

A

LIFE'S RANSOM.

A Play,

IN THREE ACTS.

BY

WESTLAND MARSTON, Esq.,

AUTHOR OF

The Patrician's Daughter, Strathmore, Philip of France and Marie de Meranie, Anne Blake, Borough Politics, A Hard Struggle, Gerald (a Dramatic Poem), &c.

THOMAS HAILES LACY,

89, STRAND,

(Opposite Southampton Street, Covent Garden Market.)

LONDON.

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A LIFE'S RANSOM.

Originally performed at the Lyceum Theatre,
on Monday, February 16, 1857.

Characters.

BASIL, LORD REVESDALE (<i>a young Nobleman of high descent, but impoverished fortune</i>)	Mr. C. DILLON.
MATTHEW RINGWOOD (<i>a Country Gentleman of great wealth</i>).....	{ Neighbours of Lord Revesdale { Mr. BARRETT.
ARTHUR RINGWOOD (<i>his Son</i>)	{ Revesdale { Mr. M'LEIN.
BANCROFT (<i>a Country Magistrate</i>)	Mr. STUART.
DRAYTON	Mr. NORMANTON.
MILES	{ (Political Emissaries) { Mr. BURT.
HOLME	{ { Mr. POYNTER.
RICHARD (<i>an Upper Servant in Lord Revesdale's Household</i>)	Mr. SHORE.
GILES (<i>an old Forester in Lord Revesdale's service</i>)	Mr. HOLSTON.
OFFICER	Mr. SIMPSON.
LANDLORD	
FELICIA REVESDALE (<i>Sister to Lord Revesdale</i>)	Mrs. C. DILLON.
ALICE FRAMPTON (<i>an aged Domestic, and Mother to Richard</i>)	Mrs. STANNETT.
<i>Dependants of Lord Revesdale, Peasants, Officers, Soldiers, &c.</i>	

Scene—Southern Coast of England.

TIME—Reign of James II., 1688.

☞ An interval of nearly a day takes place between the First and Second Scenes of the Second Act. This should be conspicuously stated on Bill of Performance.

Costumes.

(From Mr. Spencer's Boston Edition of this Play.)

REVESDALE.—Square-cut maroon-colored velvet coat, with very short sleeves and large cuffs, loose about the waist, flaps and pockets very low at sides, long-flapped maroon vest, and full trunks, small gold buttons and gold holes throughout the suit, high black bucket-topped boots, with high heels and square toes, large slouched black hat, with black feathers, narrow gold round rim, white cravat, long lace ends, brown, very long flowing ringlet wig, full sleeves and ruffles, sword and baldric.

✓ X637169X

MATTHEW.—Drab cloth suit, heavily trimmed with black velvet, black wig, appointments same as Revesdale.

ARTHUR.—Sky blue or French gray, with silver holes and buttons, brown wig, appointments same as Revesdale.

BANCROFT.—Plain black velvet suit, same style as Revesdale, black silk stockings, high-heeled, square-toed black shoes, black velvet shoe tie across shoe, hat turned up at the two sides, bald gray short ringlet wig.

DRAYTON.—Red cloth coat, gilt buttons, white vest, black trunks, appointments same as Revesdale.

MILES.—Gray mixed cloth suit, black velvet holes and buttons, appointments same as Revesdale.

HOLME.—Plain fawn coat, fawn trunks, black vest, same appointments as Revesdale.

RICHARD.—Plain green coat, red vest, green trunks, red stockings and clocks, shoes, appointments same as Bancroft, brown ringlet wig.

GILES.—Loose leather doublet, green trunks, gray stockings, gray wig, black old men's shoes, white cravat, black slouched hat.

MILITIA OFFICERS.—Red sack coat with holes, white vest, white breeches, slouched hats, high black boots, swords and white leather belts, white cravats, ringlet wigs.

LANDLORD.—Plain drab sack coat, blue vest, red trunks, black stockings, old men's black shoes, bald brown wig.

SERVANTS.—Same style as Richard, but plainer.

RETAINERS.—Sack coats, various colours, vests and trunks, shoes and stockings, slouched hats.

PEASANTS.—Same style as retainers.

PRINCE OF ORANGE.—Crimson coat and trunks, white satin figured vest, the suit heavily trimmed with broad gold lace, red silk stockings, yellow clocks, black shoes, high red heels, large brown flowing ringlet wig, slouched hat, turned up at one side, with diamond loop, trimmed round with white ostrich feathers, and large feathers in hat; heavy baldric, and handsome Spanish rapier, appointments, &c., same as Revesdale.

SAILORS.—Blue pea jackets, long-flapped red vests, canvas petticoat trousers, blue trunks, light blue stockings, black shoes.

SOLDIERS.—Same style as the Militia, with cuirass under coat, and over the vests.

OFFICERS.—Same as soldiers, gold laced.

FELICIA.—*1st dress*: A green velvet dress, long waisted, Elizabethan stomacher, amber underskirt, the dress looped back, to show the rich underskirt completely, the sleeves tight to the elbow, turned back with a cuff, the same as the men's coats, a profusion of lace ruffles, serve with the help of the gloves to conceal the arms, high red heeled black shoes and cross bows, amber silk stockings, clocked. *2nd dress*: Light brocade dress, white satin skirt, white shoes and stockings, same style as in first dress *3rd dress*: Same as first.

ALICE.—Plain black stuff dress, short sleeves, medium cuffs and black mits, brown underskirt, gray stockings, black shoes, high heels, high cap, long ears.

A LIFE'S RANSOM.

ACT I.

SCENE FIRST.—2 G. *Grounds in front of Revesdale Castle. The Castle painted on flats, with parapets and walls extending off, r., door of Castle practical, r. 2 e.*

RICHARD FRAMPTON discovered, leaning thoughtfully on a gun, on r. c. GILES and group of PEASANTS and RETAINERS of Lord Revesdale rush on from l. 2 e., and surround RICHARD.

PEASANTS. Here's Master Frampton!

RETAINERS. Master Richard Frampton! he'll tell us all.

Enter ALICE, door, r. 2 e.

ALICE. What, Richard! my son Richard!

(she makes her way through the group to FRAMPTON)

RICH. (c.) So, so, mother!

ALICE. (r. c.) It can't be true—I won't believe 'tis true;
My young lord sell his lands—sell Revesdale Park!

GILES. (l.) The castle, too—old almost as the earth
On which it stands, and which, since it has stood,

Never owned man for master but a Revesdale!

RICH. Ay, lands and castle, all must go!

ALICE. Why must?

RICH. Because the king won't pay his debts—vast sums
By our late master, brave Lord Godfrey, raised
To help the first King Charles, who perished, leaving
The claim uncancelled. Then came the second Charles,
Who put Lord Godfrey off with promised payment,
Till in one month both prince and subject died.
King James, his brother's heir, sat on his throne;
My master's heir was beggared!

GILES.

But King *James*

Will give my lord his rights?

RICH.

King James but chid him

For thrusting in *his* need 'midst public cares;

So sent him with his sister home to ruin

GILES. Our young Lord Basil—open hand that ne'er
Forgot the poor!

ALICE.

Ay, sirs, and his sweet sister,

Lady Felicia, whom but to look on
Were cure for evil!

GILES.

Talking of *evil*, look! (*points off*, L.)

RICH. His worship, Master Bancroft! 'Tis his cousin,

Living abroad, to whom my lord's estate

Stands pledged, to satisfy whose strict demand

It must be sold; so wills our magistrate.

GILES. Magistrate, 'sooth! 'Twas more brute's deed than
man'sTo hunt to death by scores, as Bancroft did,
The poor mistaken souls who rose with Monmouth.

ALICE. So said my lord and young Squire Ringwood.

GILES.

All

To gain promotion! Magistrate indeed!
Bloodhound!

RICH.

Hush, hush! he's here.

GILES and PEASANTS.

Who cares?

Enter BANCROFT, l. 1 e. All shrink back except RICHARD.

BAN. Well, friend, can I see your master?

(RICHARD who polishes his gun-stock vigorously,
makes no reply)

D'ye hear?

Your master, knave, I say! (*advancing to him*)

Have you no answer?

RICH. O, it's to *me* you speak?

BAN. You knew it!

RICH.

No;

You called me *friend*, which I am not; then *knave*,
Which I am not, not being your worship's friend.
My master's in discourse; if you would see him,

You can wait his leisure, or return.

(*a murmur of approbation from the group*)
To your tasks!

Alice. We'll bear your love and duty to my lady.

(*PEASANTS and RETAINERS exeunt, L. 2 E. ALICE, RICHARD, and GILES exeunt door, R. 2 E.*)

Ban. Bloodhound! My zeal that brought those rogues to justice,

Who leagued with Monmouth's duke against King James,

Has won me this new christening. Arthur Ringwood!

You taught the mob to hate me—taught this proud And ruined lord, who now lies in my power—

Thanks to my cousin's mortgage—thus to brand me.

Shall I forget how at a public feast,

Laying, in talk, my hand upon his arm,

Roughly the youngster shook me off?—Said he,

“I like not, sir, to bear the soil of dust

Upon my coat, far less the soil of blood!”

Shall I forget how all men at those words

Shrank from me as contagion? how my equals

Have shunned me since—a man proscribed and shunned—

A social leper. 'Tis his new command

In the militia that still foils my plans.

He little deems the appointment was but given,

That, should his schemes be treasonous, they might The better be observed and he entrapped.

Bloodhound! I'll earn my name—swift, keen, untiring!

Though, from loose gossip, I suspect young Ringwood

Shared Monmouth's treason, was in arms for him,

And that Lord Revesdale knows it. (*looking off R. 1 E.*)

Soft! 'tis Ringwood

And the pet fawn of the park, Felicia Revesdale!

'Slife! his arm's free with her! The hound's in ambush.

(*he retires through the door, R. 2 E., and stands concealed*)

Enter MATTHEW RINGWOOD, followed by ARTHUR RINGWOOD and FELICIA REVESDALE, R. 1 E.

Matt. (L. laughing to himself) And she answered, yes, so soon! Ha, ha! that boy

Has the world at his fingers' ends ! To fight or argue,
 Discuss affairs of state, or win a woman—
 All's the same to him. (*to ARTHUR*) Pooh, sir ! she
 repents,
 And droops her head.

ARTHUR. (c.) You broke so suddenly
 Upon our conference—

MATT. O, *conference* !

What two young hearts, masking for years with
 friendship,
 Can't fling aside their vizards, and display
 The honest love behind them, but it needs
 A *conference*, does it ?

ARTHUR. 'Twas her very friendship,
 Frank, like a sister's, made me doubt till now
 Love's deeper spring beneath.

MATT. And what says the daughter
 Of those grim Normans to the rich brewer's grandson ?

FELIC. (r.) That when she looks on him, she has no thought
 To spare for grandsires.

MATT. Tut ! How this news
 Will surprise Basil !

ARTHUR. Yes ; his recent absence,
 And his reserve since then, have kept my hopes
 Strange to him yet.

FELIC. Reserve !

ARTHUR. When late deposed
 From his colonelcy in the militia,
 I stepped into his post ; 'tis this, I fear,
 Rankles his pride, which deems I built advancement
 On his disgrace.

MATT. Yet you but took the office
 To curb the cruel license of the soldiers,
 Prompted by Bancroft.

ARTHUR. I had said as much ;
 But Basil would not hear me.

FELIC. Bear with him,
 My true, kind brother ! By the king's injustice,
 Soon to be driven from home, forlorn and poor,
 Wrong makes him quick and proud.

ARTHUR. Have we forgot

That to his generous silence and your shelter
I owed my life?

MATT. And you where strangers then.

Alas! poor Monmouth and that fatal night!

(*in a low and cautious tone and advancing to the front,*
FELICIA up R.)

Oft, Arthur, have I rued the chance that threw you,
A peaceful subject, 'midst those hapless rebels!

ARTHUR. 'Twas, as you say, but chance. My horse's path
They crossed, leagues from the field, poor fugitives,
A score to one pursuer! A brace of troopers,
Deaf to their cries, clove down those helpless wretches,
Staggering, unarmed, and famished! What could man,
Who had a heart and sword, do less than I—
Parry the slaughterous blow, and give them time
For flight and life?

MATT. Ay, lad, till the king's men,
Coming to their comrades' aid, forced you to fly
For your own life. Well that you were disarmed
And masked by twilight. Promise never more
To tempt your fate so.

ARTHUR. (*gayly*) Sir, you'd bid me do it,
Did the chance come round.

(*FELICIA advances down c., and lays her hand on his arm*
imploringly)

You too; you'd never ask
That I should grow so niggard of my years
As to keep down the impulse just or kind
That gives time worth. You'd have me live I know,
Or long, or brief, a thinking, loving man;
No torpid thing, that only measures time
By the almanac. To feel, to act, is life;
Who wants these lives not, sweet; he only breathes.

MATT. Here's an oration! Well, 'twas worth the risk
To hear the rogues tramp by, nor guess the traitor
Lurked snugly by Felicia's loyal hearth.

FELIC. (*c. earnestly*) My brother knew not that.

ARTHUR. (*R.*) That you concealed me?

On that point I was silent; 'twas your wish.
But why? I met him with his retinue
At the castle gate, and told him all my plight.

FELIC. He must not know you passed *within our doors*.

I kept the knowledge from him, that, if questioned,
He might deny it truly.

MATT. (L.) And so 'scape

The peril you incurred! O, wise as noble,
Thou'rt worthy of my boy!

ARTHUR. And now to Basil.

FELIC. He's held by strangers now.

MATT. To-morrow, then.

But mind you keep our secret, for I mean
Myself to tell him. 'Twill be brave to thaw
His pride in our warm love. Come, we'll all cheer him
In his harsh lot, and henceforth have one interest,
One home, one heart—perhaps one home, indeed
For there's a grand investment, a rare toy,
In stone that Arthur covets—a— Well, well,
I'll say no more—a new surprise for Basil!
You'll keep your word; remember, now, *I tell him*.

Exeunt MATTHEW, ARTHUR, and FELICIA, L. 1 E.

Re-enter BANCROFT, through door, R. 2 E.

BANC. Plague on the distance and my own dull ears!

I lost the most part; but my brain is pregnant
With what did reach me. *Sheltered from some risk?*
Sheltered by whom? Her brother? Shelter, risk?
Basil was silent! Then the peril lay
In what he knew and told not. So I thought.
Young Ringwood *was* in arms for the Duke of
Monmouth!

This modest squire, too, wooes the fair Felicia,
Which my lord knows not, for he stands aloof.
That wound of the militia which I probed
Will fester, though he hid the sore from me.
To gender hate 'twixt the proud blood of Revesdale
And base-born Ringwood I have striven, *will* strive,
And from that hate perchance so work my ends
As to sting both, win the king's gratitude
To swell my lands to lift me into rank.
Sir Richard—*Bloodhound!* O, I must walk to cool!

Exit, L. 1 E.

SCENE SECOND.—*A Gothic Library in Revesdale Castle, 3 and 5 G. The room, which is in some confusion, is hung with weapons, portraits, &c. The arms of the Revesdale family are painted on a window, which is partly open L. F., fronting the park. Set door L. 2 E., Gothic sofa at back in c. Gothic table on R.; on it pens, inkstand, parchments, and papers. Four Gothic chairs at table on R.; two Gothic chairs on L.*

LORD REVESDALE, DRAYTON, MILES, and HOLME seated at a table on R. c.

DRAY. (L. of table) What says your lordship?

REVES. (R. of table) That had I remained

In the militia, wherein, as you say,

My friend displaced me, I had scorned to use
The king's trust 'gainst himself.

DRAY. But the people love you.

Lift but your hand, hundreds of stalwart yeomen
Will leap to horse.

REVES. I will not rashly peril
Those honest, trusting hearts. As yet I know not
Your plans, your strength, or your associates.

HOLME. (at table, on R.) You know King James a tyrant
to his people,

And your immediate ruin.

MILES. (lispingly at L. of table, on R.) What can bind you
To him who's left you nothing but a name?

REVES. My last possession! You'll forgive me, therefore
If I'm jealous how I risk it. (all rise)

MILES. (aside) What a look!

They're well called the proud Revesdales.

HOLME. To the point:

Should William of Nassau set foot in England,
Shall he have aid from you?

REVES. I'll answer that
When I've your scheme and know my comrades

DRAY. We name them, sign this document. (taking parchment from his breast) It prays Ere

Prince William's presence here, to arbitrate
Between the king and his wronged subjects.

REVES. (*perusing the paper*) It
Exacts no pledge to arm in the quarrel?

DRAY. None.

REVES. (*signing it*) 'Tis signed. (*returns it to DRAYTON*)

DRAY. And here's the list of those who share our venture.
(*gives it—all come down*)

REVES. Sir Dudley Ford, Lord Harwood, Langton, Orme.
High names!

DRAY. Meet us an hour hence at my house,
Where those in league assemble. Meantime learn
We're bound by mutual peril. Your subscription
Is treason, and incurs its sentence—death!

REVES. For *this* you bade me sign, to force my silence
By the base means of fear. I sought to know
My comrades, and I know them. There's your path.
(*pointing to door, L. 2 E.*)

DRAY. Not by that door, an't please you. We require
The screen of the forest. For our late precaution,
Remember danger brooks not ceremony.

In an hour we shall expect you. Friends, to horse!

DRAYTON, MILES, and HOLME *exeunt by the open window,*
L. flat.

REVES. (*who paces the room, suddenly stopping short*) Psha!
psha!

Why should it fret me that base hirelings
Asked pledges for my truth? 'Tis not with them
I deal, but with their cause—a righteous protest
Against this tyrant who treads down our laws.
Breaks every kingly oath; in the church's name
Slays poor schismatics, while himself betrays
The church to Rome! My wronged and loyal house
Falls from thee, James, in me! I'll join these men,
And for more secrecy afoot.

(*he seizes his hat and cloak from chair, R. sofa*)

Enter FELICIA, door, L. 2 E.

REVES. (*R. C., with great tenderness*) Felicia!

FELIC. (*L.*) Do you go forth?

REVES. Ay, love, on urgent matters.

FELIC. Urgent! And you've not told them to your sister?

REVES. Since we were orphans, have I known a joy

You knew not likewise? 'Tis my cares alone
That would be secret.

(*kissing her forehead and crossing towards door, l. 2 E.*)

FELIC. Stay, I've greetings for you
From Master Ringwood. He would have you count
His heart and home your own.

REVES. (*bitterly*) Was Arthur by
To confirm this bounty! (*aside*)—He who flaunts in
honours
Stripped from his friend, and so lends countenance
To the court's insult.

FELIC. Basil!

REVES. Girl, that man
Would rise upon our ruin!

FELIC. (*reproachfully, and fixing her eyes upon him*)
Arthur Ringwood!

REVES. (*after a pause*) I may have been unjust.

FELIC. You were indeed.

Then you'll accept their welcome; you *will*, Basil?
Are you too proud?

REVES. What shield has poverty
But pride? In happier days you knew me free
To all of worth, as liberal of kind thoughts
As the day of light. My disk is darkened now!—
Let it die out, rather than glimmer on
By the pensioned beams of others!

FELIC. Should you spurn
Those aids from man to man, the loftiest need
To lean on or they fall?

REVES. The line of Revesdale
May fall; it never *leaned*.

FELIC. Be not so wrapped
In pining for past greatness, as to scorn
Life's present blessings! Though the King—

REVES. My curse
Hunt him to shame as flagrant as the glory
Of our crushed house! May—O, 'tis brave to war
With these tongue pellets! I've delayed too long.

(*FELICIA suddenly intercepts him, and lays her hand on his arm*)

Why do you hold me?

FELIC. Basil, you nurse some scheme
Against the king.

REVES. Wondrous ! You're a Cassandra,
And deal in prophecy.

FELIC. Like hers—of danger

REVES. Excellent !

FELIC. Is there none ?

REVES. And if there were,
Did ever daughter of our house urge *danger*
To bar a brother's path ?

FELIC. She does not now,
If *duty* summons. See, I loose my clasp.
Say thou art called by that which in calm hours
Thy heart counts duty, and I bid thee go,
Though the risk be life.

REVES. I go, then. It is duty
To guard a people's rights.

FELIC. One moment yet !
Is it the people's rights, or thine own wrongs,
That sway thee most ?

REVES. What matters which ?

FELIC. Much, Basil.
Do things in their true names. Take thou thy vengeance,
If it be right, as vengeance ; but don't call it
Love for a people's rights.

REVES. Both may combine.

FELIC. Scarcely. Hate cannot blend with a pure will,
And not corrupt it. Brother, earth has seen
Few patriots. These, if they strove with wrong,
Strove first by reason and by prayers ; hast thou ?
They knew each sounding of the nation's course ;
Dost thou, till late secluded in these walls ?
If they did strike, 'twas in extremity,
In grief, at cost of household ties, with yearnings
To sheathe the sword they drew ; canst thou so strike ?

REVES. Who lessons me, and dares to preach my duties ?

FELIC. (*kneeling*) Thyself, whose truth and honour in clear
seasons

Shone on thy sister's soul, and, kindling there,
Shine back to guide thee now in hours of storm !

REVES. (*after a pause, dropping his cloak*)

You're right, Felicia. I forego this purpose
Till I have pondered well, and asked my heart
If honour prompt it. I'll not take revenge
Under the mask of justice. Yet, 'twas all
He had left me in my wreck!

FELIC.

All?

REVES. (*embracing her*) No, my sister! (*they rise*)

Enter RICHARD, l. 2 e.

RICH. Your lordship's pardon! Master Bancroft's here,
And much desires to see you.

REVES. (*aside*)

It must be.

Tell him I come.

Exit RICHARD, l. 2 e.

FELIC. Bancroft! I never hear
That name without a shudder.

REVES.

Fear not, sweet!

He comes on pressing business—the near sale
Of Revesdale for his cousin's debt.

FELIC.

And *then?*

REVES. Thou wilt be with me; where thou art is home.
(*he passes his arm round her, and conducts her out, l. 2 e.*)

SCENE III.—*Grounds in front of Revesdale's Castle.*

Enter LORD REVESDALE, followed by BANCROFT, d. r. 2 e.

REVES. Be it so, sir; it is your cousin's right,
His fair undoubted right, to sell my lands.
So must my father's heavy debt be cancelled.

BANC. My kinsman, so he writes me, needs large sums
For present uses, so the lands must go.
Yet, though I've not much cause to bear you love
It frets me, that your ancient, proud domain
Should pass to strangers.

REVES. All that's needful else
You will see done.

BANC. Though if young Ringwood buys it,
'Twill scarcely fall to strangers.

REVES. Ringwood buy it!

BANC. Has he not broken with you upon this?

REVES. Never!

BANC. He might have thought, perhaps, the old Revesdale blood

Would fire at such succession—the brewer's grandson!
REVES. (*with an effort*) And my friend, sir!—He told you his intent?

BANC. He told my agent. (*jestingly*) 'Tis a foolish thought, But yet, had proof confirmed the general rumour, Of Ringwood's traitorous aid to the Duke of Monmouth,

He had found a different fate!

REVES. (*regarding him keenly*) There *are* such rumours?

BANC. (*aside*) He knows it! *Proved*, they'd check the aspiring pride

That vaults into your seat.

REVES. Ay, sir; you've taught us what the king's mercy is.

BANC. (*aside*) You taunt me, do you? Even to my face?
(*with feigned merriment*) Why you never thought I meant the scaffold!—Psha! the king's grown lenient.

Most noted traitors 'scape with fine or exile.

REVES. Such converse, Master Bancroft, as affairs Demand between us, I would give with patience To you or any man. Beyond that point, You trespass on my leisure.

BANC. (*aside*) Ay, the bloodhound Is no fit mate for a Revesdale!—As you will. Again, I say, I bear you little love, And proffer none. But I respect a house As old as yours, and hate the parasite That thrives upon a ruin!—(*aside*) Yes, he flinched! I stung his ruling passion. Thanks to that, And to my surly bluntness, which must tell In time for honesty,—I'll mould him yet!

Exit BANCROFT, L. 1 E.

REVES. Again he couples Arthur's name with treason! I must be wary; a chance word, or look, Might snare my friend. My friend! who covertly Plots to be Lord of Revesdale!—He'd not steal So subtly on my track,—see me driven forth From my ancestral home, this native ground Of my soul as well as body, and then kindle

His holiday taper in the silent halls,
Where my torch is gray in ashes !

Enter FELICIA, with RICHARD and GILES, door R. 2 E.

FELIC. Yes, good friends,
I'll bear your message.

Exeunt RICHARD and GILES, door R. 2 E. FELICIA advances to REVESDALE.

You're in thought?

REVES. (L.) No, sister!

FELIC. (R.) Richard and Giles demand a boon.

REVES. From me!

What have I left to grant?

FELIC. That where you go,

They may go too. They are content for hire
To take what fortune sends ; or, unhired, serve you
For your love, that never let them feel like hirelings.

REVES. (much moved) True friends!—I thank and bless
them. Age and sickness

Will chill those faithful hearts, and ruined Revesdale
Must let them perish aidless.

FELIC. None so perish
Who trust in Heaven, my brother!

REVES. You say well,
And I'll not murmur. Though another week
Must see us strangers here, here where our banner
Flung, like a sunward wing, its mighty shade
O'er a brood of heroes!—still I'll think whom Heaven
Has left me in my exile, thee!

FELIC. My brother! (*he embraces her*)

REVES. And time shall teach me to endure, forget,
Ay, and hope too! There—I say *hope* already!

Enter RICHARD, door, R. 2 E.

RICH. A letter for your lordship. (*gives it*) Would it bore
Some news to cheer him! *Exit door, R. 2 E.*

REVES. (cheerfully) We've this comfort, sister,
Our poverty is proof against ill tidings.

(*he opens and peruses the letter*)

Ah, ah!

- FELIC. You're moved !
- REVES. They'll cheat me and die out,
These words of light!—O, like the tints of rainbows,
They build heaven's arch on storm, and, being as
bright,
Perhaps may vanish like them !
- FELIC. What is this ?
- REVES. Such joy as almost dazzles me to doubt.
Redemption of our house and wealth, though wealth
I prize but *for* our house !
- FELIC. Is this news sure ?
- REVES. I trust so ; *you* might make it sure. It comes
From our best and most tried friend——
- FELIC. Dear, kind Lord Norville,
Who pressed your suit at court ?
- REVES. Yes ; he has a hold,
He thinks, upon the minister who needs
His special service, and the price he asks
Is justice to his friend !
- FELIC. To *you* ! O, bless him !
- REVES. That's what he asks for. Bless him, for you can !
This flashed on me at times when you met in London.
- FELIC. What flashed upon you, Basil ?
- REVES. What he writes
So plainly here—forgive my joy's abruptness—
He loves you, and would wed you.
- FELIC. Me !—Lord Norville !—
Impossible !
- REVES. Why so?—My friend is noble
In heart, mien, birth——
- FELIC. I know it !
- REVES. One for whom
You've oft avowed regard, which must, in time,
Ripen to love !
- FELIC. (*aside*) Although I promised silence,
I must reveal my troth to Arthur.—Brother,
I cannot wed Lord Norville——
- REVES. Cannot !—Pause,
Think what's at stake—the upholding of our line
In honour by his aid ! They'll grant his wife—
He writes it—what they might refuse his friend.

FELIC. You talk not like yourself.

REVES. Myself! Our Race
Adjures thee through thy brother!

FELIC. Basil!

REVES. (*pointing to the castle*) Look
On that gray pile—from base to parapet
A fane of glory!—Stone? 'Tis built of deeds,
Compact with hearts' blood; heroes trod its courts
Whose names are histories; voices from its halls
Swept o'er a realm like winds that wake a sea;
A tide of memory richer than the sun
Pours through each loophole, and its very dust
Sown with tradition—glory's fallen seed—
Stirs with the quickening future!

FELIC. O, beware!
Such pride tempts Heaven.

REVES. Heaven made the vale—it sinks;
The peak—it soars. I tell thee to my frame
Its vital flood's less dear than to my soul
The trust my fathers left. Felicia, think—
The court against me, not a chance to rise
In war or council, doomed to sordid need
And banishment from hence—as, if you scorn
Lord Norville's suit, we are—what path remains
Of enterprise or greatness?

FELIC. Brother, greatness
Is of the soul, not fortune. Emulate
The *spirit* of our sires, but leave to heaven
The question of their *fame*.

Enter BANCROFT, l. 1 E.

REVES. I ask my sister
For life, or what is dearer, and she deigns me
A homily for answer. (*turning from her he perceives*
BANCROFT on l.) Here again?

(*they converse apart from FELICIA*)
BANC. (l.) My errand's brief. Young Ringwood asks
my agent

For an inventory; will you grant it?

REVES. (c.) How?

BANC. A catalogue of all your moveables,

Plate, pictures, suits of armour, family jewels—
No, *jewels* pass as heirlooms.

REVES. How? You jest.

BANC. 'Tis natural;

Men like to know the worth of that they buy.
But he wrote in secret, and with emphasis
Forbade that you should know it.

REVES. Wrote in secret!

BANC. But as we could not take the inventory
As yet without your license, I was bound
To let you hear.

REVES. Such insult! O, my ears
Have played me false!

BANC. Then trust your eyes, and read
His letter to my agent, who waits yonder.

REVES. In his own hand!

BANC. 'Tis strange! I thought these plans
Bore on his contract for your sister.

REVES. (*starting and glancing rapidly at FELICIA, up*
R. C.) Hush!

I must hear all!

BANC. You can't be ignorant
Of his suit.

REVES. His suit—to wed my sister! Such an aim
Had jarred upon my love when most in tune!
But now— You bear him malice!

BANC. I don't dote
Either on him or you; but I brook the proud
More easily than the false.

REVES. (*aside*) Why should I doubt
This man? Though fierce and violent, he wears
His nature frankly, shows his plain distaste
For me, nor stoops to counterfeit a smoothness,
As would dissemblers.

BANC. You may think me bitter.
Well, I come of an old stock myself, and like not
Your treacherous upstarts. Let me ask you this:
Who, when the court dismissed you the militia,
Leaped to the vacant post, making your slight
His honour! Prudent friend! Who now by stealth,
Lest your pride wake and thwart him, seeks possession

Of your house and union with your blood, to gild
His base beginnings?

REVES. Hold! I'll sift your story
But to disprove it. Hither! I'll return
Anon, Felicia. Hither, sir; unfold
This business as we walk.

Exeunt REVESDALE and BANCROFT, l. 1 e.
FELIC. (*coming forward, c.*) O, bitter strait!

I must be false to love—nay, worse—to conscience,
Or crush my brother's hopes. Alas! that pride
Should blight a heart so rich! Most perilous
Is pride to noble natures. Other sins
Stand naked and repel; but pride doth filch
The garb of poetry, and the flawed idol
Shows like a god. (*retires up centre, l.*)

Enter MATTHEW and ARTHUR RINGWOOD, r. 1 e.

ARTHUR. (r.) See! 'tis herself—Felicia!
How still—how mute—how like a living dream
That's conscious of its bliss, and will not stir
Lest motion end it!

MATT. Dream, forsooth! (*aside*) He talks
Poetry like the laureate! Dream! Do dreams
Glow with a flush like hers, or do their steps
Come tinkling on men's hearts like hers on thine?

ARTHUR. (*crosses to c., embracing her*) My own!

FELIC. Arthur! (*advancing, l.*)

MATT. Is she a dream, lad?

ARTHUR. How!

There's trouble in thine eye.

FELIC. (l.) I'm glad you're come.

MATT. (r.) I'm glad we're here. He dragged me forth
ere dinner.

What's dinner to a lover? You that feed
On the dews of violets,—you sleep walkers
In the realms of fancy, that can take your rest
With open eyes, should pity common folk
That have digestions, and like easy chairs.

ARTHUR. (c.) But where is Basil?

MATT. Is our secret safe?

Is he yet i' the dark?

FELIC.

My friend, my father!

MATT.

Well;

Speak, love!

FELIC. Untoward affairs have vexed my brother.

You'll treat him gently?

MATT.

Gently! Why, how else

But gently should I treat him? I bestow

My boy—than whom a nobler never blessed

A father's heart—upon him for a brother.

Methinks that's gentle.

ARTHUR.

Look where comes my friend!

How rapt in meditation!

Re-enter REVESDALE, l. 1 E.

MATT. (to FELICIA) You'll not leave us?

FELIC. (observing REVESDALE closely) No, no; 'tis better
I remain.

MATT. (laughing) Draw back;

He's in a trance of deep philosophy.

(they retire a few steps to the back, unperceived by
REVESDALE)

REVES. Woos her in secret, does he? Wastes no breath
 To win my saction, who should thank my luck
 That my home and sister please him! Our alliance,
 'Tis true, has been held priceless; but this broker
 In decayed honours knows that it befits
 The needy to be humble. Is't for thee,
 Thou climber by the clefts of others' ruin,
 My sister has forsworn her happiness,
 And balked with such soaring sand my thirsty eyes
 Of the fount before them? Not so; my friend Norville
 Stays at his seat in Hampshire. I'll set forth
 This hour to see him, and so gain delay
 For a wiser answer.

(MATTHEW, l. c., ARTHUR, r. c., and FELICIA, r.,
come forward)MATT. (l. c.) Save you, noble student!
 You've solved a knotty problem.

REVES. (l.) Sir, you have it.

ARTHUR. I give you joy! Your hand.

REVES. 'Tis not for sale.

ARTHUR. (R. C.) For sale!

MATT. Nay, nay! We're here
To join hands, not deny them. Faith, my lord,
You must clear that clouded brow. I would ac-
quaint you

With my heiress and my new-found daughter!

REVES. So,
Your daughter? (*aside*) It goes smoothly.

MATT. You're amaz'd.
'Twill crown your wonder when I say how long
You've known her, *you*, sir—that, in brief, she stands
With her affianced husband there—ay, there.

(*pointing to ARTHUR, R. C., and FELICIA, on R.*)
Go, boy, and bless them!

REVES. Ingrate that I am,
I have no knee to thank you.

ARTHUR. You'll not mar
Our joy by your dissent? It was but yesterday
I dared to hope—

REVES. What you must hope no more!
(*restraining himself, and with formal courtesy*)
Sir, for the honor you design our house
I thank you, and decline it.

MATT. What! decline
My boy! Adversity has turned his brain.
Decline my Arthur!

ARTHUR. Basil, pardon me. (*crosses, c.*)
Your sister's love was her own gift. I stand,
However humble, dignified in this—
That she has chosen me, and girt my life
With her bright zone of love. To yield her, then,
Must be a pang to me—a worse than pang,
A crime, to her. For her sake—

REVES. (*ironically*) For her sake!

ARTHUR. Yes, for her sake, my lord. I do not boast
A storied name. Perchance mine never waved
Embroidered on a flag, or rallied hosts
In the shock of battle. Past our own domain
The hind at plough may hear it and plod on
Nor check his careless whistle. Do you ask

My title, then, in this? 'Tis here—she loves me!
 Spite of all want and accident, she loves me,
 Finds love that answers hers, finds truth to lean on,
 Finds sympathies that feed her root of joy,
 And keep it verdant. If I give not these,
 I have indeed no claim; but giving them,
 My lot grows proud. I am something to myself
 If aught to her. I'll not withdraw the faith
 She prizes, till she say, "Sir, take it back—
 I no more need it."

FELIC. Never, never, Arthur,
 Can she say that! O brother!

MATT. Stand apart,
 My boy, and let them speak.

ARTHUR and MATTHEW retire up, c.

REVES. And so you'll blight
 My future and your own for a light mood
 That dates from yesterday—a whim, a nothing!

FELIC. (r.) A *nothing*! All new life, that struck its
 fibres
 Deep down before it budded! Nothing! Basil,
 Earth has a thousand destinies for man;
 For us, one—love! Man's massive trunk puts forth
 Unnumbered branches; lop them, they renew;
 But we who cling around him, severed thence,
 Are prostrate once for ever.

REVES. (l.) Credulous girl,
 Be warned! What Ringwood seeks in this alliance
 Is his advancement, not your love. For this,
 Unknown to me, he lured you step by step.

FELIC. Your frenzy speaks!

REVES. For this, by stealth he traffics
 For our domain, as if to seize our eyry
 Made him the eagle—does this, and commands
 That the knowledge be kept from me!

FELIC. Question him;
 He'll explain all.

REVES. (*ironically*) To be sure he will! And now,
 To save you and those hopes he would eclipse,
 Listen! I'm bound for a sudden journey. Ere
 I go, decide—a suitor or a brother?

FELIC. (*seizing his hand*) You cannot mean—

REVES. Renounce him!

FELIC. He has loved me, and I cannot; I have pledged
My love to him, and will not; 'tis your wish
To cast me off, not mine to lose you, brother.
I must be true—I wed him!

ARTHUR comes down R., MATTHEW on L. C.

REVES. Free my hand!

(to ARTHUR) Sir, till your gold gives right to unlock
my gates,

You pass them not again. Release me!

FELIC. (*clinging to him*) Brother!

REVES. When next we meet I see thee Norville's wife,
His wife affianced, or a stranger—strange
Thenceforth to sight, thought, love; thy name a sound,
Thy place a void, thy very memory dead!

(he breaks away from FELICIA, and rushes out, L. I. E.;
she sinks back into ARTHUR's arms, on R. C.)

FELIC. Bear witness, heart, I had no choice but this!

(Tableau.—ARTHUR, supporting FELICIA, on R. C.
—MATTHEW, on L. C.—quick drop)

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE FIRST.—*An Oak Chamber in Revesdale Castle, 1st
grooves—door in centre, leading to chapel. Night.*

*Enter ALICE and RICHARD, bearing lamp, L. 1 E., ushering
in ARTHUR RINGWOOD.*

ALICE. This way, your honour—this way, Master Arthur.
May it prove a joyful day, or rather night.
You're kindly welcome.

RICH. Welcome! You forget
'Tis for the young squire here to welcome us.
The castle now is his.

ALICE. How thy wits wander!

ARTHUR. What says good Alice?

RICH. Nay, she'll not believe
That you've bought Revesdale, and are lord of it.

ALICE. *Revesdale's* the lord of Revesdale. In the time
Of my grandsire's grandsire, it had been so years
Beyond *his* count.

ARTHUR. It was so then.

ALICE. What then was
Must be so still. I'm grown too old to change.

ARTHUR. Too faithful, say.

ALICE. I see now why my son
Called you the lord of Revesdale. 'Tis because
You'll wed the lady of Revesdale. (*to RICHARD*)
Thy poor wits
That once wast shrewd! Tis not the wife gives rank,
But the husband. Rest ye, gentles, for a while;
I'll bring my beauty to ye, my dear child—
I'll bring the bride anon.

Exit, R.

Enter MATTHEW RINGWOOD, door, L. C.

MATT. The priest attends,
And all's prepared. A word with you, friend Richard,
On this near marriage.

ARTHUR. His true service claims
Full confidence. (*to RICHARD*) Your lady takes a husband
In her brother's absence—nay, against his will.
You like not that, nor I; but reasons strong
And just enforce it.

RICH. What my mistress does
Must needs be right.

ARTHUR. True; but your lord being adverse,
We would not use such public ceremony
As might offend him; therefore hold our union
Private, as we would have it.

RICH. I'll be heedful.
(*he retires to back, and occupies himself in arranging the apartment*)

MATT. Knows yet Felicia why we bought the castle?
ARTHUR. She does. I told her that, should chance restore
Her brother's wealth, it should again be his.

MATT. A costly purchase! Ringwood must be sold
To stock our empty coffers. But for that,
Its old walls had received you.

RICH. (L.) See, my mistress!

Enter FELICIA, in bridal attire, accompanied by ALICE, r.

FELIC. (*to ALICE*) Await me here. (*advancing, c.*) An unattended bride,

No kindred nor companions to present me
To my dear lord, I do present myself,

ARTHUR. (*c.*) There is no herald to thy love so fit
As its own music.

MATT. Bless you for his sake,
My brave, true child!

ARTHUR. And yet my heart, Felicia,
Half shrinks to take its treasure. If one doubt—

FELIC. (*c.*) There's *no* doubt. I have weighed
Each point of duty. Basil, ere he went,
Left me these written words—"By all that makes
An oath inviolable, on my return,
You part from Ringwood or from me. Obey,
Or seek a separate home." That oath he'll keep.
His journey's to your rival's house, in hopes
His suit may shake my purpose. To await
Basil's return, what were it but to wage
A fruitless strife, and widen for no cause
Our household wounds? In all becomes a sister
I'd drain my heart for him; but in that love
Which holds not of our kin, but straight from Heaven,
Doth blend two souls in one—who owns *that* claim,
Must own it paramount.

ARTHUR. O, pardon me,
If jealousy for thy pure nobleness
Makes question still. What if our union, private,
Unknown beyond these walls, yet linking us
In closest contact, draw on thee reproach
From the malignant? What, if they should say—

MATT. What *can* they say, but that an honoured lady
Receives two honoured guests? In a few days
Her brother will return, and all be told.

FELIC. My love past doubt, I'll place beyond dispute.

ALICE. (*coming forward, r.*) Now, ladybird, the priest
Attends; my darling's staid for.

MATT. May Heaven's grace
Bless thee, my daughter! 'Tis some forty years
Since, as that boy stands now, I stood with one

Gentle and fair like thee. She left me him
 For my age's solace ; and I think, though friends
 Are scanty here, perhaps an angel's eyes
 Look on these bridals. There !—don't think that grief
 Flows in these drops. I see the future through them,
 The happy future !—Basil reconciled,
 As he must be when he knows us, a glad group
 Round the old man at the hearth, and, in good time,
 Perhaps upon his knees—What was I saying ?
 Lean on your bridesman, girl. Now, boy, your arm
 To Mistress Alice !

ARTHUR. Alice !

ALICE. Sir, that ever——

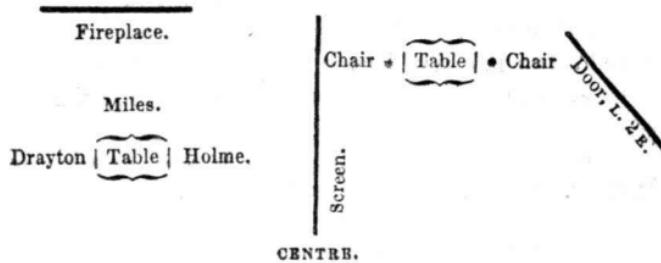
ARTHUR. (*placing her arm in his*) I shall claim my kiss !

ALICE. Ah, well-a-day !

MATT. Come, daughter !

Exeunt ARTHUR with ALICE, MATTHEW with FELICIA, into the adjoining chapel, door L. c. The music of an organ is heard behind—RICHARD lighting them.

SCENE SECOND.*—An Apartment in a Roadside Hostelry,
 2nd grooves — set fireplace, r. — DRAYTON, MILES,
 and HOLME seated at table, r., before the fire; on it a
 bottle of wine and three wine glasses; three chairs on r.;
 a large screen behind them divides the apartment; table
 and two chairs on l.; door, l. 2 E.



DRAYTON. Alone ?

MILES. (*looking behind the screen*) Not a mouse hears.

DRAY. One last cup

To our patron, ere we move.

* An interval of nearly a day is supposed to elapse between the first and second Scenes of this Act.

HOLME.

Drink deep—*Success*

To Russell and his mission! (all drink) Now or never
Is the adventure's time. The people's heart
Would leap to it.

DRAY.

These Dutchmen never hurry.

MILES. Fill up! Our task's done, and we've baffled
Bancroft.

HOLME. We're safer, being these twenty miles apart.

I liked not his close conference with Lord Revesdale.

DRAY. No danger there; a Revesdale ne'er betrayed.

And my lord was in our power, having signed to treason,
Whose penalty is death.

HOLME. (refilling his glass) So his lands are sold.

DRAY. It had been gold well spent, had some we wot of
Bought Revesdale Castle. Here's the plan of 't—see!
A height commanding all the bay.

*He exhibits the plan, and, as they examine and
discuss it, REVESDALE enters with the LANDLORD
unobserved, door L. 2 E.*

REVES.

Wine, host,

And a fresh horse! and quickly. I'd reach home
Ere night. *Exit LANDLORD, door L. 2 E.*

Disastrous chance, that called my friend
From his house before I reached it, and so wasted
My day in the vain hope of his return.

*LANDLORD re-enters, door L. 2 E., with salver, and
bottle of wine and glass, and places them on
table, L. Exit LANDLORD, L. 2 E.*

Strangers! (he retires to back of screen, and sits)

DRAY. (on r.) Ay, Revesdale Castle's in bad hands.

MILES. (on r.) In upstart Ringwood's, who refused
our league,

Because, forsooth, the cause lacked better vouchers!

HOLME. (on r.) How brooks the proud Lord Basil to
see Ringwood

Master of Revesdale?

MILES. Soon to wed his sister.

HOLME. A bridegroom who should blazon on his shield
Three vats, with crest—a malt-sack!

DRAY. 'Tis well Revesdale
Has been of late from home; though they were
friends,

He'd scarcely brooked young Ringwood's license, or
This gossip on his sister. (*all laugh and rise*)

HOLME. But that tale
Touching her chamber! It's mere jest?

DRAY. 'Tis sworn to
By our landlord's niece, a dweller in the village,
Who, having business with the lady, entered
The room inopportunely. (*renewed laughter*)

REVES. (*starting up, and advancing to them*) May I share
Your pleasant secret, sirs?

MILES. My lord!

REVES. Go on!
My sister and her chamber? Stint not breath;
I would laugh too.

DRAY. Your sister?

REVES. Ay, her chamber!

DRAY. (*hesitating*) My lord, it has been new furnished in
your absence
To suit young Ringwood's taste.

MILES. Whereat we laughed.

HOLME. No offence, I hope?

REVES. Beware! You're warned; beware—

DRAY. Nay, nay; we fear not threats; but own the claim
Of your misfortunes. If in light discourse,
We've given unmeant offence, accept our sorrow,
And grant your pardon. (*REVEDALE bows haughtily*
and walks apart) Come, the day wears down.

HOLME. Have with you!

DRAY. (*to MILES, who refills his glass*) Sirrah, d'ye mean
To sit your horse?

MILES. (*draining the bottle*) There, there!

DRAY. Good day, my lord!

Exeunt DRAYTON, MILES, and HOLME, R. 1 E.

REVES. (*coming forward*) My lands are sold then;
Revesdale now is Ringwood's!
To-day, these men came from the very spot
That was our home—*was* for five hundred years!
What meant their mirth about my sister's chamber?
There lurked beneath it more than they expressed.
'Tis plain that all men know young Ringwood's suit,
And her consent. (*after a pause, with uncontrollable*
passion) Would hurricanes had strewed

Earth with my towers ! would that the earth, agape,
 To feed on pride, had gulped them !—Wed Felicia!
 Our blood that sprang from mountain heights of time,
 Caught glory's rays while all below was dark—
 Had fate no blast to freeze, no torrid heat
 To scorch, even to its bed, that stream, or e'er
 It lapsed into a sluice, and turned a mill-wheel ?
 Well, well, well, well !

(drinks excitedly, and throws himself into chair, up, R.)

Enter BANCROFT, door L. 2 E.

BANC. Those I sought not here !
 Mine host is ignorant, or bribed.—(aside) How,
 Revesdale !

He meets my very wish. That scrupulous sense
 Called honor, sways him so, that in cool blood
 'Twere vain to tempt him ; but I've news will lash
 His passions into fury—fact, broad fact,
 The man whom most he hates his sister's guest,
 And by a village matron found last night
 Where no foot but a husband's should intrude—
 This, if I know my lord, shall gain my ends,
 And so arouse his pride, that, like a sea,
 In fury and unconscious, he'll cast up
 His inmost secrets. (feigning surprise) Ah ! whom
 do I look on ?

Lord Revesdale ? 'Tis my honored lord !

REVES. (fiercely) Your will ? (down R.)
 Why mock with this feigned respect a ruined outcast ?

BANC. (L.) Because you are one ; I can show respect,
 And not be thought to flatter.

REVES. (recklessly) Right !—At least
 I'm a gainer *that way* !

BANC. (aside) Wine or rage, or both,
 Have fevered him. The better !—you've heard all ?

REVES. (aside) Peace, heart ! Thy griefs are not to
 prate of,

As hawkers prate their ballads.—Yes, sir, all.

BANC. That your castle's sold ?

REVES.

Ay.

BANC.

And to whom ?

REVES.

That, too.

BANC. You bear it nobly. Strangers were more loud
In your behalf than you. No man would bid
For your inheritance, save Arthur Ringwood.

REVES. It fell to him cheaply, then?

BANC. This fortitude—
Though I rejoice at it—seems more than natural.
Dull wit! You have compounded with young Ringwood,
Renewed your friendship! To be sure you have!
Well, well! 'Twas prudent; you had no resource
But to yield your sister, and to trust his bounty.

REVES. You're venturous, sir!

BANC. Plague on't! my rough, blunt way.
I might have guessed before,
That you were reconciled, or he had not dared,
While Revesdale yet was yours, to come there wooing,
Against your strict command.

REVES. When I left home—
I mean, left Revesdale?

BANC. There the next day found him,
The next to that, the third; at last he staid.

REVES. Staid! where, at Revesdale, and my sister—

BANC. There,
I'm baffled. If with your leave he wooed her, why
Forget all caution in his interviews,
And draw men's gossip on her?

REVES. Gossip!

BANC. Well,
I'm loth to call it scandal, but the world
Will judge by what it sees.

REVES. Judge what? (BANCROFT averts his face) Judge
what?

BANC. What would you judge yourself, if a gallant,
Unwedded, sought a maiden in her home,
No father near, nor brother, she alone—
Sought her at eve, and had not left at dawn?
At least, he slept at Revesdale yesternight.

REVES. 'Neath the same roof with her?

BANC. Nay, one despatched
On an errand to your sister, unawares
Entering the boudoir which adjoins her chamber,
Found him there late.

REVES. In her chamber?

BANC.

Nay, I said

The adjoining room : now though I charge no guilt—
REVES. Guilt!BANC. You're so intemperate ; I only say
'Twas indiscreet !REVES. 'Twas indiscreet !—Ah ! now
The jests those men cast on her flash upon me
In their foul sense !—Felicia, a theme
For ribald tongues, a name for reeking lips
To mouth between the drainings of a flagon,
A key-note to the chorus of such laughter
As shakes a tavern !BANC. (*aside*) The gale whistles now !REVES. My innocent one that in her orphanhood
Flew to my bosom dovelike ; whose small hand
Our dying mother clasped in mine to guard,
And sanctified love's natural bonds at birth,
By prayers in death ; my darling, whom I loved
Even as my better self ! O, traitor, why
Not thrust at *my* heart only ? Stripped, forlorn,
And humbled, one pang more had cost me little.
But she, my sister !—There be eyes in heaven
That would forget the patience of the place,
And haunt me with reproach, if I forgave him !

BANC. 'Tis sure he failed in decent reverence to her.

REVES. Nay, had she been mere pulseless stone, she stood
Niched in the pure tradition of our honour
To bend men's thoughts in homage ; but herself,
Whose very life is purity, whose love,
Thought, grace, flow from its fount, all purity,—
To foul that stream of crystal from the urn
Of shadowing ages !—O, his star ascends
And mine dies out ; but from my ashes leaps
A comet that shall cross his rising orb
With fiery portent in the midst of heaven !
Would we were met !

BANC.

Why ?

REVES.

Ah, why, why ?—He seeks

To blend with the blood of Revesdale, not to *spill* it—
He'd tell me so, I doubt not !

BANC.

Pity 'tis

That you met ever.

REVES. (*traversing the room impetuously, as if speaking to himself*) Be that hour accursed!

Accursed the shows of genial fellowship
And truth that won me to him! Cursed my weak
And womanish pity that, while we were strangers,
Sealed up my servants' lips that eagerly
Sought to denounce his treason!

BANC. (*aside*) Mad with pride,
He knows not what he utters!—Treason! Nay—
REVES. It perilled his head, though. Norris, Hurst, and
others

Of my following, heard it from his own confession.

BANC. (*musing*) Norris and Hurst!—Some skirmish then.
(*approaching REVESDALE*) I say

Some petty skirmish, then?

REVES. (*impatiently*) Ay, ay, his sword
Drawn for the rebels while they fled or rallied.
I know not nor remember. I but felt
His danger and my pity.

BANC. (*aside*) Hurst and Norris.
May have better memories.—And he stung the heel
That raised, could crush him.

REVES. Peace!

BANC. His very life
Lying in your grasp—you see!

REVES. Not I!

BANC. That's strange.
He is a traitor; you, with Hurst and Norris,
Could prove him such.

(*laying his hand familiarly on REVESDALE's arm*)
REVES. Off, sir! (*throws off BANCROFT*) I spear the foe
That dares me with his tusk; but I don't chase him
To pitfalls for the butcher!

BANC. Humph! the king
May be less precise in his hunting.

REVES. Ah! You would not—

BANC. A fair journey to your lordship. (*going, l.*)

REVES. Bancroft, stay!
BANC. Not now; you're ruffled, and you shook me off
As the bloodhound's paws had soiled you, (*aside*)
Hurst and Norris! Good even, my lord.

Exit BANCROFT, door, l. 2 e.

REVES. (*after a pause as if bewildered*) What have I done? Now do I see his drift.

The villain who would tempt me thus would lie
Or color truth to dupe me. I'll pursue
And drag him back! But wherefore? Could I chain
His limbs, his tongue were free. That must be stilled
At any cost! (*moves to the door, L. 2 E.*) His horse's
hoofs! They trample
Upon a living path—my honour! Yes,
I've betrayed Ringwood! ay, *betrayed*—the sin
Of basest cowards. Vain to say my words
Flew from me like the unconscious sparks from iron
That's hammered when afire:—'twas in the furnace
Of my own pride I let this demon heat me,
And beat me to his shaping! Fool, whose hand,
Clutching the shows of nobleness,—let slip
The very thing! And Arthur—ah, why linger!
They may be on his track, his life the game,
And not a voice to warn! (*seizing his hat and cloak*
from chair at table, L.) I should have wings
To save him! Ah, what wing will overtake
Those angels who have fled me—Peace and Honour?

(*he rushes out, door L. 2 E.*)

SCENE THIRD.—*A spacious Gothic Entrance Hall in Revesdale Castle, 4th and 6th groove; a massive staircase leading to apartments, R. 3 E., practical; many portraits of the Revesdale family are suspended conspicuously on the wall; cheering and dance music heard without, R. U. E.; c. doors open, with large broad steps and platform at doors, backed by Gothic; Gothic table and chairs on R.*

Enter GILES, RICHARD, and SERVANTS, c. from R.

GILES. (R.) O, happy day! You're sure of this good news?
RICHARD. Quite sure; my mistress had it in a letter

From some great lord in London—Lord—Lord
Norville.

He's pleaded with the king, and made him pay
His debts to our master.

GILES. Hurrah! (*to the rest*) D'ye hear? Lord Basil
Is rich again; the good old times we knew
Are back once more.

SERVANTS. Brave news! brave news!

RICH. Lord Revesdale,
Being absent, knows not yet this happy change.
Would he were here! He's to have Revesdale back.
Our young squire bought it in the hope some chance
Like this might give it to his friend again.

GILES. He's a true friend, Squire Arthur!

(PEASANTS *laugh and shout without, door R. C.*)

RICH. See, here comes
A holiday group. Our lady has thrown open
The park and house for a festival in honour
Of these blithe tidings; but the night drives in
Our merry makers.

Enter male and female PEASANTS, preceded by ALICE,
door c. from R.

ALICE. (*advancing from the group in great excitement*)
Now, son, who was right?
Said I not Revesdale still was lord of Revesdale?
And now all say it. Strike up, lads and girls!
Music—a dance.

GILES. I could shake a leg myself.
(offers his arm to ALICE, who, unable to control
herself, joins the dance)
RICH. (*on L., at conclusion of the dance*) Hold, hold,
our lady!
(FELICIA, MATTHEW, and ARTHUR, appear on the
staircase, R. 3 E.; PEASANTS, &c., range on L.;
ALICE and GILES on R.)

Join all! Long life to Revesdale and our lady!
CHORUS. (*by the group, on L.*) Long live Lord Revesdale
and his noble sister!

GILES. (R.) And his honour and Squire Arthur!
GROUP. Ay, long life
And happiness to all!

FELIC. Thanks, thanks, good friends!
Let me not check the mirth, for my heart shares it.

(FELICIA, MATTHEW, and ARTHUR descend the
staircase, R., and advance to front; all bow and
courtesy, and then retire up and stand in c.,
front of c. doors)

MATT. (*to dancers*) Well done, well done! Fall to again!

(*to FELICIA, c.*) I feel

So light, so gay! I never see the young
Glad, but my old heart leaps up wild and full.

I must dance, or sing, or kiss some one, I must.

For fear of accidents, it shall be *you*.

(*kisses her tenderly*)

FELIC. (r.) Fie! You, a veteran!

MATT. Veteran, girl! I'm young.

True youth is like true wine—the longer kept,
The more the spirit of the grape comes out.

(*crosses to r.*)

ARTHUR. (l.) There wants but one thing to complete
our joy—

Basil's return.

MATT. How, scapegrace! Do you feel
No awe of the man from whom you've stolen his sister?

FELIC. No danger now. The winter that congealed
His love dispelled, 'twill open all its sweets
In Fortune's sunshine. 'Tis not in his heart
To turn from your devotion.

MATT. What delays him?
'Tis clear he's not with Norville, who despatched
The letter that restored your brother's rights,
From London.

FELIC. You speak anxiously.

MATT. No, no;
There's nought to fear. And yet 'tis true the land
Is rife with plots.

ARTHUR. I'm glad of it.

MATT. Silence! scarce a house
But holds a spy. Hundreds are daily seized
In the name of Order.

ARTHUR. Order—name abused!
When shall this harassed land know order more?—
The glad obedience freemen pay the laws
That keep them free. Cruelty on the bench,
Fraud in the council, menace everywhere,
The heart denied its commerce with the tongue—
Can there be order? Can unscrupulous power
Strike on a nation's heartstrings with a gauntlet,
And look for music?

MATT. 'Tis said all men's hopes
Are set on Holland ; but the cautious prince
Resists entreaty.

ARTHUR. Till his time be ripe.

(*laughter from the DANCERS at back*)

FELIC. Leave these grave themes, and list their happy
laughter. (*a pause, during which they watch
the DANCERS*)

REVES. (*without, c. d. l.*) Way, there ! My sister ! Arthur !

FELIC. Ah, that voice ! (*the group divides in consternation,*
REVESDALE rushes in, door l. c.) My brother !

(*going to him*)

REVES. (R. C.) Touch me not !
No, no embrace. Hence, Arthur, for your life !

ARTHUR. (C.) Go, friends.

*Exeunt PEASANTS, c., with ALICE, RICHARD, and
GILES. Doors in c. are closed.*

Now, Basil ?

REVES. (*aside*) He is here ; in that
Bancroft spoke truth. (*to ARTHUR*) By what right do
you share
One home with her ?

FELIC. By the best right—a husband's.
My brother—

REVES. (*aside*) Married ! That explains the slander.
Married ! What depths of horror at that word
Yawn in my path ! Fly, Arthur, fly !

FELIC. You speak
In terror, not in wrath.

REVES. Fly !

ARTHUR. On this night,
That hails you back to Revesdale—to *your* Revesdale !

FELIC. Ay, brother, *yours*. Lord Norville from the king
Has won your rights, and Arthur holds your lands
But to restore them.

REVES. (*aside*) This for *me*,
Beyond redemption lost ! (*to ARTHUR*) Why do you
stand

With that calm brow, when every moment falls
Like a sand from the glass of fate ? Fly for your life,
From hence, from England !

MATT. (R.) What do you mean?
 REVES. 'Tis known—
 His treason, or the deed which the law calls so,
 Is known. His foes are mustering, on their way,
 Fleet as the wind, stanch as remorse; there's not
 To spare a second!

ARTHUR. If suspicion's roused,
 Flight would confirm it. Those who seek my life
 May lie in wait at the port. 'Twere wiser far
 To stay and front them.

REVES. Madness! (*kneeling to ARTHUR*) On my knees
 I do beseech you—

FELIC. Hear him, Arthur; yield,
 My heart's beloved!

ARTHUR. And leave thee?

FELIC. Ay, to save
 Thyself, myself, that's wrapped in thine.

ARTHUR. Hear me!

FELIC. Hear me! We'll fly together!

MATT. It must not be.
 Arthur was right. Where are the proofs against him?
 His deed is known to none save Basil here
 And his trusty servants. All's secure; we'll face
 This crisis! (*to FELICIA*) Courage!

REVES. (*aside*) Then I must confess
 My baseness. Arthur!

ARTHUR. Basil, 'tis your zeal
 For me provokes these fears. Ah, when most harsh,
 I felt that you were still my friend at heart,
 My warm true friend!

REVES. No, listen! If a wretch—
 Ah! (*a loud knocking is heard without, L.C., REVEDALE stands as if tranced in horror. A short interval of silence. Knocking repeated*)

FELIC. Husband!

REVES. To the library! It opens
 On the rear of the park—the private path! Escape!
 (*drawing his sword and rushing to the door, c.*)
 I'll guard the door. More strength than's packed in iron
 Stiffens this arm! Hence! there's yet time.
 (*louder knocking and clamor without, door L. C.*)

ARTHUR. (*seizing REVESDALE's arm*) Resist not!
Your life is perilled now.

REVES. (*struggling with ARTHUR*) What bliss if that could off
 Could ransom thine! (*struggling with ARTHUR*)

ARTHUR. (*struggling with ARTHUR*) Be calm; I must remain.
 (*the doors are burst open in c., and BANCROFT enters, followed by two OFFICERS of the MILITIA.*)

BANC. (*L.*) Disarm that madman!

REVES. (*OFFICERS disarm REVESDALE, c.*) Villain!

BANC. (*L.*) Arthur Ringwood,
 I arrest you for high treason!

MATT. (*R.*) On whose charge?

BANC. (*aside to OFFICERS*) See those men, Hurst and
 Norris, kept apart,

Then stand in call; quick! *Exeunt two OFFICERS, c. to L.*

ARTHUR. (*R. C.*) Still athirst for blood!

BANC. Is it so strange in a bloodhound? That's the name
 You and my lord gave me; the name that crowds

Chorus with yells. When I was so baptized,
 You were my sponsors. Giving me the name,

Should I not have the nature? Know, your crime,
 If proved, is death.

MATT. Say, who accuses him?

None save you have suborned them. Ah, beware!

My boy is loved of the peasants.

BANC. No mob escort
 Shall see your son to prison; a detachment
 Of the king's force is sent for in his honor.

MATT. I ask for his accuser.

BANC. Ask my lord.

ARTHUR. Insolent scoffer!

FELIC. (*crossing to REVESDALE, and speaking to him aside*) Do not heed him, Basil.

Your anguish helps suspicion. It was night

When the fray chanced; none recognized my husband,

Or he had been seized before.

REVES. 'Tis known!

FELIC. To none

But Hurst and Norris, our old faithful followers;

They would not act a baseness which no tongue

Could curse to the full.

REVES. There was a third—a third
Who knew !

FELIC. Who ? If he have betrayed
My noble Arthur, may that solemn justice,
Which, unlike man's, looks to the heart as well
As to the act, judge him !

REVES. It does, it does !

FELIC. His name ? Why droop your head ? He cannot be
Your friend. You shudder ! Ah, what serpent thoughts
Hiss through my brain ! Your feud with Arthur, your
Close intercourse with Bancroft, now that look !
No, no—I loathe my mind for the doubt distraction,
Not reason, prompts ! Speak, brother, speak in
mercy !

This traitor's name ?

REVES. Behold him !
(during the previous dialogue MATTHEW, ARTHUR,
and BANCROFT have approached them)

ARTHUR. Whom ?

BANC. A witness to your guilt. Here, sirs !
(he goes up the stage and calls in OFFICERS, door c.)

MATT. My son ! (to FELICIA, who turns to ARTHUR) Away !
Thou hast no part in him ; thou art his sister.

FELIC. No !

ARTHUR. Father !

MATT. Forgive me, girl ! (extends his hand to her)

ARTHUR. Basil, what brought thee
To this abasement ?

REVES. (in a deep whisper) Why, my pride, that listened
Unto that demon !

FELIC. (to ARTHUR) Speak no more ; let's meet
Our fate in silence.

ARTHUR. Wife, his wretchedness
Doth outweigh ours. Look on him and have pity.

MATT. Pity ! he had none.

ARTHUR. (to REVESDALE) Say, how wast thou wrought
To this extreme ?

REVES. I deemed by you our house
Had suffered shame. *Exeunt two OFFICERS, c.*

FELIC. (with bitter laughter) Our house ! (ARTHUR signs
to her to be silent) If any speak,

I must. Our house! Thy house! Where ranks thy name
 In its roll of heroes? (*pointing to portraits*) See, their pictured forms
 Start into life and ask thee! Art thou heir Of him whose chivalry spared gallant foes?
 Thou didst not spare thy friend! Of him whose counsels
 Quelled bloody strife 'twixt kingdoms? Thou hast stained With blood thy hearth! Of him whose tuneful lips Sang noble deeds? How will this deed of thine Tell with the minstrels? Rise, ye shapes august, And with your lips white more with scorn than death,

Renounce him for your son!

BANC. Come, the king's business must be cared for now. Those stand without, who, till the troops arrive, Will be your guard in the castle.

ARTHUR. I am ready.

FELIC. But not alone. There's yet one comfort, love— That I can knit my fate so close with thine, No hand shall rend them. We await our doom. Ay, ours! If he be guilty, I partake His glorious crime!

ARTHUR. Felicia!

FELIC. I concealed him Within these walls to save his life. I failed. I triumph now, for I shall share his death!

(*casts herself on ARTHUR's neck*)

ARTHUR. What hast thou said?

BANC. I would it were unspoken. I meant not ill to her; but for this deed The law exacts its due.

(*goes up and waves hand*—OFFICERS enter, door, c., and stand on steps; at a sign from OFFICERS, ARTHUR and FELICIA, followed by MATTHEW, go up to the door in c., which is raised on a broad flight of stairs)

Conduct them hence.

REVES. (*as if awaking from stupor*) No, wretched! I'll save them—save—

(FELICIA, *on steps, door c., turns and looks earnestly at REVESDALE, on r.; all go out, door c., but REVESDALE, who stands awhile dumb and motionless; then, with a cry, falls prostrate*)

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE FIRST.—*Same as last Scene.* REVESDALE is seated in an attitude of mental prostration, on r., RICHARD leans over him; BANCROFT stands apart, watching them earnestly, on l.

BANC. (*to RICHARD*) He'll not answer?

RICH. You've done your work too well; for these two hours Has he sat thus, more kin to death than life.

BANC. (*aside*) Yet he must speak; for there be secrets still I would worm from him. Bid the guard conduct His sister here; the sight of her may rouse him.

RICH. Ay, to new torture.

BANC. Better that than humour A fatal lethargy. Go! *Exit RICHARD, door c.*

Our state secretary Writes in reproach—(*reading from a letter*) “that I have missed my clew To traitors here, who signed the requisition To the Prince of Orange.” Now, of these, ‘tis like One is young Ringwood. His known lenity To Monmouth’s faction, and the treasonous acts By him committed, make suspicion strong. Could I discover this, and his confederates Deliver up to justice, wealth and honours Beyond all hope were mine. By threats or wiles, I’ll wring the truth from Revesdale.

Enter FELICIA, with two OFFICERS, door c.

So! Retire. (*OFFICERS retire to the door in centre*) A torpor on your brother hangs, pernicious To health and life. Your voice, perchance, may wake His slumbering sense.

FELIC. (*gazing on him*) So prostrate! O, my brother,
 Now that my heart is calmer, it consents
 To my dear husband's pleading. Thy remorse
 Tells of a soul not base, but sorely tempted.
 Turn thy face hither; 'tis thy sister, Basil,
 Entreats thee!

REVES. (*on r., vacantly*) Who?
 FELIC. Felicia.
 REVES. Let no bless'd shape
 Visit this gulf, nor any save the one
 I wait for!

FELIC. (c.) Whom expect you?
 REVES. Go! you're fair
 — And pure; he'll not consort with such, the fiend
 Who plunged me here.

BANC. (*L., approaching with coarse laughter*) He raves!
 REVES. (*springing upon him*) Ah, ah! thou'rt come;
 I have thee in my gripe!

BANC. Let go your hold!
 Madman, be warned! release me! Off, I say!
 I'll crush thee to the earth!

REVES. Fool! Dost thou think
 My arms infold thee merely? 'Tis my soul
 That grasps its tempter! Mighty with despair,
 It twines around thee, drags thee down, down
 To its perdition!

BANC. Off! I choke! What right
 Have you for this? I sought my enemy's life,
 But you—

REVES. (*pausing*) Ay—well! Betrayed your friend!
 BANC. Betrayed your friend!

REVES. (*releases him and staggers back*) Thou'rt right.
 Thou hast crushed me to the earth!

FELIC. (R.) Basil! (BANCROFT goes up, c.)
 REVES. I look on thee, yet live!

FELIC. You never dreamed
 Of these sad issues. 'Twas a moment's frenzy
 Surprised and overcame you.

REVES. Is't to a wretch
 Like me, your murderer—

FELIC. Listen! If I'm wronged,

I have a claim on thee. O, let my words
 Fall in thy soul like holy seed, which time
 Shall turn to fruitful duty. Live to prove
 He who repents can expiate; live to serve
 Thy kind, that thou mayst say, when grateful hearts
 Bless thee, I had a sister once, whose spirit
 Still lives in mine. She prayed for me, she blessed
 me;

With her last breath she won me from despair,
 And left me what I am!

(REVESDALE interrupts her with a cry of anguish)

BANC. (looking off) A step! who comes?

Enter OFFICER, c. from L.

Well, sir, the troops?

OFFICER. Are on their way. I met them with a force
 More fit to take a city than a prisoner.

BANC. A wise precaution.

OFFICER. On their heels the crowd
 Followed with shouts.

BANC. And curses, doubtless.

OFFICER. That
 I know not; I but bore your summons to their
 captain. He laughed. "Your errand's stale; we were already
 Bent towards Revesdale."

BANC. (surprised) So!

OFFICER. I set spurs to horse,
 And thus outrode them. (at a sign of dismissal from
 BANCROFT, OFFICER exits, c. to L.)

BANC. Lady, you've scant time
 For preparation.

FELIC. Basil, one embrace!

REVES. No, no! (rushing up to BANCROFT) Baneroft, as
 yet the law knows not
 Of their offence; have pity—save her—save
 Her husband!

BANC. What, so low?

REVES. (sinking on his knees) Ay, in the dust.

Where should guilt be? So low! O, thou mightst

Above me like a god! This prostrate thing
That's at thy knees, helpless, disgraced, and hopeless,
A word from thee can fire with hope, strength,
honour.

The worm crawls; thou canst bid it rise a man!

BANC. There's but one chance. Let Ringwood own his
share

In the petition (*shewing a letter*) to the Prince of
Orange,

And trust to the king's mercy.

REVES. (*rising*) What petition?

BANC. That signed by traitors, urging William's presence,
Implying, if not offering, support.

REVES. (*aside*) The same I signed that day Felicia's
prayers

Won me from the conspiracy. (*aloud*) He never
Set hand to that.

BANC. Then he can give no clew
To the plot. I cannot save them. Mark me—'tis
of moment
Most vital some accomplice in that act
Should be discovered.

REVES. (*aside*) And my signature

To the requisition makes *me* such accomplice!

BANC. Time hurries. Officers!

REVES. Go, sister. Bancroft,
Remain.

FELIC. One last embrace.

REVES. Not now—I dare not; yet,
A time may come. Go; we shall meet once more,
Once more, my sister.

Exit FELICIA, door c. to L., guarded by two OFFICERS,

Now, you said detection

Of one who signed that deed was vital. Save

My sister and her husband, and I place

An accomplice in your power.

BANC. (*aside*) Ah! he bids high,

If I could trust him; yet to lose my vengeance!

Stay—I might compass both. Were Ringwood free,
The troops who are at hand might overtake him.

REVES. Your answer! The king's force is nigh.
 BANC. What ground
 Have I to trust you?
 REVES. This: I have confessed
 I know the traitor. If I break my word,
 The peril lights on me.
 BANC. It does already.
 REVES. I can be silent.
 BANC. (*aside*) True; the prey meanwhile
 May cheat me and escape. Will this accomplice
 Name his confederates?
 REVES. No.
 BANC. (*aside*) A foolish question!
 Once seized, if he prove obstinate, the rack
 Will force avowal. And within what time
 Will you reveal the culprit?
 REVES. When my sister
 And Ringwood are safe on shipboard.
 BANC. (*aside*) I'll so plan
 That ere they well spread sail they are pursued.
 Should they escape, the stake will justify
 My venture to the king. I take your terms.
 REVES. Quick, then—release them!
 BANC. Should you fail, be sure
 Your life—
 REVES. Will answer it.
 BANC. I go; we meet
 Straight in the court yard; but your pledge—
 remember! *Exit* BANCROFT, c. to L.
 REVES. He yields; they may be rescued! They may live
 In joy, with children round them, and my life,
 My worthless life may save them. Well said, sister;
 He who repents can expiate! *Exit*, c. to L.

SCENE SECOND.—*Court Yard of the Castle, with very large centre gates in flat, practical.*

Enter BANCROFT and OFFICER, r. 2 E.
 BANC. Mount you the roof of the castle; it commands
 The road for miles. The instant you catch sight

Of the troops, return; I'll speed you with instructions
To meet their leader. (*Exit OFFICER, l. 2 E.*) So, 'tis
well contrived.

Enter REVESDALE and RICHARD, r. 2 E.

REVES. She lies in the offing?

RICH. Ay, sir.

REVES. Bound, you say,

To Holland? Haste, good Richard; see a boat
Straight manned by the beach, and thither summon
friends

From the peasants and our people.

RICH. Think it done. *Exit RICHARD, l. 2 E.*

REVES. (*to BANCROFT*) The order for release—

BANC. Is given; even now
Your sister and her husband quit the door.

REVES. They pass this way!

BANC. I've kept my share of the compact;
Look to your own!

REVES. (*aside*) 'Till be a last farewell,
And then these arms will no more fold a sister
So noble, so forgiving, nor this hand
Clasp his whom I so wronged, so basely wronged,
And now would ransom! May they never know
That ransom's price!

*Enter FELICIA and ARTHUR, r. 2 E., preceded by four
OFFICERS, followed by ALICE, GILES, and a group of
DOMESTICS, who press around them.*

FELIC. Farewell, till happier times! (*embracing ALICE*)
O, they will come. Farewell, kind friends.

(*FELICIA and ARTHUR, with OFFICERS, advance, c.*)
FELIC. (c.) My brother!

Heaven has had mercy, and your prayers prevailed.

REVES. They did.

ARTHUR. (r., glancing at BANCROFT, up c.) And could
his heart be touched with pity?

'Tis strange!

REVES. (l.) Arthur! (*crosses to c.*)

ARTHUR. (*giving his hand*) Basil, believe no thought
Of harshness lives between us.

REVES.

I believe it,

My generous friend ; farewell !

FELIC.

Now to thine arms !

REVES. Yes ; now I think I dare embrace thee. Bless,
O, bless and pardon me ! (*they embrace*)

FELIC. (L.)

From my heart's depths.

But we shall meet again ; you'll join us soon
In the new land we seek ? Promise !

REVES. (c., very tenderly)

How like you are

To our lost mother, sweet ! That's the same look
Of anxious love she wore when we two children
Rode from the hall, and I, rash brother, urged
Your palfrey to his speed, or from the bough
Broke off the blossoming chestnut for your hat.FELIC. Ah, those old days, they'll come again ; once more
We'll be boy and girl together. (*anxiously*) Dear,
we part

But for a time.

REVES. But for a time, Felicia —

But for a time.

ARTHUR. (R.) Nay, there's some mystery. (*pointing*)
(to BANCROFT) Basil, you stand not in his power ?REVES. (affecting gaiety) His power !
His power ! You stand so, lingering here ; no safety
Till you embark ! Think of your father, Arthur ;
He waits you on the beach. Farewell, farewell —
No word but that !

ARTHUR. Basil !

FELIC. My brother ! (*returning and embracing him*)
REVES. Go !He gently forces them off, L. 2 E., OFFICERS following ; exeunt ALICE, GILES and DOMESTICS, R. 2 E.
BANC. (aside) The troops not yet in sight !REVES. (watching FELICIA and ARTHUR through the door, L. 2 E.) The gate stands open ;
The beach is lined with friends ; they pass the walls ;
The living lane divides ; and yet one group
Conceals the boat. Ah, now 'tis clear ; the pilot
Stands at the helm ; they pause ! 'Tis to embrace
Their father. Now her foot is on the plank,
And Arthur follows her. The rowers bend ;

It moves! it moves to the wide seas; they're saved!

Thank God! thank God! (*kneeling*)

BANC. (*aside*) May storm and hidden shoal

Wreak my full hate on Ringwood!—

(*suddenly, to REVESDALE*) Now your pledge!

That traitor who subscribed the requisition—

His name? Where lurks he?

REVES. Lurks! Why should *he* lurk?

The caitiff in his mesh lurks spider-like,

Who, from his very filament of life,

Spins death for others; cowards lurk, who gag

Men's reason by their passions, and then strike

A soul in fetters; bravos lurk, sometimes

Beneath a soldier's cloak, and, spite of all

The slouch betrays them. Lurk! lurk thou! Thy
victim

Stands in broad day and waits thee.

BANC. (R.) Who?

REVES. (L.) Myself.

BANC. You signed that deed?

REVES. Ay.

BANC. And you know your doom?

REVES. 'Tis death.

BANC. I see. You think to 'scape
By naming your confederates. Well, proclaim them.

REVES. Never! They're fled; thou hast lost the scent.

(*with scornful laughter*)

BANC. (*enraged and half drawing*) Beware!

REVES. (*touching the sword hilt*) It is a sword; I thought
to have seen a knife.

BANC. Mark, then; 'tis not your death alone impends,
But, ere death, torture.

REVES. Torture! Man, I've lain
Upon the rack—*remorse*; can thine affright me?

Re-enter OFFICER, R. 2 E.

BANC. Well, laggard?

OFFICER. Sir, the troops—

BANC. A curse reward their dallying!

OFFICER. Are at hand

We had descried them long since but for the mist.

BANC. To your horse, and hide
Your rowels in his flank ! Haste them !

(OFFICER. They come,
Battalion on battalion, and the shout
Of following crowds roars like a distant sea.

Exit L. 2 E.

BANC. That's strange ! such numbers ! (*goes to L. 2 E.*)
Ah, the boat returns,
And with its freight—Ringwood, his wife ! they land,
And bend this way. Unlooked-for chance ! fools, fools !
They're in my power at last ; for now the troops
Will bar escape !

REVES. O, fatal sight ! Back, back !

BANC. They're welcome. Guards !

Enter FELICIA, ARTHUR, and MATTHEW, L. 2 E.

Enter OFFICERS, R. 2 E.

The tables turn, my lord.

Their lives and yours are at my mercy.

ARTHUR. No !

FELIC. Hold, husband ! What ! his life ?

BANC. (*in c.*) He has confessed
To a treasonous plot, and thereby bought your rescue,
But screens his guilty partners. Hark ! the troops.
(*military music without, L. U. E.*)

Not theirs slow justice. In one hour they try,
Pronounce, despatch ! Look on that pair.

(*points to FELICIA and ARTHUR, on L.*) The sun
Climbs, they bask in his light, are here. An hour
He will be in his zenith ; but where they ?

'Tis you must answer. Speak ! You're comrades' names,
Or friend and sister perish ! (*he beckons to GUARDS,*
who advance towards FELICIA and ARTHUR ;
they halt at a signal from BANCROFT, on L. C.)

REVES. Wretch ! to bribe

The conscience through the heart.

(*in great agony*) Felicia ! Arthur !

What ! must a brother doom them, or pollute
Their very lives by blood ? Off, tempter, off !

No; I'll not buy their pure lives with dishonour.
Earth has a Judge; I trust in Him to save them.

(crosses to c.)

FELIC. (*embracing him*) O, twice redeemed, my brother!

MATT. (*to REVESDALE*) My son!

BANC. (*r., to OFFICERS*) Away with them!

FELIC. They will not stir.

BANC. How?

FELIC. (*clinging to REVESDALE*) Hear! As through the
mist we ploughed the main,

A skiff crossed ours. Its pilot stayed our course,
Inquired our name and errand. These being told,
"Return," he cried; "no need to quit your shores;
Friends follow you—friends able to protect
Or to avenge." Wouldst meet those friends?

(cheering without at back) Hark! hark!
The cheers of thousands greet them. (*discharge of*

artillery at back) Does that sound

Shake thee? 'Tis but a whisper to the shout

A nation's heart would utter—a free nation's!

Enter RICHARD, GILES, and ALICE r. 2 e. RETAINERS
and PEASANTS rush in, l. 2 e., shouting.

Fling wide the gates! See William of Nassau,
The Prince of Orange! (*march behind*)

(*the large gates are thrown open, and discover in
the distance the fleet painted on flat, PRINCE
WILLIAM OF ORANGE disembarking, the coast lined
with TROOPS and others. Rows set waters across.
Low wall piece across in front of waters, plat-
form in centre—SOLDIERS and BANNER MEN on
stage, c., grouped, and DIGNITARIES, with staffs of
office discovered—renewed discharge of artillery.*
FELICIA throws herself into ARTHUR's arms)

BANC. (*r.*) But the troops—

MATT. Go over to the Prince. (*crosses c.*)

(*to four SOLDIERS who have entered, r. 2 e.*) Secure
this man. (*SOLDIERS seize BANCROFT*)

Wretches, by him suborned, as I shall prove,
Have brought the innocent to timeless death.

MATT. Off with him!

Exeunt two SOLDIERS with BANCROFT, R. 2 E.

ARTHUR. How fares Basil?

REVES. O, as one

Who 'scaped from shipwreck, wakes, half deeming still
The billows round him, but beholds the earth
And the soft sky.

MATT. You wake in a new reign.

FELIC. And, brother, with new hopes.

REVES. To a new life!

(*renewed shouts and artillery; the PRINCE is seen in centre, surrounded by his SUITE; he takes off his hat; flourish and shouts; grand tableau*)

SOLDIERS and BANNERS,	SOLDIERS and BANNERS,
grouped.	grouped.
<i>Gates open.</i>	

PRINCE OF ORANGE.

OFFICERS. OFFICERS.

OFFICERS. OFFICERS.

DIGNITARIES. DIGNITARIES.

ALICE. PEASANTS.

GILES.

RICHARD.

RETAINERS.

SERVANTS.

MATTHEW. REVESDALE.

FELICIA. ARTHUR.

R.

L.

Curtain.