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ODERN STANDARD DRAMA.

EDITED BY EPES SARGENT.

No. LIII.

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B E R T R A M .

A Tragedy

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY REV. CHARLES MATURIN.

WITH THE STAGE BUSINESS, CAST OF CHARACTERS,
RELATIVE POSITIONS, ETC.

34

NEW YORK:

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M.W.P. May 20, 1902

EDITORIAL INTRODUCTION.

WHEN Sir Walter Scott had forwarded Maturin's tragedy of "Bertram" to Lord Byron, at that time a member of the committee of Drury Lane, his lordship, struck with its merits, had it immediately prepared for representation. Its success was sudden and immense. At that time, although known as an author from the period of his publishing "Montorio," while yet almost a youth, he was but a poor and struggling curate, with a young and increasing family, possessed of extremely polished tastes and elegant habits, which cannot be indulged in without expense. On his arrival in London, he was very much flattered and caressed by some persons of rank on the committee of the theatre; and being invited to their houses, he was captivated by the *agremens* of their society—the splendour and elegance that surrounded them; and his corresponding taste made him imagine that he could transfer something of this on his return to his own residence, and that he could be the cause and centre of pursuits and pleasures similar to those that had attracted him. Having derived considerable emolument from the author's right and copyright of "Bertram," and deeming now that a source of un-failing independence was opened to him, he proceeded to furnish his house in a style of extravagant elegance and expense, and to give entertainments. The walls of his parlors were done in panels, with scenes from his novels, painted by an artist of some eminence; the richest carpets, ottomans, lustres, and marble tables ornamented the withdrawing-rooms; the most beautiful papers covered the walls, and the ceilings were painted to represent clouds, with eagles in the centre, from whose claws depended brilliant lustres. But, alas! nothing is more uncertain than dramatic writing. The best dramatists produce five failures to one successful piece. Maturin's subsequent dramas, Don Manuel and Fredolfo, added neither to his fame, nor his income. He became embarrassed; and was obliged to write laboriously for bread.

Notwithstanding his dramatic labors, Maturin is said to have been universally beloved by his parishioners, who were proud of having a man of such talents in their pulpit; although the more religious lamented what they considered the false direction of those talents, and others reprehended or ridiculed his attachment to public amusements, his eccentric dress, and his passion for dancing; yet his gaiety of manner, fascinating conversation, and gentle, good-natured disposition, disarmed even prudent censure of its bitterness, and often converted blame to admiration. His curacy was that of St. Peter, in Dublin—the parish in which he was resident. He died in that city, October 30th, 1824.

Edmund Kean was the original Bertram. The part was well suited to the fiery, impetuous style of that remarkable actor; and he gained a celebrity in it, which has been attained by no subsequent personator of the character. Although the incidents of this tragedy cannot be called unnatural, considered in connection with the clime and the race, where, and among which they occur, yet they are such as modern refinement would exclude, if possible, from the stage. The popularity of the piece has consequently suffered some abatement; though this may be owing, in part, to the absence of an actor with those Kean-like qualities, which could give us a fitting embodiment of the outlawed Count. Not many years since, a fearful interest was given to the denouement of the tragedy, at its representation in a Western city—Natchez, we believe. Either from accident, or design, the actor, a young man, who had performed the part with exceeding spirit, on coming to the last lines—

“ I died no felon’s death—

A warrior’s weapon freed a warrior’s soul !”—

gave reality to the scene by stabbing himself, and falling dead upon the stage.

Bertram was originally produced, May, 1816, at Drury Lane Theatre. Miss Somerville was the original Imogene, and is said to have contributed much to the success of the piece, which was performed twenty-two nights during the remainder of the season, and four nights the season that followed.



CAST OF CHARACTERS.

Park, 1844

St. Aldobrand,	Mr. Jamieson.
Bertram,	“ Booth.
Prior,	“ Gann.
1st Monk,	“ Lovell.
2d Monk,	“ Crocker,
3d Monk,	“ Bridges.
4th Monk,	“ Freeland.
1st Robber,	“ Povey.
2d Robber,	“ Gallot.
3d Robber,	“ King.
Page,	Miss Kinlock.
Child,	“ King.
Imogine,	Mrs. Sloman.
Clotilde,	“ Lovell.
Teresa,	“ Burrows.

COSTUMES.

- ST. ALDOBRAND.—Full suit of gold armour, surcoat, and helmet.
- BERTRAM.—Brown shirt and drapery, cross-bar steel breastplate, flesh leggings and arms, sandals, &c.
- PRIOR.—Brown monk's gown, large black cape, fleshings, and sandals.
- MONKS.—Black gowas, fleshings, and sandals.
- ROBBERS.—Dressed as Bertram, but inferior in quality.
- PAGE.—Buff shirt and scarlet scarf, small buff boots.
- CHILD.—Dressed in white.
- KNIGHTS.—Full silver armour, helmets, &c.
- IMOGINE.—Moreen velvet dress, trimmed with gold.
- CLOTILDE.—White satin dress, trimmed with point lace.
- TERESA.—Ditto.

EXITS AND ENTRANCES.

R. means *Right*; L. *Left*; R. D. *Right Door*; L. D. *Left Door*; S. E. *Second Entrance*; U. E. *Upper Entrance*; M. D. *Middle Door*.

RELATIVE POSITIONS.

R., means *Right*; L., *Left*; C., *Centre*; R. C., *Right of Centre*; L. C., *Left of Centre*.

B E R T R A M .

A C T I .

SCENE I.—*Night.*—*A Gallery in the Convent of St. Anselm—a large Gothic Window in the c. of it, through which the lightning is seen flashing—a Gothic door, R. A door, L. Thunder, lightning, rain, and wind.*

Enter FIRST and SECOND MONKS, in terror, at the door, L.

1st Monk. Heaven for its mercy!—what a night is here!
Oh! didst thou hear that peal?

2d Monk. The dead must hear it. [*A pause—thunder.*]
Speak! speak, and let me hear a human voice!

1st Monk. While the dark terror hurtled distantly,
Lapt in the skirts of the advancing clouds,
I cowered with head full low upon my pallet,
Till the strong light
Did, clear as noonday, show each object round me.
Relic, and rosary, and crucifix,
Did rock and quiver in the bickering glare—
Then forth I rushed, in agony of fear.

2d Monk. Among the tombéd tenants of the cloister,
I walked and told my beads;
But, by the momentarily gleams of sheeted blue,
Did the pale marbles glare so sternly on me,
I almost deemed they lived, and fled in horror!

1st Monk. There is much comfort in a holy man
In such an hour as this. [*Knocking, R. D.*] Ho! wake thee,
Prior!

2d Monk. Oh! come forth, holy Prior, and pray for us!

Enter the PRIOR, at the Gothic door, R. D.

Prior. All peace be with you!—'Tis a fearful hour.

1st Monk. Hath memory a parallel to this?

1st Monk. How hast thou fared in this most awful time?

Prior. [*Crossing, c.*] I bowed me at the cross for those
whose heads

Are naked to the visiting blasts of Heaven,

In this, its hour of wrath—

For the lone traveller on the hill of storms,

For the tossed shipman on the perilous deep;

Till the last peal, that thundered o'er mine head,

Did force a cry of—mercy for myself!

1st Monk. Oh! holy Prior, this is no earthly storm.

The strife of fiends is on the battling clouds!

Prior. Peace, peace—thou rash and unadvised man!

The hand of Heaven, not man, is dealing with us,

And thoughts like thine do make it deal thus sternly.

Enter THIRD MONK, pale and breathless, L. D.

[*Crossing to Third Monk.*] Speak! thou hast something
seen!

3d Monk. A fearful sight!

Prior. What hast thou seen?

3d Monk. A piteous, fearful sight!

A noble vessel, labouring with the storm,

Hath struck upon the rocks beneath our walls;

Her deck is crowded with despairing souls,

And, in the hollow pauses of the blast,

We heard their perishing cries.

Prior. Now haste ye forth—haste all!

3d Monk. It cannot be—it is too late;

One hour will hush their cries, and by the morn

Thou wilt behold the ruin—wreck and corse,

Float on the weltering wave!

Prior. (*c.*) Wave high your torches on each crag and
cliff—

Let many lights blaze on our battlements—

Shout to them in the pauses of the storm,

And tell them there is hope!—

And let our deep-toned bell its loudest peal

Send cheerily o'er the deep;

'Twill be a comfort to the wretched souls,
In their extremity. All things are possible;
Fresh hope may give them strength, and strength deliverance!

I'll hie me forth with you. [Crosses, L.

3d Monk. Wilt thou go forth?

Hardly the vigorous step of daring youth
May hold its footing on those wave-washed crags;
And how wilt thou abide!

1st Monk. 'Tis tempting Heaven!

Prior. To succour man, not to tempt Heaven, I go!
Heaven will protect its servant! [Exeunt, L. D.

SCENE II.—*The Sea-Shore. Rocks, L. U. E. The Convent illuminated in the background, R. U. E. A Storm—thunder and lightning. The bell tolls at intervals. A Ship sinking. A group of Monks discovered on the rocks with torches.*

Enter the PRIOR and FIRST MONK, L. S. E.

Prior. [Clasping his hands, L. C.] Holy St. Anselm!
what a sight is here!

1st Monk. (L.) Pray for their souls—their earthly part
is doomed!

Prior. Oh! that a prayer could hush the elements!
Hold! I do espy a hope, a blessed hope—
That wave hath heaved her from the rock she struck on,
And every arm on board is plied for safety!

1st Monk. Lo! the recoiling surge drives fiercely o'er
her!

In, holy Prior, or ere their drowning shriek
Do rive the sense—in, in, and tell thy beads!

Prior. I will not in, while to that hopeless wreck
One arm doth cling—while o'er the roaring waste
One voice be raised for help—I will not hence!

Monk. [On the rocks, L. U. E.] She sinks—she sinks!
Oh, hour of woe and horror!

[The Prior falls into the arms of the First Monk, and
the Scene closes.]

SCENE III.—*The Gallery, as in Scene I.*

Enter FIRST MONK *and the* PRIOR, L. D.

1st Monk. (L.) Now rest you, holy Prior, you are much moved—

Prior. (R. c.) [*Not heeding him.*] All—all did perish!

1st Monk. Change those drenched weeds—

Prior. I wist not of them—Every soul did perish!

Enter THIRD MONK, *hastily*, L.

3d Monk. No! there was one did battle with the storm
With careless, desperate force; full many times
His life was won and lost, as though he recked not—
No hand did aid him, and he aided none—
Alone he breasted the broad wave, alone
That man was saved.

Prior. Where is he? lead him hither.

Enter two MONKS, *leading in the* STRANGER, L. D.

Praise to St. Anselm, thou redeeméd soul,
Raise high thy living voice in prayer and praise!
For wondrous hath his mercy been to thee.

2d Monk. (c.) He hath not spoken yet.

Stran. Who are those around me? where am I?

Prior. On the shore of Sicily.

The Convent of St. Anselm this is called;
Near is the Castle of Lord Aldobrand.

[*The Stranger makes an effort to break from the Monks,
but falls, through weakness, into their arms.*]

A name far known, if, as thy speech imports,
Thou'rt of Italian birth. Tell us thy name.

Stran. A man of woe.

Prior. What is thy woe, that Christian love may heal
it?

Hast thou upon the pitiless waters lost
Brother, or sire, or son?—Did she thou lovest
Sink in thy straining sight?—
Or have the hoardings of thy worldly thrift
Been lost with yonder wreck?

[*To these questions the Stranger gives signs of dissent.*
Why dost thou, then, despond?

Stran. Because I live!

Prior. Look not so wild. Can we do aught for thee?

Stran. Yes! plunge me in the waves from which ye snatched me!

Prior. I'll question not with him, his brain is wrecked;
For ever in the pauses of his speech,
His lip doth work with inward mutterings,
And his fixed eye is rivetted fearfully
On something that no other sight can spy.
Food and rest will restore him: lead him in.

[*The Monks attempt to lead him towards the Gothic door, R.*

Stran. [*Dashing them away.*] Off! ye are men!—there's poison in your touch!—

But I must yield, for this hath left me strengthless.

[*He sinks, exhausted, into the arms of the Monks, and is borne off, fainting, R. D., the Prior following.*

SCENE IV.—*A Hall in the Castle of St. Aldobrand.*

Enter PIETRO, L., and TERESA, R., meeting.

Pie. Ha! Teresa waking! Was ever such a tempest?

Ter. The lady Imogine would watch all night,
And I have tended on her. What hath roused thee?

Pie. Tell me what would give me sleep in such a night.
I know of but one remedy for fear and wakefulness; that
is a flagon of wine. I hoped the thunder would have
waked old Hugo to open the cellar-door for me.

Ter. He hath left his bed. E'en now I passed him
Measuring the banquet-hall with restless steps,
And moody, fretful gestures. He approaches.

Enter HUGO, R.

Pie. Hugo, well met. Does e'en thy age bear memory
of so terrible storm?

Hugo. They have been frequent lately.

Pie. They are ever so in Sicily.

Hugo. So it is said. But storms, when I was young,
Would still pass o'er like Nature's fitful fevers,
And rendered all more wholesome.

Ter. Heaven grant its wrath visit not my kind lady!

Hugo. Still may she be as happy in these halls,
As when she tripped the green a rural maid,
Ere her good father's ruin—
Or our lord saw and loved her!

Pie. [*Looking off, R.*] See, if Madam Clotilda be not roused.

Ter. I'm glad, for she's our lady's loved companion
And chosen attendant. [*Crosses, c.*]

Enter CLOTILDA, R.

Clo. Is your lady risen?

Ter. She hath not rested through the night.
Long ere the storm arose, her restless gestures
Forbade all hope to see her blessed with sleep.

Clo. Since her lord's absence it is ever thus.
But soon he will return to his loved home,
And the gay knights and noble wassailers
Banish her lonely melancholy. [*A horn heard without, L.*]

Monk. [*Without, L.*] What, ho!

Hugo. There's one at the gate.
My fears presage unwelcome messengers
At such untimely hours.

Clo. Attend the summons, Hugo.
I seek the Lady Imogine. If 'tis aught
Concerns her or our lord, follow me thither.

[*Exeunt, Clotilda and Teresa, R., Hugo and Pietro, L.*]

SCENE V.—*A Gothic Apartment in the Castle of St. Aldobrand—a table, candles, chairs, books, &c., R. C.*

IMOGINE discovered, sitting at the table, looking at a picture.

Imo. Yes,
The limner's art may trace the absent feature,
And give the eye of distant weeping faith
To view the form of its idolatry; [*Rises.*]
But, oh! the scenes 'mid which they met and parted—
The thoughts, the recollections sweet and bitter—
Th' Elysian dreams of lovers, when they loved—
Who shall restore them?
If thou could'st speak,
Dumb witness of the secret soul of Imogine,

Thou might'st acquit the faith of womankind ;
 Since thou wast on my midnight pillow laid,
 Friend hath forsaken friend, the brotherly tie
 Been lightly loosed, the parted coldly met,
 Yea, mothers have with desperate hands wrought harm
 To little lives from their own bosoms lent.
 But woman still hath loved, if that indeed
 Woman e'er loved like me.

Enter CLOTILDA, L.

Clo. The storm seems hushed : wilt thou to rest, lady ?

Imo. I feel no lack of rest.

Clo. Then let us stay,

And watch the last peal murmuring on the blast ;
 I will sit by the while, so thou wilt tell
 Some moving story to beguile the time.

Imo. I am not in the mood.

Clo. I pray thee, tell me of some shadowy thing
 Crossing the traveller on his path of fear
 On such a night as this.

Imo. Thou simple maid,

Thus to enslave thy heart to foolish fears.

Clo. Far less I deem of peril is in such,
 Than in those tales women most like to list to,
 The tales of love—for they are all untrue.

Imo. Lightly thou says't that woman's love is false,
 The thought is falser far—

For some of them are true as martyr's legends,
 As full of suffering faith, of burning love,
 Of high devotion, worthier heaven than earth !
 Oh ! I do know a tale—

Clo. Of knight of lady ?

Imo. Of one who loved. She was of humble birth,
 Yet dared to love a proud and noble youth.

His sovereign's smile was on him, glory blazed
 Around his path, yet did he smile on her.
 Oh ! then, what visions were that blessed one's !
 His sovereign's frown came next.

An exiled outcast, houseless, nameless, abject,
 He fled for life, and scarce by flight did save it.
 No hoary beadsman bid his parting step,
 God speed ! no faithful vassal followed him ;

For fear had withered every heart but hers,
Who, amid shame and ruin, loved him better.

Clo. Did she partake his lot ?

Imo. She burned to do it,

But 'twas forbidden.

Clo. How proved she, then, her love ?

Imo. Was it not love to pine her youth away ?

In her lone bower she sat all day to hearken
For tales of him, and—soon came tales of woe.
High glory lost, he recked not what was saved ;
With desperate men in desperate ways he dealt ;
A change came o'er his nature and his heart,
Till she that bore him had recoiled from him,
Nor knew the alien visage of her child !
Yet still *she* loved, yea, still lived hopeless on !

[*Crosses, L.*

Clo. Hapless lady ! What hath befallen her ?

Imo. Full many a miserable year hath passed—
She knows him as one dead, or worse than dead ;
And many a change her varied life hath known,
But her heart none.

In the lone hour of tempest and of terror,
Her soul was on the dark hill's side with Bertram—
Yea, when the launchéd bolt did sear her sense,
Her soul's deep orisons were breathed for him.
Was this not love ? yea, thus doth woman love !

[*Crosses, R.*

Clo. Hast thou e'er seen the dame ? I pray thee, paint
her.

Imo. They said her cheek of youth was beautiful
Till withering sorrow blanched the white rose there ;
And I have heard men swear her form was fair ;
But grief did lay its icy finger on it,
And chilled it to a cold and joyless statue.

Clo. I would I might behold that wretched lady
In all her sad and waning loveliness.

Imo. Thou would'st not deem her wretched ; outward
eyes

Would hail her happy.
They've decked her form in purple and in pall ;
When she goes forth, the thringing vassals kneel,
And bending pages bear her footcloth well :

No eye beholds that lady in her bower,—
That is *her* hour of joy, for then she weeps,
Nor does her husband hear.

Clo. Sayst thou her husband ?

How could she wed, she who did love so well ?

Imo. How could she wed ! What could I do but wed ?

Hast seen the sinking fortunes of thine house ?—

Hast felt the gripe of bitter, shameful want ?—

Hast seen a father on the cold, cold earth ?—

Hast read his eye of silent agony,

That asked relief, but would not look reproach

Upon his child unkind ?

I would have wed disease, deformity,

Yea, griped death's grisly form, to 'scape from it ;—

And yet some sorcery was wrought on me,

For earlier things do seem as yesterday,

But I've no recollection of the hour

They gave my hand to Aldobrand.

Clo. Blessed saints !

And was it thou indeed ?

Imo. I am that wretch !—

The wife of a most noble, honoured lord—

The mother of a babe, whose smiles do stab me !

[*Crosses*, L.

Clo. Hath time no power upon thy hopeless love ?

Imo. Yea, time hath power, and what a power I'll tell
thee :

A power to change the pulses of the heart

To one dull throb of ceaseless agony—

To hush the sigh on the resigned lip,

And lock it in the heart—freeze the hot tear,

And bid it on the eyelid hang forever !—

Such power hath time o'er me.

[*Crosses*, R.

Clo. And has not, then,

A husband's kindness—

Imo. Mark me, Clotilda !

And mark me well ! I am no desperate wretch,

Who borrows an excuse from shameful passion,

To make its shame more vile.

I am a wretched, but a spotless wife :

I've been a daughter, but too dutiful.

But, oh ! the writhings of a generous soul,

Stabbed by a confidence it can't return,
To whom a kind blow is a word on th' heart—
I cannot paint thy wretchedness! [*Bursts into tears.*]

Clo. Nay, nay,

Dry up your tears; soon will your lord return;
Let him not see you thus by passion shaken.

Imo. Oh! wretched is the dame, to whom the sound,
"Your lord will soon return," no pleasure brings!

Clo. Some step approaches. [*Looking off, L.*] 'Tis St.
Anselm's Monk.

Imo. Remember!

Enter FIRST MONK, L.

Now, what wouldst thou, reverend father?

1st Monk. St. Anselm's benison on you, gracious dame!
Our holy Prior by me commends him to you.
The wreck that struck our rocks i' th' storm,
Hath thrown some wretched souls upon his care,
(For many have been saved since morning dawned);
Wherefore, he prays the wonted hospitality
That the free noble usage of your castle
Doth grant to shipwrecked and distressed men.

Imo. Bear back my greetings to your holy Prior;
Tell him, the lady of St. Aldobrand
Holds it no sin, although her lord be absent,
To ope her gates to wave-tossed mariners.
Now Heaven forefend your narrow cells were cumbered,
While these free halls stood empty! Tell your Prior,
We hold the custom of our castle still.

[*Exeunt, Imogine and Clotilda, R., First Monk, L.*]

END OF ACT I.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*An Apartment in the Convent—a couch, R. C.*

*The STRANGER discovered sleeping on the couch, and the
PRIOR, L., watching him.*

Prior. He sleeps—if it be sleep; this starting trance.

Whose feverish tossings and deep-muttered groans,
Do prove the soul shares not the body's rest.

[*Hanging over him.*]

How the lip works ! how the bare teeth do grind,
And beaded drops course down his writhen brow !

I will awake him from this horrid trance ;

This is no natural sleep. Ho ! wake thee, stranger !

Stran. What would'st thou have ? my life is in thy
power.

Prior. Most wretched man, whose fears alone betray
thee—

What art thou ?—Speak !

Stran. Thou sayst I am a wretch,
And thou sayest true—these weeds do witness it—
These wave-worn weeds—these bare and bruised limbs—
What would'st thou more ? I shrink not from the ques-
tion.

I am a wretch, and proud of wretchedness ;
'Tis the sole earthly thing that cleaves to me.

Prior. Lightly I deem of outward wretchedness,
For that hath been the lot of blessed saints ;
But, in their dire extreme of outward wretchedness,
Full calm they slept in dungeons and in darkness,—
Such hath not been thy sleep.

Stran. Didst watch my sleep ?

But thou couldst gain no secret from my ravings.

Prior. Thy secrets ! wretched man, I reckon not of them ;
But I adjure thee, by the church's power,
(A power to search man's secret heart of sin,)
Show me thy wound of soul.

Weep'st thou the ties of nature or of passion,
Torn by the hand of Heaven ?

Oh, no ! full well I deemed no gentler feeling
Woke the dark lightning of thy withering eye.

What fiercer spirit is it tears thee thus ?

Show me the horrid tenant of thy heart !

Or wrath, or hatred, or revenge, is there—

[*The Stranger suddenly starts from the couch, raises
his clasped hands, and comes forward, R.*]

Stran. I would consort with mine eternal enemy,
To be revenged on him !

Prior. Art thou a man, or fiend, who speakest thus ?

Stran. I was a man ; I know not what I am—
 What others' crimes and injuries have made me—
 Look on me ! What am I ? [Advances, c.]

Prior. [Retreating to L. corner.] I know not.

Stran. I marvel that thou say'st it,
 For lowly men full oft remember those
 In changed estate, whom equals have forgotten.
 A passing beggar hath remembered me,
 When with strange eyes my kinsmen looked on me.
 I wore no sullied weeds on that proud day,
 When thou, a bare-foot monk, didst bow full low
 For alms, my heedless hand hath flung to thee.
 Thou dost not know me ! [Approaching him.]

Prior. Mine eyes are dim with age—but many thoughts
 Do stir within me at thy voice.

Stran. List to me, monk. It is thy trade to talk,
 As reverend men do use in saintly wise,
 Of life's vicissitudes and vanities.
 Hear one plain tale that doth surpass all saws—
 Hear it from me—Count Bertram!—ay, Count Bertram!
 The darling of his liege and of his land,
 The army's idol, and the council's head—
 Whose smile was fortune, and whose will was law—
 Doth bow him to the Prior of St. Anselm
 For water to refresh his parchéd lip,
 And this hard-matted couch to fling his limbs on !

Prior. Good Heaven and all its saints !

Bertram. Wilt thou betray me ?

Prior. Lives there the wretch beneath these walls, to
 do it ?

Sorrow enough hath bowed thy head already,
 Thou man of many woes.—

Far more I fear lest thou betray thyself.
 Hard by do stand the halls of Aldobrand,
 (Thy mortal enemy and cause of fall,)

Where ancient custom doth invite each stranger,
 Cast on this shore, to sojourn certain days,
 And taste the bounty of the castle's lord.

If thou goest not, suspicion will arise;
 And if thou dost, (all changéd as thou art,)
 Some desperate burst of passion will betray thee,
 And end in mortal scathe— [A pause.]

What dost thou gaze on with such fixed eyes?

Ber. What sayest thou?

I dreamed I stood before Lord Aldobrand,
Impenetrable to his searching eyes—
And I did feel the horrid joy men feel
Measuring the serpent's coil, whose fangs have stung
them;

Scanning with giddy eye the air-hung rock,
From which they leapt and live by miracle;—
To see that horrid spectre of my thoughts
In all the stern reality of life—
To mark the living lineaments of hatred,
And say, this is the man whose sight should blast me;
Yet, in calm, dreadful triumph, still gaze on:—
It is a horrid joy. [Crosses, L.]

Prior. Nay, rave not thus,

Thou wilt not meet him; many a day must pass,
Till from Palermo's walls he wend him homeward,
Where now he tarries with St. Anselm's knights.
His dame doth dwell in solitary wise,
Few are the followers in his lonely halls—
Why dost thou smile in that most horrid guise?

Ber. [*Repeating.*] His dame doth dwell alone! Per-
chance his child—

Oh! no, no, no! it was a damnéd thought.

Prior. I do but indistinctly hear thy words,
But feel they have some fearful meaning in them.

Ber. Oh, that I could but mate him in his might!

Oh, that we were on the dark wave together, [*Crosses, R.*
With but one plank between us and destruction,
That I might grasp him in these desperate arms,
And plunge with him amid the weltering billows,
And view him gasp for life!—and—
Ha! ha!—I see him struggling!—
I see him!—ha! ha! ha! [A frantic laugh.]

Prior. Oh, horrible!

Help!—Help to hold him, for my strength doth fail!

Enter two MONKS, R.—they support Bertram.

Enter FIRST MONK, L.

1st Monk. The lady of St. Aldobrand sends greeting—

Prior. Oh, art thou come; this is no time for greeting—
Help—bear him off—thou see'st his fearful state.

[*Exeunt, bearing off Bertram, R.*]

SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Castle of St. Aldobrand.*

Enter HUGO, L., showing in Bertram's Comrades.

Hugo. This way, friends, this way, good cheer awaits
you.

1st Sail. Well, then, good cheer was never yet bestowed
On those who need it more.

Hugo. To what port bound
Did this fell storm o'ertake you?

1st Sail. No matter,
So we find here a comfortable haven.

Hugo. Whence came you?

1st Sail. Psha! I cannot answer fasting.

Hugo. Roughness, the proverb says, speaks honesty;
I hope the adage true.

Come, come, the feast's prepared within; this way.

[*Exit, R.*]

1st Sail. Now, comrades, we will honour our host's
bounty
With jovial hearts, and gay forgetfulness
Of perils past and coming.

GLEE.—SAILORS.

We be men escaped from dangers,
Sweet to think of o'er our bowls;
Wilds have ne'er known hardier rangers,
Hall shall ne'er see blither souls.

[*Exeunt, R.*]

SCENE III.—*A Terraced Rampart of the Castle of St. Aldobrand, from R. to L.—a part of the Castle is seen, R., the rest concealed by Woods.—Moonlight.*

IMOGINE *discovered, R. U. E.—she gazes at the Moon for some time, and then slowly advances.*

Imo. Mine own loved light,
That every soft and solemn spirit worships,
That lovers love so well—strange joy 'is thine,
Whose influence o'er all tides of soul hath power,
Who lend'st thy light to rapture and despair!—

Bertram—Bertram!

How sweet it is to tell the listening night
The name beloved—it is a spell of power
To wake the buried slumbers of the heart,
Where memory lingers o'er the grave of passion,
Watching its tranced sleep!

Enter CLOTILDA, L. U. E.

Clo. Why dost thou wander by this mournful light,
Feeding sick fancy with the thought that poisons?

Imo. I will but weep beneath the moon awhile.
Now do not chide my heart for this sad respite.

Clo. Nay, come with me, and view those storm-'scaped
men

A feasting in thy hall; 'twill cheer thy heart.
Of perils 'scaped by flood and fire they tell,
And many an antique legend wild they know,
And many a lay they sing—[*Chorus and laughter without,*
L. U. E.] Hark! their deep voices
Come faintly on the wind.

Imo. Their wild and vulgar mirth doth startle me.
But as I passed the latticed gallery
One stood alone.—I marked him where he stood.
His face was veiled; faintly a light fell on him;
But through soiled weeds his muffled form did show
A wild and terrible grandeur.

Clo. I marked him, too. He mixed not with the rest,
But o'er his wild mates held a stern control;
Their rudest burst of riotous merriment
Beneath his dark eye's stilling energy
Was hushed to silence.

Imo. He never spoke?

Clo. No, he did naught but sigh.

Imo. Call him hither.

There is a mystery of woe about him
That strongly moves my fancy.

Clo. Wilt thou confer alone, at night, with one
Who bears such fearful form?

Imo. Why, therefore send him—
All things of fear have lost their power o'er me.

[*Exit Clotilda, L. U. E.—Imogene appears to be debating with herself how to receive him.*

If he do bear, like me, a withered heart,
I will not mock him with a sound of comfort.

Enter BERTRAM, slowly, l. u. e., his arms folded, and his eyes fixed on the earth—Imogine does not recognize him.

A form like that hath broken on my dreams
So darkly wild, so proudly stern,
Doth it rise on me waking?

*[Bertram comes forward, l. c., and stands with outlook-
ing at her.*

Stranger, I sent for thee, for that I deemed
Some wound was thine, that yon free band might chafe,—
Perchance thy worldly wealth sunk with yon wreck—
Such wound my gold can heal—the castle's almoner—

Ber. The wealth of worlds were heaped on me in vain.

Imo. Oh, then, I read thy loss. Thy heart is sunk
In the dark waters pitiless; some dear friend,
Or brother, loved as thine own soul, lies there.
Gold I can give, but can no comfort give,
For I am comfortless.

Ber. *[Striking his breast.]* No dews give freshness to
this blasted soil!

Imo. Strange is thy form, but more thy words are
strange.

Fearful it seems to hold this parley with thee,
Tell me thy race and country.

Ber. What avails it?

The wretched have no country: that dear name
Comprises home, kind kindred, fostering friends,
Protecting laws,

But none of these are mine; I have no country—
And for my race, the last dread trump shall wake
The sheeted relics of mine ancestry,
Ere trump of herald to the armed lists
In the bright blazon of their stainless coat,
Calls their lost child again.

Imo. *[Aside.]* I shake to hear him!—
There is an awful thrilling in his voice!

[Aloud.] If nor my bounty nor my tears can aid thee,
Stranger, farewell; and 'mid thy misery

Pray, when thou tell'st thy beads, for one more wretched.

Ber. Stay, gentle lady, I would somewhat with thee.

[Imogine retreats terrified,

Thou shalt not go. [Retains her.]

Imo. Shalt not?—Who art thou?—Speak!

Ber. And must I speak?

There was a voice which all the world but thee
Might have forgotten, and had been forgiven.

Imo. My senses blaze!—Between the dead and living
I stand in fear!—Oh, Heaven!—It cannot be!

Those thick black locks—those wild and sun-burnt fea-
tures,

He looked not thus—but then that voice—

[Tottering towards him.]

It cannot be!—for he would know my name.

Ber. Imagine!— [She shrieks and falls into his arms.]
Imagine!—yes.

Thus pale, cold, dying, thus thou art most fit

To be enfolded to this most desolate heart—

A blighted lily on an icy bed—

Nay, look not up, 'tis thus I would behold thee.

That pale cheek looks like truth—I'll gaze no more;

That fair, that pale, dear cheek, these helpless arms—

If I look longer, they will make me human.

Imo. [Starting from him.] Fly—fly! the vassals of thine
enemy wait

To do thee dead.

Ber. Then let them wield the thunder!

Fell is their dint, who're mail'd in despair.

Let mortal might sever the grasp of Bertram!

[Seizes her.]

Imo. Release me! [Aside.] I must break from him—he
knows not—

Oh!

Ber. [Releasing her.] Imagine, madness seizes me—

Why do I find thee in mine enemy's walls?

What dost thou in the halls of Aldobrand?

Infernal light doth shoot athwart my mind—

Swear thou art a dependent on his bounty,

That chance, or force, or sorcery brought thee hither.

Thou canst not be—my throat is swoll'n with agony—

Hell hath no plague—Oh, no, thou couldst not do it.

Imo. [Kneeling, c.] Mercy!

Ber. Thou hast it not, or thou wouldst speak—

Speak—speak!

[With frantic violence.]

Imo. I am the wife of Aldobrand,—
To save a famishing father did I wed.

Ber. I will not curse *her*—but the hoarded vengeance—

Imo. Ay—curse, and consummate the horrid spell,
For broken-hearted, in despairing hour,
With every omen dark and dire, I wedded—
Some minist'ring demon mocked the robéd priest;
With some dark spell, not holy vow they bound me,
Full were the rites of horror and despair.
They wanted but—the seal of Bertram's curse.

Ber. [*Not heeding her.*] Talk of her father! Could a
father love thee

As I have loved? In want, and war, and peril,
Things that would thrill the hearer's blood to tell of,
My heart grew human when I thought of thee!—
Imagine would have shuddered for my danger,—
Imagine would have bound my leechless wounds—
Imagine would have sought my nameless corse,
And known it well—and she was wedded!—wedded!—
Was there no name in hell's dark catalogue
To brand thee with, but mine immortal foe's?—
And did I 'scape from war, and want, and famine,
To perish by the falsehood of a woman? [*Crosses, n.*]

Imo. Oh, spare me, Bertram!—oh, preserve thyself!

Ber. A despot's vengeance, a false country's curses,
The spurn of menials whom this hand had fed—
In my heart's steeléd pride I shook them off,
As the bayed lion from his hurtless hide
Shakes his pursuers' darts—
One dart alone took aim, thy hand did barb it!

[*Crosses, l.*]

Imo. He did not hear my father's cry—Oh, heaven!—
Nor food, nor fire, nor raiment; and his child
Knelt madly to the hungry walls for succour,
Ere her wrought brain could bear the horrid thought,
Or wed with him—or—see thy father perish.

Ber. Thou tremblest lest I curse thee,—tremble not.
Though thou hast made me, woman, very wretched,
Though thou hast made me—But I will not curse thee.
Hear the last prayer of Bertram's broken heart,
That heart which thou hast broken, not his foes!—
Of thy rank wishes the full scope be on thee;

May pomp and pride shout in thine adder'd path,
 Till thou shalt feel and sicken at their hollowness;
 May he thou'st wed be kind and generous to thee,
 Till thy wrung heart, stabbed by his noble fondness,
 Writhe in detesting consciousness of falsehood;
 May thy babe's smile speak daggers to that mother
 Who cannot love the father of her child,
 And in the bright blaze of the festal hall,
 When vassals kneel, and kindred smile around thee,
 May ruined Bertram's pledge hiss in thine ear—
 Joy to the proud dame of St. Aldobrand—
 While his cold corse doth bleach beneath her towers!

[*Going*, L.]

Imo. [*Detaining him.*] Stay!

Ber. No.

Imo. Thou hast a dagger.

Ber. Not for woman.—

Imo. It was my prayer to die in Bertram's presence,
 But not by words like these.— [Falls.]

Ber. [*Turning back.*] On the cold earth!—

I do forgive thee from my inmost soul!—

The CHILD of Imogine rushes in, L., and clings to her.

Child. Mother!

[*Bertram eagerly snatches up the child.—A pause.*]

Ber. God bless thee, child!—Bertram hath kissed thy
 child! [Rushes off, L.]

Imo. Bertram—Bertram!

[*The Child clings to her, and the Curtain falls.*]

END OF ACT II.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—A Wood.

Euter ST. ALDOBRAND with a PAGE, R. U. E., speaking.

Ald. Hold thou my good steed, page; the moon is
 down;

We've far outstript the knights, but slacker speed

Hath found a surer road. Where, think'st thou, are we?
 Vainly I listen through the night so still
 For bell that tells of holy convent near;
 All is dark, still, and lorn. Where deem'st thou are we?

Page. Oh, we are nigh a fell and fearful spot,
 For by the last gleams of the sunken moon
 I saw the towers—

Ald. What towers are these, boy?

Page. The ruined towers that 'tis said are haunted.

Ald. Then not four leagues divide me from mine
 home.—

Mine home—it is a pleasant sound,—there bide
 My dame and child—all pleasant thoughts dwell there.

[*A bell tolls, L. U. E.*]

Hark! 'tis the convent bell, forego thy tale—
 The blessed thoughts of home are in that sound
 That near my castle's gallant walls doth float—

[*A Chorus of Knights heard faintly from the Forest,*
L. U. E.]

What voices swell upon the midnight air?

Page. St. Anselm's knights.

Ald. Yes, 'tis their pious wont,
 When journeying near the sound of convent bell,
 'Mid flood or fire, to raise the holy hymn
 That chaunts the praise of their protecting saint.
 List to the solemn harmony,
 Guided by that we may rejoin their company.

[*Exeunt, 1.—The Chorus is heard again, and continues*
drawing nearer as the scene changes.]

SCENE II.—*The Convent.*

The PRIOR discovered reading, L. C., and BERTRAM, R. C.,
viewing him with the attention of one who envies him.

Ber. How many hours have passed since matin-bell?

Prior. I know not, till it sound again to vespers.
 Time passes o'er us with a noiseless lapse:
 Our hours are marked alone by prayer and study,
 And know no change but by their mute succession.

Ber. Yea; thus they live, if this may life be called,
 Where moving shadows mock the parts of men.
 Prayer follows study, study yields to prayer,

Bell echoes bell, till, wearied with the sunmons,
The ear doth ache for that last welcome peal
That tolls an end to listless vacancy.

[*They rise and come forward.*]

The storm for Bertram! and it hath been with me,
Dealt with me branch and bole, bared me to th' roots,
And where the next wave bears my perished trunk,
In its dread lapse, I neither know, nor reckon of.

Prior. Thou desperate man, whom mercy woos in vain,
Although with miracles she pleads—
Forbear, I say, to taint these holy echoes
With the fell sounds of thy profane despair.

Ber. Good monk, I am beholden to your patience.
Take this from one, whose lips do mock at praise;
Thou art a man, whose mild and reverend functions
Might bid my better angel half return.
But—'tis impossible—I will not trouble thee—
The wayward Bertram and his moody mates
Are tenants all unmeet for cloistered walls:—
We will find fitter home.

Prior. Whither wilt thou resort?

Ber. Is there no forest
Whose shades are dark enough to shelter us?
Or cavern rifted by the perilous lightning,
Where we must grapple with the tenanting wolf
To earn our bloody lair?—there let us bide,
Nor hear the voice of man, nor call of heaven.

Prior. Wend not, I charge thee, with those desperate
men.

Full well I wot who are thy fearful mates.—
In their stern strife with the incenséd deep,
That dashed them bruised and breathless on our shores,
When their drenched hold forsook both gold and gear,
They griped their daggers with a murderer's instinct.
—I read thee for the leader of a band
Whose trade is blood—

Ber. Well, then, thou knowest the worst—
I am their leader,
And let the worst be known!

Prior. Mark what I read: renounce that horrid league—
Flee to the Castle of St. Aldobrand:
His power may give thee safety, and his dame

May plead for thee against the law's stern purpose—
All as thou art unknown—

Ber. His dame plead for me!—

When my cold corse, torn from some felon wheel,
Or dug from lightless depth of stony dungeon,
Welters in the cold gaze of pitiless strangers,
Then fling it at his gate, whose curséd stones
My living foot treads never,—yet beware
Lest the corse burst its cearments stark, and curse thee !

[*Crosses, L.*

Prior. Hush, hush these horrid sounds. Where wilt
thou bide ?

Near us nor knight nor baron holds his keep,
For far and wide thy foeman's land extends.

Ber. The world hath ample realms beyond his power.
The frozen mountain, or the burning sand,
Would be more wholesome than the fertile realm
That's lorded o'er by Aldobrand. [*Exit, L.*

Prior. Wild admiration thrills me to behold
An evil strength, so above earthly pitch—
Descending angels only, could reclaim thee.

Enter SECOND MONK, R.

2d Monk. The lady of St. Aldobrand in haste
Craves swift admittance to your sacred cell.

Prior. She is a gracious and a pious dame,
And doth our cell much honour by her presence.
[*Exit Second Monk, R.*

Enter IMOGINE, R.—she kneels to Prior.

Prior. (L. c.) The blessings of these sainted walls be
on thee !

Why art thou thus disturbed ? What moves thee, daughter ?

Imo. Nay, do not raise me with those reverend hands.
I am a wretched, soul-struck, guilty woman.

Prior. Thou dost amaze me ; by mine holy order,
I deemed no legends of our cloistered saints
Held holier records of pure sanctity,
Than the clear answer of thy stainless life
To shrift's most piercing search—

Imo. [*Rising.*] Oh, holy Prior ! I am a wretch !

I've nursed a slumbering serpent till it stung me,
And from my heart's true guardian hid its foulness.

Prior. Thou'st done an evil deed—

For sin is of the soul, and thine is tainted :
But most I blame thee, that from thy soul's guardian
Thou hiddest thy secret guilt.

Imo. I knew it not.

Last night, oh ! last night told a dreadful secret :—
The moon went down, its sinking ray shut out
The parting form of one beloved too well.
With naught that loved me, and with naught to love,
I stood upon the desert earth alone—
I stood and wondered at my desolation—
And in that deep and utter agony,
Though then, than ever most unfit to die,
I fell upon my knees, and prayed for death.

Prior. Art thou a wife and mother, and canst speak
Of life rejected by thy desperate passion—
These bursting tears, wrung hands, and burning words,
Are these the signs of penitence or passion ?

“ Thou comest to me, for to my ear alone
“ May the deep secret of thy heart be told,
“ And fancy riot in the luscious poison—
“ Fond of the misery we paint so well,
“ Proud of the sacrifice of broken hearts,
“ We pour on heav'n's dread ear, what man's would shrink
from—
“ Yea, make a merit of the impious insult,
“ And wrest the functions of mine holy office
“ To the foul ministry of earthly passion.”

Imo. Why came I here ! I had despair at home—
Where shall the wretch resort whom Heaven forsakes ?

Prior. Thou hast forsaken Heaven.

Speed to thy castle, shut thy chamber door,
Bind fast thy soul by every solemn vow
Never to hold communion with that object—
If still thy heart's responses yield no harmony—
Weary thy saint with agonies of prayer ;
On the cold marble quench thy burning breast ;
Number with every bead a tear of soul ;
Press to thy heart the cross, and bid it banish
The form that would usurp its image there.

Imo. [*Kneeling.*] One parting word—

Prior. No, not one parting look—

[*Turns away and crosses, R.*

One parting thought—I charge thee on thy soul.

Imo. [*Turning away.*] He never loved.

[*Seizes his robes.*

Prior. Why clingest thou to my raiment?

Thy grasp of grief is stronger on my heart—

Enter FIRST MONK and PAGE, R.

1st Monk. Hail, holy Prior, and hail, thou noble dame!
With joyful heart I break upon your privacy.

[*Prior crosses, c.*

St. Aldobrand before his own good gates

Doth rein his war-steed's pride; the warder's horn

Full merrily rings his peal of welcome home.

I hied me onward with the joyful tidings

To greet his happy dame.

Prior. Now, by my beads, the news is wond'rous welcome.

[*To Page, L. corner.*

Hath thy brave lord in safety reached his home?

[*Apart to Imogine, L. c.*

Clear thy dimmed brow, for shame! hie to thy lord,

And show a dame's true duty in his welcome. [*To Page.*

Came with thy lord the knights of good St. Anselm,

Bearing the banner of their guardian saint

Safe from the infidel scathe?

Page. They come with speed—

Though lated in the forest's wildering maze;

Last night their shelter was the broad brown oak.

Prior. High praise be given! Haste! summon all our brethren.

[*Exit First Monk, R.*

Th' occasion, noble dame, doth call me from thee—

So, Benedicite.

[*Exeunt Prior and Page, R.*

Imo. That word should mean—

A blessing rest on me.—I am not blest—

Would I were seared in guilt, or strong in innocence!

I dare not search my heart; some iron vow

Shall bind me down in passive wretchedness,

And mock the force of my rebellious heart.

As she kneels, enter BERTRAM, L.

Ha! art thou there?

Come kneel with me, and witness to the vow
I offer to renounce thee, and to die.

Ber. Nay, it is meet that we renounce each other.
Have we not been a miserable pair?
Hath not our fatal passion cursed, not blessed us?
Had we not loved, how different were our fates;
For thou hadst been a happy, honoured dame,
And I had slept the sleep of those that dream not—
But life was dear, while Imogene did love.

Imo. Witness my vow, while I have breath to speak it.

Ber. Then make it thus—why dost thou shrink from
me?

Despair hath its embrace as well as passion.
May I not hold thee in these folded arms?
May I not clasp thee to this blasted heart?
When the rich soil teemed with youth's generous flowers,
I felt thee, sunshine; now thy rayless light
Falls like a cold moon on the blasted heath,
Mocking its desolation.—Speak thy vow—
I will not chide thee, if the words should kill me.

Imo. [*Sinking into his arms.*] I cannot utter it.

Ber. Have we not loved, as none have ever loved,
And must we part as none have ever parted?
I know thy lord is near; I know his towers
Must shut thee from my sight—the curfew-hour
Will send me on a far and fearful journey.
Give me one hour, nor think thou givest too much,
When grief is all the boon.

Imo. One hour to thee?

Ber. When the cold moon gleams on thy castle walls,
Wilt thou not seek the spot where last we met?
That be our parting spot. Oh! Imogene,
Heaven, that denies the luxury of bliss,
Shall yield at least the luxury of anguish,
And teach us the stern pride of wretchedness—
That hour shall light my parting step of darkness—
Imogene's form did gleam on my last glance,
Imogene's breath did mix with my last sigh,
Imogene's tear doth linger on my cheek,
But ne'er must dew my grave.

Imo. I am desperate
To say I'll meet thee, but I will, will meet thee:

No future hour can rend my heart like this,
Save that which breaks it.

The CHILD runs in, R., and clings to Imogine.

Child. Dear mother, my father is returned, and kissed
and blessed me.

Imo. [*Falling on the Child's neck.*] What have I done?
My child! forgive thy mother.

Ber. [*Surveying Imogine with stern contempt.*]
Woman! oh, woman! and an urchin's kiss
Rends from thy heart thy love of many years.
Go, virtuous dame, to thy most happy lord,
And Bertram's image taint your kiss with poison.

[*Exit, L.*

Imo. 'Tis but the last—and I have sworn to meet him.
My boy, my boy, thy image will protect me!

[*She kneels, c., and kisses her Child, as the Act Drop falls.*

END OF ACT III.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*Beneath the Castle Walls.—Night, dark.*

BERTRAM appears, L. U. E., in the utmost agitation—he
extends his arms towards the spot where the Moon has
just disappeared.

Ber. Thou hidest away thy face, and wilt not view me;
All the bright lights of heaven are dark above me.
Beneath the black cope of this starless night
There lurks no darker soul—
My fiend-like glory hath departed from me—
Bertram hath naught above the meanest losel—
I should have bearded him in halls of pride—
I should have mated him in fields of death—
Not stol'n upon his secret bower of peace,
And breathed a serpent's venom on his flower.

[*Looks up at the Casement of the Tower, R. U. E., at
which a light appears—he gazes at it.*

She is there!

She weeps—no husband wipes her tears away—
 She weeps—no babe doth cheer the guilty mother.
 Aldobrand—No! I never will forgive thee,
 For I am sunk beneath thee.

Enter two ROBBERS, of Bertram's Band, L.

Who art thou?

1st Rob. Why dost thou wander in the woods alone,
 Leaving thy mates to play with idle hilts,
 Or dream with monks o'er rosary and relic?

2d Rob. Give us a deed to do.

Ber. [*Crossing, c.*] Ho! hear ye, villains,
 I know ye both—ye are slaves, that for a ducat
 Would rend the screaming infant from the breast
 To plunge it in the flames;
 Yea, draw your keen knives 'cross a father's throat,
 And carve with them the bloody meal ye earned.
 Villains, rejoice! your leader's crimes have purged you;
 You punished guilt—I preyed on innocence—
 Ye have beheld me fallen—Begone! begone!

1st Rob. (R.) Why, then, Heaven's benison be with
 you!

Thou'lt need it if thou tarriest longer here.

Ber. (c.) How, slave, what fear you?

2d Rob. (L.) Fly! this broad land hath not one spot to
 hide thee.

Danger and death await thee in those walls.

Ber. They'd fell a blasted tree—well—let it fall—
 But, though the perished trunk feel not the wound,
 Woe to the smiting hand—its fall may crush him.

1st Rob. Lord Aldobrand
 Holds high commission from his sovereign liege
 To hunt thy outlawed life through Sicily.

Ber. [*Wildly.*] Who?—what? [*Crosses, L.*

2d Rob. (c.) We mingled with the men at arms
 As journeying home. Their talk was of Count Bertram,
 Whose vessel had from Manfredonia's coast
 Been traced towards this realm.

1st Rob. And if on earth his living form were found,
 Lord Aldobrand had power to seal his doom.

Ber. [*Bursting into ferocity.*] Villain! abhorréd villain!
 Hath he not pushed me to extremity?

Are these wild weeds, these scarred and scathed limbs,
 This wasted frame, a mark for human malice?
 There have been those, who, from the high bark's side
 Have whelmed their enemy in the flashing deep;
 But who hath watched to see his struggling hands,
 To hear the sob of death? Fool!—idiot!—idiot!—
 'Twas but e'en now, I would have knelt to him
 With the prostration of a conscious villain—
 I would have crouched beneath his spurning feet—
 I would have felt their trampling tread, and blessed it,—
 For I had injured him, and mutual injury
 Had freed my withered heart. Villain! I thank thee.

1st Rob. Wilt thou fly?

Ber. Never! On this spot I stand
 The champion of despair—this arm my brand—
 This breast my panoply—and for my gage—
 (Oh, thou hast reft from me all knightly pledge!)
 Take these black hairs, torn from a head that hates thee—
 Deep be their dye, before that pledge is ransomed,
 In thine heart's blood or mine! [*Wild with passion.*]

Why strivest thou with me?

Lord Aldobrand, I brave thee in thy halls!
 Wrecked, famished, wrung in heart, and worn in limb!
 For bread of thine this lip hath never stained—
 I bid thee to the conflict!—Ay, come on!
 Coward! hast armed thy vassals?—Come, then, all—
 Follow! ye shall have work enough.—Follow!

[*Exeunt, L.*]

SCENE II.—*Imogine's Apartment—a door, L. C.,—a table
 c., with a lamp burning on it.*

*Enter IMOGINE, L. S. E.—she walks for some time in great
 agitation.*

Imo. Away! thou glarest on me—thy light is hateful!
 Oh! that a mountain's weight were cast upon me;
 Oh! that the wild, wide ocean heaved o'er me;
 Oh! that I could into the earthy centre
 Sink, and be nothing.—
 "Sense, memory, feeling, life, extinct and swallowed,
 "With things that are not, or have never been,
 "Lie down and sleep the everlasting sleep."
 If I run mad, some wild word will betray me.

Nay, let me think—what am I?—no, what was I?—

[*A long pause.*]

I *was* the honoured wife of Aldobrand;

I *am* the scornéd minion of a ruffian.

Enter CLOTILDA, R.

Who art thou that thus comest on me in darkness?

Clo. The taper's blaze doth make it bright as noon.

Imo. I saw thee not, till thou wert close to me;
So steal the steps of those who watch the guilty.
How darest thou gaze thus earnestly upon me?
What see'st thou in my face?

Clo. Despair.

Imo. See'st thou despair alone?

Nay, mock me not, for thou hast read more deeply,
Else why that piercing look?

Clo. I meant it not:

But since thy lonely walk upon the rampart,
Strange hath been thy demeanour; all thy maidens
Do speak in busy whispers of its wildness.

Imo. Oh! hang me shuddering on the baseless crag—
The vampire's wing—the wild-worm's sting be on me,—
But hide me, mountains, from the man I've injured.

Clo. Whom hast thou injured?

Imo. Whom doth woman injure?
Another daughter dries a father's tears;
Another sister claims a brother's love;
An injured husband hath no other wife,
Save her who wrought him shame.

Clo. I will not hear thee.

Imo. We met in madness, and in guilt we parted—
Oh! I see horror rushing to thy face—
Do not betray me, I am penitent—
Do not betray me, it will kill my lord—
Do not betray me, it will kill my boy,
My little one, that loves me.

[*Kneels.*]

Clo. Wretched woman—

Whom guilt hath flung at a dependent's feet,
Rise—rise! How can'st thou keep thy fatal secret?
Those fixed and bloodshot eyes, those wringing hands—

Imo. And were I featureless, inert, and marble,
Th' accuser *here* would speak.

Clo. Wilt thou seek comfort from the holy Prior?

Imo. When I was innocent, I sought it of him;
Now that my heart condemns me, what avails
The pardon of my earthly, erring judge? [*Crosses, R.*
What fearful sound is that?

Clo. Alas! a feller trial doth abide thee;
I hear thy lord's approach.
Madness is in thy looks; he'll know it all.

Imo. Why, I am mad with horror and remorse.
He comes—he comes, in all that murderous kindness.
Oh! Bertram's curse is on me.

St. Aldobrand. [*Without.*] Take my helmet, boy.

Enter ST. ALDOBRAND, R.

How fares my dame? Give me thy white hand, love.

[*Exit Clotilda, L.*

Well may man toil for such an hour as this.

Imo. [*Standing timidly near him, c.*]

Yea, happier they, who on the bloody field
Stretch when their toil is done.

Ald. What means my love?

Imo. Is there not rest among the quiet dead?
But, is there surely rest in mortal dwellings?

Ald. Deep loneliness hath wrought this mood in thee.
For like a cloistered votaress, thou hast kept,
Thy damsels tell me, this lone turret's bound—
Not thine to parley at the latticed casement
With wandering wooer, or—

Imo. [*Wildly.*] For mercy's sake, forbear!

Ald. How farest thou?

Imo. [*Recovering.*] Well—well—a sudden pain o' th'
heart.

Ald. Knowest thou the cause detained me hence so
long?

Imo. [*Trying to recollect herself.*] Was it not war?

Ald. Ay, and the worst war, love,
When our fell foes are our own countrymen.
Thou knowest the banished Bertram.—His mad ambition
Strove with the crown itself for sovereignty;
The craven monarch was his subject's slave;
In that dread hour my country's guard I stood,
From the state's vitals tore the coil'd serpent,

First hung him writhing up to public scorn,
Then flung him forth to ruin.

Imo. Thou need'st not tell it.

Ald. Late from Taranto's gulf his bark was traced
Right to these shores.

Imo. Think'st thou he harbours here?

Ald. Why art thou thus, my Imagine, my love?
Why is this?

Imo. I am dying, Aldobrand; a malady
Preys on my heart, that medicine cannot reach.
When I am cold, when my pale sheeted corse
Sleeps the dark sleep no venom'd tongue can wake,
List not to evil thoughts of her whose lips
Have then no voice to plead.

Take to thine arms some honourable dame,
And—if he dies not on his mother's grave—
Still love my boy as if that mother lived.

Ald. Banish such gloomy dreams—
'Tis solitude that makes thee speak thus sadly.
No longer shalt thou pine in lonely halls;
Come to thy couch, my love—

Imo. Stand off!—unhand me!—
I have a vow—a solemn vow is on me—
If I ascend the bed of peace and honour
Till that—

Ald. Till what?

Imo. My penance is accomplished.

Ald. Nay, heav'n forefend I should disturb thy ori-
sons—

The reverend Prior were fittest counsellor.

Farewell!

[*Crosses, L.*

Imo. [*With a sudden impulse, falling on her knees.*]

Yet, ere thou goest, forgive me, oh! my husband!

Ald. Forgive thee!—What?

Imo. Oh! we do all offend.

Ald. I well may pardon what I ne'er have felt.

[*Imagine follows him on her knees and kisses his hand.*

Farewell!—farewell!

[*Exit, L.*

Imo. There is no human heart can 'bide this conflict—
All dark and horrible. Bertram—

But, oh! within these walls, before mine eyes,
Who would have died for him, while life had value.

He shall not die!—

Ha! I hear a step—

It hath the speech-like thrilling of *his* tread:

It is himself.

Enter BERTRAM, C. D.

Why comest thou thus? what is thy fearful business?

Ber. (L. c.) Guess it, and spare me.

[*A long pause, during which she gazes at him.*

Canst thou not read it in my face?

[*Throwing his dagger on the ground.*

Speak thou for me.

Show me the chamber where thy husband lies;

The morning must not see us both alive.

Imo. [*Screaming and struggling with him.*]

Ah! horror! horror!

Have pity on me, I have had much wrong.

[*Falls at his feet.*

Ber. [*Looking on her with pity for a moment.*]

Thou fairest flower!

Why didst thou fling thyself across my path?

My tiger spring must crush thee in its way,

But cannot pause to pity thee.

[*Crosses, R.*

Imo. Thou must; I ne'er reproached thee—

Kind, gentle Bertram—my beloved Bertram—

For thou wert gentle once, and once beloved,—

Have mercy on me!—Oh! thou couldst not think it—

[*Looking up and seeing no relenting in his face, she starts up wildly.*

By heaven, he shall not perish!

Ber. He shall not live!

Thou callest in vain—

The arméd vassals all are far from succour.

My band of blood are darkening in their halls—

He shall fall nobly, by my hand shall fall!

Enter BANDITTI, C. D.

Ha! those felon slaves are come—

[*Snatching up the dagger.*

He shall not perish by their ruffian hands! [*Exit, L.*

Imo. [*Gazing around her, and slowly recovering recollection, repeats his last words.*] "He shall not perish!"

Oh! it was all a dream!

Rushes towards the Banditti, who advance and point their swords to resist her.—A clashing of swords without, L.

Enter CLOTILDA, L.

St. Aldobrand. [Without.] Off, villain! off!

Bertram. [Without.] Villain, to thy soul!—for I am Bertram!

Enter ST. ALDOBRAND, L., retreating before BERTRAM—he rushes forward and falls at the feet of Imogine.

Ald. Oh! save my boy.

[Dies.—Imogine faints—Bertram stands over the body of St. Aldobrand, holding the dagger, with his eyes intently fixed on it, and the Banditti range at the back, as the Act Drop falls.

END OF ACT IV.

ACT V.

SCENE I.—*The Chapel in the Convent of St. Anselm—the shrine splendidly illuminated and decorated.—The PRIOR discovered rising from before the Altar.*

Enter MONKS and KNIGHTS in procession, L. U. E.—the Monks march forward and range, R.—the Knights come forward with banners, and range, R. U. E.—Music. The Knights and Monks advance in procession, the Prior bearing the banner, which he has received from the principal Knight.

HYMN.

Guardian of the good and brave,
 Their banner o'er thy shrine we wave;
 Monk, who counts the midnight bead,
 Knight, who spurs the battle steed,
 He, who dies 'mid clarion's swelling,
 He, who dies 'mid requiem's knelling—
 Alike thy care, whose grace is shed
 On cowed scalp and helmed head—

Thy temple of the rock and flood
 For ages 'mid their wrath has stood—
 Thy midnight bell, through storm and calm,
 Hath shed on listening ear its balm.

The THIRD MONK rushes in distractedly, L. S. E.

3d Monk. Forbear! forbear!

Prior. (c.) Why comest thou thus with voice of desperate fear,

Breaking upon our solemn ceremony?

3d Monk. Despair is round our walls, a wailing spirit,
 "Yea, the mixed wailings of the infernal host
 "Burst deafeningly amid the shuddering blast"—
 No earthly lip might utterance give to such.

Prior. Thou'rt wild with watching;
 'Twas but the night wind's hollow sweep,
 Mocking the sounds of human lamentation.

[*A scream heard, L. S. E.*

3d Monk. Hush—look—it comes again!

[*The scream again heard.*

Prior. Defend us, heaven!

'Twas horrible indeed—'tis in our walls.

Ha! through the cloister there doth something glide.

Enter IMOGINE, hurriedly, L. S. E.—she rushes forward with her CHILD, her hair dishevelled, her dress stained with blood.

Imo. Save me! save me!

Prior. Save thee from what?

Imo. From earth, and heaven, and hell,—

All, all are armed, and rushing in pursuit!

[*The Prior, Monks, and Knights gather round, and converse together.*

All. Who—what—what hath befallen thee!—Speak!

Imo. (c.) Oh! wait not here to speak, but fly to save him,

For he lies low upon the bloody ground.

1st Monk. (L.) She speaks in madness; ask the frightened boy—

Hath aught befallen his father?

Imo. Ask him not—

He hath no father—we have murdered him—

Traitress and murderer—we have murdered him—

They'll not believe me for mine agony—
Is not his very blood upon my raiment?
Reeks not the charnel stream of murder from me?

Prior. [*Veheemently.*] Impossible!

Imo. Ay, heaven and earth do cry, impossible!
The shuddering angels shriek, impossible!
But fiends do know it true.

Prior. [*Solemnly.*] Spirits of madness do possess this woman!

Who did the deed?

[*Imogine sinks gradually from his fixed eye, till, hiding her face, she sinks on the ground in silence.*]

1st Monk. (i.) I do believe it, horrid as it seems.

Prior. I'd not believe her words, I do her silence.

Now—draw your swords, brave knights—avenge! pursue!

[*Excunt, tumultuously, Knights, Monks, and Attendants, L. U. E.—the Prior is following, when Imogine, who is still kneeling, grasps him by the robe.*]

Prior. [*With mixed emotion, turning to her.*]

Thou art a wretch! I did so love and honour thee—
Thou'st broke mine aged heart.—That look again—
Woman, let go thy withering hold!

Imo. I dare not—

I have no hold but upon Heaven and thee.

Prior. [*Tearing himself from her.*]

Hear thou, and—hope not—if by word or deed,
Yea, by invisible thought, unuttered wish,
Thou hast been ministrant to this horrid act,—
With full collected force of malediction,

I do pronounce unto thy soul—despair! [*Exit, L. S. E.*]

Imo. [*Looking round on the Chapel, after a long pause.*]

They've left me—all things leave me—all things human—
Follower and friend—last went the holy man—
The last—but yet he went—

To leave the guilty in their guiltiness.

Child. Dear mother, take me home.

Imo. Thou hast no home!

She, whom thou callest mother, left thee none—

We're hunted from mankind.

What form is that? Why have they laid him there?

[*Recoils.*]

The cold blue wound whence blood hath ceased to flow,
The stormy clenching of the baréd teeth—

I see them all!—

[*Shrieks.*

It moves!—it moves!—it rises—it comes to me!—

'Twill break the eternal silence of the grave—

'Twill wind me in its creaking, marrowless arms!

Hold up thy hands to it—it was thy father!—

Ha! it would have thee too!—Off!—save me!—off!

[*Rushes off with the Child, R.*

SCENE II.—*A Hall in the Castle of St. Aldobrand—a door, C. F.*

Enter PRIOR, L.

Prior. His halls are desolate; the lonely walls
Echo my single tread through the long galleries;
The hurrying knights can trace nor friend nor foe;
The murderer hath escaped.

Enter KNIGHTS, MONKS, &c., L., *supporting* CLOTILDA.

Knight. We found this trembling maid, alone, concealed.

Prior. (c.) Speak! Tell of Bertram—of thy lord—the vassals—

Clo. (L. c.) Oh! give me breath, for I am weak with fear.

Short was the bloody conflict of the night;
The bandits, loaded with the castle's spoil,
Are gone; I saw them issue from the walls,
But yet I dared not venture forth; while Bertram—

Prior. Go on—go on!

Clo. He bore the murdered body
Alone into yon chamber.

[*Points, c.*

There hath he sat in dread society;
The corse and murderer are there together.

[*The Knights draw their swords and rush towards the door, c.*

Prior. [*Interposing.*] Hold! champions, hold!
The arm of flesh were powerless on him now.

Mark how the faltering voice of feeble age
Shall bow him to its bidding. [*Striking the door.*] Ho!
come forth,

Thou man of blood—come forth! thy doom awaits thee!
[*A noise of bolts heard.*

BERTRAM opens the door, c. f., and slowly advances—his dress is stained with blood—he grasps the hilt of a dagger, and his look is so marked and grand, that the Knights and Monks make way for him, as he comes forward, r. c.—Exit Clotilda, l.

Ber. I am the murderer!—Wherefore are ye come?—
Wist ye whence I come?

The tomb—where dwell the dead—and I dwelt with him:
Till sense of life dissolved away within me.

[Looking ghastly round.

I am amazed to see ye living men;
I deemed that when I struck the final blow,
Mankind expired, and we were left alone,
The corse and I were left alone together,
The only tenants of a blasted world.
“Dispeopled for my punishment, and changed
“Into a penal orb of desolation.”

Prior. (r.) Advance, and seize him, ere his voice of
blasphemy

Shall pile the roof in ruins o'er our heads!

[Knights advance.

Ber. Advance, and seize me, ye who smile at blood,
For every drop of mine a life shall pay!
I'm naked, famished, faint, my brand is broken—
Rush, mailed champions, on the helpless Bertram!

[They sink back.

Now prove what fell resistance I shall make.

[Throwing down the dagger.

There! Bind mine arms, if ye do list to bind them;
I came to yield, but not to be subdued.

Prior. Oh! thou, who o'er thy stormy grandeur flingest
A struggling beam that dazzles, awes, and vanishes—
Thou, who dost blend our wonder with our curses,—
Why did'st thou this?

Ber. He wronged me, and I slew him!—
To man but thee I ne'er had said even this.
Now speed ye swift from questioning to death.

[They surround him.

One prayer, my executioners, not conquerors:
Be most ingenious in your cruelty—
Let rack and pincer do their full work on me—

'Twill rouse me from that dread unnatural sleep
 In which my soul hath dreamt its dreams of agony.—
 This is my prayer, ye'll not refuse it to me.

[*As the Knights are leading him off, L., the Prior
 lays hold of him.*

Prior. Yet bend thy steeléd sinews, bend and pray :
 The corse of him thou'st murdered lies within.

[*A long pause.*

Ber. I have offended Heaven, but will not mock it :
 Give me your racks and tortures, spare me words.

[*Exeunt, L.*

SCENE III.—*A dark Wood—a Cavern, R. U. E.—Rocks
 and Precipices above.*

IMOGINE discovered, reclining against the Cavern.

Imo. [*Sighing heavily after a long pause.*]

Or night or morning is it !
 I wist not which, a dull and dismal twilight
 Pervading all things, and confounding all things,
 Doth hover o'er my senses and my soul.

[*Comes forward, shuddering, c.*

The moon shines on me, but it doth not light me.
 The surge glides past me, but it breathes not on me.
 My child ! my child ! where art thou ? come to me !
 I know thou hidest thyself for sport, to mock me—
 Yet come, for I am scared with loneliness.
 I'll call on thee no more. Lo ! there he glides—
 And there, and there—he flies from me—he laughs !—
 I'll sing thee songs the churchyard spirits taught me—
 I'll sit all night on the gray tombs with thee,—
 So thou wilt turn to me. He's gone ! he's gone !

*Enter CLOTILDA, the PRIOR, and two MONKS, L., with
 torches.*

Clo. She's here—she's here ! And is it thus I see her ?
Prior. All-pitying Heaven, release her from this mi-
 sery !

Imo. Away ! unhand me ! ye are executioners—
 I know your horrible errand ! Who hath sent you ?
 This is false Bertram's doing—
 How I did love—and how am I requited !
 Well, well, accuse me of what crime you will,

I ne'er was guilty of not loving thee.

[*The Prior takes hold of her.*

Oh, spare the torture, and I will confess—

Nay, now, there needs it not—his look's enough—

That smile hath keener edge than many daggers.

[*Sinks in Clotilda's arms.*

Clo. How could this wasted form sustain the toils,
Bearing her helpless child.

Imo. [*Starting up.*] I was a mother—'twas my child I
bore ;

The murderer hung upon my flying steps.

Oh ! how we laughed to see the baffled fiend

Stamp on the shore, and grind his iron teeth,

While safe and far, I braved the wave triumphant,

And shook my dripping locks like trophied banner,—

I was a mother then.

Prior. Where is thy child ?

Clo. Oh ! he lies cold within the forest glen.

Why dost thou urge her with the horrid theme ?

Prior. It was to wake one living chord o' the heart ;

And I will try, though mine own breaks at it.

Where is thy child ?

Imo. [*With a frantic laugh.*] The forest fiend hath
snatched him !

Prior. Hopeless and dark—even the last spark extinct.

Enter THIRD MONK, hastily, l. u. e.

3d Monk. Bertram—the prisoner Bertram—

Prior. Hush ! thou'lt kill her.

Haste thee, Clotilda,—holy brethren, haste !

Remove her hence—[*Pointing to Cavern.*] ay, even to
that sad shelter. [Looking off, l. u. e.

I see the approaching torches of the guard,

Flash their red light athwart the forest's shade.

Bear her away. Oh ! my weak eye doth fail

Amid these horrors.

[*Imogine is borne to the Cavern, R. U. E., and Prior follows.—A gleam of torch-light falls on the Rocks, l. u. e.—Bertram, Knights, and Monks are seen winding down the Precipices, the clank of Bertram's chains the only sound heard.*

Enter BERTRAM, KNIGHTS, and MONKS.—Bertram between two Monks, who bear torches.

1st Monk. (R. c.) Leave him with us, and seek the Prior, I pray you.

Knight. [*Apart to 1st Monk.*] He may yet try to escape. We'll watch concealed.

[*Exeunt all but Bertram and 1st and 2d Monks.*]

1st Monk. Brief rest is here allowed thee—murderer, pause.

How fearful was our footing on those cliffs,
Where time had worn those steep and rocky steps;
I counted them to thee as we descended,
But thou, for pride, wast dumb.

Ber. (c.) I heard thee not.

2d Monk. (L. c.) Look round thee, murderer! drear thy resting place—

This is thy latest stage—survey it well.

Dare thine eye scan that spectred vacancy?

Ber. I do not mark the things thou tell'st me o.

1st Monk. Wretch! if thy fear no spectred inmate shapes—

Ber. [*Starting from his trance.*]

Cease, triflers! Would you have me feel remorse?
Leave me alone—nor cell, nor chain, nor dungeon
Speaks to the murderer with the voice of solitude.

1st Monk. Be it so.

In cruelty of mercy will we leave thee.

[*Exeunt Monks into the Cavern, R. U. E.*]

Ber. If they would go in truth—but what avails it?

[*Meditates in gloomy reflection for some minutes, and his countenance slowly relaxes from its stern expression.*]

Enter PRIOR, unobserved, from the Cavern—he stands opposite Bertram in an attitude of supplication, who, seeing the Prior, assumes his former sternness.

Ber. (L. c.) Why art thou here? There was a hovering angel

Just lighting on my heart, and thou hast scared it.

Prior. (R.) Yea, rather with my prayers I'll woo it back.

In very pity of thy soul I come
 To weep upon that heart I cannot soften. [*A long pause.*
 Oh! thou art on the verge of awful death—
 Think of the moment, when the veiling scarf
 That binds thine eyes, shall shut out earth forever;
 When in thy dizzy ear hurtles the groan
 Of those who see the smiting hand upreared,
 Thou canst but feel—that moment comes apace.

[*Bertram smiles.*

But terrors move in thee a horrid joy,
 And thou art hardened by habitual danger
 Beyond the sense of aught but pride in death.

[*Bertram turns away.*

Can I not move thee by one power in nature?
 There have been those whom Heaven hath failed to move,
 Yet moved they were by tears of kneeling age. [*Kneels.*
 I waive all pride of ghostly power o'er thee—
 I lift no cross, I count no bead before thee—
 By the locked agony of these withered hands,
 By these white hairs, such as thy father bore,
 (Whom thou could'st ne'er see prostrate in the dust,)
 With toil to seek thee here my limbs do fail;
 Send me not broken-hearted back again;
 Yield, and relent, Bertram, my son! my son!

[*Weeping—then looking up eagerly.*

Did not a gracious tear bedew thine eye?

Ber. Perchance a tear had fallen, hadst thou not marked it.

Prior. [*Rising with dignity.*]

Obdurate soul!—then perish in thy pride!
 Hear in my voice thy parting angel speak,—
 Repent—and be forgiven!

[*Crosses, L.*

[*Bertram turns towards him with strong emotion, when a shriek is heard from the Cavern—Bertram stands fixed in horror.*

Prior. [*Stretching out his hands towards the Cavern.*]

Plead thou for me!—thou!—whose wild voice of horror
 Has pierced the heart my prayers have failed to touch.

Ber. [*Wildly.*] What voice was that?—yet do not dare to tell me—

Name not her name, I charge thee!

Prior. Imagine—

A maniac through these shuddering woods she wanders,
But in her madness never cursed thy name.

[*A shriek is heard from the Cavern—Bertram attempts to rush towards it, but stands stupefied—Imogine rushes from it in distraction, bursting from the arms of Clotilda—they are followed by Monks and Knights, who remain at the back.*

Imo. Away—away—away!—no wife—no mother!

[*Rushes forward till she meets Bertram, who stands in speechless horror.*

(R. c.) Give me my husband—give me back my child—
Nay, give me back myself!

They say I'm mad, but yet I know thee well.

Look on me: they would bind these wasted limbs—

I ask but death—death from thy hand—that hand

Can deal death well, and yet thou wilt not give it.

Ber. (L.) [*Gazing at her for a moment, then rushing to the Prior, and sinking at his feet.*]

Who hath done this? Where are the racks I hoped for?

Am I not weak? am I not humbled now?

[*Grorelling at the Prior's feet, and then turning to the Knights.*

Hast thou no curse to blast—no curse for me?

Is there no hand to pierce a soldier's heart?

Is there no foot to crush a felon's neck?

Imo. [*Raising herself at the sound of his voice.*]

Bertram!

Ber. Imogine!—Imogine!—Imogine!

[*He rushes towards her, and repeats "Imogine" feebly; as he approaches, he utters her name again, passionately; he draws nearer, and seeing her looks of madness and desperation, repeats it once more in despair, but dares not approach her, till, perceiving her falling into Clotilda's arms, he catches her in his.*

Imo. Have I deserved this of thee?

[*She dies slowly, with her eyes fixed on Bertram, who continues to gaze on her, unconscious of her having expired.*

Prior. 'Tis past. [*To the Monks.*] Brethren, remove the
corse. [*The Knights and Monks advance—Bertram wavers them off, still supporting the body.*

Ber. [*Starting up.*] She is not dead—
She must not, shall not die, till she forgives me!

Speak—speak to me! [*Kneeling to the corpse.*]
Yes, she will speak anon. [*Turning to the Monks.*]

[*A long pause—he drops on the corpse.*]
She speaks no more.—Why do ye gaze on me?
I loved her—yea, I love—in death I love her—
I killed her, but I loved her.

What arm shall loose the grasp of love and death?

[*The Knights and Monks surround, and attempt to tear Bertram from the body—he snatches a sword from one of the Knights, who retreats in terror, as it is pointed at him—Bertram, resuming all his former sternness, bursts into a disdainful laugh.*]

Thee!—against thee!—Oh, thou art safe, thou worm!
Bertram hath but one fatal foe on earth—

And he is here! [*Stabs himself.*]

Prior. [*Rushing forward.*] He dies—he dies!

Ber. [*Struggling with the agonies of death.*]

I know thee, holy Prior—I know ye, brethren—
Lift up your holy hands in charity.

[*With a burst of wild exultation.*]

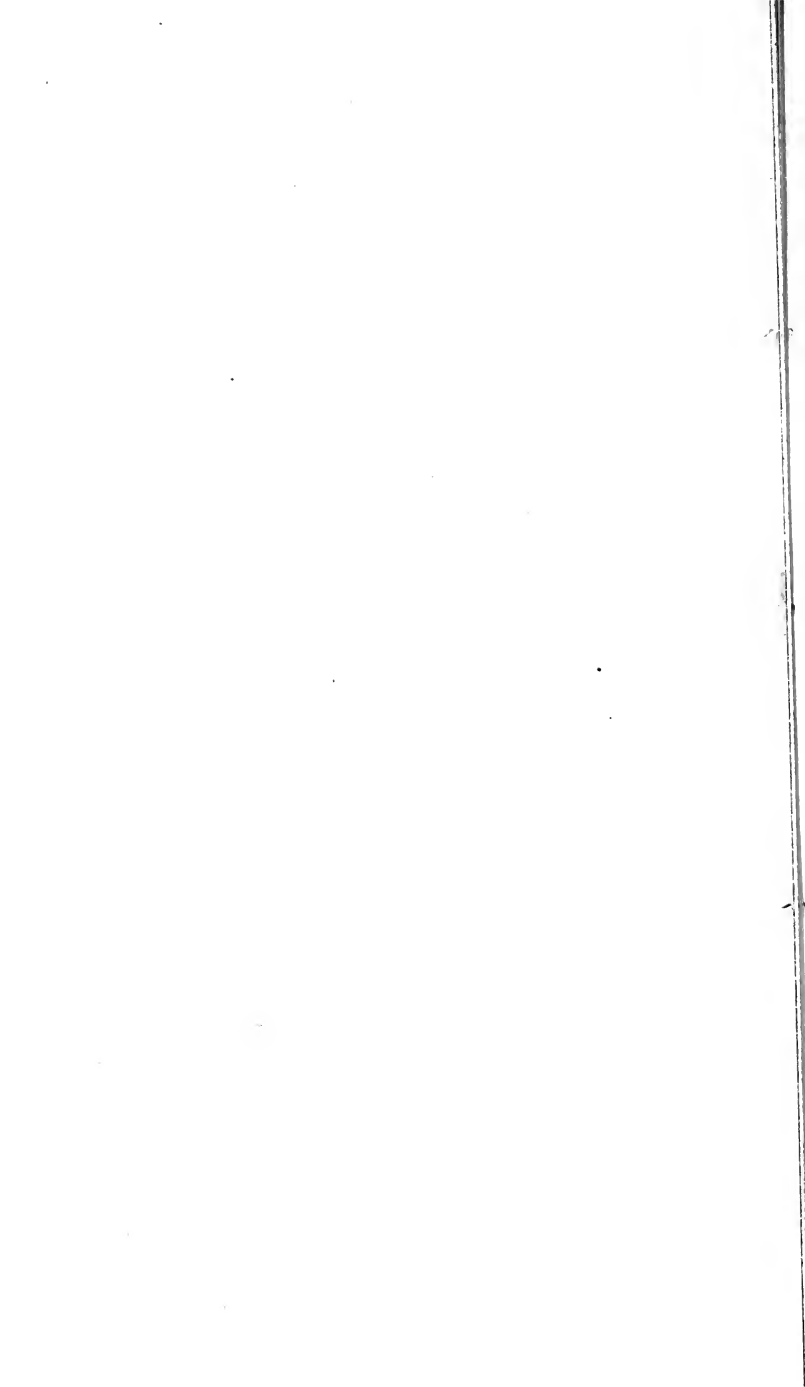
I died no felon death—

A warrior's weapon freed a warrior's soul. [*Dies.*]

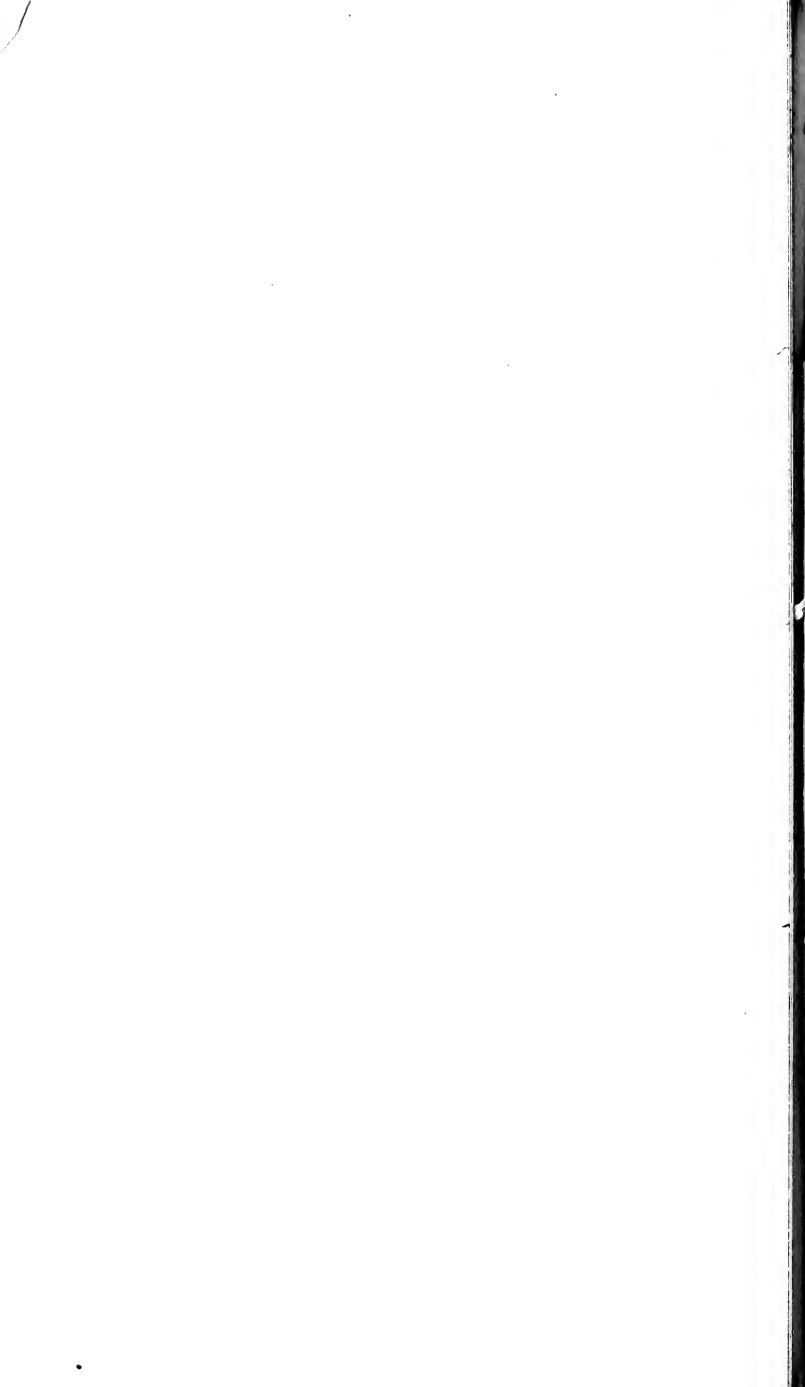
DISPOSITION OF THE CHARACTERS AT THE FALL OF
THE CURTAIN.

	KNIGHTS.	KNIGHTS.	KNIGHTS.	
MONKS.				MONKS.
	CLOTILDA.			
		BERTRAM.		
		IMOGINE.		
FIRST M.	SECOND M.		PRIOR.	THIRD M.
R.]				[L.

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