyre*).

I will take it, then!

MEDEA (*without moving from her place, but drawing the lyre away from him*).

No!

JASON. Give it me!

MEDEA (*crushing the lyre, so that it breaks with a loud, cracking sound*).

Here, take it! Broken! Thy fair lyre is broken!

[*She flings the pieces down in front of* CREUSA.]

CREUSA (*starting back in horror*).

Dead!

MEDEA (*looking swiftly about her as in a daze*).

Dead? Who speaks of death? I am alive!

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[*She stands there violently agitated and staring dazedly before her. A trumpet-blast sounds without.*]

JASON. Ha, what is that?

(*To* MEDEA.)

Why standest silent there?
Thou'lt rue this moment, that I know full well!

[*Another trumpet-blast without. The* KING_ appears suddenly at the door._]

JASON (*hurrying to meet him*).

What means that warlike trumpet-blast without?

KING. Unhappy man, canst ask?

JASON. I do, my lord!

KING. The stroke that I so feared is fall'n at last.—
Before my palace gates a herald stands,
Sent hither from the Amphictyons' holy seat,
Seeking for news of thee and of thy wife,
Crying to Heaven the doom of banishment
On both!

JASON. This, too?

KING. So is it—. Peace, he comes.

[*The palace doors swing open and a* HERALD *enters, followed by two trumpeters and, at a little distance, by a numerous suite.*]

HERALD. The blessing of the gods upon this house!

KING (*solemnly*).

Who art thou? On what errand art thou come?

HERALD. A herald of the gods am I, sent forth
From the ancient council of the Amphictyons
That speaks its judgments in that holy town
Of freedom, Delphi. And I follow close,
With cries of vengeance, on the guilty tracks

Of those false kinsmen of King Pelias,
Who ruled Iolcos, ere he fell in death.

KING. Thou seek'st the guilty? Seek in his own house,
'Mongst his own children seek them—but not here!

HERALD. Here have I found them. Here I'll speak my charge:
Thou art accursed, Jason, thou, and she,
Thy wife! With evil magic are ye charged,
Wherewith thine uncle darkly ye did slay.

JASON. A lie! Naught know I of mine uncle's death!

HERALD. Then ask thy wife, there; she will know, perchance.

JASON. Was 't she that slew him?

HERALD. Not with her own hand,
But by those magic arts ye know so well,
Which ye have brought here from that foreign land.
For, when the king fell sick—perchance e'en then
A victim, for the signs of his disease
Were strange and dreadful—to Medea then
His daughters came, and begged for healing balms
From her who knew so well to heal. And she
Gave swift consent, and followed them.

JASON. Nay, hold!
She went not! I forbade it, and she stayed.

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HERALD. The first time, yes. But when, unknown to thee,
They came again, she companied them back,
Only demanding, if she healed the king,
The Golden Fleece in payment for her aid;
It was a hateful thing to her, she said;
And boded evil. And those foolish maids,
All joyful, promised. So she came with them
To the king's chamber, where he lay asleep.
Straightway she muttered strange and secret words
Above him, and his sleep grew ever deep
And deeper. Next, to let the bad blood out,
She bade them ope his veins. And even this
They did, whereat his panting breath grew still
And tranquil; then the gaping wounds were bound,
And those sad maids were glad to think him healed.
Forth went Medea then, as she hath said;
His daughters, too, departed, for he slept.
But, on a sudden, came a fearful cry
From out his chamber! Swift his daughters sped
To aid him, and—oh, ghastly, horrible!—
There on the pavement lay the aged king,
His body twisted in a hideous knot,
The cloths that bound his veins all torn away
From off his gaping wounds, whence, in a black
And sluggish stream, his blood came welling forth.
He lay beside the altar, where the Fleece
For long was wont to hang—and that was gone!
But, in that selfsame hour, thy wife was seen,
The golden gaud upon her shoulder flung,
Swift hasting through the night.

MEDEA (*dully, staring straight before her*).

'Twas my reward!—
I shudder still, when'er I think upon
The old man's furious rage!

HERALD. Now, that no longer
Such horrors bide here, poisoning this land
With their destructive breath, I here proclaim
The solemn doom of utter banishment
On Jason, the Thessalian, Aeson's son,
Spouse of a wicked witch-wife, and himself
An arrant villain; and I drive him forth

From out this land of Greece, wherein the gods
Are wont to walk with men; to exile hence,
To flight and wandering I drive him forth,
And with him, this, his wife, ay, and his babes,
The offspring of his marriage-bed. Henceforth
No rood of this, his fatherland, be his,
No share in her protection or her rights!

[*He raises his hand and three times makes solemn proclamation, turning to different quarters.*]

Banished are Jason and Medea!
Medea and Jason are banished!
Banished are Jason and Medea!

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And whoso harbors him, or gives him aid,
After three days and nights are come and gone,
Upon that man I here declare the doom
Of death, if he be burgher; if a king,
Or city-state, then war shall be proclaimed.
So runs the Amphictyons' reverend decree,
The which I here proclaim, as is most meet,
That each may know its terms, and so beware.—
The blessing of the gods upon this house!

[*He turns to depart.*]

JASON. Why stand ye there, ye walls, and crash not down
To save this king the pains of slaying me?

KING. A moment yet, sir Herald. Hear this, too.

[*He turns to* JASON.]

Think'st thou I rue the promise I have made?
If I could think thee guilty, ay, wert thou
My very son, I'd give thee up to these
That seek thee. But thou art not! Wherefore, I
Will give thee shelter. Stay thou here.—Who dares
To question Creon's friend, whose innocence
Stands pledged by mine own words? Who dares, I say,
To lay a hand upon my son to be?
Yea, Herald, on my son to be, the spouse
Of this my daughter! 'Twas my dearest wish
In happy days long past, when Fortune smiled;
Now, when he's compassed round by stormy waves
Of evil fortune, it shall come to pass.
Ay, she shall be thy wife, and thou shalt stay
Here, with thy father. And I will myself
Make answer for it to the Amphictyons.
Who now will cry him guilty, when the king
Hath sworn him free from blame, and given him
The hand of his own daughter?

(*To the* HERALD.)

Take my words
To those that sent thee hither. Go in peace!
The blessing of the gods be on thy head!

[*The* HERALD *goes.*]

KING (*turning to* MEDEA).

This woman, whom the wilderness spewed up
To be a bane to thee and all good men,
Her that hath wrought the crimes men lay to thee,
Her do I banish forth from out this land
And all its borders. Death shall be her lot
And portion, if the morrow find her here!

(*To* MEDEA.)

Depart from out my fathers' pious town,
And make the air thou poisonest pure again!

MEDEA. Is that thy sentence? Falls it, then, on me,
And me alone? And yet I say to thee,
O king, I did it not!

KING. Nay, thou hast done
Enough of evil since he saw thee first.
Away with thee from out my house and town!

MEDEA (*turning to* JASON).

Say, must I go? So be it—but follow me!
We bear the blame together, let us bear
The punishment as well! Dost thou not know
The ancient proverb: "None shall die alone?"
One home for both, one body—and one death!
Long since, when Death stared grimly in our eyes,
We sware that oath. Now keep it! Follow me!

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JASON. Nay, touch me not! Begone from me, thou curse
Of all my days, who hast robbed me of my life
And happiness, from whom, when first mine eyes
Met thine, I shrank and shuddered, though I thought
Those fearful struggles in my very soul
Were but the signs of rash and foolish love.
Hence, to that wilderness that cradled thee!
Back to that bloody folk whose child thou art
In very thought and deed! But, ere thou go,
Give back to me what thou hast stol'n away,
Thou wanton! Give Prince Jason back to me!

MEDEA. Is't Jason thou desirest? Take him, then!
But who shall give Medea back to me?
Was't I that in thy homeland sought thee out?
Was't I that lured thee from thy father's house?
Was't I that forced, ay, forced my love on thee?
Was't I that wrenched thee from thy fatherland,
Made thee the butt of strangers' haughty scorn,
Or dragged thee into wantonness and crime?
Thou nam'st me Wanton?—Woe is me! I am!
Yet—how have I been wanton, and for whom?
Let these pursue me with their venomous hate,
Ay, drive me forth and slay me! 'Tis their right,
Because I am in truth a dreadful thing
And hateful unto them, and to myself
A deep abyss of evil, terrible!
Let all the world heap curses on my head,
Save only thee alone! Nay, thou shalt not!
'Twas thou inspiredst all these horrid deeds,
Yea, thou alone. Dost thou not call to mind
How I did clasp my hands about thy knees
That day thou bad'st me steal the Golden Fleece?
And, though I sooner far had slain myself,
Yet thou, with chilly scorn, commandedst me
To take it. Dost remember how I held
My brother in my bosom, faint to death
From that fierce stroke of thine that laid him low,
Until he tore him from his sister's arms
To 'scape thy frenzied vengeance, and leaped swift
Into the sea, to find a kinder death
Beneath its waves? Dost thou remember?—Nay,

Come here to me, and shrink not so away
To shelter thee behind that maiden there!

JASON (*coming forward*).

I hate thee,—but I fear thee not!

MEDEA. Then come!

[*She addresses him earnestly in low tones.*]

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Dost thou remember—Nay, look not on me
So haughtily!—how, on that very day
Before thine uncle died, his daughters went
So sorrowful and hopeless forth from me,
Because I sent them back at thy behest,
And would not aid them? Then thou cam'st, alone,
Unto my chamber, looking in mine eyes
So earnestly, as though some purpose grim,
Deep hidden in thy heart, would search my soul
To find its like therein? And how thou saidst
That they were come to me for healing balms
To cure their old, sick father? 'Twas thy wish
That I should brew a cool, refreshing draught
To cure him of his ills forevermore—
And thee as well! Hast thou forgotten that?
Nay, look at me, eye straight to eye, if thou
Dost dare!

JASON. Thou demon! Why these frantic words,
This rage against me? Why recall to life
These shadows of my dreams and make them real,
Why hold a mirror up to me wherein
Naught but thine own vile thoughts do show, and say
'Tis I that look therefrom? Why call my thoughts
From out the past to charge me with thy crimes?
Naught know I of thy plans and plottings, naught!
From the beginning I have hated thee,
I've cursed the day when first I saw thy face;
'Tis pity only held me at thy side!
But now I cast thee off forevermore
With bitter curses, e'en as all the world
Doth curse thee!

MEDEA (*throwing herself at his feet with a cry of agony*).

No! My love, my husband! No!

JASON (*roughly*).

Begone!

MEDEA. That day my old, gray father cursed
My name, thou gay'st thy promise, nevermore
To leave me, nevermore! Now keep thy word!

JASON. Thine own rash deeds have made that promise naught,
And here I give thee to thy father's curse.

MEDEA. I hate thee!—Come! Come, O my husband!

JASON. Back!

MEDEA. Come to my loving arms! 'Twas once thy wish!

JASON. Back! See, I draw my sword. I'll strike thee dead,
Unless thou yield, and go!

MEDEA (*approaching him fearlessly*).

Then strike me, strike!

CREUSA (*to* JASON).

Hold! Let her go in peace, and harm her not!

MEDEA. Ha! Thou here, too, thou snow-white, silvery snake?
Oh, hiss no more, nor shoot thy forked tongue
With honied words upon it! Thou hast got
What thou didst wish—a husband at the last!
For this, then, didst thou show thyself so soft
And smooth-caressing, for this only wind
Thy

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snaky coils so close about my neck?
Oh, if I had a dagger, I would smite
Thee, and thy father, that so righteous king!
For this, then, hast thou sung those winsome songs,
Taught me to play the lyre, and tricked me out
In these rich garments?

[*She suddenly rends her mantle in twain.*]

Off with you! Away
With the vile gifts of that accursed jade!

[*She turns to* JASON.]

See! As I tear this mantle here in twain,
Pressing one part upon my throbbing breast,
And cast the other from me at thy feet,
So do I rend my love, the common tie
That bound us each to each. What follows now
I cast on thee, thou miscreant, who hast spurned
The holy claims of an unhappy wife!—
Give me my children now, and let me go!

KING. The children stay with us.

MEDEA. They may not go
With their own mother?

KING. With a wanton, no!

MEDEA (*to* JASON).

Is it thy will, too?

JASON. Ay!

MEDEA (*hastening to the door*).

Come forth, my babes!
Your mother calls you!

KING. Back!

MEDEA. 'Tis, then, thy will
That I go forth alone?—'Tis well, so be it!
I say but this, O king: Before the gray
Of evening darken, give me back my babes!
Enough for now!

(*Turning to* CREUSA.)

But thou, who standest there
In glistering raiment, cloaking thy delight,
In thy false purity disdaining me,
I tell thee, thou wilt wring those soft, white hands
In agony, and envy me my lot,
Hard though it seemeth now!

JASON. How dar'st thou?

KING. Hence!

MEDEA. I go, but I will come again, to take
What is mine own, and bring what ye deserve.

KING. Ha! Wouldst thou threaten us before our face?
If words will not suffice—

(*To his attendants.*)

Then teach ye her
How she should bear herself before a king!

MEDEA. Stand back! Who dares to block Medea's path?
Mark well, O king, this hour when I depart.
Trust me, thou never saw'st a blacker one!
Make way! I go,—and take with me revenge!

[*She goes out.*]

KING. Our punishment, at least, will follow thee!

(*To* CREUSA.)

Nay, tremble not. We'll keep thee safe from her!

CREUSA. I wonder only, whether what we do
Be right? If so, no power can work us harm!

(*The curtain falls.*)

ACT III

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The outer court of CREON'S palace. In the background the entrance to the royal apartments; on the right at the side a colonnade leading to MEDEA's *apartments.*

MEDEA *is standing in the foreground, behind her at a distance* GORA *is seen speaking to a servant of the king.*

GORA. Say to the king:
Medea takes no message from a slave.
Hath he aught to say to her,
He must e'en come himself.
Perchance she'll deign to hear him.

[*The slave departs.*]

(GORA *comes forward and addresses* MEDEA.)

They think that thou wilt go,
Taming thy hate, forgetting thy revenge.
The fools!
Or wilt thou go? Wilt thou?
I could almost believe thou wilt.
For thou no longer art the proud Medea,
The royal seed of Colchis' mighty king,
The wise and skilful daughter of a wise
And skilful mother.
Else hadst thou not been patient, borne their gibes
So long, even until now!

MEDEA. Ye gods! O hear her! Borne! Been patient!
So long, even until now!

GORA. I counseled thee to yield, to soften,
When thou didst seek to tarry yet awhile;
But thou wert blind, ensnared;
The heavy stroke had not yet fallen,
Which I foresaw, whereof I warned thee first.
But, now that it is fall'n, I bid thee stay!
They shall not laugh to scorn this Colchian wife,
Heap insult on the blood of our proud kings!
Let them give back thy babes,
The offshoots of that royal oak, now felled,
Or perish, fall themselves,
In darkness and in night!

Is all prepared for flight?
Or hast thou other plans?

MEDEA. First I will have my children. For the rest,
My way will be made plain.

GORA. Then thou wilt flee?

MEDEA. I know not, yet.

GORA. Then they will laugh at thee!

MEDEA. Laugh at me? No!

GORA. What is thy purpose, then?

MEDEA. I have no heart to plan or think at all.
Over the silent abyss
Let dark night brood!

GORA. If thou wouldst flee, then whither?

MEDEA (*sorrowfully*).

Whither? Ah, whither?

GORA. Here in this stranger-land
There is no place for us. They hate thee sore,
These Greeks, and they will slay thee!

MEDEA. Slay me? Me?
Nay, it is I will slay them!

GORA. And at home,
There in far Colchis, danger waits us, too!

MEDEA. O Colchis, Colchis! O my fatherland!

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GORA. Thou hast heard the tale, how thy father died
When thou wentest forth, and didst leave thy home,
And thy brother fell? He died, says the tale,
But methinks 'twas not so? Nay, he gripped his grief,
Sharper far than a sword, and, raging 'gainst Fate,
'Gainst himself, fell on death!

MEDEA. Dost thou, too, join my foes?
Wilt thou slay me?

GORA. Nay, hark! I warned thee. I said:
"Flee these strangers, new-come; most of all flee this man,
Their leader smooth-tongued, the dissembler, the traitor!"

MEDEA. "Smooth-tongued, the dissembler, the traitor"
—were these thy words?

GORA. Even these.

MEDEA. And I would not believe?

GORA. Thou wouldst not; but into the deadly net
Didst haste, that now closes over thine head.

MEDEA. "A smooth-tongued traitor!" Yea, that is the word!
Hadst thou said but that, I had known in time;
But thou namedst him foe to us, hateful, and dread,
While friendly he seemed and fair, and I hated him not.

GORA. Thou lovest him, then?

MEDEA. I? Love?
I hate and shudder at him
As at falsehood, treachery,
Black horrors—as at myself!

GORA. Then punish him, strike him low!
Avenge thy brother, thy sire,
Our fatherland and our gods,
Our shame-yea, mine, and thine!

MEDEA. First I will have my babes;
All else is hidden in night.
What think'st thou of this?—When he comes
Treading proud to his bridal with her,

That maid whom I hate,
If, from the roof of the palace above him,
Medea crash down at his feet and lie there,
A ghastly corpse?

GORA. 'Twere a sweet revenge!

MEDEA. Or if, at the bridal-chamber's door,
I lay her dead in her blood,
Beside her the children—Jason's children—dead?

GORA. But thyself such revenge would hurt, and not him.

MEDEA. Ah, I would that he loved me still,
That I might slay myself, and make him groan!
But what of that maid, so false, so pure?

GORA. Ha! There thou strikest nearer to the mark!

MEDEA. Peace, peace! Back, whence ye came, ye evil thoughts!
Back into silence, into darkest night!

[*She covers her face with her veil.*]

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GORA. Those heroes all, who made with him
The wanton Argo-voyage hence,
The gods above have recompensed
With just requital, swift revenge.
Death and disgrace have seized them all
Save one—how long shall he go free?
Each day I listen greedily,
And joy to hear how they have died,
How fell these glorious sons of Greece,
The robber-band that fought their way
Back from far Colchis. Thracian maids
Rent limb from limb sweet Orpheus' frame;
And Hylas found a watery grave;
Pirithoues and Theseus pierced
Even to Hades' darksome realm
To rob that mighty lord of shades
Of his radiant spouse, Persephone;
But then he seized, and holds them there
For aye in chains and endless night.

MEDEA (*swiftly snatching her veil from before her face*).

Because they came to steal his wife?
Good! Good! 'Twas Jason's crime, nay, less!

GORA. Great Heracles forsook his wife,
For he was snared by other charms,
And in revenge she sent to him
A linen tunic, which he took
And clad himself therewith—and sank
To earth in hideous agonies;
For she had smeared it secretly
With poison and swift death. He sank
To earth, and Oeta's wooded heights
Were witness how he died in flames!

MEDEA. She wove it, then, that tunic dire
That slew him?

GORA. Ay, herself.

MEDEA. Herself!

GORA. Althea 'twas—his mother—smote
The mighty Meleager down
Who slew the Calydonian boar;
The mother slew her child.

MEDEA. Was she
Forsaken by her husband, too?

GORA. Nay, he had slain her brother.

MEDEA. Who?
The husband

GORA. Nay, her son, I mean.

MEDEA. And when the deed was done, she died?

GORA. She liveth yet.

MEDEA. To do a deed
Like that—and live! Oh, horrible!
Thus much do I know, thus much I see clear
Not unavenged shall I suffer wrong;
What that vengeance shall be, I know not,—would not know.
Whatso'er I can do, he deserves,—ay, the worst!
But—mankind are so weak,
So fain to grant time for the sinner to feel remorse!

GORA. Remorse? Ask thy lord if he rue his deed!
For, see! He draws nigh with hasty steps.

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MEDEA. And with him the king, my bitter foe,
Whose counsel hath led my lord astray.
Him must I flee, for I cannot tame
My hatred.

[*She goes swiftly toward the palace.*]

But if lord Jason wish
To speak with me, then bid him come in,
To my side in the innermost chambers—there
I would parley with him, not here
By the side of the man who is my foe.
They come. Away!

[*She disappears into the palace.*]

GORA. Lo, she is gone!
And I am left to deal with the man
Who is killing my child, who hath brought it to pass
That I lay my head on a foreign soil,
And must hide my tears of bitter woe,
Lest I see a smile on the lips of these strangers here.

The KING *and* JASON *enter.*

KING. Why hath thy mistress fled? 'Twill serve her not

GORA. Fled? Nay, she went, because she hates thy face

KING. Summon her forth!

GORA. She will not come.

KING. She shall!

GORA. Then go thou in thyself and call her forth,
If thou dost dare.

KING (*angrily*).

Where am I, then, and who,
That this mad woman dares to spite me thus?
The servant mirrors forth the mistress' soul—
Servant and mistress mirror forth that land

Of darkness that begat them! Once again
I tell thee, call her forth!

GORA (*pointing to Jason*).

There stands the man
That she would speak with. Let him go within—
If he hath courage for it.

JASON. Get thee gone,
Old witch, whom I have hated from the first!
Tell her, who is so like thee, she must come.

GORA. Ah, if she were like me, thou wouldst not speak
In such imperious wise! I promise thee
That she shall know of it, and to thy dole!

JASON. I would have speech with her.

GORA. Go in!

JASON. Not I!
'Tis she that shall come forth. Go thou within
And tell her so!

GORA. Well, well, I go, if but
To rid me of the sight of you, my lords;
Ay, and I'll bear your summons, but I know
Full well she will not come, for she is weak
And feels her sickness all too grievously.

[*She goes into the palace.*]

KING. Not one day longer will I suffer her
To stay in Corinth. This old dame but now
Gave utterance to the dark and fell designs
On which yon woman secretly doth brood.
Methinks her presence is a constant threat.
Thy doubts, I hope, are laid to rest at last?

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JASON. Fulfil, O King, thy sentence on my wife!
She can no longer tarry where I am,
So, let her go; the sentence is not harsh.
Forsooth, though I am less to blame than she,
My lot is bitt'rer, harder far than hers.
She but returns to that grim wilderness
Where she was born, and, like a restive colt
From whom the galling yoke is just removed,
Will rush to freedom, and become once more
Untamed and stubborn.
But my place is here;
Here must I sit and while away the days
In meek inaction, burdened with the scorn
And scoffing of mankind, mine only task
Dully to muse upon my vanished past.

KING. Thou wilt be great and famous yet again,
Believe me. Like the bow which, once set free
From the fierce strain, doth speed the arrow swift
And straight unto its mark, whenso the hand
Is loosed that bent it, so wilt thou spring back
And be thyself again, once she is gone.

JASON. Naught feel I in my breast to feed such hopes!
Lost is my name, my fame; I am no more
Than Jason's shadow, not that prince himself.

KING. The world, my son, is not so harsh as thou:
An older man's misstep is sin and crime;
The youth's, a misstep only, which he may
Retrace, and mend his error. All thy deeds
In Colchis, when thou went a hot-head boy,
Will be forgot, if thou wilt show thyself
Henceforth a man.

JASON. O, might I trust thy words,
I could be happy once again!

KING. Let her
But leave thy side, and thou wilt say I'm right.
Before the Amphictyons' judgment-seat I'll go
And speak for thee, defend thy righteous cause,
And prove that it was she alone, Medea,
Who did those horrid deeds wherewith thou'rt charged,

Prove her the wanton, her the darksome witch.
Lifted shall be the doom of banishment
From off thy brow. If not, then thou shalt rise
In all thy stubborn strength, and to the breeze
Unfurl the glorious banner of pure gold
Which thou didst bring from earth’s most distant land,
And, like a rushing torrent, all the youth
Of Greece will stream to serve thee once again
And rally ’round thy standard to oppose
All foes that come, rally ’round thee, now purged
Of all suspicion, starting life anew,
The glorious hope of Greece, and of the Fleece
The mighty hero!—Thou hast got it still?

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JASON. The Fleece?

KING. Ay.

JASON. Nay, not I.

KING. And yet thy wife
Bore it away from old King Pelias' house.

JASON. Then she must have it still.

KING. If so, then she
Shall straightway yield it up, perforce. It is
The pledge and symbol of thy power to come.
Ay, thou shalt yet be strong and great again,
Thou only son of my old friend! A king
Am I, and have both wealth and power, the which
With mine own daughter's spouse I'll gladly share.

JASON. And I will go to claim the heritage
My fathers left me, of that false man's son
That keeps it from me. For I, too, am rich,
Could I but have my due.

KING. Peace! Look, she comes
Who still doth vex us. But our task is brief.

MEDEA *comes out of the palace, attended by* GORA.

MEDEA. What wouldst thou with me?

KING. I did send thee late
Some slaves to speak my will, whom thou didst drive
With harsh words forth, and didst demand to hear
From mine own lips whate'er I had to say,
What my commands and what thou hadst to do.

MEDEA. Say on!

KING. Naught strange or new have I to tell.
I would but speak once more the doom I set
Upon thy head, and add thereto that thou
Must forth today.

MEDEA. And why today?

KING. The threats
That thou halt uttered 'gainst my daughter's life—
For those against mine own I do not care:
The savage moods that thou of late hast shown,
All these do warn me how thy presence here
Bodes ill. Wherefore, today thou must begone!

MEDEA. Give me my babes, and I will go—perhaps!

KING. Nay, no "Perhaps!" Thou goest! But the babes
Stay here!

MEDEA. How? Mine own babes? But I forget
To whom I speak. Let me have speech with him,
My husband, standing there.

KING. Nay, hear her not!

MEDEA (*to* JASON).

I pray thee, let me speak with thee!

JASON. Well, well,
So be it, then, that thou may'st see I have
No fear of any words of thine to me.

(*To the* KING.)

Leave us, my lord! I'll hear what she would say.

KING. I go, but I am fearful. She is sly
And cunning! [*He departs.*]

MEDEA. So, he's gone! No stranger now
Is here to vex us, none to come between
Husband and wife, and, what our hearts do feel,
That we can speak out clear.—Say first, my lord,
What are thy plans, thy wishes?

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JASON. Thou dost know.

MEDEA. I guess thy will, but all thy secret thoughts
I know not.

JASON. Be contented with the first,
For they are what decide.

MEDEA. Then I must go?

JASON. Go!

MEDEA. And today?

JASON. Today!

MEDEA. And thou canst stand
So calm before me and speak such a word,
Nor drop thine eyes for shame, nor even blush?

JASON. I must needs blush, if I should say aught else!

MEDEA. Ha! Good! Well done! Speak ever words like these
When thou wouldst clear thyself in others' eyes,
But leave such idle feigning when thou speak'st
With me!

JASON. Dost call my dread of horrid deeds
Which thou hast done, a sham, and idle, too?
Thou art condemned by men; the very gods
Have damned thee! And I give thee up to them
And to their judgment! 'Tis a fate, in sooth,
Thou richly hast deserved!

MEDEA. Who is this man,
This pious, virtuous man with whom I speak?
Is it not Jason? Strives he to seem mild?
O, mild and gentle one, didst thou not come
To Colchis' strand, and win in bloody fight
The daughter of its king? O, gentle, mild,
Didst thou not slay my brother, was it not
At thine own hands mine aged father fell,
Thou gentle, pious man? And now thou wouldst
Desert the wife whom thou didst steal away!
Mild? No, say rather hateful, monstrous man!

JASON. Such wild abuse I will not stay to hear.
Thou knowest now what thou must do. Farewell!

MEDEA. Nay, nay, I know not! Stay until I learn!
Stay, and I will be quiet even as thou.—
So, I am banished, then? But what of thee?
Methinks the Herald's sentence named thee, too.

JASON. When it is known that I am innocent
Of all these horrid deeds, and had no hand
In murdering mine uncle, then the ban
Will be removed from me.

MEDEA. And thou wilt live
Peaceful and happy, for long years to come?

JASON. I shall live quietly, as doth become
Unhappy men like me.

MEDEA. And what of me?

JASON. Thou dost but reap the harvest thine own hands
Have sown.

MEDEA. My hands? Hadst thou no part therein?

JASON. Nay, none.

MEDEA. Didst never pray thine uncle's death
Might speedily be compassed?

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JASON. No command
At least I gave.

MEDEA. Ne'er sought to learn if I
Had heart and courage for the deed?

JASON. Thou know'st
How, in the first mad burst of rage and hate,
A man speaks many hot, impetuous threats
Which calm reflection never would fulfil.

MEDEA. Once thou didst blame thyself for that mad deed;
Now thou hast found a victim who can bear
The guilt in place of thee!

JASON. 'Tis not the thought
Of such a deed that merits punishment;
It is the deed itself.

MEDEA (*quickly*).

I did it not!

JASON. Who, then, is guilty?

MEDEA. Not myself, at least!
Listen, my husband, and be thou the first
To do me justice.
As I stood at the chamber door, to enter
And steal away the Fleece,
The king lay there on his couch;
Sudden I heard a cry! I turned,
And lo! I saw the aged king
Leap from his couch with frightful shrieks,
Twisting and writhing; and he cried,
"Com'st thou, O brother, to take revenge,
Revenge on me? Ha! Thou shalt die
Again, and yet again!" And straight
He sprang at me, to grip me fast,
For in my hands I held the Fleece.
I shook with fear, and cried aloud
For help to those dark gods I know;
The Fleece before me like a shield
I held. His face was twisted swift

To maniac grins, and leered at me!
Then, with a shriek, he madly tore
At the clothes that bound his aged veins;
They rent; the blood gushed forth in streams,
And, even as I looked, aghast
And full of horror, there he lay,
The king, at my very feet, all bathed
In his own blood-lay cold and dead!

JASON. And thou canst stand and tell me such a tale,
Thou hateful witchwife? Get thee gone from me!
Away! I shudder at thee! Would that I
Had ne'er beheld thy face!

MEDEA. Thou knewest well
That I was skilled in witchcraft, from that day
When first thou saw'st me at my magic arts,
And still didst yearn and long to call me thine!

JASON. I was a youth then, and an arrant fool!
What boys are pleased with, men oft cast away.

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MEDEA. O, say no word against the golden days
Of youth, when heads are hot, but hearts are pure!
O, if thou wert but now what once thou wast,
Then were I happier far! Come back with me
Only a little step to that fair time
When, in our fresh, green youth, we strayed together
By Phasis' flowery marge. How frank and clear
Thy heart was then, and mine how closely sealed
And sad! But thou with thy soft, gentle light
Didst pierce my darkness, drive away the clouds,
And make me bright and happy. Thine I was,
And thou wert mine; O, Jason, is it then
Vanished forever, that far, happy time?
Or hath the bitter struggle for a hearth
And home, for name and fame, forever killed
The blooms of fairest promise on the tree
Of thy green youth? Oh, compassed though I be
With woe and heavy sorrows all about,
Yet I think often on that springtime sweet
Whence soft and balmy breezes o'er the years
Are wafted to me! If Medea then
Seemed fair to thee and lovely, how today
Can she be dread and hateful? What I was
Thou knewest, and didst seek me none the less.
Thou took'st me as I was; O, keep me, as I am!

JASON. Thou hast forgot the dreadful deeds that since
Have come to pass.

MEDEA. Ay, dread they are, in sooth,
And I confess it! 'Gainst mine aged sire
I sinned most deeply, 'gainst my brother, too,
And none condemns me more than I myself.
I'll welcome punishment, and I'll repent
In joy and gladness; only thou shalt not
Pronounce the doom upon me, nay, not thou!
For all my deeds were done for love of thee.—
Come, let us flee together, once again
Made one in heart and soul! Some distant land
Will take us to its bosom.

JASON. What land, then?
And whither should we flee?

MEDEA. Whither!

JASON. Thou'rt mad,
And dost revile me, that I do not choose
To share thy raving! No! Our life together
Is done! The gods have cursed our union long,
As one with deeds of cruelty begun,
That since hath waged and found its nourishment
In horrid crimes. E'en granting thou didst not
Thyself slay Pelias, who was there to see?
Or who would trust thy tale?

MEDEA. Thou!

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JASON. Even then,
What can I do, how clear thee?—It were vain!
Come, let us yield to Fate, not stubbornly
Defy it! Let us each repentance seek,
And suffer our just doom, thou fleeing forth
Because thou may'st not stay, I tarrying here
When I would flee.

MEDEA. Methinks thou dost not choose
The harder lot!

JASON. Is it so easy, then,
To live, a stranger, in a stranger's house,
Subsisting on a stranger's pitying gifts?

MEDEA. Nay, if it seem so hard, why dost not choose
To fly with me?

JASON. But whither? Ay, and how?

MEDEA. There was a time thou hadst not shown thyself
So over-prudent, when thou camest first
To Colchis from the city of thy sires,
Seeking the glitter of an empty fame
In distant lands.

JASON. I am not what I was;
Broken my strength, the courage in my breast
A dead thing. And 'tis thou I have to thank
For such misfortune! Bitter memories
Of days long past lie like a weight of lead
Upon my anxious soul; I cannot raise
Mine eyes for heaviness of heart. And, more,
The boy of those far days is grown a man,
No longer, like a wanton, sportive child,
Gambols amid bright flow'rs, but reaches out
For ripened fruit, for what is real and sure.
Babes I have got, but have no place where they
May lay their heads; my task it is to make
An heritage for these. Shall Jason's stock
Be but a withered weed beside the road,
By all men spurned and trampled? If thou e'er
Hast truly loved me, if I e'er was dear
To thee, oh, give me proof thereof, restore

Myself to me again, and yield a grave
To me in this, my homeland!

MEDEA. And in this
Same homeland a new marriage-bed, forsooth I
Am I not right?

JASON. What idle talk is this?

MEDEA. Have I not heard how Creon named thee son,
And husband of his daughter? She it is,
Creusa, that doth charm thee, hold thee fast
In Corinth! 'Tis for her that thou wouldst stay!
Confess, I have thee there!

JASON. Thou hast me not,
And never hadst me.

MEDEA. So, thou wilt repent,
And I, thy wife Medea, I must go
Away?—I stood beside you there and wept
As thou didst trace with her your happy days
Of youth together, tarrying at each step
In sweet remembrance, till thou didst become
Naught but an echo of that distant past.—
I will not go, no, will not!

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JASON. Thou'rt unjust,
And hard and wild as ever!

MEDEA. I unjust!
Thou dost not seek her, then, to wife? Say no!

JASON. I do but seek a place to lay me down
And rest. What else will come, I do not know!

MEDEA. Ay, but I know full well, and it shall be
My task to thwart thee, with the help of heaven!

JASON. Thou canst not speak with calmness, so, farewell!

[*He takes a step toward the door.*]

MEDEA. Jason!

JASON (*turning back*).

What wouldst thou?

MEDEA. 'Tis, perchance, the last,
Last time that we shall speak together!

JASON. True;
Then let us without hate or rancor part.

MEDEA. Thou mad'st me love thee deeply. Wouldst thou now
Flee from my face?

JASON. I must!

MEDEA. Hast robbed me, too,
Of my dear father; and wouldst steal away
Mine husband?

JASON. I am helpless!

MEDEA. At thy hands
My brother met his death untimely. Him
Thou hast taken from me, too, and now wouldst fly
And leave me?

JASON. He was innocent; he fell.
And I am blameless, too; but I must flee thee.

MEDEA. I left my fatherland to follow thee!

JASON. Thou didst but follow thine own will, not me.
Gladly would I, if thou hadst rued thy deed,
Have sent thee back again.

MEDEA. I am accurst,
And damned by all the world,—and all for thee!
And, for thy sake, I even hate myself!
Wilt thou forsake me still?

JASON. 'Tis not my will,
Nay; but a higher bidding tells me plain
That I must leave thy side. Thy fate seems hard,
But what of mine? And yet, I pity thee,
If that be any comfort!

MEDEA (*falling upon her knees to him*).

Jason!

JASON. Well?
What wouldst thou further?

MEDEA (*rising suddenly*).

Nothing! It is past
And done with! O proud sires, O mighty gods
Of Colchis, grant forgiveness to thy child
Who hath so humbled and dishonored you,
(Ay, and herself as well)—for I was pressed
And needs must do it. Now, receive me back!

[JASON *turns to leave her.*]

Jason!

JASON. Hope not that thou canst soften me!

MEDEA. Nay, never think I wished it! Give me back
My babes!

JASON.

Thy children? Never!

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MEDEA (*wildly*).

They are mine!

JASON. Men call them by their father's name; and that
Shall never grace barbarians! Here in Greece
I'll rear them, to be Greeks!

MEDEA. To be despised
And scorned by offspring of thy later bed?
I tell thee, they are mine!

JASON. Nay, have a care,
Lest thou shouldst turn my pity unto hate!
And keep a quiet mien, since that is all
Can soften thy hard fate.

MEDEA. To prayers and tears
I needs must humble me! My husband!—No,
For that thou art no more! Beloved!—No,
For that, thou never wert! Man, shall I say?
He is no man who breaks his solemn oath!
Lord Jason!—Pah! It is a traitor's name!
How shall I name thee? Devil!—Gentle! Good!
Give me my babes, and let me go in peace!

JASON. I cannot, I have told thee, cannot do it.

MEDEA. Hard heart! Thou tak'st the husband from the wife,
And robb'st the mother of her babes as well?

JASON. Nay, then, that thou may'st know how I have yet
Some kindness left, take with thee when thou goest
One of the babes.

MEDEA. But one? Say, only one?

JASON. Beware thou ask too much! The little I
Have just now granted, oversteps the right.

MEDEA. Which shall it be?

JASON. We'll leave the choice to them,
The babes themselves; and whichsoever will,
Him thou shalt take.

MEDEA. O thanks a thousand times,
Thou gentle, kindly man! He lies who calls
Thee traitor!

[*The* KING_ appears at the door._]

JASON. Come, my lord!

KING. Is't settled, then?

JASON. She goes; and I have granted her to take
One of the children with her.

(*To one of the slaves who has accompanied the* KING.)

Hasten swift
And bring the babes before us!

KING. What is this?
Here they shall stay, ay, both of them!

MEDEA. This gift
That in mine eyes so small is, seemeth it
So great a boon to thee? Hast thou no fear
Of Heaven's fell anger, harsh and violent man?

KING. The gods deal harshly with such wanton crimes
As thou hast done!

MEDEA. Yea, but they see the cause
That drove us to such deeds!

KING. 'Tis wicked thoughts,
Deep in the heart, beget such crimes as thine!

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MEDEA. All causes else thou count'st for naught?

KING. With stern
And iron justice mine own self I rule,
And so, with right, judge others.

MEDEA. In the act
Of punishing my crimes, thou dost commit
A worse thyself!

JASON. She shall not say of me
That I am all hard-hearted; wherefore I
One of the babes have promised her, to be
His mother's dearest comfort in her woe.

CREUSA *enters with the children.*

CREUSA. One told me that these babes were summoned here.
What will ye have? What deeds are now afoot?
Behold how they do love me, though they were
But now brought here to Corinth! 'Tis as if
Long years already we had seen and known
Each one the other. 'Twas my gentle words
That won them; for, poor babes, they were not used
To loving treatment; and their sore distress,
Their loneliness did straightway win my heart.

MEDEA. One of the babes goes with me!

CREUSA. What is this?
Leaves us?

KING. E'en so. It is their father's will!

(*To* MEDEA,_ who stands in deep meditation._)

Here are thy children. Let them make their choice!

MEDEA (*wildly*).

The babes! My children! Ay, 'tis they, in sooth!
The one thing left me in this bitter world!
Ye gods, forget those dark and wicked thoughts
That late I harbored; grant me both my babes,
Yea, both, and I'll go forth from out this land

Praising your mercy! Yea, I'll e'en forgive
My husband there, and her—No! Her I'll not
Forgive—nor Jason, either! Come to me,
Come here, my babes!—Why stand ye silent there
And cling upon the breast of my false foe?
Ah, could ye know how she hath humbled me,
Ye would arm your tiny hands, curve into claws
Those little, weakling fingers, rend and tear
That soft and tender form, whereto ye cling
So lovingly!—Wouldst hold my children back
From coming to me? Let them go!

CREUSA. In sooth,
Unhappy woman, I restrain them not!

MEDEA. Not with thy hand, I know, but with thy glance,
Thy false, deceitful face, that seems all love,
And holds my husband from me, too! Thou laugh'st?
I promise thee thou'lt weep hot tears in days
To come!

CREUSA. Now may the gods chastise me if I had
A thought of laughing!

KING. Woman, break not forth
In insults and in anger! Do what thou
Hast yet to do, or go!

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MEDEA. Thou'rt right, O king,
Most just of kings! Not so much kind of heart
As just! How do thy bidding? Yet will I
Strive to do both. Hark, children! List to me!
They send your mother forth, to wander wide
O'er sea and land. Who knows where she shall come?
These kindly folk, thy father, and that just
And gentle king that standeth there, have said
That I may take, to share my lonely fate,
One of my babes, but only one. Ye gods,
Hear ye this sentence? One, and one alone!
Now, whichsoever of you loves me more,
Let that one come to join me, for I may
Not have you both; the other here must stay
Beside his father, and with that false king's
Still falser daughter!—Hear ye what I say?
Why linger there?

KING. Thou seest they will not come!

MEDEA. Thou liest, false and wicked king! They would,
Save that thy daughter hath enchanted them
And keeps them from me!—Heard ye not, my babes?—
Accurst and monstrous children, bane and curse
Of your poor mother, image of your sire!

JASON. They will not come!

MEDEA (*pointing to* CREUSA).

Let her but go away!
They love me! Am I not their mother? Look
How she doth beckon, nod to them, and draw
Them further from me!

CREUSA. I will go away,
Though I deserve not thy suspicious hate.

MEDEA. Come to me, children!—Come!—O viper brood!

[*She advances toward them threateningly; the children fly to* CREUSA *for protection.*]

MEDEA. They fly from me! They fly!

KING. Thou seest, Medea,
The children will not come—so, get thee gone!

MEDEA. They will not? These my babes do fear to come
Unto their mother?—No, it is not true,
It cannot be!—Aeson, my elder son,
My best beloved! See, thy mother calls!
Come to her! Nay, no more will I be harsh,
No more enangered with thee! Thou shalt be
Most precious in mine eyes, the one thing left
I call mine own! Hark to thy mother! Come!—
He turns his face away, and will not! O
Thou thankless child, thou image of thy sire,
Like him in each false feature, in mine eyes
Hateful, as he is! Stay, then, where thou art!
I know thee not!—But thou, Absyrtus, child
Of my sore travail, with the merry face
Of my lost brother whom with bitter tears

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I mourn, and mild and gentle as was he,
See how thy mother kneels upon the ground
And, weeping, calls thee! O let not her prayers
Be all in vain! Absyrtus, come to me,
My little son! Come to thy mother!—What?
He tarries where he is! Thou, too? Thou, too?
Give me a dagger, quick, that I may slay
These whelps, and then myself!

[*She springs up.*]

[Illustration: MEDEA From the Grillparzer Monument at Vienna]

JASON. Nay, thou must thank thyself that thy wild ways
Have startled them, estranged them, turned their hearts
Unto that mild and gentle maid they love.
They do but echo what the gods decree!—
Depart now; but the babes, they tarry here.

MEDEA. O children, hear me!

JASON. See, they hearken not!

MEDEA. O children, children!

KING (*to* CREUSA).

Lead them back again
Into the palace! 'Tis not meet they hate
The mother that did bear them.

[CREUSA *moves away with the children.*]

MEDEA. Woe is me!
They flee! My children flee before my face!

KING (*to* JASON).

Come we away! To weep for what must be
Is fruitless!

[*They depart.*]

MEDEA. O my babes, my little babes!

GORA *enters quickly.*

GORA. Come, calm thyself, nor grant to these thy foes
The joy of seeing how they've conquered thee!

MEDEA (*flinging herself upon the ground*).

Conquered I am, at last, made nothing worth,
Trampled beneath my foes' triumphant feet!
They flee me, flee me! Mine own children flee me!

GORA (*bending over her*).

Thou must not die!

MEDEA. Nay, let me die! My babes,
My little babes!

ACT IV

The outer court of CREON'S *palace, as in the preceding act. It is twilight.* MEDEA lies prone upon the steps that lead to her apartments; *GORA* is standing before her._

GORA. Up, Medea, speak!
Why liest thou there so silent, staring
Blindly before thee? Rise, and speak!
O, help our sore distress!

MEDEA. My babes! My babes!

GORA. Forth must we flee ere night shall fall,
And already the twilight draweth down.
Up! Rouse thee, and gird thee for flight!
Swiftly they come to slay!

MEDEA. Alas, my children!

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GORA. Nay, up! I say, unhappy one,
Nor kill me with thy cries of woe!
Hadst thou but heeded when I warned,
Still should we be at home
In Colchis, safe; thy kinsmen yet
Were living; all were well with us.
Rise up! What use are tears? Come, rise!

[MEDEA *drags herself half up and kneels on the steps.*]

MEDEA. 'Twas so I knelt, 'twas so I lay
And stretched my hands for pity out
To mine own children; begged and wept
And prayed for one, for only one
Of my dear children! Death itself
Were not so bitter, as to leave
One of them here!—But to have none—!
And neither came! They turned away
With terror on their baby lips,
And fled for comfort to the breast
Of her—my bitterest enemy!

[*She springs up suddenly.*]

But he,—he laughed to see, and she
Did laugh as well!

GORA. O, woe is me!
O, woe and heavy sorrow!

MEDEA. O gods, is this your vengeance, then,
Your retribution? All for love
I followed him, as wife should e'er
Follow her lord. My father died,
But was it I that slew him? No!
My brother fell. Was't, then, my hand
That dealt the stroke? I've wept for them
With heavy mourning, poured hot tears
To serve as sad libation for
Their resting-place so far away!
Ye gods! These woes so measureless
That I have suffered at your hands—
Call ye these justice,—retribution?

GORA. Thou didst leave thine own—
Thine own desert thee now!

MEDEA. Then will I visit punishment
On them, as Heaven on me!
There shall no deed of wickedness
In all the wide world scathless go!
Leave vengeance to my hand, O gods above!

GORA. Nay, think how thou mayst save thyself;
All else forget!

MEDEA. What fear is this
That makes thy heart so craven-soft?
First thou wert grim and savage, spak'st
Fierce threats of vengeance, now art full
Of fears and trembling!

GORA. Let me be!
That moment when I saw thy babes
Flee their own mother's yearning arms,
Flee from the arms of her that bare
And reared them, then I knew at last
'Twas the gods' hand had struck thee down!
Then brake my heart, my courage sank!
These

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babes, whom it was all my joy
To tend and rear, had been the last
Of all the royal Colchian line,
On whom I still could lavish all
My love for my far fatherland.
Long since, my love for thee was dead;
But in these babes I seemed to see
Again my homeland, thy dear sire,
Thy murdered brother, all the line
Of princely Colchians,—ay, thyself,
As once thou wert,—and art no more!
So, all my thought was how to shield
And rear these babes; I guarded them
E'en as the apple of mine eye,
And now—

MEDEA. They have repaid thy love
As thanklessness doth e'er repay!

GORA. Chide not the babes! They're innocent!

MEDEA. How, innocent? And flee their mother
Innocent? They are Jason's babes,
Like him in form, in heart, and in
My bitter hate! If I could hold them here,
Their life or death depending on my hand,
E'en on this hand I reach out, so, and one
Swift stroke sufficed to slay them, bring to naught
All that they were, or are, or e'er can be,—
Look! they should be no more!

GORA. O, woe to thee,
Cruel mother, who canst hate those little babes
Thyself didst bear!

MEDEA. What hopes have they, what hopes?
If here they tarry with their sire,
That sire so base and infamous,
What shall their lot be then?
The children of this latest bed
Will scorn them, do despite to them
And to their mother, that wild thing

From distant Colchis' strand!
Their lot will be to serve as slaves;
Or else their anger, gnawing deep
And ever deeper at their hearts,
Will make them bitter, hard,
Until they grow to hate themselves.
For, if misfortune often is begot
By crime, more often far are wicked deeds
The offspring of misfortune!—What have they
To live for, then? I would my sire
Had slain me long, long years agone
When I was small, and had not yet
Drunk deep of woe, as now I do—
Thought heavy thoughts, as now!

GORA. Thou tremblest! What dost think to do?

MEDEA. That I must forth, is sure; what else
May chance ere that, I cannot see.
My heart leaps up, when I recall
The foul injustice I have borne,
And glows with fierce revenge! No deed

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So dread or awful but I would
Put hand to it!—
He loves these babes,
Forsooth, because he sees in them
His own self mirrored back again,
Himself—his idol!—Nay, he ne'er
Shall have them, shall not!—Nor will I!
I hate them!

GORA. Come within! Nay, why
Wouldst tarry here?

MEDEA. All empty is that house,
And all deserted! Desolation broods
Upon those silent walls, and all is dead
Within, save bitter memories and grief!

GORA. Look! They are coming who would drive us hence.
Come thou within!

MEDEA. Thou saidst the Argonauts
Found each and every one a grave unblest,
The wages of their treachery and sin?

GORA. Ay, sooth, and such a grave shall Jason find!

MEDEA. He shall, I promise thee, he shall, indeed!
Hylas was swallowed in a watery grave;
The gloomy King of Shades holds Theseus bound;
And how was that Greek woman called—the one
That on her own blood bloody vengeance took?
How was she called, then? Speak!

GORA. I do not know
What thou dost mean.

MEDEA. Althea was her name!

GORA. She who did slay her son

MEDEA. The very same!
How came it, then? Tell me the tale once more.

GORA. Unwitting, in the chase, he had struck down
Her brother.

MEDEA. Him alone? He did not slay
Her father, too? Nor fled his mother's arms,
Nor thrust her from him, spurned her scornfully?
And yet she struck him dead—that mighty man,
Grim Meleager, her own son! And she—
She was a Greek! Althea was her name.
Well, when her son lay dead—?

GORA. Nay, there the tale
Doth end.

MEDEA. Doth end! Thou'rt right, for death ends all!

GORA. Why stand we here and talk?

MEDEA. Dost think that I
Lack courage for the venture? Hark! I swear
By the high gods, if he had giv'n me both
My babes—But no! If I could take them hence
To journey with me, at his own behest,

If I could love them still, as deep as now
I hate them, if in all this lone, wide world
One single thing were left me that was not
Poisoned, or brought in ruin on my head—
Perchance I might go forth e'en now in peace
And leave my vengeance in the hands of Heaven.
But no! It may not be!
They name me cruel

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And wanton, but I was not ever so;
Though I can feel how one may learn to be.
For dread and awful thoughts do shape themselves
Within my soul; I shudder—yet rejoice
Thereat! When all is finished—Gora, hither!

GORA. What wouldst thou?

MEDEA. Come to me!

GORA. And why?

MEDEA. Come hither!
See! There they lay, the babes—ay, and the bride,
Bleeding, and dead! And he, the bridegroom, stood
And looked and tore his hair! A fearful sight
And ghastly!

GORA. Heaven forfend! What mean these words?

MEDEA. Ha, ha! Thou'rt struck with terror then, at last?
Nay, 'tis but empty words that I did speak.
My old, fierce will yet lives, but all my strength
Is vanished. Oh, were I Medea still—!
But no, I am no more! O Jason, why,
Why hast thou used me so? I sheltered thee,
Saved thee, and gave thee all my heart to keep;
All that was mine, I flung away for thee!
Why wilt thou cast me off, why spurn my love,
Why drive the kindly spirits from my heart
And set fierce thoughts of vengeance in their place?
I dream of vengeance, when I have no more
The power to wreak revenge! The charms I had
From my own mother, that grim Colchian queen,
From Hecate, that bound dark gods to me
To do my bidding, I have buried them,
Ay, and for love of thee!—have sunk them deep
In the dim bosom of our mother Earth;
The ebon wand, the veil of bloody hue,

Gone!—and I stand here helpless, to my foes
No more a thing of terror, but of scorn!

GORA. Then speak not of them if they'll serve thee not!

MEDEA. I know well where they lie;
For yonder on the plashy ocean-strand
I coffined them and sank them deep in earth.
'Tis but to toss away a little mold,
And they are mine! But in my inmost soul
I shudder when I think on such a venture,
And on that blood-stained Fleece. Methinks the ghosts
Of father, brother, brood upon their grave
And will not let them go. Dost thou recall
How on the pavement lay my old, gray sire
Weeping for his dead son, and cursing loud
His daughter? But lord Jason swung the Fleece
High o'er his head, with fierce, triumphant shouts!
'Twas then I swore revenge upon this traitor
Who first did slay my best-beloved, now
Would slay me, too! Had I my bloody charms

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And secret magic here, I'd keep that vow!
But no, I dare not fetch them, for I fear
Lest, shining through the Fleece's golden blaze,
Mine eyes should see my father's ghostly face
Stare forth at me—and oh! I should go mad!

GORA. What wilt thou do, then?

MEDEA (*wearily*).

Even let them come
And slay me, if they will! I can no more!
Not one step will I stir from where I stand;
My dearest wish is death! And when he sees
Me lying dead, mayhap he'll follow me,
Deep-smitten with remorse!

GORA. The King draws nigh;
Look to thyself!

MEDEA. Nay, all my strength is gone,
What can I do? If he would trample me
Beneath his feet—well, let him have his will!

The KING_ enters._

KING. Night falls apace, thine hours of grace are fled!

MEDEA. I know it.

KING. Art thou ready to go forth?

MEDEA. Thou tauntest me! If I were not prepared,
Must I the less go forth?

KING. My heart is glad
To find thee minded so. 'Twill make thee think
Less bitterly upon thy sorry fate,
And for thy children it doth spell great good:
For now they may remember who she was
That bare them.

MEDEA. May remember? If they will,
Thou meanest!

KING. That they shall, must be my care.
I'll rear them to be mighty heroes both;
And then—who knows?—on some far-distant day
Their hero-deeds may bring them to the shores.
Of Colchis, where they'll find thee once again,
Older in years, grown soft and gentle now,
And with fond love will press thee to their hearts.

MEDEA. Alas!

KING. What say'st thou?

MEDEA. Naught! I did but think
On happy days long vanished, and forgot
All that hath happened since.—Was this the cause
That brought thee here, or hast thou aught to say
Besides?

KING. Nay, I forgot one other word,
But I will speak it now. Thy husband brought
Much treasure when he fled to Corinth here
From far Iolcos, when his uncle died.

MEDEA. There in the house it lies, still guarded safe;
Go in and take it!

KING. And that trinket fair
Of dazzling gold, the Fleece—the gleaming prize
The Argo brought—is that within, as well?
Why turnest thou away, and wouldst depart?
Give answer! Is it there?

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MEDEA. No!

KING. Where, then? Where?

MEDEA. I know not.

KING. Yet thyself didst bear it forth
From Pelias' chamber—so the Herald said.

MEDEA. Nay, if he said so, it must needs be true!

KING. Where is it?

MEDEA. Nay, I know not.

KING. Never think
To cheat us thus!

MEDEA. If thou wouldst give it me,
I would requite thee even with my life;
For, if I had it here, thou shouldst not stand
Before me, shouting threats!

KING. Didst thou not seize
And bear it with thee from Iolcos?

MEDEA. Yea!

KING. And now—?

MEDEA. I have it not.

KING. Who hath it, then?

MEDEA. The earth doth hold it.

KING. Ha! I understand!
So it was there, in sooth?

[*He turns to his attendants.*]

Go, fetch me here
That which I bade you. What I mean, ye know!

[*The attendants go out.*]

Ha! Didst thou think to cheat us with thy words
Of double meaning? Earth doth hold it! Now
I understand thee! Nay, look not away!
Look here at me, and harken!—Yonder there
Upon the seashore, where last night ye lay,
I gave command to raise a sacred fane
To Pelias' shades; and, as my henchmen toiled,
They found—thou palest!—freshly buried there
An ebon casket, marked with curious signs.

[*The attendants bring in the chest.*]

Look! Is it thine?

MEDEA (*rushing eagerly to the chest*).
Yea, mine!

KING. And is the Fleece
Therein?

MEDEA. It is.

KING. Then give it me!

MEDEA. I will!

KING. Almost I do regret I pitied thee,
Since thou hast sought to cozen us!

MEDEA. Fear not!
For thou shalt have thy due! Once more I am
Medea! Thanks to thee, kind gods!

KING. Unlock
Thy casket, quick, and give the Fleece to me!

MEDEA. Not yet!

KING. But when?

MEDEA. Right soon, ay, all too soon!

KING. Send it to where Creusa waits.

MEDEA. To her?
This Fleece to thy fair daughter? Ay, I will!

KING. Holdeth this casket aught besides the Fleece?

MEDEA. Yea, many things!

KING. Thine own?

MEDEA. Mine own.
From these A gift I'd send her.

KING. Nay, I would demand
Naught else of thee. Keep that which is thine own.

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MEDEA. Surely thou wilt permit me one small gift!
Thy daughter was so mild to me, so good,
And she will be a mother to my babes.
I fain would win her love! Thou dost desire
Naught but the Fleece; perchance some trinkets rare
Would please her eyes.

KING. Do even as thou wilt;
Only, bethink thee of thy needs. Thou knowest
Already how she loves thee. But an hour
Agone she begged to send thy babes to thee
That thou might'st see them once again, and take
A last farewell before thou settest forth
Upon thy weary way. I said her nay,
For I had seen thy fury. Now thou art
Quiet again, and so shalt have that grace.

MEDEA. Oh, thanks to thee, thou good and pious King!

KING. Wait here. I'll send the children to thee straight.

[*He departs.*]

MEDEA. He's gone—and to his doom! Fool! Didst thou not
Tremble and shudder when thou took'st away
Her last possession from the woman thou
Hadst robbed already? Yet, I thank thee for it,
Ay, thank thee!
Thou hast given me back myself!
—Unlock the casket!

GORA (*fumbling at it*).

That I cannot do.

MEDEA. Nay, I forgot how I did lock it up!
The key is kept by friends I know full well.

[*She turns toward the chest.*]

Up from below!
Down from o'erhead!
Open, thou secretest
Tomb of the dead!

The lid springs open, and I am no more
A weak and powerless woman! There they lie,
My staff, my veil of crimson! Mine! Ah, mine!

[*She takes them out of the casket.*]

I take thee in my hands, thou mighty staff
Of mine own mother, and through heart and limbs
Unfailing strength streams forth from thee to me!
And thee, beloved wimple, on my brow
I bind once more!

[*She veils herself.*]

How warm, how soft thou art,
How dost thou pour new life through all my frame!
Now come, come all my foes in close-set ranks,
Banded against me, banded for your doom!

GORA. Look! Yonder flares a light!

MEDEA. Nay, let it flare!
'Twill soon be quenched in blood!—
Here are the presents I would send to her;
And thou shalt be the bearer of my gifts!

GORA. I?

MEDEA. Thou! Go quickly to the chamber where
Creusa sits, speak soft and honied words,
Bring her Medea's greetings, and her gifts!

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[*She takes the gifts out of the chest one by one.*]

This golden box, first, that doth treasure up
Most precious ointments. Ah, the bride will shine
Like blazing stars, if she will ope its lid!
But bear it heedfully, and shake it not!

GORA. Woe's me!

[*She has grasped the ointment-box firmly in her left hand; as she steadies it with her right hand, she slightly jars the cover open, and a blinding flame leaps forth.*]

MEDEA. I warned thee not to shake it, fool!
Back to thy house again,
Serpent with forked tongue!
Wait till the knell hath rung;
Thou shalt not wait in vain!
Now clasp it tightly, carry it with heed!

GORA. I fear some dreadful thing will come of this!

MEDEA. So! Thou wouldst warn me? 'Tis a wise old crone!

GORA. And I must bear it?

MEDEA. Yea! Obey, thou slave!
How darest thou presume to answer me?
Be silent! Nay, thou shalt, thou must!
And next
Here on this salver, high-embossed with gold,
I set this jeweled chalice, rich and fair
To see, and o'er it lay the best of all,
The thing her heart most craves—the Golden Fleece!—
Go hence and do thine errand. Nay, but first
Spread o'er these gifts this mantle—fair it is
And richly broidered, made to grace a queen—
To cover all from sight and keep them hid.—
Now, go, and do what I commanded thee,
And take these gifts, that foe doth send to foe!

[*A slave-woman enters with the children.*]

SLAVE. My lord the king hath sent these children hither;
And when an hour is gone I take them back.

MEDEA. Sooth, they come early to the marriage feast!
Now to thy mistress lead my servant here;
She takes a message from me, bears rich gifts.

(*She turns to* GORA.)

And thou, remember what I told thee late!
Nay, not a word! It is my will!

(*To the slave-woman.*)

Away!
And bring her to thy mistress.

[GORA *and the slave-woman depart together.*]

Well begun,
But not yet ended! Easy is my path,
Now I see clearly what I have to do!

[*The children, hand in hand, make as if to follow the slave-woman.*]

Where go ye?

BOY. In the house!

MEDEA. What seek ye there?

BOY. Our father told us we should stay with her.

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MEDEA. Thy mother bids you tarry. Wait, I say!—
When I bethink me how they are my blood,
My very flesh, the babes I bore so long
In my own womb, and nourished at my breast,
When I bethink me 'tis my very self
That turns against me, in my inmost soul
Fierce anger stabs me knife-like, bloody thoughts
Rise fast within me!—

(*To the children.*)

What hath mother done,
To make you flee her sight and run away
To hide in strangers' bosoms?

BOY. Thou dost seek
To steal us both away, and shut us up
Within thy boat again, where we were both
So sick and dizzy. We would rather stay
Here, would we not, my brother?

YOUNGER BOY. Yea!

MEDEA. Thou, too,
Absyrtus? But 'tis better, better so!
Come hither!

BOY. I'm afraid!

MEDEA. Come here, I say!

BOY. Nay, thou wilt hurt me!

MEDEA. Hurt thee? Thou hast done
Naught to deserve it!

Boy. Once thou flung'st me down
Upon the pavement, hard, because I looked
So like my father. But *he* loves me for it!
I'd rather stay with him, and with that good
And gentle lady!

MEDEA. Thou shalt go to her,
E'en to that gentle lady!—How his mien

Is like to his, the traitor's! How his words
Are syllabled like Jason's!—Patience! Wait!

YOUNGER BOY. I'm sleepy!

BOY. Let's lie down and go to sleep.
It's late.

MEDEA. Ye'll have your fill of sleep ere long!
Go, lay you down upon those steps to rest,
While I take counsel with myself.—Ah, see
How watchfully he guides the younger one,
Takes off his little mantle, wraps it warm
And close about his shoulders, now lies down
Beside him, clasping hands!—He never was
A naughty child!—O children, children mine!

BOY (*starting up*).

Dost want us?

MEDEA. Nay, lie down, and go to sleep!
What would I give, if I could sleep as sound!

[*The boy lies down again, and both go to sleep.* MEDEA *seats herself on a bench opposite the children. It grows darker and darker.*]

MEDEA. The night is falling, stars are climbing high,
Shedding their kindly beams on all below—
The same that shone there yestere'en, as though
All things today were as they were before.
And yet 'twixt now and yesterday there yawns

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A gulf, as wide as that which sunders joy
Made perfect and grim death! How change-less e'er
Is Nature—and man's life and happiness
How fitful, fleeting!
When I tell the tale
Of my unhappy life, it is as though
I listened, while another told it me,
And now would stop him: "Nay, that cannot be,
My friend! This woman here, that harbors dark
And murderous thoughts—how can she be the same
That once, long years agone, on Colchis' strand
Trod, free and happy, 'neath these very stars,
As pure, as mild, as free from any sin
As new-born child upon its mother's breast?"
Where goes she, then? She seeks the peasant's hut
To comfort the poor serf, whose little crops
Were trampled by her father's huntsmen late,
And brings him gold to ease his bitter heart.
Why trips she down the forest-path? She hastes
To meet her brother who is waiting there
In some green copse. Together then they wend
Homeward their way along the well-known path,
Like twin-stars shining through the forest-gloom.
Another draweth nigh; his brow is crowned
With coronet of gold; he is the King,
Their royal father, and he lays his hand
In blessing on their heads, and names them both
His joy, his dearest treasure.—Welcome, then,
Most dear and friendly faces! Are ye come
To comfort me in this my loneliness?
Draw nearer, nearer yet! I fain would look
Into your eyes! Dear brother, dost thou smile
So friendly on me? Ah, how fair thou art,
My heart's best treasure! But my father's face
Is sober, earnest; yet he loves me still,
Yea, loveth his good daughter!

[*She springs up suddenly.*]

Good? Ha, good?
’Tis a false lie! For know, thou old, gray man,
She will betray thee, *hath* betrayed thee, thee,
Ay, and herself! But thou didst curse her sore
“Know thou shalt be thrust forth
Like a beast of the wilderness,” thou saidst;
“Friendless and homeless, with no place
To lay thy head! And he, for whom
Thou hast betrayed me, he will be
First to take vengeance on thee, first
To leave thee, thrust thee forth, and first
To slay thee!” See, thy words were true!
For here I stand, thrust forth indeed,
By all men like a monster shunned,
Deserted by the wretch for whom
I gave thee up, and with no place
To lay me down; alas! not dead;
Black thoughts of murder in my heart!—
Dost thou rejoice at thy revenge?
Com’st closer?—Children! O my babes!

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[*She rushes across to where the children lie sleeping, and shakes them violently.*]

My children, did ye hear? Awake!

BOY (*waking*).

What wouldst thou?

MEDEA (*pressing them fiercely to her*).

Clasp your arms about me close!

BOY. I slept so soundly.

MEDEA. Slept? How could ye sleep?
Thought ye, because your mother watched you here,
That ye were safe? Ye ne'er were in the hands
Of any foe more dangerous! Sleep? With me,
Your mother, near? How could ye?—Go within,
And there ye shall find rest, indeed!

[*The children sleepily mount the steps and disappear down the colonnade into the palace.*]

They're gone,
And all is well again!—Yet, now they're gone,
How am I bettered? Must I aught the less
Flee forth, today, and leave them in the hands
Of these my bitter foes? Is Jason less
A traitor? Will the bride make aught the less
Of feasting on her bridal day, forsooth?
Tomorrow, when the sun shall rise,
Then shall I be alone,
The world a desert waste for me,
My babes, my husband—gone!
A wand'rer I, with weary feet
All torn and bleeding sore,
And bound for exile!—Whither, then
I know no more!
My foes stay here and make a joyous feast,
And laugh to think me gone;
My babes cling tightly to a stranger's breast,
Estranged from me forever, far away
From where I needs must come!

And wilt thou suffer that?
Is it not even now too late,
Too late to grant forgiveness?
Hath not Creusa even now the robes,
Ay, and the chalice, that fierce-flaming cup?
Hark! Nay, not yet!—But soon enough
Will come the shriek of agony
Ringing through all the palace halls!
Then they will come and slay me,
Nor spare the babes!
Hark! What a cry was that! Ha! Tongues of flame
Leap curling from the palace! It is done!
No more may I retreat, repent!
Let come what must! Set forward!

[GORA *bursts out of the palace in a frenzy.*]

GORA. Oh, horror, horror!

MEDEA (*hurrying to her*).

So the deed is done!

GORA. Woe, woe! Creusa dead, the palace red
With mounting flames!

MEDEA. So, art thou gone at last,
Thou snow-white, spotless bride? Or seek'st thou still
To charm my children from me? Wouldst thou? Wouldst thou?
Wouldst take them whither thou art gone?
Nay, to the gods I give them now,
And not to thee, nay, not to thee!

GORA. What hast thou done?—Look, look, they come!

MEDEA. They come? Too late! Too late!

[*She vanishes down the colonnade.*]

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GORA. Alas that I, so old and gray, should aid,
Unknowing, such dark deeds! I counseled her
To take revenge: but such revenge—oh, gods!
Where are the babes? 'Twas here I left them late.
Where art thou, O Medea? And thy babes—
Ah, where are they?

[*She, too, disappears down the colonnade. Through the windows of the palace in the background the rapidly mounting flames now burst forth.*]

JASON'S VOICE.

Creusa! O Creusa!

KING'S VOICE (*from within*).

O my daughter!

[GORA *bursts out of the palace and falls upon her knees in the middle of the stage, covering her face with her hands.*]

GORA. What have I seen?—Oh, horror!

[MEDEA *appears at the entrance to the colonnade; in her left hand she brandishes a dagger; she raises her right hand to command silence.*]

[*The curtain falls.*]

ACT V

The outer court of CREON'S *palace, as in the preceding act; the royal apartments in the background lie in blackened ruins whence smoke is still curling up; the court-yard is filled with various palace attendants busied in various ways. The dawn is just breaking.*

The_ KING *appears, dragging* GORA *out of the palace; a train of* CREUSA'S *slave-women follows him.*

KING. Away with thee! It was thy wicked hand
That to my daughter brought those bloody gifts
Which were her doom! My daughter! Oh, Creusa!
My child, my child!

[*He turns to the slave-women.*]

’Twas she?

GORA. Yea, it was I!
I knew not that my hands bore doom of death
Within thy dwelling.

KING. Knew’st not. Never think
To ’scape my wrath on this wise!

GORA. Dost thou think
I shudder at thy wrath? Mine eyes have seen—
Woe’s me!—the children weltering in their blood,
Slain by the hand of her that bore them, ay,
Medea’s very hand! And after that,
All other horrors are to me but jest!

KING. Creusa! Oh, my child, my pure, true child!
Say, did thy hand not shake, thou grisly dame,
When to her side thou broughtest death?

GORA. I shed no tears for her! She had her due!
Why would she seek to snatch away the last
Possession of my most unhappy mistress?
I weep for these my babes, whom I did love
So tenderly, and whom I saw but now
Butchered—and by their mother! Ah, I would
Ye all were in your graves, and by your side

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That traitor that doth call himself Lord Jason!
I would I were in Colchis with Medea
And these poor babes in safety! Would I ne'er
Had seen your faces, or your city here,
Whereon this grievous fate so justly falls!

KING. These insults thou wilt soon enough put by,
When thou shalt feel my heavy hand of doom!
But is it certain that my child is dead?
So many cry her dead, though I can find
None that did see her fall! Is there no way
To 'scape the fire? And can the flames wax strong
So quickly? See how slow they lick and curl
Along the fallen rafters of my house!
Do ye not see? And yet ye say she's dead?
An hour ago she stood before mine eyes
A blooming flower, instinct with happy life—
And now she's dead! Nay, I cannot believe,
And will not! 'Gainst my will I turn mine eyes
Now here, now there, and cannot but believe
That now, or now, or now at least, she must
Appear in all her stainless purity
And beauty, glide in safety to me here
Through those black, smoldering ruins!—Who was by?
Who saw her perish?—Thou?—Quick, speak!—Nay, then,
Roll not thine eyes in horror! Tell thy tale,
E'en though it kill me! Is she dead, indeed?

A SLAVE-WOMAN.

Dead!

KING. And thou saw'st it?

SLAVE-WOMAN.

With my very eyes!
Saw how the flames leaped forth from out that box
Of gold, and caught her flesh—

KING. Hold! Hold! Enough!
This woman saw it! Creusa is no more!
Creusa! Oh, my daughter, my dear child!
Once, many years agone, she burnt her hand
Against the altar; she was but a child,
And cried aloud with pain. I rushed to her
And caught her in my arms, and to my lips.
I put her poor scorched fingers, blowing hard
To ease the burning pain. The little maid
E'en through her bitter tears smiled up at me
And, softly sobbing, whispered in my ear,
"It is not much! I do not mind the pain!"
Gods! That she should be burned to death? Oh, gods!

[*He turns fiercely upon* GORA.]

And as for thee,—if I should plunge my sword
Ten, twenty times, up to the hilt, clean through
Thy body, would that bring my daughter back?
Or, could I find that hideous witch-wife—Stay!
Where went she, that hath robbed me of my child?
I'll shake an answer straight from out thy mouth,
Ay, though thy soul come with it, if thou'lt not
Declare to me this instant where she's gone!

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GORA. I know not—and I care no whit to know!
Let her go forth alone to her sure doom.
Why dost thou tarry? Slay me! For I have
No wish to live!

KING. We'll speak of that anon;
But first I'll have thy answer!

JASON (*behind the scenes*).

Where's Medea?
Bring her before my face! Medea!

[*He enters suddenly with drawn sword.*]

Nay,
They told me she was caught! Where is she, then?

(*To* GORA.)

Ha! Thou here? Where's thy mistress?

GORA. Fled away!

JASON. Hath she the children?

GORA. Nay!

JASON. Then they are—

GORA. Dead!
Yea, dead! thou smooth-tongued traitor, dead, I say!
She sought to put them where thine eyes could never
Take joy in them again; but, knowing well
No spot on earth so sacred was but thou
To find them wouldst break in, she hid them, safe
Forever, in the grave! Ay, stand aghast,
And stare upon the pavement! Thou canst never
Recall thy babes to life! They're gone for aye!
And, for their sake, I'm glad! No, I am not,
For their sake—but because thou dost despair,
That, smooth-tongued traitor, glads my heart indeed!
Was it not thou that drove her to this crime,
And thou, false King, with thine hypocrisy?
She was a noble creature-but ye drew

Your nets of shameful treachery too close
About her, till, in wild despair, cut off
From all escape else, she o'erleaped your snares,
And made thy crown, the kingly ornament
Of royal heads, to be the awful tool
Of her unnatural crime! Ay, wring your hands,
But wring them for your own most grievous fate!

(*Turning to the* KING.)

Why sought thy child another woman's bed?

(*Turning to* JASON.)

Why must thou steal her, bring her here to Greece,
If thou didst never love her? If thou didst
Right truly love her, why, then, thrust her forth?
Though others cry her murderess, yea, though I
Myself must name her so, yet none the less
Ye have but met your just deserts!—For me,
I have no wish to live another day!
Two of my babes are dead, the third I needs
Must hate forever! Take me, lead me hence
And slay me, if ye will! Fair hopes I have
At last, of justice in that other world,
Now I have seen Heaven's vengeance on you hurled!

[*She is led away by some of the* KING's *attendants.*]

(*Pause.*)

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KING. Nay, if I wronged her,—by the gods in Heaven
I swear I meant it not!—Now haste we all
To search these smoking ruins for what trace
Remains of my poor girl, that we may lay
Her broken, bruised frame to rest at last
In Earth’s kind bosom!

[*He turns to* JASON.]

But, for thee—straightway
Thou must go forth, where’er thy feet may choose
To carry thee! Pollution such as thine
Spells woe for all about thee, as I’ve proved.
Oh, had I never seen, never rescued thee,
Ne’er acted friendship’s part and welcomed thee
Within my palace! And, for thanks, thou took’st
My daughter from me! Go, lest thou shouldst take
As well the only comfort left me now—
To weep her memory!

JASON. Wouldst thou thrust me forth?

KING. I banish thee my sight.

JASON. What shall I do?

KING. Some god will answer that!

JASON. Who, then, will guide
My wandering steps, who lend a helping hand?
For, see! my head is bleeding, wounded sore
By falling firebrands! How? All silent, then?
And none will guide me, none companion me,
None follow me, whom once so many joyed
To follow? Spirits of my babes, lead ye
The way, and guide your father to the grave
That waits him!

[*He goes slowly away.*]

KING (*to his attendants*).

Quick, to work! And after that,
Mourning that hath no end!

[*He goes away in the other direction.*]

The curtain falls for a moment, and, when it rises again, discloses a wild and lonely region surrounded by forest and by lofty crags, at the foot of which lies a mean hut. A rustic enters.

RUSTIC. How fair the morning dawns! Oh, kindly gods,
After the storm and fury of the night,
Your sun doth rise more glorious than before!

[*He goes into the hut.*]

(JASON *comes stumbling out of the forest and leaning heavily on his sword.*)

JASON. Nay, I can go no farther! How my head
Doth burn and throb, the blood how boil within!
My tongue cleaves to the roof of my parched mouth!
Is none within there? Must I die of thirst,
And all alone?—Ha! Yon's the very hut
That gave me shelter when I came this way
Before, a rich man still, a happy father,
My bosom filled with newly-wakened hopes!

[*He knocks at the door.*]

'Tis but a drink I crave, and then a place
To lay me down and die!

[*The peasant comes out of the house.*]

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RUSTIC. Who knocks?—Poor man,
Who art thou? Ah, poor soul, he's faint to death!

JASON. Oh, water, water! Give me but to drink!
See, Jason is my name, famed far and wide,
The hero of the wondrous Golden Fleece!
A prince—a king—and of the Argonauts
The mighty leader, Jason!

RUSTIC. Art thou, then,
In very sooth Lord Jason? Get thee gone
And quickly! Thou shalt not so much as set
A foot upon my threshold, to pollute
My humble dwelling! Thou didst bring but now
Death to the daughter of my lord the King!
Then seek not shelter at the meanest door
Of any of his subjects!

[*He goes into the hut again and shuts the door behind him.*]

JASON. He is gone,
And leaves me here to lie upon the earth,
Bowed in the dust, for any that may pass
To trample on!—O Death, on thee I call!
Have pity on me! Take me to my babes!

[*He sinks down upon the ground.*]

MEDEA *makes her way among some tumbled rocks, and stands suddenly before him, the Golden Fleece flung over her shoulders like a mantle.*

MEDEA. Jason!

JASON (*half raising himself*).

Who calls me?—Ha! What spectral form
Is this before me? Is it thou, Medea?
Ha! Dost thou dare to show thyself again
Before mine eyes? My sword! My sword!

[*He tries to rise, but falls weakly back.*]

Woe's me!
My limbs refuse their service! Here I lie,
A broken wreck!

MEDEA. Nay, cease thy mad attempts
Thou canst not harm me, for I am reserved
To be the victim of another's hand,
And not of thine!

JASON. My babes!—Where has thou them?

MEDEA. Nay, they are mine!

JASON. Where hast thou them, I say?

MEDEA. They're gone where they are happier far than thou
Or I shall ever be!

JASON. Dead! Dead! My babes!

MEDEA. Thou deemest death the worst of mortal woes?
I know a far more wretched one—to be
Alone, unloved! Hadst thou not prized mere life
Far, far above its worth, we were not now
In such a pass. But we must bear our weight
Of sorrow, for thy deeds! Yet these our babes
Are spared that grief, at least!

JASON. And thou canst stand
So patient, quiet, there, and speak such words?

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MEDEA. Quiet, thou sayst, and patient? Were my heart
Not closed to thee e'en now, as e'er it was,
Then couldst thou see the bitter, smarting pain
Which, ever swelling like an angry sea,
Tosses, now here, now there, the laboring wreck
That is my grief, and, veiling it from sight
In awful desolation, sweeps it forth
O'er boundless ocean-wastes! I sorrow not
Because the babes are dead; my only grief
Is that they ever lived, that thou and I
Must still live on!

JASON. Alas!

MEDEA. Bear thou the lot
That fortune sends thee; for, to say the truth,
Thou richly hast deserved it!—Even as thou
Before me liest on the naked earth,
So lay I once in Colchis at thy feet
And craved protection—but thou wouldst not hear!
Nay, rather didst thou stretch thine eager hands
In blind unreason forth, to lay them swift
Upon the golden prize, although I cried,
"'Tis Death that thou dost grasp at!"—Take it, then,
That prize that thou so stubbornly didst seek,
Even Death!
I leave thee now, forevermore.
'Tis the last time-for all eternity
The very last—that I shall speak with thee,
My husband! Fare thee well! Ay, after all
The joys that blessed our happy, happy youth,
'Mid all the bitter woes that hem us in
On every side, in face of all the grief
That threatens for the future, still I say,
"Farewell, my husband!" Now there dawns for thee
A life of heavy sorrows; but, let come
What may, abide it firmly, show thyself
Stronger in suffering than in doing deeds
Men named heroic! If thy bitter woe
Shall make thee yearn for death, then think on me,
And it shall comfort thee to know how mine
Is bitterer far, because I set my hand
To deeds, to which thou only gav'st assent.
I go my way, and take my heavy weight

Of sorrow with me through the wide, wide world.
A dagger-stroke were blest release indeed;
But no! it may not be! It were not meet
Medea perish at Medea's hands.
My earlier life, before I stooped to sin,
Doth make me worthy of a better judge
Than I could be—I go to Delphi's shrine,
And there, before the altar of the god,
The very spot whence Phrixus long ago
Did steal the prize, I'll hang it up again,

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Restore to that dark god what is his own—
The Golden Fleece—the only thing the flames
Have left unharmed, the only thing that 'scaped
Safe from the bloody, fiery death that slew
That fair Corinthian princess.—To the priests
I'll go, and I'll submit me to their will,
Ay, though they take my life to expiate
My grievous sins, or though they send me forth
To wander still through some far desert-waste,
My very life, prolonged, a heavier weight
Of sorrow than I ever yet have known!

[She holds up the gleaming Fleece before his eyes.]

Know'st thou the golden prize which thou didst strive
So eagerly to win, which seemed to thee
The shining crown of all thy famous deeds?
What is the happiness the world can give?—
A shadow! What the fame it can bestow?—
An empty dream! Poor man! Thy dreams were all
Of shadows! And the dreams are ended now,
But not the long, black Night!—Farewell to thee,
My husband, for I go! That was a day
Of heavy sorrows when we first did meet;
Today, 'mid heavier sorrows, we must part!
Farewell!

JASON. Deserted! All alone! My babes!

MEDEA. Endure!

JASON. Lost! Lost!

MEDEA. Be patient!

JASON. Let me die!

MEDEA. I go, and nevermore thine eyes shall see
My face again!

[As she departs, winding her way among the tumbled rocks, the curtain falls.]

* * * * *

THE JEWESS OF TOLEDO

AN HISTORICAL TRAGEDY IN FIVE ACTS

By FRANZ GRILLPARZER

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

ALFONSO VIII., *the Noble, King of Castile.*

ELEANOR OF ENGLAND, *Daughter of Henry II., his Wife.*

THE PRINCE, *their Son.*

MANRIQUE, *Count of Lara, Governor of Castile.*

DON GARCERAN, *his Son.*

DONA CLARA, *Lady in Waiting to the Queen.*

The Queen's Waiting Maid._

ISAAC, *the Jew.*

ESTHER, }
} *his Daughters.*
RACHEL, }

REINERO, *the King's Page.*

Nobles, Court Ladies, Petitioners, Servants, and Other People.

Place, Toledo and Vicinity.

Time, about 1195 A.D._

THE JEWESS OF TOLEDO (1873)

TRANSLATED BY GEORGE HENRY DANTON AND ANNINA PERIAM DANTON

ACT I

In the Royal Garden at Toledo.

Enter ISAAC, RACHEL, *and* ESTHER.

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ISAAC. Back, go back, and leave the garden!
Know ye not it is forbidden?
When the King here takes his pleasure
Dares no Jew—ah, God will damn them!
Dares no Jew to tread the earth here!

RACHEL (*singing*).

La-la-la-la.

ISAAC. Don't you hear me?

RACHEL. Yes, I hear thee.

ISAAC. Hear, and linger

RACHEL. Hear, yet linger!

ISAAC. Oh, Oh, Oh! Why doth God try me?
To the poor I've given my portion,
I have prayed and I have fasted,
Unclean things I've never tasted
Nay! And yet God tries me thus.

RACHEL (*to* ESTHER).

Ow! Why dost thou pull my arm so?
I will stay, I am not going.
I just wish to see the King and
All the court and all their doings,
All their gold and all their jewels.
He is young, they say, and handsome,
White and red, I want to see him.

ISAAC. And suppose the servants catch thee

RACHEL. Then I'll beg until they free me!

ISAAC. Yes, just like thy mother, eh?
She, too, looked at handsome Christians,
Sighed, too, for Egyptian flesh-pots;
Had I not so closely watched her
I should deem-well, God forgive me!—
That thy madness came that way,

Heritage of mean, base Christians;
Ah! I praise my first wife, noble!

(*To* ESTHER.)

Praise thy mother, good like thee,
Though not wealthy. Of the second
Did the riches aught avail me?
Nay, she spent them as she pleasured,
Now for feasts and now for banquets,
Now for finery and jewels.
Look! This is indeed her daughter!
Has she not bedeckt herself,
Shines she not in fine apparel
Like a Babel in her pride?

RACHEL (*singing*).

Am I not lovely,
Am I not rich?
See their vexation,
And I don't care-la, la, la, la.

ISAAC. There she goes with handsome shoes on;
Wears them out—what does it matter?
Every step costs me a farthing!
Richest jewels are her earrings,
If a thief comes, he will take them,
If they're lost, who'll find them ever?

RACHEL (*taking off an earring*).

Lo! I take them off and hold them,
How they shine and how they shimmer!
Yet how little I regard them,
Haply, I to thee present them

(*to* ESTHER.)

Or I throw them in the bushes.

[*She makes a motion as if throwing it away.*]

ISAAC (*running in the direction of the throw*).

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Woe, ah woe! Where did they go to?
Woe, ah woe! How find them ever?

ESTHER. These fine jewels? What can ail thee?

RACHEL. Dost believe me, then, so foolish
As to throw away possessions?
See, I have it in my hand here,
Hang it in my ear again and
On my cheek it rests in contrast.

ISAAC. Woe! Lost!

RACHEL. Father come, I prithee!
See! the jewel is recovered.
I was jesting.

ISAAC. Then may God—
Thus to tease me! And now, come!

RACHEL. Anything but this I'll grant thee.
I must see his Royal Highness,
And he me, too, yes, yes, me, too.
If he comes and if he asks them,
"Who is she, that lovely Jewess?"
"Say, how hight you?"—"Rachel, sire!
Isaac's Rachel!" I shall answer.
Then he'll pinch my cheek so softly.
Beauteous Rachel then they'll call me.
What if envy bursts to hear it,
Shall I worry if it vexes?

ESTHER. Father!

ISAAC. What

ESTHER. The court approaches.

ISAAC. Lord of life, what's going to happen?
'Tis the tribe of Rehoboam.
Wilt thou go?

RACHEL. Oh, father, listen!

ISAAC. Well then stay! But come thou, Esther,
Leave the fool here to her folly.
Let the unclean-handed see her,
Let him touch her, let him kill her,
She herself hath idly willed it.
Esther, come!

RACHEL. Oh, father, tarry!

ISAAC. Hasten, hasten; come, then, Esther!

[*Exit with* ESTHER.]

RACHEL. Not alone will I remain here!
Listen! Stay! Alas, they leave me.
Not alone will I remain here.
Ah! they come—Oh, sister, father!

[*She hastens after them.*]

Enter the KING, *the* QUEEN, MANTRIQUE DE LARA *and suite*.

KING (*entering*).

Allow the folk to stay! It harms me not;
For he who calleth me a King denotes
As highest among many me, and so
The people is a part of my own self.

(*Turning to the* QUEEN.)

And thou, no meager portion of myself,
Art welcome here in this my ancient home,
Art welcome in Toledo's faithful walls.
Gaze all about thee, let thy heart beat high,
For, know! thou standest at my spirit's fount.
There is no square, no house, no stone, no tree,
That is not witness of my childhood lot.
An orphan child, I fled my uncle's wrath,

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Bereft of mother first, then fatherless,
Through hostile land—it was my own—I fled.
The brave Castilians me from place to place,
Like shelterers of villainy did lead,
And hid me from my uncle of Leon,
Since death did threaten host as well as guest.
But everywhere they tracked me up and down.
Then Estevan Illan, a don who long
Hath slept beneath the greensward of the grave,
And this man here, Manrique Lara, led me
To this, the stronghold of the enemy,
And hid me in the tower of St. Roman,
Which there you see high o'er Toledo's roofs.
There lay I still, but they began to strew
The seed of rumor in the civic ear,
And on Ascension Day, when all the folk
Was gathered at the gate of yonder fane,
They led me to the tower-balcony
And showed me to the people, calling down,
"Here in your midst, among you, is your King,
The heir of ancient princes; of their rights
And of your rights the willing guardian."
I was a child and wept then, as they said.
But still I hear it—ever that wild cry,
A single word from thousand bearded throats,
A thousand swords as in a single hand,
The people's hand. But God the vict'ry gave,
The Leonese did flee; and on and on,
A standard rather than a warrior,
I with my army compassed all the land,
And won my vict'ries with my baby smile.
These taught and nurtured me with loving care,
And mother's milk flowed from their wounds for me.
And so, while other princes call themselves
The fathers of their people, I am son,
For what I am, I owe their loyalty.

MANRIQUE. If all that now thou art, most noble Sire,
Should really, as thou sayest, spring from thence,
Then gladly we accept the thanks, rejoice

If these our teachings and our nurture, thus
Are mirrored in thy fame and in thy deeds,
Then we and thou are equally in debt.

(*To the* QUEEN.)

Pray gaze on him with these thy gracious eyes;
Howe'er so many kings have ruled in Spain,
Not one compares with him in nobleness.
Old age, in truth, is all too wont to blame,
And I am old and cavil much and oft;
And when confuted in the council-hall
I secret wrath have ofttimes nursed—not long,
Forsooth—that royal word should weigh so much;
And sought some evil witness 'gainst my King,
And gladly had I harmed his good repute.
But always I returned in deepest shame—
The envy mine, and his the spotlessness.

KING. A teacher, Lara, and a flatt'rer, too?
But we will not dispute you this and that;
If I'm not evil, better, then, for you,
Although the man, I fear me, void of wrong,
Were also void of excellence as well;
For as the tree with sun-despising roots,

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Sucks up its murky nurture from the earth,
So draws the trunk called wisdom, which indeed
Belongs to heaven itself in towering branch,
Its strength and being from the murky soil
Of our mortality-allied to sin.
Was ever a just man who ne'er was hard?
And who is mild, is oft not strong enough.
The brave become too venturesome in war.
What we call virtue is but conquered sin,
And where no struggle was, there is no power.
But as for me, no time was given to err,
A child—the helm upon my puny head,
A youth—with lance, high on my steed I sat,
My eye turned ever to some threat'ning foe,
Unmindful of the joys and sweets of life,
And far and strange lay all that charms and lures.
That there are women, first I learned to know
When in the church my wife was given me,
She, truly faultless if a human is,
And whom, I frankly say, I'd warmer love
If sometimes need to pardon were, not praise.

(*To the* QUEEN.)

Nay, nay, fear not, I said it but in jest!
The outcome we must all await-nor paint
The devil on the wall, lest he appear.
But now, what little respite we may have,
Let us not waste in idle argument.
The feuds within our land are stilled, although
They say the Moor will soon renew the fight,
And hopes from Africa his kinsman's aid,
Ben Jussuf and his army, bred in strife.
And war renewed will bring distress anew.
Till then we'll open this our breast to peace,
And take deep breath of unaccustomed joy.
Is there no news?—But did I then forget?
You do not look about you, Leonore,
To see what we have done to please you here.

QUEEN. What ought I see?

KING. Alas, O Almirante!
We have not hit upon it, though we tried.
For days, for weeks, we dig and dig and dig,
And hope that we could so transform this spot,
This orange-bearing, shaded garden grove,
To have it seem like such as England loves,
The austere country of my austere wife.
And she but smiles and smiling says me nay!
Thus are they all, Britannia's children, all;
If any custom is not quite their own,
They stare, and smile, and will have none of it.
Th' intention, Leonore, was good, at least,
So give these worthy men a word of thanks;
God knows how long they may have toiled for us.

QUEEN. I thank you, noble sirs.

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KING. To something else!
The day has started wrong. I hoped to show
You houses, meadows, in the English taste,
Through which we tried to make this garden please;
We missed our aim. Dissemble not, O love!
'Tis so, and let us think of it no more.
To duty we devote what time remains,
Ere Spanish wine spice high our Spanish fare.
What, from the boundary still no messenger?
Toledo did we choose, with wise intent,
To be at hand for tidings of the foe.
And still there are none?

MANRIQUE. Sire—

KING. What is it, pray?

MANRIQUE. A messenger—

KING. Has come? What then?

MANRIQUE (*pointing to the Queen*).

Not now.

KING. My wife is used to council and to war,
The Queen in everything shares with the King.

MANRIQUE. The messenger himself, perhaps, more than
The message—

KING. Well, who is't?

MANRIQUE. It is my son.

KING. Ah, Garceran! Pray let him come.

(*To the* QUEEN.)

Stay thou!
The youth, indeed, most grossly erred, when he
Disguised, slipped in the kemenate to spy
Upon the darling of his heart—Do not,
O Dona Clara, bow your head in shame,
The man is brave, although both young and rash,

My comrade from my early boyhood days;
And now implacability were worse
Than frivolous condoning of the fault.
And penance, too, methinks, he's done enough
For months an exile on our kingdom's bounds.

[*At a nod from the* QUEEN, *one of the ladies of her suite withdraws.*]

And yet she goes: O Modesty
More chaste than chastity itself!

Enter GARCERAN.

My friend,
What of the border? Are they all out there
So shy with maiden-modesty as you?
Then poorly guarded is our realm indeed!

GARCERAN. A doughty soldier, Sire, ne'er fears a foe,
But noble women's righteous wrath is hard.

KING. 'Tis true of righteous wrath! And do not think
That I with custom and propriety
Am less severe and serious than my wife,
Yet anger has its limits, like all else.
And so, once more, my Garceran, what cheer?
Gives you the foe concern in spite of peace?

GARCERAN. With bloody wounds, O Sire, as if in play,
On this side of the boundary and that
We fought, yet ever peace resembled war
So to a hair, that perfidy alone
Made all the difference. But now the foe
A short time holdeth peace.

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KING. ’Tis bad!

GARCERAN. We think
So too, and that he plans a mightier blow.
And rumor hath it that his ships convey
From Africa to Cadiz men and food,
Where secretly a mighty army forms,
Which Jussuf, ruler of Morocco, soon
Will join with forces gathered over seas;
And then the threat’ning blow will fall on us.

KING. Well, if they strike, we must return the blow.
A king leads them, and so a king leads you.
If there’s a God, such as we know there is,
And justice be the utt’rance of his tongue,
I hope to win, God with us, and the right I
I grieve but for the peasants’ bitter need,
Myself, as highest, should the heaviest bear.
Let all the people to the churches come
And pray unto the God of victory.
Let all the sacred relics be exposed,
And let each pray, who goeth to the fight.

GARCERAN. Without thy proclamation, this is done,
The bells sound far through all the borderland,
And in the temples gathereth the folk;
Only, alas, its zeal, erring as oft,
Expends itself on those of other faith,
Whom trade and gain have scattered through the land.
Mistreated have they here and there a Jew.

KING. And ye, ye suffer this? Now, by the Lord,
I will protect each one who trusts in me.
Their faith is their affair, their conduct mine.

GARCERAN. ’Tis said they’re spies and hirelings of the Moors.

KING. Be sure, no one betrays more than he knows,
And since I always have despised their gold,
I never yet have asked for their advice.
Not Christian and not Jew knows what shall be,
But I alone. Hence, by your heads, I urge—

[*A woman’s voice without.*]

Woe, woe!

KING. What is't?

GARCERAN. An old man, Sire, is there,
A Jew, methinks, pursued by garden churls,
Two maidens with him, one of them, behold,
Is fleeing hither.

KING. Good! Protection's here,
And thunder strike who harms one hair of hers.

(*Calling behind the scenes.*)

Hither, here I say!

RACHEL *comes in flight*

RACHEL. They're killing me!
My father, too! Oh! is there none to help?

[*She sees the QUEEN and kneels before her.*]

Sublime one, shelter me from these. Stretch out
Thy hand and hold it over me, thy maid,
Not Jewess I to serve thee then, but slave.

[*She tries to take the hand of the* QUEEN *who turns away.*]

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RACHEL (*rising*).

Here, too, no safety? Terror everywhere?
Where shall I flee to?
Here there stands a man
Whose moonbeam glances flood the soul with peace,
And everything about him proves him King.
Thou canst protect me, Sire, and oh, thou wilt!
I *will* not die, I *will* not, no, no, no!

[*She throws herself on the ground before the* KING *and seizes his right foot, bending her head to the ground.*]

KING (*to several who approach*).

Let be! Her senses have ta'en flight through fear,
And as she shudders, makes me tremble, too.

RACHEL (*sits up*).

And everything I have,

(*taking off her bracelet*)

this bracelet here,
This necklace and this costly piece of cloth,

(*taking a shawl-like cloth from her neck*)

It cost my father well-nigh forty pounds,
Real Indian stuff, I'll give that too—if you
Will leave me but my life: I will not die!

[*She sinks back to her former position.*]

ISAAC and ESTHER are led in.

KING. What crime has he committed?

MANRIQUE. Sire, thou know'st,
The entrance to the royal gardens is
Denied this people when the court is here.

KING. And I permit it, if it is forbidden.

ESTHER. He is no spy, O Sire, a merchant he,
In Hebrew are the letters that he bears,
Not in the Moorish tongue, not Arabic.

KING. 'Tis well, I doubt it not.

(*Pointing to* RACHEL.)
And she?

ESTHER. My sister!

KING. Take her and carry her away.

RACHEL (*as* ESTHER *approaches her*).

No, no!
They're seizing me, they're leading me away
To kill me!

(*Pointing to her discarded finery.*)

See, my ransom. Here will I
Remain a while and take a little sleep.

(*Laying her cheek against the* KING's *knee.*)

Here safety is; and here 'tis good to rest.

QUEEN. Will you not go?

KING. You see that I am caught.

QUEEN. If you are caught, I still am free, I go!

[*Exit with her women.*]

KING. And now that, too! That which they would prevent
They bring to pass with their false chastity.

(*Sternly to* RACHEL.)

Arise, I tell thee—Give her back her shawl,
And let her go.

RACHEL. O, Sire, a little while.

My limbs are lamed,—I cannot, cannot walk.

[*She props her elbow on her knee and rests her head in her hand.*]

KING (*stepping back*).

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And is she ever thus, so timorous?

ESTHER. Nay, for, a while ago, presumptuous,
In spite of us, she wished to see thee, Sire.

KING. Me? She has paid it dear.

ESTHER. At home, as well,
She plays her pranks, and jokes with man or dog,
And makes us laugh, however grave we be.

KING. I would, indeed, she were a Christian, then,
And here at court, where things are dull enough;
A little fun might stand us in good stead.
Ho, Garceran!

GARCERAN. Illustrious Sire and King!

ESTHER (*busy with* RACHEL).

Stand up! Stand up!

RACHEL (*rising and taking off* ESTHER's *necklace, which she adds to the other jewels*).

And give, too, what *thou* hast,
It is my ransom.

ESTHER. Well, so be it then.

KING. What think you of all this?

GARCERAN. What *I* think, Sire?

KING. Dissemble not! You are a connoisseur,
Myself have never looked at women much
But *she* seems beautiful.

GARCERAN. She is, O Sire!

KING. Be strong then, for you shall accomp'ny her.

RACHEL (*who stands in the middle of the stage with trembling knees and bent head, pushing up her sleeve*).

Put on my bracelet. Oh you hurt me so.
The necklace, too-indeed, that still hangs here.
The kerchief keep, I feel so hot and choked.

KING. Convey her home!

GARCERAN. But, Sire, I fear—

KING. Well, what?

GARCERAN. The people are aroused.

KING. Ay, you are right.
Although a royal word protection is,
'Tis better that we give no cause to wrong.

ESTHER (*fixing* RACHEL's *dress at the neck*).

Thy dress is all disturbed and all awry.

KING. Take her at first to one of those kiosks
There scattered through the garden, and at eve—

GARCERAN. I hear, my liege!

KING. What was I saying? Oh! Are you not ready yet?

ESTHER. We are, my lord.

KING. At evening when the people all have gone,
Then lead her home and that will make an end.

GARCERAN. Come, lovely heathen!

KING. Heathen? Stuff and nonsense!

ESTHER (*to* RACHEL,_ who prepares to go_).

And thankst thou not the King for so much grace?

RACHEL (*still exhausted, turning to the* KING).

My thanks, O Sire, for all thy mighty care!
O were I not a poor and wretched thing—

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(*with a motion of her hand across her neck*)

That this my neck, made short by hangman's hand,
That this my breast, a shield against thy foe—
But that thou wishest not!

KING. A charming shield!
Now go, and God be with you.—Garceran,

(*more softly*)

I do not wish that she, whom I protect
Should be insulted by improper jests,
Or any way disturbed—

RACHEL (*with her hand on her brow*).

I cannot walk.

KING (*as Garceran is about to offer his arm*).

And why your arm? The woman can assist.
And do thou, gaffer, watch thy daughter well,
The world is ill! Do thou protect thy hoard.

[*Exeunt* RACHEL *and her kin, led by* GARCERAN.]

KING (*watching them*).
She totters still in walking. All her soul
A sea of fear in e'er-renewing waves.

(*Putting down his foot*)

She held my foot so tightly in her grasp,
It almost pains me. Strange it is, a man
When cowardly, with justice is despised—
A woman shows her strength when she is weak.
Ah, Almirante, what say *you* to this?
MANRIQUE. I think, the punishment you gave my son,
Is, noble Sire, both subtle and severe.
KING. The punishment? MANRIQUE. To guard this common trash. KING. Methinks the punishment is not so hard.
Myself have never toyed with women much,

(*Pointing to his suite.*)

But these, perchance, think otherwise than you.
But now, avaunt all pictures so confused!
And dine we, for my body needs new strength,
And with the first glad draught this festal day,
Let each one think—of what he wants to think.
No ceremony! Forward! Hasten! On!

[*As the court arranges itself on both sides and the KING goes through the centre, the curtain falls.*]

ACT II

A drop scene showing part of the garden. At the right, a garden-house with a balcony and a door, to which several steps lead up.

GARCERAN *enters through the door.*

GARCERAN. And so before I'm caught, I'll save myself!
The girl is beautiful, and is a fool;
But love is folly; wherefore such a fool
Is more to fear than e'er the slyest was.
Besides, 'tis necessary that I bring,
While still there's time, my good repute again
To honor,—and my love for Dona Clara,
Most silent she of all that never talk;
The wise man counts escape a victory.

A page of the KING *enters.*

PAGE. Sir Garceran—

GARCERAN. Ah, Robert, what's a-foot?

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PAGE. The King, my lord, commanded me to see
If still you were with her entrusted you—

GARCERAN. If I am here? Why, he commanded—friend!
You were to see were I, perhaps, upstairs?
Just tell him that the girl is in the house,
And I outside. That answer will suffice.

PAGE. The King himself!

GARCERAN. Your majesty!

[*The* KING *comes wrapped in a cloak. Exit PAGE.*]

KING. Well, friend!
Still here?

GARCERAN. Why, did you not yourself command
That only with the evening's first approach—

KING. Yes, yes, but now on second thought it seems
Far better that you travel while 'tis day—
They say thou'rt brave.

GARCERAN. So you believe, O Sire—

KING. Methinks thou honorest the royal word
Which would unharmed know what it protects.
But custom is the master of mankind;
Our wills will often only what they must.
And so, depart. But tell me, what doth she?

GARCERAN. At first, there was a weeping without end,
But time brings comfort, as the saying is;
And so 'twas here. Soon cheerfulness, yea jest,
Had banished all her former abject fear;
Then there was pleasure in the shining toys,
And wonder at the satin tapestries.
We measured every curtained stuff by yards,
Till now we've settled down and feel at home.

KING. And does she seem desirous to return?

GARCERAN. It sometimes seems she does, and then does not.
A shallow mind ne'er worries for the morrow.

KING. Of course thou didst not hesitate to throw
To her the bait of words, as is thy wont?
How did she take it, pray?

GARCERAN. Not badly, Sire.

KING. Thou liest! But in truth thou'rt lucky, boy!
And hover'st like a bird in cheerful skies,
And swoopest down wherever berries lure,
And canst adjust thyself at the first glance.
I am a King; my very word brings fear.
Yet I, were I the first time in my life
To stand in woman's presence, fear should know!
How dost begin? Pray, teach me what to do;
I am a novice in such arts as these,
And nothing better than a grown-up child.
Dost sigh?

GARCERAN. Oh, Sire, how sadly out of date!

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KING. Well then, dost gaze? Does then Squire Gander gawk
Till Lady Goose-quill gawks again? Is't so?
And next, I ween, thou takest up thy lute,
And turning towards the balcony, as here,
Thou singst a croaking song, to which the moon,
A yellow pander, sparkles through the trees;
The flowers sweet intoxicate the sense,
Till now the proper opportunity
Arrives—the father, brother—spouse, perhaps—
Has left the house on similar errand bent.
And now the handmaid calls you gently: "Pst!"
You enter in, and then a soft, warm hand
Takes hold of yours and leads you through the halls,
Which, endless as the gloomy grave, spur on
The heightened wish, until, at last, the musk,
The softened lights that come through curtains' folds,
Do tell you that your charming goal is reached.
The door is ope'd, and bright, in candle gleam,
On velvet dark, with limbs all loosed in love,
Her snow-white arm enwrapped in ropes of pearls,
Your darling leans with gently drooping head,
The golden locks—no, no, I say they're black—
Her raven locks—and so on to the end!
Thou seest, Garceran, I learn right well,
And Christian, Mooress, Jewess, 'tis the same.

GARCERAN. We frontier warriors prize, for lack of choice,
Fair Moorish women, but the Jewess, Sire,—

KING. Pretend thou not to pick and choose thy fare!
I wager, if the maiden there above
Had given thee but a glance, thou'dst be aflame.
I love it not, this folk, and yet I know
That what disfigures it, is our own work;
We lame them, and are angry when they limp,
And yet, withal, this wandering shepherd race
Has something great about it, Garceran.
We are today's, we others; but their line
Runs from Creation's cradle, where our God,
In human form, still walked in Paradise,
And cherubim were guests of patriarchs,
And God alone was judge, and was the law.
Within this fairy world there is the truth
Of Cain and Abel, of Rebecca's craft,

Of Rachel, who by Jacob's service wooed—
How hight this maiden?

GARCERAN. Sire, I know not.
KING. Oh!
Of great King Ahasuerus, who his hand
Stretched out o'er Esther; she, though Jewess, was
His wife, and, like a god, preserved her race.

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Christian and Moslem both their lineage trace
Back to this folk, as oldest and as first;
Thus they have doubts of us, not we of them.
And though, like Esau, it has sold its right,
We ten times daily crucify our God
By grievous sins and by our vile misdeeds—
The Jews have crucified him only once!
Now let us go! Or, rather, stay thou here;
Conduct her hence, and mark well where she lives.
Perhaps some time, when worn by weary cares,
I'll visit her, and there enjoy her thanks.

(*About to go, he hears a noise in the house and stops.*)

What is't?

GARCERAN. Confusion in the house; it seems
Almost as if they bring thy praise to naught;
Among themselves they quarrel—

KING (*going to the house*).

What about?

ISAAC comes from the garden-house.

ISAAC (*speaking back into the house*).

Stay then, and risk your heads, if so ye will,
You've nearly lost them once. I'll save myself.

KING. Ask what he means.

GARCERAN. My good man, tell, how now?

ISAAC (*to* GARCERAN).

Ah, Sir, it is then you, our guardian!
My little Rachel speaks of you so oft;
She likes you.

KING. To the point. What babbling this—

ISAAC. Who is this lord?

GARCERAN. It makes no difference. Speak!
What is the cause of all that noise above?

ISAAC (*speaking up to the window*).

Look out, you're going to catch it—now look out!

(*To* GARCERAN.)

Yourself have seen my little Rachel-girl,
And how she wept and groaned and beat her breasts,
As if half crazed. Of course you have, my life!—
She hardly knew the danger had been passed
When back again her old high spirits came;
She laughed, and danced, and sang; half mad again
She shoved awry the sacred furniture
By dead men watched, and raves—as now you hear.
Hangs from her girdle not a chatelaine?
Her keys she tries in every closet lock,
And opens all the doors along the wall.
There hang within all sorts of things to wear,
And angels, devils, beggars vie with kings
In gay attire—

KING (*aside to* GARCERAN).
Our carnival costumes.

ISAAC. She chose, herself, a plumed crown from these,—
It was not gold, but only gilded tin—
One tells it by the weight, worth twenty pence;
About her shoulders throws a trained robe
And says she is the queen—

(*Speaking back.*)

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Oh yes, thou fool!

Then in the ante-chamber next, there hangs
A picture of the King, whom God preserve!
She takes it from the wall, bears it about,
Calling it husband with endearing words,
And holds it to her breast.

[KING *goes hastily toward the garden house.*]

GARCERAN. Oh, mighty Sire!

ISAAC (*stepping back*).

Alas!

KING (*standing on the steps, quietly*).

That game is worth a nearer look.

What's more, 'twill soon be time for you to go;
You should not miss the favorable hour.
But you, old man, must come. For not alone,
Nor unobserved would I approach your children.

[*Goes into the house.*]

ISAAC. Was that the King? Oh, woe!

GARCERAN. Proceed within.

ISAAC. If he should draw his sword, we all are doomed!

GARCERAN. Go in. And as for being afraid, 'tis not
For you nor for your daughter that I fear.

[*He pushes the hesitating* ISAAC *into the garden house and follows him.*]

* * * * *

Room in the pavilion. In the background to the left a door; in the foreground to the right, another door. RACHEL,_ with a plumed crown on her head and gold embroidered mantle about her shoulders, is trying to drag an armchair from the neighboring room, on the right._ ESTHER *has come in through the principal entrance.*

RACHEL. The armchair should stand here, here in the middle.

ESTHER. For Heaven's sake, O Rachel, pray look out;
Your madness else will bring us all to grief.

RACHEL. The King has given this vacant house to us;
As long as we inhabit it, it's ours.

[*They have dragged the chair to the centre.*]

RACHEL (*looking at herself*).
Now don't you think my train becomes me well?
And when I nod, these feathers also nod.
I need just one thing more—I'll get it—wait!

[*Goes back through the side door.*]

ESTHER. Oh, were we only far from here, at home!
My father, too, comes not, whom she drove off.

RACHEL (*comes back with an unframed picture*).

The royal image taken from its frame
I'll bear it with me.

ESTHER. Art thou mad again?
How often I have warned thee!

RACHEL. Did I heed?

ESTHER. By Heaven, no!

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RACHEL. Nor will I heed you now.
The picture pleases me. Just see how fine!
I'll hang it in my room, close by my bed.
At morn and eventide I'll gaze at it,
And think such thoughts as one may think when one
Has shaken off the burden of one's clothes
And feels quite free from every onerous weight.
But lest they think that I have stolen it—
I who am rich—what need have I to steal?—
My portrait which you wear about your neck
We'll hang up where the other used to be.
Thus he may look at mine, as I at his,
And think of me, if he perchance forgot.
The footstool bring me hither; I am Queen,
And I shall fasten to the chair this King.
They say that witches who compel to love
Stick needles, thus, in images of wax,
And every prick goes to a human heart
To hinder or to quicken life that's real.

[*She fastens the picture by the four corners to the back of the chair.*]

Oh, would that blood could flow with every prick,
That I could drink it with my thirsty lips,
And take my pleasure in the ill I'd done!
It hangs there, no less beautiful than dumb.
But I will speak to it as were I Queen,
With crown and mantle which become me well.

[*She has seated herself on the footstool before the picture.*]

Oh, hypocrite, pretending piety,
Full well I know your each and every wile!
The Jewess struck your fancy—don't deny!
And, by my mighty word, she's beautiful,
And only with myself to be compared.

[*The* KING, *followed by* GARCERAN *and* ISAAC, *has entered and placed himself behind the chair, and leans upon the back of the chair, watching her.*]

(RACHEL, *continues*)

But I, your Queen, I will not suffer it,
For know that I am jealous as a cat.

Your silence only makes your guilt seem more.
Confess! You liked her? Answer, Yes!

KING. Well, Yes!

[RACHEL, *starts, looks at the picture, then up, recognizes the* KING,_ and remains transfixed on the footstool._]

KING (*stepping forward*).

Art frightened? Thou hast willed it, and I say 't.
Compose thyself, thou art in friendly hands!

[*He stretches his hand toward her, she leaps from the stool and flees to the door at the right where she stands panting and with bowed head.*]

KING. Is she so shy?

ESTHER. Not always, gracious Sire!
Not shy, but timid.

KING. Do I seem so grim?

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(*Approaching her.* RACHEL, *shakes her head violently.*)

Well then, my dearest child, I pray be calm!
Yes, I repeat it, thou hast pleased me well;
When from this Holy War I home return
To which my honor and my duty call,
Then in Toledo I may ask for thee—
Where dwell you in this city?

ISAAC (*quickly*).

Jew Street, Sire—
Ben Mathes' house.

ESTHER. If not, before you come,
We're driven out.

KING. My word! That shall not be.
And I can keep a promise to protect.
So if at home you are as talkative
And cheerful as I hear you erstwhile were—
Not shy, as now, I'll pass the time away,
And draw a breath far from the fogs of court.
But now depart; the time has long since come.
Go with them, Garceran; but, ere you go,
My picture now return to where it was.

RACHEL (*rushing to the chair*).

The picture's mine!

KING. What ails thee, child? It must
Go back into the frame where it belongs.

RACHEL (*to* GARCERAN).

The picture touch not, nor the pins therein,
Or I shall fix it with a deeper thrust

(*Making a motion toward the picture with a pin.*)

Behold, right in the heart!

KING. By Heaven, stop!
Thou almost frightenedst me. Who art thou,

girl?
Art mistress of the black and criminal arts,
That I should feel in my own breast the thrust
Thou aimedst at the picture?

ESTHER. Noble Sire,
She's but a spoiled child, and a wanton girl,
And has no knowledge of forbidden arts!

KING. One ought not boldly play with things like these.
It drove my blood up to my very eyes,
And still I see the world all in a haze.

(*To* GARCERAN.)

Is she not beautiful?

GARCERAN. She is, my lord.

KING. See how the waves of light glow o'er her form!

[RACHEL *has meanwhile taken of the picture and rolled it up.*]

KING. Thou absolutely wilt not give it up?

RACHEL (*to* ESTHER).

I'll take it.

KING. Well, then, in the name of God!
He will prevent that any ill befall.
But only go! Take, Garceran,
The road that down behind the garden leads.
The folk's aroused; it loves, because it's weak,
To test that weakness on some weaker one.

GARCERAN (*at the window*).

Behold, O Sire, where comes th' entire court,—
The Queen herself leads on her retinue.

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KING. Comes here? Accursed! Is here no other door?
Let not the prying crew find here false cause
To prattle!

GARCERAN (*pointing to the side door*).

Sire, this chamber

KING. Think you, then,
Before my servants I should hide myself?
And yet I fear the pain 'twould give the Queen;
She might believe—what I myself believe,
And so I save my troubled majesty.
See to it that she very soon depart.

[*Exit into the side room.*]

ESTHER. I told you so! It is misfortune's road.

Enter the QUEEN *accompanied by* MANRIQUE DE LARA *and several others.*

QUEEN. They told me that the King was in this place.

GARCERAN. He was, but went away.

QUEEN. The Jewess here.

MANRIQUE. Arrayed like madness freed from every bond,
With all the tinsel-state of puppet-play!
Lay off the crown, for it befits thee not,
Even in jest; the mantle also doff!

[ESTHER *has taken both off.*]

What has she in her hand?

RACHEL. It is my own.

MANRIQUE. But first we'll see!

ESTHER. Nay, we are not so poor
That we should stretch our hands for others' goods!

MANRIQUE (*going toward the side door*).

And, too, in yonder chamber let us look,
If nothing missing, or perhaps if greed
With impudence itself as here, has joined.

GARCERAN (*barring the way*).

Here, father, call I halt!

MANRIQUE. Know'st thou me not?

GARCERAN. Yes, and myself as well. But there be duties
Which even a father's rights do not outweigh.

MANRIQUE. Look in my eye! He cannot bear to do it!
Two sons I lose on this unhappy day.

(*To the* QUEEN.)

Will you not go?

QUEEN. I would, but cannot. Yes,
I surely can, by Heaven, for I must.

(*To* GARCERAN.)

Although your office an unknightly one,
I thank you that you do it faithfully;
'Twere death to see—but I can go and suffer—
If you should meet your master ere the eve,
Say, to Toledo I returned—alone.

[*The QUEEN and her suite go out.*]

GARCERAN. Woe worth the chance that chose this day of all,
To bring me home—from war to worse than war!

RACHEL (*to* ESTHER, *who is busied with her*).

And had my life been forfeit, I'd have stayed.

ESTHER (*to* GARCERAN).

I pray you now to bring us quickly home.

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GARCERAN. First, let me ask the King his royal will.

(*Knocking at the side door.*)

Sire! What? No sign of life within? Perchance
An accident? Whate'er it be—I'll ope!

[*The* KING *steps out and remains standing in the foreground as the others withdraw to the back of the stage.*]

KING. So honor and repute in this our world
Are not an even path on which the pace,
Simple and forward, shows the tendency,
The goal, our worth. They're like a juggler's rope,
On which a misstep plunges from the heights,
And every stumbling makes a butt for jest.
Must I, but yesterday all virtues' model,
Today shun every slave's inquiring glance?
Begone then, eager wish to please the mob,
Henceforth determine we ourselves our path!

(*Turning to the others.*)

What, you still here?

GARCERAN. We wait your high command.

KING. If you had only always waited it,
And had remained upon the boundary!
Examples are contagious, Garceran.

GARCERAN. A righteous prince will punish every fault,
His own as well as others'; but, immune,
He's prone to vent his wrath on others' heads.

KING. Not such a one am I, my friend. Be calm!
We are as ever much inclined to thee;
And now, take these away, forever, too.
What's whim in others, is, in princes, sin.

(*As he sees* RACHEL *approaching.*)

Let be! But first this picture lay aside,
And put it in the place from whence you took 't.
It is my will! Delay not!

RACHEL (*to* ESTHER).
Come thou, too.

(*As both approach the side door*).

Hast thou, as is thy wont, my picture on?

ESTHER. What wilt

RACHEL. My will—and should the worst betide—

[*They go to the side door.*]

KING. Then to the border, straight I'll follow thee;
And there we'll wash in Moorish blood away
The equal shame that we have shared this day,
That we may bear once more the gaze of men.

[*The girls return.*]

RACHEL. I did it.

KING. Now away, without farewell!

ESTHER. Our thanks to thee, O Sire!

RACHEL. Not mine, I say.

KING. So be it; thankless go!

RACHEL. I'll save it up.

KING. That is, for never!

RACHEL. I know better.

(*To* ESTHER.)
Come.

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[*They go, accompanied by* GARCERAN, ISAAC *bowing deeply.*]

KING. And high time was it that she went; in sooth,
The boredom of a royal court at times
Makes recreation a necessity.
Although this girl has beauty and has charm
Yet seems she overbold and violent,
And one does well to watch what one begins.
Alonzo!

[*Enter a servant.*]

SERVANT. Mighty Sire?

KING. The horses fetch.

SERVANT. Toledo, Sire?

KING. Nay, to Alarcos, friend.
We're for the border, for the war, and so
Make ready only what we need the most.
For in Toledo four eyes threaten me;
Two full of tears, the other two, of fire.
She would not leave my picture here behind,
And bade defiance unto death itself.
And yet there needed but my stern command
To make her put it back where it belonged.
She tried her actress arts on me, that's all;
But did she put it in the frame again?
Since I am leaving here for many moons
Let all be undisturbed as 'twas before;
Of this affair let every trace be gone.

[*He goes into the ante-chamber. A pause as one of the servants takes up from the chair the clothes which* RACHEL *had worn, but holds the crown in his hand. The* KING *comes back holding* RACHEL'S *picture.*]

KING. My picture gone—and this one in its place!
It is her own, and burns within my hand—

(*Throwing the picture on the floor.*)

Avaunt! Avaunt! Can boldness go so far?
This may not be, for while I think of her
With just repugnance, this her painted image

Stirs up the burning passion in my breast.
Then, too, within her hands my picture rests!
They talk of magic, unallowed arts,
Which this folk practises with such-like things
And something as of magic o’er me comes—

(*To the servant.*)

Here, pick this up and spur thee on until
Thou overtake them.

SERVANT. Whom, my liege?

KING. Whom? Whom?
The girls of course, I mean, and Garceran;
Return this picture to the girls and ask—

SERVANT. What, Sire?

KING. Shall my own servants then become
The sharers in the knowledge of my shame?
I’ll force th’ exchange myself, if it must be!
Take up the picture—I will touch it not!

[*The servant has picked up the picture.*]

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KING. How clumsy! Hide it in your breast; but nay,
If there, it would be warmed by other's glow!
Give 't here, myself will take it; follow me—We'll
overtake them yet! But I surmise,
Since now suspicion's rife, there may some harm,
Some accident befall them unawares.
My royal escort were the safest guide.
Thou, follow me!

[*He has looked at the picture, then has put it in his bosom.*]

Stands there not, at the side,
The Castle Retiro, where, all concealed,
My forebear, Sancho, with a Moorish maid—!

SERVANT. Your Majesty, 'tis true!

KING. We'll imitate
Our forebears in their bravery, their worth,
Not when they stumble in their weaker hours.
The task is, first of all to conquer self—And
then against the foreign conqueror!
Retiro hight the castle?—Let me see!
Oh yes, away! And be discreet! But then—Thou
knowest nothing! All the better. Come!

[*Exit with servant.*]

ACT III

Garden in the royal villa. In the background flows the Tagus. A roomy arbor toward the front at the right. At the left, several suppliants in a row, with petitions in their hands. ISAAC *stands near them.*

ISAAC. You were already told to linger not.
My daughter soon will come to take the air.
And *he* is with her—*he*; I say not who.
So tremble and depart, and your requests
Take to the King's advisers in Toledo.

[*He takes the petition from one of them.*]

Let's see! 'Twon't do.

PETITIONER. You hold it upside down.

ISAAC. Because the whole request is topsy-turvy turvy—And
you are, too. Disturb no more—depart.

2D PETIT. Sir Isaac, in Toledo me you knew.

ISAAC. I know you not. In these last days my eyes
Have suddenly grown very, very weak.

2D PETIT. But I know you! Here is the purse of gold
You lost, which I herewith restore to you.

ISAAC. The purse I lost? I recognize it! Yea,
'Twas greenish silk—with ten piasters in't!

2D PETIT. Nay, twenty.

ISAAC. Twenty? Well, my eye is good;
My mem'ry fails me, though, from time to time!
This sheet, no doubt, explains the circumstance—Just
where you found the purse, perhaps, and how.
There is no further need that this report
Should go on file. And yet, just let me have't!
We will convey it to the proper place,
That every one may know your honesty!

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[*The petitioners present their petitions; he takes one in each hand and throws them to the ground.*]

No matter what it be, your answer's there.

(*To a third.*)

I see you have a ring upon your hand.
The stone is good, let's see!

[*The suppliant hands over the ring.*]

That flaw, of course,
Destroys its perfect water! Take it back.

[*He puts the ring on his own finger.*]

3D PETIT. You've put it on your own hand!

ISAAC. What, on mine?
Why so I have! I thought I'd given it back.
It is so tight I cannot get it off.

3D PETIT. Keep it, but, pray, take my petition too.

ISAAC (*busy with the ring*).

I'll take them both in memory of you. The King shall weigh the ring—I mean, of course, Your words—although the flaw is evident—The flaw that's in the stone—you understand. Begone now, all of you! Have I no club? Must I be bothered with this Christian pack?

[GARCERAN *has meanwhile entered.*]

GARCERAN. Good luck! I see you sitting in the reeds,
But find you're pitching high the pipes you cut.

ISAAC. The royal privacy's entrusted me;
The King's not here, he does not wish to be.
And who disturbs him—even you, my lord,
I must bid you begone! Those his commands.

GARCERAN. You sought a while ago to find a club;
And when you find it, bring it me. I think
Your back could use it better than your hand.

ISAAC. How you flare up! That is the way with Christians?
They're so direct of speech—but patient waiting,
And foresight, humble cleverness, they lack.
The King is pleased much to converse with me.

GARCERAN. When he is bored and flees his inner self,
E'en such a bore as you were less a bore.

ISAAC. He speaks to me of State and of finance.

GARCERAN. Are you, perhaps, the father of the new
Decree that makes a threepence worth but two?

ISAAC. Money, my friend, 's the root of everything.
The enemy is threat'ning—buy you arms!
The soldier, sure, is sold, and that for cash.
You eat and drink your money; what you eat
Is bought, and buying's money—nothing else.
The time will come when every human soul
Will be a sight-draft and a short one, too;
I'm councilor to the King, and if yourself
Would keep in harmony with Isaac's luck—

GARCERAN. In harmony with you? It is my curse
That chance and the accursed seeming so
Have mixed me in this wretched piece of folly,
Which to the utmost strains my loyalty.

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ISAAC. My little Rachel daily mounts in grace!

GARCERAN. Would that the King, like many another one,
In jest and play had worn youth's wildness off!
But he, from childhood, knowing only men,
Brought up by men and tended but by men,
Nourished with wisdom's fruits before his time,
Taking his marriage as a thing of course,
The King now meets, the first time in his life,
A woman, female, nothing but her sex,
And she avenges on this prodigy
The folly of too staid, ascetic youth.
A noble woman's half, yes all, a man—
It is their faults that make them woman-kind.
And that resistance, which the oft deceived
Gains through experience, the King has not;
A light disport he takes for bitter earn'st.
But this shall not endure, I warrant thee!
The foe is at the borders, and the King
Shall hie him where long since he ought to be;
Myself shall lead him hence. And so an end.

ISAAC. Try what you can! And if not with us, then
You are against us, and will break your neck
In vain attempt to clear the wide abyss.

(*The sound of flutes.*)

But hark! With cymbals and with horns they come,
As Esther with King Ahasuerus came,
Who raised the Jews to fame and high estate.

GARCERAN. Must I, then, see in this my King's debauch
A picture of myself from early days,
And be ashamed for both of us at once?

[*A boat upon which are the* KING, RACHEL *and suite, appears on the river.*]

KING. Lay to! Here is the place—the arbor here.

RACHEL. The skiff is rocking—hold me, lest I fall.

[*The* KING *has jumped to the shore.*]

RACHEL. And must I walk to shore upon this board
So thin and weak?

KING. Here, take my hand, I pray!

RACHEL. No, no, I'm dizzy.

GARCERAN (*to himself*).

Dizzy are you? Humph!

KING (*who has conducted her to the shore*).

It is accomplished now—this mighty task!

RACHEL. No, never will I enter more a ship.

(*Taking the* KING's *arm.*)

Permit me, noble Sire, I am so weak!
Pray feel my heart, how fev'rishly it beats!

KING. To fear, is woman's right; but you abuse it.

RACHEL. You now, hard-hearted, take away your aid!
And, oh, these garden walks, how hard they are!
With stones, and not with sand, they're roughly strewn
For men to walk on, not for women's feet.

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KING. Put down a carpet, ye, that we have peace.

RACHEL. I feel it well—I merely burden you!
Oh, were my sister only here with me,
For I am sick and tired unto death!
Naught but these pillows here?

(*Throwing the pillows in the arbor violently about.*)

No, no, no, no!

KING (*laughing*).

I see your weakness happily abates.

(*Catching sight of* GARCERAN.)

Ah, Garceran! Behold, she's but a child!

GARCERAN. A spoiled child, surely!

KING. Yes, they all are that.
It suits her well!

GARCERAN. According to one's tastes!

KING. See, Garceran! I feel how wrong I am;
And yet I know there needeth but a nod,
A simple word, to make it all dissolve—This
dream—into the nothing that it is.
And so I suffer it because I've need,
In this confusion which myself have caused.
How is the army?

GARCERAN. As you long have known,
The enemy is arming.

KING. So shall we.
A few days more, and I shall put away
This toying from me, and forevermore;
Then time and counsel shall be found again.

GARCERAN. Mayhap the counsel, but the time slips by!

KING. With deeds we shall regain the ground that's lost.

RACHEL. I hear them speaking; and I know of what—Of
And not be lonesome in this concourse loud.
I see you come not. No, they hold you back.

[*Weeping.*]

Not any comfort give they me, nor joy.
They hold me here, apart, in slavery.
Would I were home again in father's house,
Where every one is at my beck and call,
Instead of here,—the outcast of contempt.

KING. Go thou to her!

GARCERAN. What? Shall I?

KING. Go, I say!

RACHEL. Sit down by me, but nearer, nearer—so!
Once more I say, I love you, Garceran.
You are, indeed, a knight without a flaw,
Not merely knight in name, as they it learn—
Those iron, proud Castilians—from their foes,
The Moors.—But these Castilians imitate
In manner borrowed, therefore rough and crude,
What those, with delicate and clever art,
Are wont to practise as a native gift.
Give me your hand. Just see, how soft it is!
And yet you wield a sword as well as they.
But you're at home in boudoirs, too, and know
The pleasing manners of a gentler life.
From

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Dona Clara cometh not this ring?
She's far too pale for rosy-cheeked love,
Were not the color which her face doth lack
Replaced by e'er renewing blush of shame.
But many other rings I see you have—
How many sweethearts have you? Come, confess!

GARCERAN. Suppose I ask the question now of you?

RACHEL. I've never loved. But I could love, if e'er
In any breast *that* madness I should find
Which could enthrall me, were my own heart touched.
Till then I follow custom's empty show,
Traditional in love's idolatry,
As in the fanes of stranger-creeds one kneels.

KING (*who meanwhile has been pacing up and down, now stands in the foreground at the left and speaks in an aside to a servant*).

Bring me my arms, and full accoutrements,
And wait for me beside the garden-house.
I will to camp where they have need of me.

[*Exit servant.*]

RACHEL. I beg you, see your King! He thinks he loves;
Yet when I speak to you and press your hand,
He worries not. With good economy,
He fills his garish day with business,
And posts his ledger, satisfied, at ev'n.
Out on you! You are all alike—you, too.
O were my sister here! She's wise—than I
Far cleverer! Yet, too, when in her breast
The spark of will and resolution falls,
She flashes out in flames, like unto mine.
Were she a man, she'd be a hero. Ye
Before her courage and her gaze should flinch.
Now let me sleep until she comes, for I
Myself am but the dreaming of a night.

[*She lays her head on her arm and her arm on her pillows.*]

GARCERAN (*steps to the* KING *who stands watching the reclining RACHEL*).

Most noble Sire—

KING (*still gazing*). Well?

GARCERAN. May I now go back
Once more unto the army and the camp?

KING (*as above*).

The army left the camp? Pray tell me why.

GARCERAN. You hear me not—myself, *I* wish to go.

KING. And there you'll talk, with innuendo, prate—

GARCERAN. Of what?

KING. Of me, of that which here took place.

GARCERAN. For that I'd need to understand it more.

KING. I see! Believest thou in sorcery?

GARCERAN. Since recently I almost do, my lord!

KING. And why is it but recently, I pray?

GARCERAN. Respect, I thought the wonted mate of love;
But love together with contempt, my lord—

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KING. “Contempt” were far too hard a word; perhaps
An “unregard”—yet, nathless—marvelous!

GARCERAN. In sooth, the marvel is a little old,
For it began that day in Paradise
When God from Adam’s rib created Eve.

KING. And yet he closed the breast when it was done,
And placed the will to guard the entering in.
Thou may’st to camp, but not alone:—with me.

RACHEL (*sitting up*).

The sun is creeping into my retreat.
Who props for me the curtain on yon side?

(*Looking off stage at the right.*)

There go two men, both bearing heavy arms;
The lance would serve my purpose very well.

(*Calling off stage.*)

Come here! This way! What, are ye deaf?
Come quick!

[*The servant, returning with the lance and helmet, accompanied by a second servant bearing the King’s shield and cuirass, enters.*]

RACHEL. Give me your lance, good man, and stick the point
Here in the ground, and then the roof will be
Held up in that direction. Thus it throws
A broader shadow. Quickly, now! That’s right!
You other fellow, like a snail, you bear
Your house upon your back, unless, perhaps,
A house for some one else. Show me the shield!
A mirror ’tis, in sooth! ’Tis crude, of course,
As all is, here, but in a pinch ’twill do.

(*They hold the shield before her.*)

One brings one’s hair in order, pushes back
Whatever may have ventured all too far,
And praises God who made one passing fair.
This mirror’s curve distorts me! Heaven help!

What puffy cheeks are these? No, no, my friend,
What roundness nature gives us, satisfies.—
And now the helmet—useless in a fight,
For it conceals what oft'nest wins—the eyes;
But quite adapted to the strife of love.
Put me the helm upon my head.—You hurt!—
And if one's love rebels and shows his pride,
Down with the visor!

(*Letting it down.*)

He in darkness stands!

But should he dare, mayhap, to go from us,
And send for arms, to leave us here alone,
Then up the visor goes.

(*She does it.*)

Let there be light!
The sun, victorious, drives away the fog.

KING (*going to her*).

Thou silly, playing, wisely-foolish child!

RACHEL. Back, back! Give me the shield, give me the lance!
I am attacked, but can defend myself.

KING. Lay down thy arms! No ill approacheth thee!

(*Taking both of her hands.*)

Enter ESTHER from the left rear.

RACHEL. Ah thou, my little sister! Welcome, here!
Away with all this mummery, but quick!
Don't take my head off, too! How clumsy, ye!

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(*Running to her.*)

Once more be welcome, O thou sister mine!
How I have long'd to have thee here with me!
And hast thou brought my bracelets and my jewels,
My ointments and my perfumes, with thee now,
As from Toledo's shops I ordered them?

ESTHER. I bring them and more weighty things besides—
Unwelcome news, a bitter ornament.
Most mighty Sire and Prince! The Queen has from
Toledo's walls withdrawn, and now remains
In yonder castle where ill-fortune first
Decreed that you and we should meet.

(*To* GARCERAN.)

With her,

Your noble father, Don Manrique Lara,
Who summons all the kingdom's high grandees
From everywhere, in open letters, to
Discuss the common good, as if the land
Were masterless and you had died, O King.

KING. I think you dream!

ESTHER. I am awake, indeed,
And must keep watch to save my sister's life.
They threaten her. She'll be the sacrifice!

RACHEL. O woe is me! Did I not long ago
Adjure you to return unto the court
And bring to naught the plotting of my foes!—
But you remain'd. Behold here are your arms,
The helm, the shield, and there the mighty spear
I'll gather them—but Oh, I cannot do 't.

KING (*to* ESTHER).

Now tend the little girl. With every breath
She ten times contradicts what she has said.
I will to court; but there I need no arms;
With open breast, my hand without a sword,

I in my subjects' midst will boldly step
And ask: "Who is there here that dares rebel?"
They soon shall know their King is still alive
And that the sun dies not when evening comes,
But that the morning brings its rays anew.
Thou follow'st, Garceran!

GARCERAN. I'm ready.

ESTHER. What
Becomes of us?

RACHEL. O stay, I beg you, stay!

KING. The castle's safe, the keeper faithful, too;
And he will guard you with his very life.
For though I feel that I have sinned full sore,
Let no one suffer who has trusted me
And who with me has shared my guilt and sin.
Come, Garceran! Or, rather, take the lead;
For if the estates were in assembly still,
Not called by me, nor rightfully convened,
I then must punish—much against my will.
Command them to disperse—and quickly, too!
Thy father tell: Although protector he
And regent for me in my boyhood days,
I now know how to guard my right myself—
Against him, too, against no matter whom.
Come on! And ye, farewell!

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RACHEL (*approaching*). O mighty Prince!

KING. No more! I need my strength and steadfast will,
No parting words shall cripple my resolve.
Ye'll hear from me when I have done my work;
But how, and what the future brings, is still
Enwrapt in night and gloom. But come what may,
I give my princely word ye shall be safe.
Come, Garceran! With God! He be with you!

[*Exeunt KING and GARCERAN at the left.*]

RACHEL. He loves me not—O, I have known it long!

ESTHER. O sister, useless is too tardy knowledge,
When injury has made us sadly wise.
I warned thee, but thou wouldst not ever heed.

RACHEL. He was so hot and ardent at the first!

ESTHER. And now makes up in coolness for his haste.

RACHEL. But I who trusted, what shall be my fate?
Come, let us flee!

ESTHER. The streets are occupied;
Against us all the land is in revolt.

RACHEL. And so I then must die and am so young?
And I should like to live! Not live, indeed—
But die, unwarned, an unexpected death!
'Tis but the moment of our death that shocks!

(*At* ESTHER's *neck.*)

Unhappy am I, sister, hopeless, lost!

(*After a pause, with a voice broken by sobs.*)

And is the necklace set with amethysts,
Thou broughtst?

ESTHER. It is. And pearls it has as bright
And many, too, as are thy tears.

RACHEL. I would
Not look at it at all—at least not now.
But only if our prison lasts too long,
I'll try divert eternal wretchedness,
And shall adorn myself unto my death.
But see, who nears? Ha, ha, ha, ha, it is,
In sooth, our father, armed cap-a-pie!

[ISAAC, *a helmet on his head, under his long coat a cuirass, enters from the left.*]

ISAAC. 'Tis I, the father of a wayward brood,
Who ere my time are shortening my days.
In harness, yes! When murder stalks abroad,
Will one's bare body save one from the steel?
A blow by chance, and then the skull is split!
This harness hides, what's more, my notes of 'change,
And in my pockets carry I my gold;
I'll bury that and curse and soul will save
From poverty and death. And if ye mock,
I'll curse you with a patriarchal curse—
With Isaac's curse! O ye, with voices like
The voice of Jacob, but with Esau's hands,
Invert the law of primogeniture!
Myself, my care! What care I more for you!
Hark!

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RACHEL. What noise?

ESTHER. The drawbridge has been raised—
And now our refuge is a prison too.—

RACHEL. A token that the King has left these walls.
So hastes he forth.—Will he return again?
I fear me no—I fear the very worst!

(*Sinking on* ESTHER's *breast*.)

And yet I loved him truly, loved him well!

ACT IV

A large room with a throne in the foreground to the right. Next to the throne, and running in a straight row to the left, several chairs upon which eight or ten Castilian grandees are sitting. Close to the throne, MANRIQUE DE LARA, *who has arisen.*

MANRIQUE. In sadness we are now assembled here,
But few of us, whom close proximity
Allowed to gather in so short a time.
There will be more to join us presently.
Stern, universal need, delaying not,
Commands us count ourselves as competent.
Before all others, in our earnest group,
Is missing he to whom belongs the right
To call this parliament and here preside;
We then are half illegal at the start.
And so, my noble lords, I took the care
To ask her royal majesty, the Queen,
Although our business much concerns herself,
Here to convene with us and take her place,
That we may know we are not masterless,
Nor feel 'tis usurpation brought us here.
The subject of our council at this time
I hope—I fear—is known to all too well.
The King, our mighty sov'reign—not alone
In rank, estate, and dignity he's high,
But, too, in natural gifts, that when we gaze
Behind us in the past's wide-open book,
We scarce again can find his equal there—
Except that strength, the lever of all good,

When wandered from her wonted path of good,
Wills e'er to do her will with equal strength—
The King, I say, withdraws himself from court,
Lured by a woman's too lascivious charm,
A thing in no wise seeming us to judge—
The Queen!

The QUEEN, *accompanied by* DONA CLARA *and several ladies, enters from the right, and seats herself on the throne, after she has indicated to the grandees who have arisen that they are to resume their seats.*

MANRIQUE. Have I permission, Majesty?

QUEEN. Proceed.

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MANRIQUE. What I just said, I shall repeat
"A thing in no wise seeming us to judge."
But at the bound'ries arms him now the Moor,
And threats with war the hard-oppressed land;
So now the right and duty of the King
Is straight to ward this danger from us all,
With forces he has called and raised himself.
But see, the King is missing! He will come,
I know, if only angry that we called
Of our own power and will this parliament.
But if the cause remains that keeps him hence,
Unto his former bonds he will return,
And, first as last, we be an orphan land.
Your pardon?

[*The* QUEEN *signs him to continue.*]

First of all, the girl must go.

Full many propositions are at hand.
Some are there here who wish to buy her off,
And others wish to send her from the land,
A prisoner in some far distant clime.
The King has money, too, and though she's far,
You know that power can find whate'er it seeks.
A third proposal—

[*The* QUEEN, *at these words, has arisen.*]

Pardon, noble Queen!

You are too mild for this our business drear!
Your very kindness, lacking vigorous will
From which to draw renewal of its strength,
Has most of all, perhaps, estranged our King.
I blame you not, I say but what is true.
I pray you, then, to waive your own desire,
But if it please you otherwise, then speak!
What flow'ry fate, what flatt'ring punishment,
Is suited to the sin this drab has done?

QUEEN (*softly*).
Death.

MANRIQUE. In truth?

QUEEN (*more firmly*).

Yes, death.

MANRIQUE. Ye hear, my lords!
This was the third proposal, which, although
A man, I did not earlier dare to speak.

QUEEN. Is marriage not the very holiest,
Since it makes right what else forbidden is,
And that, which horrible to all the chaste,
Exalts to duty, pleasing unto God?
Other commandments of our God most high
Give added strength to our regard for right,
But what so strong that it ennobles sin
Must be the strongest of commandments all.
Against that law this woman now has sinned.
But if my husband's wrong continueth,
Then I myself, in all my married years,
A sinner was and not a wife, our son
Is but a misborn bastard-spawn, a shame
Unto himself, and sore disgrace to us.

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If ye in me see guilt, then kill me, pray!
I will not live if I be flecked with sin.
Then may he from the princesses about
A spouse him choose, since only his caprice,
And not what is allowed, can govern him.
But if she is the vilest of this earth,
Then purify your King and all his land.
I am ashamed to speak like this to men,
It scarce becomes me, but I needs must speak.

MANRIQUE. But will the King endure this? If so, how?

QUEEN. He will, indeed, because he ought and must.
Then on the murd'rers he can take revenge,
And first of all strike me and this, my breast.

[*She sits down.*]

MANRIQUE. There is no hope of any other way.
The noblest in the battle meet their doom—
To die a bitter, yea, a cruel death—
Tortured with thirst, and under horses' hoofs,
A doubler, sharper, bitt'rer meed of pain
Than ever, sinner on the gallows-tree,
And sickness daily takes our best away;
For God is prodigal with human life;
Should we be timid, then, where his command,
His holy law, which he himself has giv'n,
Demands, as here, that he who sins shall die?
Together then, we will request the King
To move from out his path this stumbling-block
Which keeps him from his own, his own from him.
If he refuse, blood's law be on the land,
Until the law and prince be one again,
And we may serve them both by serving one.

A servant comes.

SERVANT. Don Garceran!

MANRIQUE. And does the traitor dare?
Tell him—

SERVANT. The message is his Majesty's.

MANRIQUE. That's diff'rent. An' he were my deadly foe,
He has my ear, when speaks he for the King.

Enter GARCERAN.

MANRIQUE. At once your message give us; then, farewell.

GARCERAN. O Queen, sublime, and thou my father, too,
And ye besides, the best of all the land!
I feel today, as ne'er before I felt,
That to be trusted is the highest good,
And that frivolity, though free of guilt,
Destroys and paralyzes more than sin
Itself. *One* error is condoned at last,
Frivolity is ever prone to err.
And so, today, though conscious of no fault,
I stand before you sullied, and atone
For youthful heedlessness that passed for wrong.

MANRIQUE. Of that, another time! Your message now!

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GARCERAN. The King through me dissolves this parliament.

MANRIQUE. And since he sent frivolity itself
He surely gave some token from his hand,
Some written word as pledge and surety?

GARCERAN. Hot-foot he followeth.

MANRIQUE. That is enough!
So in the royal name I now dissolve
This parliament. Ye are dismissed. But list
Ye to my wish and my advice: Return
Ye not at once unto your homes, but wait
Ye rather, round about, till it appears
Whether the King will take the task we leave,
Or we must still perform it in his name.

(*To* GARCERAN.)

However, you, in princely service skilled,
If spying be your office 'mongst us here,
I beg you tell your King what I advised,
And that th' estates in truth have been dissolved,
But yet are ready to unite for deeds.

GARCERAN. Then once again, before you all, I say
No tort have I in this mad escapade.
As it was chance that brought me from the camp,
So chanced it that the King selected me
To guard this maiden from the people's rage;
And what with warning, reason, argument,
A man may do to ward off ill, although
'Twas fruitless, I admit,—that have I tried.
I should deserve your scorn were this not so.
And Dona Clara, doubly destined mine,
By parents both and by my wish as well,
You need not hang your noble head, for though
Unworthy of you—never worthy,—I
Not less am worthy now than e'er before.
I stand before you here and swear: 'Tis so.

MANRIQUE. If this is so, and thou art still a man,
Be a Castilian now and join with us
To serve thy country's cause as we it serve.

Thou art acquainted in the castle there;
The captain opes the gates if thou demand.
Perhaps we soon shall need to enter thus,
If deaf the King, our noble lord.

GARCERAN. No word
Against the King, my master!

MANRIQUE. Thine the choice!
But follow for the nonce these other lords,
The outcome may be better than we think.

[*Servant entering from the left.*]

SERVANT. His Majesty, the King!

MANRIQUE (*to the estates, pointing to the middle door*).

This way—withdraw!

(*To the servants.*)

And ye, arrange these chairs along the wall.
Naught shall remind him that we gathered here

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QUEEN (*who has stepped down from the throne*).

My knees are trembling, yet there's none to aid.

MANRIQUE. Virtue abode with strength in days of yore,
But latterly, estranged, they separate.
Strength stayed with youth—where she was wont to be—
And virtue fled to gray and ancient heads.
Here, take my arm! Though tottering the step,
And strength be lacking,—virtue still abides.

[*He leads the* QUEEN *off at the right. The estates, with* GARCERAN,_ have gone out through the centre door. The_ KING *comes from the left, behind him his page.*]

KING. The sorrel, say you, limps? The pace was fast,
But I no further need shall have of him.
So to Toledo, pray you, have him led,
Where rest will soon restore him. I, myself,
Will at my spouse's side, in her own coach
Return from here, in sight of all the folk,
That what they see they may believe, and know
That discord and dissension are removed.

[*The page goes.*]

I am alone. Does no one come to meet?
Naught but bare walls and silent furniture!
It is but recently that they have met.
And oh, these empty chairs much louder speak
Than those who sat upon them e'er have done!
What use to chew the bitter cud of thought?
I must begin to remedy the ill.
Here goes the way to where my wife doth dwell.—
I'll enter on this most unwelcome path.

[*He approaches the side door at the right.*]

What, barred the door? Hallo, in there! The King
It is, who's master in this house! For me
There is no lock, no door to shut me out.

[*A waiting-woman enters through the door.*]

KING. Ye bar yourselves?

WAITING WOMAN. The Queen, your Majesty—

(*As the* KING *is about to enter rapidly.*)

The inner door she, too, herself, has locked.

KING. I will not force my way. Announce to her
That I am back, and this my summons is—
Say, rather, my request—as now I say.

[*Exit waiting-woman.*]

KING (*standing opposite the throne*).

Thou lofty seat, o'ertopping others all,
Grant that we may no lower be than thou,
And even unexalted by these steps
We yet may hold just measure of the good.

Enter the QUEEN.

KING (*going toward her with outstretched hands*).

I greet thee, Leonore!

QUEEN. Be welcome, thou!

KING. And not thy hand?

QUEEN. I'm glad to see thee here.

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KING. And not thy hand?

QUEEN (*bursting into tears*).

O help me, gracious God!

KING. This hand is not pest-stricken, Leonore,
Go I to battle, as I ought and must,
It will be smeared and drenched with hostile blood;
Pure water will remove the noisome slime,
And for thy “welcome” I shall bring it pure.
Like water for the gross and earthly stain
There is a cleanser for our sullied souls.
Thou art, as Christian, strong enough in faith
To know repentance hath a such-like might.
We others, wont to live a life of deeds,
Are not inclined to modest means like this,
Which takes the guilt away, but not the harm—
Yes, half but is the fear of some new sin.
If wishing better things, if glad resolve
Are any hostage-bond for now and then,
Take it—as I do give it—true and whole!

QUEEN (*holding out both hands*).

O God, how gladly!

KING. No, not both thy hands!
The right alone, though farther from the heart,
Is giv’n as pledge of contract and of bond,
Perhaps to indicate that not alone
Emotion, which is rooted in our hearts,
But reason, too, the person’s whole intent,
Must give endurance to the plighted word.
Emotion’s tide is swift of change as time;
That which is pondered, has abiding strength.

QUEEN (*offering him her right hand*).

That too! Myself entire!

KING. Trembleth thy hand!

(*Dropping her hand.*)

O noble wife, I would not treat thee ill.
Believe not that, because I speak less mild,
I know less well how great has been my fault,
Nor honor less the kindness of thy heart.

QUEEN. ’Tis easy to forgive; to comprehend
Is much more difficult. How it *could* be,
I understand it not!

KING. My wife and queen,
We lived as children till but recently.
As such our hands were joined in marriage vows,
And then as guileless children lived we on.
But children grow, with the increase of years,
And ev’ry stage of our development
By some discomfort doth proclaim itself.
Often it is a sickness, warning us
That we are diff’rent—other, though the same,
And other things are fitting in the same.
So is it with our inmost soul as well—
It stretches out, a wider orbit gains,

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Described about the selfsame centre still.
Such sickness have we, then, but now passed through;
And saying we, I mean that thou as well
Art not a stranger to such inner growth.
Let's not, unheeding, pass the warning by!
In future let us live as kings should live—
For kings we are. Nor let us shut ourselves
From out this world, and all that's good and great;
And like the bees which, at each close of day,
Return unto their hives with lading sweet,
So much the richer by their daily gain,
We'll find within the circle of our home,
Through hours of deprivation, added sweets.

QUEEN. If thou desirest, yes; for me, I miss them not.

KING. But thou wilt miss them then in retrospect,
When thou hast that whereby one judges worth.
But let us now forget what's past and gone!
I like it not, when starting on a course,
By any hindrance thus to bar the way
With rubbish from an earlier estate.
I do absolve myself from all my sins.
Thou hast no need—thou, in thy purity!

QUEEN. Not so! Not so! My husband, if thou knew'st
What black and mischief-bringing thoughts have found
Their way into my sad and trembling heart!

KING. Perhaps of vengeance? Why, so much the better!
Thou feel'st the human duty to forgive,
And know'st that e'en the best of us may err.
We will not punish, nor avenge ourselves;
For *she*, believe me, *she* is guiltless quite,
As common grossness or vain weakness is,
Which merely struggles not, but limply yields.
I only bear the guilt, myself alone.

QUEEN. Let me believe what keeps and comforts me
The Moorish folk, and all that like them are,

Do practise secret and nefarious arts,
With pictures, signs and sayings, evil draughts,
Which turn a mortal's heart within his breast,
And make his will obedient to their own.

KING. Magic devices round about us are,
But we are the magicians, we ourselves.
That which is far removed, a thought brings near;
What we have scorned, another time seems fair;
And in this world so full of miracles,
We are the greatest miracle ourselves!

QUEEN. She has thy picture!

KING. And she shall return 't,
In full view I shall nail it to the wall,
And for my children's children write beneath:
A King, who, not so evil in himself,
Hath once forgot his office and his duty.
Thank God that he did find himself again.

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QUEEN. But thou, thyself, dost wear about thy neck—

KING. Oh yes! Her picture? So you knew that, too?

[*He takes the picture with the chain from his neck, and lays it on the table in the foreground to the right.*]

So then I lay it down, and may it lie—
A bolt not harmful, now the thunder's past.
The girl herself—let her be ta'en away!
She then may have a man from out her race—

[*Walking fitfully back and forth from the rear to the front of the stage, and stopping short now and then.*]

But no, not that!—The women of this race
Are passable, good even, but the men
With dirty hands and narrow greed of gain—
This girl shall not be touched by such a one.
Indeed, she has to better ones belonged.
But then, what's that to me?—If thus or thus,
If near or far—they may look after that!

QUEEN. Wilt thou, then, Don Alfonso, stay thus strong?

KING (*standing still*).

Forsooth, thou ne'er hast known or seen this girl!
Take all the faults that on this broad earth dwell,
Folly and vanity, and weakness, too,
Cunning and boldness, coquetry and greed—
Put them together and thou hast this woman;
And if, enigma thou, not magic art,
Shouldst call her power to charm me, I'll agree,
And were ashamed, were't not but natural, too!

QUEEN (*walks up and down*).

Believe me, husband, 'twas not natural!

KING (*standing still*).

Magic there is, in truth. Its name is custom,
Which first not potent, later holds us fast;
So that which at the outset shocked, appalled,

Sloughs off the first impression of disgust,
And grows, a thing continued, to a need—
Is this not of our very bodies true?
This chain I wore—which now here idly lies,
Ta'en off forever—breast and neck alike,
To this impression have become so used—

(*Shaking himself.*)

The empty spaces make me shake with cold.
I'll choose myself another chain forthwith;
The body jests not when it warning sends.
And now enough of this!
But that you could
Avenge yourselves in blood on this poor fool—
That was not well!

(*Stepping to the table.*)

For do but see these eyes—

Yes, see the eyes, the body, neck, and form!
God made them verily with master hand;
'Twas she *herself* the image did distort.
Let us revere in her, then, God's own work,
And not destroy what he so wisely built.

QUEEN. Oh, touch it not!

KING. This nonsense now again!
And if I really take it in my hand,

(*He has taken the picture in his hand*)

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Am I another, then? I wind the chain
In jest, to mock you, thus about my neck,

(*Doing it.*)

The face that 'frights you in my bosom hide—
Am I the less Alfonso, who doth see
That he has err'd, and who the fault condemns?
Then of your nonsense let this be enough!

[*He draws away from the table.*]

QUEEN. Only—

KING (*wildly looking at her*).

What is 't?

QUEEN. O God in heav'n!

KING. Be frighted not, good wife! Be sensible!
Repeat not evermore the selfsame thing!
It doth remind me of the difference.

(*Pointing to the table, then to his breast.*)

This girl there—no, of course now she is here—
If she was foolish, foolish she would be,
Nor claimed that she was pious, chaste, and wise.
And this is ever virtuous women's way—
They reckon always with their virtue thus;
If you are sad, with virtue comfort they,
If joyous is your mood, virtue again,
To take your cheerfulness at last away,
And show you as your sole salvation, sin.
Virtue's a name for virtues manifold,
And diff'rent, as occasion doth demand—
It is no empty image without fault,
And therefore, too, without all excellence.
I will just doff the chain now from my neck,
For it reminds me—

And, then, Leonore,

That with the vassals thou didst join thyself—

That was not well, was neither wise nor just.
If thou art angry with me, thou art right;
But these men, my dependents, subjects all—
What want they, then? Am I a child, a boy,
Who not yet knows the compass of his place?
They share with me the kingdom's care and toil,
And equal care is duty, too, for me.
But I the *man* Alfonso, not the King,
Within my house, my person, and my life—
Must I accounting render to these men?
Not so! And gave I ear but to my wrath,
I quickly would return from whence I came,
To show that they with neither blame nor praise
Shall dare to sit in judgment over me.

[*Stepping forward and stamping on the floor.*]

And finally this dotard, Don Manrique,
If he was once my guardian, is he still?

[*DON MANRIQUE appears at the centre door. The QUEEN points to the KING, and wrings her hand. MANRIQUE withdraws with a reassuring gesture.*]

KING. Presumes he to his sov'reign to prescribe
The rustic precepts of senility?
Would he with secret, rash, and desp'rate deed—

(*Walking back and forth diagonally across the stage*)

I will investigate this case as judge;
And if there be a trace here of offense,
Of insolent intent or wrongful act,
The nearer that the guilty stand to me,
The more shall boldness pay the penalty.
Not thou, Leonore, no, thou art excused!

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[*During the last speech, the QUEEN has quietly withdrawn through the door at the right.*]

Whither, then, went she? Leave they me alone?
Am I a fool within mine own abode?

[*He approaches the door at the right.*]

I'll go to her—What, is it bolted, barred?

[*Bursting open the door with a kick.*]

I'll take by storm, then, my domestic bliss.

[*He goes in.*]

[*DON MANRIQUE and GARCERAN appear at the centre door. The latter takes a step across the threshold.*]

MANRIQUE. Wilt thou with, us?

GARCERAN. My father!

MANRIQUE. Wilt thou not?
The rest are gone—wilt follow them?

GARCERAN. I will.

[*They withdraw, the door closes. Pause. The* KING *returns. In the attitude of one listening intently.*]

KING. Listen again!—'Tis nothing, quiet all!—
Empty, forlorn, the chambers of the Queen.
But, on returning, in the turret room,
I heard the noise of carriages and steeds,
In rushing gallop, hurrying away.
Am I alone? Ramiro! Garceran!

[*The page, comes from the door at the right.*]

KING. Report! What goes on here?

PAGE. Illustrious Sire,
The castle is deserted; you and I
Are at this hour its sole inhabitants.

KING. The Queen?

PAGE. The castle in her carriage left.

KING. Back to Toledo then?

PAGE. I know not, Sire.
The lords, howe'er—

KING. What lords?

PAGE. Sire, the estates,
Who all upon their horses swung themselves;
They did not to Toledo take their way—
Rather the way which you yourself did come.

KING. What! To Retiro? Ah, now fall the scales
From these my seeing and yet blinded eyes!
Murder this is. They go to slay her there!
My horse! My horse!

PAGE. Your horse, illustrious Sire,
Was lame, and, as you know, at your command—

KING. Well, then, another—Garceran's, or yours!

PAGE. They've taken every horse from here away,
Perhaps with them, perhaps but driv'n afar;
As empty as the castle are the stalls.

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KING. They think they will outstrip me. But away!
Get me a horse, were't only some old nag;
Revenge shall lend him wings, that he may fly.
And if 'tis done? Then, God above, then grant
That as a man, not as a tyrant, I
May punish both the guilty and the guilt.
Get me a horse! Else art thou in their league,
And payest with thy head, as all shall—

(*Standing at the door, with a gesture of violence.*)

All!

[*He hastens away.*]

ACT V

A large room in the castle at Retiro, with one door in the centre and one at each side. Everywhere signs of destruction. In the foreground, at the left, an overturned toilet table with scattered utensils. In the background, at the left, another overturned table; above it a picture half torn from its frame. In the centre of the room, a chair. It is dark. From without, behind the middle wall, the sound of voices, footsteps, and the clatter of weapons, finally, from without—"It is enough! The signal sounds! To horse!" Sounds of voices and footsteps die out. Pause. Then Isaac comes from the door at the right, dragging along a carpet, which is pulled over his head, and which he later drops.

ISAAC. Are they then gone?—I hear no sound.

(*Stepping back.*)

But yes—

No, no, 'tis naught! When they, a robber band,
Searched all the castle through, I hid myself,
And on the ground all doubled up I lay.
This cover here was roof and shield alike.
But whither now? Long since I hid full well
Here in the garden what I saved and gained;
I'll fetch it later when this noise is past.—
Where is the door? How shall I save my soul?

ESTHER *enters from the door at the left.*

ISAAC. Who's there? Woe's me!

ESTHER. Is't thou?

ISAAC. Is't thou, then, Rachel?

ESTHER. What mean'st thou? Rachel? Only Esther, I!

ISAAC. Only, thou say'st? Thou art my only child—
Only, because the best.

ESTHER. Nay, rather say,
The best because the only. Aged man,
Dost thou, then, nothing know of this attack,
Nor upon whom they meant to vent their wrath?

ISAAC. I do not know, nor do I wish to know,
For has not Rachel flown, to safety gone?
Oh, she is clever, she!—God of my fathers!
Why dost thou try me—me, a poor old man,
And speak to me from out my children's mouths?
But I believe it not! 'Tis false! No, no!

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[*He sinks down beside the chair in the centre, leaning his head against it.*]

ESTHER. So then be strong through coward fearsomeness.
Yet call I others what I was myself.
For when their coming roused me from my sleep,
And I went hurrying to my sister's aid,
Into the last, remote, and inmost room,
One of them seizes me with powerful hand,
And hurls me to the ground. And coward, I,
I fall a-swooning, when I should have stood
And offered up my life to save my sister,
Or, at the very least, have died with her!
When I awoke, the deed was done, and vain
My wild attempt to bring her back to life.
Then could I weep, then could I tear my hair;
That is, indeed, true cowardice, a woman's.

ISAAC. They tell me this and that. But 'tis not true!

ESTHER. Lend me thy chair to sit upon, old man!

[*She pulls the chair forward.*]

My limbs grow weak and tremble under me.
Here will I sit and here will I keep watch.

[*She sits down.*]

Mayhap that one will think it worth his while
To burn the stubble, now the harvest's o'er,
And will return and kill what still is left.

ISAAC (*from the floor*).

Not me! Not me!—Some one is coming. Hark!
No, many come!—Save me—I flee to thee!

[*He runs to her chair, and cowers on the floor.*]

ESTHER. I like a mother will protect thee now,
The second childhood of the gray old man.
And, if death comes, then childless shalt thou die—
I following Rachel in advance of thee!

The KING appears at the centre door, with his page, who carries a torch.

KING. Shall I go farther, or content myself
With what I know, though still it is unseen?
This castle all a-wreck, laid bare and waste,
Shrieking from ev'ry corner cries to me
It is too late, the horror has been done!
And thou the blame must bear, cursed dallier,
If not, forsooth, a party to the deed!
But no, thou weepst, and tears no lies can tell.
Behold, I also weep, I weep for rage,
From hot and unslaked passion for revenge!
Come, here's a ring to set your torch within.
Go to the town, assemble all the folk,
And bid them straight unto this castle come
With arms, as chance may put within their reach;
And I, when morning comes, with written word,
Will bring the people here, at my command—
Children of toil and hard endeavor, they,

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As an avenger at their head I'll go,
And break down all the strongholds of the great,
Who, half as servants, half again as lords,
Serve but themselves and overrule their master.
Ruler and ruled, thus shall it be, and I,
Avenging, will wipe out that hybrid throng,
So proud of blood, or flowing in their veins,
Or dripping on their swords from others' wounds.
Thy light here leave and go! I'll stay alone
And hatch the progeny of my revenge.

[*The servant puts his torch into the ring beside the door and withdraws.*]

KING (*taking a step forward*).

What moves there? Can it be there still is life?
Give answer!

ISAAC. Gracious Lord ill-doer, O,
O, spare us, good assassin!

KING. You, old man?
Remind me not that Rachel was your child;
It would deface her image in my soul.
And thou—art thou not Esther?

ESTHER. Sire, I am.

KING. And is it done?

ESTHER. It is.

KING. I knew it well,
Since I the castle entered. So, no plaints!
For know, the cup is full; an added drop
Would overflow, make weak the poisonous draught.
While she still lived I was resolved to leave her,
Now dead, she ne'er shall leave my side again;
And this her picture, here upon my breast,
Will 'grave its image there, strike root within—
For was not mine the hand that murdered her?

Had she not come to me, she still would play,
A happy child, a joy to look upon.
Perhaps—but no, not that! No, no, I say!
No other man should ever touch her hand,
No other lips approach her rosy mouth,
No shameless arm—she to the King belonged,
Though now unseen, she still would be my own.
To royal might belongs such might of charms!

ISAAC. Speaks he of Rachel?

ESTHER. Of thy daughter, yes.
Though grief increase the value of the loss,
Yet must I say: Too high you rate her worth.

KING. Think'st thou? I tell thee, naught but shadows we—
I, thou, and others of the common crowd;
For if thou'rt good, why then, thou'rt learned it so;
If I am honest, I but saw naught else;
Those others, if they murder,—as they do—
Well, so their fathers did, came time and need!

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The world is but one great reechoing,
And all its harvest is but seed from seed.
But she was truth itself, ev'n though deformed,
And all she did proceeded from herself,
A-sudden, unexpected, and unlearned.
Since her I saw I felt myself alive,
And to the dreary sameness of my life
'Twas only she gave character and form.
They tell that in Arab desert wastes
The wand'rer, long tormented in the sands,
Long tortured with the sun's relentless glare,
Some time may find a blooming island's green,
Surrounded by the surge of arid waves;
There flowers bloom, there trees bestow their shade,
The breath of herbs mounts soothing in the breeze
And forms a second heav'n, arched 'neath the first.
Forsooth the serpent coils among the brush;
A famished beast, tormented by like thirst,
Perchance comes, too, to slake it at this spring;
Yet, tired and worn, the wand'rer doth rejoice,
Sucks in with greedy lips the cooling draught,
And sinks down in the rank luxuriant growth.
Luxuriant growth! In faith! I'll see her now—
See once again that proud and beauteous form,
That mouth which drew in breath and breathed out life,
And which, now silenced ever, evermore,
Accuses me of guarding her so ill.

ESTHER. Go not, O Sire! Now that the deed is done,
Let it be done. The mourning be for us!
Estrange thyself not from thy people, Sire.

KING. Think'st thou? The King I am—thou know'st full well.
She suffered outrage, but myself no less.
Justice, and punishment of ev'ry wrong
I swore upon my coronation day,
And I will keep my oath until the death.
To do this, I must make me strong and hard,
For to my anger they will sure oppose
All that the human breast holds high and dear—

Mem’ries from out my boyhood’s early days,
My manhood’s first sweet taste of woman’s love,
Friendship and gratitude and mercy, too;
My whole life, roughly bundled into one,
Will stand, as ’twere against me, fully armed,
And challenge me to combat with myself.
I, therefore, from myself must first take leave.
Her image, as I see it here and there,
On every wall, in this and every corner
Shows her to me but in her early bloom,
With all her weaknesses, with all her charm.
I’ll

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see her now, mistreated, wounded, torn;
Will lose myself in horror at the sight,
Compare each bloody mark upon her form
With this, her image, here upon my breast.
And learn to deal with monsters, like to like.

(*As ESTHER has risen.*)

Speak not a word to me! I will! This torch
Shall, like myself, inflamed, illume the way;
Gleaming, because destructive and destroyed.
She is in yonder last and inmost room,
Where I so oft—

ESTHER. She was, and there remains.

KING (*has seized the torch*).

Methinks 'tis blood I see upon my way.
It is the way to blood. O fearful night!

[*He goes out at the side door to the left.*]

ISAAC. We're in the dark.

ESTHER. Yes, dark is round about,
And round about the horror's horrid night.
But daylight comes apace. So let me try
If I can thither bear my weary limbs.

[*She goes to the window, and draws the curtain.*]

The day already dawns, its pallid gleam
Shudders to see the terrors wrought this night—
The difference 'twixt yesterday and now.

(*Pointing to the scattered jewels on the floor.*)

There, there it lies, our fortune's scattered ruin—
The tawdry baubles, for the sake of which
We, we—not he who takes the blame—but we
A sister sacrificed, thy foolish child!

Yea, all that comes is right. Whoe'er complains,
Accuses his own folly and himself.

ISAAC (*who has seated himself on the chair*).

Here will I sit. Now that the King is here
I fear them not, nor all that yet may come.

The centre door opens. Enter MANRIQUE, and GARCERAN, behind them the QUEEN, leading her child by the hand, and other nobles.

MANRIQUE. Come, enter here, arrange yourselves the while.
We have offended 'gainst his Majesty,
Seeking the good, but not within the law.
We will not try now to evade the law.

ESTHER (*on the other side, raising the overturned table with a quick movement*).

Order thyself, disorder! Lest they think
That we are terrified, or cowards prove.

QUEEN. Here are those others, here.

MANRIQUE. Nay, let them be!
What mayhap threatens us, struck them ere now.
I beg you, stand you here, in rank and file.

QUEEN. Let me come first, I am the guiltiest!

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MANRIQUE. Not so. O Queen. Thou spak'st the word, 'tis true,
But when it came to action thou didst quake,
Oppose the deed, and mercy urge instead,
Although in vain; for need became our law.
Nor would I wish the King's first burst of rage
To strike the mighty heads we most revere
As being next to him, the Kingdom's hope.
I did the deed, not with this hand, forsooth—
With counsel, and with pity, deep and dread!
The first place, then, is mine. And thou, my son—
Hast thou the heart to answer like a man
For that which at the least thou hinder'dst not,
So that thy earnest wish to make amends
And thy return have tangled thee in guilt?

GARCERAN. Behold me ready! To your side I come!
And may the King's first fury fall on me!

ESTHER (*calling across*).

You there, although all murderers alike,
Deserving every punishment and death—
Enough of mischief is already done,
Nor would I wish the horrors yet increased!
Within, beside my sister, is the King;
Enraged before he went, the sight of her
Will but inflame his passionate ire anew.
I pity, too, that woman and her child,
Half innocent, half guilty—only half.
So go while yet there's time, and do not meet
Th' avenger still too hot to act as judge.

MANRIQUE. Woman, we're Christians!

ESTHER. You have shown you are.
Commend me to the Jewess, O my God!

MANRIQUE. Prepared as Christians, too, to expiate
In meek submission all of our misdeeds.
Lay off your swords. Here now is first my own!
To be in armor augurs of defense.
Our very number makes submission less.
Divide we up the guilt each bears entire.

[*All have laid their swords on the floor before* MANRIQUE.]

So let us wait. Or rather, let one go
To urge upon the King most speedily,
The country's need demands, this way or that,
That he compose himself; and though it were
Repenting a rash deed against ourselves!
Go thou, my son!

GARCERAN (*turning around after having taken several steps*).

Behold, the King himself!

[*The* KING *rushes out of the apartment at the side. After taking a few steps, he turns about and stares fixedly at the door.*]

QUEEN. O God in Heaven!

MANRIQUE. Queen, I pray be calm!

[*The* KING *goes toward the front. He stops, with arms folded, before old* ISAAC, *who lies back as if asleep, in the armchair. Then he goes forward.*]

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ESTHER (*to her father*).

Behold thy foes are trembling! Art thou glad?
Not I. For Rachel wakes not from the dead.

[*The* KING, *in the front, gazes at his hands, and rubs them, as though washing them, one over the other. Then the same motion over his body. At last he feels his throat, moving his hands around it. In this last position, with his hands at his throat, he remains motionless, staring fixedly before him.*]

MANRIQUE. Most noble Prince and King. Most gracious Sire!

KING (*starting violently*).

Ye here? 'Tis good ye come! I sought for you—
And all of you. Ye spare me further search.

[*He steps before them, measuring them with angry glances.*]

MANRIQUE (*pointing to the weapons lying on the floor*).

We have disarmed ourselves, laid down our swords.

KING. I see the swords. Come ye to slay me, then?
I pray, complete your work. Here is my breast!

[*He opens his robe.*]

QUEEN. He has't no more!

KING. How mean you, lady fair?

QUEEN. Gone is the evil picture from his neck.

KING. I'll fetch it, then.

[*He takes a few steps toward the door at the side, and then stands still.*]

QUEEN. O God, this madness still!

MANRIQUE. We know full well, how much we, Sire, have erred—
Most greatly, that we did not leave to thee
And thine own honor thy return to self!
But, Sire, the time more pressing was than we.
The country trembled, and at all frontiers
The foemen challenged us to ward our land.

KING. And foemen must be punished—is't not so?
Ye warn me rightly; I am in their midst.
Ho, Garceran!

GARCERAN. Thou meanest me, O Sire?

KING. Yea, I mean thee! Though me thou hast betrayed,
Thou wert my friend. Come to me then, I say,
And tell me what thou think'st of her within!
Her—whom thou help'dst to slay—of that anon.
What thoughtst thou of her while she still did live?

GARCERAN. O Sire, I thought her fair.

KING. What more was she?

GARCERAN. But wanton, too, and light, with evil wiles.

KING. And that thou hidst from me while still was time?

GARCERAN. I said it, Sire!

KING. And I believed it not?
How came that? Pray, say on!

GARCERAN. My Sire—the Queen,
She thinks 'twas magic.

KING. Superstition, bah!
Which fools itself with idle make-believe.

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GARCERAN. In part, again, it was but natural.

KING. That only which is right is natural.
And was I not a king, both just and mild—
The people's idol and the nobles', too?
Not empty-minded, no, and, sure, not blind!
I say, she was not fair!

GARCERAN. How meanest, Sire?

KING. An evil line on cheek and chin and mouth.
A lurking something in that fiery glance
Envenom'd and disfigured all her charm.
But erst I've gazed upon it and compared.
When there I entered in to fire my rage,
Half fearsome of the mounting of my ire,
It happened otherwise than I had thought.
Instead of wanton pictures from the past,
Before my eyes came people, wife, and child.
With that her face seemed to distort itself,
The arms to rise, to grasp me, and to hold.
I cast her likeness from me in the tomb
And now am here, and shudder, as thou seest.

But go thou now! For, hast thou not betrayed me?
Almost I rue that I must punish you.
Go thither to thy father and those others—
Make no distinction, ye are guilty, all.

MANRIQUE (*with a strong voice*).

And thou?

KING (*after a pause*).

The man is right; I'm guilty, too.
But what is my poor land, and what the world,
If none are pure, if malefactors all!
Nay, here's my son. Step thou within our midst!
Thou shalt be guardian spirit of this land;
Perhaps a higher judge may then forgive.
Come, Dona Clara, lead him by the hand!
Benignant fortune hath vouchsafed to thee
In native freedom to pursue thy course

Until this hour; thou, then, dost well deserve
To guide the steps of innocence to us.
But hold! Here is the mother. What she did,
She did it for her child. She is forgiv'n!

[*As the* QUEEN *steps forward and bends her knee.*]

Madonna, wouldst thou punish me? Wouldst show
The attitude most seeming me toward thee?
Castilians all, behold! Here is your King,
And here is she, the regent in his stead!
I am a mere lieutenant for my son.
For as the pilgrims, wearing, all, the cross
For penance journey to Jerusalem,
So will I, conscious of my grievous stain,
Lead you against these foes of other faith
Who at the bound'ry line, from Africa,
My people threaten and my peaceful land.
If I return, and victor, with God's grace,
Then shall ye say if I am worthy still
To guard the law offended by myself.
This punishment be *yours* as well as mine,
For all of you shall follow me, and first,
Into the thickest squadrons of the foe.
And he who falls does penance for us all.
Thus do I punish you and me! My son
Here place upon a shield, like to a throne,
For he today is King of this our land.
So banded, then, let's go before the folk.

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[*A shield has been brought.*]

You women, each do give the child a hand.
Slipp'ry his first throne, and the second too!
Thou, Garceran, do thou stay at my side,
For equal wantonness we must atone—
So let us fight as though our strength were one.
And hast thou purged thyself of guilt, as I,
Perhaps that quiet, chaste, and modest maid
Will hold thee not unworthy of her hand!
Thou shalt improve him, Dona Clara, but
Let not thy virtue win his mere respect,
But lend it charm, as well. That shields from much.

[*Trumpets in the distance.*]

Hear yet They call us. Those whom I did bid
To help against you, they are ready all
To help against the common enemy,
The dreaded Moor who threats our boundaries,
And whom I will send back with shame and wounds
Into the and desert he calls home,
So that our native land be free from ill,
Well-guarded from within and from without.
On, on! Away! God grant, to victory!

[*The procession has already formed. First, some vassals, then the shield with the child, whom the women hold by both hands, then the rest of the men. Lastly, the* KING,_ leaning in a trustful manner on *GARCERAN.]*

ESTHER (*turning to her father*).

Seest thou, they are already glad and gay;
Already plan for future marriages!
They are the great ones, for th' atonement feast
They've slain as sacrifice a little one,
And give each other now their bloody hands.

[*Stepping to the centre.*]

But this I say to thee, thou haughty King,
Go, go, in all thy grand forgetfulness!
Thou deem'st thou'rt free now from my sister's power,
Because the prick of its impression's dulled,

And thou didst from thee cast what once enticed.
But in the battle, when thy wavering ranks
Are shaken by thy en'mies' greater might,
And but a pure, and strong, and guiltless heart
Is equal to the danger and its threat;
When thou dost gaze upon deaf heav'n above,
Then will the victim, sacrificed to thee,
Appear before thy quailing, trembling soul—
Not in luxuriant fairness that enticed,
But changed, distorted, as she pleased thee not—
Then, pentinent, perchance, thou'lt beat thy breast,
And think upon the Jewess of Toledo!

(*Seizing her father by the shoulder.*)

Come, father, come! A task awaits us there.

[*Pointing to the side door.*]

ISAAC (*as though waking from sleep*).
But first I'll seek my gold!

ESTHER. Think'st still of that
In sight of all this misery and woe!
Then I unsay the curse which I have spoke,
Then thou art guilty, too, and I—and she!
We stand like them within the sinners' row;
Pardon we, then, that God may pardon us!

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[*With arms outstretched toward the side door.*]

CURTAIN

THE POOR MUSICIAN (1848) BY FRANZ GRILLPARZER

TRANSLATED BY ALFRED REMY, A.M.

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In Vienna the Sunday after the full moon in the month of July of every year is, together with the following day, a real festival of the people, if ever a festival deserved the name. The people themselves attend and arrange it; and if representatives of the upper classes appear on this occasion, they may do so only in their capacity as members of the populace. There is no possibility of class discrimination; at least there was none some years ago.

On this day the Brigittenau,[62] which with the Augarten, the Leopoldstadt and the Prater, forms one uninterrupted popular pleasure-ground, celebrates its kermis. The working people reckon their good times from one St. Bridget's kermis to the next. Anticipated with eager expectation, the Saturnalian festival at last arrives. Then there is great excitement in the good-natured, quiet town. A surging crowd fills the streets. There is the clatter of footsteps and the buzz of conversation, above which rises now and then some loud exclamation. All class distinctions have disappeared; civilian and soldier share in the commotion. At the gates of the city the crowd increases. Gained, lost, and regained, the exit is forced at last. But the bridge across the Danube presents new difficulties. Victorious here also, two streams finally roll along: the old river Danube and the swollen tide of people crossing each other, one below, the other above, the former following its old bed, the latter, freed from the narrow confines of the bridge, resembling a wide, turbulent lake, overflowing and inundating everything. A stranger might consider the symptoms alarming. But it is a riot of joy, a revelry of pleasure.

Even in the space between the city and the bridge wicker-carriages are lined up for the real celebrants of this festival, the children of servitude and toil. Although overloaded, these carriages race at a gallop through the mass of humanity, which in the nick of time opens a passage for them and immediately closes in again behind them. No one is alarmed, no one is injured, for in Vienna a silent agreement exists between vehicles and people, the former promising not to run anybody over, even when going at full speed; the latter resolving not to be run over, even though neglecting all precaution.

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Every second the distance between the carriages diminishes. Occasionally more fashionable equipages mingle in the oft-interrupted procession. The carriages no longer dash along. Finally, about five or six hours before dark, the individual horses and carriages condense into a compact line, which, arresting itself and arrested by new vehicles from every side street, obviously belies the truth of the old proverb: "It is better to ride in a poor carriage than to go on foot." Stared at, pitied, mocked, the richly dressed ladies sit in their carriages, which are apparently standing still. Unaccustomed to constant stopping, the black Holstein steed rears, as if intending to jump straight up over the wicker-carriage blocking its way, a thing the screaming women and children in the plebeian vehicle evidently seem to fear. The cabby, so accustomed to rapid driving and now balked for the first time, angrily counts up the loss he suffers in being obliged to spend three hours traversing a distance which under ordinary conditions he could cover in five minutes. Quarreling and shouting are heard, insults pass back and forth between the drivers, and now and then blows with the whip are exchanged.

Finally, since in this world all standing still, however persistent, is after all merely an imperceptible advancing, a ray of hope appears even in this *status quo*. The first trees of the Augarten and the Brigittenau come into view. The country! The country! All troubles are forgotten. Those who have come in vehicles alight and mingle with the pedestrians; strains of distant dance-music are wafted across the intervening space and are answered by the joyous shouts of the new arrivals. And thus it goes on and on, until at last the broad haven of pleasure opens up and grove and meadow, music and dancing, drinking and eating, magic lantern shows and tight-rope dancing, illumination and fireworks, combine to produce a *pays de cocagne*, an El Dorado, a veritable paradise, which fortunately or unfortunately—take it as you will—lasts only this day and the next, to vanish like the dream of a summer night, remaining only as a memory, or, possibly, as a hope.

I never miss this festival if I can help it. To me, as a passionate lover of mankind, especially of the common people, and more especially so when, united into a mass, the individuals forget for a time their own private ends and consider themselves part of a whole, in which there is, after all, the spirit of divinity, nay, God Himself—to me every popular festival is a real soul-festival, a pilgrimage, an act of devotion. Even in my capacity as dramatic poet, I always find the spontaneous outburst of an overcrowded theatre ten times more interesting, even more instructive, than the sophisticated judgment of some literary matador, who is crippled in body and soul and swollen up, spider-like, with the blood of authors whom he has sucked dry. As from a huge open volume of Plutarch, which has escaped from the

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covers of the printed page, I read the biographies of these obscure beings in their merry or secretly troubled faces, in their elastic or weary step, in the attitude shown by members of the same family toward one another, in detached, half involuntary remarks. And, indeed, one can not understand famous men unless one has sympathized with the obscure! From the quarrels of drunken pushcart-men to the discords of the sons of the gods there runs an invisible, yet unbroken, thread, just as the young servant-girl, who, half against her will, follows her insistent lover away from the crowd of dancers, may be an embryo Juliet, Dido, or Medea.

Two years ago, as usual, I had mingled as a pedestrian with the pleasure-seeking visitors of the kermis. The chief difficulties of the trip had been overcome, and I found myself at the end of the Augarten with the longed-for Brigittenau lying directly before me. Only one more difficulty remained to be overcome. A narrow causeway running between impenetrable hedges forms the only connection between the two pleasure resorts, the joint boundary of which is indicated by a wooden trellised gate in the centre. On ordinary days and for ordinary pedestrians this connecting passage affords more than ample space. But on kermis-day its width, even if quadrupled, would still be too narrow for the endless crowd which, in surging forward impetuously, is jostled by those bound in the opposite direction and manages to get along only by reason of the general good nature displayed by the merry-makers.

I was drifting with the current and found myself in the centre of the causeway upon classical ground, although I was constantly obliged to stand still, turn aside, and wait. Thus I had abundant time for observing what was going on at the sides of the road. In order that the pleasure-seeking multitude might not lack a foretaste of the happiness in store for them, several musicians had taken up their positions on the left-hand slope of the raised causeway. Probably fearing the intense competition, these musicians intended to garner at the propylaea the first fruits of the liberality which had here not yet spent itself. There were a girl harpist with repulsive, staring eyes; an old invalid with a wooden leg, who, on a dreadful, evidently home-made instrument, half dulcimer, half barrel-organ, was endeavoring by means of analogy to arouse the pity of the public for his painful injury; a lame, deformed boy, forming with his violin one single, indistinguishable mass, was playing endless waltzes with all the hectic violence of his misshapen breast; and finally an old man, easily seventy years of age, in a threadbare but clean woolen overcoat, who wore a smiling, self-satisfied expression. This old man attracted my entire attention. He stood there bareheaded and baldheaded, his hat as a collection-box before him on the ground, after the manner of these people. He was belaboring an old, much-cracked violin, beating time not only by raising

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and lowering his foot, but also by a corresponding movement of his entire bent body. But all his efforts to bring uniformity into his performance were fruitless, for what he was playing seemed to be an incoherent succession of tones without time or melody. Yet he was completely absorbed in his work; his lips quivered, and his eyes were fixed upon the sheet of music before him, for he actually had notes! While all the other musicians, whose playing pleased the crowd infinitely better, were relying on their memories, the old man had placed before him in the midst of the surging crowd a small, easily portable music-stand, with dirty, tattered notes, which probably contained in perfect order what he was playing so incoherently. It was precisely the novelty of this equipment that had attracted my attention to him, just as it excited the merriment of the passing throng, who jeered him and left the hat of the old man empty, while the rest of the orchestra pocketed whole copper mines. In order to observe this odd character at my leisure, I had stepped, at some distance from him, upon the slope at the side of the causeway. For a while he continued playing. Finally he stopped, and, as if recovering himself after a long spell of absent-mindedness, he gazed at the firmament, which already began to show traces of approaching evening. Then he looked down into his hat, found it empty, put it on with undisturbed cheerfulness, and placed his bow between the strings. "*Sunt certi denique fines*" (there is a limit to everything), he said, took his music-stand, and, as though homeward bound, fought his way with difficulty through the crowd streaming in the opposite direction toward the festival.

The whole personality of the old man was specially calculated to whet my anthropological appetite to the utmost—his poorly clad, yet noble figure, his unfailing cheerfulness, so much artistic zeal combined with such awkwardness, the fact that he returned home just at the time when for others of his ilk the real harvest was only beginning, and, finally, the few Latin words, spoken, however, with the most correct accent and with absolute fluency. The man had evidently received a good education and had acquired some knowledge, and here he was—a street-musician! I was burning with curiosity to learn his history.

But a compact wall of humanity already separated us. Small as he was, and getting in everybody's way with the music-stand in his hand, he was shoved from one to another and had passed through the exit-gate while I was still struggling in the centre of the causeway against the opposing crowd. Thus I lost track of him; and when at last I had reached the quiet, open space, there was no musician to be seen far or near.

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This fruitless adventure had spoiled all my enjoyment of the popular festival. I wandered through the Augarten in all directions, and finally decided to go home. As I neared the little gate that leads out of the Augarten into Tabor Street, I suddenly heard the familiar sound of the old violin. I accelerated my steps, and, behold! there stood the object of my curiosity, playing with all his might, surrounded by several boys who impatiently demanded a waltz from him. "Play a waltz," they cried; "a waltz, don't you hear?" The old man kept on fiddling, apparently paying no attention to them, until his small audience, reviling and mocking him, left him and gathered around an organ-grinder who had taken up his position near by.

"They don't want to dance," said the old man sadly, and gathered up his musical outfit. I had stepped up quite close to him. "The children do not know any dance but the waltz," I said.

"I was playing a waltz," he replied, indicating with his bow the notes of the piece he had just been playing. "You have to play things like that for the crowd. But the children have no ear for music," he said, shaking his head mournfully.

"At least permit me to atone for their ingratitude," I said, taking a silver coin out of my pocket and offering it to him.

"Please, don't," cried the old man, at the same time warding me off anxiously with both hands—"into the hat, into the hat." I dropped the coin into his hat, which was lying in front of him. The old man immediately took it out and put it into his pocket, quite satisfied. "That's what I call going home for once with a rich harvest," he said chuckling.

"You just remind me of a circumstance," I said, "which excited my curiosity before. It seems your earnings today have not been particularly satisfactory, and yet you retire at the very moment when the real harvest is beginning. The festival, as you no doubt know, lasts the whole night, and you might easily earn more in this one night than in an entire week ordinarily. How am I to account for this?"

"How are you to account for this?" replied the old man. "Pardon me, I do not know who you are, but you must be a generous man and a lover of music." With these words he took the silver coin out of his pocket once more and pressed it between his hands, which he raised to his heart.

"I shall therefore tell you the reasons, although I have often been ridiculed for them. In the first place, I have never been a night-reveler, and I do not consider it right to incite others to such a disgusting procedure by means of playing and singing. Secondly, a man ought to establish for himself a certain order in all things, otherwise he'll run wild and there's no stopping him. Thirdly, and finally, sir, I play for the noisy throng all day long and scarcely earn a bare living. But the evening belongs to me and to my poor art. In the evening I stay at home, and"—at these words he lowered his voice, a blush

overspread his countenance and his eyes sought the ground—“then I play to myself as fancy dictates, without notes. I believe the text-books on music call it improvising.”

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We had both grown silent, he from confusion, because he had betrayed the innermost secret of his heart, I from astonishment at hearing a man speak of the highest spheres of art who was not capable of rendering even the simplest waltz in intelligible fashion. Meanwhile he was preparing to depart. “Where do you live?” I inquired. “I should like to attend your solitary practising some day.”

“Oh,” he replied, almost imploringly, “you must know that prayers should be said in private!”

“Then I’ll visit you in the daytime,” I said.

“In the daytime,” he replied, “I earn my living among the people.”

“Well, then, some morning early.”

“It almost looks,” the old man said smiling, “as though you, my dear sir, were the recipient, and I, if I may be permitted to say so, the benefactor; you are so kind, and I reject your advances so ungraciously. Your distinguished visit will always confer honor on my dwelling. Only I should like to ask you to be so very kind as to notify me beforehand of the day of your coming, in order that you may not be unduly delayed nor I be compelled to interrupt unceremoniously some business in which I may be engaged at the time. For my mornings are also devoted to a definite purpose. At any rate, I consider it my duty to my patrons and benefactors to offer something not entirely unworthy in return for their gifts. I have no desire to be a beggar, sir; I am very well aware of the fact that the other street musicians are satisfied to reel off a few street ditties, German waltzes, even melodies of indecent songs, all of which they have memorized. These they repeat incessantly, so that the public pays them either in order to get rid of them, or because their playing revives the memory of former joys of dancing or of other disorderly amusements. For this reason such musicians play from memory, and sometimes, in fact quite frequently, strike the wrong note. But far be it from me to deceive. Partly, therefore, because my memory is not of the best, partly because it might be difficult for any one to retain in his memory, note for note, complicated compositions of esteemed composers, I have made a clear copy for myself in these note-books.” With these words he showed me the pages of his music-book. To my amazement I saw in a careful, but awkward and stiff handwriting, extremely difficult compositions by famous old masters, quite black with passage-work and double-stopping. And these selections the old man played with his clumsy fingers! “In playing these pieces,” he continued, “I show my veneration for these esteemed, long since departed masters and composers, satisfy my own artistic instincts, and live in the pleasant hope that, in return for the alms so generously bestowed upon me, I may succeed in improving the taste and hearts of an audience distracted and misled on many sides. But since music of this character—to return to my subject”—and at these words a self-satisfied smile lighted up his features—“since music of this kind requires practice, my morning hours are devoted exclusively to this exercise. The first three

hours of the day for practice, the middle of the day for earning my living, the evening for myself and God; that is not an unfair division," he said, and at the same time something moist glistened in his eyes; but he was smiling.

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“Very well, then,” I said, “I shall surprise you some morning. Where do you live?” He mentioned Gardener’s Lane.

“What number?

“Number 34, one flight up.”

“Well, well,” I cried, “on the fashionable floor.”

“The house,” he said, “consists in reality only of a ground floor. But upstairs, next to the garret, there is a small room which I occupy in company with two journeymen.”

“A single room for three people?”

“It is divided into two parts,” he
answered, “and I have my own bed.”

“It is getting late,” I said, “and you must be anxious to get home. *Auf Wiedersehen!*”

At the same time I put my hand in my pocket with the intention of doubling the trifling amount I had given him before. But he had already taken up his music-stand with one hand and his violin with the other, and cried hurriedly, “I humbly ask you to refrain. I have already received ample remuneration for my playing, and I am not aware of having earned any other reward.” Saying this he made me a rather awkward bow with an approach to elegant ease, and departed as quickly as his old legs could carry him.

As I said before, I had lost for this day all desire of participating further in the festival. Consequently I turned homeward, taking the road leading to the Leopoldstadt. Tired out from the dust and heat, I entered one of the many beer-gardens, which, while overcrowded on ordinary days, had today given up all their customers to the Brigittenau. The stillness of the place, in contradistinction to the noisy crowd, did me good. I gave myself up to my thoughts, in which the old musician had a considerable share. Night had come before I thought at last of going home. I laid the amount of my bill upon the table and walked toward the city.

The old man had said that he lived in Gardener’s Lane. “Is Gardener’s Lane near-by?” I asked a smell boy who was running across the road. “Over there, sir,” he replied, pointing to a side street that ran from the mass of houses of the suburb out into the open fields. I followed the direction indicated. The street consisted of some scattered houses, which, separated by large vegetable gardens, plainly indicated the occupation of the inhabitants and the origin of the name Gardener’s Lane. I was wondering in which of these miserable huts my odd friend might live. I had completely forgotten the number; moreover it was impossible to make out any signs in the darkness. At that moment a man carrying a heavy load of vegetables passed me. “The old fellow is scraping his fiddle again,” he grumbled, “and disturbing decent people in their night’s

rest.” At the same time, as I went on, the soft, sustained tone of a violin struck my ear. It seemed to come from the open attic window of a hovel a short distance away, which, being low and without an upper story like the rest of the houses, attracted attention on account of this

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attic window in the gabled roof. I stood still. A soft distinct note increased to loudness, diminished, died out, only to rise again immediately to penetrating shrillness. It was always the same tone repeated as if the player dwelt upon it with pleasure. At last an interval followed; it was the chord of the fourth. While the player had before reveled in the sound of the single note, now his voluptuous enjoyment of this harmonic relation was very much more susceptible. His fingers moved by fits and starts, as did his bow. Through the intervening intervals he passed most unevenly, emphasizing and repeating the third. Then he added the fifth, now with a trembling sound like silent weeping, sustained, vanishing; now constantly repeated with dizzy speed; always the same intervals, the same tones. And that was what the old man called improvising. It *was* improvising after all, but from the viewpoint of the player, not from that of the listener.

I do not know how long this may have lasted and how frightful the performance had become, when suddenly the door of the house was opened, and a man, clad only in a shirt and partly buttoned trousers stepped from the threshold into the middle of the street and called up to the attic window—“Are you going to keep on all night again?” The tone of his voice was impatient, but not harsh or insulting. The violin became silent even before the speaker had finished. The man went back into the house, the attic window was closed, and soon perfect and uninterrupted silence reigned. I started for home, experiencing some difficulty in finding my way through the unknown lanes, and, as I walked along, I also improvised mentally, without, however, disturbing any one.

The morning hours have always been of peculiar value to me. It is as though I felt the need of occupying myself with something ennobling, something worth while, in the first hours of the day, thus consecrating the remainder of it, as it were. It is, therefore, only with difficulty that I can make up my mind to leave my room early in the morning, and if ever I force myself to do so without sufficient cause, nothing remains to me for the rest of the day but the choice between idle distraction and morbid introspection. Thus it happened that I put off for several days my visit to the old man, which I had agreed to pay in the morning. At last I could not master my impatience any longer, and went. I had no difficulty in finding Gardener’s Lane, nor the house. This time also I heard the tones of the violin, but owing to the closed window they were muffled and scarcely recognizable. I entered the house. A gardener’s wife, half speechless with amazement, showed me the steps leading up to the attic. I stood before a low, badly fitting door, knocked, received no answer, finally raised the latch and entered. I found myself in a quite large, but otherwise extremely wretched chamber, the wall of which on all sides followed the

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outlines of the pointed roof. Close by the door was a dirty bed in loathsome disorder, surrounded by all signs of neglect; opposite me, close beside the narrow window, was a second bed, shabby but clean and most carefully made and covered. Before the window stood a small table with music-paper and writing material, on the windowsill a few flower-pots. The middle of the room from wall to wall was designated along the floor by a heavy chalk line, and it is almost impossible to imagine a more violent contrast between dirt and cleanliness than existed on the two sides of the line, the equator of this little world. The old man had placed his music-stand close to the boundary line and was standing before it practising, completely and carefully dressed. I have already said so much that is jarring about the discords of my favorite—and I almost fear he is mine alone—that I shall spare the reader a description of this infernal concert. As the practice consisted chiefly of passage-work, there was no possibility of recognizing the pieces he was playing, but this might not have been an easy matter even under ordinary circumstances. After listening a while, I finally discovered the thread leading out of this labyrinth—the method in his madness, as it were. The old man enjoyed the music while he was playing. His conception, however, distinguished between only two kinds of effect, euphony and cacophony. Of these the former delighted, even enraptured him, while he avoided the latter, even when harmonically justified, as much as possible. Instead of accenting a composition in accordance with sense and rhythm, he exaggerated and prolonged the notes and intervals that were pleasing to his ear; he did not even hesitate to repeat them arbitrarily, when an expression of ecstasy frequently passed over his face. Since he disposed of the dissonances as rapidly as possible and played the passages that were too difficult for him in a tempo that was too slow compared with the rest of the piece, his conscientiousness not permitting him to omit even a single note, one may easily form an idea of the resulting confusion. After some time, even I couldn't endure it any longer. In order to recall him to the world of reality, I purposely dropped my hat, after I had vainly tried several other means of attracting his attention. The old man started, his knees shook, and he was scarcely able to hold the violin he had lowered to the ground. I stepped up to him. "Oh, it is you, sir," he said, as if coming to himself; "I had not counted on the fulfilment of your kind promise." He forced me to sit down, straightened things up, laid down his violin, looked around the room a few times in embarrassment, then suddenly took up a plate from a table that was standing near the door and went out. I heard him speak with the gardener's wife outside. Soon he came back again rather abashed, concealing the plate behind his back and returning it to its place stealthily. Evidently he had asked for some fruit to offer me, but had not been able to obtain it.

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“You live quite comfortably here,” I said, in order to put an end to his embarrassment. “Untidiness is not permitted to dwell here. It will retreat through the door, even though at the present moment it hasn’t quite passed the threshold.”

“My abode reaches only to that line,” said the old man, pointing to the chalk-line in the middle of the room. “Beyond it the two journeymen live.”

“And do these respect your boundary?”

“They don’t, but I do,” said he. “Only the door is common property.”

“And are you not disturbed by your neighbors?”

“Hardly. They come home late at night, and even if they startle me a little when I’m in bed, the pleasure of going to sleep again is all the greater. But in the morning I awaken them, when I put my room in order. Then they scold a little and go.” I had been observing him in the mean time. His clothes were scrupulously clean, his figure was good enough for his years, only his legs were a little too short. His hands and feet were remarkably delicate. “You are looking at me,” he said, “and thinking, too.”

“I confess that I have some curiosity concerning your past,” I replied.

“My past?” he repeated. “I have no past. Today is like yesterday, and tomorrow like today. But the day after tomorrow and beyond—who can know about that? But God will look after me; He knows best.”

“Your present mode of life is probably monotonous enough,” I continued, “but your past! How did it happen—”

“That I became a street-musician?” he asked, filling in the pause that I had voluntarily made. I now told him how he had attracted my attention the moment I caught sight of him; what an impression he had made upon me by the Latin words he had uttered. “Latin!” he echoed. “Latin! I did learn it once upon a time, or rather, I was to have learned it and might have done so. *Loqueris latine?"*—he turned to me; “but I couldn’t continue; it is too long ago. So that is what you call my past? How it all came about? Well then, all sorts of things have happened, nothing special, but all sorts of things. I should like to hear the story myself again. I wonder whether I haven’t forgotten it all. It is still early in the morning,” he continued, putting his hand into his vest-pocket, in which, however, there was no watch. I drew out mine; it was barely nine o’clock. “We have time, and I almost feel like talking.” Meanwhile he had grown visibly more at ease. His figure became more erect. Without further ceremony he took my hat out of my hand and laid it upon the bed. Then he seated himself, crossed one leg over the other, and assumed the attitude of one who is going to tell a story in comfort.

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“No doubt,” he began, “you have heard of Court Councilor X?” Here he mentioned the name of a statesman who, in the middle of the last century, had under the modest title of a Chief of Department exerted an enormous influence, almost equal to that of a minister. I admitted that I knew of him. “He was my father,” he continued.—His father! The father of the old musician, of the beggar. This influential, powerful man—his father! The old man did not seem to notice my astonishment, but with evident pleasure continued the thread of his narrative. “I was the second of three brothers. Both the others rose to high positions in the government service, but they are now dead. Only I am still alive,” he said, pulling at his threadbare trousers and picking off some little feathers with downcast eyes. “My father was ambitious and a man of violent temper. My brothers satisfied him. I was considered a slow coach, and I *was* slow. If I remember rightly,” he continued, turning aside as though looking far away, with his head resting upon his left hand, “I might have been capable of learning various things, if only I had been given time and a systematic training. My brothers leaped from one subject to another with the agility of gazelles, but I could make absolutely no headway, and whenever only a single word escaped me, I was obliged to begin again from the very beginning. Thus I was constantly driven. New material was to occupy the place which had not yet been vacated by the old, and I began to grow obstinate. Thus they even drove me into hating music, which is now the delight and at the same time the support of my life. When I used to improvise on my violin at twilight in order to enjoy myself in my own way, they would take the instrument away from me, asserting that this ruined my fingering. They would also complain of the torture inflicted upon their ears and made me wait for the lesson, when the torture began for me. In all my life I have never hated anything or any one so much as I hated the violin at that time.

“My father, who was extremely dissatisfied, scolded me frequently and threatened to make a mechanic of me. I didn’t dare say how happy that would have made me. I should have liked nothing better than to become a turner or a compositor. But my father was much too proud ever to have permitted such a thing. Finally a public examination at school, which they had persuaded him to attend in order to appease him, brought matters to a climax. A dishonest teacher arranged in advance what he was going to ask me, and so everything went swimmingly. But toward the end I had to recite some verses of Horace from memory and I missed a word. My teacher, who had been nodding his head in approval and smiling at my father, came to my assistance when I broke down, and whispered the word to me, but I was so engrossed trying to locate the word in my memory and to establish its connection with the context, that I failed to hear

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him. He repeated it several times—all in vain. Finally my father lost his patience, *'cachinnum'* (laughter)—that was the word—he roared at me in a voice of thunder. That was the end. Although I now knew the missing word, I had forgotten all the rest. All attempts to bring me back on the right track were in vain. I was obliged to rise in disgrace and when I went over as usual to kiss my father's hand, he pushed me back, rose, bowed hastily to the audience, and went away. 'That shabby beggar,' he called me; I wasn't one at the time, but I am now. Parents prophesy when they speak. At the same time my father was a good man, only hot tempered and ambitious.

"From that day on he never spoke to me again. His orders were conveyed to me by the servants. On the very next day I was informed that my studies were at an end. I was quite dismayed, for I realized what a blow it must have been to my father. All day long I did nothing but weep, and between my crying spells I recited the Latin verses, in which I was now letter-perfect, together with the preceding and following ones. I promised to make up in diligence what I lacked in talent, if I were only permitted to continue in school, but my father never revoked a decision.

"For some time I remained at home without an occupation. At last I was placed in an accountant's office on probation; but arithmetic had never been my forte. An offer to enter the military service I refused with abhorrence. Even now I cannot see a uniform without an inward shudder. That one should protect those near and dear, even at the risk's of one's life, is quite proper, and I can understand it; but bloodshed and mutilation as a vocation, as an occupation—never!" And with that he felt his arms with his hands, as if experiencing pain from wounds inflicted upon himself and others.

"Next I was employed in the chancery office as a copyist. There I was in my element. I had always practised penmanship with enthusiasm; and even now I know of no more agreeable pastime than joining stroke to stroke with good ink on good paper to form words or merely letters. But musical notes are beautiful above everything, only at that time I didn't think of music.

"I was industrious, but too conscientious. An incorrect punctuation mark, an illegible or missing word in a first draft, even if it could be supplied from the context, would cause me many an unhappy hour. While trying to make up my mind whether to follow the original closely or to supply missing material, the time slipped by, and I gained a reputation for being negligent, although I worked harder than any one else. In this manner I spent several years, without receiving any salary. When my turn for promotion came, my father voted for another candidate at the meeting of the board, and the other members voted with him out of deference.

"About this time—well, well," he interrupted himself, "this is turning out to be a story after all. I shall continue the story. About this time two events occurred, the saddest and the

happiest of my life, namely my leaving home and my return to the gentle art of music, to my violin, which has remained faithful to me to this day.

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“In my father’s house, where I was ignored by the other members of the family, I occupied a rear room looking out upon our neighbor’s yard. At first I took my meals with the family, though no one spoke a word to me. But when my brothers received appointments in other cities and my father was invited out to dinner almost daily—my mother had been dead for many years—it was found inconvenient to keep house for me. The servants were given money for their meals. So was I; only I didn’t receive mine in cash: it was paid monthly to the restaurant. Consequently I spent little time in my room, with the exception of the evening hours; for my father insisted that I should be at home within half an hour after the closing of the office, at the latest. Then I sat there in the darkness on account of my eyes, which were weak even at that time. I used to think of one thing and another, and was neither happy nor unhappy.

“When I sat thus I used to hear some one in the neighbor’s yard singing a song—really several songs, one of which, however, pleased me particularly. It was so simple, so touching, and the musical expression was so perfect, that it was not necessary to hear the words. Personally I believe that words spoil the music anyway.” Now he opened his lips and uttered a few hoarse, rough tones. “I have no voice,” he said, and took up his violin. He played, and this time with proper expression, the melody of a pleasing, but by no means remarkable song, his fingers trembling on the strings and some tears finally rolling down his cheeks.

“That was the song,” he said, laying down his violin. “I heard it with ever-growing pleasure. However vivid it was in my memory, I never succeeded in getting even two notes right with my voice, and I became almost impatient from listening. Then my eyes fell upon my violin which, like an old armor, had been hanging unused on the wall since my boyhood. I took it down and found it in tune, the servant probably having used it during my absence. As I drew the bow over the strings it seemed to me, sir, as though God’s finger had touched me. The tone penetrated into my heart, and from my heart it found its way out again. The air about me was pregnant with intoxicating madness. The song in the courtyard below and the tones produced by my fingers had become sharers of my solitude. I fell upon my knees and prayed aloud, and could not understand that I had ever held this exquisite, divine instrument in small esteem, that I had even hated it in my childhood, and I kissed the violin and pressed it to my heart and played on and on.

“The song in the yard—it was a woman who was singing—continued in the meantime uninterruptedly. But it was not so easy to play it after her, for I didn’t have a copy of the notes. I also noticed that I had pretty nearly forgotten whatever I had once acquired of the art of playing the violin; consequently I couldn’t play anything in particular, but could play only in

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a general way. With the exception of that song the musical compositions themselves have always been a matter of indifference to me, an attitude in which I have persisted to this day. The musicians play Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart and Sebastian Bach, but not one plays God Himself. No one can play the eternal comfort and blessing of tone and sound, its magic correlation with the eager, straining ear; so that"—he continued in a lower voice and blushing with confusion—"so that the third tone forms a harmonic interval with the first, as does the fifth, and the leading tone rises like a fulfilled hope, while the dissonance is bowed down like conscious wickedness or arrogant pride.

"And then there are the mysteries of suspension and inversion, by means of which even the second is received into favor in the bosom of harmony. A musician once explained all these things to me, but that was later. And then there are still other marvels which I do not understand, as the fugue, counterpoint, the canon for two and three voices, and so on—an entire heavenly structure, one part joined to the other without mortar and all held together by God's own hand. With a few exceptions, nobody wants to know anything about these things. They would rather disturb this breathing of souls by the addition of words to be spoken to the music, just as the children of God united with the daughters of the Earth. And by means of this combination of word and music they imagine they can affect and impress a calloused mind. Sir," he concluded at last, half exhausted, "speech is as necessary to man as food, but we should also preserve undefiled the nectar meted out by God."

I could scarcely believe it was the same man, so animated had he become. He paused for a moment. "Where did I stop in my story?" he asked finally. "Oh yes, at the song and my attempt to imitate it. But I didn't succeed. I stepped to the open window in order to hear better. The singer was just crossing the court. She had her back turned to me, yet she seemed familiar to me. She was carrying a basket with what looked like pieces of cake dough. She entered a little gate in the corner of the court, where there probably was an oven, for while she continued her song, I heard her rattling some wooden utensils, her voice sounding sometimes muffled, sometimes clear, like the voice of one who bends down and sings into a hollow space and then rises again and stands in an upright position. After a while she came back, and only now I discovered why she had seemed familiar to me before. I had actually known her for some time, for I had seen her in the chancery office.

"My acquaintance with her was made like this: The office hours began early and extended beyond noon. Several of the younger employees, who either actually had an appetite or else wanted to kill a half hour, were in the habit of taking a light lunch about eleven o'clock. The tradespeople, who know how to turn everything to their advantage, saved the gourmands a walk and brought their wares into the office building, where they took up their position on the stairs and in the corridors. A baker sold rolls, a

costermonger vended cherries. Certain cakes, however, which were baked by the daughter of a grocer in the vicinity and sold while still hot, were especially popular.

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“Her customers stepped out into the corridor to her; and only rarely, when bidden, did she venture into the office itself, which she was asked to leave the moment the rather peevish director caught sight of her—a command that she obeyed only with reluctance and mumbling angry words.

“Among my colleagues the girl did not pass for a beauty. They considered her too small, and were not able to determine the color of her hair. Some there were who denied that she had cat’s eyes, but all agreed that she was pock-marked. Of her buxom figure all spoke with enthusiasm, but they considered her rough, and one of them had a long story to tell about a box on the ear, the effects of which he claimed to have felt for a week afterwards.

“I was not one of her customers. In the first place I had no money; in the second, I have always been obliged to look upon eating and drinking as a necessity, sometimes too much so, so that it has never entered my head to take pleasure and delight in it. And so we took no notice of each other. Only once, in order to tease me, my colleagues made her believe that I wanted some of her cakes. She stepped up to my desk and held her basket out to me. ‘I don’t want anything, my dear young woman,’ I said. ‘Well, why do you send for me then?’ she cried angrily. I excused myself, and as I saw at once that a practical joke had been played, I explained the situation as best I could. ’Well then, at least give me a sheet of paper to put my cakes on,’ she said. I tried to make her understand that it was chancery paper and didn’t belong to me, but that I had some paper at home which was mine and that I would bring her some of it. ‘I have enough myself at home,’ she said mockingly, and broke into a little laugh as she went away.

“That had happened only a few days before and I was thinking of turning the acquaintance to immediate account for the fulfilment of my wish. The next morning, therefore, I buttoned a whole ream of paper—of which there was never a scarcity in our home—under my coat, and went to the office. In order not to betray myself, I kept my armor with great personal inconvenience upon my body until, toward noon, I knew from the going and coming of my colleagues and from the sound of the munching jaws that the cake-vender had arrived. I waited until I had reason to believe that the rush of business was over, then I went out, pulled out my paper, mustered up sufficient courage, and stepped up to the girl. With her basket before her on the ground and her right foot resting on a low stool, on which she usually sat, she stood there humming a soft melody, beating time with her right foot. As I approached she measured me from head to foot, which only added to my confusion. ’My dear young woman,’ I finally began, ’the other day you asked me for paper and I had none that belonged to me. Now I have brought some from home, and’—with that I held out the paper. ‘I told you the other day,’ she replied,

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’that I have plenty of paper at home. However, I can make use of everything.’ Saying this, she accepted my present with a slight nod and put it into her basket. ‘Perhaps you’ll take some cake?’ she asked, sorting her wares, ‘although the best have been sold.’ I declined, but told her that I had another wish. ‘And what may that be?’ she asked, putting her arm through the handle of her basket, drawing herself up to her full height, and flashing her eyes angrily at me. I lost no time telling her that I was a lover of music, although only a recent convert, and that I had heard her singing such beautiful songs, especially one. ‘You—heard me—singing?’ she flared up. ‘Where?’ I then told her that I lived near her, and that I had been listening to her while she was at work in the courtyard; that one of her songs had pleased me particularly, and that I had tried to play it after her on my violin. ‘Can you be the man,’ she exclaimed, ‘who scrapes so on the fiddle?’ As I mentioned before, I was only a beginner at that time and not until later, by dint of much hard work, did I acquire the necessary dexterity;” the old man interrupted himself, while with the fingers of his left hand he made movements in the air, as though he were playing the violin. “I blushed violently,” he continued the narrative, “and I could see by the expression of her face that she repented her harsh words. ‘My dear young woman,’ I said, ’the scraping arises from the fact that I do not possess the music of the song, and for this reason I should like to ask you most respectfully for a copy of it.’ ’For a copy?’ she exclaimed. ’The song is printed and is sold at every street-corner.’ ‘The song?’ I replied. ’You probably mean only the words!’ ‘Why, yes; the words, the song.’ ’But the melody to which it is sung—’ ‘Are such things written down?’ she asked. ‘Surely,’ was my reply, ‘that is the most important part.’ ’And how did you learn it, my dear young woman?’ ’I heard some one singing it, and then I sang it after her.’ I was astonished at this natural gift. And I may add in passing that uneducated people often possess the greatest natural talent. But, after all, this is not the proper thing, not real art. I was again plunged into despair. ‘But which song do you want?’ she asked. ‘I know so many.’ ‘All without the notes?’ ’Why, of course. Now which was it?’ ‘It is so very beautiful,’ I explained. ’Right at the beginning the melody rises, then it becomes fervent, and finally it ends very softly. You sing it more frequently than the others.’ ’Oh, I suppose it’s this one,’ she said, setting down her basket, and placing her foot on the stool. Then, keeping time by nodding her head, she sang the song in a very low, yet clear voice, so beautifully and so charmingly that, before she had quite finished, I tried to grasp her hand, which was hanging at her side. ‘What do you mean!’ she cried, drawing back her arm, for she probably thought I intended to take her hand immodestly. I wanted to kiss it, although she was only a poor girl.—Well, after all, I too am poor now!

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“I ran my fingers through my hair in my eagerness to secure the song and when she observed my anxiety, she consoled me and said that the organist of St. Peter’s visited her father’s store frequently to buy nutmeg, that she would ask him to write out the music of the song, and that I might call for it in a few days. Thereupon she took up her basket and went, while I accompanied her as far as the staircase. As I was making a final bow on the top step, I was surprised by the director, who bade me go to my work and railed against the girl, in whom, he asserted, there wasn’t a vestige of good. I was very angry at this and was about to retort that I begged to differ with him, when I realized that he had returned to his office. Therefore I calmed myself and also went back to my desk. But from that time on he was firmly convinced that I was a careless employee and a dissipated fellow.

“As a matter of fact, I was unable to do any decent work on that day or on the following days, for the song kept running through my head. I seemed to be in a trance. Several days passed and I was in doubt whether to call for the music or not. The girl had said that the organist came to her father’s store to buy nutmeg; this he could use only for his beer. Now the weather had been cold for some time, and therefore it was probable that the good organist would rather drink wine and thus not be in need of nutmeg so soon. A too hasty inquiry might seem impolite and obtrusive, while, on the other hand, a delay might be interpreted as indifference. I didn’t dare address the girl in the corridor, since our first meeting had been noised broad among my colleagues, and they were thirsting for an opportunity to play a practical joke on me.

“In the meantime I had again taken up my violin eagerly and devoted myself to a thorough study of the fundamental principles. Occasionally I permitted myself to improvise, but always closed my window carefully in advance, knowing that my playing had found disfavor. But even when I did open the window, I never heard my song again. Either my neighbor did not sing at all, or else she sang softly and behind closed doors, so that I could not distinguish one note from another.

“At last, about three weeks having passed, I could wait no longer. Two evenings in succession I had even stolen out upon the street, without a hat, so that the servants might think I was looking for something in the house, but whenever I came near the grocery store such a violent trembling seized me that I was obliged to turn back whether I wanted to or not. At last, however, as I said, I couldn’t wait any longer. I took courage, and one evening left my room, this time also without a hat, went downstairs and walked with a firm step through the street to the grocery store, in front of which I stopped for a moment, deliberating what was to be done next. The store was lighted and I heard voices within. After some hesitation I leaned forward and peered in from

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the side. I saw the girl sitting close before the counter by the light, picking over some peas or beans in a wooden bowl. Before her stood a coarse, powerful man, who looked like a butcher; his jacket was thrown over his shoulders and he held a sort of club in his hand. The two were talking, evidently in good humor, for the girl laughed aloud several times, but without interrupting her work or even looking up. Whether it was my unnatural, strained position, or whatever else it may have been, I began to tremble again, when I suddenly felt myself seized by a rough hand from the back and dragged forward. In a twinkling I was in the store, and when I was released and looked about me, I saw that it was the proprietor himself, who, returning home, had caught me peering through his window and seized me as a suspicious character. 'Confound it!' he cried, 'now I understand what becomes of my prunes and the handfuls of peas and barley which are taken from my baskets in the dark. Damn it all!' With that he made for me, as though he meant to strike me.

"I felt utterly crushed, but the thought that my honesty was being questioned soon brought me back to my senses. I therefore made a curt bow and told the uncivil man that my visit was not intended for his prunes or his barley, but for his daughter. At these words the butcher, who was standing in the middle of the store, set up a loud laugh and turned as if to go, having first whispered a few words to the girl, to which she laughingly replied with a resounding slap of her flat hand upon his back. The grocer accompanied him to the door. Meanwhile all my courage had again deserted me, and I stood facing the girl, who was indifferently picking her peas and beans as though the whole affair didn't concern her in the least. 'Sir,' he said, 'what business have you with my daughter?' I tried to explain the circumstance and the cause of my visit. 'Song! I'll sing you a song!' he exclaimed, moving his right arm up and down in rather threatening fashion. 'There it is,' said the girl, tilting her chair sideways and pointing with her hand to the counter without setting down the bowl. I rushed over and saw a sheet of music lying there. It was the song. But the old man got there first, and crumpled the beautiful paper in his hand. 'What does this mean?' he said. 'Who is this fellow?' 'He is one of the gentlemen from the chancery,' she replied, throwing a worm-eaten pea a little farther away than the rest. 'A gentleman from the chancery,' he cried, 'in the dark, without a hat?' I accounted for the absence of a hat by explaining that I lived close by; at the same time I designated the house. 'I know the house,' he cried. 'Nobody lives there but the Court Councilor'—here he mentioned the name of my father—'and I know all the servants.' 'I am the son of the Councilor,' I said in a low voice, as though I were telling a lie. I have seen many changes during my life, but none so sudden as that which came

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over the man at these words. His mouth, which he had opened to heap abuse upon me, remained open, his eyes still looked threatening, but about the lower part of his face a smile began to play which spread more and more. The girl remained indifferent and continued in her stooping posture. Without interrupting her work, she pushed her loose hair back behind her ears. 'The son of the Court Councilor!' finally exclaimed the old man, from whose face the clouds had entirely disappeared. 'Won't you make yourself comfortable, sir? Barbara, bring a chair!' The girl stirred reluctantly on hers. 'Never mind, you sneak!' he said, taking a basket from a stool and wiping the dust from the latter with his handkerchief. 'This is a great honor,' he continued. 'Has His Honor, the Councilor—I mean His Honor's son, also taken up music? Perhaps you sing like my daughter, or rather quite differently, from notes and according to rule?' I told him that nature had not gifted me with a voice. 'Oh, perhaps you play the piano, as fashionable people do?' I told him I played the violin. 'I used to scratch on the fiddle myself when I was a boy,' he said. At the word 'scratch' I involuntarily looked at the girl and saw a mocking smile on her lips, which annoyed me greatly.

"'You ought to take an interest in the girl, that is, in her music,' he continued. 'She has a good voice, and possesses other good qualities; but refinement—good heavens, where should she get it?' So saying, he repeatedly rubbed the thumb and forefinger of his right hand together. I was quite confused at being undeservedly credited with such a considerable knowledge of music, and was just on the point of explaining the true state of affairs, when some one passing the store called in 'Good evening, all!' I started, for it was the voice of one of our servants. The grocer had also recognized it. Putting out the tip of his tongue and raising his shoulders, he whispered: 'It was one of the servants of His Honor, your father, but he couldn't recognize you, because you were standing with your back to the door.' This was so, to be sure, but nevertheless the feeling of doing something on the sly, something wrong, affected me painfully. I managed to mumble a few words of parting, and went out. I should even have left the song behind had not the old man run into the street after me and pressed it into my hand.

"I reached my room and awaited developments. And I didn't have to wait long. The servant had recognized me after all. A few days later my father's private secretary looked me up in my room and announced that I was to leave my home. All my remonstrances were in vain. A little room had been rented for me in a distant suburb and thus I was completely banished from my family. Nor did I see my singer again. She had been forbidden to vend her cakes in the chancery, and I couldn't make up my mind to visit her father's store, since I knew that this would displease mine. Once, when accidentally I met the old grocer on the street, he even turned away from me with an angry expression, and I was stunned. And so I got out my violin and played and practised, being frequently alone half the day.

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“But even worse things were in store for me. The fortunes of our house were declining. My youngest brother, a headstrong, impetuous fellow, was an officer in a regiment of dragoons. As the result of a reckless wager, he foolishly swam the Danube, mounted and in full armor, while heated from the exertion of a ride. This escapade, which occurred while he was far away in Hungary, cost him his life. My older brother, my father’s favorite, held an appointment as a member of provincial council. In constant opposition to the governor of the province, he even went so far as to promulgate untruthful statements in order to injure his opponent, being secretly incited thereto, as rumor had it, by our father. An investigation followed, and my brother took French leave of the country. Our father’s enemies, of whom there were many, utilized this circumstance to bring about his downfall. Attacked on all sides, and at the same time enraged at the waning of his influence, he delivered daily the most bitter speeches at the meetings of the council, and it was in the middle of a speech that he suffered a stroke of apoplexy. They brought him home, bereft of the power of speech. I myself heard nothing of all this. The next day in the chancery I noticed that the men were whispering secretly and pointing at me with their fingers. But I was accustomed to such treatment and paid no further attention to it. On the following Friday—the sad event had occurred on a Wednesday—a black suit of clothes with crepe was suddenly brought to my room. I was naturally astonished, asked for the reason, and was informed of what had taken place. Ordinarily my body is strong and capable of resistance, but then I was completely overcome. I fell to the floor in a swoon. They carried me to bed, where I lay in a fever and was delirious throughout the day and the entire night. The next morning my strong constitution had conquered, but my father was dead and buried.

“I had not been able to speak to him again, to ask his forgiveness for all the sorrow I had brought upon him, or to thank him for all the undeserved favors—yes, favors, for his intentions had been good; and some time I hope to meet him again where we are judged by our intentions and not by our acts.

“For several days I kept my room and scarcely touched any food. At last I went out, but came home again immediately after dinner. Only in the evening I wandered about the dark streets like Cain, the murderer of his brother. My father’s house appeared to me a dreadful phantom, and I avoided it most carefully. But once, staring vacantly before me, I found myself unexpectedly in the vicinity of the dreaded house. My knees trembled so that I was obliged to seek support. Leaning against the wall behind me, I recognized the door of the grocery store. Barbara was sitting inside, a letter in her hand, the light upon the counter beside her, and standing up straight close by was her father, who seemed

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to be urging something upon her. I should have entered, even though my life had been at stake. You have no idea how awful it is to have no one to pour out one's heart to, no one to look to for sympathy. The old man, I knew very well, was angry with me, but I thought the girl would say a kind word to me. But it turned out just the other way. Barbara rose as I entered, looked at me haughtily, and went into the adjoining room, locking the door behind her. The old man, however, shook hands with me, bade me sit down and consoled me, at the same time intimating that I was now a rich man and my own master. He wanted to know how much I had inherited. I couldn't tell him. He urged me to go to court about it, which I promised to do. He was of the opinion that no fortune could be made in a chancery. He then advised me to invest my inheritance in a business, assured me that gallnuts and fruit would yield a good profit and that a partner who understood this particular business could turn dimes into dollars, and said that he himself had at one time done well in that line.

"While he was telling me all this, he repeatedly called for the girl, who gave no sign of life, however, although it seemed to me as though I sometimes heard a rustling near the door. But since she did not put in an appearance, and since the old man talked of nothing but money, I finally took my leave, the grocer regretting that he could not accompany me, as he was alone in the store. I was grievously disappointed that my hopes had not been fulfilled, and yet I felt strangely consoled. As I stopped in the street and looked over toward my father's house, I suddenly heard a voice behind me saying in a subdued and indignant tone: 'Don't be too ready to trust everybody; they're after your money.' Although I turned quickly, I saw no one. Only the rattling of a window on the ground floor of the grocer's house told me, even if I had not recognized the voice, that the secret warning had come from Barbara. So she had overheard what had been said in the store! Did she intend to warn me against her father? Or had it come to her knowledge that immediately after my father's death colleagues of the chancery as well as utter strangers had approached me with requests for support and aid, and that I had promised to help them as soon as I should be in possession of the money? My promises I was obliged to keep, but I resolved to be more careful in future. I applied for my inheritance. It was less than had been expected, but still a considerable sum, nearly eleven thousand gulden. The whole day my room was besieged by people demanding financial assistance. I had almost become hardened, however, and granted a request only when the distress was really great. Barbara's father also came. He scolded me for not having been around for three days, whereupon I truthfully replied that I feared I was unwelcome to his daughter. But he told me with a malicious laugh that alarmed me, not to worry on that score; that he had brought her to her senses. Thus reminded of Barbara's warning, I concealed the amount of the inheritance when the subject came up in the course of the conversation and also skilfully evaded his business proposals.

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“As a matter of fact, I was already turning other prospects over in my mind. In the chancery, where I had been tolerated only on account of my father, my place had already been filled by another, which troubled me little, since no salary was attached to the position. But my father’s secretary, whom recent events had deprived of his livelihood, informed me of a plan for the establishment of a bureau of information, copying, and translation. For this undertaking I was to advance the initial cost of equipment, he being prepared to undertake the management. At my request the field of copying was extended so as to include music, and now I was perfectly happy. I advanced the necessary sum, but, having grown cautious, demanded a written receipt. The rather large bond for the establishment, which I likewise furnished, caused me no worry, since it had to be deposited with the court, where it was as safe as though it were locked up in my strong-box.

“The affair was settled, and I felt relieved, exalted; for the first time in my life I was independent—I was a man at last. I scarcely gave my father another thought. I moved into a better apartment, procured better clothes, and when it had become dark, I went through familiar streets to the grocery store, with a swinging step and humming my song, although not quite correctly. I never have been able to strike the B flat in the second half. I arrived in the best of spirits, but an icy look from Barbara immediately threw me back into my former state of timidity. Her father received me most cordially; but she acted as if no one were present, continued making paper bags, and took no part whatever in our conversation. Only when we touched upon the subject of my inheritance, she rose in her seat and exclaimed in an almost threatening tone, ‘Father!’ Thereupon the old man immediately changed the subject. Aside from that, she said nothing during the whole evening, didn’t give me a second look, and, when I finally took my leave, her ‘good-night’ sounded almost like a ‘thank heaven.’

“But I came again and again, and gradually she yielded—not that I ever did anything that pleased her. She scolded me and found fault with me incessantly. Everything I did she considered clumsy; God had given me two left hands; my coat fitted so badly, it made me look like a scarecrow; my walk was a cross between that of a duck and cock. What she disliked especially was my politeness toward the customers. As I had nothing to do until the opening of the copying bureau, where I should have direct dealings with the public, I considered it a good preliminary training to take an active part in the retail business of the grocery store. This often kept me there half the day. I weighed spices, counted out nuts and prunes for the children, and acted as cashier. In this latter capacity I was frequently guilty of errors, in which event Barbara would interfere by forcibly taking away whatever money I had in my hand,

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and ridiculing and mocking me before the customers. If I bowed to a customer or recommended myself to his kind consideration, she would say brusquely, even before he had left the store, 'The goods carry their own recommendation,' and turn her back upon me. At other times, however, she was all kindness; she listened to me when I told her what was going on in the city, or when I spoke of my early years, or of the business of the chancery, where we had first met. But at such times she let me do all the talking and expressed her approval or—as happened more frequently—her disapproval only by casual words.

"We never spoke of music or singing. In the first place, she believed one should either sing or keep quiet, that there was no sense in talking about it. But it was not possible to do any singing—the store was not the proper place for it, and the rear room, which she occupied with her father, I was not allowed to enter. Once, however, when I entered unnoticed, she was standing on tip-toe, her back turned toward me, with her hands raised above her head, groping along one of the upper shelves as if looking for something. At the same time she was singing softly to herself—it was the song, my song! She was warbling like a hedge-sparrow when it bathes its breast in the brook, tosses its head, ruffles its feathers, and smoothes them again with its little beak. I seemed to be walking in a green meadow. I crept nearer and nearer, and was so close that the melody seemed no longer to come from without, but out of my own breast—a song of souls. I was unable to contain myself any longer, and as she stood there straining forward, her shoulders thrown slightly back towards me, I threw both arms around her body. But then the storm broke. She whirled around like a top. Her face livid with rage, she stood before me; her hand twitched, and before I could utter a word of apology, the blow came.

"As I have said before, my colleagues in the chancery used to tell a story of a box on the ear, which Barbara, when she was still vending cakes, had dealt out to an impertinent fellow. What they then said of the strength of this rather small girl and of the power of her hand, seemed greatly and humorously exaggerated. But it was a fact; her strength was tremendous. I stood as though I had been struck by a thunderbolt. The lights were dancing before my eyes, but they were the lights of heaven. It seemed like sun, moon and stars, like angels playing hide-and-seek and singing at the same time. I had visions; I was entranced. She, however, scarcely less astonished than I, passed her hand gently over the place she had struck. 'I'm afraid I struck more violently than I intended,' she said, and, like a second thunderbolt, I suddenly felt her warm breath and her lips upon my cheeks. She kissed me—only gently, but it was a kiss, a kiss upon this very cheek." As he said this, the old man put his hand to his cheek, and tears came to his eyes. "What happened after that I do not know," he continued. "I only remember that I rushed toward her and that she ran into the sitting room and threw herself against the glass door, while I pushed against it from the other side. As she pressed forward

with all her might against the glass panel, I took courage, dear sir, and returned her kiss with great fervor—through the glass!

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"'Well, this is a jolly party,' I heard some one call out behind me. It was the grocer, just returning home. 'People who love each other are fond of teasing each other,' he said. 'Come out, Barbara, don't be foolish. There's naught amiss in an honest kiss.' But she didn't come out. I took my leave after having stammered a few words of apology, scarcely knowing what I was saying. In my confusion I took the grocer's hat instead of my own, and he laughingly corrected the mistake. This was, as I called it before, the happiest day of my life—I had almost said, the only happy day. But that wouldn't be true, for man receives many favors from God.

"I didn't know exactly what the girl's feelings toward me were. Was she angry or had I conciliated her? The next visit cost me a great effort. But I found her amiable. She sat over her work, humble and quiet, not irritable as usual, and motioned with her head toward a stool standing near, intimating that I should sit down and help her. Thus we sat and worked. The old man prepared to go out. 'You needn't go, Father,' she said, 'what you want to do has already been attended to.' He stamped his foot on the floor and remained. Walking up and down he talked of different things, but I didn't dare take part in the conversation. Suddenly the girl uttered a low scream. She had cut her finger slightly and, although she didn't usually pay any attention to such trifles, she shook her hand back and forth. I wanted to examine the cut, but she beckoned to me to continue my work. 'There is no end to your tomfoolery,' the old man grumbled; and, stepping before the girl, he said in a loud voice, 'What I was going to do hasn't been attended to at all,' and with a heavy tread he went out of the door. Then I started to make apologies for the day before, but she interrupted me and said, 'Let us forget that, and talk of more sensible things.'

"She raised her head, looked at me from head to foot, and continued in a calm tone of voice, 'I scarcely remember the beginning of our acquaintance, but for some time you have been calling more and more frequently, and we have become accustomed to you. Nobody will deny that you have an honest heart, but you are weak and always interested in matters of secondary importance, so that you are hardly capable of managing your own affairs. It is therefore the duty of your friends and acquaintances to look out for you, in order that people may not take advantage of you. Frequently you sit here in the store half the day, counting and weighing, measuring and bargaining, but what good does that do you? How do you expect to make your living in future?' I mentioned the inheritance from my father. 'I suppose it's quite large,' she said. I named the amount. 'That's much and little,' she replied. 'Much to invest, little to live upon. My father made you a proposition, but I dissuaded you. For, on the one hand, he has lost money himself in similar ventures, and on

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the other hand,' she added with lowered voice, 'he is so accustomed to take advantage of strangers that it's quite possible he wouldn't treat friends any better. You must have somebody at your side who has your interests at heart.' I pointed to her. 'I am honest,' she said, laying her hand upon her heart. Her eyes, which were ordinarily of a greyish hue, shone bright blue, the blue of the sky. 'But I'm in a peculiar position. Our business yields little profit, and so my father intends to set himself up as an innkeeper. Now that's no place for me, and nothing remains for me, therefore, but needlework, for I will not go out as a servant.' As she said this she looked like a queen. 'As a matter of fact I've had another offer,' she continued, drawing a letter from her apron and throwing it half reluctantly upon the counter. 'But in that case I should be obliged to leave the city.' 'Would you have to go far away?' I asked. 'Why? What difference would that make to you?' I told her I should move to the same place. 'You're a child,' she said. 'That wouldn't do at all, and there are quite different matters to be considered. But if you have confidence in me and like to be near me, buy the millinery store next door, which is for sale. I understand the business, and you can count on a reasonable profit on your investment. Besides, keeping the books and attending to the correspondence would supply you with a proper occupation. What might develop later on, we'll not discuss at present. But you would have to change, for I hate effeminate men.' I had jumped up and seized my hat. 'What's the matter? Where are you going?' she asked. 'To countermand everything!' I said breathlessly. 'Countermand what?' I then told her of my plan for the establishment of a copying and information bureau. 'There isn't much in that,' she suggested. 'Information anybody can get for himself, and everybody has learned to write in school.' I remarked that music was also to be copied, which was something that not everybody could do. 'So you're back at your old nonsense?' she burst out. 'Let your music go, and think of more important matters. Besides, you're not able to manage a business yourself.' I explained that I had found a partner. 'A partner?' she exclaimed. 'You'll surely be cheated. I hope you haven't advanced any money?' I was trembling without knowing why. 'Did you advance any money?' she asked once more. I admitted that I had advanced the three thousand gulden for the initial equipment. 'Three thousand gulden!' she exclaimed; 'as much as that?' 'The rest,' I continued, 'is deposited with the court, and that's safe at all events.' 'What, still more?' she screamed. I mentioned the amount of the bond. 'And did you pay it over to the court personally?' 'My partner paid it.' 'But you have a receipt for it.' 'I haven't.' 'And what is the name of your fine partner?' she asked. It was a relief to be able to mention my father's secretary.

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"'Good heavens!' she cried, starting up and wringing her hands. 'Father! Father!' The old man entered. 'What was that you read in the papers today?' 'About the secretary?' he asked. 'Yes, yes!' 'Oh, he absconded, left nothing but debts, and swindled everybody. A warrant for his arrest has been issued.' 'Father,' she cried, 'here's one of his victims. He intrusted his money to him. He is ruined!'

"'Oh, you blockhead! The fools aren't all dead yet,' cried the old man. 'Didn't I tell her so? But she always found an excuse for him. At one time she ridiculed him, at another time he was honesty itself. But I'll take a hand in this business! I'll show you who's master in this house. You, Barbara, go to your room, and quickly. And you, sir, get out, and spare us your visits in future. We're not in the charity business here.' 'Father,' said the girl, 'don't be harsh with him; he's unhappy enough as it is!' 'That's the very reason I don't want to become unhappy too,' cried the old man. 'There, sir,' he continued, pointing to the letter Barbara had thrown upon the table a short time before, 'there's a man for you! He's got brains in his head and money in his purse. He doesn't swindle any one, but he takes good care at the same time not to let any one swindle him. And that's the main thing in being honest!' I stammered something about the loss of the bond not being certain. 'Ha, ha,' he cried, 'that secretary was no fool, the sly rascal! And now you'd better run after him, perhaps you can still catch him.' As he said this, he laid the palm of his hand on my shoulder and pushed me toward the door. I moved to one side and turned toward the girl, who was standing with her hands resting on the counter and her eyes fixed on the ground. She was breathing heavily. I wanted to approach her, but she angrily stamped her foot upon the floor; and when I held out my hand, hers twitched as though she were going to strike me again. Then I went, and the old man locked the door behind me.

"I tottered through the streets out of the city gate into the open fields. Sometimes despair gripped me, but then hope returned. I recollected having accompanied the secretary to the commercial court to deposit the bond. There I had waited in the gateway while he had gone upstairs alone. When he came down he told me that everything was in order and that the receipt would be sent to my residence. As a matter of fact I had received none, but there was still a possibility. At daybreak I returned to the city, and made straightway for the residence of the secretary. But the people there laughed and asked whether I hadn't read the papers? The commercial court was only a few doors away. I had the clerks examine the records, but neither his name nor mine could be found. There was no indication that the sum had ever been paid, and thus the disaster was certain. But that wasn't all, for inasmuch as a partnership contract had been drawn up, several of his creditors insisted upon seizing my person, which the court, however, would not permit. For this decision I was profoundly grateful, although it wouldn't have made much difference in the end.

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“I may as well confess that the grocer and his daughter had, in the course of these disagreeable developments, quite receded into the background. Now that things had calmed down and I was considering what steps to take next, the remembrance of that last evening came vividly back to my mind. The old man, selfish as he was, I could understand very well; but the girl! Once in a while it occurred to me that if I had taken care of my money and been able to offer her a comfortable existence, she might have even—but she wouldn’t have accepted me.” With that he surveyed his wretched figure with hands outstretched. “Besides, she disliked my courteous behavior toward everybody.”

“Thus I spent entire days thinking and planning. One evening at twilight—it was the time I had usually spent in the store—I had transported myself in spirit to the accustomed place. I could hear them speaking, hear them abusing me; it even seemed as though they were ridiculing me. Suddenly I heard a rustling at the door; it opened, and a woman entered. It was Barbara. I sat riveted to my chair, as though I beheld a ghost. She was pale, and carried a bundle under her arm. When she had reached the middle of the room she remained standing, looked at the bare walls and the wretched furniture, and heaved a deep sigh. Then she went to the wardrobe which stood on one side against the wall, opened her bundle containing some shirts and handkerchiefs—-she had been attending to my laundry during the past few weeks—and pulled out the drawer. When she beheld the meagre contents she lifted her hands in astonishment, but immediately began to arrange the linen and put away the pieces she had brought, whereupon she stepped back from the bureau. Then she looked straight at me and, pointing with her finger to the open drawer, she said, ’Five shirts and three handkerchiefs. I’m bringing back what I took away.’ So saying she slowly closed the drawer, leaned against the wardrobe, and began to cry aloud. It almost seemed as though she were going to faint, for she sat down on a chair beside the wardrobe and covered her face with her shawl. By her convulsive breathing I could see that she was still weeping. I had approached her softly and took her hand, which she willingly left in mine. But when, in order to make her look up, I moved my hand up to the elbow of her limp arm, she rose quickly, withdrew her hand, and said in a calm voice, ’Oh, what’s the use of it all? You’ve made yourself and us unhappy; but yourself most of all, and you really don’t deserve any pity’—here she became more agitated—’since you’re so weak that you can’t manage your own affairs and so credulous that you trust everybody, a rogue as soon as an honest man—and yet I’m sorry for you! I’ve come to bid you farewell. You may well look alarmed. And it’s all your doing. I’ve got to go out among common people, something that I’ve always dreaded; but there’s no help for it. I’ve shaken hands with you, so farewell, and forever!’ I

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saw the tears coming to her eyes again, but she shook her head impatiently and went out. I felt rooted to the spot. When she had reached the door she turned once more and said, 'Your laundry is now in order. Take good care of it, for hard times are coming!' And then she raised her hand, crossed herself, and cried, 'God be with you, James! Forever and ever, Amen!' she added in a lower voice, and was gone.

"Not until then did I regain the use of my limbs. I hurried after her and called to her from the landing, whereupon she stopped on the stairway, but when I went down a step she called up, 'Stay where you are,' descended the rest of the way, and passed out of the door.

"I've known hard days since then, but none to equal this one. The following was scarcely less hard to bear, for I wasn't quite clear as to how things stood with me. The next morning, therefore, I stole over to the grocery store in the hope of possibly receiving some explanation. No one seemed to be stirring, and so I walked past and looked into the store. There I saw a strange woman weighing goods and counting out change. I made bold to enter, and asked whether she had bought the store. 'Not yet,' she said. 'And where are the owners?' 'They left this morning for Langenlebarn.' [63] 'The daughter, too?' I stammered. 'Why, of course,' she said, 'she went there to be married.'

"In all probability the woman told me then what I learned subsequently from others. The Langenlebarn butcher, the same one I had met in the store on my first visit, had been pursuing the girl for some time with offers of marriage, which she had always rejected until finally, a few days before, pressed by her father and in utter despair, she had given her consent. Father and daughter had departed that very morning, and while we were talking, Barbara was already the butcher's wife.

"As I said, the woman no doubt told me all this, but I heard nothing and stood motionless, till finally customers came, who pushed me aside. The woman asked me gruffly whether there was anything else I wanted, whereupon I took my departure.

"You'll believe me, my dear sir," he continued, "when I tell you that I now considered myself the most wretched of mortals, but it wasn't for long, for as I left the store and looked back at the small windows at which Barbara no doubt had often stood and looked out, a blissful sensation came over me. I felt that she was now free of all care, mistress of her own home, that she did not have to bear the sorrow and misery that would have been hers had she cast in her lot with a homeless wanderer—and this thought acted like a soothing balm, and I blessed her and her destiny.

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“As my affairs went from bad to worse, I decided to earn my living by means of music. As long as my money lasted, I practised and studied the works of the great masters, especially the old ones, copying all of the music. But when the last penny had been spent, I made ready to turn my knowledge to account. I made a beginning in private circles, a gathering at the house of my landlady furnishing the first opportunity. But as the compositions I rendered didn’t meet with approval, I visited the courtyards of houses, believing that among so many tenants there must be a few who value serious music. Finally, I even stood on public promenades, where I really had the satisfaction of having persons stop and listen, question me and pass on, not without a display of sympathy. The fact that they left was the very object of my playing, and then I saw that famous artists, whom I didn’t flatter myself I equaled, accepted money for their performances, sometimes very large sums. In this way I have managed to make a scanty, but honest, living to this day.

“After many years another piece of good fortune was granted to me. Barbara returned. Her husband had prospered and acquired a butcher shop in one of the suburbs. She was the mother of two children, the elder being called James, like myself. My profession and the remembrance of old times didn’t permit me to intrude; but at last they sent for me to give the elder boy lessons on the violin. He hasn’t much talent to be sure, and can play only on Sundays, since his father needs him in his business during the week. But Barbara’s song, which I have taught him, goes very well, and when we practise and play in this way, the mother sometimes joins in with her voice. She has, to be sure, changed greatly in these many years; she has grown stout, and no longer cares much for music; but the melody still sounds as sweet as of old.”

With these words the old man took up his violin and began to play the song, and kept on playing and playing without paying any further attention to me. At last I had enough. I rose, laid a few pieces of silver upon the table near me, and departed, while the old man continued fiddling eagerly.

Soon after this incident I set out on a journey, from which I did not return until the beginning of winter. New impressions had crowded out the old, and I had almost forgotten my musician. It wasn’t until the ice broke up in the following spring and the low-lying suburbs were flooded in consequence, that I was again reminded of him. The vicinity of Gardener’s Lane had become a lake. There seemed to be no need of entertaining fears for the old man’s life, for he lived high up under the roof, whereas death had claimed its numerous victims among the residents of the ground floor. But cut off from all help, how great might not his distress be! As long as the flood lasted, nothing could be done. Moreover, the authorities had done what they could to send food and aid in boats to those cut off by the water. But when the waters had subsided and the streets had become passable, I decided to deliver at the address that concerned me most my share of the fund that had been started for the benefit of the sufferers and that had assumed incredible proportions.

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The Leopoldstadt was in frightful condition. Wrecked boats and broken tools were lying in the streets, while the cellars of some houses were still filled with water covered with floating furniture. In order to avoid the crowd I stepped aside toward a gate that stood ajar; as I brushed by it yielded, and in the passageway I beheld a row of dead bodies, which had evidently been picked up and laid out there for official inspection. Here and there I could even see unfortunate victims inside the rooms, still clinging to the iron window bars. For lack of time and men it was absolutely impossible to take an official census of so many fatalities.

Thus I went on and on. On all sides weeping and tolling of funeral bells, anxious mothers searching for their children and children looking for their parents. At last I reached Gardener's Lane. There also the mourners of a funeral procession were drawn up, seemingly at some distance, however, from the house I was bound for. But as I came nearer I noticed by the preparations and the movements of the people that there was some connection between the funeral procession and the gardener's house. At the gate stood a respectable looking man, somewhat advanced in years, but still vigorous. In his high top-boots, yellow leather breeches, and long coat, he looked like a country butcher. He was giving orders, but in the intervals conversed rather indifferently with the bystanders. I passed him and entered the court. The old gardener's wife came toward me, recognized me at once, and greeted me with tears in her eyes. "Are you also honoring us?" she said, "Alas, our poor old man! He's playing with the angels, who can't be much better than he was here below. The good man was sitting up there safe in his room; but when the water came and he heard the children scream, he jumped down and helped; he dragged and carried them to safety, until his breathing sounded like a blacksmith's bellows. And when toward the very last—you can't have your eyes everywhere—it was found that my husband had forgotten his tax-books and a few paper gulden in his wardrobe, the old man took an axe, entered the water which by that time reached up to his chest, broke open the wardrobe and fetched everything like the faithful creature he was. In this way he caught a cold, and as we couldn't summon aid at once, he became delirious and went from bad to worse, although we did what we could and suffered more than he did himself. For he sang incessantly, beating time and imagining that he was giving lessons. When the water had subsided somewhat and we were able to call the doctor and the priest, he suddenly raised himself in bed, turned his head to one side as though he heard something very beautiful in the distance, smiled, fell back, and was dead. Go right up stairs; he often spoke of you. The lady is also up there. We wanted to have him buried at our expense, but the butcher's wife would not allow it."

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She urged me to go up the steep staircase to the attic-room. The door stood open, and the room itself had been cleared of everything except the coffin in the centre, which, already closed, was waiting for the pall-bearers. At the head sat a rather stout woman no longer in the prime of life, in a colored cotton dress, but with a black shawl and a black ribbon in her bonnet. It seemed almost as though she could never have been beautiful. Before her stood two almost grown-up children, a boy and a girl, whom she was evidently instructing how to behave at the funeral. Just as I entered she was pushing the boy's arm away from the coffin, on which he had been leaning in rather awkward fashion; then she carefully smoothed the projecting corners of the shroud. The gardener's wife led me up to the coffin, but at that moment the trombones began to play, and at the same time the butcher's voice was heard from the street, "Barbara, it's time." The pall-bearers appeared and I withdrew to make room for them. The coffin was lifted and carried down, and the procession began to move. First came the school children with cross and banner, then the priest and the sexton. Directly behind the coffin marched the two children of the butcher, and behind them came the parents. The man moved his lips incessantly, as if in devout prayer, yet looked constantly about him in both directions. The woman was eagerly reading in her prayer-book, but the two children caused her some trouble. At one time she pushed them ahead, at another she held them back; in fact the general order of the funeral procession seemed to worry her considerably. But she always returned to her prayer-book. In this way the procession arrived at the cemetery. The grave was open. The children threw down the first handful of earth, being followed by their father, who remained standing while their mother knelt, holding her book close to her eyes. The grave-diggers completed their business, and the procession, half disbanded, returned. At the door there was a slight altercation, as the wife evidently considered some charge of the undertaker too high. The mourners scattered in all directions. The old musician was buried.

A few days later—it was a Sunday—I was impelled by psychological curiosity and went to the house of the butcher, under the pretext that I wished to secure the violin of the old man as a keepsake. I found the family together, showing no token of recent distress. But the violin was hanging beside the mirror and a crucifix on the opposite wall, the objects being arranged symmetrically. When I explained the object of my visit and offered a comparatively high price for the instrument, the man didn't seem averse to concluding a profitable bargain. The woman, however, jumped up from her chair and said, "Well, I should say not. The violin belongs to James, and a few gulden more or less make no difference to us." With that she took the instrument from the wall, looked at it from all sides, blew off

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the dust, and laid it in the drawer, which she thereupon closed violently, looking as though she feared some one would steal it. Her face was turned away from me, so that I couldn't see what emotions were passing over it. At this moment the maid brought in the soup, and as the butcher, who didn't allow my visit to disturb him, began in a loud voice to say grace, in which the children joined with their shrill voices, I wished them a good appetite and left the room. My last glance fell upon the wife. She had turned around and the tears were streaming down her cheeks.

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MY JOURNEY TO WEIMAR[64]

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A journey is an excellent remedy for a perplexed state of mind. This time the goal of my journey was to be Germany. The German geniuses had, indeed, almost all departed from this life, but there was still one living, Goethe, and the idea of speaking with him or even of merely seeing him made me happy in anticipation. I never was, as was the fashion at that time, a blind worshipper of Goethe, any more than I was of any other one poet. True poetry seemed to me to lie where they met on common ground; their individual characteristics lent them, on the one hand, the charm of individuality, while, on the other hand, they shared the general propensity of mankind to err. Goethe, in particular, had, since the death of Schiller, turned his attention from poetry to science. By distributing his talents over too many fields, he deteriorated in each; his latest poetic productions were tepid or cool, and when, for the sake of pose, he turned to the classical, his poetry became affected. The impassiveness which he imparted to that period contributed perhaps more than anything else to the decadence of poetry, inasmuch as it opened the door to the subsequent coarseness of Young Germany, of popular poetry, and of the Middle-high German trash. The public was only too glad to have once again something substantial to feed upon. Nevertheless, Goethe is one of the greatest poets of all time, and the father of our poetry. Klopstock gave the first impulse, Lessing blazed the trail, Goethe followed it. Perhaps Schiller means more to the German nation, for a people needs strong, sweeping impressions; Goethe, however, appears to be the greater poet. He fills an entire page in the development of the human mind, while Schiller stands midway between Racine and Shakespeare. Little as I sympathized with Goethe's most recent activity, and little as I could expect him to consider the author of *The Ancestress* and *The Golden Fleece* worthy of any consideration, in view of the dispassionate quietism which he affected at the time, I

nevertheless felt that the mere sight of him would be sufficient to inspire me with new courage. *Dormit puer, non mortuus est*. (The boy sleeps, he is not dead.)

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At last I arrived in Weimar and took quarters in “The Elephant,” a hostelry at that time famous throughout Germany and the ante-room, as it were, to the living Valhalla of Weimar. From there I dispatched the waiter with my card to Goethe, inquiring whether he would receive me. The waiter returned with the answer that His Excellency, the Privy-councilor, was entertaining some guests and could not, therefore, receive me at the moment. He would expect me in the evening for tea.

I dined at the hotel. My name had become known through my card and the report of my presence spread through the town, so that I made many acquaintances.

Toward evening I called on Goethe. In the reception-room I found quite a large assemblage waiting for His Excellency, the Privy-councilor, who had not yet made his appearance. Among these there was a court councilor, Jacob or Jacobs, with his daughter, whom Goethe had entertained at dinner. The daughter, who later won a literary reputation under the pseudonym of Talvj, was as young as she was beautiful, and as beautiful as she was cultured, and so I soon lost my timidity and in my conversation with the charming young lady almost forgot that I was in Goethe’s house. At last a side door opened, and he himself entered. Dressed in black, the star[65] on his breast, with erect, almost stiff bearing, he stepped among us with the air of a monarch granting an audience. He exchanged a few words with one and another of his guests, and finally crossed the room and addressed me. He inquired whether Italian literature was cultivated to any great extent in our country. I told him, which was a fact, that the Italian language was, indeed, widely known, since all officials were required to learn it; Italian literature, on the other hand, was completely neglected; the fashion was rather to turn to English literature, which, despite its excellence, had an admixture of coarseness that seemed to me to be anything but advantageous to the present state of German culture, especially of poetry. Whether my opinion pleased him or not, I have no means of knowing; I am almost inclined to believe it did not, inasmuch as he was at that very time in correspondence with Lord Byron. He left me, talked with others, returned, conversed I no longer remember on what subjects, finally withdrew, and we were dismissed.

I confess that I returned to the hostelry in a most unpleasant frame of mind. It was not that my vanity had been offended—on the contrary, Goethe had treated me more kindly and more attentively than I had anticipated—but to see the ideal of my youth, the author of *Faust*, *Clavigo*, and *Egmont*, in the role of a formal minister presiding at tea brought me down from my celestial heights. Had his manner been rude or had he shown me the door, it would have pleased me better. I almost repented having gone to Weimar.

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Consequently I determined to devote the following day to sightseeing, and ordered horses at the inn for the day following. On the morning of the next day visitors of all sorts put in an appearance, among them the amiable and respected Chancellor Mueller, and, above all, my fellow-countryman Hummel, who for many years had been occupying the position of musical director in Weimar. He had left Vienna before my poetry had attracted attention, so that we had not become acquainted with each other. It was almost touching to witness the joy with which this ordinarily unsociable man greeted me and took possession of me. In the first place I probably revived in him memories of his native city, which he had left with reluctance; then, too, it probably gave him satisfaction to find his literary countryman honored and respected in Weimar, where he heard nothing but disparaging opinions regarding the intellectual standing of Austria. And, finally, he had an opportunity of conversing with a Viennese in his home dialect, which he had preserved pure and unadulterated while living among people who spoke quite differently. I do not know whether it was the contrast, or whether this really was the worst German I had ever heard in my life. While we were planning to visit some points of interest in Weimar, and while Chancellor Mueller, who had probably noticed my depression, was assuring me that Goethe's formality was nothing but the embarrassment always displayed by him on meeting a stranger for the first time, the waiter entered and handed me a card containing an invitation from Goethe to dine with him the next day. I therefore had to prolong my stay and to countermand the order for the horses. The morning was passed in visiting the places that had become famous through their literary associations. Schiller's house interested me most of all, and I was especially delighted to find in the poet's study, really an attic-room in the second story, an old man who is said to have acted as prompter at the theatre in Schiller's time, teaching his grandson to read. The little boy's open and intelligently animated expression prompted the illusion that out of Schiller's study a new Schiller might some day emerge—an illusion which, to be sure, has not been realized.

The exact order of events is now confused in my mind. I believe it was on this first day that I dined with Hummel *en famille*. There I found his wife, formerly the pretty singer, Miss Roeckel, whom I could well remember in page's attire and close-fitting silk tights. Now she was an efficient, respected housewife, who vied with her husband in amiability. I felt myself strongly drawn to the whole family and, in spite of his rather mechanical disposition, I honored and venerated Hummel as the last genuine pupil of Mozart.

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In the evening I attended the theatre with Chancellor Mueller, where an unimportant play was being given, in which, however, Graff, Schiller's first Wallenstein, had a role. I saw nothing particularly remarkable in him, and when I was told that, after the first performance, Schiller had rushed upon the stage, embraced Graff, and exclaimed that now for the first time did he understand his Wallenstein, I thought to myself—how much greater might the great poet have become had he ever known a public and real actors! It is remarkable, by the way, that Schiller, who is not at bottom very objective, lends himself so perfectly to an objective representation. He became figurative, while believing himself to be only eloquent—one more proof of his incomparable genius. In Goethe we find the exact opposite. While he is ordinarily called objective and is so to a great extent, his characters lose in the actual representation. His figurativeness is only for the imagination; in the representation the delicate, poetic tinge is necessarily lost. However, these are reflections for another time; they do not belong here.

At last the momentous day with its dinner-hour arrived, and I went to Goethe. The other guests, all of them men, were already assembled, the charming Talvj having departed with her father the morning after the tea-party and Goethe's daughter-in-law being absent from Weimar at the time. To the latter and to her daughter, who died when quite young, I later became very much attached. As I advanced into the room Goethe came toward me, and was now as amiable and cordial as he had recently been formal and cold. I was deeply moved. When we went in to dinner, and Goethe, who had become for me the embodiment of German Poetry and, because of the immeasurable distance between us, almost a mythological being, took my hand to lead me into the dining-room, the boy in me manifested itself once again and I burst into tears. Goethe took great pains to conceal my foolish emotion. I sat next to him at dinner and he was more cheerful and talkative than he had been for a long time, as the guests asserted later. The conversation, enlivened by him, became general, but Goethe frequently turned to me individually. However, I cannot recall what he said, except a good joke regarding Muellner's *Midnight Journal*. Unfortunately I made no notes concerning this journey, or, rather, I did begin a diary, but as the accident I had in Berlin made it at first impossible for me to write and later difficult, a great gap ensued. This deterred me from continuing it, and, besides, the difficulty of writing remained, even in Weimar. I therefore determined to fill in what was lacking immediately after my return to Vienna, while the events were still fresh in my memory. But when I arrived there some other work demanded immediate attention, and the matter soon escaped my mind; and therefore I retained in my memory nothing but general impressions of what I had almost called the most important moment of my life. Only one occurrence at dinner stands out in my memory—namely, in the ardor of the conversation I yielded to an old habit of breaking up the piece of bread beside me into unsightly crumbs. Goethe lightly touched each individual crumb with his finger and arranged them in a little symmetrical heap. Only after the lapse of some time did I notice this, and then I discontinued my handiwork.

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As I was taking my leave, Goethe requested me to come the next morning and have myself sketched, for he was in the habit of having drawings made of those of his visitors who interested him. They were done in black crayon by an artist especially engaged for the work, and the pictures were then put into a frame which hung in the reception-room for this purpose, being changed in regular rotation every week. This honor was also bestowed upon me.

When I arrived the next morning the artist had not yet appeared; I was therefore directed to Goethe, who was walking up and down in his little garden. The cause of his stiff bearing before strangers now became clear to me. The years had not passed without leaving some traces. As he walked about in the garden, one could see that the upper part of his body, his head and shoulders, were bent slightly forward. This he wished to hide from strangers, and hence that forced straightening-up which produced an unpleasant impression. The sight of him in this unaffected carriage, wearing a long dressing-gown, a small skull-cap on his white hair, had something infinitely touching about it. He looked like a king, and again like a father. We walked up and down, engaged in conversation. He mentioned my *Sappho* and seemed to think well of it, thus in a way praising himself, for I had followed fairly closely in his footsteps. When I complained of my isolated position in Vienna he remarked what we have since read in his printed works, that man can do efficient work only in the company of likeminded or congenial spirits. If he and Schiller had attained universal recognition, they owed it largely to this stimulating and supplementing reciprocal influence.

In the meantime the artist had arrived. We entered the house and I was sketched. Goethe had gone into his room, whence he emerged from time to time to satisfy himself as to the progress of the picture, which pleased him when completed. When the artist had departed Goethe had his son bring in some of his choicest treasures. There was his correspondence with Lord Byron; everything relating to his acquaintance with the Empress and the Emperor of Austria at Karlsbad; and finally the imperial Austrian copyright of his collected works. This latter he seemed to value very highly, either because he liked the conservative attitude of Austria, or because he regarded it as an oddity in contradistinction to the usual policy pursued in literary matters by this country. These treasures were wrapped separately in half-oriental fashion in pieces of silk, Goethe handling them with reverence. At last I was most graciously dismissed.

In the course of the day Chancellor Mueller suggested my visiting Goethe toward evening; he would be alone, and my visit would by no means be unwelcome to him. Not until later did it occur to me that Mueller could not have made the suggestion without Goethe’s knowledge.

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Now I committed my second blunder in Weimar. I was afraid to be alone with Goethe for an entire evening, and after considerable vacillation decided not to go. Several elements combined to produce this fear. In the first place, it seemed to me that there was nothing within the whole range of my intellect worthy of being displayed before Goethe. Secondly, it was not until later that I learned to place the proper value upon my own works by comparing them with those of my contemporaries, the former appearing exceedingly crude and insignificant in contrast with the works of my predecessors, especially here in the home of German poetry. Finally, as I stated before, I had left Vienna with the feeling that my poetic talent had completely exhausted itself, a feeling which was intensified in Weimar to the point of actual depression. It seemed to me an utterly unworthy proceeding to fill Goethe's ears with lamentations and to listen to words of encouragement for which there seemed to be no guarantee of fulfilment.

Yet there was some method in this madness after all. Goethe's aversion at that time for anything violent and forced was well known to me. Now I was of the opinion that calmness and deliberation are appropriate only to one who is capable of introducing such a wealth of thought into his works as Goethe has done in his *Iphigenia* and *Tasso*. At the same time I held the opinion that every one must emphasize those qualities with which he is most strongly endowed, and these in my case were at that time warmth of feeling and vividness of imagination. Occupying, as I then did, the viewpoint of impartial observation, I felt that I was far too weak to defend against Goethe the causes of such divergence from his own views, and I had far too much reverence for him to accept his exposition with pretended approval or in hypocritical silence.

At all events I did not go, and that displeased Goethe. He had good cause to feel astonished that I should display such indifference to the proffered opportunity of enlightening him concerning my works and myself; or else he came nearer to the truth, and imagined that *The Ancestress* and my predilection for similar effusions, which were repugnant to him, were not entirely quenched within me; or perhaps he divined my entire mood, and concluded that an unmanly character was bound to ruin even a great talent. From that time on he was much colder toward me.

But as far as this unmanliness is concerned, I confess, as I have previously done, to falling a prey to this weakness whenever I find myself confronted with a confused mass of sensations of lesser importance, especially with goodwill, reverence, and gratitude. Whenever I was able to define the opposing factors sharply to myself in the rejection of the bad as well as in the perseverance in a conviction, I displayed both before and after this period a firmness which, indeed, might even be called obstinacy. But in general it may safely be asserted: Only the union of character and talent produces what is called genius.

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On one of these days I was also commanded to appear before the grand duke, whom I met in all his simplicity and unaffectedness in the so-called Roman House. He conversed with me for over an hour, and my description of Austrian conditions seemed to interest him. Not he, but most of the others, hinted at the desire of acquiring my services for the Weimar theatre—a desire that did not coincide with my own inclination.

When on the fourth day of my stay I paid my farewell visit to Goethe, he was friendly, but somewhat reserved. He expressed astonishment at my leaving Weimar so soon, and added that they would all be glad to hear from me occasionally. "They," then, would be glad, not he. Even in later years he did not do me justice, for I do consider myself the best poet that has appeared after him and Schiller, in spite of the gulf that separates me from them. That all this did not lessen my love and reverence for him, I need scarcely say.

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BEETHOVEN AS A LETTER WRITER

BY WALTER R. SPALDING, A.M.

Associate Professor of Music, Harvard University

The first musician to whom a place among the representative masters of German literature may justly be assigned is Beethoven, and this fact is so significant and so closely connected with the subsequent development both of music and literature that the reasons for such a statement should be set forth in detail. Although Haydn kept a note-book, still extant, during his two visits to London, and although Mozart wrote the average number of letters, from no one of the musicians prior to Beethoven have we received, in writings which can be classed as literature, any expression of their personalities. Their intellectual and imaginative activity was manifested almost exclusively in music, and their interest in whatever lay outside the musical horizon was very slight. In the written words of neither Haydn nor Mozart do we find any reference to the poetical and prose works of Germany or of other nations, nor is there any evidence that their imaginations were influenced by suggestions drawn from literature. Famous though they were as musicians by reason of their sincere and masterful handling of the raw material of music, there is so little depth of thought in their compositions that many of them have failed to live. Neither Haydn nor Mozart can be considered as a great character and we miss the note of sublimity in their music, although it often has great vitality and charm. Beethoven, however, was a thinker in tones and often in words.

[Illustration: BEETHOVEN]

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His symphonies are human documents, and even had he not written a single note of music we have sufficient evidence in verbal form to convince us that his personality was one of remarkable power and that music was only one way, though, to be sure, the foremost, of expressing the depth of his feeling and the range of his mental activity. In distinction from his predecessors, who were merely musicians, Beethoven was a man first and a musician second, and the lasting vitality in his works is due to their broad human import; they evidently came from a character endowed with a rich and fertile imagination, from one who looked at life from many sides. Several of his most famous compositions were founded on works of Shakespeare, Goethe, and Schiller, and the Heroic Symphony bears witness to his keen interest in the momentous political changes of his time and in the growth of untrammeled human individuality. No mere manipulator of sounds and rhythms could have impressed the fastidious nobility of Vienna to the high degree chronicled by contemporary testimony. Beethoven wished to be known as a *Tondichter*, *i.e*., a first-hand creator, and his whole work was radically different from the rather cautious and imitative methods which had characterized former composers. It was through the cultivated von Breuning family of Bonn that the young Beethoven became acquainted with English literature, and his growing familiarity with it exerted a strong influence upon his whole life and undoubtedly increased the natural vigor of his imagination, for the literature of England surpassed anything which had so far been produced by Germany. Later, in 1823, when the slavery debates were going on in Parliament, he used to read with keen interest the speeches of Lord Brougham.

In estimating the products of human imagination during the last century, a fact of great significance is the relationship of the arts of literature and of music. Numerous examples might be cited of men who were almost equally gifted in expressing themselves in either words or musical sounds—notably von Weber, E.T.A. Hoffmann, Spohr, Schumann, and Mendelssohn, this dual activity reaching a remarkable climax in Richard Wagner, who was both a great dramatic poet and an equally supreme musician. The same tendency is manifested by leaders of thought in other nations. Thus the French Berlioz and St. Saens are equally noted as composers and men of letters; the Italian Boito is an able dramatist as well as composer; and, among modern instances, Debussy, d'Indy, and Strauss have shown high literary as well as musical ability. To turn to the other side of this duality, allusions to music in works of both prose and poetry have become increasingly frequent during the nineteenth century, and the musical art is no longer considered a mysterious abstraction entirely divorced from the outward world of men and events. It is a long step from Goethe, who was entirely unable to grasp the meaning of Beethoven's symphonies, to such

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men as Heine, who has made some very illuminating comments on various composers and their music; Max Mueller, a highly cultivated musical amateur; Schopenhauer, whose esthetic principles so deeply influenced Wagner; and Nietzsche, a musician of considerable technical ability. To these names should be added that of Robert Browning who, together with Shakespeare, has shown a truer insight into the real nature of music than any other English writers have manifested.

With Beethoven, then, music ceases to be an opportunity for the display of mere abstract skill and takes its place on an equality with the arts of poetry and painting as a means of intense personal expression. If the basis of all worth in literature is that the writer shall have something genuine to say, Beethoven's letters are certainly literature, for they are the direct revelation of a great and many-sided personality and furnish invaluable testimony as to just what manner of man he was—too great indeed for music wholly to contain him. The Letters are not to be read for their felicity of expression, as one might approach the letters of Stevenson or Lamb; for Beethoven, even in his music, always valued substance more than style, or, at any rate, kept style subservient to vitality of utterance. In fact, one modern French musician claims that he had no taste! He was not gifted with the literary charm and subtlety of his great follower, Hector Berlioz, and had no practise as a journalist or a critic. As his deafness increased after the year 1800 and he was therefore forced to live a life of retirement, he committed his thoughts more and more to writing, and undoubtedly left to the world a larger number of letters than if he had been taking a normal part in the activities of his fellowmen.

Particular attention is called to the variety of Beethoven's correspondents and to their influential position in the artistic and social life of that period. In the Will, number 55, a most impassioned expression of feeling, Beethoven lays bare his inmost soul, and with an eloquence seldom surpassed has transformed cold words into living symbols of emotion. The immortal power contained in his music finds its parallel in this document. He who appeals to our deepest emotions commands for all time our reverent allegiance. In addition to the letters there is an extensive diary and also numerous conversation books. All these writings are valuable, not only for themselves, but because they confirm in an unmistakable way certain of the salient characteristics of his musical compositions. With Beethoven we find in instrumental music, practically for the first time, a prevailing note of sublimity. He must have been a religious man in the truest sense of the term, with the capacity to realize the mystery and grandeur of human destiny, and numerous passages from the letters give eloquent expression to an analogous train of serious thought. (See letters 1017 and 1129.) One of his favorite books was Sturm's *Betrachtungen ueber die Werke Gottes in der Natur* ("Contemplations upon the Works of God in Nature"), and from his diary of 1816 we have the quotation which was the basis of his creed—"God is immaterial, and for this reason transcends every conception. Since he is invisible He can have no form. But

from what we observe in His work we may conclude that He is eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, and omnipresent."

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Although some modern critics have doubted whether music without the association of words can express humor, the introduction of this element into symphonic music is generally considered one of Beethoven's greatest achievements. While it is true that if any one listening to the scherzos of the Third and Eighth symphonies asserts that they mean nothing humorous to him no one can gainsay him, we know that Beethoven intended these movements to be expressions of his overflowing humorous spirits and the suggestive term "scherzo" is his own invention. In music, as in literature, much hinges upon the definition of humor, and there is the same distinction in each art between wit—light and playful, and humor—broad, serious, and, at times, even grim. A genuine humorist is always a deep thinker, one who sees all sides of human nature—-the great traits and the petty ones. The poet Lowell has defined humor as consisting in the contrast of two ideas, and in a Beethoven scherzo the gay and the pathetic are so intermingled that we are in constant suspense between laughter and tears. A humorist, furthermore, is a person of warm heart, who looks with sympathetic affection upon the incongruities of human nature. In fact, both the expression and the perception of humor are social acts, as may be seen from the development of this subject by the philosopher Bergson in his brilliant essay *On Laughter*. That Beethoven the humorist was closely related to Beethoven the humanist, and that the expression of humor in his music—-something quite different from the facile wit and cleverness of the Haydn minuet—was inevitable with him, is clearly proved by the presence of the same spirit in so many of the letters. Too much stress has been laid by Beethoven's biographers upon his buffoonery and fondness for practical jokes. At bottom he was most tender-hearted and sympathetic; his nature, of volcanic impetuosity, a puzzling mixture of contradictory emotions. In but very few of his great works is the element of humor omitted, and its expression ranges all the way from the uproariously comic to the grimly tragic. Some of his scherzos reveal the same fantastic caprice which is found in the medieval gargoyles of Gothic architecture.

Beethoven's letters, then, are to be considered as the first distinct evidence we have of that change in the musical sense which has brought about such important developments in the trend of modern music. Just as in Beethoven's works we generally feel that there is something behind the notes, and as he is said always to have composed with some poetical picture in his mind, so the music of our time has become programmistic in the wide sense of the term, no longer a mere embodiment of the laws of its own being but charged with vital and dramatic import, closely related to all artistic expression and to the currents of daily life. Familiarity with the selection of letters here published cannot fail to contribute to a deeper enjoyment of Beethoven's music, for through them we realize that the universality of the artist was the direct consequence of the emotional breadth of the man. All art is a union of emotion and intellect, and their perfect balance is the paramount characteristic of this master.

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BEETHOVEN'S LETTERS[66]

TRANSLATED BY J.S. SHEDLOCK

NO. 8

TO DR. FRANZ WEGELER IN VIENNA

(Between 1794-1796)

My dearest, my best one!

What a horrid picture you have drawn to me of myself. I recognize it; I do not deserve your friendship. You are so noble, so kindly disposed, and now for the first time I do not dare to compare myself with you; I have fallen far below you. Alas! for weeks I have given pain to my best, my noblest friends. You believe I have ceased to be kind-hearted, but, thank heaven, 'tis not so! It was not intentional, thought-out malice on my part, which caused me to act thus; but my unpardonable thoughtlessness, which prevented me from seeing the matter in the right light. I am thoroughly ashamed for your sake, also for mine. I scarcely venture to beg you to restore your friendship. Ah, Wegeler! *My only consolation is that you knew me almost from my childhood*, and—oh! let me say it myself—I was really always of good disposition, and in my dealings always strove to be upright and honest; how, otherwise, could you have loved me! Could I, then, in so short a time have suddenly changed so terribly, so greatly to my disadvantage? Impossible that these feelings for what is great and good should all of a sudden become extinct! My Wegeler, dear and best one, venture once again to come to the arms of your B. Trust to the good qualities which you formerly found in him. I will vouch for it that the pure temple of holy friendship which you will erect on them will forever stand firm; no chance event, no storm will be able to shake its foundations—firm—eternal—our friendship—forgiveness—forgetting—revival of dying, sinking friendship. Oh, Wegeler! do not cast off this hand of reconciliation; place your hand in mine—O God!—but no more! I myself come to you and throw myself in your arms, and sue for the lost friend, and you will give yourself to me full of contrition, who loves and ever will be mindful of you.

BEETHOVEN.

I have just received your letter on my return home.

NO. 27

TO THE COMPOSER J.N. HUMMEL

(Vienna, circa 1799)

Do not come any more to me. You are a false fellow, and the hangman take all such!

BEETHOVEN.

NO. 28

TO THE SAME

(The next day)

Good Friend Nazerl:

You are an honorable fellow, and I see you were right. So come this afternoon to me. You will also find Schuppanzigh, and both of us will blow you up, thump you, and shake you; so you will have a fine time of it.

Your Beethoven, also named Mehlschoeberl, embraces you.

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NO. 35

TO CARL AMENDA AT WIRBEN IN COURLAND

Vienna, June 1, 1800.

My Dear, My Good Amenda, My Heartily Beloved Friend:

With deep emotion, with mixed pain and pleasure, did I receive and read your last letter. To what can I compare your fidelity, your attachment to me. Oh! how pleasant it is that you have always remained so kind to me; yes, I also know that you, of all men, are the most trustworthy. You are no Viennese friend; no, you are one of those such as my native country produces. How often do I wish you were with me, for your Beethoven is most unhappy and at strife with nature and the Creator. The latter I have often cursed for exposing His creatures to the smallest chance, so that frequently the richest buds are thereby crushed and destroyed. Only think that the noblest part of me, my sense of hearing, has become very weak. Already when you were with me I noted traces of it, and I said nothing. Now it has become worse, and it remains to be seen whether it can ever be healed. * * * What a sad life I am now compelled to lead! I must avoid all that is near and dear to me, and then to be among such wretched egotistical beings as ——, *etc*.! I can say that among all Lichnowski has best stood the test. Since last year he has settled on me 600 florins, which, together with the good sale of my works, enables me to live without anxiety. Everything I write, I can sell immediately five times over, and also be well paid. * * * Oh! how happy should I now be if I had my perfect hearing, for I should then hasten to you. As it is, I must in all things be behindhand; my best years will slip away without bringing forth what, with my talent and my strength, I ought to have accomplished. I must now have recourse to sad resignation. I have, it is true, resolved not to worry about all this, but how is it possible? Yes, Amenda, if, six months hence, my malady is beyond cure, then I lay claim to your help. You must leave everything and come to me. I will travel (my malady interferes least with my playing and composition, most only in conversation), and you must be my companion. I am convinced good fortune will not fail me. With whom need I be afraid of measuring my strength? Since you went away I have written music of all kinds except operas and sacred works.

Yes, do not refuse; help your friend to bear with his troubles, his infirmity. I have also greatly improved my piano-forte playing. I hope this journey may also turn to your advantage; afterwards you will always remain with me. I have duly received all your letters, and although I have answered only a few, you have been always in my mind; and my heart, as always, beats tenderly for you. *Please keep as a great secret what I have told you about my hearing; trust no one, whoever it may be, with it*.

Do write frequently; your letters, however short they may be, console me, do me good. I expect soon to get another one from you, my dear friend. Don't lend out my *Quartet* any more, because I have made many changes in it. I have only just learnt how to write quartets properly, as you will see when you receive them.

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Now, my dear good friend, farewell! If perchance you believe that I can show you any kindness here, I need not, of course, remind you to address yourself first to

Your faithful, truly loving,

L. v. BEETHOVEN.

NO. 45

TO COUNTESS GIULIETTA GUICCIARDI

On the 6th July, 1801, in the morning

My Angel, My All, My Very Self:

Just a few words today, and indeed in pencil—with thine—only till tomorrow is my room definitely engaged; what an unworthy waste of time in such matters—why this deep sorrow where necessity speaks! Can our love endure otherwise than through sacrifices, through restraint in longing? Canst thou help not being wholly mine, can I, not being wholly thine? Oh! gaze at nature in all its beauty, and calmly accept the inevitable—-love demands everything, and rightly so. *Thus is it for me with thee, for thee with me*, only thou so easily forgettest that I must live for myself and for thee—were we wholly united thou wouldst feel this painful fact as little as I should—my journey was terrible. I arrived here only yesterday morning at four o'clock, and as they were short of horses the mail-coach selected another route—but what an awful road! At the last stage but one I was warned against traveling by night; they frightened me with a wood, but that only spurred me on—and I was wrong, the coach must needs break down, the road being dreadful, a swamp, a mere country road; without the postillions I had with me I should have stuck on the way. Esterhazi, by the ordinary road, met with the same fate with eight horses as I with four—yet it gave me some pleasure, as successfully overcoming any difficulty always does. Now for a quick change from without to within—we shall probably soon see each other, besides, today I cannot tell thee what has been passing through my mind during the past few days concerning my life—were our hearts closely united I should not do things of this kind. My heart is full of many things I have to say to thee—ah, there are moments in which I feel that speech is powerless! Cheer up—remain my true, my only treasure, my all!!! as I to thee. The gods must send the rest—what for us must be and ought to be.

Thy faithful

LUDWIG.

Monday Evening, July 6.

Thou sufferest, thou my dearest love! I have just found out that the letters must be posted very early Mondays, Thursdays—the only days when the post goes from here to K. Thou sufferest—ah, where I am, art thou also with me! I will arrange for myself and Thee; I will manage so that I can live with thee; and what a life!!! But as it is—without thee!!! Persecuted here and there by the kindness of men, which I little deserve, and as little care to deserve. Humility of man toward man—it pains me—and when I think of myself in connection

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with the universe, what am I and what is He who is named the Greatest—and still this again shows the divine in man. I weep when I think that probably thou wilt get the first news from me only on Saturday evening. However much thou lovest me, my love for thee is stronger; but never conceal thy thoughts from me. Good-night! As I am taking the baths I must go to bed [two words scratched through]. O God—so near! so far! Our love—is it not a true heavenly edifice, firm as heaven's vault!

Good morning, on July 7.

While still in bed, my thoughts press to thee, my Beloved One, at moments with joy, and then again with sorrow, waiting to see whether fate will take pity on us. Either I must live wholly with thee, or not at all. Yes, I have resolved to wander in distant lands, until I can fly to thy arms and feel that with thee I have a real home; with thee encircling me about, I can send my soul into the kingdom of spirits. Yes, unfortunately, it must be so. Calm thyself, and all the more since thou knowest my faithfulness toward thee! Never can another possess my heart, never—never—O God! why must one part from what one so loves—and yet my life in V. at present is a wretched life! Thy love has made me one of the happiest and, at the same time, one of the unhappiest of men; at my age I need a quiet, steady life—but is that possible in our situation? My Angel, I have just heard that the post goes every day, and I must therefore stop, so that you may receive the letter without delay. Be calm—only by calm consideration of our existence can we attain our aim to live together; be calm—love me—today—yesterday—what tearful longing after thee—thee—thee—my life—my all—farewell! Oh, continue to love me—-never, never misjudge the faithful heart

Of Thy Beloved

L.

Ever thine, ever thine, ever each other's.

NO. 55

TO HIS BROTHERS CARL AND —— BEETHOVEN

O ye men who regard or declare me to be malignant, stubborn, or cynical, how unjust are ye towards me! You do not know the secret cause of my seeming so. From childhood onward, my heart and mind prompted me to be kind and tender, and I was ever inclined to accomplish great deeds. But only think that, during the last six years, I have been in a wretched condition, rendered worse by unintelligent physicians, deceived from year to year with hopes of improvement, and then finally forced to the

prospect of *lasting infirmity* (which may last for years, or even be totally incurable). Born with a fiery, active temperament, even susceptive of the diversions of society, I had soon to retire from the world, to live a solitary life. At times, even, I endeavored to forget all this, but how harshly was I driven back by the redoubled experience of my bad hearing! Yet it was not possible for me to say to men:

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Speak louder, shout, for I am deaf. Alas! how could I declare the weakness of a *sense* which in me *ought* to be more acute than in others—a sense which *formerly* I possessed in highest perfection, a perfection such as few in my profession enjoy or ever have enjoyed; no, I cannot do it. Forgive, therefore, if you see me withdraw, when I would willingly mix with you. My misfortune pains me doubly in that I am certain to be misunderstood. For me there can be no recreation in the society of my fellow creatures, no refined conversations, no interchange of thought. Almost alone, and mixing in society only when absolutely necessary, I am compelled to live as an exile. If I approach near to people, a feeling of hot anxiety comes over me lest my condition should be noticed—for so it was during these past six months which I spent in the country. Ordered by my intelligent physician to spare my hearing as much as possible, he almost fell in with my present frame of mind, although many a time I was carried away by my sociable inclinations. But how humiliating was it, when some one standing close to me heard a distant flute, and I heard *nothing*, or a *shepherd singing*, and again I heard nothing. Such incidents almost drove me to despair; at times I was on the point of putting an end to my life—*art* alone restrained my hand. Oh! it seemed as if I could not quit this earth until I had produced all I felt within me, and so I continued this wretched life—wretched, indeed, and with so sensitive a body that a somewhat sudden change can throw me from the best into the worst state. *Patience*, I am told, I must choose as my guide. I have done so—lasting, I hope, will be my resolution to bear up until it pleases the inexorable Parcae to break the thread. Forced already, in my 28th year, to become a philosopher, it is not easy—for an artist more difficult than for any one else. O Divine Being, Thou who lookest down into my inmost soul, Thou understandest; Thou knowest that love for mankind and a desire to do good dwell therein! Oh, my fellow men, when one day you read this, remember that you were unjust to me and let the unfortunate one console himself if he can find one like himself, who, in spite of all obstacles which nature has thrown in his way, has still done everything in his power to be received into the ranks of worthy artists and men. You, my brothers Carl and ——, as soon as I am dead, beg Professor Schmidt, if he be still living, to describe my malady; and annex this written account to that of my illness, so that at least the world, so far as is possible, may become reconciled to me after my death. And now I declare you both heirs to my small fortune (if such it may be called). Divide it honorably and dwell in peace, and help each other. What you have done against me has, as you know, long been forgiven. And you, brother Carl, I especially thank you for the attachment you have shown toward me of late.

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My prayer is that your life may be better, less troubled by cares, than mine. Recommend to your children *virtue*; it alone can bring happiness, not money. I speak from experience. It was virtue which bore me up in time of trouble; to her, next to my art, I owe thanks for my not having laid violent hands on myself. Farewell, and love one another. My thanks to all friends, especially *Prince Lichnowski* and *Professor Schmidt*. I should much like one of you to keep as an heirloom the instruments given to me by Prince L., but let no strife arise between you concerning them; if money should be of more service to you, just sell them. How happy I feel, that, even when lying in my grave, I may be useful to you!

So let it be. I joyfully hasten to meet death. If it come before I have had opportunity to develop all my artistic faculties, it will come, my hard fate notwithstanding, too soon, and I should probably wish it later—yet even then I shall be happy, for will it not deliver me from a state of endless suffering? Come when thou wilt, I shall face thee courageously. Farewell, and when I am dead do not entirely forget me. This I deserve from you, for during my lifetime I often thought of you, and how to make you happy. Be ye so.

LUDWIG VON BEETHOVEN.

Heiligenstadt, October 6, 1802.

NO. 136

TO THERESE VON MALFATTI

(1807)

You receive herewith, honored Therese, what I promised, and had it not been for serious hindrances you would have received more, in order to show you that I always *offer more to my friends than I actually promise*. I hope and have every reason to believe that you are nicely occupied and as pleasantly entertained—but I hope not too much, so that you may also think of us. It would probably be expecting too much of you, or overrating my own importance, if I ascribed to you: “Men are not only together when they are together; even he who is far away, who has departed, is still in our thoughts.” Who would ascribe anything of the kind to the lively T., who takes life so easily?

Pray do not forget the pianoforte among your occupations, or, indeed, music generally. You have such fine talent for it. Why not devote yourself entirely to it—you who have such feeling for all that is beautiful and good? Why will you not make use of this, in order that you may recognize in so beautiful an art the higher perfection which casts

down its rays even on us. I am very solitary and quiet, although lights now and again might awaken me; but since you all went away from here, I feel in me a void which cannot be filled; my art, even otherwise so faithful to me, has not been able to gain any triumph. Your piano is ordered, and you will soon receive it. What a difference you will have found between the treatment of the theme I improvised one evening, and the way in which I recently wrote it down for you!

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Explain that to yourself, but don't take too much punch to help you. How lucky you are, to be able to go so soon to the country! I cannot enjoy that happiness until the 8th. I am happy as a child at the thought of wandering among clusters of bushes, in the woods, among trees, herbs, rocks. No man loves the country more than I; for do not forests, trees, rocks reecho that for which mankind longs? Soon you will receive other compositions of mine, in which you will not have to complain much about difficulties. Have you read Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister*, the *Schlegel translation of Shakespeare*? One has much leisure in the country, and it will perhaps be agreeable to you if I send you these works. I happen to have an acquaintance in your neighborhood, so perhaps I shall come early some morning and spend half an hour at your house, and be off again; notice that I shall inflict on you the shortest *ennui*.

Commend me to the good wishes of your father, your mother, although I can claim no right for so doing—and the same, likewise, to cousin MM. Farewell, honored T. I wish you all that is good and beautiful in life. Keep me, and willingly, in remembrance—-forget my wild behavior. Be convinced that no one more than myself can desire to know that your life is joyous, prosperous, even though you take no interest in

Your most devoted servant and friend,

BEETHOVEN.

N.B.—It would really be very nice on your part to send me a few lines to say in what way I can be of service here.

NO. 151

TO THE BIGOTS

(Probably Summer, 1808)

Dear Marie, Dear Bigot:

Only with the deepest regret am I forced to perceive that the purest, most innocent, feelings can often be misconstrued. As you have received me so kindly, it never occurred to me to explain it otherwise than that you bestow on me your friendship. You must think me very vain or small-minded, if you suppose that the civility itself of such excellent persons as you are could lead me to believe that—I had at once won your affection. Besides, it is one of my first principles never to stand in other than friendly relationship with the wife of another man. Never by such a relationship (as you suggest) would I fill my breast with distrust against her who may one day share my fate with me—and so taint for myself the most beautiful, the purest life.

It is perhaps possible that sometimes I have not joked with Bigot in a sufficiently refined way; I have indeed told both of you that occasionally I am very free in speech. I am perfectly natural with all my friends, and hate all restraint. I now also count Bigot among them, and if anything I do displeases him, friendship demands from him and you to tell me so—and I will certainly take care not to offend him again; but how can good Marie put such bad meaning on my actions!

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With regard to my invitation to take a drive with you and Caroline, it was natural that, as Bigot, the day before, was opposed to your going out alone with me, I was forced to conclude that you both probably found it unbecoming or objectionable—and when I wrote to you, I only wished to make you understand that I saw no harm in it. And so, when I further declared that I attached great value to your not declining, this was only that I might induce you to enjoy the splendid, beautiful day; I was thinking more of your and Caroline's pleasure than of mine, and I thought, *if I declared that mistrust on your part or a refusal would be a real offense to me*, by this means almost to compel you to yield to my wish. The matter really deserves careful reflection on your part as to how you can make amends for having spoilt this day so bright for me, owing as much to my frame of mind as to the cheerful weather. When I said that you misunderstand me, your present judgment of me shows that I was quite right—not to speak of what you thought to yourself about it. When I said that something bad would come of it if I came to you, this was more as a joke. The object was to show you how much everything connected with you attracts me, so that I have no greater wish than to be able always to live with you; and that is the truth. Even supposing there was a hidden meaning in it, the most holy friendship can often have secrets, but on that account to misinterpret the secret of a friend because one cannot at once fathom it—that you ought not to do. Dear Bigot, dear Marie, never, never will you find me ignoble. From childhood onwards I learnt to love virtue—and all that is beautiful and good. You have deeply pained me; but it shall only serve to render our friendship ever firmer. Today I am really not well, and it would be difficult for me to see you. Since yesterday, after the quartet, my sensitiveness and my imagination pictured to me the thought that I had caused you suffering. I went at night to the ball for distraction, but in vain. Everywhere the picture of you all pursued me; it kept saying to me—they are so good and perhaps through you they are suffering; thoroughly depressed, I hastened away. Write to me a few lines.

Your true friend BEETHOVEN embraces you all.

NO. 198

TO BREITKOPF AND HAERTEL

Vienna, August 8, 1809.

I have handed over to Kind and Co. a *sextet* for 2 clarinets, 2 bassoons, 2 horns, and 2 German lieder or songs, so that they may reach you as soon as possible—they are presents to you in return for all those things which I asked you for *as presents*; the *Musik Zeitung* which I had also forgotten—I remind you in a friendly way about it. Perhaps you could let me have editions of Goethe's and Schiller's complete works—-from their literary abundance something *comes in to you*, and I then send to you many things, *i.e.*,

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something which goes out into all the world. Those two poets are my favorite poets, also Ossian, Homer, the latter whom I can, unfortunately, read only in translation. So these (Goethe and Schiller) you have only to shoot out from your literary store-house, and if you send them to me soon you will make me perfectly happy, and all the more so, seeing that I hope to pass the remainder of the summer in some cozy country corner. The sextet is one of my early things, and, moreover, was written in one night; the best one can say of it is that it was composed by an author who, at any rate, has produced better works—and yet, for many, such works are the best.

Farewell, and send very soon news to your most devoted

BEETHOVEN.

Of the 'cello Sonata I should like to have a few copies; I would indeed beg you always to send me half a dozen copies; I never sell any—there are, however, here and there poor *Musici*, to whom one cannot refuse a thing of that sort.

NO. 220

TO BETTINA BRENTANO

Vienna, August 11, 1810.

Dearest Bettina (Friend!):

No finer Spring than the present one—I say that and also feel it, because I have made your acquaintance. You yourself have probably seen that in society I am like a frog (fish) on the sand, which turns round and round, and cannot get away until a well-wishing Galatea puts him again into the mighty sea. Yes, I was quite out of my element, dearest Bettina; I was surprised by you at a moment when ill-humor was quite master of me, but it actually disappeared at sight of you. I at once perceived that you belonged to a different world from this absurd one, to which, with the best will, one cannot open one's ears. I myself am a wretched man and yet complain of others!—You will surely forgive me, with your good heart, which is seen in your eyes, and with your intelligence, which lies in your ears—at least our ears know how to flatter when they listen. My ears, unfortunately, are a barrier-wall through which I cannot easily hold friendly communication with men, else—perhaps!—I should have had more confidence in you. So I could only understand the great, intelligent look of your eyes, which so impressed me that I can never forget it. Dear Bettina (friend), beloved Maiden!—Art!—Who understands it, with whom can one speak concerning this great goddess! How dear to me were the few days when we gossiped or rather corresponded together! I have kept all the little notes on which stand your clever, dear, very dear, answers; so I have, at any

rate, to thank my bad hearing that the best part of these fleeting conversations has been noted down. Since you went away I have had vexatious hours, hours of darkness, in which one can do nothing; after your departure I roamed about for full three hours in the Schoenbrunner Alley, also on the ramparts; but no angel met me who could take such hold on me as you,

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angel!—Forgive, dearest Bettina (friend), this digression from the key; I must have such intervals in order to give vent to my feelings. Then you have written, have you not, to Goethe about me? I would willingly hide my head in a sack, so as to hear and see nothing of what is going on in the world, because you, dearest angel, will not meet me. But I shall surely receive a letter from you? Hope nourishes me—it nourishes, indeed, half the world; I have had it as my neighbor all my life—what otherwise would have become of me? I here send, written with my own hand, “Kennst du das Land”—in remembrance of the hour in which I made your acquaintance. I also send the other which I have composed since I parted from you dear, dearest heart!—

Heart, my heart, what bodes the crisis,
What oppresseth thee so sore?
What a strange, untoward life this!
I can fathom thee no more.

Yes, dearest Bettina (friend), send me an answer, write to me what will happen to me since my heart has become such a rebel. Write to your most faithful friend,

BEETHOVEN.

NO. 295

TO EMILIE M. AT H.

Teplitz, July 17, 1812.

My Dear Good Emilie, My Dear Friend!

I am sending a late answer to your letter; a mass of business and constant illness must be my excuse. That I am here for the restoration of my health proves the truth of my excuse. Do not snatch the laurel wreaths from Handel, Haydn, Mozart; they are entitled to them; as yet I am not.

Your pocket-book shall be preserved among other tokens of the esteem of many men, which I do not deserve.

Continue, do not only practise art, but get at the very heart of it; this it deserves, for only art and science raise men to the Godhead. If, my dear Emilie, you at any time wish to know something, write without hesitation to me. The true artist is not proud, for he unfortunately sees that art has no limits; he feels darkly how far he is from the goal; and, though he may be admired by others, he is sad not to have reached that point to which his better genius appears only as a distant, guiding sun. I would, perhaps, rather come

to you and your people than to many rich folk who display inward poverty. If one day I should come to H., I will come to you, to your house; I know no other excellencies in man than those which cause him to rank among better men; where I find this, there is my home.

If you wish, dear Emilie, to write to me, only address straight here where I shall remain for the next four weeks, or to Vienna; it is all one. Look upon me as your friend, and as the friend of your family.

LUDWIG V. BEETHOVEN.

NO. 300

TO BETTINA VON ARNIM

Teplitz, August 15, 1812.

Dearest, good Bettina!

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Kings and princes can certainly create professors, privy councilors, and titles, and hang on ribbons of various orders, but they cannot create great men, master-minds which tower above the rabble; this is beyond them. Such men must therefore be held in respect. When two such as I and Goethe meet, these grand gentlemen are forced to note what greatness, in such as we are, means. Yesterday on the way home we met the whole Imperial family. We saw them from afar approaching, and Goethe slipped away from me and stood to one side. Say what I would, I could not induce him to advance another step, so I pushed my hat on my head, buttoned up my overcoat, and went, arms folded, into the thickest of the crowd. Princes and sycophants drew up in a line; Duke Rudolph took off my hat, after the Empress had first greeted me. Persons of rank *know* me. To my great amusement I saw the procession defile past Goethe. Hat in hand, he stood at the side, deeply bowing. Then I mercilessly reprimanded him, cast his sins in his teeth, especially those of which he was guilty toward you, dearest Bettina, of whom we had just been speaking. Good heavens! Had I been in your company, as he has, I should have produced works of greater, far greater, importance. A musician is also a poet, and the magic of a pair of eyes can suddenly cause him to feel transported into a more beautiful world, where great spirits make sport of him and set him mighty tasks. I cannot tell what ideas came into my head when I made your acquaintance. In the little observatory during the splendid May rain—that was a fertile moment for me; the most beautiful themes then glided from your eyes into my heart, which one day will enchant the world when Beethoven has ceased to conduct. If God grant me yet a few years, then I must see you again, dear, dear Bettina; so calls the voice within me which never errs. Even minds can love each other. I shall always court yours; your approval is dearer to me than anything in the whole world. I gave my opinion to Goethe, that approval affects such men as ourselves and that we wish to be listened to with the intellect by those who are our equals. Emotion is only for women (excuse this); the flame of music must burst forth from the mind of a man. Ah! my dearest child, we have now for a long time been in perfect agreement about everything! The only good thing is a beautiful, good soul, which is recognized in everything, and in presence of which there need be no concealment. *One must be somebody if one wishes to appear so*. The world is bound to recognize one; it is not always unjust. To me, however, that is a matter of no importance, for I have a higher aim. I hope when I get back to Vienna to receive a letter from you. Write soon, soon, and a very long one; in 8 days from now I shall be there; the court goes tomorrow; there will be no more performance today. The Empress rehearsed her part with him. His duke and he both wished to play some of my music, but to both I made

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refusal. They are mad on Chinese porcelain, hence there is need for indulgence; for the intellect has lost the whip-hand. I will not play to these silly folk, who never get over that mania, nor will I write at public cost any stupid stuff for princes. Adieu, adieu, dearest; your last letter lay on my heart for a whole night, and comforted me. *Everything* is allowed to musicians. Great heavens, how I love you!

Your sincerest friend and deaf brother,

BEETHOVEN.

NO. 615

TO HERR VON GOETHE

Vienna, April 12, 1811.

Your Excellency:

The pressing business of a friend of mine, one of your great admirers (as I also am), who is leaving here in a great hurry, gives me only a moment to offer my thanks for the long time I have known you (for I know you from the days of my childhood)—that is very little for so much. Bettina Brentano has assured me that you would receive me in a kindly—yes, indeed friendly, spirit. But how could I think of such a reception, seeing that I am only in a position to approach you with the deepest reverence, with an inexpressibly deep feeling for your noble creations? You will shortly receive from Leipzig, through Breitkopf and Haertel, the music to *Egmont*, this glorious *Egmont*, with which I, with the same warmth with which I read it, was again through you impressed by it and set it to music. I should much like to know your opinion of it; even blame will be profitable for me and for my art, and will be as willingly received as the greatest praise.

Your Excellency's great admirer,

LUDWIG VON BEETHOVEN.

NO. 1017

TO B. SCHOTT & SON, MAINZ

(Summer, 1824).

Dear Sirs:

I only tell you that next week the works will certainly be sent off. You will easily understand, if you only imagine to yourself, that with uncertain copying I have to look through each part separately—for this branch has already decreased here in proportion as tuning has been taken up. Everywhere poverty of spirit—and of purse! Your *Cecilia* I have not yet received.

The *Overture* which you had from my brother was performed here a few days ago, and I received high praise for it, *etc*.—but what is all that in comparison with the great Tone-Master above—above—above—and with right the greatest of all, while here below everything is a mockery—*we the little dwarfs are the highest*!!!?? You will receive the quartet at the same time as the other works. You are so open and frank—qualities which I have never yet noticed in publishers—and this pleases me. Let us shake hands over it; who knows whether I shall not do that in person and soon! I should be glad if you would now at once forward the honorarium for the quartet to Friess, for I just now want a great deal of money; everything must come to me from abroad, and here and there a delay arises—through my own fault. My brother adds what is necessary about the works offered to, and accepted by, you. I greet you heartily. Junker, as I see from your newspaper, is still living; he was one of the first who *noticed* me, an innocent and nothing more. Greet him.

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In greatest haste, and yet not of shortest standing,

Yours,

BEETHOVEN.

NO. 1117

TO HIS NEPHEW CARL

Baden, October 5, 1825.

For God's sake, do come home again today! Who knows what danger might be threatening you! Hasten, hasten! My Dear Son!

Only nothing further—only come to my arms; you shall hear no harsh word. For Heaven's sake, do not rush to destruction! You will be received as ever with affection. As to considering what is to be done in future, we will talk this over in a friendly way—no reproaches, on my word of honor, for it would be of no use. You need expect from me only the most loving help and care.

Only come—come to the faithful heart of your father,

BEETHOVEN.

Come at once on receipt of this.

Si vous ne viendrez pas vous me tuerez surement.

VOLTI SUB.

NO. 1129

TO THE COPYIST RAMPEL

(1825)

Best Rampel, come tomorrow morning, but go to hell with your calling me gracious. *God alone can be called gracious*. The servant I have already engaged—only impress on her to be honest and attached to me, as well as orderly and punctual in her small services.

Your devoted BEETHOVEN.

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FOOTNOTES:

[Footnote 1: Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.]

[Footnote 2: Translator: Sir Theodore Mart Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.]

[Footnote 3: Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.]

[Footnote 4: Translator: T. Brooksbank. Permission William Heinemann, London.]

[Footnote 5: Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.]

[Footnote 6: Translator: J.E. Wallis. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 7: Translator: Richard Garnett. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 8: Translator: Alma Strettell. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 9: Translator: Alma Strettell. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 10: Translator: Franklin Johnson. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 11: Translator: J.E. Wallis. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 12: Translator: T. Brooksbank. Permission William Heinemann, London.]

[Footnote 13: Translator: Charles G. Leland. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 14: Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.]

[Footnote 15: Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.]

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[Footnote 16: Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.]

[Footnote 17: Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.]

[Footnote 18: Translator: J.E. Wallis. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 19: Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.]

[Footnote 20: Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.]

[Footnote 21: Translator: Sir Theodore Martin Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.]

[Footnote 22: Translator: T. Brooksbank. Permission William Heinemann, London.]

[Footnote 23: Translator: Edgar Alfred Bowring. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 24: Translator: Alma Strettell. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 25: Translator: W.H. Furness. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 26: Translator: John Todhunter. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 27: Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 28: Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.]

[Footnote 29: Translator: Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 30: Translator: James Thomson. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 31: Translator: Elizabeth Barrett Browning. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 32: Translator: Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 33: Translator: “Stratheir.” Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 34: Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons.]

[Footnote 35: Translator: James Thomson. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 36: Translator: Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 37: Translator: Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 38: Translator: Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 39: Translator: Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 40: Translator: Kate Freiligrath-Kroeker. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 41: Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.]

[Footnote 42: Translator: Margaret Armour. Permission William Heinemann, London.]

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[Footnote 43: Translator: Sir Theodore Martin. Permission William Blackwood & Sons, London.]

[Footnote 44: Translator: Margaret Armour. Permission William Heinemann, London.]

[Footnote 45: Translator: Lord Houghton. Permission The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., London.]

[Footnote 46: Translator: Margaret Armour. Permission William Heinemann, London.]

[Footnote 47: Translator: Margaret Armour. Permission William Heinemann, London.]

[Footnote 48: Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.]

[Footnote 49: Permission William Heinemann, London.]

[Footnote 50: Names of Student's Corps.]

[Footnote 51: Name of the University of Goettingen.]

[Footnote 52: Name of an Austrian periodical.]

[Footnote 53: Translator: Charles Wharton Stork.]

[Footnote 54: According to that dignified and erudite work, the *Burschikoses Woerterbuch*, or Student-Slang Dictionary, "to bind a bear" signifies to contract a debt. The definition of a "sable," as given in the dictionary above cited is, "A young lady anxious to please."]

[Footnote 55: From *Ideen: Das Buch Le Grand* (Chaps. VI-IX). Permission E.P. Dutton & Co., New York, and William Heinemann, London.]

[Footnote 56: From *Pictures of Travel*, permission W. Heinemann, London.]

[Footnote 57: From *French. Affairs*; permission of William Heinemann, London.]

[Footnote 58: Permission William Heinemann, London.]

[Footnote 59: Permission William Heinemann, London.]

[Footnote 60: This prototype of "The House that Jack Built" is presumed to be a hymn in Seder Hagadah, fol. 23. The historical interpretation, says Mrs. Valentine, who has reproduced it in her Nursery Rhymes, was first given by P.N. Leberecht at Leipzig in 1731, and is printed in the Christian Reformer, vol. xvii, p. 28. The original is in Chaldee. It is throughout an allegory. The kid, one of the pure animals, denotes Israel. The Father by whom it was purchased is Jehovah; the two pieces of money signify

Moses and Aaron. The cat means the Assyrians, the dog the Babylonians, the staff the Persians, the fire the Grecian Empire under Alexander the Great. The water betokens the Roman or the fourth of the great monarchies to whose dominion the Jews were subjected. The ox is a symbol of the Saracens, who subdued Palestine; the butcher that killed the ox denotes the crusaders by whom the Holy Land was taken from the Saracens; the Angel of Death the Turkish power to which Palestine is still subject. The tenth stanza is designed to show that God will take signal vengeance on the Turks, and restore the Jews to their own land.]

[Footnote 61: There is a concluding verse which Heine has omitted. “Then came the Holy One of Israel—blessed be he—and slew the Angel of Death, who,” *etc*.—TRAN.]

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[Footnote 62: A suburb of Vienna.]

[Footnote 63: In Lower Austria, on the railroad from Vienna to Eger.]

[Footnote 64: From Grillparzer's *Autobiography* (1855).]

[Footnote 65: A decoration.]

[Footnote 66: A Critical Edition by Dr. A.C. Kalischer. Permission J.M. Dent & Co., London, and E.P. Dutton & Co., New York.]

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