

LACY'S ACTING EDITION.

LEAH, THE FORSAKEN.

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LEAH, THE FORSAKEN.

A Play,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY

AUGUSTIN DALY,

AUTHOR OF

*Griffith Gaunt; Under the Gaslight; Taming a Butterfly,
&c., &c.*

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LEAH, THE FORSAKEN.

*First produced at the Howard Athneæum, Boston, U.S.A.,
December 9th, 1862.*

Characters,

As performed at Niblo's Garden, January 19th, 1872.

LORENZ (<i>an old Magistrate</i>)	Mr. J. BURNETT.
RUDOLF (<i>his Son</i>)	Mr. EDWIN ADAMS.
FATHER HERMAN (<i>the Village Priest</i>)	...	Mr. J. W. LANERGAN.
LUDWIG (<i>a Barber and Doctor</i>)	...	Mr. E. LAMB.
GROPHEN (<i>a Butcher</i>)	Mr. DENNISON.
JOHANN (<i>a Tailor</i>)	Mr. RENDLE.
FRITZ (<i>a Baker</i>)	Mr. BLAISDELL.
JACOB (<i>a Country Youth</i>)	Mr. H. C. WILSON.
MADALENA (<i>Niece of Father Herman</i>)		Mrs. H. S. CHANFRAN
DAME GERTRUDE (<i>an Old Woman</i>)		Mrs. MOORE.
MOTHER GROSCHEN (<i>a Landlady</i>)		Mrs. SKERRETT.
ROSEL (<i>Jacob's Sweetheart</i>)	Miss E. WOOD.
LEAH (<i>Child of Rudolf and Madalena</i>)		SUSIE SWINDLEHURST.
Villagers, &c.		

JEWS.

LEAH (<i>a Jewish Maiden</i>)	Miss BATEMAN.
NATHAN (<i>an Apostate Jew, known as Master Carl, the Schoolmaster</i>)	...	J. W. WALLACK, Junr.
ABRAHAM (<i>a blind Old Man</i>)	...	Mr. GEO. ANDREWS.
SARAH (<i>a Jewish Woman</i>)	Mrs. H. P. GRATTAN.

Time of Representation—Two hours and thirty-five minutes.

SCENE.—AN AUSTRIAN VILLAGE.

DATE OF PLAY—EARLY PART OF 18TH CENTURY.

The First, Second and Third Acts occupy two days and two nights; a lapse of a week between Third and Fourth Acts; a lapse of five years between Fourth and Fifth Acts.

LEAH, THE FORSAKEN.

ACT I.

SCENE.—*A Village. Good Friday afternoon. A rustic bridge at back crossing waterfall; church on right, up stage; a stately farm house in front, on left; some chairs under trees.—Music.*

PEASANTS discovered leaving church, from which is heard the following hymn with organ accompaniment.

CHORUS.

All blessings on this holy day,
That teaches us to know
What great rewards await above
Good actions done below;
How pain to pleasure turneth there,
How bleeding feet are shod
With seraph sandals fit to tread
The highways of the God.
Oh! teach us, then, the fallen and
The lowly head to raise,
To better imitate His works
And walk His holy ways.

(FATHER HERMAN advances slowly from church to front—
the PEASANTS salute him—after he has reached the front,
MADELINA advances from church, prayer-book in hand,
and kisses his hand)

MAD. Ah, father, you have made my heart so happy to-day by your exalted words.

FATHER H. Not the words, my child, but the subject which I preached. I spoke of the sufferings and sorrow—

MAD. Would that I could suffer for humanity.

FATHER H. Love it, and you will suffer for it!

MAD. But I would make some sacrifice. The more faithfully to imitate the heroines who have suffered before me, I would walk my feet sore.

FATHER H. Better would it be for you to bind up the

wounds of others ; the sacrifices of heroes were often only the triumphs of vanity.

MAD. Oh, if I could only perform some good work. But, (*clapping her hands joyously*) you remember that woman ?

FATHER H. The Jewess ?

MAD. Yes, the wandering woman ?

FATHER H. You have told me that you had met her.

MAD. Let me look for her, bring her here with her poor abandoned family ; let me provide for them in our own house.

FATHER H. You forget, child, that we are not masters here. Would you take up strange Jews who might become a burden to the village ?

MAD. They are erring suffering fellow-beings.

FATHER H. (*mildly*) Well—well, I'll not dispute you. See, here comes the magistrate, and his friend, the schoolmaster.

MAD. Oh, yes, Father Lorenz will not refuse me.

Enter LORENZ and NATHAN, arm in arm from church, talking together—they advance to front.

LORENZ. (*to NATHAN*) Yes, for each grain of comfort, a ton of sorrow.

NATHAN. So runs the world, good Father Lorenz.

LOR. Of what use to me that the fields give such promise of a rich harvest ? For whom have I sown seed ? I am old and gray ; and my son has turned from me.

NATH. Indeed there is fear that he may become a heretic.

LOR. On the day when all good people redouble their prayers, he alone neglects his. At each creaking of the church door did I look around, expecting to see my son, but no Rudolf came.

MAD. (*approaching timidly*) Good morning, Father Lorenz.

LOR. Oh ! bless you, my little Madalena. (*to FATHER HERMAN*) Beg pardon, your reverence ; but that was what I call a sermon. It went direct to the heart ; I am only sorry that my son heard not a word ; the better you spoke, the worse I felt.

FATHER H. Nay, Father Lorenz. Who knows what kept him away to-day ? The youth is good and diligent.

NATH. He did not come to church ? Is he Christian ? Still waters run deep, your reverence, (*aside*) and he who has dived beneath them knows their depths.

FATHER H. Schoolmaster, one may be excused from coming to church.

NATH. Shame, your reverence, you should better have said—he that cannot walk must crawl to our temple this day.

FATHER H. You cling so closely to the forms. I fear you forget the spirit of Christian precept.

NATH. Thanks, your reverence. You and I can never agree. But I was at church to-day, though I am not so young as Rudolf. Still he is well conducted, and marvellously quiet in demeanour.

LOR. That's it. I do not wish him to be so quiet. I would willingly pardon him a thousand mad pranks, if he still keeps a heart for good. But there he lacks. Look at that girl. (*pointing to MADALENA*) Is she not comely, modest and good? Why does he not bring her to me as his wife? I will joyfully give him house, barns and fields. But the hypocrite—

MAD. Do not speak ill of him, Father Lorenz, before you have heard him. Perhaps he is about some errand of good which he desires to conceal until it is accomplished. Just as last week when he went far over the hills to seek herbs for your painful foot, you scolded half the night through, yet the next morning you were well, and he was quietly at work.

LOR. What do you desire, my good girl?

MAD. You will not let me speak to the end.

LOR. Have we not a holiday to-day? and besides, your voice may help to chase away my evil mood. (*they ALL sit*)

NATH. (*sneeringly*) Let that be rather the labour of religion, my friend. Seek not to attain the benefits of holy comforts through the gross indulgence of the senses:

LOR. You hear the schoolmaster, Father Herman? Ha, ha, ha!

FATHER H. Our good schoolmaster would surely have been a Pharisee had he been born a Jew.

NATH. A Jew! How dare—no, no. I would say why does your reverence choose such a strange comparison? (*aside*) Can he suspect me?

LOR. Ha, ha, ha! The good father is even with you for preaching when he is present. Go on, Madalena, my child. Schoolmaster, you and I shall scourge ourselves afterwards for this indulgence. Go on, my child.

MAD. Not long since I heard that on the other side of the forest a poor woman had given birth to a child. I took what I had of old linen, a jug full of milk, and white bread, and went to see her. The young spring sun shone warmly, and when I reached the hill-top everything was fragrant and blooming. I put my burden on the ground and commenced to look for berries, when suddenly I was startled by voices near me. I went towards the spot whence they came, and found a woman lying weak and pallid on a couch of dried leaves. Beside her knelt a young girl, in whose lap was an infant. Tall and strangely clad, her brown hair flowing over her naked shoulders, her great eyes gleaming beneath her arched brows. I shuddered with a strange fear as I gazed

upon her. She was feeding from a porringer of milk the little infant, seeming to take fresh pleasure herself from every mouthful it swallowed. I saw that her porringer was nearly empty, so I ran forward and placed the milk and bread I had before her. Half afraid and half too proud to ask if it was for her, she took it up and gazed wistfully at me. Seeing that I did not forbid, she gently placed it to the lips of the child, which drank so deeply and blissfully; then presented it to the mother, and then when all the others had been satisfied, placed it to her own lips, and drained the scanty remnant with an eagerness that showed me she, too, had thirsted.

LOR. (*affected*) Noble woman.

NATH. Excellent woman. Who was she?

FATHER H. A good Christian who assisted her fellow-beings.

NATH. So. I saw no good Christian woman with naked shoulders at church to-day.

MAD. You shall hear. The strange woman rose up, drew my hands to her lips, and covered them with kisses. "You are this poor woman's sister," I asked. "No," she said. "Whence come you then?" "I am a Jewess."

ALL. A Jewess!

MAD. My hand trembled, but I had not strength to withdraw it. She smiled bitterly and said, "That quivering pulse, beautiful girl, tells me that you had not suspected me." Our people have been driven from Hungary, our miserable huts burned. I escaped with a blind man. We sought shelter among the beasts of the field, for man has driven us forth. As I wandered past here I met this poor woman with her infant, and stopped to succour them.

LOR. An excellent Jewess.

NATH. This is all very well, but you have forgotten the poor Christian woman for whom you intended the milk and bread.

MAD. This was the Christian woman and her child.

LOR. What? The Jewess succoured a Christian?

MAD. Yes, and had it not been so, would you have asked the thirsting child its creed?

NATH. We hold differently; the good priest and I—

FATHER H. Not I! I agree with her.

LOR. Peace, peace, friends. Schoolmaster, we will argue the point anon. Let the girl finish.

MAD. Nay, I have done. And now, good Father Lorenz, you must grant me a favour. You are magistrate here; permit me to take in these unfortunates—

NATH. (*excited suddenly*) The Jewess. Is the girl mad?

MAD. That I may bring up the child.

NATH. Great heavens ! Impious ! Does your reverence hear your niece ?

LOR. Let the girl finish, I say.

NATH. (*rising*) I will not. It is a disgrace that she has spoken thus far. Adopt here a Jewess and her brood. Here, in a village which has always been a century in advance of its neighbours in intelligence and civilization, and from which the Jews have been driven over a hundred years ago !

FATHER H. As far advanced were the barbarians.

NATH. Good. Speak against me, your reverence ; call it barbarity ! Show the congregation how highly you think of the laws of your country. Does not our Government command, that in this province, no Jew shall keep himself over night ? It is for this that we are happy and so free from usury, trickery and deceit.

FATHER H. Well—well, schoolmaster, if it comes to that, even in this happy village, we may find deceit.

NATH. Your reverence will answer for the consciences you can see, I trust, and no more. My book of life is clear.

FATHER H. Since when ? True, you have lived among us twenty years, and have been the strictest in the creed of all our neighbours. But what, or who you were before that time, no man I ever saw could tell.

NATH. (*aside*) Does he suspect ? Pshaw ! (*aloud*) Ha, ha ! Good father, anon I will tell you my most private acts from my birth to my coming here.

MAD. Don't let him misguide you, Father Lorenz.

LOR. My child, the affair is difficult. Let me think over it.

MAD. Why reflect ? Be humane, be just !

NATH. Yes, just, girl, let us be. Here a principle comes into play, do you understand. The principle of maintaining the holy laws——

MAD. Of humanity.

NATH. Of our good Government, which wisely ordain to the sinful ribs of the Jew the stripes which the backs of the Christian shall escape. Do you know what a wretch a Jew is ? Why, in Prague they burn his eyebrows ! In Stockholm they tear a rude cross upon his back with iron teeth ! Hum ! Good father, a cross we should be loath to bear. Do you know what it is to declare yourself a Jew in Gratz ? It is to be cast headlong into the nearest dyer's vat, if no other cauldron be handy. I saw a pitiful Jew once running through the streets of Gratz with howling devils at his heels. He flies—they pursue—foam streams from his mouth—he turns and doubles, until at last he sinks exhausted—they are upon him—they lift him up. A sturdy dyer cries out, "Boil him in my shop !" They toss him into an indigo vat—he writhes a

moment—then cries out “ Mercy ! I will become a Christian ! ” They dragged out the converted, half-scalded wretch—drenched him with water, and he lived a good blue Christian for many years after.

Enter MOTHER GROSCHEN, DAME GERTRUDE, LUDWIG, GROPHEN, FITZ and JACOB, anxiously and curiously, from different roads, and come down, R.

MOTHER G. Why, what's this noise about, schoolmaster ?

NATH. Nothing, nothing, good mother, except that our pretty Madalena here wishes to bring a Jewess into the village.

ALL. A Jewess ! Never !

LOR. Hold your tongues, and don't make such a disturbance ! You were not consulted, schoolmaster ; the girl addressed herself to me. (*to MADALENA*) Come, my child. Come, Father Herman. (*going towards house*)

NATH. (*humbly*) I crave your pardon, if I was too zealous for our holy faith and my duty ; I try to provide for the morals in our youth.

FATHER H. (*to NATHAN*) I must undo your meddling work. (*NATHAN bows lowly*) Friends, listen to me. She asked shelter for a houseless woman and child for a few days.

MOTHER G. Ah, if it is only for a short time.

ALL. A few days !

LUD. Yes ; for a few days one might be able to stand it, but if they once get fast, ten devils can't move them. Let in one or two, and then Cousin Abraham, and Uncle Moses will be smuggled in. Cousin Abraham will open a tailor's shop on Monday, and Moses will begin a bakery on Tuesday, and both will sell their miserable wares at half price.

FRITZ. And steal the bread of honest people from their mouths.

JACOB. And give little fellows like me shorter measure than we give them stuff for our clothes.

LUD. But we must keep out the pestilence, and prevent the plague. For this are we doctors.

MOTHER G. A Jewish child in the village ! Why, neighbours, then farewell to a quiet hour. We'll have to be running around all day, seeing that our children do not meet the little Jew and come to harm.

DAME G. Ah, that I should live to hear this ! Is the Jewess to be admitted here to poison our wells and fountains, as in the year sixteen hundred ? Is she to bewitch our children that they become infected with——

LUD. Good mother, fear not. For that are we doctors.

Enter several more PEASANTS crying "Where is the Jewess?"

LOR. Why ask me? Do I know?

NATH. (*to PEASANTS*) While you are standing here, she perhaps is skulking about the village already. We want no witches and child murderers here.

MOTHER G. Good gracious! Where is my little Frank? Where is my child? Frank! Perhaps the Jewess has already killed him!

ALL. The Jewess! The Jewess!

FATHER H. Friends, children, hear me!

NATH. (*to CROWD*) The priest is a freethinker!

FATHER H. Who said that word?

NATH. Away friends, seek the accursed witch—drag her here. *Exit NATHAN and PEASANTS severally.*

MAD. In the name of heaven, neighbours, stay! Do hear me! Is the poor woman to come to harm through me?

LOR. (*calling after them*) Hold I say! Hold good people—a thousand devils, stay! Do you not listen to the voice of your magistrate? (*cries heard in distance*)

MAD. (*clinging to FATHER HERMAN*) Protect the woman, uncle. Let no harm befall her.

(*loud cries—the VILLAGERS appear on bridge, dragging on*

LEAH, who boldly pushes them off, and re-enters from upper entrance and runs to front, the CROWD follow, shouting)

ALL. Down with her! Stone her!

(*FATHER HERMAN and LORENZ interpose*)

LEAH. (*haughtily and boldly*) I am here! What do you want with me?

NATH. What seek you here, daughter of an accursed race?

LEAH. (*looking searchingly around*) I seek—(*shaking her head sadly*) no one!

MAD. (*running to her*) You seek bread?

LEAH. No, I did not come to beg. (*looking round*) Not here, he is not here. (*attempts to go off—LUDWIG stops her*)

LUD. Not so fast. Hold on there! First confess what brought you here.

JACOB. Yes, What did she seek here? I saw her hiding behind the elder-bush. Is it not so? Deny it, if you can!

NATH. (*confidentially to PEASANTS*) I will tell you what she sought here. To-morrow they celebrate their accursed Passover, when they devour little children as a sacrifice. Yes, good mother, little children! She was laying in wait for your little ones to kill.

(*ALL start with horror and murmur—JACOB shrinks behind crowd*)

DAME G. See, how she turns away her eyes! It must be true! Deny it, if you can!

FATHER H. (*striding towards NATHAN*) What have you said to these ignorant people, malignant bigot? You will be answerable for her blood.

NATH. (*smiling*) I'm a good Christian.

PEASANTS. To the water with her!

LOR. Hold!

FATHER H. Listen to me!

MAD. Friends, do not harin her.

PEASANTS. To the water wilh her! Stone her!

(LEAH stands calmly—the PEASANTS rush at her, and struggle with LORENZ to reach her—MADALENA is pushed aside)

FATHER H. (*dividing the CROWD, and confronting it*) Men! Women! What has the woman done to you? Do you seek to revive the horrors which all men shudder to recollect?

PEASANTS. Down with the Jewess!

NATH. You hear, priest? The voice of the people! You know what this is?

FATHER H. I do; but heaven speaks through its ordained priest. (CROWD advance) Back, blind' people! I lay my anointed hands upon her. Daughter of Judea, do not tremble, I am thy protector. (LEAH utters a low cry, and cowers before him)

NATH. See, the wretch trembles! She cannot bear his touch! Down with her! Stone her!

(FATHER HERMAN lifts the cross from his neck before them, and at the sight of the symbol the CROWD uncover their heads, and bow in submission)

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

A C T I I.

SCENE First.—*A Room in the House of Father Lorenz.*

Enter MADALENA and RUDOLF.

RUD. Angry? My father angry with me? That is but an old story now. I seem never to be able to please him.

MAD. Nay, it was because you were not at church to-day. This day, when all the villagers, old and young, were there to hear Father Herman.

RUD. Well, there was a time when I could stroll over the vine-hills without arousing his displeasure.

MAD. The good priest spoke in your behalf, and Father

Lorenz became much quieter afterwards, saying that he would speak to you to-night, when you were comfortably seated at home.

RUD. I cannot be at home to-night.

MAD. No.

RUD. No, my little Madalena; I must go over the vine-hills.

MAD. At night, Rudolf?

RUD. At night. To-night!

MAD. Yes; and every night, too, Rudolf, for you are never at home now. You are always absent. Your father——

RUD. Will be more angry still, I know it. Am I not unfortunate! Just as he would have me, I am called elsewhere.

MAD. Who calls you elsewhere?

RUD. Ah! that is my secret.

MAD. It must be indeed a secret, for Father Lorenz, and Father Herman have constantly asked you the same thing, and you have never made them any reply.

RUD. Why, my father would be a confessor, and the confessor would have me publicly confess, and that you know. My little Madalena is not as the church directs.

MAD. Dear Rudolf, you smile, and I know you are good-tempered again. Now promise me to be at home to-night. Be at home for my sake.

RUD. I cannot.

MAD. Whither must you go then?

RUD. Do you question me, too?

MAD. Because you always made me your confidant. Have I deserved your mistrust?

RUD. I mistrust you? Are you not my childhood's friend.

MAD. And did we not reveal to each other all our secrets? How often have your companions laughed when you neglected them for me? See, here is the little silver ring you brought me from the fair at Gratz the first time you went there with your father. See how tightly it now encircles my finger—so that no force can remove it.

RUD. Alas! happy days.

MAD. Is it my fault that these are less happy now? Am I less kind than when you used to kiss me even before you kissed your mother? What troubles you? Speak.

RUD. (*taking her hand*) Madalena!

MAD. Tell me, I will be as secret as the grave, and you will feel easier.

RUD. What shall I tell you?

MAD. Why are you so changed? You are not at peace in your father's house. Oh, Rudolf, could you have heard how solemnly your father spoke to the good priest of you.

"Let him," said he, "follow his evil ways, avoid his father, but one day, when he seeks me, the way will be barred against him." Oh, Rudolf, Rudolf! this is an evil time. When father and son no longer work together, who shall be friends? He has studied, received new ideas, but the day will come when time will pass as unmercifully over them as ploughshare over ant hills, and only the simple heart will hold its own.

RUD. (*impatiently*) He spoke this?

MAD. Yes. (*RUDOLF laughs slightly*) Oh, do not look thus. You remind me so much of that Jewess.

RUD. (*hastily*) What of her? What did she hear?

MAD. Ah, I wished you had been here to protect her. They threatened her with death!

RUD. Who!

MAD. Every one. We feared that they might follow her to her abiding place.

RUD. (*aside*) In danger! (*aloud*) Farewell! (*going*)

MAD. (*sadly*) And you are going?

RUD. And dare not to stay—honour—conscience alike forbid it; but think kindly of me, Madalena. Farewell—farewell!

Tears himself from her and exits.

MAD. (*tearfully*) Heaven protect him; he is sadly changed.

Exit.

SCENE SECOND.—*A Forest. Night; the moon not risen; a large ruined cross on platform, in centre.*

LEAH. (*discovered sitting on platform of cross*) Welcome, night! In the miserable hut over the vine-hills sleep the mother and child, and on the threshold cowers Abraham, the blind watcher. Sleep on; you need me not. Innocence is guarded by the angels, and the wings of the Eternal Majesty shelters its head! Yet I watch, and anxiously wait until my Messiah comes. Oh Rudolf, Rudolf! Beloved, come, take all the love, all the long-looked for bliss I can give thee. The night is still, the leaves are softly praying, I, too, pray for thee! (*turns to cross, but starts back in horror*) Ha, at the cross! Ill-omened visage! Why do I shiver with horror when I look on thee? Why do thy ghost-like features fright me away? As a lonely child in a strange house seeks in affright some familiar face, so do I tremblingly hope for some well-known object to cheer my solitary spirit. Ah, welcome, thrice welcome, Luna! Thy beams rest on me as they did in childhood, when I carried the little lamp before my old father as he went out with solemn ritual to bless and pray to thee as I pray now—not for my people—not for our fallen cities—but for him, the adored one whom I worship, for whom my soul liveth!

Enter RUDOLF.

RUD. Leah.

LEAH. (*hastening to him*) Is it thou, Rudolf?

RUD. Poor child.

LEAH. No, not poor; I have thee—thy look—thy touch—thy kiss. Where is the queen with whom I would exchange?

RUD. Dearest.

LEAH. Thou lovest me?

RUD. Can you ask?

LEAH. No, I believe you. In whom could I believe if not in thee? For thee I have forgotten all else, even our people's deeply cherished hate.

RUD. What say you—hate?

LEAH. What else was left us? Houseless wanderers, as we hung our harps upon the willows that line the shore of Babel, our torturers derisively bade us sing. We struck the mute strings and cried, "Woe, Babel, woe to thee! And through centuries this song has been the consolation of Judea's fugitive sons. You may burn our huts, drive our children into the wilderness, rob us of all else; but you cannot take from us that song of vengeance. (*melting*) But you—you dearest, you have robbed me of this last treasure. This hatred of the Christians. I asked you your creed, you answered—"Heaven is love!" I loved thee, and was converted.

RUD. No, it is I, strange woman, who was taught by thee, since that night when I first saw thee in the wood, and moved by thy sorrow, offered thee my hand and guided thy steps towards this cot which now affords shelter to thee and thine; since that night a strange bond draws me to thee—thou givest me no rest nor peace—in my sleep thy image is ever present—thy dark eyes are ever gazing in my soul—thy gleaming hair ever twining round my hands draws me to thy heart. When the searching glances of the old priest strive to read my secret—when my father and my childhood's friend ask knocking at my heart—where is the old love! Thou startest before me, thy kiss seals the secret on my lips. Then I am angry that thou hast taken from me all that was once so dear, and I hate thee—yet thou hast given me more than thou hast taken, and I pity thee—and hate, fear and pity are my love!

LEAH. Be brave, my beloved! Know with me how beautiful it is to love. It is a secret, like the temple once hidden from each mortal eye; it lies as the pearl and diamond do, deep in the earth, precious, yet hidden. I gave up my friends, thou gavest thine. Let us leave this old Mizriam, and wander through the desert into the promised land.

RUD. Yes; you are right. I am ashamed of myself, and of my time when everything moves in such narrow bounds; when

love, envy and hate are bought and sold with little profit. You have drawn me out of this circle in which the bonds of prejudice tied me, and out of this dark region have shown me light ! Henceforth the world is mine, and every man my friend. (*fast*) Eight days of travel will bring us to the sea, across which is the free land where love and duty no longer contend. There we will plough the soil, and on it rear the altar of a new religion, that shall teach love and brotherhood to all men. You weep, Leah.

LEAH. No ; I but prayed that we might not outlive our love.

RUD. I see my way clearly. I will reveal all to my father.

LEAH. You will then—

RUD. Do all that duty bids me. I know he will not hear me. You saw for yourself to-day how they have been stricken with blindness. They threatened you with death.

LEAH. I did not feel terror.

RUD. If my father will not consent, farewell fatherland. We will seek a home across the sea. (*embraces*) Good night, Leah—you will follow me to America?

LEAH. Does the light ask if the shadow will follow it ? Yet, what will become of them ?

RUD. Of whom ?

LEAH. The mother, the child, the old blind man, I am their eye, their hand, their foot. Can I leave them to perish ?

RUD. (*bitterly*) Ah, the people of your church. Your choice, Leah, will you prefer them to me ?

LEAH. Beloved one, what am I without thee ? To sin for thee is not sin.

RUD. Then you consent, dearest ?

LEAH. Have I a choice left ?

RUD. My wife. To-morrow night.

NATHAN appears at back and steals across stage, and crouches behind cross, as RUDOLF goes out.

LEAH. (*calling after him*) Rudolf !

Re-enters RUDOLF.

A sudden pain ! Here, Oh, Rudolf ! What does it mean ?

RUD. Dearest ! (*supporting her*)

LEAH. *breaking from him*) Rudolf, but this moment a pain ! Oh, Rudolf, as night embraces day in the mystic hour of twilight, so do all my hopes, all my apprehensions unite in thee ! I love ! I fear ! Oh, Rudolf, promise me, promise again !

RUD. To love you ?

LEAH. No ; but to forsake me not.

RUD. You doubt me?

LEAH. No, a thousand times no. For to doubt you were to hate you. Doubt you? Oh, Rudolf, you have lifted me out of a dark and noisome sepulchre to the light of day! Had you not stopped by the brink—not looked down in pity on my wistful eyes, but gone your way and heeded me no more—perchance you might have been happy and I content. But you stretched down your hand to mine; you brought me up from those festering depths, where my girlish heart seemed fast falling to decay. You placed me in the revivifying sunlight of love. I learned my soul to laugh at your coming footsteps; I began to feel that I was a woman—not that hideous blot upon the face of nature, a Jewish outcast! This is what you have done. But, Rudolf, I can never go back to my prison-house again. I shall be exacting, chary of every smile, selfish in every atom of my enjoyment. I *will not* be betrayed, for you have lifted me up, and I am strengthened. You have shown me the sun, and it has fired me with pride.

RUD. (*stands amazed, and then embraces her with rapture*) You do love me, Leah, and you shall not fear—good night! To-morrow I will await thee—thou knowest where the great linden tree at the Cross Road stands—there a new vista of life opens before us. You will be there?

LEAH. I will!

RUD. To be for ever mine. And now good night. (*kiss*)

LEAH. (*forming her hands over his head*) Bless thee, dearest, Good night!

(RUDOLF *hurries off by the road on the left*—NATHAN appears at back looking after him—LEAH, her hands still joined as if over RUDOLF's head, remains as in prayer, as the curtain descends)

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE FIRST.—*A Room in Father Lorenz's House. A door at the back and on right; large windows on left with view of village now closed; easy chair; time, morning.*

MOTHER GROSTHEN, JACOB, ROSEL, FRITZ, DAME GERTRUDE, GROPHEN and one or two others discovered listening at door, R., as curtain rises. Enter MADALENA with LUDWIG from door, R.

MOTHER G. Well, Miss Madalena, what news of our patient the good Father Lorenz?

MAD. Many thanks to you, and your good friends, he

is better. The bleeding did him much good, and with heaven's help we have nothing more to fear. Is it not so, doctor?

LUD. Well, one cannot always tell, my good girl. Nature is a capricious child, to-day we strike her on the finger and believe her cured, to-morrow she repeats the same disorder—but for that are we doctors!

MOTHER G. But what made him sick so suddenly?

LUD. What? An apoplexia sanguinosa!

JACOB. A fit of apoplexy? Bah!

LUD. Tailor, remain with your goose. Seek not to penetrate the secrets of the Materia Medica. What, apoplexy? Vulgar and barbarous. An apoplexia sanguinosa, I say. For that are we doctors.

MOTHER G. And yesterday he was still so well.

LUD. Does that surprise you, Mother Groschen? He who dies to-day, was yesterday still living. Every one cannot remain healthy. For a man to be reckoned sick he must some time have been well. For that are we doctors.

MOTHER G. What was the cause of it?

MAD. Sad news.

LUD. Oh, nonsense! A good physician never troubles himself about the cause. If I see a house burn do I ask who lighted it before I strive to put it out? A person can become sick without cause, as many remain well against all reason. And for that are we doctors.

FRITZ. Why, Miss Madalena, the news spread over the whole village that Father Lorenz had been stricken with apoplexy, and that Rudolf was the cause of it.

MAD. (*perplexed*) Why, what do you mean?

MOTHER G. He is said to have had a hard dispute with the old man.

MAD. Oh, how can you believe that! He is sitting at his father's bedside weeping. His eye is faded and dead; his face pale. Alas! I fear much for his health. Doctor, what shall I do for him?

LUD. Have you still some of those drops which I prescribed last week for the horse? Give him a few of them; they cure everything.

MAD. Hark! the old man calls. Go, friends. I thank you all for your interest. (*loud*) I am coming, Father Lorenz—I am coming.

Exit door, R.

LUD. And I must be going. I must be off to cup Martin, the smith, who must have taken too many cups inwardly, must now a few outwardly. Thence I must go to see Mother Mathias, and bleed her; thence to his reverence to shave him. Should any of your children in the meantime choke with a

brass button, or tumble out of window, you will know where to find me. For all this are we doctors!

(*runs out of the door at back, and against NATHAN, who enters there, bows and exits*)

NATH. Good morning, friends.

MOTHER G. Good Morrow, Schoolmaster, how came you out so early?

NATH. I have made a discovery. Ah, Rudolf—Rudolf!

MOTHER G. Rudolf? What of him?

FRITZ. Yes, what of him?

NATH. Ah! my friends, how strange that there should be hypocrisy here.

MOTHER G. Oh, do tell us. Don't keep us in suspense.

FRITZ. Yes, we are neglecting our business.

NATH. Last night I watched Rudolf steal away to the hut at the borders of the forest, and went to inform his father. The old man merely nodded his head; but every quarter of an hour he looked at the clock, and walked up and down like the watcher by one dying. The clock struck one; all at once Madalena exclaimed—here he comes! Now came in Rudolf, his shirt open like one who has been looking too deep into his cups. The father commences to speak solemnly to him, but how think you the boy acts? He catechises his father, calls his reverence a false priest, and as if the devil had him entirely—preaches of a new religion.

ALL. Impious!

NATH. The old man bites his pipe stem, and drums with his feet; it becomes too much for him. Now he cries out, let's have the end of the song, and the truth comes out. Rudolf is in love!

ALL. With whom?

NATH. The vagabond Jewess!

ALL. Impossible!

NATH. Oh, I knew it. I knew what his neglect of our holy church would bring him to; but soon the storm broke—the old man rises from his seat blue with perplexity and rage—Madalena hides her face—the priest raises his hands to heaven. But Rudolf does not tremble. He persists he will beg—he will wander if his father refuses consent to his marriage with the vagabond Jewess. "Enough, unnatural boy," cries the father. "You want nothing from me? Then take my—"

ALL. His curse?

NATH. He would have said it; but before he could utter the word, he dropped stricken with apoplexy.

ALL. Great heaven!

NATH. I am not sorry for him, though he is now repentant.

(goes to door—peeps in) Yes, there he sits pale as a ghost, at his father's bedside. Conscience! Soft, he rises, he comes!

MOTHER G. Let us go, friends, the madman might do us some harm. *They all exit, door, L.*

NATH. (*solus*) Why come these accursed Judeans upon us after so long an absence? For fifteen years I have never seen the face of one my race that might recognise or expose me. Why come they now to trouble me? I must devise a plan through this family quarrel to be rid of them by stratagem, since I cannot persuade these stupid villagers to defy their priest, and hang the outcasts. I dare not have them near me, I tremble too much. Last night I dreamt of them—I thought I heard myself called by my old name. I tried to cry out, but iron fingers clutched my throat. Then I saw a well-known Jewish face that leered at me as its lips muttered, "I know your secret! I know it, I know it! But I will be secret." Then I thought I was the exposed renegade in the village square. Familiar village faces were round me gibing and sneering. The little children gathered stones to hurl at me. The officers knotted their whips to lash me. A hundred voices cried out death! Death to the Apostate Jew! Oh, God of Israel! whom I have forsaken, this must never be. Hark, they come! I must conceal myself, and hear what fear there may be that this Jewess will be brought here to affright me. (*he steals up stage, and conceals himself at back*)

Enter RUDOLF and MADALENA, door, R.; LORENZ and FATHER HERMAN following; NATHAN goes out by door at back, he appears listening here during the ensuing scene; OLD LORENZ is conducted to seat, C.

LOR. Open the window, Madalena, let the fresh breath of Easter float in upon me. (*MADALENA opens window at back*) Rudolf, my son. (*RUDOLF runs to him and kneels*) Bless thee! See, my son, that word is not yet forbidden to cross my lips, I was about to commit a great crime last night; pardon me.

RUD. Dear father!

LOR. I am quite strong now, the black blood has left me, and the world appears bright and happy. Come, Rudolf, speak now, I will hear you.

RUD. Rather let me remain silent.

FATHER H. Your silence has brought you no good.

RUD. And my words will bring none. To me nothing will bring a blessing. I only see everywhere curses and misery. Rather let my heart break than yours, father!

LOR. You love the Jewess still?

RUD. It is so.

LOR. (*very calmly after a pause*) You see I am passionless.

I will not persuade you, my son. (*taking his hand*) Yet, Rudolf, think now calmly on that woman in all her charms, and tell me, will you give us all up for her?

RUD. Father, I have sworn to love her.

LOR. You have been dazzled by her beauty. There are far more beautiful women, and Christians.

RUD. Father, no man loves a woman because she is most beautiful before the world, but because she is most beautiful to him. O, good father, let me not prove so base a wretch as to betray Leah! If I desert her who has no possessions, no riches but myself, where will she go? How will she subsist? Where find shelter or rest? (FATHER HERMAN and LORENZ *avert their heads*)

LOR. (*after a pause*) My son, if you marry that woman, you will be for ever chained to one who abhors the altar at which we worship; who will raise your children's hands on high in strange outlandish prayer; who will not kneel with you at your mother's grave, because the cross above it drives her back in horror, and when other children stand joyfully round the Christmas tree, or with palm branches join in the festival processions, your little ones will ask—father, mother, why not me?

MAD. Where, Rudolf, would you be the happiest in such a scene as that or among your own people, your own faith and kindred?

RUD. Happiest, Madalena! The moth dashes into the flame, it must, it cannot help it; and yet, Madalena, thy image rises before me—thy bright and pleasant image, as sometimes I go to meet the object of this fearful love.

MAD. And you have not seen her often, Rudolf?

RUD. I cannot tell how often. Something seems to draw me towards the forest. First I went there trembling, as one about to sin; and when the church bell tolled the solemn benediction, it seemed to call me back to a holier faith, yet I hurried on. She came to meet me, so wildly beautiful, so full of feeling, that only then I understood what is affinity—as if drawn by wings above this lower life; we roamed steeple high over the sunken world, as one flies in a dream, dizzy, yet delighted. And when I thought on the sufferings of her people as she told them, do you condemn the oath I took to be her saving angel?

FATHER H. My son, what you have sworn contrary to your belief is perjury, to gainsay which is no sin. My son, who may love this wild uncouth woman, but, remember, that although the rough diamond is not despised, yet it is only the polished one that is now upon the breast. The partner of your home must be worthy of you.

RUD. Oh, father! Oh, good priest! if you could read my heart, you would pity me. I am bound so firmly to her, so firmly to you, that if I lean either way, it will tear my heart to pieces. Do not ask me to decide, I will not, I cannot choose my path; but you, my first and best instructors, tell me what I am to do, and may I be forgiven if I do wrong. (LORENZ and FATHER HERMAN converse earnestly together)

MAD. Dear Rudolf! (*she takes his hand, he leans on her shoulder weeping, at this point NATHAN walks boldly down as if he had just entered*)

NATH. Good morrow, father!

LOR. What! schoolmaster! Welcome! (*aside to FATHER HERMAN*) Shall we not ask his advice?

FATHER H. (*aside to LORENZ*) As you please. Yes.

LOR. (*low to NATHAN*) You have arrived most seasonably, good schoolmaster, we are much disturbed, my son loves this Jewess, but he is willing to abide by our advice.

NATH. (*low*) I know, I overheard, as I entered, his last words and yours. I know he loves the Jewess, and I know besides how she may be got rid of.

LOR. How? Have you seen her?

NATH. No, but I know them! I know these Jews—men, women, and children. They think only of money. Do you know why they thus haunt our villages? It is to beg, to steal, or to wheedle money from the unsuspecting—it is part of their faith!

LOR. Well, what then?

NATH. What then. Suppose that a young Jewess, who is considered very beautiful, has a father who would make money, they contrive that she shall fascinate the son of some honest farmer who has plenty of money.

LOR. But surely you do not think this of Leah? My son could never love such a wretch.

NATH. Is she not, after all, but a beggar and a Jew? Are they not a soulless and a grasping race, who value more the chink of gold, than all the virtues of humanity strung together? Contrive it, contrive it, good father, and you, Father Herman, assist in the plan. You and I, your reverence, shall work together this time to save a good Christian and our neighbour's son.

FATHER H. It is worth trying. The honest schoolmaster may be right.

LOR. It shall be done. (*aloud to RUDOLF*) Rudolf. (*RUDOLF starts and turns anxiously*) It will be hard for you, my son, to give up your love; for the Jewess it will be easier. Do you really believe you love her?

RUD. Father, yes!

LOR. Poor boy, she caught you easily; she will easily release you.

RUD. She will not. She loves me. And I would not have it so, for she loves me.

FATHER H. My son, she is a Jewess. Her tribe have been noted always for their avarice and greed.

RUD. And are not so the Christians, father?

NATH. Nay, the Jews will sell their holiest feelings.

RUD. Sell?

NATH. Aye, a single coin will heal their deepest sorrow.

LOR. Leah is poor.

RUD. Unhappy child, she is.

LOR. And an outcast.

RUD. Yes.

LOR. She would be rich, and a farmer's wife!

NATH. Humph. She would be satisfied with less. Why give her a fortune and more, when a simple purse would do?

RUD. (*after looking from one side to the other in perplexity*) What mean you?

LOR. My son, listen to me: "This Jewess may be induced to release—for money."

RUD. For money?

NATH. (*aside to LORENZ*) Watch him! he started! press it on him, good father!

LOR. Yes, Rudolf, these people—the Jews, her tribe—do everything for money.

RUD. (*confused*) Do you believe—

LOR. My son, she may be tried. If she willingly releases you for money, what then?

RUD. Oh, father, you mock me! You insult her and me.

NATH. Ha, ha! She even now laughs in the shadow at your simplicity.

LOR. My son, shall we not try? If she refuses to receive the money—

RUD. She will refuse.

LOR. Then she shall be yours.

RUD. You will consent?

LOR. Yes.

NATH. If you love the girl, it is best to decide quickly: delay may peril all. The villagers even now speak of going to the hut of the Jews to drive them forth.

RUD. What shall I do? Leah, forgive me if I wrong thee! Do as you will. (*retires to side with MADALENA*)

LOR. Schoolmaster, you are wise and discreet; will you seek the Jewess on this errand?

NATH. Yes.

FATHER H. Let Madalena go with him.

MAD. Oh, yes do !

LOR. No, no. He knows better how to talk to her. Madalena, within on the table, you will find a chamois-skin purse.

Exit MADALENA.

The Schoolmaster will take the money to the Jewess. If she goes, she shall also be well provided for on the way.

Re-enter MADALENA with purse which she gives to SCHOOLMASTER.

MAD. Do not speak harshly to her, Schoolmaster.

NATH. Fear not, pretty maiden ; I shall be gentle.

LOR. Away, friend. By to-night you may be back. I will hold myself bounden deeply to you, in case you return with good news.

RUD. Hold, Schoolmaster ! when she refuses it with scorn, as I know she will, send here a fleet messenger with the tidings to make me happy, and clear her fair fame. Then, father, you shall see how Leah loves, and that a Jewess's honesty is a jewel of as pure lustre as a Christian's honour.

NATH. (*aside*) Fear not, when they are gone I shall breathe easier ! (*aloud*) Rely on me; you could not have found a more fitting messenger, or a more willing one.

Exit NATHAN—bell heard.

FATHER H. The benediction ! I must to the church.

LOR. Hold, there ! I will go with you. What ! do you think that I have not strength for that ? Since my son has become his former self, I have become ten years younger. You will go with me, will you not ? How they will stare to see you in the pew beside your father ! Such a happy day I have not seen in years.

Exit ALL—LORENZ between MADALENA and RUDOLF.

SCENE SECOND.—*Interior of dilapidated Hut ; curtain hides alcove at back ; door at centre ; and entrance on left ; wind ; thunder and lightning ; night.*

Enter SARAH and ABRAHAM from alcove.

SARAH. Ah, if we could only sleep as the child sleeps ! It knows nothing of darkness, and laughs at thee. Perhaps, when it begins to cry for food, all will soon be over. (ABRAHAM goes to door, L., opens it, lightning) Abraham, what do you there ? You cannot see.

ABRAHAM. But, I can hear.

SARAH. Yes, the howling winds.

ABRA. No, the returning footsteps of her whom we await.

SARAH. What detains her ? We are sadly neglected !

ABRA. But, not by Leah. No, not by Leah, for see she comes.

Enter LEAH, L., with covered basket.

SARAH. Do you bring anything, daughter?

LEAH. Yes, bread and wine! (*gives basket*)

SARAH. Where from?

LEAH. Eat, but do not question.

SARAH. Bless you, daughter! Were it not for thee, 'ere
this we should be in our graves. *Exit in alcove.*

ABRA. Leah.

LEAH. Father!

ABRA. Does the moon shine?

LEAH. She struggles with the storm clouds, father.

ABRA. Direct my eyes in the direction where it is. (*LEAH leads him to side, he stands, bowing down*)

ABRA. Where is the door? I will lie me down.

LEAH. (*takes his hand and leads him*) Come, father!

ABRA. From the points of thy fingers stream floods of light. When you are near, the stars rise in my firmament; my feet do not stumble when you lead the way. May the God of our fathers bless you, my child. (*he lies down across the alcove*)

LEAH. (*solus*) When I have forsaken them, her breath of life will shortly expire, *his* footsteps totter. Cursed is he who breaks the crutches of the lame, and yet I depart and leave them. (*down to front with intensity*) Search my heart, oh, heaven! You know that strength, and will no longer remain to me. I must go. I am as a seal upon his heart. I must go with him, and though the way lead me to death, I have no choice. I love! Love! thou that hast no fitting comparison! strong as death! thy will firm as the very hell! thyself a heavenly flame! thou rulest with an iron rod every power of earth! (*milder*) I commit to the care of heaven the forsaken ones! Overshadow them with thy protecting wings, Guardian of Israel that watches and sleeps not! The old man is quiet. (*stealing up and listening*) The child sleeps. Farewell! Be firm, weak heart! I come, Rudolf! Beloved, take me to thy arms! *Exit, LEAH—a pause.*

Enter NATHAN and PEASANTS, with LUDWIG, with lamps at back.

NATH. Curses on the road! everything as black as Erebus! Well! (*looking round*) Let us see how they have made their burrow.

LUD. Yes, let us see!

NATH. And then we'll make them start. We want no Jews here.

LUD. No—no Jews here!

NATH. If they go not willingly, we'll drive 'em off.

LUD. Yes, drive 'em off.

NATH. The law is on our side, and will do a great service to the magistrate. This he has told me! Do you hear?

NATH. Take your station outside the door, lest so many strangers here should terrify them. I will remain and speak with them. *Exit LUDWIG and OTHERS through door, L.*

Enter SARAH from alcove, ABRAHAM rises on his knee.

SARAH. Who is here?

NATH. Where are the others, woman?

SARAH. Alas, worshipful sir! no one is here but a poor old man and a little child; and we do no harm.

NATH. No harm? Know you not that no Jew is allowed to pass a night here?

SARAH. We are endeavouring to flee into Bohemia, where I have friends, but through sickness I could go no further.

NATH. How came you to this hut?

SARAH. Kind sir, she brought us here.

NATH. She? Who?

SARAH. Leah, the daughter of Rabbi David, the wise.

NATH. And by what right?

SARAH. Noble sir, I know not.

NATH. But I know! I am acquainted with your knavish tricks, but it is all over now.

LUD. (*head inside door*) Where are you, friend School? Done yet?

NATH. Peace, peace, a moment! (*to SARAH*) You must away immediately. All of you—all—not a Jew must remain near our village. (*aside*) There shall I be in peace. (*aloud*) Where is Leah?

SARAH. In the vine hills. But, kind sir, must we be driven hence?

NATH. Aye, immediately.

SARAH. Have you no pity?

NATH. You shall be conveyed over the frontiers into Bohemia—

SARAH. (*joyously*) Into Bohemia?

NATH. Yes, and you will be provided for on your journey.

SARAH. Provided for—kind, generous sir! I kiss your hands.

NATH. Take this money.

SARAH. Money for me?

LUD. (*as before*) I say! It's going to rain out here. I shall catch cold—for this are we doctors?

NATH. Silence! (*to SARAH*) This money is yours, if you will persuade Leah to go with you at once, and never return.

SARAH. Why not? For so much money we will do any-

thing; I stake my life upon it she will go. And it is ours, all ours!

NATH. If you hasten—and mark you—never return.

SARAH. (*calling*) Leah, Leah! Abraham, we are saved!

NATH. (*following her up stage*) You are certain of Leah?

SARAH. Why should I not be certain? I thank you in her name, in her name I bless you. All this money, all mine! One, two, three. *Exit in alcove.*

NATH. (*running to door and opening it*) Ludwig, send Jacob to Father Lorenz, and tell him that the Jewess Leah has accepted the money, and will depart willingly. (*closes the door, and comes down*)

ABRA. (*rises from alcove and comes down*) I hear a strange voice, and yet not a strange voice.

Re-enter SARAH from alcove.

NATH. (*to SARAH*) Who is this old man?

SARAH. Abraham, sir—a poor old blind man.

LUD. (*as before*) Ain't you done yet, Schoolmaster? I tell you we are soaking out here! It's raining, I shall have the rheumatics.

NATH. I will be with you in a moment.

SARAH. This is our benefactor, Abraham! Go kiss his hand—

NATH. This is no time for idle acts! Come, away, away!

ABRA. That voice! I know that voice! There was at Presburg, a man whose name was Nathan. He was a singer in the synagogue. It is his voice I hear.

NATH. (*looking anxiously round—aside*) What if that fool overheard him. (*aloud*) The man is mad.

ABRA. It was said he became a Christian, and went out into the world.

NATH. (*angrily*) Silence!

ABRA. He left his father to die in poverty and misery, since he had forsaken his faith, and the house of his kindred.

NATH. (*striding to him, and laying his hand on his shoulder*) Silence! silence, I say!

ABRA. I will not be silent. I hear the voice of Nathan. (*passing his hand over NATHAN's face*) And I recognise the features of Nathan.

LUD. (*from without, knocking at door*) Come along—come along!

NATH. (*terrified*) The Jew is mad! Silence, or I'll do you injury!

ABRA. With my fingers I read thy dead father's face, for with my fingers I closed his eyes, and nailed down his coffin! Thou art a Jew! (*loudly*)

NATH. (*flying at him*) Another word! (*seizes him by the throat, and bends him to the floor—SARAH screams and runs after him, endeavouring to save ABRAHAM*)

LUD. (*outside, knocking*) Ain't you coming?

NATH. (*not relaxing his hold, against which ABRAHAM feebly struggles*) A moment. A moment, and I will be with you.

SARAH. Oh, spare the old man. He's mad, sir, I know.

NATH. (*bewildered, knocking on door*) Coming? Ha! What's this? (*loosens his grasp from which ABRAHAM sinks supinely; at the same moment a thunder-bolt strikes the cabin, and the storm increases*)

SARAH. (*screams*) He is dead!

NATH. (*at first confused, but recovering, as the PEASANTS all run in affright from the storm, and stand gazing around the dead body of ABRAHAM*) Aye—dead! by the hand of heaven!—
(Tableau)

SCENE THIRD.—*Road in the Vine-hills. The Storm.*

Enter JACOB, running.

JACOB. Burr-r, how it lightens! It's not good to run round in this weather, my grandmother told me so: however, I shall soon be at home. But the Schoolmaster's message was in haste. "Tell Father Lorenz," said he, "that the Jewess has taken the money, and departs willing." Now I don't see anything very wonderful in that. Why shouldn't she take the money? I would take it. Bur-r-r! (*after a pause*)

Exit running.

Enter NATHAN.

NATH. (*fearfully*) At last I have escaped that crowd whose eager curiosity frightens me. Where are they? Am I alone? Alone and safe? O God of Israel, if I am to purchase security by such horrid deeds, how terrible is the course thou hast laid upon the criminal! How was I a criminal? Was it because I chose riches, instead of misery; honour, instead of disdain; life, instead of death? Were it not for that feeling here, I might persuade myself that I was not the guilty wretch I am. Let me gather my thoughts. Have I been discovered? Am I suspected? How looked those peering faces that gazed upon the aged corpse! No—no! They were only blank with amazement. The thunderbolt that angry heaven may have designed for my guilty head only served to conceal my crime! Ah, that clammy throat seems yet between these trembling singers. Oh, ye who live to old age, still happy as children in the faith you learned at your mother's knee, can never tell what hourly terror the apostate feels—not at the halter—

not at the rack; but at the loss of men's opinions! For fifteen years have I laboured to become the honoured man, but in a single moment I may be cast into the degradation in which my kindred are rotting to this day. I am resolved. No life so precious as my own; fear makes a tiger of me. Even as I have silenced the only accusing voice raised against me—so will I to the end. Let me once get rid of this accursed woman; now for ever lost to her lover, then I shall again feel what it is to rise without foreboding, to sleep without fear.

Exit.

SCENE FOURTH.—*A Wood, with exterior of LORENZ's House, with door and steps to it—Night—Storm.*

Enter LEAH.

LEAH. (*gazing round*) He is not here. This is the appointed spot. The trysting place named by him last night. He comes not. He will not come. Guilty thoughts. He must. How the lightning flashes! (*tearfully*) Art angry with me, heaven, that thou permittest thy thunders to roll? (*starts*) Should the tempest now light on that cot in which the old man, the woman, and child are resting—should they call upon Leah—their staff—their guide! (*excitedly trying to escape the thought*) Rudolf, hasten, come! (*goes to door*) Terror drives me back. How I tremble. Shall I knock? (*knocks three times trembling*).

Enter OLD LORENZ, from door, L.

LEAH. Is it you, Rudolf?

LOR. Who is there?

LEAH. (*starting back*) Oh, heavens!

LOR. What means this knocking? What seek you here?

LEAH. (*sadly*) What do I seek?

LOR. Accursed woman, have you not done enough? Estranged my son—turned him from his father, and distracted his heart by your witchcraft. And when he returns to me penitent, you still come—

LEAH. (*trembling*) Still come—

LOR. You come in vain. He knows you now. He knows that she who for money will love, for money will lie!

LEAH. What am I to understand?

LOR. You took the gold: you took it joyfully!

LEAH. Gold! What gold? I know not of what gold you speak.

LOR. Lie not, false woman, I could have driven hence, you and your people; but instead of delivering them up to justice, I yielded to my son, and begged, entreated, payed you to go. And now you have come again to lure him away, and weave

the net of lies with which you sought to part us. Away, I say. Begone! I hear his steps approaching.

LEAH. (*runs to door*) Rudolf, Rudolf!

LOR. (*pushing her away*) Silence, I say, and begone!

LEAH. (*falling on her knees*) Mercy. Oh let me see him. I swear, by heaven, that if I see him but once, I will begone!

Enter MADALENA, from house.

MAD. What is the matter?

LEAH. Oh, that is the woman, the good woman, with bread and milk restored the thirsting back to life. And now I thirst, my spring of life is well-nigh exhausted. Unless you save me I die. Oh, if you know what love is, bring him to me.

MAD. I do know what love is, but not such as thine. Miserable woman! Do not desecrate the word.

LEAH. And you, too?

MAD. I pleaded for you. I was prepared to sacrifice everything for you; you sold a priceless love for money.

LEAH. Am I mad? Who speaks of money?

MAD. Pity you now, or protect you, I cannot! Go, and if you can live happily—(*goes to door*)

LOR. Go, ere a just punishment overtakes your sin.

LEAH. (*confused*) Punishment o'ertakes my sin. Helpless, I left them alone in the darkness, and helpless do I stand here alone in the darkness! Ha! (*listening*)

RUD. (*entering from door*) You here, Leah?

LEAH. (*exultingly*) Ha! it is day. Sunlight! Night, agony, and sin pass away. You shall see, proud old man, and you, heartless woman, that I am beloved!

RUD. (*coldly*) Who are you that speaks thus?

LEAH. (*palsied with amazement*) Who am I? Why, Leah! Oh, cease this idle seeming; you torture me.

RUD. Speak not to me of tortures, or I shall tell you of those you have never felt, and which you have caused me.

LEAH. I, Rudolf, my beloved? I cause you pain or sadness? I would rather die to spare it to you. Oh, Rudolf, what matters it if all others are cold, so that you love me?

RUD. (*retreating*) Father, Madalena, to my side, lest her looks, her words exercise the old spell. (*embracing both*) So I am strong—

LEAH. (*passionately*) You call her to your side. You shall not do it. Out from his arms, woman, it is to me! (*runs to MADALENA*, RUDOLF *breaks from LORENZ and MADALENA, and confronts LEAH, towering over her, she stops, shrinking*)

RUD. Oh, I am not about to strike you, for you would not feel it on your heart, and it is there where, had I the power, I would send the keenest stroke. But do not pollute that

young girl by your touch. Away, I know your tricks! I know you! Enchantress, I have ransomed my soul—

LEAH. (*shrieking*) Rudolf!

RUD. Begone!

LEAH. Have you no memory of yesternight, your solemn vow, your oath? Behold me ready to go with you to that distant land, where you said so much happiness awaited us.

RUD. (*in tears*) Go, and be happy. I forgive you that you have toyed with a heart that was wholly yours, that you well-nigh wrecked the peace of this happy household for ever. I forgive, I forgive you all! You did right to make merchandize of my deep love. What if a Christian's heart did break?

LEAH. (*pressing her hand to her side*) My heart—my heart! (*as RUDOLF turns away, about to re-enter door, and running after him shrieking*) You will not, shall not leave me!

RUD. (*turning fiercely*) Hypocrite! you are no longer masked! I loved you, you sold me for money. I see the avaricious devil in your eyes laugh at my agony, and mock my pain. This night, aye, an hour ago I was prepared to sacrifice all and follow you. Believing in your love, your wild untutored honour, your fair young womanhood, and your maiden oath. I would have sacrificed all I held most sacred, I would have faced the lightnings of heaven to have called you mine!

LEAH. (*faintly*) Oh, Rudolf!

RUD. (*vehemently, and increasing in passion as he speaks*) But, when I learned that you, too, like all your race, held honour, love and faith less than the pettiest coin, and have sold me, Judas-like, for a few pieces, when, had your greedy soul been patient, I would, myself, have given you hundreds. I tore away the silken sinews of your love, struck down your image here, and forgot you as if your treachery and my love had been a dream. Go, cheat other men, your avarice does not spoil your beauty. Farewell! (*runs to gate, but returns*) Yet, stay, huckster of those maddening charms; you shall lose by me, and that you may not come for nothing to say farewell, add this to thy gains to-day, and count it the price of eternal separation! (*throws down a purse of money, and rushes into house*)

LEAH. (*tottering after him, but he shuts the door in her face—sinking down*) Rudolf!

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

A C T IV.

SCENE FIRST.—*Same Scene as Act I., Village Church and Lorenz's House.*

Enter MOTHER GROSCHEN, from R.

MOTHER G. Ah! Dear me, what a time there will be to-day with this wedding. Everybody out in their holiday suits. Ah, good morning, neighbour! How nice you look!

Enter LUDWIG, from L.

LUD. Ha, good wife! Oh! yes, for a florin one can make himself look decent. What think you of these ribbons? Blood color! Capital imitation! and those hose—they are as waterproof as the mucus membrane; and they stretch like a lung.

MOTHER G. Lor! how learnedly you can talk even about hose.

LUD. Yes; you see for that are we doctors.

MOTHER G. And a bunch of flowers in your hat.

LUD. On such an occasion one must be gay; yet, I say there is trouble here! They have kept everything pretty quiet; but they have not been able to hide the symptoms from me. For that are we doctors. Rudolf seems to me not quite right! His heart!

MOTHER G. An affection?

LUD. Yes, a fatty affection.

MOTHER G. Oh, I thought his was an unrequited one—that affair of the Jewess. I wonder what has become of them?

LUD. I don't know. They all left here a week ago, carrying with them the body of the old Jew, who was killed by lightning, on the night of that great storm. Do you recollect what a splendid lecture our Schoolmaster made on the subject of thunder and lightning, describing how old Abraham must have been killed? How pathetic he was! some of the women folks cried.

MOTHER G. Ah, yes, he's a clever man is our Schoolmaster! He got us well rid of those horrible Jews. But how bright everything looks in the village since they left us; and, to-day, what beautiful weather! Does it not seem as if it was made for our Madalena's wedding?

Enter DAME GERTRUDE, carrying a rose wreath.

DAME GERTRUDE. Well—well, friends! Here I am at another happy wedding!

LUD. You are right. You must assist at every holiday.

MOTHER G. Ah ! Dame Gertrude. I have still the rose wreath which you gave to me on my wedding-day.

LUD. Ah ! mine—my little rascal has torn up mine playing with it. Ah ! how my wife cried, "The rose wreaths of Dame Gertrude always bring good luck !" says she, "Yes," says I, "but she gives them to us after the mischief's done," says I, "How's that ?" says she, "After we're married," says I, and with that, she flung the ladle at me that caused a most unsightly gash on my cerebellum, which I dressed with plaster. For that are we doctors !

DAME G. They bring luck everywhere ; the threads are spun by innocent maidens, and a benison prayed on every leaf and bud.

Enter JACOB and ROSEL, dressed as grooms-man and bridesmaid.

LUD. Aha ! a neat little girl ! Well, Jacob, I admire your taste. Permit me to imprint on her lips the chaste salute of a friend and physician. (*JACOB grumbles, and stands before ROSEL*) For that are we doctors !

JACOB. Not in this case.

LUD. (*turning to another*) I suppose it will soon be your turn, my little lass ; you'll be getting married, eh !—and having a family ?

GIRL. (*confused*) Oh, psha !

LUD. For that are we doctors.

Enter LORENZ from house in bridal gala suit, and PEASANTS in holiday costumes enter from all sides.

LOR. Good morning, friends, good morning. Do you know I feel happier now than I did at my own wedding. Who would have believed eight days ago that the fiddlers would be in my house to-day, and that Rudolf would stand at the altar. But now let all be happy ! Let my best wine flow ! Let the fiddlers play till they dance themselves. Let the table be spread in the large park. (*to PEASANTS*) Assemble all the poor folk in the village, and let them be feasted like lords. Oh ! I am so happy. Come friends, let's into the house and have a drop of wine ! Ah ! doctor ?

LUD. For that are we doctors.

All go off gaily.

SCENE SECOND.—*Garden behind LORENZ's House.*

Enter FATHER HERMAN, leading MADALENA, who is dressed in bridal robes, L.—Bell.

FATHER H. The bell summons me to church. So far, I can remain with you. At the altar the priest awaits you. Farewell, my child ?

MAD. (*clinging to him*) Uncle, I am—afraid !

FATHER H. You will enter no stranger's house, my child; the trusty friend of your youth awaits you. You have brought him back to peace and happiness; and my heart tells me that a pleasant future awaits you. Remain good and pious as you are; I can wish you no greater blessing. *Kisses her—exit, R.*

MAD. (*solas*) I know not why my heart is so heavy. Have I done wrong? At other times, I have gone into his house, in which I have played since childhood with a joyous step, yet to-day the threshold seems strange to me. I feel as I should not cross it—as if to do so were to reach after the goods of another. No, Rudolf, no; I have a claim upon you, because I love you so much. (*gazing down on herself*) How nicely they have dressed me to-day! And you, dear flowers from my parents' graves—you go with me to the altar, that I may not stand alone! Lay yourselves like parental hands upon my head to bless me! (*puts on wreath*)

Enter RUDOLF in wedding suit.

MAD. Dear Rudolf!

RUD. For us are those bells ringing!—for us is the village decked in holiday attire! See, the husbandmen already return from the fields! Could you but see my father, and hear his hearty laugh! I feel as if I had risen from a long sickness in which I knew no one, and now again I see the dear old world. Tell me, Madalena, have you then really forgiven me?

MAD. I forgive? For what?

RUD. That I could ever have neglected you for that unhappy one—

MAD. Speak not of her. True, I often wept when you used to pass the parsonage without noticing me; but, believe me, dear Rudolf, I was never angry. I only prayed that you might be happy.

RUD. I am so, and through you. Let me kiss the hands that have saved me, and never leave you again! Have you that little ring upon your finger?

MAD. Why, that is my betrothal ring. You gave it to me. I loved you then, when you were but in sport; and now everything will come to pass. Oh, you'll see how happy and joyous we'll be! I am so happy, and you must promise to be so, too! Won't you?

RUD. Yes, dear little sweetheart, I will!

MAD. And you will never think any more of going to America?

RUD. Never!

MAD. Never?

RUD. I will never cause a sad or a cloudy day. (*embrace—music in distance increases, shouts of VILLAGERS*)

Enter LORENZ and BRIDAL PARTY and VILLAGERS.

LOR. Why, why, forward, my children. The good priest will become impatient.

DAME G. Stop! First Dame Gertrude must bring her gift. (*she hangs a rosewreath around their joined hands*) So! This will bring you luck. Let it not fall by the way, lose it not—tear it not; this will keep your wedded happiness together, and watch over the welfare of your children. Watch carefully this sacred wedding wreath.

During this speech the gay wedding music changes to a low solemn strain—it now bursts forth merrily again—RUDOLF and MADALENA exit, followed by all the others, huzzing, the MEN waving their hats, exēunt, R.

SCENE THIRD.—Night. *The Churchyard behind the Village Church. Tombstones and graves about; at back the side of the church showing its stained glass windows, and a little sacristy door leading from it to yard; among the gravestones a little to the left of centre of stage is a half-broken white column.*

Enter LEAH, slowly, from L., her hair streaming over her shoulders.

LEAH. (*solus*) What seek I here! I know not; yet I feel I have a mission to fulfil. I feel that the cords of my soul are stretched to their utmost effort. Already seven days! So long! As the dead lights were placed about the body of Abraham, as the friends sat nightly at his feet and watched, (*slowly sinking down*) so have I sat for seven days, and wept over the corpse of my love! (*with painful intensity*) What have I done? Am I not a child of man? Is not love the right of all—like the air, the light? And if I stretch my hands towards it, was it a crime? When I first saw him—first heard the sound of his voice, something wound itself around my heart. Then first I knew why I was created, and for the first time was thankful for my life. (*laying her hand on her brow*) Collect thyself, mind, and think! What has happened? I saw him yesterday—no! eight days ago! He was full of love. "You'll come," said he. I came. I left my people. I tore the cords that bound me to my nation, and came to him. He cast me forth into the night. And yet, my heart, you throb still. The earth still stands, the sun still shines, as if it had not gone down for ever for me. (*low*) By his side stood a handsome maiden, and drew him away with caressing hands. It is her he loves, and to the Jewess he dares offer gold. (*starting up*) I will seek him! I will gaze on his face—(*church lit up, windows*

illuminated, organ heard soft) that deceitful, beautiful face. I will ask him what I have done that—(hides her head in her hands and weeps, organ swells louder and then subsides again to low music) Perhaps he has been misled by someone—some false tongue! His looks, his words seem to reproach me. Why was I silent? Thou proud mouth, ye proud lips, why did you not speak? (exultingly) Perhaps he loves me still. Perhaps his soul, like mine, pines in nameless agony, and yearns for reconciliation. (Music soft) Why does my hate melt away at this soft voice with which Heaven calls to me. That grand music. (listening) I hear voices, it sounds like a nuptial benediction; perhaps it is a loving bridal pair. (clasping her hands, and raising them on high) Amen—amen! to that benediction, whoever you may be. (Music stops) I, poor desolate one, would like to see their happy faces—I must—this window. Yes, here I can see into the church. (goes to window, looks in, screams and comes down—speaks very fast) Do I dream? Kind Heaven, that prayer, that amen, you heard it not. I call it back. You did not hear my blessing. You were deaf. Did no blood-stained dagger drop down upon them? 'Tis he! Revenge! (throws off her mantle, disclosing white robe beneath—bares her arm, and rushes to the little door, but halts) No! Thou shalt judge! Thine, Jehovah, is the vengeance. Thou alone canst send it. (stands beside broken column, rests her left arm upon it, letting the other fall by her side)

Enter RUDOLF from the little door of church, with rose wreath in his hand.

RUD. I am at last alone. I cannot endure the joy and merriment around me. How like mockery sounded the pious words of the priest. As I gazed towards the church windows, I saw a face, heard a muffled cry, I thought it was her face, her voice.

LEAH. (*coldly*) Did you think so?

RUD. Leah! Is it you?

LEAH. Yes.

RUD. (*tenderly*) Leah—

LEAH. (*with a gesture of contempt*) Silence, perjured one! Can the tongue that lied still speak? The breath that called me wife now swear faith to another? Does it dare to mix with the pure air of heaven? Is this the man I worshipped? whose features I so fondly gazed upon? Ah! (*shuddering*) No—no! The hand of heaven has crushed, beaten, and defaced them! The stamp of divinity no longer rests there! (*walks away*)

RUD. Leah! hear me!

LEAH. (*turning fiercely*) Ha! You call me back? I am pitiless now.

RUD. You broke faith first. You took the money.

LEAH. Money! What money?

RUD. The money my father sent you.

LEAH. Sent me money? For what?

RUD. (*hesitating*) To induce you to release me—to—

LEAH. That I might release you. And you knew it. You permitted it?

RUD. I staked my life that you would not take it.

LEAH. And you believed I had taken it?

RUD. How could I believe otherwise? I—

LEAH. (*with rage*) And you believed I had taken it. Miserable Christian, and you cast me off! Not a question was the Jewess worth. (*subdued, but vindictive*) This then was thy work: this the eternity of love which you promised me. (*falling on her knees*) Forgive me, heaven, that I forget my nation to love this Christian. Let that love be lost in hate. Love is false, unjust—hate endless, eternal.

RUD. Cease these gloomy words of vengeance—I have wronged you. I feel it without your reproaches. I have sinned, but to sin is human, and it would be but human to forgive.

LEAH. You would tempt me again? I do not know that voice.

RUD. I will make good the evil I have done; aye, an hundredfold.

LEAH. (*bitterly*) Aye, crush the flower, grind it under foot, then make good the evil you have done. (*fiercely*) No, no! An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a heart for a heart!

RUD. Hold, fierce woman, I will beseech no more! Do not tempt heaven, let it be the judge between us! If I have sinned through love, see that you do not sin through hate.

LEAH. Blasphemer! and you dare call on heaven! What commandment hast thou not broken? Thou shalt not swear falsely—you broke faith with me! Thou shalt not steal—you stole my heart. Thou shalt not kill—what of life have you left me?

RUD. (*advances towards her*) Hold, hold! No more.

LEAH. (*repelling him*) The old man who died because I loved you, the woman who hungered because I followed you; the infant who died of thirst because of you; may they follow you in dreams, and be a drag upon your feet for ever. May you wander as I wander, suffer shame as I now suffer it. Cursed be the land you till, may it keep faith with you, as you kept faith with me! Cursed be the unborn fruit of thy marriage! may it wither as my young heart has withered;

and should it ever see the light, may its brows be blackened by the mark of Cain, and may it vainly pant for nourishment on its dying mother's breast ! (*snatching the wreath from his uplifted hand*) Cursed, thrice cursed may you be evermore, and as my people on Mount Ebal spoke, so speak I thrice, Amen ! Amen ! Amen !

(RUDOLF who has been standing as if petrified, drops on his knees, as the curtain descends on the tableau)

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

SCENE FIRST.—*A beautiful Farm. Smiling country. A neat Farm House at L., with garden occupying front of stage—a railing at back, outside of which are growing crops, and road leading to a hill, a part of which goes across stage at back—Music.*

REAPERS discovered at work at back—JACOB and ROSEL among them.

CHORUS.

When the lark is singing,
His morning serenade :
And the dew is clinging
To every grassy blade,
Then would I were the sunbeam
Through my sweetheart's window creeping,
To watch her happy dream !
Slyly creeping—slyly creeping,
To watch her happy dream !

ROSEL. (*coming down*) Ah ! there our work is almost over : and what an easy work it is too. This ground seems the easiest to till and to reap in the whole village !

JACOB. I wish it were ours, wife !

ROSEL. Nonsense ! work hard, and we'll get plenty. But I think it such a pleasure to work for Rudolf and Madalena, that I don't care to leave this farm even for one of our own.

JACOB. You are right, wife. This house seems blessed. Not an ugly word heard in it from morning till night. But, I say, let's to work ! (*they commence again—they go up*)

Enter LORENZ, from house, with pipe.

LOR. What, still at work !

JACOB. We have only this little patch yet to do.

LOR. Working in the field all day, cutting hay and binding up the vines, and still at work now! Go down into the cellar, Jacob, and bring a jug of wine, and we'll take a drop together.

ROSEL. Go, Jacob, go.

Exit JACOB, into house.

LOR. Does he make you a good husband, Rosa?

ROSEL. Ah! so, so! In our house here everything is good, and he could well help himself.

LOR. Yes; how inviting everything looks! How Madalena works everywhere, attending to everything with a joyous face, and still, if you want a chat with her she always has time! And the child! Rosa, would you ever have believed that one could love their grandchildren as well as their own?

Enter JACOB with jug and glasses.

So—here's your health, Jacob! Hallo! Is that our waggon I hear coming over the bridge? No—gone. Ah! It is eight days now since Rudolf left us to go to Gratz.

JACOB. Is there a fair at Gratz?

LOR. No—he went on a good errand. Ever since he has been married, he has endeavoured in all ways to better the condition of his fellow men. Does any one want assistance? he gives it. Does any one want work? he finds it for him. Does one seek redress for injury? he will assist him. Now guess, for what purpose he has gone to Gretz?

JACOB. } We don't know.
ROSEL. }

LOR. To try and see our good Emperor, and beg him to permit the Jews to settle in our villages, and have the same privileges as Christians.

JACOB. What? The Jews!

LOR. Ah! I see you are like all the rest of the villagers, and still retain your old hatred.

JACOB. Yes, in the village, no Jews would be permitted to stay. They still declare they would stone him.

LOR. Bad, bad—unchristian! Unpitying!

JACOB. But some of the wisest of our teachers encourage this feeling in us.

LOR. You mean the Schoolmaster?

JACOB. Yes. He still tells us of Jewish witchcraft and secret enormities, and bids us never to harbour them.

LOR. I cannot understand the Schoolmaster. So relentless where many others have softened—there is nothing to worry him, and yet he becomes moody every day.

JACOB. He told us there was a tribe of Jews even now in our valley yonder.

LOR. So. Why are they there?

JACOB. The Schoolmaster says that he has been among them and bidden them depart. We would have gone down and

fired their huts and driven them forth, but he told us to wait, he would first persuade them to leave voluntarily.

LOR. So!

JACOB. But we have agreed that should any of them attempt to enter the villages we will soon finish them.

LOR. Hard, hard hearts! you should be ashamed to say this. I am ashamed myself of what I did five years ago. I fear much that I may one day have to answer for my cruelty.

JACOB. You mean to the Jewess Leah.

LOR. Yes.

JACOB. But it was not your fault!

LOR. Had she not been a Jewess, I would not so have treated her; but as it was, I thought only evil of her. Oh, this accursed hate which is handed down from father to son! The first consequence of my act, was the dangerous illness that befell my son when they brought him home senseless from the church-yard upon his wedding night. Ah! a pretty wedding. And his rose-wreath gone too. But after all what is a rose-wreath? It makes one neither happy nor unhappy. But they are happy now. True at times a black shadow rests on Rudolf's brow, and when he fondles his child, there is something peculiar in his look. But let Madalena appear, and everything clears away as before the rising sun. See, here she comes from the field.

Enter MADALENA down hill, R., with CHILD of four years, followed by two MAIDS, who go into house—Exit VILLAGERS, JACOB and ROSEL singing last strain of chorus.

LOR. Ah, my gentle Madalena.

MAD. Father, where can Rudolf be so long? He might have been here long ago, had not something happened to him!

LOR. Why, what are you thinking of?

MAD. If he is not with me, I am continually trembling. Nine days already.

LOR. Oh, fear nothing.

MAD. Well, after all, of what use is it to fear. He is well protected. Come, father, let us in to supper. Yet stay! You can do me a service.

LOR. What is it, my child?

MAD. Across the Vinehills there rests an emigrant Jewish tribe, with all their goods, on their way to America. They spent last night in the old castle, they fear the dwellings of men in this country, whence they have always been cruelly driven. There are old men, women, and children there. Now, how would it do to put a barrel of wine into our waggon, and send it to them for their supper? That would be something for grandfather to do.

LOR. And that is something grandfather will do with all his heart, my good girl, and right away too!

Exit into house with CHILD.

MAD. (*solus*) Where can Rudolf be? I have no rest—no quiet, fearing lest something has happened to him. Not a soul knows what he has confessed to me. How that dreadful curse follows his step like a ghost. How in the midst of plenty, I look tremblingly around and draw my child to my breast, as if to protect it from invisible hands. My husband loves me—my sweet child grows every day. Oh! may her unjust words be turned to lies. Five years have passed, and yet no evil has come near us. (*distant noise and shouts heard*) Ha! what sound is it that disturbs our peaceful home. It comes nearer. It sounds like a crowd of men chasing some poor animal that——

(*loud cries—JACOB and two VILLAGERS appear on hill, R., and others below at R.—LEAH enters running on hill, and stands at bay before JACOB and others, who shout and brandish their sticks—she turns and is about to retrace her steps, when NATHAN and other VILLAGERS enter L. on hill, and intercept her—she stands a moment, then totters down hill in front, and runs up to MADALENA, pursued by the crowd*)

NATH. Aha, we've caught her! Now friends! Now for the river.

JACOB. Yes—yes; drown her.

ALL. Stone the Jewess.

MAD. Stand back! She has sought the protection of my house, and she shall have it.

NATH. After her! Seize her! Tear her from here! Stone her!

MAD. Stay, wretch! What would you do?

NATH. Out of my way——(*trying to reach LEAH*)

MAD. Beware! this is the house of the magistrate.

NATH. We obey our laws.

MAD. Where is your authority?

NATH. I want none—nor you! Give up that woman.

MAD. Never. I know what the law requires, and so do you. Dare to put a finger upon her, and you shall hereafter answer it.

NATH. (*to VILLAGERS*) She is right. It is too dangerous to proceed without authority. But, come with me, neighbours, we will soon have the police here, and that will be authority enough, I imagine. See, mistress, that you do not feed or comfort that woman, nor hold communion with her; but keep her safely locked until we return, lest you transgress the law. *Exeunt.*

MAD. (*to LEAH*) Rise, poor woman!

LEAH. (*for the first time seeing her face*) Ha! (*retreating—aside*) It is his wife—that woman! This, then, is his house. My heart, be firm! Be stone!

MAD. A beggar woman! and a Jewess! Poor thing, take this. (*offering money*)

LEAH. (*bitterly*) I want no money.

MAD. What then? The supper is prepared. Come with me into the house. You shall be welcome!

LEAH. I am not hungry.

MAD. Thirsty, perhaps?

LEAH. Thirsty? Yes.

MAD. You can draw water from that well. But stay, I'll draw it for you. (*goes to well*)

LEAH. (*taking round*) Radiant as the temple does this house shine, and peace and happiness are beaming on that woman's face. There is the gate where she stood, hypocrite, when she drew him back. There the threshold on which I lay beseeching! The threshold where he crushed my heart. Why do I tremble? Is it because yonder one can smile? (*MADALENA comes down to her with water*)

MAD. Drink of this.

LEAH. (*handing back the mug*) Leave me in peace!

MAD. How?

LEAH. Do you not fear for yourself? You see I am an outcast, and am pursued. They have warned you. Do you not fear?

MAD. Fear? No! You are safe here. (*LEAH starts*) Are you sick? Your hand is burning hot! Come with me into the house and rest yourself.

LEAH. Are you alone in the house?

MAD. I am. Father went to meet the emigrating Jews with some food and drink.

LEAH. And he!

MAD. He? Who?

LEAH. Your husband?

MAD. (*sighs*) My husband—is gone.

LEAH. (*exultingly*) Gone! He left you! Just Heaven! You have a child?

MAD. Yes, one, a girl.

LEAH. (*rapidly*) And he went? And left you both?

MAD. (*terrified*) Perhaps you know what has happened him. What is it? Speak! Conceal nothing that has befallen him.

LEAH. I know—nothing.

MAD. You tremble—you are ill.

LEAH. No, no! I am well, very well. How long has he been gone?

MAD. Nine days.

LEAH. And you know not whither?

MAD. Not know whither he has gone? Of course I do. He has gone to Gratz to demand justice and forbearance for the Jews.

LEAH. Forbearance—for the Jews—and he stays so long. Do you fear nothing?

MAD. What should I fear? Heaven will protect him.

LEAH. You think so. What if his horse, terrified by the

thunders of that heaven should stumble, and hurl him headlong into some yawning abyss! What if the wrath of that heaven shouId crush the bridge over which he passes? if the sharp dagger aimed by the hand of the avenger should strike him in the forest!

MAD. Peace, woman! Why do you thus torture me? What do you seek here? Begone, begone! Your sight fills me with terror!

LEAH. (*low*) She casts me forth! The old power returns. She casts me forth! (*aloud*) Well, well. (*turns to go*)

MAD. (*after her*) No, no! Stay here, poor woman, forgive me, why should I be angry with you? You are ill! Rest here to-night. Sleep will make you better, and to-morrow you will be able to go your way in peace. Hark! what is that I hear? Rudolf! (*runs to top of the hill*) Rudolf, Rudolf! (*runs off*)

LEAH. Yes, I will remain to-night, and vengeance may yet be mine; but I must not be seen. Where shall I conceal myself? Ah, this cover—

Exit, L.

Enter RUDOLF and MADALENA on hill.

MAD. Rudolf.

RUD. Beloved wife! (*they embrace*)

MAD. Is it you, and well?

RUD. Yes, love. How is our child?

MAD. (*running to house*) Child, quick—quick, your father! (*CHILD runs out and up to RUDOLF, who takes it up, and kisses it*)

RUD. And so you are mine again, and love me as well as ever?

MAD. That we do.

RUD. And father?

MAD. He will be back presently. He has gone to the valley to give some wine to the fugitive Jews. But, tell me, why did you stay so long?

RUD. I went to Vienna to see our Emperor.

MAD. You shall tell me all that befell you there.

RUD. (*sitting, with CHILD on his knee*) Well, you must know that in Gretz they have a bureau, and the people send you from this man to that, and from this lord to the other, so I thought I would find the Emperor myself, and off I went to Vienna.

MAD. (*LEAH appears at back, listening*) And did you not find it difficult to gain access to him?

RUD. No, my darling. People go to him as they go to church. The doors are wide open, everybody goes to him, and everybody finds place in his turn. I pictured to myself a man as large as a tower, and before me stood a plainly-dressed mild-looking man, and asked me in our native dialect what I wished and why I had sought him? I commenced; at first it

went very hard, but when I saw how pleasantly he looked I took courage and told him all. How we wished that it might no longer be against the law for the poor Jews to stay among us.

MAD. And what said he?

RUD. He looked at me smilingly, laid his hand on my shoulder thus, and said, "Let them stay; the laws of exile are of ancient date; I will make a new law, I myself am anxious that all my subjects should be equal, for, Jew or Christian, they all belong to me."

MAD. Our good Emperor!

RUD. I have with me the Imperial letter to the magistrates, which I must give to father. Yet—shall I confess it? I was sad in the midst of my pleasures; I thought how such a change might have healed a long-broken heart.

MAD. Poor Rudolf, and must you still remember? Do you not see how much you are blessed?

RUD. Yes, everything seems radiant with blessings. No bolt has shattered the roof which shelters me. No pestilential breath has withered or destroyed my child. No stamp of Cain is upon her pure brow!

MAD. Oh, no—no!

RUD. And yet that awful curse!

MAD. It was from the lips of one, while thousands bless you!

RUD. (*LEAH comes down stage gently and sad, listening*) Think, Madalena, of her lot and mine. While I clasp a tender wife, and a lovely child; she wanders in foreign lands, suffering and desolate. It is not alone her curse that haunts me, it is her pale and gentle face, which I seem to see in my dreams, and which so sadly says to me, "I have forgiven!" Oh, Madalena, could I but hear her say this, and tell her how deeply I feel that I have wronged her—could I but wet her hands with my repentant tears, then would I find peace.

MAD. Rudolf, a thought! In yonder valley camps a company of Jews who are emigrating to America; perhaps one of them may be able to give you news of Leah, and if you find her, she shall share the blessings of our home. She shall be to me a dear sister! (*LEAH hastily conceals herself*) Ha, that beggar woman, where is she? (*looks around*) Perhaps she belongs to the tribe; perhaps she may tell you of her.

RUD. How say you? A beggar woman?

MAD. Yes, a poor Jewess, whom I rescued to-day. She must now be in the house. Oh, come, Rudolf, let us find her. All may yet be well!

Exeunt in house.

Enter LEAH from behind a hayrick.

LEAH. Have I heard aright? The iron bands seem melting, the cold dead heart moves, and beats once more! The old life returns. Rudolf! (*tears*) My Rudolf. No, no, he is no longer

mine ! The flame is extinguished, and only the empty lamp remains above the sepulchre of my heart. No, Madalena, no, I shall not remain to be a reproach to you both. I will wander on with my people ; but the hate I have nourished has departed. I may not love, but I forgive—yes, I forgive him. But his child. Oh, I should so like to see his child !

CHILD comes to doorway from house.

Fear not, little one, come hither.

CHILD. (*coming towards her*) Is it you ? Father seeks you.

LEAH. His very image. (*kisses her*) What is your name, my darling ?

CHILD. Leah.

LEAH. What say you ? Leah ?

CHILD. Did you know the other Leah ?—she whom mother and father speak of so often, and for whom every night I must pray ?

LEAH. (*with emotion, kissing her, and giving her a withered rose-wreath which she takes from inside her dress*) Take this, my pretty one.

CHILD. A rose-wreath ?

LEAH. Take it, and give it to your father. Say to him your little prayer has been heard, and that Leah—(*emotion*) Leah forgives. (*going, returns again, kisses CHILD, and with extended arms and choking voice*) Bless you, darling ! (*extending arms to house*) And you, and you—and all—all ! (*goes to fence, totters, and sinks down, endeavouring to exit*)

Enter RUDOLF and MADALENA from house.

RUD. Not here !

CHILD. (*running to MADALENA*) See, mother, see what the strange woman gave me. (*showing wreath*)

MAD. (*not noticing CHILD*) Where is she ?

CHILD. She has gone away. (*running to RUDOLF with wreath*) See, father.

RUD. (*taking wreath*) A rose wreath. Great heaven, Madalena, it must have been Leah ; it is my wreath. Leah !

MAD. It was she !

RUD. Yes, it was Leah. By this token we are reconciled. (*LEAH moans*) Ha, what sound is that ?

MAD. (*going to the prostrate figure*) Quick, Rudolf ! It is she. (*they run to her, raise her up, and bear her to front*)

LEAH. (*feebley*) I tried to go, but my strength forsook me. I shall, at least, then, die here !

RUD. Die ! No, no ; speak not of dying, you shall live !

LEAH. No ; I am too happy to live. See, Madalena, I take his hand, but it is to place it in yours. All is over. (*sinks into their arms*)

Enter NATHAN on hill, with OFFICERS OF JUSTICE, a NOTARY, and VILLAGERS.

NATH. She is here. Seize her!

RUD. Too late! too late, friend. She is dead.

NATH. It is false; I—

LEAH. (*rousing herself*) It is false. (ALL start) For what come you?

NATH. You. I have the proper warrant for your apprehension. Go with me.

LEAH. This to me, daughter of Rabbi David. This to me, Nathan!

ALL. Nathan! a Jewish name.

NATH. 'Tis false! I know her not. She lies. I am no Jew.

LUD. Who said you were, Schoolmaster?

LEAH. This is Nathan of Presburg, who left his old father to die in poverty, and became a Christian!

NAT. It is false, woman!

LEAH. It is true, apostate.

NATH. What if I was a Jew? I am a man, and against man will battle for my life. Be your fate that of the drivelling Jew who, like you, dared to tell my secrets to the world. (*rushes at her, RUDOLF interposes, and signals OFFICERS to take him in custody, one on either side of him*)

LEAH. You hear him?—he confesses! You, then, killed the poor old man who tottered blindly on the borders of the grave. As Judith to Holofernes, so I to you. (*goes towards him, and draws a knife from her girdle*) I tell thee, apostate—(overcome by sudden faintness, she staggers, drops her dagger, and is falling as MADALENA catches her; she leans on MADALENA's shoulders—after a pause, and faintly) Thine, thine is the vengeance, vengeance, madness and folly. To him above, and not to me, even as he said it. Alas, alas! (*suddenly starting*) Who embraces me? Who dares—(*softly*) Rudolf, you—But I must not remain. I must now away with my people, for this night I shall wander into the far-off—the promised land!

(LEAH separates from them, and is going off slowly and feebly, while RUDOLF, MADALENA, and CHILD kneel; NATHAN, bound, cowers in one side; VILLAGERS group.—Music, as curtain falls, demi-slow)



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