Fiesco; or, the Genoese Conspiracy: A Tragedy

by Friedrich Schiller

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FIESCO, OR THE GENOESE CONSPIRACY.

A TRAGEDY. By Friedrich Schiller

AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

The chief sources from which I have drawn the history of this conspiracy are Cardinal de Retz's Conjuration du Comte Jean Louis de Fiesque, the Histoire des Genes, and the third volume of Robertson's History of Charles the Fifth.

The liberties which I have taken with the historical facts will be excused, if I have succeeded in my attempt; and, if not, it is better that my failure should appear in the effusions of fancy, than in the delineation of truth. Some deviation from the real catastrophe of the conspiracy (according to which the count actually perished [A] when his schemes were nearly ripe for execution) was rendered necessary by the nature of the drama, which does not allow the interposition either of chance or of a particular Providence. It would be matter of surprise to me that this subject has never been adopted by any tragic writer, did not the circumstances of its conclusion, so unfit for dramatic representation, afford a sufficient reason for such neglect. Beings of a superior nature may discriminate the finest links of that chain which connects an individual action with the system of the universe, and may, perhaps, behold them extended to the utmost limits of time, past and future; but man seldom sees more than the simple facts, divested of their various relations of cause and

effect. The writer, therefore, must adapt his performance to the short-sightedness of human nature, which he would enlighten; and not to the penetration of Omniscience, from which all intelligence is derived.

In my Tragedy of the Robbers it was my object to delineate the victim of an extravagant sensibility; here I endeavor to paint the reverse; a victim of art and intrigue. But, however strongly marked in the page of history the unfortunate project of Fiesco may appear, on the stage it may prove less interesting. If it be true that sensibility alone awakens sensibility, we may conclude that the political hero is the less calculated for dramatic representation, in proportion as it becomes necessary to lay aside the feelings of a man in order to become a political hero.

It was, therefore, impossible for me to breathe into my fable that glowing life which animates the pure productions of poetical inspiration; but, in order to render the cold and sterile actions of the politician capable of affecting the human heart, I was obliged to seek a clue to those actions in the human heart itself. I was obliged to blend together the man and the politician, and to draw from the refined intrigues of state situations interesting to humanity. The relations which I bear to society are such as unfold to me more of the heart than of the cabinet; and, perhaps, this very political defect may have become a poetical excellence.

[A] Fiesco, after having succeeded in the chief objects of his undertaking, happened to fall into the sea whilst hastening to quell some disturbances on board of a vessel in the harbor; the weight of his armor rendered his struggles ineffectual, and he perished. The deviation from history in the tragedy might have been carried farther, and would perhaps have rendered it more suitable to dramatic representation.—Translation.

FIESCO; OR, THE GENOESE CONSPIRACY. A TRAGEDY.

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

ANDREAS DORIA, Duke of Genoa, a venerable old man, eighty years of age, retaining the traces of a high spirit: the chief features in this character are dignity and a rigid brevity in command.

GIANETTINO DORIA, nephew of the former, and pretender to the ducal power, twenty-six years of age, rough and forbidding in his address, deportment, and manners, with a vulgar pride and disgusting features.

FIESCO, Count of Lavagna, chief of the conspiracy, a tall, handsome young man, twenty-three years of age; his character is that of dignified pride and majestic affability, with courtly complaisance and deceitfulness.

VERRINA, a determined republican, sixty years of age; grave, austere, and inflexible: a marked character.

BOURGOGNINO, a conspirator, a youth of twenty; frank and high-spirited, proud, hasty, and undisguised.

CALCAGNO, a conspirator, a worn-out debauchee of thirty; insinuating and enterprising.

SACCO, a conspirator, forty-five years of age, with no distinguishing trait of character.

LOMELLINO, in the confidence of the pretender, a haggard courtier.

ZENTURIONE, | ZIBO, | Malcontents. ASSERATO, |

ROMANO, a painter, frank and simple, with the pride of genius.

MULEY HASSAN, a Moor of Tunis, an abandoned character, with a physiognomy displaying an original mixture of rascality and humor.

A GERMAN of the ducal body-guard, of an honest simplicity, and steady bravery.

THREE SEDITIOUS CITIZENS.

LEONORA, the wife of Fiesco, eighteen years of age, of great sensibility; her

appearance pale and slender, engaging, but not dazzling; her countenance marked with melancholy; her dress black.

JULIA, Countess dowager Imperiali, sister of the younger Doria, aged twenty-five; a proud coquette, in person tall and full, her beauty spoiled by affectation, with a sarcastic maliciousness in her countenance; her dress black.

BERTHA, daughter of Verrina, an innocent girl.

ROSA, | Maids of Leonora. ARABELLA, |

Several Nobles, Citizens, Germans, Soldiers, Thieves.

(SCENE—Genoa. TIME—the year 1547.)

ACT I.

ACT II.

ACT III.

ACT IV.

ACT V.

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A Saloon in FIESCO'S House. The distant sound of dancing and music is heard.

LEONORA, masked, and attended by ROSA and ARABELLA, enters hastily.

LEONORA (tears off her mask). No more! Not another word! 'Tis as clear as day! (Throwing herself in a chair.) This quite overcomes me——

ARABELLA. My lady!

LEONORA (rising.) What, before my eyes! with a notorious coquette! In presence of the whole nobility of Genoa! (strongly affected.)—Rosa! Arabella! and before my weeping eyes!

ROSA. Look upon it only as what it really was—a piece of gallantry. It was nothing more.

LEONORA. Gallantry! What! Their busy interchange of glances—the anxious watching of her every motion—the long and eager kiss upon her naked arm, impressed with a fervor that left in crimson glow the very traces of his lips! Ha! and the transport that enwrapped his soul, when, with fixed eyes, he sat like painted ecstacy, as if the world around him had dissolved, and naught remained in the eternal void but he and Julia. Gallantry? Poor thing! Thou hast never loved. Think not that thou canst teach me to distinguish gallantry from love!

ROSA. No matter, Signora! A husband lost is as good as ten lovers gained.

LEONORA. Lost? Is then one little intermission of the heart's pulsations a proof that I have lost Fiesco? Go, malicious slanderer! Come no more into my presence! 'Twas an innocent frolic—perhaps a mere piece of gallantry. Say, my gentle Arabella, was it not so?

ARABELLA. Most certainly! There can be no doubt of it!

LEONORA (in a reverie). But does she then feel herself sole mistress of his heart? Does her name lurk in his every thought?—meet him in every phase of nature? Can it be? Whither will these thoughts lead me? Is this beautiful and majestic world to him but as one precious diamond, on which her image—her image alone—is engraved? That he should love her? —love Julia! Oh! Your arm—support me, Arabella! (A pause; music is again heard.)

LEONORA (starting). Hark! Was not that Fiesco's voice, which from the tumult penetrated even hither? Can he laugh while his Leonora weeps in solitude? Oh, no, my child, it was the coarse, loud voice of Gianettino.

ARABELLA. It was, Signora—but let us retire to another apartment.

LEONORA. You change color, Arabella—you are false. In your looks, in the looks of all the inhabitants of Genoa, I read a something—a something which—(hiding

her face)—oh, certainly these Genoese know more than should reach a wife's ear.

ROSA. Oh, jealousy! thou magnifier of trifles!

LEONORA (with melancholy enthusiasm). When he was still Fiesco; when in the orange-grove, where we damsels walked, I saw him—a blooming Apollo, blending the manly beauty of Antinous! Such was his noble and majestic deportment, as if the illustrious state of Genoa rested alone upon his youthful shoulders. Our eyes stole trembling glances at him, and shrunk back, as if with conscious guilt, whene'er they encountered the lightning of his looks. Ah, Arabella, how we devoured those looks! with what anxious envy did every one count those directed to her companions! They fell among us like the golden apple of discord—tender eyes burned fiercely—soft bosoms beat tumultuously—jealousy burst asunder all our bonds of friendship——

ARABELLA. I remember it well. All Genoa's female hearts were in rebellious ferment for so enviable a prize!

LEONORA (in rapture). And now to call him mine! Giddy, wondrous fortune!—to call the pride of Genoa mine!—he who from the chisel of the exhaustless artist, Nature, sprang forth all-perfect, combining every greatness of his sex in the most perfect union. Hear me, damsels! I can no longer conceal it—hear me! I confide to you something (mysteriously)—a thought!—when I stood at the altar with Fiesco,—when his hand lay in mine,—a thought, too daring for woman, rushed across me. "This Fiesco, whose hand now lies in thine—thy Fiesco"—but hush! let no man hear us boast how far he excels all others of his sex. "This, thy Fiesco"—ah, could you but share my feelings!—"will free Genoa from its tyrants!"

ARABELLA (astonished). And could this dream haunt a woman's mind even at the nuptial shrine?

LEONORA. Yes, my Arabella,—well mayest thou be astonished—to the bride it came, even in the joy of the bridal hour (more animated). I am a woman, but I feel the nobleness of my blood. I cannot bear to see these proud Dorias thus overtop our

family. The good old Andreas—it is a pleasure to esteem him. He may indeed, unenvied, bear the ducal dignity; but Gianettino is his nephew—his heir—and Gianettino has a proud and wicked heart. Genoa trembles before him, and Fiesco (much affected)— Fiesco—weep with me, damsels!—loves his sister.

ARABELLA. Alas, my wretched mistress!

LEONORA. Go now, and see this demi-god of the Genoese—amid the shameless circles of debauchery and lust! hear the vile jests and wanton ribaldry with which he entertains his base companions! That is Fiesco! Ah, damsels, not only has Genoa lost its hero, but I have lost my husband!

ROSA. Speak lower! some one is coming through the gallery.

LEONORA (alarmed). Ha! 'Tis Fiesco—let us hasten away—the sight of me might for a moment interrupt his happiness. (She hastens into a side apartment; the maids follow.)

SCENE II

GIANETTINO DORIA, masked, in a green cloak, and the MOOR, enter in conversation.

GIANETTINO. Thou hast understood me!

MOOR. Well——

GIANETTINO. The white mask——

MOOR. Well——

GIANETTINO. I say, the white mask——

MOOR. Well—well—well——

GIANETTINO. Dost thou mark me? Thou canst only fail here! (pointing to his heart).

MOOR. Give yourself no concern.

GIANETTINO. And be sure to strike home——

MOOR. He shall have enough.

GIANETTINO (maliciously). That the poor count may not have long to suffer.

MOOR. With your leave, sir, a word—at what weight do you estimate his head?

GIANETTINO. What weight? A hundred sequins——

MOOR (blowing through his fingers). Poh! Light as a feather!

GIANETTINO. What art thou muttering?

MOOR. I was saying—it is light work.

GIANETTINO. That is thy concern. He is the very loadstone of sedition. Mark me, sirrah! let thy blow be sure.

MOOR. But, sir,—I must fly to Venice immediately after the deed.

GIANETTINO. Then take my thanks beforehand. (He throws him a bank-note.) In three days at farthest he must be cold.

[Exit.

MOOR (picking up the note). Well, this really is what I call credit to trust—the simple word of such a rogue as I am!

[Exit.

SCENE III.

CALCAGNO, behind him SACCO, both in black cloaks.

CALCAGNO. I perceive thou watchest all my steps.

SACCO. And I observe thou wouldst conceal them from me. Attend, Calcagno! For some weeks past I have remarked the workings of thy countenance. They bespeak more than concerns the interests of our country. Brother, I should think that we might mutually exchange our confidence without loss on either side. What sayest thou? Wilt thou be sincere?

CALCAGNO. So truly, that thou shalt not need to dive into the recesses of my soul; my heart shall fly half-way to meet thee on my tongue—I love the Countess of Fiesco.

SACCO (starts back with astonishment). That, at least, I should not have discovered had I made all possibilities pass in review before me. My wits are racked to comprehend thy choice, but I must have lost them altogether if thou succeed.

CALCAGNO. They say she is a pattern of the strictest virtue.

SACCO. They lie. She is the whole volume on that insipid text. Calcagno, thou must choose one or the other—either to give up thy heart or thy profession.

CALCAGNO. The Count is faithless to her; and of all the arts that may seduce a woman the subtlest is jealousy. A plot against the Dorias will at the same time occupy the Count, and give me easy access to his house. Thus, while the shepherd guards against the wolf, the fox shall make havoc of the poultry.

SACCO. Incomparable brother, receive my thanks! A blush is now superfluous, and I can tell thee openly what just now I was ashamed even to think. I am a beggar if the government be not soon overturned.

CALCAGNO. What, are thy debts so great?

SACCO. So immense that even one-tenth of them would more than swallow ten times my income. A convulsion of the state will give me breath; and if it do not cancel all my debts, at least 'twill stop the mouths of bawling creditors.

CALCAGNO. I understand thee; and if then, perchance, Genoa should be freed, Sacco will be hailed his country's savior. Let no one trick out to me the threadbare tale of honesty, if the fate of empires hang on the bankruptcy of a prodigal and the lust of a debauchee. By heaven, Sacco, I admire the wise design of Providence, that in us would heal the corruptions in the heart of the state by the vile ulcers on its limbs. Is thy design unfolded to Verrina?

SACCO. As far as it can be unfolded to a patriot. Thou knowest his iron integrity, which ever tends to that one point, his country. His hawk-like eye is now fixed on Fiesco, and he has half-conceived a hope of thee to join the bold conspiracy.

CALCAGNO. Oh, he has an excellent nose! Come, let us seek him, and fan the flame of liberty in his breast by our accordant spirit.

[Exeunt.

SCENE IV.

JULIA, agitated with anger, and FIESCO, in a white mask, following her.

JULIA. Servants! footmen!

FIESCO. Countess, whither are you going? What do you intend?

JULIA. Nothing—nothing at all. (To the servants, who enter and immediately retire.) Let my carriage draw up——

FIESCO. Pardon me, it must not. You are offended.

JULIA. Oh, by no means. Away—you tear my dress to pieces. Offended. Who is here that can offend me? Go, pray go.

FIESCO (upon one knee). Not till you tell me what impertinent——

JULIA (stands still in a haughty attitude). Fine! Fine! Admirable! Oh, that the Countess of Lavagna might be called to view this charming scene! How, Count, is this like a husband? This posture would better suit the chamber of your wife when she turns over the journal of your caresses and finds a void in the account. Rise, sir, and seek those to whom your overtures will prove more acceptable. Rise—unless you think your gallantries will atone for your wife's impertinence.

FIESCO (jumping up). Impertinence! To you?

JULIA. To break up! To push away her chair! To turn her back upon the table—that table, Count, where I was sitting——

FIESCO. 'Tis inexcusable.

JULIA. And is that all? Out upon the jade! Am I, then, to blame because the Count makes use of his eyes? (Smilingly admiring herself.)

FIESCO. 'Tis the fault of your beauty, madam, that keeps them in such sweet slavery.

JULIA. Away with compliment where honor is concerned. Count, I insist on satisfaction. Where shall I find it, in you, or in my uncle's vengeance?

FIESCO. Find it in the arms of love—of love that would repair the offence of jealousy.

JULIA. Jealousy! Jealousy! Poor thing! What would she wish for? (Admiring herself in the glass.) Could she desire a higher compliment than were I to declare her taste my own? (Haughtily.) Doria and Fiesco! Would not the Countess of Lavagna have reason to feel honored if Doria's niece deigned to envy her choice? (In a friendly tone, offering the Count her hand to kiss.) I merely assume the possibility of such a case, Count.

FIESCO (with animation). Cruel Countess! Thus to torment me. I know, divine Julia, that respect is all I ought to feel for you. My reason bids me bend a subject's knee before the race of Doria; but my heart adores the beauteous Julia. My love is criminal, but 'tis also heroic, and dares o'erleap the boundaries of rank, and soar towards the dazzling sun of majesty.

JULIA. A great and courtly falsehood, paraded upon stilts! While his tongue deifies me, his heart beats beneath the picture of another.

FIESCO. Rather say it beats indignantly against it, and would shake off the odious burden. (Taking the picture of LEONORA, which is suspended by a sky-blue ribbon from his breast, and delivering it to JULIA.) Place your own image on that altar and you will instantly annihilate this idol.

JULIA (pleased, puts by the picture hastily). A great sacrifice, by mine honor, and which deserves my thanks. (Hangs her own picture about his neck.) So, my slave,

henceforth bear your badge of service.

[Exit.

FIESCO (with transport). Julia loves me! Julia! I envy not even the gods. (Exulting.) Let this night be a jubilee. Joy shall attain its summit. Ho! within there! (Servants come running in.) Let the floors swim with Cyprian nectar, soft strains of music rouse midnight from her leaden slumber, and a thousand burning lamps eclipse the morning sun. Pleasure shall reign supreme, and the Bacchanal dance so wildly beat the ground that the dark kingdom of the shades below shall tremble at the uproar!

[Exit hastily. A noisy allegro, during which the back scene opens, and discovers a grand illuminated saloon, many masks—dancing. At the side, drinking and playing tables, surrounded with company.

SCENE V.

GIANETTINO, almost intoxicated, LOMELLINO, ZIBO, ZENTURIONE, VERRINA, CALCAGNO, all masked. Several other nobles and ladies.

GIANETTINO (boisterously). Bravo! Bravo! These wines glide down charmingly. The dancers perform a merveille. Go, one of you, and publish it throughout Genoa that I am in good humor, and that every one may enjoy himself. By my ruling star this shall be marked as a red-letter day in the calendar, and underneath be written,—"This day was Prince Doria merry." (The guests lift their glasses to their mouths. A general toast of "The Republic." Sound of trumpets.) The Republic? (Throwing his glass violently on the ground.) There lie its fragments. (Three black masks suddenly rise and collect about GIANETTINO.)

LOMELLINO (supporting GIANETTINO on his arm). My lord, you lately spoke of a young girl whom you saw in the church of St. Lorenzo.

GIANETTINO. I did, my lad! and I must make her acquaintance.

LOMELLINO. That I can manage for your grace.

GIANETTINO (with vehemence). Can you? Can you? Lomellino, you were a candidate for the procuratorship. You shall have it.

LOMELLINO. Gracious prince, it is the second dignity in the state; more than threescore noblemen seek it, and all of them more wealthy and honorable than your grace's humble servant.

GIANETTINO (indignantly). By the name of Doria! You shall be procurator. (The three masks come forward). What talk you of nobility in Genoa? Let them all throw their ancestry and honors into the scale, one hair from the white beard of my old uncle will make it kick the beam. It is my will that you be procurator, and that is tantamount to the votes of the whole senate.

LOMELLINO (in a low voice). The damsel is the only daughter of one Verrina.

GIANETTINO. The girl is pretty, and, in spite of all the devils in hell, I must possess her.

LOMELLINO. What, my lord! the only child of the most obstinate of our republicans?

GIANETTINO. To hell with your republicans! Shall my passion be thwarted by the anger of a vassal? 'Tis as vain as to expect the tower should fall when the boys pelt it with mussel-shells. (The three black masks step nearer, with great emotion.) What! Has the Duke Andreas gained his scars in battle for their wives and children, only that his nephew should court the favor of these vagabond republicans! By the name of Doria they shall swallow this fancy of mine, or I will plant a gallows over the bones of my uncle, on which their Genoese liberty shall kick itself to death. (The three masks step back in disgust.)

LOMELLINO. The damsel is at this moment alone. Her father is here, and one of those three masks.

GIANETTINO. Excellent! Bring me instantly to her.

LOMELLINO. But you will seek in her a mistress, and find a prude.

GIANETTINO. Force is the best rhetoric. Lead me to her. Would I could see that republican dog that durst stand in the way of the bear Doria. (Going, meets FIESCO at the door.) Where is the Countess?

SCENE VI.

FIESCO and the former.

FIESCO. I have handed her to her carriage. (Takes GIANETTINO'S hand, and presses it to his breast.) Prince, I am now doubly your slave. To you I bow, as sovereign of Genoa—to your lovely sister, as mistress of my heart.

LOMELLINO. Fiesco has become a mere votary of pleasure. The great world has lost much in you.

FIESCO. But Fiesco has lost nothing in giving up the world. To live is to dream, and to dream pleasantly is to be wise. Can this be done more certainly amid the thunders of a throne, where the wheels of government creak incessantly upon the tortured ear, than on the heaving bosom of an enamored woman? Let Gianettino rule over Genoa; Fiesco shall devote himself to love.

GIANETTINO. Away, Lomellino! It is near midnight. The time draws near —Lavagna, we thank thee for thy entertainment—I have been satisfied.

FIESCO. That, prince, is all that I can wish.

GIANETTINO. Then good-night! To-morrow we have a party at the palace, and Fiesco is invited. Come, procurator!

FIESCO. Ho! Lights there! Music!

GIANETTINO (haughtily, rushing through the three masks). Make way there for Doria!

ONE OF THE THREE MASKS (murmuring indignantly). Make way? In hell! Never in Genoa!

THE GUESTS (in motion). The prince is going. Good night, Lavagna! (They depart.)

SCENE VII.

The THREE BLACK MASKS and FIESCO. (A pause.)

FIESCO. I perceive some guests here who do not share the pleasure of the feast.

MASKS (murmuring to each other with indignation). No! Not one of us.

FIESCO (courteously). Is it possible that my attention should have been wanting to any one of my guests? Quick, servants! Let the music be renewed, and fill the goblets to the brim. I would not that my friends should find the time hang heavy. Will you permit me to amuse you with fireworks. Would you choose to see the frolics of my harlequin? Perhaps you would be pleased to join the ladies. Or shall we sit down to faro, and pass the time in play?

A MASK. We are accustomed to spend it in action.

FIESCO. A manly answer—such as bespeaks Verrina.

VERRINA (unmasking). Fiesco is quicker to discover his friends beneath their masks than they to discover him beneath his.

FIESCO. I understand you not. But what means that crape of mourning around your arm? Can death have robbed Verrina of a friend, and Fiesco not know the loss?

VERRINA. Mournful tales ill suit Fiesco's joyful feasts.

FIESCO. But if a friend—(pressing his hand warmly.) Friend of my soul! For whom must we both mourn?

VRRRINA. Both! both! Oh, 'tis but too true we both should mourn—yet not all sons lament their mother.

FIESCO. 'Tis long since your mother was mingled with the dust.

VERRINA (with an earnest look). I do remember me that Fiesco once called me brother, because we both were sons of the same country!

FIESCO (jocosely). Oh, is it only that? You meant then but to jest? The mourning dress is worn for Genoa! True, she lies indeed in her last agonies. The thought is new and singular. Our cousin begins to be a wit.

VERRINA. Fiesco! I spoke most seriously.

FIESCO. Certainly—certainly. A jest loses its point when he who makes it is the first to laugh. But you! You looked like a mute at a funeral. Who could have thought that the austere Verrina should in his old age become such a wag!

SACCO. Come, Verrina. He never will be ours.

FIESCO. Be merry, brother. Let us act the part of the cunning heir, who walks in the funeral procession with loud lamentations, laughing to himself the while, under the cover of his handkerchief. 'Tis true we may be troubled with a harsh step-mother. Be it so—we will let her scold, and follow our own pleasures.

VERRINA (with great emotion). Heaven and earth! Shall we then do nothing? What is to become of you, Fiesco? Where am I to seek that determined enemy of tyrants? There was a time when but to see a crown would have been torture to you. Oh, fallen son of the republic! By heaven, if time could so debase my soul I would spurn immortality.

FIESCO. O rigid censor! Let Doria put Genoa in his pocket, or barter it with the robbers of Tunis. Why should it trouble us? We will drown ourselves in floods of Cyprian wine, and revel it in the sweet caresses of our fair ones.

VERRINA (looking at him with earnestness). Are these indeed your serious thoughts?

FIESCO. Why should they not be, my friend? Think you 'tis a pleasure to be the foot of that many-legged monster, a republic? No—thanks be to him who gives it wings, and deprives the feet of their functions! Let Gianettino be the duke, affairs of state shall ne'er lie heavy on our heads.

VERRINA. Fiesco! Is that truly and seriously your meaning?

FIESCO. Andreas adopts his nephew as a son, and makes him heir to his estates; what madman will dispute with him the inheritance of his power?

VERRINA (with the utmost indignation). Away, then, Genoese! (Leaves FIESCO hastily, the rest follow.)

FIESCO. Verrina! Verrina! Oh, this republican is as hard as steel!

SCENE VIII.

FIESCO. A MASK entering.

MASK. Have you a minute or two to spare, Lavagna?

FIESCO (in an obliging manner). An hour if you request it.

MASK. Then condescend to walk into the fields with me.

FIESCO. It wants but ten minutes of midnight.

MASK. Walk with me, Count, I pray.

FIESCO. I will order my carriage.

MASK. That is useless—I shall send one horse: we want no more, for only one of us, I hope, will return.

FIESCO (with surprise). What say you?

MASK. A bloody answer will be demanded of you, touching a certain tear.

FIESCO. What tear?

MASK. A tear shed by the Countess of Lavagna. I am acquainted with that lady, and demand to know how she has merited to be sacrificed to a worthless woman?

FIESCO. I understand you now; but let me ask who 'tis that offers so strange a challenge?

MASK. It is the same that once adored the lady Zibo, and yielded her to Fiesco.

FIESCO. Scipio Bourgognino!

BOURGOGNINO (unmasking). And who now stands here to vindicate his honor, that yielded to a rival base enough to tyrannize over innocence.

FIESCO (embraces him with ardor). Noble youth! thanks to the sufferings of my consort, which have drawn forth the manly feelings of your soul; I admire your generous indignation—but I refuse your challenge.

BOURGOGNINO (stepping back). Does Fiesco tremble to encounter the first efforts of my sword?

FIESCO. No, Bourgognino! against a nation's power combined I would boldly venture, but not against you. The fire of your valor is endeared to me by a most lovely object—the will deserves a laurel, but the deed would be childish.

BOURGOGNINO (with emotion). Childish, Count! women can only weep at injuries. 'Tis for men to revenge them.

FIESCO. Uncommonly well said—but fight I will not.

BOURGOGNINO (turning upon him contemptuously). Count, I shall despise you.

FIESCO (with animation). By heaven, youth, that thou shalt never do—not even if virtue fall in value, shall I become a bankrupt. (Taking him by the hand, with a look of earnestness.) Did you ever feel for me—what shall I say—respect?

BOURGOGNINO. Had I not thought you were the first of men I should not have yielded to you.

FIESCO. Then, my friend, be not so forward to despise a man who once could merit your respect. It is not for the eye of the youthful artist to comprehend at once the master's vast design. Retire, Bourgognino, and take time to weigh the motives of Fiesco's conduct!

[Exit BOURGOGNINO, in silence.

Go! noble youth! if spirits such as thine break out in flames in thy country's cause, let the Dorias see that they stand fast!

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SCENE IX.

FIESCO.—The MOOR entering with an appearance of timidity, and looking round cautiously.

FIESCO (fixing his eye on him sharply). What wouldst thou here? Who art thou?

MOOR (as above). A slave of the republic.

FIESCO (keeping his eye sharply upon him). Slavery is a wretched craft. What dost thou seek?

MOOR. Sir, I am an honest man.

FIESCO. Wear then that label on thy visage, it will not be superfluous— but what wouldst thou have?

MOOR (approaching him, FIESCO draws back). Sir, I am no villain.

FIESCO. 'Tis well thou hast told me that—and yet—'tis not well either (impatiently). What dost thou seek?

MOOR (still approaching). Are you the Count Lavagna?

FIESCO (haughtily). The blind in Genoa know my steps—what wouldst thou with the Count?

MOOR (close to him). Be on your guard, Lavagna!

FIESCO (passing hastily to the other side). That, indeed, I am.

MOOR (again approaching). Evil designs are formed against you, Count.

FIESCO (retreating). That I perceive.

MOOR. Beware of Doria!

FIESCO (approaching him with an air of confidence). Perhaps my suspicions have wronged thee, my friend—Doria is indeed the name I dread.

MOOR. Avoid the man, then. Can you read?

FIESCO. A curious question! Thou hast known, it seems, many of our cavaliers. What writing hast thou?

MOOR. Your name is amongst other condemned sinners. (Presents a paper, and draws close to FIESCO, who is standing before a looking-glass and glancing over the paper—the MOOR steals round him, draws a dagger, and is going to stab.)

FIESCO (turning round dexterously, and seizing the MOOR'S arm.) Stop, scoundrel! (Wrests the dagger from him.)

MOOR (stamps in a frantic manner). Damnation! Your pardon—sire!

FIESCO (seizing him, calls with a loud voice). Stephano! Drullo! Antonio! (holding the MOOR by the throat.) Stay, my friend!—what hellish villany! (Servants enter.) Stay, and answer—thou hast performed thy task like a bungler. Who pays thy wages?

MOOR (after several fruitless attempts to escape). You cannot hang me higher than the gallows are——

FIESCO. No—be comforted—not on the horns of the moon, but higher than ever yet were gallows—yet hold! Thy scheme was too politic to be of thy own contrivance speak, fellow! who hired thee?

MOOR. Think me a rascal, sir, but not a fool.

FIESCO. What, is the scoundrel proud? Speak, sirrah! Who hired thee?

MOOR (aside). Shall I alone be called a fool? Who hired me? 'Twas but a hundred miserable sequins. Who hired me, did you ask? Prince Gianettino.

FIESCO (walking about in a passion). A hundred sequins? And is that all the value set upon Fiesco's head? Shame on thee, Prince of Genoa! Here, fellow (taking money from an escritoire), are a thousand for thee. Tell thy master he is a niggardly assassin. (MOOR looks at him with astonishment.) What dost thou gaze at? (MOOR takes up the money—lays it down—takes it up again, and looks at FIESCO with

increased astonishment). What dost thou mean?

MOOR (throwing the money resolutely upon the table). Sir, that money I have not earned—I deserve it not.

FIESCO. Blockhead, thou hast deserved the gallows; but the offended elephant tramples on men not on worms. Were thy life worth but two words I would have thee hanged.

MOOR (bowing with an air of pleasure at his escape). Sir, you are too good——

FIESCO. Not towards thee! God forbid! No. I am amused to think my humor can make or unmake such a villain as thou, therefore dost thou go scot-free—understand me aright—I take thy failure as an omen of my future greatness—'tis this thought that renders me indulgent, and preserves thy life.

MOOR (in a tone of confidence). Count, your hand! honor for honor. If any man in this country has a throat too much—command me, and I'll cut it—gratis.

FIESCO. Obliging scoundrel! He would show his gratitude by cutting throats wholesale!

MOOR. Men like me, sir, receive no favor without acknowledgment. We know what honor is.

FIESCO. The honor of cut-throats?

MOOR. Which is, perhaps, more to be relied on than that of your men of character. They break their oaths made in the name of God. We keep ours pledged to the devil.

FIESCO. Thou art an amusing villain.

MOOR. I rejoice to meet your approbation. Try me; you will find in me a man who is a thorough master of his profession. Examine me; I can show my testimonials of villany from every guild of rogues—from the lowest to the highest.

FIESCO. Indeed! (seating himself.) There are laws and systems then even among thieves. What canst thou tell me of the lowest class?

MOOR. Oh, sir, they are petty villains, mere pick-pockets. They are a miserable set. Their trade never produces a man of genius; 'tis confined to the whip and workhouse—and at most can lead but to the gallows.

FIESCO. A charming prospect! I should like to hear something of a superior class.

MOOR. The next are spies and informers—tools of importance to the great, who from their secret information derive their own supposed omniscience. These villains insinuate themselves into the souls of men like leeches; they draw poison from the heart, and spit it forth against the very source from whence it came.

FIESCO. I understand thee—go on——

MOOR. Then come the conspirators, villains that deal in poison, and bravoes that rush upon their victims from some secret covert. Cowards they often are, but yet fellows that sell their souls to the devil as the fees of their apprenticeship. The hand of justice binds their limbs to the rack or plants their cunning heads on spikes—this is the third class.

FIESCO. But tell me! When comes thy own?

MOOR. Patience, my lord—that is the very point I'm coming to—I have already passed through all the stages that I mentioned: my genius soon soared above their limits. 'Twas but last night I performed my masterpiece in the third; this evening I attempted the fourth, and proved myself a bungler.

FIESCO. And how do you describe that class?

MOOR (with energy). They are men who seek their prey within four walls, cutting their way through every danger. They strike at once, and, by their first salute, save him whom they approach the trouble of returning thanks for a second. Between ourselves they are called the express couriers of hell: and when Beelzebub is hungry they want but a wink, and he gets his mutton warm.

FIESCO. Thou art an hardened villain—such a tool I want. Give me thy hand—thou

shalt serve me.

MOOR. Jest or earnest?

FIESCO. In full earnest—and I'll pay thee yearly a 'thousand sequins.

MOOR. Done, Lavagna! I am yours. Away with common business—employ me in whate'er you will. I'll be your setter or your bloodhound—your fox, your viper—your pimp, or executioner. I'm prepared for all commissions —except honest ones; in those I am as stupid as a block.

FIESCO. Fear not! I would not set the wolf to guard the lamb. Go thou through Genoa to-morrow and sound the temper of the people. Narrowly inquire what they think of the government, and of the house of Doria— what of me, my debaucheries, and romantic passion. Flood their brains with wine, until the sentiments of the heart flow over. Here's money— lavish it among the manufacturers——

MOOR. Sir!

FIESCO. Be not afraid—no honesty is in the case. Go, collect what help thou canst. To-morrow I will hear thy report.

[Exit.

MOOR (following). Rely on me. It is now four o'clock in the morning, by eight to-morrow you shall hear as much news as twice seventy spies can furnish.

[Exit.

SCENE X.

An apartment in the house of VERRINA. BERTHA on a couch, supporting her head on her hand— VERRINA enters with a look of dejection.

BERTHA (starts up frightened). Heavens! He is here!

VERRINA (stops, looking at her with surprise). My daughter affrighted at her father!

BERTHA. Fly! fly! or let me fly! Father, your sight is dreadful to me!

VERRINA. Dreadful to my child!—my only child!

BERTHA (looking at him mournfully). Oh! you must seek another. I am no more your daughter.

VERRINA. What, does my tenderness distress you?

BERTHA. It weighs me down to the earth.

VERRINA. How, my daughter! do you receive me thus? Formerly, when I came home, my heart o'erburdened with sorrows, my Bertha came running towards me, and chased them away with her smiles. Come, embrace me, my daughter! Reclined upon thy glowing bosom, my heart, when chilled by the sufferings of my country, shall grow warm again. Oh, my child! this day I have closed my account with the joys of this world, and thou alone (sighing heavily) remainest to me.

BERTHA (casting a long and earnest look at him). Wretched father!

VERRINA (eagerly embracing her). Bertha! my only child! Bertha! my last remaining hope! The liberty of Genoa is lost—Fiesco is lost—and thou (pressing her more strongly, with a look of despair) mayest be dishonored!

BERTHA (tearing herself from him). Great God! You know, then——

VERRINA (trembling). What?

BERTHA. My virgin honor——

VERRINA (raging). What?

BERTHA. Last night——

VERRINA (furiously.) Speak! What!

BERTHA. Force. (Sinks down upon the side of the sofa.)

VERRINA (after a long pause, with a hollow voice). One word more, my daughter—thy last! Who was it?

BERTHA. Alas, what an angry deathlike paleness! Great God, support me! How his

words falter! His whole frame trembles!

VERRINA. I cannot comprehend it. Tell me, my daughter—who?

BERTHA. Compose yourself, my best, my dearest father!

VERRINA (ready to faint). For God's sake—who?

BERTHA. A mask——

VERRINA (steps back, thoughtfully). No! That cannot be!—the thought is idle—(smiling to himself). What a fool am I to think that all the poison of my life can flow but from one source! (Firmly addressing himself to BERTHA.) What was his stature, less than mine or taller?

BERTHA. Taller.

VERRINA (eagerly). His hair? Black, and curled?

BERTHA. As black as jet and curled?

VERRINA (retiring from her in great emotion). O God! my brain! my brain! His voice?

BERTHA. Was deep and harsh.

VERRINA (impetuously). What color was—No! I'll hear no more! 'His cloak! What color?

BERTHA. I think his cloak was green.

VERRINA (covering his face with his hands, falls on the couch). No more. This can be nothing but a dream!

BERTHA (wringing her hands). Merciful heaven! Is this my father?

VERRINA (after a pause, with a forced smile). Right! It serves thee right—coward Verrina! The villain broke into the sanctuary of the laws. This did not rouse thee. Then he violated the sanctuary of thy honor (starting up). Quick! Nicolo! Bring balls and powder—but stay—my sword were better. (To BERTHA.) Say thy prayers! Ah!

what am I going to do?

BERTHA. Father, you make me tremble——

VERRINA. Come, sit by me, Bertha! (in a solemn manner.) Tell me, Bertha, what did that hoary-headed Roman, when his daughter—like you— how can I speak it! fell a prey to ignominy? Tell me, Bertha, what said Virginius to his dishonored daughter?

BERTHA (shuddering). I know not.

VERRINA. Foolish girl! He said nothing—but (rising hastily and snatching up a sword) he seized an instrument of death——

BERTHA (terrified, rushes into his arms). Great God! What would you do, my father?

VERRINA (throwing away the sword). No! There is still justice left in Genoa.

SCENE XI.

SACCO, CALCAGNO, the former.

CALCAGNO. Verrina, quick! prepare! to-day begins the election week of the republic. Let us early to the Senate House to choose the new senators. The streets are full of people, you will undoubtedly accompany us (ironically) to behold the triumph of our liberty.

SACCO (to CALCAGNO). But what do I see? A naked sword! Verrina staring wildly! Bertha in tears!

CALCAGNO. By heavens, it is so. Sacco! some strange event has happened here.

VERRINA (placing two chairs). Be seated.

SACCO. Your looks, Verrina, fill us with apprehension.

CALCAGNO. I never saw you thus before—Bertha is in tears, or your grief would have seemed to presage our country's ruin.

VERRINA. Ruin! Pray sit down. (They both seat themselves.)

CALCAGNO. My friend, I conjure you——

VERRINA. Listen to me.

CALCAGNO (to SACCO). I have sad misgivings.

VERRINA. Genoese! you both know the antiquity of my family. Your ancestors were vassals to my own. My forefathers fought the battles of the state, their wives were patterns of virtue. Honor was our sole inheritance, descending unspotted from the father to the son. Can any one deny it?

SACCO. No.

CALCAGNO. No one, by the God of heaven!

VERRINA. I am the last of my family. My wife has long been dead. This daughter is all she left me. You are witnesses, my friends, how I have brought her up. Can anyone accuse me of neglect?

CALCAGNO. No. Your daughter is a bright example to her sex.

VERRINA. I am old, my friends. On this one daughter all my hopes were placed. Should I lose her, my race becomes extinct. (After a pause, with a solemn voice). I have lost her. My family is dishonored.

SACCO and CALCAGNO. Forbid it, heaven! (BERTHA on the couch, appears much affected.)

VERRINA. No. Despair not, daughter! These men are just and brave. If they feel thy wrongs they will expiate them with blood. Be not astonished, friends! He who tramples upon Genoa may easily overcome a helpless female.

SACCO and CALCAGNO (starting up with emotion). Gianettino Doria!

BERTHA (with a shriek, seeing BOURGOGNINO enter). Cover me, walls, beneath your ruins! My Scipio!

SCENE XII.

BOURGOGNINO—the former.

BOURGOGNINO (with ardor). Rejoice, my love! I bring good tidings. Noble Verrina, my heaven now depends upon a word from you. I have long loved your daughter, but never dared to ask her hand, because my whole fortune was intrusted to the treacherous sea. My ships have just now reached the harbor laden with valuable cargoes. Now I am rich. Bestow your Bertha on me—I will make her happy. (BERTHA hides her face—a profound pause.)

VERRINA. What, youth! Wouldst thou mix thy heart's pure tide with a polluted stream?

BOURGOGNINO (clasps his hand to his sword, but suddenly draws it back). 'Twas her father said it.

VERRINA. No—every rascal in Italy will say it. Are you contented with the leavings of other men's repasts?

BOURGOGNINO. Old man, do not make me desperate.

CALCAGNO. Bourgognino! he speaks the truth.

BOURGOGNINO (enraged, rushing towards BERTHA). The truth? Has the girl then mocked me?

CALCAGNO. No! no! Bourgognino. The girl is spotless as an angel.

BOURGOGNINO (astonished). By my soul's happiness, I comprehend it not! Spotless, yet dishonored! They look in silence on each other. Some horrid crime hangs on their trembling tongues. I conjure you, friends, mock not thus my reason. Is she pure? Is she truly so? Who answers for her?

VERRINA. My child is guiltless.

BOURGOGNINO. What! Violence! (Snatches the sword from the ground.) Be all the sins of earth upon my bead if I avenge her not! Where is the spoiler?

VERRINA. Seek him in the plunderer of Genoa! (BOURGOGNINO struck with

astonishment—VERRINA walks up and down the room in deep thought, then stops.) If rightly I can trace thy counsels, O eternal Providence! it is thy will to make my daughter the instrument of Genoa's deliverance. (Approaching her slowly, takes the mourning crape from his arm, and proceeds in a solemn manner.) Before the heart's blood of Doria shall wash away this foul stain from thy honor no beam of daylight shall shine upon these cheeks. Till then (throwing the crape over her) be blind! (A pause—the rest look upon him with silent astonishment; he continues solemnly, his hand upon BERTHA'S head.) Cursed be the air that shall breathe on thee! Cursed the sleep that shall refresh thee! Cursed every human step that shall come to sooth thy misery! Down, into the lowest vault beneath my house! There whine, and cry aloud! (pausing with inward horror.) Be thy life painful as the tortures of the writhing worm— agonizing as the stubborn conflict between existence and annihilation. This curse lie on thee till Gianettino shall have heaved forth his dying breath. If he escape his punishment, then mayest thou drag thy load of misery throughout the endless circle of eternity!

[A deep silence—horror is marked on the countenances of all present. VERRINA casts a scrutinizing look at each of them.

BOURGOGNINO. Inhuman father! What is it thou hast done? Why pour forth this horrible and monstrous curse against thy guiltless daughter?

VERRINA. Youth, thou say'st true!—it is most horrible. Now who among you will stand forth and prate still of patience and delay? My daughter's fate is linked with that of Genoa. I sacrifice the affections of a father to the duties of a citizen. Who among us is so much a coward as to hesitate in the salvation of his country, when this poor guiltless being must pay for his timidity with endless sufferings? By heavens, 'twas not a madman's speech! I have sworn an oath, and till Doria lie in the agonies of death I will show no mercy to my child. No—not though, like an executioner, I should invent unheard-of torments for her, or with my own hands rend

her innocent frame piecemeal on the barbarous rack. You shudder—you stare at me with ghastly faces. Once more, Scipio—I keep her as a hostage for the tyrant's death. Upon this precious thread do I suspend thy duty, my own, and yours (to SACCO and CALCAGNO). The tyrant of Genoa falls, or Bertha must despair—I retract not.

BOURGOGNINO (throwing himself at BERTHA'S feet). He shall fall—shall fall a victim to Genoa. I will as surely sheathe this sword in Doria's heart as upon thy lips I will imprint the bridal kiss. (Rises.)

VERRINA. Ye couple, the first that ever owed their union to the Furies, join hands! Thou wilt sheathe thy sword in Doria's heart? Take her! she is thine!

CALCAGNO (kneeling). Here kneels another citizen of Genoa and lays his faithful sword before the feet of innocence. As surely may Calcagno find the way to heaven as this steel shall find its way to Gianettino's heart! (Rises.)

SACCO (kneeling). Last, but not less determined, Raffaelle Sacco kneels. If this bright steel unlock not the prison doors of Bertha, mayest thou, my Saviour, shut thine ear against my dying prayers! (Rises.)

VERRINA (with a calm look). Through me Genoa thanks you. Now go, my daughter; rejoice to be the mighty sacrifice for thy country!

BOURGOGNINO (embracing her as she is departing). Go! confide in God—and Bourgognino. The same day shall give freedom to Bertha and to Genoa.

[BERTHA retires.

SCENE XIII.

The former—without BERTHA.

CALCAGNO. Genoese, before we take another step, one word——

VERRINA. I guess what you would say.

CALCAGNO. Will four patriots alone be sufficient to destroy this mighty hydra? Shall we not stir up the people to rebellion, or draw the nobles in to join our party?

VERRINA. I understand you. Now hear my advice; I have long engaged a painter who has been exerting all his skill to paint the fall of Appius Claudius. Fiesco is an adorer of the arts, and soon warmed by ennobling scenes. We will send this picture to his house, and will be present when he contemplates it. Perhaps the sight may rouse his dormant spirit. Perhaps——

BOURGOGNINO. No more of him. Increase the danger, not the sharers in it. So valor bids. Long have I felt a something within my breast that nothing would appease. What 'twas now bursts upon me (springing up with enthusiasm); 'twas a tyrant!

[The scene closes.

ACT II.

SCENE I.—

An Ante-chamber in the Palace of FIESCO. LEONORA and ARABELLA.

ARABELLA. No, no, you were mistaken: your eyes were blinded by jealousy.

LEONORA. It was Julia to the life. Seek not to persuade me otherwise. My picture was suspended by a sky-blue ribbon: this was flame-colored. My doom is fixed irrevocably.

SCENE II.

The former and JULIA.

JULIA (entering in an affected manner). The Count offered me his palace to see the procession to the senate-house. The time will be tedious. You will entertain me, madam, while the chocolate is preparing.

[ARABELLA goes out, and returns soon afterwards.

LEONORA. Do you wish that I should invite company to meet you?

JULIA. Ridiculous! As if I should come hither in search of company. You will

amuse me, madam (walking up and down, and admiring herself), if you are able, madam. At any rate I shall lose nothing.

ARABELLA (sarcastically). Your splendid dress alone will be the loser. Only think how cruel it is to deprive the eager eyes of our young beaux of such a treat! Ah! and the glitter of your sparkling jewels on which it almost wounds the sight to look. Good heavens! You seem to have plundered the whole ocean of its pearls.

JULIA (before a glass). You are not accustomed to such things, miss! But hark ye, miss! pray has your mistress also hired your tongue? Madam, 'tis fine, indeed, to permit your domestics thus to address your guests.

LEONORA. 'Tis my misfortune, signora, that my want of spirits prevents me from enjoying the pleasure of your company.

JULIA. An ugly fault that, to be dull and spiritless. Be active, sprightly, witty! Yours is not the way to attach your husband to you.

LEONORA. I know but one way, Countess. Let yours ever be the sympathetic medium.

JULIA (pretending not to mind her). How you dress, madam! For shame! Pay more attention to your personal appearance! Have recourse to art where nature has been unkind. Put a little paint on those cheeks, which look so pale with spleen. Poor creature! Your puny face will never find a bidder.

LEONORA (in a lively manner to ARABELLA). Congratulate me, girl. It is impossible I can have lost my Fiesco; or, if I have, the loss must be but trifling. (The chocolate is brought, ARABELLA pours it out.)

JULIA. Do you talk of losing Fiesco? Good God! How could you ever conceive the ambitious idea of possessing him? Why, my child, aspire to such a height? A height where you cannot but be seen, and must come into comparison with others. Indeed, my dear, he was a knave or a fool who joined you with FIESCO. (Taking her hand with a look of compassion.) Poor soul! The man who is received in the assemblies of

fashionable life could never be a suitable match for you. (She takes a dish of chocolate.)

LEONORA (smiling at ARABELLA). If he were, he would not wish to mix with such assemblies.

JULIA. The Count is handsome, fashionable, elegant. He is so fortunate as to have formed connections with people of rank. He is lively and high-spirited. Now, when he severs himself from these circles of elegance and refinement, and returns home warm with their impressions, what does he meet? His wife receives him with a commonplace tenderness; damps his fire with an insipid, chilling kiss, and measures out her attentions to him with a niggardly economy. Poor husband! Here, a blooming beauty smiles upon him—there he is nauseated by a peevish sensibility. Signora, signora, for God's sake consider, if he have not lost his understanding, which will he choose?

LEONORA (offering her a cup of chocolate). You, madam—if he have lost it.

JULIA. Good! This sting shall return into your own bosom. Tremble for your mockery! But before you tremble—blush!

LEONORA. Do you then know what it is to blush, signora? But why not? 'Tis a toilet trick.

JULIA. Oh, see! This poor creature must be provoked if one would draw from her a spark of wit. Well—let it pass this time. Madam, you were bitter. Give me your hand in token of reconciliation.

LEONORA (offering her hand with a significant look). Countess, my anger ne'er shall trouble you.

JULIA (offering her hand). Generous, indeed! Yet may I not be so, too? (Maliciously.) Countess, do you not think I must love that person whose image I bear constantly about me?

LEONORA (blushing and confused). What do you say? Let me hope the conclusion is too hasty.

JULIA. I think so, too. The heart waits not the guidance of the senses —real sentiment needs no breastwork of outward ornament.

LEONORA. Heavens! Where did you learn such a truth?

JULIA. 'Twas in mere compassion that I spoke it; for observe, madam, the reverse is no less certain. Such is Fiesco's love for you. (Gives her the picture, laughing maliciously.)

LEONORA (with extreme indignation). My picture! Given to you! (Throws herself into a chair, much affected.) Cruel, Fiesco!

JULIA. Have I retaliated? Have I? Now, madam, have you any other sting to wound me with? (Goes to side scene.) My carriage! My object is gained. (To LEONORA, patting her cheek.) Be comforted, my dear; he gave me the picture in a fit of madness.

[Exeunt JULIA and ARABELLA.

SCENE III.

LEONORA, CALCAGNO entering.

CALCAGNO. Did not the Countess Imperiali depart in anger? You, too, so excited, madam?

LEONORA (violently agitated.) No! This is unheard-of cruelty.

CALCAGNO. Heaven and earth! Do I behold you in tears?

LEONORA. Thou art a friend of my inhuman—Away, leave my sight!

CALCAGNO. Whom do you call inhuman? You affright me——

LEONORA. My husband. Is he not so?

CALCAGNO. What do I hear!

LEONORA. 'Tis but a piece of villany common enough among your sex!

CALCAGNO (grasping her hand with vehemence). Lady, I have a heart for weeping virtue.

LEONORA. You are a man—your heart is not for me.

CALCAGNO. For you alone—yours only. Would that you knew how much, how truly yours——

LEONORA. Man, thou art untrue. Thy words would be refuted by thy actions——

CALCAGNO. I swear to you——

LEONORA. A false oath. Cease! The perjuries of men are so innumerable 'twould tire the pen of the recording angel to write them down. If their violated oaths were turned into as many devils they might storm heaven itself, and lead away the angels of light as captives.

CALCAGNO. Nay, madam, your anger makes you unjust. Is the whole sex to answer for the crime of one?

LEONORA. I tell thee in that one was centred all my affection for the sex. In him I will detest them all.

CALCAGNO. Countess,—you once bestowed your hand amiss. Would you again make trial, I know one who would deserve it better.

LEONORA. The limits of creation cannot bound your falsehoods. I'll hear no more.

CALCAGNO. Oh, that you would retract this cruel sentence in my arms!

LEONORA (with astonishment). Speak out. In thy arms!

CALCAGNO. In my arms, which open themselves to receive a forsaken woman, and to console her for the love she has lost.

LEONORA (fixing her eyes on him). Love?

CALCAGNO (kneeling before her with ardor). Yes, I have said it. Love, madam!

Life and death hang on your tongue. If my passion be criminal then let the extremes of virtue and vice unite, and heaven and hell be joined together in one perdition.

LEONORA (steps back indignantly, with a look of noble disdain). Ha! Hypocrite! Was that the object of thy false compassion? This attitude at once proclaims thee a traitor to friendship and to love. Begone forever from my eyes! Detested sex! Till now I thought the only victim of your snares was woman; nor ever suspected that to each other you were so false and faithless.

CALCAGNO (rising, confounded). Countess!

LEONORA. Was it not enough to break the sacred seal of confidence? but even on the unsullied mirror of virtue does this hypocrite breathe pestilence, and would seduce my innocence to perjury.

CALCAGNO (hastily). Perjury, madam, you cannot be guilty of.

LEONORA. I understand thee—thou thoughtest my wounded pride would plead in thy behalf. (With dignity). Thou didst not know that she who loves Fiesco feels even the pang that rends her heart ennobling. Begone! Fiesco's perfidy will not make Calcagno rise in my esteem—but—will lower humanity. [Exit hastily.

CALCAGNO (stands as if thunderstruck, looks after her, then striking his forehead). Fool that I am. [Exit.

SCENE IV.

The MOOR and FIESCO.

FIESCO. Who was it that just now departed?

MOOR. The Marquis Calcagno.

FIESCO. This handkerchief was left upon the sofa. My wife has been here.

MOOR. I met her this moment in great agitation.

FIESCO. This handkerchief is moist (puts it in his pocket). Calcagno here? And Leonora agitated? This evening thou must learn what has happened.

MOOR. Miss Bella likes to hear that she is fair. She will inform me.

FIESCO. Well—thirty hours are past. Hast thou executed my commission?

MOOR. To the letter, my lord.

FIESCO (seating himself). Then tell me how they talk of Doria, and of the government.

MOOR. Oh, most vilely. The very name of Doria shakes them like an ague-fit. Gianettino is as hateful to them as death itself—there's naught but murmuring. They say the French have been the rats of Genoa, the cat Doria has devoured them, and now is going to feast upon the mice.

FIESCO. That may perhaps be true. But do they not know of any dog against that cat?

MOOR (with an affected carelessness). The town was murmuring much of a certain—poh—why, I have actually forgotten the name.

FIESCO (rising). Blockhead! That name is as easy to be remembered as 'twas difficult to achieve. Has Genoa more such names than one?

MOOR. No—it cannot have two Counts of Lavagna.

FIESCO (seating himself). That is something. And what do they whisper about my gayeties?

MOOR (fixing his eyes upon him). Hear me, Count of Lavagna! Genoa must think highly of you. They can not imagine why a descendant of the first family—with such talents and genius—full of spirit and popularity— master of four millions—his veins enriched with princely blood—a nobleman like Fiesco, whom, at the first call, all hearts would fly to meet——

FIESCO (turns away contemptuously). To hear such things from such a scoundrel!

MOOR. Many lamented that the chief of Genoa should slumber over the ruin of his country. And many sneered. Most men condemned you. All bewailed the state

which thus had lost you. A Jesuit pretended to have smelt out the fox that lay disguised in sheep's clothing.

FIESCO. One fox smells out another. What say they to my passion for the Countess Imperiali?

MOOR. What I would rather be excused from repeating.

FIESCO. Out with it—the bolder the more welcome. What are their murmurings?

MOOR. 'Tis not a murmur. At all the coffee-houses, billiard-tables, hotels, and public walks—in the market-place, at the Exchange, they proclaim aloud——

FIESCO. What? I command thee!

MOOR (retreating). That you are a fool!

FIESCO. Well, take this sequin for these tidings. Now have I put on a fool's cap that these Genoese may have wherewith to rack their wits. Next I will shave my head, that they may play Merry Andrew to my Clown. How did the manufacturers receive my presents?

MOOR (humorously). Why, Mr. Fool, they looked like poor knaves——

FIESCO. Fool? Fellow, art thou mad?

MOOR. Pardon! I had a mind for a few more sequins.

FIESCO (laughing, gives him another sequin). Well. "Like poor knaves."

MOOR. Who receive pardon at the very block. They are yours both soul and body.

FIESCO. I'm glad of it. They turn the scale among the populace of Genoa.

MOOR. What a scene it was! Zounds! I almost acquired a relish for benevolence. They caught me round the neck like madmen. The very girls seemed in love with my black visage, that's as ill-omened as the moon in an eclipse. Gold, thought I, is omnipotent: it makes even a Moor look fair.

FIESCO. That thought was better than the soil which gave it birth. These words are

favorable; but do they bespeak actions of equal import?

MOOR. Yes—as the murmuring of the distant thunder foretells the approaching storm. The people lay their heads together—they collect in parties—break off their talk whenever a stranger passes by. Throughout Genoa reigns a gloomy silence. This discontent hangs like a threatening tempest over the republic. Come, wind, then hail and lightning will burst forth.

FIESCO. Hush!—hark! What is that confused noise?

MOOR (going to the window). It is the tumult of the crowd returning from the senate-house.

FIESCO. To-day is the election of a procurator. Order my carriage! It is impossible that the sitting should be over. I'll go thither. It is impossible it should be over if things went right. Bring me my sword and cloak—where is my golden chain?

MOOR. Sir, I have stolen and pawned it.

FIESCO. That I am glad to hear.

MOOR. But, how! Are there no more sequins for me?

FIESCO. No. You forgot the cloak.

MOOR. Ah! I was wrong in pointing out the thief.

FIESCO. The tumult comes nearer. Hark! 'Tis not the sound of approbation. Quick! Unlock the gates; I guess the matter. Doria has been rash. The state balances upon a needle's point. There has assuredly been some disturbance at the senate-house.

MOOR (at the window). What's here! They're coming down the street of Balbi—a crowd of many thousands—the halberds glitter—ah, swords too! Halloo! Senators! They come this way.

FIESCO. Sedition is on foot. Hasten amongst them; mention my name; persuade them to come hither. (Exit Moon hastily.) What reason, laboring like a careful ant, with difficulty scrapes together, the wind of accident collects in one short moment.

SCENE V.

FIESCO, ZENTURIONE, ZIBO, and ASSERATO, rushing in.

ZIBO. Count, impute it to our anger that we enter thus unannounced.

ZENTURIONE. I have been mortally affronted by the duke's nephew in the face of the whole senate.

ASSERATO. Doria has trampled on the golden book of which each noble Genoese is a leaf.

ZENTURIONE. Therefore come we hither. The whole nobility are insulted in me; the whole nobility must share my vengeance. To avenge my own honor I should not need assistance.

ZIBO. The whole nobility are outraged in his person; the whole nobility must rise and vent their rage in fire and flames.

ASSERATO. The rights of the nation are trodden under foot; the liberty of the republic has received a deadly blow.

FIESCO. You raise my expectation to the utmost.

ZIBO. He was the twenty-ninth among the electing senators, and had drawn forth a golden ball to vote for the procurator. Of the eight-and-twenty votes collected, fourteen were for me, and as many for Lomellino. His and Doria's were still wanting——

ZENTURIONE. Wanting! I gave my vote for Zibo. Doria—think of the wound inflicted on my honor—Doria——

ASSERATO (interrupting him). Such a thing was never heard of since the sea washed the walls of Genoa.

ZENTURIONE (continues, with great heat). Doria drew a sword, which he had concealed under a scarlet cloak—stuck it through my vote—called to the assembly——

ZIBO. "Senators, 'tis good-for-nothing—'tis pierced through. Lomellino is procurator."

ZENTURIONE. "Lomellino is procurator." And threw his sword upon the table.

ASSERATO. And called out, "'Tis good-for-nothing!" and threw his sword upon the table.

FIESCO (after a pause). On what are you resolved?

ZENTURIONE. The republic is wounded to its very heart. On what are we resolved?

FIESCO. Zenturione, rushes may yield to a breath, but the oak requires a storm. I ask, on what are you resolved?

ZIBO. Methinks the question shall be, on what does Genoa resolve?

FIESCO. Genoa! Genoa! name it not. 'Tis rotten, and crumbles wherever you touch it. Do you reckon on the nobles? Perhaps because they put on grave faces, look mysterious when state affairs are mentioned—talk not of them! Their heroism is stifled among the bales of their Levantine merchandise. Their souls hover anxiously over their India fleet.

ZENTURIONE. Learn to esteem our nobles more justly. Scarcely was Doria's haughty action done when hundreds of them rushed into the street tearing their garments. The senate was dispersed——

FIESCO (sarcastically). Like frighted pigeons when the vulture darts upon the dovecot.

ZENTURIONE. No! (fiercely)—like powder-barrels when a match falls on them.

ZIBO. The people are enraged. What may we not expect from the fury of the wounded boar!

FIESCO (laughing). The blind, unwieldy monster, which at first rattles its heavy bones, threatening, with gaping jaws, to devour the high and low, the near and

distant, at last stumbles at a thread—Genoese, 'tis in vain! The epoch of the masters of the sea is past—Genoa is sunk beneath the splendor of its name. Its state is such as once was Rome's, when, like a tennis-ball, she leaped into the racket of young Octavius. Genoa can be free no longer; Genoa must be fostered by a monarch; therefore do homage to the mad-brained Gianettino.

ZENTURIONE (vehemently). Yes, when the contending elements are reconciled, and when the north pole meets the south. Come, friends.

FIESCO. Stay! stay! Upon what project are you brooding, Zibo?

ZIBO. On nothing.

FIESCO (leading them to a statue). Look at this figure.

ZENTURIONE. It is the Florentine Venus. Why point to her?

FIESCO. At least she pleases you.

ZIBO. Undoubtedly, or we should be but poor Italians. But why this question now?

FIESCO. Travel through all the countries of the globe, and among the most beautiful of living female models, seek one which shall unite all the charms of this ideal Venus.

ZIBO. And then take for our reward?

FIESCO. Then your search will have convicted fancy of deceit——

ZENTURIONE (impatiently). And what shall we have gained?

FIESCO. Gained? The decision of the long-protracted contest between art and nature.

ZENTURIONE (eagerly). And what then?

FIESCO. Then, then? (Laughing.) Then your attention will have been diverted from observing the fall of Genoa's liberty.

[Exeunt all but FIESCO.

SCENE VI.

FIESCO alone. (The noise without increases.)

FIESCO. 'Tis well! 'tis well. The straw of the republic has caught fire—the flames have seized already on palaces and towers. Let it go on! May the blaze be general! Let the tempestuous wind spread wide the conflagration!

SCENE VII.

FIESCO, MOOR, entering in haste.

MOOR. Crowds upon crowds!

FIESCO. Throw open wide the gates. Let all that choose enter.

MOOR. Republicans! Republicans, indeed! They drag their liberty along, panting, like beasts of burden, beneath the yoke of their magnificent nobility.

FIESCO. Fools! who believe that Fiesco of Lavagna will carry on what Fiesco of Lavagna did not begin. The tumult comes opportunely; but the conspiracy must be my own. They are rushing hither——

MOOR (going out). Halloo! halloo! You are very obligingly battering the house down. (The people rush in; the doors broken down.)

SCENE VIII.

FIESCO, twelve ARTISANS.

ALL ARTISANS. Vengeance on Doria! Vengeance on Gianettino!

FIESCO. Gently! gently! my countrymen! Your waiting thus upon me bespeaks the warmth of your affection; but I pray you have mercy on my ears!

ALL (with impetuosity). Down with the Dorias! Down with them, uncle and nephew!

FIESCO (counting them with a smile). Twelve is a mighty force!

SOME OF THEM. These Dorias must away! the state must be reformed!

1ST ARTISAN. To throw our magistrates down stairs! The magistrates!

2D ARTISAN. Think, Count Lavagna—down stairs! because they opposed them in the election——

ALL. It must not be endured! it shall not be endured!

3D ARTISAN. To take a sword into the senate!

1ST ARTISAN. A sword?—the sign of war—into the chamber of peace!

2D ARTISAN. To come into the senate dressed in scarlet! Not like the other senators, in black.

1ST ARTISAN. To drive through our capital with eight horses!

ALL. A tyrant! A traitor to the country and the government!

2D ARTISAN. To hire two hundred Germans from the Emperor for his body-guard.

1ST ARTISAN. To bring foreigners in arms against the natives—Germans against Italians—soldiers against laws!

ALL. 'Tis treason!—'tis a plot against the liberty of Genoa!

1ST ARTISAN. To have the arms of the republic painted on his coach!

2D ARTISAN. The statue of Andreas placed in the centre of the senate-house!

ALL. Dash them to pieces—both the statue and the man——

FIESCO. Citizens of Genoa, why this to me?

1ST ARTISAN. You should not suffer it. You should keep him down.

2D ARTISAN. You are a wise man, and should not suffer it. You should direct us by your counsel.

1ST ARTISAN. You are a better nobleman. You should chastise them and curb their insolence.

FIESCO. Your confidence is flattering. Can I merit it by deeds?

ALL (clamorously). Strike! Down with the tyrant! Make us free!

FIESCO. But—will you hear me?

SOME. Speak, Count!

FIESCO (seating himself). Genoese,—the empire of the animals was once thrown into confusion; parties struggled with parties, till at last a bull-dog seized the throne. He, accustomed to drive the cattle to the knife of the butcher, prowled in savage manner through the state. He barked, he bit, and gnawed his subjects' bones. The nation murmured; the boldest joined together, and killed the princely monster. Now a general assembly was held to decide upon the important question, which form of government was best. There were three different opinions. Genoese, what would be your decision?

1ST ARTISAN. For the people—everything in common——

FIESCO. The people gained it. The government was democratical; each citizen had a vote, and everything was submitted to a majority. But a few weeks passed ere man declared war against the new republic. The state assembled. Horse, lion, tiger, bear, elephant, and rhinoceros, stepped forth, and roared aloud, "To arms!" The rest were called upon to vote. The lamb, the hare, the stag, the ass, the tribe of insects, with the birds and timid fishes, cried for peace. See, Genoese! The cowards were more numerous than the brave; the foolish than the wise. Numbers prevailed—the beasts laid down their arms, and man exacted contributions from them. The democratic system was abandoned. Genoese, what would you next have chosen?

1ST AND 2D ARTISANS. A select government!

FIESCO. That was adopted. The business of the state was all arranged in separate departments. Wolves were the financiers, foxes their secretaries, doves presided in the criminal courts, and tigers in the courts of equity. The laws of chastity were regulated by goats; hares were the soldiers; lions and elephants had charge of the baggage. The ass was the ambassador of the empire, and the mole appointed inspector-general of the whole administration. Genoese, what think you of this wise

distribution? Those whom the wolf did not devour the fox pillaged; whoever escaped from him was knocked down by the ass. The tiger murdered innocents, whilst robbers and assassins were pardoned by the doves. And at the last, when each had laid down his office, the mole declared that all were well discharged. The animals rebelled. "Let us," they cried unanimously, "choose a monarch endowed with strength and skill, and who has only one stomach to appease." And to one chief they all did homage. Genoese—to one—-but (rising and advancing majestically)—that one was—the lion!

ALL (shouting, and throwing up their hats). Bravo! Bravo! Well managed, Count Lavagna!

1ST ARTISAN. And Genoa shall follow that example. Genoa, also, has its lion!

FIESCO. Tell me not of that lion; but go home and think upon him. (The ARTISANS depart tumultuously.) It is as I would have it. The people and the senate are alike enraged against Doria; the people and the senate alike approve FIESCO. Hassan! Hassan! I must take advantage of this favorable gale. Hoa! Hassan! Hassan! I must augment their hatred— improve my influence. Hassan! Come hither! Whoreson of hell, come hither!

SCENE IX.

FIESCO, MOOR entering hastily.

MOOR. My feet are quite on fire with running. What is the matter now?

FIESCO. Hear my commands!

MOOR (submissively). Whither shall I run first?

FIESCO. I will excuse thy running this time. Thou shalt be dragged. Prepare thyself. I intend to publish thy attempted assassination, and deliver thee up in chains to the criminal tribunal.

MOOR (taking several steps backward). Sir!—that's contrary to agreement.

FIESCO. Be not alarmed. 'Tis but a farce. At this moment 'tis of the utmost consequence that Gianettino's attempt against my life should be made public. Thou shalt be tried before the criminal tribunal.

MOOR. Must I confess it, or deny?

FIESCO. Deny. They will put thee to the torture. Thou must hold out against the first degree. This, by the by, will serve to expiate thy real crime. At the second thou mayest confess.

MOOR (shaking his head with a look of apprehension). The devil is a sly rogue. Their worships might perhaps desire my company a little longer than I should wish; and, for sheer farce sake, I may be broken on the wheel.

FIESCO. Thou shalt escape unhurt, I give thee my honor as a nobleman. I shall request, as satisfaction, to have thy punishment left to me, and then pardon thee before the whole republic.

MOOR. Well—I agree to it. They will draw out my joints a little; but that will only make them the more flexible.

FIESCO. Then scratch this arm with thy dagger, till the blood flows. I will pretend that I have just now seized thee in fact. 'Tis well. (Hallooing violently). Murder! Murder! Guard the passages! Make fast the gates! (He drags the MOOR out by the throat; servants run across the stage hastily.)

SCENE X.

LEONORA and ROSA enter hastily, alarmed.

LEONORA. Murder! they cried—murder!—The noise came this way.

ROSA. Surely 'twas but a common tumult, such as happens every day in Genoa.

LEONORA. They cried murder! and I distinctly heard Fiesco's name. In vain you would deceive me. My heart discovers what is concealed from my eyes. Quick! Hasten after them. See! Tell me whither they carry him.

ROSA. Collect your spirits, madam. Arabella is gone.

LEONORA. Arabella will catch his dying look. The happy Arabella! Wretch that I am? 'twas I that murdered him. If I could have engaged his heart he would not have plunged into the world, nor rushed upon the daggers of assassins. Ah! she comes. Away! Oh, Arabella, speak not to me!

SCENE XI.

The former, ARABELLA.

ARABELLA. The Count is living and unhurt. I saw him gallop through the city. Never did he appear more handsome. The steed that bore him pranced haughtily along, and with its proud hoof kept the thronging multitude at a distance from its princely rider. He saw me as I passed, and with a gracious smile, pointing thither, thrice kissed his hand to me. (Archly.) What can I do with those kisses, madam?

LEONORA (highly pleased). Idle prattler! Restore them to him.

ROSA. See now, how soon your color has returned!

LEONORA. His heart he is ready to fling at every wench, whilst I sigh in vain for a look! Oh woman! woman!

[Exeunt.

SCENE XII.—The Palace of ANDREAS.

GIANETTINO and LOMELLINO enter hastily.

GIANETTINO. Let them roar for their liberty as a lioness for her young. I am resolved.

LOMELLINO. But—most gracious prince!

GIANETTINO. Away to hell with thy buts, thou three-hours procurator! I will not yield a hair's breadth? Let Genoa's towers shake their heads, and the hoarse sea bellow No to it. I value not the rebellious multitude!

LOMELLINO. The people are indeed the fuel; but the nobility fan the flame. The

whole republic is in a ferment, people and patricians.

GIANETTINO. Then will I stand upon the mount like Nero, and regale myself with looking upon the paltry flames.

LOMELLINO. Till the whole mass of sedition falls into the hands of some enterprising leader, who will take advantage of the general devastation.

GIANETTINO. Poh! Poh! I know but one who might be dangerous, and he is taken care of.

LOMELLINO. His highness comes.

Enter ANDREAS—(both bow respectfully).

ANDREAS. Signor Lomellino, my niece wishes to take the air.

LOMELLINO. I shall have the honor of attending her.

[Exit LOMELLINO.

SCENE XIII.

ANDREAS and GIANETTINO.

ANDREAS. Nephew, I am much displeased with you.

GIANETTINO. Grant me a hearing, most gracious uncle!

ANDREAS. That would I grant to the meanest beggar in Genoa if he were worthy of it. Never to a villain, though he were my nephew. It is sufficient favor that I address thee as an uncle, not as a sovereign!

GIANETTINO. One word only, gracious sir!

ANDREAS. Hear first what thou hast done; then answer me. Thou hast pulled down an edifice which I have labored for fifty years to raise— that which should have been thy uncle's mausoleum, his only pyramid—the affections of his countrymen. This rashness Andreas pardons thee——

GIANETTINO. My uncle and my sovereign——

ANDREAS. Interrupt me not. Thou hast injured that most glorious work of mine, the constitution, which I brought down from heaven for Genoa, which cost me so many sleepless nights, so many dangers, and so much blood. Before all Genoa thou hast cast a stain upon my honor, in violating my institutions. Who will hold them sacred if my own blood despise them? This folly thy uncle pardons thee.

GIANETTINO (offended). Sir, you educated me to be the Duke of Genoa.

ANDREAS. Be silent. Thou art a traitor to the state, and hast attacked its vital principle. Mark me, boy! That principle is—subordination. Because the shepherd retired in the evening from his labor, thoughtest thou the flock deserted? Because Andreas' head is white with age, thoughtest thou, like a villain, to trample on the laws?

GIANETTINO (insolently). Peace, Duke! In my veins also boils the blood of that Andreas before whom France has trembled.

ANDREAS. Be silent! I command thee. When I speak the sea itself is wont to pay attention. Thou hast insulted the majesty of justice in its very sanctuary. Rebel! dost thou know what punishment that crime demands? Now answer! (GIANETTINO appears struck, and fixes his eyes on the ground without speaking). Wretched Andreas! In thy own heart hast thou fostered the canker of thy renown. I built up a fabric for Genoa which should mock the lapse of ages, and am myself the first to cast a firebrand into it. Thank my gray head, which would be laid in the grave by a relation's hand—thank my unjust love that, on the scaffold, I pour not out thy rebellious blood to satisfy the violated laws.

[Exit.

SCENE XIV.

GIANETTINO looks after the DUKE, speechless with anger, LOMELLINO entering, breathless and terrified.

LOMELLINO. What have I seen! What have I heard! Fly, prince! Fly quickly! All

is lost.

GIANETTINO (with inward rage). What was there to lose?

LOMELLINO. Genoa, prince: I come from the market-place. The people were crowding round a Moor who was dragged along bound with cords. The Count of Lavagna, with above three hundred nobles, followed to the criminal court. The Moor had been employed to assassinate Fiesco, and in the attempt was seized.

GIANETTINO (stamping violently on the ground). What, are all the devils of hell let loose at once?

LOMELLINO. They questioned him most strictly concerning his employer. The Moor confessed nothing. They tried the first degree of torture. Still he confessed nothing. They put him to the second. Then he spoke— he spoke. My gracious lord, how could you trust your honor to such a villain?

GIANETTINO (fiercely). Ask me no question?

LOMELLINO. Hear the rest! Scarcely was the word Doria uttered—I would sooner have seen my name inscribed in the infernal register than have heard yours thus mentioned—scarcely was it uttered when Fiesco showed himself to the people. You know the man—how winningly he pleads—how he is wont to play the usurer with the hearts of the multitude. The whole assembly hung upon his looks, breathless with indignation. He spoke little, but bared his bleeding arm. The crowd contended for the falling drops as if for sacred relics. The Moor was given up to his disposal—and Fiesco—a mortal blow for us! Fiesco pardoned him. Now the confined anger of the people burst forth in one tumultuous clamor. Each breath annihilated a Doria, and Fiesco was borne home amidst a thousand joyful acclamations.

GIANETTINO (with a ferocious laugh). Let the flood of tumult swell up to my very throat. The emperor! That sound alone shall strike them to the earth, so that not a murmur shall be heard in Genoa.

LOMELLINO. Bohemia is far from hence. If the emperor come speedily he may

perhaps be present at your funeral feast.

GIANETTINO (drawing forth a letter with a great seal). 'Tis fortunate that he is here already. Art thou surprised at this? And didst thou think me mad enough to brave the fury of enraged republicans had I not known they were betrayed and sold?

LOMELLINO (with astonishment). I know not what to think!

GIANETTINO. But I have thought of something which thou couldst not know. My plan is formed. Ere two days are past twelve senators must fall. Doria becomes sovereign, and the Emperor Charles protects him. Thou seemest astonished——

LOMELLINO. Twelve senators! My heart is too narrow to comprehend a twelvefold murder.

GIANETTINO. Fool that thou art! The throne will absolve the deed. I consulted with the ministers of Charles on the strong party which France still has in Genoa, and by which she might a second time seize on it unless they should be rooted out. This worked upon the emperor—he approved my projects—and thou shalt write what I will dictate to thee.

LOMELLINO. I know not yet your purpose.

GIANETTINO. Sit down and write——

LOMELLINO. But what am I to write? (Seats himself.)

GIANETTINO. The names of the twelve candidates for death—Francis Zenturione.

LOMELLINO (writes). In gratitude for his vote he leads the funeral procession.

GIANETTINO. Cornelio Calva.

LOMELLINO. Calva.

GIANETTINO. Michael Zibo.

LOMELLINO. To cool him after his disappointment in the procuratorship.

GIANETTINO. Thomas Asserato and his three brothers. (LOMELLINO stops.)

GIANETTINO (forcibly). And his three brothers——

LOMELLINO (writes). Go on.

GIANETTINO. Fiesco of Lavagna.

LOMELLINO. Have a care! Have a care! That black stone will yet prove fatal to you.

GIANETTINO. Scipio Bourgognino.

LOMELLINO. He may celebrate elsewhere his wedding——

GIANETTINO. Ay, where I shall be director of the nuptials. Raphael Sacco.

LOMELLINO. I should intercede for his life until he shall have paid my five thousand crowns. (Writes.) Death strikes the balance.

GIANETTINO. Vincent Calcagno.

LOMELLINO. Calcagno. The twelfth I write at my own risk, unless our mortal enemy be overlooked.

GIANETTINO. The end crowns all—Joseph Verrina.

LOMELLINO. He is the very head of the viper that threatens us. (Rises and presents the paper to GIANETTINO.) Two days hence death shall make a splendid feast, at which twelve of the chief of Genoa's nobles will be present.

GIANETTINO (signs the paper). 'Tis done. Two days hence will be the ducal election. When the senate shall be assembled for that purpose these twelve shall, on the signal of a handkerchief, be suddenly laid low. My two hundred Germans will have surrounded the senate-house. At that moment I enter and claim homage as the Duke. (Rings the bell.)

LOMELLINO. And what of Andreas?

GIANETTINO (contemptuously). He is an old man. (Enter a servant.) If the Duke should ask for me say I am gone to mass. (Exit servant.) I must conceal the devil that's within beneath a saintly garb.

LOMELLINO. But, my lord, the paper?

GIANETTINO. Take it, and let it be circulated among our party. This letter must be dispatched by express to Levanto. 'Tis to inform Spinola of our intended plan, and bid him reach the capital early in the morning. (Going.)

LOMELLINO. Stop, prince. There is an error in our calculation. Fiesco does not attend the senate.

GIANETTINO (looking back). Genoa will easily supply one more assassin. I'll see to that.

[Exeunt different ways.

SCENE XV.

An Ante-chamber in FIESCO'S Palace. FIESCO, with papers before him, and MOOR.

FIESCO. Four galleys have entered the harbor, dost say?

MOOR. Yes, they're at anchor in the port.

FIESCO. That's well. Whence are these expresses?

MOOR. From Rome, Placentia, and France.

FIESCO (opens the letters and runs over them). Welcome! welcome news! (In high spirits.) Let the messengers be treated in a princely manner.

MOOR. Hem! (Going.).

FIESCO. Stop, stop! Here's work for thee in plenty.

MOOR. Command me. I am ready to act the setter or the bloodhound.

FIESCO. I only want at present the voice of the decoy-bird. To-morrow early two thousand men will enter the city in disguise to engage in my service. Distribute thy assistants at the gates, and let them keep a watchful eye upon the strangers that arrive. Some will be dressed like pilgrims on their journey to Loretto, others like

mendicant friars, or Savoyards, or actors; some as peddlers and musicians; but the most as disbanded soldiers coming to seek a livelihood in Genoa. Let every one be asked where he takes up his lodging. If he answer at the Golden Snake, let him be treated as a friend and shown my habitation. But remember, sirrah, I rely upon thy prudence.

MOOR. Sir, as securely as upon my knavery. If a single head escape me, pluck out my eyes and shoot at sparrows with them. (Going.)

FIESCO. Stop! I've another piece of business for thee. The arrival of the galleys will excite suspicion in the city. If any one inquire of thee about them, say thou hast heard it rumored that thy master intends to cruise against the Turks. Dost thou understand me?

MOOR. Yes, yes—the beards of the Mussulmen at the masthead, but the devil for a steersman. (Going.)

FIESCO. Gently—one more precaution. Gianettino has new reasons to hate me and lay snares against my life. Go—sound the fellows of thy trade; see if thou canst not smell out some plot on foot against me. Visit the brothels—Doria often frequents them. The secrets of the cabinet are sometimes lodged within the folds of a petticoat. Promise these ladies golden customers. Promise them thy master. Let nothing be too sacred to be used in gaining the desired information.

MOOR. Ha! luckily I am acquainted with one Diana Buononi, whom I have served above a year as procurer. The other day I saw the Signor Lomellino coming out of her house.

FIESCO. That suits my purpose well. This very Lomellino is the key to all Doria's follies. To-morrow thou shalt go thither. Perhaps he is to-night the Endymion of this chaste Diana.

MOOR. One more question, my lord. Suppose the people ask me—and that they will, I'll pawn my soul upon it—suppose they ask, "What does Fiesco think of

Genoa?" Would you still wear the mask?—or—how shall I answer them?

FIESCO. Answer? Hum! The fruit is ripe. The pains of labor announce the approaching birth. Answer that Genoa lies upon the block, and that thy master's name is—John Louis Fiesco——

MOOR (with an air of satisfaction). That, by my rogue's honor, shall be done to your heart's content. Now be wide awake, friend Hassan! First to a tavern! My feet have work enough cut out for them. I must coax my stomach to intercede with my legs. (Hastening away—returns.) Oh, apropos! My chattering made me almost forget one circumstance. You wished to know what passed between Calcagno and your wife. A refusal, sir—that's all.

[Runs off.

SCENE XVI.

FIESCO alone.

FIESCO. I pity thee, Calcagno. Didst thou think I should, upon so delicate a point, have been thus careless had I not relied in perfect security on my wife's virtue and my own deserts? Yet I welcome this passion. Thou art a good soldier. It shall procure me thy arm for the destruction of Doria. (Walking up and down.) Now, Doria, to the scene of action! All the machines are ready for the grand attempt—the instruments are tuned for the terrific concert. Naught is wanting but to throw off the mask, and show Fiesco to the patriots of Genoa. (Some persons are heard approaching.) Ha! Visitors! Who can be coming to disturb me?

SCENE XVII.

FIESCO, VERRINA, ROMANO, with a picture; SACCO, BOURGOGNINO, CALCAGNO.

FIESCO (receiving them with great affability). Welcome, my worthy friends! What important business brings you all hither? Are you, too, come, my dear brother,

Verrina? I should almost have forgotten you, had you not oftener been present to my thoughts than to my sight. I think I have not seen you since my last entertainment.

VERRINA. Do not count the hours, Fiesco! Heavy burdens have in that interval weighed down my aged head. But enough of this——

FIESCO. Not enough to satisfy the anxiety of friendship. You must inform me farther when we are alone. (Addressing BOURGOGNINO.) Welcome, brave youth! Our acquaintance is yet green; but my affection for thee is already ripe. Has your esteem for me improved?

BOURGOGNINO. 'Tis on the increase.

FIESCO. Verrina, it is reported that this brave young man is to be your son-in-law. Receive my warmest approbation of your choice. I have conversed with him but once; and yet I should be proud to call him my relation.

VERRINA. That judgment makes me of my daughter vain.

FIESCO (to the others). Sacco, Calcagno—all unfrequent visitors—I should fear the absence of Genoa's noblest ornaments were a proof that I had been deficient in hospitality. And here I greet a fifth guest, unknown to me, indeed, but sufficiently recommended by this worthy circle.

ROMANO. He, my lord, is simply a painter, by name Julio Romano, who lives by theft and counterfeit of Nature's charms. His pencil is his only escutcheon; and he now comes hither (bowing profoundly) to seek the manly outlines of a Brutus.

FIESCO. Give me your hand, Romano! I love the mistress of your soul with a holy fire. Art is the right hand of Nature. The latter only gave us being, but 'twas the former made us men. What are the subjects of your labor?

ROMANO. Scenes from the heroic ages of antiquity. At Florence is my dying Hercules, at Venice my Cleopatra, the raging Ajax at Rome, where, in the Vatican, the heroes of former times rise again to light.

FIESCO. And what just now employs you?

ROMANO. Alas! my lord, I've thrown away my pencil. The lamp of genius burns quicker than the lamp of life. Beyond a certain moment the flame flickers and dies. This is my last production.

FIESCO (in a lively manner). It could not come more opportune. I feel to-day a more than usual cheerfulness. A sentiment of calm delight pervades my being, and fits it to receive the impression of Nature's beauties. Let us view your picture. I shall feast upon the sight. Come, friends, we will devote ourselves entirely to the artist. Place your picture.

VERRINA (apart to the others). Now, Genoese, observe!

ROMANO (placing the picture). The light must fall upon it thus. Draw up that curtain—let fall the other,—right. (Standing on one side). It is the story of Virginia and Appius Claudius. (A long pause; all contemplate the picture.)

VERRINA (with enthusiasm). Strike, aged father! Dost thou tremble, tyrant? How pale you stand there, Romans! Imitate him, senseless Romans! The sword yet glitters! Imitate me, senseless Genoese! Down with Doria! Down with him! (Striking at the picture.)

FIESCO (to the painter, smiling). Could you desire greater applause? Your art has transformed this old man into a youthful enthusiast.

VERRINA (exhausted). Where am I! What has become of them! They vanished like bubbles. You here, Fiesco! and the tyrant living!

FIESCO. My friend, amidst this admiration you have overlooked the parts most truly beauteous. Does this Roman's head thus strike you? Look there! Observe that damsel—what soft expression! What feminine delicacy! How sweetly touched are those pale lips! How exquisite that dying look! Inimitable! Divine, Romano! And that white, dazzling breast, that heaves with the last pulse of life. Draw more such beauties, Romano, and I will give up Nature to worship thy creative fancy.

BOURGOGNINO. Is it thus, Verrina, your hopes are answered?

VERRINA. Take courage, son! The Almighty has rejected the arm of FIESCO. Upon ours he must rely.

FIESCO (to ROMANO). Well—'tis your last work, Romano. Your powers are exhausted. Lay down your pencil. Yet, whilst I am admiring the artist, I forget to satiate on the work. I could stand gazing on it, regardless of an earthquake. Take away your picture—the wealth of Genoa would scarcely reach the value of this Virginia. Away with it.

ROMANO. Honor is the artist's noblest reward. I present it to you. (Offers to go away.)

FIESCO. Stay, Romano! (He walks majestically up and down the room, seeming to reflect on something of importance. Sometimes he casts a quick and penetrating glance at the others; at last he takes ROMANO by the hand, and leads him to the picture.) Come near, painter. (With dignified pride.) Proudly stand'st thou there because, upon the dead canvas, thou canst simulate life, and immortalize great deeds with small endeavor. Thou canst dilate with the poet's fire on the empty puppet-show of fancy, without heart and without the nerve of life-inspiring deeds; depose tyrants on canvas, and be thyself a miserable slave! Thou canst liberate Republics with a dash of the pencil, yet not break thy own chains! (In a loud and commanding tone.) Go! Thy work is a mere juggle. Let the semblance give place to reality! (With haughtiness, overturning the picture.) I have done what thou hast only painted. (All struck with astonishment; ROMANO carries away the picture in confusion.)

SCENE XVIII.

The former, except ROMANO.

FIESCO. Did you suppose the lion slept because he ceased to roar? Did your vain thoughts persuade you that none but you could feel the chains of Genoa? That none

but you durst break them? Before you knew their weight, Fiesco had already broken them. (He opens an escritoire, takes out a parcel of letters, and throws them on the table.) These bring soldiers from Parma;—these, French money;-these, four galleys from the Pope. What now is wanting to rouse the tyrant in his lair? Tell me, what think you wanting? (All stand silent with astonishment.) Republicans! you waste your time in curses when you should overthrow the tyrant. (All but VERRINA throw themselves at FIESCO'S feet.)

VERRINA. Fiesco, my spirit bends to thine, but my knee cannot. Thy soul is great; but—rise, Genoese! (They rise.)

FIESCO. All Genoa was indignant at the effeminate Fiesco; all Genoa cursed the profligate FIESCO. Genoese! my amours have blinded the cunning despot. My wild excesses served to guard my plans from the danger of an imprudent confidence. Concealed beneath the cloak of luxury the infant plot grew up. Enough—I'm known sufficiently to Genoa in being known to you. I have attained my utmost wish.

BOURGOGNINO (throwing himself indignantly into a chair). Am I, then, nothing?

FIESCO. But let us turn from thought to action. All the engines are prepared—I can storm the city by sea and land. Rome, France, and Parma cover me; the nobles are disaffected; the hearts of the populace are mine; I have lulled to sleep the tyrants; the state is ripe for revolution. We are no longer in the hands of Fortune. Nothing is wanting. Verrina is lost in thought.

BOURGOGNINO. Patience! I have a word to say, which will more quickly rouse him than the trumpet of the last day. (To VERRINA—calls out to him emphatically.) Father! Awake! Thy Bertha will despair.

VERRINA. Who spoke those words? Genoese, to arms!

FIESCO. Think on the means of forwarding our plan. Night has advanced upon our discourse; Genoa is wrapped in sleep; the tyrant sinks exhausted beneath the sins of the day. Let us watch o'er both.

BOURGOGNINO. Let us, before we part, consecrate our heroic union by an embrace! (They form a circle, with joined arms.) Here unite five of the bravest hearts in Genoa to decide their country's fate. (All embrace eagerly.) When the universe shall fall asunder, and the eternal sentence shall cut in twain the bonds of consanguinity and love, then may this fivefold band of heroes still remain entire! (They separate.)

VERRINA. When shall we next assemble?

FIESCO. At noon to-morrow I'll hear your sentiments.

VERRINA. 'Tis well—at noon to-morrow. Goodnight, Fiesco! Come, Bourgognino, you will hear something marvellous.

[Exeunt VERRINA and BOURGOGNINO.

FIESCO (to the others). Depart by the back gates, that Doria's spies may not suspect us.

[Exeunt SACCO and CALCAGNO.

SCENE XIX.

FIESCO, alone.

FIESCO (walking up and down in meditation). What a tumult is in my breast! What a concourse of dark, uncertain images! Like guilty wretches stealing out in secret to do some horrid deed, with trembling steps and blushing faces bent toward the ground, these flattering phantoms glide athwart my soul. Stay! stay!—let me examine you more closely. A virtuous thought strengthens the heart of man, and boldly meets the day. Ha! I know you—robed in the livery of Satan—avaunt! (A pause; he continues with energy.) Fiesco, the patriot! the Duke Fiesco! Peace! On this steep precipice the boundaries of virtue terminate: here heaven and hell are separated. Here have heroes stumbled, here have they fallen, and left behind a name loaded with curses—here, too, have heroes paused, here checked their course, and

risen to immortality. (More vehemently.) To know the hearts of Genoa mine! To govern with a master's hand this formidable state! Oh, artifice of sin, that masks each devil with an angel's face! Fatal ambition! Everlasting tempter! Won by thy charms, angels abandoned heaven, and death sprung from thy embraces. (Shuddering.) Thy syren voice drew angels from their celestial mansions—man thou ensnarest with beauty, riches, power. (After a pause, in a firm tone.) To gain a diadem is great—to reject it is divine! (Resolutely.) Perish the tyrant! Let Genoa be free—and I (much affected) will be its happiest citizen.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—

Midnight. A dreary wilderness. VERRINA and BOURGOGNINO entering.

BOURGOGNINO (stands still). Whither are you leading me, father. The heavy grief that hung upon your brow when first you bade me follow you still seems to labor in your panting breast. Break this dreadful silence! Speak. I will go no further.

VERRINA. This is the place.

BOURGOGNINO. You could not choose a spot more awful. Father, if the deed you purpose be like the place—father—my hair will stand on end with horror.

VERRINA. And yet 'tis cheerfulness itself to the gloom that enwraps my soul. Follow me to yon churchyard, where corruption preys on the mouldering remnants of mortality, and death holds his fearful banquet— where shrieks of damned souls delight the listening fiends, and sorrow weeps her fruitless tears into the never-filling urn. Follow me, my son, to where the condition of this world is changed; and God throws off his attributes of mercy—there will I speak to thee in agony, and thou shalt hear with despair.

BOURGOGNINO. Hear! what? I conjure you, father.

VERRINA. Youth! I fear. Youth, thy blood is warm and crimson—thy heart is soft and tender—such natures are alive to human kindness—this warmth of feeling melts my obdurate wisdom. If the frost of age or sorrow's leaden pressure had chilled the springtide vigor of thy spirits —if black congealed blood had closed the avenues of thy heart against the approaches of humanity—then would thy mind be attuned to the language of my grief, and thou wouldst look with admiration on my project.

BOURGOGNINO. I will hear it, and embrace it as my own.

VERRINA. Not so, my son—Verrina will not wound thy heart with it. O Scipio, heavy burdens lie on me. A thought more dark and horrible than night, too vast to be contained within the breast of man! Mark me—my hand alone shall execute the deed; but my mind cannot alone support the weight of it. If I were proud, Scipio, I might say greatness unshared is torture. It was a burden to the Deity himself, and he created angels to partake his counsels. Hear, Scipio!

BOURGOGNINO. My soul devours thy words.

VERRINA. Hear! But answer nothing—nothing, young man! Observe me—not a word—Fiesco must die.

BOURGOGNINO (struck with astonishment). Die! Fiesco!

VERRINA. Die—I thank thee, God, 'tis out at last—Fiesco must die. My son—die by my hand. Now, go. There are deeds too high for human judgment. They appeal alone to heaven's tribunal. Such a one is this. Go! I neither ask thy blame nor approbation. I know my inward struggles, and that's enough. But hear! These thoughts might weary out thy mind even to madness. Hear! Didst thou observe yesterday with what pride he viewed his greatness reflected from our wondering countenances? The man whose smiles deceived all Italy, will he endure equals in Genoa? Go! 'Tis certain that Fiesco will overthrow the tyrant. 'Tis as certain he will become a tyrant still more dangerous.

[Exit hastily. BOURGOGNINO looks after him with speechless surprise, then

follows slowly.

SCENE II.

An apartment in FIESCO'S house. In the middle of the back scene a glass door, through which is seen a view of the sea and Genoa. Daybreak. FIESCO at the window.

FIESCO. What do I see! The moon hath hid its face. The morn is rising fiery from the sea. Wild fancies have beset my sleep, and kept my soul convulsed by one idea. Let me inhale the pure, refreshing breeze. (He opens a window; the city and ocean appear red with the tint of morning. FIESCO walking up and down the room with energy.) I the greatest man in Genoa! And should not lesser souls bow down before the greater? But is not this to trample upon virtue? (Musing.) Virtue? The elevated mind is exposed to other than ordinary temptations—shall it then be governed by the ordinary rules of virtue? Is the armor which encases the pigmy's feeble frame suited to the giant? (The sun rises over Genoa.) This majestic city mine! (Spreading out his arms as if to embrace it.) To flame above it like the god of day! To rule over it with a monarch mind! To hold in subjection all the raging passions, all the insatiable desires in this fathomless ocean! 'Tis certain, though the cunning of the thief ennoble not the theft, yet doth the prize ennoble the thief. It is base to filch a purse—daring to embezzle a million,—but it is immeasurably great to steal a diadem. As guilt extends its sphere, the infamy decreaseth. (A pause, then with energy.) To obey! or to command! A fearful dizzying gulf—that absorbs whate'er is precious in the eyes of men. The trophies of the conqueror—the immortal works of science and of art—the voluptuous pleasures of the epicure—the whole wealth encompassed by the seas. To obey! or to command! To be, or not to be! The space between is as wide as from the lowest depths of hell to the throne of the Almighty. (In an elevated tone.) From that awful height to look down securely upon the impetuous whirlpool of mankind, where blind fortune holds capricious sway! To quaff at the fountainhead

unlimited draughts from the rich cup of pleasure! To hold that armed giant law beneath my feet in leading-strings, and see it struggle with fruitless efforts against the sacred power of majesty! To tame the stubborn passions of the people, and curb them with a playful rein, as a skilful horseman guides the fiery steed! With a breath—one single breath—to quell the rising pride of vassals, whilst the prince, with the motion of his sceptre, can embody even his wildest dreams of fancy! Ah! What thoughts are these which transport the astounded mind beyond its boundaries! Prince! To be for one moment prince comprises the essence of a whole existence. 'Tis not the mere stage of life—but the part we play on it that gives the value. The murmurs which compose the thunder's roar might singly lull an infant to repose—but united their crash can shake the eternal vault of heaven. I am resolved. (Walking up and down majestically.)

SCENE III.

FIESCO; LEONORA, entering with a look of anxiety.

LEONORA. Pardon me, count. I fear I interrupt your morning rest.

FIESCO (steps back with astonishment). Indeed, madam, you do surprise me not a little.

LEONORA. That never happens to those who love.

FIESCO. Charming countess, you expose your beauty to the rude breath of morning.

LEONORA. I know not why I should preserve its small remains for grief to feed on.

FIESCO. Grief, my love? I thought that to be free from cares of state was happiness.

LEONORA. It may be so. Yet do I feel that my weak heart is breaking amidst this happiness. I come, sir, to trouble you with a trifling request, if you can spare a moment's time to hear me. These seven months past I have indulged the pleasing dream of being Countess of Lavagna. It now has passed away and left a painful weight upon my mind. Amid the pleasures of my innocent childhood I must seek

relief to my disordered spirits. Permit me, therefore, to return to the arms of my beloved mother——

FIESCO (with astonishment). Countess!

LEONORA. My heart is a poor trembling thing which you should pity. Even the least remembrance of my visionary joy might wound my sickly fancy. I therefore restore the last memorials of your kindness to their rightful owner. (She lays some trinkets on the table.) This, too, that like a dagger struck my heart (presenting a letter). This, too (going to rush out of the door in tears), and I will retain nothing but the wound.

FIESCO (agitated, hastens after and detains her). Leonora! For God's sake, stay!

LEONORA (falls into his arms exhausted). To be your wife was more than I deserved. But she who was your wife deserved at least respect. How bitter is the tongue of calumny. How the wives and maidens of Genoa now look down upon me! "See," they say, "how droops the haughty one whose vanity aspired to Fiesco!" Cruel punishment of my pride! I triumphed over my whole sex when Fiesco led me to the altar——

FIESCO. Really, Madonna! All this is most surprising——

LEONORA (aside). Ah! he changes color—now I revive.

FIESCO. Wait only two days, countess—then judge my conduct——

LEONORA. To be sacrificed! Let me not speak it in thy chaste presence, oh, thou virgin day! To be sacrificed to a shameless wanton! Look on me, my husband! Ah, surely those eyes that make all Genoa tremble, must hide themselves before a weeping woman——

FIESCO (extremely confused). No more, signora! No more——

LEONORA (with a melancholy look of reproach). To rend the heart of a poor helpless woman! Oh, it is so worthy of the manly sex. Into his arms I threw myself,

and on his strength confidingly reposed my feminine weakness. To him I trusted the heaven of my hopes. The generous man bestowed it on a——

FIESCO (interrupting her, with vehemence). No, my Leonora! No!

LEONORA. My Leonora! Heaven, I thank thee! These were the angelic sounds of love once more. I ought to hate thee, faithless man! And yet I fondly grasp the shadow of thy tenderness. Hate! said I? Hate Fiesco? Oh, believe it not! Thy perfidy may bid me die, but cannot bid me hate thee. I did not know my heart——(The MOOR is heard approaching.)

FIESCO. Leonora! grant me one trifling favor.

LEONORA. Everything, Fiesco—but indifference.

FIESCO. Well, well (significantly). Till Genoa be two days older, inquire not! condemn me not! (Leads her politely to another apartment.)

SCENE IV.

FIESCO; the MOOR, entering hastily.

FIESCO. Whence come you thus out of breath?

MOOR. Quick, my lord!

FIESCO. Has anything run into the net?

MOOR. Read this letter. Am I really here? Methinks Genoa is become shorter by twelve streets, or else my legs have grown that much longer! You change color? Yes, yes—they play at cards for heads, and yours is the chief stake. How do you like it?

FIESCO (throws the letter on the table with horror). Thou woolly-pated rascal! How camest thou by that letter?

MOOR. Much in the same way as your grace will come by the republic. An express was sent with it towards Levanto. I smelt out the game; waylaid the fellow in a narrow pass, despatched the fox, and brought the poultry hither——

FIESCO. His blood be on thy head! As for the letter, 'tis not to be paid with gold.

MOOR. Yet I will be content with silver for it—(seriously, and with a look of importance). Count of Lavagna! 'twas but the other day I sought your life. To-day (pointing to the letter) I have preserved it. Now I think his lordship and the scoundrel are even. My further service is an act of friendship—(presents another letter) number two!

FIESCO (receives it with astonishment). Art thou mad?

MOOR. Number two—(with an arrogant air—his arms akimbo) the lion has not acted foolishly in pardoning the mouse. Ah! 'twas a deed of policy. Who else could e'er have gnawed the net with which he was surrounded? Now, sir, how like you that?

FIESCO. Fellow, how many devils hast thou in pay?

MOOR. But one, sir, at your service; and he is in your grace's keeping.

FIESCO. What! Doria's own signature! Whence dost thou bring this paper?

MOOR. Fresh from the hands of my Diana. I went to her last night, tempted her with your charming words, and still more charming sequins. The last prevailed. She bade me call early in the morning. Lomellino had been there as you predicted, and paid the toll to his contraband heaven with this deposit.

FIESCO (indignantly). Oh, these despicable woman-slaves! They would govern kingdoms, and cannot keep a secret from a harlot. By these papers I learn that Doria and his party have formed a plot to murder me, with eleven senators, and to place Gianettino on the throne.

MOOR. Even so—and that upon the morning of the ducal election, the third of this month.

FIESCO (vehemently). The night of our enterprise shall smother that morning in its very birth. Speed thee, Hassan. My affairs are ripe. Collect our fellows. We will take

bloody lead of our adversaries. Be active, Hassan!

MOOR. I have a budget full of news beside. Two thousand soldiers are safely smuggled into the city. I've lodged them with the Capuchins, where not even a prying sunbeam can espy them. They burn with eagerness to see their leader. They are fine fellows.

FIESCO. Each head of them shall yield thee a ducat. Is there no talk about my galleys?

MOOR. Oh, I've a pleasant story of them, my lord. Above four hundred adventurers, whom the peace 'twixt France and Spain has left without employ, besought my people to recommend them to your grace to fight against the infidels. I have appointed them to meet this evening in the palace-court.

FIESCO (pleased). I could almost embrace thee, rascal. A masterly stroke! Four hundred, said'st thou? Genoa is in my power. Four hundred crowns are thine——

MOOR (with an air of confidence). Eh, Fiesco? We two will pull the state in pieces, and sweep away the laws as with a besom. You know not how many hearty fellows I have among the garrison—lads that I can reckon on as surely as on a trip to hell. Now I've so laid my plans that at each gate we have among the guard at least six of our creatures, who will be enough to overcome the others by persuasion or by wine. If you wish to risk a blow to-night, you'll find the sentinels all drenched with liquor.

FIESCO. Peace, fellow! Hitherto I have moved the vast machine alone; shall I now, at the very goal, be put to shame by the greatest rascal under the sun? Here's my hand upon it, fellow—whate'er the Count remains indebted to thee, the Duke shall pay.

MOOR. And here, too, is a note from the Countess Imperiali. She beckoned to me from her window, when I went up received me graciously, and asked me ironically if the Countess of Lavagna had not been lately troubled with the spleen. Does your grace, said I, inquire but for one person?

FIESCO (having read the letter throws it aside). Well said. What answer made she?

MOOR. She answered, that she still lamented the fate of the poor bereaved widow—that she was willing to give her satisfaction, and meant to forbid your grace's attentions.

FIESCO (with a sneer). Which of themselves may possibly cease sometime before the day of judgment. Is that all thy business, Hassan?

MOOR (ironically). My lord, the affairs of the ladies are next to those of state.

FIESCO. Without a doubt, and these especially. But for what purpose are these papers?

MOOR. To remove one plague by another. These powders the signora gave me, to mix one every day with your wife's chocolate.

FIESCO (starting). Gave thee?

MOOR. Donna Julia, Countess Imperiali.

FIESCO (snatching them from him eagerly). If thou liest, rascal, I'll hang thee up alive in irons at the weathercock of the Lorenzo tower, where the wind shall whirl thee nine times round with every blast. The powders?

MOOR (impatiently). I am to give your wife mixed with her chocolate. Such were the orders of Donna Julia Imperiali.

FIESCO (enraged). Monster! monster! This lovely creature! Is there room for so much hell within a female bosom? And I forgot to thank thee, heavenly Providence, that has rendered it abortive—abortive through a greater devil. Wondrous are thy ways! (To the MOOR.) Swear to me to obey, and keep this secret.

MOOR. Very well. The latter I can afford—she paid me ready money.

FIESCO. This note invites me to her. I'll be with you, madam!—and find means to lure you hither, too. Now haste thee, with all thy speed, and call together the conspirators.

MOOR. This order I anticipated, and therefore at my own risk appointed every one to come at ten o'clock precisely.

FIESCO. I hear the sound of footsteps. They are here. Fellow, thy villany deserves a gallows of its own, on which no son of Adam was ever yet suspended. Wait in the ante-chamber till I call for thee.

MOOR. The Moor has done his work—the Moor may go.

[Exit.

SCENE V.

FIESCO, VERRINA, BOURGOGNINO, CALCAGNO, SACCO.

FIESCO (meeting them). The tempest is approaching: the clouds rash together. Advance with caution. Let all the doors be locked.

VERRINA. Eight chambers have I made fast behind. Suspicion cannot come within a hundred steps of us.

BOURGOGNINO. Here is no traitor, unless our fear become one.

FIESCO. Fear cannot pass my threshold. Welcome he whose mind remains the same as yesterday. Be seated. (They seat themselves.)

BOURGOGNINO (walking up and down). I care not to sit in cold deliberation when action calls upon me.

FIESCO. Genoese, this hour is eventful.

VERRINA. Thou hast challenged us to consider a plan for dethroning the tyrant. Demand of us—we are here to answer thee.

FIESCO. First, then, a question which, as it comes so late, you may think strange. Who is to fall? (A pause.)

BOURGOGNINO (leaning over FIESCO'S chair, with an expressive look). The tyrants.

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FIESCO. Well spoken. The tyrants. I entreat you weigh well the importance of the word. Is he who threatens the overthrow of liberty—or he who has it in his power—the greater tyrant?

VERRINA. The first I hate, I fear the latter. Let Andreas Doria fall!

CALCAGNO (with emotion). Andreas? The old Andreas! who perhaps to-morrow may pay the debt of nature——

SACCO. Andreas? That mild old man!

FIESCO. Formidable is that old man's mildness, O my friend—the brutality of Gianettino only deserves contempt. "Let Andreas fall!" There spoke thy wisdom, Verrina.

BOURGOGNINO. The chain of iron, and the cord of silk, alike are bonds. Let Andreas perish!

FIESCO (going to the table). The sentence, then is passed upon the uncle and the nephew. Sign it! (They all sign.) The question who is settled. How must be next determined. Speak first, Calcagno.

CALCAGNO. We must execute it either as soldiers or assassins. The first is dangerous, because we must have many confidants. 'Tis also doubtful, because the peoples' hearts are not all with us. To act the second our five good daggers are sufficient. Two days hence high mass will be performed in the Lorenzo Church—both the Dorias will be present. In the house of God even a tyrant's cares are lulled to sleep. I have done.

FIESCO (turning away). Calcagno, your plan is politic, but 'tis detestable. Raphael Sacco, yours?

SACCO. Calcagno's reasons please me, but the means he chooses my mind revolts at. Better were it that Fiesco should invite both the uncle and nephew to a feast,

where, pressed on all sides by the vengeance of the republic, they must swallow death at the dagger's point, or in a bumper of good Cyprian. This method is at least convenient.

FIESCO (with horror). Ah, Sacco! What if the wine their dying tongues shall taste become for us torments of burning pitch in hell! Away with this advice! Speak thou, Verrina.

VERRINA. An open heart shows a bold front. Assassination degrades us to banditti. The hero advances sword in hand. I propose to give aloud the signal of revolt, and boldly rouse the patriots of Genoa to vengeance. (He starts from his seat, the others do the same.)

BOURGOGNINO (embracing him). And with armed hand wrest Fortune's favors from her. This is the voice of honor, and is mine.

FIESCO. And mine. Shame on you, Genoese! (to SACCO and CALCAGNO). Fortune has already done too much for us, let something be our own. Therefore open revolt! And that, Genoese, this very night——(VERRINA and BOURGOGNINO astonished—the others terrified.)

CALCAGNO. What! To-night! The tyrants are yet too powerful, our force too small.

SACCO. To-night! And naught prepared? The day is fast declining.

FIESCO. Your doubts are reasonable, but read these papers. (He gives them GIANETTINO'S papers, and walks up and down with a look of satisfaction, whilst they read them eagerly.) Now, farewell, thou proud and haughty star of Genoa, that didst seem to fill the whole horizon with thy brightness. Knowest thou not that the majestic sun himself must quit the heavens, and yield his sceptre to the radiant moon? Farewell, Doria, beauteous star!

Patroclus to the shades is gone, And he was more than thou.

BOURGOGNINO (after reading the papers). This is horrible.

CALCAGNO. Twelve victims at a blow!

VERRINA. To-morrow in the senate-house!

BOURGOGNINO. Give me these papers, and I will ride with them through Genoa, holding them up to view. The very stones will rise in mutiny, and even the dogs will howl against the tyrant.

ALL. Revenge! Revenge! Revenge! This very night!

FIESCO. Now you have reached the point. At sunset I will invite hither the principal malcontents—those that stand upon the bloody list of Gianettino! Besides the Sauli, the Gentili, Vivaldi, Vesodimari, all mortal enemies of the house of Doria; but whom the tyrant forgot to fear. They, doubtless, will embrace my plan with eagerness.

BOURGOGNINO. I doubt it not.

FIESCO. Above all things, we must render ourselves masters of the sea. Galleys and seamen I have ready. The twenty vessels of the Dorias are dismantled, and may be easily surprised. The entrance of the inner harbor must be blocked up, all hope of flight cut off. If we secure this point, all Genoa is in our power.

VERRINA. Doubtless.

FIESCO. Then we must seize the strongest posts in the city, especially the gate of St. Thomas, which, leading to the harbor, connects our land and naval forces. Both the Dorias must be surprised within their palaces, and killed. The bells must toll, the citizens be called upon to side with us, and vindicate the liberties of Genoa. If Fortune favor us, you shall hear the rest in the senate.

VERRINA. The plan is good. Now for the distribution of our parts.

FIESCO (significantly). Genoese, you chose me, of your own accord, as chief of the conspiracy. Will you obey my further orders?

VERRINA. As certainly as they shall be the best.

FIESCO. Verrina, dost thou know the principle of all warlike enterprise? Instruct him, Genoese. It is subordination. If your will be not subjected to mine—observe me well—if I be not the head of the conspiracy, I am no more a member.

VERRINA. A life of freedom is well worth some hours of slavery. We obey.

FIESCO. Then leave me now. Let one of you reconnoitre the city and inform me of the strength or weakness of the several posts. Let another find out the watchword. A third must see that the galleys are in readiness. A fourth conduct the two thousand soldiers into my palace-court. I myself will make all preparations here for the evening, and pass the interval perhaps in play. At nine precisely let all be at my palace to hear my final orders. (Rings the bell.)

VERRINA. I take the harbor.

BOURGOGNINO. I the soldiers.

CALCAGNO. I will learn the watchword.

SACCO. I will reconnoitre Genoa.

[Exeunt.

SCENE VI.

FIESCO, MOOR.

FIESCO (seated at a desk, and writing). Did they not struggle against the word subordination as the worm against the needle which transfixes it? But 'tis too late, republicans.

MOOR (entering). My lord——

FIESCO (giving him a paper). Invite all those whose names are written here to see a play this evening at my palace.

MOOR. Perhaps to act a part, and pay the admittance with their heads.

FIESCO (in a haughty and contemptuous manner). When that is over I will no longer detain thee here in Genoa. (Going, throws him a purse.) This is thy last employment.

[Exit.

SCENE VII.

MOOR, alone.

MOOR (taking up the purse slowly, and looking after FIESCO with surprise). Are we, then, on these terms? "I will detain thee in Genoa no longer." That is to say, translated from the Christian language into my heathen tongue, "When I am duke I shall hang up my friend the Moor upon a Genoese gallows." Hum! He fears, because I know his tricks, my tongue may bring his honor into danger when he is duke. When he is duke? Hold, master count! That event remains to be considered. Ah! old Doria, thy life is in my hands. Thou art lost unless I warn thee of thy danger. Now, if I go to him and discover the plot, I save the Duke of Genoa no less than his existence and his dukedom, and gain at least this hatful of gold for my reward. (Going, stops suddenly.) But stay, friend Hassan, thou art going on a foolish errand. Suppose this scene of riot is prevented, and nothing but good is the result. Pshaw! what a cursed trick my avarice would then have played me! Come, devil, help me to make out what promises the greatest mischief; to cheat Fiesco, or to give up Doria to the dagger. If Fiesco succeed then Genoa may prosper. Away! That must not be. If this Doria escape, then all remains as it was before, and Genoa is quiet. That's still worse! Ay, but to see these rebels' heads upon the block! Hum! On the other hand 'twould be amusing to behold the illustrious Dorias in this evening's massacre the victims of a rascally Moor. No. This doubtful question a Christian might perhaps resolve, but 'tis too deep a riddle for my Moorish brains. I'll go propose it to some learned man.

[Exit.

SCENE VIII.

An apartment in the house of the COUNTESS IMPERIALI. JULIA in dishabille. GIANETTINO enters, agitated.

GIANETTINO. Good-evening, sister.

JULIA (rising). It must be something extraordinary which brings the crown-prince of Genoa to his sister!

GIANETTINO. Sister, you are continually surrounded by butterflies and I by wasps. How is it possible that we should meet? Let's be seated.

JULIA. You almost excite my curiosity.

GIANETTINO. When did Fiesco visit you last?

JULIA. A strange question. As if I burdened my memory with such trifles!

GIANETTINO. I must know—positively.

JULIA. Well, then, he was here yesterday.

GIANETTINO. And behaved without reserve?

JULIA. As usual.

GIANETTINO. As much a coxcomb as ever.

JULIA (offended). Brother!

GIANETTINO (more vehemently). I say—as much a coxcomb——

JULIA (rises, with indignation). Sir! What do you take me for?

GIANETTINO (keeps his seat—sarcastically). For a mere piece of woman-flesh, wrapped up in a great—great patent of nobility. This between ourselves—there is no one by to hear us.

JULIA (enraged). Between ourselves—you are an impertinent jackanapes, and presume upon the credit of your uncle. No one by to hear us, indeed!

GIANETTINO. Sister! sister! don't be angry. I'm only merry because Fiesco is still

as much a coxcomb as ever. That's all I wanted to know. Your servant——(Going.)

SCENE IX.

The former, LOMELLINO, entering.

LOMELLINO (to JULIA, respectfully). Pardon my boldness, gracious lady. (To GIANETTINO.) Certain affairs which cannot be delayed——(GIANETTINO takes him aside; JULIA sits down angrily at the pianoforte and plays an allegro.)

GIANETTINO (to LOMELLINO). Is everything prepared for to-morrow?

LOMELLINO. Everything, prince—but the courier, who was despatched this morning to Levanto, is not yet returned, nor is Spinola arrived. Should he be intercepted! I'm much alarmed——

GIANETTINO. Fear nothing. You have that list at hand?

LOMELLINO (embarrassed). My lord—the list? I do not know—I must have left it at home in my other pocket.

GIANETTINO. It does not signify—would that Spinola were but here. Fiesco will be found dead in his bed. I have taken measures for it.

LOMELLINO. But it will cause great consternation.

GIANETTINO. In that lies our security. Common crimes but move the blood and stir it to revenge: atrocious deeds freeze it with terror, and annihilate the faculties of man. You know the fabled power of Medusa's head—they who but looked on it were turned to stone. What may not be done, my boy, before stories are warmed to animation?

LOMELLINO. Have you given the countess any intimation of it?

GIANETTINO. That would never do! We must deal more cautiously with her attachment to FIESCO. When she shares the sweets, the cost will soon be forgotten. Come, I expect troops this evening from Milan, and must give orders at the gates for their reception. (To JULIA.) Well, sister, have you almost thrummed away your

anger?

JULIA. Go! You're a rude unmannered creature. (GIANETTINO, going, meets FIESCO.)

SCENE X.

The former; FIESCO.

GIANETTINO (stepping back). Ha!

FIESCO (with politeness). Prince, you spare me a visit which I was just now about to pay.

GIANETTINO. And I, too, count, am pleased to meet you here.

FIESCO (approaching JULIA courteously). Your charms, signora, always surpass expectation.

JULIA. Fie! that in another would sound ambiguous—but I'm shocked at my dishabille—excuse me, count—(going).

FIESCO. Stay, my beauteous lady. Woman's beauty is ne'er so charming as when in the toilet's simplest garb (laughingly). An undress is her surest robe of conquest. Permit me to loosen these tresses——

JULIA. Oh, how ready are you men to cause confusion!

FIESCO (with a smile to GIANETTINO). In dress, as in the state—is it not so? (To JULIA.) This ribbon, too, is awkwardly put on. Sit down, fair countess—your Laura's skill may strike the eye, but cannot reach the heart. Let me play the chambermaid for once. (She sits down, he arranges her dress.)

GIANETTINO (aside to LOMELLINO). Poor frivolous fellow!

FIESCO (engaged about her bosom). Now see—this I prudently conceal. The senses should always be blind messengers, and not know the secret compact between nature and fancy.

JULIA. That is trifling.

FIESCO. Not at all; for, consider, the prettiest novelty loses all its zest when once become familiar. Our senses are but the rabble of our inward republic. The noble live by them, but elevate themselves above their low, degenerate tastes. (Having adjusted her toilet, he leads her to a glass.) Now, by my honor! this must on the morrow be Genoa's fashion—(politely)—may I have the honor of leading you so abroad, countess?

JULIA. The cunning flatterer! How artfully he lays his plans to ensnare me. No! I have a headache, and will stay at home.

FIESCO. Pardon me, countess. You may be so cruel, but surely you will not. To-day a company of Florentine comedians arrive at my palace. Most of the Genoese ladies will be present this evening at their performance, and I am uncertain whom to place in the chief box without offending others. There is but one expedient. (Making a low bow.) If you would condescend, signora——

JULIA (blushing, retires to a side apartment). Laura!

GIANETTINO (approaching FIESCO). Count, you remember an unpleasant circumstance——

FIESCO (interrupting him). 'Tis my wish, prince, we should both forget it. The actions of men are regulated by their knowledge of each other. It is my fault that you knew me so imperfectly.

GIANETTINO. I shall never think of it without craving your pardon from my inmost soul——

FIESCO. Nor I without forgiving you from my heart's core. (JULIA returns, her dress a little altered.)

GIANETTINO. Count, I just now recollect that you are going to cruise against the Turks——

FIESCO. This evening we weigh anchor. On that account I had some apprehensions

from which my friend Doria's kindness may deliver me.

GIANETTINO (obsequiously). Most willingly. Command my utmost influence!

FIESCO. The circumstance might cause a concourse toward the harbor, and about my palace, which the duke your uncle might misinterpret.

GIANETTINO (in a friendly manner). I'll manage that for you. Continue your preparations, and may success attend your enterprise!

FIESCO (with a smile). I'm much obliged to you.

SCENE XI.

The former—A GERMAN of the body-guard.

GIANETTINO. What now?

GERMAN. Passing by the gate of St. Thomas I observed a great number of armed soldiers hastening towards the harbor. The galleys of the Count Fiesco were preparing for sea.

GIANETTINO. Is that all? Report it no further.

GERMAN. Very well. From the convent of the Capuchins, too, suspicious rabble are pouring, and steal toward the market-place. From their gait and appearance I should suppose them soldiers.

GIANETTINO (angrily). Out upon this fool's zeal! (To LOMELLINO, aside.) These are undoubtedly my Milanese.

GERMAN. Does your grace command that they should be arrested?

GIANETTINO (aloud to LOMELLINO). Look to them, Lomellino. (To the GERMAN.) Begone! 'Tis all well. (Aside to LOMELLINO.) Bid that German beast be silent.

[Exeunt LOMELLINO and GERMAN.

FIESCO (in another part of the room with JULIA—looks toward GIANETTINO.).

Our friend Doria seems displeased. May I inquire the reason?

GIANETTINO. No wonder. These eternal messages.

[Exit hastily.

FIESCO. The play awaits us, too, signora. May I offer you my hand?

JULIA. Stay, let me take my cloak. 'Tis no tragedy I hope, count? It would haunt me in my dreams.

FIESCO (sarcastically). 'Twill excite immoderate laughter.

[He hands her out—the curtain falls.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Night. The court of FIESCO'S palace. The lamps lighted. Persons carrying in arms. A wing of the palace illuminated. A heap of arms on one side of the stage. BOURGOGNINO, leading a band of soldiers.

BOURGOGNINO. Halt! Let four sentinels be stationed at the great gate. Two at every door of the palace. (The sentinels take their posts.) Let every one that chooses enter, but none depart. If any one attempts to force his way run him through. (Goes with the rest into the palace. The sentinels walk up and down. A pause.)

SCENE II.

ZENTURIONE entering.

SENTINELS AT THE GATE (call out). Who goes there?

ZENTURIONE. A friend of Lavagna. (Goes across the court to the palace on the right.)

SENTINEL THERE. Back! (ZENTURIONE starts, and goes to the door on the left.)

SENTINEL ON THE LEFT. Back!

ZENTURIONE (stands still with surprise. A pause. Then to the SENTINEL on the left). Friend, which is the way to the theatre?

SENTINEL. Don't know.

ZENTURIONE (walks up and down with increasing surprise—then to the SENTINEL on the right). Friend, when does the play begin?

SENTINEL. Don't know.

ZENTURIONE (astonished, walks up and down. Perceives the weapons; alarmed). Friend, what mean these?

SENTINEL. Don't know.

ZENTURIONE (wraps himself up in his cloak, alarmed). Strange!

SENTINELS AT THE GATE (calling out). Who goes there?

SCENE III.

The former, ZIBO entering.

ZIBO. A friend of Lavagna.

ZENTURIONE. Zibo, where are we?

ZIBO. What mean you?

ZENTURIONE. Look around you, Zibo.

ZIBO. Where? What?

ZENTURIONE. All the doors are guarded!

ZIBO. Here are arms——

ZENTURIONE. No one that will answer——

ZIBO. 'Tis strange!

ZENTURIONE. What is it o'clock?

ZIBO. Past eight.

ZENTURIONE. How bitter cold it is!

ZIBO. Eight was the hour appointed.

ZENTURIONE (shaking his head). 'Tis not all as it should be here.

ZIBO. Fiesco means to jest with us——

ZENTURIONE. To-morrow will be the ducal election. Zibo, all's not right here, depend upon it.

ZIBO. Hush! hush!

ZENTURIONE. The right wing of the palace is full of lights.

ZIBO. Do you hear nothing?

ZENTURIONE. A confused murmuring within—and——

ZIBO. The sound of clattering arms——

ZENTURIONE. Horrible! horrible!

ZIBO. A carriage—it stops at the gate!

SENTINELS AT THE GATE (calling out). Who goes there?

SCENE IV.

The former, four of the ASSERATO family.

ASSERATO (entering). A friend of FIESCO.

ZIBO. They are the four Asserati.

ZENTURIONE. Good evening, friends!

ASSERATO. We are going to the play.

ZIBO. A pleasant journey to you!

ASSERATO. Are you not going also?

ZENTURIONE. Walk on. We'll just take a breath of air first.

ASSERATO. 'Twill soon begin. Come. (Going.)

SENTINEL. Back!

ASSERATO. What can this mean?

ZENTURIONE (laughing). To keep you from the palace.

ASSERATO. Here's some mistake——

ZIBO. That's plain enough. (Music is heard in the right wing.)

ASSERATO. Do you hear the symphony? The comedy is going to begin.

ZENTURIONE. I think it has begun, and we are acting our parts as fools.

ZIBO. I'm not over warm—I'll return home.

ASSERATO. Arms here, too?

ZIBO. Poh! Mere play-house articles.

ZENTURIONE. Shall we stand waiting, like ghosts upon the banks of Acheron? Come, let us to a tavern! (All six go towards the gate.)

SENTINELS (calling loudly). Back! Back!

ZENTURIONE. Death and the devil! We are caught.

ZIBO. My sword shall open a passage!

ASSERATO. Put it up! The count's a man of honor.

ZIBO. We are sold! betrayed! The comedy was a bait, and we're caught in a trap.

ASSERATO. Heaven forbid! And yet I tremble for the event.

SCENE V.

The former—VERRINA, SACCO, and NOBLES.

SENTINELS. Who goes there?

VERRINA. Friends of the house. (Seven NOBLES enter with him.)

ZIBO. These are his confidants. Now all will be explained.

SACCO (in conversation with VERRINA). 'Tis as I told you; Lascaro is on guard at

the St. Thomas' gate, the best officer of Doria, and blindly devoted to him.

VERRINA. I'm glad of it.

ZIBO (to VERRINA). Verrina, you come opportunely to clear up the mystery.

VERRINA. How so? What mean you?

ZENTURIONE. We are invited to a comedy.

VERRINA. Then we are going the same way.

ZENTURIONE (impatiently). Yes—the way of all flesh. You see—the doors are guarded. Why guard the doors?

ZIBO. Why these sentinels?

ZENTURIONE. We stand here like criminals beneath the gallows.

VERRINA. The count will come himself.

ZENTURIONE. 'Twere well if he came a little faster. My patience begins to fail. (All the NOBLES walk up and down in the background.)

BOURGOGNINO (coming out of the palace, to VERRINA). How goes it in the harbor?

VERRINA. They're all safe on board.

BOURGOGNINO. The palace is full of soldiers.

VERRINA. 'Tis almost nine.

BOURGOGNINO. The count is long in coming.

VERRINA. And yet too quick to gain his wishes. Bourgognino! There is a thought that freezes me.

BOURGOGNINO. Father, be not too hasty.

VERRINA. It is impossible to be too hasty where delay is fatal. I must commit a second murder to justify the first.

BOURGOGNINO. But—when must Fiesco fall?

VERRINA. When Genoa is free Fiesco dies!

SENTINELS. Who goes there?

SCENE VI.

The former, FIESCO.

FIESCO. A friend! (The NOBLES bow—the SENTINELS present their arms.) Welcome, my worthy guests! You must have been displeased at my long absence. Pardon me. (In a low voice to VERRINA.) Ready?

VERRINA (in the same manner). As you wish.

FIESCO (to BOURGOGNINO). And you?

BOURGOGNINO. Quite prepared.

FIESCO (to SACCO). And you?

SACCO. All's right.

FIESCO. And Calcagno?

BOURGOGNINO. Is not yet arrived.

FIESCO (aloud to the SENTINELS). Make fast the gates! (He takes off his hat, and steps forward with dignity towards the assembly.) My friends—I have invited you hither to a play—not as spectators, but to allot to each a part therein.

Long enough have we borne the insolence of Gianettino Doria, and the usurpation of Andreas. My friends, if we would deliver Genoa, no time is to be lost. For what purpose, think you, are those twenty galleys which beset our harbor? For what purpose the alliances which the Dorias have of late concluded? For what purpose the foreign forces which they have collected even in the heart of Genoa? Murmurs and execrations avail no longer. To save all we must dare all. A desperate disease requires a desperate remedy. Is there one base enough in this assembly to own an equal for his master? (Murmurs.) Here is not one whose ancestors did not watch around the cradle of infant Genoa. What!—in Heaven's name!— what, I ask you,

have these two citizens to boast of that they could urge their daring flight so far above our head? (Increasing murmurs.) Every one of you is loudly called upon to fight for the cause of Genoa against its tyrants. No one can surrender a hair's-breadth of his rights without betraying the soul of the whole state. (Interrupted by violent commotions he proceeds.)

You feel your wrongs—then everything is gained. I have already paved your way to glory—Genoese, will you follow? I am prepared to lead you. Those signs of war which you just now beheld with horror should awaken your heroism. Your anxious shuddering must warm into a glorious zeal that you may unite your efforts with this patriotic band to overthrow the tyrant. Success will crown the enterprise, for all our preparations are well arranged. The cause is just, for Genoa suffers. The attempt will render us immortal, for it is vast and glorious——

ZENTURIONE (vehemently, and agitated). Enough! Genoa shall be free! Be this our shout of onset against hell itself!

ZIBO. And may he who is not roused by it pant at the slavish oar till the last trumpet break his chains——

FIESCO. Spoken like men. Now you deserve to know the danger that hung over yourselves and Genoa. (Gives them the papers of the MOOR.) Lights, soldiers! (The nobles crowd about the lights, and read—FIESCO aside to VERRINA.) Friend, it went as I could wish.

VERRINA. Be not too certain. Upon the left I saw countenances that grew pale, and knees that tottered.

ZENTURIONE (enraged). Twelve senators! Infernal villany! Seize each a sword! (All, except two, eagerly take up the weapons that lie in readiness.)

ZIBO. Thy name, too, Bourgognino, is written there.

BOURGOGNINO. Ay, and if Heaven permit, it shall be written to-day upon the throat of Gianettino.

ZENTURIONE. Two swords remain——

ZIBO. Ah! What sayest thou?

ZENTURIONE. Two amongst us have not taken swords.

ASSERATO. My brothers cannot bear the sight of blood—pray spare them!

ZENTURIONE (vehemently). What! Not a tyrant's blood! Tear them to pieces—cowards! Let such bastards be driven from the republic! (Some of the assembly attack the two ASSERATI.)

FIESCO (restraining them). Cease! Shall Genoa owe its liberty to slaves? Shall our pure gold be debased by this alloy? (He disengages them.) Gentlemen, you must be content to take up your abode within my palace until our business be decided. (To the sentinels.) These are your prisoners; you answer for their safety! Guard them with loaded arms. (They are led off—a knocking heard at the gate.)

SENTINEL. Who is there?

CALCAGNO (without, eagerly). Open the gate! A friend! for God's sake, open!

BOURGOGNINO. It is Calcagno—heavens! What can this mean?

FIESCO. Open the gate, soldiers.

SCENE VII.

The former—CALCAGNO, out of breath.

CALCAGNO. All is lost! all is lost! Fly, every one that can!

BOURGOGNINO. What's lost? Have they flesh of brass? Are our swords made of rushes?

FIESCO. Consider, Calcagno! An error now is fatal.

CALCAGNO. We are betrayed! Your Moor, Lavagna, is the rascal! I come from the senate-house. He had an audience of the duke.

VERRINA (with a resolute tone, to the sentinels). Soldiers! let me rush upon your

halberts! I will not perish by the hangman's hands. (The assembly show marks of confusion.)

FIESCO (with firmness). What are you about? 'Sdeath, Calcagno! Friends, 'tis a false alarm. (To CALCAGNO, aside.) Woman that thou art to tell these boys this tale. Thou, too, Verrina? and thou, Bourgognino? Whither wouldst thou go?

BOURGOGNINO. Home—to kill my Bertha—and then return to fall with thee.

FIESCO (bursting into a loud laugh). Stay! stay! Is this the valor that should punish tyrants? Well didst thou play thy part, Calcagno. Did none of you perceive that this alarm was my contrivance? Speak, Calcagno? Was it not my order that you should put these Romans to this trial?

VERRINA. Well, if you can laugh I'll believe you—or never more think you man.

FIESCO. Shame on you, men! to fail in such a boyish trial! Resume your arms—you must fight like lions to atone for this disgrace. (Aside to CALCAGNO.) Were you there yourself?

CALCAGNO (low). I made my way among the guards to hear, as was my business, the watchword from the duke. As I was returning the Moor was brought——

FIESCO (aloud). So the old man is gone to bed—we'll drum him out of his feathers. (Low.) Did he talk long with the duke?

CALCAGNO (low). My sudden fright and your impending danger drove me away in haste——

FIESCO (aloud). See how our countrymen still tremble.

CALCAGNO (aloud). You should have carried on the jest. (Low.) For God's sake, friend, what will this artifice avail us?

FIESCO. 'Twill gain us time, and dissipate the first panic. (Aloud.) Ho! bring wine here! (Low.) Did the duke turn pale? (Aloud.) Well, brothers, let us drink success to this night's entertainment. (Low.) Did the duke turn pale?

CALCAGNO. The Moor's first word must have been conspiracy; for the old man started back as pale as ashes.

FIESCO (confused). Hum! the devil is an artful counsellor. Calcagno— the Moor was cunning, he betrayed nothing till the knife was at his throat. Now he is indeed their savior. (Wine is brought, he drinks to the assembly.) Comrades, success! (A knocking is heard.)

SENTINELS. Who is without?

A VOICE. The guard of the duke's. (The NOBLES rush about the court in despair.)

FIESCO (stepping forward). Oh, my friends! Be not alarmed! I am here— quick, remove these arms—be men. I entreat you—this visit makes me hope that Andreas still doubts our plot. Retire into the palace: recall your spirits. Soldiers, throw open the gate! (They retire, the gates are opened.)

SCENE VIII.

FIESCO (as if coming from the palace). Three GERMAN SOLDIERS bringing the MOOR, bound.

FIESCO. Who calls me?

GERMANS. Bring us to the count!

FIESCO. The count is here, who wants me?

GERMAN (presenting his arms). Greeting from the duke!—he delivers up to your grace this Moor in chains, who had basely slandered you: the rest this note will tell.

FIESCO (takes it with an air of indifference). Have I not threatened thee already with the galleys? (To the GERMAN.) Very well, my friend, my respects to the duke.

MOOR (hallooing after them). Mine, too—and tell the duke had he not employed an ass for his messenger he would have learned that two thousand soldiers are concealed within these palace walls.

[Exeunt GERMANS, the NOBLES return.

SCENE IX.

FIESCO, the CONSPIRATORS, MOOR (looking at them unconcerned.)

THE CONSPIRATORS (shuddering at the sight of the MOOR). Ha! what means this?

FIESCO (after reading the note with suppressed anger). Genoese, the danger is past—but the conspiracy is likewise at an end——

VERRINA (astonished). What! Are the Dorias dead?

FIESCO (violently agitated). By heavens! I was prepared to encounter the whole force of the republic, but not this blow. This old nerveless man, with his pen, annihilates three thousand soldiers (his hands sink down). Doria overcomes Fiesco!

BOURGOGNINO. Speak, count, we are amazed!

FIESCO (reading). "Lavagna, your fate resembles mine; benevolence is rewarded with ingratitude. The Moor informs me of a plot: I send him back to you in chains, and shall sleep to-night without a guard." (He drops the paper—the rest look at each other.)

VERRINA. Well, Fiesco?

FIESCO (with dignity). Shall Doria surpass me in magnanimity? Shall the race of Fiesco want this one virtue? No, by my honor—disperse—I'll go and own the whole——

VERRINA (stopping him). Art thou mad? Was, then, our enterprise some thievish act of villany? Was it not our country's cause? Was Andreas the object of thy hatred, and not the tyrant? Stay! I arrest thee as a traitor to thy country.

CONSPIRATORS. Bind him! throw him down!

FIESCO (snatching up his sword, and making way through them). Gently! Who will be the first to throw the cord around the tiger? See, Genoese, —I stand here at liberty, and might force my way with ease, had I the will—but I will stay—I have

other thoughts——

BOURGOGNINO. Are they thoughts of duty?

FIESCO (haughtily). Ha! boy! learn first to know thy own—and towards me restrain that tongue! Be appeased, Genoese,—our plans remain unaltered. (To the MOOR, whose cords he cuts with a sword). Thou hast the merit of causing a noble act—fly!

CALCAGNO (enraged). What? Shall that scoundrel live,—he who has betrayed us all?

FIESCO. Live—though he has frightened you all. Rascal, begone! See that thou turn thy back quickly on Genoa; lest some one immolate thee to the manes of his courage.

MOOR. So, then, the devil does not forsake his friends. Your servant, gentlemen! I see that Italy does not produce my halter; I must seek it elsewhere.

[Exit, laughing.

SCENE X.

FIESCO, CONSPIRATORS. Enter SERVANT.

SERVANT. The Countess Imperiali has already asked three times for your grace.

FIESCO. Ha! then the comedy must indeed begin! Tell her I come directly. Desire my wife to hasten to the concert-room, and there remain concealed behind the tapestry. (Exit SERVANT.) In these papers your several stations are appointed: let each but act his part, the plan is perfect. Verrina will lead the forces to the harbor, and when the ships are seized will fire a shot as a signal for the general attack. I now leave you upon important business; when you hear the bell come all together to my concert-room. Meanwhile enjoy my Cyprian wine within. (They depart into the palace.)

SCENE XI.

LEONORA, ARABELLA, and ROSA.

LEONORA. Fiesco promised to meet me here, and comes not. 'Tis past eleven. The sound of arms and men rings frightfully through the palace, and no Fiesco comes.

ROSA. You are to conceal yourself behind the tapestry—what can the count intend?

LEONORA. He directs and I obey. Why should I fear? And yet I tremble, Arabella, and my heart beats fearfully with apprehension. For heaven's sake, damsels, do not leave me.

ARABELLA. Fear nothing; our timidity subdues our curiosity.

LEONORA. Where'er I turn my eyes strange shapes appear with hollow and distracted countenances. Whomsoever I address trembles like a criminal, and withdraws into the thickest gloom of night, that fearful refuge of a guilty conscience. Whate'er they answer falls from the trembling tongue in doubtful accents. Oh, Fiesco! what horrid business dost thou meditate? Ye heavenly powers! watch over my Fiesco!

ROSA (alarmed). Oh, heavens! what noise is that without?

ARABELLA. It is the soldier who stands there as sentinel. (The SENTINEL without calls, "Who goes there?")

LEONORA. Some one approaches. Quick! behind the curtain. (They conceal themselves.)

SCENE XII.

JULIA and FIESCO, in conversation.

JULIA (much agitated). Forbear, count! Your passion meets no longer an indifferent ear, but fires the raging blood—where am I? Naught but seducing night is here! Whither has your artful tongue lured my unguarded heart?

FIESCO. To this spot where timid love grows bold, and where emotions mingle unrestrained.

JULIA. Hold, Fiesco! For Heaven's sake no more! 'Tis the thick veil of night alone

which covers the burning blushes on my cheeks, else wouldst thou pity me.

FIESCO. Rather, Julia, thy blushes would inflame my passions, and urge them to their utmost height. (Kisses her hand eagerly.)

JULIA. Thy countenance is glowing as thy words! Ah! and my own, too, burns with guilty fire. Hence, I entreat thee, hence—let us seek the light! The tempting darkness might lead astray the excited senses, and in the absence of the modest day might stir them to rebellion. Haste, I conjure thee, leave this solitude!

FIESCO (more pressing). Why so alarmed, my love? Shall the mistress fear her slave?

JULIA. O man, eternal paradox! then are you truly conquerors, when you bow as captives before our self-conceit. Shall I confess, Fiesco? It was my vice alone that could protect my virtue—my pride alone defied your artifices—thus far, my principles prevailed, and all your arts were foiled—but in despair of every other suit you made appeal to Julia's passion—and here my principles deserted me——

FIESCO (with levity). And what loss was that?

JULIA (with emotion). If I betray the safeguards of my honor, that thou mayest cover me with shame at will, what have I less to lose than all? Wouldst thou know more, scoffer? Shall I confess that the whole secret wisdom of our sex is but a sorry precaution for the defence of this weak fortress, which in the end is the sole object of assault by all your vows and protestations, and which (I blush to own it) is so willingly surrendered—so often betrayed to the enemy upon the first wavering of virtue? That woman's whole art is enlisted in fortifying a defenceless position, just as in chess the pieces move and form a breastwork round the defenceless king?—surprise the latter—check-mate! and the whole board is thrown into confusion. (After a pause—with earnestness), behold the picture of our boasting weakness. Be generous, Fiesco!

FIESCO. And yet, my Julia—where could'st thou bestow this treasure better than on

my endless passion?

JULIA. Certainly, nowhere better, and nowhere worse? Tell me, Fiesco, how long will this endless passion endure? But, alas! I've risked too much already now to hesitate at staking my last. I trusted boldly to my charms to captivate thee—to preserve thy love, I fear they'll prove too weak. Fie upon me!—what am I uttering? (Hides her face with her hands.)

FIESCO. Two sins in one breath. Mistrust in my taste, and treason against the sovereignty of your charms? Which of the two is the most difficult to forgive?

JULIA (in a tremulous, imploring tone). Falsehood is the armory of hell! Fiesco needs not this to gain his Julia. (She sinks exhausted on a sofa: after a pause—energetically.) Hear, Fiesco! One word more. When we know our virtue to be in safety, we are heroines; in its defence, no more than children; (fixing her eyes on him wildly)—furies, when we avenge it. Hear me! Should'st thou strike me to the heart with coldness?

FIESCO (assuming an angry tone). Coldness? coldness? Heavens! What does the insatiable vanity of woman look for, if she even doubt the man who lies prostrate at her feet? Ha! my spirit is awakened; my eyes at length are opened. (With an air of coldness.) What was this mighty sacrifice? Man dearly purchases a woman's highest favors by the slightest degradation! (Bowing ceremoniously.) Take courage, madam! you are safe.

JULIA (with astonishment). Count! what sudden change is this?

FIESCO (with great indifference). True, madam! You judge most rightly; we both have risked our honor. (Bowing ceremoniously.) I will await the pleasure of your company among my guests. (Going.)

JULIA (stops him). Stay! art thou mad? Must I, then, declare a passion which the whole race of men, upon their knees, should not extort from my inflexible pride? Alas! in vain the darkness strives to hide the blushes which betray my guilt.

Fiesco—I wound the pride of all my sex—my sex will all detest me—Fiesco—I adore thee—(falls at his feet).

FIESCO (steps back without raising her, laughing with exultation). That I am sorry for, signora—(rings the bell—draws the tapestry, and discovers LEONORA). Here is my wife—an angel of a woman! (Embracing her.)

JULIA (with a shriek). Unheard-of treachery!

SCENE XIII.

The CONSPIRATORS, entering in a body—LADIES on the other side—FIESCO, JULIA, and LEONORA.

LEONORA. Oh, my husband, that was too cruel!

FIESCO. A wicked heart deserved no less. I owed this satisfaction to your tears. (To the company.) No,—my friends—I am not wont on every slight occasion to kindle into passion. The follies of mankind amuse me long ere they excite my anger; but this woman merits my whole resentment. Behold the poison which she had mingled for my beloved Leonora. (Shows the poison to the company—they start with horror.)

JULIA (biting her lips with rage). Good! Good! Very good, Sir! (Going.)

FIESCO (leads her back by the arm). You must have patience, madam; something else remains. My friends, perhaps, would gladly learn why I debased my reason with the farce of love for Genoa's silliest coquette.

JULIA (starting up). It is not to be borne. But tremble! Doria rules in Genoa, and I am Doria's sister——

FIESCO. Poor, indeed, if that be your only sting! Know that Fiesco of Lavagna has changed the diadem of your illustrious brother for a halter, and means this night to hang the thief of the republic. (She is struck with terror—he continues with a sarcastic laugh.) Ha! that was unexpected. And do you see, madam, 'twas for this

purpose that I tried to blind the eyes of the Dorias. For this I assumed a mock passion— (pointing to JULIA.) For this I cast away this precious jewel—(pointing to LEONORA); and by shining bait ensnared my prey. I thank you for your complaisance, signora—(to JULIA;) and resign the trappings of my assumed character. (Delivers her the miniature with a bow.)

LEONORA (to FIESCO, in a supplicating tone). She weeps, my Lodovico. May your Leonora, trembling, entreat you?

JULIA (enraged, to LEONORA). Silence, detested woman!

FIESCO (to a SERVANT). Be polite to my friend; escort this lady. She has a mind to see my prison-chamber—take care that none approach to incommode her. The night air is blowing somewhat keenly, the storm which rives the house of Doria may, perchance, ruffle the lady's head-dress.

JULIA. Curses on thee, black, detested hypocrite! (Enraged, to LEONORA.) Rejoice not at thy triumph! He will destroy thee also, and himself—and then despair! (Rushing out!)

FIESCO (to the guests). You were witnesses; let your report in Genoa preserve my honor. (To the CONSPIRATORS.) Call on me as soon as the cannon gives the signal. (All the guests retire.)

SCENE XIV.

LEONORA and FIESCO.

LEONORA (approaching with anxiety). Fiesco! Fiesco! I understand but half your meaning; yet I begin to tremble.

FIESCO (significantly). Leonora! I once saw you yield the place of honor to another. I saw you, in the presence of the nobles, receive the second compliment. Leonora, that sight tormented me. I resolved it should be so no longer. Henceforth it ceases. Do you hear the warlike noise which echoes through my palace? What you

suspect is true. Retire to rest, countess, to-morrow you shall awake Duchess of Genoa.

LEONORA (clasping her hands together, and throwing herself into a chair). O God! My very fears! I am undone!

FIESCO (seriously, and with dignity). Let me speak out, my love. Two of my ancestors wore the triple crown. The blood of the Fiescos flows not pure unless beneath the purple. Shall your husband only reflect a borrowed splendor? (In a more energetic manner.) What! shall he owe his rank alone to capricious chance, which, from the ashes of mouldering greatness, has patched together a John Louis Fiesco? No, Leonora, I am too proud to accept from others what my own powers may achieve. This night the hereditary titles of my ancestors shall return to deck their tombs—Lavagna's counts exist no longer—a race of princes shall begin.

LEONORA (mournfully, and giving way to imagination). I see my husband fall, transfixed by deadly wounds. (In a hollow voice.) I see them bear my husband's mangled corpse towards me. (Starting up.) The first—the only ball has pierced Fiesco's heart.

FIESCO (tenderly seizing her hand). Be calm, my love. The only ball will not strike me.

LEONORA (looking steadfastly at him). Does Fiesco so confidently challenge Heaven? If, in the scope of countless possibilities, one chance alone were adverse, that one might happen, and I should lose my husband. Think that thou venturest Heaven, Fiesco; and though a million chances were in thy favor, wouldst thou dare tempt the Almighty by risking on a cast thy hopes of everlasting happiness? No, my husband! When thy whole being is at stake each throw is blasphemy.

FIESCO. Be not alarmed. Fortune and I are better friends.

LEONORA. Ah! say you so, Fiesco? You, who have watched the soul-convulsing game, which some call pastime? Have you not seen the sly deceiver, Fortune, how

she leads on her votary with gradual favors, till, heated with success, he rushes headlong and stakes his all upon a single cast? Then in the decisive moment she forsakes him, a victim of his rashness—and stood you then unmoved? Oh, my husband, think not that thou hast but to show thyself among the people to be adored. 'Tis no slight task to rouse republicans from their slumber and turn them loose, like the unbridled steed, just conscious of his hoofs. Trust not those traitors. They among them who are most discerning, even while they instigate thy valor, fear it; the vulgar worship thou with senseless and unprofitable adoration. Whichever way I look Fiesco is undone.

FIESCO (pacing the room in great emotion). To be irresolute is the most certain danger. He that aspires to greatness must be daring.

LEONORA. Greatness, Fiesco! Alas! thy towering spirit ill accords with the fond wishes of my heart. Should fortune favor thy attempt—shouldst thou obtain dominion—alas! I then shall be but the more wretched. Condemned to misery shouldst thou fail—if thou succeed, to misery still greater. Here is no choice but evil. Unless he gain the ducal power, Fiesco perishes—if I embrace the duke I lose my husband.

FIESCO. I understand you not.

LEONORA. Ah! my Fiesco, in the stormy atmosphere that surrounds a throne the tender plant of love must perish. The heart of man, e'en were that heart Fiesco's, is not vast enough for two all-powerful idols—idols so hostile to each other. Love has tears, and can sympathize with tears. Ambition has eyes of stone, from which no drop of tenderness can e'er distil. Love has but one favored object, and is indifferent to all the world beside. Ambition, with insatiable hunger, rages amid the spoil of nature, and changes the immense world into one dark and horrid prison-house. Love paints in every desert an elysium. And when thou wouldest recline upon my bosom, the cares of empires, or rebellious vassals, would fright away repose. If I should

throw myself into thy arms, thy despot fears would hear a murderer rushing forth to strike thee, and urge thy trembling flight through all the palace. Nay, black suspicion would at last o'erwhelm domestic concord. If thy Leonora's tenderness should offer thee a refreshing draught, thou wouldst with horror push away the goblet, and call it poison——

FIESCO (starting). Leonora, cease! These thoughts are dreadful.

LEONORA. And yet the picture is not finished. Let love be sacrificed to greatness—and even peace of mind—if Fiesco but remained unchanged. O God! that thought is racking torture. Seldom do angels ascend the throne—still seldomer do they descend it such. Can he know pity who is raised above the common fears of man? Will he speak the accents of compassion who at every wish can launch a bolt of thunder to enforce it. (She stops, then timidly advances, and takes his hand with a look of tender reproach.) Princes, Fiesco—these abortions of ambition and weakness—who presume to sit in judgment 'twixt the godhead and mortality. Wicked servants—worse rulers.

FIESCO (walking about much agitated). Leonora, cease! The bridge is raised behind me——

LEONORA (with a look of tenderness). And why, my husband? Deeds alone are irrevocable. Thou once didst swear (fondly clinging to him, and somewhat archly) that all thy projects vanished before my beauty. Thou hast foresworn thyself, dissembler—or else my charms have prematurely withered. Ask thy own heart where lies the blame? (More ardently, and throwing her arms round him.) Return, Fiesco! Conquer thyself! Renounce! Love shall indemnify thee. O Fiesco, if my heart cannot appease thy insatiate passions, the diadem will be found still poorer. Come, I'll study the inmost wishes of this soul. I will melt into one kiss of love all the charms of nature, to retain forever in these heavenly bonds the illustrious captive. As thy heart is infinite, so shall be my passion. To be a source of happiness

to a being who places all its heaven in thee, Fiesco? Ought that to leave any void in thy heart.

FIESCO (with great emotion). Leonora—what hast thou done? (He falls, overcome, on her neck.) I shall never more dare to meet the eyes of Genoa's citizens.

LEONORA (with lively expression). Let us fly, Fiesco! let us with scorn reject these gaudy nothings, and pass our future days only in the retreats of love! (She presses him to her breast with rapture.) Our souls, serene as the unclouded sky, shall never more be blackened by the poisonous breath of sorrow; our lives shall flow harmoniously as the music of the murmuring brook. (A cannon-shot is heard—FIESCO disengages himself—all the conspirators enter.)

SCENE XV.

CONSPIRATORS. The hour is come!

FIESCO (to LEONORA, firmly). Farewell! forever unless Genoa to-morrow be laid prostrate at thy feet. (Going to rush out.)

BOURGOGNINO (cries out). The countess faints! (LEONORA in a swoon—all run to support her.)

FIESCO (kneeling before her, in a tone of despair). Leonora! Save her! For heaven's sake save her! (ROSA and ARABELLA run to her assistance.) She lives—she opens her eyes (jumps up resolutely). Now to close Doria's! (Conspirators rush out.)

ACT V.

SCENE I.

After midnight. The great street of Genoa. A few lamps, which gradually become extinguished. In the background is seen the Gate of St. Thomas, which is shut. Men pass over the stage with lanterns. The patrol go their round. Afterwards, everything is quiet except the waves of the sea, which are heard at a distance, rather

tempestuous. FIESCO (armed, before the Doria Palace), and ANDREAS.

FIESCO. The old man has kept his word. The lights are all extinguished in the palace—the guards dismissed—I'll ring. (Rings at the gate.) Ho! Halloo! Awake, Doria! Thou art betrayed. Awake! Halloo! Halloo!

ANDREAS (appearing at the balcony). Who rings there?

FIESCO (in a feigned voice). Ask not, but follow me! Duke, thy star has set; Genoa is in arms against thee! Thy executioners are near, and canst thou sleep, Andreas?

ANDREAS (with dignity). I remember when the raging sea contended with my gallant vessel—when her keel cracked and the wind split her topmast. Yet Andreas Doria then slept soundly. Who sends these executioners!

FIESCO. A man more terrible than your raging sea—John Louis Fiesco.

ANDREAS (laughs). You jest, my friend. Come in the daytime to play your tricks. Midnight suits them badly.

FIESCO. Dost thou then despise thy monitor?

ANDREAS. I thank him and retire to rest. Fiesco, wearied with his rioting, sleeps, and has no time to think of Doria.

FIESCO. Wretched old man! Trust not the artful serpent! Its back is decked with beauteous colors; but when you would approach to view it you are suddenly entwined within its deadly folds. You despised the perfidious Moor. Do not despise the counsels of a friend. A horse stands ready saddled for you; fly, while you have time!

ANDREAS. Fiesco has a noble mind. I never injured him, and he will not betray me.

FIESCO. Fiesco has a noble mind and yet betrays thee. He gives thee proof of both.

ANDREAS. There is a guard, which would defy Fiesco's power, unless he led against them legions of spirits.

FIESCO (scornfully). That guard I should be glad to see to despatch it with a message for eternity.

ANDREAS (in an elevated manner). Vain scoffer! Knowest thou not that Andreas has seen his eightieth year, and that Genoa beneath his rule is happy? (Leaves the balcony.)

FIESCO (looks after him with astonishment). Must I then destroy this man before I have learnt how difficult it is to equal him? (He walks up and down some time in meditation). 'Tis past, Andreas. I have repaid the debt of greatness. Destruction take thy course! (He hastens into a remote street. Drums are heard on all sides. A hot engagement at the St. Thomas' Gate. The gate is forced, and opens a prospect in the harbor, in which lie several ships with lights on board.)

SCENE II.

GIANETTINO (in a scarlet mantle). LOMELLINO—(Servants going before them with torches).

GIANETTINO (stops). Who was it that commanded the alarm to be beat?

LOMELLINO. A cannon was fired on board one of the galleys.

GIANETTINO. The slaves perhaps have risen in mutiny. (Firing heard at the gate of St. Thomas.)

LOMELLINO. Hark! A shot!

GIANETTINO. The gate is open. The guards are in confusion. (To the servants.) Quick, rascals! Light us to the harbor. (Proceeding hastily towards the gate.)

SCENE III.

The former; BOURGOGNINO, with some CONSPIRATORS, coming from the gate of St. Thomas.

BOURGOGNINO. Sebastian Lascaro was a brave soldier.

ZENTURIONE. He defended himself like a bear till he fell.

GIANETTINO (steps back startled). What do I hear? (to his servants). Stop!

BOURGOGNINO. Who goes there with torches?

LOMELLINO (to GIANETTINO). Prince, they are enemies. Turn to the left.

BOURGOGNINO (calls to then peremptorily). Who goes there with the torches?

ZENTURIONE. Stand! Your watchword?

GIANETTINO (draws his sword fiercely). Loyalty and Doria!

BOURGOGNINO (foaming with rage). Violator of the republic and of my bride! (To the CONSPIRATORS, rushing upon GIANETTINO.) Brothers, this shortens our labor. His devils themselves deliver him into our hands— (runs him through with his sword).

GIANETTINO (falling). Murder! Murder! Murder! Revenge me, Lomellino——

LOMELLINO and SERVANTS (flying). Help! Murder! Murder!

ZENTURIONE (halloing with vehemence). Doria is down. Stop the Count Lomellino! (LOMELLINO is taken).

LOMELLINO (kneeling). Spare but my life, I'll join your party.

BOURGOGNINO (looking at GIANETTINO). Is this monster yet alive? Let the coward fly. (LOMELLINO escapes.)

ZENTURIONE. St. Thomas' gate our own! Gianettino slain! Haste some of you and tell Fiesco.

GIANETTINO (heaving himself from the ground in agony). Fiesco! Damnation! (Dies.)

BOURGOGNINO (pulling the sword out of GIANETTINO'S body). Freedom to Genoa, and to my Bertha. Your sword, Zenturione. Take to my bride this bloody weapon—her dungeon is thrown open. I'll follow thee, and bring the bridal kiss. (They separate through different streets.)

SCENE IV.

ANDREAS DORIA, GERMANS.

GERMAN. The storm drove that way. Mount your horse, duke!

ANDREAS. Let me cast a parting look at Genoa's towers! No; it is not a dream. Andreas is betrayed.

GERMAN. The enemy is all around us. Away! Fly! Beyond the boundaries!

ANDREAS (throwing himself upon the dead body of his nephew). Here will I die. Let no one talk of flight. Here lies the prop of my old age—my career is ended. (CALCAGNO appears at a distance, with CONSPIRATORS.)

GERMAN. Danger is near. Fly, prince! (Drums beat.)

ANDREAS. Hark, Germans, hark! These are the Genoese whose chains I broke. (Hiding his face.) Do your countrymen thus recompense their benefactors?

GERMAN. Away! Away! while we stay here, and notch their swords upon our German bones. (CALCAGNO comes nearer.)

ANDREAS. Save yourselves! Leave me! and go, declare the horrid story to the shuddering nations that Genoa slew its father——

GERMAN. Slew! 'Sdeath, that shall not be. Comrades, stand firm! Surround the duke! (They draw their swords.) Teach these Italian dogs to reverence his gray head——

CALCAGNO (calls out). Who goes there? What have we here?

GERMAN. German blows—(retreat fighting, and carry off the body of GIANETTINO.)

SCENE V.

LEONORA, in male attire, ARABELLA following— they walk along timidly.

ARABELLA. Come, my lady, pray let us hasten onward.

LEONORA. This way the tumult rages—hark! was not that a dying groan? Ah, they surround him! At Fiesco's breast they point their fatal muskets—at my breast they point them. Hold! hold! It is my husband! (Throws her arms up in agony.)

ARABELLA. For heaven's sake, my lady!

LEONORA (with wild enthusiasm, calling on all sides). O my Fiesco! my Fiesco! His firmest friends desert him. The faith of rebels is unsteady (shuddering). Rebels! Heaven? Is Fiesco, then, a chief of rebels?

ARABELLA. No, signora. He is the great deliverer of Genoa.

LEONORA (emphatically). Ha! that would indeed be glorious! And shall Leonora tremble?—shall the bravest republican be wedded to the most timid woman? Go, Arabella! When men contend for empires even a woman's soul may kindle into valor. (Drums again heard.) I'll rush among the combatants.

ARABELLA (clasping her hands together). All gracious heaven!

LEONORA. Softly! What strikes my foot? Here is a hat—and here a mantle! A sword, too! (she lifts it up)—a heavy sword, my Arabella; but I can carry it, and the sword shall not disgrace its bearer. (The alarm-bell sounds.)

ARABELLA. Hark! hark! How terrible it sounds yonder, from the tower of the Dominicans! God have mercy on us!

LEONORA (enthusiastically). Rather say, how delightful! In the majestic sound of this alarm-bell my Fiesco speaks to Genoa. (Drums are heard louder.) Ha! did flutes so sweetly strike my ear. Even these drums are animated by Fiesco. My heart beats higher. All Genoa is roused; the very mercenaries follow his name with transport—and shall his wife be fearful? (Alarm-bells from three other towers.) No—my hero shall embrace a heroine. My Brutus clasp within his arms a Roman wife. I'll be his Portia. (Putting on GIANETTINO'S hat and throwing his scarlet mantle round her.)

ARABELLA. My gracious lady, how wildly do you rave. (Alarm-bells and drums are heard.)

LEONORA. Cold-blooded wretch; canst thou see and hear all this, and yet not rave? The very stones are ready to weep that they have not feet to run and join Fiesco. These palaces upbraid the builder, who had laid their foundations so firmly in the earth that they cannot fly to join Fiesco. The very shores, were they able, would forsake their office in order to follow his glorious banner, though by so doing they abandoned Genoa to the mercy of the ocean. What might shake death himself out of his leaden sleep has not power to rouse thy courage? Away! I'll find my way alone.

ARABELLA. Great God! You will not act thus madly?

LEONORA (with heroic haughtiness). Weak girl! I will. (With great animation.) Where the tumult rages the most fiercely. Where Fiesco himself leads on the combat. Methinks I hear them ask, "Is that Lavagna, the unconquered hero, who with his sword decides the fate of Genoa? Is that Lavagna?" Yes, I will say; yes, Genoese, that is Lavagna; and that Lavagna is my husband!

SACCO (entering with CONSPIRATORS). Who goes there—Doria or Fiesco?

LEONORA (with enthusiasm). Fiesco and liberty. (Retires into another street. A tumult, ARABELLA lost in the crowd.)

SCENE VI.

SACCO, with a number of followers. CALCAGNO, meeting him with others.

CALCAGNO. Andreas has escaped.

SACCO. Unwelcome tidings to Fiesco.

CALCAGNO. Those Germans fight like furies! They planted themselves around the old man like rocks. I could not even get a glimpse of him. Nine of our men are done for; I myself was slightly wounded. Zounds! If they thus serve a foreign tyrant, how will they guard the princes of their country?

SACCO. Numbers have flocked already to our standard, and all the gates are ours.

CALCAGNO. I hear they still are fighting desperately at the citadel.

SACCO. Bourgognino is amongst them. Where is Verrina?

CALCAGNO. He guards, like Cerberus, the passage between Genoa and the sea—an anchovy could scarcely pass him.

SACCO. I'll rouse the suburbs——

CALCAGNO. I'll away to the market-place. Drummers, strike up! (They march off, drums beating.)

SCENE VII.

MOOR. A troop of THIEVES, with lighted matches.

MOOR. Now I'll let you into a secret, my boys; 'twas I that cooked this soup, but the devil a spoonful do they give me. Well, I care not. This hubbub is just to my taste. We'll set about burning and plundering. While they are squabbling for a dukedom we'll make a bonfire in the churches that shall warm the frozen apostles. (They disperse themselves among the neighboring houses.)

SCENE VIII.

BOURGOGNINO—BERTHA, disguised as a boy.

BOURGOGNINO. Rest here, dear youth; thou art in safety. Dost thou bleed?

BERTHA (in a feigned voice). No; not at all.

BOURGOGNINO (with energy). Rise, then, I'll lead thee where thou mayst gain wounds for Genoa—wounds beautiful like these. (Uncovering his arm.)

BERTHA (starting). Heavens!

BOURGOGNINO. Art thou frightened, youth? Too early didst thou put on the man. What age hast thou?

BERTHA. Fifteen years.

BOURGOGNINO. That is unfortunate! For this night's business thou art five years too young. Who is thy father?

BERTHA. The truest citizen in Genoa.

BOURGOGNINO. Gently, boy! That name belongs alone to the father of my betrothed bride. Dost thou know the house of Verrina?

BERTHA. I should think so.

BOURGOGNINO (eagerly). And knowest thou his lovely daughter?

BERTHA. Her name is Bertha.

BOURGOGNINO. Go, quickly! Carry her this ring. Say it shall be our wedding-ring; and tell her the blue crest fights bravely. Now farewell! I must hasten yonder. The danger is not yet over. (Some houses are seen on fire.)

BERTHA (in a soft voice). Scipio!

BOURGOGNINO (struck with astonishment). By my sword! I know that voice.

BERTHA (falling upon his neck). By my heart! I am well known here.

BOURGOGNINO. Bertha! (Alarm-bells sound in the suburbs—a tumult—BOURGOGNINO and BERTHA embrace, and are lost in the crowd.) [NOTE]

[NOTE] In lieu of this scene Schiller substituted the following, during his stay at Leipzig in 1786, for the use of the theatre there:—

A subterranean vault, lighted by a single lamp. The background remains quite dark. BERTHA is discovered sitting on a stone in the foreground; a black veil covers her face. After a pause she rises and walks to and fro.

BERTHA. Still no sound? No sign of human footstep? No approach of my deliverers. Horrible suspense! Fearful and hopeless as that of one buried alive beneath the sod of the churchyard. And for what dost thou sit, poor deceived one? An inviolable oath immures thee in this dungeon. Gianettino Doria must fall, and Genoa be free, or Bertha left to pine away her miserable existence, such was my

father's oath. Fearful prison-house to which there is no key but the death-groan of a well-guarded tyrant. (Looking round the vault) How awful is this stillness! terrible as the silence of the grave! How fearfully the darkness creeps from yonder vaults! My lamp, too, is flickering in its socket. (Walking up and down energetically). Oh, come, come, my beloved, 'tis horrible to die here. (A pause—then she starts up and rushes to and fro wringing her hands to deep despair.) He has forsaken me. He has broken his oath. He has forgotten his Bertha. The living think not of the dead, and this vault is my tomb. Hope no more, wretched one. Hope flourishes only where the eye of the Almighty pervades—into this dungeon it never penetrates. (Again a pause; she becomes still more alarmed.)

Or have my deliverers perished? Perchance the bold attempt has failed, the danger has overwhelmed the courageous youth. O unhappy Bertha, perhaps even now their ghosts are wandering through these vaults, and weep over thy vain hopes. (Shuddering.) Heavens! if they are dead I am irrevocably lost, irrevocably abandoned to a horrible death. (Leans against the wall for support. After a pause she continues despondingly.) And if my beloved one still lives—if he should return to keep his word, to fetch his bride away in triumph, and find all here lonely and silent, and the inanimate corpse no longer sensible to his transports—when his burning kisses shall in vain endeavor to restore the life which has fled from these lips, and his tears flow on me hopelessly—when my father shall sink weeping on the body of his daughter, and the voice of his lamentations echo through the regions of my prison-house. Oh, then repeat not to them my complaints, ye walls! Tell them that I suffered like a heroine, and that my last sigh was forgiveness. (Sinks exhausted on the stone—pause—a confused sound of drums and bells is heard from behind the stage in various directions. BERTHA starts to her feet.) Hark! what means this? Am I awake, or do I dream? How dreadfully the bells clang! That is no sound of ringing to prayers. (The noise comes nearer and increases; she rushes to and fro alarmed.) Louder and louder yet! Heavens, they are alarm-bells! they are alarm-bells! Have

enemies surprised the city? Is Genoa in flames? A wild and dreadful din, like the trampling of myriads! What's that? (Someone knocks loudly at the door.) They come this way—they draw the bolts—(rushing towards the background). Men! Men! Liberty! Deliverance! (BOURGOGNINO enters hastily with a drawn sword, followed by several torch-bearers.)

BOURGOGNINO (calling out loudly). Thou art free, Bertha! The tyrant is dead! This sword has passed through his heart.

BERTHA (running into his arms). My deliverer! my angel!

BOURGOGNINO. Dost thou hear the alarm-bells, and the roll of the drums? Fiesco has conquered, Genoa is free, and thy father's curse annihilated.

BERTHA. Oh, heavens! This dreadful uproar, these alarm-bells, then, were for me?

BOURGOGNINO. For thee, Bertha! They are our marriage chimes. Leave this horrid dungeon and follow me to the altar.

BERTHA. To the altar, Bourgognino? Now, at this midnight hour? While this awful tumult is raging as though the whole globe were crushing to atoms! (VERRINA enters unperceived, and remains standing silently at the entrance.)

BOURGOGNINO. In this beautiful, glorious night, in which all Genoa celebrates its freedom, as a bond of love this sword, still dyed with the tyrant's blood, shall be my wedding gear—this hand, still warm from the heroic deed, the priest shall lay in thine. Fear not my love, and follow me to the church. (VERRINA approaches, steps between both, and embraces them.)

VERRINA. God bless you, my children!

BERTHA AND BOURGOGNINO (falling at his feet). O my father!

VERRINA (lays his hands on them both—a pause—then he turns solemnly to BOURGOGNINO). Never forget how dearly thou hast won her. Never forget that thy marriage dates from the day of Genoa's freedom. (Turning towards BERTHA in

a grave and dignified manner.) Thou art the daughter of Verrina, and 'twas thy husband slew the tyrant. (After a pause he beckons them to rise, and says, with suppressed emotion.) The priest awaits you.

BERTHA AND BOURGOGNINO (together). How, my father? Will you not accompany us thither?

VERRINA (very gravely). A terrible duty calls me elsewhere; my prayers shall accompany you. (Drums and trumpets, intermixed with acclamations, are heard in the distance.) What means this shouting?

BOURGOGNINO. They are proclaiming Fiesco duke. The populace adore him, and with eager acclamations brought him the purple; the nobles looked on with dismay, but dared not refuse their sanction.

VERRINA (laughs bitterly). You see, my son, I must away with speed to be the first to tender the oath of allegiance to the new monarch.

BOURGOGNINO (holds him back alarmed). What is your purpose! I'll go with you.

BERTHA (hanging anxiously on BOURGOGNINO). Heavens! what means this, Bourgognino? What is my father meditating?

VERRINA. My son, I have converted all my possessions into gold, and have conveyed it on board thy ship. Take thy bride and embark without delay. Perhaps I shall soon follow, perhaps never. Hasten to Marseilles, and (embracing them with emotion) God be with you.

BOURGOGNINO (determinedly). Verrina, I must stay; the danger is not yet past.

VERRINA (leading him towards BERTHA). Look to thy bride, thou proud, insatiable one. Thou hast despatched thy tyrant, leave me to deal with mine. [Exeunt.

SCENE IX.

FIESCO and ZIBO from different sides. Attendants.

FIESCO (in great anger). Who set fire to those houses?

ZIBO. The citadel is taken.

FIESCO. Who set those houses on fire?

ZIBO (to the attendants). Despatch a guard to apprehend the villains. (Some soldiers go.)

FIESCO. Will they make me an incendiary? Hasten with the engines! (Attendants go.) But are you sure that Gianettino has fallen?

ZIBO. So they say.

FIESCO (wildly). They say so only! Who say? Declare, upon your honor, has he escaped?

ZIBO (doubtfully). If I may trust my eyes against the assertion of a nobleman, then—Gianettino lives.

FIESCO (starting). Zibo, your eyes may cost your head——

ZIBO. 'Tis but eight minutes since I saw him in the crowd dressed in his scarlet cloak and yellow plume.

FIESCO (wildly). Heaven and hell! Zibo! Bourgognino shall answer for it with his head. Hasten, Zibo! secure the barriers. Sink all the boats that he may not escape by sea. This diamond, Zibo—the richest in all Italy—this diamond shall reward the man who brings me tidings of Gianettino's death. (ZIBO hastens away.) Fly, Zibo!

SCENE X.

FIESCO, SACCO, the MOOR, SOLDIERS.

SACCO. We found this Moor throwing a lighted match into the convent of the Jesuits.

FIESCO. Thy treachery was overlooked when it concerned myself alone. The halter awaits the incendiary. Take him away and hang him at the church-door.

MOOR. Plague on it! that's an awkward piece of business. Is there no way out of it?

FIESCO. No.

MOOR. Send me awhile to the galleys——

FIESCO (beckoning to the attendants). To the gallows.

MOOR (impudently). Then I'll turn Christian.

FIESCO. The church refuses the dregs of infidelity.

MOOR (in an insinuating manner). At least send me drunk into eternity!

FIESCO. Sober.

MOOR. Don't hang me up, however, beside a Christian church!

FIESCO. A man of honor keeps his word. I promised thee a gallows of thy own.

SACCO. No more prating, heathen! we've business of more consequence.

MOOR. But, stay! Perhaps the rope may break?

FIESCO (to SACCO). Let it be double.

MOOR. Well, if it must be so, the devil may make ready for an extra guest. (Soldiers lead him off, and hang him at a little distance.)

SCENE XI.

FIESCO—LEONORA appearing at a distance, in the scarlet cloak of GIANETTINO.

FIESCO (perceiving her, rushes forward—then stops). Do I know that crest and mantle? (Rushes on furiously.) Yes, I know them. (Runs her through with his sword.) If thou hast three lives then rise again. (LEONORA falls with a hollow groan, the march of victory is heard, with drums, horns, and hautboys.)

SCENE XII.

FIESCO, CALCAGNO, ZENTURIONE, ZIBO: SOLDIERS, with drums and colors.

FIESCO (advancing towards them in triumph). Genoese—the die is cast. Here lies the viper of my soul, the abhorred food of my resentment. Lift high your swords! Gianettino is no more!

CALCAGNO. And I come to inform you that two-thirds of Genoa have declared for our party, and swear obedience to Fiesco's standard.

ZIBO. By me Verrina sends his greeting to you from the admiral's galley, with the dominion of the sea.

ZENTURIONE. By me the governor of the city sends his keys and staff of office.

SACCO. And in me (kneeling) the less and greater senate of the republic kneel down before their master, and supplicate for favor and protection.

CALCAGNO. Let me be the first to welcome the illustrious conquerer within the walls. Bow your colors! Hail, Duke of Genoa!

ALL (taking off their hats). Hail! Hail, Duke of Genoa! (March of triumph—FIESCO stands the whole time with his head sunk upon his breast, in a meditating posture.)

CALCAGNO. The people and the senate wait to see their gracious sovereign invested in the robes of dignity. Great duke, permit us to follow you in triumph to the senate-house.

FIESCO. First allow me to listen to the dictates of my heart. I was obliged to leave a most dear person in anxious apprehension—a person who will share with me the glory of this night. (To the company.) Will you, my friends, attend me to your amiable duchess! (Going.)

CALCAGNO. Shall this murderous villain lie here, and hide his infamy in obscurity?

ZENTURIONE. Plant his head upon a halberd.

ZIBO. Let his mangled carcass sweep the streets! (They hold lights toward the

body.)

CALCAGNO (terrified and in a low voice). Look, Genoese! By heavens, this is not the face of Gianettino! (All look at the body.)

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FIESCO (fixes his eyes upon it with an eager look, which he withdraws slowly—then, with convulsive wildness, exclaims). No! ye devils! That is not the face of Gianettino—Oh, malicious fiend! Genoa is mine, say you? Mine? (Rushing forward with a dreadful shriek.) Oh, trickery of hell! It is my wife! (He sinks to the ground in agony—The CONSPIRATORS stand around in groups, shuddering—a dead silence.)

FIESCO (raising himself exhausted—in a faint voice). But tell me truly, Genoese, have I indeed slain my wife? I conjure you look not so ghastly upon this illusion! Heaven be praised! there are fates which man has not to fear, because he is but man. This must be one of them. He who is denied the joys of heaven can scarce be doomed to bear the pains of hell. This dread infliction would be even more. God be praised! It must be so. And this is naught but the chimera of a disordered brain.

SCENE XIII.

The former—ARABELLA enters weeping.

ARABELLA. Let them kill me! What have I now to dread? Have pity on me, Genoese. 'Twas here I left my dearest mistress, and nowhere can I find her.

FIESCO (approaching her—with a low and trembling voice.) Was Leonora thy mistress?

ARABELLA (with pleasure). Are you there, my most gracious and dear good lord? Be not displeased with us. We could no longer restrain her.

FIESCO (in alarm). Restrain her! Wretch! From what?

ARABELLA. From following——

FIESCO (violently). Ha! From following what?

ARABELLA. The tumult——

FIESCO. What was her dress?

ARABELLA. A Scarlet mantle.

FIESCO (in a transport of rage). Get thee to the abyss of hell! The mantle?

ARABELLA. Lay here upon the ground.

SOME OF THE CONSPIRATORS (talking apart). 'Twas here that Gianettino was killed.

FIESCO (ready to faint, to ARABELLA). Thy mistress is found—(ARABELLA advances anxiously—FIESCO casts his eyes round the whole circle—then, with a faltering voice)—'Tis true—'Tis true—And I am the instrument of this horrid deed. (Madly.) Back! back! ye human forms! Oh! (gnashing his teeth wildly, and looking up toward heaven) had I but this created orb between my teeth—I feel as though I could tear the universe to fragments, till nature's face was hideous as the pain that gnaws my soul! (To the others, that stand around, trembling.) See, how they stand aghast there, miserable creatures! blessing themselves and rejoicing that they are not as I am. I alone feel the blow. (Wildly.) I!—why I? Why not these as well? Why is my sorrow denied the balm of being shared with others?

CALCAGNO (timidly). Most gracious duke!

FIESCO (rushes on hint with a look of fiendlike joy). Ha! Welcome! Here, Heaven be thanked, is one whom the same thunderbolt has struck! (Pressing CALCAGNO furiously in his arms.) Brother of my sorrows! Welcome to your share of destruction! She's dead. Didst thou not also love her? (Forcing him toward the dead body.) Behold her and despair! She's dead. (Fixing his eyes earnestly on one part of the stage.) Oh, that I could stand upon the brink of the infernal gulf, and view below all hell's variety of torments!—could hear the horrid shrieks of damned souls!

(Approaching the body, trembling.) Here lies my murdered wife. Nay—that says too little—the wife that I myself have murdered. Oh! 'Tis the cunningest of hell's devices—first I was allured to the topmost pinnacle of joy—to the very threshold of heaven—then—in an instant hurled headlong down—and then—oh that my breath could send a pestilence to hell! And then was made the murderer of my wife—fool that I was to trust two erring eyes? Oh, fiends, this is your masterpiece of torture! (All the CONSPIRATORS lean upon their swords much afflicted—a pause.)

FIESCO (exhausted, and looking mournfully round the circle). Yes, by heavens! They who feared not to draw their swords against their prince are shedding tears! (With dejection.) Speak! Do you weep over this havoc caused by treacherous death, or do you bewail the fall of your leader's spirit? (Turning toward the dead body in an affecting posture.) Where iron-hearted warriors were melted into tears, Fiesco uttered only imprecations of despair. (Kneels down, weeping, by her side.) Pardon me, Leonora—the decrees of heaven are immutable; they yield not to mortal anger. (With a melancholy tenderness.) O Leonora, years ago my fancy painted that triumphant hour when I should present thee to Genoa as her duchess—methought I saw the lovely blush that tinged thy modest cheek—the timid heaving of thy beauteous bosom beneath the snowy gauze— I heard the gentle murmurs of thy voice, which died away in rapture! (More lively.) Ah, how intoxicating to my soul were the proud acclamations of the people! How did my love rejoice to see its triumph marked in the sinking envy of its rivals! Leonora! The hour which should confirm these hopes is come. Thy Fiesco is Duke of Genoa—and yet the meanest beggar would not exchange his poverty for my greatness and my sufferings. (More affected.) He has a wife to share his troubles—with whom can I share my splendor? (He weeps bitterly, and throws himself on the dead body. Compassion marked upon the countenances of all.)

CALCAGNO. She was, indeed, a most excellent lady.

ZIBO. This event must be concealed from the people. 'Twould damp the ardor of our party and elevate the enemy with hope.

FIESCO (rises, collected and firm). Here me, Genoese! Providence, if rightly I interpret its designs, has struck me with this wound only to try my heart for my approaching greatness. The blow was terrible. Since I have felt it, I fear neither torture nor pleasure. Come! Genoa, you say, awaits me—I will give to Genoa a prince more truly great than Europe ever saw. Away!—for this unhappy princess I will prepare a funeral so splendid that life shall lose its charms, and cold corruption glitter like a bride. Follow your duke!

[Exeunt, with music and colors.

SCENE XIV.

ANDREAS, LOMELLINO.

ANDREAS. Yonder they go, with shouts of exultation.

LOMELLINO. They are intoxicated with success. The gates are deserted and all are hastening toward the senate-house.

ANDREAS. It was my nephew only whom Genoa could not brook. My nephew is no more. Hear, Lomellino!

LOMELLINO. What, duke—still—do you still hope?

ANDREAS (sternly). And dost thou tremble for my life, and mock me with the name of duke the while thou wouldst forbid me hope.

LOMELLINO. My gracious lord, a raging nation lies in Fiesco's scale; what counterpoise in yours?

ANDREAS (with dignity and animation). Heaven!

LOMELLINO (shrugging up his shoulders). The times are past, my lord, when armies fought under the guidance of celestial leaders. Since gunpowder was invented angels have ceased to fight.

ANDREAS. Wretch that thou art! Wouldst thou bereave an aged head of its support, its God. (In an earnest and commanding tone.) Go! Make it known throughout Genoa that Andreas Doria is still alive. Say that Andreas entreats the citizens, his children, not to drive him, in his old age, to dwell with foreigners, who ne'er would pardon the exalted state to which he raised his country. Say this—and further say, Andreas begs but so much ground within his fatherland as may contain his bones.

LOMELLINO. I obey; but I despair of success. (Going.)

ANDREAS. Stay; take with thee this snowy lock, and say it was the last upon my head. Say that I plucked it on that night when ungrateful Genoa tore itself from my heart. For fourscore years it hung upon my temples, and now has left my bald head, chilled with the winter of age. The lock is weak, but 'twill suffice to fasten the purple on that young usurper.

[Exit—LOMELLINO hastens into another street—Shouts are heard, with trumpets and drums.

SCENE XV.

VERRINA (coming from the harbor), BERTHA, and BOURGOGNINO.

VERRINA. What mean these shouts?

BOURGOGNINO. They proclaim Fiesco duke.

BERTHA (to BOURGOGNINO, timidly). Scipio! My father's looks are dreadful——

VERRINA. Leave me, my children. O Genoa! Genoa!

BOURGOGNINO. The populace adore him, and with transports hailed him as their duke. The nobles looked on with horror, but dared not oppose it.

VERRINA. My son, I have converted all my possessions into gold, and conveyed it on board thy vessel. Take thy wife with thee, and set sail immediately. Perhaps I soon shall follow. Perhaps—never more. Hasten to Marseilles, and—(embracing

them mournfully and with energy)—may the Almighty guide you. [Exit hastily.

BERTHA. I beseech thee, say, on what dreadful project does my father brood?

BOURGOGNINO. Didst thou understand thy father?

BERTHA. He bade us fly. Merciful Heaven! Fly on our bridal day!

BOURGOGNINO. He spoke it, and we must obey.

[Exeunt towards the harbor.

SCENE XVI.

VERRINA, and FIESCO (in the ducal habit), meeting.

FIESCO. Welcome, Verrina! I was anxious to meet thee.

VERRINA. I also sought Fiesco.

FIESCO. Does Verrina perceive no alteration in his friend?

VERRINA (with reserve). I wish for none.

FIESCO. But do you see none?

VERRINA (without looking at him). I should hope not!

FIESCO. I ask, do you perceive none?

VERRINA (after a slight glance). None!

FIESCO. See, then, how idle is the observation that power makes a tyrant. Since we parted I am become the Duke of Genoa, and yet Verrina (pressing him to his bosom) finds my embrace still glowing as before.

VERRINA. I grieve that I must return it coldly. The sight of majesty falls like a keen-edged weapon, cutting off all affection between the duke and me. To John Louis Fiesco belonged the territory of my heart. Now he has conquered Genoa I resume that poor possession.

FIESCO (with astonishment). Forbid it, Heaven! That price is too enormous even for a dukedom.

VEERINA (muttering). Hum! Is liberty then out of fashion, that republics are so lightly thrown away upon the first that offers himself?

FIESCO (bites his lips). Verrina, say this to no one but Fiesco.

VERRINA. Oh, of course! Great indeed must be that mind which can hear the voice of truth without offence. But alas! the cunning gamester has failed in one single card. He calculated all the chances of envious opposition, but unfortunately overlooked one antagonist—the patriot— (very significantly). But perhaps the oppressor of liberty has still in store some scheme for banishing patriotic virtue. I swear by the living God that posterity shall sooner collect my mouldering bones from off the wheel than from a sepulchre within that country which is governed by a duke.

FIESCO (taking him tenderly by the hand). Not even when that duke is thy brother? Not if he should make his principality the treasury of that benevolence which was restrained by his domestic poverty? Not even then, Verrina.

VERRINA. No—not even then! We pardon not the robber because he made gifts of his plunder, nor does such generosity suit Verrina. I might permit my fellow-citizens to confer a benefit on me—because I should hope some day to make them an adequate return. That which a prince confers is bounty; but bounty undeserved I would receive alone from God.

FIESCO (angrily). It were as easy to tear Italy from the bosom of the ocean as to shake this stubborn enthusiast from his prejudices.

VERRINA. Well mayst thou talk of tearing: thou hast torn the republic from Doria, as a lamb from the jaws of the wolf, only that thou mightest devour it thyself. But enough of this—just tell me, duke, what crime the poor wretch committed whom you ordered to be hung up at the church of the Jesuits?

FIESCO. The scoundrel set fire to the city.

VERRINA. Yet the scoundrel left the laws untouched.

FIESCO. Verrina presumes upon my friendship.

VERRINA. Away with friendship! I tell thee I no longer love thee. I swear to thee that I hate thee—hate thee like the serpent of Paradise, that first disturbed the happiness of creation, and brought upon mankind unbounded sorrow. Hear me, Fiesco, I speak to thee not as a subject to his master, not as a friend to his friend, but as man to man—(with bitterness and vehemence). Thou hast committed a crime against the majesty of the eternal God in permitting virtue to lead thy hands to wickedness, and in suffering the patriots of Genoa to violate their country. Fiesco, had thy villany deceived me also!—Fiesco, by all the horrors of eternity! with my own hands I would have strangled myself, and on thy head spurted the venom of my departing soul. A princely crime may break the scale of human justice, but thou hast insulted heaven, and the last judgment will decide the cause. (Fiesco remains speechless, looking at him with astonishment.) Do not attempt to answer me. Now we have done. (After walking several times up and down.) Duke of Genoa, in the vessels of yesterday's tyrant, I have seen a miserable race who, at every stroke of their oars, ruminate upon their long-expiated guilt, and weep their tears into the ocean, which, like a rich man, is too proud to count them. A good prince begins his reign with acts of mercy. Wilt thou release the galley-slaves?

FIESCO (sharply). Let them be the first fruits of my tyranny. Go, and announce to them their deliverance.

VERRINA. You will enjoy but half the pleasure unless you see their happiness. Perform this deed thyself. The great are seldom witnesses of the evils which they cause. And shall they, too, do good by stealth and in obscurity? Methinks the duke is not too great to sympathize with a beggar.

FIESCO. Man, thou art dreadful; yet I know not why I must follow thee. (Both go toward the sea.)

VERRINA (stops, much affected). But once more embrace me, Fiesco. Here is no

one by to see Verrina weep, or to behold a prince give way to feeling—(he embraces him eagerly). Surely never beat two greater hearts together—we loved each other so fraternally—(weeping violently on Fiasco's neck). Fiesco! Fiesco! Thou makest a void in my bosom which all mankind, thrice numbered, could not fill up.

FIESCO (much affected). Be still, my friend.

VERRINA. Throw off this hateful purple, and I will be so. The first prince was a murderer, and assumed the purple to hide the bloody stains of his detested deeds. Hear me, Fiesco! I am a warrior, little used to weeping—Fiesco—these are my first tears—throw off this purple!

FIESCO. Peace.

VERRINA (more vehemently). Fiesco, place on the one side all the honors of this great globe, on the other all its tortures; they should not make me kneel before a mortal—Fiesco (falling on his knee), this is the first bending of my knee—throw off this purple!

FIESCO. Rise, and no longer irritate me!

VERRINA (in a determined tone). I rise then, and will no longer irritate thee. (They stand on a board leading to a galley.) The prince must take precedence.

FIESCO. Why do you pull my cloak? It falls——

VERRINA (with bitter irony). If the purple falls the duke must after it. (He pushes him into the sea.)

FIESCO (calls out of the waves). Help, Genoa! Help! Help thy duke! (Sinks.)

SCENE XVII.

CALCAGNO, SACCO, ZIBO, ZENTURIONE, Conspirators, People.

CALCAGNO (crying out). Fiesco! Fiesco! Andreas is returned—half Genoa joins Andreas. Where is Fiesco?

VERRINA (in a firm tone). Drowning.

ZENTURIONE. Does hell or madness prompt thy answer?

VERRINA. Drowned—if that sound better. I go to join Andreas.

(The CONSPIRATORS stand in groups, astonished. The curtain falls.)

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK FIESCO; OR, THE GENOESE CONSPIRACY: A TRAGEDY ***

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