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JEREMIAH'S  
DAUGHTER

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# Jephthah's Daughter.

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A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS,

*Founded on the Eleventh Chapter of Judges.*

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*By Mrs. Adelia C. Graves,*

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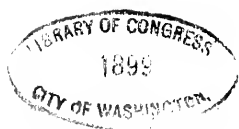
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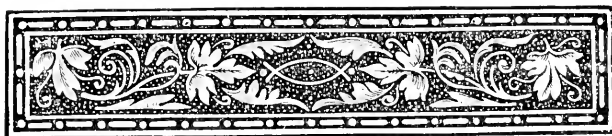
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TO THE PUPILS  
OF THE  
Mary Sharp College,

*With whom I have spent many of the pleasantest  
hours of my life,*

THIS LITTLE WORK  
Is most affectionately inscribed.

*May they be stimulated to all  
deeds worthy of Woman; then will each be  
worthy of self and her*

ALMA MATER.





## PREFACE.

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**F**ROM my earliest girlhood, the history of Jephthah's Daughter, told as it is in so few words, and yet those few beautifully revealing to us a character perfect in its simplicity, and uniting, without the slightest ostentation, every element of feminine excellence, has had a peculiar charm for me.

The coolest courage, the most un-

daunted heroism, the loftiest patriotism, consummated in the extremest act of self-sacrifice humanity can perform, were all present in her ready concurrence in her father's dreadful vow; and yet the simple Israelitish maiden seems to have thought only of filial obedience and right.

And the stern majesty of Jephthah, outcast and insulted; feeling keenly the wrongs he suffered, yet, by his determination and energy, aided by the blessing of the God he served, patiently working out a reputation which finally triumphed, and brought him the honor for which he toiled so long and faithfully, has been a favorite subject for study.

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The master-passion of his nature I have made pride; fostered by the unfortunate circumstances of his life, and which, from his feeling his own worthiness, made him esteem himself just in proportion to the disesteem, or contempt of others; and which, so long as it led only to a just appreciation of himself, was right; but in excess became a wrong, as spoken by Telah, in scene first:

What was  
Humility and faith at first,  
May grow into self-confidence  
And pride; and right, pursued too far  
Or with unholy motive, grow  
Into a wrong,—

inculcating the doctrine that all vices are but excesses of some virtue.

If I have preserved the unity of my plot and exhibited the character of Jephthah throughout, as it naturally would exhibit itself under the influence of this predominant passion, I have accomplished all I expected.

MARY SHARP COLLEGE,  
WINCHESTER, TENN., }  
May 1, 1867.

A. M. Green

Author

*of the*

HISTORY.

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**A**ND after Abimelech there arose to defend Israel, Tola, the son of Puah, the son of Dodo, a man of Issachar; and he dwelt in Shamir in mount Ephraim. And he judged Israel twenty and three years, and died, and was buried in Shamir.

And after him arose Jair, a Gileadite, and judged Israel twenty and two years. And he had thirty sons that rode on thirty ass colts, and they had thirty cities, which are called Havoth-jair unto this

day, which are in the land of Gilead. And Jair died, and was buried in Camon. And the children of Israel did evil again in the sight of the Lord, and served Baalim, and Ashtaroth, and the gods of Syria, and the gods of Zidon, and the gods of Moab, and the gods of the children of Ammon, and the gods of the Philistines, and forsook the Lord, and served not him.

And the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hands of the Philistines, and into the hands of the children of Ammon. And that year they vexed and oppressed the children of Israel eighteen years, all the children of Israel that were on the other side Jordan in the land of the Amorites, which is in Gilead. Moreover, the chil-



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dren of Ammon passed over Jordan, to fight also against Judah, and against Benjamin, and against the house of Ephraim; so that Israel was sore distressed.

And the children of Israel cried unto the Lord, saying, We have sinned against thee, both because we have forsaken our God, and also served Baalim. And the Lord said unto the children of Israel, Did not I deliver you from the Egyptians, and from the Amorites, from the children of Ammon, and from the Philistines? The Zidonians also, and the Amalekites, and the Maonites, did oppress you; and ye cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand. Yet ye have forsaken me, and served other gods: wherefore I will deliver you no more. Go and cry unto the gods which

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ye have chosen; let them deliver you in the time of your tribulation.

And the children of Israel said unto the Lord, We have sinned: do thou unto us whatsoever seemeth good unto thee; deliver us only, we pray thee, this day. And they put away the strange gods from among them, and served the Lord: and his soul was grieved for the misery of Israel. Then the children of Ammon were gathered together, and encamped in Gilead. And the children of Israel assembled themselves together, and encamped in Mizpeh. And the people and princes of Gilead said one to another, What man is he that will begin to fight against the children of Ammon? he shall be head over all the inhabitants of Gilead.

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Now Jephthah the Gileadite was a mighty man of valor, and he was the son of a harlot: and Gilead begat Jephthah. And Gilead's wife bare him sons; and his wife's sons grew up, and they thrust out Jephthah, and said unto him, Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house; for thou art the son of a strange woman. Then Jephthah fled from his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tob: and there were gathered vain men to Jephthah, and went out with him.

And it came to pass in process of time, that the children of Ammon made war against Israel. And it was so, that when the children of Ammon made war against Israel, the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob: And they said unto Jephthah, Come, and be

our captain, that we may fight with the children of Ammon. And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, Did not ye hate me, and expel me out of my father's house? and why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress? And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, Therefore we turn again to thee now, that thou mayest go with us, and fight against the children of Ammon, and be our head over all the inhabitants of Gilead. And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight against the children of Ammon, and the Lord deliver them before me, shall I be your head? And the elders of Gilead said unto Jephthah, The Lord be a witness between us, if we do not so according to thy words.

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Then Jephthah went with the elders of Gilead, and the people made him head and captain over them: and Jephthah uttered all his words before the Lord in Mizpeh.

And Jephthah sent messengers unto the king of the children of Ammon, saying, What hast thou to do with me, that thou art come against me to fight in my land? And the king of the children of Ammon answered unto the messengers of Jephthah, Because Israel took away my land, when they came up out of Egypt, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and unto Jordan: now therefore restore those lands again peaceably. And Jephthah sent messengers again unto the king of the children of Ammon; and said unto him, Thus saith

Jephthah, Israel took not away the land of Moab, nor the land of the children of Ammon: but when Israel came up from Egypt, and walked through the wilderness unto the Red Sea, and came to Kadesh; then Israel sent messengers unto the king of Edom, saying, Let me, I pray thee, pass through thy land: but the king of Edom would not hearken thereto. And in like manner they sent unto the king of Moab; but he would not consent. And Israel abode in Kadesh. Then they went along through the wilderness, and compassed the land of Edom, and the land of Moab, and came by the east side of the land of Moab, and pitched on the other side of Arnon, but came not within the border of Moab: for Arnon was the border of

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Moab. And Israel sent messengers unto Sihon, king of the Amorites, the king of Heshbon; and Israel said unto him, Let us pass, we pray thee, through thy land unto my place. But Sihon trusted not Israel to pass through his coast: but Sihon gathered all his people together, and pitched in Jahaz, and fought against Israel. And the Lord God of Israel delivered Sihon and all his people into the hand of Israel, and they smote them: so Israel possessed all the land of the Amorites, the inhabitants of that country. And they possessed all the coasts of the Amorites, from Arnon even unto Jabbok, and from the wilderness even unto Jordan. So now the Lord God of Israel hath dispossessed the Amorites from before his people Israel, and

shouldest thou possess it? Wilt not thou possess that which Chemosh thy god giveth thee to possess? So whomsoever the Lord our God shall drive out from before us, them will we possess. And now art thou any thing better than Balak, the son of Zippor, king of Moab? did he ever strive against Israel, or did he ever fight against them, while Israel dwelt in Heshbon and her towns, and in Aroer and her towns, and in all the cities that be along by the coasts of Arnon, three hundred years? why therefore did ye not recover them within that time? Wherefore I have not sinned against thee, but thou doest me wrong to war against me: the Lord the Judge be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon.



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Howbeit the king of the children of Ammon hearkened not unto the words of Jephthah which he sent him.

Then the Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah, and he passed over Gilead, and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over unto the children of Ammon. And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into my hands, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to meet me, when I return in peace from the children of Ammon, shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt-offering.

So Jephthah passed over unto the children of Ammon to fight against

them; and the Lord delivered them into his hands. And he smote them from Aroer even till thou come to Minnith, even twenty cities, and unto the plain of the vineyards, with a very great slaughter. Thus the children of Ammon were subdued before the children of Israel.

And Jephthah came to Mizpeh unto his house, and behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she was his only child; besides her he had neither son nor daughter. And it came to pass, when he saw her, that he rent his clothes, and said, Alas, my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, and thou art one of them that trouble me: for I have opened my mouth unto the Lord, and I

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can not go back. And she said unto him, My father, if thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord, do to me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies, even of the children of Ammon. And she said unto her father, Let this thing be done for me: let me alone two months, that I may go up and down upon the mountains, and bewail my virginity, I and my fellows. And he said, Go. And he sent her away for two months: and she went with her companions, and bewailed her virginity upon the mountains. And it came to pass at the end of two months, that she returned unto her father, who did with her according

to his vow which he had vowed: and she knew no man. And it was a custom in Israel, that the daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year.

CHARACTERS IN JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

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JEPHTHAH—*The Gileadite.*

TELAH—*His wife.*

ADAH—*His daughter.*

EBER—*Betrothed of Adah.*

MICAH—*First captain of the guard.*

HEZRON—*Officer in charge of sick and  
wounded.*

MIRIAM—*Servant maid.*

*Men of Gilead.*

*Followers of Jephthah.*

*Musicians, attendants, and chorus  
of young girls, in scene fifth.*



# JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.



## Scene First.

*Time, morning—a room in Jephthah's house in Miz-  
peh—Jephthah and Telah alone.*

TELAH.

GOEST thou forth upon the hills  
To-day? I would thou stayed'st at home.  
Rumors there are of yet a war  
With Ammon and the Israelites,  
And much I fear some danger may  
Beset the path thou tread'st. These deeds  
Of violence, and blood, and strife,  
Suit not a woman's heart. Jephthah,  
Stay here, I shall be happier.

JEPHTHAH.

'Tis ever thus with all thy sex,  
When glory beckons onward, then  
Would they, timid and shrinking, fain  
Forego the honor, for the fear.

TELAH.

Nay, Jephthah, nay, not so; at least,  
Not altogether so. Thou know'st  
In times of danger, woman may,  
Nerved by her love for those most dear,  
Be cool, and prompt, and ready, and  
Unflinching as a man; her mind  
As firm as his; her courage strong,  
And deathless even. But is't not this?  
Blood-glory hath no lure to tempt  
A woman's heart. In *that*, she sees  
Not the best good to those she loves,  
Nor yet the human race. Thus hath  
It been from the beginning, even;



Woman opposed to violence  
 And blood. *Man slays and woman  
 mourns.*

I'd fain persuade thee, Jephthah, from  
 This life of danger, toil and fear,  
 To quieter pursuits.

JEPHTHAH.

I do  
 Not bid thee, Telah, call thy maids,  
 And to thy loom and distaff, and  
 Thy 'broidery frames, as many a man  
 Might do. Attentively, I list  
 To all thou say'st, for pleasant is  
 Thy counsel ever unto me,  
 And all thy words of interest  
 Are sweet. Much do I owe to thee,  
 In that I've brought thee from thy friends,  
 And country, and thy kin, to this

Strange desert land, and linked so close  
Thy tender lovingness to my  
Rough ways. Too much of my lone life  
Thou'st cheered for me to turn away,  
Unheeding aught that thou would'st say.  
Fear not this strife of Ammon and  
The Israelites. I have no part  
In it. 'Tis true that Ammon hath  
Encroached still farther now. His host  
Hath camped in Gilead; so 'tis said,  
In Mizpeh's streets—a rumor brought  
The tidings yester-even—and yet  
Thou know'st, that tho' my brethren and  
All kindred of my tribe dwell there,  
*I* have no part among them, and  
*Their* quarrel is not *mine*. Yet tho'  
Cast out, an alien from my tribe,  
Can we not be as happy here,  
As if *we* dwelt in Gilead? Thou

And our sweet child, our Adah, dark-  
Eyed dove, are treasures quite enough  
For me, joined with the favor of  
Jehovah. He hath prospered me,  
And all to which I've put my hands,  
And spread my name abroad. 'Tis proof  
That He, whom I have served, hath work  
For me to do. 'T was thus of old  
*He* prospered those *He* set apart  
For great and worthy deeds. *Thou* dost  
Not shrink from duty, Telah, nor  
Would have *me* turn my back, when *He*  
Appoints the way?

TELAH.

Thou needest not  
To ask—and yet, I *would* we dwelt  
At peace with Gilead and thy kin.  
If they but knew thee as thou art,

They would admire and love, instead  
Of hating, and would bring thee home  
Again. My heart *is* sad whene'er  
I think of this estrangement, for  
A woman's nature yearns for love,  
And kindness from all those whom blood  
And duty make akin to her.  
So much, too, it affecteth *thee*, I grieve,  
For it hath warped thy mind, I fear  
Ofttimes, and made thee jealous, and  
Suspicious of thy kind: caused thee  
To set too high an estimate  
Upon men's thoughts of thee. What *was*  
Humility and faith, at first,  
*May* grow into *self*-confidence  
And *pride*; and right, pursued too far,  
Or with unholy motive, grow  
Into a wrong. That thus it *is*  
With thee, I know not; yet sometimes

I fear. *There is no sin*, thou know'st,  
Jehovah winketh at, and least  
In those, by whom he manifests  
His power. Jephthah, turn not away.  
Wrong, in exalted privilege,  
With signal punishment, our God  
Hath ever visited.

JEPHTHAH.

Thou read'st  
My secret thoughts, and canst not much  
Esteem him whom thou hast divined  
So well.

TELAH.

Because I *do* esteem  
*So much*—because I think *so well*  
Of Jephthah—that my fine gold is  
*So pure*, is why I'd have no *breath*  
Of *taint* upon it, and no *speck*

Of *rust corrode*.

'T is why I tell him all my mind,  
How that I fear, sometimes, it may  
Be needlessly, his mind is warped;  
Jehovah's favor is not all  
His heart desires; that he, too much,  
Cares for his fellow-men's esteem,  
And the world's honor. 'T is because  
I love, I fear. Love, as thou know'st  
Is anxious; hath a watchful heart,  
A vigilant eye, and, for the loved  
One, feels a coming evil, oft,  
Ere it arrives.

*(Enter an attendant, announcing guests.)*

ATTENDANT.

Some Gileadites are come, who crave  
An audience of Jephthah. Shall  
I bring them here?





*Interview with Jephthah.*



JEPHTHAH.

Aye, bring them here.

TELAH.

I will retire. (*She goes.*)

JEPHTHAH. (*Aside.*)

What can they want  
Of Jephthah? All these many years,  
Have I dwelt here unsought, uncared  
For, and despised. Why seek me now?

(*Enter Gileadites.*)

Why come ye, men of Gilead,  
This day, to me? Do ye not know  
That Jephthah hath no part among  
His father's sons? What errand is't  
That brings ye here?

GILEADITES.

We come to tell  
Thee of our sore distress. Thou know'st

How all the tribes of Israel, for  
These many years, have suffered: how  
Jair, the Gileadite, was Judge,  
And, dying, slept in Camon: how  
Th' Israelites turned to strange gods,  
Ashtaroth, and Baalim, and  
The gods of Zidon, and the gods  
Of Syria, of Moab, and  
The Philistines, and of the sons  
Of Ammon, too, and did forsake  
Jehovah, and no longer serve  
Him. Then his anger wax-ed hot  
Against his people, and he sold  
Them into the Philistines' hands  
For eighteen years—all Israel that  
Was in the land of Gilead and  
The Amorite. And now they've crossed  
The Jordan—those bold Ammonites  
To take *their* lands from Judah, and

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From Benjamin, and from the house  
Of Ephraim. *We are sore distressed.*

## JEPHTHAH.

It is an ancient crime, to turn  
Away from worshipping the true  
And living God, and to bow down  
To idols. Ye know that, all their days,  
Hath Israel done this thing, since first  
The golden calf was made within  
The wilderness of Sin, and all  
The people bowed them down to it.  
Grievous it is, and grievously  
The Lord hath ever punished it.

## GILEADITES.

We know: we know Israel *hath* sinned;  
But now unto Jehováh, God,  
We've turned, confessing we have sinned,

In that we've turned away from Him,  
And served Baalim.

JEPHTHAH.

And He bade  
Ye call upon the gods, whom ye  
Have chosen, to deliver you!  
'T was just.

GILEADITES.

And then we cried again, and turned  
Away from heathen gods, and with  
Clean hearts did serve the Lord, and we  
Besought him He would do what seemed  
Him good, but to deliver us from  
Our enemy, but this one time.  
And now we know He pitieth  
The wretchedness of Israel.  
The Ammonitish host, e'en now,  
A multitude, are gathered and

Encamped in Gilead, and we  
Th' Israelites, assembled are,  
Scarce twenty bow-shots from thy home  
In Mizpeh.

JEPHTHAH.

Why are ye come here,  
To tell these things to me? Long have  
I known what hath befallen them—  
Israel and Gilead. What is't  
To me? Ye know I have no part  
In Gilead. My brethren drove  
Me out, and said, "Thou shalt have no  
Inheritance with us." They could  
Not take Jehovah's favor, else  
Would they have *that* deprived me of.  
But He hath prospered me and I  
Have tried to serve Him. Valiant men  
Have gathered to me, and the tribes

## GILEADITES.

Therefore\*—thou sayest—it is  
Because we wronged thee, and did do  
That very thing. Therefore we turn  
Again to thee, and pray thee to  
Go with us and to fight the hosts  
Of Ammon; then to take thy place  
In Gilead's house, and be our head  
Over all the men of Gilead.  
Thou wilt not, Jephthah, be more just  
Than God? we turned to *Him* and *He*  
Hath pitied us.

## JEPHTHAH.

And if ye bring  
Me home again, to fight for you,

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\* It would seem not unlikely, from the reply of the men of Gilead to Jephthah's question, and the manner of his asking it, that some of his brethren were among them.—JUDGES XI: 7, 8.

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Against the hosts of Ammon, and  
If God, through me, deliver ye  
From out their hand, surely shall I  
Then be your head in Gilcad?

GILEADITES.

God be a witness between thee  
And us, if we do not, even  
According to thy words.

JEPHTHAH.

Then will  
I send my messengers, this day  
Unto th' Ammonitish king,  
Saying, "And what hast thou to do  
With me, that thou art come against  
Me now, to take away my land?  
When Israel wandering, came up out  
Of Egypt through the desert, then  
They asked of Sihon, king of all

The Amorites, saying, 'Let us pass,  
We pray thee, through thy land unto  
Our place.' But he then gathered up  
His men, and fought all Israel, and  
The God of Israel gave Sihon  
And all his people unto *them*,  
The host of his own Israelites.  
So they possessed the lands of all  
Those Amorites, from Arnon even  
Unto Jabbok's hill, and to the flood  
Of Jordan, from the wilderness.  
Take *thou* the land which Chemosh, *thine*  
*Own god*, hath given *thee* to possess,  
And thus will *we* possess even whom  
The *Lord, our God*, shall drive out from  
Before *our* face. While Israel dwelt  
In Heshbon, and her towns, and in  
Aroer and her villages,  
And in the cities, which grew up



Along the shores of Arnon for  
Three hundred years, why did ye not  
Recover them in all that time?  
I have not trespassed thus on thee.  
Thou doest wrong to war against  
Me now. The Lord, the Judge, <sup>BE</sup> Judge  
This day between the children of  
*His* Israel and the Ammonites.”  
Thus will I say to him, and send  
This day by some sure messenger.  
Then, peradventure, if the Lord  
Deliver Israel by my hand,  
I shall be head in Gilead.  
I'll be with ye anon. (*Exit Gileadites.*)

(*Soliloquizing.*) There's a  
Strong tie in blood. Affection may  
Be warm, and true, e'en unto death,  
But the affinity of blood

Is something different. Friendship  
speaks  
Sentiments of variance  
With zeal, and warmth, and earnestness,  
And blame, but is not friendship as  
Before. The bond will break, and what  
Remains is hollow mockery  
Of seeming only, and no more.  
Friendship mounts guard; observes the  
rules,  
The courtesies, civilities  
Conventionalities of life,  
But blood hath confidence in the  
Born tie that holds together all,  
And can dispense with forms.  
Friendship *asks* favors; blood *demand*s,  
And feels it hath a right. Friendship  
Aggrieved, can scarce converse about  
A wrong, but weightier grows th' offense,

And wider is the breach than 'twas  
At first; and confidence again  
Returneth, never as before.  
'Tis not in nature thus to be.  
But blood grows hot and leaps its bounds,  
And says hard words, and doeth wrong,  
E'en grievous wrong, but when the heat  
Of anger cools, and sorrow comes  
To him who said the words, and did  
The wrong, blood helpeth to forget,  
And to forget is to forgive.  
I know not yet, if *I* forgive;  
I know I've not forgotten, for  
The sting is here of all the taunts,  
And scorn, and wrong of earlier years.  
Yet sweet the triumph of the hour,  
And sweeter 'twill be, when I am  
Deliverer of Israel,  
And head of Gilead. I feel

The power struggling within me, and  
My confidence unshaken that  
Jehovah's might will manifest  
Itself in me, and Ammon shall  
Be driven from all the lands he hath  
Usurped. Hear me, O! Lord, thou God  
Of Israel, if, without fail,  
Thou shalt deliver to my hands  
The hosts of Ammon, then it shall  
Be, that whatever cometh forth  
From out the doors of mine own house  
To meet me, when, victorious, I  
Return in peace, a conqueror of  
The Ammonites, shall surely be  
The Lord's, and *I will offer it  
To Him for a burnt-offering.*

END OF SCENE FIRST.

## SCENE SECOND.

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*Jephthah sitting in the door of his tent, after the Ammonites are subdued, his face buried in his hands.*

JEPHTHAH.

*(He rises and walks, soliloquizing.)*

'Tis over now, the victory is fairly won;  
Victory, to me, in senses more than one.  
Jehovah nerved this arm. An Ammon-  
ite

No vantage hath to fight an Israelite.  
Baal-berith's strength, Baal-berith's  
mighty power,  
Fail, ere the cloud-drops dry upon the  
flower,

And scattered thousands, on the blood-  
stained earth,

Embrace the soil that gave them first  
their birth.

E'en twenty cities more are Israel's own,  
And through them Jephthah's name is  
proudly known;

That name once hated and cast out of  
men,

Who now entreat e'en Jephthah back  
again.

Oh! for this hour have I toiled and  
prayed,

And offerings on Jehovah's altar laid.

This hour, in fancy, have I thought so  
sweet,

None other could at all compare with it;  
The crowning moment of dull strug-  
gling years,



*Battle Scene.*





The hope made certain from the depth  
of fears.

'T is come at last, tho' tardily. No more  
An outcast, I may seek my father's door,  
Enter and be his child again; yea, claim  
My birthright, as the eldest of his name.  
Thanks to Jehovah! praise and glory be  
To Him who gave such joyful victory.

*(Enter Eber.)*

EBER.

Methought I heard thy signal calling me,  
My leader's summons should not be in  
vain.

JEPHTHAH.

I did not call, yet art thou welcome  
here.

Is all prepared for our departure, when  
The sun is risen in the east?

EBER.

All is prepared.

JEPHTHAH.

I am impatient now the conflict's past.  
Aroer, Minnith, and the towns between,  
E'en twenty cities of the Ammonites,  
Subdued, the country wrested from the  
foe,  
The plain of vineyards bounds our conquests now,  
And Ammon Israel need no longer fear.  
All's done which I have come to do,  
and now  
The land of Tob recalls my panting  
breast,  
And weary limbs to rest them there,  
awhile, [smile  
And two sweet faces I would fain see

In loving fondness as I come again.  
 Thou'rt ready, Eber?

EBER.

Ready! yes, my sire.  
 Pardon my boldness that I dare recall  
 Thy promise of the bliss that should be  
     mine  
 When this foray was over, won by  
     thee.  
 Surely thou canst not think I'd linger  
     here!  
 My thoughts will far outstrip the stately  
     march  
 My feet must keep among thy cooler  
     hosts  
 That have no promised bride to greet,  
 When Mizpeh opens to their coming  
     sight.

I would we went to-night, and need  
not wait  
The op'ning day.

JEPHTHAH.

Ah! youth is ever thus,  
Impatient of a short delay. It is a stern,  
Hard lesson, man must learn, to bide  
his time,  
Nor strive to hasten what betideth him.  
'Twill come, at last, be 't good or ill,  
and thou  
Wilt find many events thou 'dst fain  
delay;  
While there are others, that we wait so  
long,  
So anxiously, and with such feverish  
thought [while  
Boding, and brooding; hoping, fearing,

The heart, sick with its own impatience,  
 feeds  
 Upon itself, and eats its own core out,  
 Ere the desire 's accomplished. Such,  
 have I  
 Felt in the long and dreary years gone  
 by,  
 My son—for gladly shall I call thee so,  
 I have none other; thou and she are all—  
 These heart-sick feelings may'st thou  
 never know;  
 Nor canst thou, for thy lot will not be  
 mine,  
 Brave, cherished scion of a noble line.

ÆÆÆ.

Pardon my far presuming, if I ask  
 Hath Jephthah's name not been an  
 honored one,

Famed, among Gilead's hills, for valor  
and

Such wisdom as a leader well becomes?  
Did not men gather to his standard, and  
Did he not then instruct, reform and  
prove,

Not leader only, but their benefactor,  
too?

Taming their fierce hearts to a calm  
control,

Making them better, happier than be-  
fore?

Hath not the poor blessed Jephthah, as  
he passed,

And orphans' tears, and widows' grate-  
ful prayers,

Have they not, too, been offered up for  
thee?

And now, to thine inheritance restored,

Leader of Gilead's submissive hosts,  
*Thou, sure, art satisfied!*

JEPHTHAH.

Yea, satisfied.

It is for this I've toiled and planned so  
 long,  
 E'en from that hour of causeless wrong,  
 when they  
 Did say to Jephthah, in his father's house,  
 And he, that father, said not one faint  
 "Nay,"  
 "Begone!" \* \* \* \*

My heart hath nourished, in its secret  
 core,  
 Those taunting words, those gestures of  
 contempt,  
 Those haughty looks, when bent their  
 brows on me,

In bitter, biting scorn. Thou know'st  
not what

It is to feel one's self derided, mocked,  
Jeered at with insult, hatred, foulest  
wrong;

To bear gibes, sneers, and looks askant,  
that say

“Thou 'rt made of meaner, dirtier clay  
than we;”

While he that should protect thee with  
an arm

Of power, stands silently and coldly by,  
And not a glance of kindness warms his  
eye.

I hate the memory of those torturing  
years,

When oft with wild desire yet feeble hope  
I sought for kindly offices, yea, menial  
ones,



E'en abject servitude, if by it I might  
gain

But one approving glance, humbling  
myself

E'en to the very dust, and yet repelled  
As some loathed and degraded object,  
when

My soul was full of lofty thoughts, and  
full

And free forgiveness, melting love and  
joy

In my great, overmastering desire  
To be beloved; or less, kindly endured.

O! Eber, I have borne all this, and  
more;

And, in stern silence, nursed such bitter  
wrongs

As would have made me desperate,  
wert not

For those most precious ones, my wife  
and child;

And for the confidence *my time would  
come.*

'Tis *not what men may say of us that  
makes*

*Us vile: 'tis what we do.* The wrong  
must be

Within ourselves; lives out of sight oft-  
times,

And like the fruit of Sodom's apple, fair  
And good to outward view, the foul,  
black heart

Hath but the dust and ashes of deceit  
Within.

*(Enter Micah, first Captain of the Guard, with a  
respectful salute to Jephthah.)*

MICAH.

What disposition wilt thou that we make

Of all the prisoners to-night? Our band  
Is small, thou know'st.

JEPHTHAH.

See to 't they be secure.  
Let a strict watch be set of one in ten;  
Fewer might be unsafe: and let none  
    sleep  
Upon his post. Our band *is* small, be  
    sure,  
Some less than when we left our homes,  
    and yet  
Fewer are gone than we might have  
    supposed,  
Thanks to the justice of our cause and  
    that  
Great Power that hath protected us.  
    They 're safe—  
Our hostages, the chief men of the foe—

The Ammonites? They must be guarded with  
Untiring vigilance.

MICAH.

Enough, my lord,  
'Tis Kadesh hath the charge of them,  
and he  
Will not a whit abate his constant care.  
A desert lion is he to his prey, and none  
Shall plunder it from him. Escape  
Is scarcely possible, when he hath charge.  
His fierce eye never seems in need of  
sleep.

JEPHTHAH.

'Tis well; I know none I could better  
trust.

*(Turns away.)*

EBER, (*To Micah.*)

Say, Micah, wilt not thou rejoice, when  
 this  
 One night is over in this bloody land,  
 And we turn homeward to the quiet  
 shade,  
 And pleasant rest of Mizpeh's sheltering  
 walls?

MICAH.

Why, lad, art not afraid to tarry here?  
 Thou did'st use gloriously the bow and  
 spear,  
 And, for so young a lad, dost promise  
 well; [come?  
 Yet blenchest thou because the dark has

EBER.

Out on thee, Micah! Nay, ten thousand  
 nays.

Blanches my cheek nor at the dark, nor  
blood,  
Though thou dost taunt me with my  
youth  
And fear, a thing unknown to me. Thy  
age  
Protects thee, else should'st thou repent  
thy taunts.  
Surely there is no wrong that I'll rejoice  
To tread once more in Mizpeh's streets.  
My home  
Is there. (*Turns and walks indignantly away.*)

JEPHTHAH.

Nay, Eber, curb thy heart of fire:  
Remain.

MICAH. (*Aside.*)

A hot head truly! I had best take care.  
(*Loud to Jephthah.*)

What preparations for the morning shall  
we make?

JEPHTHAH.

None, save to start at rising sun.  
Let a picked company of archers lead  
The way. Next, march the prisoners,  
two and two,  
And spearmen close behind. The  
wounded then,  
In litters take the way, while all the  
rear  
Shall covered and protected be, of right,  
By the most trusty of my veteran band.

MICAH.

Thou art determined that our pris'ners  
keep  
Their lives secure?—the Ammonitish  
king

And his chief men, by whose advice he  
brought  
This war on Israel? Is 't well, my lord?  
Our fathers did not so. The heathen  
they  
Spared not, but slew them, small and  
great.

## JEPHTHAH.

Micah, thou dost forget thyself, yet for  
Past services, I overlook thy forward-  
ness.  
Thou art a veteran, brave and trusty,  
too,  
And so I tell thee that we war not with  
A fallen foe to practice cruelty.  
These hostages are better for the peace  
Of Gilead than if all their necks were  
merged



In one, and severed at a blow. Know'st  
not

That mercy, oftentimes, availeth more  
Than strict, nay, even just severity?

*We* have not fought as Joshua, at God's  
Command, to drive the heathen from  
the land,

But to repel encroachment, and when  
they

Who did the thing, submit, it is enough.

MICAH.

Thou dost command our forces by the  
way?

JEPHTHAH.

Even so: I lead our brave victorious  
band

To Mizpeh's gates, and there dismiss  
them to

Their homes. But the picked guard I  
leave to march  
With the poor sufferers in this bloody  
fray,  
And our illustrious prisoners will be  
Commanded by this noble youth. (*Aside.*)  
'Tis time  
He try his powers, if he be worthy of  
the prize  
I've promised him. (*To Eber.*) Eber, upon  
the way  
See thou the Ammonitish king, and all,  
Be treated generously, and yet take care  
He be most strictly watched in word  
and deed.

EBER.

I fear thy captains will not like to be  
Subjected to my orders. One so young

Hath not enough experience to be  
Thus trusted, thus exalted over all  
The brave, tried followers of thy veteran  
band.

Wilt please thee, name some other one?

MICAH. (*Aside.*)

Beshrew  
Me, but the lad has sense. If 'twere  
not for  
Such modest airs no step of mine should  
stir, [dawn.  
To do his bidding, at the morrow's

JEPHTHAH.

Eber, I will thou take the lead. I'll  
have  
No other one. Look to it, Micah, that  
All yield obedience to him as if  
It were myself. Dost hear?

MICAH.

Dost think

Me deaf? I hear as well as any one.  
I know my duty, too, and shall not fail  
To do it.

EBER.

Micah, thou hear'st what  
Jephthah says: [struct  
Thou must be privy counsellor, and in-  
Me as to all that I must say and do.  
Then 'twill be well: I have great con-  
fidence  
In thee.

MICAH.

I'll do it, lad. Thy judg-  
ment's good. (*Aside.*)  
I'm quite content. (*To Jephthah.*) Hast any  
more commands?

JEPHTHAH.

Send Hezron here. (*Exit Micah: enter Hezron.*)

(*To Hezron.*) The wounded, how  
are they?

HEZRON

Some better, and some worse.

JEPHTHAH.

The litters, for  
To-morrow's use,—are they all ready  
now?

HEZRON

All are made ready, or will be before  
We sleep.

JEPHTHAH.

'T is well. And can all be  
removed?

HEZRON.

All can who live.

JEPHTHAH.

Then some are dead  
and some  
Must die? Who are they, Hezron, who?

HEZRON.

Even now  
They pile the earth on Asher's noble  
son,  
And cover Menon's glorious face. Ke-  
dar's  
Life slowly ebbs away. The arrow  
points,  
The spears, have done their deadly work.  
All else  
Are doing well.

JEPHTHAH. (*Covering his face.*)

Alas! my friends: how dear  
Were they to me. My counsellors are  
gone.

I would they might have died in Miz-  
poh. Oh!

'Tis hard to leave them here.

(*He crosses the stage two or three times, then says:*)

Our wounded ones—  
Thou'lt see all is prepared to shield  
from pain

And suffering by the way? Eber has  
charge

Whene'er 'tis needful for their comfort-  
ing,

To stay the band till they would fain  
proceed.

HEZRON

Thou 'rt mindful, Jephthah, more than  
is thy wont:  
Thou 'st left these things to me before.

JEPHTHAH.

So now  
I do, but I am sick of blood. Go now,  
I trust thee, as I ever did. (*To Eber.*) To  
rest:  
A few short hours of calm repose will  
fit  
Us better for to-morrow's toil.

END OF SCENE SECOND.



## SCENE THIRD.

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*Time, sunset. A room opening upon a balcony facing the west. Telah and Adah alone.*

ADAH.

MOTHER, hast seen the sky more bright,  
At golden sunset, than to-night?  
See'st thou, how every quivering leaf  
Stands out in delicate relief  
Against the sky beyond, unrolled  
Like some rich curtain's ample fold?  
See, too, my gentle flowers, how they  
Turn round to watch the close of day.  
It seems as if, like me, they've power  
T' enjoy the beauty of the hour.

There, softly creeping, Arnon's rills  
Wind at the foot of Gilead's hills,  
Twining, like silver threads, around  
The base of each sun-lighted mound.  
Dost thou not love to gaze, like me,  
On all this gorgeous tracery,  
As, gloriously, the weary sun  
Sinks to his rest, when day is done?  
In such an hour as this, would I,  
Dear mother, lay me down to die;  
Pillow my head, at close of day,  
And pass, with sunset's light, away.

## TELAH.

Surely it is a glorious sight,  
And much I love its varied light,  
Replete with fondest memory,  
And thoughts of hope and love for  
thee;

But now my heart is far away.  
Where is thy father, child, to-day?  
A weight seems pressing on me here—  
I hope the best, yet greatly fear  
That in this conflict, some strong arm  
May chance to do him serious harm.

ADAH.

Oh! mother, let such fears depart,  
They 're but a sickness of the heart,  
Because he 's gone so far from home:  
Thou wilt be happier when he 's  
come.

Jehovah's arm hath power, we know,  
To shield from every deadly blow.  
To Baalim, nor Ashtaroth, we  
Have never learned to bow the knee,  
And Israel's God, in whom we trust,  
Is merciful, as well as just.

But why this new and fearful war  
That calls my father off so far?  
Why at the head of Gilead fight?  
Surely, he 's not a Gileadite?

TELAH. (*As if communing with herself.*)

Yea, formerly he hath been one:—  
Of Gilead, he 's the eldest son.

ADAH.

Then why dwell here, dear mother, say,  
From his inheritance away?  
Each Israelitish son hath space  
Allotted for a dwelling-place,  
And why should he forswear his home,  
Within the wilderness to roam?  
The desert land of Tob is not,  
Like Canaan's soil, a favored spot.  
And why did Gilead let him come?  
His first-born son should dwell at home,

To cheer his sire's remaining space  
Of life; then take his place.  
Like foolish Esau, he hath not  
His privilege so much forgot  
That he should sell his birthright, and  
Become a stranger in the land

TELAH.

He had no birthright.

ADAM.

And yet thou  
Didst say, my mother, even now,  
That he was Gilead's first-born son!

TELAH.

E'en so. What hath been done is done.  
The wrongs thy father's youth befell,  
Thy grandsire's shame, that I should  
tell.

It fitteth not, at least not now,  
For on that fair and open brow  
Thus early, it were sure to fling  
Too much of sorrow's saddening;  
Nor would I, with harsh memories,  
Make lonelier such hours as these.

ADAH.

I'll try to yield obedience,  
But scarce can drive the feeling hence  
To beg of thee to gratify,  
This once, my curiosity;  
For faint remembrances come o'er  
Th' inquiring mind of scenes of yore:  
Of hard-browed men that gathered  
    round,  
With voices threatening in their sound:  
Of fleeing to the wilderness  
To find us, there, a resting-place:—

Of other men, too, one by one,  
Adding to Jephthah's strength their own,  
Till, leader of a mighty clan,  
They called him a most valiant man.  
I've sometimes thought these things a  
dream—

For all such memories are dim—  
But once, when in our garden-bower,  
My father spent a lonely hour  
Scanning the ground, with downcast  
eyes,

I thought to give a glad surprise,  
So stole around, with noiseless step,  
While on the ground his eyes he kept,  
And communed with himself, as if  
His heart was overcharged with grief.

TELAM.

But he said nothing, did he?

ADAH.

Yea.

TELAH.

Thou didst not listen?

ADAH.

Surely, nay,  
At least, not meaningly; but I  
Was there, thinking to catch his eye  
Beaming with smiles, and hear him say  
How is my little girl to-day?  
So waiting, there I stood,—

TELAH.

And he  
Talked with himself, and not with thee?  
Thou should'st have come away.

ADAH.

I know  
I ought, but did not then.



TELAH.

And so  
Thou heard'st him talk—of what?

ADAH.

'T was of the past he spake: I thought  
He called it dread and bitter past,  
And wished Oblivion might cast  
Her mantle over it, that he  
Might all forget its memory:  
That his was but an outcast's name,  
Born to a heritage of shame;  
Reproaches to endure from those  
Who should be friends, but were his  
foes;  
And that they yet should gladly claim  
Kindred with Jephthah's hated name.  
What more he said I did not hear,  
For, trembling with an unknown fear,

I turned away, marveling much  
What dread calamity could touch  
The secret springs that caused to flow  
So bitterly those words of woe.  
I wondered what dark heritage  
Of shame could cloud his manly age;  
If he had wronged his kinsmen, or  
What else his heart was grieving for,  
And yet no injury, I knew,  
To friend or foe, could Jephthah do.  
But who they were that yet should  
claim,  
Gladly, connexion with his name,  
I now can guess.

TELAH.

How didst thou learn?

ADAH.

Theirs are the faces darkly stern,

Of those who, in my memory yet  
Remain freshly as if I met  
Them every day. I do, at night,  
Oft see them in my dreams,—the fright  
Wakes me in terror, and I shroud  
My face, and almost weep aloud.

TELAH.

I told thee naught.

ADAH.

Save thou didst say  
That *he* was Gilead's son; and they  
Are his younger brethren. Is't not so?

TELAH.

Thou hast conjectured right—and know  
The time, of which he spake, is come:  
Entreatingly called home, by those  
Thou heard'st him mention as his foes,

He, even now, their leader, fights  
Against th' encroaching Ammonites.

ADAH.

Mother, thy words encourage me;  
Wilt thou not tell me who was she  
That gave him birth?

TELAH.

She was no Jew  
Of Jacob's line, but lineage drew  
From outcast Ishmael. The sire  
Of thine saw her and loved. Desire  
Sprung up—no law had made them one,  
And yet the fruit—

ADAH.

Was what?

TELAH.

A son.

ADAH.

Long, long have I conjectured this,  
That some such sad remembrances  
Clouded my father's cheerless past,  
And darkness, o'er his future cast;  
Yet scarcely deemed such mark of shame  
Was stamped upon my father's name;  
That God's own courts, to enter in,  
He could not, so defiled with sin.  
Ere this such truth I should have heard:  
Innocently I may have erred,  
But then thou knowest, and canst tell,  
If thou hast conned this matter well.

TELAH.

To none, my child, has wrong been  
done,  
And, least of all, to Eslon's son.  
God, in his mercy, gave to us

No sons to feel this dreaded curse,  
But one dear child, whose progeny  
From all such stain is counted free.

ADAH.

Then will I grieve o'er it no more,  
The past no sorrow can restore.  
But what of her—dear mother, say,  
Hath yet the earth-worm claimed its  
    prey?  
Far better fate than it would be  
To lead such life of misery.

TELAH.

She was forsaken soon and spurned  
By him whose flattering tongue had  
    learned  
Her heart to throb with feelings wild  
For one whose passion had beguiled

---

Her into sin. She sought return  
To her own country, there to mourn,  
Till death should come, the final loss  
Of that to which all else is dross.  
Nor long did she her frailty weep,  
And tearful vigils nightly keep,  
But like those clouds, at close of day,  
Gently and calmly passed away.  
O'er her cold corse fresh flowers they  
    strewed,  
And, with their tears, her grave bedewed,  
For she was fair and beautiful  
As roses that we love to cull,  
And like a bud, with canker worn,  
Or from its stem that's rudely torn,  
She faded in her loveliness,  
Yet lives in *their* remembrances  
Who knew her ere her heart was crushed,  
And its sweet music sadly hushed.

ADAH.

And then my grandsire took a wife?

TELAH.

He did before; and bitter strife  
Was mingled with each household  
word,

While angry thoughts and feelings  
stirred

The breasts of those *she* bare to him,  
And, with success, they strove to dim  
A father's love for his first-born,  
That they, with words of biting scorn,  
Might cast him out. The deed was done,  
The father sanctioned, and the son  
Warned to depart, while tauntingly  
They jeered him with fierce mockery;  
Scoffed at his birth, saying "The son  
Of a strange woman should be gone:"



Nay, more; with brutal violence  
 They *thrust* him out, and *drove* him  
 thence.

\*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*       \*

Aye! there are words that tear apart  
 The fibers of the crushing heart;  
 That stretch its fragile strings so much  
 They burst asunder, at a touch;  
 That sweep its gentle chords of song  
 With floods of grief so wild and  
     strong,  
 That harsh, discordant sounds alone  
 Swell forth, in place of happier tone;  
 Yea, that, with master-passion fraught,  
 Drive out each sweet and peaceful  
     thought,  
 Till perish all the flowers of feeling,  
 Its naked depths alone revealing.

ADAH.

Mother, they 're past, those dreary years  
Of insult, wrong, and burning tears,  
And now the wronged one, with his calm  
And quiet dignity, like the palm,  
Judea's stately emblem, soon will be  
Ruler of Gilead, for victory  
Shall crown his efforts, and all they  
Who mocked at him shall feel his sway;  
His mild and gentle yet decided rule  
That bows the trusting heart and leaves  
    it full  
Of meek submission, timid love and awe,  
To find his slightest wish, his look, a  
    law.  
How my glad thoughts go springing forth  
    to meet  
My precious sire, whose every wish 't is  
    sweet

For me, at all times, gladly to obey.  
 Mother, how lonely 'tis, when he's away;  
 The house is desolate, the dusky walls  
 Sad echoes whisper, as my footstep falls  
 Lightly upon the stone-paved courts  
 and I  
 Hear solemn wailings in each night-bird's  
 cry.  
 The bulbul, 'mid the clumps of roses,  
 where  
 The fountain throws its spray upon the air,  
 Weeps mournful plaining at the midnight  
 hour  
 From out the fragrance of her fav'rite  
 bower,  
 And my sad heart seems shrouded with  
 its own  
 Dismal forebodings, when we're thus  
 alone.

TELAM.

Cheer thee, my child—patiently hope  
the best,

The hour is drawing nigh for nightly  
rest.

Thou'rt weary and dispirited, sweet  
child,

And the dark tale, I told thee, hath  
beguiled

No one of those dark shadows from a  
brow

Where they've too often cast their gloom,  
ere now.

Throw them aside, and that thy happy  
dreams

May be as sunlight on the flashing streams  
Of fair Judea's soil, thy lute bring here,  
And pour its melody within my ear,  
To charm *my* boding heart of all *its* fear.

ADAH.

Wilt listen, mother, while I sing?

TELAH.

Ah, yes,  
For ever had thy voice a power to  
    bless  
From the first hour its feeble wail was  
    heard,  
And all a mother's love my bosom  
    stirred,  
Up to this night of painful solitude,  
When dark'ning shadows drape the fading  
    wood,  
And settle gloomily upon my soul.  
Yea, sing; music may yet control  
The fiercely struggling powers as I shall  
    hear  
Thy pleasant melodies fall on my ear.

*(Adah claps her hands and a young girl enters.)*

ADAH.

Miriam, bring hither now thy lute and  
play  
Thy choicest melodies, to drive our gloom  
away.  
Meanwhile, to thy accompanying, I'll  
sing.

*(Miriam retires for a moment, and, returning, begins  
a prelude on her instrument. Adah sings, Miriam  
accompanying.)*

ADAH AND MIRIAM.

SONG.

O! why should hearts be sad  
When there's so much to glad?  
When earth, so bright and fair,  
Should charm our every care?

Judea's vales are green,  
Judea's skies, serene,  
Judea's maidens, fair,  
Her sons brave, every-where.

## CHORUS.

Then let our hearts, to-night,  
Beat high, with pulses light,  
And glad the fleeting hours  
With music, joy, and flowers.

## SONG.

Judea's sons will toil  
For honor's goodly spoil,  
And with the bold and free  
Wait glorious destiny.  
Judea's maidens, fair,  
Sustain, with loving care,  
Daughter, sister, and wife,  
The crowning gift of life.

## CHORUS.

Then let our hearts, to-night,  
Beat high, with pulses light,  
And glad the fleeting hours  
With music, love, and flowers.

## ADAH.

Sadly my voice seemeth to jar  
With all such bright imagining;  
I turn to him, who still afar,  
I'd fain to this lone circle bring

## SONG.

Night draweth on and we're alone  
Within a stranger land,  
We long to see and cling to thee,  
Grasping thy friendly hand;  
Father, come home.



The sighing breeze sweeps thro' the  
trees

With such a dreary sound,  
I turn my head to list thy tread:  
Thou art not to be found;  
Father, come home.

The sun's last ray, athwart the way,  
Lengthens the plane-tree's shade,  
While evening's gloom steals thro' the  
room,  
And darkness fills the glade;  
Father, come home.

The tinkling bells, adown the dells,  
Where browsing camels stray,  
With drowsy chime, recall the time,  
When thou wert not away;  
Father, come home.

Sad are our hearts when day departs,  
And twinkling stars appear,  
With milder light, to rule the night,  
Whispering thou art not here;  
Father, come home.

*(An attendant enters, and, with a low obeisance, hands a missive to Telah. She clips the thread and reads aloud.)*

“Rejoice with me, my loved ones there,  
The strife is ended. I prepare  
E’en now to take my homeward way,  
Victor in this most mighty fray.  
Aroer, Minnith, twenty cities yield  
To Gilead on the bloody field.  
*His* arm gave strength, our foes to over-  
come,  
Those Ammonites, and now for joy and  
home!”

TELAH.

Miriam, it is the hour for evening service,  
 call  
 Our minstrels to come hither, one and  
 all,  
 To join together in a glorious song  
 For all Jehovah's done. To him be-  
 long  
 Deep gratitude for what *His* hand hath  
 wrought;  
 That through a land with danger thickly  
 fraught  
*He* hath preserved the husband, father,  
 friend,  
 And master: praise to Jehovah without  
 end.

*(Miriam retires to execute Telah's commands, and  
 Adah resumes her singing.)*

ADAH.

*His* hand kept thee, unscathed and free,  
Through all war's wild alarm,  
And we'll rejoice, with heart and voice,  
To greet thee, free from harm;  
Father, come home.

*(Musicians enter and arrange themselves, and Telah addresses them.)*

TELAH. *(To the musicians.)*

Your boldest, gladdest strains to-night  
will be [and me,  
The most approved by this young maid  
Jephthah, unharmed, in a few days will  
come  
To greet us all within our quiet home,  
For signal victory his arms hath crowned,  
And Gilead gains the wide-spread  
country round;

And now, proud Israel's ruler, he,  
From such a conquest, is most sure to be.

## SONG.

On they came with power and might,  
Like a torrent of the night,  
And they struggled in the fight,  
But Jehovah's mighty hand  
Scattered the presumptuous band,  
And *He* drove them from the land.

*One voice chanting.*—Trust in Jehovah, for *He* is mighty, and His mercy endureth forever.

All the efforts made, must fail  
Of the gods, that rule the vale  
Chemosh, Ashtaroth and Baal.  
Of Jehovah's power we tell  
With the victories that befell  
Wandering, chosen Israel.

*Voice chanting.*—Trust in Jehovah, &c.  
Earth must yield her to *His* nod,  
Princes bow and kiss *His* rod,  
Heathen nations own *Him* God,  
Mighty, merciful and just,  
Hurling nations to the dust  
When they cease in *Him* to trust

*Voice chanting.*—Trust in Jehovah, &c.  
Yet the lowliest ever may  
Feel His mighty arm their stay,  
As they travel on their way;  
So, to no vain idol cling,  
But the heart's pure offering  
To Jehovah-jireth bring.

*Voice chanting.*—Trust in Jehovah, for  
He is mighty, and His mercy endureth  
forever.

END OF SCENE THIRD.

## SCENE FOURTH.

---

*Jephthah, a few followers with him, approaching his home in Mizpeh. He dismisses them.*

JEPHTHAH.

Go, now, my tried and trusty followers,  
And as each one shall take his homeward  
    way,  
May ye, arrived, in mercy find 't is well  
With those ye left behind. E'en so, with  
    me,  
That I find, too, all's well within the  
    walls  
That hold my heart's most precious ones.  
    Farewell.

---

*(They disappear in different directions, and he soliloquizes.)*

Why sinks my heart with such chill  
weight of dread?  
Why shake my knees, as if no strength  
were left  
In this strong, stalwart frame, as I do  
look  
Upon the sheltering boughs above the  
roof  
Where dwell my treasures all? My eyes  
are dim;  
They have no power to look at those  
gray walls  
That pen my little fold—the youngling  
and  
Its dam.—Home! sweetest spot of all  
the earth.  
A few more eager steps, and I am there;



Yet something still those longing steps  
restrains.

What if she haste to meet me here?—  
or that

Dear one, my other self? Oh! would  
't were past

That I might know the worst, and know-  
ing, fear

No more. Uncertainty! how dread the  
thought

Of what this hand may be compelled  
to do.

*(Music is heard, and Adah comes with tabrets and  
dances to meet him.)*

'T is she! 't is she! My one ewe lamb!  
Oh, this

Is more than I can bear! Most duti-  
ful

And loving child of all Judea's maids,

She comes, with signs of overmastering  
joy,  
To greet her sire, who dooms his child  
to death  
In all her virgin innocence! Punished!  
And more, for all my wild ambition  
now.

*(Adah, seeing his wild, disordered looks and torn  
garments, stops.)*

ADAH.

O! Father, speak to me.

*(Jephthah, having covered his face with his hands,  
as if to shut her from his sight, stands motion-  
less.)*

He will not speak,  
He will not look at me!

JEPHTHAH.

I can not, for  
My heart is burst with grief.





*Jephthah's Return.*

ADAM.

Who speaks of grief,  
Returning from such signal victory?  
Leader of Gilead—

JEPHTHAH.

O! name it not—  
Most hateful thought that ever crossed  
my brain.

ADAM.

Greatly rejoiced my mother dear and I  
To hear the tidings of thy messenger,  
And scarce have slept for very joy, that  
thou  
Wast safe from all the dangers that beset  
Thy path among such deadly foes.  
Thou com'st,  
And with a daughter's loving tenderness

And overflowing sympathy, with what  
I deemed thy great, full joy at this that  
shall

Exalt thee over Gilead, I haste  
To meet thee with a gladdened step.

Not one

Embrace! no father's fond, warm kiss!  
nor one

Sweet word of loving welcome! O! not  
e'en

A look! O! father, what means this?  
When thou

Hast come from off the hills with all  
thine armed

Men proudly at thy back, with valor  
flushed,

Thou'st bade me to thy arms, as if  
't were joy

Beyond the battle's victory, to clasp

Thy child again. But now, thou heed'st  
me not!

JEPHTHAH.

My daughter, thou hast brought me very  
low.

ADAH.

I, father!

JEPHTHAH.

Thou 'rt one of them that trouble me.

ADAH.

What have I done? Thou dost not hate  
me now?

It can not be! Thou lov'st me, father?

Say

But that, and I can bear it all!

JEPHTHAH.

Love thee,  
My precious child!—yea, better than  
my life.

ADAH.

I knew 't was so, yet thou didst look so  
cold;  
Had no kind word of greeting for mine  
ear—  
I have done naught to anger thee?

JEPHTHAH.

Nay, nay—  
Thou never didst, my own sweet child.  
Thou gav'st  
Me never slightest cause for grief, till now.

ADAH.

Why now? Pray tell me all. Strong  
' in thy love,



And in the sweet assurance of such  
 cheering words,  
 I'm ready for the worst. Fear not for  
 me.  
 'T were better over. Let the pang, I  
 pray, be short.

JEPHTHAH.

I've opened to the Lord my mouth; I  
 can  
 Not now go back——

ADAH.

My father, if unto the Lord, thy God,  
 Thou 'st opened thy mouth, do unto me  
 According to the vow thy lips have made,  
 For on our enemies, the Ammonites,  
 His vengeance hath he taken by thy  
 hand.

JEPHTHAH.

My child, thou break'st my heart!

ADAH.

Nay, father, nay—  
My disobedience and disregard  
Of all Jehovah's laws *would* break thy  
heart.

Do I not owe to thee my life? And  
should  
That life be dearer to me than the  
right?

Than Jephthah's full approval of his  
God?

I'm Jephthah's child, his only one, and  
should

Men say in Israel: "She did defy  
The law, mocked at her father's words;  
set them

At naught?" That were far worse than  
 death, for God,

*Thy* God, hath armed thy right hand  
 with *His* power;—

Hath smote thine enemies before thy  
 face,

E'en as thou asked. And now, shall we  
 withhold

That which thy lips did promise unto  
*Him?*

We *dare* not mock Him thus: a jealous  
 God

He is, and the iniquity of him

That doeth wrong shall be (thou know'st  
 the law)

Upon his children surely visited.

I could not then escape. 'T is not so  
 great

A sacrifice.

JEPHTHAH.

O! say not so! My all,  
And nothing else. O, reckless vow!  
O, wild  
Ambition to be first, where I have been  
Spurned and insulted! Mad desire to  
show  
Jehovah's power in me; that *He* ap-  
proved  
The banished brother, unacknowledged  
son!  
Pride! pride! the great archangel's  
damning sin,  
That drove him out of Paradise! Ah,  
me!  
My punishment, like Cain's, is more  
than I  
Can bear. He slew his brother, only; I  
Must kill my child.

· ADAH.

Not thus did Job bewail  
His children slain, his wealth all rifled  
in

An hour. Not thus did faithful Abra-  
ham,

When God, to try his faith, commanded  
him

To take his only son, the promised seed,  
To lone Moriah's steep, and offer him  
Upon its heights, a smoking sacrifice.

Yea, father, in Jehovah, God, trust now  
As thou hast ever done: He doeth right.

JEPHTHAH.

I thank thee for those words. 'T is the  
one drop

That 's pleasant in this cup of bitterness,  
That hopeful thought of holy Abraham.

God did provide the lamb: He may  
again.

ADAM.

Nay, nay, I meant not that—only that  
he

Did not bewail or hesitate, when God  
Commanded him to take his only son,  
The promised seed, in whom all nations  
should

Be blessed, and bind him to the ready  
pile.

I had forgot the rest.

JEPHTHAH.

And so should I.  
Daughter, I am rebuked. God did but  
try

His faith. I must be punished for my  
sin,

For that desire of exaltation, so intense  
That it forgot all else.

*(Adah makes no reply, but stands with one hand over her eyes, her head bent down in a thoughtful attitude. Jephthah noticing it, and seeing she makes no reply to what he has said, gloomily continues, as if to himself.)*

I wonder not she has no word for me.

ADAH.

I have; I have. What askest thou?  
My mind  
Was buried in its thoughts.

JEPHTHAH.

And I would ask  
What were those thoughts?

ADAH.

Of death, of leaving thee,  
My mother, all I love; to be no more.

Of the dark grave, and what a contrast  
in  
My early youth to lay me down within  
Its narrow walls, shut from the glorious  
light  
Of heaven; and for companionship,  
instead  
Of thee and her, the greedy, gloating  
worm.

JEPHTHAH, (*weeping.*)

Go on.

ADAH.

The shivering cold for warmth, darkness  
For light, silence for pleasant sounds,  
these limbs,  
Rigid and still, instead of airy life's  
Quick, varied movements; and drear  
loneliness



For most beloved companionship. Yet  
think

Not that I shrink, appalling though it  
be—

*Right must be done, what'er the cost to me.*

I have no fear; like Job, I, too, can say,  
“Though worms devour this skin of  
mine, yet in

My flesh shall I see God.” Father, thy  
vow

Must be fulfilled! Yet make I one  
request.

JEPHTHAH.

Thou couldst ask nothing that I would  
not grant.

ADAH.

Give me, I pray thee, two short months,  
in which

I may prepare me for my fate. Thou  
know'st  
What was to be. I did look forward to  
The time, my height of joy should be  
to make  
Another happy, and I thought too  
much,  
It may be, of the bliss that should be  
mine  
When yet another should dwell in our  
home,  
Alike beloved by *her* and *thee* and me,  
And sons and daughters should be born  
to thee  
In place of those Jehovah had denied  
To thine own wedlock. No sweet,  
cherub lip,  
Pressed close to mine, shall ever call  
me by

That dearest name that woman ever  
bore.

I'll not repine; my grief is not my own:  
'T is *thine*, and *hers*, and his. O, God!  
for *him*—

JEPHTHAH.

My daughter, Adah, wilt thou break  
my heart?

ADAH.

Nay, father, nay; but I do think of  
him,—

Eber, in all his young and joyous years  
Doomed to be desolate; to bear a heart  
Widowed, bereaved, just as he enters on  
Life's opening threshold; his bright  
morning sky

Beclouded ere life's sun had fairly risen.

Thou wilt console him; let him be to  
thee  
E'en as he would have been, although  
no bride  
His yearning heart find here. Thou 'lt  
promise this?

JEPHTHAH.

I promise all. Say on. Ask what thou  
wilt.

ADAH.

My mother loves me, father. O! how  
can  
She bear to be alone? Her child reft  
from  
Her arms, and none to dwell with her:  
alone!  
Oh! comfort her.

JEPHTHAH.

And who shall comfort me?  
 Thou think'st of all, of every one but  
 me.

Hast thou no love for me? Shall *I* not,  
 too,  
 Be left alone? Will not *my* home be  
 dark?—

*My* heart be desolate? Hast thou no  
 love  
 For *me*, my child?

ADAH.

Ah, yes, too much for all.  
 Forgive me if I thought of others first,  
 Each is so dear; it is so hard to feel  
 I can no longer have a place among  
 Ye all; can come no more with heart  
 so full

Of gushing love, to cheer in sorrow,  
soothe  
In suffering hours, and be a part of all,  
In joy or grief.

JEPHTHAH.

Look, Adah; there she comes!  
How shall I meet her? Oh! how break  
To her this woe?

ADAH.

I will away, I can  
Not meet her now. Thy blessing, once  
more,  
Father, on thine Adah's head.

*(She kneels. He places his hand on her head. Telah comes in full view, as he does it, and the curtain drops.)*

END OF SCENE FOURTH.





*Mourning over the Grave.*



## Scene Fifth.

---

*“And the daughters of Israel went out, four days in the year, to mourn and lament for her.”*

*Scene—the mountain, with trees and rocks. A green mound, under which are the remains of Jephthah's daughter. To one side, and partially hidden, is Eber, the betrothed of Adah, bowed under a covering of sackcloth. From the opposite side of the stage advance six maidens, clad in white robes, carrying baskets of flowers, and singing as they come.*

MAIDENS.

SONG.

Here we come, a band of maidens,  
 To these lonely rocks and glades;  
 Bright the blue sky bends above us,  
 Cool and green, the leafy shades.

Come we here to mourn a lost one,  
Loved and lost one to bewail:  
Fitting spot for lamentation  
O'er our lost one of the vale.

It was here she was lamenting,  
Till two moons had paled and gone,  
Gaining strength, and faith, and courage,  
In these solitudes, alone.

On the mountain, where she perished,  
Where she spent those lonely days,  
Every year we come to mourn her,  
Come, this noble maid to praise.

*(They discover Eber sitting on the far side of the mound. He slowly raises the sackcloth from his face, and they see who it is. A maiden speaks.)*

MAIDEN.

Comest thou here to mourn and weep,  
Eber? Worthy was she that's here  
Beneath this lonely mound.

EBER.

Ye come

But once a year, for she was naught  
 To you but a sweet friend. To me  
 My sun, my life—my every thing;  
 And I come—when, I scarcely know,  
 Nor, yet, how long I stay. There is  
 No joy remaining, now, save here  
 To bow by this green mound and  
 feel

I shall be with her soon. How long!  
 How long! Oh, cruel vow! Was  
 He,

The God of mercy, pleased with such  
 A sacrifice?

MAIDEN

Eber, thou griev'st  
 As one that hath no hope.

EBER.

Grief is  
No name for all the pangs I feel;  
For, with such love as I have borne,  
'T is the survivor dies. Long woe,  
With ecstasy of torture, kills  
At last—but O! how long. No death  
The dying hath, like unto that  
The living feels, to wander on  
Alone; of all earth's joys bereft—  
Its glorious sun extinct; life's light  
To darkness turned, and all its flowers  
To noxious weeds; the poor, numb soul,  
Unknowing when 't is change of day,  
Or night, or seasons, e'en. The crushed,  
Torn heart-strings, rent away from all  
About which twined their joy,  
Lie trampled, bleeding, thrilled with  
pain,

And yet there's no desire to take  
 Them up, and soothe, and nurse them  
 back

To ease, and strength, and life again.  
 The once glad, joyous heart, bound-  
 ing

In youthful gladsomeness, crushed down,  
 A heavy lead-like thing within  
 The bosom's core, which ne'er again  
 Uplifts itself, but slowly wears  
 Its lingering tenement away,  
 Mourning a form that hath none,  
 and

A voice it can not hear.

*(He slowly moves away.)*

*(Six voices chanting separately, as numbered.)*

FIRST VOICE.

Joy beamed in her eye as she went forth  
 to meet him.

SECOND VOICE.

Skill born of her gladness brought mirth  
from the tabret.

THIRD VOICE.

Fleet moved her light steps in the joy  
of his coming.

FOURTH VOICE.

She met him; her eye beamed no longer  
in brightness.

FIFTH VOICE.

Dropped quickly her fingers, forgetting  
their cunning.

SIXTH VOICE.

And stayed were the steps that had  
bounded in gladness.

FIRST VOICE.

But paled not the cheek of the maid as  
she listened.

SECOND VOICE.

Her people were saved—she was ready  
to perish.

THIRD VOICE.

Meek, bent the young head in its quiet  
submission.

FOURTH VOICE.

O! daughter of Jephthah, most worthy  
of honor.

FIFTH VOICE.

Nor daughter of Jephthah alone, but  
of Israel.

SIXTH VOICE.

A nation laments while its maids are  
bemoaning.

ALL.

And the tribes of the earth, through all  
time, shall thee honor.

## SONG.

Daughter, in thy narrow bed,  
Sister, from whom life hath fled,  
Jewish maiden, o'er thy head,  
Loving hands delight to fling  
Sweetest blossoms of the spring  
Nature's holy offering.

*(They scatter flowers upon the mound from their  
baskets, and continue to do it, from time to time,  
through the song.)*

Jewish maiden, virtues rare  
Made thee e'en more good, than fair;  
Pure as ever maidens are;  
Meekly bent her drooping head,  
Every thought of self had fled—  
“Father, be 't as thou hast said.”

Other daughters have been good,  
But, among them, she hath stood  
Crown of virgin womanhood.



Round this mound sad hearts await,  
Here to weep thine early fate,  
And thy goodness emulate.

Jewish maiden! fair and young,  
Ever shall thy praise be sung,  
All the maids of earth among.  
Purity beamed in thine eye—  
All the virtues that could die  
Wafted thy pure soul on high.

*(Six voices chanting, each a separate sentiment.)*

FIRST VOICE.

Whose heart was so strong as this beautiful maid's?

SECOND VOICE.

Whose filial devotion so perfect and pure?

THIRD VOICE.

No son of Judea was like unto her.

FOURTH VOICE.

Who'll teach us our duty now she lieth  
low?

FIFTH VOICE.

The maidens of Israel are poor in her  
loss.

SIXTH VOICE.

The God of our fathers make us, even  
us,

ALL.

Like unto the maiden we come to  
bewail.

SONG.

Woe! for the vow that the warrior made,  
The warrior and father, that Ammon be  
stayed,  
And his country be freed from the grasp  
of the foe,

Who the altars of God in the valleys  
laid low.

Bereaved is a household—*one* heart is a  
wreck,

Which thought for the bridal, its treasure  
to deck;

*Her* life is aweary, uncheered, and  
alone,

There beameth no future when hope is  
unknown.

Sleep sweetly, pure maiden, disturbed  
by no fears,

We'll keep the turf green by our sor-  
rowing tears,

And the blossoms we bring thee, renew  
when they fade,

Lamenting, bewailing thee, beautiful  
maid.

SONG.

*(With voices alternating.)*

ONE VOICE.

He that sleeps, shall wake no more.

ALL.

Yes, upon the morrow.

ONE VOICE.

Years, the dead can not restore.

ALL.

But they ease our sorrow.

ONE VOICE.

All must die, though live they would—

ALL.

Every life 's a debtor.

ONE VOICE.

Weeping, mourning, do no good,—

ALL.

Sadness maketh better.

ONE VOICE.

It is sad to mourn and weep.

ALL.

Sad, and yet a pleasure.

ONE VOICE.

Let each sorrowing memory sleep.

ALL.

Memory is a treasure.  
Memories of the pure and good  
Make our own hearts better.  
This pure maiden, if we could,  
We would not forget her.

SONG.

They met, and proud Ammon was con-  
quered at last,  
And the tramp of his warriors went  
hurrying past;

His towns and his cities were swept from  
his hands,  
And the conquered oppressor hath sought  
other lands.

There's a chieftain in Israel, once haughty  
and bold,  
But the light, in his dark eye, is altered  
and cold;  
There's a Judge, too, in Israel, loves jus-  
tice and right,  
But the honors, they pay him, can bring  
no delight.

He knoweth the price of proud Ammon's  
defeat,  
For a face is upturning, so pleadingly  
sweet;  
'T is the picture that's ever his vision  
before,

And 't will fade from his sight, never-  
more, nevermore.

There 's a memory, haunting, will never  
depart,  
And the sweet light of hope is shut out  
of his heart.  
He is ruler, he 's judge, but he 's child-  
less and lone,  
For *her* life was the price of the victories  
won.

SONG.

*(With alternate voices, one alone, and all answering.)*

ONE VOICE.

Sing of all that 's good and fair,

ALL.

She was better fairer:

ONE VOICE.

Sing of all that's bright and rare,

ALL.

She was brighter, rarer.

ONE VOICE.

Liken her to earth's flower-queen,

ALL.

Lily of the valley.

ONE VOICE.

Breathing fragrance, though unseen

ALL.

When the light winds dally

ONE VOICE.

Liken her to brighter flowers,

ALL.

Sharon's precious roses,



ONE VOICE.

Making glad the passing hours

ALL.

As each cup uncloses.

ONE VOICE.

Liken her to stars of night;

ALL.

They're too far above us;

ONE VOICE.

They are pure, and they are bright,

ALL.

But they can not love us.

ONE VOICE.

Liken her to all pure things;

ALL.

Snow upon the mountain;  
Dewdrops, snow, and flowers and  
springs;  
Water from the fountain.

Yet is naught so pure and bright,  
As this peerless daughter,  
Turning meekly from the light  
To the dark doom brought her.

CLOSING SONG.

*(One Voice.)*

Her life bought our freedom,  
 For the nation paid;  
 Israel can but honor  
 This devoted maid.

Prophet's hymning, tender,  
 Ready writer's praise,  
 Ever shall commend her,  
 Through all lapse of days.

And though Israel perish,  
 Prophet, priest, and king,  
 Yet the world shall cherish  
 Her of whom we sing.

Distant times and sages  
 Shall her fame rehearse,  
 Ages upon ages  
 Weave it into verse.

And no brighter luster  
Ever deed surround,  
Never mem'ry juster,  
Through all time be found.  
All the world shall claim her,  
Like the sun and showers,  
Though we love to name her  
Israel's and ours.

END OF SCENE FIFTH.







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