



## Azael, The Prodigal.

*AZAEL.* / to Amenophis ) Ah! Amenophis, see there, my Father!  
                          ) speak to him, thou comfort him, if I remain one  
                          ) moment longer, I shall expire at his feet.

*Act 2. Scene 2*

# AZUEL, THE PRODIGAL.

A grand Romantic Spectacle,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY

EDWARD FITZBALL, Esq.,

(Member of the Dramatic Authors' Society),

AUTHOR OF

"*Maritana*," "*Hans von Stein*," "*Cadi's Daughter*," "*Greek Slave*," &c. &c.

THOMAS HAILES LACY,  
STRAND, LONDON.

2378

First performed at the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, under the management of Mr. JAMES ANDERSON,  
on Wednesday, February 19th, 1851.

# AZAZEL THE PRODIGAL OR THE PRODIGAL

Founded on Auber's popular Opera, "L'ENFANT PRODIGUE."

The entirely new Scenery on a scale of magnificence and novelty of effect, hitherto unattempted even in this Theatre, designed and painted by Messrs. JONES & CUTHBERT, assisted by Messrs. C. ADAMS, SEWARD, NICHOLS, COOPER, and ALIO. The extensive Machinery by MR. JAMES SLOWMAN. The gorgeous Properties and Appointments by MR. PHILLIPS and numerous Assistants. The brilliant Costumes by MR. PALMER and MRS. CLARKE. The Incidental Dances composed and arranged by MADAME LOUISE. And the principal Morceaux of Auber's celebrated Music have been selected, adapted, and arranged by MR. HENRY LAURENT.

## Characters.

REUBEN ( <i>Chief of a Tribe of Israelites</i> ) .....	Mr. VANDENHOFF.
AZAZEL ( <i>his Son</i> ) .....	Mr. JAMES ANDERSON.
AMENOPHIS ( <i>a Traveller</i> ) .....	Mr. EMERY.
BUCHARIS ( <i>High Priest of Isis</i> ) .....	Mr. COOPER.
CANOPE and MENETHON ( <i>Priests of Isis</i> ) .....	Messrs. ABBOTT & S. JONES.
FIRST PRIEST .....	Mr. SIMPSON.
SESTHOS ( <i>a Novice of the Temple</i> ) .....	Mr. RAFFERT.
NEMROUD ( <i>a Camel Driver</i> ) .....	Mr. H. BUTLER.
A CITIZEN OF MEMPHIS .....	Mr. J. CHESTER.
2ND CITIZEN ... Mr. BISSON. 3RD CITIZEN ... Mr. R. ROMER. 4TH CITIZEN ... Mr. G. WATSON.	Mr. HARRIS.
5TH CITIZEN ... Mr. BECKETT.	Mr. DOUGLAS.
THEOPHAS ( <i>a Noble</i> ) .....	Mr. HARRIS.
JEROAM ( <i>Servant to Reuben</i> ) ..... <i>Shepherds, Travellers, Camel Drivers, Egyptians, Priests, Slaves, Guards, Officers, Peasants, &amp;c.</i>	Mr. HARRIS.

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THE SPIRIT OF THE DESERT .....	Miss WHITE.
JEPTHELE ( <i>Niece to Reuben, and betrothed to Azael</i> ) .....	Miss F. Vining.
NEFTE ( <i>a Traveller by the Caravan, Sister to Amenophis</i> ) .....	Mrs. WALTER LACY.
LIA ( <i>principal Dancer of the Almees, Rival to Nefte</i> ) .....	Mdlle. VICTORINE LEGRAIN. Her First Appearance.
1 <sup>ST</sup> ALMEE ... Madame LOUISE.	Mdlle. PAISER.
2 <sup>ND</sup> ALMEE ... Miss JULIA BLEADEN.	3 <sup>RD</sup> ALMEE ... Miss ELIZA NELSON.
1 <sup>ST</sup> PRIESTESS ... Miss JULIA BLEADEN.	2 <sup>ND</sup> PRIESTESS ... Miss DE CAMP.
PALMEA ( <i>a Priestess of Isis</i> ) .....	<i>Shepherdesses, Priestesses, Almees, Travellers, Gleaners, &amp;c. &amp;c. &amp;c.</i>

### Programme of Scenery and Incidents.

ACT I.

## INTERIOR OF REUBEN'S TENT,

Opening at the back to

### THE DISTANT DESERT—SUNSET.

The Travellers—the Evening Repast—the Request—the Gift—Departure of Azael with the Caravan for Memphis.  
CAMELS OF THE DESERT.

ACT II.

## THE GREAT SQUARE OF MEMPHIS;

ARRIVAL OF AZAEL.

### SACRED PROCESSION OF APIS. THE OFFERINGS.

LIA, AND TROOP OF ALMEEES.

# GRAND PAS de FASCINATION by Mademoiselle VICTORINE LEGRAIN,

*The Ensemble by Madame Louise, Miles, Palsey, Julie, and Coryphees.*

The Gamester—False Dice—Azael's Prodigality—The Love Token.

# VIEILLE NÉAUX TEMPETHIS.

Reuben in Search of his Son—The False Friend.

# INTERIOR OF THE TEMPLE OF ISIS!

O R G Y E,

# GRAND PAS DE POIGNARDS. by the CORYPHEEES.

Azael recovers the Stolen Scarf—The Secret Spring—Azael surprised in the Sacred Temple—The "Human Victim."

# THE DOOM OF THE PRODIGAL.

ACT III.

# TENT OF NEMIROUD, THE CAMEL DRIVER.

Arrival of Travellers—Degradation of the Prodigal—The Slave—The false Friend—The Gift restored—Despair of the Prodigal.

# THE DREAM ! THE VALE OF AZAEL'S BIRTH !

The Harvest Festival—Azael mourned as Dead—Return of the Prodigal.

# APPEARANCE OF THE SPIRIT OF THE DESERT !

AZUEL, THE PRODIGAL.

## AZAEEL, THE PRODIGAL.

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### ACT I.

SCENE FIRST.—*The Habitation of Reuben, formed of a large tent, opening to the borders of the Desert, at sunset. Curtains R. and L.*

*Music.—at the rising of the curtain, REUBEN, JEPTHELE, and the DOMESTICS of the Patriarch are discovered on their knees, their backs to the Audience, in prayer—picture.*

#### *Opening Music.*

The sun is setting, softly calm—  
On bow'r and flow'r the dewdrops weep.  
Sadly waves the stately palm,  
Nature sinks in silent sleep.

#### *Solo.—JEPTHELE.*

With us, through the darksome night,  
Watchful angels kindly dwell;  
Stars, all beautiful and bright,  
Shed on high your sacred light—  
God of day! farewell!

#### *Duetto and Chorus.*

Watchful angels, near us dwell,  
Stars, all beautiful, &c.

(at the end, the sun sets, and DOMESTICS rise and go out,  
R. and L.—REUBEN and JEPTHELE turn and advance)

REUB. Why that sigh, dearest niece? What maketh thee sad?

JEPTH. He returneth not! (looking back, R.)

REUB. He! Who?

JEPTH. (mournfully) Azael.

REUB. (stifling his regret) Grieve not on that account, my child. Of late, thou knowest, my son hath not, as formerly,

returned to share our evening meal. Prepare it, nevertheless; he'll presently be here. (*going to back—JEPTHELE makes a sign and DOMESTICS spread a sort of carpet on the table, and place on it some fruit and bowls of milk*) No! alas! my boy, my only son, my Azael, is of late much changed in manner; he no longer taketh delight in the affectionate discourse of his old father, nor the sweet smiles of his betrothed Jepthele. The familiar home, the habitation of the shepherd, hath lost its charm; that home in which he was once the happiest of Isaac's tribes. Why is all this? The marvellous tales of the various travellers from Memphis, to which he hath listened so eagerly, at the neighbouring caravansery, have turned his brain, his heart, poor boy! He could quit his tranquil home, the tents of his father, to encounter that false world of whose deceptions his innocent nature is so unconscious. I will admonish him! I will fix the time of his nuptials with Jepthele! He loveth her, fondly loveth her, as she deserveth to be loved, and—

JEPHTH. (*advancing, with joy*) Ah! at length he cometh.

REUB. (*turning*) 'Tis his joyous footstep! his voice!

AZAAEL bounds in from R. U. E.; a shepherd's crook in his hand.

AZAAEL. Father! Jepthele! (*embraces her*)

REUB. (*gravely*) Thou'rt late, my son! What detained thee?

AZAAEL. (*with naiveté*) Two kind travellers, who related to me such astonishing things of Memphis; and the caravansery being so full of guests, I have conducted them hither, to share the hospitable roof of my father.

*Enter AMENOPHIS and NEFTE, from R. U. E.—sunset.*

REUB. Thou knowest they would be welcome, boy. The curtains of thy father's tent were never yet closed against the stranger. (*to AMENOPHIS and NEFTE*) Welcome, friends, we are just about to commence our evening meal. Share it with us! 'Tis humble, but offered with sincerity. (*motions to the table; the back curtains of tent are drawn*)

AMEN. Thanks! Here is a seat for you, sister.

(*they approach table—REUBEN sits, also AMENOPHIS; NEFTE sits at the left, and AZAAEL is about to seat himself also, when he observes JEPTHELE mournfully apart, L.—he goes to her*)

AZAAEL. (*tenderly*) What ailest my beloved Jepthele?

JEPHTH. That fair stranger! (*pointing*) She is very beautiful! I tremble for the heart of Azael. (*sighs*)

AZAAEL. (*smiling*) Jealous one! Be composed! Let Azael

kiss away that tear. (*kisses her*) Fear not for the heart of thine Azael, where thou alone reignest empress. Sit by me. (*seating her by his side, R.; she in the centre; back to Audience.*)

REUB. Thou travellest towards Memphis?

AMEN. (*pompously*) Yes; at sunrise we depart, and cross the desert towards that radiant queen of cities, glorious Memphis!

NEFTE. (*watching Azael*) Memphis! the most beautiful, and enchanting of earthly abodes.

REUB. (*disturbed*) Ours excepted: There the hand of art alone combineth to achieve all that is certainly gorgeously magnificent: here, Nature's mighty architect giveth a prouder finish to the scene. Memphis, may, indeed boast of her glittering temples, and superb palaces. But can she excel our gigantic mountains? Our lofty palms, tossing their leafy arms towards heaven, as if in worship; and to defy the humble imitations of mankind.

NEFTE. Surely nothing can eclipse the brilliancy of our crowded squares; our magazines of rich merchandize, silks, velvets, gold; then the bright costumes of the men! the women! the magnificent processions to the temple! the dancing! the music!

REUB. Music: Give me the music of an honest heart. We, also have our native melodies: Come hither, Aaron, sing the strangers that sweet song with which, yester morn, I heard thee driving thy peaceful flocks to the green meadows. (AARON advances)

*Song.—Adapted to the air, which air is a great feature in the piece.*

Land of Peace! Sweet home of flow'rs;  
'Neath whose tents my childhood flew,  
Like the sunbeam, are thy bow'rs,  
Sparkling 'mid the morning dew;  
There, within some mountain dell,  
My fleecy flocks around, above,  
Evermore, content I'd dwell—  
With one true heart mine own to love.

Bless'd in thee my native Gessen,  
From thee never more I'd roam,  
Light, as are thy golden valleys,  
Feels this heart when near its home;  
There, within some mountain dell,  
My snowy flocks around, above,  
Ever, yes, content I'd dwell—  
With one true heart mine own to love. (*retires, L.*)

AMEN. (*insolently applauding*) Bravo! Bravo! by my faith,

not bad, positively, for a driver of goats ; good, very good ; ha ! ha !

NEFTE. Ha ! ha ! ha !

REUB. Yet, after all, there is no music, can outvie the voice of true affection, emanating from the heart's centre. What square in courtly Memphis, or men in glittering attire, can shine so brightly as our golden corn-fields, and the happy rustic reaper in his simple raiment. Then our sky so blue !

JEPTH. Our translucent streams, gushing, like threaded silver, through banks of fragrant flowers.

REUB. No, no, there is nothing in your proud city, can surpass beauties like these ; the seed time, and the harvest ; the plough, and the harrow ; the children of industry ; these are our boast, and, but for which, where would be your arrogant Memphis ? with her scarlet and gold voluptuousness ? A prey to famine and forsaken ; ruined, desolate, like her people, with their idols and their false deities. (*with abhorrence*)

NEFTE. (*aside to AMENOPHIS*) The old barbarian ! But what can we expect from savages ?

AMEN. Then, there are our enchanting Almees, dancing, with their light steps, and their beautiful forms, bending, gracefully to and fro, like flowers in the gale. There be no women voluptuous and lovely as the daughters of Memphis.

REUB. (*angrily, rising*) The repast is ended ; Jepthele, see that those strangers be conducted to their separate chambers. Friends, good night ! At early dawn, with the departure of the caravan, doubt not you shall be summoned from repose.

NEFTE. }  
AMEN. } Good night.

(*Music. JEPTHELE makes a sign, and ATTENDANTS with lamps shew out NEFTE, L., and AMENOPHIS, R., the table is cleared and removed ; also the cushions, except that on which AZAEL remains seated, and lost in thought*)

JEPTH. (*observing AZAEL*) Alas ! how lost !

REUB. In dreams of distant cities—rainbow visions—let us leave him. Light me to my couch, Jepthele ; my heart is weary ; I'll not speak to him now. Light me to repose. (*sighs*) Repose.

AZAEL. (*taking his robe as he passes, R.*) Dearest father ! one word. (*seeing JEPTHELE*) Alone !

REUB. (*to JEPTHELE*) Go bring the lamp.

JEPTH. Alas ! I comprehend !

*Exit, R.*

REUB. (*troubled*) Well, boy, speak !

AZAEL. Father, you heard what the strangers said, of that gorgeous city.

REUB. Memphis ?

AZAEL. Yes, father ! In my dreams, I have fancied such a place : I would, were it not denied me—— (*hesitates*)

REUB. Realize those dreams ! Thou wouldest go to Memphis ?

AZAEEL. Father, I would : I am young and would see the world ; the beautiful world they spoke of.

REUB. Do not deceive thyself, my son. Thou wilt discover nothing more beautiful in life than this tranquil home thou art so anxious to forsake. Hearts are not in the crowded throngs of cities what they are here : true and honest. Thine inexperience will lead thee into nothing but trouble, remorse, and regret ; till like the wounded bird, thou wilt fly back again, into thine own woods, to die. Do not importune me. Beware ! beware ! (*going, R.*)

AZAEEL. (*detaining him*) My father ! oh, listen to me ! I implore.

REUB. Boy, boy ! thou art the light of my house : the green prop of my old age ! Wouldst leave me in my winter, and break my heart ? (*weeps*)

AZAEEL. (*with tender remorse*) Break thy heart ! I, dear father ! no, forgive me. This dull monotony, which notwithstanding thy affection and Jepthele's love, day by day weigh'st down, more and more, my heart, shall be at thy bidding, father dear, endured ; for her sake and for thine, Azael will remain in this dull valley and die.

REUB. Die ? would it kill thee to remain with us ? Thy fond old father ! thy young betrothed, Jepthele ? that gentle, devoted heart, which thou hast promised to render so happy.

AZAEEL. And I would do so, father ; I would return to claim my best loved—my own betrothed Jepthele. Yes, I would return and—

REUB. How return ? Methinks I see thee, young and blooming as thou now art, entering the gilded gates of soul-contaminating Memphis. Thine eye is upcast in innocent wonder ; thy guileless heart open to every deceiver. Vice, in luring shape advances ; she danceth around thee with beguiling looks ; she tempteth thee to thy ruin ; thou perceivest not the mask with which she covereth her treacherous face ; nor the deep pit which she spreadeth at thy deluded feet. One false step—thou art lost. Oh, then, what an altered creature is mine own dear Azael ? The eye so confident in innocence hath lost its holy lustre ; the cheek its early morning tint of happiness. (*with great grief*) All is faded ; thou art no more Azael ! the Azael of yesterday—good, guileless ! the lustre of Israel's tents ! And thine old miserable father can only recognise thee with a bursting heart. (*deep emotion*)

*Re-enter JEPTHELE, listening R., the lamp in her hand, which she places, L. C.*

AZAEEL. No, father, no ; Azael will die here ! (*throwing himself into his arms*)

REUB. My own boy ! bless—bless thee !  
JEPTH. (*advances*) Father, let him depart !

REUB. (*with surprise*) Is it Jepthele speakest ? *Thou* wouldst have him go ?

JEPTH. Yes, I. Rather witness his departure than see him suffer here. Let him behold Memphis. *I* do not fear his truth. He will return ! Not to the hour, perhaps ; not to the day, the week, the month, but he *will* return. Prevent this insurmountable desire, it will lie, like a hidden canker, at the inmost depth of his heart, to blight the very future joy thou dreamest of. Let him to Memphis ; 'tis Jepthele asketh it.

REUB. (*gazing*) And thou *lovest* him ?

JEPTH. 'Tis that *I do* love him, I request this of thee.

AZUEL. Dearest Jepthele ! Ah ! how well she knoweth my heart—my constancy !

REUB. (*after a struggle*) She is right, and setteth good example to my age. (*to AZAEL*) Boy, thou shalt to Memphis.

AZUEL. (*eagerly*) Father—when ?

REUB. To-morrow.

AZUEL. (*eagerly*) At daybreak ?

REUB. At daybreak ! with the departure of the caravan.

AZUEL. (*apart*) Oh, joy !

JEPTH. (*apart*) Alas !

REUB. And go thou shalt ; not like the shepherd's bondman, but like the patriarch's son. Gold shalt thou have, and state worthy of a prince of Israel. But oh, my unconscious boy, be sure thou follow not in the steps of infamy ; think ever on thy father, thy betrothed, and thy pure life—the only life of happiness passed in these desert mountains. Never let shame tinge thy cheek, that thou mayest come back again to us, and gaze upon us as now thou gazest—honestly, holily. (*gazing affectionately at him*)

JEPTH. (*tenderly*) Oh, he will promise all this ; aye, and keep his word too—wilt thou not, Azael ? And see, this gage of love : (*taking off her white scarf*) Jepthele giveth it thee, as a charm to ward off evil. Never part with it till we meet again. For my sake, thou wilt not, dearest Azael !

AZUEL. Never, Jepthele, but with life ! (*music—camel bells*) Ah ! I hear the approach of the caravan.

REUB. It is dawn already !

DOMESTICS enter, and withdrawing the back curtains, part of the cavalcade appears—lamp is taken away.

JEPTH. (*sighing*) Yes—dawn ! already ! My heart beginneth to fail.

*Enter NEFTE, L., and AMENOPHIS, R., ushered in by DOMESTICS.*

REUB. (*catching AZAEL in his arms*) Stay; I do repent me of my mad assent. Boy, thou shalt not leave me. I, thy fond old doating father, I shall miss thee at every turning; thy look, thy joyous laugh, thy gay, merry voice, thy fond embrace! No, no, no! I cannot part with thee—thy lost mother's image. It would kill me—kill me.

JEPTH. (*nobly*) Father, thou hast said the word. He must depart. Let him not see us suffer.

REUB. (*checking his tears*) Noble girl! I know not what inspiration sustaineth thee, but I will be admonished. Yes, he shall go. Bless thee, boy! (*falls on AZAEL's neck*) Beware of all that I did caution thee; beware of the licentiousness of that proud city; beware of the false priest—the false Deity. Remember always thou art a child of Israel, and Israel's God will never forsake thee. Thou wilt come back to us, one day, to close the eyes of thine old father! Promise me that, and to see him laid at rest, amongst the dust of his kindred: to shed a tear over his cold remains: to pray for him—for him who will never cease to pray for thee, son of my lost, devoted Rachael! my boy! my boy! (*clinging to him, with a burst of the deepest anguish*)

*Music—Trio.—AARON and HANDMAIDENS.*

Fare thee well: tho' far away  
We'll think of thee: for thee we'll pray:  
Fare thee well! O'er desert sand  
Go, and seek some brighter land.  
But, when worldly pleasures fail,  
Think then of thy native vale:  
Think of thy home thro' every ill,  
Where hearts unchanged await thee still.

*Ensemble. Farewell!*

(*during this—AMENOPHIS and NEFTE quit the stage, c., and re-cross in procession on horseback, with camels, guards, &c., from L. to R. The Caravan driver announces to REUBEN that the cavalcade is about to depart. JEPTHELE puts on AZAEL's mantle, L.; baggage is carried across; AZAEL embraces JEPTHELE, then his father; shakes hands with all; then springing on the back of his horse, gallops out. The procession re-crosses in distance; the domestics waving their caps, as REUBEN sinks on a seat, and JEPTHELE, now giving way to tears, weeps bitterly)*

*Picture, and end of Act 1.*

## ACT II.

**SCENE FIRST—***The great Square of Memphis, on the banks of the Nile, to the R. a pavilion, with table, seats, dice, &c., to the L. the steps conducting to the Temple. Palm trees, at back, &c.*

**Music—PEOPLE and DANCERS** are discovered celebrating the fete of Memphis. A magnificent barque enters, R. U. E., on the deck of which, on cloth of gold, are reclining AZAEL, NEFTE, and AMENOPHIS, gorgeously attired. Steps are placed; they disembark, &c. &c.

AZAEEL. Thou saidst truly, charming Nefte; this Memphis is indeed, a place of perfect delight. (*surveying scene*) What luxury! What magnificence! It is here, that people know how to exist; how to be happy.

NEFTE. (*coaxingly*) And how to love!

AZAEEL. (*tenderly*) And to love! (*music, R.*)

AMEN. Listen! The priests of the temple, and the citizens this way approach, to commence the celebration of the rites of Isis, and the Sacred Bull. It is a spectacle beyond all thou hast ever witnessed. (*they cross the stage and look, L.*) Azael, come out of the crowd, into yon pavilion: thou canst witness all, there, freely.

(*Grand March. As AZAEL, NEFTE, and AMENOPHIS step back to the music and enter the Pavilion, R., the procession commences, L., with PRIESTS, PRIESTESSES, GUARDS of the Temple, carrying the God Apis in a golden chair, also the sacred fire on a tripod; also pushed on at back on a rich barque the Sacred Bull (white), decorated with a rich housing of velvet and gold, and fanned by PRIESTS, wearing on their heads garlands of roses. Young girls holding up the drapery of the bull on their knees. A grand tableau is formed by the PEOPLE kneeling; the PRIESTS holding in their hands emblems of their faith—the winged world, the lotus flower, the golden crocodile, &c., &c.)*

*Solo—SESTHOS.*

Great Osiris, hear our prayer!  
Make, oh make us, still thy care;  
Strew with flowers our summer plain;  
Ripen long our autumn grain.

*Chorus,*

Cause our fields to overflow,  
On us, all thine aid bestow.

Great Osiris, &c.

(*during this the kneeling CITIZENS offer fruits and flowers to the BULL, which are received and placed at his feet by the GIRLS who attend him*)

*Enter BUCHARIS, from the temple, L.*

PEOPLE. Hail! Bucharis !

BUCH. Approach, people of Memphis. (*they turn, on their knees, and bend before him in the humblest submission*) Your offerings are accepted. Children of Isis, fear not; your presents, aided by prayers, will affect the solemn purpose of your devotions.

1ST CIT. Still, the mighty Isis remaineth deaf to our intercessions!

2ND CIT. Still the waters of the sacred Nile refuse to overflow, and to nourish our meadows with their fostering waves.

1ST CIT. What is to be done? Holy Bucharis, our harvests will fail—our children perish of famine.

BUCH. Much is to be accomplished by prayer.

ALL. With devotion. By prayer?

BUCH. (*craftily*) And by presents.

ALL. (*gloomily*) More offerings?

BUCH. It may be the Spirit of the Nile requireth a human victim.

ALL. (*alarmed*) A human victim?

BUCH. Not one of Memphis; but a stranger; of that hereafter. In the meantime, some to renew their offerings; others to the Great Temple. Hence!

(*Music. He descends the steps as the procession moves out R., the Priests fanning the Bull. People some L., but most with procession. Some to play dice in the Pavilion, where they are joined by AZAEL and AMENOPHIS.*)

NEFTE crossing towards centre is met by BUCHARIS)

BUCH. The lovely Nefte, once so devout! Why hast thou forsaken the Temple, and its orgies?

NEFTE. Bucharis!

BUCH. Why comest thou no more by the secret passage to the Temple, to celebrate, as formerly, the mysteries of Isis?

NEFTE. I have abandoned the rites.

BUCH. Ah! How long since?

NEFTE. (*jealously*) Since they admitted to their ceremonies the dancers of Delta.

BUCH. (*confused*) They are sacred dancers, remember.

NEFTE. Ha! ha! Very! And the beautiful and voluptuous Lia, is she sacred, also? With her light, licentious steps, and her languishing, seductive movements? Sacred—she and her satellites! Sacred flowers of the Temple! Such sanctity! (*music L.*) But lo! she cometh. This sacred one! (*points L.*)

(*Music. BUCHARIS expostulates with NEFTE, who retreats R., he following. Enter the ALMEES, dancing L., then LIA, L., who perceiving BUCHARIS conversing with NEFTE, glides behind them, and reproves him with her finger on her lip. Not daring to notice her, he crosses back into the Temple, L.; NEFTE joins the dicers R.; LIA dancing*

*amidst her companions is noticed by AZAEL, who is struck by her beauty. She notices AZAEL and resolves to attract him from NEFTE; making many graceful movements amongst her ALMEES)*

## PAS DE FASCINATION.

(AZAEL rises and pursues her steps; the ALMEES always interposing. NEFTE and AMENOPHIS at the table angrily watching)

MERCHANTS enter R. with boxes of jewels; AZAEL offers trinkets to LIA; she refuses everything.

AZAEL. Will nothing tempt thee, beautiful one? Nothing? These oriental pearls? these costly diamonds? this magnificent scarf? Is there no gem here worthy of thy surpassing loveliness? (he entreats; she still refuses, till seeing JEPTHELE's scarf around him, she would possess that) This scarf! oh, no—I cannot; 'tis a gage of love given by one most dear!

NEFTE. (apart) A gage of love! Why then it should be mine.

(Music. NEFTE, by a quick movement, suddenly snatches the scarf, and holding it R. LIA snatches it from her, then throwing it to her companions, they sportively throw it from one to another, round a circle, till it comes back again to LIA, who escapes with it L.)

NEFTE. (detaining AZAEL, who would follow LIA, L.) Azael!

AMEN. The dicers await your coming to complete the game.

AZAEL. (as he is urged away, looking L.) I had forgot; I come.

NEFTE. Azael, you do forget your friends, and Nefte also. What anguish! Alas! (pretends to weep)

AZAEL. (affected) Tears! dearest Nefte; pardon! to the table. Come!

(they seat themselves, and play. AZAEL, evidently, does nothing but lose. LIA returns L. on the tips of her toes, and watches the game. She at length seizes the dice-box from NEFTE, and shows him that the dice are false. Table in disorder; all rise)

AZAEL. False dice! and in thy hand, Nefte! What perfidy. Thou that I believed so loved me!

NEFTE. And thou canst not perceive that it was love alone induced me to aid in dispossessing thee of gold? Gold doth but expose thee to alluring snares, which win thee too much from Nefte. (she weeps)

AZAEL. Can I believe such devotion? Then have I indeed wronged thee? Oh, forgive!

(LIA coming behind NEFTE, snatches away the handkerchief which she holds to her eyes, and discovers that her tears are pretended—enraged, NEFTE draws a dagger to stab LIA, who flies away with her companions, L., as AZAEL forces away NEFTE, R.—a picture)

SCENE SECOND.—*Outside of the Temple, and View of Memphis.*

*Enter CHORUS of PRIESTS and PRIESTESSES bearing in the sacred altar, burning, &c. &c., R.*

CHORUS. To the sacred rites repair,  
Wine shall be the offering there!

Wine! Wine! &c. *They go out, L.*

*Enter the ALMEES dancing; then LIA pursued by AZAEL, they are overtaken by NEFTE from R., who detains AZAEL as LIA escapes, L.*

NEFTE. Traitor! have I overtaken thee? Is it thus thou requitest my love?

AZAEEL. I cannot escape the magic of her steps: they entangle my heart. Hear me, Nefte. I—*(a laugh is heard R.)* Ah! *(looks R.)* Who cometh this way? That tottering form! Heavens! my father. Lost wretch that I am; I dare not meet his face.

*Exit L., followed by NEFTE.*

*Enter R. REUBEN, supported by JEPTHELE, preceded by several CITIZENS, who look at him with ridicule and laughter.*

REUBEN. Good friends, answer me; answer I pray; have you heard of him? have you seen him? My son, one of the tribe of Israel; a shepherd of the vale. He hath forsaken the tenets of his fathers, and adjourneth somewhere in your city. His name, Azael. Good he is, and innocent, and handsome—worthy of his tribe. Have you seen him? I am his disconsolate father. Speak, I implore. *(following, as they pass L., and go out laughing)* Oh, wretches! they mock my despair, they are not fathers; they—*(enter others, L.)* Ah! you, perhaps, good strangers, in some street of your vast city, you have seen my son; his name, Azael—a simple shepherd of the vale. Speak, tell me! *(they stare at him, cross, and go out R.)* Oh, cruel, unfeeling monsters! Will none of them reply, save in derision, to a broken-hearted father's supplication? My boy! my Azael! Where art thou? I'll lift up my voice on high—I'll call thee from earth to heaven! *(calling)* Azael! Azael! Aza—

*(he sinks, overcome, on a stone bench, R.; JEPTHELE sustains him, as AZAEL, troubled, re-enters, R.)*

AZAEEL. His cries madden me! Yet my heart faileth. I dare not, culpable as I am, throw myself before him and implore forgiveness.

*Enter AMENOPHIS, R.*

Ah, Amenophis! see there, my father. Speak to him, thou: comfort him. If I remain one moment longer I shall expire at his feet.

*Goes out, L.*

JEPHTH. *(at sound of AMENOPHIS' footstep)* Ah! a stranger so near!

AMEN. Start not, lovely Jepthele ! (*putting back his hood*) I am no stranger ! See ! knowest thou not me ?

JEPTH. Ah ! our guest of the Caravan ?

AMEN. The same—Amenophis !

JEPTH. (*joyfully*) Oh, dear father ! revive ! revive ! Here is a friend.

REUB. (*sadly*) A friend !

AMEN. Yes ! one that will tell thee of thy son.

REUB. (*starting up*) My son ! oh, speak, kind sir ! Is he well ? is he alive ?

AMEN. Both alive and well. Go with me to my pavilion, soon I'll bring thee tidings. In the mean time the maiden, under yonder palm tree, might chance to hear his voice, or see him pass. (*points L.*)

JEPTH. Oh, happiness unspeakable ! Azael so near ! Courage, dearest father ; go with our kind benefactor, repose thy wearied frame, and doubt not Jepthele will bring Azael to thee. Azael ! dear Azael ! *Hurries out, L.*

REUB. (*supported by AMENOPHIS*) Ah, blessed, blessed tidings ! At length then, Reuben's prayers are heard ; and the warm blood gusheth back again into this aged heart, like the tide which seeketh merrily its native shore. Excuse me, sir, if I weep. I am an old man. I have no one in this wide, wicked world, to close my dying eyes, save that, my only child. And I shall see him again ? you promise me that I shall see him again ? Gaze upon him once more ; embrace him next my heart ; and then I care not how soon this tottering frame be laid amidst the dust of its fathers. Ha ! ha ! ha ! yes, I shall see him again, my boy ! my Azael. *Supported out, R.*

*Re-enter AZAEL and NEFTE, L.*

AZAEI. Ah ! he is gone ! my dear father.

NEFTE. (*eagerly*) Gone ! thy father ? Hath he brought thee more gold ?

AZAEI. (*bitterly*) Gold ! it is a curse ! Jepthele too ; so innocent ; so pure ; I dared not speak to her.

NEFTE. (*jealously*) Such purity ! such innocence as you ascribed to your divine Lia, doubtless.

AZAEI. (*with fervor*) Lia ! Is she not divine. (*music, L.*) Ah ! they approach the temple, to celebrate the sacred mysteries, hallowed by the divine Lia herself.

NEFTE. (*with satire*) Divine again ! Ha, ha ! Sacred mysteries. Hast thou the courage to test thine idol's divinity ? To witness those sacred mysteries ?

AZAEI. Gladly would I do so ; were it in Nefte's power to conduct me.

NEFTE. Come with me then. I will conduct thee by a secret way to the interior of the temple ! Thou shalt be convinced how pure thy divinity is ! how sacred those holy mysteries.

AZAELO. On then, on ! anywhere to drown these racking thoughts, though it were to drown them in one long dark oblivion. To the temple ! On !

*Exeunt, L.*

SCENE THIRD.—*The Interior of the Temple of Isis.* An immense and wide staircase runs up at back, on each side of which, galleries and massive Egyptian pillars ; the two pillars nearest the audience (R. and L.) are supported on gigantic pedestals ; in the pedestal R., there is a secret door. Near the pedestal, L., a rich couch, supported by Sphinxes, under a costly canopy. The figures of Apis, Isis, and other idols, seated in chairs, occupy the galleries, R. and L.

Music.—BUCHARIS is discovered on the couch, attended by WOMEN. PRIESTS recline on the stairs, drinking from cups of gold, which are filled by NEGROES, and handed by the PRIESTESSES. A joyous revel is going on ; a blaze of light fills the scene. LIA advances from couch, L., and invites companions to dance.

### PAS DE POIGNARDS.

*At the conclusion of this dance, the wine cup is freely circulated. BUCHARIS comes forward, and LIA hands him wine ; the PRIESTESSES do the same by the other PRIESTS ; a Bacchanalian revel terminates in their falling upon the steps, upon the floor, and upon the couch ; all sinking into sleep. Grand Tableau. A peculiar light is thrown over the whole. The secret door, R. c., opens, and NEFTE enters cautiously.*

NEFTE. (*mysteriously*) Advance ! fear not ! That secret entrance known to few save me, would afford us immediate escape.

Enter AZAEL, gazing, R. c.

AZAELO. Amazement ! What is it I behold ?

NEFTE. (*sneeringly*) The pious Priests of Memphis at their devotion. (*approaching couch*) And see thy beautiful emblem of purity ! the divine Lia ! Is worthy of thy worship ; is she not ? (*pointing at LIA, who is asleep on the couch with BUCHARIS*)

AZAELO. Dare I believe my senses ? Is this not a wild delusion ? a dream ?

NEFTE. Looks that scarf like a delusion ? (*points L.*)

AZAELO. Ah ! the scarf given me by my dear Jepthele, resting beneath the head of Lia. What profanation ! (*approaching L.*) Come back to me, thou precious gift ! once more, next this relenting heart. (*snatches it, and thrusting it into his breast*) Restore to it that peace too lightly lost. Oh ! Jepthele ! Jepthele ! how hath Azael wrong'd thee !

NEFTE. (*jealously*) Still, Jepthele.

AZAELO. (*wildly*) The perfidy of the world ; the deceit of those, in whose innocence I was most led to believe ; the home I have forfeited ; my father ! my betrothed ! all these contending thoughts, combine to madden me, (*pressing his brow*) Yes, to madden me.

NEFTE. (*alarmed*) Hush ! or we shall be betrayed ! Hush ! (*seeing him lost in despair, she steals the scarf from his breast*) This scarf !

AZAEL. Oh ! give it me back.

NEFTE. Never !

*In the struggle for the scarf, BUCHARIS wakes ; NEFTE tries in vain to escape by the secret entrance, which is closed ; BUCHARIS strikes a gong ; all wake at the sound)*

BUCH. Let fall the veil of the temple.

*(A curtain of gold and velvet falls quite across the steps ; LIA seeing AZAEL runs and urges him to fly ; he is inflexible ; she then hurries towards the secret door, opens it, and leaving it open, goes out)*

BUCH. (*fiercely*) This intruder must be put to instant death. (PRIESTS advance)

NEFTE. Stay, Bucharis.

BUCH. Thou, Nefte, with that audacious.

NEFTE. (*meaning to be understood by AZAEL*) This youth, conducted by me, would be initiated in your mysteries, become a worshipper of Isis.

AZAEL. (*indignantly*) I ! I become a worshipper of Isis ! bow the knee before images of brass or clay ; forsake the pure faith of my fathers ! Never ! false priest, never !

NEFTE. (*apart—troubled*) Dost thou prefer death ?

AZAEL. Yes, a thousand deaths rather !

BUCH. He pronounceth his own doom ! away with him !

*(CANOPE and the PRIESTS drag away AZAEL, through the curtains ; NEFTE flies through the secret door, left open by LIA ; a noise is heard, L. CANOPE returning goes out, L.)*

BUCH. Some new disturbance ! Whence proceeds that cry ?

CANOPE. (*re-entering*) The people, impatient at the delay of the Nile, which still refuseth its rising waters, come to insist on a human victim ! a stranger !

BUCH. (*grimly smiling*) He is there ! (*points back*) the human victim ! A stranger ! (*calling, R.*) The altar ! The axe of sacrifice ; Quickly ! quickly !

*(at a sign, a burning altar is brought in, L. C., and the axe of sacrifice, which is placed near it—BUCHARIS assumes a devotional attitude, bending towards the altar)*

JEPHTH. (*outside*) Help ! Pity ! (*CANOPE goes out and returns, L.*)

CANOPE. Under the great palm tree, at the entrance of the temple, found they this Jewess. (*JEPTHELE conducted in L.*) Her they wish to sacrifice.

BUCH. (*observing her*) A female, young and beautiful : no, no, I have already provided a victim : Release the damsel ! (*they release her*)

JEPHTH. (*falling at his feet*) Oh ! thanks, mighty sir ! What is my offence, that they should kill a poor Hebrew maiden ? methought that I heard the voice of one lost, and most beloved

beneath the palm tree yonder, and simply stole thither to greet him, when these stern men seized and dragged me hither. But thou wilt restore me to my father ? He is sick, aged, and in sorrow : my long absence will drive him to frenzy, Pity !

BUCH. (*softly*) Thou shalt remain with us ; fear not, I will befriend thee, I !

JEPHTH. (*alarmed*) Alas ! what hear I ?

PEOPLE. (*impatiently*) Our victim !

BUCH. Lo ! Behold him.

(*pointing B.* AZAEL, covered with a black veil, is conducted in through the curtains)

BUCH. Take hence that maiden !

JEPHTH. Oh, no ! mercy ! to my father, let me be restored. (*clinging to him*)

AZAAEL. (*starting*) That voice ! (*throwing off the veil*)

JEPHTH. (*with a cry, springing up*) Azael ! (*they rush in each others arms*)

BUCH. Force them asunder ! he is condemned to perish in the Nile ! he is the victim you seek ! tear her from his arms.

(*Music.—JEPTHELE clinging to AZAEL, as suddenly seizing the sacrificing axe he defends her. Picture*)

AZAAEL. Tear her away from these devoted arms ! Which of these false priests will first attempt it ? his blood shall flow as lightly on the marble steps beneath, as the licentious wine of your detested orgies. (*they move forward*) Back, I say ! or it is not all your images of stone can save you from this uplifted axe. Beware ! (*to JEPTHELE*) Through that secret door ! fly at once, think not of me, fly ! our father waiteth for thee ; go !

JEPHTH. Without thee ?

AZAAEL. Fear not for me ! Think of our distracted father ! away !

(*pushing her through the secret entrance, he places his back against the door, and defends it with upraised axe. Picture*)

Now then, come on, ye valiant worshippers of Isis, and show how nobly twenty brave priests, can vanquish one poor son of Israel, who sinketh thus defenceless. (*lets fall the axe*)

ALL. (*as he is seized*) To the Nile !

AZAAEL. Well, to the Nile ! I fear not, my heart is still strong in purity and faith. If I must perish, it is the will of Him, for whom I fear not to encounter death. Idolators ! at you and your mockeries I laugh, false deities that can neither see nor hear, ha, ha ! I despise both alike, them and you, holy men of Memphis. Yes ! the poor Israelite despiseth you ! I feel that you have no power to crush me. To the Nile !

BUCH. To the Nile.

PEOPLE. A human victim ! To the Nile !

(*Gong.—The curtains are again raised, the PRIESTS and the PEOPLE of the temple with fury in their looks, and wielding flambeaux, menace AZAEL as he is dragged up the steps and cast headlong into the Nile. Shout. Tableau.*

## ACT III.

SCENE FIRST.—*Tent of Nemroud the camel-driver, on the borders of the Desert. On the R. a tent. To the L. a stable for camels. Dawn; several SLAVES sleeping on the ground, R. and L.*

*Music.—March of Caravan.*

NEMROUD. (*peeping from tent*) Dawn ! ah ! surely I hear the bells of the coming caravan ! (*advancing*) Yes, it is the caravan from Memphis : and by the height of the sun, I see, 'tis full time to expect them. (*to SLAVES*) Hilloa ! you lazy snoring scoundrels, have you no ears ? (*beats them*) Up, I say ! up ! and look after the camels, or I'll soon wake your heels, with a vengeance. (*beats them out, L.*) Ah ! (*sighs*) I ruin all my slaves by indulgence ; and yet, the lazy hounds are always grumbling : never satisfied, but when they are asleep. (*turning he perceives one still asleep, R.*) This rascal is deafer than the others, I suppose. Let's see, if he can't hear, whether he can feel. (*striking him*) Take that, and that, you la—

(*the SLAVE rises with difficulty—it is AZAEL, dressed in the wretched habit of a camel driver, his face pale, his appearance toil-worn and haggard.*)

AZAEEL. Patience, good master ! Exhausted by fatigue—

NEMROUD. Fatigue indeed ! a camel driver speak of fatigue. Ha, ha ! why he ought not to know the existence of such a thing. Fatigue ! bah ! I'm never fatigued. You, too, that owe your life to me, and ought always to live awake in my service. Did I not drag you from the waters of the overflowing Nile, when you were at your last gasp ; another wave and your head had been plump down the jaws of an enormous crocodile, which was eagerly waiting to give you a most friendly lodging near his heart. Ha, ha !

AZAEEL. (*humblly*) If a wretched life like mine be worth preserving, believe me—I am grateful.

NEMROUD. Grateful ! so you ought. Have I not made a gentleman of you ? Clothed you in the best of goat skins, and fed you like an emperor, on delicious black beans ! And how is my beneficence requited ? by idleness and over-sleeping. But the fact is, my weak nature gets the better of me, and my over indulgence gets abroad.

AZAEEL. Pardon ! thou shalt have no further cause to complain of me.

NEMROUD. Prove it then, in future, by waking with the sun. Go in and harness your camels, and let me have no fault finding while you continue to enjoy the luxuries conferred by my generosity.

AZAEEL. (*apart*) Luxuries ! Oh, father ! oh, Jepthele, how is the prodigal punished. *Exit L. Music of bells nearer, L.*

NEMROUD. (*looking L.*) Ah ! here they come ; to halt at this well during the heat of midday, or till the simoom passes, and

then on to Babylon. (*bells nearer*) Hillo ! (*calls L.*) The caravan ! The caravan !

*Music.* Enter SLAVES, L., then the PEOPLE of the caravan, L., with AMENOPHIS, NEFTE, &c., &c.

NEFTE. (*to AMENOPHIS*) How charming is this unceasing change of scene ! What delight, to be ever on the wing, like a bird. It keeps the spirits in such an agreeable flutter.

AMEN. (*grumbling*) Yes, and it keeps your eyes full of sand also ; and the tongue as parched and dry as an old sheepskin. What a pity it is, sister, your habits are not like mine, a little more domestic.

NEFTE. Your habits domestic ! Ha, ha, ha ! Have you no liquid to moisten the lips with ? The shade of this palm tree is refreshing. (*she takes something to drink, &c.*)

AMEN. I'm choked, positively !

### Enter AZAEL, L.

AZAEEL. (*starting*) Oh, heavens ! He here ! The false friend who despoiled me of all, and then forgot me ! Thus exposed to him ! Oh, the degradation is insupportable. (*going L.*)

AMEN. (*calling after him*) Hillo, you slave ! Don't run away ! Here, take my mantle ! give it a good shake ; and kneel down and dust my sandals. (*throwing his cloak*)

AZAEEL. (*dashing down the cloak*) I ! Never !

AMEN. Well, I must say, for a camel-driver thou art the most impudent fellow I ever met with. That for thy insolence ! (*about to strike him with his riding whip—AZAEL snatches it, and gives him several smart blows*)

AZAEEL. Take thou that, wretch !

AMEN. (*roaring out*) Oh, murder !

NEFTE. (*turning suddenly*) What's the matter ? (*sees AZAEL*) Ah ! whom see I ? Azael !

AMEN. Azael !

AZAEEL. Recognized by her ! Cover me, earth. Oh, degradation ! degradation ! (*covering his face with his hands*)

AMEN. So I perceive, friend, although thou hast lost thy caste, thou hast not lost thy pride. However, for past acquaintanceship, I forgive thee.

AZAEEL. (*scornfully*) Forgive ? Thou !

AMEN. Yes ; and to prove that I bear no malice, if I could recommend thee to——

AZAEEL. Thy recommendation ! Ha, ha !

NEFTE. (*proudly*) Yes, and mine. People of our condition, you know, have opportunities sometimes of serving those beneath them, in whom they take an interest.

AZAEEL. (*bitterly*) Oh, Nefte—Nefte ! do not so utterly cast off thy sex's better nature as to forget the past. At least be

silent, and respect my sorrow. Taunts, derisions, fall bitterly from any lips—but most, most bitterly from those which once professed to love us. Let me, at least, be spared insult from thee.

NEFTE. (*reprovingly*) Hadst thou hearkened to my advice in the temple, thou hadst at least been spared a reverse like this. Remember!

AZAELE. Thy advice! Adjure my father's faith, simply to save a life which my father's God hath spared. That thought cometh to me with a sweet consolation, even at a moment like this, and whispereth to my poor crushed heart that the fallen degraded Azael is not utterly forgotten—there! (*pointing up*)

NEFTE. On our route to Babylon we shall pass the abode of thy father; and if we could deliver any sort of intelligence—

AMEN. (*affectedly*) We should not materially object to calling on the well-meaning old Israelite, simply to give him news of his son.

AZAELE. (*trembling*) Inform him not of my destiny. Oh, no, no! I have sinned beyond forgiveness, and am no longer deserving the sacred name of son. She, too—how unworthy have I been of her love and purity. Oh! (*wildly*) no, no—go not near their peaceful dwelling, into which your fatal steps have already carried too much desolation. Leave me—leave me to my fate—'tis all I ask, friends.

AMEN. Well! as you please. The caravan, I perceive, is ready to pursue its journey, and I am only too happy to escape ingratitude (*retires up R.*) like yours.

NEFTE. (*approaching AZAELE, who seems lost in grief*) Ere I bid thee farewell for ever, I wish to restore a slight remembrance—this scarf. (*giving Jepthele's scarf*)

AZAELE. (*joyfully*) Ah! Jepthele's scarf. It cometh to me like the dove's leaf after the deluge. (*kissing it*) Oh! welcome! welcome!

NEFTE. It may serve to dry your eyes with when Nefte has taken her departure. Some day too, some day she might recognize it, that Jepthele, thou speakest of, confiding, poor simple thing, in thy love and constancy, and make thee an excellent wife. Return to the plough and the harrow, the shepherd's crook, thy pastoral life. It is the only way to ensure thy sort of happiness. Take my advice this time. Thou seest I am not so very unreasonable.

AZAELE. (*showing the scarf*) For this I forget all, and forgive thee; aye, and bless thee.

NEFTE. (*touched*) Forgive! bless!—there is something in those words which thrillett me. When I am gone, Azael, do not think of me worse than I deserve. A child of early misfortune; no parents or friends to direct my steps, I became an early prey to vice—the destroyer's victim—that destroyer man. I found no pity—encountered no remorse for my misfortune. All was selfish—ungrateful! If then, in my turn, I,

a woman wronged, at length put on the gilded mask to deceive others, as I had been deceived, do not thou, hereafter blame, but pity me. Farewell!

AMEN. The caravan! Adio, adio! We give you leave to think of us. (*to AZAEL*)

NEFTE. (*resuming her affection*) Adio, adio? *Exeunt, R.*

AZAAEL. (*troubled*) Departing! All! Without me! (*advancing, L.*)

NEMROUD. (*the last*) No, no; you go not with us. Your insolence to the travellers demands punishment. Remain in the desert, food for vultures, ingrate! Perish! Starve! I care not. *Exit, R.*

CAMELDRIVERS. (*repelling him, R.*) Perish! ha, ha!

*Following NEMROUD out.*

AZAAEL. (*alone*) Perish! yes, alone in the desert, without food, without drink—nothing remaineth to Azael but death. No bondman in my father's tents, however humble his condition, might not pity the prodigal's wretched end, Famine! despair! Alone on the scorching sand, to stretch forth this fainting body. Alone, unwatched, unheard, save by the ravenous vulture thirsting for my blood, waiting to feast on my corse ere it be cold. (*shudders*) Father! Jepthele! Ah! could they now behold me, punished—stricken! (*Music tremulo*) What's here, upon my heart, ah! it is her scarf. A dim mist hovers o'er my eyes—I faint! (*falls*) Darkness! Jepthele! Jepthele! I press my head upon thy parting gift. I die.

(*falls prostrate, his head upon the scarf—a vision takes place*)

*Music.—1st.—JEPTHELE and the MAIDENS of Gessen appear, offering flowers to REUBEN, who seems inconsolable.*

Dear father!

*2nd.—AZAEL appears at the feet of his FATHER, imploring his forgiveness—JEPTHELE interceding.*

Pardon, pardon!

*3rd.—THE SPIRIT OF THE DESERT appears advancing from a distance, then stretching its wings over AZAEL, then pointing out the way across the desert, flies off, R.*

(*springing up*) Ah! what happy dreams occupy my soul, and cheer my drooping spirits! I arise as from a refreshing slumber; my limbs seem to renew their strength, my mind its energy. Yes, interceding Spirit of the Desert, I will obey thy summons; I will return to my father; I will humble myself in the dust at his feet. Jepthele will also intercede for me, and if I am too unworthy for his forgiveness, it will, at least, console me, to sink down and die near him and her! Father!

*Rushes off, R.*

SCENE SECOND.—*The Heart of the Desert.**Music. The Air of the Song.*

*Enter AZAEL, leaning on a staff, R., he is becoming very weary, and looks around in vain for water; his sight is imperfect.*

*Music: piano through words.*

AZAEI. My limbs begin to stiffen. All the moisture has passed from my brow. My tongue cleaveth to the roof of my mouth like a coal of fire. Oh! for a single drop of water to slake this consuming thirst! Ah—there is some! ha, ha, ha! (*throws himself down to drink*) No—it is a delusion cheating my bewildered brain! My mouth is filled with sand! Misery mocks me! (*his disappointment fills him with the deepest despair*) Spirit, thou hast forsaken me. (*Music—rises*) No, no, glorious one—there thou art again! (*looking L.*) I see thee, surrounded by thy golden glory! and beyond thee a—(*shading his eyes with his hand*) a spring of rippling water, ha, ha, ha! I hear it trickling. I shall reach it. I shall not die. No, I am spared for thee, father! For thee, Jepthele! Your prayers are heard; I shall be saved yet! Water! Water! (*he crawls faintly, sinking repeatedly, out, L.*)

SCENE THIRD.—*The Valley of Gessen. Reuben's tent, L.; at the back a cornfield in sheaf; beyond it a rivulet, crossed by a rustic bridge, and the extreme distant desert; REAPERS at work, and GLEANERS.*

*Chorus.—Oh! happy, happy harvest time!*

When golden grain each toil repays;  
To Him whose plenty crowns the fields,  
Be wafted every praise, &c.

*Enter JEPTHELE from tent, L.*

JEPHTH. Dear friends, relinquish your toil, and depart; my father cometh hither to refresh his burning brow in the calm breeze. I would not have him disturbed. In the evening you can return and be merry. Now, silence! depart!

*They go out, R. and L., some over the bridge.*

*Enter REUBEN, much changed, L.; a stool is placed, c., to which JEPTHELE supports him.*

REUB. (*sighing deeply*) Ah! me!

JEPHTH. Dear father, there be tears in thine eyes; I have not seen them there for a long time: thank heaven they—they will relieve thy heart.

REUB. (*deeply sighing*) My heart! What can relieve it but to die? Tears, girl! Tears, said'st thou? (*dashing them off*) I, that have no longer anything left to weep for, or to love.

JEPHTH. (*with soft reproof*) Oh! Nothing to love? Father!

REUB. Pardon, child, pardon; I had forgotten thee, my kind, preserving angel! *(embracing her)*

JEPH. Dear father, be more composed. I had a joyful dream last night. He will be here *soon*.

REUB. *(vacantly)* He! who?

JEPH. *Azael!* thy son.

REUB. *(excited, starting up)* My son! Alas! alas! I have no son! No, no, no! *(wildly)* But did I not forbid thee ever again to breathe that name to me! that name, ungrateful—unnatural; the name of one so changed. Ah! methinks I see him now before me; he that was once so perfect and so gentle. Lost; degraded! fallen! fallen from that high estate of innocence which elevateth the heart of man to that of an angel. I trace no longer in those blighted looks a single line of reverence or devotion to his father, or his father's worship. No affection! no love! All is gone! and in its place a hideous countenance appears; a mocking look of crime; a pale distorted form; but fit to curse. *(violently)*

JEPH. *(with a cry, clinging to him)* Oh! hold! though all else condemned, 'twere guilt that thou should'st curse him. He is still thy son! Thou art the author of his being. He is still young, remember, and if a *father's* heart cannot find excuses for his early error, where, oh where is he to turn? What savage, unnatural man would he be that would curse his only child! *(tenderly)* his mother's image! Not thou, my father, no, not thou! It is the privilege of a demon to curse! *(points up)* He! the Father of all delighteth but in mercy!

REUB. *(overcome)* Girl! girl! I know not by what holy influence thou speakest, but thy words sink into my bruised heart like words of sacred writ. Heaven, I feel, has set thee to watch over my soul like some guardian angel to save me, even from myself. But for thee, despite my firm reliance on heaven's bounties, I had sunk ere now beneath the weight of my despair. I could not but recall the days of happiness when he, so like his poor mother, came often into my tent, with his light joyous voice; the very sound of his step a blessing! And that voice I shall never hear again. Never! never! Oh, Jephele! Jephele! do not speak to me now. I will go in and pray; and pray.

JEPH. *(tenderly)* I will pray with thee.

*She assists him in; the music of the song recommences; at that instant AZAEL, leaning on his staff, almost unable to walk, advances across the bridge. He surveys, then recognizes the scene with joy.*

AZAEI. Where am I? *(with a burst of emotion)* Ah! my native valley! My home; Spirit, thou hast kept thy promise! I bless thee! *(totters)* Bless thee! My strength again beginneth to fail, but I am here, and I care not; here! at the threshold

of my father's tent. (*advancing, then pausing*) My father! If I should have come too late. No, heaven hath not reserved me thus for a trial so beyond support. (*steps, L.*) Ah! footsteps! I tremble, almost to sinking; my heart beats so—I—(*turning, R.*) I dare not meet him.

*Enter JEPTHELE, L.*

JEPHTH. That voice! (*sees him*) A stranger!

AZAEEL. (*starting*) Her voice!

JEPHTH. (*advancing*) Thou appearest wayworn; fatigued! Enter our tent—the hospitality of the children of Israel, is never denied to—

AZAEEL. Oh! I am too unworthy to enter there.

JEPHTH. (*starting*) Ah! (*seeing the scarf*) That scarf too! Who! what art thou? Speak, in pity's name!

AZAEEL. (*turning towards her*) Jepthele!

JEPHTH. (*with a cry*) Azael!

AZAEEL. Yet, do not welcome me so tenderly! I that am so undeserving thy affection, thy truth; thy love.

JEPHTH. Speak not thus disconsolately, my Azael; thou hast at length returned, and in the old valley, we will have now, nothing but happiness.

AZAEEL. (*embracing her*) Bless thee! bless thee! Jepthele!—And dare I ask it—My father—Is he alive?

JEPHTH. Heaven be praised! He is!

AZAEEL. Oh, bliss! oh!—(*falls overcome*)

JEPHTH. (*calling, L.*) Help! oh, help! (*she runs and supports AZAEEL*)

*Enter REUBEN, L.*

REUB. That cry! What hath happened?

JEPHTH. (*timidly*) This poor traveller faint with crossing the desert.

REUB. (*crossing*) Ah! he hath fainted! No! he reviveth! Assist him thou to rise; I am too feeble. (*supported by JEPTHELE, AZAEEL rises*) Come into the tent, friend. (*going, L.*) Rest thyself by the Hebrew's hearth. Thou hast travelled far.

AZAEEL. (*faintly*) Yes! All the way from Memphis!

REUB. (*turning hastily*) Memphis? Oh! should it be possible thou hadst seen my son! my Azael!

AZAEEL. (*falling at REUBEN's feet*) Father! I am he!

REUB. Thou! Azael?

AZAEEL. Yes; curse me!

JEPHTH. (*falling on her knees also, L.*) No, father, no; on thy soul!

REUB. (*violently agitated*) Curse! no! I cannot; my tongue cleaveth to the roof of my mouth.

AZAEEL. Father! I have sinned against all the good thou taughtest me. I am no longer worthy to be called thy son;

but misery—despair—repentance have overcome me; and I have crawled hither abject, degraded, broken-hearted, hated of myself, to see thee once again, to *bless thee*, for I dare not ask of thee to bless *me*; and to fall down in the dust at thy feet, and expire.

REUB. (*deeply affected*) Oh! my son! my son! had I discovered thee amongst thy reckless companions, revelling away thy young existence in the debaucheries of Memphis, deaf to the voice of virtue, and surrounded by voluptuousness, vice, then indeed, *perchance*, these lips *had* cursed thee; but heaven hath of itself forestalled my wrath. I read in those haggard looks, those weak attenuated limbs, thy punishment had been equal to thy crime. I will *not* curse thee. Tell me but thou hast not abjured thy father's faith?

AZUEL. (*clasping his hands devoutly*) No, father, no; else how came I hither, or by whom sustained; conducted to thy feet.

REUB. (*devoutly, lifting his hands towards heaven*) Bless thee, then! Bless thee! Come *home* to the old man's heart again. Oh! my boy! my boy! my only one! (*embracing him*) Mightiest of the Mighty to thee, to thee the Hebrew father lifteth up his soul in the outpourings of thankfulness; he had lost his son, thy bounty hath restored him. Nearer, my Azael, nearer. Thou, too, my Jephele; but for thy benign influence the old grateful Reuben had no longer his blessing to bestow. (*encircling them with his arms*) Thus, altogether, circled in each other's arms, once more heart to heart, let us bow in mutual thankfulness before Him whose way is justice; whose delight is *pardon*. (*calling*) My friends, my friends, come and rejoice with me; my crushed heart is well again. I had lost my son, I have found him.

AZUEL. Spirit of the Desert, bless thee!

*Music.* PEOPLE enter on all sides, contemplating in silence the happy group; as the centre sheaf of corn expands and the SPIRIT of the DESERT rises, spreading its wings over AZUEL and JEPHELE as they kneel at the feet of REUREN, who confers on them his benediction. Tableau.

Curtain.

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### Costumes.

**REUBEN.**—Gabardine, purple or black, over a shirt, white, striped with black, and bound round the middle with scarf of crimson; turban; sandals.

**AZUEL.**—*First Dress:* Shirt of brown serge, bound with a girdle of leather, fleshings, and sandals. *Second Dress:* Long shirt of white and gold; tiara or bandeau of gold, gold sandals, girdle of precious stones.

**AMENOPHIS.**—Shirt of white and brown stripes; cloak with hood hanging at back, of crimson and brown stripes, sandals.

**BUCHARIS.**—White robe, full; girdle of jewels, sandals, red; bandeau of gold.

**THE PRIESTS.**—The same, but more simple.

**CITIZENS.**—Tunic of brown and black stripes; leather girdle, cap of the Egyptian fashion, with lappets over the ears.

**JEPTHELE.**—White dress, trimmed with scarlet; turban to correspond; sandals.

**LIA.**—Light gauze dress, short, white, striped with silver; sandals, white silver; bandeau of silver and gems.

**NEFTE.**—*First Dress:* Amber, striped with brown; turban, after the Oriental fashion. *Second Dress:* White and gold, similar fashion.

**PRIESTESS.**—White dress; belt of gold; bandeau of gold with ostrich feather in front, pink and white.

**ALMEES.**—White short muslin dresses; scarlet and gold scarfs, tie in front; caps, Egyptian, with lappets.

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*The Costumes of this Play are published,  
Price 2s.*

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