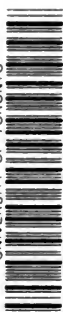


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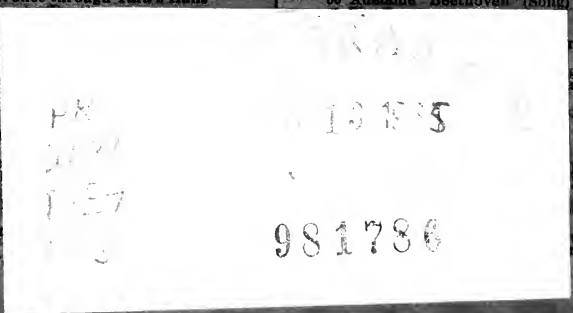
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- 16 The Harp that once through Tara's Halls
- 17 The Manly Hero
- 18 Beethoven's
- 19 In that Long
- 20 Where the B
- 21 Ah, Fair Dre
- 22 La Petit Fleu
- 23 Angels ever
- 24 Saught e'er
- 25 'Tis but a littl
- 26 My Mother b
- 27 Coming thro'
- 28 Beautiful isle
- 29 Tell me, my
- 30 I know a Ban
- 31 The Minstrel
- 32 Hommage au
- 33 See what Pret
- 34 Tom Bowling
- 35 Tell me, Mary

- 36 When the Swallows Homeward Fly (Song)
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- 47 The "Crown Diamonds" Fantasia
- 48 Hear me, dear One (Serenade)
- 49 Youth and Love at the Helm (Barcarolle)
- 50 Adelaide Beethoven (Song)



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ESMERALDA;

A DRAMA, IN THREE ACTS.

FOUNDED ON VICTOR HUGO'S POPULAR NOVEL OF "NOTRE DAME,"
BY EDWARD FITZBALL.



Dramatis Personæ.

[See page 3.]

First Performed at the Surrey Theatre April 14, 1834.

LAUDE FROLLO (Monk of Notre Dame)	Mr. O. Smith.	ESMERALDA (the Gipsy Girl) ...	Mrs. Yates.
CAPTAIN PHŒBUS (of the King's Archers)	Mr. Osbaldistoun.	ST. GUDCLE (the Recluse)	Mrs. W. West.
CAPTAIN ERNEST (his Friend)... ..	Mr. Brayne.	MAHIETTE (a Citizen's Wife) ...	Mrs. Wilkinson.
TERRE GRINGOIRE (Poet and Puppet-Show-Man)	Mr. Vale.	MADAME GONDELARIER	Mrs. Vale.
QUASIMODO (the Deformed)	Mr. Yates.	FLEUR-DE-LIS	Miss Cross.
LOPIN (King of the Beggars) ...	Mr. Rogers.	OU DARDE } (two Gossips)	Miss Young.
		GERVAISE }	Mrs. White.
		COUCOU (a Bohemian Widow, alias Damoiselle)	Mrs. Blake.

C O S T U M E .

PERIOD—Louis XI., 1482.

MALE.—Hair long and bushy, but cut off straight across the forehead, beard and moustache seldom worn, the toes of boots, shoes, and sollerets were long and pointed, the doublets were short, barely reaching to the hips, with small erect collars open in the throat—the hats were high, and of a sugar-loaf shape, with the brim generally peaked down in front and turned up behind, where between it and the crown a feather (when rank permitted) was worn—the flowing robes over a tight, dress and the turban-like head gear of the previous reign, is often met with in illustrations of this date.

FEMALE.—The outer dress very long, with tight sleeves; the girdle worn high, from which the collar is turned back over the shoulders and behind the neck, showing in front and beneath (when held up for freedom of walking), an embroidered corset and petticoat; the hair is little seen, being thrust under the high conical head-dress, from the end of which a long and light veil is suspended.

CLAUDE FROLLO.—A monk's gown, with large sleeves and hood, shaven crown.

PHŒBUS.—Short full doublet, reaching only to the hips, silk embroidered pantaloons, and long pointed ankle shoes, dagger, and sword hanging from waist belt.

ERNEST.—Same as Phœbus. *2nd dress:* Half armour.

FERRE GRINGOIRE.—Plain jerkin and pantaloons, tied together with strings, showing shirt round waist, ankle shoes.

QUASIMODO.—The same shape, but padded to deformity and strength, red shock hair.

BEGGARS.—Tattered dresses of any shape.

EXECUTIONER.—Black dress and mask.

MADAME GONDELAURIE and FLEUR-DE-LYS.—Ladies' dresses of the time.

OUARDE and GERVAISE.—Stuff dresses, and white linen caul caps.

COUCOU.—Tattered dress.

GUDULE.—Grey serge dress, dishevelled hair.

ESMERALDA.—*1st dress:* Fancy dress of various colours, trimmed with ribbon and lace, coloured boots, and plaited hair. *2nd dress:* Plain white dress.

STAGE DIRECTIONS.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; D. F. *Door in Flat*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*; L. U. E. *Left Upper Entrance*; R. U. E. *Right Upper Entrance*; L. S. E. *Left Second Entrance*; P. S. *Prompt Side*; O. P. *Opposite Prompt*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.—R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; C. *Centre*; R. C. *Right of Centre*; L. C. *Left of Centre*.

R

RC.

C.

LC.

L.

• *The Reader is supposed to be on the Stage, facing the Audience.*

ESMERALDA.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The Place before Notre Dame, with Belfry Window, through which QUASIMODO appears ringing the chimes, which are heard to strike; he then retires—on R. is a grated cell—a stone fountain, L.—a puppet-show, C., representing a mystery, around which people are assembled—MAHIETTE, EUSTACHE, OUDARDE, and GERVAISE are sitting on the edge of the fountain—GRINGOIRE dressed as a buffoon, with a long staff, directs the mystery, &c.*

Grin. (Pompously.) Yes, my intellectual and enlightened friends—just as I, Monsieur Gringoire, puppet-show man, poet, and principal tragic writer to the crowned heads and cardinals of all Europe, Asia, and Africa, have described the overthrow of the terribly-renowned Saracen Giant, Hurlohomosanguinaro de Phospherioriosto, by that valorous knight of France, Jamais of the Glass Sword, so it actually befel in the Holy Land. Now, ladies and gentlemen, you shall have the honour of seeing how the knight made the grand coup; and how the ponderous head of the giant actually rolled forty leagues into the ocean, which, being stained with his blood, has ever since that day been called the Red Sea! Now silence, ladies and gentlemen—not a breath!—the curtain is about to rise again—hush!

All. Hush! hush!

(The sound of a distant tambourine heard, L. U. E.)

People. Esmeralda! Esmeralda!

(All except Mahiette, Eustache, Oudarde, Gervaise, &c., hurry out, L.; and they appear so lost in gossiping as to be unconscious of the passing scene—Eustache munching a cake—Gringoire, as the People retire, throws himself into an attitude of despair.)

*Grin. Gone!—fled!—all! to gaze at a prancing gipsy girl. Are her little feet to be more appreciated than my great head?—the head of the Giant Hurlohomosanguinaro! Oh, infamy!—oh, insult to the tragic muse! and the exquisite poetry of the unrivalled Gringoire! I shall run mad! I could tear my hair!—beat out my brains with vexation!—but I won't do it. If they have no brains, is that any reason why I should dash out mine? Besides, here, I see, are three intellectual ladies, who still possess discrimination enough to remain and encourage the refinement of my splendid mystery. *(Approaching and bowing.)* Sensible and illustrious gentlewomen—you, I perceive, flowers of the fine arts, and princesses of true taste, for so I must compliment you—*

Mahiet. Ugh! What's that, Monsieur Mountebank?

Grin. Mounte—but it's to prove my philosophy. (To Mahiette) You, madam, I say, and you, exquisite ladies, (bowing) with a perfect consciousness of the truly sublime—with my erudite and inexplicable mystery performing before your ravished eyes—you, I say, are not like unto the rest of the fools, running off to look at a poor, pitiful, capering Egyptian—this Esmeralda—who—

(Tambourine again.)

Mahiet. (starting up) Esmeralda! listen!—so it is, I declare. Come along, Cousin Gervaise, you must see Esmeralda!—come along, Eustache. Thank'e for telling us, kind Gringoire, or we should have never heard the tambourine. Come, come.

(They hurry out at back, L. U. E.; while Gringoire, nearly fainting, supports himself against the fountain.)

*Grin. The world's at an end! The candles of human nature are all going out. There go the last three and a little one. *(Looking after them—tambourine again.)* That infernal tambourine again! the sound of it drives me wild; but I'll have my revenge. The conclusion of the terrible mystery shall be buried in eternal chaos. *(Approaching the show.)* Come to my arms, renowned knight of France—immeasurable head of the Giant Hurlohomosanguinaro, into my pocket. Deluded and ignorant people of Paris, I blush for—I pity—but I desert you—bah!*

(He takes up the show—is rushing out at back, L., as the cry "Esmeralda" is renewed and the people begin to return with a throng of Gipsies dancing. ESMERALDA appears amongst them; at sight of her, Gringoire hurries out, R., &c. The Gipsies spread a carpet, on which Esmeralda performs her dance, &c. Quasimodo appears gazing over the turrets of the church; and CLAUDE in a black mantle and hood, enters, L. Esmeralda hands round the tambourine—money is given her—she offers her tambourine towards Claude the last.)

Claude. (L., giving money) Were it my soul, I'd give it thee, beautiful Egyptian.

*Esmer. (L. C., starting, and dropping the money.) He again!—ever thus, upon my steps—this secret dread! *(to Claude.)* What would you with me?—you that wear the outward form of piety? Is it in mockery, or—yet speak not—leave me—nay, then I, at least, will hence, *(Going, R. 1 E.)**

Mahiet. (Seizing her arm.) Stay, Esmeralda!

My cousin, here, (*pointing to Gervaise*) who has come all the way from Rheims to see everything that is rare and curious in Paris, would fain that you should point out to her the first letter of her lover's name. Do it, Esmeralda. Here is silver for thee.

Esmer. (*Whispering.*) Not here—not here; there are eyes gazing upon me that I love not, looks that annihilate joy, as ill stars are said to blight the young flowers of the mountains.

Mahiet. Ah, I see! It's that ugly Hunchback, the bell ringer of Notre Dame. The idiot, he has left off ringing the chimes; and there he is, on the battlements, staring at you, and fixed as one of the stone monsters in the fretwork.

Esmer. Quasimodo, I meant not him. I—

Mahiet. Oh! then, it's sister Gudule, the mad recluse, who lives in yonder cell. (*Gudule appears at grating, &c. &c. only for a moment.*) You are afraid of her, I think?

Esmer. (*Recalling at sight of Gudule.*) Yes—yes, I am. Her child, as you know, was stolen by gypsies some years ago; and I never pass the grated window of her solitary abode, that she does not call after and denounce me, as though I were the author of her misery. I, so humble, so defenceless; but it is not of her I speak. (*Looking fearfully towards Claude.*)

Mahiet. No! of whom then?

Esmer. (*R. c.*) Of that hooded man, see!—He follows me about like a dark shadow. Keep between us, *Mahiette*—screen me from him. I know not why, but the serpents, which sometimes cross my path in my wild wanderings among the hills, are less terrible to me than yonder glaring monk. I that have such a fearless heart!—Feel how my hand trembles!

Mahiet. (*Looking at Claude, who draws his cowl over his face.*) 'Tis—I really suspect, I'm not certain, *Claude Frolo*, the monk—the alchemist—who shuts himself up at midnight in yonder dark tower of Notre Dame, to practise, as some think, (*whispering*) necromancy. The devil, 'tis believed in Paris, helps him to make gold there; and *Quasimodo* is his familiar, no doubt. (*Whispering.*)

Esmer. Necromancer! I'll not here remain: where he is, there is no sunlight; he spreads himself, as it were, an interposing cloud 'twixt me and happiness. Let go my hand, he is nearer still. Ugh!—

[*She crosses and hurries out, with evident disgust, as Claude advances. People follow. Claude makes a sign to Quasimodo, who retires; Mahiette, Eustache, and Gervaise remain; Claude looks after Esmeralda, then enters the church, L. U. E.*]

Mahiet. *Esmeralda*—gone! Well, we shall meet again near the Pont Neuf. But, by-the-bye, cousin, you have not yet seen the interior of Notre Dame; let us enter.

(*Gudule, pale and her hair dishevelled, appears at the grating, &c.*)

Gudu. My child!—where art thou?

Mahiet. (*Softly.*) 'Tis the maniac, *Gudule*.

Gudu. Give me my child, I say, accursed gypsies—my poor, poor child—I heard it cry—yes, yes, my child!

Mahiet. Ah! she mistakes my *Eustache* for her lost child. Hush, *Eustache*, hush!

(*Clinging to child.*)

Gudu. Give it me; I am its mother—its heart—

broken mother! Oh, how my brain burns—how my heart aches! Pray, pray give me my child! Help!—murder!

(*Wildly rushing from cell, and searching about.*)
Mahiet. Poor soul! Come softly away. (*Organ in church.*) Hark! the solemn organ of the cathedral! Unfortunate *Gudule*!—let us go in, and supplicate that she may one day recover her child.

Gudu. Cursed gypsies!—my child! Ah, her voice! (*Listening to organ.*) She is there, on high—she speaks to me from heaven—my child!—I am praying, praying!

(*Organ music.—They steal into the church; Gudule is suddenly subdued by the tones of the organ, and is seen to sink in devotion on her knees, audibly weeping, as the scene closes.*)

SCENE II.—The Steeple of the Belfry.

Enter *QUASIMODO*, from behind a bell.

Quas. Outcast from my birth; of no race—no kin, deformity that I am—I love! I, that am loved of no earthly creature, that never knew the sweet endearment of one parental—one approving smile—that am run from for my hideousness—I love! Mothers do hide their children from my approach, as from an ogre! Maidens, at the sight of me—me, *Quasimodo*, the monstrously compounded hunchback of Notre Dame—fly in terror; yet I madly, despairingly, I love!—and such a damsel, that silver-winged spirits, which, so saintly tongues proclaim, hover over these battlements, might proudly deck themselves in her surpassing beauty. Oh, *Esmeralda*! *Esmeralda*! why did these gushing eyes ever behold thee?—close them merciful Death, in thine eternal sleep! Earth, bury me from the world!—from misery—from her—myself!

(*Throws himself down.*)

Enter *CLAUDE*, cautiously, &c.

Claude. (*Gazing at him.*) *Quasimodo*!

Quas. (*Not regarding.*) *Esmeralda*!

Claude. (*Harshly.*) What says the fool? *Quasimodo*.

Quas. (*Springing up.*) My benefactor!

Claude. That word becomes thee well. (*Approaching.*) *Quasimodo*, thou hast, at least, a grateful memory.

Quas. I hope, a grateful heart.

Claude. We shall see presently, when I show thee that I require thy service.

Quas. Service!—speak—command!

Claude. Dare I trust thee?

Quas. When by an unnatural mother, I was disclaimed—left, a worse than defenceless infant a hideous one!—exposed on the cold steps of Notre Dame,—when the spectators,—who mistake me, the foundling, for a monster,—would have cast me into the Seine,—your pity saved me from their fury. You reared me—protected me—made me here, what most I wished to be, bell-ringer of Notre Dame:—that life, and more than life, I owe to you; yet you ask, *Quasimodo*, "dare I trust thee?"

Claude. Well, well; thou art the only being that shall know my secret. I should be reviled, mocked,—but I can no longer struggle with my passion.

Quas. Passion?

Claude. Yes. I love!

Quas. (*Devotely.*) I am glad of it,—'tis a blessed emotion.

Claude. Amazement! Canst thou love, Quasimodo?

Quas. Can I? (*Mournfully.*) Oh—yes—yes. Is it because that I am deformed, my heart should not be like unto other men's? The diamonds which deck our shrine, often, have I heard you say, had once, like Quasimodo, a rude exterior: bethink thee, sir, man's eye looked coldly on them then, and dreamed little of that hidden radiance which hath since burst forth, and burns, even when the altar-lamp expires.

Claude. (*Looking at him.*) Poor wretch! What sentiments are these?—he understands my feelings,—'tis well! Thou hast strength and cunning,—and when, as I shall ordain, the maiden whom I adore, comes, in the dusk this evening, to the shrine of the Virgin, thou, like a hidden tiger, must rush forth, seize her in thine arms, and hurry her to the cell in the black turret.

Quas. Know I this maiden?

Claude. Oh, she is well famed; all Paris knows her for her grace—her beauty.

Quas. And her name?

Claude. (*Whispering in his ear.*) Esmeralda.

Quas. (*Staggering from him.*) No!—not that name!—No!

Claude. What alls thee?—am I a viper—to sting thee—thou startest so?

Quas. O—h!

Claude. (*Harshly.*) Wilt do my bidding?

Quas. I must.

Claude. (*Fiercely.*) Thou shalt.

Quas. I will—and pay thee more than life.

Claude. Swear to guard my secret! Yon hesitate.

Quas. (*After a pause.*) No! I swear.

Claude. Follow me then. The moon is up already—all is arranged. In thy herculean grasp, she will not have the power to struggle; thy hideous look will stifle her screams. Follow me, or we shall be too late—haste.

[*Exit, R.*]

Quas. And I am to fold her in these desolate arms, press her to this despairing, aching breast—ecstasy of worlds—though but for a moment. The deed is crime,—but the requital,—the requital! It is something in the desert to gaze upon the well—it is a dream that refresheth the soul, though we drink not of the fountain.

Claude. (*Without.*) Quasimodo!

Quas. Master, I come.

[*Exit, R.*]

SCENE III.—*A splendid Apartment in the House of Madame de Gondelaurier, with an open window and balcony discovering a bird's-eye view of Paris.*

FLEUR DE LYS is painting at a table; ERNEST is turning over the leaves of a book; while DIANE and ALOISE are embroidering tapestry.

Enter MADAME DE GONDELAURIER, R.

Madame. Heyday! love—music! Eh, young people? Well, children, yours is the age of tenderness; but, (*looking about*) where's the lover?

Fleur. (*Confusedly.*) The lover, madam?

Madame. Where's my nephew, Captain Phœbus? If he be not thy lover, I know not who is. What says Captain Ernest?

Ernest. (*Stammering.*) Really, madam, I—that is—

Madame. You, Captain Ernest, the most intimate

friend of Phœbus during his abode in Paris, must have heard from himself of the marriage decided upon by the family, at least six years since, to take place between Phœbus and his cousin, Demoiselle Fleur de Lys, here?

Ernest. (*Sighing.*) Oh, madam, I plead not ignorance of that affair.

Madame. But where is your friend? I left him with you in this apartment.

Ernest. He must have stolen away, or—

Fleur. I heard him yawn while we were singing.

Ernest. He doth not love music, I believe.

Madame. There I think you are mistaken, for I observe, that, although apparently indifferent to the music of this chamber, he is now in the balcony listening with profound attention (*pointing*) to the music of a tambourine. Why, Phœbus!

(*Calling.*)

Enter CAPTAIN PHŒBUS, L.

Phœbus. Madam, I am here, obedient to the word of command.

Madame. Methinks, Captain Phœbus, thou displayest strange apathy towards thy intended bride. She and I have now been in Paris a whole month, and, in all that time, scarcely hast thou passed one day in her society. Strangers would suppose you married already.

Phœbus. On my honour, I crave pardon.

Madame. Well, well! If Fleur de Lys can overlook such neglect—but, in my time, let me tell you—

Fleur. Nay! nay! dear mamma! Soldiers, you should remember, have a license for forgetfulness in affairs of the heart: their various duties—

Phœbus. Thank you, sweet cousin! By my gorget, but you waive the flag of truce nobly, and make the prettiest minister of peace I ever beheld? But, to be candid with you, I have no taste for melody; tuneless notes ever drive me drowsy. If I must have music, I'm for something martial—something startling—drum-like.

Madame. (*With sarcasm.*) Aye, I'll warrant me, if it be only a tambourine.

Phœbus. A tambourine? (*Tambourine.*) Again! *Madame.* Hark! (*Looking out.*) I pray, who is that young female, surrounded by a throng? She wields the tambourine with much grace and agility.

Ernest. It is the young Egyptian, Esmeralda.

Fleur. Oh, I have heard of her: she is the talk of all Paris. 'Tis told me that she can glance into a maiden's palm, and repeat to her the first letter of her lover's name!

Madame. Upon my word, it is a wonderful faculty, of which, I perceive, these young ladies have been close observers. Simpletons! The girl seems pretty. (*Looking out at balcony.*)

Phœbus. (*With enthusiasm.*) Beautiful as Hebe!

Madame. (*Looking at him with suspicion.*) Indeed! And her eyes are very brilliant, are they not, Phœbus?

Phœbus. Twin stars, madame, I assure you!

Madame. Truly, nephew, thou canst be both enthusiastic and poetical when the impulse moves thee! And this young sybil hath spells and love charms for gentlemen as well as for ladies! Eh, Phœbus?

Phœbus. Indeed, madam, they do report as much in our regiment.

Madame. (*With sarcasm to Phœbus.*) Hath she skill enough thinkest thou, on the report of thy regiment,

to reveal to Fleur de Lys, the first letter of the name of her future husband?

Phœbus. (Confused.) Perhaps—I cannot tell! *(Aside.)* What the deuce doth she mean?

Fleur. Oh, I should like much to know.

Madame. Thou shalt be gratified, child; her eyes are turned on this balcony. *(Waving her handkerchief.)* Ho, fortune-teller! Gipsy girl! Jervayse, admit the Egyptian.

Phœbus. Nay, madam; the girl, in our presence, might be frightened

(Confused.)

Madame. Frightened! It is not the nature of gipsies. *(Aside.)* I wish thou mayst not prove more confused than she! I perceive, Phœbus, that her timidity is easily overcome; she is here.

Enter ESMERALDA, L.

Esmer. (Curtseying.) Ladies, I am summoned. Am I to sing or dance? I know the song of the mountain—the lightest footstep of the Egyptian!

(Touching the tambourine)

Madame. (Haughtily.) You tell fortunes, I believe?

Esmer. (Proudly.) No!

Madame. What, then, is thine art?

Esmer. If, by fortune-telling, you mean natural anticipation, I guess shrewdly at the first letters of lovers' names, by reading—

Madame. The planets?

Esmer. (Ingenuously.) Yes, if lovers' eyes be planets, and at least they are so, lady, of the heart.

Madame. (Aside.) Indeed, but she is subtle! This is no ordinary mind—may be, one most dangerous. *(To Esmeralda.)* Is it in thy power to inform me which of these two gentlemen is the lover of that lady?

(Fleur de Lys and Ernest confused; Phœbus turns aside.)

Fleur. } Dear madam, this is too—

Ernest. }

Madame. Hush! Now, Egyptian, make a trial of thy skill.

Esmer. Which of these two gentlemen is the lover of that lady? Which of—*(Seeing Phœbus.)* Oh, Phœbus!

(Suppressing emotion, as Phœbus presses his finger on his lips.)

Madame. Ah, she repeats his name—Phœbus! At least, in this respect thou art correct.

Esmer. Correct! *(Agitated.)* Phœbus—

(Checking herself.)

Madame. Yes, and see, the pleasing confirmation overcomes my daughter.

Fleur. Indeed—I faint! Support me!

Ernest. Permit me, dear Fleur—

Madame. Dear! Monsieur!—Phœbus, art thou transformed to a statue? Thy intended bride fainting, and thou immovable!

Esmer. Bride! Lady, I—

(Phœbus awkwardly assists Fleur De Lys, still glancing at Esmeralda—Ernest troubled and confused.)

Madame. No thanks—there is gold for thee. *(Aside.)* Thou knowest but too well the name of my nephew Phœbus. Go! I hope thou'rt innocent as thy looks portray thee—go!

Esmer. (Throwing the purse at her feet.) Innocent!—Gold requires no degradation, lady. The poor gipsy, Esmeralda, would reject gold, piled to the

lofty summit of these domes, were it proffered, even by a queen, as a warrant for unmerited insult!

Madame. (Proudly.) Audacious!—My child!

(She turns to Fleur De Lys, who is supported by Diane, Aloise, and Ernest—off, R.)

Phœbus. Esmeralda!

Esmer. Oh! do not detain me, Phœbus. If what I have heard be true, the wretched Esmeralda has only one consolation left her—to die!

Phœbus. Hear me swear it, Esmeralda! 'Tis thee alone I love! I—

Madame. (Outside.) Phœbus!

Esmer. (Mournfully.) Go! I'll not detain thee; an hour hence, as we did appoint, I'll meet thee at the Virgin's statue—then, perhaps—and never more—Oh! Phœbus, it was at the feet of that pure image you first told me that you loved me—a poor gipsy girl; and, in return, I gave you all I possessed in the world—my heart. Perhaps it was too much to expect sincerity from one so high, so very high, above me; but—let me go, Phœbus, I cannot help weeping, and there are tears which my pride would conceal, even from you.

Phœbus. Esmeralda, Esmeralda! Hence with these trembling drops! The love that I shall ever feel for thee only, I have sworn to; and what I have sworn to, I will die for.

Esmer. Noble Phœbus, pardon! I know, I feel that I have wronged thee; but for a moment—the haughty looks of—my doubts—I was so very wretched—but hither comes the menial—perhaps to repel me from the door. *(Going.)*

Phœbus. (Detaining her.) Esmeralda,

Enter SERVANT, bowing to Phœbus, as from Madame, he then crosses to L. C., and makes an insolent menace to Esmeralda, which Phœbus perceives.

Phœbus. (To Servant.) Stay, sirrah! *(Pointing to R.)* Yonder lies your duty; be it mine to attend this young Bohemian; and learn in future, to repress insult to the humble, which officious servants are too apt to inflict at the expense of their masters.

[Exit, leading out Esmeralda, L., Servant bowing, R.]

SCENE IV.—*The Virgin's Statue. Chimes strike.*

Enter CLAUDE and QUASIMODO, disguised, cautiously, R., night thickens.

Claude. It is already dusk. *(Chimes.)*

Quas. Notre Dame strikes the hour.

Claude. Hark! She comes! *(Tambourine heard.)* She is alone!

Quas. Defenceless!

Claude. Slave! whence that tone of pity? No one at hand! Here is the key of the turret; while I unlock the door, spring thou forward, and, stifling her shrieks with thy cloak—silence!

Enter ESMERALDA, L.

Esmer. (Mechanically touching her tambourine.) Will he be here? Oh, yes! my heart fully assures me of that. He does love me—I am convinced he loves me—falsehood never veiled itself under looks like his; deception never spoke in such sweet tones. Ah! the clock of Notre Dame tolls nine! *(Clock concludes striking.)* Phœbus!—I—thou here again!

(Trembling.)

Claude. Esmeralda! why tremble, why recoil at the sight of him that loves thee? Hear me, one moment, in mercy—my passion is boundless—chainless as the sea! If thou would'st not drive me to a deed of madness, hear me!

Esmer. Have I not told thee—have I not said to thee, another has my heart! Thine, mysterious being!—Oh, never, never! Be thou mendicant, or monk, disguise befits not innocence to wear. If monk,—and such I deem thee,—back to thy cloister; for holy men, there are beads, and books, and prayers; their office 'tis to save the soul, not sink it to perdition. If open gull, which rushes like a tiger on, be criminal, what is that which wears the mask of sanctity for most unholy purposes?—Avoid thee! Avoid thee!

(*Going—he detains her.*)

Claude. Nay! we part not. (To *Quasimodo*, who appears immovable.) Now—let no cry escape her—fixed! Immovable! Cowardly idiot! Thus then!

(*Seizing her in his arms.*)

Esmer. Help! Phœbus, where art thou? Ah! (Seeing *Phœbus*.) Ha, ha, ha!

(*Wildly joyful—struggling.*)

Re-enter PHŒBUS, with his sword drawn, L.

Phœbus. Esmeralda! Ruffian, down!

(*Striking him off with his sword.*)

Claude. (Drawing a dagger.) A blow, from—ah! She!—If not mine, not thine.

(*He is rushing towards Esmeralda, who retreating with a shriek, throws herself into the arms of Phœbus, at that moment Quasimodo springing forward arrests Claude's arm—picture.*)

Phœbus. Maniac! Who else would raise his arm against a woman?—begone, or meet thy death! Esmeralda, calm thee!—calm thee, loved one, calm thee!

Esmer. (Shuddering.) Away, away!

(*He supports her out, L.*)

Claude. Am I a maniac?—and thou my sentinel, so to disarm me? I could turn my rage on thee, (checking himself) yet, my faithful Quasimodo, it was kind to stay my frantic arm. One crimson spot on her fair bosom, wrought by this jealous, distracted hand, had plunged my soul into a sea of blood. Thank thee, Quasimodo, thy master is not angry; thank thee. Speak, Quasimodo, why gazest thou that way?

Quas. She is there, with him, alone.

Claude. What devil art thou, to fan again my heart into a flame?

Quas. (Looking after *Phœbus*, L.) They approach the house of the gipsy king.

Claude. Clopin, the gipsy king—his house. In this disguise, I also have entrance there; this golden key. (Shows a purse.) Get into yonder boat upon the Seine—the gipsy king's house looks towards the water—should I need thine aid. Now, I know not why—I'll summon thee, by a lamp placed at the wicket—dost hear me?

Quas. (Starting.) Master, I do—I—yes.

Claude. A lamp placed 't the window! Be vigilant—cautions.

(*Exit, E.*)

Quas. (After a pause.) I dream! (Rubbing his eyes.) She is not of this earth! And he—Phœbus—he is of a brighter region than I. I—Ugh! There hangs my hateful shadow on the wall! How appalling must be the image whose outline is that of a fiend! a fiend! Why, then, have I eyes, to be

sensible to the charms of innocence and beauty? A heart open to love—exquisite love! how much purer than that of yonder monk? He would crumble in his enraged grasp, the flower his hand is not permitted to gather; while I—no, no! she never can be mine—never, never! (Weeps.) Yet would I not despoil her of her joy; why should I? If she loves Phœbus, he is worthy of her love, for she is incapable of loving what is worthless! I think I could be happy to see her happy, even with this Phœbus. But the monk—I've sworn to guard his secret—it is my duty! Yet from him I would preserve thee, Esmeralda. (Firmly.) I will preserve thee, though it be in death! and oh, to die—to die for Esmeralda, is the only certain hope of the wretched Quasimodo.

[*Exit, E.*]

SCENE V.—Interior of an ancient house frequented by the Gipsies. A window in back, looks towards the Seine, and Notre Dame by moonlight &c.

CLOPIN, King of the Gipsies, seated on an elevated chair near a fire. Other GIPSIES, male and female, at a table. Some sing, some dance, &c., &c.

Clopin. Enough, enough. Bring forth the offender who hath had the audacity, without our royal leave or license, to thrust himself into our respectable community! Where is the knave? Place him before us!

All. He is here.

GRINGOIRE led on, somewhat perturbed.

Clopin. Now, scoundrel, what is your name, title, or condition?

Grin. My name, so please your majestic majesty, is Pierre Gringoire; title I have none better than poverty; and, as for my condition, it implies starvation, on which I humbly ground my claim to belong to your very benevolent and ancient fraternity.

Clopin. No compliments; they offend our dignity. Remember, I am thy judge. You have intruded on our territories, and must abide the consequences.

Grin. What consequences can reduce a man to a worse state than hunger?

Clopin. Art thou a thief, a beggar, or a vagrant?

Grin. I have not that honour, great king! I am an author!

Clopin. An author! Thine is a hopeless calling. Hang him at once! The sentence is pronounced. We dismiss the court.

Grin. Oh, most puissant king! You cannot mean what you say. I am the poet Gringoire, whose puppets so majestically perform their master's tragedies, that your real actors of flesh and blood hang themselves in despair. Here are two of my stars.

(*Pulling out two puppets.*)

Clopin. Stars! Ha, ha, ha! Give them to their native element.

(*Throws them into the fire.*)

Grin. Murder! By the devil's hoofs, if he has not thrown the chivalrous Knight of France and the Giant Harlohomosanguinardo alike into the flames! Well, so to perish was worthy two such heroes! Admit me into your society, great king of pickpockets, though I am a poet. Recollect, *Æsop*

was a vagabond; Homer, a beggar; Mercury, a thief! Don't hang me, sweet king!

(*Beseechingly.*)

Clopin. There is only one way to save thee.

Grin. Name it, illustrious.

Clopin. If any of our ladies would accept thee for a husband.

Grin. (*Looking about.*) Must I marry, mighty king of vagabonds?

Clopin. Or be hanged!

Grin. (*Looking about.*) Lovely ladies, which of you will be the fortunate woman? Speak first—How! all silent! What! not one of you fly into these extending arms.

[*Women laugh and retire.*]

Clopin. You must be hanged!

Grin. Oh, the insensible sex! Where's Esmeralda, the gipsy Thalia? her comedy and my tragedy might form a pretty couplet, and dissolve the rivalry existing between us. Gringoire and Esmeralda married! the sun and moon would shake hands.

Clopin. Esmeralda! Bah! I have one for thee more worthy thy deserts.

Grin. Say you so! Worthy my deserts! then she must needs be Venus herself, enamoured of this godly person, and descended to earth for the purpose of snatching me to her fair arms. (*Sniffing.*) I sniff Ambrosia! The goddess is not far off.

Clopin. No; just at hand. Ho! Demoiselle Coucou! (*Calls.*) She has a most sympathizing heart, and will, I am sure, marry this unfortunate devil, to save his life. She is poetical too! Call her hither.

[*One of the Gipsies goes off, R.*]

Grin. Demoiselle Coucou! How romantic. Poetical too—sympathetic! Kind gods! Her voice is music, no doubt.

Couc. (*Without, R., hoarsely.*) Where is the varlet?

Clopin. That's Coucou.

Grin. Voice! Music! The bellows of the organ of Notre Dame are more harmonious; and as for her beauty—

Enter COUCOU, R.

A female Cyclops! Gods, you have deserted your poet.

(*Falls senseless.*)

Couc. What's the matter with the fool? Is he overpowered at the sight of my agreeable looks? (*Lifts him up.*) Come, come, you are not so very ugly—I've had seven uglier husbands in my time, though I am so youthful as to be still called Demoiselle. (*Hugging him.*)

Grin. A perfect she-bear! I shall expire!

Couc. Give him something to drink.

Grin. (*Aside.*) She has humanity.

Clopin. Now, kneel, and swear never to divulge the secrets of this august society.

All. (*Lifting up different weapons.*) Swear!

Grin. (*Kneeling.*) Oh, most willingly! I'll swear anything, at such kind entreaties.

Clopin. Enough—do not rise; Demoiselle is about to complete the rite of marriage.

Grin. The rite of marriage! What is it?

Clopin. A mere simple form—this earthen jug to be broken by her gentle hand upon thy soft head.

(*Lifts up a jug.*)

Grin. Murder!

(*Breaks jug across a stick that is held over his head.*)

Couc. There—'tis done! (*He falls.*) See us, with

all ceremony, to our lodgings across the court, for I have business of importance. Come, dear husband.

Grin. Dear! A plaster for my unfortunate— (*she looks angrily at him.*) Coming, sweet bride! How happy I ought to be.

Clopin. With regal sway I lead the way! But, first, the nuptial dance of the Egyptians.

(*They elevate Gringoire and Coucou in a chair. A dance, &c., is performed.*)

As they go out in mock procession, D. L. 3 E., the last person remains, and closes the door—it is CLAUDE.)

Claude. Did he, then, bear her to some other spot? If so, I am here in vain. (*Looks out at window.*) The dash of oars—it is Quasimodo! devoted fool—how faithful to his master! Ah! that sound!—(*running to the door*)—the voice—it is hers!

(*He goes into a ruined closet, and is seen occasionally watching through the disjointed planks.*)

Enter PHCEBUS and ESMERALDA, D. L. 3 E.

Esmer. And you will never forsake me?

Phabus. Never!

(*They seat themselves by the fire, which beams on their faces.*)

Esmer. And shall I be really the wife of a Captain of the King's Archers? A lady—your lady—beautifully dressed—seated in the lattice of a fine house, while you, on your foaming war steed, prance up and down the street, the horse tearing up the pavement with his hoofs! your bright cuirass glittering in the sun? Oh, how proud it will render me—ha, ha, ha, ha!

(*Jumping and clapping joyfully her hands; an amulet falls from her bosom—she attempts to pick it up.*)

Esmer. (*Interposing.*) Oh, touch not that amulet!

Phabus. Is it, then, so sacred?

Esmer. Yes; it was given me by a kind nurse, now no more, who prophesied that its hidden virtues would one day enable me here in France, to discover my real mother.

Phabus. In France? art thou not a Bohemian?

Esmer. No, no; but we will not talk of that now—it always makes me melancholy. We will speak of something else—of yourself. Let me gaze at your sword—(*kisses the sword which he gives her*)—dear sword! you belong to a valiant man; it was with you he defended me from the monk! March, Phcebus, that I may admire your bright clothes, hear the clatter of your shining scabbard. (*He marches to and fro.*) Oh, how grand! So happy, I am, I can't help laughing—he mine! I a lady! But I am to be your wife, Phcebus?

Phabus. By everything dear to honour, you shall.

Claude. (*At back, R.*) Liar!

Esmer. (*Starting up.*) Ugh! What was that?

Phabus. (*Rising.*) I think it was an echo. (*Takes the lamp, and looks about.*) Ah! there are boats on the water—it was a voice from thence.

(*Leaves lamp on window, L. C., and reseats himself.*)

Claude. He leaves the lamp in the window—Quasimodo will take it for the signal. If I could extinguish it. (*Advancing with caution.*)

Esmer. Your bride! Yes, I shall be too happy; for then, I shall see you every day, dear Phcebus—be always near you—hear the rattle of your gold spurs, constantly on the pavement; and the Demoiselles will no longer look so scornfully at me.

I shall be yours—you mine! Ah! Phœbus, how brave and good you are! I ought to love you, and I do love you, Phœbus—very—very dearly. It is remarkable, but do you know, Phœbus, that I, who, scarcely an hour since wept for sorrow, because I deemed thee lost, am weeping now for joy. (Simply and tenderly.) Don't be angry with me, Phœbus.

(Placing her head on his breast.)

Phœbus. Angry! my own dear Esmeralda! (Encircling her in his arms.) Give me one kiss, Esmeralda!

Esmer. (Rising and affecting to go away.) A kiss? Fine, Phœbus.

Phœbus. (detaining her.) Only one, Esmeralda.

Esmer. (Throwing herself into his arms. Well, take it. (As he is about to kiss her, the stage becomes dark, in consequence of Claude's blowing out the lamp. Claude crouches himself.) What was that?

Phœbus. Nothing. I left the lamp near the crevice of the lattice—the wind hath blown it out. 'Tis a rough, dark night; the moon entirely withdraws herself; the water of the Seine roll on, like a river of ink.

Esmer. Give me the lamp; I'll rekindle it, by the embers here.

Phœbus. Not till I've had the kiss.

QUASIMODO appears at window, L. C.

Claude. Fool! down! You will betray me else. Esmer. (Trembling.) That tone—it is the ruffian!—the same voice!

Phœbus. (Feeling for his sword grasps Claude's arm.) Wretch! who'er thou be—my sword—ah!—quick, Esmeralda—the lamp! rekindle the lamp! Claude. Detected—exposed! I—a monk—no way but this. Abhorred rival! vengeance!

(Stabs him.)

Phœbus. Assassin! Esmeralda, I am slain! Oh!

(Falls.)

Esmer. (Remaining torpid.) Phœbus! Slain!

Claude. Esmeralda! (Kisses her.)

Esmer. Ugh!

(Sinks senseless into a chair, as if disgusted by his touch. QUASIMODO running in at window, and snatching a burning brand from the hearth.)

Quas. If thou hast murdered her— (Looking at her with the torch.) No—she lives. I had stricken thee dead else.

Claude. Dog! this way the light. Not dead; but wounded and insensible—already he begins to recover. (Looks at Phœbus—noise.) We shall be surprised—we must be gone.

Quas. (Regarding Esmeralda.) Cold! Pale—pale! Shall we not bear away Esmeralda?

Claude. Yes—no! A thought—a glorious thought—rushes suddenly into my mind—he—he—must accompany us.

Quas. He—

Claude. Silence! and obey me, as you would repay the life you owe me. Assist me—Phœbus—to the boat.

(Music.—They support Phœbus, who appears gradually coming to himself; they drag him hurriedly off, through the low window, which is on a level with the stage floor, leaving his sword and cap.)

Esmer. (Recovering.) Phœbus—help—mercy—Phœbus!

Enter CLOPIN, GIPSIES, and Strangers, door L. 3 E.

Clopin. Esmeralda, what has happened?

Esmer. (Wildly.) My Phœbus!—they have murdered him.

Clopin. Phœbus—they murdered! What distraction is all this?

Esmer. (Wringing her hands.) Phœbus—Phœbus! (Music.—March of Archers.)

Clopin. Ah, what see I? A body of the king's archers in the house of Clopin, the gipsy. Whom seek you.

Enter ERNEST and ARCHERS, door L. 3 E.

Ernest. I come to command the immediate attendance of Captain Phœbus Chateaupers on his Majesty.

Clopin. Captain Phœbus is not here.

Ernest. He was here: I—I saw him enter the house,—this is his sword—his cap.

Esmer. (R. c.) Yes—they have murdered him! Look at these terrible spots. (Pointing to floor.) O—h!

(Sinks on her knees, gazing on floor, and clasping her hands in anguish.)

Ernest. (L. c.) By heavens, these are evidences of foul work—violence—struggling. Which of you can explain this? (Pointing to floor.)

Enter CLAUDE hastily, as a monk, door L. 3 E.

Claude. (L.) That can I.

Ernest. You, Father Claude?

Claude. Yes. On my passage, in my boat, across the Seine, to attend an invalid, I saw two men lift a body through that window, and bury it in the waters of the river. I pursued them, but in vain—the unusual darkness of the night aided them. I looked through your lattice; that girl was alone in this apartment—she is a confederate of the assassins. Let her be arraigned, and conducted to the Confessional for prisoners, at Notre Dame. It is your duty: this murder must be proved.

(Esmeralda is arrested by the Archers.)

Clopin. Forbear! we will defend our sister. (Gipsies advance.)

Ernest. In the King's name, stand back! or I will, at once, avenge the destruction of my friend.

Esmer. (Who has remained as if torpid—her eyes fixed on the floor.) Who is it grasps my arm? (Seeing the monk, L.) Ah! fearful being!—that denouncing look!—does he accuse me? Yes—indistinctly I overheard. But you—(to Ernest)—do not—cannot believe him? He is a monster—a—Ah! because he wears the outward show of devotion, you are deceived—you give no credit to my words. Pity—mercy! Alas! I am a poor friendless girl—an outcast—no father—no mother—no one, now he is murdered, to speak for me—to care for me! They do not understand me. Whither would they drag me? I have done no wrong—I am innocent—innocent! Save me—you—(to Clopin) you—help a poor girl—no father—no mother! O—h!

(She struggles violently, and appears convulsed with agony as they drag her towards the door.)

Clopin and Gipsies. (Assuming an attitude of

defiance). To the rescue!—rescue!—by knife!—by fire!

(*Music. As Esmeralda, followed by Claude, is borne off, the Gipsies attack the Military; they snatch firebrands from the embers, and hurl them frantically at their opponents; the house takes fire, as Ernest, Claude, Esmeralda, with Archers, &c., cross the Seine in a boat, tossed by the troubled waters. The Gipsies crouch in one group in front; the Soldiers presenting swords at them from back of stage. Picture.*)

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Ferry House of the Seine.*

Enter CLAUDE, wearing a cowl, and conducted by GRINGOIRE, r.—*the latter clad as a beggar.*

Claude. That for thee, good ferryman, to mend thy patches with. Is Demoiselle Coucou at home, thinkest?

Grin. She that was Demoiselle Coucou, now Madame Gringoire, is at home, reverend father; pray walk in.

(*He opens the door—Claude enters door in flat.*)

She's a pious wife that must needs have her confessor so early a morning; and he's a worthy confessor that pays a tattered ferryman, like me, in shining silver. There's some mystery in all this. There's a prisoner in the Ferry House, whom I am not permitted to see: is it to shrieve him that the monk cometh, or to convert my wife? If the latter, and he succeed, let his next experiment be upon Beelzebub, who is nearer allied to Christianity than Madame Gringoire. A precious honeymoon I'm enjoying! Every morning roused from my peaceful slumbers with a cudgel, wielded by the tender hand of my loving wife, with, "Go and ply the ferry boat till sunset—it will give thee an appetite for supper;" breakfast and dinner being obsolete. At supper time it is "Go and disguise thyself, not in drink, but with one leg, one eye, one arm—the charitable, an' thou beg like a gentleman, will give thee food." Oh me! but this mysterious prisoner. Who can he be? what can he be? Does he wear an iron mask? sleep in an iron shroud? or live in an iron cage? I'll be no longer curious about it—I shall only draw down some new trouble on this devoted head. (*A cup of silver is thrown from the turret, which knocks him down.*) Oh, murder! Mercy, sweet wife! Indeed I'm not idling; I—Ah, her favourite silver goblet. (*Taking it up.*) How she must love me to throw this at my head! What's here? Writing! (*Looking at cup.*) They told me that she was poetical, and this is some little compliment, beautifully sketched—I know she leaves impressions that way. (*Reads.*) "Prisoner!" Ah!—"A thousand crowns to whoever will disclose to Captain Ernest, of the king's archers, that his friend, Phœbus, is still living a close prisoner in the Ferry House of the Seine." Phœbus, by every saint in the year! Why, that's the very man for whom the Bohemian, Esmeralda, is condemned to be executed. Poor girl; here's a discovery. This testimony of her innocence might yet save her; but how to deliver it—I that am watched like a mouse by a she cat. What a horrible conspiracy! I'll thwart it; but have I not sworn never to divulge

the secrets of this diabolical fraternity? Ah, the confessor! I'll make him my confidant—the very man to accomplish a benevolent deed. Yes, Esmeralda, you—Ah, here is the monk.

Re-enter CLAUDE, door in flat.

So, venerated and pious father, hath my tender wife made confession?

Claude. An honest one, good son.

Grin. (*Looking timidly at the door.*) Honest! You know, then, of the prisoner?

Claude. (*Starting.*) Prisoner! What prisoner?

Grin. (*Aside.*) This is her honest confession. (*To Claude.*) Not a word to my wife as you compassionate my bones. But can you read, learned father? (*Showing the cup.*) These turrets don't rain silver cups for nothing, as this slight bump on my head might testify.

Claude. Ah, I understand. (*Aside.*) Had this stratagem succeeded, I had perished for my crime, and she had still been my rival's (*To Gringoire.*) Phœbus, whom all Paris imagines dead?

Grin. The same—there, in—(*pointing to turret.*)

Claude. (*Thrusting the cup into his robe.*) Disclose not thou one syllable of this elsewhere. The innocent Bohemian is in safe hands—it will be her own fault if I effect not her deliverance.

Grin. Oh, charitable father, there is yet another innocent whose deliverance thou wouldst do well to effect.

Claude. (*Coldly.*) Speak'st thou of Phœbus?

Grin. No, blessed saint; of myself, Gringoire, the poet. I am a lost child of the Muses.

Claude. How am I to save thee?

Grin. By feelingly causing the head of my precious wife to be chopped off instead of that of Esmeralda—the law will be much better satisfied, and I a philosophic widower.

Claude. Thy wife approacheth.

Enter COUCOU, door in flat.

Couc. Gringoire!

Grin. (*Trembling.*) Here am I, sweetheart. Impose thy gentle commands on me, that, light as Cupid on the wings of morning, I may fly to—(*Throwing himself into a tiptoe attitude.*)

Couc. (*Striking him.*) Stuff! Quick and bring me in a faggot—or—

Grin. Don't exert yourself, dove—I'm going. (*Aside.*) A faggot! Would it were to burn the witch with! I—(*Seeing Coucou angry.*) Sugar-sops, I'm gone! Oh, la!

[*Exit, l., looking beseechingly at Claude.*]

Couc. What mystery is that?

Claude. He knows of our captive.

Couc. How?

Claude. (*Showing cup.*) This device, from your window. He must be more closely watched. Three days, and two thousand crowns are at your disposal.

Couc. But Esmeralda may not perish; though for her beauty I love her not. No; harm must not reach her life—even for the gain of a million of crowns, every crown of gold.

Claude. To that, by bead and book, have I not solemnly sworn? I will keep my oath.

Couc. Or terrible will be the fury of our tribe, on Clopin and on me, for daring, unknown to them, to tamper with the girl's life.

Claude. If nor prayers, nor suffering, can turn her heart unto me—to him who loves her beyond the quiet of his own soul—then, though the axe be

raised o'er her head, then will I save her, even as I have vowed to thee and thy gipsy king.

Couc. Enough. Gringoire returns.

Claude. Benedicite!

[Exit, R.]

Enter GRINGOIRE with faggot, L.

Couc. Laggard!

Grin. Can I be laggard when I haste to thee?

Oh! (Sighing affectedly.)

Couc. Thou shalt not be so when thou hastenest from me.

(She snatches a stick and beats him into house.)

Grin. Oh, mercy, sweetheart! Sugar-posset!

Oh! [Exeunt door in fat.]

SCENE II.—A dark and solitary Dungeon, lit by a single lamp. A secret door, R.

ESMERALDA discovered, in the garb of a penitent, seated on some straw.

Esmer. How sadly slow the hours in darkness pass, when the heart aches, and sleep deserts the eyelids! and yet I slept; for, in my troubled dreams a flood of golden sunlight burst upon me, and, once again, I stood in the clear, beamy day, the joyous creature of a cloudless world. He was there—my brave, my noble Phœbus—all radiant as the sun whose name he bore. I saw him, distinctly, as even now, to my fancy he appears, (rising) extending wide his arms, and, as I bounded to them, he vanished—in his stead—ah—(Covering her eyes, and recoiling on her knees.) Horror! Save me!

Enter CLAUDE through a secret door, R.

Claude. (Gazing at her.) Esmeralda! Behold thy confessor.

Esmer. My destroyer! (Shuddering.)

Claude. Say, rather, thy preserver. One word—one little word—uttered by thy lips, these gloomy walls shall fly, as by a talisman, asunder, and thou be free. Happy Esmeralda—mine.

Esmer. Leave me, unholy tempter; leave me to the doom by thee inflicted.

Claude. By me inflicted! Desperate is the resource of despairing love. I am here to avert every suffering, beautiful Esmeralda. Look on me. Esmeralda. (Grasping her hand.)

Esmer. (Shuddering and recoiling.) Oh, unhand me! As I lay here in my dreary dungeon, alone, there came, gliding in the dark, across the chilling pavement, a viperous creature, that sought to nestle itself in my dishevelled hair. I seized it, shuddering with disgust, as its clammy folds encircled my fingers, and dashed it there; yet, even that loathsome creature, horrible as it was, polluted monk, it were less revolting for me to call back again, and foster it like a dove, in this despairing bosom, than to endure the pressure of thy hand for a single moment.

Claude. There is anguish for thee—there is death for thee; I will transform them to joy and life.

Esmer. No, no. Worse than anguish, worse than death, it were, to live for thee.

Claude. Oh, Esmeralda! Esmeralda!—ere I saw thee, I was virtuous, pious, happy.

Esmer. (Wringing her hands.) And I—miserable I—

Claude. Girl, interrupt me not. Yes, I was happy, innocent, till one day—one fatal day!—listen to me, Esmeralda, (she rises)—I was sitting, buried in meditation, at the grating of my cell—I heard the sound of a tambourine. I cast my eyes below—unfortunate transgression! There, in the brilliant

sunshine—less radiant than herself—I beheld a creature dancing; a creature so beautiful, so exquisite, that the sky might have chosen her for its fairest inmate. Esmeralda, it was thee! Surprised, charmed, intoxicated, I felt, from that moment, the hand of fate was on me.

Esmer. Fly, for ever, the wretched cause of thy misery.

Claude. Impossible! Sorceress, I have struggled but too long and vainly; my brain is turned; all that should have waked of virtue in my soul, the memory of thee had speedily lulled to sleep. Like men perishing in snow, I took pleasure in yielding to this slumber. I knew no ecstasy but to pronounce thy name. I have prayed that I might forget thee, but in vain. I have wept that I could not cease to remember thee. I have followed thee under every form—under every excitement—love, indignation, jealousy, despair; revenge may be the next, for ardent as is my love, so terrible would be my hate. Save thyself from that; save me—pity me. Mercy, or I am lost eternally! (Kneeling.) Pity! Pity!

Esmer. Pity! alas! you who know so well what love is, yet could murder all that I loved; for, oh, I still believe it was thy voice, thine, which I heard in the gipsy's chamber, when my poor Phœbus—God! why do I recollect what a noble creature he was? So brave—so generous! ah, how tenderly did he love me! how ardently did I worship him! The hours that I have watched for him! a smile of his—the sunny glimmer of his armour—the joyous waving of his plume!—and all this hath ceased,—he is gone;—earth no longer holds him; and you, you would speak to me of, what? love! love, which, like the last star fading before the tempest, expired in this desolate heart with him. (Wildly.) Phœbus! Give him to me! Where, where is he?

Claude. (Morosely.) Dead!

Esmer. Kill me also. It were a deed to redeem thy soul: it would seem a crime, but be a mercy.

Claude. I would enable thee to escape; I will forsake my vows. Together, we will seek that land where most joy is to be found. I will be all to thee.

Esmer. Phœbus!

Claude. Utter not that name; but save thyself. The scaffold awaits thee—the executioner hath whetted his axe—the footstep of the guard, coming to conduct thee to my doom, is on the stairs—listen! What will sustain thee?

Esmer. (Firmly.) Innocence!

Claude. Fearest thou not the grave?

Esmer. No; Phœbus is there: we shall meet.

Claude. Is it easier to die for him, than to live for me?

Esmer. Leave me, cruel and perjured monk. Yet, one thing I would thank thee for: it is, that thou hast taught me to despise a life which thy subtlety compels me to relinquish. No more—no more. I am prepared. Nothing can render me thine—nothing—never!

Claude. Inflexible Bohemian! Thou destroyest thyself: behold the guard.

Enter GUARDS, L.

Esmer. Oh, welcome, death!

Claude. Esmeralda! but one word.

Esmer. Phœbus!

[Music. She is guarded off, L.; he rushes out at secret door, R.]

SCENE III.—*Exterior of Notre Dame. An ancient window of heavy stonework and painted glass. Above, a scaffold, which stands c.*

QUASIMODO enters hastily, and surveys the scaffold.

Quas. Must I ring the knell which tolls in mockery of her miseries? I—No—I cannot. Accursed scaffold! How comes it that avenging lightnings descend not from offended heaven to sink and bury thee in earth's dark centre? Why, why did I take that oath? That oath to assist the monk in this infernal enterprise, and she the victim? What is gratitude for a worthless life, like mine, that it should kindle up a pile on which to sacrifice the innocent? Esmeralda! that dear Esmeralda, for whom I would immolate this misshapen body, as though it were but a grain of dust unworthy of being trampled on by her feet, this monk would bring to the edge of the axe; he would then say to her, "Young Bohemian, Phoebus, whom thou lovest, lives no longer; he who loves thee as tenderly, awaits to rescue thee from an ignominious fate—wilt thou be mine?" Should she say, Aye—here at the foot of the scaffold—aye, even to him, it will be no more than natural; she is but a woman—a trembling, forlorn woman—and death is terrible even to the strong of heart. Should she say no, what then? Must she perish? It shall not be. Quasimodo the hunchback, hath an arm of iron: Esmeralda, it should snatch thee from the scaffold, were the blood-thirsty axe raised, and thou on thy knees at the block! [Music. Rushes out, L.]

Enter GUDULE and MAHIETTE, R., who attempts to draw away the former.

Gudu. (Struggling.) I must—I will behold her. I heard them say it, through my grated cell, I heard it—"The Bohemian girl is to die." Lo! ye, in yon dismal and dreary vault, how long and vainly have I wept, and prayed of heaven to restore my child—my child stolen from me by those accursed Egyptians? And now, that a daughter of their cruel tribe is about to perish, thou wouldst drag me—me, from the scene. No—no; let me stay to witness whether her mother—hers—will not come hither to weep, and tear her dishevelled hair, as I tear mine. Should it be so, Mahiette, I shall laugh, and cry aloud, "Look! look! look! at the gipsy mother—how bitterly she laments for her own! See, the tribe of Bohemians mourning all around her. Wretches! little cared they for a mother's anguish when they stole from me my only one—my only one. Curse them!"

Mahiet. But this poor girl—so handsome, so friendless—

Gudu. Friendless! Is she more friendless than I? Is she more handsome than was my child—my little Agnes? Hers was not mortal beauty. Methinks I gaze upon her now—there, where I left her under the rose-tree, smiling like a cherub in the sun-light: I quitted her but an instant; yet, ere I returned, the gipsy sorceress had been there—the ogress! I called in vain for my infant—I heard the mockery of a loud laugh: I saw, as it were, the faces of demons glaring at me through the foliage; I looked into the clear fountain for my lost treasure—the countenance of an insulting fiend met mine. "She is gone—my child is gone!" I cried, frantically, to rocks and woods—and even Echo mocked my despair by responding, "She is gone!" (Weeps.) Gone!

Mah. Poor unfortunate!

Gudu. Last night, when the chimes of Notre Dame pealed forth the midnight hour, the shade of my child came to the grating of my cell. "Tomorrow," she said, "at the scaffold where the Bohemian girl is condemned to die, there will I be 'Mother'." She called me mother—ha, ha, ha! My heart danced at the music of her voice—feel how it throbs now. They say music will tame a lion; but "mother" hath a sweeter note than music. (Looking about.) Child, where art thou? I am here, yet I perceive not thee—thy mother.

(Bell.)

Mahiet. Hark! it is the gipsy, ill-fated Esmeralda.
Gudu. (Surprised.) Esmeralda! Is it she? Their beauty—their May Queen, as they called her,—'tis she, is it? I've witnessed her antics—the glitter of her garments. (Bitterly.) The young sybil—she—I'll speak to her—I'll—

(Going, L.)

Mahiet. (Detains her.) For pity's sake, as thou art a Christian woman.

MUSIC.—Enter. MEN-AT-ARMS, ARCHERS, MONKS, NUNS, &c. conducting in ESMERALDA, a taper in her hand, a rope about her waist, from L. V. E. The EXECUTIONER ascends the scaffold; a concourse of People and Gipsies follow in the procession.

Herald. (Advancing and reading) "Bohemian girl, calling yourself Esmeralda, whereas you are accused, on the evidence of the good monk, Claude, of Notre Dame, of being accessory to the death of Captain Phoebus de Chateaupers, and of obstinately refusing to reveal the names of your confederates, it is the will of his Most Sacred Majesty King Louis of France, that you do pay the forfeit of your crime with your life, on this public scaffold; and you are now asked, for the last time, will you, or will you not, full confession make?"

Esmer. (Calmly.) I am innocent.

Herald. (Taking the taper.) Enough—my duty is performed. Take leave of your friends. (He retires.)

Gipsy Women. (Kissing her hands.) Esmeralda! Esmeralda!

Esmer. Dear, dear friends.

Gudu. (Gazing at her.) I would speak to her; I would mock her; but I am choked. I have no utterance for scorn. The anger of mine eye is quenched in tears. I weep for the Bohemian's daughter. I,—poor pale thing—poor thing! (Gazing intently.)

Esmer. You, who know me best, know me incapable of this crime; but even you little imagine how tenderly I loved him for whom I suffer. For his sake, death comes to me shorn of its terrors. 'Tis true I am young—there might have been for me, still a few years of happiness—yet—no,—not without him.

Gudu. (Aside, R.) I came to curse—did I not?

Esmer. To you, Gertrude, I bequeath this ring. It is of small worth; but you, I feel, will remember that it was Esmeralda's. To you, Phiona, my tambourine. Its sound will sometimes remind you of how happy we have often been together, dancing. Bless you!—bless you! (Embrace.)

Gudu. Lead me—lead me hence,—I will go pray for her—pray.

Esmer. One favour I would ask. You are aware, all of you, that I am not a Bohemian; but that I was stolen from my mother—

Gudu. Stolen from her mother!

Esmer. She, whom I recognised as a mother, in her dying moment, gave me this little embroidered glove.

Gudu. (*Aside.*) An embroidered glove!

Esmer. It was on my hand, when she received me, an infant to her bosom. It was her belief, that it would, one day, enable me to find my real mother. Place it with me in my grave—there only, I and my mother can now meet.

Gudu. (*Rushing forward.*) That glove,—speak, unhappy one, doth it resemble this?—nay, do not recoil from me. This glove—(*feeling in her bosom.*)—it hath rested here—here, next my poor desolate heart, for fifteen long years,—it was all the cruel gipsies left me of my child. It is wrought in gold. I wrought it to deck the hand of my pretty one. It was vanity; but her hands were so small, so exquisite, so beautiful. Here it is. (*Pulling a glove from her bosom.*) Let us compare them.

Esmer. Heavens! they are alike.

Mahiet. Exactly.

Gudu. Yes, exactly the same. I know—I—those features! Child, thine age—thine age?

Esmer. Nineteen to-morrow.

Gudu. Aye, since the day I lost thee. I remember—I—(*parting her hair and examining her nearly.*) Yes! yes! yes! I have found her again, My Agnes!—my daughter!

Esmer. (*Rushing into her arms.*) Mother.

Gudu. It is the same word,—the same voice that I heard last night. Thanks—thanks! I have found my daughter! Ha, ha, ha! (*Kissing Esmeralda in joyful tenderness.*)

CLAUDE appears near the scaffold, wearing the habit of the Confessor.

Claude. 'Tis fortunate—her mother—she will no longer despise life: one more bold step—she's mine. (*He makes a sign to a man-at-arms, who warns Esmeralda to ascend the scaffold.*)

Gudu. What would he? Heed not him. How happy we shall be!

Esmer. Happy! Alas, mother, I am condemned to die.

Gudu. Die—no—thou art innocent.

Esmer. Yes, mother, yes.

Gudu. Let us be gone. In Languedoc, I have a fair name—kindred—affluence.

Esmer. Unhappy Esmeralda!

Claude (*Aside.*) She relents—the hour of triumph comes. (*Guard touches her.*)

Esmer. Since it must be—mother—farewell!

Gudu. (*Clinging to her.*) No, no—did I find thee for this? They cannot, will not part us again—it is impossible. Men, fathers—on our knees—the mother—the daughter—implore mercy! (*She forces Esmeralda to kneel, and lifts up her hands in her own.*) Mercy! my child, they shall not have thee again—no—I'll cling around thee in icy death—thy mother! I'll never quit thee more—no, no, no—never!

(*She clings, screaming, to Esmeralda, who, as they force her towards scaffold, dragging Gudu half across the stage, who then falls senseless. Esmeralda, by a sudden effort, releases herself, runs, lifts up the head of her mother, and kisses her.*)

Esmer. One kiss—it is the last. (*Gazing at Gudu.*) So pale—so still! If she be sleeping, do not disturb her—if she be dead, seek not to call her back: there is nothing for her here—not even

her daughter—nothing but misery—despair! (*Placing her on ground.*) My poor mother! Mother—it is a sweet word! Wake not, mother—stir not, mother. Wait where thou art: in heaven, thy child will come to thee. (*Starting up.*) Yes, mother—to Phœbus and to thee. Headsman, I am ready.

(*Approaching scaffold.*)

Claude. (*Speaking in a low voice.*) Esmeralda, 'tis not too late—live but for me.

Esmer. (*Shudders, and glides past him.*) Phœbus calls me! Mother, we shall meet.

(*Ascending scaffold.*)

Claude. Wilt thou die?

Esmer. He is dead.

Claude. I'll not survive thee! This dagger—Esmeralda, one word!

(*Aiming a secret dagger at his own breast.*)

Esmer. Mother—Phœbus—I come!

(*She throws herself on the block; the axe is raised; a general feeling of horror is displayed: at that moment the window is burst asunder, and the outstretched hand of Quasimodo seizes the axe; he pushes aside the Executioner, and raising the fainting Esmeralda, he bears her towards the window.*)

Quas. (*Wielding the axe.*) Forbear this hellish rite! She is innocent, and shall not die. Men-at-arms, move one step towards me—the strength of worlds is in this determined hand—this uplifted axe shall strike him dead that follows Esmeralda to the shrine. Comfort, Esmeralda! To the sanctuary—to the sanctuary! 'Tis the refuge of the guilty—shall be of the innocent. The sanctuary!

(*He bears her away. The windows close—Cry of People "Quasimodo."*)

Claude. (*On the scaffold, repelling the Soldiers.*) Beware! She is rescued. Profane not the sanctuary!

(*Music. — A picture is formed — the people shouting "Quasimodo." The Soldiers advancing to the window, repelled by the Monk. Gudu supported by Mahiette and other women, R.*)

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—The Sanctuary.

QUASIMODO discovered with ESMERALDA, insensible, in his arms.

Quas. I have succeeded—she is in the sanctuary. They will not dare to follow. (*Looking at Esmeralda.*) She breathes—her heart throbs and palpitates against mine—against mine—Oh, that these consecrated walls might shut out the world from us, for ever! Us!—she so beautiful, I so hideous! Ah, those eyes re-open! Esmeralda!

Esmer. Take away that axe. Mother! Phœbus! Where am I?

Quas. In safety.

Esmer. In the grave? With death? And thou—(*Shuddering.*)

Quas. Bohemian—appalling as I seem—I am he that hath snatched thee from death, even while his cold arm encircled thee.

Esmer. It was kind—yet that blow administered—

Quas. Maiden, thou hast much to live for.

Esmer. A mother—duty.

Quas. Love!

Esmer. 'Tis a passion that lies frozen in my heart—its tomb is here.

(Pressing her bosom.)

Quas. Unlock that tomb, then, and bid thy love spring up, and be the golden crocus, bursting into sunlight, even through the snows of sorrow. He that loves thee lives!

Esmer. My Phœbus?

Quas. Aye—thy Phœbus.

Esmer. Do not mock my sufferings.

Quas. If thou couldst look into my heart, I—
(Checking himself.) Behold this silver cup! I found it in the cell of Father Claude.

Esmer. (With a burst of joy.) 'Tis Phœbus' writing! Where is he? Doth he know what, for him, I have endured?

Quas. He shall know all. He is a captive, as this cup declares; but at midnight, I, Quasimodo, will steal forth, and send those to aid him that shall bring him to thee to attest thine innocence; he—happy, happy Phœbus!

Esmer. And thou, also, in the contemplation of that happiness which—

Quas. (Troubled.) Come with me into the church. Though this sanctuary enshrine thee from others, it will not so from the monk—methinks I hear his footstep. I remember, near the altar, is a curious tomb, which opens by a hidden spring—there I'll conceal thee.

Esmer. Horror! with the dead?

Quas. The dead will accord thee life—the living kill thee.

Esmer. Shouldst thou fail to return, in that awful solitude, perhaps, to perish.

Quas. Doubt not me; my mission is not of earth—a pure, and a bright spirit hovers o'er me, for thy sweet sake. Thou, in safety, ere you bat, which screams the vesper hour, hath ceased her moonlit circlets round these cloisters, thou, Esmeralda, shalt be free—be blessed; 'tis all I ask to live for—all to die for! Fear not Quasimodo.

Esmer. No—thou hast saved me.

[Exeunt, L.]

SCENE II.—A Gloomy Chamber in the Ferry House.

PHŒBUS discovered.

Phœbus. Again the night descends, and I am here a captive. What am I to understand? My mind racks itself with vain conjectures. Could Esmeralda have been sensible of the attempt to do me wrong? No—perish the thought! The dark figure which wielded the dagger—it was Claude, the Monk of Notre Dame. How had I moved a holy man to such resolved malice? Conjecture—all is vain.

(Sinks on a chair—noise.)

Grin. (Outside.) Captain! Captain Phœbus!

Phœbus. My name! Who calls?

Grin. Hush! Read that paper!

(A paper thrust through the door in flat.)

Phœbus. Paper! Ah! (Takes paper.) Here it is! (Reads.) "Be upon your guard.—If you are not at liberty, Esmeralda, who has been saved by Providence this night, will be torn from the sanctuary of Notre Dame, and executed in the morning for your murder." Great Powers! My poor Esmeralda! (Reads.) "I am myself so narrowly watched as not to be able to quit this house. There is only one

hope left me; while my wife, Coucou, sleeps, I'll blow up the house. Stand from the door, and in the confusion look to yourself.—Gringoire."

Phœbus. Blow up the house! Look to myself in the confusion! What the deuce does he mean? Gringoire! Gringoire! (Calling at door.) Are you mad? You forget I'm a prisoner, and can't escape. Gringoire!

(An explosion is heard. The door in flat is blown down. Enter GRINGOIRE, through sparks of fire; his face black, his night-cap on; a sword in his hand—running about and affecting terror.)

Grin. Help! help! Fireworks—crackers—explosions! (Aside.) Don't be alarmed—it was only a very little barrel—no other way of forcing open that door. If people will keep combustibles in their houses, combustibles it must be expected will explode. Murder! I only hope the damage may have reached Madame—see how she'll relish being blown up herself. Mur—

Clop in and others. (Outside.) The varlet! Strangle him!

Grin. Oh, la! they've smoked the plot. Nothing kills the devil's pets—here they come. (Bawling.) Murder! Fire! Poor Madame Gringoire! Should she be harmed or killed—(Aside.) No such luck! (To Phœbus.) This villain of a prisoner—Don't think to pass—no, no. (Aside.) Here's a sword—run the first man through the body that opposes your way. The door is open—now follow me, or—(Recoiling.) Oh, la! Madame is alive! (Collaring Phœbus.) You pass not—you pass not.

Enter COUCOU, CLOPIN, and GIPSIES, their faces black with the explosion, D. in F.

Couc. (To Gringoire.) Hound!

Grin. Ah, then I am truly happy! My dear wife survives. (Aside.) Cruel Beelzebub! not to seize her in his own element—I'm sure he might have mistaken the whole group for part of his own family.

Clop in. (Threatening him.) You are the author of this mischief, dog.

Grin. Dog! pretty compliments! You say truly, a watchful dog I am; 'Twas I blew out the blowing up, or you had, ere now, all been spared the expense of warming-pans. Why do you keep such combustibles in the house? A courageous dog I am, or where had your prisoner been?

Clop in. (Picking up the paper which Phœbus has dropped.) This is the certificate of your fidelity.

Grin. Oh, murder! My head is in that piece of paper!

(Gets behind Phœbus.)

Couc. Seize the wretch!

Clop in. Hang him!

All. Hang him!

Phœbus. Dare to touch him at peril of your lives. The attempt, on his part, was generously made to rescue me from your clutches; and the first man that, in my presence, has the temerity to place a finger upon him, in the way of violence, shall pay the trespass with his life's blood.

(Presenting sword.)

Clop in. Captain, you are a bold man.

Phœbus. So bold, that I will no longer here remain a prisoner; and I question you, by what right you dare to restrain me—me, a captain in the king's service?

Clop in. Be satisfied; we seek not your life.

Claude, the rich monk of Notre Dame, gives a thousand crowns for your captivity till Esmeralda shall have consented to become his.

Phœbus. His! Heard I not of an execution? That paper—

Clopin. Execution!—a mere piece of mummy, got up to frighten the girl, which he can stop, though the axe be raised—so hath he sworn to us; or, if he do not, she is none of our tribe.

Phœbus. And needs may perish for your accursed interests. Devils! for I will not think so mealy of humanity as believe it could give utterance to words of such cold depravity.

Clopin. Have a care; you are in the gipsies' haunt.

Phœbus. Were it in the haunt of fiends, my indignation could not check itself! Back! and let me pass, or look to your life.

Clopin. Seize upon them both.

Phœbus. Ruffian! off!

(Seizing him.)

(Dashing him off.)

All. Down with him—our father bleeds!

(They disarm and surround him, drawing forth knives. Gringoire rushes out at D. in F.)

Phœbus. I see I am devoted. Strike, assassins—I can fall like a soldier.

(Throwing himself on his knee in the centre.)

All. (About to strike.) Revenge our father's blood!

Crash.—Enter GRINGOIRE hastily, door in flat.

Grin. I have opened the door—they are here.

All. Who?

Grin: The king's archers.

Enter ERNEST and ARCHERS, door in flat.

Phœbus. (Sinking into Ernest's arms.) My friend, you are just in time.

Clopin. Who has betrayed us?

Ernest. This cup—Quasimodo—You are our prisoners all. Away—away!

Phœbus. Esmeralda—

Ernest. Is alive. We will seek her.

Phœbus. Where?

Ernest. In the sanctuary of Notre Dame.

(Exit, door in flat.)

Grin. Madame Gringoire, I divorce myself from you—by this sacred pitcher I do it. (To Clopin.) Mighty king of rats! and you, august princes of the same trap, I most respectfully beg of you to—March! Heu!

(Strutting out, shouldering the sword; they follow, guarded, door in flat.)

SCENE III.—The Interior of Notre Dame by Moonlight. At the extremity of the aisle, a pair of heavy folding doors, and a lofty stone gallery, with a descent on the left into another gallery, which conducts to the centre of the church. Near the front of the stage, R., is an ancient tomb, in brass work, supporting the figure of a kneeling woman.

(Music.—QUASIMODO appears in the moonlight, cautiously emerging from behind a pillar; he has on his arm a basket; he approaches the brass tomb, and after looking cautiously around, speaks.)

Quas. (In a low voice.) Bohemian! Esmeralda!

(The door of the tomb slowly opens, and ESME-
RALDA appears.)

Esmer. Quasimodo—generous preserver! I—
(hesitating) I would speak of—

Quas. Phœbus?

Esmer. Oh, yes, yes. Assure me that he lives, and—

Quas. That I cannot. The cup—I have taken it to Captain Ernest; he, with his archers, is gone to the Ferry House—there is hope. But thou—thou famishest: here is food for thee. Eat—eat.

(Giving her the basket.)

Esmer. Hark! heard I not a footstep?

Quas. If so, 'tis one of danger—the monk perhaps, who mad, distracted, calls on thy name, and seeks thee everywhere. Conceal thyself, but be careful thou close not quite those brazen doors—the spring which secures them is a secret one, known as I think, to me alone—once fastened, it can only be undone by a hand on the outside. Ah, that glare of light. In—in—it is thine enemy.

(Music. She goes hastily into the tomb, which he closes softly, and glides behind a pillar. CLAUDE appears in the distance, pale and haggard, a torch in his hand; as he advances, Quasimodo steals across the aisle, and appears to enter from an opposite side.)

Claude. Quasimodo—Quasimodo!

Quas. (Gloomily approaching.) I am here—what would you?

Claude. The sanctuary is deserted—where is Esmeralda?

Quas. In safety.

Claude. Dog! why hast thou avoided me till this late hour? Tell me, where hast thou hidden the young Bohemian?

Quas. Where heaven knows to find her. Consider, a king's warrant might yet drag her to a midnight scaffold.

Claude. Fool! what knowest thou of such matters? they cannot harm her. Let me whisper in thine ear—Phœbus lives.

Quas. For Esmeralda?

Claude. (Wildly.) No, no, no—I cannot support the thought. I have vowed to wed Esmeralda. In death united—mine—mine! This dagger is for her—for me! Clapsed in these expiring arms, I will leap with her into the grave—he will not tear her from me there. Ha, ha, ha! (Wildly.)

Quas. Distracted monk! Fly and save thyself! lest the infuriated throng, convinced of thine iniquity, do tear thee presently asunder, and dye this marble pavement with thy blood.

Claude. Esmeralda! whom unto the soul's perdition I do love.

Quas. Love! thou mistaken one. I'll tell thee what love is—I, that am unread in books, as thou art, save Nature's book, will tell thee what love is. It is upon the altar of the heart to fix the image most beloved, and worship it with untold thoughts, like holy prayers—to yield it attributes, as to a saint, with joyfulness, e'en though those attributes destroy ourselves. In true love there can be no base desires, such as thine—no jealousy, no revenge; such passions are for demons—love disclaims them.

Claude. Cold-hearted idiot! what is this thou speakest? Thou that ne'er didst feel, but as these chill cloisters, which reject the sunshine, yet ring in mockery of heaven. No, I will not from my purpose be delayed. Esmeralda his!—never! I

know she's not far off. Every tomb I'll search—nor coffin, nor winding sheet shall 'scape me.

Quas. (*Abruptly snatching the torch.*) In darkness be it then; while I yon sullen doors to the multitude throw open.

Claude. Those doors—heavily locked they are—the key is gone. None enter here till she and I lie dead.

Quas. Tiger! Since, for thee, even the shrine hath no sanctity 'neath which to shield the innocent; with this torch, flaming like a beacon to all Paris, from yonder gallery will I denounce thee—hypocrite! murderer!

(*Approaching the stairs, L. U. E.*)

Claude. (*Detaining him, and recovering the torch.*) Stay, imp, that flashest like an unnatural meteor before me—thus I extinguish thy soul.

(*Stabs him.*)

Quas. I owed thee life—thou hast paid thyself.

(*Falls.—Tumult outside.*)

Claude. Ah, that tumult. Here, with his blood upon my hands, I must not be detected.

(*Ascends stairs, bearing with him the torch.*)

Quas. I die—but still she will be saved. 'Tis he, the happy Phœbus, comes. O—h!

Enter ESMERALDA, from tomb, R.

Esmer. That shout! Phœbus! Ah, Quasimodo slain!

Claude. (*Pausing on first gallery.*) 'Tis Esmeralda! Hence—I'll bear her with me!

Quas. No, wretch! You descend not this way. With my last convulsion I oppose thee. I—fly, Esmeralda, lest in this struggle he—

(*Esmeralda enters tomb, which closes with a crash. Quasimodo ascends stairs, L.*)

Claude. Fool! dying he bays my path. Ah! to yonder gallery!—by that winding staircase to avoid him—to secure her.

(*He hurries up second gallery.*)

Quas. (*On first gallery at the same time that the Monk is on the second.*) Stay, accursed monk! too well I read thy purpose; but you quit not yonder gallery alive. No, never! Thus I save Esmeralda.

(*He pursues the Monk up second gallery, and dashes him over the balustrade; then, taking the torch from the side, looks after him a moment. A loud murmur is heard without.*)

Quas. (*Looking after Claude.*) All is over—he is no more. Dashed to death, he lies outstretched on the chilled pavement of these dim cloisters, to disturb the gloom, whereof the midnight echoes of his solitary step were once the only music. How often have I, even I, in my dark loneliness, caught the welcome sound, and blessed myself that it was human? Ugh! what a stream of blood is there! Those still expanding eyes, kindling in the red gleam of this o'erhanging torch, looking up reproachfully at me! Those lips, scarce cold, seem quivering in my appalled ear. Quasimodo—murderer! (*Recoiling in horror.*) No—(*listening*)—all is quiet—silent as the grave. A corse is but a corse—powerless—speechless. And I—life obbs swiftly from my breast. I faint. Esmeralda! Ah! she hears me not! Great God! She

is shut up in the tomb—the secret spring of which is only known to me. I sink—she will be suffocated—perish of famine (*Noise.*) They come too late—they will never find her. Es—I die.

(*Staggering down, he falls at the foot of the stairs.*)

Enter PHŒBUS, ERNEST, GUDULE, GIPSIES, ARCHERS, and CITIZENS, with torches.

Gudu. My child—my daughter! thy mother calls thee—where art thou? Innocent one, he is alive.

Phœbus. Esmeralda! Esmeralda! Hark!

(*A scream is heard from the tomb—the people, who are all searching about, pause on the instant.*)

Gudu. It was her voice—a mother cannot forget it. Here it sounded.

Phœbus. Yes, here in this tomb—all silent. Esmeralda! No reply. Heard I not a feeble moan? She is perishing! Horror! The sepulchre is of brass—it cannot be riven asunder. Who—will rescue from a living grave the ill-starred Esmeralda?

Quas. (*Feebly.*) Quasimodo.

People. Quasimodo!

(*They support him forward.*)

Phœbus. Esmeralda!

Quas. In that tomb—the secret spring.

Phœbus. The secret spring?—oh, speak, or Esmeralda—

Quas. (*Recovering and losing his recollection.*) Ah! yes, poor Esmeralda, there—dying. The spring— Listen how the bells chime—the bells of Notre Dame—sweet, sweet.

Phœbus. Quasimodo, look at me—speak to me—save Esmeralda.

Gudu. 'Tis her distracted mother imploring. Oh! Quasimodo, while thus in agony I press thy hand, cold as a statue—

Quas. You are right—yes. Press the hand of the statue. Those bells again. (*Absorbed.*)

Phœbus. The hand of the statue!

(*He presses the hand of the statue, the doors of the tomb spring open, and Esmeralda is lifted out insensible.*)

Gudu. My child!

Phœbus. Dear Esmeralda! Ah! she lives—she knows me.

Esmer. Phœbus—mother! (*Embrace.*)

Quas. It is her voice; but I no longer behold her.

Esmer. Quasimodo, thou bleedest.

Quas. 'Tis for thee, Esmeralda—let me but once clasp thy hand, 'tis all I ask. (*Phœbus places the hand of Esmeralda in that of Quasimodo, who kisses it.*) It is enough that I am spared for this. Be happy, Esmeralda. One prayer—one tear of thine will suffice for the poor Hunchback of Notre Dame (*Falls.*) Those bells again—they summon me—sweet, sweet bells. Esme—ral— (*Dies.*)

(*A picture is formed by the various characters as the organ of the church mingling with the chimes of the bells peals forth the midnight mass.*)

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