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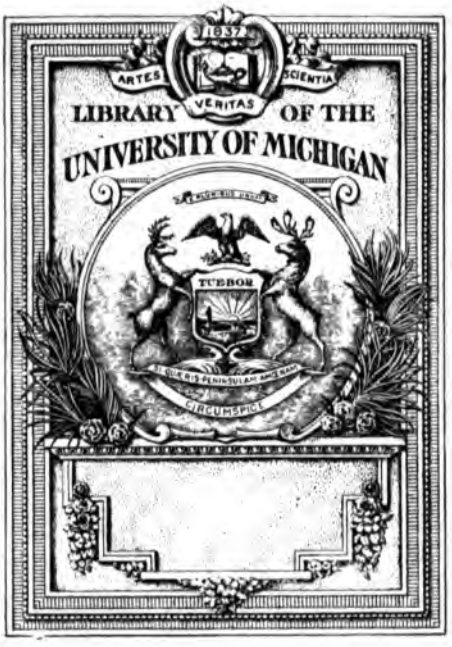
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Poet Lore

TITLE REGISTERED AS A TRADE MARK

A Magazine of Letters

Autumn Number

In the Shadow of Statues. A PLAY IN THREE ACTS
By GEORGES DUHAMEL

TOY THEATRE PLAYS

A Legend of St. Nicholas. A PLAY IN ONE ACT
By BEULAH MARIE DIX

Marinetti, Futurist: An Appreciation.
By ANNE SIMON

Poems.
By MARINETTI, DUHAMEL, PRYDZ AND OTHERS

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CHARLOTTE PORTER — HELEN A. CLARKE

PAUL H. GRUMMANN — EDWARD J. O'BRIEN

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VOLUME XXV AUTUMN, 1914 NUMBER V

To Andre Antoine

IN THE SHADOW OF STATUES*

Drama in Three Acts

By Georges Duhamel

Authorized translation from the French by Sasha Best

CHARACTERS

Robert Bailly.
Alain Mostier.
Hilaire.
Judge Treuillebert.
Alfred Guillermoz.
Eloi.
Levie, *the delegate.*
Pillet, *the doctor.*
The Editor.
The other delegates.
Madame Caroline Bailly.
Alice.

*Presented for the first time at the Théatre National de l' Odéon, October 26, 1912

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know very little about this house to want to see Monsieur in person. I am only acting in your interest. Sit down here in this chair. Only on the chair if it makes no difference to you. (*After awhile.*) Generally, if it is for any affair concerning the father of Monsieur, it is M. Guillermoz who attends to it. If it concerns the festivities and the unveiling of the monument of Emanuel Bailly, it is to M. Mostier that you must turn. Ah! if it is something concerning the family, Madame, perhaps, will receive you, if the case be urgent.

Hilaire.— To tell you the truth it is M. Bailly in person ——

Eloi.— But, my dear sir, M. Robert does not see to anything. But where is your card? I never know what I have done with your card.

Hilaire.— You put it on the little gilt bracket beside the window.

Eloi.— Yes, to be sure. Hilaire! just that! Hilaire! M. Hilaire! How singular!

Hilaire.— The cards are engraved. Pass your finger ——

Eloi.— Oh! I know! I know!

Hilaire.— I had one hundred made — they are not bad.

Mostier (*enters, sixty years old, bald, small chin beard and white moustache; tall, thin, correct and elegant*). — Is M. Guillermoz here? (*To* ELOI, *after having cast a look at* HILAIRE.)

Eloi.— He is in the record room, sir.

Mostier.— Go and get him. Where did you put the delegation?

Eloi (*pointing to the door in the rear*).— There in the large salon.

Mostier.— Has Judge Treuillebert arrived?

Eloi.— He is talking to the delegates.

Mostier (*in low voice, pointing to* HILAIRE).— Who is this man?

Eloi.— There is his card. He insists on seeing M. Bailly.

Mostier (*with a slight movement of his shoulders*).— Oh! but that is impossible.

Eloi.— Monsieur cannot receive everybody. Monsieur is working. Monsieur is studying. But there is M. Mostier ——

Hilaire.— The fact is, I have something to say to M. Bailly.

Eloi.— Precisely. But everybody has something to say to him!

Hilaire.— I have already come five times ——

Eloi.— You are not going to imagine that I am to blame for your not being received?

Hilaire.— Certainly not, sir.

Eloi.— You are unreasonable. You come again to-day! To-day! You know perfectly well that the great monument is to be unveiled to-morrow. For the past month we have n't had a moment's peace, and we don't belong to ourselves here. (*Opening and shutting the folios with violence.*) There, on account of you, I no longer know what I am doing, and I put things where they don't belong. You would do better to go away to-day. You can come back in five or six weeks. No? you don't want to? That is your business! What did I do with your card? There it is! Hilaire, Hilaire, just that? — how singular. Hilaire! that is really a name ——

Hilaire.— To tell the truth ——

Eloi.— You must write the object of your visit on the card; that is the custom.

Hilaire.— I can't, sir. I can't.

Eloi.— Very well, tell me what it is, and I will see whether it will be necessary to speak to M. Mostier, or to M. Guillermoz, who could, the case demanding it, talk to Madame ——

Hilaire (*uneasy*).— I can't say anything, sir. It is without a doubt a very grave matter, and one that does not concern me personally — I can say nothing.

Eloi.— Go away, I know you. Society of encouragement, eh? Committee of patronage, eh? Honorary member? You need n't hide it from me. And how much the assessment?

Hilaire.— Sir, I assure you ——

Eloi.— Oh! well, you know, it is all the same to me. You

know very little about this house to want to see Monsieur in person. I am only acting in your interest. Sit down here in this chair. Only on the chair if it makes no difference to you. (*After awhile.*) Generally, if it is for any affair concerning the father of Monsieur, it is M. Guillermoz who attends to it. If it concerns the festivities and the unveiling of the monument of Emanuel Bailly, it is to M. Mostier that you must turn. Ah! if it is something concerning the family, Madame, perhaps, will receive you, if the case be urgent.

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Mostier (*in low voice, pointing to* HILAIRE).— Who is this man?

Eloi.— There is his card. He insists on seeing M. Bailly.

Mostier (*with a slight movement of his shoulders*).— Oh! but that is impossible.

Mostier.— Hilaire! Hilaire! What is that? Go and fetch M. Guillermoz. I will receive the delegates here.

Eloi.— And — this gentlemen?

Mostier.— Don't worry. Go! Go! (ELOI *goes.*)

Mostier (*stiffly, to* HILAIRE).— What is it you desire?

Hilaire.— I should like very particularly to speak to M. Bailly.

Mostier.— For what purpose? if you please?

Hilaire.— It is something — something that it is not for me to tell — in truth ——

Mostier.— Sir, I am an old friend, the oldest friend of the Bailly family, and I think, in this capacity ——

Hilaire.— Oh! but I cannot, I truly cannot.

Mostier.— You astonish me, sir. The confidence shown me during his life, by M. Emanuel Bailly, whose faithful companion, I might almost say, advisor I was,— this confidence should be for you a guaranty of my discretion and if I dare to say it, of my qualification to become acquainted with this matter.

Hilaire.— I am quite confused, but ——

Mostier (*drily*).— I am exceedingly sorry, sir; but you cannot be received, either to-day or to-morrow — very probably not within the coming two weeks. I will ring to have you shown out ——

Hilaire.— Sir, it is absolutely necessary that I stay to-day. But I can wait, I am not in too much of a hurry ——

Mostier.— Look here, you must know that the monument to Emanuel Bailly, raised by national subscription, is to be unveiled to-morrow. The cares that overwhelm Robert Bailly on the eve of the great day which is to see the genius of his illustrious father the object of so magnificent a manifestation, these cares, understand me well, these cares are of a nature to make me close his door to the importunate. I am — Alain Mostier. You may not know, perhaps, that for thirty years I have been the friend, the collaborator of the great writer whose memory is to be honored to-morrow. You will admit, sir, that I have good reason to

receive you myself, and to spare Robert your visit. (*Stubborn silence.*) Look here, who are you, sir, and what chance brings you here into this library?

Hilaire.— I don't know, sir; the servant told me to come here.

Mostier.— But who are you? I cannot take it upon myself to have you wait without more ample information.

Hilaire (*drawing out another card*).— Hilaire — I am Hilaire — there is my card.

Mostier.— That is true, I know. Keep your card.

Hilaire.— Oh! I don't mind about one card. I had a hundred made.

Mostier.— Hilaire? — singular!

Hiliare.— You think so, sir — to tell the truth ——

(*Enter* GUILLERMOZ *and* ELOI.)

Mostier (*quickly to* GUILLERMOZ).— You found the copies of this speech?

Guillermoz.— I have the first ten sheets, all marked by you with red crayon.

Mostier (*taking the sheets*).— That's it. (*Quickly glances over the papers.*) 'This solitude is the dearest of all conquests ——' No, it is further on. 'Dare to say then, to say that you do not owe your most effective certitude——' There it is! Give me your pencil, Guillermoz. 'Dare then to say ——' up to 'Such as you have desired it, and more majestic perhaps.' That is the phrase. Will you put the papers on the table, Alfred, well in evidence?

Guillermoz.— You will need the other sheets?

Mostier.— No. You can pin them together separately and arrange them. Who saw the florists this morning?

Guillermoz.— Miss Alice is receiving them this minute.

Mostier.— Very well. Leave that to my niece. It is as much as done and well done.

Guillermoz.— Do you want Treuillebert and his crowd to come?

Mostier.— It were better, perhaps. Bruechner is in the gallery with the proofs of his cantata; he has been there for eight hours. I don't know what to do with him. Above all don't let him enter the music-room; he would revolutionize the house again!

Guillermoz.— That would distract him ——

Mostier.— Yes, but it irritates me. And where may you be going, Eloi?

Eloi (*about to go out*).— I am going to receive the tailor and tell him to wait.

Mostier.— Go on but don't dawdle. I must feel you near me. (ELOI *out.*) Treuillebert certainly will be good for half an hour; they are going to let him come in.

Guillermoz.— Without losing a moment, then. (*Starts to go, then quickly returns and points out* HILAIRE *to* MOSTIER.) Do you have to keep this gentleman here any longer?

Mostier.— Which gentleman?

Guillermoz.— That man there with the cloth folio.

Mostier.— True! Oh! what a nuisance he is, that fellow! There is no one in the manuscript cabinet?

Guillermoz.— No, I just passed through there. But you know it is very dark there.

Mostier.— So much the worse! So much the worse! (*To* HILAIRE.) You still wish to wait, sir?

Hilaire.— If it would n't trouble you too much, if it won't put you out ——

Mostier.— Not at all! Come here. Come quickly, sir, quickly! Enter and have the goodness to await the moment when it will be possible for M. Bailly to see you.

Hilaire.— Oh! I will wait.

Mostier.— And now it is Treuillebert's turn.

Guillermoz (*opening the large door in the rear*).— Will you enter, gentlemen? (*Enter the delegation.*)

Mostier.— You will excuse the delay, gentlemen ——

A Delegate.— A delay which has permitted us to remain longer under this illustrious roof.

Mostier (*taking out his watch*).— It is now twenty minutes past nine and M. Bailly will probably be back at half past nine. I believe you told me, M. Treuillebert, that it would be agreeable to you to see M. Bailly this morning?

Treuillebert (*fat, out of breath; speech confused and ridiculous*).— It would certainly be agreeable to me, for eloquent reasons if I may say so, to see M. Bailly this morning.

Mostier.— Very well, to while away the time would it please your Honor to recite the essential parts of your discourse?

Treuillebert.— A very simply matter. (*Takes a paper from the inner pocket of his coat.*) I can read it all.

Mostier.— We don't want to abuse — in truth —— But the very first passages perhaps ——

Treuillebert.— Let us see first of all, whether I have well in mind the general plan. The monument is there to my left. (*He removes a chair and pushes it to the left.*) I am on the first step. (*Is looking for something.*) Have you a little bench, — something?

Mostier.— Do you consider that absolutely indispensable?

Treuillebert.— It would be useful. (*Finds a little bench and places it before him.*) These gentlemen of the Society are behind me. (*Gazes over his eye-glasses at the delegates who follow his indications and group themselves.*) Leave a little space — a little more. Dr. Pillet, you keep near me for the silver palm. (*Hands him a folded journal.*) There that is the palm.

Doctor Pillet.— I will pass it to you the moment you say, 'a branch of laurel for this esteemed brow ——'

Treuillebert.— At that moment I must already have it. Give it to me at the beginning of my peroration: 'This grand austere visage —' you understand, Doctor, you understand ——

Mostier.— Have no fear, your Honor; all the details of the ceremonies are arranged by the general commissary and as to me, I make myself ——

Treuillebert.— What I am saying, is all for myself, my friend. We must aid our memory and our eloquence. There at the end

of the hymn, I get up (*gets up on the little stool*) and I speak. (*Silence.*)

Mostier.— Speak, your Honor.

Treuillebert (*oratory tone*).— 'It is with profound emotion that I undertake to speak in this place on this day, and on this occasion. Mine has been the honor and task at the same time, to eulogize here a genius, perhaps the greatest and assuredly the most prolific, of all those who have during an entire century honored humanity. Perilous honor! Overwhelming task! What can my feeble voice say when fifty immortal works are there to proclaim the glory of their master? What accents can I find to honor so great a memory after the vigorous, simple, profound words of a minister ——' (*To* MOSTIER.) You know I can't do otherwise in regard to Le Huquier; it is a personal matter that I will explain to you ——

Mostier.— Oh! but all that you say will do very well.

Treuillebert (*continuing*).'— —of a minister to whom the country owes a great artistic soaring and unexampled prosperity. What eloquence can I have recourse to after the learned and admirable discourse of which a master of speech has made us the charmed auditors? I name M. Leopold Grandard, who has spoken in the name of the first and most illustrious company of our state.' (*To a delegate.*) It is you, Lévié, who have the notes on the discourse of Grandard?

A Delegate.— No, it is I. Coltas gave me the sheets. It is pretty, not very long, a little troublesome ——

Treuillebert.— Very well. I will continue.

Mostier.— If you don't mind, our time is so limited ——

Treuillebert.— There now. 'What chord can I make vibrate after the phrases, so noble and touching, pronounced in this place by the senior of the poets of our day, the admired author of 'The Bow of Beryl,' the companion, the friend of the great man whose proud effigy is being raised here to-day?' (ELOI *has quietly entered, and during* TREUILLEBERT'S *speech the following remarks pass.*)

Eloi (*to* GUILLERMOZ).— If you please, sir, silk revers or satin for M. Bailly's coat? The tailor is waiting.

Guillermoz.— Hush, hush. That does n't matter.

Eloi. — Oh! but it does matter. (*Glides toward* MOSTIER, *and in a low voice.*) Sir! silk revers on M. Bailly's coat?

Mostier (*in a low voice*). — Satin revers, you understand? Satin ——

Treuillebert (*interrupting himself*). — But, my dear friend, you are no longer listening!

Mostier. — I beg your pardon, your Honor, you were just saying, 'the great man whose magnificent statue is to be erected on this spot ——'

Treuillebert. — No, no! I say 'the proud effigy.' That is quite a different thing, note it well, from your 'magnificent statue.' I continue —— (*Suddenly is heard a great tumult on the organ.*) What is that, my friend? I can't hear myself any longer.

(*Murmur of the delegates.*)

Mostier (*to* GUILLERMOZ).— There it is! Bruechner has entered the music-room. (*To* TREUILLEBERT.) Pay no attention to it! It is Professor Bruechner, who is trying the first measures of his cantata. There is some mistake. We will stop him. (*To* GUILLERMOZ, *in a low tone.*) Alfred, my friend, go and stop this madman Bruechner. Tell him that there are people here who must have quiet. (*To* TREUILLEBERT.) You will be able to continue, your Honor. You will not forget the few words about Robert that we agreed upon, of M. Robert Bailly — you understand? (*Exit* GUILLERMOZ. *The noise of the organ ceases.*)

Treuillebert.— I am getting there, I am getting to it. Oh! it is very difficult to find one's thread again. (*Quickly.*) 'I will have this courage, I will have this audacity! Too many illustrious visages are turned toward me, too many well-known eyes are fastened on me, that call me to my duty, my mission. I take care not to forget that the chief of the state has kindly consented

to preside at this solemn occasion, to which his presence lends special gravity and luster. I will seek with my eyes, in order to give the desirable grandeur and serenity to my words, the ever mourning face of her who was the inspiring and admirable companion of the master.' Now, Mr. Mostier, I am there. I will now turn to M. Robert Bailly, who must be there, between His Excellency and Mme. Caroline Emanuel Bailly (*removes a desk and places it before him*), and I will continue in this fashion: 'I will draw sympathetic and salutary encouragement from the sight of a son in whose moral physiognomy we find reproduced the happy imprint of an immortal example — of a son whose every trait recalls the dear and venerated traits; of a son, in fact, who — who (*mixes up his papers and becomes very much agitated*) — of a son —— (ROBERT BAILLY *has just entered; he is a frail, nervous young man.*)

Robert (*in an icy voice*).— Don't look any further, your Honor. If the sheet is lost, you will please me greatly by not again finding it.

Treuillebert.— Ah! there you are, my dear friend. See there, I have found it, I have found it, my dear friend! Listen: 'of a son whose juvenile work is already attracting attention in the world of letters, and forms the rampart of this impregnable citadel hewn out of firm rock by the great, the immortal Emanuel Bailly!'

Robert.— Excuse me, gentlemen, excuse me, M. Treuillebert, for troubling so opportune a reunion on the eve of the day on which you propose to honor the memory of my father with so much eloquence; but I am extremely happy to have arrived at just this minute. Your Honor, will you do me the favor to cut my name out of your discourse?

Mostier.— You astonish me, my dear Robert! M. Treuillebert alone is judge of the arrangement of his discourse. Your modesty is admirable, but I find it entirely out of place!

Treuillebert (*getting down from his little stool*).— You distress me, M. Bailly. I assure you I am very anxious to retain these few lines on your work.

Robert.— You are too kind. To-morrow is to be consecrated to the memory of my father; very well, that is sufficient. Without excess of modesty I deem it superfluous to give any time to my works, my humble work. It is an honor that I have not solicited, your Honor.

Mostier.— But you are mad, Robert! Everything has already been arranged, everything is already prepared.

Robert (*in a low tone to* MOSTIER).— I am certainly astonished, my good friend, to see how all things are so regularly arranged, and how difficult it is to arrive at any place whatsoever without finding everything already disposed of. (*To* TREUILLEBERT.) Sincerely, sir, I should be very sorry to annoy you; but I repeat it, my few modest works do not deserve mention on so solemn an occasion.

Treuillebert.— You are disconcerting! Modest works! modest works! But look here, your 'Eulogy of Solitude' is an exquisite thing!

Robert.— It is, I believe, of immortal things, that there is to be question, to-morrow, your Honor.

Treuillebert.— Without a doubt, but that is no reason for suppressing the rest. Immortal things are not the only ones in life ——

Mostier (*intervening*).— We can continue, just the same, Mr. Treuillebert. My dear Robert, the time of these gentlemen is limited. Will you provisionally admit terms that can in time be modified?

The Delegate Lévié (*stepping forth from the group*).— If you please, your Honor?

Treuillebert.— My friend?

Levie.— Just a word.

Treuillebert.— Speak, speak. (*They both go to the back of the scene.*)

Mostier.— Robert, I beg of you, leave things as they are. Mr. Treuillebert's intentions are the best in the world. When all is told he is doing you a great honor ——

Robert.— Crushing, I assure you, Mostier.

Mostier.— In short, he has composed a remarkable eulogy of your father. You will not be obliged to listen, I assure you. He has in his discourse drawn a very good portrait — there! a very good portrait indeed, to whose harmony and equilibrium ——

Robert.— To whose harmony my own eulogy is not indispensable.

Mostier.— My friend, you are mistaken. I beg of you, let it rest at that. It is almost ten o'clock and we have n't a minute to lose.

Robert.— Very well, lose it, Mostier. Twenty-three years now, that I have n't lost a minute.

Mostier.— Be reasonable. We are on the eve of so great an event!

Robert.— I will contradict you no longer. As far back as I can remember, I have always been on the eve of a great event!

Mostier (*affectionately*).— What is the matter, Robert? I find you nervous, irritable and susceptible as never before. The cares occasioned by this ceremony cannot weigh upon you; it is I who have assumed the greatest part ——

Robert.— Excuse me, my good friend. I don't myself understand why the little left upon me should be such a burden to me.

Mostier.— Our common duties toward your father ——

Robert.— Yes, no one is less conscious of them than I. Once again, pardon me, Mostier, and then do as you please. But deliver me as quickly as possible from this fat man, who smells of perspiration.

Mostier.— Come now, don't be unjust toward one of the most active admirers of your father, one of those to whom we owe ——

Treuillebert (*coming back suddenly*).— See here, my friend, Lévié just tells me that the proofs of my discourse have been corrected and sent to the *National Bulletin*. By this time the first sheets must be printed. So, that in spite of myself ——

Mostier.— Then all is for the best. Then hear, Robert, what M. Treuillebert is saying?

Robert.— M. Treuillebert, it is impossible for me to be modest as I should wish to be. The responsibility is all yours. And permit me to thank you for a sympathy that honors as well as touches me —— (*Sits down at a distance.*)

Treuillebert.— Oh! believe me, I am sincere. All goes well! I don't like to cut out from a finished discourse: the general harmony suffers.

Robert.— If you had told me that sooner I would have made it a point not to incommode you.

Treuillebert (*to* MOSTIER).— Ah! it is late, it is very late now, my friend; I will not be able to read the rest ——

A Delegate.— Not even, sir, the beautiful page on Emanuel Bailly's youth?

Treuillebert (*surrounded by delegates*).— The fact is it would not be bad to look over that page again, to have it better on my tongue.

Lévié.— It is something very welcome and will surely take with the lettered public.

Treuillebert.— Yes, yes, I rather like that page myself —— (*Declaims.*) 'It is the hour of poverty, it is the hour of obscurity ——

Doctor Pillet.— Go on, your Honor. This whole picture of the adolescence at Boutreville ——

A Delegate.— It is of such largeness!

Another Delegate.— We are listening, your Honor.

Treuillebert (*declaiming*).— 'It is the hour of poverty, it is the hour of obscurity. But in this poverty is fermenting all the coming richness, and this obscurity closely precedes the dawn. Who then could divine, in this eager young man, in this young man subdued by the customs and routine of the little town of Boutreville — Boutreville squatted in the far-off mountains of the center, who could divine the future master of thought, whose voice soon was to resound like thunder, but like a thunder of love all over the continent.'

Doctor Pillet.— 'A thunder of love.' Gentlemen, did you hear that?

A Delegate.— It is of such largeness!

Another Delegate.— We are listening, your Honor.

Treuillebert.— 'over all the continent. And from this hour, in the shadow of this great brain —' note the curious effect of this metaphor.

Doctor Pillet.— It is very daring, but it is an admirable picture; it is easily enough understood!

A Delegate.— And above all, it is of such largeness!

Another Delegate.— We are listening, your Honor, we are listening.

Treuillebert.— 'In the shadow of this great brain, a fervent friendship is stirring, an intelligent and sympathetic figure, a devoted silhouette, that from this time we will find everywhere at the side of the great man. From this hour indeed, Alain Mostier, the distinguished author of 'The Writers of To-day,' forever attaches his name to that of Emanuel Bailly. (*During this harangue* MOSTIER *has approached* ROBERT *to the right of the stage.*)

Mostier.— You ought to come nearer, Robert.

Robert.— Why? this man surely speaks loudly enough.

Mostier.— Come, Robert, be more conciliatory. At least give yourself the air of listening.

Robert.— A man capable of saying such things is incapable of believing that one is not listening.

Mostier.— Oh! how exasperating you are to-day, my child!

Robert.— Bah! I am more or less tired ——

Mostier.— If you show yourself thus to your mother, she will be greatly grieved. (*Silence.*) Truly, you worry me, Robert.

Robert.— Listen, my good friend, it is your turn now; they are talking about you.

Mostier (*getting up quickly*).— Oh, but you are really too kind, your Honor.

Robert (*behind* MOSTIER).— You thank him without having heard him, you have no doubts ——

Mostier (*to* TREUILLEBERT).— I am overcome, and I don't know how to express my emotion — there is so much *finesse*, so much clear-sightedness, such generosity! (*The organ breaks forth anew in the neighboring room, the voice of a man is heard, singing.*)

The Delegates.— Again! Ah! Ah! Really!

Mostier.— What can Guillermoz be doing? Excuse me, gentlemen, some ridiculous error, some mistake in the time ——

Treuillebert.— Yes, yes, one can scarcely hear ——

Mostier.— I will go to assure myself. (*Enter* GUILLERMOZ.) Alfred, Alfred, what is Professor Bruechner doing?

Guillermoz.— I can't stop him, I assure you, sir. He wanted to make a scene. I tried to explain to him that — but he said to me: 'Go away! go away! First comes the music'!

Treuillebert.— What, what, the music?

Mostier.— Wait for me a minute, gentlemen.

Treuillebert.— Listen, my dear friend, it is getting very late!

Doctor Pillet.— The fact is, your Honor ——

Delegate Lévié.— Don't forget, sir, that at half-past ten ——

Mostier.— One minute only, gentlemen, and I will be back.

Treuillebert.— You are right, Lévié. Come! don't let us lose another minute. (*About to go out to the left; they all hurry out and begin to push.*)

Guillermoz (*opening the door at the back.*)— This is the way, gentlemen.

Mostier.— I am so sorry! Believe me, my dear Judge, it would have given me great pleasure to have heard all the kind and courteous things ——

Treuillebert.— It is I who am happy. (*They all go out by the door in the rear.*)

Robert (*who has n't stirred from his chair*).— Good-bye, gentlemen, good-bye. (*The voices of the delegates are lost in the distance. The organ ceases to play a few minutes afterward.*)

Mostier (*returns and closes the two wings of door in the rear; rubbing his hands*).— He is very sympathetic — Judge Treuillebert.

Robert.— He is generous, my friend. Words cost him nothing. All bitterness aside; he is very nice. Yes, every kind of bitterness put aside.

Mostier.— Tell me, Robert, are you sure of your discourse?

Robert.— You made me learn it by heart, did n't you?

Mostier (*coming to the table*).— Just imagine, I found, in an unknown manuscript of your father, a phrase, a phrase — oh! something quite remarkable and that dates from his first period. It contains almost the whole doctrine in a germ. It is unknown, and that is fortunate, for this is now the occasion to produce it. Take it, Robert, read it. (*Takes sheets from the table.*) See here, from this passage: 'Dare to say, then, that you do not owe your most effective certitude' — up to 'such as you have desired it, and more majestic perhaps.'

Robert.— Thanks, my friend, thanks ——

Mostier.— But read, Robert, read. It is of the first order.

Robert.— I believe you. What are you going to do with this page?

Mostier.— But read it all.

Robert.— I am tired, my good friend. (*Rapidly peruses the page.*) Yes, yes, it is very beautiful. What are you going to do with it?

Mostier.— This phrase must be introduced into your preamble. (*Rings.*) You will be sure of a great effect. I have had this text typewritten twenty times and it will be reproduced all over, all over! A veritable unedited manuscript. And it is quite unexpected. I am half inclined to give the sheets to Guillermoz for his theme. He is a clever lad who can make good use of it. (*Enter* Eloi.) Here, take this to Mr. Guillermoz, who knows about it.

Eloi.— We have arranged about the revers. The tailor has gone.

Robert.— What are you saying, Eloi?

Eloi.— It is about the revers of your coat, for to-morrow. I ordered them in satin — that is as you wished, I hope?

Robert.— It is always you who know best, my friend.

Mostier (*coming back*).— I had a great deal of trouble to get rid of Bruechner.

Robert.— Tell me, why do you want me to introduce this phrase, this famous phrase into my discourse? That annoys me, Mostier. I don't even know whether it is in the spirit of the rest of the discourse ——

Mostier.— In the spirit. You mean to say that it lights up the whole!

Robert.— I am not so sure of that. I have n't the slightest desire to change anything whatsoever in this discourse ——

Mostier.— You are a child, or rather you are giving me a childish reason. This phrase is just the thing for you to say on this occasion.

Robert.— I don't believe it ——

Mostier.— But I assure you. And besides you are telling me this too late. You should have thought of it before the papers were handed in.

Robert.— I believe anything when you assure me.

Mostier.— I told you that I had trouble to get rid of Bruechner, who wanted to play for me the whole first movement of his cantata. He is astonishing, this musician! What do you suppose to-morrow means for him? The unveiling of the monument of Emanuel Bailly, perhaps? Far from it! To-morrow is the day on which the cantata of Bruechner is to be heard for the first time. There you have the musician!

Robert.— Ah! There are many musicians in the world, my good friend. There are nothing but musicians ——

Mostier.— Aye, what did you say? Ah, as a matter of fact I have put the manuscript of your discourse back into the drawer of the large table.

Robert.— It will be necessary to make the addition, your addition,— this phrase that you are so anxious for ——

Mostier.— By my faith, Robert, I will admit to you that I have already put it in. I thought that you would agree to it ——

Robert.— And you were right, my dear good friend. (*Enter* MME. BAILLY *and* ALICE. MME. BAILLY *in mourning, severe mien.* ALICE, *eighteen years old.*)

Mme. Bailly.— Robert, I bring your friend, who is coming to draw a promise from you.

Robert.— Good morning, mother. Good morning, Alice. (*Kisses his mother's hand and shakes that of* ALICE.) In truth, a daring person. And what must I promise?

Alice.— And what is most important, this promise must be carried out to-day. To-morrow will be too late.

Robert.— I am waiting. I am ready.

Alice.— Guess —— You can't guess?

Robert.— No, but I have the habit of promising in advance. It is simpler.

Mme. Bailly.— Here it is. Alice wishes to know your discourse before hearing you deliver it to-morrow before all the people. Think of it! The first discourse that it is given you to deliver before a large audience, and on so unique and beautiful an occasion. (*To* ALICE.) Go, ask your big friend to read it to you this morning, Alice, since it has been agreed upon.

Robert.— Ah, it has been agreed upon?

Alice.— Ah! What is the matter? You seem quite disappointed. What then, did you expect?

Robert.— Something quite different, assuredly. Something less easy, certainly, and more agreeable.

Mme. Bailly.— Come, Robert, you are not gallant. Has he come, my dear Mostier — Judge Treuillebert?

Mostier.— He has just gone out.

Mme. Bailly.— And Bruechner?

Mostier.— I just sent him away, dear Madame.

Mme. Bailly.— I saw the general commissary this morning,

and I am waiting for Colonel Berini. We will receive him together, if it so please you, Mostier.

Mostier.— I am entirely at your service. Alice, what have you done with the florists?

Alice.— I have just a word more to say to them, uncle.

Mme. Bailly.— I must congratulate your niece, Mostier. She has shown decided and charming taste. Go, send away your florists, my child. Let us go down, Mostier, it is time: the minutes are rare, to-day. (MME. BAILLY *and* MOSTIER *go out at the rear.* ALICE *exit to the right; but on the threshold, she returns and gives* ROBERT *an affectionate look and smile.*)

(ROBERT *reaches the desk; he looks for and finds the sheet of his discourse. He then walks slowly around the room, and, with suppressed irritation displaces, here and there, the furniture. He finally stops near the window, glances at the papers, that he is holding in his hand, looks outside, and drops the manuscript on the floor where it disperses itself. Stands thus immovable, and it is in this attitude that Alice surprises him. She has come in without noise and begins to regather the sheets scattered on the floor.*)

Robert (*suddenly feeling her behind him*).— I beg of you, don't take the trouble ——

Alice.— You don't wish me to pick up all that?

Robert (*taking the papers from her and letting them drop again, then taking her hands and holding them in his*).— Leave all that, Alice, leave it. These dear hands, these lovely hands were not made to gather up all these stupid things ——

Alice (*looking about her*).— Oh! Hush! If anyone were to hear you ——

Robert.— It is true, they must not hear us! And above all they must not know that I have, in this house, a friend, a true friend to my solitary heart, a dear child who is my pleasure and my torment.

Alice.— I am not your torment! You must not say that I am your torment ——

Robert.— Oh, my ambitious one, my rash one! he who

secretly possesses gold draws from the same object both his happiness and his uneasiness. If this beautiful friendship did not give me so many fears do you believe that it so surely would be my great joy? Sit down there, and confess. Who has made you believe that you want to hear me read this idle stuff?

Alice.— Oh! Robert ——

Robert.— Alice, Alice, you are not so tired of our minutes of solitude that you would have wished, of your own accord, to have them usurped by these silly trifles?

Alice.— My uncle told me that the discourse was so beautiful, and my godmother has so often spoken to me about it.

Robert.— Ah! very well, very well! I prefer it so. Put aside, will you, a desire that does not come from your own heart. My mother and your uncle, Alice, are not in our secret. There is no one but us in the secret of our friendship, and if you wish to see me look happy promise me to leave even their memory, their image at the threshold of each spot where we can spend a tranquil minute together, so happy at being alone and together.

Alice.— Oh! I only hope that you have nothing against my uncle? And then if you are not going to be pleased with your mother you will tell me all, will you not? I want to know everything.

Robert.— Don't be uneasy. I know how one must love. (*Rises.*)

Alice.— No, no, there is something you are not telling me.

Robert.— Frankly, no! There is nothing. Or, rather, I know so little what I feel, I so little feel what there is the matter with me, that it seems very much as though there were nothing. (*Comes toward* ALICE.) Don't speak of anyone but us, will you, Alice? I beg of you, Alice. Don't knit your brow like that; you won't succeed in even feigning a wrinkle. Ah! ah! you there — who want to understand what even I myself don't comprehend: a great presumption that!

Alice.— Don't laugh! Women don't have to understand — they know without understanding.

Robert.— Oh! I believe that it is impossible for me to explain anything whatsoever of what fills this soul, so irritable and not at all happy! I say not happy — not happy when you don't altogether succeed in appeasing it.

Alice.— Oh! as for me, I want always to appease it altogether—!

Robert.— Let us leave all that, will you? There are troubles, torments that one but augments in troubling one's self about their nature. (*After awhile.*) You have just spoken. You have spoken simple, humble words. I can't cease admiring these words! How they are yours, how naturally they come from you! Between your heart and your words there is nothing strange, nothing that does not belong to you; and it is all happiness and liberty. You speak! Oh! you alone are speaking, no matter what you say! I look at you: I see no one behind you, no one beside you. You are pure; pure and — absolute.

Alice.— But are we not both alike?

Robert.— See! you just bent forward a bit, in speaking. It is a gesture, simple and new, one that you have probably never made before, that no one has ever thus made before you. Oh! I don't want them to spoil you, I don't want it! You are all that I cannot be, that I never will be. Stay here, near me, and don't speak of anything outside. Name for me all the objects that you see. Tell me all the charming, simple things that come across your soul; and you will see, I will be calmer, happier, more patient.

Alice.— Oh! Robert, I don't understand why you are so agitated to-day.

Robert.— Leave it! and be content to be beside me, as you always are. A melancholy sickening smell of books prevails in this room. Come, I will open the window to the garden. The trees are covered with rain. A little freshness will enter into all this majestic dust. (*Passes behind the desk.*) Don't take care! Alice, walk all over those papers, let us both walk over them. Oh! that is nothing ——

Alice.— We are going to spoil it all.

Robert.— Pooh! — my discourse! Listen, it is never I, who have written all that.

Alice.— Not you?

Robert.— Yes, it was I who held the pen; it was I who formed the letters and without a doubt I was alone at the time. But there was, just the same, someone in the room. There was someone near me; and I am not speaking of all those who stand at the doors and listen. Will you smile and not make such an astonished face? I mean that it is not I who have found the words gathered together there. (*Kicks the papers with his foot.*) Do you see I do not often myself form the words and the ideas that serve me to live; but when you are there it sometimes happens to me. (*Opens the window.*) Oh! feel how happy the leaves are! See the leaves, they live freely: they resemble you, Alice! How good it is in the garden ——

Alice.— They won't see us together at the window?

Robert.— No, all the foliage is there to hide us. We have accomplices on all the branches, we have true friends all around us.

Alice.— Your forehead is so hot, Robert. Ah! you are making me unhappy, Robert, and how can you want me happy when I feel you so restless and unhappy?

Robert.— There is calm, now. This garden is always empty. That is a great satisfaction. Yes, yes, that is very restful ——

Alice.— See the cut grass: they have left it on the lawn since yesterday. It is that that makes it so cool in the shade, and how good its odor is!

Robert.— There are drops of dew on all the flowers and one can see the light across their stalks.

Alice.— The street is not very far, but one hears nothing, not even the noise of the carriages.

Robert.— The ivy on the wall is so thick that for us there are no carriages!

Alice.— This morning the walks are quite empty. Truly it is a deserted garden. Only we are in the garden and how queer,

not even we are there. Look, down there, see, one can see the corner of the green bench and the oval table. (*After a time.*) Is it true that it was on that table that your father wrote his beautiful book, you know: 'The Power of Love.' They say that it was on this garden table, on this queer little stone table ——

Robert (*his face contracted*).— I don't know. (*Draws* ALICE *away.*) Come, come away! (*Closes the window brusquely.*)

Alice.— Why? We were so happy looking at the empty garden ——

Robert (*almost hard*).— The garden is not empty. I should prefer to go away, — elsewhere.

Alice.— Where do you want us to go? We were so happy.

Robert.— I tell you I want to go away, do you hear me? Come, come with me. Let us get away from here! (*Reaches the door at the rear.*)

Alice.— Don't let us go out that way; my uncle and your mother and all the other people are there in the large salon.

Robert.— It is true, always people! Very well! come this way. (*Opens the door to the left and starts back hastily and angrily in pushing the door.*)

Alice.— What is the matter with you? What did you see?

Robert.— Oh! nothing, but someone is there. There is a man in that room. I don't want to see anyone!

Alice.— Come, we will go away that way. We won't meet anyone. Don't be so angry, don't tremble like that. Don't be unhappy, Robert —— (*They go out to the right; the stage is empty for awhile, then the door to the left is opened timorously.* HILAIRE *appears, still carrying his calico portfolio and his high hat. He advances, looking all about him, sits down finally on a chair and stays there immovable.*)

CURTAIN

ACT II

Afternoon of the same day. Everything just as it was at the

end of the first act. HILAIRE, *who has n't moved, is patiently thrumming on the edge of his hat.* ROBERT *enters from the right without seeing* HILAIRE. *He is walking, his head lowered, his shoulders bent, and he seems bowed down with weariness. As* HILAIRE *softly rises* ROBERT *starts and goes back to the door.*

Hilaire.— Sir! Sir! (ROBERT *is on the point of going out.*) I should like to speak to Mr. Robert Bailly ——

Robert.— I believe — I don't think he is here. (*Opens the door.*)

Hilaire.— Do you think I will be able to see him to-day?

Robert.— I know nothing about it. (*Ready to go out.*)

Hilaire.— Ah! I am very unfortunate ——

Robert (*coming back*).— Of what are you complaining, sir?

Hilaire.— To tell the truth I am not complaining. Only I am unlucky — I have been here since nine o'clock this morning ——

Robert (*coming still nearer*).— Since nine o'clock?

Hilaire.— Yes, sir.

Robert (*carefully regarding* HILAIRE).— Who received you? Who is the person who asked you to wait?

Hilaire.— To tell the truth no one asked me to wait. Everybody, on the contrary, asked me to go ——

Robert.— Where were you this morning? Where did you wait?

Hilaire.— That depends. At first I waited down below; then there (*shows the door in the rear*) — then, by my faith, I was here (*indicating the library itself*) — then after that I was there. (*Points to the door to the left.*) But I was bored there; then I came back here.

Robert.— Ah! it was you who were ——

Hilaire.— Sir?

Robert.— Nothing, nothing. And what did the persons who received you this morning tell you?

Hilaire.— They told me — nothing, you know. They told me — oh! I don't remember very well — that I was mistaken in

counting on seeing him — Mr. Bailly; that he was studying, that he received no one; I don't remember very well — that I must first tell them the object of my visit ——

Robert.— Very well! (*Goes to close the door that he has left half open and returns to sit down at the desk.*) What do you want to tell me, sir? What do you wish? I am Robert Bailly.

Hilaire (*astonished*).— Oh! Oh! Oh! Truly! Sir!

Robert.— Very well, what do you want to tell me? I am listening.

Hilaire.— Oh! but I am astonished. I was beginning no longer to believe ——

Robert.— In the existence of Robert Bailly, is that it? Yes, that is quite comprehensible. Sit down, sir, I am listening.

Hilaire.— You will excuse me, sir. You must be very busy, on the eve, as they tell me, of an event ——

Robert.— Who told you that? (*Gets up and walks up and down.*) No! take your time: I am not busy. I was never less busy than to-day.

Hilaire.— I ought, at first, to say —— You have without a doubt received my card. You know — an engraved card?

Robert. — I know nothing. They have given me nothing. Rest assured that I know nothing.

Hilaire.— There it is. (*Drawing out his card.*)

Robert.— Thank you. (*In an undertone.*) Hilaire — ah! ah! That is singular ——

Hilaire.— Yes, don't you find it so? To tell the truth ——

Robert.— What is it you wish, Mr. Hilaire?

Hiliare.— I must first tell you (*looks about him*) that my name is not Hilaire. There you are!

Robert.— Ah! continue.

Hiliare.— It is a name that I just took, like that. A fictitious name. Not to have to tell anyone my real name before having seen you.

Robert.— You astonish me; a great many precautions for a visit, Mr. Hilaire.

Hilaire.— No, not Hilaire: it is an adopted name, I tell you.

Robert.— Sir, for various reasons that I cannot explain to you, I made up my mind, a minute ago, to receive you myself, no matter what the object of your visit, and to listen to you, to the end. This story about the assumed name is, to say the least, a strange one; but let that pass, if you please. I prefer not to interrupt you again. Be assured of my entire attention and of my good-will, sir

Hilaire.— Sir, my right name is Louis Bouche ——

Robert.— Yes.

Hilaire.— Do you understand?

Robert.— Yes — no — but that makes no difference.

Hilaire.— Ah! Only when I was entrusted with the commission that I am now about to carry out, I thought it better, more prudent to take another name. On these occasions it is the custom to take an assumed name. And I chose the name Hilaire, because it is the name of one of my brothers-in-law. And before coming here, I had one hundred cards engraved.

Robert.— Yes, I understand perfectly — continue ——

Hilaire.— You know Boutreville?

Robert.— Certainly, sir, certainly.

Hilaire.— I come from Boutreville. It is a country, sir, where the memory of your great father ——

Robert (*getting up*).— Are you very sure that it is to me in particular that you wish to speak? All the affairs relating to my father are in the hands of persons who alone take care of them, and in whom I confide blindly.

Hilaire.— But, sir, as far as I know, I don't think it is a question of your father.

Robert.— Very well, continue, then, Mr. Hilaire.

Hilaire.— No, Bouche, I beg your pardon, Louis Bouche — I have always lived in Boutreville, and I never would have believed, a month ago, that it could ever happen to me to find myself face to face with you, as I now am. One can never know these things. Is it not so, sir? Is it long since you have been at Boutreville, sir?

Robert.— Very long, I have but the vaguest remembrance——

Hilaire.— Good, good. Very well, then, I left Boutreville a week ago and I have been here five times trying to see you.

Robert.— Can you now in two words tell me the object of your visit? In two words?

Hilaire.— To tell the truth, I don't quite know myself ——

Robert (*jumping up impatiently*).— Oh! Oh! but I beg of you.

Hilaire.— I have come on an errand. I have come to bring you a package. (*Opens his folio.*) A small package.

Robert.— To me in person?

Hilaire (*seriously*).— The person who gave me this package made me swear three times to give it to you only, and to you in particular. And I swore, sir, I swore three times; I am sixty-five ——

Robert.— Very well, give it to me.

Hilaire.— I will explain to you afterward ——

Robert.— Give it to me, sir.

Hilaire.— There it is. Neat and clean, and just as I received it with the seals.

Robert.— Thank you. Sit down, sir. (*Reaches the table, breaks the seals and opens a package from which fall bundles of papers well tied. They are in a large envelope covered with red seals that* ROBERT *slowly undoes. During this time* HILAIRE *has risen discreetly and seems to contemplate attentively the statue of E. Bailly. As* ROBERT *continues to read his letters, an extraordinary emotion seizes him and makes his hands tremble visibly. He snatches the package with the letters, separates and looks at them, then he gets up with a start and approaches* HILAIRE.)

Hilaire (*at this moment*).— That is a beautiful statue there of your illustrious father ——

Robert (*his voice brutal and hoarse*).— Come here. Who are you, sir?

Hilaire (*overwhelmed*).— Louis Bouche, Louis Bouche, former secretary of receipts at Boutreville ——

Robert (*drawing* HILAIRE *toward him*).— Come nearer, come nearer, so that I can look at you, Mr. Hilaire.

Hilaire.— No, Bouche, I beg your pardon, sir. I told you Louis Bouche, if it is all the same to you. From you I prefer my true name.

Robert (*as though calmed*).— Ah! yes. (*Pushes him into a chair.*) Sit down here. (ROBERT *is a prey to the greatest emotion. Returns to the table, removes the papers with absurd haste and feverishly making an effort to control himself, turns to* HILAIRE.) Who gave you that?

Hilaire (*frightened and subdued*).— A person ——

Robert.— Who? What person? Are you going to speak, confound you?

Hilaire (*tears in his voice*).— A person who is dead, sir.

Robert.— Dead? When?

Hilaire.— Four weeks ago at Boutreville.

Robert.— Who was this person? Explain yourself, explain yourself.

Hilaire.— A friend: my friend, Florent Lavaud ——

Robert (*making a rush at the papers that he again takes*).— You said Florent, did you not? Florent?

Hilaire.— Yes, Florent — Florent Lavaud.

Robert (*looking about him*).— Hush — keep quiet. Not so loud. Keep quiet!

Hilaire.— I said nothing.

Robert (*walks up and down, a large letter in his hand. Breathes heavily, and from time to time casts a frightened look at* HILAIRE.)— You do not know the contents of these papers? (*There is knocking at the door in the back.*)

Hilaire.— I think some one just knocked. (ELOI *appears at the door. With a bound* ROBERT *is at the table as if to hide the disorder of the scattered papers.*)

Robert (*to* ELOI).— What are you doing here?

Eloi.— If you will pardon me, sir ——

Robert.— Will you go away! Get out, get out! (*He flings*

himself against the door that he pushes to with violence and locks with the key, then comes back to HILAIRE. *Draws a chair and sits down near the old man.*) What is the matter with you? Why do you tremble?

Hilaire.— It is stronger than I.

Robert.— Calm yourself. Come on now! All is going well.

Hilaire.— Ah! All is well? You think so?

Robert.— Yes. Don't have such an amazed air.

Hilaire.— To tell the truth ——

Robert.— How old are you?

Hilaire.— Sixty-five years and three months, sir.

Robert.— You are from Boutreville?

Hilaire.— Yes, sir. I was born rue Haute de la Corniche.

Robert.— Ah! You have never left Boutreville?

Hilaire.— Yes. For the journey that had for object an inheritance from my mother. It is not that it brought me very much; because, as I always say, the family of my mother ——

Robert.— When did you know this man who just died,— Florent — what did you call him?

Hilaire.— Florent Lavaud? I have always known him.

Robert.— He, too, was from Boutreville, Florent Lavaud?

Hilaire.— Yes, like myself, sir. We were of the same age, he and I. Ten years less at the most.

Robert.— What was he — this man?

Hilaire.— Oh! he was a true artist, sir.

Robert.— An artist? What kind of artist?

Hilaire.— He painted flowers, nothing but flowers, but as no one else knew how to paint them. He could decorate menus or fans for you ——

Robert.— Ah! very well! (*Gets up and walks about.*) You remember having seen my parents at Boutreville, my father — Mr. Emanuel Bailly?

Hilaire.— Oh! very well. When they lived on the *esplanade*, I saw Mr. Bailly pass before the windows of the office every day. He had a little spindle leaf on his hat; it appears that that has

become famous since. It was at this time that the journals of the country said a lot of unkind things about him — that they have since greatly regretted.

Robert.— And — your friend, Florent Lavaud, what was he doing during this time?

Hilaire.— Oh! nothing, nothing. He was n't my friend then. He had painted a picture, an oil painting that had been exhibited at the city hall. Everyone thought then that he ought to become a great painter. But he has not always been very fortunate, and he was a man who did not make much of a stir, not he!

Robert (*attentive and contained*).— Did you ever see him with my father — your friend, Florent Lavaud?

Hilaire.— Sometimes, yes. They met like that from time to time. And then your parents left Boutreville. What a lovely reception they gave your father when he returned a few years after. This time I saw you on the *esplanade*. A little white collar, a little cane like a man. Oh! very pretty! No one knew you at Boutreville.

Robert.— Do you know — do you know whether Mr. Lavaud was at Boutreville, at the time of that last trip of my parents, this journey on which I accompanied them?

Hilaire.— Wait — oh, I know! No, no. He must have been away to paint some pictures in mountains.

Robert.— Listen. When did your friend Florent Lavaud give you the package that you have just brought me?

Hilaire.— About six weeks ago, perhaps more. He had broken his leg two months ago, yes — that is about the time. Surely no one, at the beginning, would have thought that he was going to die of it. We were coming out of the Hotel Savage, where the club meets ——

Robert.— Which club?

Hilaire.— The club of Boutreville! And Florent, who was always walking, his eyes up in the air — even though I always told him that it would bring him trouble — Florent did not see the sidewalk. He just fell that was all. Oh! three times, nothing!

But the next day in bed, sir. And just think! the leg broken right here near the hip. What that means to us! and three francs for the doctor's visit each day and the plaster cast; and, finally, the trouble in the kidneys caused by the shock; and he screamed a great part of the day ——

Robert.— He was alone? He had no children, he was not married, this gentleman, your friend Florent Lavaud?

Hilaire.— Oh, no! He was a regular old bachelor! He had a little income and his painting added to his little fortune. Then he asked me to come in the afternoon. I thought he wanted to play a game of piquet, in his bed; he is very strong on piquet. But no! he was very pale and emaciated — then he took this package from under the eiderdown —— (*A knock at the door in the rear, and some one trying to open it.*)

Robert.— Keep quiet — keep quiet! (*Knocking continues.*)

The Voice of Mostier.— Robert! Well, Robert! you are here?

Robert (*in a low voice to* HILAIRE).— Wait. (*Rushes to the table and pushes the papers into a drawer. Then he comes back to* HILAIRE *with a dry nervous little laugh.*)

Hilaire.— What is the matter, sir?

Robert.— Not so loud. Follow me. You are coming to my room with me ——

Hilaire.— To do what, sir?

Robert.— You will not move; I am going to lock you in and later I will rejoin you. We have n't finished: I must speak to you again. (*Draws* HILAIRE *to the left.*) Ah! to be sure, you have had nothing to eat since this morning!

Mostier (*outside*).— If you are there, this is a singular pleasantry ——

Robert (*goes on his tiptoes to turn the key in door of the rear; then he rejoins* HILAIRE *at the door to the left*).— Well, I myself will bring you something to eat in my room, Hilaire.

Hilaire.— I would rather you would call me Bouche, Louis Bouche; Hilaire is an assumed name, you know it well —— (*They have both gone out.*)

Voice of Mostier.— No, but really, I know you are there, Robert, and you are crazy, my friend. (*The door suddenly yields and* MOSTIER *enters the empty room.*) *Looking around in utter astonishment.*) There is no one. Robert! Robert! (*Sees the sheets of Robert's manuscript scattered around the window. Begins to pick them up.* ROBERT *enters meanwhile and drops into a chair.*) (MOSTIER, *turning around.*) Eh! eh! My friend! What then are you doing?

Robert.— As you see,— nothing, nothing.

Mostier.— I have knocked at your door for five good minutes.

Robert.— Truly? You knocked full five minutes?

Mostier.— I give you my word, Robert.

Robert.— It is possible, my good friend. But it is a wrong and thankless proceeding to knock at a door more than once, at a door that refuses to open!

Mostier (*astonished*).— Who has so mixed up your sheets here? And what is still worse, they have been walked over! But, Robert, someone has stamped on your manuscript.

Robert.— Oh! come my friend that is of the slightest importance. I beg of you, don't worry; I will have the whole mess swept away.

Mostier.— You will have it swept away? (*Puts the papers on the table and quickly moves up to* ROBERT.) Robert! Robert! Your face is quite changed! I don't understand either your attitude or your language.

Robert.— I would disown my visage if it were stupid enough to betray the resolutions of my soul. Don't deceive yourself, Mostier. My head is that of a man who is very warm and who has no care to hide it. As to my language, as to my attitude, I grant them to be voluntary and quite as I wish them to be.

Mostier.— Admit that this manuscript ——

Robert.— What would you say if I spoke to you thus: dear friend, absolve me from pronouncing this discourse to-morrow; I no longer care to pronounce this discourse.

Mostier.— I would answer, my child, in a moment like this, the duty of a son of Emanuel Bailly is above a caprice.

Robert.— You speak of duty, of caprice. You call my wishes caprices ——

Mostier.— No, don't insist. Tell me, rather, and frankly, who is this person with whom you were speaking a minute ago?

Robert.— You are jesting, my good friend. Do you not yourself introduce into my presence all the people whose conversation it is given me to enjoy?

Mostier.— Robert, don't let us play at too fine a game.

Robert.— I would n't dare, my friend.

Mostier.— And what was your motive in chasing Eloi out of this room so brusquely?

Robert.— Ah! ah! Eloi never loses any time.

Mostier.— That is to say I happened to meet him just as I was coming up to see you. Do you know, Robert, upon reflecting, I believe that the face of this man is not entirely unknown to me.

Robert.— Of whom are you speaking?

Mostier.— Why, of the man who was with you ——

Robert.— Ah! ah!

Mostier.— And whom I myself received very shortly this morning. I certainly could not tell where I have seen this face and figure before ——

Robert (*attentive*).— For you think that you have seen him, don't you?

Mostier.— It is very vague, a long way off. But let us say no more about it, Robert! You receive whom you please ——

Robert.— Of course!

Mostier (*offended*).— Let us say no more about it. (*Reaches the desk.*) I left the list of the invitations for this evening with you. What did you do with it? (*Starts to open the drawer of the desk.*) Do you remember, Robert?

Robert (*gets up with a start*).— Wait, wait!

Mostier.— You probably have put it ——

Robert (*calm and very pale*).— Don't touch that drawer, Mostier.

Mostier.— But which drawer?

Robert (*without moving*).— I beg of you not to open the drawer of the desk, of *my* desk.

Mostier.— I tell you, you are ill,— ill, my good Robert!

Robert.— I don't deny it.

Mostier.— What has come over you? For the past ten years I have carried the keys of this piece of furniture with me, and we have made use of it in common since you have come to manhood.

Robert (*contained*).— The sheet you are looking for is not there. (*After awhile.*) And then — open the drawer if you wish.

Mostier.— You quite understand that I would never touch this drawer again, not for anything in this world.

Robert.— Ah! ah! open it, if you care to.

Mostier.— Robert! Robert! If you don't want to see me leave this house this minute you will give me an honest explanation of your conduct. Don't evade me. You have never yet spoken in this tone to the oldest friend of your family. Oh! I well know, I know better than anyone, that it is difficult to build on your character.

Robert.— Blame no one but yourself, Mostier, since it was you who formed this character.

Mostier (*good naturedly*).— My poor boy, it was I who brought you up almost entirely, I alone bore the responsibilities of your education. I am, therefore, the one to bear with your humors and I will no longer take offense at them. But I expected more in the course of time and from your friendship ——

Robert (*suddenly softened*).— Did I make you feel badly, my friend?

Mostier.— It is n't in my nature to reproach you, Robert. But no one better than you has made me feel how great an abyss can separate a father from his son ——

Robert (*attentive*).— Truly, my friend?

Mostier.— You are a singular young man, but you were a still stranger child. No one knows that as I do; you yourself can have but a mediocre idea of it, for one does not see one's self, one does not judge one's self. Your father was the most expansive, the most generous, open-hearted of men, no man was ever met with who was more prodigal of himself — and yet I have had to struggle during your whole childhood against the most secretive, the most concentered, the least accessible of characters. Your father thought much of a system of education of which he had every reason to expect sure and striking results. Ah! Robert, the moral teaching of your father has had great success elsewhere since then, but what trouble I had to make you accept it in the beginning! You are listening, my boy, you are listening! Never will you know what torment took possession of your dying father when he realized that you had become a man indeed, but not the cherished inheritor of his ideas —— (*A pause.* MOSTIER *sighs.*)

Robert (*almost humble*).— Tell me some more, my friend. You said something about torment ——

Mostier.— Look here, your father had the impulsive nature of the apostle. Never could he bring his own son to share his enthusiasms, his 'elans ——'

Robert.— Never, that is true.

Mostier.— You were still a little child when already we had to engage in veritable combats.

Robert.— Yes, yes!

Mostier.— All our efforts, your mother's and mine, struck against something hard and strange that has sometimes caused your mother tears, Robert.

Robert (*with an exaltation, but badly restrained*).— Ah! ah!

Mostier.— Ah! how constantly we devoted ourselves to bring you nearer to the great man who died too soon for you, and whom I think you knew but little or understood but badly. You are, without a doubt, a noble nature, and I speak to you as I am now doing only because I feel myself so much older than you. We had to use main force in conquering you.

Robert.— Ah! truly, it took main force to do it? (*Suddenly getting up.*)

Mostier (*lost in memories*).— Indeed yes, my boy.

Robert.— You had to, you say, use main force to accomplish this conquest?

Mostier.— Oh! I don't know. (*Raises his head.*) But what is the matter with you,— what a face you are making? What a face?

Robert.— Pay no attention to it — a powerful trouble, an unforeseen tumult has come into my heart, I tell you, and I won't be able much longer to contain myself. (*Runs across the room with stormy impatience.*) Come on, don't despair, I am your man! See: I am wearing the uniform, and I have been saying, for the past twenty-three years, words that it would never come to my mind to say myself. So be satisfied, Mostier. But you see crushing truth has taken possession of me — and the time has not yet come for you to know the extent and the savor of it —— Ah! there is one thing that you seem not to know, Mostier — children form dreams, good friend, dreams that no one has the right to direct, dreams that are beyond all education and that go where the sight of the pedagogians does not reach. Oh! it was not a very foolish dream believe me: see me here, learned and stiff, all discolored by the odor of libraries; but I have often thought that I could live in a small town in the mountains — I would have had an obscure, fresh life without echo. My father would have been an old man, smiling and laconic. Listen, I seem to see this man: he lives in a tiny house full of charming and puerile objects; he has endless leisure in which to paint flowers on fans and menus. From time to time he copies a bit of the landscape, and three well-meaning friends admire it. When he is tired of his walks on the *esplanade*, he finds old people like himself and they play — at cards — he is strong at cards. Oh! that is a father easy to bear, whom one loves and who is unknown. A father who does not crush you, who does not stifle you. (ROBERT *has stopped before the statue of Emanuel Bailly.*) But you are listening

to very incoherent things are you not, Mostier? There is my father. Tell me, is it true that I look so much like him?

Mostier (*pale and disconcerted*).— You are talking nonsense a thousand times over, and I really do not know whether you are ungrateful, ill, or weakminded. Look! look, at that beautiful face. You will understand, perhaps, what an honor, what grandeur it would be for a young man of your age to find anything in his features resembling those.

Robert.— My features, my face! Go away! you don't know it. I promise you that you will when the occasion comes to confront my true face with that one there. (*Mounts the statue.*) On the bones of my visage there is a docile and restrained something, and I am very much ashamed to find the imprints of fingers of strangers. Don't look at your hands by chance, Mostier; they don't create what they touch, above all when the material they wish to knead is myself, myself! Do you understand? Eh! you are quite out of countenance, Mostier. It is your fault; it won't do to push a man like myself to extremes. What are you doing here any way? What precious minutes you are losing with this silly individual! Have n't you hidden in the antichamber the weighty M. Treuillebert, this orator for Congress? Have n't you forgotten, in the room of state, some Colonel Berini? See how the statue is looking at you, Mostier. Attention — the secretary of his Excellence — and my tailor, who is going to modify the cut of my coat! What are you doing here, my good friend, what are you doing here with me, on the eve of so great a day?

Mostier (*dumbfounded*).— Robert! Robert, you are losing your senses. I am going to your mother this minute. I won't stay with you another minute ——

Robert.— No! No! You are at home here. Consider as yours the house that I will have left this evening. (*Goes to the door and comes back.*) But, what is there to say, old man? You consider yourself capable of measuring the extent of a single one of my desires? Who makes you judge of a purpose of which

you ignore the cause and the power? Adieu, Mostier! Attention, you are walking on the manuscript of my discourse. Pick it up, pick it up, good friend, hand it over to Guillermoz, who is the man to make good use of it. And then meditate on what gratitude is. (*Goes out slamming the door after him.* MOSTIER, *left alone, violently rings the bell. Enter* ELOI.)

Mostier (*nervously walking about the room*).— Pick up these papers. Very well; put them on the table. Do you know whether Mme. Bailly is in her room?

Eloi.— I think Madame has gone out.

Mostier.— Go and see. If Mme. Bailly is out, find out where she can be and bring me my hat. (ELOI *leaves.* MOSTIER *throws himself into an easy chair. Enter* ALICE, *dressed as though for a fête. Comes up to* MOSTIER *and bows solemnly.*)

Alice.— See, my uncle. See a beautiful lady ——

Mostier (*starting*).— You frightened me. What does this mean, this dress?

Alice.— It is my beautiful gown for the *fête* to-morrow. I just tried it on, and I came to show it to you.

Mostier.— Well, very well!

Alice.— Oh! how disturbed you seem! You are not looking at the beautiful material and the pretty color I have chosen.

Mostier.— Is this a time to think of colors, Alice! Have you seen Mme. Bailly?

Alice.— An hour ago my godmother was still working with Guillermoz. Nothing serious has happened, uncle?

Mostier.— No, nothing serious — it is sad. I just had such a stupid scene with Robert, an odious sort of a quarrel.

Alice.— With Robert?

Mostier.— Yes, yes. There is something painfully difficult and incoherent in the mind of this boy. I don't believe him to be either bad or stupid; but he chose to-day of all days to tell me the most ridiculous things — and — and I must tell his mother about it as soon as possible.

Alice.— Oh! uncle, you don't know him well, perhaps ——

Mostier.— Whom?

Alice.— Why — why — Robert, uncle.

Mostier.— Oh! as for that! I saw him born and saw him grow up. Robert! I made him the man he is. It is I who made him as he is and what he is.

Alice.— Perhaps you did not quite understand his intention ——

Mostier.— Not understand very well! I! I! Go on, you are nothing but a little girl. I not understand — not understand —— I evidently did not understand very well, but ——

Alice.— What did Robert tell you, uncle?

Mostier.— He said things about his father — there is nothing to understand about it: it is absurd, it is enough to make one despair of all one's opinions, of all discipline. (ELOI *has entered, carrying the high hat of* MOSTIER.) Then Mme. Bailly is not at home ——

Eloi.— Madame was obliged to visit Mr. Adolphe Duply-Desmoutiers in his studio.

Mostier.— Ah! yes to be sure. The photographs of the monument! My hat!

Eloi.— I must tell you, sir, that it is half past three, and that the special correspondent of the *National Bulletin* has just arrived; he is in the gallery.

Mostier.— Guillermoz? Where is Guillermoz? Go and tell him to receive the special envoy.

Eloi.— Mr. Guillermoz is at the ministry; he won't be back before half past five.

Mostier.— Oh! but I have n't the time, do you understand, I have n't the time ——

Eloi.— Shall I let Mr. Robert know?

Mostier.— No, no, leave Mr. Robert alone — alone.

Eloi.— Shall I send away the special envoy?

Mostier.— On no account! Listen to me, Eloi: you, yourself, are going to receive the correspondent. Were you present? — to be sure you were present when I received the editor 'Of the

Lectures for Young Women.' Do you remember or nearly remember my words? Go on, try to remember the essential things: National Subscription, Homage of the Families — the Genius of Doing Good; Power of Human Love, and don't forget to pronounce the words: The Necessity of an Individual Moral.

Eloi.— Yes, sir! And also: Insufficiency of the Collective Morals — Triumph of Sentiment over Passion ——

Mostier.— That's it! very good. You will be perfectly able to receive this special envoy.

Eloi.— I will tell him that Mr. Mostier was in despair ——

Mostier.— Yes, in despair.

Eloi (*confidential*).— And as always, I will say: Mr. Alain Mostier, the friend of early days, the faithful collaborator and tried counseller ——

Mostier.— Hush! hum — look here, Eloi. (ELOI *looks in* ALICE'S *direction, who, her back turned, seems to be inspecting the shelves of the bookcase, and he continues in a lower tone.*) Oh! yes! Say that. Don't forget, don't forget — faithful collaborator, eh? Col-la-bo-ra-tor — yes, yes! (*Louder.*) I am going away. *Au revoir*, Alice. If anyone should ask for me tell them that I am with Mme. Caroline Emanuel Bailly at the studio of Adolphe Duply-Desmoutiers. And then tell them to wait. I will be back, I am going to come back immediately. (*Goes.*)

Eloi.— Miss Alice?

Alice.— What is it, Eloi?

Eloi.— I shall be obliged to go away for a few minutes. If anyone should ask for me, I am — I am about to receive the special envoy of the *National Bulletin*, but I will be back immediately, I am going to return immediately. (*Out.*)

Alice (*is about to go out to the right when the door to the left is opened.* ROBERT *cautiously enters, then not seeing anyone but* ALICE *he quickly crosses the room.*) It is you, Robert?

Robert (*preoccupied*).— What —— Has he gone? (*Comes to the desk.*)

Alice.— Who?

Robert.— Mostier.

Alice.— Yes, my uncle has just gone out. What has happened, Robert?

Robert.— Wait a second. I must take something here, and must go upstairs to my room with it. (*Opens the drawer and hastily gathers together the papers that he has hidden there. Then suddenly.*) You have been here a long time?

Alice.— Five minutes perhaps.

Robert (*feverishly*).— I hope you have n't seen him open the drawer?

Alice.— Which drawer? No, I saw nothing.

Robert.— That is astonishing just the same. (*Suddenly calmed.*) Ah! no, no! There now! there now! (*Puts it all into his pocket.*) I was very imprudent. (*Gets ready to cross the room and affects a careless tone.*) But how are you dressed?

Alice (*placing herself before him*).— Pay no attention; that is of no importance.

Robert (*trying to talk lightly and getting nearer to the door*).— And what a pretty dress. What a charming way of uniting the colors and of arranging the material ——

Alice (*gravely*).— Don't occupy yourself with my dress, Robert.

Robert.— Very well! What must I occupy myself with?

Alice.— Ever since we have been friends, ever since you have talked to me as one does to a true friend; never in all these years have I seen on your face such an expression of tumult and fury.

Robert (*stopping*).— Of tumult, Alice, you think so?

Alice.— Oh! indeed ——

Robert.— And of fury? So be it then, look at me! Have I the carriage, have I the look of an unhappy man? It may be rather that there is in my eyes a vigorous flame and such joy that I can no longer dream of dissembling its violence.

Alice.— You are not going to tell me anything? You have nothing to confide to your friend? What can you have said to my uncle?

Robert.— To Mostier?

Alice.— I found him quite undone, quite disconcerted. What did you say to him? You speak of joy, and it is true perhaps that you are not unhappy; but there is something in this joy that makes me afraid: it does not resemble a good joy, a joy that one would share. Why do you trv to go away? You forget that we promised never to hide anything from one another?

Robert.— It is true, but I don't yet quite know what I am to confide to you. I must get used to this idea before I can talk about it — and you will see what astonishing news these are.

Alice.— If they had been good news they would not have come to you in such a tempest. You have n't the look of one who is working for his own peace and that of others.

Robert.— What do you know about it? You have never seen the visage of a man who has just faced a truth. Oh! the truth may not always be propitious to universal happiness: it is ugly and magnificent. But it is always the truth! How, how would it be favorable to peace, this truth whose discovery suffices to create among men two unreconcilable parties? But I am not dissatisfied ——

Alice.— I am very sure now that you are going to cause great trouble to those about you.

Robert.— Indeed, no. I want nothing but silence about me. Oh! misery! I never have breathed as I do to-day, always carrying with me in my heart, in my breast, there in my pockets, these old secrets, all these lies, all this shame! This evening! I will tell you all this evening. And you will understand too how difficult it is from every point of view! When a man has been robbed you don't blame him for reclaiming his own?

Alice.— But you are not a man who has been robbed of anything ——

Robert.— But if this thing that I have been robbed of is not money, not property, not even love. If it is something more interior still. And oh! much more precious? Ah! don't look at me in such astonishment. You are asking yourself whose voice

is this, whose words —— It is perhaps to a new man that you are listening ——

Alice.— Remember, Robert, it was with another voice, your old voice, and it was with other words, that we were happy formerly.

Robert.— It is not a question of being happy, it is a question of being master of one's self, constantly free, master of the world as one only is, when one is master of one's self!

Alice.— Oh! you speak of being master of yourself, and you are saying it like a man who is not in possession of himself. Your hands are trembling: you can't prevent your hands from trembling; I feel it — I feel them tremble in mine ——

Robert.— They won't always tremble. They will get used to everything, even to being the hands of a liberated man. There has been an old lie here, of whom no one knew anything, and that was forgotten by the only person who ought not to have forgotten. I can no longer be the prisoner of this lie. To others the remains of the feast! Thank you! I am not hungry and this nourishment is not my due. I must leave —— No I am not the phantom of anyone, be it whom it may. I am a man alone on the road! I am a man obscure and unknown, and all alone on his road.

Alice.— You don't want to go upstairs? You cannot be left alone in this rage.

Robert (*mysterious*).— I am not alone up there. But in truth, I am learning to be alone once for all.

Alice.— To be alone? Oh! Robert, don't go up!

Robert.— Let me pass, my friend. This evening. I will tell you all this evening. Let me pass.

Alice.— A man can do nothing very happy or very beautiful when he is in such a condition. I am very sure that I am going to be unhappy, and you and all the others ——

Robert (*overlooking her*).— Come, come! I must be myself, cost what it may, that alone is now of importance. (*Pushes* ALICE *aside and goes out.*)

Alice (*her voice full of tears*).— Robert! (*Left alone, is about*

to cross the room, but stops and begins to cry nervously. MME. BAILLY *and* MOSTIER *enter.*)

Mme. Bailly.— It was fortunate that you met me. You were saying, Mostier?

Mostier (*perceiving* ALICE).— Wait, dear Madam, wait.

Mme. Bailly.— Well, Alice, what is the matter with you?

Alice.— Oh! nothing, godmother.

Mostier.— But what does all this mean?

Mme. Bailly.— Leave her, Mostier. (*Softly to* ALICE.) What is the matter, my child? Who has given you pain?

Alice (*sobbing*).— No one ——

Mostier.— This is too much!

Mme. Bailly.— Don't, Mostier. Why don't you leave her alone? You don't want to tell me about it, my child? You are not going to tell your godmother?

Alice.— I — I — there is nothing.

Mostier.— You see, Madam, the most incomprehensible things are happening here. It will be absolutely necessary to ——

Mme. Bailly.— Be quiet, Mostier, and don't confuse her. We are, as it is, hardly in a position to console this child, and to speak about the serious things that are in our minds.

Mostier.— And of which we must speak without losing a moment — the day is advancing, Madam, and the dinner is at eight o'clock ——

Mme. Bailly.— Very good! Never mind about the time! Come, my child. (*Affectionately draws* ALICE *to her.*) Go to your room, will you? I will rejoin you there presently.

Alice.— Thank you, godmother, don't trouble yourself ——

Mostier.— Shall I wait for you here?

Mme. Bailly.— But I am not going away, you see Mostier. I will see you soon, Alice, wait for me in your room. There, that is better! There's a good child. (*Waits until* ALICE *has gone, closes the door and comes back to* MOSTIER.) Well, what is it?

Mostier.— It is four o'clock, now. I no longer know where my head is!

Mme. Bailly.— What are you complaining of? We still have half an hour at our disposal and we can't do better than to speak of serious matters. (*After a time.*) Do you know whether this man has gone?

Mostier.— No one downstairs has seen him leave, but there is the door of the garden ——

Mme. Bailly.— I have the key to that door.

Mostier.— Well, then, the fellow has not left the house.

Mme. Bailly.— Robert, then, has kept his visitor with him in his room? That is possible. (*Lightly.*) That is his business. And what were they talking about when you found them here before your quarrel, before your altercation?

Mostier.— But, my dear Madam, you don't think that I would listen?

Mme. Bailly.— There is nothing in my question to get excited about, my dear Mostier. You are the devoted friend, and you have been the wise instructor of our Robert — and one sometimes hears things without actually listening ——

Mostier.— Yes, indeed, and I admit that the few words that I by chance did hear when I was on the point of opening the door did not seem to me to be very serious or very coherent, not even very interesting — the club of Boutreville? I ask of you? It is a question of honorary membership. There is then a club at Boutreville?

Mme. Bailly.— I don't know, Mostier, and it is as you say, without interest.

Mostier.— As to this broken leg — either I did not understand very well or did not hear well ——

Mme. Bailly.— Of what broken leg are you speaking?

Mostier.— It is quite vague — just as I was seizing the door-knob, I inadvertently overheard a few words about a certain Florent who had broken his leg at the club at Boutreville. There was also the story about this old bachelor, and wait a minute, of the eiderdown and the package! What do I know? One cannot pay attention to these things — as I had my hand on the

door-knob I heard, 'very strong at piquet'— how do you suppose that would interest me! And I heard something about an income and painting — but what is the matter, dear Madam, are you ill? (MME. BAILLY, *pale and stiff, has fallen into a chair.*)

Mme Bailly (*with an effort*).— No, indeed, Mostier. I have a right to be tired, you know after this hard week. (*Controlling herself.*) And what did you quarrel about, my dear friend?

Mostier.— Oh! trifles, Madam, but trifles that my age forces me to take notice of. He hotly accused me of all sorts of things; he almost forbade me to put my hand on a drawer of the desk, where for the past ten years we have put things and unimportant papers. He did this and did it so well that I had to call him to order, and tell him what trouble his education has caused, and the care he was to his father and even the tears — that he has not failed to make so superior a person as you shed. I had to shame him with his stubbornness, his fits of temper and his hostility ——

Mme. Bailly (*in cold anger*).— Ah! you reminded him of all that, Mostier? And what did he say?

Mostier.— He listened, dear Madam, with a concentrated calm that is not habitual with him. I have never seen him so attentive. And all of a sudden he became violently angry and spared no one, neither me, nor the memory of his father. He said a thousand foolish things, used absurd words. No, indeed, I will not stay another week, not another year with Robert at my side, if he does not take back all the insulting thing he has said to me. What do you think of it, Madam? (*Silence.*) He chose his moment badly. One does not have these nervous crises on the eve of such a day. Think of it, Madam, he announced emphatically that he did not intend to stay another day in this house — in view of such dissent, I know what I must do, and that is to go away.

Mme. Bailly (*rising with affected calm*).— Mostier, you are going to stay here. Robert said nothing that was specially intended for you, I can assure you.

Mostier.— But you must admit ——

Mme. Bailly.— No, nc, Mostier. (*Comes up to* MOSTIER, *takes his hand and forces him to sit down beside her.*) Stay near me, my friend, for something very serious is taking place now, and I am in need of your affection and your devotion.

Mostier.— You don't doubt ——

Mme. Bailly— I doubt neither the quality nor the extent of your old friendship. That is why I am going to make known to you what it is that is happening in my house to-day. Robert must not leave, do you hear? I do not want him to commit a folly, which at such a moment would have the most disastrous, the most painful and difficult consequences.

Mostier.— But, Madam, you don't seriously fear?

Mme. Bailly.— I feared nothing this morning and I fear everything now. I beg of you, my friend, don't look so astonished. I must this minute be able to count blindly on you as on myself, more surely than on myself. If Robert leaves the house he will never come back again. He must find you on the threshold before him, because — I myself can't be there. It is you he must find, and you must see that he stays.

Mostier.— Madam, I am listening and you astonish me greatly.

Mme. Bailly.— Robert must have, by means of a cruel play of circumstances, learned something that would cast down any other man and move him to tears, but that has probably carried him on to an exalted and extreme violence. Oh! I know him only too well, this man who is my son. Make my task easier for me; it is a heavy one and a sad one. When you again find yourself in Robert's presence, when you are doing all in your power to appease him and to retain him, you must know the reason of his sorrow and fury. Robert, no doubt, carried away, and in the heat of the discussion, will tell you a million incoherent things: it may be, for instance, that he will tell you that he is going to leave a house that is not his father's ——

Mostier.— Oh! Madam, I will not allow him to pronounce such words! I have brought up Robert in the veneration of a great man ——

Mme. Bailly.— Very well — very well — you will let him say what he will. (*A long pause.*) Come here, my friend. You have witnessed my life. I could fear nothing from you, and at our age the confiding of even a painful secret will bring us only the more closely together. If Robert, in order to turn you aside, tells you that he is not the son of Emanuel Bailly, he is not telling you an untruth, and you must know this. Don't lower your head like that! We have been living for the past twenty years in the sound of glory. We have together devoted our lives to this glory; we have come to be its soldiers — its dazzled servitors. Our own youth now related to us would seem strange to us. It is strange to me, Mostier. I say so with serenity. Here we are both of us standing on the steps of a tribune that is like a throne. Let us consider frankly: do you recognize in me the young beautiful woman that on a summer day one could see crossing the *esplanade*, and who was laughing and idle? No! There is no longer anything in common between the widow of Emanuel Bailly and this charming personage, to whom the certain young man that you then were wrote notes that have since been burned with many others. But, look at me: I am now an old, ugly woman and I have n't worked for nothing these past twenty years. (*A pause.*) I do not want Robert to leave my house, do you hear me, because I ardently desire that he be the son of E. Bailly just the same, and I can live tranquilly only when this wish is satisfied.

Mostier (*voice trembling*).— Madam ——

Mme. Bailly.— I do not wish, Mostier, that Robert speak to you of his father; his father is E. Bailly. (*Lower.*) As for the other, I do not know this man and he does n't interest me. Robert is still but a child and what he has now heard has filled his mind with an agitation that it is for you to dispel. Robert's education is the work of your life, my dear Mostier ——

Mostier.— Yes, indeed, Madam ——

Mme. Bailly.— And you will never permit that such a work be compromised at the very moment of its achievement. You

must know, Mostier, that I have just passed through a hard trial. I have passed it. What has, by means of solicitude, of constancy, of intelligence and love, been established these twenty years, must stand before the revelation that has come to my son to-day. You can look at me, Mostier. I am not at the age where the women of my race would weep and I cannot say that I have done everything to avoid what is now happening. At various times I have even had occasion to believe that this minute was necessary; one never pays one's authority too dearly. If Robert receives this blow without being too much shaken, the past will be destroyed, destroyed — do you understand me, Mostier? And I ask of you to help my son, because I do not want to do it myself.

Mostier.— Count on my good-will, Madam.

Mme. Bailly (*changing her tone*).— You will see Robert this evening. He must come to dinner. We still have three hours to convince him. You will arrange it so that he sits opposite me at table — and that I can look into his face.

Mostier.— And you, Madam, what are you going to do now?

Mme. Bailly.— I had counted on going up to see Alice, but I really no longer have the time before receiving the architect and the directors of the patronages for young girls. By the way, I can hand over the architect to you. Come with me; you have only a few minutes at your disposal. We are going to pass through a terrible day to-morrow, Mostier, and I want Robert to be near me, at his place.

Mostier (*lost*).— My God! my God! You said the architect ——

Mme. Bailly.— Come, don't lose your head; we will receive him together and I will leave you after. (*Knocking. Enter* ELOI.)

Eloi.— Sir, the editor of the *Chronicle of Moral Sciences* is there.

Mostier.— Oh! I forgot him, I forgot him completely. What are we going to do, dear Madam? What do you think about it?

Mme. Bailly.— That is very annoying, Mostier, but you actually have not the time ——

Eloi.— Must I send this person away?

Mostier.— On no account!

Mme. Bailly.— Come, Mostier, come, come. (MME. BAILLY *goes out.*)

Mostier.— Very well! Eloi! what am I to do? Receive him yourself, this man, and tell him that I am in despair ——

Eloi.— Don't worry, sir. (*Opens the door at the rear and enter a man who immediately takes out of his pocket a pencil and paper.*) Mr. Mostier will be in despair ——

The Editor.— Mr. — you say?

Eloi (*slowly*).— Mr. Alain Mostier, the friend of the early days, the faithful collaborator and tried adviser of the master ——

The Editor.— Wait, wait, you said — the f-a-i-th-f-u-l c-o-ll-a-b-o-r-a-t-o-r — and — and?

CURTAIN

ACT III

Evening of the same day. When the curtain rises the stage is plunged in darkness. MOSTIER *enters from the right. He is in evening dress. He feels his way across the room, opens the door at the left and calls in a low voice.*

Mostier.— Eloi! Eloi! (*Enter* ELOI *on tiptoes; closes the door behind him.*) Turn on the light. (*A lamp is lighted and feebly lights up the stage during entire act.*) Mr. Robert is still up there?

Eloi.— Yes, sir.

Mostier.— You still hear him talking?

Eloi.— He talks for awhile, then nothing is heard for a quarter of an hour, then the whole thing begins all over again.

Mostier.— What happened when you knocked at the door during the dinner?

Eloi.— He did n't answer at first. I came nearer to the door and said in a loud voice that the guests had arrived and that all were waiting for Mr. Robert! I then heard him cry inside: 'What do you suppose I care? Leave me alone!'

Mostier (*troubled*).— Ah! Ah! He has veen very ill indeed, that is true. (*Enter* MME. BAILLY *in a severe black evening dress.*)

Mme. Bailly (*to* MOSTIER).— Well?

Mostier.— Go back to your service, Eloi. (ELOI *out.*)

Mme. Bailly.— Well?

Mostier.— Well, he is still up there.

Mme. Bailly.— And always with this — man?

Mostier.— Very probably, Madam. One can hear them talk, from time to time.

Mme. Bailly.— Ah! Let us go down, Mostier, our absence down there is a ridiculous thing and not very courteous ——

Mostier.— True, but seeing that Robert is ill — seeing at least, that it is what we told them ——

Mme. Bailly.— No matter, let us go down. We are accumulating all sorts of stupid things to-day. I will speak to Robert myself this evening. I must speak to him. (*Enter* ALICE.)

Mostier.— What, you too?

Mme. Bailly (*attentively gazing at* ALICE).— You are not ill, Alice?

Mostier.— Now, there is no one down there; it is unheard of!

Mme. Bailly.— Keep still, Mostier. You are surely not ill, Alice?

Alice.— To tell the truth, godmother, I am not feeling very well. I beg of you, permit me to stay upstairs this evening.

Mostier.— I like to think that Guillermoz at least is in the smoking-room. Let us hurry down, dear Madam. (ALICE *sits down.*) Well, what are you doing there, little one? If you are ill you must go to bed.

Mme. Bailly.— Mostier, my dear friend, your place is with our guests.

Mostier.— Without a doubt, dear Madam — but what ails you, Alice?

Mme. Bailly.— Leave your niece with me, will you? Go on ahead and I will follow immediately.

Mostier.— It is true: here we are all of us, and these people down there all alone ——

Mme. Bailly.— I can't believe that they are bored; but go down to keep them company and I will follow.

Mostier.— I am going. (*Turning around on the threshold.*) As to Robert, you know ——

Mme. Bailly (*charging him to be silent*).— Yes, yes. (*He goes out.* MME. BAILLY'S *eyes are on* ALICE *all the time.*) Keep your seat, my child. You were right to leave all those people, since you were tired. Are you merely going to rest a few minutes? or are you going to your room to sleep, to prepare yourself for the fatigues of to-morrow?

Alice.— Oh! I am merely going to rest a bit, godmother.

Mme. Bailly.— Why don't you lie down on the *chaiselongue* in my boudoir?

Alice.— Thank you, godmother, I am very well here, I assure you.

Mme. Bailly.— Ah! you prefer to stay? Very well, very well! (*Gazes at* ALICE *searchingly, then starts to go out.*) I am going down but I will send some one in a few minutes to find out how you are ——

Alice (*quickly*).— Oh! but that will not be at all necessary, godmother. I am much better already.

Mme. Bailly (*coming toward* ALICE).— Alice, it may be that, if you stay here, you will see Robert ——

Alice.— And if I do, godmother?

Mme. Bailly (*insinuating and contained*).— It is without importance, to be sure. But we said at dinner that Robert was ill and tired: that is only partly true. Robert is only ill — morally. Robert is passing through a moral crisis at this moment. Oh! I am telling you all this — you are not looking at me very bravely, my child; you are not ill? (*A pause.*) Robert has not told you about his troubles, Alice? Alice, why were you crying awhile ago? Why did you not want to tell your godmother about it? Ah! you do not love your godmother enough, Alice —

don't have such a frightened look. You often talk to my son; you no doubt know him very well, your friend, Robert, and he is a man who does not easily trust himself — he is not very confiding, my Robert. Robert does not happen to have told you anything about what is worrying him?

Alice.— But what do you suppose he would tell me, godmother?

Mme. Bailly.— Oh! the fact is that it is not of the least importance, and that on the eve of such a day we are tired enough without worrying about other things. Rest, my child, and if you can, rejoin us presently. (*Goes, then comes back.*) Ah! I must ask you something You see how serious I am — it isn't, however, that what I am going to ask you is particularly serious; but — but — you know how I love Robert and how I have his interest at heart — you know my affection for him — well, if Robert were to tell you something — it is hardly probable — but if he were to tell you something very wild and foolish, something very improbable — I don't know — Well! you must come to me immediately, do you hear, immediately to tell me about it.

Alice.— But what is the matter with you, godmother. What do you fear?

Mme. Bailly.— I fear nothing. Don't torment me. Robert will have nothing to say to you. *Au revoir.* (*Reaches the door, then turns again.*) You would come immediately, Alice, immediately, would you not? (*Goes out. After* MME. BAILLY *has gone out,* ALICE *has slowly risen and gone to the door to the left. As she opens it* ROBERT *appears. He steps in and searches the room that is but feebly lighted.*)

Robert.— Alone, are you not? Stay there. (*He turns around.*) Follow me, come this way, Mr. Bouche. (HILAIRE *appears behind him carrying folio and high hat.*)

Hilaire.— There, you see, I like it better when you call me Bouche. To tell you the truth, this name Hilaire, it now weighs me down, you know.

Robert.— Don't talk so loudly, Mr. Bouche. (*Cautiously opens the door at the rear.*) You will not leave your hotel before I come, to-morrow, perhaps to-night. Go on ahead, softly if you please, softly. (ROBERT *signs to* ALICE *to remain, and goes out. Returns a few seconds later.* ALICE *waits for him, anxious and immovable.* ROBERT *takes* ALICE *by the hand and they both sit down, side by side. A long silence.*) Turn to the light so that I can see you.

Alice.— I don't dream of hiding my face from you. I came here to-night to hear what you have to tell me. I have the face of one resolved but to do one thing, and that is to listen with all my heart ——

Robert.— It is now five years that you have been near me. And now when I think of the man I am, I always see you by my side, and our two images seem to me to be inseparable in the future.

Alice (*gravely*).— Yes, Robert, inseparable.

Robert.— I have had no other friend but you. I do not like to think of the time when you were not here, when there was not your smile across my solitude. Now my solitude resembles you. It is events sometimes that decide us to speak of things, and it is not I who have chosen this minute. But there! what are we going to do, since I must leave, since I must leave this house?

Alice.— Stop, Robert! I have often dreamed that wherever you live I would accompany you. What you have just told me has given me great courage; there is in our friendship something stronger than friendship, perhaps, since I can't bear even the thought of being separated from you ——

Robert.— No, there is no question of being separated, no! but I must leave and — and without delay, this house and all the people of this house. I must go away.

Alice.— Don't say "I must go away." It is very long since I have been able to think as do those who can say 'I.' I am a woman, and you are so mingled in my resolutions, Robert, that secretly I say 'we' even when I am thinking only of myself.

Robert.— Then, we must leave this house.

Alice.— I will do what you wish. (*A pause.*)

Robert.— Robert Bailly! Oh! I am going to leave this name and these effects here behind me. I am going away and I will take only you of this past that others have made for me. How ashamed I am of having so long taken my food here! I am going to live the life to which I have a right. Robert Bailly? I am a man, free and unknown. My name is so obscure that I hardly know it myself. My true name is a humble name and without history, but it belongs to me like a humble thing. Bailly! A word that at this moment is in the mouth of thousands of imbeciles, and that is glory! I am going away, I am going away! I have never been the son of this statue ——

Alice.— What have they told you that you dare to cry out such things?

Robert.— I have been thrust into a cold and clinging darkness. There is a sorrow that soothes and I suddenly feel bathed in light. I am still too much oppressed by the news that a poor devil has brought me, without even knowing the price of what he was bringing. All those people were there around me, to watch my profile and the movements of my face. When I smiled they all said: there is the smile of Emanuel Bailly! And when I was calm they all thought: it is the same gravity! And when I showed anger, they looked at each other and murmured: it is astonishing, he resembles him also in his violence and his force! There are the women who are always on the watch, stupid, cruel and curious! They listened to my voice as though it were his breath that passed through my lips. A marionette! the prey of all the photographers and the newspapers! (*Approaches the statue of E. Bailly.*) You can see for yourself that I do not resemble this man: the bone formation is entirely different, and the rest they have transformed by means of discourses and examples. I had to cut my beard like his, and my moustache, and I had to draw back my hair as he used to draw back his ——

Alice.— Why don't you want to resemble this man?

Robert.— There are ideas that have so early entered the mind and have been there for so long a time, that it is impossible to tear them out without much cruel anger and suffering ——

Alice.— You are to confide something to me and you become exalted and irritable, and you speak as though I already knew what you have not yet told me. You must tell me all and explain to me. You know that no one is more worthy than I of knowing what is tormenting you and what is filling your eyes with tears. Your secret seems so terrible to me that I want to be the first to know it, because when you have told me it will have hardly had the time to come from your heart and we will be stronger, being two, to keep it, if it must remain unknown ——

Robert.— Unknown, indeed! unknown. Listen, this man who came this morning ——

Alice.— Yes, yes, sit down beside me and speak softly, without haste and if you can without anger, and then you will say only what you want to say ——

Robert.— This man who came — this man — oh! my God! how difficult it is —— (*Stops.*)

Alice.— Calm yourself, Robert. You seem to me to suffer a great deal for a man who has spoken of joy ——

Robert.— No, I am not suffering! I have been for the past twenty-three years the son of a great man, and I am the most miserable of beings: my life has neither reason nor savor. I have always been an object of envy and admiration for my companions. Oh! I have been miserable for twenty-three years, and this unhappiness is not even of the kind to inspire pity. Every man has his character, his traits, his visage; I have only had the right to the visage and the gestures of another, and one has only sought in me the image of another and his memory. Only this morning I was resigned, effaced, when someone came who has unfolded for me the cause of this great fatigue and this desire to die that I always feel. I am not the son of Emanuel Bailly. I have grown up in the shadow of this man and he and the world thought that I was the inheritor of his glory! Then I learn to-day that this

man is not my father, and here I am trembling, stumbling like one who has come out of a dark, damp room and who receives the full light on his face — and I ask but for one thing, solitude, far from here, and oblivion.

Alice.— Where are we going to?

Robert.— We are going to leave this city since you say you are willing to live where I live. Look, this whole room is full of E. Bailly's books. No, no, they are not on the walls; they are on my shoulders, I carry them on my shoulders, and they are crushing me! I do not like, I must say it, I do not like the thoughts of this man, I never liked anything he said ——

Alice.— But, Robert, it was he who raised you and protected you; it was he who loved ——

Robert.— Oh! don't speak for him or I will say that I detest him! I was thirteen years old when he died, and he has never been so much alive as since his death. I don't care about being just: my hour has come to be unjust. No, I have not been loved as I wanted to be loved, as I want to be loved, and I say that I have been enchained and betrayed. I love solitude and I am living in a market. I loved my fellow creatures; I was forced to approach them until I was annoyed by their odor and I now repeat things to them that lacerate my mouth because I don't believe them. I want to live near rough and beautiful nature, but they have made a society creature of me. You say a man has loved me because he has nourished me and has made of me what I did not at all want to be — I would have been a different man if he had loved me!

Alice.— Robert, don't you know that I — I love you.

Robert (*on his knees before her*).— Oh! it is true! pardon me! I am not bad, but a great anger is agitating my heart and putting into disorder all my faculties, and I cannot contain myself. Yes, I am going to be very happy. We are going away so far away that no one will know us. Don't say no! I want to go away and leave them here with their statue, their glory and their lives of maniacs. You will see how kind I will be, never bitter

any more, and how I will become what it is my destiny to become. You do not know me as yet and you will be amazed to discover the real man that I will be when I will have left behind me Robert Bailly. I am going to take any name, a poor, modest name and one that is obscure, and I will try to make it great according to my own heart and my own powers. You will partake of this name and of my beautiful laborious existence. I have written books, but all that I have written is worth nothing at all. I have never been able to say what I wanted to say; there always has been between my work and my mind the resistant wall raised by him who was my father. I am going to write now what I feel myself capable of writing —— Oh! Alice, since you love me, tell me that I am not merely a shadow and that I have perhaps my genius — a genius of my own —— (*Hardly can retain a sob and takes* ALICE *in his arms.*)

Alice.— Yes, yes, Robert! Yes, you deserve to be happy, to be great; but here you are like one ill, and dominated by fever, and it is not thus that one can act and resolve. Now that you know the truth you are certainly going to think differently, and you will feel yourself stronger and more mature; but wait, there will always be time enough to leave the house, when you will have carefully weighed matters and will have chosen what is best for our happiness. Do nothing while in this anger, wait awhile ——

Robert (*getting up*).— No, I can't wait another day, not even another hour. My need for breathing freely is such that it must be satisfied immediately. Perhaps if I wait it will never be satisfied.

Alice.— Yes, Robert, but is there no one to whom you must account before making so grave a decision?

Robert.— Knowing what I know, I have to account to no one. To-morrow no one will know me and everything will be as it should be.

Alice.— You know you will have to go very far indeed, so that in seeing you it be not said ——

Robert.— What?

Alice.— There goes the son of Emanuel Bailly ——

Robert.— I don't want that said any longer.

Alice.— How can you expect the world to give you a name other than the one you have borne since your childhood, and that the law has given you forever?

Robert.— I no longer want this name!

Alice.— It is a beautiful one and you have borne it with honor.

Robert.— It is n't due me and it annoys me. I denounce it as a garment of parade that hurts and deforms.

Alice.— It was pure when you took it; leave it without violence and without tearing it, for you have not the right.

Robert.— I know those who have worn it genteely and who have betrayed it. But look at me, Alice, you say you love me, and if that is true what matters the name that I give you? Oh! don't turn away your eyes or I will believe that it is not I alone whom you love!

Alice.— I love you, Robert, but no one acts wisely in anger.

Robert (*very intensely, without taking his eyes off* ALICE).— No, no! you are not speaking your true thought! You are not even thinking your true thought! You love — someone who is the son of E. Bailly, but who is not I. You love — E. Bailly, but that is not I! Oh! it is not your fault if you do not love me. ——

Alice.— Robert!

Robert.— No! all that is only too true! Here I can have nothing to myself alone, not even my love. I am going away!

Alice.— You will not go without me!

Robert.— I am going alone! (*Takes a few steps;* ALICE *throws herself on him. At the door in the rear* MOSTIER *appears.*)

Mostier (*trembling, very gravely to* ALICE).— Go upstairs to your room and don't leave it until I or your godmother have authorized you to do so. Stay here, Robert.

Robert (*ready to leave*).— You were saying?

Mostier.— I ask you to stay here.

Robert.— You have taken habits of authority that no longer

permit you to measure your language. You see, sir, I am going to take my hat and leave; I am not in the humor this evening to listen to you.

Mostier.— Once again, Alice!

Alice (*feebly*).— Robert! (ROBERT *remains mute and cold.* ALICE *leaves upon a renewed gesture from* MOSTIER.)

Mostier.— The moment has not come for me to ask you to account for the language you have exchanged with my niece, nor of the tenor of this language. To-day, I must speak to you of other things.

Robert.— Mostier, you listen behind doors, but you never have the courage to listen long enough.

Mostier.— I don't wish to get angry, and I will allow you to insult me as much as you please. The main thing now is that you stay here.

Robert.— No, no. It is necessary to settle this question that you have so stupidly brought up. I wish to leave nothing unachieved behind me. What do you mean — what is it that I have to account to you for? There is a young girl here who is, or has been my friend, but I owe you nothing. As to my heart, you don't, I hope, mean to put hands on that and — I have nothing further to say to you.

Mostier.— So be it! I ask nothing further of you, and the object of our interview is quite a different one. Robert, I know the cause of your great trouble ——

Robert.— Truly?

Mostier.— I know that you want to go away from here because you are prey to a great emotion, and it is in the name of your mother that I have come to place myself in opposition to the cruel madness ——

Robert.— Don't deceive yourself; you know nothing. Go on! Why are you still interfering?

Mostier.— I will not take notice of a single of your wounding words. I tell you that your mother has just confessed ——

Robert.— Confessed! Oh! the ridiculous word! Oh! the

pretentious word! Your manner of choosing your words makes you utter nothing but nonsense. My mother is not a woman who confesses, sir. She is a woman who commands ——

Mostier.— I know that you have to-day experienced one of the most cruel sorrows that could strike a young man of your age and your condition. Robert, I understand that a disappointment, a sorrow such as you must feel, must have profoundly disturbed you. But I assure you, you must reflect deeply ——

Robert.— What does it mean this tale of disappointment and sorrow? But you are mistaken, my good man. The conflict that interests me is beyond you, believe me, and you are expressing what is obvious to you in words at which I could die laughing. I cannot say that I have a light heart to-day; that, for a surety were a lie. But I am not a disappointed man. Do you think, perhaps, that I am in need of consolation and have you come to give it to me? No, no, I need liberty and solitude, and these are things that I cannot find here. Very well! allow me to pass, sir ——

Mostier.— In the name of your mother, I will not allow you to leave to-day!

Robert.— What do I want to do in the name of my mother? My mother must know that there are certain rare occasions on which one cannot permit one's self to be replaced. You are not going to play with me, who am a man, as though I were a baby! Good-bye!

Mostier.— You make one believe that you are not yet a man, Robert. Think of the consequences of a flight this evening, on the eve of such a day, at a moment where the attention of all society is fixed upon you. It is natural that you are ill; it is even admissible that you withdraw yourself because of fatigue from the obligations that the glory of your — your father imposes on us all. But you cannot ostensibly commit an action that by its strangeness, by its unexpectedness, contrary to all that one knows of you and your family, is going to unchain the curiosity of a public only too much inclined to interest itself in the mis-

fortune and the ridicule of great men. Your departure, your absence, on the eve of the day when the glory of E. Bailly is to enter into eternity, all that represents a sort of treason ——

Robert.— What have I to do with the glory of E. Bailly? It is truly in the name of my mother that you have come to deliver to me this little discourse as a sort of opening? Step back, Mostier, so that I can look at you and that I can at the same time measure all the stupidity one can put into defending one's cause. Oh! misery! this the message that my mother sends me at the moment when I want to leave her house!

Mostier.— Robert! Robert! I implore you, don't scream so loud. Think that the house is full of people this evening, that there may be people in the salon and that you might be heard ——

Robert.— Yes, yes, you fear a scandal. Go along! say the word. You fear a scandal and that is why you ask me not to talk so loud, and that is why you fear everything from a curious untractable soul, and that is why you have undertaken to keep me here until what you call my grief and my disappointment have passed away! Oh! I don't know what is keeping me from opening wide these doors, and from crying ——

Mostier (*frightened*).— I beg of you, Robert, Robert!

Robert.— Are you going to leave me alone! Don't dare to touch me, take your hands off me or I will box your ears —— (*Enter* MME. BAILLY, *calm and straight.*)

Mme. Bailly.— Let him go, Mostier.

Mostier (*out of breath*).— Madam, Madam, this is not a rational being, this is a madman, a demented creature.

Mme. Bailly.— Very well, you can retire, my dear friend; and leave us now, my son and myself.

Mostier.— Certainly, Madam, for I can no longer answer for myself. (*Goes.*)

Robert (*beside himself and undone*).— I want to go away from here! Why did you send this man? Why do you come yourself? Why must I encounter before this door all those whom I don't wish to see? And perhaps it was you also who sent Alice? Come,

since you do not answer me, let me say good-bye to you. (MME. BAILLY *remains immovable, without answering.*) Pardon me, it were perhaps more suitable for me, after the discovery that I have made, to throw myself on your breast, tragic and pale, so that we could weep together. It is not thus, however, that I will act, and I feel myself less crushed than delivered ——

Mme. Bailly.— Be quiet!

Robert.— Oh! I do not know whether you can understand me; but why have you constantly crushed me under the glory of this man who is not my father? I have formed the project of being myself hereafter, and I go forth from here to realize this project. Don't look at me with this assurance. You have not raised me to have pity with the weaknesses of others, but simply in the cult of a glory that is all devouring, and which from now on I will thoroughly despise. I would have left secretly, peaceably, if everyone had not opposed my wishes. But you have not a single honest reason for keeping me here — and I am too unhappy after all to hear you speak of affection.

Mme. Bailly.— Be quiet!

Robert.— Oh, no! I will not be quiet. (*Goes to one of the shelves of the bookcase.*) See, there was this in the house that was mine: these three little books that I have written. They are no more mine than the rest. (*Draws out three books and throws them on the floor.*) You know only too well who has dictated them to me. I have said nothing there of what I really want to say, of what I must say. They are but bad copies of all these, of all these —— (*Takes out large volumes and throws them on the ground.*) Oh! I bear you ill-will for not having loved me enough to have spared me, either my whole life or this single minute ——

Mme. Bailly (*moves toward* ROBERT).— Be quiet!

Robert.— But why do you want me to be quiet? Are you, too, afraid of the noise, afraid of scandal? You fear only frankness, you can tell me so to-day. Your house is full of people, I know it; all these people now have their stomachs filled by you and you are afraid that my voice might reach them, for they

are here below, back there, to the right, to the left, all over! You are afraid that I will lose my reason perhaps at the very minute when you have completed your task, and when the glory of your husband has reached its height. (*He is before the statue.*) Poor man! Poor great man! Served by imbeciles and betrayed by the others! Do you want me to pity him then! How can you expect me to respect the memory of a man whom you have deceived? For it is true, you deceived him and you deceive me more than you did him ——

Mme. Bailly (*firmly, in a low voice*),— I did not deceive you, my child. You are what you had to become, what you could become.

Robert.— You have made a shadow of me. Know that I now will have my soul and my — genius!

Mme. Bailly.— And I, I am your mother and I, who know you, I tell you that your destiny is here, and that your soul can no longer be a stranger to this man's.

Robert.— I no longer know this man.

Mme. Bailly.— If that is true, why are you afraid to look at his image?

Robert.— Well, I am looking at it.

Mme. Bailly.— See how you resemble him just the same.

Robert.— Don't say that or I will pluck out my face.

Mme. Bailly.— You resemble him still more by what is beneath your face.

Robert.— You know that I am capable of daring things!

Mme. Bailly.— I know that you will never be able to forget him.

Robert.— Oh! don't defy me! or I will overthrow it — your statue. (*Precipitates himself toward it.*)

Mme. Bailly (*against the statue*).— There are others in the world larger than this!

Robert.— You must not defy me!

Mme. Bailly.— Throw it on me, my child! (ROBERT, *overwhelmed, falls on his knees.* MME. BAILLY *puts her hand on his head.*)

Robert (*groaning*).— What do you want? What do you want of me?

Mme. Bailly.— To pardon all that you have just said and done.

Robert (*sobs furiously*).— Oh! I do not want to weep! I do not want, I do not want to ——

Mme. Bailly (*drawing him to her*).— It is n't enough not to want to, and you have never been so much in need of it. Say no more (*kisses him*), it is enough that you are my son. And yet I could not kiss you before. But now you are as when you were small and you will not want to make me unhappy.

Robert (*with choked voice*).— Tell me that you will let me depart.

Mme. Bailly.— No, no, I will not let you depart. You are my son and you will not go elsewhere. What could I make of you? This man became great, and as I was no longer foolish I wished that you should resemble him and become his son.

Robert.— You should have abandoned me and not have enfolded me in these lies — you should have let me become the man that I would have been all by myself.

Mme. Bailly.— There is no such thing as a destiny missed. Believe me, we become only what we must become. And how could I have abandoned you, Robert, since I — I loved you? I have never seen you cry until this minute, and I am almost happy, because your father (*looks at the statue*) had a large abundant heart and he knew how to cry. And now you resembled him by your tears.

Robert (*conquered*).— Oh! mother!

Mme. Bailly.— What could I do? What can I do for you, but what I have done? Events have been stronger than the wishes of a single man. I have often thought that a day would come where a storm would break out over you and I feared and I waited for this day, thinking that if I did not lose you in the tempest you would be more entirely mine thereafter. And the storm has passed ——

Robert.— Oh! mother!

Mme. Bailly.— Yes, it has passed. And do not say any more that you are going to leave me; you have n't the right. What can you do against this grand figure at a moment, when even we are not going to be able to do anything more for it? It has invaded the world, and the name of E. Bailly is not of those that one can forget; he is already in eternity! I devoted myself to its grandeur with all the more submission, because I had failed to recognize its greatness. Pardon me if I have carried you along in this wish, since you are the only witness of my weakness. Do you not want me to be pardoned? Stay by my side and we will construct a beautiful heroic future; and no one is sacrificed who accepts the sacrifice. I have never begged anyone so long as I have just begged you, my child, and I am ready to go down on my knees if your heart so demands.

Robert.— I demand nothing. What do you want me to do? (MOSTIER, *who has noiselessly entered the room, discreetly gathers up the books to put them back in place.* MOSTIER *thus will watch over the perfect order of the room, then he gradually turns on first all the lamps, then the entire light.*)

Mme. Bailly.— I wish you to do nothing that is contrary to your own wishes.

Robert.— Very well, mother, let my wishes be yours.

Mme. Bailly.— No, your wishes may go hand in hand with mine, but they are not mine. Look at me, my son; don't turn away your eyes, don't put me to the shame of turning away your eyes. Let me arrange your hair and smooth this visage; put a little peace into it. It is well, I recognize you again; I recognize my son, who will not again wish to torment me, and who will let me grow old honorably. (MOSTIER *has gone to open the door at the rear, then a second door opening into a large salon, whose lights are visible.*)

Mostier (*into the ear of* MME. BAILLY).— Madam, Mr. Treuillebert and all these other gentlemen insist on talking to you this evening.

Mme. Bailly.— Robert, will you give me your arm to go and rejoin these gentlemen? (ROBERT *submits with a motion of his head.*) Go on, Mostier, we are following you. (MOSTIER *goes out, and a vague noise of conversation is heard soon after. The gallery is filled with groups that go toward the library.* MME. BAILLY, *standing opposite* ROBERT, *is gazing at him with ardent attention, as though to assure herself of him. Then suddenly resolved she holds out an arm that* ROBERT *takes. Groups of invited guests invade the room. A murmur of conversation and greeting is heard.*)

CURTAIN

POEMS

By F. T. Marinetti—(*Futurista*)

Translated from the Italian by Anne Simon

NOCTURNE

(*In three voices*)

For us, for us only, in the languor
Of that suave sensual night,
The Wind, weary of eternally traveling and deluded
By its rapidity of phantasm,
With languid hands was crushing
In the profundity of space, the sumptuous velvets
Of a great pillow of shadow, diamonded
With sidereal tears!

For us, for us only, the Wind was fainting with sweetness
Upon the hot and anxious breasts
Of the waves of Spring
Like a lover with his body perfumed with spices,
His forehead crowned with poppies,
In the vast weariness of this sensual night! . . .

Side by side we were going,
The pulse of our hearts beating rhythmically
With the sobs and sighs of the waves of our desires . . .
She had the fragile grace and suppleness of flowers
In the sensuous movement of her walk, light and persuasive,
Amidst her azure veil which seemed to give her wings.
And fright took me by the throat,
As my arm girdled
Her lithe and aërial figure,
Which at each step seemed to want to vanish,
With the soft and languid flight of the dove,
Through clouds edged with gold! . . .

She had in her eyes the humid and attentive silence
Of the solitary and rare violets,
Which wrecked sail-boats, driven by the tempest,
Discover miraculously in evenings of tranquility
Behind some promontory,
Along the cursed coast! . . .

I remember the pallor of her face, panting
Under the weight of her glorious head of hair,
And the gold mass which fell down her back
Like a regal crown — scorned! . . .
I remember her kisses impregnated with the Ideal
Which slowly ran from her half-opened lips.
I remember her voice which had the long silken rustling
Of crushed roses. . . .

THE VOICE OF THE WOMAN

My love, do you see far away the thin stars of gold
Which go by with light step on the beach,
Graceful, two by two, in luminous embrace?
They are half nude, and from time to time
Their bodies of pearl taper,
And their rosy flesh, blooming
Out from the soft mother-of-pearl,
Drips with bloody rubies! . . .

MY VOICE

My heart trembles to see them so sweet and fragile,
To see their tender faces clarified by ecstasies
And lost in the vortexes
Of their thick hair of turquoise . . .
My heart trembles to see them swim vagrantly
With the calm indifference of their arms of rays . . .
Do you not know, my love, that I could descend
To the immeasurable abysses of the seas,

Or in the labyrinths of death,
Only to kiss the poor crushed lips
Of a drowned Star?

O dying Stars of my childhood nights!
Still I sob to hear you agonize
Like the pallid shipwrecked,
In the cruel waters of my heart! . . .
Oh! I will never be able to succor them,
Because all my Stars are far away,
Very far away from our human lips! . . .

THE VOICE OF THE WOMAN

Weep no more, my lover, because my heart suffers!
Has your mouth forgotten the intoxication of my kiss . . .
Why dost thou wish to consume in that way thy desire
Upon the chimerical pupils of the Stars? . . .
Close thine eyes that I may kiss thine eyelids! . . .
Close thine eyes that I may linger on them
With my eager lips, deliciously! . . .

MY VOICE

Alas! my love! Thou to me art more sad
And further away when I have thee in my arms,
Than an intangible shipwrecked Star! . . .

THE VOICE OF THE WOMAN

Speak not thus . . . I cannot understand thee . . .
I am all inundated with love, and full of thee! . . .
Look, bold one! Thy tender mouth
Enchains all of me . . .
Let me untie my veil
That thou mayst be able to caress me as thou wishest,
My body which is thine! . . .
Nothing I expect of God, neither of the Stars,

Because thou lovest me! . . . I feel thee . . . I kiss thee,
And my lips go to sleep, dreaming amidst thy lips,
And thy kisses remain forever in my veins. . . .

MY VOICE

Oh! how far away is thy mouth from me still! . . .
I see it open itself a little, like an ardent cloud
Upon the smiling mother-of-pearl of the moon,
And thou seemest to me languidly bent
Over the stern of a chimerical galley which vanishes . . .
Alas! Thou canst do nothing else but strip thy kisses
With thy finger-tips and from far away,
With a pallid gesture which vanishes like a flash! . . .

THE VOICE OF THE SEA

Your burning caresses, your subtle caresses,
Are like the tragic groping of the blind
In the corridors of a labyrinth. . . .
Your kisses always have the insatiable ravenousness
Of two deaf men in an enraged dispute
Shut up in the bottom of a dark prison. . . .
With all your most poignant love
And with all your caresses
You shall forever be lost, buried
In the burning Theban desert of your flesh! . . .
Thou who persisted in unsatisfied kisses
Upon the body of a woman who moans in your arms,
Why do you contemplate with such sadness
The unapproachable mouth of the far-away Stars?

MY VOICE

O Sea, treacherous Sea, that goest, vagabond, far away
Amidst the rays of mist, cursed sorcerer . . .
Knowest thou the joy of tearing off slowly

A heart-rending spasm from this dying flesh,
And to heap up by force of caresses and tumultuous kisses
The burning honey of wantonness
In her open veins? . . .
I await the supreme thrill
Of this sensitive, pliant body which dissolves in delight,
And I want the supreme communion
Of our agony, because her body
Finally thanks me, inebriated with joy
With the cruel slowness of my daggers . . .
Because, finally, the innumerable lips
Of all its wounds may kiss fervidly
The blades which make her weep and die,
Happy and pierced. . . .
If I try to go far from her, suddenly her breasts
Fascinate my look,
Like banks of vaporous mother-of-pearl
Ennobled by the dawn,
Which I saw so many times upon the curve of the horizon
From the prow of the ship . . .
Oh! fascinating banks, burning with the Ideal,
Calm pillows of sand,
Which shall surpass in rapid flight my great migratory dreams! . . .
And this pure brow shines sometimes in the shadow,
Like the illuminated window
In a villa, that seems to us bathed
In a golden felicity . . .
Oh! the sweetness of living
In the intimate warmth of her soul
Under a brow so transparent! . . .

THE VOICE OF THE SEA

However far thou travelest, galloping, flung towards the unknow,
Thou canst never see again the clear, illuminated glass

In the evening of calm felicity! . . .
How far away it is from thy soul,
This beautiful ideal forehead
That thy lips touch so tenderly! . . .
Your kisses shall be always, always illusive,
Because an infinite heaven separates you both! . . .

MY VOICE

Yes! I feel it, I feel it. . . .
Profound abysses immensify themselves between our insatiable hearts! . . .
And I know well, great Sea, that thy turquoise waves,
Like extended arms dripping with precious stones,
Smile far from me, at the other pole,
With eyes full of joy much more hallucinating! . . .
I know that thou runnest with more sweet abandon
And more sparse perfumes, shelling thy rosy pearls
Upon the joyful bank, that one great divine Evening
Bathes all in felicity and immutable azure!
Also I know that other lovers
Extend themselves upon the sands, like us,
Anguished amidst the ardent opening of the stars,
And desperately inconsolable
To feel their mouths so far away
While they exhausted themselves in frenzied kisses! . . .
And I feel that our caresses, our subtle
Caresses, are like
The tragic groping of the blind
In the corridors of a labyrinth! . . .
I feel that our kisses have the mad impetuosity
Of a rabid dialogue between two deaf people
Shut up in the bottom of a black prison! . . .
I feel that we shall be always, always buried
In the burning Theban desert of our flesh . . .
Alone in the midst of the monotonous sound of voices of the tavern

Which rise from the profundity of wantoness. . . .
Alone under Destiny and its great rocks
Of sorrow, suspended over our heads . . .
Alone, under Destiny which crashes ominously
Like a colossal flood-gate! . . .

THE VOICE OF THE SEA

Go then, my child, go then —
Opening wide thy delirious eyes!
Scale the black mountains of the night,
Visit the Stars, one by one . . .
The Stars, cursed golden city
With the battlements of diamonds,
Which you will meet here and there, upon the immense Milky Way! . . .
Thou will'st go in the paths of the sky
From one firmament to another, following from a distance
The luminous track of a comet,
Panting with passion for the One that thou bringest
In thy heart enchained, but intangible,
Adhering to thy lips, but forever far away. . . .
Towards the one that cannot be thine,
In spite of the horrible spasm which rends you! . . .
Thou wilt, thou wilt go as far as the confines of the heaven,
And always, always thou wilt be far away from her,
As when you pressed her passionately in your arms. . . .

THE SONG OF THE LOVE — MENDICANT

I saw thee one evening, long ago, I know not where,
And from that time I waited impatiently . . .
The Night, proud with stars and pale blue perfumes,
Languished her nudity upon me,
Dazzled and convulsed with love! . . .
Desperately, the Night

Opened her constellations
Like palpitating veins of purple and gold,
And all the illuminated voluptuousness of her blood
Filtered through the vast heavens. . . .
I stood, inebriated, waiting under thy lighted windows,
Which were the only flames in space . . .
Immobile, I awaited the supreme marvel
Of thy love, and the ineffable charity of thy glance! . . .

. . . For I am the mendicant hungry for the Ideal,
Who goes along the shores
Imploring kisses and love to nourish his dream!
With rancorous covetousness I desired the jewels of the heavens
To adorn thy queenly nudity . . .
And towards thee I flashed
My savage glance, blood-stained in the shadow,
Like the wasted arms of a dying one!
Everything seemed to become gigantic from the amplitude of my dream!
Bells rattled in the heavens
Like monstrous mouths:
The mouths, perhaps, of Destiny! . . . Bells
Invisible and savage
Seemed to open over me in the silence
Like overturned abysses! . . .

A great wall erected itself before me,
Implacable and proud as desperation!
I waited alone, and a thousand stars,
Restless stars, seemed to dart
From thy windows,
Like a flight of sparks from a furnace of gold! . . .
Thy sweet shadow appeared before the window,
Like a terrorized soul
Which agitates itself in agonized pupils,
And thou for me became a prey

Delirious up there, at the extreme summit
Of the lofty towers of my Dream! . . .
My love (with shining teeth and slanting eyes) grasped
With a great gesture its red swords
And barbarously arose
Towards thy tragic splendor.

For I am the insatiable mendicant who walks
Towards the faint warmth of breasts,
Towards the languor of lips,
The implacable mendicant
Who goes along the shores
Stealing love and kisses
To nourish his Dream! . . .

The gloomy night opened itself at the foot of the wall,
And thou appearedst, suavely blooming
Near me, white and pure in the midst of the shadows,
Trembling like the counsels of the nocturnal breeze! . . .
And everything was annulled around me,
And my dream shattered the world
With just a blow of its wing!

Surely — I thought — in the fabulous gardens
Where my soul exiles itself,
Chimerical peach-trees made
Thy yielding flesh, with the odorous snow
Of their flowers,
Moulded by the sonorous fingers of the wind! . . .
I came to thee, trembling and devout,
As in a temple . . . advancing uncertainly,
As in a damp grotto! . . .
To thee I came, stumbling with each of my timid steps,
Holding my breath
In order not to awaken Sorrow in Passing! . . .
Thy smile disclosed itself
In the serene lake of thy face,

As at the placid falling of a flower . . .
Thy smile opened itself like a fan,
Fluctuating in the heavens, and made pallid
The impetuous face of the Stars in the silence! . . .
I spoke to thee volubly of strange things,
Bathed my soul with a disgorged anguish,
And it seemed to me that I was in the midst
Of the current of a voluptuous river.
Avidly, thou sought my soul
On my lips, like golden honey! . . .

I felt my face become inflamed
Like a burning castle, pillaged by the enemy.
I spoke to thee, and my distorted thoughts
Were reflected, far away and vaporous,
In the tranquil lake of thy face.

Thou desiredst to respond to me, but knew not what to say,
Thou demanded of me my anguish, my fears,
Since thou saw'st me tremble on the threshold
Like a culprit . . .
And I was like the wounded vagabonds
Who go, hoarse,
From gate to gate in search of refuge,
Amidst the raised fists of the implacable crowd! . . .
Thou spoke to me of indifferent things! . . . Thou desiredst to know
Of my past life, my far-away country . . .
Thou desiredst to know my name,
And all that is usual to ask
Of tired travelers who drink at the fountains
In the evening,
When all becomes dark . . .

For I am the mendicant, hungry for the Ideal,
Who comes from nobody knows where,

And goes along the shores . . .
Begging for love and kisses to nourish his Dream! . . .

I followed thee finally to thy house:
We were alone, far away from human multitudes,
Upon the threshold of the Infinite, and I felt
The suavity of twilight upon the sea,
When it shelters itself in a violent gulf
Humid with silence! . . .
We were alone, and my Dream
To thy Dream, sang:

'Oh! Cast languidly down thine eyelids
Upon the erring foolishness of thy glance.
Lower thine eyelids mystically and slowly,
Like the closing of angels' wings . . .
Lower thy rosy eyelids,
In order that the quick flame of thine eyes may creep in,
Like a sigh of the Moon through half-closed blinds.
Lower thine eyelids, and then raise them again,
And I will be able to lose myself in thine eyes,
In thine eyes, forever,
Like the evening on drowsy lakes,
Amidst foliage, placid and dark!

'Be sweet, because my heart
Trembles amidst thy fingers . . . Be sweet! . . .
The Shadow waits to spy on our inebriation, — and Silence
Bends itself and caresses us
Like a tender mother . . . Be sweet! . . .
For the first time I adore
My own soul, and I admire it
Because it loves thee so, like a poor madman!
I adore my lips because they desire thee . . .
My soul is thine, — my soul
Is so far away and azure as to seem a stranger to me.
Before thee my soul humbles itself

Like a dying sheep, and lulled to sleep,
Shivering under thy fragile feet
Like a meadow which becomes silvery
Under the furtive steps of the moon . . .

'Come! . . . My foolish lips will attract
Thy pensive face and thy great sad eyes
Towards the dazzling banks of the Dream . . .
Towards the divine archipelagoes of clouds! . . .
My lips shall be indefatigable
Like the one who tows slowly,
In the rosy freshness of the morning,
The great barques with the solemn sails
Through the scintillating pearliness
Of the far-away sea . . . And I
Shall be no more than thy breath . . . And my blood
In its course shall carry the perfume of thy lips
Like a river in the Spring, inebriated with flowers! . . .

Then thy rosy mouth opened itself.
Fragile, buzzing sea-conch,
Murmuring sinuously
The deliriu n of space and the febrile song of seas!
At the rhythm of thy voice, my heart
Prepared itself to weigh anchor
Towards gulfs exalted by the sun,
And through gleaming islands of gold . . .
Thou told me ingenuously
That never had any one so sung
To the gates of thy heart . . .
That never had any one wept
His dream and his sorrow
On thy breast, perfuming it with tears! . . .

For I am the mendicant who weeps and laments,
The mendicant hungry for the Ideal,
Who comes from nobody knows where, and goes along the shores

Imploring love and kisses
To nourish his Dream! . . .

Thy soothing and velvety gestures
Had the caressing languor
Which oars have upon the brown water in the evening . . .
The liquid and plaintive hour rippled, shivering, —
Our voices fell . . .
But Lust, alas, spied us,
Searching insiduously in the shadow . . .
Lust, crawling, panting, along the walls! . . .

Through the open window, from time to time,
The wind of the night
Breathed on us
Swelling out obscenely
The purple curtains . . .
We saw the lamp of gold faint
Like a sick child amidst filmy laces,
And sweetly die . . .
We saw the chaste flickerings of the lamp,
Kneeling, fading, along the walls
Like praying angels . . .
And our own dreams bent, melancholy
And resigned in the silence . . .
Then my foolish desire appeared to thee
Unsheathed, like a sword
And, groping along thy pure body,
With a wild gesture sought violently
The absorbing warmth of thy mouth.
Madly, in a black intoxication,
Brutally we united our lips,
As if committing a crime!
My lips infuriated themselves
Upon thine, heavily
And our mouths were as bloody
As two lances!

With a sublime gesture,
Thou offeredst to me, deliriously, thy sweet nudity,
Like a flagon to a pilgrim, and
I quenched my immense thirst
Upon thy naked body, until I was delirious,
Seeking there immense Forgetfulness . . .
Trembling, and with dizziness,
My Soul inclines itself
Upon thy radiant beauty,
Like an abyss which makes one dizzy
With its perfumes and hot light! . . .

Thine eyes grew languid, sweetly,
Under thy rosy eyelids,
— Like lamps veiled with filmy silk, —
And, bending low over thine unbound hair,
I took finally thy Soul, all
Thy Soul, religiously,
With my eager, waiting lips,
As one takes the consecrated host.

When I went again on my way
Through the profundity of the livid night,
My heart became black, was thirsty,
And eagerly I drank the black
Water of the fountains . . .
. . . Then I fled, precipitating my steps,
Towards the Unknown . . .
For I am the mendicant,
Who goes along the shores
Imploring love and kisses to nourish his Dream, —
With the fear in his heart that he may sink forever
His bloody feet
In the carnal freshness of the sands, on the shores of the seas,
In some evening
Of mortal fatigue and infinite Void! . . .

AN APPRECIATION OF MARINETTI

By Anne Simon

'I love him who worketh and inventeth to build a house for the Superman.'— Nietzsche.

IT would be impossible to find a more appropriate 'motif' for the appreciation of this unique man, Marinetti, the justly celebrated Futuristic poet of Italy, than these words of his giant-brother, Nietzsche. The above words, with their most literal significance, may be used to describe the aims and ideals of this man, the same man who was called a pornographer by some of his own people.

Marinetti was born in Alexandria, Egypt, of Italian parents. No classic institution of learning existing in that city, he entered the Sorbonne in Paris, and won his diploma of Bachelor of Letters. He then entered the University of Paris, and later the University of Genoa, receiving there his degree of Doctor of Law. As far as we know, he has written entirely in the French language, the works being afterwards translated into Italian. And so, Italian in type and style, it is now clear to us that he became a French writer only through force of circumstances. He seems to have divided his literary activities between Paris and Milan.

We believe a more comprehensive presentation of the poet's broad scheme of life, and his idealistic horizon, may be given by a *résumé* of the circumstances connected with his legal censure for having written the much discussed novel, "Mafarka il Futurista," than by any other approach to the subject.

Modernism must have made a more rapid progress than we realize, for as recently as 1910, Marinetti, even then the leading Futurist of Italy, was tried in Milan for writing this novel, considered by the authorities an indecent book. It sounds like an echo of the early Victorian age, when we read of the Public Minis-

ter's demand to have the trial take place behind closed doors. Happily the opposition to this proposal triumphed. Young Italy, that generous, sympathetic and valorous spirit, encouraged him, as shown by the number of Futurists who came from all parts of Italy to be present at the trial, and to fight, if necessary, for their gifted leader.

Marinetti defended himself most ably, and with logic, eloquence and suavity. During the trial he revealed many things hitherto unknown about himself. He is a rich man, through inheritance, and it is typical of him that he has used much of his wealth to advance his audacious (so considered) projects, one of his aims being to re-create and renew the artistic movement in Italy. He publishes in Milan, a magazine called 'Poesia,' to which he has given eight years of indefatigable labor, and an unselfish expenditure of money, using this magazine to spread the Futuristic creed, which was really born in the Paris '*Figaro*.' He is surrounded by a group of young poets and painters, who literally adore him. Like Paul Fort to-day in France, he takes great pleasure in protecting and encouraging the young writer, in protecting him from the avarice and myopic vision of editors and publishers. We should be intensely grateful to these large-hearted men who are so patient with the younger artists. And here we would like to add, that it was this same spirit of sweet patience and sincere interest, which caused Paul Fort to discover Mæterlinck. He not only advanced him, but he kept him before the literary world of Paris, afterward saying, with a humility both unusual and touching, 'I owe more to Mæterlinck than he owes to me.'

In Italy and France they love art. This explains, with a slight modification of the Nietzschean nomenclature, the willingness to seek and reseek, and to re-value and constantly re-value.

We will quote some fragmentary sentences spoken by Marinetti at his trial, which are very indicative of the man:

'Our movement is fatal. The dying await our coming. . . . I shall never weary. . . . Business opportunism, contempt

for youth, moral and physical cowardice, these are the things we combat. You have called me a pornographer! These are the things I have combatted in Italy!'

But before allowing ourselves to make any comments on Futurism, we will analyze briefly Marinetti's novel, 'Mafarka.'

Without doubt, some of the images and descriptions in this book would seem grossly revolting to us. His daring disregard of conventional speech cannot be judged by our standards; in Italy there is much greater freedom. In 'Mafarka' is described most impressively the ascent of an African hero, a man of temerity and cunning, who after exhibiting an unbridled desire to live, the desire for victory in battle, who after having had all sorts of experiences and adventures, suddenly raised himself from this vainglorious military heroism to philosophic and artistic heroism. In this novel he describes the glorious evolution of life, life which was first vegetal, then animal and then human, and which should finally manifest itself in a miraculous being, winged and immortal. With great beauty of idealism, he brings to man unbounded hope for his ultimate physical and spiritual perfection. He wants to liberate man from lust, from that lust which slowly consumes and devours. He wants to assure man of his speedy liberation from sleep, fatigue and death.

And this is the man they call a pornographer!

The prevailing idea in this book is of Nietzschean origin, that man shall surpass himself. It is more a poem than a novel, in which is portrayed the approaching liberty of man through spiritual conquest. It is full of contrasts between brutal instinct and the development of the spiritual nature. It is full of rich and strange images — images of love and of victory — of desire for lust and for chastity — of rebellion and of sacrifice. It is both tragic and lyric, and compels us to realize the author's clairvoyant and exalted vision. Marinetti loved 'Mafarka' more than any of his other books, because he used it to convey his great Futuristic dream. He considered it an African poem, illuminated by unbounded fantasy. And it is a poem, utterly incomprehensible

though to the majority of intelligences, so disgracefully unfamiliar with poetry.

In order to be true to African customs and life he found it necessary to lay a certain stress on things regarded as indecent to civilized eyes; for he says that 'Africa may be symbolized in three words: heat, filth and lust.' He did not write of the Africa of Pierre Loti, nor did he try to prettily adjust it for the academic and private salons of Paris. In the one chapter of 'Marfarka' which really led to its incrimination, his motive was ethical. He wanted to suggest that even out of the seething cauldron of lust and brutality, a finer being might emerge. He wanted to prove that man can conquer his carnal instincts. He used the incidents in this chapter to show his violent disgust of man's brutalities and brutishness. It is easy for anyone of even fairly broad vision to see his purpose, through the very crudeness of the vocabulary, through his exactness of vulgar detail. It gives his hero the opportunity to denounce a race that could be so frequently guilty of the crime stated there. One should rather be moved by the artistic power of the representation of that orgy. In defending his book at the trial, Marinetti said: 'I have tried to show, according to the law of contrast, the ascent of the human spirit when freed from the tyranny of love and the obsession of woman; how it detaches itself finally from earth and opens its great wings, which lay folded and asleep in the flesh of man.'— Can man have a finer motive than this?

It is difficult to understand why there should have been legal prosecution for the writing of this book. Italy accepted the "Aphrodite' of Pierre Louys, which was translated into Italian and published in Italy. 'Mafarka' was also written in French, translated into Italian, and we think published by the same firm. And the writings of Boccaccio, are they not recognized as classics in Italy? And then, there is the autobiography of Benvenuto Cellini that remained uncondemned. Capuana, professor of the University of Catania, who defended Marinetti in a long and profound treatise, which shall always remain a precious document

in Italian literature, recalled to the audience an incident connected with San Giroloma, one of the earliest translators of the Bible, who even while in the act of translating this holy book, kept under his pillow the comedies of Aristophanes! He, apparently, was not scandalized by the indecent boldness of this great Athenian. We like to think of some other great men who met the same fate as Marinetti: Baudelaire, Flaubert and Swinburne, for example. The critics who most violently censured Marinetti are those who criticize from the standpoint of popular morality. Our entire scale of moral values should be subjected to criticism first. Some of his critics hate him, and why? Because he disturbs them — that is the unforgivable crime with certain insular mentalities.

Marinetti is an artist, and not a man of sensual vision. In his art, he persistently deals in contrasts, considering it legitimate to use any details which will make the contrasts more prominent. There is a vast difference between a book that incites a person to sensuality, and a book just as repulsive in plot and description, but in which the writer makes evident the repulsion in his heart. A few critics suggested that he at least might have eliminated certain harsh, crude, ugly words, or that he might have used the mask a little more freely. We answer that by saying, when a great writer is in the anguish of creation, he cannot be anything but sincere, and is far removed from word-coquetry.

With Marinetti, the thought is often so colossal, that language can hardly sustain it, and the imagery so subtle, that one feels it cannot be translated into language. He is not polished in his work, but we cannot fail to admire the truly extraordinary force of his creation.

He thinks one of the principles of the highest type of literature is to consider the images not as accessories or decoration, but as really essential elements of expression — unconscious instruments to fix the elusive truth, and to indicate the indefinite and the undefinable.

Marinetti's first epic poem was called '*La Conquête des*

Étoiles,' which was an enormous oceanic vision, in which he depicted the battle between the tempestuous waves, and the inaccessible stars. (The motto of the Futurists might well be, 'The Conquest of the Stars.') In this poem there are no erotic or sentimental details. Woman is excluded, as she is also in his satiric tragedy, '*Re Baldoria*.' As the curtain rises in this last-named play, the women are seen going away, indignant at the low and vulgar sensuality of man, and with an ultra-idealistic protest they leave the men to their destiny. We only mention this as another point in his defense. This work was written in 1910, and received high commendation in France. Many critics who were strongly opposed to Futurism admired this work, and the celebrated critic, Borgese, considered it full of 'the stupendous force of Aristophean conception, and a most subtle phantasmagoria, in which the imaginative fecundity of the poet draws us with him.

Marinetti was the founder of Futurism in Italy. Futurism, like the Nietzschean philosophy, acknowledges no laws, no codes, no magistrates, no police, no 'moral eunuchs,' as Marinetti aptly calls them. It is a scourge for mental cowards. It is a bomb to blow up the Past. Its followers do not believe in building on the ruins of that Past. In the words of its great interpreter, 'we want the work of art to be burned with the corpse of its creator. That which survives Genius, does it not perhaps poison living Genius by a sort of nostalgia?' He believes that it is right to sacrifice the Past and Tradition in order to ensure the growth of a stronger work. The Futurists seek to spread the contagion of courage, and are magnificent in their fearlessness. One must admire this heroism. In their souls is a glorious passion for Art. With indifference to the Past comes an equal indifference to their own immortality. (Marinetti calls this immortality 'a dream of usurious souls, just as contemptible as the Christian idea of Paradise!') It matters not if their traces are effaced by those who follow. To them, the absorbing thought is the ascent to the heights, with the glowing treasure in their uplifted hands, which they have wrested from the depths. Marinetti believes that no

more than talent will spring from building on the Past, and that genius must destroy before it starts to rebuild.

His art is barbaric, impulsive and opulent. His ideal, like that of Novalis, is the search for the transcendental self. The beautiful tribute paid by Swinburne to the Orientalist, Burton, might equally well be said of Marinetti:

> 'A soul whose eyes were keener than the sun.
> A soul whose wings were wider than the world.'

FROM THE MOUNTAIN TOP

By Alvilde Prydz

Translated from the Norwegian by Hester Coddington

Fair is the earth!

I see light streaming forth — I see joy ascending. . . . I hear it as it seethes and foams, in jubilant exultation. . . .

Fair is the earth!

No, terrible is the earth!

I see gloom — and sorrow and anguish above the storm-black wave. . . . I see the lowest depths of suffering. I hear the wail of distress as it rises, and grief lamenting. . . . I see souls going down into night and death!

Terrible is the earth!

Far out over the earth I look!

I see that men are not brothers . . . that love is not the lord of life — it is not the light along the way!

I see that man has not found the light — that radiant light so full of warmth and glorious strength, which streams out into the great desolation and points the way. . . . He has not yet found it. All is cold and dark about him.

Ah, the earth is full of woe!

But no, the earth is fair!

I see light streaming forth — I see joy ascending . . . I hear it as it seethes and foams, in jubilant exultation! I hear the *all-good* coming — silent, courageous — powerful, victorious. . . .

Lord God, the earth is fair!

THE PRISON IN SPRING

Translated from the French of Georges Duhamel

By Sasha Best

The prison of the valley is a beautiful prison,
The prison in the valley where the winter wheat trembles.

Its towers are bare without Clematis or ivy,
It is girt round by fosses fill'd with water waste and clear.

It has walls without visage and smoke on its tops,
A city that would live for itself alone.

All around breathes the valley and does a great work
And feels happiness tremble between its swelling slopes.

It perceives the horizon across the shoots of the vineyards,
Its wild budding wheat recalls the cheeks of a youth.

This valley it is marked by two living veins
Of whom it ignores both destiny and birth.

One a green stream, deep and angry in its time
That the stubborn willows cannot always overcome;

The other the road that quickly transports
All the things we see yet hardly know.

With care for the hamlets that cling to its breasts,
The valley understands but its duty, its attire,

And holds without effort in the midst of its verdure
The prison stranded there like a great silent ark.

The valley knows naught, even when darkness reigns,
Of the thousand brooding prisoners who are gnawing their fists.

TO BE, OR NOT TO BE

By Charles M. Street

IN a former article,* the speech of 'To be, or not to be' was analyzed in the light of the 'lawful espials' and the presence of Ophelia. The recent appearance of Dr. Arnold's scholarly study,† moves us to suggest some points not sufficiently emphasized in our article, and not considered at all in Dr. Arnold's fascinating work.

Dr. Arnold divides the overheard soliloquy into two groups: (1) the unconscious entrance. (2) the conscious entrance. In neither of these groups has he mentioned the speech in question. He devotes considerable space to an analysis of the speech in other parts of his book and mentions Joseph Hunter's objection to its setting in the second quarto being inferior to 'its living place and principle of continuity in the play' in the original version. And while it is evident that he does not consider 'Hamlet's Soliloquy' as overheard, his study should have considered the playwright's intention in setting the meditations within sight of Hamlet's suspicious and superstitious enemy. Whether Shakespeare's technique suffered or triumphed here, calls for comment more than any eavesdropping situation in any of the plays. And if any reliability can be accorded the version of the scene that is Hunter's preference, and Dr. Arnold seems to give it credence, attention should be called to the fact that in that version Corambis (Polonius) speaks *after* Hamlet enters, and before the soliloquy is started. As Hamlet enters, Corambis sights him, and asks the Queen to retire, which she does. Corambis then turns to Ophelia and hands her a book, with direction to 'walk aloose.' He tells her that 'the king shall be unseen.' Hamlet then commences his soliloquy, 'pouring

*Poet Lore, Volume 20, page 468.

†'The Soliloquies of Shakespeare,' by Morris LeRoy Arnold, Ph.D. (*Columbian Press*, N. Y., 1911.)

upon a book.' How, with this situation, could Shakespeare, when he constructed his play out of this old one, escape Hamlet's consciousness of being watched? Especially would this be so in our poet's creating of two scenes out of this one, in the new version, in one of which he has Hamlet enter 'pouring upon a book,' and being approached by Polonius, *the king an eavesdropper*, the 'Asides' of Polonius being addressed to the king; and in the other, Hamlet entering and speaking the 'soliloquy' without mention of a book, while 'walk aloose' is changed to 'walk you *here*,' as a command to Ophelia by her obtuse, precise father, the dramatic idea of approaching Hamlet with regard to the subject of Ophelia being followed by one of attracting him by having her cross his path. And while, in the new version, no word is uttered after Hamlet appears, the idea that Hamlet is accustomed to walk where he actually does enter 'pouring upon a book,' in the old version, is in that part of the scene that is put forward into the following act, in the new version, changed to the idea of him being covertly 'sent for' to appear where the 'soliloquy' is delivered. All of this points to the idea that while the creator of the scene in the old version may not have intended Hamlet to be conscious of being watched, and may not have noticed that he had constructed the scene so crudely, the situation suggests this consciousness without Hamlet's own words carrying forward the idea; Shakespeare noticed and felt this, and the idea appealed to him and he reconstructed the two new scenes for the developing and subtilizing of this consciousness, and he also reconstructed the 'soliloquy' with Claudius in his mind, and Hunter's objection to the advancing of the 'soliloquy' into the heart of the court-play development is thus made a highly important reason in favor of such advancement. We must remember that Shakespeare was thoroughly familiar with the old play, as it is known his company played it as early as 1594 — nearly a decade before Shakespeare's quarto appeared.

Here are six points that perhaps we did not make clear and distinct in our other article, and which we would like to see Dr.

Arnold, or some one else equally well qualified, answer, but answer only in the interest of a view that harmonizes all the dramatic elements in the scene and in the characters without undue respect to any array of critics or stage tradition howsoever authoritative, or disrespect to any view howsoever humble:

First — Shakespeare has given us evidence that fully advises the audience of Hamlet's knowledge of the espials *before he enters*. He has also given us lines that focus the attention of the audience on the sensitive condition of Claudius at the instant Hamlet appears. We will state this evidence later.

Second — The soliloquy is superstitious. If there is a hereafter that carries forward the consciousness of this life, only the superstitious dread it.

Third — Wonderful as are the cadences in the speech, harmonizing with the idea of a soliloquy, the sentiment is false to our idea of Hamlet. He is not superstitious. We will state abundant evidence by word and deed that he neither desired to die after his experience with his father's spirit, but also that he had no dread of 'the undiscover'd country.' And even with his father's spirit, he was affected intellectually, not superstitiously. The majestic sense of aroused intellect contained in the lines given Hamlet upon his first vision of the Ghost are lost in the theatrical and superstitious effect given the scene on the stage.

Fourth — Claudius is superstitious. The prayer scene gives abundant evidence of his attitude toward the dreams that come in the sleep of death.

Fifth — Claudius is suspicious and the soliloquy is specially adapted to aggravate his suspicions and to produce in the King a state of being 'dreadfully attended' by Hamlet and 'the undiscover'd country' in connection with his own consciousness of the crime.

Sixth — The dramatic elements in eavesdropping situations were never slighted by Shakespeare. These situations appear in twenty-three of the plays.

Let us consider briefly each of these points, most of our other article having been devoted to the colloquy with Ophelia:

First — What is the evidence of Hamlet's knowledge of

the espials *before he enters?* Of course, if he has n't this knowledge, then we are compelled to ask how could the 'soliloquy' be intended for Claudius? But if there is evidence that he did have this knowledge, then we are equally compelled to take a look at the 'soliloquy' in the light of Hamlet's consciousness that he is being watched and overheard. There are four points of evidence to be considered in this connection: (*a*) There is the line, 'For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither.' 'Closely' means 'secretly, privately, covertly.' It appears in 'Love's Labour's Lost,' Act IV, scene iii, line 137; 'Richard III,' Act III, scene i, line 159; 'Romeo and Juliet,' Act V, scene iii, line 255; and in 'Hamlet,' Act III, scene i, line 29. The line thus reads, 'For we have covertly sent for Hamlet hither.' Its import must be construed in connection with the words in the preceding scene, 'dreadfully attended' and 'sent for.' Hamlet tells his schoolfellows that he is 'most dreadfully attended,' and this suggests the inquiry, 'Were you not sent for?' And so in the line, 'For we have closely sent for Hamlet hither,' the import is clear that this advises the audience that Hamlet is again conscious of being 'most dreadfully attended,' and is thus on the alert for espials when he answers the summons. (*b*) This effect is heightened by the fact that the day before he has surprised out of his schoolfellows their agency to the king. When he receives the 'covert' summons, would he not instantly be reminded of his experience of the day before, and of days before that? (*c*) And then again, is he to be deceived by the guileless Ophelia under unnatural conditions *after* he has just outwitted two astute young men under natural conditions? Was it not natural that his school fellows should visit him in his bereavement? Was not the excuse given them by the king an honorable one from their view-point? Did they suspect crime? On the other hand, was it natural for the obedient Ophelia to walk across Hamlet's path with his 'remembrances' in her hands after she had been forbidden to see him, pretending to read on a book? Could the pretense in *her* appear natural? And when her father commands her to 'walk

you *here*,' would not 'here' be the precise point where Hamlet enters? Would not the precise, obtuse court chamberlain have her walk at a point where *he* figures Hamlet cannot miss stumbling into her the instant he enters? And, of course, Hamlet does see her the instant he comes in sight of the place, sees her before any of them see him. His failure to notice her, and her inability to address him, weakens her as the soliloquy progresses, and at its conclusion she has sunk to her knees in prayer, in which attitude she is when he impressively invokes, *not asks*, that she remember his sins in her 'orisons.' (*d*) Finally, as evidence showing that Hamlet was not only conscious of the presence of espials before he enters to deliver the 'soliloquy,' but that our poet has prepared the king to respond to just such torment in double meanings, subtle hints and picturesque superstitions, all reinforced by rhythmic eloquence, as are contained in the 'soliloquy,' we have the 'aside' of Claudius expressing the effect of a remark of Polonius as his last utterance before Hamlet commences his 'To be, or not to be.' Such a contrast is a Shakespeare characteristic quite as much as the appeal, the delicacy, the spirit, the charm and the *fidelity* contained in all Shakespeare eaves-dropping situations. Polonius has commented on the pious hypocrisy in having Ophelia simulate religious devotion. It has been suggested, on the strength of what Polonius here says, and Ophelia does, that this scene should be set in a chapel, as much on Ophelia's account as an *excuse* for her being where Hamlet is requested to appear, as on account of the 'soliloquy' itself, and it seems to me that the suggestion is not only worthy of consideration, that a chapel-setting would not only reconcile each character to the scene more harmoniously, and give increased impressiveness to the 'soliloquy,' but the view of the 'soliloquy' here suggested would be strengthened, and the discords that Robert Russell Benedict ('The Mystery of Hamlet, Prince of Denmark,' Lippincott, 1909) mentions would turn into arguments in favor of the speech as intended to involve the king.

Second — The 'soliloquy' is superstitious. This is self-evident.

Third — It is false to Hamlet. As we have suggested, the *key-note* to Hamlet's character is a responsiveness to the intellectual and spiritual element in dramatic situations. The 'gloomy temperament,' 'the sense of being haunted,' that William Winter so unqualifiedly approved in Edwin Booth's Hamlet, and the picturesque study that E. H. Sothern has developed, do not express that which Forbes Robertson comes nearest reflecting, the aroused intellect free from any taint of morbidness when brought into contact with some great phenomena like the appearance of the Ghost or the rising of the king in the court scene. In the former, the aroused majestic sense is spoiled if Horatio lays a detaining hand on Hamlet when the latter asks, 'Why, what should be the fear?' This inquiry is addressed more to the phenomena and to himself than to Horatio, and the latter should be, is, awed by it. Hamlet feels the immortality of his own soul here in a sense too powerful for words. It is 'immortal as itself.' He decides no harm can come to him by entering 'the undiscover'd country.' To sustain the dignity of the scene and avoid the theatrical that so often spoils it on the stage, the superstitious rejoinder of Horatio should be in a weak voice, and when a detaining hand is finally put upon Hamlet, it should be weak. There should be as much awe of Hamlet here as of the unknown, otherwise the dignity of the scene is lost and the Ghost is unreal. And this intellectual *awakening* again appears in the court scene when the king rises. Hamlet should not rush at the king. The climax of self-suffering has been reached and he should remain riveted to his seat by the sight of a suffering more intense than anything contained in a physical revenge. The thought of a physical revenge has been intellectualized out of Hamlet by the sight of the phenomena. The instinct for revenge has been met and [illegible]. This explains why the revenge is delayed. Only in the massive moods does he desire to kill, except in the final scene where the [illegible] is purely physical. 'The gloomy temperament' is a gross misnomer in Hamlet. While he has 'that within which passeth show,' he also carries an 'antic disposition.' He even

appears 'mad.' And yet when he says, 'I have of late — but wherefore I know not — lost all my mirth, foregone all custom of exercise,' he is having fun with the boys he is addressing, for we know he has been 'in continual practice' with the foils since Laertes 'went into France.' And as to being haunted by the Ghost, he doubts it, but *is* haunted by the *king* and his court chamberlain. And above all, there's no dread. He took voyage to England, knowing its purpose before he started. He returned to Denmark, alone, notwithstanding young Fortinbras was his friend, became his choice for the succession to the throne of Denmark. He accepted the challenge for the duel with 'a kind of gain-giving as would perhaps trouble a woman.' And when Horatio wanted to give heed to the feeling, and at least postpone the match, Hamlet gave expression to this comprehensive and sublime statement of his attitude toward the 'something after death':

> Not a whit; we defy augury; there is special providence in the fall of a sparrow. If it be now, 'tis not to come; if it be not to come, it will be now; if it be not now, yet it will come: the readiness is all; since no man has aught of what he leaves, what is't to leave betimes? Let be.'

And when Laertes informs him that he has been slain by the treachery of the king and that there is 'not half an hour of life' in him, he first disposes of the king; he then receives the apologies of Laertes; then he makes a request of Horatio to report him and his 'cause aright to the unsatisfied'; then he prevents Horatio from becoming a suicide, and with his latest breath, gives his dying voice to young Fortinbras as the successor to the throne of Denmark, a happy thought of Shakespeare's when it is remembered that young Fortinbras' father had been slain by Hamlet's father. 'The rest is silence.' Is there any dread of the 'undiscover'd country' in all of this?

Fourth — But Claudius is superstitious. He tries to pray, and cannot, because he sees glimpses of himself in 'the undiscover'd country.' He feels there is a punishment awaiting him in the other world. A mortal judge may be bribed, or improperly

influenced, in Shakespeare's day as in ours. But Claudius fears the Eternal Judge, according to this extract from his own soliloquy:

> In the corrupted currents of this world
> Offense's gilded hand may shove by justice,
> And oft 'tis seen the wicked prize itself
> Buys out the law: but 'tis not so above;
> There is no shuffling, there the action lies
> In his true nature, and we ourselves compelled
> Even to the teeth and forehead of our faults
> To give in evidence.

There is no danger of him committing suicide. Nor does he think Hamlet means suicide when he refers to taking 'arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing, end them.' The 'bare bodkin' creates a doubt, but it is a painful doubt. It is the very ebb and flow of doubt and dread, hope and fear, that gives dramatic exquisiteness to this psychological study. It is a striking illustration of Shakespeare's superb intuitions of the secret action of hopes and fears played upon by the thought-suggestions and double meanings conveyed by mere words. And to appreciate the fascination of the study in the mind of one of the 'lawful espials,' we have only to con the soliloquy in the light of Claudius' intense clinging to his earthly possessions as evidenced in his fear of the dreams that come in the sleep of death that took him to his knees in the fruitless effort to pray:

> 'But O, what form of prayer
> Can serve my turn? "Forgive me my foul murder?"
> That cannot be, since I am still possess'd
> Of those effects for which I did the murder,
> My crown, mine own ambition and my queen.
> May one be pardoned and retain the offense?'

Fifth — Hamlet's soliloquy contains subtle hints peculiarly meaningful to the suspicious mind of Claudius. Claudius does not suspect Hamlet knows he is present till Hamlet refers to 'outrageous fortune.' The espials should at all times be visible to the audience in order that the effect of the 'soliloquy' may be observed by the expression in their respective faces. Their being

visible also helps the audience to keep them in mind in considering the meaning of the 'soliloquy.'

The reference to 'outrageous fortune' is the first intimation in the play Hamlet has given Claudius, or any of his agents, as to his fortune. This, followed by the considering taking 'arms against a sea of troubles, and by opposing, end them,' cannot but suggest to the suspicious mind of Claudius that his own life is in jeopardy. Yet he cannot interrupt, he cannot speak, he is compelled to remain where he is and listen as he never listened before.

There is something soothing in the four lines that follow this seemingly veiled threat to end the life of the king, almost a requiem for the dead, the heart-ache and all shocks ended, 'a consummation devoutly to be wish'd.'

Hamlet then goes back to the beginning of this train of thought and following the 'sleep,' the thought contemplates what follows death instead of what death leaves behind. It is the dread of dreams following death that 'makes calamity of so long life.' In the soliloquy in the first quarto, 'the happy smile, the accursed damn'd.' In the new version only the disagreeable is suggested and it is so subtly done, Claudius cannot say that only the 'accursed' are meant. And what sly digs, what impressive insinuations, what rich cadence are in the lines:

> To die, to sleep;
> To sleep: perchance to dream: ay, there's the rub;
> For in that sleep of death what dreams may come,
> When we have shuffled off this mortal coil,
> Must give us pause: there's the respect
> That makes calamity of so long life;
> For who would bear the whips and scorns of time,
> The oppressor's wrong,

'The oppressor's wrong'! Does the king picture in his own mind the wrong as well as the oppressor that he thinks is in Hamlet's mind,— a picture of himself in the orchard,— Hamlet's father asleep,— the murder! — Hamlet an unseen witness?

'The proud man's contumely.' Is this a narcotic? Does this unman the king? 'The pangs of disprized love' is the court chamberlain's balm. 'The law's delay'! Has Hamlet any legal

evidence or human proof of the crime? Does the king know his evidence? Does the king know that Hamlet has nothing to do with 'the law's delay' — no cause for complaint against it even in his thought? The king is here compelled to think that Hamlet has just cause for complaint, that he has a legal case for the court to act upon.

> The insolence of office, and the spurns
> That patient merit of the unworthy takes,
> When he himself might his quietus make
> With a bare bodkin?

Who would bear any of these 'calamities' when he might end his life with a hatpin or short dagger, or whatever a 'bodkin' is? This is an unexpected conclusion of the train of thought — to the king — although a logical one. The king has n't been thinking of the logic of the talk, and perhaps discovers that he has been thinking of suicide himself as a last resort, in the event the knowledge and subtle tactics of the prince prove too much for him. Perhaps when Hamlet mentions the 'quietus' he has anticipated a thought already in the king's purpose.

But Hamlet goes back and begins over again, ignoring the thought of a soothing 'quietus' afforded by a neat suicide, and reminds us again of the terrible possibility of hell,— the hell of the supersititous mind,— the hell where the cursed are damned, in the minds of superstitious guilt. Here are the exact words:

> Who would fardels bear,
> To grunt and sweat under a weary life,
> But that the dread of something after death,
> The undiscover'd country from whose bourn
> No traveler returns, puzzles the will,
> And makes us rather bear those ills we have,
> Than fly to others that we know not of?

Does this not banish the thought of suicide from the king's mind? His conscience makes a coward of him and his resolution is 'sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.' Werder here interprets 'conscience' as 'pure reflection.' To my mind, it is the king's own word in the line, 'How smart a lash that speech

doth give my conscience!' He is too weak to repeat it here. It is no wonder that the king's enterprise loses the name of action. He is 'like a man to double-business bound,' as he himself confesses in the soliloquy in the prayer scene.

Sixth — Let us consider briefly Shakespeare's characteristic interest in eaves-dropping situations and the violence that the speech does, considered as a soliloquy, to this characteristic. While eaves-dropping occurs in twenty-three of the plays, in ten of them the plot turns on such situations. These plays are as follows: 'Love's Labour's Lost,' 'Much Ado About Nothing,' 'Midsummer Night's Dream,' 'Romeo and Juliet,' 'Measure for Measure,' 'All's Well That Ends Well' (turns upon knowledge conveyed to the Countess that Helena has in soliloquy spoken of her love for Bertram), 'Cymbeline,' 'Troilus and Cressida,' 'The Tempest' and 'Hamlet.'

In five of the plays, one or more of the characters speak for the benefit of the eaves-dropper: 'Much Ado About Nothing' (Act II, scene iii; Act III, scene i); 'Taming of the Shrew' (Act IV, scene ii); 'Two Gentleman of Verona' (Act IV, scene ii); 'Othello' (Act IV, scene i); and 'Hamlet' (Act II, scene ii, and Act III, scene i).

Soliloquies are overheard in eight of the plays: 'Love's Labour's Lost' (Act IV, scene iii); 'Twelfth Night' (Act II, scene v); 'King Henry IV,' Part I (Act II, scene ii; Act V, scene iv); 'King Henry VI,' Part III (Act II, scene v; Act III, scene i); 'Romeo and Juliet' (Act II, scene ii); 'Antony and Cleopatra' (Act IV, scene ix); 'All's Well That Ends Well' (Act I, scene iii); and 'Hamlet' (Act III, scene i).

In 'A Winter's Tale,' Autolycus soliloquizes at length in the presence of others, and does n't discover the fact till the soliloquy is concluded, and then exclaims, 'If they have overheard me now,— why, hanging.' But these others have been so absorbed in their own conference that they have neither seen nor heard Autolycus.

In the fourth scene of the fourth act of 'Hamlet,' the prince

asks his school-fellows to go a little ahead in order that he can be alone. He desires to soliloquize. Were no other illustration possible, this is sufficient to show Shakespeare's consciousness of a soliloquy being spoken aloud, and that if the soliloquy is not dramatically suitable to be overheard and observed, no one should be within earshot unless, as in the case of Perdita, Florizel and Camillo, they are so absorbed with themselves they can neither see nor hear anything going on around them. This latter situation is more dramatic because the soliloquy is there, just as 'To be, or not to be' intensifies the situation of Claudius.

In the light of all these studies, can we say our playwright was not conscious of the king's presence,— the presence of Hamlet's deadliest enemy,— a suspicious, superstitious mind,— and that our peerless dramatic poet put the soliloquy in sight of Claudius unmindful of what he was doing? To my mind, 'with all its heterogeneousness, the deeper and more synthetic the apprehension of it the surer the sense that it is not careless, but meant.' To my mind, Hamlet in the Ophelia colloquy in this scene, was affected by Ophelia, and the effect, indulged, threatened madness. To my mind, Ophelia and Polonius saw Hamlet clearer in this respect than did Claudius. To my mind, the celebrated monologue is an 'antic disposition' intended to worry the king, while the king spoke real soliloquy in the presence of Polonius when he exclaimed:

> Love! his affections do not that way tend;
> Nor what he spake, though it lack'd form a little,
> Was not like madness. There's something in his soul
> O'er which his melancholy sits on board,
> And I do doubt the hatch and the disclose
> Will be some danger, which for to prevent
> I have in quick determination
> Thus set it down: he shall with speed to England
> For the demand of our neglected tribute.

A LEGEND OF SAINT NICHOLAS*

By Beulah Marie Dix

A story of the children's good Saint, for children of all ages, to be enacted upon a bare platform, without drop-curtain or scenery, after the manner of the Ben Greet Company in "Everyman."

The People are as follows:

Prologus.
Saint Nicholas.
Azzo, *a mighty lord.*
Pia, *his lady.*
Niccolo (Cola) *their son.*
Mico, *his playfellow.*
The Sultan.
Zoe, *his young daughter.*
Ilbrahim, Arbaces, Mustapha } *Paynims.*
Two Attendants.

(*Upon the bare stage* Prologus *enters. He is clad in a scholar's long robe of black, with a black cap, and a scroll in his hand. He bows low and speaks to the audience.*)

Prologus.— Now lithe and listen, gentles all, to me,
As many as here in presence seated be.
A saintly legend from the Long Ago,
When Paynims fierce held all the coasts in woe,
When ways were rough, and Death stalked ever near,
Shall be set forth this hour, to do you cheer.
Since this our narrow stage scant room doth lend,

* 'A Legend of Saint Nicholas' was produced for the first time at the Toy Theatre, Boston, December 16, 1912. Acting rights, and rights of translation, reserved to the author.

All lapses must your nimble wit amend.
First, to our aid, we pray you here behold
The formal greensward of an orchard old
That 'longeth to good Lord Azzo's fair domain.
Believe that next you look upon the main
In a wild spot. Then are you rapt away
Unto the East, where holdeth cruel sway
The haughty Sultan. Last, your footsteps wend
To Azzo's palace, where the tale shall end.
So is said out, in sooth, my simple say.
Now find ye fitter matter in our play.
Come, all ye parents, that have children dear,
Unto the woes of a young child give ear!
Come, all ye lads, and pretty maidens, too,
List to the fortunes of a child like you!

(PROLOGUS *goes out.*)

(*Two* ATTENDANTS *in long, belted robes, with broad collars, like Bluecoat boys, enter with a little garden bench, which they set upon the stage and go out. Enter* AZZO. *He wears a belted robe, with slip shoes, and a girdle to which is hung a straight, cross-hilted sword.*)

Azzo.— Azzo am I, the lord of this fair land.
In youth I smote the Paynim, sword in hand,
But in mine age at home in peace I bide.
O'er forest, farm and fief my sway is wide.
But out and alas! in this chief thing I'm poor.
One only child have I, to heir my store.
In this one son is all my hope and joy,
Yet he, alas! proves but a knavish boy.
But soft, look yonder! Lo, who cometh here?

(*Enter* PIA *in a trailing robe.*)

Welcome, my most sweet wife and lady dear!

Pia.— My honored lord, may fair days still be thine!

Azzo.— What is amiss with thee, good lady mine?

Pia.— Fair husband, at thy hand I crave a boon.

Azzo.— Name it, good lady! It is granted soon.
Pia.— Thy pardon, then, for an unlucky wight,
Who durst not show himself within thy sight.
Azzo.— Aye, by my truth, it is my rascal son!
What mischief now hath our wild Cola done?
The truant played, belike, and run from school,
Or ridden, perchance, and lamed my favorite mule,
Frighted the serving maids. . . .
Pia.— Nay, be thou mild!
When all is said, the boy is but a child.
Yea, and at heart I know him kind and true.
Azzo.— Call him to me, and without more ado!
Pia.— Be not too harsh with the poor lad, I pray.
Azzo.— Cola! What, Cola! Cola! Wilt thou stay?
Cola (*comes in, a gallant, erect little lad of ten or twelve, in a belted kirtle that reaches to the knee and cross-gartered*).— Lo, here am I, good father, at command.
Azzo.— What is yon stain I see upon thine hand?
Cola.— That stain, my lord? 'Tis blood, as I believe.
Azzo.— And stained and rent behold thy doublet sleeve.
So! Hast thou brawled, and in the open street?
Thy playfellows! Their names!
Cola.— Nay, I entreat!
Thou shalt not harm them, lord, nor do them shame,
For I myself was chief, and most to blame.
Pia.— There spoke mine own dear son, both brave and true.
Azzo.— Peace, good my lady! Truth, I need not sue
To this my son for knowledge. By the sea
Thou hast the truant played, with mates forbidden thee.
That is the truth, which thou dost not deny?
Cola.— No, good my father, for I will not lie.
Azzo.— Amongst these lawless ribalds of the street
Thou hast been fighting, and thou hast been beat.
Cola.— Nay, father, if the truth thou'lt have me tell,
'Twas I that beat them, soundly, too, and well.

Azzo.— Thou malapert. . . .
Pia.— Oh, calm thee, dearest lord!
Azzo.— Thou saucy sirrah, hearken well my word:
Thou shalt not wander from this spot to-day.
Here in this orchard on my pleasure stay,
And sharper punishment await, thou knave.
This is a son would make an angel rave.
(Azzo *goes out, and* Pia, *very sorrowful, starts to follow him.*)
Cola (*speaks defiantly*).— Here in the orchard, then, I'll gayly bide.
Good faith, I care not what shall me betide!
Pia (*turns back and comes to* Cola).— Cola, my child! Mine own heart's little lad!
Cola.— O, dear my mother, I have made thee sad.
Mother o' me, indeed thou must not weep.
Lo, I will fall upon my knees and creep
For my lord's pardon, nor will ever rise
Until I shall have seen thee wipe thine eyes.
Pia.— Why wilt thou vex him with thy headlong way?
Cola.— With all my heart I set me to obey,
But then upon the breeze I smell the sea.
I think upon the ships, and woe is me!
In the dull schoolroom then I cannot bide.
I must be ranging, with the wind and tide.
And the brown ship-boys that I know full well . . .
Hey, but the wondrous tales they have to tell!
Pia.— I see thou art thy father's very son.
Cola.— Yea, I would do as my dear lord hath done,
Fare over seas to the far Paynim coast,
And with a good sword smite their cursed host.
Pia.— So shalt thou do, my gallant son, one day,
But yet for a few years must patient stay
Under thy father's roof, as fits thine age,
Yea, and con lessons from the written page.
Modest, and eke obedient, without strife,

Be thou to those that may command thy life.
For right obedience thou first must learn,
Ere thou commandest others in thy turn.

Cola.— But, oh! it irks me sore to sit in school,
And irks me, too, sometimes my father's rule.
Canst thou not help me, O my mother kind,
To hold in the right path my wayward mind?

Pia.— My little son, if it is help thou need,
Then thou must seek them that can help indeed.

Cola.— 'Tis the bright saints thou nam'st? But, great and wise,
I doubt for me if they would quit the skies.
How should they ever leave their heavenly seat
To help a lad that brawled once in the street?

Pia.— Oh, foolish heart of my dear little son!

Cola.— Then would they list the prayer of such a one?

Pia.— Yea, there is one saint, if thou wilt attend,
That to young children always help will lend.
Blessed Saint Nicholas, thy name-saint, boy.
Call thou on him, whene'er thou hast annoy.

Cola.— And he will make me, as I fain would be?

Pia.— He will not make; instead he will help thee.
Strive thou thine hardest first, mine own son dear,
Then, when thou need'st help, thou shalt find him near.

Cola.— Yea, I will ever my dear name-saint seek
For help, whene'er I find my strength grow weak.
Yea, I will pray to him in this same hour.

Pia.— And thou shalt find thy saint of mighty power.
So for a little now my leave I take.

Cola.— Weep thou no more for my most worthless sake!
For now I have this gracious saint to friend me,
Thou'lt see, dear mother, how I shall amend me.

(PIA *goes out, and* COLA *kneels and prays, but he speaks hurriedly, without putting his mind on his prayer.*)

Cola.— Sweet Nicholas, my saint, so kind and gent . . .

I wonder what it was my father meant?
Sore punished shall I be, and soon, I trow.
Sweet Nicholas, my saint, oh! help me now!
Hey, but the wind smells strongly o' the salt!
I would amend me of my every fault,
I would obedient be, and good, and mild,
All that beseemeth well so young a child.
Hey, but this hour the tide is setting strong!
I feel it sweeping all my thoughts along.
And the great ships go dancing down the strand,
And o'er the sea is the far Paynim land.
Great Nicholas, my saint, lo, here I bow . . .

(*Enter* MICO, *a boy of* COLA'S *own age, but meanly clad.*)

Mico.— Cola! Hey, Cola! Mercy save us now!
Art thou turned priest that thou art set at prayer?

Cola (*springing up from his knees*).— Mock'st thou me, Mico? Nay, then, have a care!

Mico.— What! Wouldst thou quarrel, and with me, thy friend?

Cola.— Go hence, my Mico, for our love must end.
Back to my books must I, O Mico mine!

Mico.— Wilt thou sit in the schoolroom, then, and pine?

Cola.— After this one day, aye, such is my fate.

Mico.— Then use this one day, ere it be too late.
Come forth with me, for one blithe ramble more.
Come, good my Cola, down to the seashore!

Cola.— Nay, but I must not, for I am forbid.

Mico.— Hark to the child that hath been soundly chid!

Cola.— I am no child.

Mico.— Then boldly come away.
Why in a thousand plagues should we delay?
There is a deep dell by the shore I know,
A sheltered spot, where purple wild grapes grow,
And bread have I, and eke a lump of cheese.
Upon the rocks we'll lean and feast at ease.

Come, good my Cola! For the waves run high.
The clouds scud merrily across the sky.
Come forth this one day more, and gayly roam.
This is no time to mope and pine at home.

Cola.— Oh, blessed Nicholas! I needs must stay.

Mico.— Dost hear the wind? Canst thou not smell the spray?

Cola.— Strong savor o' the sea where tall ships ride,
And brown weed falls and rises with the tide!

Mico.— Come, then, my Cola! Dost thou linger still?

Cola.— Have with thee, Mico, and let come what will!
One more day I will take o' breeze and brine.
One blithe day more of roving shall be mine.
Saint Nicholas, so kind, pray thee, forgive!
I'll serve thee all the other days I live.

(MICO *and* COLA *go out. The* ATTENDANTS *remove the bench, and in its place put a low screen and go out. Enter the three Paynims,* ILBRAHIM, *who is lean and subtle,* MUSTAPHA, *who is fat and fearful, and* ARBACES, *who is very bloodthirsty. They wear full trousers, short jackets and blouses, with turbans, and sashes stuck full of knives and pistols. They have fierce moustaches. They bring with them a little cask to fetch water.*)

Ilbrahim.— Keep wary watch, my comrades! All be yare,
Now that we brave it here in Christian air.

Mustapha.— Back to our ship and safety fain would I.

Arbaces.— From Christian dogs, thou craven, wouldst thou fly?
Let them come on, although they be a score!
Full oft ere this I've bathed in Christian gore.

Ilbrahim.— Arbaces, leave thine empty boasts of slaughter.
We come to do no more than draw fresh water.
So long the voyage our casks are dry and drained.
Seek, if some wholesome spring is to be gained.

Arbaces.— Come, then, Mustapha! Knave, why dost thou stand?
Thou seem'st full loath to budge from the sea-strand.

Mustapha.— Know ye, perchance, whose broad domains are these?
Haply, when known, ye will be less at ease.
Arbaces.— What care I how the Christian dog is hight,
Who holds these shores and forests in his might?
Mustapha.— I doubt me if ye have forgot his name.
'Tis great Lord Azzo called, who wrought us shame.
Ilbrahim.— The haughty Azzo, that long years ago
Had well-nigh worked our Sultan's overthrow?
Arbaces.— May Termagant and Mahound send him harm!
Would I had strength to reach him with this arm!
Ilbrahim.— Could we but work on him some great disaster,
We should rejoice the Sultan's heart, our master.
Mustapha.— Hist! Yonder 'tis a footstep. Dost not hear?
Back to the ship, and swift! I quake with fear.
Arbaces.— Cowardly dog! Nay, but thou shalt not flee.
Come hide thyself behind yon rock with me.
Ilbrahim.— Aye, let's lie close, and let us all be dumb.
Soon we'll discover who are these that come.

(*The Paynims hide themselves behind the screen.* COLA *and* MICO *come in.* COLA *is singing.*)

Cola.— Trip, trip,
Skip, skip,
Pretty pebble-stones!
Hop, hop
The water's top,
Never break your bones!

Mico.— Stay, stay, good Cola! I am wearied well.
Leagues we have trudged since stroke of noontide bell.
Cola.— In truth, this is a spot to me is strange.
Never so far from home I've chanced to range.
Black are the rocks, and wild. The sea is stern.
Mico.— Belike 'tis fitting, Cola, we should turn.
Cola.— What! Turn back, Mico, hast thou heart to say?
Art thou a coward that thou 'dst run away?

Mico.— Nay, but I'm wearied, and the hour draws late.

Cola.— First sit and eat! Come then, old Grumble-pate!

(*They sit, and* MICO *takes from his wallet bread, which they share.*)

Mico.— The bread I pledged, and thus I will it break.

Cola.— And here my share, that I will blithely take.
The spray of the salt sea shall serve for wine.
How good it is, this last free day of mine!
Soft is the air, though all the sky is gloom,
And kind the savor of the salty spume.
(*He sings.*) Flower o' the foam!
My father's a sailor; the sea is my home.
Flower o' the tide!
My good ship's the steed where I safely shall ride.
Flower o' the wave!
When I shall die, let the sea be my grave!

Mico.— Canst thou not sing us, lad, a stave more gay?
That is a chant fit for a burial day.

Cola.— Mico, the grudging grumbler, still thou art!
Listen! Is this more welcome to thine heart?
(*He sings*) Pipe, pretty bird, on the top o' the tree!
Pipe, pretty bird, when I whistle to thee!
A cage all of gold thou shalt have to thy fee.
Pipe, pretty bird, when I whistle to thee!

(*The two boys begin blithely to repeat the song together, when the three Paynims rush from behind the screen and fall upon them.*)

Mico.— Out! Out! Run, Cola!

(ARBACES *seizes* MICO, *who is too frightened to struggle.* ILBRAHIM *and* MUSTAPHA *seize* COLA, *who resists with all his might.*)

Cola.— Villain! Let me free!

Ilbrahim.— A humbler mien shall soon be taught to thee.

(MUSTAPHA *binds* COLA'S *hands.*)

Mico.— Cola! Dear Cola! They will work us woe.

Cola.— Where do you lead us? Whither must we go?

Ilbrahim.— Ye shall fare with us over the salt waves.
The faithful can find use for Christian slaves.

Mico.— Cola! They'll sell us in their heathen mart.
Cola.— I hear. And it will break my mother's heart.
Arbaces.— Quickly! March on, thou little Christian whelp!
(*He strikes* Mico, *who bursts into tears.*)
Mico.— Oh, pitying saints! Oh, is there nowhere help?
Cola.— Peace, Mico! Wouldst thou shame our fathers' faith?
Mico.— Good gentles! Oh, forbear to work us scathe!
Our friends will ransom us from your dread hands.
Arbaces.— We seek not ransom.
Mico.— Into heathen lands,
Oh, do not sell us! 'Tis a great lord's heir,
My comrade, mark you.
Cola.— Prithee, friend, take care!
Ibrahim (*to Cola*).— Peace, knave! Or quickly I shall make thee peace!
Mustapha.— Were it not well we let them buy release?
Arbaces.— Money is good, aye, true.
Ibrahim. First let us know
Who is this lord that ransom shall bestow.
Who is thy father? Speak! Art silent still?
Mico. Oh, answer, Cola! Thou must do their will.
Cola. That I am come to this is blame of mine.
I'll not declare my father, nor my line.
Arbaces. Nay, but thou wilt, by great Mahound I swear!
Answer, if for thy safety thou dost care!
Mustapha (*seizing* Mico *roughly*).— Nay, answer thou!
Methinks this mouse will squeak.
Mico. Good sirs! Oh, be not rough, for I will speak.
Yon lad is Cola, son to a great lord,
The valiant Azzo.
Mustapha.— May we believe this word?
Ibrahim.— Art thou the son to Azzo?
Cola.— Yea, his son.
Ibrahim.— It is a master-stroke that we have done.

Mustapha.— Our fortunes are established, firm and fast.
Arbaces.— We'll have the Sultan's grace while life shall last.
Mico.— Cola! They whisper. What should they intend?
I thought to speak would help thee, dear my friend.
Ilbrahim.— Thou, sirrah, this same moment shalt go clear.
Mico.— Free am I, say'st thou? Cola, be of cheer!
Ilbrahim.— Speed to thine home, and as thou hopest to live,
Speak truthfully the message that I give.
Mico.— Touching the ransom? What's the sum ye've set?
Ilbrahim.— Say to Lord Azzo: We do not forget!
Say to the Christian dog that his sole heir
Shall quit to us the wrongs he made us bear.
Say that we lead him to the Sultan's hall,
Where he shall serve the Sultan as his thrall,
Humbly and basely.
Arbaces.— Such shall be his fate.
Not all the gold and pomp of Azzo's state
May buy his freedom. This to Azzo give:
He ne'er shall see his son while he shall live.
Mico.— Oh, Cola! Cola! Out and woe is me!
What shall I say when they ask news of thee?
Cola.— Oh, Mico, bid my mother not to weep.
Mico.— Our Lady shield thee! All the kind saints keep!
Arbaces.— Off with thee, slave, else thou shalt rue this stay!
Mico.— Ah, Cola! Cola! Oh, alas the day!
(MICO *goes out, sobbing.*)
Mustapha.— Swift to the ship, lest he return with aid!
Ilbrahim.— And still, young lording, thou art not afraid?
Cola.— Sweet Nicholas!
Arbaces.— I'll soon amend thy speed.
Cola.— I must obey thee, in my bitter need.
Ilbrahim.— Proud Azzo's son full soon shall learn to bow.
Cola.— Sweet Nicholas, my saint! Oh, help me now!
(*The Paynims go out, leading* COLA *captive. The* ATTENDANTS *remove the screen and in its place set a stool and a table and*

go out. Enter the SULTAN, *a very fierce, proud Paynim, in royal robes, with a plume and jewel in his turban.*)

Sultan.— He who doth love his life, let him now be still!
Death is his portion who grudgeth at my will.
Wide is the land that my rough rule doth sway.
Many are the men that must my law obey.
Whoso withstandeth me, better were he dead.
Straight shall my minions smite me off his head.
Fell are the fierce gods to the which I kneel . . .
Termagant and Mahound, sharper than the steel.
Cruel unto Christians am I ever foe.
Deep my delight, whenever I work 'em woe.
Down, all ye people! To my bidding bend!
Render me homage, or your days shall end!

(*Enter* ZOE, *the* SULTAN'S *little daughter, eight or ten years old. She wears full trousers that reach to the ankle, turned-up red slippers, a white blouse, a little embroidered jacket, and many bangles and chains.*)

Zoe.— Dread father and my lord, a boon I crave.

Sultan.— Approach, my daughter Zoe, and my slave!

Zoe (*kneeling*).— Lo, my dread lord, this favor do I seek,
That the young Christian thrall with me may speak.
In this vast palace must I lonely stray.
There are no children here with whom to play.
The little Christian thrall, 'tis but a boy.
Let me speak with him, lord. 'Twould give me joy.

Sultan.— What say'st thou, foolish prattler? Peace, be still!

Zoe.— Oh, be not angered, for I'll do thy will!

Sultan.— Well do I know thy foolish heart is soft.
Womanish-pitiful I've seen thee oft.
Now would'st thou to this slave some comfort take,
Since I misuse him, for his father's sake.

Zoe.— Ah, good my lord, no more than child is he.

Sultan.— Right soon a sorrier child he'll learn to be.
Ah, proud Lord Azzo, all the wrong thou'st wrought

For thy dear son heaped misery hath bought.
Lo, deeming thus, my heart hath waxed full glad.
I'll praise the gods that gave to me this lad.
Come, my young daughter, come, and incense sweet
We will burn yonder, at great Mahound's feet!

(*The* SULTAN *and* ZOE *go out.*)

(*Then come in* ARBACES *and* COLA, *in a ragged kirtle, who carries a great drinking goblet of metal.*)

Arbaces.— Get to thy task, thou little Christian dog,
Or else right soundly straight we shall thee flog.

Cola.— Am I not ever swift at thy commands?

Arbaces.— Aye, since thou knowest the weight of our fell hands.
Cleanse thou yon cup!

Cola.— Thou seest that I obey.

Arbaces.— Fail thou therein, and thou shalt rue the day!

(ARBACES *goes out.* COLA *kneels and polishes the cup. Presently he speaks.*)

Cola.— Scarce have I eaten, lo, this many an hour.
Always new tasks, and far beyond my power.
Once would I not obey my father kind.
Now have I masters of a sterner mind.
Sweet Nicholas, my saint, all this I've earned.
May I go home, now that my lesson's learned?
All my life long I'll bear me as I should.
Kind Nicholas! Dear Saint! I'll be so good.

(COLA *sobs, and at that moment* ZOE *comes in.*)

Zoe.— Cola! Ho, little Christian! It is I.
What is amiss? Why, Cola, dost thou cry?

Cola.— Cry? Art thou crazed, thou little silly maid?
Boys do not cry, nor are they e'er afraid.

Zoe.— Thou must not call me little silly girl!
I am a princess, and thou but a churl.

Cola.— A lord was I once, in my father's hall.

Zoe.— Here thou art nothing but my father's thrall.

Cola.— Aye, but a slave. Go hence! Leave me alone!
Canst thou not see my task is to be done?
Zoe.— Cola! Nay, Cola! Wilt thou force me seek thee?
Cola.— How should thy father's thrall dare to bespeak thee?
Zoe.— Wilt thou be angered then against me still?
I am — right sorry that I spoke thee ill.
Cola.— Mine only friend!
Zoe.— Thou wilt forgive me, please?
Cola.— Forgive? I kiss thine hands, upon my knees.
Zoe.— Soft now! Receive this, Cola! 'Tis a cake.
I brought it hither stealthy, for thy sake.
Cola.— Thou little Princess! Ever art thou kind.
In all my prayers I'll hold thee still in mind.
(*He eats the cake while he talks.*)
Zoe.— What are the gods to whom thou shapest thy prayer?
What is the name I hear thee oft declare?
Cola.— 'Tis sweet Saint Nicholas that most I praise,
He giveth help through all the long, hard days.
Zoe.— Saint Nicholas! Speak I the name aright?
Now tell me more of this most wondrous wight.
Cola.— Chiefest to children, Zoe, is he friend.
Ever to children doth he blessings send.
Zoe.— Had I been born in some good Christian land,
Fain had I praised that saint, with heart and hand.
Our gods are fierce, with cruel eyes so hot.
I'll whisper to thee: Truth, I love them not!
Cola.— My sweet Saint Nicholas is ever mild.
Always he hearkens to the least, small child.
Zoe.— But if thy saint have power, call his name!
Will he not come and snatch thee from thy shame?
Cola.— Why should he help me? Why should he lend aid,
Until mine own strength shall be quite outpayed?
One must do all, and so my mother taught,
Before he ask that great aid shall be brought.
When I am older grown, and big and strong,

Thou'lt see they shall not hold me captive long.
But till that day, dear lass, I must endure
Whatever my ill fortune hath in store.

Zoe.— Cola, I pity thee with all my heart.

Cola.— Ah, Zoe, thou dost ever take my part.
So good! So kind! To Nicholas I'll pray
To make of thee a Christian, too, some day.

(ILBRAHIM *comes in.*)

Ilbrahim.— Fair Princess Zoe, lo, thy father calls.
Grudge will he sore that thou dost talk with thralls.

Zoe.— Say thou naught, then, for my dread father's ear.

(*She gives* ILBRAHIM *a ring from her hand.*)

This ring from mine own finger, have it here!

Ilbrahim.— Get to thy task, thou little idle knave!
Hast thou forgotten that thou art a slave?

Zoe.— Ilbrahim, come! Do thou attend on me!
Chide not the lad, friend. Here is gold for thee.

(ZOE *and* ILBRAHIM *go out.* COLA *kneels to his task, and presently speaks.*)

Cola.— Sweet my Saint Nicholas, my shame is deep
That like a maiden thou hast seen me weep.
Gentle my name-saint, straight I will amend,
But through the long days, do thou stand my friend.
My fathers' faith I must not bring to shame.
Sweet my Saint Nicholas, I praise thy name!
Lo, on the hot air comes a smack o' spray.
How fare my parents, weary leagues away?
Kind Nicholas, let not my mother know
The shame I suffer here, the pain and woe.
Could I but see her once before I die. . . .
Indeed, Saint Nicholas, I do not cry!
Brave will I be, through all the days that come,
Only by night, oh! send me dreams of home!

(*He looks up to the sky and presently sings.*)

Swallow, my swallow!

Fain would I follow,
Over the foam,
Over the foam!
Follow, oh! follow!
Swallow, my swallow!
Follow thee home!
Follow thee home!

Saint Nicholas! The tears I cannot keep.
Saint Nicholas! They must not see me weep!

(*The* SULTAN *comes in, and with him* ZOE, ARBACES, ILBRAHIM, *and* MUSTAPHA. *The last named carries a jar of wine.*)

Sultan.— Lo, I am merry. I will drink red wine.
(*He sits.*)
And he shall serve me, yonder thrall of mine.

(ILBRAHIM *fills from the jar the cup which* COLA *holds.*)

Ilbrahim.— Speed, then, thou slave! Dost hear thy master's voice?

(COLA *kneels and presents the cup to the* SULTAN.)

Sultan.— Thy woe, proud Azzo's son, makes me rejoice.
Why on this day dost keep such sorry cheer?
Upon thy cheek, by Mahound! 'tis a tear.
Stout heart is thine, great Azzo's only heir.
'Tis a maid's garments fitter thou shouldst wear.

Cola.— Wilt thou be pleased to drink, O mighty lord?

Sultan.— I've blither sport than drink could e'er afford.
So thou hast dared to prattle with yon maid?
Spies do I keep, and know each word that's said.

Zoe.— Oh, good my lord, thine anger turn on me!

Sultan.— Peace, silly wench! Thou slave, I spoke to thee.
What is the false saint on whose name thou'lt call?

Cola.— 'Tis great Saint Nicholas, not false at all.

Sultan.— If strong thy gods, as they do boast in vain,
Why art thou left my captive, in such pain?
Thou seest our gods are stronger far than thine.
Then be thou wise, and worship at our shrine.

Cola.— Great lord, thou bidd'st me mine own faith forsake?
Sultan.— A truer worship, boy, I bid thee take.
Bow to our gods, and I will set thee free,
Yea, more, as mine own son will cherish thee.
Cola.— Great lord, I thank thee for this kindness shown,
But for thy faith I'll never leave mine own.
Sultan.— Thou wilt defy me, then, presumptuous slave?
Ere the sunsetting thou wilt be less brave.
Zoe.— Father! My father! Lo, I thee entreat.
Sultan.— Be silent, fool, or I shall have thee beat.
(*He turns to* COLA.)
Full little wont am I to beg and sue.
Bend to my bidding straight, or thou shalt rue.
Thou young dog, take this cup within thine hand.
Now pour the red wine forth upon the sand,
And praise thou great Mahound thou'st held in scorn,
Or thou shalt wish that thou hadst ne'er been born.
Zoe.— Oh, Cola, thou must do my father's will,
Or they will hurt thee sore and haply kill.
Cola.— I may not praise thy gods, for they are naught.
Sultan.— Another fashion, then, I'll have thee taught.
Bind yonder slave and scourge him sore with rods,
Until he humbly kneel and praise our gods.
(ILBRAHIM *and* ARBACES *lay hands upon* COLA.)
Cola.— Upon my body you may work your scathe,
And yet I'll not renounce my father's faith.
Sultan.— With torments dire we soon shall make thee bow.
Dost think thy silly saint can help thee now?
Cola.— Yea, my strong saint could save me in this hour.
Sultan.— Call on him, then, and let him show his power!
Arbaces.— Shall we about it, then, without delay?
Sultan.— Yea, lead him hence to torment, without stay.
Cola.— Saint Nicholas! Oh, help me to be strong!
Let not my martyrdom endure too long!
Sultan.— Yea, call thy saint, for haply he doth sleep.

Cola.— Saint of my heart, thy watch above me keep!
Sultan.— Saint Nicholas! Thou canst not win his ear.
Zoe.— Oh, Christian saint! Oh, why wilt thou not hear?
Cola.— Saint Nicholas! I've done my little all.
Oh, aid me now! Oh, come thou at my call!

(*At the back of the stage appears* SAINT NICHOLAS, *as a comely youth and tall, in the splendid robes of a bishop.* COLA *stands with his face to the front and his hands upraised. He seems to feel the Saint draw near, but dares not look, lest it be a dream.*)

Zoe.— What is this perfume steals upon the air?

(*She crosses her arms on her breast and gazes raptly toward the Saint.*)

Ilbrahim.— What is yon light that beams so clear and fair?

(*The three Paynims release their hold on* COLA, *and fall on their knees. The* SULTAN *covers his face with his arms, as if dazzled.*)

Mustapha.— Out and alas! I can no longer stand.
Arbaces.— The strength is withered wholly from mine hand.

(COLA *turns, slowly and fearfully. He sees the Saint and runs to him.*)

Cola.— Saint Nicholas! Oh, surely thou art come!
Oh, Nicholas, my saint! Oh, take me home!
Saint Nicholas.— Saint of the weak ones, Nicholas am I.
Wherever children call, I hear their cry.
Rise up and fear not, Cola, my name-son!
My little soldier, now thy fight is done.
Lean thou thy tired head upon mine arm,
And I will hold thee safe from every harm,
Thou weary one! Full softly thou shalt sleep,
And I will bear thee home across the deep.

(SAINT NICHOLAS *leads* COLA *off.*)

Zoe.— O Nicholas! Great saint! Oh, stay for me!

(*She runs out after them.*)

Sultan.— Ho, where are ye, my knaves? I cannot see.

(*He rises groping, like one gone blind.*)

Why hath this darkness fallen on the land?
Why are there none to list to my command?

(*The Paynims, awe-stricken and trembling, rise and hasten to him.*)

Ilbrahim.— Here am I, lord, to do thy least behest.

Sultan.— Why is this darkness? Is it some mad jest?

Arbaces.— Out and alas, my lord, the sun shines clear!

Sultan.— Then I am blinded — blinded! Are ye near?

Ilbrahim.— A dread enchantment surely hath been wrought
By the great Christian saint we set at naught.

Sultan.— Lead me unto the temple without stay.
There will we fall upon our knees and pray.
Mahound and Termagant, to whom we bow,
Oh, save me, save me from my blindness now!

(*The Paynims lead out the blind* SULTAN. *The* ATTENDANTS *remove the stool, table, cup and jar. In their place they set a great chair and go out. Enter* AZZO *and* PIA, *clad in black and very sorrowful.*)

Azzo.— Oh, good my lady, thou must solace take,
And cease to grieve for our poor Cola's sake.

Pia.— Chide not, dear lord, for I must still be sad,
Whene'er I think upon our poor, lost lad.

(*She sits.*)

Azzo.— Alas, alas, that ever this should be!
My son doth serve the Sultan on his knee,
And so must serve until the day he die,
For all my gold his freedom may not buy.

Pia.— Saint Nicholas that is the children's friend,
Oh, aid my little lad until the end!

Azzo.— Unless the saints their blessed help shall give,
We may not see our boy while we shall live.

Pia.— This is the feast of Nicholas the saint.

Azzo.— Why warms the color in thy cheek so faint?

Pia.— A foolish hope indeed to thee 'twill seem,
But yesternight I had a blithesome dream.

Azzo.— Say on, dear lady, if 'twill bring thee peace.
Pia.— Within my dreaming, sorrow seemed to cease.
For I beheld a noble youth, and mild,
And in his arms he bore a little child.
Over the burning plains he seemed to stride,
Across the mountains, and the sea's harsh tide.
As he drew near, I looked upon his face,
And saw it shining bright with Heaven's own grace,
And then methought I cried aloud with joy,
For in his arms — O husband! 'twas our boy!
'Twas Nicholas the saint that strode the foam,
And in his arms he bore our lost lad home.
Azzo.— 'Twas a fair dream, my lady bright and dear!
Pia.— Shall I draw hope therefrom, or haply fear?
Perchance it meaneth that our lad is dead,
And the saint helped him in the hour he sped.
Alas, alas, my heart is like to break!
Again I weep for my lost darling's sake.
Azzo.— Take comfort, lady! Be not sad of cheer!
It may be, some good day — in some good year ——
Pia.— Oh, but my lad, my little, tender son,
The Sultan's slave! My tears will ne'er be done.
(COLA *is heard to sing outside.*)
Cola.— Sweet Saint Nicholas,
Ever gent and mild,
Hear a little child!
Pia.— What is the sound I hear that rings so sweet?
Azzo.— Naught but the young lads, singing in the street.
'Tis Nicholas's day, of all the days,
And through the town they go and sing his praise.
Cola (*singing outside*).— Sweet Saint Nicholas,
Be thou to me kind,
Hold me still in mind!
Pia.— That song — it echoes! Is my brain gone wild?
Azzo.— It brings me heavy thoughts of our lost child.
I'll bar the door. The sound I may not brook.

Pia.— What manner child doth sing? Good husband, look!
(Azzo *looks forth at the door.*)
Cola (*singing outside*).— Sweet Saint Nicholas,
All a life of days,
I will give thee praise!
Azzo.— It is a ragged, sorry-looking wight.
Pia.— And is he ragged, then, and in sad plight?
Then call him in, for our poor Cola's sake.
Some good cheer for him surely we should māke.
Azzo.— Ho, there! Come in, thou little, noisy knave!
(Cola *comes in, muffled in a ragged cloak.*)
'Tis this dame's pleasure thou shouldst sing a stave.
What! Stand'st thou dumb and frightened, my good boy?
Nay, sing and fear not! None shall thee annoy.
Cola (*singing*).— Sweet Saint Nicholas,
Far across the foam,
Thou hast led me home!
Pia.— What is that voice? Should things be as they seem —
(Cola *throws off his cloak.*)
Cola! My Cola! Oh, let me still dream!
Cola.— Mother! My mother! Clasp me to thee tight!
Pia.— Methinks I waken from a long, black night.
Azzo.— Full welcome art thou home.
Cola (*kneeling*).— Father, forgive
The wrong I've done thee. As I hope to live,
Henceforth thou'lt find me —,
Azzo (*raising him*).— Let the future show
All that we both have learned in days of woe.
Pia.— My child redeemed before mine eyes I see.
It was a true dream then that came to me.
Cola.— Belike I, too, have dreamed, O mother mine.
Methought the good saint bore me o'er the brine.
Methought he snatched me from the Sultan's court,
Where to the Paynim folk my shame was sport,
Where all were harsh, and none were kind — save one.

Pia.— Why dost thou look so sad, my dearest son?
Cola.— I think upon my little comrade true.
Would that the saint had brought her hither, too!
(MICO *is heard to sing outside.*)
Mico.— Turn about, turn about, turn about again!
Silly maid, silly maid, thou dost seek in vain.
Trip her in the puddle, so all her clothes are wet.
Heathen jade, heathen jade, no better should she get.
Pia.— What are those voices in the alley-way?
Azzo.— It is the street boys still about their play.
(ZOE *is heard to call piteously outside.*)
Zoe.— Cola! Oh, Cola! Dost not hear me cry?
Come thou and help me! Zoe! It is I.
Cola.— Mother! My father! 'Tis my little friend.
(*Cola runs out at the door, and is heard to speak outside*).
Out on ye, cowards! Now your sport's at end.
(COLA *comes in again, leading* ZOE, *who is much frightened and dishevelled.*)
Azzo.— Methinks this is some little heathen lass.
Pia.— Poor little heart! What brought thee to such pass?
Cola.— My lady mother, lo, this little maid —
Look up now, Zoe! Be thou not afraid!
When all were harsh, to me she was right kind.
Pia.— My little maid, in me a mother find!
Zoe.— Oh, thou art gentle! With thee shall I stay?
For I have come, oh! such a weary way.
But good Saint Nicholas was aid to me,
When once I vowed that I'd a Christian be.
Azzo.— And thou shalt be baptized our daughter dear.
Cola.— Thou'lt be my sister, Zoe. Dost thou hear?
Zoe.— Saint Nicholas! To him I give all praise.
Cola.— Saint Nicholas that helped us in hard days,
Make us in fair days good and gentle still!
Saint Nicholas! We bow us to thy will.
Azzo.— Now go thou in, my good son, Heaven-sent!

Pia.— And go thou, little one that Heaven hath lent.
Cola.— Yea, hand in hand, dear Zoe, let us wend.
Azzo.— Now have we comfort, and our sorrows end.
(COLA *leads off* ZOE, *and* AZZO *leads off* PIA. *Then comes in* PROLOGUS *and speaks.*)
Prologus.— My masters all, that here are set in row,
Your praise upon Saint Nicholas bestow,
That ever hath been known the children's friend.
To him give laud and honor without end.
And may Saint Nicholas be with ye still,
And at this season all your joys fulfill.
And to all children, for his sake, be kind!
The little, ragged, poor ones have in mind.
Now may the saint, and all the saints above,
Keep ye, and hold ye ever in their love!
Amen!
(*So goeth out* PROLOGUS *and the play endeth.*)

INVOCATION

By "Humilis"

(*From the French*)

O my Lord Jesus, Childhood venerable,
I love and fear You, little and miserable,
For You are the Son of Love adorable.

O my Lord Jesus, welcomed Youth,
My soul adores You in humble duty,
For You are Grace in being Beauty.

O my Lord Jesus, who adorneth a garment,
Color of the calm sea and of the dawn,
Red and blue deck You with colors still.

O my Lord Jesus, chaste and sweet toiler,
Teach me the peace of the noblest labor,
That of the carpenter, that of the tailor.

O my Lord Jesus, Sower of parables
Containing the clear live gold of symbols,
Take my copper verses even as obols.

O my Lord Jesus, O Guest Divine,
Who pourest Thy Blood as they pour wine,
Let my hunger and thirst not call Thee in vain.

O my Lord Jesus, whom on fire we name,
Death of Love, whose death ever consumes its flame,
May Thy Truth take fire in the hearts of men.

DEUS BENIGNUS ET NATURA

By Frederic Hunter

All life was in the soul of quietude;
The sunlight slumbered in the garden close;
And wistful summer hazes overhead
Seemed longing for the guerdon of repose.

Time was a knowledge of the past; and life
Pulsed in one slow full chord too deep for tears;
Bathed in the light of beauty and of youth
Our full rich soul-life had no thought of years.

The treetops shivered in a fluttering flame,
And suddenly wind-shodden Time was there;
The silences were trembling at a sound,
And soft-awakened rustling hid the air.

The charm was broken; and a hint of change
Too soon betrayed the loss of our repose;
Yet we who dreamed with hearts that loved still knew
The Godhead in the petals of the Rose.

A MEETING

By Alvilde Prydz

Translated from the Norwegian by Hester Coddington.

I met thee, Death, in the dark watches — when thy breath swept my strings and made them resound!

I met thee, Night — and Horror, I met thee — thy heavy step made my lyre tremble. . . .

Death, thou art a friend to rely upon — a comfort in time of need! On earth there is no other friend so kind!

Great God, how many bitter herbs there are — not strengthening, but poisonous herbs, which steal one's strength and courage, and paralize one's joy! . . .

And here amid mankind! . . . Would it have been better, would it have saved my soul from anguish, from bitter loneliness, if I had held myself aloof? . . . If I had sojourned with the creatures of the wood? . . .

They could not have done me so much evil!

Death, thou art everything to me! A haven thou art, alluring and safe. Here on earth where my lines have fallen, it is not so fair as it is with thee! Ah, it is hard to wander! . . . Now yearns my soul for thy cool, dark realm —for the silent stream of infinitude — for the great eternal life! . . .

Death, I long for the rest thou givest. Lift thy wings — their soft hum is music to my soul! Look upon me! I love thy gaze, so calm and soothing. Touch me! Thy poppy-filled hands bring peace after suffering — they quiet the storm on the sea.

Mighty art thou, oh Death! Great in thy strength, victorious ruler of eternity's realm! All hail to thee, as thou comest, silent deliverer, full of compassion! Powerful, yet gentle, through the eternal ages thou wilt bear us onward to peace.

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