



*Mr MURRAY as DEMETRIUS.*

*Dem. I beg I challenge. I provoke my death.*

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THE  
*BROTHERS.*

A  
TRAGEDY.

By DR. EDWARD YOUNG.

ADAPTED FOR  
THEATRICAL REPRESENTATION,  
AS PERFORMED AT THE  
THEATRE-ROYAL, DRURY-LANE.

REGULATED FROM THE PROMPT-BOOK,  
*By Permission of the Manager.*

The Lines distinguished by single inverted Commas, are omitted in the Representation, and those printed in Italics are Additions of the Theatres.

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1797.

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THE LIFE OF DR. EDWARD YOUNG.

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DR. EDWARD YOUNG, the son of Dr. Edward Young, dean of Sarum, was born at Upham, near Winchester, in June, 1681. He was placed on the foundation at Winchester College, where he remained until the election after his eighteenth birth-day; when not being chosen to New College, he, on the 13th of October, 1703, was entered an independant member of that society, and, that he might be at little expence, resided at the lodgings of the warden, who had been a particular friend of his father. In a few months, the death of his benefactor occasioned him to remove to Corpus, the president of which college invited him there for the same reasons as the warden of New College had before done. In 1708, he was nominated to a law-fellowship at All-Souls, by archbishop Tennison. On the 23d of April, 1714, he took the degree of bachelor of civil law; and his doctor's degree, on the 10th of June, 1719.

Two years after he had taken his first degree, he was appointed to speak the Latin Oration, which was delivered on laying the foundation of the Codrington Library. In 1719, he was received in the Earl of Exeter's family, as tutor to Lord Burleigh, with whom he was to travel, and might have secured an annuity of 100l. per annum, had he continued in that situation; but having been admitted to an intimacy with the witty Duke of Wharton, he directly attached himself to that

nobleman, with whom he visited Ireland, and under whose auspices he became a candidate for the borough of Cirencester, in which attempt he was unsuccessful.

On the death of the Duke, Dr. Young took orders; and in April, 1728, was appointed Chaplain to George the Second. In July, 1730, he was presented by his College to the rectory of Welwyn, in Hertfordshire; and in April, 1732, married Lady Elizabeth Lee, daughter of the Earl of Litchfield, and widow of Colonel Lee. This lady died in the year 1740, and her death was soon afterwards followed by that of her daughter, an amiable young lady, whose husband, Mr. Temple, son of Lord Palmerston, did not long survive her. The loss of these three persons, for some time, threw a gloom over Dr. Young's mind, and gave birth to the *Night Thoughts*, a work by which it certainly was the author's wish to be distinguished, and by which his reputation has been established throughout his own and the neighbouring kingdoms. From this time he lived in his retreat at Welwyn, without receiving any addition to his preferment.

In 1761, at the age of fourscore, he was appointed Clerk of the Closet to the Princess-Dowager of Wales, and died in April, 1765.

He left the bulk of his fortune, which was considerable, to his only son, whom he had long excluded both from his roof and his protection. What offence occasioned this suspension of parental tenderness, we are not enabled to determine. Yet during his last con-

finement, even when the expectation of life had forsaken him, he continued strenuous in refusing to see his child, who repeatedly, but vainly, wished for his parting benediction.

Of the private habits of Dr. Young very few particulars are known. Singularity is said to have predominated in his most juvenile practices. The late Dr. Ridley remembered a report current at Oxford, that when he was composing, he would shut up his windows, and sit by a lamp even at mid-day; nay, that skulls, bones, and instruments of death were among the ornaments of his study. He rose betimes, and obliged his domestics to join with him in the duties of morning prayer. He read but little. While his health permitted him to walk abroad, he preferred a solitary ramble in his church-yard to exercise with a companion on a more cheerful spot. He was moderate in his meals, and rarely drank wine, except when he was ill, being (as he said) unwilling to waste the succours of sickness on the stability of health. After a slight refreshment he retired to bed at eight in the evening, although he might have guests in his house, who wished to prolong his stay among them to a later hour. He lived at a moderate expence, rather inclining to parsimony than profusion.

The remains of Dr. Young were deposited in his own church, with a plain Latin inscription over him.

We have now to give some account of the literary productions of this favourite of the Muses.

In 1704, he produced his celebrated Poem on the Last Day, which, as being the pious, as well as masterly composition of a young obscure layman, became presently a popular and generally-admired performance.

Soon after this he wrote the poem, entitled—The Force of Religion: or, Vanquish'd Love; which was likewise received with very flattering marks of distinction. Such was the success of both these juvenile performances, at a period when the noblest effusions of genius were daily issuing from the press—when, in fact, the literature of England seemed to have reached the zenith of its glory, that several of the first characters in the kingdom not only loaded him with applause, but actually courted his confidence and friendship.

Of all our Author's poetical performances, the Satires, entitled Love of Fame, the Universal Passion, have been generally considered as the most correct and finished, though written at an early period of life. By certain fastidious critics they have been stigmatized as a mere string of epigrams.

In 1719 our Author made his first appearance in the train of Melpomene; and though Busiris, his first effort in the line of tragedy, afforded but little pleasure in the representation, and is indeed frequently tinctured with the false sublime, yet, coolly examined in the closet, a reader of taste will discover in it a number of admirable lines of elevated sentiments.

His next, and confessedly the best of his tragic

compositions, (since it still continues a stock play at the theatres) was the Revenge. For the idea of this play, which appears, from the Annals of the Drama, to have been acted in the same year with Busiris, our Poet is evidently indebted partly to the Othello of Shakspeare, and partly to the Abdalazar of Mrs. Behn; on both which pieces he has indeed made many skillful improvements.

His last was the Brothers, a play written upon the plan of a French piece of great merit. The emoluments arising from the exhibition of this piece were generously allotted by the Author to the purposes of public charity.

Having followed Dr. Young through his dramatic career, let us now consider him as the moral and plain-tive, the pious but gloomy, Author of the Night Thoughts; a work composed in a style so strictly peculiar to himself, that of the many efforts which have been made to imitate it, none have proved in any degree successful. Than the Night-Thoughts never was any poem received with applause more general or unbounded. "The unhappy bard, whose grief in melting numbers flows, and melancholy joys diffuse around," has been sung by the profane as well as the pious. These were written under the recent, the overwhelming pressure of sorrow for the death of his wife, and of his daughter and son in law: the former of whom, though distinguished by no name, he often pathetically alludes to; while the two latter he beau-

tifully characterizes under the poetical appellations of Narcissa and Philander.

This sublime performance is addressed to Lorenzo, an infidel man of pleasure and dissipation; in a word, a mere man of the world. By Lorenzo, if general report says true, we are to understand his own son, who, borne away by the passions too often fatal to youth, is well-known to have long laboured under the heavy punishment of a father's just displeasure. Whatever there may be in this, every page of the poem abounds with the noblest flights of fancy—flights which, especially in his description of Death, in the act of noting down, from his secret stand, the exercises of a Bacchanalian society; in his epitaph on the departed World; in the issuing of Satan from his dungeon on the day of judgment, and a few others, might tempt a reader of warm imagination to suppose the poet under the immediate inspiration of the Divinity.

Uniformly a friend to virtue, and an indefatigable assertor of the dignity of human nature against all the cavils, not of the rude multitude only, but of many well-disposed, tho' mistaken and discontented moralists, in 1754, under the patronage of Queen Caroline, our Author published his *Estimate of Human Life*; a valuable tract, which, while it exhibits a striking picture of the writer's pious benevolence and charity, evinces him to have been alike qualified to shine in prose and verse.

This was followed by his *Centaur* not *Fabulous*, another of his prose pieces. When turned of eighty, our Author published (in the form of a letter addressed to his friend, (the celebrated editor of Sir Charles Grandison) his *Conjectures on Original Composition*; a performance which (it is more than conjecture to add) will for ever remain a singular monument, that even at that age of general imbecility and dotage, the intellectual powers of Dr. Young had apparently lost nothing of their wonted vigour.

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 PROLOGUE.
 

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WRITTEN BY MR. DODSLEY.

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THE tragic muse, revolving many a page  
 Of Time's long records, drawn from every age,  
 Forms not her plans on low or trivial deeds,  
 But marks the striking!—When some hero bleeds,  
 To save his country, then her powers inspire,  
 And souls congenial catch the patriot fire.  
 When bold Oppression grinds a suffering land;  
 When the keen dagger gleams in Murder's hand;  
 When black Conspiracy infects the throng;  
 Or fell Revenge sits brooding o'er his wrong;  
 Then walks she forth in terror; at her frown  
 Guilt shrinks appall'd, tho' seated on a throne.  
 But the rack'd soul when dark suspicions rend,  
 When brothers hate, and sons with sires contend;  
 When clashing interests war eternal rage;  
 And love, the tenderest passion, turns to rage;  
 Then grief on every visage stands impress,  
 And pity throbs in every feeling breast;  
 Hope, fear, and indignation rise by turns,  
 And the strong scene with various passion burns.  
 Such is our tale.—Nor blush if tears should flow:  
 They're Virtue's tribute paid to human woe.  
 Such drops new lustre to bright eyes impart;  
 The silent witness of a tender heart:  
 Such drops adorn the noblest hero's cheek,

And paint his worth in strokes that more than speak;  
 Not he who cannot weep, but he who can,  
 Shews the great soul, and proves himself a man.

Yet do not idly grieve at others' pain,  
 Nor let the tears of Nature fall in vain:  
 Watch the close crimes from whence their ills have grown,  
 And from their frailties learn to mend your own.

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Dramatis Personar.

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*Men.*

PHILIP, King of Macedon, - - - - Mr. BARRY.  
PERSEUS, his elder Son, - - - - Mr. MOSSOP.  
DEMETRIUS, his younger Son, - - - Mr. GARRICK.  
PERICLES, the Friend of Perseus, - - Mr. BLAKES.  
ANTIGONUS, a Minister of State, - - Mr. BURTON.  
DYMAS, the King's Favourite, - - - Mr. SIMSON.  
POSTHUMIUS, } Roman Ambassadors, { Mr. WINSTONE.  
CURTIUS, } } Mr. MOZEEN.

*Women.*

ERIXENE, the Thracian Princess, - - Mrs. BELLAMY.  
Her Attendant, - - - - - Miss HIPPISELEY.

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THE BROTHERS.

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ACT I. SCENE I.

*Enter CURTIUS and POSTHUMIUS.*

*Curtius.*

THERE's something of magnificence about us  
I have not seen at Rome. But you can tell me. [Gazes round.]

*Post.* True : hither sent on former embassies,  
I know this splendid court of Macedon,  
And haughty Philip, well.

*Cur.* His pride presumes  
To treat us here like subjects more than Romans,  
More than ambassadors, who, in our bosoms,  
Bear peace and war, and throw him which we please,  
As Jove his storm, or sunshine, on his creatures.

*Post.* This Philip only, since Rome's glory rose,  
Preserves its grandeur to the name of King ;  
Like a bold star, that shews its fires by day.  
The Greek, who won the world, was sent before him,  
As the grey dawn before the blaze of noon :

Philip had ne'er been conquered, but by Rome;  
And what can fame say more of mortal man?

*Cur.* I know his public character.

*Post.* It pains me

To turn my thought on his domestic state.  
There Philip is no God; but pours his heart,  
In ceaseless groans, o'er his contending sons;  
And pays the secret tax of mighty men  
To their mortality.

*Cur.* But whence this strife,  
Which thus afflicts him?

*Post.* From this Philip's bed  
Two Alexanders spring.

*Cur.* And but one world?  
'Twill never do.

*Post.* They both are bright; but one  
Benignly bright, as stars to mariners;  
And one a comet, with malignant blaze,  
Denouncing ruin.

*Cur.* You mean Perseus.

*Post.* True.

The younger son, Demetrius, you well know,  
Was bred at Rome, our hostage from his father.  
Soon after, he was sent ambassador,  
When Philip fear'd the thunder of our arms.  
Rome's manners won him, and his manners Rome;  
Who granted peace, declaring she forgave,  
To his high worth, the conduct of his father.  
This gave him all the hearts of Macedon;  
Which, join'd to his high patronage from Rome,

Inflames his jealous brother.

*Cur.* Glows there not

A second brand of enmity?

*Post.* O yes;

The fair Erixene.

*Cur.* I've partly heard

Her smother'd story.

*Post.* Smother'd by the King;

And wisely too: but thou shalt hear it all.

Not seas of adamant, not mountains whelm'd

On guilty secrets, can exclude the day.

Long burnt a fix'd hereditary hate

Between the crowns of Macedon and Thrace;

The sword by both too much indulg'd in blood.

Philip, at length, prevail'd; he took, by night,

The town and palace of his deadly foe;

Rush'd thro' the flames, which he had kindled round,

And slew him, bold in vain: nor rested there;

But, with unkingly cruelty, destroy'd

Two little sons within their mother's arms;

Thus meaning to tread out those sparks of war,

Which might one day flame up to strong revenge.

The Queen, through grief, on her dead sons expir'd.

One child alone surviv'd; a female infant,

Amidst these horrors, in the cradle smil'd.

*Cur.* What of that infant?

*Post.* Stung with sharp remorse,

The victor took, and gave her to his Queen.

The child was bred, and honour'd as her own;

She grew, she bloom'd; and now her eyes repay



Her brother wounds, on Philip's rival sons.

*Cur.* Is then Erixene that Thracian child?

How just the Gods! from out that ruin'd house  
He took a brand, to set his own on fire.

*Post.* To give thee, friend, the whole in miniature;  
This is the picture of great Philip's court:  
The proud, but melancholy King, on high,  
Majestic sits, like Jove, enthron'd in darkness;  
His sons are as the thunder in his hand;  
And the fair Thracian princess is a star,  
That sparkles by, and gilds the solemn scene.

[*Shouts heard.*

'Tis their great day, supreme of all their year,  
The fam'd lustration of their martial powers;  
Thence, for our audience, chosen by the King.  
If he provokes a war, his empire shakes,  
And all her lofty glories nod to ruin.

*Cur.* Who comes?

*Post.* O, that's the jealous elder brother;  
Irregular in manners, as in form.  
Observe the fire, high birth, and empire, kindle!

*Cur.* He holds his conference with much emotion.

*Post.* The brothers both can talk, and, in their turn,  
Have borne away the prize of eloquence  
At Athens. Shun his walk: our own debate  
Is now at hand. We'll seek his lion sire,  
Who dares to frown on us, his conquerors;  
And carries so much monarch on his brow,  
As if he'd fright us with the wounds we gave him,

[*Exeunt.*

*Enter PERSEUS and PERICLES.*

*Per.* 'Tis empire! empire! empire! let that word  
Make sacred all I do, or can attempt!  
Had I been born a slave, I should affect it;  
My nature's fiery, and, of course, aspires.  
Who gives an empire, by the gift defeats  
All end of giving; and procures contempt  
Instead of gratitude. An empire lost,  
Destroy'd, would less confound me, than resign'd.

*Peri.* But are you sure Demetrius will attempt?

*Per.* Why does Rome court him? For his virtues? No.  
To fire him to dominion; to blow up  
A civil war; then to support him in it:  
He gains the name of King, and Rome the power.

*Peri.* This is indeed the common art of Rome!

*Per.* That sours of justice thro' the wond'ring world!  
His youth and valour second Rome's designs:  
The first impels him to presumptuous hope;  
The last supports him in it. Then his person!  
Thy hand, O Nature, has made bold with mine  
Yet more! what words distil from his red lip,  
To gull the multitude! and they make Kings.  
Ten thousand fools, knaves, cowards, lump'd together,  
Become all wise, all righteous, and almighty.  
Nor is this all: the foolish Thracian maid  
Prefers the boy to me.

*Peri.* And does that pain you?

*Per.* O Pericles, to death! It is most true,  
Through hate to him, and not through love for her,

I paid my first addresses; but became  
 The fool I feign'd: my sighs are now sincere.  
 It smarts; it burns: O that 'twere fiction still!  
 By Heaven, she seems more beauteous than dominion!  
*Peri.* Dominion, and the princess, both are lost,  
 Unless you gain the King.

*Per.* But how to gain him?  
 Old men love novelties; the last arriv'd  
 Still pleases best; the youngest steals their smiles.  
*Peri.* Dymas alone can work him to his pleasure;  
 First in esteem, and keeper of his heart.

*Per.* To Dymas thou; and win him to thy will.  
 In the mean time, I'll seek my double rival;  
 Curb his presumption, and erect myself,  
 In all the dignity of birth, before him.  
 Whate'er can stir the blood, or sway the mind,  
 Is now at stake; and double is the loss,  
 When an inferior bears away the prize.

*Peri.* Your brother, dress'd for the solemnity!  
*Per.* To Dymas fly! gain him, and think on this:  
 A prince indebted, is a fortune made. [*Exit Pericles.*]

*Enter DEMETRIUS.*

*Dem.* How brother! unattir'd! Have you forgot  
 What pomps are due to this illustrious day?

*Per.* I am no gew-gaw for the throne to gaze at:  
 Some are design'd by nature but for shew;  
 The tinsel and the feather of mankind.

*Dem.* Brother, of that no more: for shame, gird on  
 Your glittering arms, and look like any Roman.

*Per.* No, brother, let the Romans look like me,  
 If they're ambitious. But, I pry'thee, stand;  
 Let me gaze on thee:—No inglorious figure!  
*More Romano*, as it ought to be.  
 But what is this that dazzles my weak sight?  
 There's sunshine in thy beaver.

*Dem.* 'Tis that helmet  
 Which Alexander wore at Granicus.  
*Per.* When he subdu'd the world? Ha! is't not so?  
 What world hast thou subdu'd? O yes, the fair!  
 Think'st thou there could in Macedon be found  
 No brow might suit that golden blaze but thine?

*Dem.* I wore it but to grace this sacred day:  
 Jar not for trifles.

*Per.* Nothing is a trifle  
 That argues the presumption of the soul.  
*Dem.* 'Tis they presume who know not to deserve.  
*Per.* Or who, deserving, scorn superior merit.

*Dem.* Who combats with a brother, wounds himself:  
 Wave private wrath, and rush upon the foes  
 Of Macedonia.

*Per.* No; I would not wound  
 Demetrius' friends!

*Dem.* Demetrius' friends!  
*Per.* The Romans.  
 You copy Hannibal, our great ally:  
 Say, at what altar was you sworn their foe?  
 Peace-making brother! Wherefore bring you peace,  
 But to prevent my glory from the field?  
 The peace you bring, was meant as war to me.

*Dem.* Perseus, be bold when danger's all your own:  
War now, were war with Philip more than Rome.

*Per.* Come, you love peace; that fair cheek hates a  
You that admire the Romans, break the bridge [scar.  
With Cocles, or with Curtius leap the gulph;  
And league not with the vices of our foes.

*Dem.* What vices?

*Per.* With their women and their wits.  
Your idol Lælius, Lælius the polite.  
I hear, Sir, you take wing, and mount in metre.  
Terence has own'd your aid, your comrade Terence.  
God-like ambition! Terence there, the slave!

*Dem.* At Athens bred, and to the arts a foe?

*Per.* At Athens bred, and borrow arts from Rome?

*Dem.* Brother, I've done: let our contention cease;  
Our mother shudders at it in her grave.  
And how has Philip mourn'd? a dreadful foe,  
And awful King; but O the tend'rest parent  
That ever wept in fondness o'er a child!

*Per.* Why, ay, go tell your father; fondly throw  
Your arms around him; stroke him to your purpose,  
As you are wont: I boast not so much worth;  
I am no picture, by the doating eye  
To be survey'd, and hung about his neck.  
I fight his battles; that's all I can do.  
But if you boast a piety sincere;  
One way you may secure your father's peace;  
And one alone—resign Erixene.

*Dem.* You flatter me, to think her in my power.  
We run our fates together; you deserve,

And she can judge; proceed we then like friends,  
And he who gains her heart, and gains it fairly,  
Let him enjoy his gen'rous rival's too.

*Per.* Smooth-speaking, unsincere, insulting boy!  
Is then my crown usurp'd but half thy crime?  
Desist; or by the Gods that smile on blood!  
Not thy fine form, nor yet thy boasted peace,  
Nor patronizing Rome, nor Philip's tears,  
Nor Alexander's helmet; no, nor more,  
His radiant form, should it alight in thunder,  
And spread its new divinity between us,  
Should save a brother from a brother's fury. [Exit.

*Dem.* How's this? the waves ne'er ran thus high  
Resign thee! yes, Erixene, with life. [before.  
Thou in whose eyes, so modest, and so bright,  
Love ever wakes, and keeps a vestal fire.  
Ne'er shall I wear my fond, fond heart from thee!  
But Perseus warns me to rouse all my powers.  
As yet I float in dark uncertainty;  
For tho' she smiles, I sound not her designs:  
I'll fly, fall, tremble, weep upon her feet;  
And learn (O all ye Gods!) my final doom!  
My father! ha! and on his brow deep thought  
And pale concern! Kind heav'n assuage his sorrows,  
Which strike a damp thro' all my flames of love! [Ex.

*Enter KING and ANTIGONUS.*

' *King.* Kings of their envy cheat a foolish world:  
' Fate gives us all in spite, that we alone  
' Might have the pain of knowing all is nothing.

- ' The seeming means of bliss but heighten woe,  
 ' When impotent to make their promise good :  
 ' Hence, kings, at least, bid fairest to be wretched.'

*Ant.* True, sir; 'tis empty, or tormenting, all ;  
 The days of life are sisters ; all alike :  
 None just the same ; which serves to fool us on  
 Through blasted hopes, with change of fallacy :  
 While joy is like to-morrow, still to come ;  
 Nor ends the fruitless chace but in the grave.

*King.* Ay, there, Antigonus, this pain will cease,  
 ' Which meets me at my banquet ; haunts my pillow ;  
 ' Nor, by the din of arms, is frighted from me.'  
 Conscience, what art thou ? thou tremendous power !  
 Who dost inhabit us without our leave ;  
 And art, within ourselves, another self,  
 A master self, that loves to domineer  
 And treat the monarch frankly as the slave.  
 How dost thou light a torch to distant deeds !  
 Make the past, present ; and the future frown !  
 How, ever and anon, awake the soul,  
 As with a peal of thunder, to strange horrors,  
 In this long restless dream, which idiots hug,  
 Nay, wise men flatter with the name of life !

*Ant.* You think too much.

*King.* I do not think at all :  
 The Gods impose, the Gods inflict, my thoughts,  
 And paint my dreams with images of dread.  
 Last night, in sleep, I saw the Thracian Queen  
 And her two murder'd sons. She frown'd upon me,  
 And pointed at their wounds. How throb'd my heart !

How shook my couch ! and when the morning came,  
 The formidable picture still subsisted,  
 And slowly vanish'd from my waking eye.  
 I fear some heavy vengeance hangs in air,  
 And conscious deities infuse these thoughts,  
 To warn my soul of her approaching doom.  
 The Gods are rigid when they weigh such deeds  
 As speak a ruthless heart ; they measure blood  
 By drops ; and bate not one in the repay.  
 Could infants hurt me ? 'Twas not like a King.

*Ant.* My Lord, I do confess the Gods are with us ;  
 Stand at our side in ev'ry act of life ;  
 And on our pillow watch each secret thought ;  
 Nay, see it in its embryo, yet unborn.  
 But their wrath ceases on remorse for guilt ;  
 And well I know your sorrows touch your sons ;  
 Nor is it possible but time must quench  
 Their flaming spirits in a father's tears.

*King.* Vain comfort ! I this moment overheard  
 My jarring sons with fury shake my walls.  
 Ah ! why my curse from those who ought to bless me ?  
 The Queen of Thrace can answer that sad question.  
 She had two sons ; but two : and so have I.  
 Misfortune stands with her bow ever bent  
 Over the world ; and he who wounds another,  
 Directs the Goddess, by that part he wounds,  
 Where to strike deep her arrows in himself.

*Ant.* I own, I think it time your sons receive  
 A father's awful counsel ; or, while here,  
 Now weary nature calls for kind repose,

Your curtains will be shaken with their boils:  
And, when you die, sons' blood may stain your tomb.  
But other cares demand you now:—the Romans.

*King.* O change of pain! the Romans? Perish Rome!  
Thrice happy they who sleep in humble life,  
Beneath the storm ambition blows. 'Tis meet  
The great should have the fame of happiness,  
The consolation of a little envy;  
'Tis all their pay, for those superior cares,  
Those pangs of heart, their vassals ne'er can feel.  
Where are these strangers? First I'll hear their tale;  
Then talk in private with my sons.

*Ant.* But how

Intends my Lord to make his peace with Rome?

*King.* Rome calls me fiery: let her find me so.

*Ant.* O, Sir, forbear! Too late you felt Rome's power.

*King.* Yes, and that reason stings me more than ever,  
To curse, and hate, and hazard all against her.

*Ant.* Hate her too much to give her battle now;  
Nor to your god-like valour owe your ruin.  
Greece, Thessaly, Illyriun, Rome has seiz'd;  
Your treasures wasted, and your phalanx thinn'd:  
Should she proceed, and strike at Macedon,  
What would be left of empire?

*King.* Philip: all.

I'll take my throne. Send in these foreigners.

[*The Scene draws, and discovers a magnificent Throne, PERSEUS, DEMETRIUS, Courtiers, &c. attending. POSTHUMIUS and CURTIUS, the Roman Ambassadors, enter. Trumpets sound. The King ascends the Throne.*]

*Post.* Philip of Macedon, to those complaints  
Our friends groan out, and you have heard at large,  
Rome now expects an answer. She sits judge,  
And will have right on earth.

*King.* Expects an answer!

I so shall answer as becomes a King.

*Post.* Or more, Sir; as becomes a friend of Rome.

*King.* Or Alexander's heir, to rise still higher.

But to the purpose. Thus a King to those  
'That would make Kings, and puff them out at pleasure:  
Has Philip done amiss? 'Twas you provok'd him.  
My cities, which deserted in my wars,  
I thought it meet to punish: you deny'd me.  
When I had shook the walls of Marena,  
You pluck'd me thence, and took the taken town.  
Then you sent word I should retire from Greece—  
A conquest at my door, by nature mine—  
And said, "Here end thy realm;" as ye were Gods!  
And Gods ye shall be, ere Rome humbles me.  
All this is done; yet Philip is your friend!  
If this buys friendship, where can ye find foes?  
In what regard will stern Rome look upon me?  
If as a friend, too precious let her hold

Her own esteem, to cast a stain on mine :

If as an enemy, let her proceed,

And do as she has done ; she needs no more.

*Post.* The Romans do no wrong ; yet still are men :

And if to-day an error thwarts their purpose,

To-morrow sets it right. If Philip loves

Dominion, and the pride that waits on Kings,

(Of which, perhaps, his words too strongly savour)

Humility to Rome will lead him to it.

She can give more than common Kings can govern.

*King.* Than common Kings? Ambassador! remember

Cannæ—where first my sword was flush'd with blood.

*Dem.* My Lord, forbear. [*Aside to the King.*

*King.* And Hannibal still lives.

*Post.* Because he fled at Capua.

*King.* There, indeed,

I was not with him.

*Post.* Therefore he fled alone.—

Since thus you treat us, hear another charge.

Why here detain you, prisoner of your power,

His daughter, who was once Rome's good ally,

The King of Thrace? Why is she not restor'd?

For our next meeting you'll provide an answer.

What now has past, for his sake, we forgive.

[*Pointing to Demetrius.*

But mark this well: there lies some little distance,

Philip, between a Roman and King. [*Exeunt Romans.*

*King.* How say'st, unscepter'd boaster? This to me!

With Hannibal I left yon Alpine rocks ;

With Hannibal choak'd Thrasymene with slaughter :

But, O the night of Cannæ's raging field !

When half the Roman senate lay in blood

Without our tent, and groan'd as we carous'd !

Immortal Gods ! for such another hour !

Then throw my carcase to the dogs of Rome.

*Ant.* Sir, you forget your sons.

*King.* Let all withdraw.

[*Exeunt all but the King and his Sons.*

Two passions only take up all my soul ;

Hatred to Rome, and tenderness for them.

Draw near, my sons, and listen to my age.

By what has past, you see the state of things.

Foreign alliance must a King secure ;

And insolence sustain to serve his power.

And if alliances with Rome are needful,

Much more among ourselves. If I must bear,

Unmov'd, an insult from a stranger's brow,

Shall not a brother bear a brother's look

Without impatience? Whither all this tends,

I'm sorry that your conscious hearts can tell you :

Is it not most severe? Two sons alone

Have crown'd my bed ; and they two are not brothers.

Look here, and, from my kind regards to you,

Copy such looks as you should bear each other.

Why do I sigh? Do you not know, my sons?

And if you do—O let me sigh no more!

Let these white hairs put in a claim to peace!

*Per.* Henceforth, my sole contention with my brother

Is this; which best obeys our father's will.

*Dem.* Father, if simple nature ever speaks  
In her own language, scorning useless words,  
You see her now; she swells into my eyes,  
I take thee to my heart: I fold thee in it.

[*Embracing Perseus.*]

Our father bids; and that we drank one milk,  
Is now the smallest motive of my love.

*King.* Antigonus, the joy their mother felt,  
When they were born, was faint to what I feel.

*Dem.* See, brother, if he does not weep! His love  
Runs o'er in venerable tears. I'm rude;  
But Nature will prevail—My king! My father!

*Per.* Now cannot I let fall a single tear. [*Aside.*]

*King.* See! the good man has caught it too.

*Ant.* Such tears,

And such alone, be shed in Macedonia!

*King.* Be not thou, Perseus, jealous of thy brother;  
Nor thou, Demetrius, prone to give him cause;  
Nor either think of empire till I'm dead.

You need not; you reign now; my heart is your's,  
Sheath your resentments in your father's peace;  
Come to my bosom both, and swear it there.

[*Embracing his Sons.*]

*Ant.* Look down, ye Gods, and change me, if you can,  
This sight for one more lovely! What so sweet,  
So beautiful, on earth, and, ah! so rare,  
As kindred love, and family repose?  
This, this alliance, Rome, will quite undo thee.  
See this, proud Eastern monarchs, and look pale!

Armies are routed, realms o'er-run by this.

*King.* Or if leagu'd worlds superior forces bring,  
I'd rather die a father than a king.  
Fathers alone a father's heart can know;  
What secret tides of still enjoyment flow,  
When brothers love; but if their hate succeeds,  
They wage the war; but 'tis the father bleeds.

[*Exeunt.*]

ACT II. SCENE I.

*Enter PERSEUS.*

*Perseus.*

WHY loiters my ambassador to Dymas?

His greatness will not, sure, presume to scorn  
A friendship offer'd from an heir of empire!—  
But Pericles returns.

*Enter PERICLES.*

Is Dymas our's?

*Peri.* He's cautious, Sir; he's subtle; he's a courtier.  
Dymas is now for you, now for your brother;  
For both, and neither: he's a summer-insect,  
And loves the sunshine: on his gilded wings,  
While the scales waver, he'll flydoubtful round you;  
And sing his flatteries to both alike:  
The scales once fix'd, he'll settle on the winner,  
And swear his pray'rs drew down the victory—  
But what success had you, Sir, with your brother?

*Per.* All, all my hopes are at the point of death!  
The boy triumphant keeps his hold in love:  
He's ever warbling nonsense in her ear,  
With all th' intoxication of success.  
Darkness incloses me; nor see I light  
From any quarter dawn, but from his death.

*Peri.* Why start at his death, who resolves on your's?

*Per.* Resolve on mine!

*Peri.* Have you not mark'd the Princess?  
You have: with what a beam of majesty  
Her eye strikes sacred awe! It speaks her mind  
Exalted, as it is. Whom loves she then?  
Demetrius? No; Rome's darling; who, no doubt,  
Dares court her with your empire. And shall Perseus  
Survive that loss?—Thus he resolves your death.

*Per.* Most true. What crime then to strike first?  
Or when? or where? O Pericles! assist me. [But how?]

*Peri.* 'Tis dangerous.

*Per.* The fitter for me.

*Peri.* Wait an occasion that befriends your wishes.

*Per.* Go, fool, and teach a cataract to creep!  
Can thirst of empire, vengeance, beauty, wait?

*Peri.* In the mean time, accept a stratagem  
That must secure your empire, or your love.  
Your brother's Roman friendships gall no less  
The King, than you: he dreads their consequence.  
Dymas hates Rome; and Dymas has a daughter.  
How can the King so powerfully fix  
Demetrius' faith, as by his marriage there?  
For Dymas thus, Rome's sworn, eternal foe,

Becomes a spy upon his private life,  
And surety for his conduct.

*Per.* True—but thus

Our art defeats itself. My brother gains  
The favourite, and so strengthens in his treason.

*Peri.* Think you he'll wed her? No; the Princess'  
Makes no such short-liv'd conquest. He'll refuse, [eye  
And thus effect what I have strove in vain:  
Yes, he'll refuse; and Dymas, in his wrath,  
Will list for us, and vengeance.—Then the King  
Will, doubtless, much resent his son's refusal;  
And thus we kindle the whole court against him.

*Per.* My precious friend, I thank thee. I take wing  
On ardent hope: I think it cannot fail.  
Go, make thy court to Dymas with this scheme:  
Begone—Erixene!—I'll feed her pride [Looking out.  
Once more, but not expend my breath in vain.  
This meeting stamps unalterable fate,  
I will wed her, or vengeance—

*Enter ERIXENE and DELIA.*

O, Erixene!  
O, Princess! colder than your Thracian snows!  
See Perseus, who ne'er stoop'd but to the Gods,  
Prostrate before you. Fame and empire sue.  
Why have I conquer'd?—Because you are fair.  
What's empire?—but a title to adore you.  
Why do I number in my lineage high  
Heroes and Gods?—That you, scarce less divine,  
Without a blush may listen to my vows.



My ancestor subdu'd the world. I dare  
Beyond his pride, and grasp at more, in you.  
Obdurate maid! or turn, or I expire.

*Erix.* If love, my Lord, is choice, who loves in vain  
Should blame himself alone; and if 'tis fate,  
'Tis fate in all: why then your blame on me?  
My crown's precarious, through the chance of war;  
But sure my heart's my own. Each villager  
Is queen of her affections, and can vent  
Her arbitrary sighs where'er she pleases.  
Shall then the daughter of a race of Kings——

*Per.* Madam, you justly blame the chance of war:  
The Gods have been unkind: I am not so.  
No! Perseus comes to counter-balance Fate.  
Thrace ne'er was conquer'd—if you smile on me.  
Silent! obdurate still! as cold as death!  
But 'tis Demetrius——

*Erix.* Prince, I take your meaning.  
But, if you truly think his worth prevail,  
How strange is your request!

*Per.* No, madam, no:  
Though love has hurt my mind, I still can judge  
What springs controul the passions of the great.  
Ambition is first minister of state;  
Love's but a second in the cabinet:  
Nor can he feather there his unfledg'd shaft  
But from ambition's wing: but you conceive  
More sanguine hopes, from him whom Rome supports,  
Than me. You view Demetrius on my throne;  
And thence he shines indeed! his charms from thence

Transpierce your soul, enamour'd of dominion.

*Erix.* Why now you shew me your profound esteem!  
Demetrius' guilt alone has charms for me;  
'Tis not the Prince, but Traitor wins my love.  
Such insults are not brook'd by royal minds,  
Howe'er their fortunes ebb; and though I mourn,  
An orphan, and a captive, Gods there are——  
Fear then an orphan's and a captive's wrong.

*Per.* Your cruel treatment of my passion——  
But I'll not talk. This, madam; only this——  
Think not the cause, the cursed cause of all,  
Shall laugh secure, and triumph in my pangs.  
No; by the torments of an heart on fire,  
She gluts my vengeance, who defrauds my love! [*Exit.*]

*Erix.* What have I done! In what a whirlwind rage  
Has snatch'd him hence on ill! I frown on Perseus  
And kill Demetrius.

*Delia.* Madam, see the Prince.

*Enter DEMETRIUS.*

*Erix.* Ah, Prince! the tempest, which so long has  
Is now full ripe, and bursting o'er your head. [*lour'd.*]  
This moment Perseus' malice flam'd before me;  
Victorious rage broke through his wonted guard,  
And menac'd loud your ruin. Fly, O fly  
This instant!

*Dem.* To what refuge?

*Erix.* Rome extends  
Her longing arms to clasp you for her own.

*Dem.* Madam, 'tis prudent; I confess it is;

But is it loving as true lovers ought,  
To be so very prudent in our love?  
I boast not so much wisdom: I prefer  
Death at your feet, before the world without you.

*Erix.* In danger thus extreme——

*Dem.* Oh! most below'd!

Lov'd you like me, like me you would discern  
That I but execute my brother's purpose  
By such a flight. At that his clamour, rage,  
And menace aim: to chase a rival hence,  
And keep the field alone. Oh! shall I leave him  
To gaze whole days; to learn to read your eye;  
To study your delights, to chide the wind's  
Too rude approach; to bid the ground be smooth;  
To follow, like your shadow, where you go;  
Tread in your steps; perhaps—to touch your hand!  
O death! to minister in little things;  
From half a glance to prophesy your will,  
And do it, ere well form'd in your own mind!  
Gods! Gods! while worlds divide me from my princess,  
That, should she call, Demetrius might grow old  
Ere he could reach her feet!

*Erix.* If Perseus' love

Pains you, it pains me more. Is your heart griev'd?  
Mine is tormented: but since Philip's self  
Is love's great advocate, a flat refusal  
But blows their rage, and hastens your destruction.  
Had I not that to fear! were you secure!  
I'd ease my bosom of its full disdain,

And dash this bold presumer on his birth,  
But, see! the grand procession.  
*Dem.* We must join it.

*Enter the King, PERSEUS, ROMANS, ANTIGONUS, &c.*

*King.* Let the procession halt! and here be paid,  
Before yon flaming altar, thanks to Heav'n,  
That brings us safe to this auspicious day!  
The great lustration of our martial powers,  
Which from its distant birth to present time  
Unfolds the glories of this ancient empire,  
And throngs the pride of ages in an hour.

*Post.* What figure's that, O Philip! which precedes?  
[Pointing.]

*King.* The founder of our empire, furious son  
Of great Alcides. We're ally'd to Heaven;  
And you, I think, call Romulus a God.—  
That, Philip, second of our name; and here,  
O bend with awe to him, whose red right hand  
Hurl'd proud Darius like a star from Heaven,  
With lesser lights around him, flaming down,  
And bid the laurel'd sons of Macedonia  
Drink their own Ganges.

*Per.* Give him his helmet, brother. [Aside to Dem.]  
*King.* You lead the troops that join in mock en-  
counter:

And in no other may you ever meet! [To his Sons.]  
But march one way, and drive the world before you:  
The victor, as our ancient rites decree,  
Must hold a feast, and triumph in the bowl.

*Dem.* I long, my Lord, to see the charge begin:  
The brandish'd faulchion, and the clashing helm,  
Though but in sport, it is a sport for men.  
Raw Alexander thus began his fame,  
And overthrew Darius, first, at home.  
We'll practise o'er the plans of future conquests,  
While neighb'ring nations tremble at our play;  
And own the fault in fortune, not in us,  
That we but want a foe to be immortal. [brother.

*Per.* You have supply'd my wants: I thank you,

*King.* [Rising, and coming forward. Music.] How  
vain all outward efforts to supply

The soul with joy! The noon-tide sun is dark,  
And music discord, when the heart is low!  
Avert its omen! what a damp hangs on me!  
These sprightly, tuneful airs but skim along  
The surface of my soul, not enter there:  
She does not dance to this enchanting sound.  
How, like a broken instrument, beneath  
The skilful touch, my joyless heart lies dead!  
Nor answers to the master's hand divine! [joys

*Antig.* When men once reach their autumn, sickly

Fall off apace, as yellow leaves from trees,  
At ev'ry little breath misfortune blows;  
Till, left quite naked of their happiness,  
In the chill blasts of winter they expire.  
This is the common lot. Have comfort then:  
Your grief will damp the triumph.

*King.* It is over.

Hear too; the trumpet calls us to the field,

And now this phantom of a fight begins.  
Fair Princess, you and I will go together,  
As Priam and bright Helen did of old,  
To view the war. Your eyes will make them bolder,  
And raise the price of victory itself.

[All go out but Perseus, who has observed Demetrius  
and Erixene all this time conversing, and stays behind,  
thoughtful and disturbed.

*Per.* Before my face she feeds him with her smiles:  
The King looks on, nor disapproves the crime;  
And the boy takes them as not due to me,  
Without remorse, as happy as she'll make him.  
Perish all three! I'll seek allies elsewhere;  
Father and brother, nay, a mistress too.  
Destruction, rise! Though thou art black as Night,  
Thy mother, and as hideous as despair,  
I'll clasp thee thus, nor think of woman more.  
How the boy doats, and drinks in at his eyes!  
Her poison! O to stab him in her arms!  
And yet do less than they have done to me.

Enter PERICLES.

*Peri.* Where is my prince? The nation's on the wing,  
No bosom but exults; no hand but bears  
A garland or a trophy: and shall Perseus—

*Per.* Vengeance!

*Peri.* Hear how with shouts they rend the skies!

[Shouts within.

*Per.* Give me my vengeance!

*Peri.* Forty thousand men,

In polish'd armour, shine against the sun.

*Per.* Dare but another word, and not of vengeance,  
And I will use thee, as I would—my brother.

*Peri.* Vengeance! on whom?

*Per.* On him.

*Peri.* What vengeance?

*Per.* Blood.

*Peri.* 'Tis your's.

*Per.* What God will give it me?

*Peri.* Your own right hand.

*Per.* I dare not—for my father.

*Peri.* You shall dare.

*Per.* Shalt thou dare give encouragement to Perseus?  
Unfold thy purpose; I'll outshoot the mark.

*Peri.* Where are you going?

*Per.* To the mock encounter.

*Peri.* What more like mock encounter than the true?

*Per.* Enough—He's dead! 'Twas accident; 'twas  
No matter what. Ten thousand share the blame. [error;

*Peri.* Hold, Sir! I had forgot: on this occasion,  
The troops are search'd; and foils alone are worn,  
Instead of swords.

*Per.* An osier were enough.  
Who pains my heart, plants thunder in my hand.

*Peri.* But should this fail——

*Per.* Impossible!

*Peri.* But, should it,  
The banquet follows.

*Per.* Poison in his wine.

I thank the Gods! my spirits are reviv'd!  
I draw immortal vigour from that bowl!

*Peri.* Nay, should both fail, the field and banquet too,  
All fails not; fairer hopes to fair succeed:

For know, my Lord, the King receiv'd with joy  
The marriage-scheme, and sent for Dymas' daughter.

*Per.* Then there's a second bowl of poison for him.

*Peri.* Yet more: this ev'ning those ambassadors,  
Which Philip sent to Rome, beneath the name  
Of public business, but, in truth, to learn  
Your brother's conduct, are expected home.

*Per.* Those whom I swore, before they parted hence,  
In dreadful sacraments of wine and blood,  
To bring back such reports as should destroy him:  
And what if, to complete our secret plan,  
We feign a letter to his friend the consul,  
To strengthen our ambassadors' report?

*Peri.* That care, my Lord, be mine: I know a knave,  
Grown fat on forgery; he'll counterfeit  
Old Quintius' hand and seal, by former letters  
Sent to the King; which you can gain with ease.

*Per.* Observe—This morning, at their interview,  
The Romans, in effect, inform'd the King,  
That Thrace was theirs, and order'd him restore  
The Princess. This will give much air of truth,  
If our forg'd letters say the Romans crown  
Demetrius King of Thrace, and promise more.

*Peri.* My Lord, it shall be done.

*Per.* All cannot fail.

[Trumpets.

*Peri.* The trumpets sound: the troops are mounted.

*Per.* Vengeance!

Sweet vengeance calls: nor ever call'd a God

Such swift obedience : like the rapid wheel  
 I kindle in the course ; I'm there already ;  
 Snatch the bright weapon ; bound into my seat ;  
 Strike ; triumph ; see him gasping on the ground,  
 And life, love, empire, springing from his wound.  
 When god-like ends, by means unjust, succeed,  
 The great result adorns the daring deed.  
 Virtue's a shackle, under fair disguise,  
 To fetter fools, while we bear off the prize. [Exeunt.]

ACT III. SCENE I.

Enter PERSEUS.

*Perseus.*

Cowards in ill, like cowards in the field,  
 Are sure to be defeated. To strike home,  
 In both, is prudence : guilt, begun, must fly  
 To guilt consummate, to be safe.

Enter PERICLES.

*Peri.* My Lord——

*Per.* Disturb not my devotions ; they decline  
 The beaten track, the common path of pray'r——  
 Ye Pow'rs of darkness ! that rejoice in ill ;  
 All sworn by Styx, with pestilential blasts  
 To wither every virtue in the bud ;  
 To keep the door of dark conspiracy,  
 And snuff the grateful fumes of human blood !  
 From sulphur blue, or your red beds of fire,

Or your black ebon thrones, auspicious rise ;  
 And bursting through the barriers of this world,  
 Stand in dread contrast to the golden sun ;  
 Fright day-light hence with your infernal smiles,  
 And howl aloud your formidable joy,  
 While I transport you with the fair record  
 Of what your faithful minister has done,  
 Beyond your inspiration, self-impell'd  
 To spread your empire, and secure his own.  
 Hear, and applaud. Now, Pericles, proceed ;  
 Speak, is the letter forg'd ?

*Peri.* This moment ; and might cheat  
 The cunning eye of jealousy itself.

*Per.* 'Tis well: Art thou appriz'd of what hath pass'd  
 Since last we parted ?

*Peri.* No, my Lord.

*Per.* Then rouse

Thy whole attention : here we are in private :  
 Know then, my Pericles, the mock encounter  
 I turn'd, as taught by thee, to real rage.  
 But blasted be the cowards which I led !  
 They trembled at a boy.

*Peri.* Ha !

*Per.* Mark me well:

The villains fled ; but soon my prudence turn'd  
 To good account that momentary shame.  
 Thus——I pretend 'twas voluntary flight  
 To save a brother's blood ; accusing him  
 As author of that conflict I declin'd,  
 And he pursu'd with ardour and success.

*Peri.* That's artful. What ensu'd?  
*Per.* The banquet follow'd,  
 Held by the victor, as our rights require:  
 To which his easy nature, soon appear'd,  
 Invited me. I went not; but sent spies  
 To learn what pass'd; which spies, by chance detected,  
 (Observe me) were ill us'd.

*Peri.* By whom? your brother?

*Per.* No; by his sons of riot. He soon after,  
 Not knowing that my servants were abus'd,  
 Kind, and gay-hearted, came to visit me.  
 They, who mistu'd my spies, for self-defence,  
 Conceal'd their arms beneath the robes of peace.  
 Of this inform'd, again my genius serv'd me.—

*Peri.* You took occasion, from these few in arms,  
 To charge a murderous assault on all.

*Per.* True, Pericles; but mark my whole address:  
 Against my brother swift I bar my gates;  
 Fly to my father; and with artful tears  
 Accuse Demetrius; first, of turning sports,  
 And guiltless exercise, to mortal rage;  
 Then of inviting me (still blacker guilt!)  
 To smiling death in an invenom'd bowl;  
 And last, that both these failing, mad with rage,  
 He threw his schemes of baffled art aside,  
 And with arm'd men avow'dly sought my life.

*Peri.* Three startling articles, and well concerted,  
 Following each other in an easy train,  
 With fair similitude of truth! But, Sir,  
 How bore your father?

*Per.* Oh! he shook! he fell!  
 Nor was his fleeting soul recall'd with ease.

*Peri.* What said he when recover'd?

*Per.* His resolve

I know not yet; but see, his minion comes;  
 And comes perhaps to tell me. But I'll go;  
 Sustain my part, and echo loud my wrongs.  
 Nought so like innocence as perfect guilt.  
 If he brings aught of moment, you'll inform me.

[As Perseus goes off, he is seized by Officers.]

Enter DYMAS.

*Peri.* How fares the King?

*Dym.* Even as an aged oak

Push'd to and fro, the labour of the storm;  
 Whose largest branches are struck off by thunder:  
 Yet still he lives, and on the mountain groans;  
 Strong in affliction, awful from his wounds,  
 And more rever'd in ruin than in glory.

*Peri.* I hear Prince Perseus has accus'd his brother.

*Dym.* True: and the King's commands are now  
 gone forth

To throw them both in chains; for farther thought  
 Makes Philip doubt the truth of Perseus' charge.

*Peri.* What then is his design?

*Dym.* They both this hour

Must plead their cause before him. Nay, already  
 His nobles, judges, counsellors, are met;  
 And public justice wears her sternest form:  
 A more momentous trial ne'er was known;

Whether the pleaders you survey as brothers,  
 Or princes known in arts, or fam'd for arms;  
 Whether you ponder, in their awful judge,  
 The tender parent, or the mighty King.  
 Greece, Athens hears the cause: the great result  
 Is life, or death; is infamy, or fame. [Trumpets.  
*Peri* What trumpets these?  
*Dym.* They summon to the court. [Exeunt.

*The Scene draws, and discovers the Court, KING, &c.*

*Enter DYMAS, and takes his place by the KING.*

*King.* Bring forth the prisoners.  
 Strange trial this! Here sit I to debate,  
 Which vital limb to lop, nor that to save,  
 But render wretched life more wretched still.  
 What see I, but Heaven's vengeance, in my sons?  
 Their guilt a scourge for mine: 'tis thus Heaven writes  
 Its awful meaning, plain in human deeds,  
 And language leaves to man.

*Enter PERSEUS and DEMETRIUS, in Chains, from different sides of the Stage; PERSEUS followed by PERICLES, and DEMETRIUS by ANTIGONUS.*

*Dym.* Dread Sir, your sons.

*King.* I have no sons; and that I ever had,  
 Is now my heaviest curse: and yet what care,  
 What pains, I took to curb their rising rage!  
 How often have I rang'd through history,  
 To find examples for their private use?

The Theban brothers did I set before them—  
 What blood! what desolation! but in vain!  
 For thee, Demetrius, did I go to Rome,  
 And bring thee patterns thence of brother's love:  
 The Quintii, and the Scipios: but in vain!  
 If I'm a monarch, where is your obedience?  
 If I'm a father, where's your duty to me?  
 If old, your veneration due to years?  
 But I have wept, and you have sworn, in vain!  
 I had your ear, and enmity your heart.  
 How was this morning's counsel thrown away!  
 How happy is your mother in the grave!  
 She, when she bore you, suffer'd less: her pangs,  
 Her pungent pangs, thro' through the father's heart.  
*Dem.* You can't condemn me, Sir, to worse than  
 this.  
*King.* Than what, thou young deceiver? While I live,  
 You both with impious wishes grasp my sceptre:  
 Nothing is sacred, nothing dear, but empire.  
 Brother, nor father, can you bear; fierce lust  
 Of empire burns, extinguish'd all beside.  
 Why pant you for it? to give others awe?  
 Be therefore aw'd yourselves, and tremble at it,  
 While in a father's hand.  
*Dym.* My Lord, your warmth  
 Defers the business.  
*King.* Am I then too warm?  
 They that should shelter me from every blast,  
 To be themselves the storm! O! how Rome triumphs!  
 Oh! how they bring this hoary head to shame!

Conquest and fame, the labour of my life,  
 Now turn against me, and call in the world  
 To gaze at what was Philip, but who now  
 Wants even the wretch's privilege—a wish.  
 What can I wish? Demetrius may be guiltless.  
 What then is Perseus? Judgment hangs as yet  
 Doubtful o'er them; but I'm condemn'd already;  
 For both are mine; and one—is foul as hell. [dear!]  
 Should these two hands wage war, (these hands less  
 What boots it which prevails? In both I bleed.  
 But I have done. Speak, Perseus, and at large;  
 You'll have no second hearing. Thou forbear.

[To Demet.

*Per.* Speak!—'Twas with utmost struggle I forbore:  
 These chains were scarce design'd to reach my tongue.  
 Their trespass is sufficient, stopping here.

[Shewing his arms.

These chains! for what? Are chains for innocence?  
 Not so; for see Demetrius wears them too.  
 Fool that I was to tremble at va'n laws;  
 Nor learn from him defiance of their frown;  
 Since innocence and guilt are us'd alike;  
 Blood-thirsty stabbers, and their destin'd prey;  
 Perseus, and he—I will not call him brother:

[Pointing at Demet.

He wants not that enhancement of his guilt.

*King.* But closer to the point; and lay before us  
 Your whole deportment this ill-fated day.

*Per.* Scarce was he cool from that embrace this morn-  
 Which you enjoin'd, and I sincerely gave; [ing,

Nor thought he plann'd my death within my arms;  
 When, holding vile, oaths, honour, duty, love,  
 He fir'd our friendly sports to martial rage.  
 If war, why not fair war? But that has danger.  
 From hostile conflict, as from brothers' play,  
 He blush'd not to invite me to his banquet.  
 I went not; and in that was I to blame?  
 Think you, there nothing had been found but peace,  
 From whence soon after sally'd armed men?  
 Think you I nothing had to fear from swords,  
 When from their foils I scarce escap'd with life?  
 Or poison might his valour suit as well:—  
 This pass'd, as suits his wisdom, Macedonians,  
 Who volts o'er elder brothers to a throne.  
 With an arm'd rout he came to visit me.  
 Did I refuse to go, a bidden guest?  
 And should I welcome him, a threat'ning foe?  
 Resenting my refusal; boiling for revenge!

*Dem.* 'Tis false.

*Ant.* Forbear—The King!

'*Per.* Had I receiv'd them,  
 ' You now had mourn'd my death, nor heard my cause.  
 ' Dares he deny he brought an armed throng?  
 ' Call those I name; who dare this deed, dare all;  
 ' Yet will not dare deny that this is true.  
 ' My death alone can yield a stronger proof;  
 ' Will no less proof than that content a father?  
 ' *Peri.* Perseus, you see, has art, as well as fire;  
 ' Nor have the wars worn Athens from his tongue.'  
 ' *Per.* Let him, who seeks to bathe in brother's blood,



Not find well pleas'd the fountain whence it flow'd :  
 Let him, who shudders at a brother's knife,  
 Find refuge in the bosom of a father :  
 For where else can I fly ? Whom else implore ?  
 I have no Romans, with their eagle's wings,  
 To shelter me ; Demetrius borrows those,  
 To mount full rebel-high : I have their hatred ;  
 And, thanks to heaven ! deserve it : good Demetrius  
 Can see your towns and kingdoms torn away  
 By these protectors, and ne'er lose his temper.  
 My weakness, I confess, it makes me rave ;  
 It makes me weep—and my tears rarely flow.

*Peri.* Was ever stronger proof of filial love ?

*Per.* Vain are Rome's hopes, while you and I survive :  
 But should the sword take me, and age my father,  
 (Heav'n grant they leave him to the stroke of age !)  
 The kingdom, and the King, are both their own ;  
 A duteous loyal King, a scepter'd slave,  
 A willing Macedonian slave to Rome.

*King.* First let an earthquake swallow Macedonia.

*Per.* How, at such news, would Hannibal rejoice !  
 How the great shade of Alexander smile !  
 The thought quite choaks me up ; I can no more.

*King.* Proceed.

*Per.* No, Sir—Why have I spoke at all ?  
 'Twas needless : Philip justifies my charge ;  
 Philip's the single witness which I call,  
 To prove Demetrius guilty.

*King.* What dost mean ?

*Per.* What mean I, Sir ! what mean I !—To run mad :

For who, unshaken both in heart and brain,  
 Can recollect it ?

*King.* What ?

*Per.* This morning's insult.

This morning they proclaim'd him Philip's King ;

This morning they forgave you for his sake.

O, pardon, pardon ! I could strike him dead.

*King.* More temper.

*Per.* Not more truth ; that cannot be !

And that it cannot, one proof can't escape you ;  
 For what but truth could make me, Sir, so bold ?

Rome puts forth all her strength to crowd her minion,

Demetrius' vices, thriving of themselves,

Her fulsome flatteries dung to ranker growth.

Demetrius is the burden of her song ;

Each river, hill, and dale, has learnt his name ;

While elder Perseus in a whisper dies.

Demetrius treats ; Demetrius gives us peace ;

Demetrius is our God, and would be so.

My sight is short : look on him you that can :

What sage experience sits upon his brow,

What awful marks of wisdom, who vouchsafes

To patronize a father, and a King ?

Such patronage is treason.

*King.* Treason ! Death !

*Per.* Nor let the ties of blood bind up the hands  
 Of justice ; Nature's ties are broke already :

For, who contend before you ?—Your two sons ?—

No ; read aright, 'tis Macedon and Rome.

A well-mask'd foreigner, and your—only son,

Guard of your life, and—exile of your love.  
Now, bear me to my dungeon : what so fit  
As darkness, chains, and death, for such a traitor ?

*King.* Speak, Demetrius.

*Ant.* My Lord, he cannot speak ; accept his tears—  
Instead of words.

*Per.* His tears are false as they——

Now, with fine phrase, and foppery of tongue,  
More graceful action, and a smoother tone,  
That orator of fable, and fair face,  
Will steal on your brib'd hearts, and, as you listen,  
Plain truth, and I, plain Perseus, are forgot.

*Dem.* My father ! King ! and judge ! thrice awful  
power !

Your son, your subject, and your prisoner, hear ;  
Thrice humble state ! If I have grace of speech,  
(Which gives, it seems, offence) be that no crime,  
Which oft has serv'd my country, and my King :  
Nor in my brother let it pass for virtue,  
That, as he is, ungracious he would seem :  
For, oh ! he wants not art, tho' grace may fail him.  
The wonted aids of those that are accus'd,  
Has my accuser seiz'd. He shed false tears,  
That my true sorrows might suspected flow :  
He seeks my life, and calls me murderer ;  
And vows no refuge can he find on earth,  
That I may want it in a father's arms ;  
Those arms, to which e'en strangers fly for safety.

*King.* Speak to your charge.

*Dem.* He charges me with treason.

If I'm a traitor, if I league with Rome,  
Why did his zeal forbear me till this hour ?  
Was treason then no crime, till (as he feigns)  
I sought his life ? Dares Perseus hold so much  
His father's welfare cheaper than his own ?  
Less cause have I, a brother, to complain.  
He says, I wade for empire through his blood :  
He says, I place my confidence in Rome :  
Why murder him, if Rome will crown my brow ?  
Will then a sceptre, dipp'd in brother's blood,  
Conciliate love, and make my reign secure ?  
False are both charges ; and he proves them false,  
By placing them together.

*Ant.* That's well urg'd.

[me

*Dem.* Mark, Sir, how Perseus, unawares, absolves  
From guilt in all, by loading all with guilt.  
Did I design him poison at my feast ?  
Why then did I provoke him in the field ?  
That, as he did, he might refuse to come ?  
When angry he refus'd, I should have sooth'd  
His rous'd resentment, and deferr'd the blow ;  
Not destin'd him that moment to my sword,  
Which I before instructed him to shun.  
Through fear of death, did he decline my banquet ?  
Could I expect admittance then at his ?  
These numerous pleas at variance, overthrow  
Each other, and are advocates for me.

*Per.* No, Sir, Posthumius is his advocate.

*King.* Art thou afraid that I should hear him out ?

*Dem.* Quit then this picture, this well-painted fear,

' And come to that which touches him indeed.  
 ' Why is Demetrius not despis'd of all,  
 ' His second in endowments, as in birth?  
 ' How dare I draw the thoughts of Macedon?  
 ' How dare I gain esteem with foreign powers?  
 ' Esteem, when gain'd, how dare I to preserve?  
 ' These are his secret thoughts; these burn within;  
 ' These sting up accusations in his soul;  
 ' Turn friendly visits to foul fraud, and murder;  
 ' And pour in poison to the bowl of love.  
 ' Merit is treason in a younger brother.  
   *King.* But clear your conduct with regard to Rome.  
   *Dem.* Alas! dread Sir, I grieve to find set down  
 ' Among my crimes, what ought to be my praise.  
 ' That I went hostage, or ambassador,  
 ' Was Philip's high command, not my request:  
 ' Indeed, when there, in both those characters,  
 ' I bore in mind to whom I owe my birth:  
 ' Rome's favour follow'd. If it is a crime  
 ' To be regarded, spare a crime you caus'd;  
 ' Caus'd by your orders, and examples too.  
 ' True, I'm Rome's friend, while Rome is your ally:  
 ' When not, this hostage, this ambassador,  
 ' So dear, stands forth the fiercest of her foes;  
 ' At your command, fly swift on wings of fire,  
 ' The native thunder of a father's arm.  
   *Ant.* There spoke at once the hero and the son.  
   *Dem.* To close—To thee, I grant, some thanks are  
   due; *[S, saking to Perseus.]*  
 Not for thy kindness, but malignity:

Thy character's my friend, tho' thou my foe:  
 For, say, whose temper promises most guilt?  
 Perseus, importunate, demands my death:  
 I do not ask for his: Ah! no! I feel  
 Too pow'rful Nature pleading for him here;  
 But, were there no fraternal tie to bind me,  
 A son of Philip must be dear to me.  
 If you, my father, had been angry with me,  
 An elder brother, a less awful parent,  
 He should assuage you, he should intercede,  
 Soften my failings, and indulge my youth:  
 But my asylum drops its character;  
 I find not there my rescue, but my ruin.  
   *Per.* His bold assurance——  
   *King.* Do not interrupt him;  
 But let thy brother finish his defence.  
   *Dem.* O Perseus! how I tremble as I speak!  
 Where is a brother's voice, a brother's eye?  
 Where is the melting of a brother's heart?  
 Where is our awful father's dread command?  
 Where a dear dying mother's last request?  
 Forgot, scorn'd, hated, trodden under foot!  
 Thy heart, how dead to ev'ry call of nature!  
 Unson'd! unbrother'd! nay, unhumaniz'd!  
 Far from affection, as thou'rt near in blood!  
 Oh! Perseus! Perseus!—But my heart's too full.  
*[Falls on Antigonus.]*  
   *King.* Support him.  
   *Per.* Vengeance overtake his crimes.  
   *King.* No more!

*Ant.* See from his hoary brow he wipes the dew,  
Which agony wrings from him.

*King.* Oh, my friend,  
These boys at strife, like Ætna's struggling flames,  
Convulsions cause, and make a mountain skake ;  
Shake Philip's firmness, and convulse his heart ;  
And, with a fiery flood of civil war,  
Threaten to deluge my divided land.

I've heard them both ; by neither am convinc'd ;  
And yet Demetrius' words went through my heart.—  
A double crime, Demetrius, is your charge ;  
Fondness for Rome, and hatred to your brother.  
If you can clear your innocence in one,  
'Twill give us cause to think you wrong'd in both :

*Dem.* How shall I clear it, Sir ?

*King.* This honest man  
Detests the Romans : if you wed his daughter,  
Rome's foe becomes the guardian of your faith.

*Dem.* I told you, Sir, when I return'd from Rome—

*King.* How ! Dost thou want an absolute command ?  
Your brother, father, country, all exact it.

*Ant.* See yonder guards at hand, if you refuse.  
Nay, more ; a father, so distress'd, demands  
A son's compassion, to becalm his heart.

Oh ! Sir, comply. [*Aside to Demet.*]

*Dem.* There ! there ! indeed, you touch me !  
Besides, if I'm confin'd, and Perseus free,  
I never, never shall behold her more.—  
Pardon, ye Gods ! an artifice forc'd on me. [*Aside to Ant.*]

Dread Sir, your son complies. [*To the King.*]

*Dym.* Astonishment !

*King.* Strike off his chains. Nay, Perseus too is free :  
They wear no bonds, but those of duty, now.  
*Dymas*, go thank the prince : he weds your daughter ;  
And highest honours pay your high desert.

[*Exeunt all but Dym. and Dem.*]

*Dym.* O, Sir, without presumption, may I dare  
To lift my ravish'd thought ?——

*Dem.* In what I've done,  
I paid a duty to my father's will :  
And set you an example, where 'tis due,  
Of not with-holding your's.

*Dym.* My duty, Sir,  
To you, can never fail.

*Dem.* Then, *Dymas*, I request thee,  
Go seek the King, and save me from a marriage  
My brother has contriv'd, in artful malice,  
To make me lose my father, or my love.  
Go, charge the just refusal on thyself.

*Dym.* What Philip authorizes me to wish,  
You, Sir, may disappoint. But, to take on me  
The load of the refusal——

*Dem.* Is no more  
Than *Dymas* owes his honour, if he'd shun  
The natural surmise, that he concurr'd  
In brewing this foul treason.

*Dym.* Sir, the King  
Knows what he does : and, if he seeks my glory——

*Dem.* In a degree, destructive of his own ;

'Tis your's to disappoint him, or renounce  
Your duty to your King.

*Dym.* You'll better tell——

*Dem.* Yes, better tell the King he wounds his honour,  
By lifting up a minion from the dust,  
And mating him with princes. Use your power  
Against yourself. Yes, use it like a man,  
In serving him who gave it. Thus you'll make  
Indulgence, justice; and absolve your master.  
Tho' Kings delight in raising what they love,  
Less owe they to themselves, than to the throne;  
Nor must they prostitute its majesty,  
To swell a subject's pride, how'er deserving.

*Dym.* What the King grants me——

*Dem.* Talk not of a grant:

What a King ought not, that he cannot give;  
And what is more than meet from Princes' bounty,  
Is plunder, not a grant. Think you, his honour  
A perquisite belonging to your place,  
As favourite paramour? Preserve the King  
From doing wrong, tho' wrong is done for you;  
And shew, 'tis not in favour to corrupt thee.

*Dym.* I sought not, Sir, this honour.

*Dem.* But would take it.

True majesty's the very soul of Kings;  
And rectitude's the soul of majesty:  
If mining minions sap that rectitude,  
The King may live, but majesty expires;  
And he that lessens majesty, impairs  
That just obedience public good requires;

Doubly a traitor, to the crown and state.

*Dym.* Must I refuse what Philip's pleas'd to give?

*Dem.* Can a King give thee more than is his own?

Know, a King's dignity is public wealth;  
On that subsists the nation's fame and power.  
Shall fawning sycophants, to plump themselves,  
Eat up their master, and dethrone his glory?  
What are such wretches? What, but vapours foul,  
From fens and bogs, by royal beams exhal'd,  
That radiance intercepting, which should cheer  
The land at large? Hence subjects' hearts grow cold,  
And frozen loyalty forgets to flow:  
But, then 'tis slippery standing for the minion:  
Stains on his ermine, to their royal master  
Such miscreants are; not jewels in his crown.  
If you persist, Sir—But, of words no more!  
To me, to threat, is harder than to do!

*Dym.* Let me embrace this genuine son of empire.

When warm debates divide the doubtful land,  
Should I not know the prince most fit to reign?  
I've try'd you as an eagle tries her young,  
And find, your dauntless eye is fix'd on glory.  
I'll to the King, and your commands obey.——

We must give young men opiates in a fever. [*Aside.*]

Yes, boy, I will obey thee, to thy ruin.  
Erixene shall strike thee dead for this. [*Exit Dym.*]

*Dem.* These statesmen nothing woo but gold and  
I'm a bold advocate for other love; [*power.*]  
Tho' at their bar, indicted for a fool.  
When reason, like the skilful charioteer,

Can break the fiery passions to the bit,  
 And, spite of their licentious sallies, keep  
 The radiant track of glory; passions, then,  
 Are aids and ornaments. Triumphant reason,  
 Firm in her seat, and swift in her career,  
 Enjoys their violence, and, smiling, thanks  
 Their formidable flame, for high renown.  
 Take then my soul, fair maid! 'tis wholly thine;  
 And thence I feel an energy divine.  
 When objects worthy praise our hearts approve,  
 Each virtue grows on consecrated love:  
 And, sure, soft passion claims to be forgiv'n,  
 When love of beauty is the love of Heav'n.

[Exit.

ACT IV. SCENE I.

Enter ERIXENE and DELIA.

*Erixene.*

'Tis plain! 'tis plain! this marriage gains her father:  
 He join'd to Rome the crown. Thy words were true;  
 He woos the diadem, that diadem which I  
 Despis'd for him. Oh, how unlike our loves!  
 But it is well; he gives me my revenge.  
 Wed Dymas' daughter! What a fall is there!  
 Not the world's empire could repair his glory. [why

*Del.* Madam, you can't be mov'd too much! But  
 More now than at the first?

*Erix.* At first I doubted:

For who, that lov'd like me, could have believ'd?  
 I disbeliev'd what Pericles reported;  
 And thought it Perseus' art to wound our loves.  
 But when the good Antigonus, sworn friend  
 To false Demetrius, when his word confirm'd it,  
 Then passion took me, as the northern blast  
 An autumn leaf. O Gods! the dreadful whirl!  
 But, while I speak, he's with her: laughs and plays;  
 Mingles his dalliance with insulting mirth;  
 To this new Goddess offers up my tears;  
 Yes, with my shame and torture, woos her love.  
 I see, hear, feel it! O these raging fires!  
 Can then the thing we scorn give so much pain?  
*Del.* Madam, these transports give him cause to  
 triumph!

*Erix.* I vent my grief to thee; he ne'er shall know it.  
 If I can't conquer, I'll conceal my passion,  
 And stifle all its pangs beneath disdain.

*Del.* The greatest minds are most relenting too:  
 If then Demetrius should repent his crime——

*Erix.* If still my passion burns, it shall burn inward:  
 On the fierce rack in silence I'll expire,  
 Before one sigh escape me.—He repent!  
 What wild extravagance of thought is thine!  
 But did he? Who repents, has once been false:  
 In love, repentance but declares our guilt;  
 And injur'd honour shall exact its due.  
 In vain his love, nay mine, should groan in vain:  
 Both are devoted. Vengeance, vengeance reigns!  
 Our first love murder'd, is the sharpest pang

*Enter PERICLES.*

*Peri.* Sir, your ambassadors arriv'd from Rome—

[*Presents a letter.*]

*King.* Ha! I must read it; this will tell me more.

[*After reading it.*]

Oh, Princess! Now our only comfort flows  
From your indulgence to my better son,  
This dreadful news precipitates my wish.  
To keep rapacious Rome from seizing Thrace,  
You cannot wed too soon: my fair ally!  
What if you bless me and my son to-morrow?

*Erix.* Since you request, and your affairs demand it,  
Without a blush, I think I may comply.

*King.* Oh, daughter!—but no more; the Gods will  
I go to bless my Perseus with the news. [thank you,

*Dym.* Thus the boy's dead in empire and in love.

[*Exeunt King, Dymas, &c.*]

*Erix.* I triumph! I'm reveng'd! I reign! I reign!  
Nor thank Demetrius' treason for a crown.  
Love is our own cause, honour is the Gods',  
I can be glorious without happiness;  
But without glory never can be blest.

*Del.* 'Tis well: but can you wed the man you scorn?

*Erix.* Wed any thing, for vengeance on the perjurd,  
I'll now insult him from an higher sphere:  
This unexpected turn may gall his pride.

Whate'er has pangs for him, has charms for me.

*Del.* A rooted love is scarce so soon remov'd.

*Erix.* If not, the greater virtue to controul it:

And strike at his heart, though 'tis through my own.

*Del.* I can't but praise this triumph; yet I dread  
The combat still. And see, the foe draws near.

*Enter DEMETRIUS.*

*Dem.* Erixene!

*Erix.* My Lord!

*Dem.* My pale cheek speaks;  
My trembling limbs prevent my faltering tongue,  
And ask you—

*Erix.* What, my Lord?

*Dem.* My Lord?—Her eyes  
Confirm it true, and yet, without a crime,  
I can't believe it. Oh, Erixene—

*Erix.* I guess your meaning, Sir; but am surpris'd  
That Dymas' son should think of ought I do.

*Dem.* False are my senses! false both ear and eye!  
All, all be rather false than her I love!

*Erix.* She pass'd not, Sir, this way.

*Dem.* Is then my pain

Your sport? And can Erixene pretend  
Herself deceiv'd by what deceiv'd the King?  
An artifice made use of for your sake;  
A proof, not violation of my love.

*Erix.* I thought not of your love, nor artifice:  
Both were forgot; or, rather, never known.  
But, without artifice, I tell you this;  
Your brother lays his sceptre at my feet,—  
And whose example bids my heart resist  
The charms of empire?

*Dem.* This is woman's skill :  
 You cease to love, and from my conduct strive  
 To labour an excuse. For if, indeed,  
 You thought me false, had you been thus serene,  
 Calm and unruffled? No; my heart says, no.  
 Passions, if great, though turn'd to their reverse,  
 Keep their degree, and are great passions still.  
 And she who, when she thinks her lover false,  
 Retains her temper, never lost her heart.

*Erix.* That I'm serene, says not I never lov'd :  
 Indeed, the vulgar float as passion drives ;  
 But noble minds have reason for their queen.  
 While you deserv'd, my passion was sincere :  
 You change, my passion dies. But, pardon, Sir,  
 If my vain mind thinks anger is too much ;  
 Take my neglect, I can afford no more. [deaths!

*Dem.* No: rage! flame! thunder! give a thousand  
 Oh, rescue me from this more dreadful calm !  
 This curs'd indifference ! which, like a frost  
 In northern seas, out-does the fiercest storm.  
 Commanded by my father to comply,  
 I feign'd obedience :—had I then refus'd—— [full

*Erix.* I grant the consequence had been most dread-  
 I grant that Dymas' daughter had been angry.

*Dem.* Ask Dymas with what rage——

*Erix.* You well might rage,  
 To be refus'd.

*Dem.* Refus'd?

*Erix.* He told your secret ;  
 The King, and I, and all the court can witness.

*Dem.* Refus'd! false villain! Oh, the perjur'd slave!  
 Hell-born impostor! Madam, 'tis most false!  
 Warm from my heart is ev'ry word I speak!  
 The villain lies! Believe the pangs that rend me;  
 Believe the witness streaming from my eyes,  
 And let me speak no more.

*Erix.* I do believe  
 Your grief sincere. I've heard the maid is fair.

*Dem.* Proceed; and thus, indeed, commit that crime  
 You falsely charge on me. The crown has charm'd you.  
 How warm this morning did you press my flight!  
 The cause is plain: an outrag'd lover's groan,  
 And dying agony, molest your ear,  
 And hurt the music of a nuptial song.

*Erix.* Since your inconstancy persists to charge  
 Its crime on my ambition, I'll be kind,  
 And leave you in possession of an error  
 Of which you seem so fond.

*Dem.* Ah! stay one moment!

*Enter PERSEUS and PERICLES.*

*Per.* Erixene!

*Dem.* Distraction!

[Starting.

*Erix.* 'Tis well tim'd.

My Lord, your brother doubts if I'm sincere,  
 And thinks (an error natural to him)  
 I'll break my vow to you. You'll clear my fame,  
 And labour to convince him, that to-morrow  
 Erixene's at once a bride and queen. [Exit.

*Per.* When I have work'd him up to violence,



Bring thou the King, and pity my distress.

[To Pericles, who goes out.

‘Dem. On what extremes extreme distress compels  
 ‘ In things impossible I put my trust: [me?  
 ‘ I in my only brother find a foe;  
 ‘ Yet in my rival, hope the greatest friend.  
 ‘ When all our hopes are lodg’d in such expedients,  
 ‘ ’Tis as if poison were our only food,  
 ‘ And death was call’d on as the guard of life.’

Per. Why dost thou droop?

Dem. Because I’m dead; quite dead  
 To hope; and yet rebellious to despair;  
 Like ghosts unblesst’d, that burst the bars of death,  
 Strange is my conduct!—Stranger my distress:  
 Beyond example both! Whoe’er before me  
 Press’d his worst foe, to prove his truest friend?  
 But though thou’rt not my brother, thou’rt a man;  
 And, if a man, compassionate the worst  
 That man can feel; though found that worst in me.

Per. What would’st?

Dem. Unclinch thy talons from thy prey;  
 Let the dove fly to this her nest again.

[Striking his breast.

For, Oh! the maid’s unalinearly mine,  
 Though now through rage run mad, and turn’d to thee.  
 How often have I languish’d at her feet?  
 Bask’d in her eye, and revell’d in her smile?  
 How often, as she listen’d to my vows,  
 Trembling and pale with agonies of joy,  
 Have I left earth, and mounted to the stars?

Per. There Dymas’ daughter shone above the rest,  
 Illustrious in thy sight.

Dem. Thy taunt, how false!—

I no less press your int’reast than my own.  
 Think you ’tis possible her heart so long  
 Inclind to me, the price of all my vows,  
 Purchas’d by tears and groans, and paid me down  
 In tenderest returns of love divine,  
 Can in one day be your’s?—Impossible!

Per. If I’m deceiv’d, I’m pleas’d with the deceit.  
 How my heart dances in the golden dream!  
 In pity do not wake me ’till to-morrow.

Dem. Then thou’lt wake distracted. Trust me,  
 ‘She gives her hand alone. [brother,

‘Per. Nor need I more;

‘That hand’s enough that brings a sceptre in it.  
 ‘I scorn a Prince who weds with meaner views.  
 ‘Her duty’s mine, and I conceive small pain  
 ‘From your sweet error, that her love is your’s.  
 ‘I’m pleas’d such cordial thoughts of your own merit  
 ‘Support you in distress.’

Dem. Inhuman Perseus!

If pity dwells within the heart of man,  
 If due that pity to the last distress,  
 Pity a lover exquisitely pain’d,  
 A lover exquisitely pain’d by you.  
 Oh! in the name of all the Gods, relent!  
 Give me my Princess, give her to my throes!  
 Amidst a thousand you may chuse a love;  
 The spacious earth contains but one for me.—

But Oh! I rave. Art thou not he, the man  
 Who drinks my groans like music at his ear?  
 And would, as wine, as nectar, drink my blood?  
 Are all my hopes of mercy lodg'd in thee?  
 Oh, rigid Gods! and shall I then fall down,  
 Embrace thy feet, and bathe them with my tears?  
 Yes, I will drown thee with my tears, my blood,  
 So thou afford a human ear to pangs,  
 A brother's pangs, a brother's broken heart.

*Per.* Pardon, Demetrius; but the Princess calls,  
 And I am bound to go.

*Dem.* Oh, stay! [Laying hold of him.]

*Per.* You tremble.

*Dem.* The Princess calls, and you are bound to go!

*Per.* E'en so.

*Dem.* What Princess?

*Per.* Mine.

*Dem.* 'Tis false.

*Per.* Unhand me.

*Dem.* What, see, talk, touch, nay taste her like a bee,  
 Draw honey from her wounded lip, while I  
 Am stung to death!

*Per.* The triumph once was your's.

*Dem.* Rip up my breast, or you shall never stir.  
 My heart may visit her! Oh, take it with you!  
 Have I not seen her, where she has not been?  
 Have I not clasp'd her shadow? Trod her steps?  
 Transported trod! as if they led to Heaven?  
 Each morn my life I lighted at her eye,  
 And every evening, as its close, expir'd —

[Bursts into tears.]

*Per.* Fie! thou'rt a Roman; can a Roman weep?  
 Sure Alexander's helmet can sustain  
 Far heavier strokes than these. For shame, Demetrius;  
 E'en snatch up the next Sabin in thy way,  
 'Twill do as well.

[Going.]

*Dem.* By Heav'n you shall not stir.  
 Long as I live, I stand a world between you,  
 And keep you distant as the poles asunder.  
 Who takes my love, in mercy takes my life;  
 Thy bloody pass cleave through thy brother's breast.  
 I beg, I challenge, I provoke my death.

[His hand upon his sword.]

*Enter KING and DYMAS.*

*Per.* You will not murder me?

*Dem.* Yes, you and all.

*King.* How like a tyger foaming o'er his prey!

*Per.* Now, Sir, believe your eye, believe your ear,  
 And still believe me perjurd as this morning.

*King.* Heav'n's wrath's exhausted, there's no more to  
 My darling son found criminal in all. [fear.]

*Dem.* That villain there to blast me! Yes, I'll speak;  
 For what have I to fear, who feel the worst?

'Tis time the truth were known. That villain, Sir,  
 Has cleft my heart, and laughs to see it bleed;  
 But his confession shall redeem my fame,  
 And re-enthone me in my Princess' smile;  
 Or I'll return that false embrace he gave me,  
 And stab him in your sight.

King. Hold, insolent!  
Where's your respect to me?

Dem. Oh, royal Sir!  
That has undone me. Through respect I gave  
A feign'd consent, which his black artifice  
Has turn'd to my destruction. I refus'd  
That slave's, that cursed slave's, that statesman's  
And he pretends she was refus'd to me. [daughter,  
Hence, hence, this desolation. Nought I fear,  
Though nature groan her last. And shall he then  
Escape and triumph?

King. Guards there! Seize the Prince! [*He's seiz'd.*  
The man you menace you shall learn to fear.

Dym. Hold, Sir! not this for me! It is your son:  
What is my life, though pour'd upon your feet?

King. Is this a son?

Dem. No, Sir; my crime's too great,  
Which dares to vindicate a father's honour,  
To catch the glories of a falling crown,  
And save it from pollution. But I've done.  
I die, unless my Princess is restor'd; [*Pointing to Dym.*  
And if I die, by heav'n, and earth, and hell!  
His sordid blood shall mingle with the dust,  
And see if thence 'twill mount into the throne.  
Oh, Sir! think of it! I'll expect my fate. [*Exit.*

King. And thou shalt have it.

Dym. How, my Lord; in tears!

King. As if the Gods came down in evidence!  
How many sudden rays of proof concur

To my conviction? Was ever equal boldness?  
But 'tis no wonder from a brother King;

[*Produces the forg'd letter.*

This King of Thrace—To-morrow he'll be King  
Of Macedon—He therefore dies to-night.

Per. And yet I doubt it, for I know his fondness.  
Thou practise well the lesson I have taught thee,  
While I put on a solemn face of woe,  
Afflicted for a brother's early fall— [*Aside to Dym.*  
Heaven knows with what regret—But, Sir, your safety—

[*Presenting the mandate for Demetrius's death.*

King. What giv'st thou here?

Dym. Your passport to renown.  
You sign your apotheosis in that.  
What scales the skies, but zeal for public good?

Per. How god-like mercy?

Dym. Mercy to mankind,  
By treason aw'd.

King. Must then thy brother bleed? [*To Per.*

[*Dym. seeming at a loss, Per. whispers him,  
and gives a letter.*

Dym. No, Sir, the King of Thrace.

[*Looking on the letter.*

King. Why that is true—  
Yet who, if not a father, should forgive?  
Dym. Who, Sir, if not a Philip, should be just?

King. Is't not my son? [*To Dym.*

Dym. If not, far less his guilt.

King. Is not my other Per eus? [*To Per.*

Per. Sir, I thank you;

That seeks your crown and life.

King. And life?

Dym. No, Sir;

He'll only take your crown, you still may live.

King. Heav'n blast thee for that thought!

Per. Why shakes my father?

King. It stabs, it gnaws, it harrows up my soul.

Is he not young? Was he not much indulg'd?

Gall'd by his brother? Doubted by his father?

Tempted by Rome? A nation to a boy?

Dym. Oh, a mere infant—that deposes Kings.

King. No; once he sav'd my crown.

Dym. And now would wear it.

King. How my head swims!

Per. Nor strange; the task is hard.

Dym. Yet scarce for him. Erutus was but a Roman:

[Speaking as if he would not have the King hear,  
Yet like a Philip dar'd, and is immortal.

King. I hear thee, Dymas; give me then the mandate.  
[Going to sign, he stops short.

Dym. No wonder if his mother thus had paus'd.

Per. Rank cankers on thy tongue! Why mention  
her? [Aside.

King. Oh, Gods! I see her now: what am I doing?  
[Throws away the style.

I see her dying eye let fall a tear

In favour of Demetrius. Shall I stab

Her lovely image stamp't on ev'ry feature?

Dym. His scul escap'd it, Sir.

King. Thou ly'st; be gone.

[Per. and Dym. in great confusion, Per. whispers Dym.

Dym. True; that, or nought, will touch him.

[Aside to Per.

[To the King.

If, Sir, your mercy——

Per. O speak on of mercy!

Mercy, the darling attribute of Heav'n!

Dym. If you should spare him——

King. What if I should spare him?

Dym. I dare not say—Your wrath again might rise.

King. Yes, if thou'rt silent—What if I should spare  
him? [you for it.

Dym. Why if you should, proud Rome would thank

King. Rome!—Her applause more shocks me than

Oh, thou, Death's orator! Dread advocate [his death.

For bowelless severity! assist

My trembling hand, as thou hast steel'd my heart;

And if it is guilt in me, share the guilt.

He's dead. [Signs.] And if I blot it with one tear,

Perseus, though less affected, will forgive me.

Per. Forgive! Sir, I applaud, and wish my sorrow  
Was mild enough to weep.

[The King going out, meets Demetrius in mourning,  
introduced by Antigonus. He starts back, and  
drops on Dymas. Recovering, speaks.

King. This, Fate, is thy tenth wave, and quite o'er-  
whelms me:

It less had shock'd me, had I met his ghost.

This is a plot to sentence me to death.

What hast thou done, my mortal foe! thrown bars

[To Ant.

Athwart my glory? But thy scheme shall fail.  
As rushing torrents sweep th' obstructed mound,  
So Philip meets this mountain in his way,  
Yet keeps his purpose still.

[Perseus and Pericles whisper aside.]

*Peri.* I can't but fear it.

*Per.* I grant the danger great, yet don't despair.  
Jove is against thee, Perseus on thy side.

*Ant.* The Prince, dread Sir, low on his bended knee—

*King.* This way, Antigonus. Dost mark his bloom?  
Grace in his aspect, grandeur in his mien?

*Ant.* I do.

*King.* 'Tis false; take a king's word. He's dead.  
That darling of my soul would stab me sleeping.  
How dar'st thou start? Art thou the traitor's father?  
If thou art pale, what is enough for me?  
How his grave yawns! Oh, that it was my own!

*Ant.* Mourn not the guilty.

*King.* No, he's innocent:  
Death pays his debt to justice, and that done,  
I grant him still my son; as such I love him:  
Yes, and will clasp him to my breast, while yet  
His clay is warm, nor moulders at my touch.

*Per.* A curse on that embrace!

[Aside.]

*Dym.* Nay, worse; he weeps.

*King.* Poor boy, be not deceiv'd by my compassion;  
My tears are cruel, and I groan thy death.

*Dem.* And am I then to die? If death's decreed,  
Stab me yourself, nor give me to the knife  
Of midnight ruffians, that have forg'd my crimes.

For you I beg, for you I pour my tears;  
You are deceiv'd, dishonour'd; I am only slain.  
Oh, father!—

*King.* 'Father! there's no father here.'

Forbear to wound me with that tender name:  
Nor raise all nature up in arms against me.

*Dem.* My father! guardian! friend! 'nay, Deity!  
'What less than Gods give being, life, and death!  
My dying mother—

*King.* Hold thy peace, I charge thee.

*Dem.* Pressing your hand, and bathing it with tears,  
Bequeath'd your tenderness for her to me;  
And low on earth my legacy I claim,  
Clasping your knees, though banish'd from your breast.  
*King.* My knees!—Would that were all, he grasps  
my heart!

'Perseus, can'st thou stand by and see me ruin'd?

[Reaching his hand to Perseus.]

*Per.* Loose, loose thy hold.—It is my father too.

*King.* Yes, Macedon, and thine, and I'll preserve  
thee. [Thracian?]

*Dem.* Who once before preserv'd it from the  
'And who at Thrasymene turn'd the lifted bolt  
'From Philip's hoary brow?

*King.* I'll hear no more.

O Perseus! Dymas! Pericles! assist me,  
Unbind me, disenchant me, break this charm  
Of nature, that accomplice with my foes;  
Rend me, O rend me, from the friend of Rome.

*Per.* Nay, then, howe'er reluctant, aid I must.

- ' The friend of Rome ?—That severs you for ever;
- ' Though most incorporate and strongly knit;
- ' As lightning rends the knotted oak asunder.

*Dem.* In spite of lightning I renew the tie;

- ' And stubborn is the grasp of dying men.—
- ' Who's he that shall divide me from myself?

[Demetrius is forc'd from the King's knees, on which, starting up, he flings his arms round his father.

- ' Still of a piece with him from whom I grew,
- ' I'll bleed on my asylum, dart my soul
- ' In this embrace, and thus my treason crown.

*King.* Who love yourselves, or Macedon, or me,  
From the curs'd eagle's talons wrench'd my crown;  
And this barb'd arrow from my breast.—'Tis done;

[Forced asunder.

And the blood gushes after it.—I faint.

*Dym.* Support the King.

*Per.* While treason licks the dust.

[Pointing at Demetrius, fallen in the struggle.

*Dym.* A field well fought.

*Per.* And justice has prevail'd.

*King.* ' O, that the traitor could conceal the son!  
Farewel, once best belov'd! still more deplor'd!  
He, he who dooms thee, bleeds upon thy tomb. [Exit.

*Dem.* Prostrate on thee, my mother earth, be thou  
Kinder than brother, or than father; open  
And save me in thy bosom from my—friends.  
' Friends, sworn to wash their hands in guiltless tears,  
' And quench infernal thirst in kindred blood;  
' As if relation sever'd human hearts,

' Or that destruction was the child of love.

*Per.* Farewel, young traitor: if they ask below,

' Who sent thee beardless down, say, honest Perseus;  
' Whom reason sways, not instinct; who can strike  
' At horrid parricide, and flagrant treason,

' Though through a bosom dearer than his own.  
' Think'st thou, my tender heart can hate a brother?  
' The Gods and Perseus war with nought but guilt.

' But I must go. What, Sir, your last commands  
' To you Erixene? She chides my stay. [Exit.

*Dem.* ' Without that token of a brother's love

' He could not part; my death was not enough.—  
' I came for mercy, and I find it here.

' And death is mercy, since my love is lost.'  
Alas! my father too; my heart aches for him.

And Perseus—fain wou'd I forgive e'en thee:  
But Philip's sufferings cry too loud against it.  
Blind author, and sure mourner of my death!  
Father most dear! What pangs hast thou to come?  
Like that poor wretch is thy unhappy doom,  
Who, while in sleep his fever'd fancy glows,  
Draws his keen sword, and sheaths it in his foes;  
But, waking, starts upright, in wild surprize,  
To feel warm blood glide round him as he lies;  
To see his reeking hands in crimson dy'd,  
And a pale corse extended by his side.  
He views with horror what mad dreams have done,  
And sinks, heart-broken, on a murder'd son.

ACT V. SCENE I.

KING, POSTHUMIUS, &c. meeting.

*Posthumius.*

WE, in behalf of our allies, O King!  
Call'd on thee yesterday, to clear thy glory.  
No wonder now that Philip is unjust  
To strangers, who has murder'd his own son.

*King.* 'Tis false.

*Post.* No thanks to Philip that he fled.

*King.* A traitor is no son.

*Post.* Heav'n's vengeance on me,

If he refus'd not yesterday thy crown,

Though life and love both brib'd him to comply.

*King.* See there. [*Gives the letter.*]

*Post.* 'Tis not the consul's hand or seal.

*King.* You're his accomplices.

*Post.* We're his avengers.

'Tis war.

*King.* Eternal war.

*Post.* Next time we meet—

*King.* Is in the capitol. Haste, fly my kingdom.

*Post.* No longer thine.

*King.* Yes, and proud Rome a province.

[*Exeunt Posthumius, &c.*]

They brave, they make, they tyrannize o'er Kings.  
The name of King the prostrate world ador'd,  
Ere Romulus had call'd his thieves together.—

But let me pause—Not Quintius' hand or seal?—  
Doubt and impatience, like thick smoke and fire,  
Cloud and torment my reason.

*Ant.* Sir, recall,

And re-examine those you sent to Rome:

You took their evidence in haste and anger.

Torture, if they refuse, will tell the truth.

*King.* Go stop thenuptials, till you hear from me.

[*Exeunt King and Ant.*]

*Enter ERIXENE and DELIA, meeting.*

*Del.* Madam, the Prince, who fled from threaten'd  
death,

Attempting his escape to foreign realms,

Was lately taken at the city gates,

So strongly guarded by his father's pow'rs;

And now, confin'd, expects his final doom.

*Erix.* Imprison'd, and to die!—And let him die.

Bid Dymas' daughter weep. I half forgot

His perjurd insolence; I'll go and glut

My vengeance. Oh, how just a traitor's death!

And blacker still, a traitor to my love.

[*Exeunt Erixene and Delia.*]

*Scene draws, and shows DEMETRIUS in Prison.*

*Dem.* Thou subterranean sepulchre of peace!  
Thou home of horror! hideous nest of crimes!  
Guilt's first sad stage in her dark road to hell!  
Ye thick-barr'd sunless passages for air,  
To keep alive the wretch that longs to die!

Ye low-brow'd arches, through whose sullen gloom  
Resound the ceaseless groans of pale despair!  
Ye dreadful shambles, cak'd with human blood!  
Receive a guest, from far, far other scenes,  
From pompous courts, from shouting victories,  
Carousing festivals, harmonious bow'rs,  
And the soft chains of heart-dissolving love.  
Oh, how unlike to these! Heart-breaking load  
Of shame eternal, ne'er to be knock'd off,  
Oh welcome death!—no, never but by thee!—  
Nor has a foe done this.—A friend! a father!—  
Oh, that I could have died without their guilt!—

*Enter ERIXENE, DEMETRIUS gazing at her.*

So look'd in chaos the first beam of light:  
How drives the strong enchantment of her eye  
All horror hence!—How die the thoughts of death!

*Erix.* I knew not my own heart. I cannot bear it.  
Shame chides me back: for to insult his woes  
Is too severe; and to condole, too kind. [*Going.*]

*Dem.* Thus I arrest you in the name of mercy,  
And dare compel your stay. Is then one look,  
One word, one moment, a last moment too,  
When I stand tottering on the brink of death,  
A cruel ignominious death, too much  
For one that loves like me? A length of years  
You may devote to my blest rival's arms,  
I ask but one short moment. O permit,  
Permit the dying to lay claim to thee,  
To thee, thou dear equivalent for life,

Murder, relentless, marble-hearted maid!

*Erix.* Demetrius, you persist to do me wrong;  
For know, though I behold thee as thou art,  
Doubly a traitor, to the state and me,  
Thy sorrow, thy distress, have touch'd my bosom:  
I own it is a fault,—I pity thee.

*Enter Officer.*

*Off.* My Lord, your time is short, and death waits  
for you.

*Erix.* Death!—I forgive thee from my inmost soul.

*Dem.* Forgive me? Oh! thou need'st not to forgive,  
If imposition had not struck thee blind.

Truth lies in ambush yet, but will start up,  
And seize thy trembling soul, when mine is fled.  
O I've a thousand, thousand things to say!

*Erix.* And I am come a secret to disclose,  
That might awake thee, wert thou dead already.

*Off.* My Lord, your final moment is expir'd.

*Dem. and Erix.* One, one short moment more.

*Dem.* No; death lets fall

The curtain, and divides our loves for ever.

[*Demetrius is forced out.*]

*Erix.* Oh, I've a darker dungeon in my soul,  
Nor want an executioner to kill me.

'What revolutions in the human heart

'Will pity cause! What horrid deeds revenge! [*Exit.*]

[*Scene shuts.*]



*Enter* ANTIGONUS, *with Attendants.*

*Ant.* How distant virtue dwells from mortal man!  
Was't not that each man calls for others' virtue,  
Her very name on earth would be forgot,  
And leave the tongue, as it has left the heart.  
Was ever such a labour'd plan of guilt?  
Take the King's mandate, to the prison fly,  
Throw wide the gates, and let Demetrius know  
The full detail.

*Enter* ERIXENE.

The Princess! ha! be gone; [*To the Attendant.*  
While I stir up an equal transport here.  
Princess, I see your griefs, and judge the cause:  
But I bring news might raise you from your grave;  
Or call you down from Heaven to hear with joy.  
Just Gods! the virtuous will at last prevail.  
On motives, here too tedious to relate,  
I begg'd the King to re-examine those  
Who came from Rome. The King approv'd my counsel.  
Surpris'd, and conscious, in their charge they faulted,  
And threaten'd tortures soon discover'd all:  
That Perseus brib'd them to their perjuries;  
That Quintius' letter was a forgery;  
That Prince Demetrius' intercourse with Rome  
Was innocent of treason to the state, [*with me?*

*Erix.* Oh, my swoln heart! What will the Gods do

*Ant.* And to confirm this most surprising news,  
Dymas, who, striving to suppress a tumult,  
The rumour of Demetrius' flight had rais'd,

Was wounded sore, with his last breath confess'd,  
The Prince refus'd his daughter; which affront  
Inflam'd the statesman to his Prince's ruin.

*Erix.* Did he refuse her?

[*Swoons.*

*Ant.* Quite o'ercome with joy!  
Transported out of life!—The Gods restore her!

*Erix.* Ah! why recall me? This is a new kind  
Of murder; most severe! that dooms to life.

*Ant.* Fair Princess, you confound me.

*Erix.* Am I fair?

Am I a Princess? Love and empire mine?

Gay, gorgeous visions dancing in my sight!—

No, here I stand a naked, shipwreck'd wretch,  
Cold, trembling, pale, spent, helpless, hopeless, maid;  
Cast on a shore as cruel as the waves,  
O'erhung with rugged rocks, too steep to climb;  
The mountain billows loud, come foaming in  
Tremendous, and confound, ere they devour.

*Ant.* Madam, the King absolves you from your vow.

*Erix.* For me, it matters not; but Oh! the Prince—

'When he had shot the gulph of his despair;

'Emerging into all the light of Heav'n,

'His heart, high-beating with well-grounded hope;

'Then to make shipwreck of his happiness,

'Like a poor wretch that has escap'd the storm,

'And swam to what he deems an happy isle,

'When, lo! the savage natives drink his blood.

'Ah! why is vengeance sweet to woman's pride,

'As rapture to her love? It has undone me.'

*Del.* Madam, he comes.

*Erix.* Leave us, Antigonus.

*Ant.* What dreadful secret this?—But I'll obey,  
Invoke the Gods, and leave the rest to fate. [Exit.

*Erix.* How terribly triumphant comes the wretch!  
He comes, like flowers ambrosial, early born,  
To meet the blast, and perish in the storm.

*Enter DEMETRIUS.*

*Dem.* After an age of absence in one hour,  
Have I then found thee, thou celestial maid!  
Like a fair Venus in a stormy sea;  
Or a bright Goddess, through the shades of night,  
Dropt from the stars, to these blest arms again?  
How exquisite is pleasure after pain!  
Why throbs my heart so turbulently strong,  
Pain'd at thy presence, through redundant joy,  
Like a poor miser, beggar'd by his store?

*Erix.* Demetrius, joy and sorrow dwell too near.

*Dem.* Talk not of sorrow, lest the Gods resent,  
As under-priz'd, so loud a call to joy.  
I live, I love, am lov'd, I have her here!  
Rapture, in present, and in prospect, more!  
No rival, no destroyer, no despair;  
For jealousies, for partings, groans, and death,  
A train of joys, the Gods alone can name!  
When Heav'n descends in blessings so profuse,  
So sudden, so surpassing hope's extreme,  
Like the sun bursting from the midnight gloom,  
'Tis impious to be niggards in delight;  
Joy becomes duty; Heav'n calls for some excess,

And transport flames as incense to the skies.

*Erix.* Transport how dreadful!

*Dem.* Turns Erixene?

Can she not bear the sun-shine of our fate?  
Meridian happiness is pour'd around us;  
The laughing loves descend in swarms upon us;  
And where we tread is an eternal spring.  
By heav'n, I almost pity guilty Perseus  
For such a loss.

*Erix.* That stabs me through and through! [love?

*Dem.* What stabs thee?—Speak. Have I then lost thy

*Erix.* To my confusion, be it spoke—'Tis thine.

*Dem.* To thy confusion! Is it then a crime?

You heard how dying Dymas clear'd my fame.

*Erix.* I heard, and trembled; heard, and ran distracted.

*Dem.* Astonishment!

*Erix.* I've nothing else to give thee.

[*He steps back in astonishment; she in agony; and both are silent for some time.*

He is struck dumb:—nor can I speak.—Yet must I.  
I tremble on the brink; yet must plunge in.  
Know, my Demetrius, joys are for the Gods;  
Man's common course of nature is distress:  
His joys are prodigies; and, like them too,  
Portend approaching ill. The wise man starts,  
And trembles at the perils of a bliss.  
To hope, how bold! how daring to be fond,  
When, what our fondness grasps, is not immortal!  
I will presume on thy known, steady virtue,  
And treat thee like a man; I will, Demetrius!

Nor longer in my bosom hide a brand,  
That burns unseen, and drinks my vital blood.

*Dem.* What mystery? [*Here a second pause in both.*]

*Erix.* The blackest.

*Dem.* How every terror doubles in the dark!

Why muffled up in silence stands my fate?

This horrid spectre let me see at once,

And shew if I'm a man.

*Erix.* It calls for more.

*Dem.* It calls for me then; love has made me more.

*Erix.* Oh, fortify thy soul with more than love!

To hear, what heard, thou'lt curse the tongue that tells

*Dem.* Curse whom? Curse thee! [thee.

*Erix.* Yes, from thy inmost soul.

Why dost thou lift thine eyes and hands to Heav'n?

The Pow'rs, most conscious of this deed, reside

In darkness, howl below in raging fires,

Where pangs like mine corrode them. Thence arise,  
Black Gods of execration and despair!

Through dreadful earthquakes cleave your upward way,

While nature shakes, and vapours blot the sun;

Then through those horrors in loud groans proclaim,

That I am—

*Dem.* What?—I'll have it, though it blast me.

*Erix.* Thus then in thunder—I am Perseus' wife.

[*Demetrius falls against the Scene. After a pause—*]

*Dem.* In thunder! No; that had not struck so deep.

What tempest e'er discharg'd so fierce a fire?

Calm and deliberate anguish feeds upon me;

Each thought sent out for help brings in new woe.

Where shall I turn? Where fly? To whom but thee?

[*Kneeling.*]

Tremendous Jove! whom mortals will not know

From blessings, but compel to be severe,

I feel thy vengeance, and adore thy power;

I see my failings, and absolve thy rage.

But, Oh! I must perceive the load that's on me;

I can't but tremble underneath the stroke.

Aid me to bear!—But since it can't be borne,

Oh, let thy mercy burst in flames upon me!

Thy triple bolt is healing balm to this;

This pain unfelt, unfancy'd by the wretch,

The groaning wretch, that on the wheel expires.

*Erix.* Why did I tell thee?

*Dem.* Why commit a deed

Too shocking to be told? What fumes of hell

Flew to thy brain? What fiend the crime inspir'd?

*Erix.* Perseus, last night, as soon as thou wast fled,

At that dead hour, when good men are at rest,

When every crime and horror is abroad, [scream;

Graves yawn, fiends yell, wolves howl, and ravens

Than ravens, wolves, or fiends, more fatal far,

To me he came, and threw him at my feet,

And wept, and swore, unless I gave consent

To call a priest that moment, all was ruin'd:

That the next day Demetrius and his powers

Might conquer, he lose me, and I my crown,

Confer'd by Philip but on Perseus' wife.

I started, trembled, fainted; he invades

My half-recover'd strength, brib'd priests conspire,

All urge my vow, all seize my ravish'd hand,  
 Invoke the Gods, run o'er the hasty rite;  
 While each ill omen of the sky flew o'er us,  
 And furies howl'd our nuptial song below.—  
 Can'st thou forgive?

*Dem.* By all the flames of love,  
 And torments of despair, I never can.  
 The furies toss their torches from thy hand,  
 And all their adders hiss around thy head!

I'll see thy face no more. [Going.

*Erix.* Thy rage is just.

Yet stay and hear me. [She kneels, and holds him.

*Dem.* I have heard too much.

*Erix.* 'Till thou hast heard the whole, O do not curse  
 me!

*Dem.* Where can I find a curse to reach thy crime?

*Erix.* Mercy! [Weeping.

*Dem.* [Aside.] Her tears, like drops of molten lead,  
 With torment burn their passage to my heart.  
 And yet such violation of her vows—

*Erix.* Mercy!

*Dem.* Perseus— [Stamping.

*Erix.* Stamp 'till the centre shakes,  
 So black a dæmon shalt thou never raise.  
 Perseus! Can'st thou abhor him more than I?  
 Hell has its furies, Perseus has his love,  
 And, Oh! Demetrius his eternal hate.

*Dem.* Eternal! Yes, eternal and eternal;  
 As deep, and everlasting, as my pain.

*Erix.* Some God descend, and sooth his soul to peace!

*Dem.* Talk'st thou of peace? what peace hast thou  
A brain distracted, and a broken heart. [bestow'd?  
Talk'st thou of peace? Hark, hark, thy husband calls.  
His father's rebel! Brother's murderer!  
Nature's abhorrence, and—thy lawful lord!  
Fly, my kind patroness, and in his bosom  
Consult my peace.

*Erix.* I never shall be there.  
My lord! my life!

*Dem.* How say'st? Is Perseus here?—  
Fly, fly! away, away! 'tis death! 'tis incest!

[*Starting aside, and looking round him.*  
*Dar'st thou to touch Demetrius? Dar'st thou touch him,  
Ev'n with thine eye?*

[*As he is going, she lays hold of his robe.*

*Erix.* I dare—and more, dare seize,  
And fix him here: no doubt to thy surprise—  
I'm blemish'd, not abandon'd; honour still  
Is sacred in my sight. Thou call'st it incest;  
'Tis innocence, 'tis virtue; if there's virtue  
In fix'd, inviolable strength of love.  
For know, the moment the dark deed was done;  
The moment madness made me Perseus' wife,  
I seiz'd this friend, and lodg'd him in my bosom,  
[*Shewing a dagger.*

Firmly resolv'd I never would be more:  
And now I fling me at thy feet, imploring  
Thy steadier hand to guide him to my heart.  
Who wed in vengeance, wed not but to die.  
'*Dem.* Has Perseus then an hymeneal claim?



## THE BROTHERS.

*Scene. And now I fling me at thy feet imploring  
Thy steadier hand to guide him to my heart.*

Act V.

Shewing a dagger.

- ' And no divorce, but death?—and death from me,  
 ' Who should defend thee from the world in arms?  
 ' O thou still excellent! still most belov'd!  
 ' *Erix.* Life is the foe that parts us; death, a friend,  
 ' All knots dissolving, joins us; and for ever.  
 ' Why so disorder'd? Wherefore shakes thy frame?  
 ' Look on me; do I tremble? Am I pale?  
 ' When I let loose a sigh, I'll pardon thine.  
 ' Take my example, and be bravely wretched;  
 ' True grandeur rises from surmounted ills;  
 ' The wretched only can be truly great.  
 ' If not in kindness, yet in vengeance strike;  
 ' 'Tis not Erixene, 'tis Perseus' wife.  
 ' Thou'lt not resign me?  
 ' *Dem.* Not to Jove.  
 ' *Erix.* Then strike.  
*Dem.* How can I strike?

[Gazing on her with astonishment.]

Stab at the face of Heav'n?

How can I strike? Yet how can I forbear?

I feel a thousand deaths debating one.

' A deity stands guard on every charm,

' And strikes at me.

' *Erix.* As will thy brother soon:

' He's now in arms, and may be here this hour.

' Nothing so cruel as too soft a soul;

' This is strange tenderness, that breaks my heart;

' Strange tenderness, that dooms to double death—

' To Perseus.

' *Dem.* True—but how to shun that horror?

- ' By wounding thee, whom savage pardons would spare?  
 ' My heart's inhabitant! my soul's ambition!  
 ' By wounding thee, and bathing in thy blood;  
 ' That blood illustrious, through a radiant race  
 ' Of Kings and Heroes, rolling down from Gods!  
 ' *Erix.* Heroes and Kings, and Gods themselves, must  
 ' To dire necessity. [yield  
 ' *Dem.* Since that absolves me,  
 ' Stand firm and fair.  
 ' *Erix.* My bosom meets the point,  
 ' Than Perseus far more welcome to my breast.  
 ' *Dem.* Necessity, for Gods themselves too strong,  
 ' Is weaker than thy charms. [Drops the dagger.  
 ' *Erix.* Oh, my Demetrius!  
 [Turns, and goes to a farther part of the stage.  
 ' *Dem.* Oh, my Erixene!  
 [Both silent, weep, and tremble.  
 ' *Erix.* Farewell [Going.  
 ' *Dem.* Where goest? [Passionately seizing her.  
 ' *Erix.* To seek a friend.  
 ' *Dem.* He's here.  
 ' *Erix.* Yes, Perseus' friend——  
 ' Earth, open and receive me.  
 ' *Dem.* Heav'n strike us dead,  
 ' And save me from a double suicide,  
 ' And one of tenfold death.—O Jove! O Jove!  
 [Falling on his knees.  
 ' But I'm distracted. [Suddenly starting up.  
 ' What can Jove? Why pray?  
 ' What can I pray for?

- ' Erix. For a heart.  
 ' Dem. Yes, one  
 ' That cannot feel. Mine bleeds at every vein.  
 ' Who never lov'd, ne'er suffer'd ; he feels nothing,  
 ' Who nothing feels but for himself alone ;  
 ' And when we feel for others, reason reels,  
 ' O'erloaded, from her path, and man runs mad.  
 ' As love alone can exquisitely bless,  
 ' Love only feels the marvellous of pain ;  
 ' Opens new veins of torture in the soul,  
 ' And wakes the nerve where agonies are born.  
 ' E'en Dymas, Perseus, (hearts of adamant !)  
 ' Might weep these torments of their mortal foe.

Erix. ' Shall I be less compassionate than they ?'

[Takes up the dagger.

What love deny'd, thine agonies have done ;

[Stabs herself.

Demetrius' sigh outstings the dart of death.

Enter the KING, &c.

King. Give my Demetrius to my arms ; I call him  
To life from death, to transport from despair.

Dem. See Perseus' wife ! [Pointing at Erix.] let De-  
lia tell the rest.

King. My grief-acustom'd heart can guess too well.

Dem. That sight turns all to guilt, but tears and  
death.

King. Death ! Who shall quell false Perseus, now in  
Who pour my tempest on the capitol ? [arms ?  
How shall I sweeten life to thy sad spirit ?—

I'll quit my throne this hour, and thou shalt reign.

Dem. You recommend that death you would dissuade ;  
Ennobled thus by fame and empire lost,  
As well as life !—Small sacrifice to love.

[Going to stab himself, the King runs to prevent him ;  
but too late. [heart !

King. Ah, hold ! nor strike thy dagger through my

Dem. 'Tis my first disobedience, and my last.

[Falls.

King. There Philip fell ! There Macedon expir'd !

I see the Roman eagle hovering o'er us,

And the shaft broke should bring her to the ground.

[Pointing to Dem.

Dem. Hear, good Antigonus, my last request :

Tell Perseus, if he'll sheath his impious sword

Drawn on his father, I'll forgive him all ;

Tho' poor Erixene lies bleeding by :

Her blood cries vengeance ;—but my father's—peace.—

[Dies.

King. As much his goodness wounds me, as his  
death.

' What then are both ?—O Philip, once renown'd !

' Where is the pride of Greece, the dread of Rome,

' The theme of Athens, the wide world's example,

' And the God Alexander's rival, now ?

' E'en at the foot of fortune's precipice,

' Where the slave's sigh wafts pity to the prince,

' And his omnipotence cries out for more.

' Ant. As the swoln column of ascending smoke,

So solid swells thy grandeur, pigmy man !

‘*King.*’ My life’s deep tragedy was plann’d with art,  
 From scene to scene advancing in distress,  
 Through a sad series, to this dire result;  
 As if the Thracian Queen conducted all,  
 And wrote the moral in her children’s blood;  
 Which seas might labour to wash out in vain.  
 Hear it, ye nations! distant ages, hear;  
 And learn the dread decrees of Jove to fear:  
 His dread decrees the strictest balance keep;  
 The father groans, who made a mother weep;  
 But if no terror for yourselves can move,  
 Tremble, ye parents, for the child ye love;  
 For your Demetrius: mine is doom’d to bleed,  
 A guiltless victim, for his father’s deed. [Exit.]




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 AN HISTORICAL EPILOGUE.
 

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*AN Epilogue, through custom, is your right,  
 But ne'er, perhaps, was needful till this night;  
 To-night the virtuous falls, the guilty flies,  
 Guilt's dreadful close our narrow scene denies.  
 In history's authentic record read  
 What ample vengeance gluts Demetrius' shade:  
 Vengeance so great, that when his tale is told,  
 With pity some, even Perseus may behold.  
 Perseus surviv'd, indeed, and fill'd the throne;  
 But ceaseless cares, in conquest made him groan.  
 Nor reign'd be long; from Rome swift thunder flew;  
 And headlong from his throne the tyrant threw:  
 Thrown headlong down, by Rome in triumph led,  
 For this night's deed, his perjur'd bosom bled.  
 His brother's ghost each moment made him start,  
 And all his father's anguish rent his heart.  
 When rob'd in black his children round him hung,  
 And their rais'd arms in early sorrow wrung;  
 The younger smil'd, unconscious of their woe;  
 At which thy tears, O Rome! began to flow;  
 So sad the scene: what then must Perseus feel,  
 To see Jove's race attend the victor's wheel:  
 To see the slaves of his worst foes encrease,  
 From such a source!—An emperor's embrace?  
 He sickn'd soon to death, and, what is worse,  
 He well deserv'd, and felt the coward's curse;  
 Unfit, scorn'd, insulted his last hour,  
 Far, far from home, and in a vassal's power.*



*His pale cheek rested on his shameful chain,  
No friend to mourn, no flatterer to feign.  
No suit retards, no comfort sooths his doom,  
And not one tear bedews a monarch's tomb.  
Nor ends it thus—dire vengeance to complete,  
His ancient empire falling, shares his fate.  
His throne forgot!—his weeping country chain'd!  
And nations ask—Where Alexander reign'd.  
As public woes a prince's crimes pursue,  
So, public blessings are his virtue's due.  
Shout, Britons, shout! Auspicious fortune bless!  
And cry, long live—our title to success!*

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