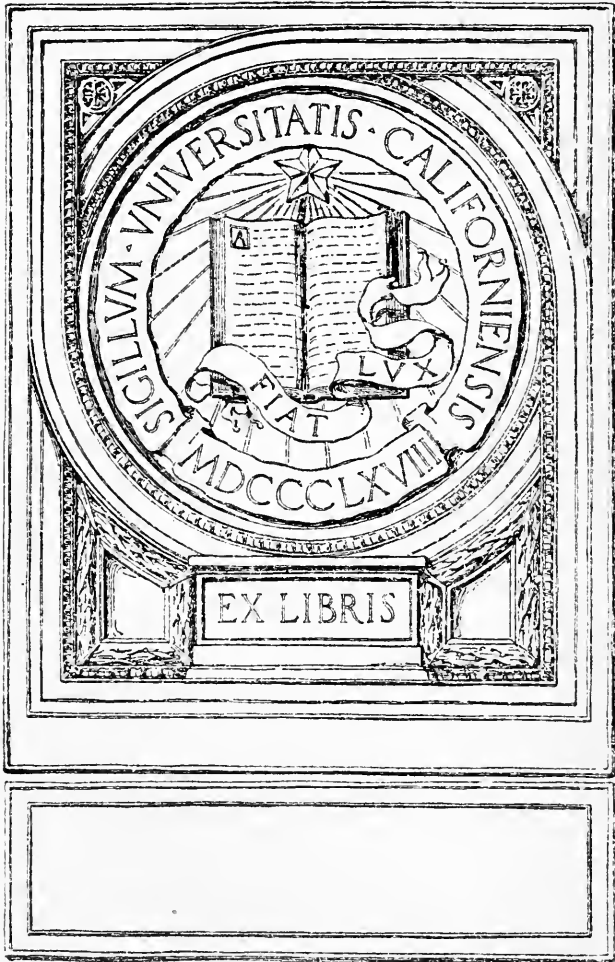


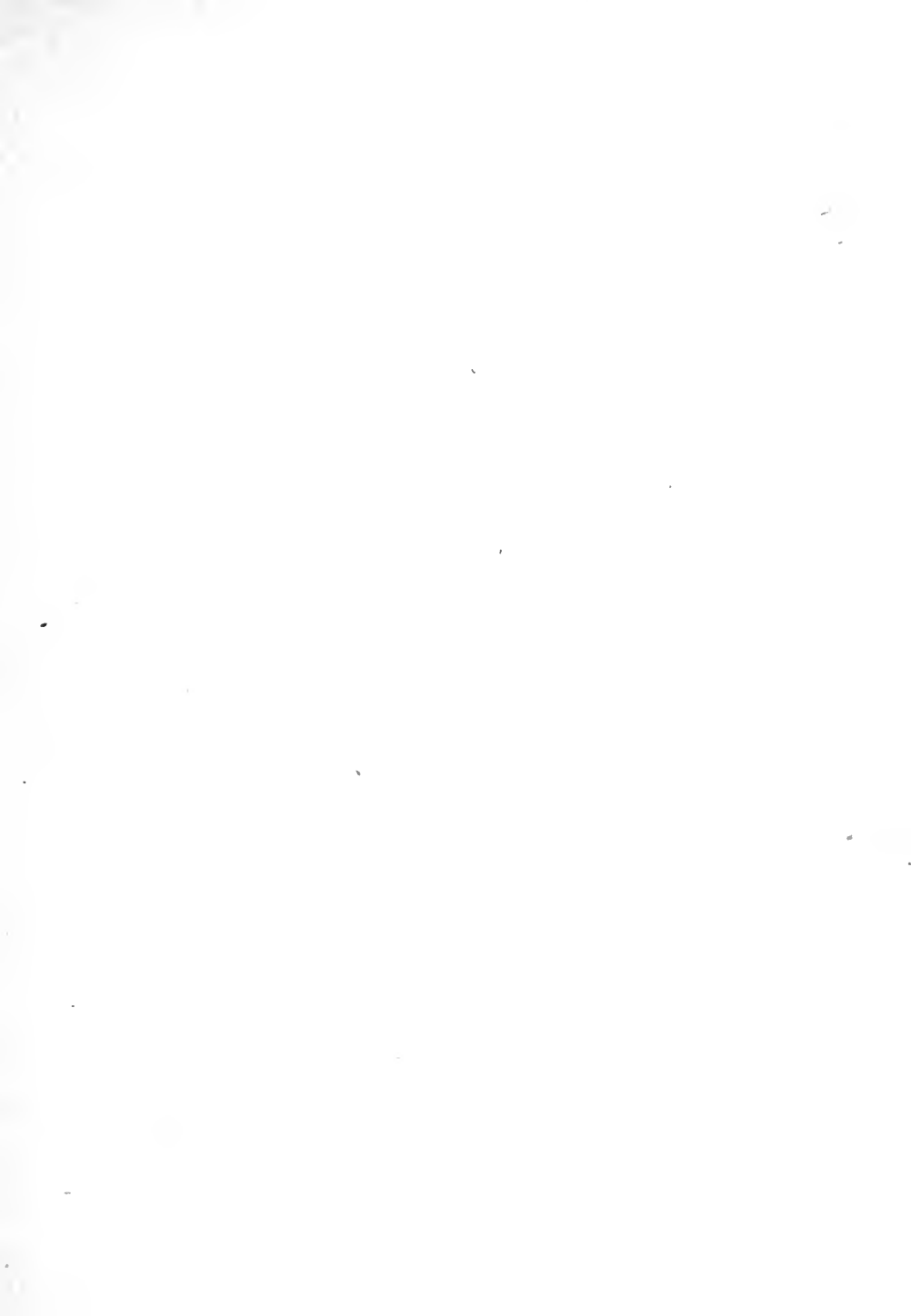
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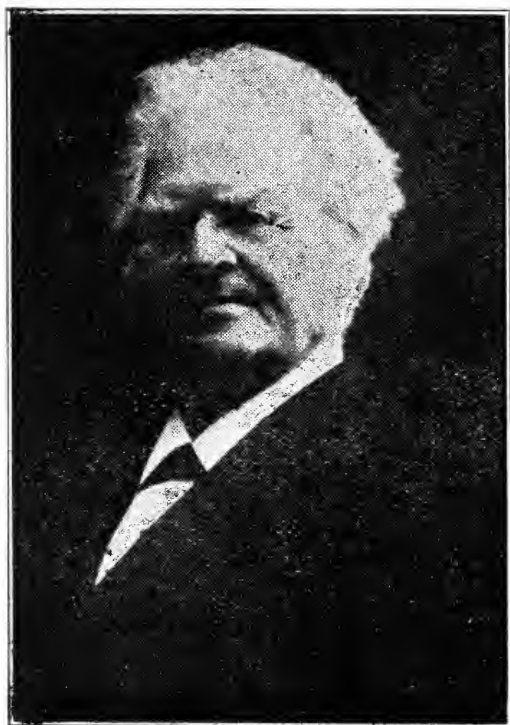
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MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS





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BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON
1832-1910

M A R Y

QUEEN OF SCOTS

A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS

By

BJÖRNSTJERNE BJÖRNSON



Translated from the Norwegian

by

AUG. SAHLBERG

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MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS

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CHARACTERS.

- MARY STUART, Queen of Scotland.
HENRY DARNLEY, her consort, titular king.
JAMES, Earl of Murray, her half-brother.
Lord STUART, the same.
The DUCHESS of ARGYLE, her half-sister.
MAITLAND, Earl of Lethington, her secretary of state.
DAVID RIZZIO, her private secretary of foreign correspondence.
JAMES HEPBURN, Earl of Bothwell.
The Earl of MORTON.
Lord RUTHVEN.
Lord LINDSAY.
ANDREW KERR.
WILLIAM TAYLOR.
Captain ERSKINE of the guards.
A CITIZEN.
JOHN KNOX.
COURTIERS, WARRIORS, CITIZENS.

The first and second acts pass in the first days of March, 1566, at Holyrood Castle in Edinburgh, the third act in the fall of the same year, the fourth act in the spring of the next year (1567), both in and at Edinburgh, the fifth at Dunbar Castle, a little over two months thereafter.

MARY, QUEEN OF SCOTS

ACT FIRST

The large drawing-room in the castle of Holywood.

SCENE FIRST.

The drawing-room festively decorated. There is a ball, there is just being danced a Purpose. The QUEEN dances with her half-brother, LORD STUART; among the dancers the EARL of LETHINGTON with the COUNTESS of ARGYLE, the EARL of MORTON, the EARL of BOTHWELL. Quite in front stand LORD LINDSAY, ANDREW KERR and a CITIZEN, all three dressed in dark and peculiar clothes; several Presbyterians crowd around them. RIZZIO is seen a little later on the other side in a whispering, quiet conversation with a noble. Toward the close DARNLEY enters alone.

(The following conversation is carried on every time the music becomes soft or a rest is taken.)

LINDSAY.

Look, the dancing lines wind as snakes in the sun! Listen, the music plays with the flames of hell! The devil's roar of laughter is in it!

ANDREW KERR.

Hush, hush; the penalty will overwhelm them as the sea overwhelmed Pharaoh's army.

LINDSAY.

Look, how they whisper! The infecting breath of sin! See their voluptuous smile, see the ladies' frivolous gowns.

CITIZEN.

All which Knox preaches is wasted on this court!

LINDSAY.

He is as the prophet in Israel, he does not speak in vain; for the Lord Himself will redeem His words upon the ungodly race.

ANDREW KERR.

There is David Rizzio.

SEVERAL.

He, there to the right? —

ANDREW KERR.

The Catholic seducer!

LINDSAY.

The pope's secret agent!

ANDREW KERR.

Member of the new Jesu society!

CITIZEN.

The devil's smartest machinator!

ANDREW KERR.

Within eight days he shall also get work in his shop!

LINDSAY.

Let us part. We create suspicion!

ANDREW KERR

(to the citizens and others).

Come!

(They go behind the dancers. Rizzio has gone up on his side of the stage. Darnley comes quickly down toward Lindsay and watches the dance.)

LINDSAY

(behind him).

My Lord!

DARNLEY

(does not answer).

LINDSAY.

My Lord! *(As before.)* My Lord, ally yourself with the Lord's faithful people! Save us from this Jesebel!

DARNLEY.

Oh, how charming she is!

LINDSAY.

She is granted this power by the devil! Beware, my Lord, you have now suffered and wept long enough under it!

DARNLEY.

I have suffered and wept, but look at her, if she is not worth it! No, she has this power from heaven: for at the sight of her I am exalted as on a nice, clear spring-day! Look, look, her every motion gleams like the sun! When she bows there falls a shadow; when she rises there come sun-beams, when she steps forward hearts throb in unison!

LINDSAY.

He is mad!

(Goes.)

DARNLEY.

Every time I see her, it seems to me that I never have seen her before! If I did not want to speak to her once more, I must be as the snowy mountain at Loch Linnch! She is more alone than the royal power with all its splendor!

(He stays until the dance is finished, and the queen, led by Stuart, comes up in front, where Stuart with bent knees expresses his thanks for the dance, absents himself, speaks to a servant and comes back again immediately; Darnley goes up to her in the meanwhile.)

DARNLEY.

I am more impatient for a conversation with your grace than as a boy I was for fairy-tales.

STUART.

Supper is ready, we expect the order from your grace.

QUEEN.

Then ask the ladies and gentlemen to enjoy themselves. We, ourselves, wish to wait here with the King.

STUART

(invites to supper after which each retires with his lady, while festive march is played.)

SCENE SECOND.

DARNLEY.

The dance has brought roses to your cheeks. They were perhaps not intended for me, but my heart has kept them.

QUEEN.

My Lord, if it is a matter which allows postponement—

DARNLEY.

No, it allows no postponement, my heart is being lacerated, I can't do the measured walk in a cold ceremonial. Mary, why have we grown apart?

QUEEN.

Because my Lord prefers other company to ours.

DARNLEY.

I?—Am I then myself without you?

QUEEN.

Oh, among my Lord's pot-companions together with frivolous women it is certainly more joyous than in our rooms.

DARNLEY.

Oh, do not mention what I might do to deaden my sorrow and pain. But nobody except Mary of Scotland can cause me that.

QUEEN.

Is it an accusation you intend to make?

DARNLEY.

He that loves to desperation, has an accusation against every living thing* [against joy because it is too joyous, against sorrow because it is too sad. I waste my time as a day laborer who will not work for less than a certain price; but there is a price under which I even do not want to live.—] Oh, what shall I do to regain your love?

QUEEN.

It is too bad, my Lord, that I can not mention any price too high.

DARNLEY.

You are of the Guises' family,—splendent as the diamond and also as hard.

*That enclosed between brackets [] might be omitted at the performance.

QUEEN.

Antonius melted a diamond which Cleopatra drank.

DARNLEY.

But that cost many millions.

QUEEN.

It was that I wanted to recall.

DARNLEY.

I am poor; for I have given everything to you,—even my peace of conscience.

QUEEN.

What I gave you as compensation you have also wasted.

DARNLEY.

Oh, Mary, the first months of our marriage I believed that you loved me!

QUEEN.

My God! I believed the same!

DARNLEY.

But now there has come one between us!

QUEEN.

My Lord!

(Starts to go.)

DARNLEY.

No, listen to me, or it might be too late.

QUEEN
(*stops*).

Do you threaten?

DARNLEY.

Mary, you do not know what love can force one to!

QUEEN.

Yes.—to rudeness!

DARNLEY
(*excitedly*).

To still more! I could in cold blood . . . no, do not force me, Mary!

QUEEN.

That is just what I am not able to do.

DARNLEY.

But the day you are able to do it you shall repent of it!

QUEEN
(*more excitedly*).

No, show yourself as a man; my God! I am a woman!

DARNLEY.

Oh, only that flash in your eye, only that motion, and I love you again to frenzy!

QUEEN.

Yes, you can love, Henry!

DARNLEY.

But you can't, Mary!

QUEEN

(*smiles*).

DARNLEY.

That smile says both yes and no, but there are thousands of each, and I can not count.

QUEEN.

It is also only a page who counts the smiles of his mistress.

DARNLEY.

If I knew one who tried to, I would kill him.

QUEEN.

Jealousy is also a page-fault.

DARNLEY.

It is impossible to love without being jealous.

QUEEN.

Not even when I return the love?—

DARNLEY.

No; for you never return it otherwise than that you have some left.

QUEEN.

Poor Darnley!

DARNLEY.

If you were able to feel pity, you would remove the cause of the sickness,—then you would remove him that hurts me.

QUEEN.

Then I should have to remove my whole court.

DARNLEY.

No, only one!

QUEEN.

My Lord!

DARNLEY.

There is one to whom you show more confidence than to all others put together!

QUEEN.

Then this one is worthy of it.

DARNLEY.

You provoke not only me, but the proud nobility of the whole of Scotland by promoting an adventurer.

QUEEN.

What more are the others?

DARNLEY.

Nobles!

QUEEN.

He to whom I give my confidence is ennobled.

DARNLEY.

But others are more worthy of it!

QUEEN.

He that best serves my plans is most worthy of it!

DARNLEY.

Others love you more!

QUEEN.

My God! I have come to Scotland for something else than to—love!

DARNLEY.

I should wish it were true, when we speak about—Rizzio!

QUEEN.

My Lord!

DARNLEY.

For the reports which are current deprive me
of my sleep!

QUEEN.

Choose a better pillow than Edinburgh's float-
ing rumors!—

DARNLEY.

Well, let them be as a fog, they nevertheless
always return . . . let my whole jealousy be naive
as the bird's aimless flight, it is nevertheless my
existence, and therefore you must please be so
kind as to pay attention to it!

QUEEN.

By removing Rizzio? Never!

DARNLEY.

Is that your last word?

QUEEN.

My last!

DARNLEY.

Well. If you do not pay any regard to me, I
shall neither pay any regard to you!

QUEEN.

You vex me, my Lord.

DARNLEY.

Now I shall not speak about it again,—but act.

QUEEN.

You have said that so often that it annoys me.

DARNLEY.

That you scoff at the love which you yourself have nourished really does not surprise me; for I know that you can even bring it to the scaffold.

QUEEN

(*is silent*).

DARNLEY.

Poor Chatelard, it cost him his life; but it is foretold that everybody who loves you will have to pay therefor with his life.

QUEEN

(*is silent*).

DARNLEY.

Oh, Mary!—No, snake in woman-slough, evil plays in a cascade which draw people to their death and laugh giddily over them,—I shall

nevertheless find the net which catches you, and the horror which conquers you; I shall nevertheless live to see the day when I shall cause you to weep, Scotland's beautiful sphinx,—weep blood!

QUEEN.

Then it will not be the first time!

(She bursts out weeping.)

DARNLEY.

Oh, Mary, forgive me, I am not bad; it is only since the day I saw you that such thoughts have grown on me; but then you must also have power to remove them. Oh, be gentle. . .

QUEEN.

Now I am going to Rizzio!

(She goes.)

SCENE THIRD.

DARNLEY

(alone).

To Rizzio? To Rizzio! I shall follow! I shall kill him in the large drawing-room in the

presence of all Scotland's lords! . . . No, that would only hit him, but not her. I must hit her, she must learn to fear; for she loves only him whom she fears! She said it herself: "Become a man!" said she. Yes, I shall that, and the deed which makes me a man shall frighten you as if you were a child! Lethington is right. Morton is right, . . . where are they now? [What? Gratitude? Gratitude toward her? She scorns me daily, she denies me the crown, she lets me live an idle life as mock-king, half a mockery to others, but wholly to myself, and] she besmirches my honor and gives my right to another. She sees the need and misery of my soul, but she lets me live in it.

(Music is heard from the inner rooms.)

This music rose six months ago at the dances of the intoxicating marriage festival, now it finds me alone and in the darkness of bad thoughts. But she has remained in the light of the festal drawing-room—and on the arm of another! Oh, how soon did the fall come! The leaves of love have faded and fallen off; I once saw flowers, but did not discover any fruits. *(The music becomes louder.)* But in there—what color and delight. Wait, wait . . . an evening I shall break in with a hundred steel-clad men; then there

shall be a glare as of blue ice, and the red color shall flow over it! There is Lethington! Have our thoughts also an echo!

SCENE FOURTH.

LETHINGTON.

I come from a scene in the large drawing-room which has amazed all. The queen. . .

DARNLEY.

. . . the queen!

LETHINGTON.

. . . entered, went straight toward David Rizzio, whispered to him, then took his arm and led him to the inner rooms.

DARNLEY.

Oh, gracious God, preserve my wits!

LETHINGTON.

I was standing at the side of the French Envoy. He said: "To what room do you think they are going now?"

DARNLEY.

He is lying!

LETHINGTON.

I answered at once: "Doubt can not be raised about such a high lady's manners."

DARNLEY.

Oh, too great, Lethington, too great!

LETHINGTON.

The French Envoy remarked: "Yesterday one saw David give audience in a blue dressing-gown! among them that had entry was the queen."

DARNLEY.

It is a devilish lie, she has never called upon him.

LETHINGTON.

This is word for word as I on your account answered, and England's Envoy who just joined as eagerly contradicted it; for he knew for sure that Rizzio on the contrary had called upon the queen in—dressing gown.

DARNLEY.

Ha, ha, ha!

LETHINGTON.

Yes, it is only to laugh at.

DARNLEY.

Ha, ha, ha! my honor, my life is only to laugh at; my sleepless love also, and my mother's crushed happiness, and my father's immense pride, only to laugh at!—Lethington, you are a damned rascal! You lead me directly to my destruction; I feel it, and can, nevertheless, not resist. For it is only with her that I can seek salvation against you; but she pushes me back as a prey for your rapacity.

LETHINGTON.

I wish your grace a rapid recovery.

(Starts to leave.)

DARNLEY.

Lethington, do not go away from me! Lethington! Yes, I am sick, I have not slept for many nights, I fear being alone; sometimes I fear for my wits. Oh, Lethington, why, I am still almost a child, only nineteen, I am not strong enough to bear so hard a fate. And then I love her too much! Oh, if she only would say a single kind word to me, even if it were that she was guilty, only if she would ask my pardon, I would forgive her. Lethington!

LETHINGTON.

That God and your honor forbid.

DARNLEY.

I know that; but I have no other God and honor than her love. If she only would come back to me with tears, I would take her into my arms and carry her before the proudest court of Europe and openly confess that I am the most happy man in the world!

Oh, I have been that, Lethington! The first two months of our marriage she wanted only to be where I was. This lady, Europe's prettiest, most witty and most charming, she was mine; the most charming dream any youth has dreamt that was my daily life, and I was only eighteen!

But it soon came to an end. . .

(He weeps.)

LETHINGTON.

A man revenges such a thing, he does not weep.

DARNLEY.

It is childish,—I know that; but now the emptiness of the night is my day, and the disturbance of the day has moved down into my night. If I were not allowed to weep once in a while, my painful thoughts would break my heart.

(Weeps.)

LETHINGTON.

Consequently it is best to drop the entire plan.

DARNLEY.

Which, Lethington?

LETHINGTON.

Perhaps you do not even wish that any one of us shall challenge the impudent fellow to a duel. . .

DARNLEY.

A duel? Give David Rizzio an even piece of steel in his hand? From behind, Lethington, with twenty stabs, and still some when he is lying dead! [Undress him so and string him up to shame and disgrace to all the world. He that ruined my happiness must also perish as every bad insect!] Lethington, why there is no crime on earth more awful than to coax one's wife into his confidence, and then deceive her.

LETHINGTON.

Have you never done it yourself, Henry Darnley?

DARNLEY.

I have not before known what it was.

LETHINGTON.

But are you now also so sure in your case? The appearance is strong; but perhaps it is appearance; what if she now assured you of her innocence?

DARNLEY.

She laughs, when I speak about it, yes, she assured me almost of the contrary.

[LETHINGTON.

She defies you?

DARNLEY.

Yes, she now went straight to Rizzio.

LETHINGTON.

Perhaps just because she felt herself strong in her innocence?

DARNLEY.

But why does she not prove it to me? Why, she sees my suffering?]

LETHINGTON.

She does not love you.

DARNLEY.

No!

LETHINGTON.

And she does not fear you.

DARNLEY.

That is just the misfortune!

LETHINGTON.

Her defying nature loves only him whom she fears!

DARNLEY.

It is so; just so!

LETHINGTON.

If your grace consequently could get her to fear. . .

DARNLEY.

That is what I want, [Lethington!

LETHINGTON.

But for that courage is necessary!

DARNLEY.

I shall try; for my whole future is at stake!

LETHINGTON.

Even if she assured positively that your assertion is false. . .

DARNLEY.

But if it were false, Lethington?

LETHINGTON.

Then it could be true! For she does not love,
and she does not fear.

DARNLEY.

You are right, you are right!

LETHINGTON.

But do you see how easily you give up!

DARNLEY.

I shall not!—] But Lethington . . . if she in
a moment of danger applied to me as her natural
protector?—

LETHINGTON.

Then ask her why she did not come sooner.

DARNLEY.

You are right . . . now she shuns me, now she
defies me.

LETHINGTON.

If you yield at the moment of the punishment,
she will also despise you, and later she will know
no limit.

DARNLEY.

That is true.

LETHINGTON.

Guilty or innocent—she must find her master! . . .

DARNLEY.

Or my life is the torment of hell, a sneaking consumption which every one of her moments can make worse.

LETHINGTON.

Your grace must know that just during the last few days there has become a more intimate relation between Rizzio and her than ever before.

DARNLEY.

How do you know that?

LETHINGTON.

He has been overwhelmed with gifts; I have heard that in clothes alone he owns many thousand pounds.

DARNLEY.

Disgraceful, disgraceful!

LETHINGTON.

She has just added from her own ornaments to his collection of jewels and precious stones.

DARNLEY.

Is there then more doubt! Oh, Lethington, I have called Murray home, I have called his whole expelled party,—I have united myself with my enemies, yes, with the devil himself—rather than to put up with this shame and suffering.

LETHINGTON.

Murray is on the way . . . we must make haste!

DARNLEY.

Come to me to-morrow, let us make a more definite appointment, put all a going, but hurry; for if a sharp action will not soon bloodlet my bad blood, then you will find me suffocated a morning!

LETHINGTON.

Do not speak so loudly, your grace, somebody is coming.

DARNLEY.

I want to go out, I must have air and room. Lethington, a couple of my servants, ask them to accompany me, I will mount a horse and ride out in the forest.

LETHINGTON.

But it is deep night.

DARNLEY.

Yes, we are suited for one another!

(He goes, Lethington follows him, but meets in the door a servant.)

LETHINGTON

(to the servant).

Please find servants for the king, he wants to ride out. Be quick!

(The servant goes out.)

SCENE FIFTH.

LETHINGTON.

Poor Darnley! *(Sees Morton in the door.)*
No one is here.

MORTON

(remains standing).

But somebody might come here.

LETHINGTON.

Have you, my Lord, seen the new picture of the queen? *(Places himself before it, Morton*

comes and does likewise.) It is an excellent likeness.

MORTON.

The expression seems to me too defiant.

LETHINGTON.

I think it can be corrected.

MORTON.

Have you inquired into that?

LETHINGTON.

I am sure it will be corrected.

MORTON.

Do they agree?

LETHINGTON.

In everything.

MORTON.

And the time?

LETHINGTON

(confidentially).

At once!—[One can't wait. The Spanish subsidies have arrived, she will also get the properties of the exiled. Within eight days she will begin open war against the Protestants and

against England . . . as her allies she has all Europe!]

MORTON

(*softly*).

'Then to-morrow?

LETHINGTON

(*likewise*).

To-morrow, Knox's house, at four o'clock in the afternoon!

MORTON

(*likewise*).

But they are on the track. The king has been tattling, Lord Stuart has heard him threaten.

LETHINGTON.

Then they must be put on a false scent.

MORTON.

You want Murray's ring to throw into the Italian?

(*Gives it.*)

LETHINGTON.

Yes.—Nothing more here.

MORTON

(*loudly*).

An excellent picture indeed; only the imperious expression must be moderated.

LETHINGTON

(*loudly*).

And the Italian false shirt taken away. (*Morton goes in the meanwhile up, along and out.*)
There comes Rizzio—aha! in conversation with Stuart!

(*Up along, to the side and out.*)

SCENE SIXTH.

RIZZIO.

I believe, nevertheless, that my Lord sees specters in broad day-light. The exiled Murray is in want in England, his faction in still greater. Elizabeth does not want to help them; Elizabeth only helps them that succeed. From where then do they get means to start another rebellion in Scotland?

STUART.

Not rebellion, Monsieur; I have not spoken about rebellion. No, it is worse!

RIZZIO.

What is worse than rebellion?

STUART.

Assassination.

RIZZIO

(*horrified*).

Assassination! (*Crosses himself*.) The Holy Virgin will protect her own faith and its true servants.

STUART.

The Holy Virgin has her notions as every other woman, and I advise Monsieur to strengthen the guards of the castle.

RIZZIO.

I thank my Lord for the sagacious advice.

STUART.

Madame ma soeur knows herself that there have already been attempts made three times on her dear person in this rough country. This time it might perhaps be directed against several.

RIZZIO.

Whom does my Lord mean?

STUART.

Monsieur knows that he is not loved by this country's nobles.

RIZZIO.

The saint Antonius of Padua, my patron saint, will protect me against bad people. The queen, my high mistress, will graciously watch my safety.

STUART.

Speak to Mr. Erskine, captain of the guards; it is certainly he that can protect monsieur.

RIZZIO.

Thank you, my Lord, I shall speak to him.

STUART.

Monsieur, not for his own sake, but because madame ma soeur shows him especial favor, have I said this to him. Monsieur, I have to lead off the dance.

RIZZIO.

My Lord!

SCENE SEVENTH.

RIZZIO.

Assassination!

(As he turns around, Lethington stands just behind him; he is horrified.)

LETHINGTON.

Are you afraid I will assassinate you?

RIZZIO.

Who has said?—

LETHINGTON.

I wish to speak to you. It is Count Morton who has sent me. You know he does not like to speak to you himself.

RIZZIO.

When such a polite messenger is at his service, I suppose it serves him best.

LETHINGTON.

He is himself messenger from a still greater personage.

RIZZIO.

From whom?

LETHINGTON.

From Murray.

RIZZIO.

The exiled rebel! So they carry on negotiations?

LETHINGTON.

As to that you must ask Morton himself.

RIZZIO.

Murray's matters are completely indifferent to me as, also, are they that take care of them.

LETHINGTON.

It might be that one might make matters a little interesting for you.

RIZZIO.

They will hardly succeed in that.

(*Sits.*)

LETHINGTON

(*aside*).

He sits in my presence!

RIZZIO.

Please sit down, Mr. Secretary of the State!

LETHINGTON.

I am very much obliged to you, Mr. Private Secretary! (*Sits down with his back partly toward him and both his feet on a chair.*) Have you no passions, David Rizzio?

RIZZIO.

It is dangerous for a politician to entertain passions.

LETHINGTON.

A remark so true that I have just recently made it. Nevertheless . . .

(*He begins to play with Count Murray's ring.*)

RIZZIO.

You mean that nobody can claim to be free from passion?

LETHINGTON
(*with emphasis*).

Yes.

RIZZIO.

But then it is the thing to take care that they are identical in all points with our work. . .

LETHINGTON.

. . . so no hand can come between; certainly!—

RIZZIO.

And if I should tell, why I have succeeded so far, in that only I seek the reason.

LETHINGTON.

Indeed, not absurd.

RIZZIO.

The Scotch are prone to have some inher-

itance, dream, revenge, ambition to take care of, and therefore get into trouble.

LETHINGTON.

That is true, especially in this disturbed time of transition, during which old and new are fighting for souls.

RIZZIO.

I came as a stranger to this country, I have only the aim to be true and of use to my queen.

LETHINGTON.

Therefore she prefers you to us,—it is quite natural.

RIZZIO.

If it is not just natural, it is not without prudence anyway.

LETHINGTON.

No, no.

RIZZIO.

The result has not spoken against it.

LETHINGTON.

The Catholic cause now stands well, that is true.

RIZZIO.

What wonderful ring is it anyway the Earl is holding there?

LETHINGTON.

A costly one, is it not?

RIZZIO

(*rises*).

I have seldom seen such a splendor! What?—
It is worth more than the largest crown-diamond!

LETHINGTON.

Were you once clerk in a jeweler's shop!

RIZZIO.

When I buy precious stones, I send for them.

LETHINGTON.

I am glad that at last one can value this precious stone.

RIZZIO.

I love pretty stones; I myself have a collection.

LETHINGTON.

If you love stones, you must know this one; for collectors have sharp eyes.

RIZZIO

(*views it more closely*).

The Earl of Murray's! Have you bought it?

LETHINGTON.

No, he wants to give it away!

RIZZIO.

This immense fortune . . . to whom?

LETHINGTON.

To you, David Rizzio!

RIZZIO.

To me!

LETHINGTON

(*rises*).

The proud Count Murray begs you to plead his cause with his sister, the queen;—can you get a greater proof how completely you have conquered! The Protestant party which a few years ago was uncontrolled master is so forced back that its first man must beg for grace from the secret agent of the Pope at this court.

RIZZIO.

It pains you, Earl of Lethington?

LETHINGTON.

I should not be the frank man that I am, if

I concealed that it pains me.—Here is the ring!

RIZZIO.

The Earl of Murray's misfortune also pains me; but I can't help him to come back.

LETHINGTON.

You will not?

RIZZIO.

I can understand that with your usual acuteness you have found my passion; but I am sorry to say that in this it does not coincide with the policy of the queen. Au revoir—!

(About to go.)

LETHINGTON

(opens the door of the stove to throw the ring in).

RIZZIO.

For the Madonna's sake! What are you doing?

LETHINGTON.

It now has no destination.

RIZZIO.

Why, it is a fortune, it is more than all I own!

LETHINGTON.

Do you want to save it?

RIZZIO.

Of course!

LETHINGTON.

Then take it.

RIZZIO.

No.—But give it to his sister, the queen; let her keep it for the earl!

LETHINGTON.

For the earl—

(Starts to throw it into the stove.)

RIZZIO.

You do not know its value; you do not know what you destroy.

LETHINGTON.

Well, then you might as well keep it yourself!

RIZZIO.

Keep it? Well,—with pleasure!—but not as if my way of procedure should in any way be bound by that.

LETHINGTON.

But, as a daily remembrance, nevertheless,
how unhappy the queen's brother is.

(Gives it.)

RIZZIO

(takes it.)

And as a daily remembrance of a proud
moment in my life!

LETHINGTON.

To that you have a right of course. But I
suppose I may hope that this, the Earl of Mur-
ray's submission, has not been altogether in
vain.

RIZZIO

You yourself must understand that after
this proof I can not any longer consider Count
Murray and his party dangerous. I can't say
more.

SCENE EIGHTH.

STUART.

Monsieur, madame ma soeur commands your
presence.

LETHINGTON.

Mr. Secretary!

RIZZIO.

My Lord!

LETHINGTON

(*goes*).

RIZZIO.

Where is the queen?

STUART.

I shall guide him.

RIZZIO.

As to the advice which my Lord so kindly gave me, I can now assure my Lord that it was quite unnecessary.

STUART.

That gives me pleasure, Monsieur.

RIZZIO.

Not with murderous weapon, but with pleadings and gifts they seek us. And the highly amusing air with which some noblemen at this court deem it necessary to have intercourse with me never seemed to me more amusing than now.

Au revoir! But why, there is the queen herself!—

STUART.

Her usual impatience surpasses all rules of etiquette. . .

QUEEN.

First business, then dance! Close the doors!

STUART.

What must one think!

(Goes out.)

SCENE NINTH.

QUEEN.

What is this, Rizzio? They speak to me the third time about an attack.

RIZZIO.

Also to your grace?

QUEEN.

Also to you?

RIZZIO.

Yes, just now!—

QUEEN.

Peculiar. The king also recently threatened me.

RIZZIO.

Your grace thinks that he is in league with. . .

QUEEN.

With whom? . . .

RIZZIO.

[With those who are contemplating an attack. . .

QUEEN.

Who are contemplating an attack?

RIZZIO.

I do not know. (*Pause.*) Is it the exiled?

QUEEN.

My brother Count Murray? Darnley should enter into an alliance with my . . . with my enemies?—What has then occurred here?

RIZZIO.

Your grace must best know that!—

QUEEN.

He recently demanded of me—(*Stops, looks*

et Rizzio, laughs.) Darnley is a fool. The whole matter is fabrication.

RIZZIO.

Your grace is never safe. . .

QUEEN.

What proof do you have then?]

RIZZIO.

Does your grace recognize this ring?

QUEEN.

My brother's!

RIZZIO.

With this Count Murray wants to find his way back to your grace's halls—

QUEEN.

And through you it had to be done?

RIZZIO.

They tried it!—But here is the ring.

(Wants to give it, she sees it, but does not take it.)

QUEEN.

They ascribe to you a great influence with us,
Rizzio.

RIZZIO.

Only to make me a suspect in the eyes of your grace.—Here is the ring!

QUEEN

(*as before*).

Why are you more faithful to me than the others. Rizzio?—

RIZZIO.

It is of more use to examine into why they try to make us feel safe at the same time as an assault is hinted at. . .

QUEEN.

Many before have also been true to me; but they have all had their reasons.—reasons which I have seen. . .

RIZZIO.

Your grace, they are certainly meditating plots against you; I simulated that I myself felt safe, *but I am not!*—

QUEEN.

You must be very sure of our favor, David Rizzio, since you do not even answer us!

RIZZIO.

I do not answer, because I only see an intrigue

in all this; they are trying to deprive me of your grace's favor, and that at a very important moment.

QUEEN.

I begin to tire of all this importance they ascribe to you.—and which you also ascribe to yourself.

RIZZIO.

Your grace is unjust toward me;—but I shall try to endure it,—as I daily endure indignities for the sake of your grace.

QUEEN.

But why in the world do you do it?—There is something you are concealing.

RIZZIO.

If anything concerning me is mysterious to your grace, then my acts toward your grace, the policies which till this day have borne so great fruits for the Catholic cause, must be proof enough that I am devoted to you.

QUEEN.

That is true! But why am I always to hear it, why shall I be in debt to you for that?—Why

don't you for example want to become a nobleman?

RIZZIO.

Because it would hurt me.

QUEEN.

But a high rank, nevertheless?

RIZZIO.

I do not care about what is only appearances.

QUEEN.

It is money, precious stones. . .

RIZZIO.

Yes, that is a sure investment.

[QUEEN

And costly clothes.

RIZZIO.

I am uncomely by nature, I must strive to improve it.] But, your grace, let not the enemy's seed, nevertheless, grow into your soul immediately. Let us not on account of these trifles lose sight of the great danger, the first dark streak of which is seen far away. [Lethington has designs, he and Murray and Morton; I simulated that I was ignorant and felt myself

safe, but I am afraid! They must have many aids; for the matter is so spread that even so egotistically occupied a person as Lord Stuart has got track of it;—surely, scouts must now ride out at night; for watchfires are seen in the big forests!]

QUEEN.

I have now been assaulted three times, and have come out safe! I do not care about it!

RIZZIO.

Your grace has such great courage. . .

QUEEN.

And you so little! . . .

RIZZIO.

I have a care for the welfare of your grace!

QUEEN.

But have you that? Why do you put up with my notions and the slander of others?

RIZZIO

(*angry*).

When a child has grown tired of the violin it has been playing on, it will break it to look at it on the inside!

QUEEN.

Consequently the day I look at you inside? . . .

RIZZIO.

Your grace, may I now go?

QUEEN.

Can't I get this violin together, if I once have looked at it on the inside? . . .

RIZZIO.

No.

QUEEN.

Then you aim at something very high in your affection!

RIZZIO.

Your grace has no more use for me to-day, I suppose. . .

(Starts to go.)

QUEEN.

Rizzio!

RIZZIO.

Yes, your grace. . .

QUEEN.

We two can't work together any more; I can't speak confidentially to a masked man.

RIZZIO.

There is something cruel in your heart; it is not the first time I have seen it!

QUEEN.

Are you afraid of any one, that you will not say it?

RIZZIO.

I beg you, let me go now!

QUEEN.

—Your enemy, the king?

RIZZIO.

No!—

QUEEN.

The nobles?—(*As he is silent.*) Is your desire some unheard of exaltation,—well, you shall have it in spite of the nobility!

RIZZIO.

It is not the nobility I am afraid of.

QUEEN.

Alas, I understand . . . it is the whole public opinion of Europe. But why, you know, Rizzio, it amuses me to furnish material for gossip.

RIZZIO.

I am afraid of none in the world—except—

QUEEN.

Except?—Then mention it!

RIZZIO.

You yourself!

QUEEN.

Me!—Now I order you to speak!

RIZZIO.

You are without limit and regard; it pleases you to see me consumed by the most powerful passion,—for I have one!—it is that which has inflamed me and it will inflame me to the greatest deeds in your service so long as it burns to the last spark,—after that I am nothing.

QUEEN.

Such eloquence!—Rizzio, I do not recognize you!

RIZZIO.

No, most gracious Queen, you have never known me! My silence has been a daily lie, and my fretfulness the seal. But now, when you have opened my lips for the awful truth, now

you shall know it: Only he that has a great aim can forsake all small ones; only he to whom one thought gives strength can suffer; only he that is waiting, can put up with peculiar notions, scorn, slander, malice!

QUEEN.

But what is it though?

RIZZIO.

It is,—yes, know first though, it is not as Darnley, who is tiring and pursuing you, not as those, who before the world will boast of a glance, a word, a dance, not as those that make noise and duel for your honor;—I do not like to be mentioned as your lover, but one day or another,—if even far in the future, if a life full of sacrifices and fidelity is necessary,—nevertheless, at last, to become it—

QUEEN.

Ha, ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha, ha!

RIZZIO

(*despairingly*).

Laugh at me, but remember, what silent love has done for you during these toilsome years!—

Then laugh at me and cast me away, as all the others,—why, that is your aim!

(*Goes out.*)

SCENE TENTH.

QUEEN

(*suddenly serious*).

Didn't I think so? He also was lurking for a feeble moment! He also my secret enemy! Can't I find any one in the whole world, whom I can rely upon? [The great dread, which so suddenly seizes me, does that prophesy that it will have a bad ending?—Yes, it will!] They that come to serve me intend to rob me; they that love me are worse to me than they that hate me! I feel as if torn to pieces and can't compose myself. Oh, you Virgin Mary, who always are praying for me! You that gave me name, you the woman's eternal symbol, shine forth glorifying me; for there is nobody who helps me! [The husband I selected is alternately a child and a jealous tyrant: my own brother turned rebel, and against my council I have to protect myself as against a snake, with which I am locked in the same room.] Oh, I

need protection! I have a need, a longing, but I do not know where I dare to go. (*Pause.*) The silent, patient Rizzio also!—Darnley, you are nevertheless more faithful in your way than all the others,—and you are so young! I was too strict before, I shall set it all right again. (*Rings; a servant enters.*) Call Lord Stuart! (*The servant goes.*) Darnley loves, and one in love can do everything!

SCENE ELEVENTH.

STUART

(*aside*).

Rizzio is not here? (*Loudly.*) Madam!

QUEEN.

Let the music start up, and let the dance begin!

STUART.

Immediately, immediately, your grace!

QUEEN.

Call Darnley and tell him that I ask for the first dance.

STUART.

With the king?

QUEEN.

Yes.

STUART.

But the king has not been seen!

QUEEN.

Oh, look for him in his suite; if he has locked himself in, knock on his door and shout that I am waiting for him with longing.

STUART.

The king?

QUEEN

(*severely*).

The king!—But hurry!

STUART.

I hurry, I hurry! (*Aside*.) Are we going to make love to the king at this court?

QUEEN.

But go, though!

STUART.

I am flying.

SCENE TWELFTH.

QUEEN.

Where I am placed, I must work; what comes from the circumstances, I must put up with!

(The music starts.)

I possess youth and strength, I have great designs and powerful allies! My life will soon enter into the high council of mighty acts; the trifling which torments me will then cease of itself!

(The dancers come in pairs; among them Bothwell, Lethington and Morton.)

SCENE THIRTEENTH.

STUART.

I am very sorry, Madam, but the king is not in his rooms.

QUEEN.

Then search for him everywhere. Take more people with you; he must come!

STUART.

He must come!

(He goes.)

LETHINGTON.

Is it the king they are searching for?

SEVERAL.

Yes.

LETHINGTON.

I saw the king ride away.

QUEEN.

Ride away . . . in the middle of the night?

LETHINGTON.

I made the same remark; but "we are suited to one another," answered he.

QUEEN.

Poor Darnley! I was too strict before. Oh, he should have been here now! Now is the moment!

STUART.

Whom does your grace desire to honor with your choice?

QUEEN.

None!—I do not dance.

STUART.

Oh, your grace, do not make us despair. It would be as if tearing down the flowers and extinguishing the lights.

The DUCHESS of ARGYLE.

Your grace must not cause us this sorrow. We have been waiting so long!

(Several ladies urge her.)

QUEEN.

Well, to please you, my dear. . .

ALL.

Thank you, your grace!

(They arrange themselves in order.)

QUEEN.

Which nobleman does your grace want to honor?

QUEEN

(views them, says as she turns away).

Is there among them all a single one, who has not deceived me in an hour of trouble, or who may not do so?—Yes, there is one!

(To Stuart.)

The Earl of Bothwell!

(The music grows louder. Bothwell comes

and bends his knee before the queen, takes her hand and leads her up to the dancers. He places himself vis a vis Stuart and the Duchess of Argyle, who lead off. The dance is a slow, old one.)

(The curtain falls.)

ACT SECOND

SCENE FIRST.

KNOX

*(walks slowly up and down with both hands
behind him. A knock on the door).*

Come in!

(He continues his walking.)

LINDSAY and MORTON

(enter).

Good afternoon!

LINDSAY.

We are ordered hither at four o'clock.

KNOX

(as before).

I know that.

(Silence.)

MORTON.

Is Ruthven able to be one of the party?

KNOX.

I do not know.

LINDSAY

(to Morton as they are going toward the front).

How many men has my Lord enlisted?

MORTON.

Five hundred archers.

LINDSAY.

That is not many.

MORTON.

I rely on those fellows; they have served before where blood has flown. Some of them oftener than any one of us.

LINDSAY.

The palace-guard is small so it is quickly bound. But afterwards the citizens might come.

MORTON.

My men do not esteem a citizen more than a bull. Most of them have served in France or Germany or Denmark; war is their trade and their pleasure.

LINDSAY.

If I were king, I should forbid this enlisting

for foreign countries. It depraves the people.

MORTON.

On the contrary, it better prepares the people for war.

LINDSAY.

I always disagreed with the Earl of Murray about these matters. He really sold the children of the country to strangers.

MORTON.

He sold boys and got back men. Murray always knows what he is doing.

LINDSAY.

Do you think he will arrive at the right time? The hour is now approaching.

MORTON.

He that has to travel secretly must often make a circuit. If any one has gotten a message from him, it must be Knox.

LINDSAY

(*to Knox*).

Have you heard anything from Murray?

KNOX

(*as before*).

Yes.

MORTON.

Is he coming?

KNOX.

Immediately.

LINDSAY

(*to Morton*).

That is well, then let us sit down while we are waiting. I do not deny that I am a little excited. One controls it better when one sits down.

MORTON.

Then I am entirely quiet. I am only a little vexed at Knox's not speaking to us. I think I shall speak to him.

LINDSAY.

No, don't do that.

MORTON

(*to Knox*).

What does Knox think about the condition of the country?

KNOX.

Nothing.

LINDSAY.

No, what is the use, Morton?

MORTON.

What does Knox say about our undertaking?

KNOX.

Neither anything about that.

MORTON.

Do you think we serve God by this?

KNOX.

Everything serves God.

MORTON.

If this Italian, David Rizzio, got the Evangelical doctrine entirely rooted out here in Scotland, would that also serve God?

KNOX.

Everything which occurs is predestined, and then it would be predestined that another and better generation should receive the blessing, and this one perish.

LINDSAY.

Stop now, Morton!

MORTON.

Then we could cease doing anything;—for what is going to occur, will occur anyway?

KNOX.

Certainly. It does not put so much as a straw toward his destination, neither does it take any thing from it. What you do, you do only for your own salvation.

MORTON.

But if I am from the beginning destined to damnation, then it is impossible for me to be saved?

KNOX.

He that from the beginning knows that you shall be condemned, knows also from the beginning that you would deserve it.

LINDSAY.

This is blasphemy, Morton.

MORTON.

It must be tiresome for God to look at every-

thing which he knows beforehand even from the beginning.

KNOX.

He certainly has his thoughts about it, as I have mine about your speech,—although I also knew it beforehand.

(Silence. A knock on the door.)

SCENE SECOND.

KNOX.

Come!

(The door is opened, Ruthven enters, armed, leaning on a servant. The two rise, Lindsay places a chair for him, Morton supports him.)

MORTON.

You overtax yourself, Ruthven. It would be better for you to keep your bed.

RUTHVEN

(to the servant, when he is taken to seat).

Go. Wait outside!

LINDSAY.

This was not the meaning, Lord Ruthven, that

you, sick as you are, should trouble yourself!

RUTHVEN.

But I do not rely on you!

MORTON.

But there are enough of us, though.

LINDSAY.

And everything ready.

RUTHVEN.

When the queen begins to weep, then you will let your hands drop. I know you.

LINDSAY.

God forbid that we should not esteem the welfare of this country higher than her tears.

MORTON.

My Lord nevertheless does not himself intend to go with us to the palace?

RUTHVEN.

Yes, if you have to carry me thither!

LINDSAY.

But what do you want there as sick as you are?

RUTHVEN.

Take care that the rascal is really killed.—
Where is Lethington?

LINDSAY.

The day we all should sign he had left the
city.

RUTHVEN.

There you see! There you see! Can I rely
on such people?

MORTON.

Lethington is careful.

RUTHVEN.

Is it now time to be careful? Look at me!
The danger is so great that even sick people
must rise to fight!

MORTON.

Each to his task. Lethington has benefited
our case, when no one else could. He has been
able to do that, because he never exposed him-
self.

LINDSAY.

How sick you are, Ruthven.

RUTHVEN.

Yes, the night is bad, the day is worse.—
Where is Knox?

KNOX

(stops a moment).

Ruthven!

RUTHVEN.

Well, are you there!—I feel ill, Knox.

KNOX.

I see that.

RUTHVEN.

Why don't you come to me?

KNOX.

Because you still do not have need for me.

RUTHVEN.

Yes, Knox, you do not know what it is to be
lying without sleep, thinking of one's life. You
should have come, Knox.

KNOX.

No, it was too soon.

RUTHVEN.

Too soon? What do you mean by that, Knox?

KNOX.

When you have reached the point that you wish to die, Ruthven, then I shall come.

RUTHVEN

(rises in horror, falls back again).

You mistake my sickness, Knox. It is not sickness unto death, it is rheumatism with the agonies of hell; I can become a cripple, and yet not die.—Why are you silent, Knox?

KNOX.

Because answer is unnecessary.

RUTHVEN.

If I knew it were death, I should not wait; I would finish it myself.

KNOX.

That is the straight way to hell.

RUTHVEN.

Oh, Knox, do not say that!—If you would mass,—no, it is true, there are no more masses. Knox, come and sit down and talk with me.

KNOX

(places himself before him).

What do you want with me?

RUTHVEN.

You are too severe, KNOX,—your whole religion is too severe,—we get no help.

KNOX.

No, it must come from yourself.

RUTHVEN.

I know that, therefore I defy sickness and go with the others to the palace. If we get that ungodly woman, the plague of the whole church, removed, and kill her seducer, the servant of Beelzebub, it will, I suppose, be counted a little in my favor on that day,—isn't it true, KNOX?

KNOX.

I do not know that.

RUTHVEN.

Don't you know that, KNOX? Why, you encourage it, we are here in your house.

KNOX.

I have never encouraged it!

RUTHVEN.

But what is your opinion? You terrify me.

LINDSAY

(steps forward).

- You terrify me too, Knox! I do not know the motive of the others; but mine is zeal for the church.

RUTHVEN.

Then tell us your opinion, Knox! We tremble in fear of it.

KNOX.

Not my opinion, but the opinion of the Bible about ungodly kings and their dynasty. There listen: The prophet Achaia said to king Jeroboam: "Thou hast had other gods than me, therefore thy dynasty shall be destroyed."—The prophet Elias said to Achab: "*I will destroy thy dynasty just as Jeroboam's.*" The prophet Elisha anointed the subject Jehu as king. "*That he should destroy Achab's dynasty.*" But Jehu is as one of you, not pure in the eyes of the Lord, nevertheless he is as a rod of punishment in His hand.—The sentence of God is evident; but let every one who undertakes the execution be careful! For the sentence of God is as a double-edged sword which wounds both ways. Woe unto him that brandishes it from desire for possession of the goods of the church;

would that it put him to death!—Woe unto him that lifts it to revenge his own family,—would that it slay and destroy him as lightning from the sky! Woe unto him that is doing it from revenge and hate, woe, woe unto all them that are doing it in unbelief and obduracy!—Other encouragement I can not give you.

(Goes as before; silence for a long time.)

RUTHVEN.

When one in old time sought a Catholic priest, he went away consoled. When we ask for bread, you give stones.—I think I shall go home again.

LINDSAY.

No! These words have powerfully strengthened my purpose. yes, bound the sword to my hand, so to speak. Even if I should perish, even if my intention were not so entirely pure, which I suppose is possible for a human being.—where the sentence of the Lord is so clearly pronounced as here, it is one's duty to undertake it.

RUTHVEN.

Then I have not correctly understood his words.

MORTON.

They also seem to me to strike both sides; but I do here as I always do, when words seem incomprehensible to me, keep to the act. Why, Knox himself is one of the party.

RUTHVEN.

No. Knox will not be with us.

MORTON.

Not with sword in hand; he is a man of peace. But he is, nevertheless, with us in the plan.

(*A knock.*)

ALL.

That is Murray!

SCENE THIRD.

(*Murray, covered in a cape, which he immediately throws off*).

MORTON.

Yes, it is Murray!

LINDSAY.

Now there are a thousand more men in Scotland! Now I begin to feel easy! Welcome!

(He hastens toward him and embraces him, Morton likewise.)

MURRAY
(to Ruthven).

Good evening my friends! You are sick, Ruthven.

RUTHVEN.

Yes, so sick that I do not even recover by seeing you! Welcome to Scotland! *(They embrace one another.)* But everything is not all right here.

MORTON.

It shall be better! *(He sees Knox, goes toward him.)* Your blessing! *(He bends knee before him.)*

KNOX
(with his hand on his head).

God give you a simple belief and a strong will.
God forgive you your offences.

(The curtain falls. Change of scene.)

Mary Stuart's cabinet de repos.

SCENE FOURTH.

As the curtain goes up, laughter and the close of a Spanish song to playing on the harp is heard from one side. From the other a covered supper-table is rolled in at the same time. Pages come and place themselves in order after some jesting. From the first side come the QUEEN, led by STUART, the DUCHESS of ARGYLE, led by Captain ERSKINE, and RIZZIO alone.

QUEEN.

With this song must come the most costly wine. (*All sit down; as they are seated the queen says to the pages.*) Is this the new Cyprus-wine which the king of Spain has sent?

A page.

Yes, your grace!

QUEEN.

The world's most famous wine!

STUART.

How I am longing for the first glass!

DUCHESS.

Yes, more than the sultan, who sacrificed 18,000 warriors to get hold of it.

STUART.

Good wine is as a feast-shot expected for a long time. Good humor becomes prevalent and hilarity is spread.

DUCHESS.

Good wine is as a witty saying, it burns and makes free.

QUEEN.

Good wine is as the sun after a rain, a message from the eternal spring of joy.

DUCHESS.

Good wine arches the rain-bow over the landscape of our thoughts with beauty and promises.

STUART.

Good wine is as music, says Ronsard; it purls melodiously through our being.

QUEEN.

Good wine, I say, is as a sweet secret, it whispers and laughs in our inner self.

DUCHESS.

Good wine is as praise, it doubles our strength.

STUART.

Or as flattery, which deceives.

QUEEN

(lifts her glass).

The first glass lifts us up on our steed for a merry ride.

DUCHESS

(lifts her glass).

The other forms charming landscapes around us.

STUART

(lifts his glass).

The third throws us off.

QUEEN.

But if we, after this eulogy, let the first glass stand?

(Places it on the table, all do the same.)

DUCHESS

(laughing).

That would be a greater abstinence than Eve was capable of.

RIZZIO.

It is, nevertheless, too small to be called abstinence.

DUCHESS.

It is often more difficult, Rizzio, to show abstinence in the smaller than in the greater things.

QUEEN.

Perhaps Rizzio knows about abstinence,—please give us a definition!

RIZZIO.

Your grace!

STUART.

But quickly!

DUCHESS.

But he must not search for it so far away as the wine comes from.

QUEEN.

What is abstinence, Rizzio?

RIZZIO.

H'm,—to give that which one has most desire for.

(All laugh.)

STUART.

Where did you attend school, Monsieur?

QUEEN.

In Turin, the definition is from Piedmont.

RIZZIO

(*points to the wine*).

I was just thinking of that standing before us.

DUCHESS.

Or of that sitting near you.

RIZZIO.

If I should decide myself, I feel it the most difficult abstinence to abstain from letting others be sufferers from one's own adversity.

STUART.

Monsieur means to abstain from revenge.

RIZZIO.

No. I have seldom felt temptation to strike back, but often to let the blow go further.

STUART.

No, back!

THE OTHERS.

Yes, back!

QUEEN.

The revenge is as sweet wine,—this be our last simile.—Your health!

(*They all take their glasses.*)

QUEEN
(*drinking*).

But Rizzio must practice abstinence! (*They drink.*) The best wine I ever drank!

STUART.

Charmant!

DUCHESS.

Magnifique!

QUEEN.

Rizzio did really not drink. Ha, ha, ha!—
My friend, it was not my meaning though.

DUCHESS.

The toast of abstinence is best drunk in that
manner.

QUEEN.

Was it the toast of abstinence we drank? Was
it not that of revenge?

STUART.

Yes, sweet revenge!

RIZZIO.

Revenge can be gratifying to us, but not
sweet.

ALL THE OTHERS.

Yes, yes!

QUEEN.

The sweetness of revenge is as,—yes, let me find a living picture, — — as Bothwell! Bothwell is as revenge, the revenge is Bothwell!

THE OTHERS.

But Bothwell is neither sweet nor handsome.

QUEEN.

Bothwell!—There exists a beauty which I will call horrible, and Bothwell possesses that.

DUCHESS.

It is consequently that with one eye.

QUEEN.

Well yes, that he only has one eye, belongs to it. In the marked face lies a dim writing whose riddle captivates. The hundred rumors which follow him as a fleet where he sails forth, gather spectators. His quick, vehement behavior frightens them away again, the daring in all his judgments astounds, and then this that his coldness possesses warmth, his warmth coldness . . . yes, it is only contrasts; but Bothwell is such, and such is also that kind of beauty.

SCENE FIFTH.

(*Henry Darnley, somewhat tipsy.*)

ALL

(*except the queen.*)

The king!

(*They rise, only the queen remains sitting.*)

DARNLEY.

Please keep your seats, keep your seats, pretty alliance of joy! I am only coming for a visit to my own wife, I will only embrace you, you wonderful seducing—

(*He embraces and kisses her.*)

QUEEN.

My Lord!

DARNLEY

(*taking a chair and sitting down, back of the queen.*)

Are not my kisses according to your grace's taste! Are you thinking of that Judas gave? (*Leaning familiarly on her chair.*) I am thinking of all them which you gave me in sweet deceit. Oh, I am so glad, so glad; for in the future you shall never more kiss any other than me, you Scotland's wild swan!

QUEEN

(rises).

Thank you for this evening, ladies and gentlemen; I am not feeling quite well. Excuse me, my Lord!

(Tries to pass by him.)

DARNLEY.

Oh no, no, you can't pass by, you dearest; no, now first you shall always stay with me. Here more merry people are coming, look at him there, how gay he is!

SCENE SIXTH.

(Ruthven stands in the door pale, leaning on his drawn sword, behind him more armed people, who force their way in with him.)

(The former gather around the queen.)

QUEEN.

What is this? Why armed men?

(No answer.)

QUEEN

(goes forward).

Lord Ruthven! Who has given you permis-

sion to force your way into the queen's room un-announced?

RUTHVEN.

We come because that David Rizzio is here—and has been here too long.

QUEEN.

Impudence!

RUTHVEN.

If your grace will not remove him, then the nobility of Scotland must do so; for they shall maintain the dignity of the throne.

STUART and ARTHUR ERSKINE

(draw their swords and hurry forth).

QUEEN.

The guards up here, arrest them all!

RUTHVEN.

Quiet, Arthur Erskine, quiet, Stuart. The guard is arrested; Morton and Lindsay keep the castle occupied.

QUEEN, ERSKINE, STUART, DUCHESS.

High treason!

STUART.

No brave knight will see his queen offended;

Arthur Erskine, we can't protect her, but we can fall, nevertheless!—Sapristi!

(Thrusts a man down, so he falls and is carried away; goes forth toward the crowd, Erskine follows; short melee, in which they are surrounded and forced out.)

STUART.

The damned French parade rapier! If I only had a Scotch weapon! Oh, Madam, God protect you!—

THE DUCHESS OF ARGYLE

(forward to the queen).

I will seek James Melwill, the citizens shall come! The alarm-bells shall ring!

QUEEN.

Would that God in heaven also let His be heard.

DUCHESS

(as she is hindered from getting out).

Am I David Rizzio? Has that fellow eyes in his head?

RUTHVEN.

Let her pass. she can't do anything. *(She gets out.)* Now to our work.

QUEEN.

Holy Virgin! What country have you sent me to!

RUTHVEN

(to the warriors who are coming in again).

Seize David Rizzio!

RIZZIO

(who has been standing farthest forward in one of the corners entirely quiet, goes now impetuously over to the queen and throws himself on his knees).

Justice, your grace, they will murder me!

(He keeps himself behind the queen.)

QUEEN.

This is high treason. None dare come hither!

RUTHVEN.

Seize David Rizzio!

QUEEN.

But why, what has he done?

RUTHVEN.

He has offended your Majesty's honor, and with that the King's, your consort's, and the nobility and the people over whom you rule!—

QUEEN.

By the eternal truth, that is an impudent slander for which you shall suffer!

RUTHVEN.

H'm!—we certainly shall take care that your grace never more shall have power in this country.—Forward, seize him!

RIZZIO

(behind her on his knees).

Oh, I told you there was danger, but you would not listen to me. You have been unjust toward me,—now you must protect me!

QUEEN.

If you have a charge against him, I shall bring it before the parliament of lords. I tell you: Obey the law, do not overrule the order of this country, as you force your way into and overturn everything in the apartments of your queen! Truly there will come a day after this!

RUTHVEN.

Yes, on the day of judgment everything will be judged! In the name of the church and the law, forward against this idolater and seducer!
(The warriors go over to the other side.)

RIZZIO.

Justice! I have served you with fidelity!

QUEEN.

But is there among you not a single one who will obey his queen? Call Bothwell, call Huntley, there are nevertheless men in the castle of Holyrood!

RUTHVEN.

Their rooms are locked!

QUEEN

(*strongly*).

But am I not the Lord's anointed. And you will let me stand helpless and alone!—Think of what you are doing; you murder the laws, you rebel against the royalty appointed by God, you soil the sacred purple, you tear asunder the Holy Writ!—Back, insane!

(*They yield.*)

RUTHVEN.

It is as I said: This woman would soon conquer you.

(*Steps forward himself to seize Rizzio, who throws himself on his knees and clutches her dress.*)

RIZZIO.

Help! Help!

QUEEN

(*supplicatingly*).

Oh, you violate still more, you violate the right of the woman from eternity. The greatest sin which men can commit is to let a woman feel her feebleness. Regard and lenience shall keep guard around her, pity be her intercessor, and her feebleness a bar against the rough violence of passion! If you tear that down, oh, then there is no limit any longer, all will intermingle as animals.—Do not begin with your own queen, where will it then end!—

SEVERAL.

Ruthven. let that be enough!

RUTHVEN.

Now she is meek, but tomorrow she will bring us to the scaffold.

SCENE SEVENTH.

(*Lindsay enters.*)

LINDSAY.

If there is no one who fears God and the

country's honor more than this woman, then I do!

(Forward toward Rizzio.)

QUEEN

(in his way).

Over my corpse then shall you come to him!

LINDSAY.

Is not necessary!

(Will seize her.)

QUEEN

(back).

Who dares lay hand on his queen?

LINDSAY

(yields).

She did not say that of her own accord!

(The others also yield.)

ANDREW KERR

(forces his way forward and cocks a pistol).

If no one dare touch her, then we should rather shoot her down!

(He takes aim.)

QUEEN

(forward).

Yes, do that! But know that I carry two lives, and both Scotland's first!

(He lowers the pistol.)

RUTHVEN.

Then the king, her consort, must seize her, nobody can forbid him that!

QUEEN

(to Darnley who is standing at the table).

His first duty as husband forbids that; for that is to protect me! His second as King forbids it; for that is to chase you away! Henry Darnley, order these men to withdraw. My God! here at last is an occasion to shaw that you are a man!

DARNLEY.

Now I will show it—by resisting all your begging for Rizzio!—

QUEEN.

Oh, they have made use of your horrible simplicity. Don't you then remember that it is Rizzio who helped you up to the throne!—God forgive him that, now we suffer both therefor!

DARNLEY.

I remember more than that.

QUEEN.

It is slander, by all that you consider sacred, it is a lie! (*Toward him.*) Oh, Darnley, you have lost my love, be now a man, and you will get it back!

(*The conspirators make use of Rizzio's standing unprotected; now they throw themselves over him; he himself was standing listening to the words of his queen.*)

RIZZIO.

Help, help!

QUEEN.

Oh, Jesus, Mary, I forgot him! (*Rushes after him, but Darnley places himself in her way.*) How dare you bar my way?

DARNLEY.

For the sake of your safety; for your life is here in danger.

QUEEN.

What is my life, when they have broken down my dignity as queen and woman?

(*She goes forward, he hinders her.*)

DARNLEY.

They shall not hurt him!

RIZZIO

(has the whole time been crying for help, assuring of his innocence; now he shouts to the queen).

Oh, on account of my faithfulness I suffer this! Save me!

QUEEN.

I can't!

(The others out with Rizzio.)

SCENE EIGHTH.

QUEEN.

Oh, why did I come to this country! No friends, not a protector, all traitors against me, and I am only a woman!

(She bursts out crying and swoons. Darnley takes her to a seat. There comes somebody and takes his dagger off his girdle and runs out again.)

DARNLEY

(looking after him).

That is right, that is right! With my dagger

he must be killed! (*He looks at the queen, who is lying in a swoon.*) There is nevertheless that which conquers her! . . . (*Leans over her.*) Mary, listen to me!—(*She makes an averting motion with her hand, as if he is disgusting to her.*) Mary, understand it;—not you, but him!—You are to me always dear just the same! (*The queen again makes the same motion and looks up.*) Think over, Mary, how badly you have treated me!—Such a thing was necessary, —Mary—do you now understand,—how I love you!—

SCENE NINTH.

(*Ruthven enters again.*)

RUTHVEN

(*throws himself down on a chair.*)

Wine. I tremble!

(*Darnley runs up and gives him a glass, which he empties in one swallow.*)

QUEEN

(*who is looking up.*)

Rizzio's glass! It was poured for revenge!

RUTHVEN.

That does not matter; now he is killed!

QUEEN

(rushes up).

Oh, that blood shall be dear to many of you!

RUTHVEN.

Just so! The worse your pain rages, the stronger support you give to suspicion!

QUEEN

(stops and considers).

I understand your meaning! But, if it were the simplest of my servants, I would rather lay down my life than see him killed in my protecting presence. Because I have suffered this humiliation, because you have wrung from me this pride, therefore I now weep,—although without tears!

RUTHVEN.

It had to come to this! When the ruler does not follow the law, the law comes to the ruler! You have been this country's whip, now it is swung in your own palace.

QUEEN.

Oh, that anybody dare say this to me!

(She covers her face.)

health,—soon you will meet Rizzio before the eternal Judge!

RUTHVEN.

Take me away! Call my servants!

LINDSAY.

Lord Ruthven is sick, Ruthven's servants!
(They come, he is led away.)

SCENE ELEVENTH.

QUEEN

(goes up and down vehemently, stops now and then).

DARNLEY

(stands quietly viewing her).

No, she is strong still. She is flapping her wings as an eagle whose talons are bound. How pretty she is! But I do not give up; she shall tremble from rage, but later from fear!—Mary!

QUEEN

(stops).

Do not call me by that name! You must understand that I can't be your wife any longer.

DARNLEY.

You were not before, that is true. But now you shall become it! The Catholic church does not know divorce; you are mine till death, from to-day only mine!

QUEEN.

God in heaven, why, you can't wish to have my life bound to this person!—Oh, what a future!

(She covers her face.)

DARNLEY.

Do you see, there is no other way. I am now your master! Speak a word of submission! You do not leave this castle, before it is spoken,—no, not if it should last for years!

QUEEN.

I speak a word of submission?

DARNLEY.

Yes.

QUEEN.

Traitor! Son of a traitor! I shall never be satisfied until your soul is pierced by the same anguish that mine is at this moment!

(She passes through the door from whence she came.)

SCENE TWELFTH.

DARNLEY

(*alone*).

This fight will be both harder and longer than I expected.—Has the smart Lethington deceived himself! Or deceived me! It is not fear that conquers her. Could I have been mistaken? Should I have lost her to-day for ever? No, there must be something that paves the way. Love, the most humble, devoted and imploring doesn't do it,—then it must be this! Yes, it must be fear: let us wait, let us only wait!—The horse rears and kicks until it is wet with foam, but then it yields, let us only hold on!—I will see Rizzio! I will see, if the pain of death is delineated in his features!

(*He goes.*)

SCENE THIRTEENTH.

MORTON.

Who the devil has saddled us with the citizens?

LINDSAY.

What shall we do with them?

MORTON.

Shoot them down!

LINDSAY.

No, no shots; for that is to awaken the whole of Scotland! We must speak to them. We must assure them that what is done is done in behalf of the Reformed church.

MORTON.

Oh, nobody will believe that talk.

LINDSAY.

When I tell you, Earl of Morton, that that was my reason, then I wish to learn if you still call it talk?

MORTON.

Have what reason you wish, but do not try the citizens. For they have a kind of enthusiasm for their young queen. If she but speaks to them, they will storm the castle!

LINDSAY.

Then we shall also speak to them in the name of religion.

MORTON.

Yes, try which is the stronger. Either your religion or a pretty woman who weeps!

LINDSAY.

Then she must not speak to them.

MORTON.

Her windows face toward them. Who can forbid it?

LINDSAY.

She must not!

MORTON.

Well,—then I know of only one means!---

LINDSAY.

No shooting, no shooting!

MORTON.

Not at the citizens, but—

LINDSAY.

What do you mean?

MORTON.

Do you feel, that if she speaks, this castle will burn and our goods and our lives be a heap of flames?

LINDSAY.

I feel there is danger.

MORTON.

Have I the command here?

LINDSAY.

I think we both have it.

MORTON.

I think that two can't have it.

LINDSAY.

Then I am the older one.

MORTON.

Then draw your sword, Lindsay; for I wish
to become the older one!

LINDSAY.

Are you getting crazy?

MORTON

(*quietly*).

No, but I am dropping this partnership.—
Draw your sword, Lord Lindsay!

LINDSAY.

Lord Lindsay lets not himself be frightened!

MORTON.

And a Douglas lets not himself be forced
aside!

LINDSAY.

Who is forcing you aside?

MORTON.

Death and hell, you all do it! Was it not I that set it on foot, but Lethington who took the honor? Was it not I who brought the men together, but Ruthven who took the command? Now it is my turn; I wish to do what none of you dare—end this trouble by a stroke!—Draw your sword, you are in my way!

LINDSAY.

He is crazy.

(They draw swords.)

SCENE FOURTEENTH.

(Armed people come.)

ONE

(quickly).

There is danger, there is danger! The citizens demand to see the queen, they storm the castle!

MORTON.

Burst the queen's door open, place guards at

her windows. If she approaches, shoot her down.

LINDSAY.

But Patrick Lindsay will shoot him who dares do that!

MORTON.

Then it shall be I!—Follow me, soldiers!

(Out, some of them follow him.)

LINDSAY.

I call upon you and heaven to bear me witness, that I never have known this man.

(Out, some of them after him.)

(There is quiet a while among them that still remain. They listen; from below is shouted: "The Earl of Murray forever!" Immediately afterwards is shouted nearer: "The regent of the country forever!" The shout reaches the scene, and the Earl of Murray, accompanied by two noblemen and a crowd of people, appears.)

SCENE FIFTEENTH.

MURRAY.

Where is the queen? The people demand to

see the queen!—You do not answer!—Is she in danger?

QUEEN

(in disorder—night robe).

Help, help, Scotland's men, drawn swords are put upon my breast! *(She sees an unsheathed sword and utters a shriek.)* Hide, hide! I can't stand to see it! *(She weeps.)* Scotland's men, protect your queen! *(On her knees.)* Or be merciful and kill me, but without my seeing it! There, there again. *(She leaps up, looks around disturbed.)*

Oh, why did I come to this country? I do not understand you, I am afraid of you; let me go home again!—Oh, when I saw Scotland's shores in fog and cold I was standing freezing on the wet deck, then I felt something tingle as fire through my breast, and now I feel it again. Oh, let me go home to France again! Oh, how awful it is here! I rode into your dark, heavy city, you came in long processions with biblical drawings above your heads, drawings of only murder and fire; you were sawing away on instruments without sound, you sang dreary psalms,—oh, let me go home to France! There is sun again in France, there is pity for a

woman, there is quiet regard and respect for the laws, and there is kindness toward him that is deserted, and there is my family and there were the days of my childhood; oh, let me go home again to France! (*On her knees.*) (*Morton and followers come; then she rises frightened and flees.*) There they are! Now they want to kill me!

MURRAY

(*forward*).

Hide your sword, Earl of Morton! (*He does it immediately, but men behind him do not.*) Earl of Morton, arrest the men behind you, who have not hidden their weapons! (*Morton does it, they are immediately surrounded and brought out.—To Lindsay, who has also come.*) Lord Lindsay assumes guard of the castle! No armed man dares enter the queen's rooms under punishment of death!—March!

(*The stage cleared.*)

SCENE SIXTEENTH.

QUEEN

(*who with astonishment becomes aware of Murray and has listened to him*).

James! (*In his arms.*) Oh, if you had been here, all this would not have happened!

MURRAY.

If I had been here, Henry Darnley would not be your consort, and Scotland's lords not your enemies!

QUEEN.

Oh, James, would that I had followed your advice!

MURRAY.

There is still time for that!

QUEEN.

No, now I must depart!—I will not stay here any longer, and I am sick—oh, so sick!

MURRAY.

Your grace needs rest.—I shall assume the government.

QUEEN.

Then you must revenge me, James!

MURRAY.

Do not think of revenge, only think of your soon becoming a mother; see that you rest yourself!

QUEEN.

Yes, rest you say . . . as humbled as I am, I can't enjoy it!

MURRAY.

Go to family and friends, put aside all sorrowful thoughts;—I shall take care that you get restitution!

QUEEN.

Oh, this load of shame; this pressure upon my heart of the tears which I can not weep, that I can not lay aside!—No, something must first be done!

(A horseman in the door. She sees him. The horseman on his knees, reaches forth a letter with a respectful greeting, she takes it; he goes).

QUEEN

(reads).

“Within three days three thousand men.—Bothwell!” . . . *(She does not apprehend it, she reads it over again.)* “Within three days three thousand men.—Bothwell!”

SCENE SEVENTEENTH.

QUEEN

(turns around, sees Darnley in the door, runs up toward him and brings him forth).

Will you save me?

DARNLEY

(horried, lets her go).

QUEEN

(holding up the letter).

Bothwell will in three days have three thousand men,—flight and disgrace is awaiting all the rebels!—On what side do you want to be?

DARNLEY.

Has Bothwell escaped!

MURRAY

(aside).

Jesus! Has he escaped!

QUEEN

(to Darnley).

Now you can keep me arrested and take me with you on your flight; but never shall any one obtain anything else than Scotland's wrath and the imprecation of the whole world through it!

—And you, Henry, you shall not have so much love as the iron bar before my window!

DARNLEY
(*horrified*).

Who has let Bothwell escape!

QUEEN.

Yes, now comes the repentance, Henry! But if you will let the guards go, if you will secretly, quickly take me to Bothwell's camp, then I think that even during the flight this night shall be able to see the dawn of the morning of forgiveness!

DARNLEY.

Oh, Mary!

QUEEN.

As true as the sky above you is filled with flashings of lightning of revenge, you shall hear it crash awfully around you a night, when you are hurled down into the hell of the anguish of your conscience,—or you take me in your arms and ride silently away from here,—over to Dunbar's well fortified castle.—Now you must hurry and choose, Henry!

DARNLEY.

Oh, Mary! . . . The men, who are my allies,
I have sworn not to sacrifice!

QUEEN.

One should not betray traitors?—But me,
whom you love, me you can betray!—Listen to
me now; your cause is lost, if you prefer to be
convicted with them for high treason, well, that
is a quick way to become a widow!

DARNLEY.

Oh, Mary, for your sake I gave up my father-
land, for your sake my religion, for your sake
I have become a murderer; shall also this insane
love cause me to become a traitor?—No, I
will not!

QUEEN.

I feel there are others who shall lose their
soul this night,—but let us first come out of it!
—Henry, flee with me, and only the coming
spring under the old trees at Dunbar castle
knows what you can gain! (*He is becoming
enlivened.*)—But I can't promise you anything,
—not any thing!—I do not want to deceive you:
—a great pain troubles me, which you must first
be able to relieve!

DARNLEY

(softly).

Murray,—is our cause lost?

MURRAY

(softly).

As far as the whole was calculated as a surprise, it certainly is lost.

QUEEN

(to Murray).

You—James, you returned home to assume the government in Darnley's name;—but now he does not furnish this name any longer—

(When the queen pauses to let Darnley speak, but he is silent, says)

MURRAY.

I see that!

QUEEN.

But will you rule in my name?

MURRAY.

In your name?—Under conditions—certainly!

QUEEN.

Give Bothwell and me the conspirators, and I shall give you the country to rule.

(Pause.)

[MURRAY.

The questions of religion?

QUEEN.

May rest for a while.—When I again take them up, you may go.]

MURRAY.

I should like to be of use to my country.—
I shall take your offer under consideration!

[QUEEN

(*quickly*).

But you do not give the conspirators any hint.

MURRAY.

Your flight will certainly give it to them.

QUEEN.

But you do not help them?

MURRAY.

Their case is dropped.]

QUEEN.

You leave the conspirators to their fate?

MURRAY.

As they themselves left me to mine—to-day
a year ago.

QUEEN.

They are convicted!—Now Henry Darn-
ley!—

DARNLEY.

I also am convicted!

QUEEN.

Henry, I believe the crime you committed
toward me, you committed through love, but
then the same love must have healing power.
Henry, on Dunbar castle we two have much
to talk about, alone.—For three months I must
have rest. Henry, are you not longing to be
alone with me for three months?

DARNLEY.

If I am longing—?

QUEEN.

We have never been alone.

DARNLEY.

Not since we were married.

QUEEN.

That was the devil in our marriage.

DARNLEY.

It was that.

QUEEN.

Well, then—take me away from here to Dunbar's well fortified castle!

DARNLEY.

They that follow us will soon take you away from me.

QUEEN.

Nobody shall follow us.

DARNLEY.

None except I?

QUEEN.

None!

DARNLEY.

Is it really true?

QUEEN.

I have said it.

DARNLEY.

Then your words light a thousand torches on

both sides of the way even till we arrive at Dunbar!

QUEEN.

Then you must also protect me, Henry!

DARNLEY.

As the princess of a fairy tale behind an enchanted castle! None but I—and for three months. promise that!

QUEEN.

For three months, and now spring is coming!

DARNLEY.

Mary, can we be together for three months—

QUEEN.

We can be together for a whole lifetime!—
But then you would have to become a different person.—

DARNLEY.

Before the word becomes a wish, before the glance becomes a word, before the thought becomes a glance, I shall have caught and performed it! Oh, a life of sacrifice is the noblest I can think of! But you did not allow me that before. Yes, I thought at last that it

was just the contrary you wished,—therefore came this night. . .

QUEEN

(breaking him off).

. . . which we so quickly shall flee away from, that not even our speech must hang on it. Darnley! Murray! *(She goes between them and takes their hands and leads them forward.)* We all three have to forget and to forgive.—Now, James, my brother, now you promise me to be quiet and silent.

(Murray nods his head approvingly.)

And you, my . . . you, Henry, dispatch the guards, you go alone with me to Dunbar's well fortified castle?

DARNLEY.

As you like!

(Darnley and Murray go.)

QUEEN.

I am so tired, so nervous . . . But nevertheless; I am now again Scotland's queen, God's grace my throne, and the law my sword!—

(The curtain falls.)

ACT THIRD

Knox's house.

SCENE FIRST.

(John Knox is reading in a big book. A knock.)

KNOX.

Come in!

(William Taylor enters.)

TAYLOR.

My old teacher and benefactor! Have you time to grant me an interview!

KNOX.

Most willingly.

TAYLOR.

I have become page to the king, the unhappy Henry Darnley.—I am seeking help for him.

KNOX.

From me?

TAYLOR.

From a godly man. No one in Scotland can be sick in his soul without longing for John Knox.

KNOX.

Is Henry Darnley longing for me?

TAYLOR.

Yes;—things went bad at Dunbar castle!—He is disappointed and deserted by all, also by himself.

KNOX.

A single flickering sigh from a lacerated soul nobody can pay attention to.

TAYLOR.

Oh no, there is more. He is badly treated by the queen and by all those around him; his by nature peaceful mind is melted into despair. Now somebody must come to help him, now is the time of seeding.

KNOX.

Of serious repentance, of severe atonement he is not capable. He is a reed.

TAYLOR.

His love for the queen has nevertheless been

sincere. That might be developed toward a higher love.

[KNOX.

Yes, if she did not meddle any more.

TAYLOR.

There is no danger. She detests him.

KNOX.

What has now again happened?

TAYLOR.

She demanded of him, that he publicly disavow all participation in the conspiracy; for otherwise she could not punish the conspirators; this he was weak enough to do. But they took revenge and proved, that he at one time had even signed her abdication of the throne.—This she can't forget.

KNOX.

Yes, see what kind of a wretch he is.

TAYLOR.

If she demanded that he execrate his own mother, he would do it!]

KNOX.

He has, consequently, a faculty for devotion?

TAYLOR.

Wonderful! But he can't rule it;—thus he plagued her further with his jealousy.

KNOX.

Why, Rizzio is now dead?

TAYLOR.

Then he was jealous of the dead Rizzio. He did not even allow the queen to honor the memory of Rizzio. From this came the worst; when the queen was delivered of a son, she was moved as all young mothers and demanded to see the father; but in an attack of jealousy he pretended not to know that it was his son!—She never will forgive him that!

KNOX.

He is a mixture of a refractory child and of dishonest weakness.

TAYLOR.

But this childishness was once so filled with love,—by that was also the queen charmed. If she had had a strong character, around which his soul could wind itself, he would now be a man. They are both to blame.

KNOX.

He is wavering over her whims as children waver over the shavings which they throw in a pond, and to which they themselves make artificial storm. Listen, William, I will have nothing to do with this.—I have more serious things.

(*Reads.*)

[TAYLOR.

Forgive me, Sir, I have myself inspired him with this thought; he is longing now.

KNOX.

I forgive you on account of your good intention; but you ought to have seen that I have no time for that kind of uncertain longings.

(*Reads.*)]

(*Pause.*)

TAYLOR.

I was myself as wretched, when I came to you the first time.

KNOX.

I can transplant the green tree, but not the dry.

TAYLOR.

As long as there is a fresh branch, there is hope in the spring.

KNOX.

Then I would first have to see it. Go now, William! There are not many hours left of my life; those I have I must use.

TAYLOR

(*aside*).

He is waiting outside!—Shall he also go disappointed from this door, then the next one is that of death.

KNOX.

Is there anything else you want?

TAYLOR.

No, Sir!

KNOX.

You have come into a depraved house, William, you should —not seek temptation.

TAYLOR.

I have only sought the company of one, whom all others deserted.

KNOX.

Well, that is creditable to you.—But let me have rest!

(*Reads.*)

TAYLOR.

Good bye, Sir! (*in a low voice.*) I think nevertheless, I shall risk it!

KNOX.

Good bye, William! (*Taylor goes; Knox reads, stops.*) Such wisdom! The poet's words are as coin of precious metal which keeps its value, but the impression becomes worn and soon it is not current any more. The word of the Lord is as the diamond, it is never worn and sparkles with the same lustre till the Lord's last day.

(*A Knock.*)

Come in!

SCENE SECOND.

DARNLEY

(*covered with a cloak.*)

Are you alone?

KNOX.

Yes!

DARNLEY.

Do you want to speak to an unhappy man?

KNOX.

Always.

DARNLEY

(throws off his cloak).

Do you know me?

KNOX

(rises).

The King!

DARNLEY.

No, not any longer! Only the poor Henry Darnley!

KNOX

(coldly).

What do you want here?

DARNLEY.

Advice, consolation, help!—Yes, I do not know what I want; but I have no one else to go to.

KNOX.

You have deserted our church, have embraced the Catholic—seek now the consolation of that!

DARNLEY.

That has none; now I want to return to the Protestant!

KNOX.

But this church is more severe than that.

DARNLEY.

It is not the church I seek, it is a strong man;
I am in need!

KNOX

*(lays his book aside, goes near to him, looks in
his eyes).*

What do you want?

DARNLEY.

Seek help to protect myself: I am tempted
night and day to commit suicide.

KNOX.

To flee from a short and temporal anguish,
you want to seek out an eternal?

DARNLEY.

God can't punish one any more, that has al-
ready suffered so much.

KNOX.

He does not punish the man, but the sin; when
you carry the sin over with you, he must also
punish it further.

DARNLEY.

Where shall I then go? The whole earth has only blame, scorn and torment for me.

KNOX.

Please sit down, I want to talk to you.

DARNLEY.

But be not severe!

KNOX

(has taken a chair and moved near to him).

You have broken with your queen, Elizabeth, and with your fatherland, to come to this woman.

DARNLEY.

Yes.

KNOX.

You have deserted the faith of your childhood for Mary's sake.

DARNLEY.

Yes.

KNOX.

And later you have scorned it.

DARNLEY.

Yes.

KNOX.

But immediately when you thought Mary was untrue, you also scorned her and threw yourself into debauchery and defiance.

DARNLEY.

Yes.

KNOX.

You turned traitor against her and sold her to the conspirators.

DARNLEY.

Yes.

KNOX.

Then you again sold the conspirators to her.

DARNLEY.

Yes.

KNOX.

But then the conspirators took revenge and communicated to the queen that you even had signed her abdication of the throne.

DARNLEY.

Yes.

KNOX.

The conspirators had for a long time treated

you with contempt; now she also did it,—and with her all the people! Then you thought of flight, but you can't go to England, for there your enemies are; neither to France, for there her friends are; to no Catholic country, for there she is loved; to no Protestant, for there you are yourself held in contempt

DARNLEY.

Yes, Lord Jesus! So it is! The countries of the whole world are closed against me as is the heart of every man,—oh, have pity!

KNOX.

For him, to whom life has been so dark and severe on earth, light is quickly kindled in heaven. Truly, my son, I shall help you!

DARNLEY

(on his knees).

Oh, for heaven's sake.

KNOX

(freeing himself from him, strokes his hair back from off his face).

Yes, for its sake! There still shall come that day on which you shall feel yourself quiet and at ease.

DARNLEY.

Here on earth?

KNOX.

Here on earth. Sometime one becomes as miserable as you are now, that both he and others really can feel that there exist an eternity and a commiserator—for otherwise we would not advance.

DARNLEY.

Now, I will never more leave you!

KNOX.

You must, nevertheless, my son!

DARNLEY.

No, you alone can teach me to forget her, and if you do that, oh, how I shall love you through my whole life; for I can love, you must believe!

KNOX.

Not me, not me! I shall soon go away from you, but He will be here all days.

DARNLEY.

Oh, I understand you!

KNOX.

And He shall send you a help, you do not have any thought of.

DARNLEY.

But you must stay with me; I devour your every word, as the suffocating inhales the air; you must continue with me!

KNOX.

My son, you have a wonderful faculty for belief; I tell you, you shall regain your health!

DARNLEY.

Oh, Knox! May I always come to you as a son?

KNOX.

Be cheerful.—from this moment you are that!

DARNLEY

(arms around his neck).

Oh, I need love so very much!

KNOX.

You shall learn to give it to a greater one.—But now, my son, I must leave you; I am ordered to be present at the queen's entry into the city;—I suppose you will do likewise?

DARNLEY.

Why did you mention her? I now had a peace, which I have not felt for many months.

KNOX.

You deceive yourself very much, my son, if you think that you can gain it without a fight. You must be able to face both scorn and punishment, otherwise no physician is of any use! Are you not going to the palace?

DARNLEY.

Yes!

KNOX.

Then attend!

DARNLEY.

Oh, that is only to receive new humiliations, —I know that.

KNOX.

Then receive them! You do not gain courage, neither forgiveness the cheaper.

DARNLEY.

Oh, Knox, you do not understand what it is; you, that are always strong. . .

KNOX.

To sum it up, if you can't take upon yourself self-inflicted humiliation, then you can't make yourself fit for grace,—and I can't help you.

DARNLEY.

Oh, if my courage failed at the moment. . .

KNOX.

We shall pray!

DARNLEY.

Will you then help me?

KNOX.

With all my might! Come now. . .

DARNLEY.

(takes the cloak).

I must shroud myself.

KNOX.

Why? Summer's day!

DARNLEY.

Oh, they must not see me coming from here.

KNOX.

They saw you in old days come out from the taverns; are you more ashamed of. . .

DARNLEY.

You make me ashamed. I will go without
the cloak!

(Throws it off.)

KNOX.

Right, my son!

DARNLEY.

Let us go then!

KNOX.

Yes. *(Goes.)*

DARNLEY.

But the people . . . when they see me, they
whisper and laugh. . .

KNOX.

Not when you go with me.

DARNLEY.

I will accompany you!

(They go.)

(Change of scene.)

SCENE THIRD.

Throne—hall in Holyrood.

(Music. Large and elegant assembly of citi-

zens, nobles and courtiers. The queen under a canopy, the Earl of Murray next to her on one side, Lord Stuart on the other.)

A CITIZEN

(kneeling).

This Presbyterian assembly of Edinburgh's citizens want to pay you homage! Begging for protection for our militant church, we congratulate you on your victory over the traitors and enemies and implore God's blessing on the child that just is born to you for the union of two realms, whose right heir he alone is. *(Rising.)* God bless Scotland's queen Mary!

(It is repeated accompanied by the flourishing of trumpets.)

QUEEN.

Together with our citizens we thank the high assembly, that our entry here has become one of victory. They that rebelled as high traitors have either perished by the sword, or are in prison, or fugitives. God once more wished to manifest by our enemies' destruction, that our right is from Him, and that He Himself watches over us. Therefore has He also in times of danger graciously presented us with an heir,—whose youth I trust you with, Scottish men!—

Then it is left to thank the men, who in these days have assisted us—first of all the Earl of Bothwell, Scotland's High Admiral, our Lord Lieutenant at the frontier. God has granted this man the second time to save our honor and our realm! He has conquered the rebels and restored the law in Scotland. We are sorry that he is not here personally to receive our reward. It is our duty to thank the Earl of Murray, our brother. In time of danger he embraced our cause. The order in the interior, which the country now enjoys, is due to him. Many faithful citizens I have to thank, also you citizens of Edinburgh. We know one another now! Although a woman, our Majesty does not let the offence against her go unpunished, and your faithfulness is my honor's strongest buckler!

ALL.

The Queen forever!

The CITIZEN
(*kneeling*).

Edinburgh wishes to celebrate this day with a great feast. We wish humbly to ask your grace to be present in a short while.

QUEEN

(joyously).

I thank the citizens of Edinburgh. Within an hour I expect you here, so I can accompany you! I thank you!

(He retires.)

We wish to have a conversation with John Knox.

DARNLEY

(forward, bends his knee).

I kneel here with a prayer for your future and with a welcome to your joyful entry!

QUEEN.

We thank your grace, whom we in vain expected to see at our side during the entry.—We hope now that you may lead us to the feast of the citizens,—for the moment we give audience.

(He bows and goes.)

SCENE FOURTH.

KNOX

(to the queen, who has fallen into a reverie, as she is looking after Darnley).

Why am I called?

QUEEN

(nerving herself).

Listen to me, under this festal robe my heart is throbbing from sorrow and doubt. I have sorrow in my house, sorrow that can never become joy, (*she stops a moment*) and doubt I have in my government, doubt about where I shall go.— I will not conceal from you in this to me so important a moment, that Rizzio fell a victim to my own indiscreetness in more than one respect. With him my whole policy fell; for he alone held the reins.—But before I again begin the negotiations with the Catholic powers, I wish to once more seek an agreement with you. Do not push me back; be now, if only for once, mild and good to me, and tell me: Is a reconciliation not at all possible?

KNOX.

I have answered your grace so many times on this point.

QUEEN.

To make sheer demands is not any attempt at an agreement.—

KNOX.

Your grace knows that I can not bargain about the truth.

QUEEN.

No, no! But tell me what is necessary.

KNOX.

This is necessary: You shall abjure the Catholic religion and shun the pope's seduction; for he is the great antichrist.

QUEEN.

Oh, do not speak in that way! Remember, that I was baptized in my childhood in the Catholic faith, that I married in it in my youth, and that my dead were buried in it,—my whole heart is with it!

KNOX.

Then it is no wonder that you are irresolute; for, as Martha, have you not elected the better part.

QUEEN.

Spare me,—let us speak about the situation and about the future; for I am near to desperation!

KNOX.

For God wished to warn you!

QUEEN.

What do you mean?

KNOX.

That you, after what you have experienced, are still trying a half act, an agreement, instead of a whole act,—I say that is to defy God.

QUEEN.

I do not understand you!

KNOX.

Then I shall speak clearly. When Manasse defied God, he was carried off to Assyria in captivity. First when he humbled himself, he returned to his ancestors' throne. But his son Amon did not humble himself before the Lord and was killed by his own servants.

QUEEN.

Jesus, Mary! This is to preach rebellion.

KNOX.

This is to preach Holy Writ.

QUEEN.

This is against all Christian ethics; for the king is the Lord's anointed.

KNOX.

Manasse was also the Lord's anointed.

QUEEN.

Oh, Knox! You will be the cause of all my misfortune!

KNOX.

For I can't change the Scripture!

QUEEN.

But you could be a human being!

(She weeps.)

KNOX

(mildly).

Oh, would that there were the right contrition in this weeping, so I could say with the prophet Hulda: "Because thy heart is moved by the words thou hast heard, and because thou humbledst thyself before the Lord and has wept before me, therefore thou shalt meet thy ancestors in peace, so thy eyes shall not see all the disaster I will bring upon this place."

QUEEN.

I will humble myself, I will not force my faith on this people. I will not again live to see a night like that on which Rizzio was killed. But I demand forbearance, tolerance; for I show it myself. That is a sacrifice I am making; let that anyway be counted in my favor!

KNOX.

When King Saul made offer unto the Lord to reconcile him and wished to keep something for himself, Samuel said: Dost thou think the Lord hath greater desire for offerings than for obedience?—Refractoriness is ungodliness and idolatry.”

QUEEN.

Am I then an idolatress?

KNOX.

Yes.

QUEEN.

Oh, Knox! It is a sin for you to say this to me.

KNOX.

If I were silent, it would be a greater sin. The high priest Eli was a righteous man; but he was eradicated from the earth because he did not withhold his sons from sin.

QUEEN.

Listen to me: My faith is as sacred to me as yours is to you. But I shall grant you free exercise of religion with salaried parsons and all belonging to it under the supervision of the law.

Then grant me the same for the Catholics! Let not these horrible scenes be repeated, which are a shame to all humanity! Let us bear with one another, Christianity is love anyway! You yourself, Knox, must try to show this love, not thunder from the pulpits against me, your of the Lord appointed queen, nor stir parliament against its anointed supreme head; but rather join in building up respect for the authorities and the law in this desperate country!

KNOX.

The Catholic doctrine has destroyed this people. The Catholic church gives absolution from sin for all that which their wildness, thirst of revenge, vanity and avarice hit upon! We have come back to paganism! The Lord's angel now places himself at the gate; the entrance is barred, also every side-way, every short cut, every roundabout way is barred. But as long as a Catholic church-door is open, so long there is a short cut, a side-way, a roundabout way open.— This is my opinion, high lady, and it is irrevocable.

QUEEN.

Horrible man! You make your doctrine a

matter of life and death for Scotland, a national matter!

KNOW.

So it is.

QUEEN.

And he that can't join. . .

KNOW.

Perishes!

QUEEN.

Oh, I feeble woman, thrown into this fight, and among this people! Although married, I am as a widow, although queen, I am addressed as a criminal subject; I do not understand your hardness.

KNOW.

No, you do not understand neither your age nor your people. It is in adversity, that the Lord's deeds have the strongest effect; I think that is the reason for your coming up here. For your resistance will have such effect, that even the sleepy wakes up, the lukewarm becomes eager;— thus you are in spite of yourself a blessing to this country.

QUEEN.

No, this goes too far! I, your queen, address an apostle of peace to get advice and consolation from him. But he overwhelms my overtures with threats and my religion with scorn! He says, I live for the ruin of my people and that it is only by the grace of the Lord, turned into blessing. He compares me with the Bible's ungodly regents and gives my people permission to rebel against me!

Then I call upon heaven to bear me witness, that I again and again have wished reconciliation, but it has stranded because of you! Take the responsibility therefor, my heart accuses you, and history will do it for all eternity!—Do not come any more before my face, shun this country! You were a party to the last conspiracy, I know that, and parsons who stir the people against their authorities are an abomination unto the Lord,—and we will not put up with them within our frontiers!

KNOX.

If your grace has an accusation against me, I may humbly ask to be brought before the parliament of the country.

QUEEN.

You yourself have taught that both can be dispensed with in regard to us, do not then expect better conditions yourself! For we shall have a government here, queen I will be.—Go!

KNOX.

I ask gently . . .

QUEEN.

No, not a word more!—What have I not put up with, and how have I not been begging for reconciliation! But, although I am the wronged, oh, so shockingly mistreated, you are so severe, so haughty, so hard . . . oh, you behave yourself disgracefully toward me!

(She weeps, Knox stands a while surprised, bows deeply and goes.)

SCENE FIFTH.

QUEEN.

I can't draw breath in the same country where this horrible man is,—now he must away! My designs, my whole life is wrapped up in him; it

is like a storm on a heath. Now he has to be driven away. And with him his doctrine; for that is as he, it is intolerance, agitation, rebellion, arbitrary explanation of the Bible, it upsets civic life and order. With horror I turn away from it!—But with whom shall I go further—and where?

LORD STUART.

The Earl of Bothwell has come!

QUEEN

(surprised, almost loses her composure).

Bothwell here! I thought he was at the frontier?

LORD STUART.

The frontier wars are at an end, and he is a victor!

(Goes, the door is opened.)

SCENE SIXTH.

(Bothwell quickly, followed by his officers).

QUEEN.

Welcome!

BOTHWELL.

We have hurried to join in the general entry; but have nevertheless come too late!

QUEEN.

To receive our thanks and reward, you have not come too late!

BOTHWELL.

Allow me to recommend the officers in my suite.

QUEEN.

The Lord Lieutenant's recommendation is more than enough! Gentlemen, I shall remember you.

(They salute and retire.)

QUEEN.

Oh, Bothwell, you are Scotland's sword and the honor of your queen!

BOTHWELL.

I am your servant and nothing more.

QUEEN.

You vividly recall to-day about our seeing you the first time. You as a quite young man had fought for our mother, but driven away by

a superior force you came as a fugitive to our court in Paris. So healthy and strong did you come into the fine apartments! Such a longing for home you gave me!

BOTHWELL.

I came from battles and dangers, that gives natural superiority to one in a dancing-room.

QUEEN.

Your great faculties lifted you up above the crowd of the court; we all saw in you the man, who later beat Murray's rebellious party, and who now for the second time has saved us and Scotland! You have been true to us through all vicissitudes; — there is hardly a Scottish nobleman about whom we can say the same.

BOTHWELL.

Your grace's thanks are not worth so much to me as her confidence.—

QUEEN.

Yes, I rely upon you,—in spite of all slander; I rely upon you!

BOTHWELL.

Try me, try me!

QUEEN.

! have no one else!—Oh, tell me, Bothwell, how shall I get rid of the unfortunate religious controversies.

BOTHWELL.

By not bothering yourself about them!

QUEEN.

That is also an advice. Ha. ha. ha!

BOTHWELL.

Draw the leaders to you, give them offices and goods!

QUEEN.

I can't show their leaders any favor, for they are exiled.

BOTHWELL.

Then let them come home again!

QUEEN.

High traitors!

BOTHWELL.

Who are not high traitors in Scotland! What does it matter if the turbulent heads make trouble, when they only are conquered? It is

elevating thus to live among sheer conquered people!

QUEEN.

You are certainly no dark Protestant, you are certainly Catholic?

BOTHWELL.

I myself have not really calculated the difference, but I have observed that there are ras-eals among both.

QUEEN.

Ha, ha, ha!

BOTHWELL.

But since the Queen asks me, may I be allowed to ask the Queen: What reward do you get for occupying yourself with these things?

QUEEN.

What reward?

BOTHWELL.

Yes, I mean not the inner; for I have seen in you only sighs and tears,—but outward, in the realm or as queen?

QUEEN.

It is certainly not great so far.

BOTHWELL.

Unless you call it reward to be so abundantly furnished with rebellion, treason and attack, as your grace has been during all these years.

QUEEN.

But I get help!

BOTHWELL.

H'm—I suppose that is not more than my regiment of cavalry can levy on a joyous day! From the pope perhaps a string of beads, from King Philip some Cyprus-wine, from Catherine—at most—a bottle of poison.

QUEEN.

Ha, ha, ha! There is more truth in this than in years of negotiations.

BOTHWELL.

Then something more,—if I am allowed. . .

QUEEN.

Speak, speak!

BOTHWELL.

You are young, beautiful, gifted and on account of these disturbances can never live in peace!—Four rebellions have shaken your short

reign. Intrigues on the continent, English intrigues tear asunder your reign. Now they wish to take you prisoner on a riding tour, then they break into your church during the service, then into your room at night, soon they kill your true servants far away from you, soon in your royal presence! And to all this—religion as a pretext! Look what reward your care for these things gives you,—while your beautiful youth passes, loses leaves as a rose-tree in a storm!

QUEEN.

Yes, it is true, it is true!

BOTHWELL.

If you even could effect anything by it, you would as every brave nature not pay attention to danger and trouble. But in what respect, since you put your feet on Scottish ground, is the religious position changed? The same disturbance, the same lie!—

QUEEN.

Yes, yes, alas yes!

BOTHWELL.

He that has once begun toward an aim, often does not observe that he goes around instead of

forward. There must come a stranger to see and warn him. I am this stranger. I tell your grace: All that which you till this day have thought and acted in this country's religious matters, has only brought you to the edge of an abyss.—Let therefore these matters take care of themselves; be a human being, woman, youth, queen! The world anyway has other tunes than psalms and other places than graves!—Come, I will take you by the hand and lead you to the dance! Or to the tumult of the battle on the foaming steed! Take the wreath of life and put it on your luxurious hair, you are more charming than the fairy of the forest, take as she, nature into your possession, while it still has fragrance;—fall will come soon enough!

QUEEN.

Man, you are breaking into my house like sunbeams! I perceive you as a song under my window; [I am myself standing in the dim cloister-castle, the old pictures on the deep arches put on life, the dreams of my childhood awake, and I run to the open balcony. There is a view as on a clear day in the blue colors of joy, and you yourself are sitting under the balcony and reaching your hand up from your steed.

while at your side my own is standing saddled.]
—I bow myself down before you, and along it goes through the dreamed-of countries of my childhood! Around me again is the French court. the joyous choir of minstrels flutter along amid the ladies' long veils, the brave cavaliers manage their steeds, the banners are waving, I am queen in this circle and enraptured with joy!
—Yes, take me out to the longings of my spring! Before one dies, one must live anyway!

BOTHWELL.

Yes, yes! Travel in your beautiful country, call on your lords, ascend the mountains, hunt, dance,—then down on the bays, or out on the sea! There I was raised; it is inspiring on the sea! There the sorrows blow away indefinitely and courage is stretched as a sail! There you can conceive great designs and inhale the strength which will bring them into execution!

QUEEN.

Yes. in the intercourse with you I can forget, I can still be happy! I feel that!

BOTHWELL.

Indeed, nature has also its altar, on that the sorrow has to be offered!—Don't you feel by my

words a liking for life, which you do not intend to give up? There are other demands in young blood than those which are taught by monks. We got a kiss from the strong powers of nature, we must give it back before we die!—He that is pinched and sick, shall make a grasp back in life for a renewal of youth! He whose nerves begin to tremble shall take morning walks in the strong, fresh air of decisions!—

QUEEN.

Come, I will take my first walk.

(They go.)

SCENE SEVENTH.

LORD STUART.

The court as well as the citizens are waiting for your grace!

QUEEN.

Let them come!

(As the doors are opened, the beginning of the march previously played is heard.)

THE CITIZEN

(kneeling).

We have come to call for your grace according to order!

(He rises.)

DARNLEY

(steps forward quietly).

By order of your grace I appear to take you to the great feast!

QUEEN.

I am so fortunate, my Lord, to be able to dispense with your help—*(subduedly)* forever! *(Darnley stumbles back a couple of steps, so he remains standing quite forward in the corner to the right.)* Will the Earl of Bothwell please take us to the great feast, which really is his work!

BOTHWELL

(forward, kneeling, takes her hand; louder music).

(They arrange themselves in pairs, the queen first, led by Bothwell; they pass by Darnley without looking at him, then pair after pair; some look at him with a smile or scorn, others not at all; the stage is becoming vacated, music is heard for a long time.)

DARNLEY

(remains standing unmovable a long time, behind him his page, William Taylor; then he sinks down and hides his face, the page forward at his side in prayer. Then Knox enters slowly, places himself between them and prays).

KNOX.

Take this sinful, but severely punished soul up, take it through the fire-purification of repentance into your grace!

(When Darnley perceives Knox's voice, he looks up, reaches his hands up toward him; when Knox has finished, he leaps up, throws himself on his breast and sobs.)

KNOX.

My son, have you had enough of life's joyous gifts?

DARNLEY.

Now I have enough!

KNOX.

Do you want to go thither, where everything is eternal?—

DARNLEY.

Now I want to go thither, where I can get love; I need some one to love!

KNOX.

You shall find Him!—You, William, who yourself have gone the way, you must help me to bring him to the eternal love.

DARNLEY

(to Taylor).

You have not gone from me? He that did not go away from me to-day, must stay with me till I die! —

TAYLOR.

Till you die!

(*They embrace one another.*)

(*Down on the street hundreds of voices are heard, shouting: “Mary Stuart of Scotland forever!” “The Queen forever!” Flourishes and a salute of cannon.*)

DARNLEY.

Now the ground is trembling at her feet. Now she has conquered—and I have lost!

KNOX

(*looks at him a while in his sorrow.*)

I do not know if you will conquer; but she will lose, that I know!

(*The curtain falls.*)

During the last horn-signal MURRAY and LETHINGTON dressed as hunters with carbines in their hands enter quickly from the right, stop and look toward the left, and after a couple of words MURRAY goes quickly up toward the rear and disappears. LETHINGTON drops back slowly—spying. The QUEEN enters, led by BOTHWELL; sits down.

QUEEN.

Alone among high trees is to me as in the quietness after a gun-shot.

BOTHWELL.

No, as if I were lying in ambush.

QUEEN.

Bothwell, Bothwell! The forest is the unfortunates' sanctuary. All that were persecuted on earth, have rested in the great forests. Don't you remember David pursued by Saul, Jotham fleeing from Abimelech, or the prophet Elias alone with his revelations on the Mountain of Horeb?

BOTHWELL.

But don't you remember our ancestors! The animals of the forests clothed them, the thickets

of the forest hid them; they offered up blood on the roots of the trees with prayers to the revenging Gods of the forest. It is revenge the forest hides. Your progenitor, Robert Bruce, let Scotland's forests attack England every spring, as Macduff behind Birnam the dark Macbeth. Do you remember Douglas' nightly revenge? Scotland's history is dreaming in its forests; there we can wake it when we wish.

QUEEN.

I have often listened in the forests and heard voices, but they were not these.

BOTHWELL.

In the forests I shot animals as a boy, but robbers as a man. When it is quiet here, I must spy; when a branch is cracking, I take to arms.

QUEEN.

In the world there are two parties, the pursuing and the pursued. You belong to the first.

BOTHWELL.

Yes, two parties!—But there is one that has designs and another that has none.

QUEEN.

Let that be as it will. The whirls of the de-sings belong out there; here is shelter.

BOTHWELL.

No, here it begins! When the dogs are let loose and bark in the air, there is something in my nature that wants to do likewise.—The forest excites; for it has hiding-places.

QUEEN

(*rises*).

Earl, where is our suite? We will go further.

BOTHWELL.

Sent away, your grace; for it was unnecessary.

QUEEN.

Your one eye twinkles as a hawk's; is it I whom you pursue?

BOTHWELL.

Yes, with a love more intense than the summer-heat you are seeking shelter against.

QUEEN.

Bothwell, I have entrusted myself to your care!

BOTHWELL.

You have entrusted me with so much, that you must trust me with the rest.

QUEEN.

That would not be good for either of us.

BOTHWELL.

I do not wish to go on the scaffold as Chate-lard, or be killed as Rizzio, or be thrown away as Darnley.

QUEEN.

Let the fate of the daring warn you!

BOTHWELL.

The ire of your eyes sparkles as do the stars on a southern night!

QUEEN.

Bothwell, you were the proudest, the strongest, I had for my defence.

BOTHWELL.

I shall also defend you against all the world!

QUEEN.

Not against my own conscience.

BOTHWELL

(*on his knees*).

If you already mention that, then you love me!

(*Grasps her hand.*)

QUEEN.

I mention and conjure everything between heaven and earth against you!

BOTHWELL.

But it does not make its appearance!

QUEEN.

You overwhelm intellect and law, you stake life on a moment.

BOTHWELL.

For I love.

QUEEN.

Rise, Bothwell, cease the error of your passions, rise toward the morning of honor as the falcon from my hand,—and there will perhaps come a day—

BOTHWELL.

Then please give me a pledge of this!

QUEEN.

No, then you would draw me entirely over; for you are too strong.

BOTHWELL.

Mary, no one has served you as Bothwell,

none loved you as I. They that loved you before were not men.

QUEEN.

That is true.—You are the strongest I have known!

(She quickly embraces him, caresses and kisses him, tears herself loose and disappears.)

SCENE SECOND.

BOTHWELL

(awakens as from an intoxication; he turns, then Lethington comes from behind a tree at the same moment).

You here?

LETHINGTON.

Yes!

BOTHWELL

(rising).

You saw the queen?—Saw her here?—Saw what happened?

LETHINGTON.

Yes.

BOTHWELL.

Then draw your sword, Earl of Lethington!
(*Draws sword himself.*)

LETHINGTON

(*likewise.*)

Yes, I now draw my sword against Henry Darnley, the King of Scotland, for he is now in the way!

BOTHWELL.

Henry Darnley!

LETHINGTON.

Now quickly, while you have the warmth,— a barrel of powder under his room to-night, and to-morrow there is not a child in Scotland that will ask for him.

BOTHWELL.

Death and hell, Lethington, you intend to deceive me!

(*Starts to attack him.*)

LETHINGTON

(*stops him.*)

Man, use your intellect! This is what every nobleman in Scotland secretly wishes and what

the most prominent of them have spoken about, even to-day, seeing you together.

BOTHWELL.

I am still not sober because of the kiss she gave me;—is this not an ambush?

LETHINGTON.

I solemnly assure you that hundreds of the best noblemen of the country will appear in your behalf in court or in a duel, wherever you might be accused because of this.

BOTHWELL

(after he has considered).

So Darnley has only—one night left!

LETHINGTON.

Not a whole night! Do not give Mary of Scotland a whole night for consideration!

(Pause.)

BOTHWELL

(in an undertone).

Lethington, do you think there is a power above us!

LETHINGTON.

I do not see much of it?

BOTHWELL.

But below?—

LETHINGTON.

—are the worms.

BOTHWELL

(*more loudly*).

But there are powers in us,—eternal or temporal, from where or to where,—but from the moment my will has taken root in the occurrences, I have seen it grow. I once stood in for the Orkneys, the ocean tossed us, the clouds flitted like wet sails, the breakers roared; and the coast was treeless and rocky; then I felt my family present, the Norwegian viking stock that drove ashore here and from which we descend; it has a will-tree, that bit root into the rock, but in the shelter of which people are now building. Then I thought: I shall also in storm bend the smaller wills after my own.—Lethington, contract an alliance with it, do not try your strength against it! Everything you ask for, you shall receive on my day of honor; for we two belong to the same party. It is not Knox's or the queen's, the Protestants' or the Catholics,' it is the true alliance of courage, the knighthood of

ambition.—Farewell! When we again meet, there is only one above us in Scotland, (*subduedly*) and this one is mine!

(*Goes.*)

SCENE THIRD.

LETHINGTON

(*alone*).

What? Should I risk anything on this will? It has beaten us three times, and the first time he was only a boy. He has the nature of the mountain-birch; it grows in higher places than all other trees.—it wants to grow in such high places that it freezes to death. Therefore, always drive him aloft,—but do not follow him! Murray's is the mean temperature: all opinions can grow in that: it is also that which gives him power over the minds of others. So—she kissed him!—But with this kiss she also consecrated him to death!—She took to flight as from a bad deed;—but she can not pass him by;—she will fall over that stone!—Yes, she can say that we all love her; there is only one who hates her: this one is her brother.

SCENE FOURTH.

MURRAY.

That was a short negotiation.

LETHINGTON.

But sufficient.

MURRAY.

His ambition—?

LETHINGTON.

— has a blasting power stronger than that of powder. Darnley will be blown up this night.

MURRAY.

Really! — He goes the same way as the powder; — he is burned up!

LETHINGTON.

Well, I can't remember having seen your Excellence so glad.

MURRAY

(*seriously*).

Did you have to promise him aid?

LETHINGTON.

With document and seal.

MURRAY.

That is risky.

LETHINGTON.

Perhaps you will be so kind as to write it?

MURRAY.

You can do that much better.

LETHINGTON.

Perhaps you will be so kind as to speak to the lords; you can better assemble them.

MURRAY.

You have so little confidence in yourself, my good Earl. — Besides there are certain things, which for the moment forbid me that.

LETHINGTON.

I might perhaps be initiated into them.

MURRAY.

At a more convenient time and place it will give me great pleasure.

LETHINGTON.

I once knew a man who was half born, half

royal, half legitimate; he was also half Protestant and was also standing half on the side of the people, half on that of the royal authority. He was toward his sister a half brother, he always defended her, when he couldn't attack her. That man also had half friends; for he showed only half confidence. But that man did not succeed.

MURRAY.

I also know this man, — but know him better. He came into the world only half right and for that reason he had to be very careful also not to get half sympathies. He is not half Protestant, not half the people's man; but policy uses such things. His aims are always whole, but the time and the circumstances are not. You do not know whom he must serve; — You do not know the queen! She does not mind either designs or persons; for she has no devotion. She accepts our work, our love, our sacrifice to death, — the next day she is free! The ties that bind her, she does not mind; that which might be ties, she denies. Gold, goods she gives not from gratitude, for that she does not have, but in purchase toward getting rid of dependence, to feel herself without obligation. On the other

hand she calls home her worst enemy, yes, even works with him as if nothing had happened. See, for instance, Morton! The fact is, she neither loves nor hates longer than a moment. When a being has such power, the situation is unbearable; plans and persons change; one never knows what the next day will bring. The whole country is a camp where every man sleeps with his sword at his side, expecting alarm! — We may remove Rizzio, Darnley, Bothwell, — but as long — —

(Looks around.)

LETHINGTON.

— as long as she is not removed —?

MURRAY

(shrugs his shoulders).

Be removed —?

LETHINGTON.

Be removed, — once again.

MURRAY.

There must not be any injury done her.

LETHINGTON.

I mean, be made impossible —

MURRAY.

Only be married to Bothwell —

LETHINGTON.

She will never do that!

MURRAY.

Bothwell will not let go the hold of his prey,
— and you must help him.

LETHINGTON.

And if she does it?

MURRAY.

Then she can hardly reign! — They will not
put up with it.

LETHINGTON.

—But you can reign — in her son's name?—

MURRAY.

—Yes, if I have nothing to do with it.

LETHINGTON.

Yes.

MURRAY.

You see, that I do not give half confidence.

LETHINGTON.

Yes.

MURRAY.

You also see, that it is necessary that I go away immediately. — What is entrusted to your prudence is not necessary for me to support. I shall remember you on my day of honor! Farewell!

SCENE FIFTH.

LETHINGTON.

— Yes! — All use Lethington! First Bothwell; — then Bothwell falls, — with him the queen; — then Murray, — Murray falls — probably. And then? — Who is then going to rule Scotland in the minor's name? (*At the same moment he turns around, sees Morton dressed as a hunter, high up on a rock in the rear; he is horrified.*) Morton? He? . . . Should he take the crown of my life, just as it sunk down? Should he proudly stand there, just as I at last arrived? No, rather a little mine under the stone he is standing on, the dear! (*Greeting.*) Good day, your excellence! Have you come so high up?

(*Curtain falls. Change of scene.*)

Plain small room at Darnley's.

SCENE SIXTH.

(Darnley and Taylor enter, the first leaning on the other, walking very slowly.)

DARNLEY.

The evening-sun! — Here it is better . . . Let us go around a little. — Since I became ill, she calls on me again. — Do you think, she will come this evening?

TAYLOR.

She will certainly do that.

DARNLEY.

But it is getting so late; she has to be present at Margaret's wedding; she will not have any time for me.

TAYLOR.

Alas, my lord, if you thought less about her!

DARNLEY

(stops).

Do not be tired, William! I am a weak, miserable soul, I am again sliding down from

Knox's height. — I am afraid of Knox. He subdues me, he carries me off,—but he does not understand me. (*Goes a little, stops.*) William, the world despises the weak; for it admires strength, even if it is strength of the bad: The world admires the devil.

(*Goes.*)

TAYLOR.

My Lord, do not speak thus! Besides, the world's opinion is not Knox's.

DARNLEY

(*stops.*)

Alas, if they understood the weak! He is weak because there is something in his innermost nature to which he is true, a longing, a love. He knows it is his destruction, he is making a thousand attempts to get loose, but his feeling is too deep, he sinks, yet holds on.

(*Goes.*)

TAYLOR.

This viewing of yourself weakens you, it weakens your will-power.

DARNLEY

(*after a short pause.*)

The constancy of the bad is not fidelity, but

defiance, — nevertheless they admire it. The bad person (*stops*) hardens himself into an insane inclination, he fortifies himself behind hate and burns all the bridges. The world admires this.

(*Goes.*)

TAYLOR.

You frighten yourself! You bar yourself with fear on all sides.

DARNLEY.

People want fight with great victory or great defeat! (*Stops.*) They overlook the immense refraction in the soul of the weak, the thousand glimpses which come and go until the drop has evaporated. — See the sun set! What a peculiar sky! William, I am getting so afraid, look, look! It is a sign, it is the ire of heaven! I tremble, oh, William, let me sit down!

(*It is done.*)

TAYLOR.

My Lord, fight anyway a little against —

DARNLEY.

I can't, this trembling! Oh, read a little, help me a little, hurry, I am so horror-struck!

TAYLOR.

(reads from an open book).

“Lord, how long wilt thou forget me, how long wilt thou hide thy face from me? How long shall I deliberate in my soul and have sorrow in my heart during the day? How long shall my enemy exalt himself over me? . . .”

DARNLEY.

. . . I do not comprehend it, the words threaten me, and changing, dark colors come over my perception.

TAYLOR

(will again begin, but at the same time music from orchestra is heard, which continues until the queen has entered).

It is the queen!

DARNLEY.

Yes, it is she, it is Mary who does not forget me! Kindle the light, many lights! She, the horrible, the beautiful, who is taking my life, comes, she — the fiery that consumes while she warms! Oh, make light here, draw the curtains! Have you not incense? Throw smelling water, place torches in front of the house!

SCENE SEVENTH.

A PAGE.

The queen asks, if you have any time to bestow upon her grace.

DARNLEY.

All my time.

(He opens for the queen with suite, that stops in the hall. Taylor greets the queen by bending his knees and retires likewise. The doors are closed.)

SCENE EIGHTH.

(The queen is festively dressed and stops in the middle of the floor before him. The music ceases.)

DARNLEY

(on his couch)

Are you there? Beautiful, harmonious as the music by which you were borne hither, festively dressed and in high spirits, beneficial, when you are present, but producing the anguish of love, when you go. Come anyway hither to me; —

no, stop, while I view you! — No, come! (*She sits down on a low chair at his side, he grasps her hand and kisses it tenderly; she looks at him.*) I dreamt last night, that I was taken up in much sunshine. I felt the delight, I felt as a child, when I dreamt, that I was carried through the air. It seemed to me, that I awoke in a charming place, but you were not there. Then I prayed that you would follow, and you came, you and my mother together, and in still more light. What was it, do you think? There were angels in our dream; night is the intimate of the day but it remembers all things better than the day. —

Yesterday William read the song of Solomon, and since it has whistled like mild winds around my head, carrying fragrance from Lebanon. William says it is about the church and its bridegroom. No, about love it is, it is the song of love; there is on earth written none else. The sun of the south was necessary, the vineyards in the Jewish people's fancy, Solomon's glory in all its oriental warmth. I always thought of you, while he read. You, my friend, are beautiful as Thirza, pleasant as a big city, horrible as they that are under the colors. Your eyes are as a dove's between your locks, there is honey and

milk under your tongue, your height is as a palm-tree, your manners are as a closed book.

Love they say is strong as death. Many waters can not extinguish love, its glow is burning embers, a sacred flame.

How good you are, to sit with me and talk so much.

QUEEN.

Have you not observed that I still have not said a word?

DARNLEY.

Then it must be your eyes and my thoughts in them. — Now you are going to a wedding.

QUEEN.

Yes.

DARNLEY.

Then you must think of me and my love, and for the sake of that forgive me—what I have offended against you.

QUEEN.

I have forgiven you.

DARNLEY.

All?—Say all!

QUEEN.

All,—even the murder of Rizzio!

DARNLEY.

Oh, Mary, that you mentioned this name.—
You have not forgiven me!

QUEEN.

Yes, all—since I really understand you.

DARNLEY.

No, you do not understand me,—if you understood me,—oh, then you would not mention this name!

QUEEN.

I mentioned it, because this evening it forces itself in with its dark memory. It was just at this time a year ago, and at this hour.

DARNLEY.

Oh, Mary, you are killing me!

QUEEN.

What is it?

DARNLEY.

The anguish returns, this shaking and trembling.

QUEEN.

My dear, you are not feeling well.—How pale you are getting, and how you are perspiring!

(She wipes his brow with her handkerchief, rises and places him in a more easy position; she again sits down, puts her hand on his forehead.)

DARNLEY

(smiles).

QUEEN.

Are you better?

DARNLEY.

Yes. *(Makes sign, that he wishes to hold her other hand; she gives it to him, a little afterwards takes the first from his brow.)* No, let it remain! It is that which chases away the anguish. *(She lays it there again.)* How good you are!—You forgive all, isn't it true?

QUEEN.

Yes.

DARNLEY.

It is so noble to forgive. I think often when I am lying here and do not know where you

are or what you are doing:—I forgive her, she will return, she is good. I have forgiven you all, oh, all! Mary, how beautiful you are now. You are looking at me so mildly, so moved, kiss me. (*The queen shakes her head.*) Yes, as a pledge,—that we forgive.

QUEEN

(*again shakes her head*).

DARNLEY.

But you have tears?

QUEEN

(*bursts out weeping and throws herself on his breast*).

DARNLEY.

Are they treating you badly? Make yourself my confidant, I can't defend you, but I can share your pain with you.

QUEEN

(*rises and wipes her tears*).

I must go now. They are waiting for me at the wedding.

DARNLEY.

Alas, already!

QUEEN.

But at the church I shall pray—for us both!

DARNLEY.

When will you call again?

QUEEN.

First thing tomorrow;—I will after this come to you oftener.

DARNLEY

(almost whispering).

Thank you!—Thank you for this hour!

QUEEN

(stoops down and kisses him on his brow).

Farewell.

DARNLEY.

Thank you!

QUEEN

(goes, stops at the door, looks at him, says mildly and gently).

Till we meet again!

DARNLEY

(likewise).

Till we meet again!

*(When she has gone, he clasps his hands
and is lying quietly.)*

SCENE NINTH.

*(There is music heard outside, which little
by little ceases.)*

(Taylor comes.)

TAYLOR.

You are praying, my Lord?

(Retires a little.)

DARNLEY.

Yes,—if love is a sin, then I am a great
sinner.

TAYLOR.

She has been good to you to-day.

DARNLEY.

Oh, so good;—only once she mentioned Riz-
zio's name.

(Pause.)

TAYLOR.

Do you want me to retire?

DARNLEY.

No.—Sing for me,—music,—but softly.

(Taylor sits down and is about to start singing, when dull jolts are heard beneath, as if something heavy were rolled in.)

DARNLEY.

Taylor, what is this?

(They listen; it is heard again.)

TAYLOR.

I shall see. *(Runs to the door, it is locked).*
The door is barred.

DARNLEY

(rises in a sitting posture).

Is it barred?

TAYLOR

(rushes against the door, but can not open it).

DARNLEY.

Come to me; this means something bad!

TAYLOR

(comes, Darnley half rises, they embrace one another and hold on to one another a while thus; noise is heard again).

My Lord, let us go to your room, from there we can come to the garden!

DARNLEY.

I can't!

TAYLOR.

I—I will help you down; come!

DARNLEY

(going with him).

What can they want with me? What have I done now again?

TAYLOR

(as the door to the room is opened).

It is dark here.

(Just as they are outside, is heard)

DARNLEY.

Help, help!

TAYLOR

(likewise).

Help!

(The curtain falls quickly, while there is heard a horrible cracking as of an explosion.)

[ACT FIFTH]

Two months later.

Dunbar castle. Old-fashioned room with ante-room.

SCENE FIRST.

A host of horsemen come, keeping time, arrange themselves in two ranks placed against one another, standing throughout the ante-room and a little inside, they let their spears meet and under these comes Bothwell as a cavalry-flourish resounds, fully armed, leading the queen, dressed for traveling and veiled. When they have entered and Bothwell has led her to a seat, which she does not accept, the captain of the horsemen steps forth with a banner he himself has received, bearing Scotland's weapon. It is set up after which the whole troop marches away. At the same moment the queen throws her veil aside and hurries forth.

QUEEN.

What does all this mean? We and our suite

are surrounded on the way. We are taken to your fortified castle and placed under guard?

BOTHWELL

(*on his knees*).

Forgive me; my love took the risk.

QUEEN.

Earl of Bothwell, explain yourself.

BOTHWELL.

Give me that now on which you gave pledge

QUEEN.

You dare?

BOTHWELL.

I remember only about a promise—and about more later.

QUEEN.

I do not understand; is it force?

BOTHWELL.

I beg only.

QUEEN

(*sarcastically*).

Among your soldiers?

BOTHWELL

(*rises*).

This castle is yours, all my men your faithful servants.

QUEEN

(*quickly*).

Who are waiting for my orders?

BOTHWELL.

Yes, your grace.

QUEEN

(*proudly*).

Take them away,—and you yourself never again come before our eyes!

(*Turns.*)

BOTHWELL

(*after a short consideration*).

I have for your grace's sake twice been in exile; I shall go the third.

(*Bows and will go.*)

QUEEN

(*stops*).

In ex—? Yes, that is right! You can't serve us any longer.

BOTHWELL.

What I have done to-day, I have only done for the protection of your grace.

QUEEN.

For my protection.

BOTHWELL.

For to-morrow another would have done it. As widow you do not live safe in this country any longer. Every high-born nobleman in Scotland wants now to own the queen.

QUEEN

(*vehemently*).

Scotland's men are animals, roaring through the forests, wild from cruelty and sensuality.

BOTHWELL

(*forward*).

Therefore seek shelter! I am faithful to you.

QUEEN.

You have been that, Bothwell, and you could—no, also you—go!

BOTHWELL.

Do not be afraid of me, black dove of the forest! We two shall fly well together.

QUEEN.

There is something in you which horrifies me.

BOTHWELL.

Yes, from the moment you fled from me under the darkness of the trees, but threw the fire-spark of the kiss after you, it has grown.

QUEEN.

Bothwell!

BOTHWELL.

Now I know and will only do one thing.

QUEEN.

Consider—!

BOTHWELL

(passionately, on his knees).

No, now you must become my wife!

QUEEN

(in strong surprise).

I—yours?—Mary Stuart of Scotland, James Hepburn's—ha, ha, ha, ha! *(Bothwell springs*

up like a flash of lightning.) No. I did not laugh.

(Rather long pause.)

QUEEN.

There is a greatness in your spirit, which sometimes charms me,—sometimes again—yes, as you now are standing there, I am afraid of you, afraid of you more than of all lords put together.

BOTHWELL.

Then it must be because you have reason for it.

QUEEN.

Do not try to fight with me! Certainly I am not strong, as when Rizzio was killed, but my defense is out there. What will my family, my people, what will Europe say, if I am brought in here as a prisoner, and come out again as your wife?

BOTHWELL.

What will they say if Mary Stuart is alone with me as my prisoner and comes out again—without being my wife?

QUEEN.

All Saints!—They will say—they will think

(*Pause.*)

BOTHWELL.

There is no choice.

QUEEN.

Righteous God! That was the reason then!

BOTHWELL.

Yes.

QUEEN

(*slowly*).

And now there is no choice between you and shame? Look how he is standing there in the cold, waiting! (*Rises.*) Oh, you fool! (*Straight toward him.*) From this cavity wherein I am trailed, I shall go out neither conquered nor disgraced; I have a courage which you have not considered. I have courage to die!—Be careful!

BOTHWELL.

What will then become of your son!

QUEEN.

My son?—(*takes a couple of steps*). Oh, my son!

BOTHWELL.

Then he is standing without defense.

QUEEN.

Oh, Jesus—Mary. I did not think of him!

BOTHWELL.

It is he for whom you have to choose!

QUEEN

(*quickly*).

Should the only thing in the world which
I love be my destruction?

BOTHWELL.

Destruction?

QUEEN

(*more vehemently*).

His father caused me only anguish and tears,
and should the child do likewise? No. No!

BOTHWELL.

They have nevertheless already aimed at
him.

QUEEN

(*anxious*).

Is that possible?

BOTHWELL.

For he who has your son in his possession

rules you. You now prove it yourself. Therefore seek defense for your son!

QUEEN

(*still more vehemently*).

Oh, then he is woven into my very life as love in sin; all my faults would not cause me to fall, but on the contrary this innocent—(*Totters*.) This is cruel, cruel.—Lord, protect my senses, these constant shocks, oh, they will at last kill me!

BOTHWELL

(*helps her*).

Mary.—I am strong! Lean on me!

QUEEN.

Oh, I had as a child so many hopes, as a young woman so much success, and now—(*sees Bothwell, grows strong immediately*.) No, this is a living death; rather I shall take my child in my arms and go away from here poor!

BOTHWELL.

Then you will deprive him of his throne.

QUEEN.

Yes, it is not to desire either!

BOTHWELL.

But to that nobody on earth has right, and least of all his mother.

QUEEN.

Well, then I shall fight for him against you and the whole world!

BOTHWELL.

Not against me. For I shall leave Scotland. But whom have you then?

QUEEN.

None, none! Oh, why did I come to this country where I should be deserted by all!
(*She sits down and weeps.*)

(*Rather long pause.*)

BOTHWELL

(*stands a while viewing her, then approaches.*)

Listen to me! Look here! (*Puts forth a document*). Seventy signatures. All say that they do not feel the queen, the heir apparent, or the country safe, before the queen has selected a consort from among them for herself. And they have chosen me for it.

(*Pause, during which the queen mechanically looks at the document.*)

QUEEN

(in struggle).

And to these I should trust myself? *(Rises, without leaving her place.)*

BOTHWELL.

Not to them, but to me. I have them in my power.

QUEEN

(after a pause).

And I should believe you?

BOTHWELL

(a step back).

Well,—then, believe nobody!

QUEEN

(sits down).

My God, my God!—Where shall I turn?

BOTHWELL.

Do not be ungrateful. Have I used my hands to another purpose than to fight for you?

QUEEN.

No, you have been the only one; *(complainingly.)*—but why then you also?

BOTHWELL
(*vehemently*).

Oh, well, know it then: My history is like all the others.' Either I must own you or leave you. (*Overwhelmed.*) I can't say more than, that I shall go and God be my witness; I am going!

QUEEN.

No, do not leave me. Bothwell! Why, I have none other. Oh, God! (*Weeps.*)

BOTHWELL
(*forward*).

My queen! Mary! (*Kneeling.*) Oh, they shall not reach you even with a word!

QUEEN.

What do you ask of me, Bothwell?

BOTHWELL
(*takes forth a document*).

This document is ready, when it receives your signature! Oh, rely upon me, you are my wife before God and man.

QUEEN.

Do you promise to be good to me, Bothwell?

I have suffered so much and now have no joy left.

BOTHWELL.

You have your son.

QUEEN
(*warmly*).

Yes,—do you promise to defend his young life and his royal right? I can't.

BOTHWELL.

I promise that.

QUEEN.

Do you promise me—never to deny me his company? (*Weeps.*)

BOTHWELL.

I promise that.

QUEEN
(*takes the pen*).

Oh, so many bright dreams, so many—No, I can't! (*Leans forward over her arms and sobs.*)

BOTHWELL
(*rises*).

You have no confidence in me.

QUEEN

(looks up slowly).

It is not from love you are doing this.

BOTHWELL.

Not from that alone. I love you because you have the power, but I love the power because it is yours. If it were otherwise, I should not serve your turn. One Darnley must be enough.

QUEEN.

Peace with him! But if I would get ten realms, I should not marry him the second time. Oh, will you do what he couldn't, will you protect us?

BOTHWELL.

After this I protect myself, when I protect you!

QUEEN.

That is true, you can't do anything else. *(Takes the pen.)* What will my family, what will the proud royal nobility of the Guises' say? No, no! *(Lays the pen.)*

BOTHWELL.

Think of your son!

QUEEN.

Yes! My son, my charming boy! God! Now he is sleeping in his little white bed and does not know how his mother is struggling for his sake.

BOTHWELL.

For his sake you must come to a decision.

QUEEN.

Yes, he is worth more than all my pride. I will do it! God be my witness; yes, I will do it! (*Takes the pen, says mildly:*) Now, Mary is signing her sentence of death. (*Writes; throws herself backward and falls into violent weeping.*)

BOTHWELL

(*takes the document, bends his knees before the queen, kisses her hand and looks up at her.*)

Do not weep more, Mary.

QUEEN:

Oh, yes, yes, yes, yes!

BOTHWELL.

The tears you weep over me, do no good.

QUEEN.

I weep over myself. I am not queen any longer,—oh, now it is all over, now it is all over!

BOTHWELL.

These tears freeze like ice in my heart.

QUEEN.

Oh, that I could weep all my being away. That I could flow tear after tear into eternity, oh, oh, oh, oh! Now it is all over, now it is all over!

BOTHWELL.

No, now it shall begin! Ask me for what you wish, and you will see that it shall be fulfilled.

QUEEN.

This is my first request of you, that I be allowed to weep!

BOTHWELL

(*rises*).

I will not deny you that. (*More lowly.*)
But you will repent of it.

QUEEN

(*sees Scotland's banner above her head*).

Oh, Scotland's banner, how poorly you have protected me. My tears shall never be dried on you. Leaping lion, why do you throw me off? Where are you going, horrible, that you can't take your easy burden with you?

BOTHWELL.

It shall do that, fear not! For the leaping lion in it, that I shall become to you.

QUEEN.

Oh, it has put its claws into my heart.

SCENE SECOND.

(A horseman comes with a letter, which he gives to Bothwell and retires immediately).

BOTHWELL

(reads, gets pale, reads again, but now more quietly).

Your tears are not lost. Here comes a cause.

QUEEN

(languidly).

There can't come anything that is worse

than that which I now suffer. Oh God, oh God!

BOTHWELL.

Then listen to this, anyway:

“To the Earl of Bothwell, Duke of the Orkneys!

To protect the queen and the realm we hereby break off all alliance with you.

On the march against Dunbar castle—in the name of the allied lords.

Maitland, Earl of Lethington.”

(Pause).

QUEEN

(pale, rises slowly).

BOTHWELL.

Traitors! Yes, by all the devils, they are traitors.

QUEEN.

You said that the nobility

BOTHWELL.

They have broken their oath, their most sacred obligations!—Oh, how they shall have to repent of it!

QUEEN.

Is this the protection, which—

BOTHWELL.

There the ravens begin to come!

SCENE THIRD.

(Another horseman enters).

BOTHWELL.

Cry out!

THE HORSEMAN.

All fields are covered by hosts of horsemen
in a gallop who ride toward the castle.

BOTHWELL.

Up with the bridges, the horses ready!

QUEEN

(*anxious*).

Shall we flee?

BOTHWELL.

Yes, and we shall return with such a force
that the devil himself shall not be able to pro-

tect them. (*The queen sinks down.*) You meant, cunning Lethington, that I should clear the way, but you ascend the fortress. You meant, Scotland's noblemen, that you yourselves would come first, but I certainly rode too fast for you.

Now, will against will, with blow against blow! Now fight in the old ravines! Now rise, joyous highlander, leap down into the peaceful valleys with song, with fire and the exultation of death;—he that conquers, shall embrace the queen and the country!

QUEEN

(*sinks down*).

Horrible, horrible!

BOTHWELL

(*vehemently, quickly*).

No, the same day I reached the highest pinnacle, I do not give up! I shall gather troops, where I gathered them before. I shall beat them, where I beat them before. The Scottish lion is now placing itself ready for leap. The forest will soon give resonance of cries. Come, Mary of Scotland, on horseback and away; spears are growing behind the mountains!

QUEEN.

Yes, in blood and tears.—Let it now be enough!

BOTHWELL

(*darts back horrified*).

You will not away? You will not fight? You will surrender the country, your son and yourself to traitors?

SCENE FOURTH.

(A Nobleman enters).

THE NOBLEMAN.

The lords have dispatched a bearer of a flag of truce with challenge to the Earl of Bothwell.

BOTHWELL.

Ha, ha! For a duel with me? Yes, man after man, the whole row! (*The nobleman goes.*) This pleases my very soul! In the manner of the ancients, on horseback, in full armour, against treason and lies! To stab every one who dares appear as complainant, to get God's sentence at the point of the lance and throw it scornfully into a sand-heap.—That you shall see from the hill!

QUEEN

(with detestation).

I will not look at it!

BOTHWELL.

Do not tempt my patience beyond its reach!
—Remember, I am now the only man in Scotland who feels inclined to fight for your falling throne!

QUEEN

(rises).

Strength and beauty have sometimes exercised power over me,—rudeness never!

(Pause.)

BOTHWELL.

Forgive me if my language becomes that of an impatient warrior; but you do not understand how to act. Come with me! You will take away courage from the traitors; for where you appear, you will recall broken oaths and unfulfilled duties toward our fatherland. Therefore sit on the hill while I am fighting.

QUEEN.

No!

BOTHWELL.

Dare you not believe in your case,—or will you not believe in me? Remember, every one is judged according to his behavior. If he shows the quiet of an open face, the people say he is right! Come with me!

SCENE FIFTH.

(*A horseman enters*).

THE HORSEMAN

(*quickly*).

My lord, they do not want to fight! It was a stratagem, and we are being surrounded!

BOTHWELL.

Traitors to the last! (*To the horseman.*) Sit up, now we come. (*The horseman goes.*) Now you must follow me farther out and to greater fights! By all that is dear to you on earth, if you are taken prisoner here, then you shall not reign an hour longer in Scotland!

QUEEN.

I can not reign over this country either.

BOTHWELL.

But your son—your son!

QUEEN.

Can not either. And I have seen during this hour, that he is as safe with the lords as with you.

BOTHWELL.

Consequently you want to desert me—after all I have risked for you during my life.

QUEEN.

You have received your pay to-day.

BOTHWELL.

Well, if nothing of this kind binds, then anyway the instinct of self-preservation binds! In this hand lies your crown, place your faith in that! In the high mountains we shall find Hamilton, Seyton and many true Catholics; from there we beat the traitors, as truly as Bothwell has still not lost a battle.—Everything in the world you have done but half,—do now this in the whole.

QUEEN.

Yes, much good I have done but half,—therefore I shall now also stop with half a sin!

BOTHWELL.

There exists only one sin, but that is certainly also unpardonable; that is to lose! He that wins is right, for he writes the laws himself. But I can't get right without you; for I can't gather an army without you. Shine on your white horse in front of the troops only one sun-bright hour;—the rest I shall do!

QUEEN.

You should not before have deprived me of my confidence, Bothwell!

BOTHWELL.

Oh, damned, stirring stubbornness, thirst of revenge, selfish weariness,—is all it is;—you play dice badly with life.—But how beautiful you are, standing there in your defiance, unfathomable!—I shall take you by force,—you shall be saved—and save me!

QUEEN.

Try!

BOTHWELL.

She still has a strength I can not manage.—They are already in the yard! Here is no . . . oh, Mary, for the last time the star of

your life twinkles up again in me, there whistles still a fair wind by—reach me your hand for a stormy trip after the fortune!

QUEEN

(is silent, but shakes her head).

BOTHWELL.

The noise down there is approaching! . . . I shall try alone! Not every man who runs into the sea from a sinking ship drowns. But for you there shall come a day when you will repent that you let go your hold of the strong swimmer,—when you from your prison-window shall follow the birds over the mountain and think of me,—shall tremble, listening to every step that gives echo in the long halls, if it should be a message from Bothwell, a message from life, a message of revenge!—and if it stays away,—you must sit until you grow old and sallow,—still wait,—then curse Bothwell, then say, he became the revenge,—the revenge of all your faithlessness!

(There is shouted from the balcony-windows: "Bothwell!")

Yes, now I am coming!—Shall I never see you more, you high siren in the power's star-

besprinkled surroundings! You have lured me by song down into the abysses! How many have still to be whirled down into the dance of death around you? You always in bridal attire; I ought to kill you before I go; for no one should possess you, when I could not!

(*From below several are shouting: "Bothwell! Bothwell!"*)

I am coming, I am coming!—Never more see you—oh! (*He rushes toward her, embraces her and whispers:*) If we now both died?—Then we would not be separated!—No.—(*Lets go his hold of her.*) Life, liberty, and hope with that! (*Goes.*)

SCENE SIXTH.

QUEEN
(*alone.*)

The bird from the eagle's nest!

With him was destruction. From him also. Now I suppose I must be through with Scotland, as I have not a single friend any longer.—And no more deeds to do . . . (*Bothwell's voice from below: "Come with me, Mary, come with me!"*) This was the song under the

window.—I hear them come,—they that want my crown. But I shall not give it away. Not for all the torments in the world.—They may take it, then they have one sin more.—Then thus it should end. Oh, my liberty and my young kingdom! It is too soon for us to part, I have still life-blood left for you to grow in,—well, then I shall use it to resist. They can take everything from me, but they shall not conquer me. They shall be forced to bear witness:

If she could not rule the fortune,

Oh, then she could bear the misfortune.

(Starts to go, but she has hardly gone a couple of steps before the doors are opened, a guard marches in, halts and forms in two ranks. Through these come Morton, Lindsay and two noblemen.)

SCENE SEVENTH.

LINDSAY.

Your grace, in the name of the assembled lords we come—

QUEEN.

Welcome, you gentlemen of the nobility! I

knew that you would hurry to the protection of your queen. The regardful Lindsay, the true Morton,—where are my other protectors, my brother Murray and the brave Lethington?

LINDSAY.

They are with us, your grace.

QUEEN.

How safe must Scotland's queen feel herself among such men!

MORTON.

We have order to—

QUEEN.

—put yourselves in our service! To that God Himself has installed you; on your noble sword is written: “For God, king and fatherland.”

LINDSAY.

If it is convenient for your grace, we will accompany you to—

QUEEN.

—Our true men we follow! What we now have left to entrust you with, our royal right, no man can take; for that we have from God

from our birth. Therefore, forward! We are ready. Honors for the queen!

(The officers lower their weapons, the horsemen lay their halberds crosswise, the queen goes thereunder, later Morton, Lindsay and the two noblemen, after which the guard marches off; the whole procession moves slowly. Empty stage for a while.)

SCENE EIGHTH.

(Murray comes, followed by Lethington, Morton and many noblemen. Later Lindsay.)

MURRAY.

Gentlemen: Mary Stuart has surrendered to Scotland's lords. I know she will be received and treated with all the respect which is due a royal personage and a lady.

ALL.

Yes.

MURRAY.

But I know also, that Mary Stuart of Scotland has ceased reigning from this day.

ALL

(*and much stronger*).

Yes, yes, yes, yes.

MURRAY.

Her son, James VI, the King of Scotland forever!

ALL.

James VI forever!

MURRAY.

In his name and in the name of the government, which Scotland's parliament will appoint, I hereby take Scotland's royal banner—

(*He goes forward toward it, as they make room for him, followed by Lethington and Morton who are looking at one another. He has just laid his hand on it, when several voices from the rear shout: Stop, stop!*)

LINDSAY

(*comes, struttingly*).

Stop!

SCENE NINTH.

SEVERAL.

John Knox and the people with him.

LINDSAY.

Silence, Knox is speaking!

KNOX.

The people, hearing that the action concerned Scotland, wished to be a party thereto.

THE PEOPLE

(*not without threat*).

Knox forever!

KNOX.

What Scotland's nobility has done to-day, is certainly for the best; for everything is for the best. But then they shall not to-day lay the unclean hands of the fight upon this banner; for it is not Murray's, nor Morton's, nor Lethington's, it is Scotland's, it is the national symbol under which Scotland shall conquer all her wretchedness; for the lion in it is the Lord's power!—But I shall on behalf of His church take this banner and carry it before the people.

(He takes it amid great exultation. Orchestra plays a march, and as Knox leaves, carrying the banner, some of the people shout: "Knox forever!" others "Scotland forever!" The people and the noblemen solemnly follow Knox.)

They are received outside amid great and general exultation; Murray, Lethington and Morton remain.)

(The curtain falls.)



