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Title: Count Julian

Author: Walter Savage Landor

Release date: May 1, 2003 [EBook #4008]
Most recently updated: October 27, 2014

Language: English

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK COUNT JULIAN ***

Transcribed from the 1812 John Murray edition by David Price, ccx074@pglaf.org

COUNT JULIAN:

A

TRAGEDY.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR JOHN MURRAY, FLEET STREET,
By James Moyes, Greville Street, Hatton Garden.

1812.

THE daughter of Count Julian is usually called Florinda—a fictitious appellation, unsuitable to the person and to the period. Never was one devised more incompatible with the appearance of truth, or more fatal to the illusions of sympathy. The city of Covilla, it is reported, was named after her. Here is no improbability: there would be a gross one in deriving the word, as is also pretended, from La Cava. Cities, in adopting a name, bear it usually as a testimony of victories or as an augury of virtues. Small and obscure places, occasionally, receive what their neighbours throw against them; as Puerto de la mala muger in Murcia. A generous and enthusiastic people, beyond all others in existence or on record, would affix no stigma to innocence and misfortune.

It is remarkable that the most important era in Spanish history should be the most obscure. This is propitious to the poet, and above all to the tragedian. Few characters of such an era can be glaringly misrepresented, few facts offensively perverted.

CHARACTERS.

Count JULIAN.

RODERIGO, King of Spain.

OPAS, Metropolitan of Seville.

SISABERT, betrothed to COVILLA.

MUZA, Prince of Mauritania.

ABDALAZIS, son of MUZA.

TARIK, Moorish Chieftain.

COVILLA, daughter of JULIAN.

EGILONA, wife of RODERIGO.

Officers.

HERNANDO, OSMA, RAMIRO, &c.

ACT I. SCENE 1.

p. 1

Camp of Julian.

OPAS. JULIAN.

Opas. See her, Count Julian: if thou lovest God,
See thy lost child.

Jul. I have avenged me, Opas,
More than enough: I sought but to have hurled
The brands of war on one detested head,
And died upon his ruin. O my country!
O lost to honour, to thyself, to me,
Why on barbarian hands devolves thy cause,
Spoilers, blasphemers!

Opas. Is it thus, Don Julian,
When thy own offspring, that beloved child,
For whom alone these very acts were done
By them and thee, when thy Covilla stands
An outcast, and a suppliant at thy gate,
Why that still stubborn agony of soul,
Those struggles with the bars thyself imposed?
Is she not thine? not dear to thee as ever?

p. 2

Jul. Father of mercies! show me none, whene'er
The wrongs she suffers cease to wring my heart,
Or I seek solace ever, but in death.

Opas. What wilt thou do then, too unhappy man?

Jul. What have I done already? All my peace
Has vanished; my fair fame in after-times
Will wear an alien and uncomely form,
Seen o'er the cities I have laid in dust,
Countrymen slaughtered, friends abjured!

Opas. And faith?

Jul. Alone now left me, filling up in part
The narrow and waste intervals of grief:
It promises that I shall see again
My own lost child.

Opas. Yes, at this very hour.

p. 3

Jul. Till I have met the tyrant face to face,
And gain'd a conquest greater than the last;
Till he no longer rules one rood of Spain,
And not one Spaniard, not one enemy,
The least relenting, flags upon his flight;
Till we are equal in the eyes of men,
The humblest and most wretched of our kind,
No peace for me, no comfort, no—no child!

Opas. No pity for the thousands fatherless,
The thousands childless like thyself, nay more,
The thousands friendless, helpless, comfortless—
Such thou wilt make them, little thinking so,
Who now, perhaps, round their first winter fire,
Banish, to talk of thee, the tales of old,
Shedding true honest tears for thee unknown:
Precious be these, and sacred in thy sight,
Mingle them not with blood from hearts thus kind.

If only warlike spirits were evoked
By the war-demon, I would not complain.
Or dissolute and discontented men;
But wherefor hurry down into the square
The neighbourly, saluting, warm-clad race,
Who would not injure us, and could not serve;
Who, from their short and measured slumber risen,
In the faint sunshine of their balconies,
With a half-legend of a martyrdom
And some weak wine and withered grapes before them,
Note by their foot the wheel of melody
That catches and rolls on the sabbath dance.
To drag the steady prop from failing age,
Break the young stem that fondness twines around,
Widen the solitude of lonely sighs,
And scatter to the broad bleak wastes of day
The ruins and the phantoms that replied,
Ne'er be it thine.

Jul. Arise, and save me, Spain!

p. 4

ACT I. SCENE 2.

MUZA enters.

Muza. Infidel chief, thou tarriest here too long.
And art, perhaps, repining at the days
Of nine continued victories, o'er men
Dear to thy soul, tho' reprobate and base.
Away!

p. 5

[*Muza retires.*]

Jul. I follow. Could my bitterest foes
Hear this! ye Spaniards, this! which I foreknew
And yet encounter'd; could they see your Julian
Receiving orders from and answering
These desperate and heaven-abandoned slaves,
They might perceive some few external pangs,
Some glimpses of the hell wherein I move,
Who never have been fathers.

Opas. These are they
To whom brave Spaniards must refer their wrongs!

Jul. Muza, that cruel and suspicious chief,
Distrusts his friends more than his enemies,
Me more than either; fraud he loves and fears,
And watches her still footfall day and night.

Opas. O Julian! such a refuge! such a race!

Jul. Calamities like mine alone implore.
No virtues have redeemed them from their bonds;
Wily ferocity, keen idleness,
And the close cringes of ill-whispering want,
Educate them to plunder and obey:
Active to serve him best whom most they fear,
They show no mercy to the merciful,
And racks alone remind them of the name.

p. 6

Opas. O everlasting curse for Spain and thee!

Jul. Spain should have vindicated then her wrongs
In mine, a Spaniard's and a soldier's wrongs.

Opas. Julian, are thine the only wrongs on earth?
And shall each Spaniard rather vindicate
Thine than his own? is there no Judge of all?
Shall mortal hand seize with impunity
The sword of vengeance, from the armory
Of the Most High? easy to wield, and starred
With glory it appears; but all the host
Of the archangels, should they strive at once,
Would never close again its widening blade

Jul. He who provokes it hath so much to rue.
Where'er he turn, whether to earth or heaven,
He finds an enemy, or raises one.

Opas. I never yet have seen where long success
Hath followed him who warred upon his king.

p. 7

Jul. Because the virtue that inflicts the stroke
Dies with him, and the rank ignoble heads
Of plundering faction soon unite again,
And, prince-protected, share the spoil, at rest.

ACT I. SCENE 3.

Guard announces a Herald. OPAS departs.

Guard. A messenger of peace is at the gate,
My lord, safe access, private audience,
And free return, he claims.

Jul. Conduct him in.

[*To Roderigo, who enters as Herald.*

A messenger of peace! audacious man!
In what attire appearest thou? a herald's?
Under no garb can such a wretch be safe.

Rod. Thy violence and fancied wrongs I know,
And what thy sacrilegious hands would do,
O traitor and apostate!

p. 8

Jul. What they would
They cannot: thee of kingdom and of life
'Tis easy to despoil, thyself the traitor,
Thyself the violator of allegiance.
O would all-righteous Heaven they could restore
The joy of innocence, the calm of age,
The probity of manhood, pride of arms,
And confidence of honour! the august
And holy laws, trampled beneath thy feet.
And Spain! O parent, I have lost thee too!
Yes, thou wilt curse me in thy latter days,
Me, thine avenger. I have fought her foe,
Roderigo, I have gloried in her sons,
Sublime in hardihood and piety:
Her strength was mine: I, sailing by her cliffs,
By promontory after promontory,
Opening like flags along some castle-towers,
Have sworn before the cross upon our mast
Ne'er shall invader wave his standard there.

Rod. Yet there thou plantest it, false man, thyself.

p. 9

Jul. Accursed he who makes me this reproach,
And made it just! Had I been happy still,
I had been blameless: I had died with glory
Upon the walls of Ceuta.

Rod. Which thy treason
Surrendered to the Infidel.

Jul. 'Tis hard
And base to live beneath a conqueror;
Yet, amidst all this grief and infamy,
'Tis something to have rushed upon the ranks
In their advance; 'twere something to have stood
Defeat, discomfiture; and, when around
No beacon blazes, no far axle groans
Thro' the wide plain, no sound of sustenance
Or succour sooths the still-believing ear,
To fight upon the last dismantled tower,
And yield to valour, if we yield at all.
But rather should my neck lie trampled down
By every Saracen and Moor on earth,

Than my own country see her laws o'erturn'd
By those who should protect them: Sir, no prince
Shall ruin Spain; and, least of all, her own.
Is any just or glorious act in view,
Your oaths forbid it: is your avarice,
Or, if there be such, any viler passion
To have its giddy range, and to be gorged,
It rises over all your sacraments,
A hooded mystery, holier than they all.

p. 10

Rod. Hear me, Don Julian; I have heard thy wrath
Who am thy king, nor heard man's wrath before.

Jul. Thou shalt hear mine, for thou art not my king.

Rod. Knowest thou not the alter'd face of war?
Xeres is ours; from every region round
True loyal Spaniards throng into our camp:
Nay, thy own friends and thy own family,
From the remotest provinces, advance
To crush rebellion: Sisabert is come,
Disclaiming thee and thine; the Asturian hills
Opposed to him their icy chains in vain;
But never wilt thou see him, never more,
Unless in adverse war, and deadly hate.

Jul. So lost to me! So generous, so deceived!
I grieve to hear it.

p. 11

Rod. Come, I offer grace,
Honour, dominion: send away these slaves,
Or leave them to our sword, and all beyond
The distant Ebro to the towns of France
Shall bless thy name, and bend before thy throne.
I will myself accompany thee, I,
The king, will hail thee brother.

Jul. Ne'er shalt thou
Henceforth be king: the nation, in thy name,
May issue edicts, champions may command
The vassal multitudes of marshall'd war,
And the fierce charger shrink before the shouts,
Lower'd as if earth had open'd at his feet,
While thy mail'd semblance rises tow'rd the ranks,
But God alone sees thee.

Rod. What hopest thou?
To conquer Spain, and rule a ravaged land?
To compass me around, to murder me?

Jul. No, Don Roderigo: swear thou, in the fight
That thou wilt meet me, hand to hand, alone,
That, if I ever save thee from a foe—

p. 12

Rod. I swear what honour asks—First, to Covilla
Do thou present my crown and dignity.

Jul. Darest thou offer any price for shame?

Rod. Love and repentance.

Jul. Egilona lives:
And were she buried with her ancestors,
Covilla should not be the gaze of men,
Should not, despoil'd of honour, rule the free.

Rod. Stern man! her virtues well deserve the throne.

Jul. And Egilona—what hath she deserved,
The good, the lovely?

Rod. But the realm in vain
Hoped a succession.

Jul. Thou hast torn away
The roots of royalty.

Rod. For her, for thee.

Jul. Blind insolence! base insincerity!
Power and renown no mortal ever shared

Who could retain, or grasp them, to himself:
And, for Covilla? patience! peace! for her?
She call upon her God, and outrage him
At his own altar! she repeat the vows
She violates in repeating! who abhors
Thee and thy crimes, and wants no crown of thine.
Force may compell the abhorrent soul, or want
Lash and pursue it to the public ways;
Virtue looks back and weeps, and may return
To these, but never near the abandon'd one
Who drags religion to adultery's feet,
And rears the altar higher for her sake.

p. 13

Rod. Have then the Saracens possess thee quite,
And wilt thou never yield me thy consent?

Jul. Never.

Rod. So deep in guilt, in treachery!
Forced to acknowledge it! forced to avow
The traitor!

Jul. Not to thee, who reignest not,
But to a country ever dear to me,
And dearer now than ever: what we love
Is loveliest in departure! One I thought,
As every father thinks, the best of all,
Graceful, and mild, and sensible, and chaste:
Now all these qualities of form and soul
Fade from before me, nor on any one
Can I repose, or be consoled by any.
And yet in this torne heart I love her more
Than I could love her when I dwelt on each,
Or clasped them all united, and thanked God,
Without a wish beyond.—Away, thou fiend!
O ignominy, last and worst of all!
I weep before thee—like a child—like mine—
And tell my woes, fount of them all! to thee!

p. 14

ACT I. SCENE 4.

ABDALAZIS enters.

Abd. Julian, to thee, the terror of the faithless,
I bring my father's order, to prepare
For the bright day that crowns thy brave exploits:
Our enemy is at the very gate!
And art thou here, with women in thy train,
Crouching to gain admittance to their lord,
And mourning the unkindness of delay!

p. 15

[Julian, much agitated, goes towards the door, and returns.]

Jul. I am prepared: Prince, judge not hastily.

Abd. Whether I should not promise all they ask,
I too could hesitate, tho' earlier taught
The duty to obey, and should rejoice
To shelter in the universal storm
A frame so delicate, so full of fears,
So little used to outrage and to arms,
As one of these; so humble, so uncheer'd
At the gay pomp that smooths the track of war:
When she beheld me from afar dismount,
And heard my trumpet, she alone drew back,
And, as tho' doubtful of the help she seeks,
Shudder'd to see the jewels on my brow,
And turn'd her eyes away, and wept aloud.
The other stood, awhile, and then advanced:
I would have spoken; but she waved her hand
And said, "*Proceed, protect us, and avenge,
And be thou worthier of the crown thou wearest.*"
Hopeful and happy is indeed our cause,
When the most timid of the lovely hail

p. 16

Rod. And shrink, but to advance.

Abd. Thou tremblest! whence, O Julian! whence this change?
Thou lovest still thy country.

Jul. Abdalazis!
All men with human feelings love their country.
Not the high-born or wealthy man alone,
Who looks upon his children, each one led
By its gay hand-maid, from the high alcove,
And hears them once aday; not only he
Who hath forgotten, when his guest inquires
The name of some far village all his own;
Whose rivers bound the province, and whose hills
Touch the last cloud upon the level sky:
No; better men still better love their country.
'Tis the old mansion of their earliest friends,
The chapel of their first and best devotions;
When violence, or perfidy, invades,
Or when unworthy lords hold wassail there,
And wiser heads are drooping round its moats,
At last they fix their stedly and stiff eye
There, there alone—stand while the trumpet blows,
And view the hostile flames above its towers
Spire, with a bitter and severe delight.

p. 17

[*Abdalazis, taking his hand.*

Abd. Thou feelest what thou speakest, and thy Spain
Will ne'er be shelter'd from her fate by thee
We, whom the Prophet sends o'er many lands
Love none above another; Heaven assigns
Their fields and harvests to our valiant swords,
And 'tis enough—we love while we enjoy.
Whence is the man in that fantastic guise?
Suppliant? or herald?—he who stalks about,
And once was even seated while we spoke,
For never came he with us o'er the sea.

p. 18

Jul. He comes as herald.

Rod. Thou shalt know full soon,
Insulting Moor.

[*Julian intercedes.*

Abd. He cannot bear the grief
His country suffers; I will pardon him.
He lost his courage first, and then his mind;
His courage rushes back, his mind still wanders.
The guest of heaven was piteous to these men,
And princes stoop to feed them in their courts.

ACT I. SCENE 5.

MUZA enters with EGILONA.

Roderigo is going out when Muza enters—starts back on seeing Egilona.

[*Muza, sternly, to Egilona, who follows.*

Muza. Enter, since 'tis the custom in this land.

[*Egilona, passing Muza disdainfully, points to Abdalazis, and says to Julian—*

Egil. Is this our future monarch, or art thou?

p. 19

Jul. 'Tis Abdalazis, son of Muza, prince
Commanding Africa, from Abyla
To where Tunisian pilots bend the eye
O'er ruin'd temples in the glassy wave.
Till quiet times and ancient laws return,
He comes to govern here.

Rod. To-morrow's dawn
Proves that.

Muza. What art thou?

[*Roderigo, drawing his sword.*

Rod. King.

Abd. Amazement!

Muza. Treason!

Egil. O horror!

Muza. Seize him.

Egil. Spare him! fly to me!

Jul. Urge me not to protect a guest, a herald—
The blasts of war roar over him unfelt.

Egil. Ah fly, unhappy!

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Rod. Fly! no, Egilona—
Dost thou forgive me? dost thou love me? still?

Egil. I hate, abominate, abhor thee—go,
Or my own vengeance—

[*Roderigo points with his own to the drawn swords of Muza and Abdalazis, who look with malice towards Julian, takes his hand, and seems inviting to attack them. Julian casts his hand away.*

Rod. Julian!—

Jul. Hence, or die.

ACT II. SCENE 1.

Camp of JULIAN.

JULIAN and COVILLA.

Jul. Obdurate! I am not as I appear.
Weep, my beloved child, Covilla weep
Into my bosom; every drop be mine
Of this most bitter soul-empoisoning cup:
Into no other bosom than thy father's
Canst thou, or wouldst thou, pour it.

p. 21

Cov. Cease, my lord,
My father, angel of my youth, when all
Was innocence and peace—

Jul. Arise, my love,
Look up to heaven—where else are souls like thine!
Mingle in sweet communion with its children,
Trust in its providence, its retribution,
And I will cease to mourn; for, O my child,
These tears corrode, but thine assuage the heart.

Cov. And never shall I see my mother too,
My own, my blessed mother!

Jul. Thou shalt see
Her and thy brothers.

Cov. No! I cannot look
On them, I cannot meet their lovely eyes,
I cannot lift mine up from under theirs.
We all were children when they went away,
They now have fought hard battles, and are men,
And camps and kings they know, and woes and crimes.
Sir, will they never venture from the walls
Into the plain? Remember, they are young,
Hardy and emulous and hazardous,
And who is left to guard them in the town?

p. 22

Jul. Peace is throughout the land: the various tribes
Of that vast region, sink at once to rest,
Like one wide wood when every wind lies hush'd.

Cov. And war, in all its fury, roams o'er Spain!

Jul. Alas! and will for ages: crimes are loose
At which ensanguined War stands shuddering;
And calls for vengeance from the powers above,
Impatient of inflicting it himself.
Nature, in these new horrors, is aghast
At her own progeny, and knows them not.
I am the minister of wrath; the hands
That tremble at me, shall applaud me too,
And seal their condemnation.

Cov. O kind father,
Pursue the guilty, but remember Spain.

Jul. Child, thou wert in thy nursery short time since,
And latterly hast past the vacant hour
Where the familiar voice of history
Is hardly known, however nigh, attuned
In softer accents to the sickened ear;
But thou hast heard, for nurses tell these tales,
Whether I drew my sword for Witiza
Abandoned by the people he betrayed,
Tho' brother to the woman who of all
Was ever dearest to this broken heart,
Till thou, my daughter, wert a prey to grief,
And a brave country brooked the wrongs I bore.
For I had seen Rusilla guide the steps
Of her Theodofred, when burning brass
Plunged its fierce fang into the founts of light,
And Witiza's the guilt! when, bent with age,
He knew the voice again, and told the name,
Of those whose proffer'd fortunes had been laid
Before his throne, while happiness was there,
And strain'd the sightless nerve tow'rds where they stood
At the forced memory of the very oaths
He heard renewed from each—but heard afar,
For they were loud, and him the throng spurn'd off.

Cov. Who were all these?

Jul. All who are seen to-day.
On prancing steeds richly caparisoned
In loyal acclamation round Roderigo;
Their sons beside them, loving one another
Unfeignedly, thro' joy, while they themselves
In mutual homage mutual scorn suppress.
Their very walls and roofs are welcoming
The King's approach, their storied tapestry
Swells its rich arch for him triumphantly
At every clarion blowing from below.

Cov. Such wicked men will never leave his side.

Jul. For they are insects which see nought beyond
Where they now crawl; whose changes are complete,
Unless of habitation.

Cov. Whither go
Creatures, unfit for better, or for worse?

Jul. Some to the grave—where peace be with them—some
Across the Pyrenean mountains far,
Into the plains of France; suspicion there
Will hang on every step from rich and poor,
Grey quickly-glancing eyes will wrinkle round
And courtesy will watch them, day and night.
Shameless they are, yet will they blush, amidst
A nation that ne'er blushes: some will drag
The captive's chain, repair the shattered bark,
Or heave it, from a quicksand, to the shore,
Among the marbles on the Lybian coast;
Teach patience to the lion in his cage,
And, by the order of a higher slave,

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p. 25

Hold to the elephant their scanty fare
To please the children while the parent sleeps.

Cov. Spaniards? must they, dear father, lead such lives?

Jul. All are not Spaniards who draw breath in Spain,
Those are, who live for her, who die for her,
Who love her glory and lament her fall.
O may I too—

Cov. —But peacefully, and late,
Live and die here!

p. 26

Jul. I have, alas! myself
Laid waste the hopes where my fond fancy strayed,
And view their ruins with unaltered eyes.

Cov. My mother will at last return to thee.
Might I, once more, but—could I now! behold her.
Tell her—ah me! what was my rash desire?
No, never tell her these inhuman things,
For they would waste her tender heart away
As they waste mine; or tell where I have died,
Only to show her that her every care
Could not have saved, could not have comforted;
That she herself, clasping me once again
To her sad breast, had said, Covilla! go,
Go, hide them in the bosom of thy God.
Sweet mother! that far-distant voice I hear,
And, passing out of youth and out of life,
I would not turn at last, and disobey.

ACT II. SCENE 2.

p. 27

SISABERT enters.

Sis. Uncle, and is it true, say, can it be,
That thou art leader of these faithless Moors?
That thou impeachest thy own daughter's fame
Thro' the whole land, to seize upon the throne
By the permission of these recreant slaves?
What shall I call thee? art thou, speak Count Julian,
A father, or a soldier, or a man?

Jul. All—or this day had never seen me here.

Sis. O falsehood! worse than woman's!

Cov. Once, my cousin,
Far gentler words were uttered from your lips;
If you loved me, you loved my father first,
More justly and more steddily, ere love
Was passion and illusion and deceit.

Sis. I boast not that I never was deceived,
Covilla, which beyond all boasts were base,
Nor that I never loved; let this be thine.
Illusions! just to stop us, not delay,
Amuse, not occupy!—too true! when love
Scatters its brilliant foam, and passes on
To some fresh object in its natural course,
Widely and openly and wanderingly,
'Tis better! narrow it, and it pours its gloom
In one fierce cataract that stuns the soul.
Ye hate the wretch ye make so, while ye choose
Whoever knows you best and shuns you most.

p. 28

Cov. Shun me then: be beloved, more and more.
Honour the hand that showed you honour first,
Love—O my father! speak, proceed, persuade,
Thy voice alone can utter it—another.

Sis. Ah lost Covilla! can a thirst of power
Alter thy heart, thus, to abandon mine,
And change my very nature at one blow.

Cov. I told you, dearest Sisabert, 'twas vain
To urge me more, to question, or confute.

Sis. I know it—for another wears the crown
Of Witiza my father; who succeeds
To king Roderigo will succeed to me.
Yet thy cold perfidy still calls me dear,
And o'er my aching temples breathes one gale
Of days departed to return no more.

p. 29

Jul. Young man, avenge our cause.

Sis. What cause avenge?

Cov. If I was ever dear to you, hear me.
Not vengeance; Heaven will give that signal soon.
O Sisabert, the pangs I have endured
On your long absence—

Sis. Will be now consoled.
Thy father comes to mount my father's throne;
But though I would not an usurper king,
I prize his valour and defend his crown:
No stranger, and no traitor, rules o'er me,
Or unchastized inveigles humbled Spain.
Covilla, gavest thou no promises?
Nor thou, Don Julian? Seek not to reply—
Too well I know, too justly I despise,
Thy false excuse, thy coward effrontery;
Yes, when thou gavest them across the sea,
An enemy wert thou to Mahomet,
And no appellant to his faith or leagues.

p. 30

Jul. 'Tis well: a soldier hears, throughout, in silence.
I urge no answer: to those words, I fear,
Thy heart with sharp compunction will reply.

[*Sisabert, to Covilla.*

Sis. Then I demand of thee, before thou reign,
Answer me, while I fought against the Frank
Who dared to sue thee? blazon'd in the court,
Trailed not thro' darkness, were our nuptial bands;
No: Egilona join'd our hands herself,
The peers applauded, and the king approved.

Jul. Hast thou yet seen that king since thy return?

Cov. Father! O father!

Sis. I will not implore
Of him or thee what I have lost for ever,
These were not, when we parted, thy alarms;
Far other, and far worthier of thy heart
Were they! which Sisabert could banish then!
Fear me not, now, Covilla! thou hast changed,
I am changed too—I lived but where thou livedst,
My very life was portioned off from thine.
Upon the surface of thy happiness
Day after day, I gazed, I doated—there
Was all I had, was all I coveted,
So pure, serene, and boundless, it appear'd:
Yet, for we told each other every thought,
Thou knowest well, if thou rememberest,
At times I fear'd; as tho' some demon sent
Suspicion without form into the world,
To whisper unimagined things;
Then thy fond arguing banished all but hope,
Each wish, and every feeling, was with thine,
Till I partook thy nature, and became
Credulous, and incredulous, like thee.
We, who have met so alter'd, meet no more.

p. 31

[*Takes her hand.*

Mountains and seas! ye are not separation—
Death! thou dividest, but unitest too,
In everlasting peace and faith sincere.
Confiding love! where is thy resting-place!

p. 32

Where is thy truth, Covilla! where? ^[32]—go, go,
I should adore thee and believe thee still.

[*Sisabert goes.*

Cov. O Heaven! support me, or desert me quite,
And leave me lifeless this too trying hour!
He thinks me faithless.

Jul. He must think thee so.

Cov. O tell him, tell him all, when I am dead—
He will die, too, and we shall meet again.
He will know all when these sad eyes are closed.
Ah cannot he before! must I appear
The vilest!—O just Heaven! can it be thus?
I am—all earth resounds it—lost, despised,
Anguish and shame unutterable seize me.
'Tis palpable—no phantom, no delusion,
No dream that wakens with overwhelming horror;
Spaniard and Moor fight on this ground alone,
And tear the arrow from my bleeding breast
To pierce my father's, for alike they fear.

p. 33

Jul. Invulnerable now, and unassail'd
Are we, alone perhaps of human kind,
Nor life allures us more, nor death alarms.

Cov. Fallen, unpitied, unbeliev'd, unheard!
I should have died long earlier: gracious God!
Desert me to my sufferings, but sustain
My faith in, thee! O hide me from the world,
And from thyself, my father, from thy fondness,
That opened in this wilderness of woe
A source of tears that else had burst my heart,
Setting me free for ever—then perhaps
A cruel war had not divided Spain,
Had not o'erturned her cities and her altars,
Had not endanger'd thee! O haste afar
Ere the last dreadful conflict that decides
Whether we live beneath a foreign sway—

Jul. Or under him whose tyranny brought down
The curse upon his people. O child! child!
Urge me no further, talk not of the war,
Remember not our country.

Cov. Not remember!
What have the wretched else for consolation,
What else have they who pining feed their woe?
Can I, or should I, drive from memory
All that was dear and sacred, all the joys
Of innocence and peace; when no debate
Was in the convent, but what hymn, whose voice,
To whom among the blessed it arose,
Swelling so sweet; when rang the vesper-bell
And every finger ceased from the guitar,
And every tongue was silent through our land;
When, from remotest earth, friends met again
Hung on each other's neck, and but embraced,
So sacred, still, and peaceful, was the hour.
Now, in what climate of the wasted world,
Not unmolested long by the profane,
Can I pour forth in secrecy to God
My prayers and my repentance? where beside
Is the last solace of the parting soul?
Friends, brethren, parents—dear indeed, too dear,
Are they, but somewhat still the heart requires
That it may leave them lighter, and more blest.

p. 34

Jul. Wide are the regions of our far-famed land:
Thou shalt arrive at her remotest bounds,
See her best people, choose some holiest house—
Whether where Castro ^[35] from surrounding vines
Hears the hoarse ocean roar among his caves,
And, thro' the fissure in the green church-yard,
The wind wail loud the calmest summer day;

p. 35

Or where Santona leans against the hill,
Hidden from sea and land by groves and bowers.

Cov. O! for one moment, in those pleasant scenes
Thou placest me, and lighter air I breathe;
Why could I not have rested, and heard on!
Thy voice dissolves the vision quite away,
Outcast from virtue, and from nature too!

Jul. Nature and virtue!—they shall perish first.
God destined them for thee, and thee for them,
Inseparably and eternally!
The wisest and the best will prize thee most,
And solitudes and cities will contend
Which shall receive thee kindest; sigh not so—
Violence and fraud will never penetrate
Where piety and poverty retire,
Intractable to them, and valueless,
And look'd at idly, like the face of heaven,
If strength be wanted for security,
Mountains the guard, forbidding all approach
With iron-pointed and uplifted gates,
Thou wilt be welcome too in Aguilar—^[36]
Impenetrable, marble-turreted,
Surveying from aloft the limpid ford,
The massy fane, the sylvan avenue—
Whose hospitality I proved myself,
A willing leader in no impious war
When fame and freedom urged me—or mayst dwell
In Reynosas dry and thriftless dale,
Unharvested beneath October moons,
Amongst those frank and cordial villagers.
They never saw us, and, poor simple souls!
So little know they whom they call the great—
Would pity one another less than us
In injury, disaster, or distress.

p. 36

p. 37

Cov. But they would ask each other whence our grief,
That they might pity?

Jul. Rest then just beyond,
In the secluded scenes where Ebro springs
And drives not from his fount the fallen leaf,
So motionless and tranquil its repose.

Cov. Thither let us depart, and speedily.

Jul. I cannot go: I live not in the land
I have reduced beneath such wretchedness:
And who could leave the brave, whose lives and fortunes
Hang on his sword?

Cov. Me canst thou leave, my father?
Ah, yes, for it is past; too well thou seest
My life and fortunes rest not upon thee.
Long, happily,—could it be gloriously!—
Still mayst thou live, and save thy country still!

Jul. Unconquerable land! unrivalled race!
Whose bravery, too enduring, rues alike
The power and weakness of accursed kings—
How cruelly hast thou neglected me!
Forcing me from thee, never to return,
Nor in thy pangs and struggles to partake!
I hear a voice—'tis Egilona—come,
Recall thy courage, dear unhappy girl,
Let us away.

p. 38

ACT II. SCENE 3.

EGILONA *enters.*

Egil. Remain, I order thee.
Attend, and do thy duty; I am queen,

Unbent to degradation.

Cov. I attend
Ever most humbly and most gratefully
My too kind sovran, cousin now no more;
Could I perform but half the services
I owe her, I were happy, for a time,
Or dared I show her half my love, 'twere bliss.

p. 39

Egil. Oh! I sink under gentleness like thine
Thy sight is death to me; and yet 'tis dear.
The gaudy trappings of assumptive state
Drop, at the voice of nature, to the earth,
Before thy feet—I cannot force myself
To hate thee, to renounce thee; yet—Covilla!
Yet—O distracting thought! 'tis hard to see,
Hard to converse, with, to admire, to love,
As from my soul I do, and must do, thee—
One who hath robbed me of all pride and joy,
All dignity, all fondness.—I adored

[*After a pause.*]

Roderigo—he was brave, and in discourse
Most voluble; the masses of his mind

[*She walks about, and speaks by fits and abstractedly.*]

Were vast, but varied; now absorbed in gloom,
Majestic, not austere; now their extent
Opening, and waving in bright levity—

Jul. Depart, my daughter—'twere as well to bear
His presence as his praise ^[40]—go; she will dream
This phantasm out, nor notice thee depart.

p. 40

[*She departs.*]

Egil. What pliancy! what tenderness! what life!
O for the smiles of those who smile so seldom,
The love of those who know no other love!
Such he was, Egilona, who was thine.

Jul. While he was worthy of the realm and thee.

Egil. Can it be true, then, Julian, that thy aim
Is sovranity? not virtue, nor revenge?

Jul. I swear to heaven, nor I, nor child of mine,
Ever shall mount to this polluted throne.

Egil. Then am I still a queen. The savage Moor
Who could not conquer Ceuta from thy sword,
In his own country, not with every wile
Of his whole race, not with his myriad crests
Of cavalry, seen from the Calpian heights
Like locusts on the parched and gleamy coast,
Will never conquer Spain.

Jul. Spain then was conquer'd
When fell her laws before the traitor king.

p. 41

ACT II. SCENE 4.

Officer announces OPAS.

O queen, the metropolitan attends
On matters of high import to the state,
And wishes to confer in privacy.

[*Egilona, to Julian.*]

Egil. Adieu then; and whate'er betide the country,
Sustain at least the honours of our house.

[*Julian goes before Opas enters.*]

Opas. I cannot but commend, O Egilona,

Such resignation and such dignity.
Indeed he is unworthy; yet a queen
Rather to look for peace, and live remote
From cities, and from courts, and from her lord,
I hardly could expect, in one so young,
So early, widely, wondrously, admired.

p. 42

Egil. I am resolved: religious men, good Opas,
In this resemble the vain libertine;
They find in woman no consistency,
No virtue but devotion, such as comes
To infancy or age, or fear or love,
Seeking a place of rest, and finding none,
Until it soar to heaven.

Opas. A spring of mind
That rises when all pressure is removed,
Firmness in pious and in chaste resolves,
But weakness in much fondness; these, O queen,
I did expect, I own.

Egil. The better part
Be mine; the worst hath been; and is no more.

Opas. But if Roderigo have at length prevailed
That Egilona willingly resigns
All claim to royalty, and casts away
—Indifferent or estranged—the marriage bond
His perjury tore asunder, still the church
Hardly can sanction his new nuptial rites.

p. 43

Egil. What art thou saying? what new nuptial rites?

Opas. Thou knowest not?

Egil. Am I a wife; a queen?
Abandon it! my claim to royalty!
Whose hand was on my head when I arose
Queen of this land? whose benediction sealed
My marriage-vow? who broke it? was it I?
And wouldst thou, virtuous Opas, wouldst thou dim
The glorious light of thy declining days?
Wouldst thou administer the sacred vows,
And sanction them, and bless them, for another,
And bid her live in peace while I am living?
Go then—I execrate and banish him
For ever from my sight: we were not born
For happiness together—none on earth
Were ever so dissimilar as we.
He is not worth a tear, a wish, a thought—
Never was I deceived in him—I found
No tenderness, no fondness, from the first:
A love of power, a love of perfidy,
Such is the love that is returned for mine.
Ungrateful man! 'twas not the pageantry
Of regal state, the clarions, nor the guard,
Nor loyal valour, nor submissive beauty,
Silence at my approach, awe at my voice,
Happiness at my smile, that led my youth
Towards Roderigo! I had lived obscure,
In humbleness, in poverty, in want,
Blest, O supremely blest! with him alone;
And he abandons me, rejects me, scorns me,
Insensible! inhuman! for another!
Thou shalt repent thy wretched choice, false man!
Crimes such as thine call loudly for perdition;
Heaven will inflict it, and not I—but I
Neither will fall alone nor live despised.

p. 44

[*Sound of trumpet.*]

Opas. Peace, Egilona, he arrives; compose
Thy turbid thoughts, meet him with dignity.

Egil. He! in the camp of Julian! trust me, sir,
He comes not hither, dares no longer use
The signs of state, and flies from every foe.

p. 45

[*Egilona retires some distance.*]

ACT II. SCENE 5.

MUZA *and* ABDALAZIS.

[*Muza to Abdalazis.*

Muza. I saw him but an instant, and disguised,
Yet this is not the traitor; on his brow
Observe the calm of wisdom and of years.

Opas. Whom seekest thou?

Muza. Him who was king, I seek.
He came arrayed as herald to this tent.

Abd. Thy daughter! was she nigh? perhaps for her
Was this disguise.

Muza. Here, Abdalazis, kings
Disguise from other causes; they obtain
Beauty by violence, and power by fraud.
Treason was his intent: we must admit
Whoever come; our numbers are too small
For question or selection, and the blood
Of Spaniards shall win Spain for us, today.

p. 46

Abd. The wicked cannot move from underneath
Thy ruling eye.

Muza. Right!—Julian and Roderigo
Are leagued against us, on these terms alone,
That Julian's daughter weds the christian king.

[*Egilona, turning round, and rushing forward.*

Egil. 'Tis true—and I proclaim—

Abd. Heaven and earth!
Was it not thou, most lovely, most high-souled,
Who wishedst us success, and me a crown?

[*Opas, in astonishment, goes abruptly.*

Egil. I give it—I am Egilona, queen
Of that detested man.

Abd. I touch the hand
That chains down fortune to the throne of fate;
And will avenge thee; for 'twas thy command,
'Tis Heaven's—My father! what retards our bliss?
Why art thou silent?

p. 47

Muza. Inexperienced years
Rather would rest on the soft lap, I see,
Of pleasure, after the fierce gusts of war.
O destiny! that callest me alone,
Hapless, to keep the toilsome watch of state;
Painful to age, unnatural to youth,
Adverse to all society of friends,
Equality, and liberty, and ease,
The welcome cheer of the unbidden feast,
The gay reply, light, sudden, like the leap
Of the young forester's unbended bow;
But, above all, to tenderness at home,
And sweet security of kind concern
Even from those who seem most truly ours.
Who would resign all this, to be approach'd,
Like a sick infant by a canting nurse,
To spread his arms in darkness, and to find
One universal hollowness around.
Forego, a little while, that bane of peace.
Love may be cherished.

p. 48

Abd. 'Tis enough: I ask
No other boon.

Muza. Not victory?

Abd. Farewell,

O queen! I will deserve thee; why do tears
Silently drop, and slowly, down thy veil?
I shall return to worship thee, and soon;
Why this affliction? O, that I alone
Could raise or could repress it!

Egil. We depart,
Nor interrupt your counsels, nor impede;
O may they prosper, whatsoever they be,
And perfidy soon meet its just reward!
The infirm and peaceful Opas—whither gone?

Muza. Stay, daughter; not for counsel are we met,
But to secure our arms from treachery,
O'erthrow and stifle base conspiracies,
Involve in his own toils our false allie—

Egil. Author of every woe I have endur'd!
Ah sacrilegious man! he vowed to heaven
None of his blood should ever mount the throne.

p. 49

Muza. Herein his vow indeed is ratified;
Yet faithful ears have heard this offer made,
And weighty was the conference that ensued
And long—not dubious—for what mortal e'er
Refus'd alliance with illustrious power?
Tho' some have given its enjoyments up,
Tired and enfeebled by satiety.
His friends and partisans, 'twas his pretence,
Should pass uninterrupted; hence his camp
Is open, every day, to enemies.
You look around, O queen, as tho' you fear'd
Their entrance—Julian I pursue no more;
You conquer him—return we; I bequeath
Ruin, extermination, not reproach.
How we may best attain your peace and will
We must consider in some other place,
Not, lady, in the midst of snares and wiles
How to supplant your charms and seize your crown.

[*He takes her hand.*

I rescue it, fear not: yes, we retire.

p. 50

[*She is reluctant to go with him.*

Whatever is your wish becomes my own,
Nor is there in this land but who obeys.

[*Sternly—he leads her away.*

ACT III. SCENE 1.

Palace in XERES.

RODERIGO *and* OPAS.

Rod. Impossible! she could not thus resign
Me, for a miscreant of Barbary,
A mere adventurer—but that citron face
Shall bleach and shrivel the whole winter long;
There, on yon cork-tree by the sallyport.
She shall return.

Opas. To fondness and to faith?
Dost thou retain them, if she could return?

Rod. Retain them? she has forfeited by this
All right to fondness, all to royalty.

p. 51

Opas. Consider, and speak calmly: she deserves
Some pity, some reproof.

Rod. To speak then calmly,
Since thine eyes open and can see her guilt—
—Infamous and atrocious! let her go—
Chains—

Opas. What! in Muza's camp?

Rod. My scorn supreme!

Opas. Say, pity.

Rod. Aye, aye, pity—that suits best,
I loved her, but *had* loved her; three whole years
Of pleasure, and of varied pleasure too,
Had worn the soft impression half away.
What I once felt, I would recall; the faint
Responsive voice grew fainter each reply:
Imagination sunk amid the scenes
It labour'd to create; the vivid joy
Of fleeting youth I followed, and possest.
'Tis the first moment of the tenderest hour,
'Tis the first mien on entering new delights,
We give our peace, our power, our souls, for these.

p. 52

Opas. Thou hast; and what remains?

Rod. Myself—Roderigo—
Whom hatred cannot reach, nor love cast down.

Opas. Nor gratitude nor pity nor remorse
Call back, nor vows nor earth nor heaven controul.
But art thou free and happy? art thou safe?
By shrewd contempt the humblest may chastize
Whom scarlet and its ermine cannot scare,
And the sword skulks for everywhere in vain.
Thee the poor victim of thy outrages,
Woman, with all her weakness, may despise.

Rod. But first let quiet age have intervened.

Opas. Ne'er will the peace or apathy of age
Be thine, or twilight steal upon thy day.
The violent choose, but cannot change, their end—
Violence, by man or nature, must be theirs;
Thine it must be, and who to pity thee?

Rod. Behold my solace! none. I want no pity.

p. 53

Opas. Proclaim we those the happiest of mankind
Who never knew a want? O what a curse
To thee this utter ignorance of thine!
Julian, whom all the good commiserate,
Sees thee below him far in happiness:
A state indeed: of no quick restlessness,
No glancing agitation—one vast swell
Of melancholy, deep, impassable,
Interminable, where his spirit alone
Broods and o'er shadows all, bears him from earth
And purifies his chasten'd soul for heaven.
Both heaven and earth shall from thy grasp recede.
Whether on death or life thou arguest,
Untutor'd savage or corrupted heathen
Avows no sentiment so vile as thine.

Rod. Nor feels?

Opas. O human nature! I have heard
The secrets of the soul, and pitied thee.
Bad and accursed things have men confest
Before me, but have left them unarrayed,
Naked, and shivering with deformity.
The troubled dreams and deafening gush of youth
Fling o'er the fancy, struggling to be free,
Discordant and impracticable things:
If the good shudder at their past escapes,
Shall not the wicked shudder at their crimes?
They shall—and I denounce upon thy head
God's vengeance—thou shalt rule this land no more.

p. 54

Rod. What! my own kindred leave me, and renounce me!

Opas. Kindred? and is there any in our world
So near us, as those sources of all joy,
Those on whose bosom every gale of life

Blows softly, who reflect our images
In loveliness through sorrows and through age,
And bear them onward far beyond the grave.

Rod. Methinks, most reverend Opas, not inapt
Are these fair views; arise they from Seville?

Opas. He, who can scoff at them, may scoff at me.
Such are we, that the giver of all good
Shall, in the heart he purifies, possess
The latest love—the earliest, no, not there!
I've known the firm and faithful; even from these
Life's eddying spring shed the first bloom on earth.
I pity them, but ask their pity too.
I love the happiness of men, and praise
And sanctify the blessings I renounce.

p. 55

Rod. Yet would thy baleful influence undermine
The heaven-appointed throne.

Opas. —the throne of guilt
Obdurate, without plea, without remorse.

Rod. What power hast thou? perhaps thou soon wilt want
A place of refuge.

Opas. Rather say, perhaps
My place of refuge will receive me soon:
Could I extend it even to thy crimes,
It should be open; but the wrath of heaven
Turns them against thee, and subverts thy sway;
It leaves thee not, what wickedness and woe
Oft in their drear communion taste together,
Hope and repentance.

Rod. But it leaves me arms,
Vigour of soul and body, and a race
Subject by law, and dutiful by choice,
Whose hand is never to be holden fast
Within the closing cleft of knarled creeds;
No easy prey for these vile mitred Moors.
I, who received thy homage, may retort
Thy threats, vain prelate, and abase thy pride.

p. 56

Opas. Low must be those whom mortal can sink lower,
Nor high are they whom human power may raise.

Rod. Judge now: for, hear the signal.

Opas. And derides
Thy buoyant heart the dubious gulphs of war?
Trumpets may sound, and not to victory.

Rod. The traitor and his daughter feel my power.

Opas. Just God! avert it.

Rod. Seize this rebel priest.
I will alone subdue my enemies.

ACT III. SCENE 2.

p. 57

RAMIRO and OSMA enter from opposite sides.

Ram. Where is the king? his car is at the gate,
His ministers attend him, but his foes
Are yet more prompt, nor will await delay.

Osma. Nor need they—for he meets them as I speak—

Ram. With all his forces—or our cause is lost.
Julian and Sisabert surround the walls—

Osma. Surround, sayst thou? enter they not the gates?

Ram. Perhaps ere now they enter.

Osma. Sisabert

Brings him our prisoner.

Ram. They are friends! they held
A parley; and the soldiers, when they saw
Count Julian, lower'd their arms and hail'd him king.

Osma. How? and he leads them in the name of king?

Ram. He leads them; but amidst that acclamation
He turn'd away his head, and called for vengeance.

p. 58

Osma. In Sisabert, and in the cavalry
He led, were all our hopes.

Opas. Woe, woe is theirs
Who have no other.

Osma. What are thine? obey
The just commands of our offended king,
Conduct him to the tower ^[58]—off—instantly.
Ramiro, let us haste to reinforce—

Ram. Hark! is the king defeated? hark!

Osma. I hear
Such acclamation as from victory
Arises not, but rather from revolt,
Reiterated, interrupted, lost.
Favour like this his genius will retrieve
By time, or promises, or chastisement,
Which-e'er he choose—the speediest is the best—
His danger and his glory let us share;
'Tis ours to serve him.

p. 59

Ram. While he rules, 'tis ours.
What chariot-wheels are thundering o'er the bridge?

Osma. Roderigo's—I well know them.

Ram. Now, the burst
Of acclamation! now! again—again.

Osma. I know the voices; they are for Roderigo.

Ram. Stay, I entreat thee—one hath now prevailed.
So far is certain.

Osma. Aye, the right prevails.

Ram. Transient and vain their joyance, who rejoice
Precipitately and intemperately,
And bitter thoughts grow up where'er it fell.

Osma. Nor vain and transient theirs, who idly float
Down popularity's unfertile stream
And fancy all their own that rises round?

Ram. If thou still lovest, as I know thou dost,
Thy king—

[*Osma interrupting.*

Osma. I love him; for he owes me much
Brave soul, and cannot, though he would, repay.
Service and faith, pure faith and service hard,
Throughout his reign, if these things be desert,
These have I borne toward him, and still bear.

p. 60

Ram. Come, from thy solitary eiry come,
And share the prey so plenteous and profuse
Which a less valourous brood will else consume.
Much fruit is shaken down in civil storms,
And shall not orderly and loyal hands
Gather it up? Again! [*loud shouts*] and still refuse?
How different are those citizens without
From thee! from thy serenity! thy arch,
Thy firmament, of intrepidity!
For their new lord, whom they have never served,
Afraid were they to shout, and only struck
The pavement with their ferrels and their feet;
Now they are certain of the great event
Voices and hands they raise, and all contend

Who shall be bravest in applauding most.
Knowest thou these?

Osma. Their voices I know well—
And can they shout for him they would have slain?
A prince untried they welcome; soon their doubts
Are blown afar!

Ram. Yes, brighter scenes arise.
The disunited he alone unites,
The weak with hope he strengthens, and the strong
With justice.

Osma. Wait: praise him when time hath given
A soundness and consistency to praise:
He shares it amply who bestows it right.

Ram. Doubtest thou?

Osma. Be it so: let us away;
New courtiers come—

Ram. And why not join the new.
Let us attend him, and congratulate;
Come on, they enter.

Osma. This is now my post
No longer: I could face them in the field,
I cannot here.

Ram. Tomorrow all may change;
Be comforted.

Osma. I want nor change nor comfort.

Ram. The prisoner's voice!

Osma. The metropolitans?
Triumph he may—not over me forgiven.
This way, and thro' the chapel—none are there.

ACT III. SCENE 3.

OPAS *and* SISABERT.

Opas. The royal threat still sounds along these halls;
Hardly his foot hath past them, and he flees
From his own treachery—all his pride, his hopes,
Are scatter'd at a breath; even courage fails
Now falsehood sinks from under him: behold,
Again art thou where reign'd thy ancestors;
Behold the chapel of thy earliest prayers,
Where I, whose chains are sunder'd at thy sight
Ere they could close around these aged limbs,
Received and blest thee, when thy mother's arm
Was doubtful if it loosed thee! with delight
Have I observed the promises we made
Deeply imprest and manfully perform'd.
Now, to thyself beneficent, O prince,
Never henceforth renew those weak complaints
Against Covilla's vows and Julian's faith,
His honour broken, and her heart estranged.
O, if thou holdest peace or glory dear,
Away with jealousy—brave Sisabert,
Smite from thy bosom, smite that scorpion down;
It swells and hardens amid mildewed hopes,
O'erspreads and blackens whate'er most delights,
And renders us, haters of loveliness,
The lowest of the fiends: ambition led
The higher on, furious to dispossess,
From admiration sprung and phrenzied love.
This disingenuous soul-debasing passion,
Rising from abject and most sordid fear,
Stings her own breast with bitter self-reproof,
Consumes the vitals, pines, and never dies.

Love, Honour, Justice, numberless the forms,
Glorious and high the stature, she assumes;
But watch the wandering changeeful mischief well,
And thou shalt see her with low lurid light
Search where the soul's most valued treasure lies,
Or, more embodied to our vision, stand
With evil eye, and sorcery hers alone,
Looking away her helpless progeny,
And drawing poison from its very smiles.
For Julian's truth have I not pledged my own?
Have I not sworn Covilla weds no other?

Sis. Her persecutor have not I chastized,
Have not I fought for Julian, won the town,
And liberated thee?

Opas. But left for him
The dangers of pursuit, of ambuscade,
Of absence from thy high and splendid name.

Sis. Do probity and truth want such supports?

p. 65

Opas. Gryphens and eagles, ivory and gold,
Can add no clearness to the lamp above,
But many look for them in palaces
Who have them not, and want them not, at home.
Virtue and valour and experience
Are never trusted by themselves alone
Further than infancy and idiocy;
The men around him, not the man himself,
Are looked at, and by these is he prefer'd:
'Tis the green mantle of the warrener
And his loud whistle, that alone attract
The lofty gazes of the noble herd:
And thus, without thy countenance and help,
Feeble and faint is still our confidence,
Brief perhaps our success.

Sis. Should I resign
To Abdalazis her I once adored?
He truly, he must wed a Spanish queen!
He rule in Spain! ah! whom could any land
Obey so gladly as the meek, the humble,
The friend of all who have no friend beside,
Covilla! could he choose, or could he find
Another who might so confirm his power?
And now, indeed, from long domestic wars
Who else survives of all our ancient house—

p. 66

Opas. But Egilona.

Sis. Vainly she upbraids
Roderigo.

Opas. She divorces him, abjures,
And carries vengeance to that hideous highth
Which piety and chastity would shrink
To look from, on the world, or on themselves.

Sis. She may forgive him yet.

Opas. Ah Sisabert!
Wretched are those a woman has forgiven;
With her forgiveness ne'er hath love return'd:
Ye know not, till too late, the filmy tie
That holds heaven's precious boon, eternally
To those who fondly cherish her; once go
Driven by mad passion, strike but at her peace,
And, tho' she step aside from broad reproach,
Yet every softer virtue dies away.
Beaming with virtue inaccessible
Stood Egilona; for her lord she lived,
And for the heavens that raised her sphere so high:
All thoughts were on her—all, beside her own.
Negligent as the blossoms of the field,
Arrayed in candour and simplicity,
Before her path she heard the streams of joy
Murmur her name in all their cadences,

p. 67

Saw them in every scene, in light, in shade,
Reflect her image—but acknowledged them
Hers most complete when flowing from her most.
All things in want of her, herself of none,
Pomp and dominion lay beneath her feet
Unfelt and unregarded: now behold
The earthly passions war against the heavenly!
Pride against love, ambition and revenge
Against devotion and compliancy—
Her glorious beams adversity hath blunted,
And coming nearer to our quiet view
The original clay of coarse mortality
Hardens and flaws around her.

p. 68

Sis. Every germ
Of virtue perishes, when love recedes
From those hot shifting sands, the female heart.

Opas. His was the fault; be his the punishment.
'Tis not their own crimes only, men commit,
They harrow them into another's breast,
And they shall reap the bitter growth with pain.

[*Sisabert, walking up and down, abstractedly.*

Sis. Yes, blooming royalty will first attract
These creatures of the desert—now I breathe
More freely—she is theirs if I pursue
The fugitive again—he well deserves
The death he flies from—stay! don Julian twice
Called him aloud, and he, methinks, replied.
Could not I have remain'd a moment more,
And seen the end? altho' with hurried voice
He bade me intercept the scattered foes,
And hold the city barred to their return.
May Egilona be another's wife
Whether he die or live! but oh!

p. 69

[*Aloud, to Opas.*

—Covilla—

She never can be mine! yet she may be
Still happy—no, Covilla, no—not happy,
But more deserving happiness without it.
Mine never! nor another's—'tis enough.
The tears I shed no rival can deride;
In the fond intercourse, a name once cherished
Will never be defended by faint smiles,
Nor given up with vows of alter'd love.
And is the passion of my soul at last
Reduced to this? is this my happiness?
This my sole comfort? this the close of all
Those promises, those tears, those last adieus,
And those long vigils for the morrow's dawn.

Opas. Arouse thee! be thyself. O Sisabert,
Awake to glory from these feverish dreams;
The enemy is in our land—two enemies—
We must quell both—shame on us, if we fail.

Sis. Incredible; a nation be subdued
Peopled as ours!

p. 70

Opas. Corruption may subvert
What force could never.

Sis. Traitors may.

Opas. Alas!
If traitors can, the basis is but frail.
I mean such traitors as the vacant world
Echoes most stunningly; not fur-robed knaves
Whose whispers raise the dreaming bloodhound's ear
Against benighted famished wanderers;
While with remorseless guilt they undermine
Palace and shed, their very father's house,
O blind! their own and children's heritage,
To leave more ample space for fearful wealth.
Plunder in some most harmless guise they swathe,

Call it some very meek and hallowed name,
Some known and borne by their good forefathers,
And own and vaunt it thus redeemed from sin.
These are the plagues heaven sends o'er every land
Before it sink—the portents of the street,
Not of the air—lest nations should complain
Of distance or of dimness in the signs,
Flaring from far to Wisdom's eye alone:
These are the last! these, when the sun rides high
In the forenoon of doomsday, revelling,
Make men abhor the earth, arraign the skies.
Ye who behold them spoil field after field,
Despising them in individual strength,
Not with one torrent sweeping them away
Into the ocean of eternity,
Arise! despach! no renovating gale,
No second spring awaits you—up, begone,
—If you have force and courage even for flight—
The blast of dissolution is behind.

p. 71

Sis. How terrible! how true! what voice like thine
Can rouse and warn the nation! if she rise,
Say, whither go, where stop we?

Opas. God will guide.
Let us pursue the oppressor to destruction,
The rest is heaven's: must we move no step
Because we cannot see the boundaries
Of our long way, and every stone between?

p. 72

Sis. Is not thy vengeance for the late affront,
For threats and outrage and imprisonment?

Opas. For outrage, yes—imprisonment and threats
I pardon him, and whatsoever ill
He could do *me*.

Sis. To hold Covilla from me,
To urge her into vows against her faith,
Against her beauty, youth, and inclination,
Without her mother's blessing, nay without
Her father's knowledge and authority—
So that she never will behold me more,
Flying afar for refuge and for help
Where never friend but God will comfort her—

Opas. These, and more barbarous deeds were perpetrated.

Sis. Yet her proud father deigned not to inform
Me, whom he loved and taught, in peace and war,
Me, whom he called his son, before I hoped
To merit it by marriage or by arms.
He offer'd no excuse, no plea; exprest
No sorrow; but with firm unfaltering voice
Commanded me—I trembled as he spoke—
To follow where he led, redress his wrongs,
And vindicate the honour of his child.
He called on God, the witness of his cause,
On Spain, the partner of his victories,
And yet amidst these animating words
Rolled the huge tear down his unvisor'd face—
A general swell of indignation rose
Thro' the long line, sobs burst from every breast,
Hardly one voice succeeded—you might hear
The impatient hoof strike the soft sandy plain:
But when the gates flew open, and the king
In his high car came forth triumphantly,
Then was Count Julian's stature more elate;
Tremendous was the smile that smote the eyes
Of all he past—"fathers, and sons, and brothers,"
He cried, "I fight your battles, follow me!
Soldiers, we know no danger but disgrace!"
Father, and general, and king, they shout,
And would proclaim him—back he cast his face,
Pallid with grief, and one loud groan burst forth;
It kindled vengeance thro' the Asturian ranks,
And they soon scatter'd, as the blasts of heaven

p. 73

p. 74

Scatter the leaves and dust, the astonished foe.

Opas. And doubttest thou his truth?

Sis. I love—and doubt—
Fight—and believe: Roderigo spoke untruths,
In him I place no trust; but Julian holds
Truths in reserve—how should I quite confide!

Opas. By sorrows thou beholdest him opprest;
Doubt the more prosperous: march, Sisabert,
Once more against his enemy and ours;
Much hath been done, but much there still remains.

ACT IV. SCENE II.

Tent of JULIAN.

RODERIGO *and* JULIAN.

Jul. To stop perhaps at any wickedness
Appears a merit now, and at the time
Prudence or policy it often is
Which afterward seems magnanimity.
The people had deserted thee, and thronged
My standard, had I rais'd it, at the first;
But once subsiding, and no voice of mine
Calling by name each grievance to each man,
They, silent and submissive by degrees,
Bore thy hard yoke, and, hadst thou but opprest,
Would still have borne it: thou hast now deceived;
Thou hast done all a foren foe could do,
And more, against them; with ingratitude
Not hell itself could arm the foren foe—
'Tis forged at home, and kills not from afar.
Amid whate'er vain glories fell upon
Thy rainbow span of power, which I dissolve,
Boast not how thou conferredst wealth and rank,
How thou preservedst me, my family,
All my distinctions, all my offices,
When Witiza was murder'd, that I stand
Count Julian at this hour by special grace.
The sword of Julian saved the walls of Ceuta,
And not the shadow that attends his name
It was no badge, no title, that o'erthrew
Soldier, and steed, and engine—don Roderigo,
The truly and the falsely great here differ,
These by dull wealth or daring fraud advance,
Him the Almighty calls amidst his people
To sway the wills and passions of mankind.
The weak of heart and intellect beheld
Thy splendour, and adored thee lord of Spain—
I rose—Roderigo lords o'er Spain no more.

Rod. Now to a traitor's add a boaster's name.

Jul. Shameless and arrogant, dost thou believe
I boast for pride or pastime? forced to boast,
Truth costs me more than falsehood e'er cost thee.
Divested of that purple of the soul,
That potency, that palm of wise ambition—
Cast headlong by thy madness from that high
That only eminence 'twixt earth and heaven,
Virtue—which some desert, but none despise—
Whether thou art beheld again on earth,
Whether a captive or a fugitive;
Miner or galley-slave, depends on me:
But he alone who made me what I am
Can make me greater, or can make me less.

Rod. Chance, and chance only, threw me in thy power,
Give me my sword again and try my strength.

Jul. I tried it in the front of thousands.

p. 75

p. 76

p. 77

Rod. Death
At least vouchsafe me from a soldier's hand.

Jul. I love to hear thee ask it—now my own
Would not be bitter; no, nor immature.

Rod. Defy it, say thou rather.

Jul. Death itself
Shall not be granted thee, unless from God;
A dole from his and from no other hand.
Thou shalt now hear and own thine infamy—

Rod. Chains, dungeons, tortures—but I hear no more.

Jul. Silence, thou wretch, live on—aye, live—abhor'd.
Thou shalt have tortures, dungeons, chains, enough—
They naturally rise and grow around
Monsters like thee, everywhere, and for ever.

p. 78

Rod. Insulter of the fallen! must I endure
Commands as well as threats? my vassal's too?
Nor breathe from underneath his trampling feet?

Jul. Could I speak patiently who speak to thee,
I would say more—part of thy punishment
It should be, to be taught.

Rod. Reserve thy wisdom
Until thy patience come, its best allie:
I learn no lore, of peace or war, from thee.

Jul. No, thou shalt study soon another tongue,
And suns more ardent shall mature thy mind.
Either the cross thou bearest, and thy knees
Among the silent caves of Palestine
Wear the sharp flints away with midnight prayer,
Or thou shalt keep the fasts of Barbary—
Shalt wait amid the crowds that throng the well
From sultry noon till the skies fade again,
To draw up water and to bring it home
In the crackt gourd of some vile testy knave,
Who spurns thee back with bastinated foot
For ignorance or delay of his command.

p. 79

Rod. Rather the poison or the bow-string.

Jul. Slaves
To other's passions die such deaths as those,
Slaves to their own should die—

Rod. —What worse?

Jul. Their own.

Rod. Is this thy counsel, renegade?

Jul. Not mine;
I point a better path, nay, force thee on.
I shelter thee from every brave man's sword
While I am near thee: I bestow on thee
Life: if thou die, 'tis when thou sojournest
Protected by this arm and voice no more;
'Tis slavishly, 'tis ignominiously,
'Tis by a villain's knife.

Rod. By whose?

Jul. Roderigo's.

Rod. O powers of vengeance! must I hear? endure?
Live?

p. 80

Jul. Call thy vassals? no! then wipe the drops
Of froward childhood from thy shameless eyes.
So! thou canst weep for passion—not for pity.

Rod. One hour ago I ruled all Spain! a camp
Not larger than a sheepfold stood alone
Against me: now, no friend throughout the world
Follows my steps or hearkens to my call.
Behold the turns of fortune, and expect

No better; of all faithless men, the Moors
Are the most faithless—from thy own experience
Thou canst not value nor rely on them.

Jul. I value not the mass that makes my sword,
Yet while I use it I rely on it.

Rod. Julian, thy gloomy soul still meditates—
Plainly I see it—death to me—pursue
The dictates of thy leaders, let revenge
Have its full sway, let Barbary prevail,
And the pure creed her elders have embraced:
Those placid sages hold assassination
A most compendious supplement to law.

p. 81

Jul. Thou knowest not the one, nor I the other.
Torne hast thou from me all my soul held dear!
Her form, her voice, all, hast thou banish'd from me
Nor dare I, wretched as I am! recall
Those solaces of every grief, erewhile!
I stand abased before insulting crime.
I falter like a criminal myself.
The hand that hurled thy chariot o'er its wheels,
That held thy steeds erect and motionless
As moulten statues on some palace-gates,
Shakes, as with palsied age, before thee now.
Gone is the treasure of my heart, for ever,
Without a father, mother, friend, or name!
Daughter of Julian—Such was her delight—
Such was mine too! what pride more innocent,
What, surely, less deserving pangs like these,
Than springs from filial and parental love!
Debarred from every hope that issues forth
To meet the balmy breath of early life,
Her sadden'd days, all, cold and colourless,
Will stretch before her their whole weary length
Amid the sameness of obscurity.
She wanted not seclusion, to unveil
Her thoughts to heaven, cloister, nor midnight bell;
She found it in all places, at all hours:
While, to assuage my labours, she indulged
A playfulness that shunn'd a mother's eye,
Still, to avert my perils, there arose
A piety that, even from *me*, retired.

p. 82

[*Roderigo, much agitated—after a pause.*

Rod. Such was she!—what am I!—those are the arms
That are triumphant when the battle fails.
O Julian, Julian! all thy former words
Struck but the imbecile plumes of vanity;
These, thro' its steely coverings, pierce the heart.
I ask not life nor death; but, if I live,
Send my most bitter enemy to watch
My secret paths, send poverty, send pain—
I will add more—wise as thou art, thou knowest
No foe more furious than forgiven kings.
I ask not then what thou woudst never grant:
May heaven, O Julian, from thy hand, receive
A pardon'd man, a chasten'd criminal.

p. 83

Jul. This further curse thou hast inflicted; wretch,
I cannot pardon thee.

Rod. Thy tone, thy mien,
Refute those words.

Jul. No—I can *not* forgive.

[*Julian greatly moved, goes towards him.*

Rod. Upon my knee, my conqueror, I implore—
Upon the earth, before thy feet [*starts back*—hard heart!

Jul. Audacious! hast thou never heard that prayer
And scorn'd it? 'tis the last thou shouldst repeat.
Upon the earth! upon her knees! O God!

Rod. Resemble not a wretch so lost as I:

Be better; O! be happier; and pronounce it.

Jul. I swerve not from my purpose: thou art mine,
Conquered; and I have sworne to dedicate
—Like a torne banner on my chapel's roof—
Thee to that power from whom thou hast rebelled.
Expiate thy crimes by prayer, by penances—

Rod. Hasten the hour of trial, speak of peace.

[*Julian looks sternly on the ground and does not answer.*]

Pardon me not, then—but with purer lips
Implore of God, who *would* hear *thee*, to pardon.

Jul. Hope it I may—pronounce it—O Roderigo!
Ask it of him who can; I too will ask,
And, in my own transgressions, pray for thine.

Rod. One name I dare not—

Jul. Go—abstain from that,
I do conjure thee; raise not in my soul
Again the tempest that has wrecked my fame;
Thou shalt not breathe in the same clime with her.
Far o'er the unebbing sea thou shalt adore
The eastern star, and—may thy end be peace.

ACT IV. SCENE 2.

JULIAN *and* HERNANDO.

Her. From the prince Tarik I am sent, my lord.

Jul. A welcome messenger, my brave Hernando.
How fares it with the gallant soul of Tarik.

Her. Most joyfully; he scarcely had pronounced
Your glorious name, and bidden me urge your speed,
Than, with a voice as though it answered heaven,
He shall confound them in their dark designs
Cried he—and turn'd away, with that swift stride
Wherewith he meets and quells his enemies.

Jul. Alas, I cannot bear felicitation,
Who shunned it even in felicity.

Her. Often we hardly think ourselves the happy
Unless we hear it said by those around.
O my lord Julian, how your praises cheer'd
Our poor endeavours! sure, all hearts are open
Lofty and low, wise and unwise, to praise.
Even the departed spirit hovers round
Our blessings and our prayers; the corse itself
Hath shined with other light than the still stars
Shedd on its rest, or the dim taper, nigh.
My father, old men say, who saw him dead
And heard your lips pronounce him good and happy,
Smiled faintly thro' the quiet gloom, that eve,
And the shroud throbb'd upon his grateful breast.
Howe'er it be, many who tell the tale
Are good and happy from that voice of praise.
His guidance and example were denied
My youth and childhood: what I am I owe—

Jul. Hernando, look not back: a narrow path
And arduous lies before thee, if thou stop
Thou fallest; go right onward, nor observe
Closely and rigidly another's way,
But, free and active, follow up thy own.

Her. The voice that urges now my manly step
Onward in life, recalls me to the past,
And from that fount I freshen for the goal.
Early in youth, amongst us villagers
Converse and ripened counsel you bestowed.

O happy days of (far departed!) peace,
Days when the mighty Julian stooped his brow
Entering our cottage door; another air
Breathed thro' the house; tired age and lightsome youth
Beheld him, with intensest gaze—these felt
More chastened joy; those, more profound repose.
Yes, my best lord, when labour sent them home
And midday suns, when from the social meal
The wicker window held the summer heat,
Prais'd have those been who, going unperceived,
Open'd it wide, that all might see you well:
Nor were the children blamed, upon the mat,
Hurrying to watch what rush would last arise
From your foot's pressure, ere the door was closed,
And not yet wondering how they dared to love.
Your counsels are more precious now than ever,
But are they—pardon if I err—the same?
Tarik is gallant, kind, the friend of Julian,
Can he be more? or ought he to be less?
Alas! his faith!

p. 88

Jul. In peace or war? Hernando.

Her. O, neither—far above it; faith in God—

Jul. 'Tis God's, not thine—embrace it not, nor hate it.
Precious or vile, how dare we seize that offering,
Scatter it, spurn it, in its way to heaven,
Because we know it not? the sovran lord
Accepts his tribute, myrrh and frankincense
From some, from others penitence and prayer:
Why intercept them from his gracious hand?
Why dash them down? why smite the supplicant?

Her. 'Tis what they do?

Jul. Avoid it thou the more.
If time were left me, I could hear well-pleas'd
How Tarik fought up Calpe's fabled cliff,
While I pursued the friends of don Roderigo
Across the plain, and drew fresh force from mine.
O! had some other land, some other cause,
Invited him and me, I then could dwell
On this hard battle with unmixt delight.

p. 89

Her. Eternal is its glory, if the deed
Be not forgotten till it be surpast:
Much praise by land, by sea much more, he won,
For then a Julian was not at his side,
Nor led the van, nor awed the best before;
The whole, a mighty whole, was his alone.
There might be seen how far he shone above
All others of the day: old Muza watched
From his own shore the richly laden fleet,
Ill-arm'd and scatter'd, and pursued the rear
Beyond those rocks that bear St. Vincent's name,
Cutting the treasure, not the strength, away—
Valiant, where any prey lies undevour'd
In hostile creek or too confiding isle:
Tarik, with his small barks, but with such love
As never chief from rugged sailor won,
Smote their high masts and swelling rampires down;
And Cadiz wept in fear o'er Trafalgar.
Who that beheld our sails from off the heights,
Like the white birds, nor larger, tempt the gale
In sunshine and in shade, now almost touch
The solitary shore, glance, turn, retire,
Would think these lovely playmates could portend
Such mischief to the world; such blood, such woe;
Could draw to them from far the peaceful hinds,
Cull the gay flower of cities, and divide
Friends, children, every bond of human life;
Could dissipate whole families, could sink
Whole states in ruin, at one hour, one blow.

p. 90

Jul. Go, good Hernando—who *would* think these things?
Say to the valiant Tarik, I depart

Forthwith: he knows not from what heaviness
Of soul I linger here; I could endure
No converse, no compassion, no approach,
Other than thine, whom the same cares improved
Beneath my father's roof, my foster-brother,
To brighter days and happier end, I hope;
In whose fidelity my own resides
With Tarik and with his compeers and chief.
I cannot share the gladness I excite,
Yet shall our Tarik's generous heart rejoice.

p. 91

[*Egilona enters. Hernando goes.*]

ACT IV. SCENE 3.

JULIAN *and* EGILONA.

Egil. O fly me not because I am unhappy,
Because I am deserted fly me not.
It was not so before, it cannot be
Ever from Julian.

Jul. What would Egilona
That Julian's power with her new lords can do?
Surely her own must there preponderate.

Egil. I hold no suit to them—restore, restore Roderigo.

Jul. He no longer is my prisoner.

Egil. Escapes he then?

Jul. Escapes he—dost thou say?
O Egilona! what unworthy passion—

p. 92

Egil. Unworthy, when I loved him, was my passion,
The passion that now swells my heart, is just.

Jul. What fresh reproaches hath he merited?

Egil. Deeprooted hatred shelters no reproach.
But whither is he gone.

Jul. Far from the walls.

Egil. And I knew nothing!—

Jul. His offence was known
To thee at least.

Egil. Will it be expiated?

[*After some hesitation.*]

Jul. I trust it will.

Egil. This withering calm consumes me.
He marries then Covilla! 'twas for this
His people were excited to rebell,
His sceptre was thrown by, his vows were scorn'd,
And I—and I—

Jul. Cease, Egilona!

p. 93

Egil. Cease?
Sooner shalt thou to live, than I to reign.

ACT V. SCENE 1.

Tent of MUZA.

MUZA. TARIK. ABDALAZIS.

Muza. To have first landed on these shores, appears
Transcendent glory to the applauded Tarik.

Tarik. Glory, but not transcendent, it appears,
What might in any other.

Muza. Of thyself
All this vain boast?

Tarik. Not of myself—'twas Julian.
Against his shield the refluent surges rolled,
While the sea-breezes threw the arrows wide,
And fainter cheers urged the reluctant steeds.

Muza. That Julian, of whose treason I have proofs,
That Julian, who rejected my commands
Twice, when our mortal foe besieged the camp,
And forced my princely presence to his tent.

p. 94

Tarik. Say rather, who without one exhortation,
One precious drop from true believer's vein,
Marched, and discomfited our enemies.
I found in him no treachery—Hernando,
Who, little versed in moody wiles, is gone
To lead him hither, was by him assigned
My guide, and twice in doubtful fight his arm
Protected me—once on the hights of Calpe,
Once on the plain, when courtly jealousies
Tore from the bravest and the best his due,
And gave the dotard and the coward command:
Then came Roderigo forth—the front of war
Grew darker—him, equal in chevalry,
Julian alone could with success oppose.

Abd. I doubt their worth who praise their enemies.

Tarik. And theirs doubt I who persecute their friends.

p. 95

Muza. Thou art in league with him.

Tarik. Thou wert, by oaths,
I am without them; for his heart is brave.

Muza. Am I to bear all this?

Tarik. All this, and more:
Soon wilt thou see the man whom thou hast wronged,
And the keen hatred in thy breast concealed
Find its right way, and sting thee to the core.

Muza. Hath he not foil'd us in the field; not held
Our wisdom to reproach?

Tarik. Shall we abandon
All he hath left us in the eyes of men;
Shall we again make him our adversary
Whom we have proved so, long and fatally?
If he subdue for us our enemies,
Shall we raise others, or, for want of them,
Convert him into one, against his will?

ACT V. SCENE 2.

p. 96

HERNANDO *enters.* TARIK *continues.*

Here comes Hernando from that prince himself—

Muza. Who scorns, himself, to come.

Her. The queen detains him.

Abd. How! Egilona?

Muza. 'Twas my will.

Tarik. At last
He must be happy; for delicious calm
Follows the fierce enjoyment of revenge.

Her. That calm was never his, no other will be!
Thou knowest not, and mayst thou never know,

How bitter is the tear that fiery shame
Scourges and tortures from the soldier's eye.
Whichever of these bad reports be true,
He hides it from all hearts, to wring his own,
And drags the heavy secret to the grave.
Not victory, that o'er shadows him, sees he!
No airy and light passion stirs abroad
To ruffle or to soothe him; all are quelled
Beneath a mightier, sterner, stress of mind:
Wakeful he sits, and lonely, and unmoved,
Beyond the arrows, views, or shouts of men;
As oftentimes an eagle, when the sun
Throws o'er the varying earth his early ray,
Stands solitary, stands immovable
Upon some highest cliff, and rolls his eye,
Clear, constant, unobservant, unabased,
In the cold light, above the dews of morn.
He now assumes that quietness of soul
Which never but in danger have I seen
On his staid breast.

p. 97

Tarik. Danger is past, he conquers;
No enemy is left him to subdue.

Her. He sank not, while there was, into himself.
Now plainly see I, from his alter'd tone,
He cannot live much longer—thanks to God!

Tarik. What! wishest thou thy once kind master dead?
Was he not kind to thee, ungrateful slave!

p. 98

Her. The gentlest, as the bravest, of mankind.
Therefor shall memory dwell more tranquilly
With Julian, once at rest, than friendship could,
Knowing him yearn for death with speechless love.
For his own sake I could endure his loss,
Pray for it, and thank God; yet mourn I must
Him above all! so great, so bountiful,
So blessed once! bitterly must I mourn.
'Tis not my solace that 'tis his desire;
Of all that pass us in life's drear descent
We grieve the most for those that wished to die.
A father to us all, he merited
Unhappy man! all a good father's joy
In his own house, where seldom he hath been,
But, ever mindful of its dear delights
He formed one family around him, ever.

Tarik. Yes, we have seen and known him—let his fame
Refresh his friends, but let it stream afar,
Nor in the twilight of home-scenes be lost.
He chose the best, and cherished them; he left
To self-reproof the mutinies of vice—
Avarice, that imparts ambition's tone and mien,
Envy, sick nursling of the court; and pride
That cannot bear his semblance nor himself;
And malice, with bleared visage half-descried
Amid the shadows of her hiding-place.

p. 99

Her. What could I not endure, O gallant man,
To hear him spoken of, as thou hast spoken!
Oh! I would almost be a slave to him
Who calls me one.

Muza. What! art thou not? begone.

Tarik. Reply not, brave Hernando, but retire.
All can revile, few only can reward.
Behold the meed our mighty chief bestows!
Accept it, for thy services, and mine.
More, my bold Spaniard, hath obedience won
Than anger, even in the ranks of war.

Her. The soldier, not the Spaniard, shall obey.

[*Muza, to Tarik.*

Muza. Into our very council bringest thou
Children of reprobation and perdition?

Darkness thy deeds and emptiness thy speech,
Such images thou raisest as buffoons
Carry in merriment on festivals,
Nor worthiness nor wisdom would display
To public notice their deformities,
Nor cherish them nor fear them; why shouldst thou?

Tarik. I fear not them nor thee.

ACT V. SCENE 3.

EGILONA *enters.*

Abd. Advance, O queen.
Now let the turbulence of faction cease.

Muza. Whate'er thy purpose, speak, and be composed.

Egil. He goes; he is afar; he follows her;
He leads her to the altar, to the throne,
For, calm in vengeance, wise in wickedness,
The traitor hath prevailed, o'er him, o'er me,
O'er you—the slaves, the dupes, the scorn, of Julian.
What have I heard! what have I seen!

p. 101

Muza. Proceed—

Abd. —And I swear vengeance on his guilty head
Who intercepts from thee the golden rays
Of sovereignty; who dares rescind thy rights;
Who steals upon thy rest, and breathes around
Empoisoned damps o'er that serenity
Which leaves the world, and faintly lingers here.

Muza. Who shuns thee—

Abd. —Whose desertion interdicts
Homage, authority, precedency—

Muza. Till war shall rescue them—

Abd. —And love restore.

Egil. O generous Abdalazis! never! never!
My enemies—Julian alone remains—
The worst, in safety, far beyond my reach,
Breathe freely on the summit of their hopes;
Because they never stopt, because they sprang
From crime to crime, and trampled down remorse.
Oh! if her heart knew tenderness like mine!
Grant vengeance on the guilty; grant but that,
I ask no more; my hand, my crown, is thine.
Fulfill the justice of offended heaven,
Assert the sacred rights of royalty,
Come not in vain, crush the rebellious crew,
Crush, I implore, the indifferent and supine.

p. 102

Muza. Roderigo thus escaped from Julian's tent?

Egil. No, not escaped—escorted—like a king.
The base Covilla first pursued her way
On foot; but after her the royal car,
Which bore me from San Pablos to the throne,
Empty indeed, yet ready at her voice,
Rolled o'er the plain, amid the carcasses
Of those who fell in battle or in flight:
She, a deceiver still, to whate'er speed
The moment might incite her, often stopt
To mingle prayers with the departing breath,
Improvident! and those with heavy wounds
Groaned bitterly beneath her tottering knee.

Tarik. Now, by the clement and the merciful!
The girl did well: when I breathe out my soul,
Oh! if compassion give one pang the more,
That pang be mine; here be it, in this land—

p. 103

Such women are they in this land alone.

Egil. Insulting man!

Muza. We shall confound him yet.
Say, and speak quickly, whither went the king?
Thou knewest where was Julian.

Abd. I will tell
Without his answer: yes, my friends! yes, Tarik,
Now will I speak, nor thou, for once, reply.
There is, I hear, a poor half-ruin'd cell
In Xeres, whither few indeed resort;
Green are the walls within, green is the floor
And slippery from disuse; for christian feet
Avoid it, as half-holy, half-accurst.
Still in its dark recess fanatic sin
Abases to the ground his tangled hair,
And servile scourges and reluctant groans
Roll o'er the vault uninterruptedly,
Till, such the natural stilness of the place,
The very tear upon the damps below
Drops audible, and the heart's throb replies.
There is the idol maid of christian creed,
And taller images, whose history
I know not, nor inquired—a scene of blood,
Of resignation amid mortal pangs,
And other things, exceeding all belief.
Hither the aged Opas of Seville
Walked slowly, and behind him was a man
Barefooted, bruized, dejected, comfortless,
In sack-cloth; the white ashes on his head
Dropt as he smote his breast—he gathered up,
Replaced them all, groan'd deeply, looked to heaven,
And held them, like a treasure, with claspt hands.

p. 104

Egil. O! was Roderigo so abased?

Muza. 'Twas he.
Now, Egilona, judge between your friends
And enemies—behold what wretches brought
The king, thy lord, Roderigo, to disgrace.

Egil. He merited—but not from them—from me
This, and much worse: had I inflicted it,
I had rejoiced—at what I ill endure.

Muza. For thee, for thee alone, we wished him here,
But other hands released him—

p. 105

Abd. —With what aim
Will soon appear to those discerning eyes.

Egil. I pray thee, tell what past until that hour.

Abd. Few words, and indistinct: repentant sobs
Filled the whole space; the taper in his hand,
Lighting two small dim lamps before the altar,
He gave to Opas—at the idol's feet
He laid his crown, and wiped his tears away:
The crown reverts not, but the tears return.

Egil. Yes, Abdalazis! soon, abundantly.
If he had only called upon my name,
Seeking my pardon ere he looked to heaven's,
I could have—no! he thought not once on me!
Never shall he find peace or confidence;
I will rely on fortune and on thee
Nor fear my future lot: sure, Abdalazis,
A fall so great can never happen twice,
Nor man again be faithless, like Roderigo.

Abd. Faithless he may be still, never so faithless.
Fainter must be the charms, remote the days,
When memory and dread example die,
When love and terror thrill the heart no more,
And Egilona is herself forgotten.

p. 106

ACT V. SCENE 4.

JULIAN *enters.*

Tarik. Turn, and behold him! who is now confounded?
Ye who awaited him, where are ye? speak—
Is some close comet blazing o'er your tents?
Muza! Abdalazis! princes, conquerors,
Summon, interrogate, command, condemn.

Muza. Justly, don Julian—but respect for rank
Allays resentment, nor interrogates
Without due form—justly may we accuse
This absence from our councils, from our camp;
This loneliness in which we still remain
Who came invited to redress your wrongs.
Where is the king?

p. 107

Jul. The people must decide.

Muza. Imperfectly, I hope, I understand
Those words, unworthy of thy birth and age.

Jul. O chieftain, such have been our gothic laws.

Muza. Who then amid such turbulence is safe?

Jul. He who observes them: 'tis no turbulence,
It violates no peace: 'tis surely worth
A voice, a breath of air, thus to create
By their high will the man, form'd after them
In their own image, vested with their power,
To whom they trust their freedom and their lives.

Muza. They trust! the people! God assigns the charge,
Kings open but the book of destiny
And read their names, all that remains for them
The mystic hand from time to time reveals.
Worst of idolaters! idolater
Of that refractory and craving beast
Whose den is in the city, at thy hand
I claim our common enemy, the king.

Jul. Sacred from justice then! but not from malice!

p. 108

Tarik. Surrender him, my friend: be sure his pains
Will not be soften'd.

Jul. 'Tis beyond my power.

Tarik. Tomorrow—if in any distant fort
He lies tonight: send after him.

Jul. My faith
Is plighted, and he lives—no prisoner.

Egil. I knew the truth.

Abd. Now, Tarik, hear and judge.

[*Abdalazis to Julian.*

Was he not in thy camp? and in disguise?

Tarik. No: I will answer thee.

Muza. Audacious man!
Had not the Kalif Walid placed thee here,
Chains, and a traitor's death, should be thy doom.
Speak, Abdalazis! Egilona, speak.
Were ye not present? was not I, myself,
And aided not this Julian his escape?

Jul. 'Tis true.

Tarik. Away then friendship; to thy fate
I leave thee: thou hast render'd Muza just,
Me hostile to thee. Who is safe! a man
Arm'd with such power and with such perfidy!

p. 109

Jul. Stay, Tarik! hear me; for, to thee alone

Would I reply.

Tarik. Thou hast replied, already.

[*Goes.*

Muza. We, who were enemies, would not inquire
Too narrowly what reasons urged thy wrath
Against thy sovran lord; beneath his flag
The christians first assailed us from these shores,
And we seized gladly the first aid we found
To quell a wealthy and a warlike king.
We never held to thee the vain pretence
That 'twas thy quarrel our brave youth espoused,
Thine, who hast wrought us much disgrace and woe.
From perils and from losses, here we rest
And drink of the fresh fountain at our feet,
Not madly following such illusive streams
As overspread the dizzy wilderness,
And vanish from the thirst they have seduced.
Ours was the enterprise, the land is ours:
What gain we by our toils if he escape
Whom we came hither solely to subdue?

p. 110

Jul. Is there no gain to live in amity?

Muza. The gain of traffickers and idle men;
Courage and zeal expire upon such calms.
Further, what amity can Moors expect
When you have joined your forces?

Jul. From the hour
That he was vanquished, I have laid aside
All power, all arms.

Muza. How can we trust thee, once
Deceived, and oftener than this once despised?
Thou camest hither with no other aim
Than to deprive Roderigo of his crown
For thy own brow.

Egil. Julian, base man, 'tis true.
He comes a prince, no warrior, at this hour.

Muza. His sword, O queen, would not avail him now.

p. 111

Abd. Julian, I feel less anger than regret.
No violence of speech, no obloquy,
No accusation shall escape my lips:
Need there is none, nor reason, to avoid
My questions: if thou value truth, reply.
Hath not Roderigo left the town and camp?
Hath not thy daughter?

Egil. —Past the little brook
Toward the Betis—from a tower I saw
The fugitives, far on their way; they went
Over one bridge, each with arm'd men—not half
A league of road between them—and had join'd,
But that the olive-groves along the path
Concealed them from each other; not from me:
Beneath me the whole level I surveyed,
And, when my eyes no longer could discern
Which track they took, I knew it from the storks
Rising in clouds above the reedy plain.

Muza. Deny it, if thou canst.

Jul. I order'd it.

p. 112

Abd. None could beside: lo! things in such a mass
Falling together on observant minds,
Create suspicion and establish proof:
Wanted there fresh—why not employ our arms?
Why go alone?

Muza. To parley, to conspire,
To reunite the Spaniards, which we saw,
To give up treaties, close up enmities,
And ratify the deed with Moorish blood.

Jul. Gladly would Spain procure your safe return,
Gladly would pay large treasures, for the aid
You brought against oppression—

Muza. Pay she shall—
The treasures of her soil, her ports, her youth:
If she resist, if she tumultuously
Call forth her brigands and we lose a man,
Dreadful shall be our justice; war shall rage
Through every city, hamlet, house, and field,
And, universal o'er the gasping land,
Depopulation.

p. 113

Jul. They shall rue the day
Who dare these things.

Muza. Let order then prevail.
In vain thou sendest far away thy child,
Thy counsellor the metropolitan,
And Sisabert—prudence is mine, no less.
Divide with us our conquests, but the king
Must be delivered up.

Jul. Never by me.

Muza. False then were thy reproaches, false thy grief.

Jul. O Egilona! were thine also feigned?

Abd. Say, lovely queen, neglectful of thy charms
Turned he his eyes toward the young Covilla?
Did he pursue her to the mad excess
Of breaking off her vows to Sisabert,
And marrying her, against the christian law?

Muza. Did he prefer her so?

Abd. Could he prefer
To Egilona—

Egil. Her! the child Covilla?
Eternal hider of a foolish face—
Incapable of any thing but shame—
To me? old man! to me? O Abdalazis!
No: he but followed with slow pace my hate.
And cannot pride check these unseemly tears!

p. 114

[*To herself.* Goes.

Muza. The most offended, an offended woman,
A wife, a queen, is silent on the deed.

Abd. Thou disingenuous and ignoble man,
Spreading these rumours! sending into exile
All those their blighting influence injured most:
And whom? thy daughter and adopted son,
The chieftains of thy laws and of thy faith.
Call any witnesses, proclaim the truth,
And set, at last, thy heart, thy fame, at rest.

Jul. Not, if I purposed or desired to live,
My own dishonour would I e'er proclaim
Amid vindictive and reviling foes.

Muza. Calling us foes, avows he not his guilt?
Condemns he not the action we condemn,
Owning it his, and owning it dishonour?
'Tis well my cares prest forward, and struck home.

p. 115

Jul. Why smilest thou? I never saw that smile
But it portended an atrocious deed.

Muza. After our manifold and stern assaults,
With every tower and battlement destroyed,
The walls of Ceuta still were strong enough—

[*Stops.*

[*Julian hastily.*

Jul. For what? who boasted now her brave defence,
Or who forbad your entrance, after peace?

Muza. None: for who could? their engines now arose
To throw thy sons into the arms of death.
For this erect they their proud crests again.
Mark him at last turn pale before a Moor.

Jul. Imprudent have they been, their youth shall plead.

Abd. O father, could they not have been detained?

Muza. Son, thou art safe and wert not while they lived.

Abd. I feared them not.

Muza. And therefor wert not safe:
Under their star the blooming Egilona
Would watch for thee the nuptial lamp in vain.

p. 116

Jul. Never, oh never, hast thou worked a wife
So barren of all good! speak out at once,
What hopest thou by striking this alarm?
It shocks my reason, not my fears or fondness.

Muza. Be happy then as ignorance can be;
Soon wilt thou hear it shouted from our ranks.
Those who once hurled defiance o'er our heads,
Scorning our arms, and scoffing at our faith,
The nightly wolf hath visited, unscared,
And loathed 'em as her prey; for famine first,
Atchieving in few days the boast of years,
Sunk their young eyes and opened us the gates:
Ceuta, her port, her citadel, is ours.

Jul. Blest boys! inhuman as thou art, what guilt
Was theirs?

Muza. Their father's.

Jul. O support me, Heaven!
Against this blow! all others I have borne.
Ermenegild! thou mightest, sure, have lived!
A father's name awoke no dread of thee!
Only thy mother's early bloom was thine!
There dwelt on Julian's brow—thine was serene—
The brightened clouds of elevated souls,
Feared by the most below: those who looked up
Saw, at their season, in clear signs, advance
Rapturous valour, calm solicitude,
All that impatient youth would press from age,
Or sparing age sigh and detract from youth:
Hence was his fall! my hope! myself! my Julian!
Alas! I boasted—but I thought on him,
Inheritor of all—all what? my wrongs—
Follower of me—and whither? to the grave—
Ah no: it should have been so! years far hence!
Him at this moment I could pity most,
But I most prided in him; now I know
I loved a name, I doated on a shade.
Sons! I approach the mansions of the just,
And my arms clasp you in the same embrace,
Where none shall sever you; and do I weep!
And do they triumph o'er my tenderness!
I had forgotten mine inveterate foes
Everywhere nigh me, I had half forgotten
Your very murderers, while I thought on you:
For, O my children, ye fill all the space
My soul would wander o'er—O bounteous heaven!
There is a presence, if the well-beloved
Be torne from us by human violence,
More intimate, pervading, and complete,
Than when they lived and spoke like other men,
And their pale images are our support
When reason sinks, or threatens to desert us.
I weep no more—pity and exultation
Sway and console me: are they—no!—both dead?

p. 117

Muza. Aye, and unsepulchred.

Jul. Nor wept nor seen
By any kindred and far-following eye?

p. 118

Muza. Their mother saw them, if not dead, expire.

Jul. O cruelty!—to them indeed the least!
My children, ye are happy—ye have lived
Of heart unconquered, honour unimpaired,
And died, true Spaniards, loyal to the last.

p. 119

Muza. Away with him.

Jul. Slaves! not before I lift
My voice to heaven and man: though enemies
Surround me, and none else, yet other men
And other times shall hear: the agony
Of an opprest and of a bursting heart
No violence can silence; at its voice
The trumpet is o'erpowered, and glory mute,
And peace and war hide all their charms alike.
Surely the guests and ministers of heaven
Scatter it forth thro' all the elements,
So suddenly, so widely, it extends,
So fearfully men breathe it, shuddering
To ask or fancy how it first arose.

Muza. Yes, they shall shudder—but will that, henceforth,
Molest my privacy, or shake my power?

p. 120

Jul. Guilt hath pavilions, but no privacy.
The very engine of his hatred checks
The torturer in his transport of revenge,
Which, while it swells his bosom, shakes his power
And raises friends to his worst enemy.

Muza. Where now are thine? will they not curse the day
That gave thee birth, and hiss thy funeral?
Thou hast left none who could have pitied thee.

Jul. Many, nor those alone of tenderer mould,
For me will weep—many alas thro' me!
Already I behold my funeral.
The turbid cities wave and swell with it,
And wrongs are lost in that day's pageantry:
Opprest and desolate, the countryman
Receives it like a gift; he hastens home,
Shews where the hoof of Moorish horse laid waste
His narrow croft and winter garden-plot,
Sweetens with fallen pride his children's lore,
And points their hatred; but applauds their tears.
Justice, who came not up to us thro' life,
Loves to survey our likeness on our tombs,
When rivalry, malevolence, and wrath,
And every passion that once stormed around,
Is calm alike without them as within.
Our very chains make the whole world our own,
Bind those to us who else had past us by,
Those at whose call brought down to us, the light
Of future ages lives upon our name.

p. 121

Muza. I may accelerate that meteor's fall,
And quench that idle ineffectual light
Without the knowledge of thy distant world.

Jul. My world and thine are not that distant one.
Is age less wise, less merciful, than grief,
To keep this secret from thee, poor old man?
Thou canst not lessen, canst not aggravate
My sufferings, canst not shorten nor extend
Half a sword's length between my God and me.
I thank thee for that better thought than fame,
Which none however, who deserve, despise,
Nor lose from view till all things else are lost.

p. 122

Abd. Julian, respect his age, regard his power.
Many who feared not death, have dragged along
A piteous life in darkness and in chains.
Never was man so full of wretchedness
But something may be suffered after all,
Perhaps in what clings round his breast, and helps
To keep the ruin up, which he amidst

His agony and phrenzy overlooks,
But droops upon at last, and clasps, and dies.

Jul. Altho' a Muza send far underground,
Into the quarry whence the palace rose,
His mangled prey, climes alien and remote
Mark and record the pang; while overhead
Perhaps he passes on his favorite steed,
Less heedful of the misery he inflicts
Than of the expiring sparkle from a stone,
Yet we, alive or dead, have fellow men
If ever we have served them, who collect
From prisons and from dungeons our remains,
And bear them in their bosom to their sons.
Man's only reliques are his benefits;
These, be there ages, be there worlds, between,
Retain him in communion with his kind:
Hence is our solace, our security,
Our sustenance, till heavenly truth descends—
Losing in brightness and beatitude
The frail foundations of these humbler hopes—
And, like an angel, guiding us, at once
Leaves the loose chain and iron gate behind.

p. 123

Muza. Take thou my justice first, then hope for theirs.
I, who can bend the living to my will,
Fear not the dead, and court not the unborn:
Their arm will never reach me, nor shall thine.

Abd. Pity, release him, pardon him, my father.
Forget how much thou hatest perfidy,
Think of him, once so potent, still so brave,
So calm, so self-dependent in distress—
I marvel at him—hardly dare I blame,
When I behold him fallen from so high,
And so exalted after such a fall.
Mighty must that man be, who can forgive
A man so mighty; seize the hour to rise,
Another never comes: O say, my father,
Say, "*Julian, be mine enemy no more.*"
He fills me with a greater awe than e'er
The field of battle, with himself the first,
When every flag that waved along our host
Drooped down the staff, as if the very winds
Hung in suspense before him—bid him go
And peace be with him, or let me depart.
Lo! like a god, sole and inscrutable,
He stands above our pity.

p. 124

Jul. For that wish,
Vain as it is, 'tis virtuous—O, for that,
However wrong thy censure and thy praise,
Kind Abdalazis, mayst thou never feel
The rancour that consumes thy father's breast,
Nor want the pity thou hast sought for me.

p. 125

Muza. Now hast thou sealed thy doom.

Jul. And thou thy crimes.

Abd. O father, heed him not: those evil words
Leave neither blight nor blemish—let him go.

Muza. A boy, a very boy, art thou indeed!
One who in early day would sally out
To chase the lion, and would call it sport,
But, when more wary steps had closed him round,
Slink from the circle, drop the toils, and blanch
Like a lithe plant from under snow in spring.

Abd. He who ne'er shrunk from danger, might shrink now,
And ignominy would not follow here.

Muza. Peace, Abdalazis! how is this? he bears
Nothing that warrants him invulnerable,
Shall I then shrink to smite him? shall my fears
Be greatest at the blow that ends them all?
Fears? no! 'tis justice—fair, immutable,

Whose measured step, at times, advancing nigh,
Appalls the majesty of kings themselves.

p. 126

[*Aside.*]

O were he dead! tho' then revenge were o'er!

ACT V. SCENE 5.

Officer. Thy wife, Count Julian!

Jul. Speak!

Offi. Is dead!

Jul. Adieu

Earth, and the humblest of all earthly hopes,
To hear of comfort, tho' to find it vain.
Thou murderer of the helpless! shame of man!
Shame of thy own base nature! 'tis an act
He who could perpetrate could not avow,
Stained, as he boasts to be, with innocent blood,
Deaf to reproach, and blind to retribution.

Offi. Julian, be just; 'twill make thee less unhappy.
Grief was her end: she held her younger boy
And wept upon his cheek; his naked breast
By recent death now hardening and inert,
Slipt from her knee; again with frantic grasp
She caught it, and it weighed her to the ground
There lay the dead—

p. 127

Jul. She?

Offi. —And the youth her son.

Jul. Receive them to thy peace, eternal God!
O soother of my hours, while I beheld
The light of day, and thine! adieu, adieu!
And, my Covilla! dost thou yet survive?
Yes, my lost child, thou livest yet—in shame!
O agony, past utterance! past thought!
That throwest death, as some light idle thing,
With all its terrors, into dust and air—
I will endure thee; I, whom heaven ordained
Thus to have served beneath my enemies,
Their conqueror, thus to have revisited
My native land with vengeance and with woe.
Henceforward shall she recognise her sons,
Impatient of oppression or disgrace,
And rescue them, or perish; let her hold
This compact, written with her blood, and mine.

p. 128

[*To the guards.*]

Now follow me—but tremble ^[128]—years shall roll
And wars rage on, and Spain at last be free.

THE END.

J. MOYES, PRINTER,
Greville Street, Hatton Garden, London.

Footnotes

[32] She attempts, but is unable, to speak.

[35] In Asturia, bordering on Biscay.

[36] Del Campo, in Castile.

[40] Covilla hesitates.

[58] Guard hesitates. Opas goes.

[128] To Muza, &c.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK COUNT JULIAN ***

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