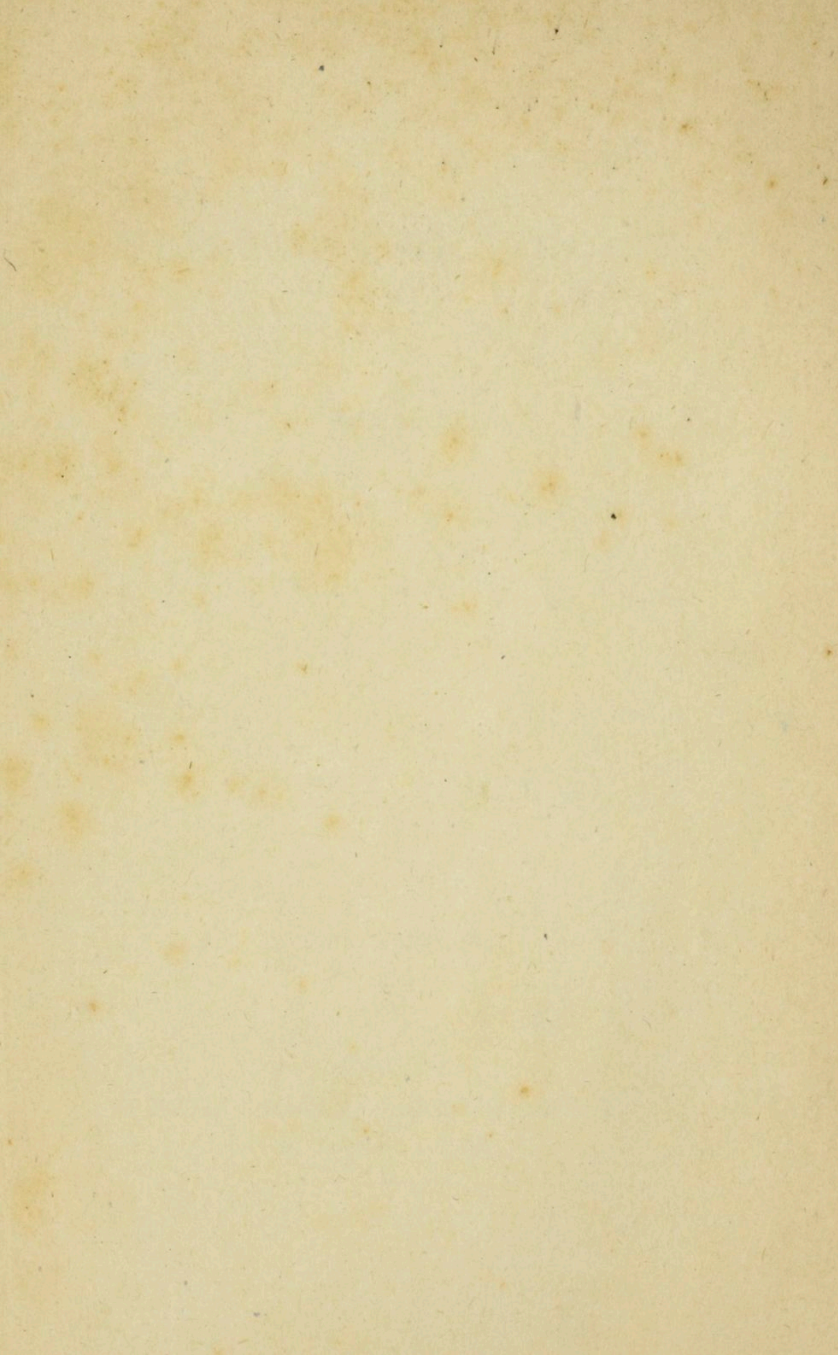


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T. J. Mitchell

X

THE



MERCHANT OF LONDON.

A PLAY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY T. J. SERLE.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
W. SAMS, BOOKSELLER TO THE KING,
ST. JAMES'S STREET.

—
MDCCCXXXII.



MERCHANT OF LONDON.

A PLAY

IN FIVE ACTS.

C. WHITING, BEAUFORT HOUSE, STRAND.

BY T. A. BRILL

SECOND EDITION

LONDON

AT THE BOOKSTALL TO THE KING

BY JAMES WHITING

MICHHELL

TO

W. C. MACREADY, Esq.

MY DEAR SIR,

YOUR splendid personation of *Scroope* has made the character your own ; but it is not so much my gratitude for your exertions as an Actor, as that which I feel for your unwearied and zealous friendship in promoting its performance under circumstances peculiarly discouraging, which induces me to desire your acceptance of the Dedication of this Play.

Those only who have encountered a similar ordeal, can judge of the extent of such an obligation ; but, when I declare that this is the larger portion of my debt to you, the Public will easily believe it to be great indeed.

Your sincere and grateful

Friend and Servant,

THOMAS JAMES SERLE.

LAMBETH,
30th April, 1832.

PREFACE.

IT is my delightful task to complete, if possible, the acknowledgments begun in my dedication. Never did or could any author owe more to the kindness and exertions of the performers. First in this list of tribute, let me place Miss Phillips, whose *Mariana*, while it realized all my ideas of the part, and changed criticism itself into universal praise, gave a certain indication to those who know the elements of the histrionic art, that it is a very humble prelude to, I hope, a long series of triumphs. To Mrs. Orger I also offer my heartfelt thanks, with the wish that I had been able to give her a worthier opportunity of earning them. Nor must I close my respects to the ladies, without at least mentioning Miss Gordon and Mrs. Broad.

Mr. Cooper's judgment, energy, and honest love of his art, were most conspicuous in his *Richard*. Mr. Harley's *Flaw* demands from me a particular notice, as being an offering of good feeling from a highly popular actor, in a part much beneath his talent. Mr. J. Russell's *Parallel* will be best appreciated by those who read the play, as it will be seen that a difficult sketch

became, in his hands, a well-finished portrait. To Mr. H. Wallack, for his *Edward*, an "uphill" part, steadily, courageously, and ably acted; to Mr. Bedford, for a representation of the first class in its line; to Messrs. Younge, Brindal, Salter, and Hughes, all of whom showed, by the performance of trifling parts, how worthy they are of better ones, I offer my sincere thanks.

Nor, in the production of the play, must I forget the assistance of Mr. Wallack, and his able aide-de-camp, Mr. Wilmot. The civilities which Mr. Bunn has been pleased to show me should equally be felt and mentioned.

To close this list, I must request Mr. Young to accept my acknowledgments for the generous interest taken by him in first presenting this play to Drury Lane Theatre; and, of mere honesty, declare how much is due to the very friendly criticisms and suggestions of Mr. Morton.

I have yet one friend to whose encouragement I should very proudly declare myself a debtor, but that I am sure he would rather that this, with many other such kindnesses, remained unknown to others, though they cannot be forgotten by me.

PERSONS REPRESENTED.

| | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|---|---|---|-----------------|---|--------------|
| LORD BEAUFORT | - | - | - | Mr. YOUNGE. | | |
| EDWARD BEAUFORT, <i>his Son</i> | - | | - | Mr. H. WALLACK. | | |
| RICHARD FITZALAN, <i>his Page</i> | - | | - | Mr. COOPER. | | |
| PARALLEL, <i>Tutor to Edward</i> | } | | - | Mr. J. RUSSEL. | | |
| <i>and Richard</i> | | - | | | - | |
| SCROOPE, <i>the Merchant</i> | - | | - | Mr. MACREADY. | | |
| GOLDLOVE, <i>another Merchant</i> | - | | - | Mr. HUGHES. | | |
| FLAW, <i>his Nephew</i> | - | | - | Mr. HARLEY. | | |
| RIVERS | - | - | } | Mr. BRINDAL. | | |
| BLOODMORE | - | - | | | } | Mr. BEDFORD. |
| MOUSEHEART | - | - | | | | |
| WILLIAM, <i>Clerk to Scroope</i> | - | | - | Mr. HONNER. | | |
| TAILOR | - | - | - | Mr. SALTER. | | |

Two Officers, Alsatians, Servants, &c.

WOMEN.

| | | | | |
|----------------------------------|---|---|---|------------------|
| ISABEL, <i>Daughter to Lord</i> | } | | - | Miss GORDON. |
| <i>Beaufort</i> | | - | | |
| MARIANA, <i>Niece to Scroope</i> | - | | - | Miss PHILLIPS. |
| BRIDGET, <i>his Housekeeper</i> | - | | - | Mrs. BROAD. |
| <i>The WIDOW LOVEL</i> | - | | - | Mrs. ORGER. |
| <i>An Old Woman</i> | - | | - | Miss SOMERVILLE. |

TIME.—*One Day.*

SCENE.—*London, in the reign of Elizabeth.*

THE MERCHANT OF LONDON.

ACT. I.

SCENE I.—*A Terrace opening on the Thames. On one side the mansion of LORD BEAUFORT in the half distance, the gate of the grounds belonging to it at the back of the stage. On the same side, in front, another gate, supposed to open from the small garden of SCROOPE'S cottage. On the other side, the house of the WIDOW LEVEL.*

Enter RICHARD from the gate at the back.

Not here yet! though the sun is up and bright,
And shines upon her lattice as 'twould rouse
The dullest sleeper! And the breath of morning
Comes fresh and stirringly across the river;
Yet with no air to chill thee, gentle flower,
And close the lids which the sun woos to open.
Master Scroope's window standeth wide—Old Thrift
Is peering ere the dawn.—I'd wage a noble
He has walked a two miles down the stream to spy
Some rich freight of a wealthy clime, that comes
To be gorg'd by wealthier London. That a man
Whose looks denote the care of decent poverty,

Should carry half this river's wealth about him
 In the small compass of securities,
 Rich bills of lading, and the keys of chests,
 Whose precious store of gold and gems might raise
 An army cloth'd in pageantry! Who would deem
 Yon cottage, whose white neatness seems to shun
 The dangerous imputation of its wealth,
 Were the abode of beauty's costliest work,
 Of Mariana!—There's an arm so round,
 So purely white, that opens that small casement—

Enter the WIDOW LOVEL from her house.

'Tis drawn back suddenly—ha! plagues and torments!
 The gossiping rich widow!

WIDOW.

Master Richard!
 You're early up, sir! 'faith! a good ensample
 For young unmarried men. I told my husband,
 Dead and gone Master Lovel——

RICHARD.

Heaven and earth!
 Defend me from a lecture, as interminable
 As she treated that poor man with! How to escape——

WIDOW.

You did not mark me, sir; it is a pleasure
 To discourse to one's friends and neighbours; and, save you,
 I've few or none to hear me.

RICHARD.

Her whole stock
 Of chattering to my share—and Mariana——

WIDOW.

There's the Lord Beaufort—your protector; he's

A proud and stately nobleman—no talking
With people of that rank.

RICHARD.

'Tis a great privilege
Of their nobility.

WIDOW.

Then there's his son and heir,
His honour, Master Edward—he's all pride—
And Master Scroope, though kind enough to one
Who hath any troubles, and a calm, grave man,
Will not endure one's conversation.

RICHARD.

Half
My precious time spent—how to send her hence—

WIDOW.

And then his daughter, Mariana ; faith
I think the wench must be in love—aye, now.
You turn and listen to me.

RICHARD.

Did I, faith ?—In love !—aye ?—well ?

WIDOW.

Perhaps with the young Beaufort—
Are you not well ?

RICHARD.

Yes—yes—with the young Beaufort ?

WIDOW.

Not that her eye agrees with mine in that :
For my part I have seen and can see now—
But I was talking of my talking to her ;
One's little tattle—some folks call it scandal,
It may be, or it may not—sooth—where was I ?
Oh !

RICHARD.

Oh!

WIDOW.

You sigh'd—well; when I've spoken to her
Some half hour, she looks full up in my face
And asks me what I said.

RICHARD (*aside.*)

'Twould puzzle you
To tell her.—I shall lose the opportunity——
'Twill be a blank day with me—not a word
With Mariana.

WIDOW.

Now to you, who are neither
Highborn, nor proud, nor rich, nor yet in love,
One may talk.

RICHARD.

Yes, it seems so. Dame, you've heard
The queen to-day will take her barge at Westminster,
And sail to Greenwich.

WIDOW.

Is it so?—I've seen her
So often I shall wait here 'till she passes
And catch her from my window.

RICHARD.

You'll take boat, sure;
There is a pageant.

WIDOW

I have seen so many——
There was the last—two dolphins.—

RICHARD.

Yes, I saw it,
'Tis nothing unto this. Seventeen whales

Meet her as she embarks, spouting aloft
Floods of rich wine.

WIDOW.

Into the water?

RICHARD.

Aye.

Enough to make the Thames one bowl of negus.

WIDOW.

Seventeen whales!

RICHARD.

Five great sea unicorns,
Caught in Utopia, are to be harness'd
Unto a car, in which her highness rides
From Westminster to Greenwich—where a mystery,
Call'd Balaam and his ass, will be presented
By the corporation, and the beast will speak,
As representative of the mayor and aldermen.

WIDOW.

A new device!

RICHARD.

Not altogether new,
For corporations have had such interpreters,
Yet pleasant.

WIDOW.

Very pleasant.

RICHARD.

You'll not miss
The sight and hearing?

WIDOW.

Nay, forsooth, I will not.
You'll come with me?—

RICHARD.

I've weighty business.

WIDOW.

What?

To borrow money of old miser Scroope?

He will not lend it. Come, have you no friend?

Can you not guess now? Who for very kindness

Would and could give——

RICHARD.

Nay that is not my need.

Think of the unicorns.

WIDOW.

Well, well! my own barge,

For I've one, waits you, if a seat and cheer,

Such as the richest cellars and best larder——

RICHARD.

I've neither thirst nor hunger—but the whales——

WIDOW.

Aye, true, the seventy whales!

RICHARD (*aside.*)

I said seventeen.

WIDOW.

Here, John, well, Robert, (*enter servants*) get the boat in order.

I'll sail to-day—directly; (*exit servants*) will you not?—

Remember! such a sight——

RICHARD.

True, woe is me!

I shall miss all and more, your company:

But it must be.

WIDOW.

Nay, you shall have my company,
Whene'er you please to ask it.

RICHARD.

But the mystery
Of Balaam—You'll be late—

WIDOW.

True—despatch knaves!
I fain would hear the ass speak.

RICHARD.

I've heard many,
So 'tis no treat to me—but pray away,
The tide serves—do you hear the trumpets?

WIDOW.

Aye,
Not very well—but there they are, I dare say --
My boat, knaves farewell—gentle master Richard.

[Exit

RICHARD.

So, she is gone.

WIDOW (*returning.*)

Another word! the ass—
Is it a real ass?

RICHARD.

Truly, I know not.
The best informed, and such as are the deepest,
In the state secrets, say it is machinery,
Inflated with a funnel—

WIDOW.

With a funnel!
Well, 'tis ingenious—adieu, Master Richard.

[Exit.

RICHARD.

She's fairly off, I hope—Aye, there she steps
Aboard the boat—push well off, lads, or else
Some other question—Adieu, gentle dame—
The gate is softly opening—all is safe, love,
Come forth, my Mariana—

(Enter MARIANA from gate in front.)

My own heart!

My Mariana! What a purgatory

Have I endur'd—I fear'd she ne'er would leave me,

And I should lose the one hour of my day

In which my soul is banquetted, that feeds me

With hope and joy, that make my duller hours

One dream of this short sweet time.

MARIANA.

It must be short

This morning, Richard, for my uncle rose

Early, and soon returns; he hath some business

With Goldlove, that starv'd miser, or his nephew,

Young Flaw, the sly, young, spendthrift lawyer, who

Pretends to be enamour'd of me.

RICHARD.

It may be

To sacrifice thee to that demon, wealth,

Thy uncle worships—one way or the other

To wed thee to old Goldlove's hoards.

MARIANA.

Nay, Richard,

You wrong my uncle.

RICHARD.

He hath a sordid love

Of riches, and whoe'er hath that, yields all

Unto his idol.

MARIANA.

Thou wilt anger me ;
Aye, me—as gentle as you deem me, Richard
My uncle is a thrifty, careful man,
Frugal, abstemious, no miser, Richard.
He sordid ! 'tis that he will not be sordid
That he is thrifty.

RICHARD.

A cold, unkind man !

MARIANA.

Your fears speak, not your judgment : he unkind !
My uncle ! my dear uncle ! no, sir, the world
Has treated him unkindly—he has a heart
Open as yours, though not so rashly spent
In feeling 'ere his head prompts—He hath suffered
Deeply from treachery, hath the doubts that age
And sad experience cast, as 'twere a shield,
Before our unarm'd impulse. He unkind !
Didst ever hear him speak to me—or of me ?
Cold didst thou say ? thy love is not more fervent
Than his for me.

RICHARD.

Forgive me, Mariana.
My fears did speak and not my judgment.

MARIANA.

Aye,
I knew it—he's my uncle and I love him——

RICHARD.

And I will love him too.

MARIANA.

Aye, that you will.
Was I angry with you ?—there's my hand.

RICHARD.

It trembles

Yet——

MARIANA.

With no anger.

RICHARD.

I did fear these suitors.

MARIANA.

And have I nought to fear? The Widow Lovel——

RICHARD.

The Widow Lovel——nay——

MARIANA.

She's very rich,

And not past thirty; and I think would find

Her perch if you should whistle.

RICHARD.

Prythee, now ——

MARIANA.

Then the fair Isabel Beaufort.

RICHARD.

Mariana,

Spare that. She's gentle, noble, good—I would not

Even know or think that she——

MARIANA.

If she——

RICHARD.

Peace! peace!

My honour, faith, my love are pledg'd to you;

Nor would temptations of pride, beauty, power,

Cause me to hesitate—think of another;

But spare one who might almost call you sister.

MARIANA.

I will, I will ; my spirits were too free.
I might, how much more worthily, have pin'd
And perish'd hopeless.

RICHARD.

Ah ! that we could end
All thoughts but those of love— hush every doubt
In fond security—would I dare ask
Thy uncle.

MARIANA.

And you dare not ?

RICHARD.

Love, what am I ?
An orphan, nameless—a poor idle youth.
Stripped of the badge—the livery and protection
Of the Lord Beaufort · a mere helpless thing,
Without so much as a low handicraft
To earn a daily pittance. — I could not
I should blush for such a one to ask thy uncle
For this great treasure.

MARIANA.

Thou'rt wealthy, Richard,
In the integrity of an honest heart
And gentle breeding—and—

RICHARD.

What weigh these, love,
Against the world's wealth ? Thou'rt too dear to me
To wed thee to a state of poor dependence
Though 'twere my own. Lord Beaufort may promote me
To state or warlike service, and I may
Earn some distinction worth thee : at the worst

I must strive to be patient—being blest
But with a hope of thee.

MARIANA.

And fear not, Richard ;
I know my uncle—there may speedier means
Be found than court attendance, or promotion
Won tediously by scars.

Enter BRIDGET from the gate in front.

BRIDGET.

Madam, a boat,
In which I think I spy your uncle with
Old Goldlove and his nephew, Master Flaw,
Is rowing towards the terrace.

MARIANA.

Leave me, Richard ;
And, that our farewell may not be too long,
It shall not be a heavy one—go—hope
And fear not—fare thee well.

RICHARD.

Farewell Mariana :
I trust thee—as I love thee—with my soul—

[Exit at upper gate.]

MARIANA.

Farewell. Heaven bless thee—all the gracious prayers
That I can think I'll breathe for thee—Ah me,
I shall not see him 'till the morn again—
Never 'till now was time so wearisome.

*Enter from a boat, on the Terrace, SCROOPE, GOLDLOVE,
and FLAW.*

SCROOPE.

There's for thy fare—*(to Watermen attending.)*

GOLDLOVE.

His fare—sooth, 'tis too much.

SCROOPE.

Let's waste no more time on't.—Why, Mariana,
Good morrow! I had left the house an hour
'Ere thou would'st rise. Age finds small rest a-bed
When the mind's stirring and abroad—and youth,
Innocent and heedless, presses once again
Its pillow.—Youth's sleeps are so sweet and balmy.

MARIANA.

Good morrow, my dear uncle: Master Goldlove
And you good Master Flaw—good morning—sirs.

SCROOPE.

Yet is there something looks untowardly;
Thine eyes are misty, girl—

MARIANA.

'Tis nought, dear uncle.

SCROOPE.

Well, take in Master Flaw, and bid them set
A stoup or two of wine and some light cheer;
The river's air has made me hungry, and
Our friends will taste with us.

FLAW.

An opportunity
Not to be miss'd.—Sweet Mistress Mariana,
I follow you—oh, for a simile
To tell you how I follow you.

MARIANA.

Nay, sir—
Rack not your brain for it, 'twill keep you fasting—
Try if my uncle's wine inspire you, sir. *[Exit.*

FLAW.

A challenge, faith—she's struck—now, Master Flaw,
 Speak and she's won.

[Exit.]

SCROOPE.

Will't please you to walk in?
 Come, Master Goldlove—we'll dispatch that matter
 About the Indian tissues.

GOLDLOVE.

I but came, sir,
 To give my nephew countenance with your niece—
 As for the tissues we will talk on Change;
 He'll win her heart, sir.

SCROOPE.

'Tis a difficult prize,

GOLDLOVE.

But he's a lawyer, has a tongue is young, too,
 Swears, dances, drinks.

SCROOPE.

These are accomplishments;
 But yet I think her safe.

GOLDLOVE.

Makes poetry . . .

SCROOPE.

Ay, that's a subtle stealer of the heart:
 I thought he but wrote verses.

GOLDLOVE.

'Tis the same thing?

SCROOPE.

Not quite.

GOLDLOVE.

Dispatch him soon.

SCROOPE.

I will not keep him
Longer than needful.

GOLDLOVE.

Thank ye—thank ye—farewell. [Exit.

SCROOPE.

Farewell—I'll watch my neice and my young lawyer!
My poet!—that's a rare, unheard of union—
Ha! ha! a poet! This is poetry,
The sun, the rippling stream—the mighty wealth
Of nations clustering to our London mart,
The grandeur of pure nature and of man
In his proud enterprize, his lofty passions,
And his sublime endurance—all that tends
To lift the spirit upwards from controul
Of baseness:—'tis the heaven of high thoughts
That stirs our earthly natures—and this verse maker—
A poet!—Well—I'll join them.

[Exit.

SCENE II.—*The interior of SCROOPE'S house—A parlour neatly furnished and bearing every mark of wealthy comfort—Books, paintings, musical instruments, &c.*

FLAW and MARIANA.

FLAW.

Tush, my fair mistress, I am not that dull ass—
A studious lawyer.

MARIANA.

I wrong'd you not so much, sir.

FLAW.

It were a wrong, indeed—Old musty Lyttleton
 May grow yet mouldier for me—I'm not
 A shelf to carry folios—I but study
 As much law as will pass with my old uncle—

MARIANA.

To make his will, sir?

FLAW.

If 'twere in my favour
 I would not draw it up myself—No, lady——
 I'm for the stirring humours of the times——
 The ordinaries, plays, the bear-garden.
 Now of all things I love a bear-garden,
 Unless 'tis poetry.

MARIANA.

Ay, sir, 'tis difficult
 To choose between them.

FLAW.

Then there are the roarers,
 The brave Alsatians that despise the law
 And such weak cobwebs—

MARIANA.

And you know them too, sir?

FLAW.

Ay, marry, and have led them in some rambles.
 There was the last great robbery, of the plate

MARIANA.

Why, surely, sir—

FLAW.

Nay, nay, I would not boast—
 But he's no lad of spirit and true mettle

That hasn't seen the world—Why, there's Will Shakspeare
 In his last play of Falstaff, makes a king's son
 Turn highwayman for true sport—and they say, too,
 And I have heard him jest on't o'er his cups,
 That he once stole a deer.

MARIANA.

Then you know Shakspeare?

FLAW.

Know him—I've heard him swear 'tis such as I
 That he most loves to talk with—and I've seen
 A thing or two I've said in print—but car'd not
 To challenge it. Here comes your uncle, lady.

Enter SCROOPE.

And I had much to say to you.

SCROOPE.

Say on, sir—

I'll listen to you, too.

MARIANA.

Or Master Flaw

Can speak with you alone, sir.

FLAW.

What! already!

I've made short work of it. (*Aside.*)

SCROOPE.

My girl, I'll spare you

The pains of hearing him (*aside to her.*) Go, Mariana,

And bid Will wait me in the counting-room

With the account 'twixt me and Master Goldlove;

He will be here anon.

MARIANA.

I shall, dear uncle.

[*Exit.*]

FLAW.

And ere my uncle Goldlove come—I'd beg, sir,
Your ear to a proposal—

SCROOPE.

Come, speak out, sir —
My niece—

FLAW.

Sooth, sir, if I can guess her mind,
She hath left us here together that I may
Speak her desires as well as mine—I love her.

SCROOPE.

And think you she returns your passion ?

FLAW.

Nay.
I know not yet—love hath its ceremonies,
Its toys and trifles, serenades, love verses—
Then come the walks to Moorfields, progresses
By water down to Greenwich ; all which duties
I long to pay her.

SCROOPE.

Well, sir,—win and wed her.
Her answer's mine—but to pursue such wooing
Must to a young man, Master Goldlove's heir,
Who's not profuse in his allowance to you,
As I should guess, be somewhat chargeable ;
I have a hundred marks now unemployed,
Which if you choose to borrow——

FLAW.

I could pay it
Upon my marriage or my uncle's death,
Or any other fortunate time——

SCROOPE.

True, true, sir.

FLAW.

And 'tis an omen, sir, of your good wishes.
I hope for my acceptance with your niece.

SCROOPE.

Whatever it is I lend it freely, sir.

FLAW.

Whate'er interest?

SCROOPE.

Seal me but your bond
For the repayment when I call on you ;
I am no usurer, and lend the money
In hope of no such profit. Pray you step
Into my counting-room, and bid my clerk
Prepare the writing and tell out the gold.

FLAW.

I'll do it gladly, sir.

[*Exit.*

SCROOPE.

So, he is mine.

Enter BRIDGET.

Come hither, Bridget ; thou for fifteen years
Hast been a faithful servant.

BRIDGET.

Ay, sir—faithful
To a kind master.

SCROOPE.

Good, then! Tell me, Bridget,
What suitors hath my niece, besides the three
That have been here this morning?—as I think
Goldlove, or Flaw, or Parallel, could never

Call blushes on her cheek—unthought-of tears
 Within her downcast eye ; unconscious sighs,
 And that soft, gentle, happy melancholy
 That links all joys and sufferings of our thoughts
 In love.

BRIDGET.

I should not tell, perhaps.

SCROOPE.

I ask not
 For what in delicate and womanly feeling
 She may have trusted to thee ; I but ask
 Of my old servant that which her fidelity
 To me requires she should tell me. Fear not ;
 I think you've never known me use authority
 Cruelly to any ; and my niece——

BRIDGET.

The young Beaufort
 Hath spoken to her.

SCROOPE.

Ay, she told me so,
 Yet neither proudly nor yet timidly.
 Young Beaufort—'tis a name I love not—but
 If 'twere so, it might be a noble cause
 To arouse the charity I scarcely owe
 To that proud house.

BRIDGET.

Then—but I fear you'll chide her—
 She hath conversed, and more than once, with Richard,
 Lord Beaufort's page—Richard Fitz-Allan——

SCROOPE.

Wherefore
 Should I chide, Bridget ?

BRIDGET.

He's so gay and wild—
Thoughtless and kind too.

SCROOPE.

Happy, happy youth!
Fervid and generous youth! Shall our age dare
To envy and condemn thee? I have been young,
Though my life had but little youth in it.

BRIDGET.

But he's so poor—I thought——

SCROOPE.

And I so rich,
Have such a weight of needless wealth.

BRIDGET.

And he's
Somewhat improvident.

SCROOPE.

What hath he had
To make him provident? Improvident
Of my Lord Beaufort's pittance!—A just prudence
Comes oft with means of prudence.

BRIDGET.

You're not angry
For that they've met?

SCROOPE.

No. I would but secure
Her in a state as near to happiness
As earth may grant—content, or peace, or ease,
Whate'er it may be. Once I had belief
In happiness, and though for me 'twas madness,

Yet I'd resign the wisdom of experience
To hope she might be happy.

BRIDGET.

The young Beaufort——

SCROOPE.

A hornet! I'll enmesh him—gold—gold—gold!
And thinks't thou he or Richard?——

BRIDGET.

That I know not.

A lord's son—and to be my Lady Beaufort——

SCROOPE.

Are prizes to most women—toys to her;
At least if I can judge her. Stay!—no matter,
I must not bribe fidelity. I'll pay it
Some other time (*aside.*) Go to your mistress, Bridget,
And no word of our talk.

BRIDGET.

I shall observe, sir.

[*Exit.*

SCROOPE.

Yes, all!—the hornet, Beaufort, and the bee,
Young Richard—all!—I'll play the spider with:
But with no venom'd sting. Young Beaufort's needs
Are open: I can buy him cheap. I have
This first care of my life despatch'd and clear;
The full account of my affections closed
With Mariana's marriage. Then for Beaufort.
Lord Beaufort—the proud nobleman: his mortgage
Expires to-day. His houses, lands, himself,
All are within my grasp. Let but my heart
Pour out its charities on Mariana,
Then for a sterner and a stricter audit—
Severe and equal justice with Lord Beaufort.

[*Exit.*

ACT II.

SCENE I.—*The Gardens of BEAUFORT'S House.*

Enter RICHARD and ISABEL.

ISABEL.

Richard!
You must serve me in a matter of some trust;
There are some jewels I would sell—there's none
I would trust as I do you—will you?—

RICHARD.

Your jewels?
Sell them?

ISABEL (*hesitating.*)

They're old and useless, and—

RICHARD.

I'll do
As you would have me, madam; pardon me!
I was surprised.

ISABEL.

Yet must you know the truth,
And I dare trust you—my poor father's ruined.

RICHARD.

Ruined? Lord Beaufort! my kind benefactor!
And you, my kindest mistress.

ISABEL.

Your friend, Richard,
 And one who'll grieve to part from you—perchance
 We may scarce see each other more.

RICHARD.

If fortune
 Doom me to sorrow, it but little matters
 By how few it is shared; but should I thrive
 I must return to those who are my home,
 And claim their joy with mine—O, that I thus
 Might greet you!

ISABEL.

Would you, Richard?

RICHARD.

Call you sister!

ISABEL.

Sister!

RICHARD.

I am too bold.

ISABEL.

No. Be it so. "Sister:"
 You are henceforth my brother.

RICHARD.

A proud title
 To urge me to desert.

ISABEL.

See, some one comes.
 I'll hence and bring the jewels.

[Exit.]

RICHARD.

Poor! poor girl!
 Reared in the genial clime of soft indulgence
 How wilt thou shrink before the nipping blast

That sweeps along the barren icy shore
To which thou'rt banished? Fortune is but cowardly
To wreak its wrath on thee.

Enter EDWARD.

EDWARD.

Why, how now, Richard?
Thou with a moody brow!

RICHARD.

Nay, nay; 'tis nothing.

EDWARD.

Is it that Spendall presses thee for money?
We're at our last: my father's purse is empty.
But what! cheer up! I have a plan shall save all.
There's the old miser, Scroope, hath a fair neice.

RICHARD.

Mariana!

EDWARD.

Ay, thou knowest her—I will wed her.
Titles may weigh with gold—I shall have riches;
She shall be called my lady—why, what ails thee?
Thou hast no hopes there?

RICHARD.

None; I fear me, none.

EDWARD.

Nay, if thou lovest her—and that cheek of thine
Gives me shrewd guesses—thou must yield her, Richard.
What could'st thou offer to her careful uncle
In barter for his gold?

RICHARD.

Nothing. Yet, mark me,
Thou must not rival me with Mariana.

EDWARD.

Rival thee?

RICHARD.

Ay; although I have no hope,
No fortune, title, name, or quality
Of mind or person, that should bid me hope,
Thou must not rival me with Mariana.

EDWARD.

Rival! Dost think thou art my equal?

RICHARD.

Ay;
In this more than thine equal. Boast thy rank—
Add to it wealth—aye, pile on pile of gold;
Estates unmeasured, gems 'bove price, and then,
Still will I brave thee. Psha! thou knowest her not.
Mariana hath a heart.

SCROOPE appears at the gate.

EDWARD.

And here is one
To whom your high pretensions may be spoken,
What, Master Scroope, good day! Please you walk in;
You have not seen the grounds here.

[RICHARD retires.]

Enter SCROOPE at garden gate.

SCROOPE.

'Tis, indeed,
Some time since.

EDWARD.

When, man ?

SCROOPE.

Oh ! I had forgotten.
These grounds——

EDWARD.

Why, you were deep in other thought.

SCROOPE.

I was, indeed.

EDWARD.

Making a calculation
Of your last venture's profit, or the outlay
For your next merchandize.

SCROOPE.

My mind, sir, is not
Ever upon such trifles.

EDWARD.

Trifles !

SCROOPE.

Aye,
I have wealth enough now to afford to feel.
Pleasures, enjoyments, e'en domestic loves,
Are, with the poor, called idle ; with the rich,
They are feelings, tastes, and generous sentiments.
I have earned the rights which I once idly thought
Were nature's.

EDWARD.

You've enjoyments in your wealth
That many envy you—altho' they'd use it
In a different kind—not contemplate, but spend it.

SCROOPE.

Yes, sir, I have enjoyments in my wealth ;

And sometimes love to contemplate my riches.
Not that the chink of gold 'gainst gold can sound
A miser's music in my ears—or diamonds,
With care kept from the sun, dazzle my eyes
With an unholy lustre, when a lamp
Stealthily shines upon my hoards ; my wealth
I think of for its use. What are the pleasures
Men covet most ? I have the power of all.
What hath the world that I dare not call mine ?
Show me the palace, the rich furniture,
The fair domain, the meiny of attendants
I cannot make mine own ? this is mere pomp.
Show me the luxuries—the costly wines
The thousand pleasures that poor ingenuity
Starves to invent to pamper the dull rich,—
E'en with a word they're mine ; but this is sensual.
Show me the knowledge I may not controul,
The learning that I cannot buy, the talents,
Nay, e'en the genius, that I cannot claim
To mine own use ; but this, you'll say, is heartless.
Show me the friend would spurn my offered hand
'Tho I were baseness' self ; show me the love,
'Tho e'en I were decrepitude, could ward
My golden shower from Danæ's lap.
They are, I own, but mercenary minds
That could be won thus—but my wealth, sir, gives me
A power o'er men's hearts as well as actions :
It can controul the proud, support the weak,
Confront mean greatness with an equal port,
And cheer with happy hope poor humble merit—
Strive with the bitterest foes that crush young hearts,
Relieve old age's cares, soothe pain and sickness,

And make the happiest lovers bless its power,
E'en mid the fervour of their holiest thoughts.
Yes, sir, I have enjoyments in my wealth,
And I do love to contemplate its might.

EDWARD.

You argue well for it.

SCROOPE.

There are other uses
Which time may prove for it—they may be felt,
Not spoken :—meanwhile I've an argument
Would win e'en you to praise it.

EDWARD.

Nay, I am bound
To rail—I'm poor enough to make common cause
'Gainst its possessors.

SCROOPE.

Say that I should lend you
What you may need or wish ?

EDWARD.

I've no rich jewels,
Nor vast reversions to bind over to you :
My father hath left his heir not even that chance
To move the hearts of lenders.

SCROOPE.

Your own bond
Shall well suffice me for three hundred pounds.

EDWARD.

Nay, it shall ne'er be said I lost the money
Because I would not ask it. I confess
I'm a full convert to your argument.

SCROOPE.

In time you will be.

EDWARD.

There's a threat in that.

SCROOPE.

You fear yourself, not me, if you refuse it.

EDWARD.

Well, well, lend me the money.

Enter RICHARD.

Master Scroope

Lends me three hundred pounds, tho' for what reason
I'll not e'en strive to guess.

SCROOPE.

Another debtor!

Yes, though you wonder.

RICHARD.

How?

SCROOPE.

You know one Spendall?

He is a bankrupt; I'm his creditor—

His chief, almost his only creditor.

You owe him money: if you prove deserving,

And I'm no rigid censor of my friendship,

You shall owe me nought but gentle gratitude.

RICHARD.

I thank you frankly.

SCROOPE.

Give me then your hand on't.

Your's is a face recalls to me some joys,

When I was young and buoyant, that would sparkle,

Thus in the eye. I'll not betray your friendship,

Stand you but true to mine. (*To* EDWARD) Within this half
hour

I shall expect you.

[*Exit*

EDWARD.

'Tis a miracle,
Or his familiar fiend, the demon, gold,
Is leading him in quagmires. Parallel!

Enter PARALLEL.

PARALLEL.

I saw old Master Scroope here : hath he left you ?

RICHARD.

Yes, Master Parallel, and left us merrier
That he hath been here.

PARALLEL.

Would that I had seen him.

RICHARD.

Why, master tutor, you look somewhat fearful :
What is the matter, sir ?

PARALLEL.

Nay, nothing, nothing.
I must to Master Scroope's.

EDWARD.

And wherefore thither ?

PARALLEL.

For money.

EDWARD.

Why, what pawn would'st offer him ?

PARALLEL.

None ; yet he'll lend me.

RICHARD.

Thee too ? What need'st thou ?

PARALLEL.

Ten marks to pay
A tailor for a suit I had at college.

I thought he had forgotten me—yet now
 I saw his ominous visage o'er the shoulder
 Of one o' the city's varlets, and I feared
 Lest he should spy me : all my hopes were gone
 Were I arrested now—first Mariana.

RICHARD.

Master Scroope's niece.

PARALLEL.

Ay, ay—Why, wherefore laugh ye?
 He offered me this morning a large sum,
 I warrant in his mind, full twenty marks.

EDWARD.

Well, take it Master Parallel, and all
 Are then his debtors, Richard, 'gainst his will,
 And I with mine : whate'er the merchant seeks
 We shall have our venerable tutor here
 In the same predicament. In half an hour,
 Or less, you'll meet with Scroope at his own house.

[*Exeunt EDWARD and PARALLEL into house.*]

Enter ISABEL with a casket.

ISABEL.

I have watched till you were alone. You can dispose
 Of these, and keep a hundred pounds, in which
 I but pay my father's debts.

RICHARD.

Not so, dear lady.
 Not so—by heaven ! I would not take from him
 To whom I owe my nurture, one poor doit
 Now in his poverty. I am too much bound to him,
 Too hopelessly. And you—it is not kind,
 At parting thus, by deeds to call me selfish.
 I will not touch those jewels.

ISABEL.

Yes, for me!

For I shall need your service—but for me!

RICHARD.

Ay, you will promise to receive the money—

All, or I touch them not.

ISABEL.

I promise it.

[EDWARD *appears from the house.*

RICHARD.

Then give me them and I will find a chapman,

A fair and honest one—and I thank heaven

He's known to me—and even from him I'll urge

The extremest value for your sake—farewell.

[*Exit at gate.*

ISABEL.

Noble and generous youth—I will not leave thee

In debt to some harsh creditor—he'll gladly

Receive the gold which thou refuseth proudly.

Edward!

EDWARD.

Aye, Isabel, blush not—what was't

You gave to Richard? Girl, if you'd buy hearts,

'Twere well you chose a true one.

ISABEL.

You're sententious.

Have you done? There may be yet another venture

In which I would embark my little store,

One of pure friendship, brother :—it may be,

Richard refuses even that kindness from me.

EDWARD.

No anger, Isabel! Our time of pride
 Is past, and had Fitz-Alan been your lover
 You had removed a somewhat from my path,
 An obstacle, it may be, or a rival ;
 But we shall see.—Farewell.

[*Exit at gate.*

ISABEL.

Why did I not
 Reply with scorn to this imputed folly ?
 For it were folly now—once I had thought it
 A generous sacrifice—perchance a happy one :
 But he loves another—I am now his sister.
 I have with care enquired of his debts
 And thus, at least, against his will, I'll serve him.

[*Exit.*

 SCENE II.—SCROOPE'S *Counting-house.*

SCROOPE and WILLIAM.

SCROOPE.

Place this bond of young Beaufort's in the chest,
 The iron safe—I have him there securely. [*Exit WILLIAM.*
 The hour approaches for my forfeit mortgage,
 How shall I deal with him ? If ever vengeance
 Were holy—but it is not—there's a peace,
 A calm content of conscience, will not dwell
 With wrath, however seeming just.—Who feels
 That he is frail, dares not revenge, but trusts

To mercy for the showing it. I'll be calm,
I will do even justice— more, show mercy,
Lest I should be unjust.

Enter RICHARD with the casket

How now, my friend!
A moment—I was thinking—Well, what would you?

RICHARD.

I come to trade, sir, with you

SCROOPE

Aye, have with you!
In what?

RICHARD.

These jewels : I would sell them.

SCROOPE.

How!

These are a woman's gear.

RICHARD.

Pray ask no questions.

If you would show me friendship, I would have
The utmost value for them.

SCROOPE.

That's strange trading.

RICHARD.

Well, then—

SCROOPE.

But you said "friendship," I allow it.

You shall have their utmost value : let me see them.

Why, what is this?

[Takes up a ring.]

RICHARD.

A ring—a little ring.
There are richer jewels.

SCROOPE.

Yes, this ring was hers.
There is the cipher which I marked myself,
And gave it her.

RICHARD.

You're moved!

SCROOPE.

Aye, there are memories
Between me and the house of Beaufort, which
This ring, as 'twere a talisman, calls up!
In clear and distinct vision. Methinks I see her,
And by this token, this, the holiest token,
She calls for vengeance. You have seen me moved
At a strange cause—at least to you. We are,
You have said it, friends.

RICHARD.

I have—how can I prove——?

SCROOPE.

You will be silent, as you had not known it,
Of this my strange emotion.

RICHARD.

You've my word.

SCROOPE.

Enough, now leave me.—Ah, the jewels!—yes,
I recked not of them; I will send their value,
Their full and ample value, to you straight,
And something, too, for this—this priceless ring!
Go, wonder, but be silent.

RICHARD.

Fear me not, sir.

[Exit

SCROOPE.

My poor, poor wife! and this was thine, the pledge—
 The first pledge of my love. What mystery
 Is there in providence to send me this,
 Now, in the very tide of my strong power?
 Thou bauble, would thou wert intelligent
 Of the future as the past—for so much love,
 And so much bitter wrong, thou speak'st to me
 To shake my very nature to its centre.
 As the final trumpet-call shall rend the earth
 Changing the laws of being.

MARIANA (*without.*)

William! William!

SCROOPE.

Mariana's voice! Ay, let me think of her,
 No pain can share with that thought—Mariana!
 Yet lie thou near my heart, for thou'rt a symbol
 Of love, which grief could but grave deeper there—
 Of love, which Death could only make immortal.

SCENE III.—*The Terrace, as in Act I., Scene I.*

RICHARD *and* MARIANA.

MARIANA.

And must you leave us? What sad chance is this?
 Even as my hopes were brightest, for my uncle
 Spoke kindly of you. I said ye had hearts
 To love each other—did I not?

RICHARD.

Sweet prophet!

And wilt thou love me, Mariana, still?
 Though proud fate trample on me, tho' my lot
 Be poverty and scorn —though chilling absence——

MARIANA.

Speak not so sadly; see, here comes old Goldlove,
 And your friend, if he be so, Edward Beaufort.

RICHARD.

Let's walk from them; I've much to say.

Enter WIDOW LOVEL from her house; takes RICHARD'S arm
 S'death, she here!

Enter EDWARD and GOLDLOVE, who go to MARIANA.

WIDOW.

You are a wise youth, Master Richard, thus
 To listen to advice; nay, come for it.
 You have received my letter?

RICHARD (*aside.*)

I had forgotten it,
 Or ne'er had ventured hither.

WIDOW.

I am well pleased
 With this mark of your punctual courtesy,
 And will, in due time, thank you for it; but first
 I have a quarrel with you.

RICHARD.

Pray you, dame,
 Spare both your thanks and anger, and so make
 The matter even.

WIDOW.

Nay, to send me up
 As far as Westminster, to see the queen,

The whales, the unicorn, and Balaam's ass,
 And there was no such sight, nor any sign
 Of progress or procession !

RICHARD.

Woe is me !
 Just as you quitted me, I had bethought me
 My information was apocryphal ;
 I had it from a sort of Jesuit
 I' th' service of the Pope and King of Spain,
 As I learnt afterwards.

WIDOW.

A per'lous traitor !
 To spread his false reports ! you should reveal him
 To my Lord Mayor.

RICHARD.

I would, if it were possible
 To find him.

WIDOW.

Well, the truth's the best excuse ;
 Therefore I pardon you : but I must blame you
 In another sort.

RICHARD.

Some other time, dear lady

WIDOW.

“ There's no time like the present,” says the proverb ;
 And, sooth, there's many a true proverb. — Come
 This way ; they'd fain o'erhear us ;—I must tell you
 It touches you to hear me.—

RICHARD.

Sure, St. Anthony
 Had ne'er severer trials of his patience.

[*They go up.*]

EDWARD.

Now for one fortunate instant ; I may speak
To you alone—I love you, Mariana.

MARIANA.

Pray, spare me, sir, I am not worthy.

EDWARD.

Nay,
Deny me not an hour of gentle converse,
That I may urge my suit—we are now too public.

MARIANA.

Not for the answer I must give you, sir.
I thank you, and, that said, I've but one word ;
My heart's another's, and, as you are noble,
You'll scorn to urge me further.

EDWARD.

So, 'tis Richard's.
Well, 'tis a pity that he prizes not
The preference :—are you content to share
His love with yon gay widow ? See, she leads him
In a close converse and bends fondly toward him
And he—

MARIANA.

Endures it, sir !—but who hath told you
'Tis he who hath my heart ?

EDWARD.

Do you deny it ?

MARIANA.

Have you the right to question ? Yet I'll answer.
He's mine, and I am his ; if there be truth
In the soul's language—in that fervid trust,
Which, without vows or any other bond
Than that of innocent truth, plights guileless love

Firmly as though the troth were pledged in heaven,
From which the affection sprung.—I love him, sir,
And trust him, and the meaning of your brow,
Deep drawn as 'twas when speaking of yon widow,
I answer with a smile.—You cannot smile too,
For you would wrong your friend.

EDWARD.

I but surmised——

MARIANA.

Well, sir, you see how much I share your fears.
I leave them to their converse—fare you well, sir. [Exit.

EDWARD.

So 'tis is a prosperous day with me, yon proud one!—
But even her pride's a spur to my desires,
Makes them o'erleap the formal barrier conscience,
Which, at the first, I shrunk from. I'll accept
His boastful challenge.—I should like to change
His triumph into disappointed anger—
My envy to victorious malice. Come!
They wait us, Richard—I've a thought shall do it.
Those jewels! I may frame a tale from them!
Richard, I say; the bell sounding dinner!

RICHARD.

I come—farewell, my gentle dame.

WIDOW.

To-morrow

I will pursue my counsel—or indeed
This afternoon—cannot you dine with me?

RICHARD.

Excuse me; I am expected.

WIDOW.

Well, sir, well,
Remember I shall wait you.

[Exit.

RICHARD.

You shall wait me
Indeed, or ere I come, my gentle mistress ;
I must have even called some sudden sickness,
The plague, or some such kind disease, to scare her ;
For as you spoke I dreaded an avowal
In plain and open terms. See, she is peeping
Now from her casement—run, or I'm her prisoner.

[*Exit.*

EDWARD.

A plague upon his fortunes, or his face,
I know not which, that women thus doat on him.

Enter PARALLEL from SCROOPE'S.

EDWARD.

So, Master Parallel, I need your service.

PARALLEL.

Why, service hath its kind, degree, condition,
Honour, dishonour, safety, peril, accidents,
Beyond enumeration.

EDWARD.

My request
Is first your silence—I'd have your assistance
In my suit to Mariana.

PARALLEL.

Humph! that can't be.
I have hopes of her myself.

EDWARD.

You hopes of her !
What, 'cause you have a loan from Master Scroope ?

PARALLEL.

I have, sir, and I'm brave in it ; for this bravery
Hath many kinds, the bravery of soul,

The bravery of purse, of dress, of lineage,
Of——

EDWARD.

Stay! Is yours a bravery to meet
A tailor and two varlets?

PARALLEL.

You shall see, sir.
Ay! they're the very hang dogs—Mark my bearing!
It shall be a specimen of that true courage
That springs from what's within.—(*Chinking a purse.*)
A fortitude
Can answer all draughts on it.

Enter TAILOR, and two Officers.

So! approach, sirs.
I have sought long—(*aside*)—to keep out of your way.
It troubles me to carry money with me
That's not mine own; for the first joy of money
Is the right to expend it.

TAILOR.

Please your worship
I'm glad, indeed, we've found you; but, good varlet,
Tap him o' th' shoulder, or we lose our costs.
You are arrested, sir.

PARALLEL.

Ay, ay, arrested.
Where's your demand? Some ten marks, is it not?
Mark but my bearing (*to EDWARD.*) Rascal! here they are.

TAILOR.

Alas! good sir, ten marks will pay but little
Of the debt now.

PARALLEL.

How?

TAILOR.

Costs, sir, have accrued.
I'm sorry that your worship found me not :
I've been at charges for an outlawry :
And that, with the attendance of our friends here,
Shall let you cheaply off at twenty pounds.

EDWARD (*to PARALLEL.*)

Well, sir, I mark your bearing.

PARALLEL.

Twenty pounds !

EDWARD.

A perfect specimen of fortitude
Which springs from that within !

PARALLEL.

Twenty pounds ! Ruined !

EDWARD.

Stay ! these are friends, and merciful, no doubt.
You, sir—(*to TAILOR.*)

TAILOR.

Oh no, sir, we have caught him now :
And, by the livery of our company,
Their arms, the needle, goose, and fatal shears !—
Or all that can be thought more dread and solemn—
I swear I'll have his body or the payment.

PARALLEL.

In full ?

TAILOR.

In full.—I told you I would do it
If you paid not.

PARALLEL.

All things conspire against me !
Even tailors keep their words !

EDWARD.

Your leave a moment!

TAILOR.

Is it to speak upon the means of payment?

EDWARD.

It is.

TAILOR.

Then stand you here—you post yourself
By this gate, and be ready with your poles
To knock him down if he should stir. Now, sir, [to PAR.
You're quite at liberty.

EDWARD.

Where are your hopes now
Of Mariana?

PARALLEL.

Oh, 'tis cruel, thus
To mock me in my mortal agony,
For death has many doors; we'll say some forty
First——

EDWARD.

Zounds! Is this a time to talk divisions?
I'll pay the debt.

PARALLEL.

You will?

EDWARD.

On one condition.
You've now no hope of Mariana?

PARALLEL (*sighs.*)

True!

EDWARD.

But I may have some yet—if you will join me
In a slight slander, aid me to devise it,

And then deliver it to Mariana.

You are a grave, staid person, and your words
May be, perchance, believed. Say, will you do this
If I should free you ?

PARALLEL.

I'll do any thing.

EDWARD.

You may ask audience of her as a suitor,
For all these are admitted, and then speak
What we shall plan for you.

PARALLEL.

But whoop these hounds off,
I'll say or swear whatever you direct me.

TAILOR.

Are we to have the money ?

EDWARD.

Friends ! bear witness,
I lend him twenty pounds to pay his debt,
And at his strong entreaty—Is't not so ? [To PAR.]

PARALLEL.

At my most strong, importunate entreaty.

EDWARD.

There 'tis, and he is free (*gives money.*)

TAILOR.

Thanks ! noble sir.

[To PAR.] There is my hand, sir, I bear no man malice.
It always grieves me to lock up my customers.
Come friends—you'll chance, perhaps, to want a suit ?

PARALLEL.

No ; no more of your suits, they fit me not.

[Exit TAILOR, &c.]

EDWARD.

Come, Master Parallel, come, a cup of wine,
And then to make me a repayment.

PARALLEL.

Ay!

You're a fit type of Lucifer; you've saved
My body but to catch my soul.

EDWARD.

Your body's
Nothing to boast of; yet best of the twain.
But come and learn your lesson, my grave tutor.

[Exeunt.]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.—*The Garden or Court-yard of Scroope's house. Before the house, R. H., a porch with seats in it. The entrance gate opening inwards, L. H.*

SCROOPE *meeting* ISABEL.

ISABEL.

I would speak with Master Scroope.

SCROOPE.

He waits your pleasure.

ISABEL.

There is a debt due to you from Fitz-Alan,
My father's page—some fifty pounds—on his part
I come to pay it.

SCROOPE.

On your father's part?
His steward then—pardon me—yours is not
A face that I dare crimson, or a heart
That I dare pain; but this account of Richard's
Must not be settled thus.

ISABEL.

Why, what expect you
More than the payment?

SCROOPE.

Not so much, perhaps,
Unless I am sure from whom that payment comes.
I am a cautious man, honest withal :
Should I rob the child who'd pay her father's debts,
His very kindnesses, out of the store,
The little store, his prodigality
Has left her ?

ISABEL.

Nay, sir.

SCROOPE.

I have a right to praise you,
Nearer than you would think—a right to love you.
Richard is free on one condition only.

ISABEL.

Name it.

SCROOPE.

That you receive the jewels which
You sent by him this morning. He has not
Betray'd you—nor would I, even if I could
Read aught in you that is not just and noble.—
I'll bring the jewels.

ISABEL.

Nay—

SCROOPE.

If, ere the night fall
You think that you should not receive them from me
Give them again.

ISABEL.

I know not how to doubt you.
Stay, some one comes, I'd not be seen.

SCROOPE.

Nor shall you.

'Tis Master Parallel with my niece, step in

And rest you in that chamber. I will sit

Here in the porch.

[Exit ISABEL.

[SCROOPE sits in the porch. MARIANA and PARALLEL enter at the gate.]

MARIANA.

Come in, grave sir!

PARALLEL.

Nay, not grave now, sweet mistress;

The subject I would treat of is a gay one,—

That is, it hath, when properly divided,

Both gaiety and gravity, being Love;

Which is a feeling, passion, or sensation,

To be handled logically, thus—

MARIANA.

Good, sir,

Is't thus you would be gay?

PARALLEL.

If you but wait

Until the thirteenth point you'll see how merrily

And wittily 'tis treated.

MARIANA.

Come! away sir

With all this musty logic! I'm unlearned

And fain would hear you in a simpler tongue.

(Enter EDWARD unperceived.)

EDWARD.

I'll listen how my pupil-tutor speeds

In the lesson I have taught him! ha! the porch there!

[Approaches the porch gradually during the dialogue.]

MARIANA.

What news abroad, sir, or what scandal have you ?

PARALLEL.

Scandal !

MARIANA.

Aye, scandal, that's our Latin, sir ;

And if you are not learned in that tongue

You'll gain no honours in a female college.

PARALLEL.

Scandal,—why, no—yet yes ; for, to speak plainly,

Scandal is not at all times scandalous.

MARIANA.

Oh, no.

PARALLEL.

And there are pleasing, light discourses,

In which we sift and analyse the feelings

Of friends, which savour strongly of humanity.

MARIANA.

Certainly.

PARALLEL.

For we know that human nature

Hath two sides at the least.

MARIANA.

To understand it,

We must turn it inside out.

PARALLEL.

Exactly so.

Now of yourself.

MARIANA.

Of me! Scandal of me!

PARALLEL.

No, that might not amuse you ; but of one
 Who, being one, would of that one make twain,
 Yet of the twain but one. One who would wed you.

MARIANA.

One of my lovers?

PARALLEL.

Ay, Richard Fitz-Alan.

[RICHARD *appears at gate ; hearing his name, stops ;
 goes behind the door and listens.*

There was some noise.

MARIANA.

Nay, nothing ; pray, go on.

PARALLEL.

Ahem ! hem !

[EDWARD *has now gained the porch.*

EDWARD (*sees SCROOPE.*)

Ha!

SCROOPE.

Silence ! Enter ! Sit you down

PARALLEL.

There was a noise that way.

[MARIANA and SCROOPE *exchange signals.*

MARIANA.

Nay ; nothing, nothing.

What is it you would say of Richard ?

PARALLEL.

Ah ! you love him.

Nay, do not blush, there are none by to hear us.

Hem ! To divide——

MARIANA.
Divide!

PARALLEL.
As one might say,
Cut up his character.

MARIANA.
Yes, that's the point—
Cut up his character.

PARALLEL.
We may consider it
Under five heads; as, first, his love to you,
Which branches into two considerations,
As, whether it be real or pretended.

MARIANA.
Good, sooth! I've sometimes doubted that.

[*Looking at RICHARD*

PARALLEL.
Ay, doubt
Is parent of all truth. But, to proceed:
Marry, now, treat the point Socratically.
How many doors or entrances hath love
Into the heart?

MARIANA.
As many as the senses.
All are love's portals; though, when the proudest comes,
He comes, as conqueror's use, by his own path,
And sympathy's that breach.

PARALLEL.
Ay, ay, that's well!
But, I know not how it is, to speak of love
No maid discusses it with logical propriety.

MARIANA.

But Richard——

PARALLEL.

You're impatient. I'll be brief,
 And handle but these facts : that he hath seen
 The lady Isabel Beaufort ; then discuss
 Her beauty, and its probable effects ;
 Thence turning to her poverty, the changes
 Which that might work, proving that interest
 Hath sometimes, too, its share in marriage, thence
 Descanting on his change from her to you,
 And touching, as a pleasant episode,
 Upon some jewels which to-day she gave him.

RICHARD.

(*Aside*) Malignant slanderer !

PARALLEL.

What noise was that ?

MARIANA.

Nothing. You'd pledge your honour to the truth
 Of such a strange narration ?

PARALLEL.

Marry would I.

For if the premises be false, the argument
 That might be built thereon, howe'er ingenious,
 Were but a rope of sand.

RICHARD.

(*Aside*) The unblushing rascal !

MARIANA.

Hush ! as you love.

RICHARD.

I'd kill and eat the villain.

MARIANA.

'Twere better I should turn my thoughts from him
And fix them on a wiser, sadder man.

PARALLEL.

What! can it be! "a wiser, sadder man!" (*aside.*)

MARIANA.

And yet I know but one.

PARALLEL.

(*Aside*) She must mean me.
Oh happy Parallel! at length your studies
Will meet their due reward.

[RICHARD *threatening in gesture.*

MARIANA.

True, Edward Beaufort
Has offer'd me his hand.

PARALLEL.

(*Aside*) I may supplant him.
I should like much to read a lecture to you
Of many various vices which are mingled
So curiously in him 'twould be delightful
To expatiate upon so fine a subject.

EDWARD.

How!

SCROOPE.

Listen! If 'tis false you may be patient.

PARALLEL.

First! his cold heart and selfishness—example,
A tale of him and an Italian girl,
A poor forsaken—

EDWARD.

Death! the peerless villain.

SCROOPE.

Silence! I say: hear out the sland'rous falsehood.

PARALLEL.

Of facts, thus—How he brought her from the Low Countries;
How, while he lov'd, he furnish'd her with gold;
But now—

EDWARD.

The slave (*aside*.)

PARALLEL.

I'm sure I heard a noise.

MARIANA.

Go on, go on.

PARALLEL.

Then taking fit occasion
To move the hearer's feelings by relation;
For feeling may sometimes be used to open
The ears to a discourse—

MARIANA.

It may, indeed!

PARALLEL.

By the relation how he abandoned her,
Poor, friendless, far from home, strange to our language,
With many other happy points.

MARIANA.

The heartless,
Unfeeling wretch! I'st true?

PARALLEL.

True!—do but offer
What solemn oath you please, and I will swear it.

SCROOPE (*restraining* EDWARD.)

Nay, be not mov'd : whoever speaks a lie
Will, save from fear, as easily swear to it.

MARIANA.

Poor girl ! base villain ! Pardon, worthy sir,
I was thinking.—Mine's a most unhappy case :
Where shall I find a suitor true and honest ?

PARALLEL.

Might I presume to speak to you of love ?

MARIANA.

You !

PARALLEL.

Aye. I will not now speak of divisions
In which to handle the sweet subject, since
'Tis union not division that I seek—
By this fair hand—(*kneeling.*)

[PARALLEL, *in some confusion, has kept his eyes averted during the previous speech. MARIANA has beckoned on RICHARD and placed him between her and PARALLEL, who takes RICHARD'S hand before he sees him.*

RICHARD.

Well, sir, why don't you swear ?
'Tis the first time that you have hesitated.
(*Draws*) 'Sblood but I'll end thee on the spot. I'll make thee
The martyr as th' apostle of all slander.

PARALLEL.

Oh ! mercy, mercy !

RICHARD.

Straight confess thy sins !
Knowest thou one act of mine, one simple word,
To justify thy monstrous lies ?

PARALLEL.

Not one.

Save that—I've heard—the jewels—

RICHARD.

But their use—

By my honour, I am free (*to MARIANA.*) What know you
of it?

PARALLEL.

Nothing.

RICHARD.

Nor why I took them?

PARALLEL.

No.

RICHARD.

These falsehoods—

What motive hadst thou to invent them? Speak!

PARALLEL.

Must I tell all?

RICHARD.

Or die, by my just wrath!

PARALLEL.

I was set on by Master Edward Beaufort.

RICHARD.

Rise, wretch, and—

MARIANA (*looking at EDWARD.*)

Stay! hold yet your sword to him

For then he swears sincerely. Spoke you truth

In what you said of Beaufort?

PARALLEL.

Very nearly,

Not much embellished.

RICHARD.

Go.

EDWARD (*advancing as PARALLEL retreats.*)

Scandalous liar!

I, too, have overheard thee!

SCROOPE.

Kill him not—

His fears at least have made us some amends :

We have learnt more from him than you intended.

PARALLEL.

I've but improved upon some hints you gave me,

Placing them, as a man of learning should do,

In apt and proper order and division.

SCROOPE.

So far, at least, he's stedfast. I'll protect thee

In this, thy just avowal. You have made, sirs,

A pretty hiding-place of my poor garden.

I wish you joy o' the sport.

EDWARD.

Do you believe, then,

Fair Mariana?—

MARIANA.

Can I doubt your tutor?

The witness you selected for my credence?

For your own sake, no more.

EDWARD.

Do they dare mock me?

Brave me in love and vengeance? Let them look to 't.

There's not the power in earth or hell I'd shrink from

To gain revenge. Farewell; you'll learn to know me

Better, I trust. I'll prove to you what I am.

[Exit.

SCROOPE.

Do you not follow your employer, sir ?

PARALLEL.

I pray you, is there no back way ? for though
He spoke not, yet there are more indications
Of wrath, than speech—as first, just such a look
As he took leave with.

SCROOPE.

Step, sir, through the passage ;
’Twill lead you to the water side.

PARALLEL.

I’ll take it.
For various roads have their conveniences,
Which, at your leisure, of my gratitude
I will at full discuss to you ; but now,
For many reasons which shall then and there
Be well expounded, I would save my throat
Which, one might argue, runs no little hazard
If I should tarry longer.—So, adieu, sir.

[Exit.]

SCROOPE.

So, we are free of two of them ;—and you, sir—

(to RICHARD.)

RICHARD.

I have been to blame to use so little ceremony.
Yet must I ask your ear awhile to swear to you,
Howe’er it seem against me,—there’s no truth
In all the baseness he has taxed me with,
Though honour bids me to be silent.

SCROOPE.

Well,
If there be not, you’ve nought to fear.—I have
A certain means to know all.

RICHARD.

Mariana,
You'll not believe—

SCROOPE.

She will know all; and you,
If you are innocent, I pledge my word.
Your fame is clear with both.—Dare you abide this?

RICHARD.

I dare.

SCROOPE.

Enough—nay look not fearfully
I am bound t'ye for an honourable judgment.

[*Exit* RICHARD.]

MARIANA.

He is slandered, I am sure on't.

SCROOPE.

Are you so?
Then I am sure—But here is one will tell us.

Enter ISABEL.

You have heard all?

ISABEL.

I have.

SCROOPE.

It was a hearing
I would you had been spared.

ISABEL.

Ay, for myself
A brother's baseness is a sister's shame—
More, when my name's their theme;—but I have learnt
The necessity of endurance.—Mariana,
All they have said of Richard is a slander.

He refused from me a portion, a mere trifle,
 Of what remained to me;—nor have I any,
 The slightest claim, upon his faith, save this,
 The friendship of a brother and a sister,
 And, in that friendship, here before your uncle,
 I tell you, I am sure you have his love,
 And by mine honour he is worthy yours.
 I would have you his—and happy.

SCROOPE.

Mariana!

MARIANA.

Uncle!

SCROOPE.

Ay, you're too happy to say more.
 Lead in your sister, for she shall be so
 If she is Richard's sister. I will follow you
 And bring the jewels—all but one, which I
 Have even a better claim to than yourself;—
 Go in my children.

[*Exeunt MARIANA and ISABEL.*]

Is my heart so tender
 After its rough and weather-beaten voyage?
 That is a noble girl! I was all sternness,
 And her face won me—'twas so like—oh! woman!
 Man's tutelar to save him from himself,
 Light of our joys and solace of our griefs,
 Heaven's masterpiece of heaven's perfection—love!
 Fierce anger and old hate flee from the spell
 Of thy subduing voice and piteous eye,
 And leave the heart to thine own charity.

Enter WILLIAM.

WILLIAM.

So please you, sir, Lord Beaufort would desire
Some speech with you, an hour hence.

SCROOPE.

He is happy
To choose his time thus—well?

WILLIAM.

And he would know
Where you would meet him? here or at his house?

SCROOPE.

His house! I'll spare his honour—I'll go to him
Within this half hour. (*Exit WILLIAM.*) Yes, at once I'll
end this.

Shall my better thoughts be but as the false verdure
That clothes a fell volcano? I must quench
This Etna—I'll speak once more with his daughter.

[*Exit into house.*]

SCENE II.—*A Room in a Tavern in Alsatia.* FLAW,
BLOODMORE, RIVERS, and MOUSEHEART, at a Table,
drinking, others gaming, &c.

FLAW.

So, they have turned off poor Will Paston to-day? od's
my life! he was a merry roystering rogue!

BLOODMORE.

Ay, sir, this morning we three stole out to pay our respects
at his carting.—As pretty a man as ever had his neck in a

noose!—No whining, flinching, or blabbing!—Died quite like a gentleman!

FLAW.

It's odd how one's friends drop off!

BLOODMORE.

The lawyers, sir! the villanous lawyers! that will not abide by the old adage—"Live and let live." No offence to you, Master Flaw, for I never wish to quarrel but in the way of business: I am too much of a regular, Heaven be praised! to care for any amateur amusement that way.

FLAW.

Right, sir, right! I'm no lawyer now, you know:—my uncle confined me once, to be sure, in a set of cobweb'd chambers, with a loaf and a pitcher, like an immured nun; so first I gamed, and lost the little cash I had, then I wrote verses, but nobody would publish them; at last I learned a trick or two on the cards—could cog a die or so; that brought me acquainted with you, gentlemen, where I have found that the shortest way for a man who makes too free with his own money is to make free with other people's.

BLOODMORE.

Yes, you have passed through all the degrees of a cutter.—But, how now, Rivers and Mouseheart, you are sad: I hope the little accident this morning hasn't shaken your nerves.—Death, you know, gentlemen, must happen to every body, and I should think hanging as pleasant as any, if one hadn't the trouble of getting up so early in the morning.

RIVERS.

I was thinking of the woe-struck girl, that stood
Beside me in the crowd,—so pale and thin,
With her large speaking eyes, first bent on th' earth,

As tho' she shared his shame, then fixed on him,
With such a deep, tearless anxiety,
Such breathless anguish, until that last moment ;
And then she fell stone dead into the arms
Of the old man ! His father and his sister,
'Twas the first time I ever feared to die.

FLAW.

Did you assist her ?

RIVERS.

I scarce thought myself
Fit to console her ; and I hope—I hope
She needed no more consolation here.
I hope she woke no more in this harsh world.

MOUSEHEART.

I thought he struggled hard and suffered much.

BLOODMORE.

Come, gentlemen ! Is this conversation to entertain our friend, Flaw, who so liberally imparteth to us ? Is this encouragement for a hopeful young gentleman, whose lamented fate and gallant behaviour shall, I hope, be sung in as many ballads as Robin Hood ? Is it thus you train youth to glory ? Fie upon't ! What, we are all born to live ; we can't live without means ; and if we can't come by them honestly, there is but one other way.

FLAW.

True, if my uncle, Goldlove, were no curmudgeon, I might be content to be honest.

RIVERS.

And if——No matter ! You're right, Bloodmore, we're in for't ; so another stoup ! and let remorse go look after reflection.

BLOODMORE.

Ay, that's it! Drink, boys! if it gives you the head-ache, it leaves no room for the heart-ache. Here's Master Flaw, with his love-songs and his braveries, his mistresses and his velvet cloaks, how shall he maintain 'em, sirs, if we instil false principles into his untutored mind? More wine! mine host.

FLAW.

Ay, to be sure. Wine's like the gout, it cures all other disorders.

Enter EDWARD BEAUFORT, wrapped in a cloak.

EDWARD.

Well met, sirs. I am directed to one Bloodmore.

BLOODMORE.

The watchword, sir, and he may be discovered t'ye.

EDWARD.

I come from Captain Fang, and by the token
"A Tyburn collar squeezes."

BLOODMORE.

You're all right, sir,
I am your man.

EDWARD.

Then I have business for you.
There is a female, over whom I've rights
Must be enforced, and the law's tardy hand
Will be too weak.

BLOODMORE.

I understand—a rape, sir.
We're not afraid to call things by their right names
Here in Alsatia; 'tis the land of truth, sir.

EDWARD.

Why——

BLOODMORE.

Never blink it, sir. You want stout fellows,
A close concealment, and a well-barred cage,
To hold your lady-bird. They're to be had, sir,
For money.

EDWARD.

You are frank.

BLOODMORE.

It saves us labour,
And you, I take it, spare some blushes by it.
You seemed ashamed o' th' business; never fear, sir,
Here are your men, my party:—Will you sit
And grow acquainted?

EDWARD.

Nay.

BLOODMORE.

You're too squeamish, sir,
They're honest gentlemen, and well brought up too,
Too well, indeed; their education 'as taught 'em
Nothing but wants. Let's see! Here are four of us—
The matter's perilous, four necks in question,
'Tis worth a hundred pounds, sir.

EDWARD.

You shall have it.

BLOODMORE.

And there's the dove-cot we must seek for you,
'Twill cost some twenty more—risk is run there, too.

EDWARD.

I'll pay it.

F 2

BLOODMORE.

One half down by way of priming.

EDWARD.

There's somewhat more.

BLOODMORE.

You're purse speaks well for you,
Though you are given to silence.

EDWARD.

Meet me, then,
To-night at dusk, east of the Temple Gardens ;
I'll lead you to the spot, but be prepar'd
To silence any noise.

BLOODMORE.

We know our trade, sir ;
Tut! we're no novices! a gag, a litter,
Cords, and a comrade dress'd like a mad doctor,
To prove the girl's insane.

EDWARD.

Tis excellent!

BLOODMORE.

Common, sir! common! when we are put to shifts
We've better tricks.—We will attend you, sir.

EDWARD.

Farewell then—Be you punctual and attentive :
I'll keep my promise fully.

BLOODMORE.

We've security
Enough for that—your life, sir. Fare you well.

(Retires to table.)

EDWARD.

Why do I pause? Why tremble? I am no coward—
But you cold blooded villain! Let me think
On Mariana's charms—Richard's despair—
My triumph o'er their scorn—and the rich ransom
Old Scroope perchance may pay. I will not perish,
Like the poor sorcerer that rais'd the devil,
Through my own fears. Courage! The demon serves me.

[Exit.

BLOODMORE.

Then you object to our engaging in this business, Rivers?
Wherefore? Use any reasonable argument and we'll hear
you.

RIVERS.

Conscience!

BLOODMORE.

We've sworn against it. Conscience! The word is treason
to our constitution. Say too much risk, or too little profit, or
even any gentlemanly feeling of revenge, or—

RIVERS.

I've none of these.

FLAW.

Psha! conscience! I trust I'm above that by this time.
I couldn't see his face, but he pays well—and that's the first
virtue in our code of morality. I'll act the doctor.

BLOODMORE.

Ay, you need not join us till all is secure; the party
placed in the litter, and so forth. Your nerves are un-
practised, and must not be put to too severe a trial. But
for Rivers, I blush for him.

MOUSEHEART.

In the open street! 'twill be very dangerous.

BLOODMORE.

The pay is good. We must live, boys. Starve or win it.

MOUSEHEART.

Ay yet---

BLOODMORE.

If you prefer it, Rivers, silence and honour, and you need'nt join us.

RIVERS.

I claim the cutter's law. I'm of your party.

BLOODMORE.

Then see you do not flinch, or—you know me.

RIVERS.

And you know me.—You never had cause to doubt me honest to you ; and, when your threats are all that bind me, it will be safest to have done with me.

BLOODMORE.

Come, come, I'm peaceable ; you know it. I scorn to throw away an angry look out of the way of trade ; and, if it were necessary for our safety, you know I would cut your throat without a word. So we're friends, and understand one another.

RIVERS.

Perfectly.

FLAW.

Ay, nothing like a right understanding. Come, gentlemen, I'll go to prepare my disguise. This is almost my first venture ; so I'll prime myself with a bottle or two, for I'm not quite so steady as I should be.

BLOODMORE.

And I'll go sleep off what I have drank. This is a delicate business, and whenever the gallows is in prospect I like to be able to see my road clearly.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.—*A chamber at LORD BEAUFORT'S.*RICHARD FITZ-ALAN *and* PARALLEL.

RICHARD.

Well, I forgive thee. Thou wert born a rascal
And bred a tutor : 'tis quite natural
That thou shouldst play the villain.

PARALLEL.

And the debt, too !
The fear of prison !

RICHARD.

True, you are a coward.
Another fair excuse. Well, I forgive you.
But here comes one with whom I must demand
A sterner parley.

PARALLEL.

Edward ! Then I'll leave you,

RICHARD.

Stay ! Stay !

PARALLEL.

Then you'll protect me ?

RICHARD.

I'll ensure you
The chance to run for it.

PARALLEL.

I'll take courage, then ;
But let me see that I've fair start of him.

Enter EDWARD.

EDWARD.

So Richard ! you look gloomily upon me.

RICHARD.

Mine is a gloomy task : you've wronged my honour,

EDWARD.

Are not both suitors to fair Mariana ?
Did you not challenge me to this encounter ?

RICHARD.

I did not challenge you with poison'd weapons.

EDWARD.

Well, well, I was to blame—it was not just.
And yet, he far exceeded his instructions.

PARALLEL.

I pray you now, speak not of me, nor ask me ;
For, though there be some several sorts of death,
It matters not to me if I be spitted
Upon his sword or yours, and that's the end on't,
Whatever you may force me speak.

EDWARD.

He hath
Foresworn his slanders: you are clear. The thought——
The base, degenerate thought Ill call it so——
Rose in my mind, and this fit instrument
Forcing himself upon my service in it.

PARALLEL.

Who? I?

RICHARD.

Well, he must be forgiven too.

EDWARD.

Frankly by me, if you can pardon him.

RICHARD.

I have already.

EDWARD.

Come, shake hands, then, Parallel!
Come, man! [*They shake hands: aside to him.*]
You villain! But for once you're safe!
You are forgiven freely! Come, let's have
A cup of wine. Be gay and jovial:
Sit, sit my worthy tutor, and regale.

PARALLEL.

Sooth! and I will.

EDWARD.

How fares it with the widow?
Richard! It were but just to pay her back
A little of the toilsome load she has laid
So heavily on your shoulders. Say you wrote
A fit reply to that same loving letter
She sent this morning an anonymous line
Requesting her attendance: she would swear
The hand was yours, and Master Parallel
Might profit by the opportunity
And win a rich wife. What head would this joke
Come under, Master Tutor?

PARALLEL.

If 'twere practicable,
The head "jokes advantageous."

RICHARD.

Let him write
The letter, then.

EDWARD.

He write a love-letter?
Would you spoil all?

RICHARD.

You'll own the letter, Parallel?
'Tis done, you know, for your sake.

PARALLEL.

Own the letter?
Ay, truly would I, and for many reasons.
First, my own interest——

EDWARD.

That one suffices :
Here are pens, ink, and paper. [RICHARD writes.
Is't not kind of me,
After your tricks, to find a wife for you?

PARALLEL.

Nay, don't talk of my tricks.

EDWARD.

I spoke of them
In mirth.

PARALLEL.

But your mirth's somewhat terrible,
Rather like grinning death upon a tombstone——
A gay "memento mori."

EDWARD.

Psha! The widow——
Think of the brave rich widow, she's your mark, man!

RICHARD.

I've scrawled a line or two.

EDWARD.

Let Master Parallel
Hear how you speak for him, and frame his tongue to it.

RICHARD (*reads.*)

Mistress, one will wait to-night,
In the quiet evening light,
On the terrace near your dwelling :
When love's orb begins to reign,
Come and list to him who'd fain
Of his heart the tale be telling.

There's a good halting doggrel muse for you.
Stay, "To the Widow Level."

EDWARD.

Hold ! 'twere better
Not to direct it. Even if the hand
Be known, you then can say 'tis but a scrawl
Missent where 'twas not due.

RICHARD.

E'en as you please.

EDWARD.

Our stoup is out. Another flask ?

RICHARD.

Nay, hold,—
No more to-day ; here's Master Parallel
Must make him ready for his love encounter.

EDWARD.

I'll send his verses.

RICHARD.

Now, my worthy pupil,
Now for your master's honour go and prosper.

[*Exit.*

PARALLEL.

I will read Ovid to refresh my mind
With pleasing images, and cast an eye
O'er Horace for a little mirth- Anacreon

And Sappho—Love indeed's the noblest use
Of learning. She shall have a specimen
Of the true classic wooing.

[Exit.]

EDWARD.

When you find her.
This precious fragment is for higher uses,
Than to procure your meeting with the widow.
'Tis Richard's hand, and known to Mariana;
A lure that sweet bird will full gladly stoop to.

[ISABEL *has entered during the speech, and taken up the
paper.*]

Ha, Isabel!

ISABEL.

Verses in Richard's hand!
What would you with them, brother?

EDWARD.

Tut! a toy,
A jest!

ISABEL.

You seldom jest, good Edward: now
Methinks 'tis no time for it.

EDWARD.

Give them me,
Or you will spoil the mirth I'd make with them.

ISABEL.

The mirth! I doubt you, brother. I have seen
But now a sorry token of your jesting.
You are a suitor, too, to Mariana;
And, foil'd, I know your temper; but I'll watch
To save them from your wiles, you from yourself.

[Exit.]

SCENE IV.—*An Apartment at BEAUFORT'S.*

Enter LORD BEAUFORT, *followed by a* SERVANT.

LORD BEAUFORT.

I'll see him here, and while we are together
 Let no one interrupt us. (*Exit* SERVANT.) For the first
 time,
 To ask, and of a merchant! one to whom
 Wealth is the all in all; whose trade's oppression,
 By all the various means of craft and usury,
 Who hath no passion but his gold; no sympathy
 Save with the means of gain! Well, I must meet him.

Enter SCROOPE (*he keeps his face averted.*)

He stands with such a tradesman-like humility,
 Hypocrisy so crawling, serpent-like;
 I loathe it more than the imperious pride
 That lurks beneath. You hold a mortgage, sir,
 Over my house and lands here, which expires
 Even as we speak, perhaps? Why are you silent?
 You have it, have you not?

SCROOPE.

I have.

LORD BEAUFORT.

Methinks

I have heard that voice before. How's this? you tremble?

SCROOPE.

Do I indeed? (*Aside.*) I do feel like the bird
 That looks upon the rattle-snake. What would you
 Propose or offer?

LORD BEAUFORT.

Nothing ; my whole wealth
Is at your mercy, or indeed 'tis yours :
The wreck, by careful nursery, might yield
A slender pittance, such as would support
Mean life, and that I scarce can ask of you.

SCROOPE.

Why do you send for me ? To ask compassion ?

LORD BEAUFORT.

Sir, spare your insult and begone !

SCROOPE.

Why should I ?
You say this house is mine. Why sent you to me
If not to ask compassion ?

LORD BEAUFORT.

I might hope
My creditor might have so much of conscience,
To save all needless charges, and perchance
To pay me the small value of my lands,
Above the mortgage.

SCROOPE.

And from whom could you
Expect this favour ?

LORD BEAUFORT.

Even from a stranger.

SCROOPE.

But I am not a stranger ? You have heard
My voice before.

LORD BEAUFORT.

Yet cannot recollect
Where I have heard it ; though some mournful thoughts
Rise in its accents.

SCROOPE.

Look upon my face !

'Tis more than twenty years since you beheld it ;
Ay, some years more than twenty—yet, methinks,
You should not have forgotten.—

LORD BEAUFORT.

It is he !

SCROOPE.

Ay ; do you know me ? Does Lord Beaufort send
To Francis Norton ? Would you ask of him
Favour or friendship, or mere charity ?

LORD BEAUFORT.

And am I in your power ?

SCROOPE.

Ay : for years
I've wormed myself, by fine degrees, to the heart
Of your once proud fortunes : I have thrown the means
Of waste within your way : when you shot forth
Unhealthy branches of expenditure
I still supplied the sap : but there I dwelt,
Near to the core, eating and eating still
The strength of the trunk away, till my slow patience
At length hath felled it.

LORD BEAUFORT.

Fool ! that I knew you not.
These five years you have lived here.

SCROOPE.

Aye ! I came
To keep a steward's eye o'er my estate
And watch its heedless tenants. Now you know me

What can you ask of me, I cannot answer,
Out of your own mouth, with a stern denial?
Is there a common tie of man to man,
Such as the Arab of the desert owns
When e'en an enemy of his faith craves shelter,
You have not broke between us? Now, what ask you?

LORD BEAUFORT.

Nothing. Your fate has conquered, and I'm lost.

SCROOPE.

I came not here to triumph, but to judge.
I've lived to see you at my feet: deny't not!
For all your outward pride is but the symbol
Of your heart's quailing—I have lived to see this,
And I am satisfied. I've little cause
To spare you, but for her sake, whom you killed,
And for some others who are near to you,
You shall at least have justice. For the terms,
Within an hour send Richard to my house
Richard Fitz-Alan—I will hear no more.
Awaken not the deadly fiends that struggle
Yet into life within my breast. Send him,
And in my better mood, amid those thoughts
That cleanse the heart of vengeful will, perchance
Your fortunes may fare better—send him to me.

[*Exeunt.*]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The parlour of SCROOPE's house.*

Enter SCROOPE.

SCROOPE.

Yes, this is my revenge upon the world,
Before whose tyranny my fervent youth
Fainted: they shall be happy. It shall not,
As it hath done from mine, wrench out, deep torture!
The fondest charities from the best years
Of their hearts' life. No, they shall spurn the world
That loves to spurn the lowly—that base world
That cheers its valiant hunters on the hare
And throws a shield before the lordly lion;
That vile, that parasite world, that knows not merit
Save in prosperity, high birth, or wealth
Its very charters of monopoly
In all its paltry ventures. They, at least,
Shall not become its victims. He is here.

Enter RICHARD.

Welcome! I've much to say to you. You come
From the Lord Beaufort; he hath bid you seek me?

RICHARD.

I come, by his command, to know your will, sir,
And, if I may, to plead for him.

SCROOPE.

I'll hear you.

You know I have a mortgage on his lands
Not far short of their value, and this hour
I may seize on them as forfeit : wherefore should I
Refrain from my just rights ?

RICHARD.

For charity
Lest he should lack the very means of life.

SCROOPE.

For many years I've sought to gain this power :
Be you the judge whether I should forego it.

RICHARD.

I am his ward—almost his son.

SCROOPE.

You'll judge him
More kindly ? Well ! Even kindly be it then !
If 'twere a common cause of man and man,
With nought but natural human rights between us,
You should go hence at once, and with your suit ;
But I've some claim for vengeance.

RICHARD.

He is fallen !
A brave arm sinks before a prostrate foe.

SCROOPE.

You're right to urge it. Yet, with you, methinks,
There is a chord of the heart that I might touch,
And that should sound " Revenge : " for you can love——

RICHARD.

Sir—I.—

SCROOPE.

Ne'er falter! You do love?

RICHARD.

I do.

It is my hope, my pride, my glory.

SCROOPE.

Ay;

If one should wrong you past the power of pardon,
Might it not be that he should sting you there?

RICHARD.

He tore your's from you?

SCROOPE.

More. Doom'd her to die.

In the freshness of young hope, and fervent joy,
And vital love, consign'd her to the tomb.

RICHARD.

Lord Beaufort did this!

SCROOPE.

Ay. You do not plead for him.

RICHARD.

'Tis well there is a mercy in the heavens
Beyond what man can show, or frame, or fathom!

SCROOPE.

Calmly! You are to judge. Listen, and patiently!

I am the son of one who tenanted

An humble dwelling on Lord Beaufort's land.

I was a thoughtful, musing, pensive child,

Apter to read than labour, and my parents

Strove hard to gain the means of study for me.

The old Lord Beaufort aided them, though slightly;

You have seen such patronage. My mind expanded.
I looked on nature and the beings round me
A reasoning, feeling man : but how I reason'd
And how I felt are bitter memories to me.

RICHARD.

Bitter! The young fresh blossoms of the soul
Expanding into charity and wisdom!

SCROOPE.

No, no ; the blight that cankered them. Lord Beaufort
Had mark'd my studious temper. Village fame
Lauded me high. He sent for me, he prais'd me,
Made me companion of his son and daughter——
Their tutor.

RICHARD.

This Lord Beaufort and his sister?

SCROOPE.

The same. He little read or thought, but she
Lov'd poesy's ideal world—the lore
Of high enthusiasts. She was beautiful,
As youth is ever ere it looks on care ;
Generous, frank, high-minded above pride,
As youth is ever ere it knows of wrong ;
Full of imagination's noblest dreams,
As youth is ever ere it reads sad truth.

RICHARD.

You lov'd her?

SCROOPE.

What? The daughter of a lord!
And I a peasant! think you I dar'd love her?

RICHARD.

What home had each for nature's holiest thoughts

Save the other's heart? The mighty sympathies
Which dare appeal to heaven for their birth
Are of too proud a lineage to bow
Before earth's idols.

SCROOPE.

So we argued not,
But so we felt. Young Beaufort left us for
The court, and, save her father, we were alone.
That solitude! that happy solitude!
When all else is intrusion, bound the chain
Closer and closer round us. To be brief,
We dar'd to wed in secret.

RICHARD.

Perilous joy!

SCROOPE.

Had you not done so? Say a heart were yours,
Fondly, entirely yours, no other hope ——?

RICHARD.

I would strive to think for her.

SCROOPE.

You would do well.
But if she, all abandoned to her love,
Pleaded—and both so young ——?

RICHARD.

So fond! to wed
Or say "farewell" for ever!

SCROOPE.

We both thought so.

RICHARD.

Love, then, is fate and fortune and eternity.

SCROOPE.

The old Lord Beaufort died ; his son return'd.
 Still were we silent, for stolen love is timorous,
 And Beaufort was an alter'd man : the court
 Had taught the value of his rank and station.
 He was now a proud peer, I, his poor dependant.
 At length a disappointed traitor told him
 The tale of my presumption, and his anger
 Paus'd but to seize a weapon of destruction
 To crush the wretch who brav'd it.

RICHARD.

This Lord Beaufort !

SCROOPE.

He ! he ! 'twas then the reign of bigotry
 And iron persecution ; 'Mary rul'd.
 Beaufort was Catholic, he knew my faith,
 Denounc'd me as a heretic and traitor,
 'Twas subtle cruelty, a taint o' th' plague
 That might infect all that I lov'd and cherish'd,

RICHARD.

And she ? ..

SCROOPE.

I fled from her lest she should fall
 Beneath the accursed bane of heresy.

RICHARD.

It was a subtle cruelty. But she—

SCROOPE.

To keep that life, which, while I liv'd, she priz'd,
 To 'scape the persecution of a brother,
 Who else had sated his proud indignation
 With axe or flame, a convent's walls received her,

And there, from me her love and life were seal'd ;
I know but that she died.

RICHARD.

Poor sacrifice !

SCROOPE.

Indeed a sacrifice of innocence
To the Moloch of human pride ! Oh, that warm heart,
Those fond affections, barr'd from all communion
With hope and joy, the very elements
Of her sweet life perishing, what could she do but die ?
And to this lingering death did Beaufort doom her ;
'Tis for this man you now ask my compassion.

RICHARD.

I yet must ask though I may scarcely hope.

SCROOPE.

I bid him send you to me ; there is hope.
There are vile agents for the viler purposes
Of base oppression and of legal ruin :
I would not so employ you. I forgive him.
I pray to heaven this may be the last shock
To that meek charity which best befits
Men's helpless frailty. His estates are free ;
The mortgage you shall have ere you depart
With my free will to cancel it, and she,
Even in blessedness, will smile to see
That act,—I feel it.

RICHARD.

'Tis a blessed act
On which the heav'nliest spirit might look down,
Nor dim its joy celestial.

SCROOPE.

We've dispatch'd
 Our sadder task ; yet, though Lord Beaufort wait,
 His messenger must stay while I achieve
 The story of my life. For some time, void
 Of present and of future, the sad past
 Made up existence : but my sister died,
 And left to my sole care an orphan niece.
 Grief hath a consolation in its fancies :
 In Mariana's eyes I lov'd to trace
 The expression of my Catherine's ; in her voice,
 With all its lispings, childish tenderness,
 I still sought for some tone of Catherine's ;
 But most in the child's gentleness and kindness,
 I treasur'd up my thoughts of Catherine's soul.
 Thus was I warm'd to sad but gentle wishes
 That her fate might be happier. Again I dreamt
 The vision of young life in cherishing her.
 I toiled and prospered—toiled again and throve,
 Till I was rich, for her sake, and I now
 Would crown a heart heav'n fram'd for happiness
 With its own best wishes. You love Mariana ?
 Speak ! I would hear you say so.

RICHARD.

It were cowardice
 Now to be tongue-tied ; tell me but the means
 By which I e'er may win her, not deserve her,
 That I hope not, but point me out the peril,
 On which I burn to rush, would gain her hand,
 Or even the vile servitude, the drudgery,
 Cheer'd by the hope that she may yet be mine,
 And let me prove I am not a mere boaster :

I will do that should prove me, though unworthy,
Yet sensible, at least, of such a blessing.

SCROOPE.

Words! words! I'll put you to the proof. May a life
Of peace and love bear witness for your heart.
You shall see how I believe you. [Exit.

RICHARD.

What new pain's this?
I have met peril, laughed at poverty,
But kindness so unmerited!—By your leave
Good manhood! If a tear will gush it must.
Joy struggles with my very life. My heart
Choaks in my throat.

Re-enter SCROOPE.

Where is she?

SCROOPE.

Know you not?
She is not there and on the table lay
This paper. 'Tis your hand.

RICHARD.

It is indeed.

SCROOPE.

Why, what is't ails you? Seek her on the terrace
Come, I can pardon this.

RICHARD.

Oh, never! never!
If this be as I fear, I ask no pardon,
I'm too accursed a villain to dare hope it.
Mariana! (*rushes out.*)

SCROOPE.

What means this? What thunder-cloud
Hath burst upon him and yet hangs o'er me
Ready to blast me?

RICHARD (*without.*)

Mariana!

SCROOPE.

Hark!
He calls her, but no voice responds!

RICHARD (*without.*)

Mariana!

SCROOPE.

All's silent! Sure my very heart is withering!
I cannot breathe.

RICHARD (*re-enters.*)

RICHARD.

She's gone!

SCROOPE.

By heaven's judgment!
I do adjure thee! Speak!

RICHARD.

May every curse,
More terrible than vengeance can devise,
Light on young Beaufort's head!

SCROOPE.

Wherefore?

RICHARD.

This paper!
He gain'd it from me:—oh! that my hand had rotted
Ere I had written it!—for an idle purpose.

He said—oh! lie, forged in the blackest hell!—
He hath robbed me of her with it!

SCROOPE.

Dared'st thou traffic
With him for Mariana? If thou hast—

RICHARD.

Hold! On my soul not so. Do not you curse me!
I know you've cause, yet, on my knees, I pray you
Spare me, if but for vengeance on that villain.

SCROOPE.

Ay, vengeance, instant vengeance upon all!
My Mariana! oh, what wretched purpose
Had'st thou in writing this?

RICHARD.

A mean, base jest,
But not on her. Oh, had I thought on her
Then—

SCROOPE.

Idle fool! to trifle with thy fortune,
Now on its topmost round, thou'rt crushed indeed
If I but find one evil thought towards her,
One little, idle slight within thy soul.
Oh! let me think!
My brain throbs so; Yes! vengeance upon all!
They're in my power! Ho! there.

Enter WILLIAM and THOMAS.

Call me officers!
Bring forth those bonds and papers! I'm their master!
Bid them make seizure on Lord Beaufort's house!

[*Exit THOMAS.*

Send thou to Flint, the lawyer : if to-night
 They lie not in the prison—which, I pray,
 May hold them ever—I'm no more his client.
 Call men and send to every street—each house—
 To enquire my Mariana forth ! I'll make
 A fortune for a duke to him that finds her !
 Away ! How dar'st thou tarry ? (*Exit WILLIAM.*) Wretch
 that I am !
 What can I do ?

RICHARD.

Hear me !

SCROOPE.

Thy voice is hateful !
 Oh ! how I lov'd and trusted thee, and built
 My hopes upon thy happiness and hers !

RICHARD.

For her sake, hear me ! I have but one thought—
 To rescue her ; grant me an hour to try this,
 And, if I fail, I'll gladly yield myself
 To prison—fettters—death ! If she be lost,
 I'll bless you for revenging her on me !

SCROOPE.

Go.—I'll try to believe thee.

RICHARD.

Thanks ! let not your curse be heaped upon me :
 Pray for my good success.

[*Exit RICHARD.*]

SCROOPE.

I'll seek her at Lord Beaufort's ; if she's lost
 What have I left to bind me to my kind ?
 I'll hold a revel of revenge and misery
 And that proud house shall be my court. My gold,

I bless thee for my power. I have them all!
 The light of goodness shuns me: darkness and evil
 Have, too, their festivals; and mine shall be
 As terrible as his, th' arch-fiend's, where groans
 Re-echoe round his burning throne, and torture
 Teaches him torture. In my heart's a fire
 To scorch up all around. Oh, my poor child. [Exit.

SCENE II.—*A room in Alsatia. One window high above the floor, and grated. The whole miserable and squalid.*

EDWARD *and an* OLD WOMAN.

EDWARD.

'Tis well—'tis well—go leave me.

OLD WOMAN.

Therefore, sir,
 If you would have ought more—

EDWARD.

I prythee go.
 There is a noise—'tis they—away, old crone.

[Exit OLD WOMAN.

Sin must be sweet to make me bear with such
 As I've encounter'd here.—Yet, in my state,
 This is a golden fortune. Say I wed her—
 And that, methinks, is my best policy—
 My wealth shall laugh at the poor envious fools
 Who sneer at such alliance. Wife or mistress,
 She shall be mine—and let her wisdom choose.
 They're here!

Enter BLOODMORE, MOUSEHEART, and RIVERS, *with* MARIANA. EDWARD *for a moment retires.*

MARIANA.

Oh! are ye men? and have ye never known
One tender tie of love to woman? Sons,
Brothers, or lovers? Sure there is some touch
Of pity in your hearts.

BLOODMORE.

We have forgotten
Such matters where they interfere with business.

MARIANA.

Can man look on a woman's tears with scorn?
A helpless, unoffending, innocent woman?
Would you have wealth? There's one shall buy your souls
Yet from this deep perdition—give you gold
Enough to make your lives joyfully honest
Even to long old age. What would you of me?

BLOODMORE.

We're paid, and we must do our duty, lady.
Honest, forsooth! We should be precious rogues
To take the money and then sell the service.
Who do you think would trust us?

MARIANA.

Woe is me!
What can I say—what offer—or how plead?
What would you with me? (*EDWARD comes forward.*)
Oh! sir, are you here?
I read your black designs. I do conjure you,
If you have but one human feeling left,
If ye'd not have your mothers' spirits curse you,
At the least kill me in mine honesty.

There is a fate is worse than death to woman,
And I implore you, by your parents' graves,
Release me but from that.

EDWARD.

Stay, Mariana—

And fear me not: the means are rough indeed
I've used to woo you; yet, if you are wise,
You have no cause for fear.

MARIANA.

What wisdom, sir,
Is it that you would teach me?

EDWARD.

Friends, your leave.
I love you, Mariana, and would wed you.

MARIANA.

Love me!

EDWARD.

You know not your own charms to doubt it.

MARIANA.

A courtly flattery for such a place!
Love me!—alas, sir, know you what love is?
Love perils life—and glories in the martyrdom—
To spare one blush on the beloved's cheek,
To calm one throb of anguish in her heart.
And say you that you love me?—fie, sir, fie!

EDWARD.

We will not cavil now on words. I'd wed you:
If you consent 'tis well; if not, fine mistress,
You may live to wish you had not sold yourself
Upon worse terms: the bargain's in my hands,
And, one way or the other, you yourself
Shall be the ransom——

MARIANA.

Is't my uncle's wealth
That tempts you?—he will gladly lay it down,
All—to the uttermost farthing, but to save me;
We'll both be poor and bless you. Do not mock me,
To say you love me—it is needless. Speak!
And by my soul, all you can ask of him
Shall be most freely granted, and yourself
Pardon'd and free from blame.

EDWARD.

I were most wise
To trust your word in that; but once my wife,
And I am safe——

MARIANA.

Your wife!

EDWARD.

Ay, or my minion;
You see I am no trifler. Is't a match?

MARIANA.

I am in your power; yet heaven looks not idly
Upon the world; in that name I defy you.
I am a woman, strengthless and unarmed,
Encircled by remorseless fiends, as savage
As the untutor'd cannibal, who owns
No language that speaks pity!—but I kneel,
And firmly place my trust there, in my agony.

EDWARD.

Fool! you have chosen——(*noise without.*)

MARIANA.

Hark! a breath can scare you.
Look! on each face sit guilt and pallid fear!
Open yon door, and let me pass: I'll save you!

FLAW *enters drunk, in the habit of a physician.*

EDWARD.

What foolery is this ?

FLAW.

Foolery ! I'm a fool-catcher now—a physician ; a knave—no fool ; i'faith, you may stare indeed, for I'm somewhat metamorphosed in person and understanding—as it were, doubly disguised—in dress and in liquor ! But what ! we be lads of spirit !

BLOODMORE.

How now, Master Flaw ! Shame on such doings !

MARIANA.

Flaw—ha !—good Master Flaw—oh save me, help me !
Have you no company ?

FLAW.

What, Mariana !
Have I been helping them to carry off
My own intended wife ! I'm not quite sober,
Or else a precious ass—or perhaps both—
But——

BLOODMORE.

Come, begone ; I blush this worthy gentleman
Should see such manners. What must he think of us ?

FLAW.

I'll not begone——

BLOODMORE.

Not.

FLAW.

Pish—that for your sword ;
I've got one somewhere—here it is at last,
She is my love, and by true cutter's law,

And civil law—and martial law, if need be,
I will defend her.

MARIANA.

Have you no friends, sir?

FLAW.

Friends—never fear—get you behind yon basket,
And then have at you fellows.

MARIANA.

Oh, for pity,
Harm him not.

(They overpower FLAW.)

FLAW.

I'm not hurt.

BLOODMORE.

Give me yon cord
And bind him tight.

FLAW.

You'll cut my arms in two.

BLOODMORE.

I'll cut your throat directly.—Now, sirs, speak,
I think 'twere best for our security
We should despatch this drunken fool at once.

EDWARD.

Hold! hold! no murder.

FLAW.

Let 'em murder me,
I shall see the day they'll pay for it.

EDWARD.

Silence, fool --

Bind him and keep him fast—no more—I charge you,
Harm him no further.

BLOODMORE.

Oh! I bear no malice;
 But a keen blade just drawn across the throat
 Is such a stop to awkward evidence,
 It cheats the law so neatly—and he merits it
 For making this unseemly brawl.

EDWARD.

No matter.

BLOODMORE.

Then tie his legs and throw him in the basket;
 When the lad's sober he's a civil spoken
 And proper youth—and like some day to prove
 An honour to the gallows—'tis a pity
 A hopeful boy should run out of the course thus.

FLAW (*As they tie him and put him in the basket.*)

You rascals—give me my sweet love—I die
 A hero and a lover. Cut my throat!
 When? scoundrels—when? it was'nt made for cutting.
 I fall in virtue's cause—and perish nobly.

BLOODMORE.

There you may sleep—

FLAW.

Good night to all the world:
 Mariana—oh, my stomach!—oh, my love!

EDWARD.

So much for your chivalrous rescuer—
 Bethink you better of your fortunes, lady.
 For a short time I'll leave you under guard:
 When I return I hope to find you wiser.
 You, good sir—come with me—I have some business

In which you yet may aid me. Dare we leave
Her in this custody.

BLOODMORE.

Ay: fear not that, sir,
We'll lock the outer door,

EDWARD.

Lady! be wise. [*Exit EDWARD and BLOODMORE.*]

MARIANA.

All hope of rescue lost. Hath heaven no pity?
Will you not help me—speak?

MOUSEHEART.

I dare not, lady.

MARIANA.

And you, you will not look upon me?

RIVERS.

Silence!

I know my duty, and I must perform it.

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE I. — *Street.*

Enter RICHARD.

Nor him—nor her! and my short respite passes
 Like the last hour of a poor culprit's life,
 That waits the executioner. Yet 'tis not
 Myself I heed; let me wear out my life
 The tenant of a prison—I deserve it!
 But she, the beautiful! the innocent!
 She who placed all her trust, her love, on me,
 To be the victim of my folly!—Ha!
 Who passes there? 'Tis he! I'll rush—No, no;
 Patience—a moment's patience—lest he 'scape me.

[*Enter* EDWARD; *he is passing quickly.*

[RICHARD *comes close to him.*

'Tis he!

EDWARD.

Ah, Richard! I have business—

RICHARD.

Stay!

I've sought you—

EDWARD.

Then be brief. Had not my father
 Commanded my attendance, I'd not spar'd
 One instant from the affair that calls on me.

RICHARD.

It is an earnest one. Where is she?

Who ?
EDWARD.

Mariana !—Speak !
RICHARD.

You rave.
EDWARD.

Tear from the wolf
RICHARD.
Her young and strive to parley; but dare not
Trifle with me. Where is she?

You are jesting !
EDWARD.
Farewell!

RICHARD.
To stir a step is death !

EDWARD.
Ha ! ha !
Go ! order thine inferior, if thou hast one,
To search her out ; for me, I am no lacquey
To obey a foundling page, or watch the steps
Of a base usurer's niece.

RICHARD.
We are man to man now !
And well thou know'st thy life is at my will,
If thou durst meet my sword in manly conflict—
Brave heaven's fierce lightnings with thy pride of birth !
Wert thou a king, and I thy meanest slave
My wrath would spurn thy rank.—Where is my bride ?
She should have been so—thou, and none but thou,
Hast torn her—nay, hast basely stolen her from me.
Thy life, or mine, or both, are on the stake.

EDWARD.
If I had known-

RICHARD.

Coward! speak not the lie,
 Lest I should strangle it in thy foul throat!
 The letter that thou urged'st me to write—
 Thy base equivocations—all proclaim it.
 Yield her, or meet thy death!

EDWARD.

From thee?

RICHARD.

From me!
 Yield her—but yield her to her father's arms,
 And I will cast me at thy feet and bless thee:
 I'll beg of him forgiveness for thee—nay,
 I'll yield her to thee, win her father's blessing
 Upon your union, doom myself to banishment;
 Let me but wipe the foul stain from my soul,
 That I've dishonour'd her who trusted me!

EDWARD.

I am a fool to listen to thy ravings.
 Stand from before me—I will pass—

RICHARD.

Then be it so! (*draws.*)
 Here let me perish if I slay thee not!
 Draw!—traitor to thy friend!—poor, paltry villain!
 Draw!—or I will not spare thee!—

[*EDWARD draws. They fight. RICHARD attacking EDWARD with uncontrolled and wild fury. EDWARD defends himself coolly, and at length disarms and wounds RICHARD.*

EDWARD.

So, my brave sworder!—you are in my power—
 I'd slay thee, with as small remorse as crush

The insect in my path,—but live—and pause
 Ere you again brave noblemen, and learn
 To fight with temper, or your fencer's skill,
 With all its boast, may meet its match.—Your sword
 Is there, if your arm hath strength to wield it still.—
 Now, on thy life, dare not to dog my steps!
 But that I think thou can'st not, or I'll end
 Thy folly and presumption at a blow!

[*Exit.*]

RICHARD (*supporting himself against a pillar*).

I have no strength to follow him. Is life
 Ebbing, or is't but weakness? She is lost!
 He hath confined her in some hellish den
 To accomplish his damn'd purpose! Oh! for but
 One hour of strength, and then to die! Ho! friends,
 Help, for heaven's charity! help! help!

Enter two Officers.

FIRST OFFICER.

You're hurt, sir.
 Let us convey him straight into a house,
 For we have urgent business. Edward Beaufort.

RICHARD.

What of him?

FIRST OFFICER.

We must straight attach his person.

RICHARD.

Leave me! he's yonder! fly! leave me! I'm strong.
 If thou wouldst save my life, my very soul
 Lose not a moment; leave me, if to perish!
 But fly! secure him and I'll bless you! Ah!
 I've scarce the power to speak it—Mariana!

(*Falls in their arms.*)

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.—*A Hall at LORD BEAUFORT'S.*

LORD BEAUFORT *and a* SERVANT.

LORD BEAUFORT.

Not come yet!

SERVANT.

No, my lord!

LORD BEAUFORT.

Edward, you say,

Hath left the house again? Where is my daughter?

SERVANT.

She, too, is gone, my lord.

LORD BEAUFORT.

Do all desert me?

At such a time, methinks, my children's place

Should be their father's side. Who is't comes yonder?

SERVANT.

I think, my lord, 'tis Scroope.

LORD BEAUFORT.

Then leave me with him.

[*Exit* SERVANT.]

I feel him with the instinct which the sparrow

Hath of the hawk. I feel that it is he.

Yet not the Scroope I met this morning here,

'Tis liker Francis Norton

Twenty-five years ago; his step so hasty,

His eye so quick and proud.

SCROOPE (*without.*)

Away, sir! hence!

I'm master here, and, in my house, I need not

To be announced. How dar'st thou look thus on me?
I say I am master here. (*Enters.*)

LORD BEAUFORT.

What means this, sir?

SCROOPE.

Must I be heralded into a den
Of wolves? It means that you are in my power
And you shall feel you are so. Wrong on wrong
You and your house have heap'd upon me. A nest
Of serpents! race of fiends! whose very sport
Is the heart's torture!

LORD BEAUFORT.

What passion's this?

SCROOPE.

What passion? Say the eagle's for his mate,
Whom you have slain, and from whose nest you've stolen
His young; 'twill poorly paint my anguish'd wrath
Or my swift vengeance. Ye shall feel me, proud ones!

LORD BEAUFORT.

Hear me!

SCROOPE.

Ay, groaning with remorse and hunger
When you and all are cast forth from your dwelling,
To feel—there is no keener fate, and you
Have practis'd it on me—the hard world's scorn,
Its arrogant, proud pity, its advice
For what is past. Even I cannot desire
Bitterer mocks, more biting, poignant taunts,
More mean and abject, heart-corroding sorrows,
Than shall attend your fall'n nobility.
Daily I'll come—nay hourly, to the prison

Where I'll consign your son, and hear the moans
Of his proud kindred in their squalid rags,
Whose greatness hath no more to yield him. Then,
Then I may smile once more, for you have left me
No other joy but in your misery.

LORD BEAUFORT.

Yet let me know what new offence? I'm innocent——

SCROOPE.

You are his father. 'Tis enough from you
He hath inherited the accursed nature
To feel but for himself; and he shall feel!
To dwell with Beaufort is to learn to murder,
Wantonly murder! There's a pestilence
Among ye, and you should be all pent up
In a foul lazar-house: your breath is poison;
Even your page, Fitz-Alan, whom I loved,
Is made an instrument of wrong to me:
And for your son——

Enter an OFFICER.

How now, sir! Have you search'd?
Say, are they here?

OFFICER.

Neither, sir.

SCROOPE.

Mariana!

Where shall I seek her! Oh, my peerless child!

Yet I'll avenge!

You have doom'd yourselves. Hence from my house! my
house!

And beg ere nightfall for a beggar's shelter.

[EDWARD is brought on guarded by the two OFFICERS.]

Ha! art thou here? Thank heaven! Mariana!
Tell me! Where is she?

EDWARD.

I'm a prisoner, sir,
But not your slave. Ask those will answer you.

SCROOPE.

Thou wilt not tell me? I could seize thee, villain,
And rend thee as the lion doth his prey;
But thou'rt too far beneath me, thou'rt too firmly,
Too surely in my power. I will make
An art of torturing thee. Fool! thou art here
Within my grasp, and at my will I crush thee.
One word decides thy fate. Where's Mariana?

EDWARD.

Had I my freedom, I would answer thee.
My sword should tell thee, as it told Fitz-Alan,
How little I regard thee or thy threats.

LORD BEAUFORT.

What! is he slain? By thee! Indeed, all's lost.

SCROOPE.

Thy spirit's pamper'd now. Answer me thus
When a slow year of prison hath consum'd it.

EDWARD.

Lead me to prison, sirs. Why have you brought me
Before this self-appointed judge, to plead
To what concerns not me? You shall well answer
For making me the sport of his wild fancies.
How dare ye treat me as a criminal
On his false accusation?

SCROOPE.

See! the writing
Which thou didst gain from him thou call'dst thy friend!
Let that confound thee! Let that bar all hope!
Thou art my debtor! Ah, my wealth, I praise thee!
And for a sum that will, I think, detain thee
Until I forge for thee a felon's fetters
And lead thee to the gibbet! Aye, the gibbet!
Let thy birth render that illustrious!

Enter RICHARD, pale and breathless, his arm bound.

RICHARD.

Though with my last breath, let me pay my debt,
The debt of vengeance; I am come to yield
Myself your prisoner, sir.

LORD BEAUFORT.

Doth he yet live?
Then is there left a hope.

SCROOPE.

Poor heart-struck victim!
I almost pity thee.

EDWARD.

Lead me away.

SCROOPE.

Let him remain! I'll answer to the law
For what I do. That felon shall remain.
For the Lord Beaufort and his household, hence!
Away with them! To beg! to starve! to die!

LORD BEAUFORT.

One moment! I may yet awake one chord
Of mercy in thy breast.

SCROOPE.

Ha! ha! my breast!
 'Tis flint! 'tis adamant! a tower of rock,
 Where hate and vengeance keep their citadel.

LORD BEAUFORT.

My sister!—thine own wife——

SCROOPE.

I tremble, but
 With deeper rage.

LORD BEAUFORT.

If it be so, despair
 Is brave. Thy wife, I say, my sister, ere
 She died, became a mother, and there lives
 One who may call thee "Father." I alone
 Can tell thee of thy offspring, 'tis a claim
 I have acknowledged yet to none, for pride
 Bade me first keep it secret; and this day,
 In the same pride, I hop'd I might repay
 All thou could'st show of mercy. Tell me, sir,
 Who is the master now?

SCROOPE.

I am at thy feet.
 Oh! tell me! does my heart?—Am I deceived?
 Is he not here? Speak! All that thou canst ask
 Is thine. I swear it.

LORD BEAUFORT.

Richard is thy son!

SCROOPE.

He swoons within my arms! Oh my lost boy!
 Dear relic of thy mother! my poor child!
 Do I embrace thee but to lose thee! Ha!

Thank heaven! he looks up! my boy! my son!
Look to his wound!

RICHARD.

My father! Fear not for me!
'Tis but a moment's weakness. It was bound
By a hand of kindest ministry! Fear not!
But when I felt I liv'd, I could but live
For you and Mariana, and no power
Had held me hence.

SCROOPE.

I ever lov'd thee, Richard;
But now what joy to trace thy mother's smile
Beam on thy face.

RICHARD.

Oh! were this joy but shar'd
With Mariana!

Enter FLAW.

FLAW.

Good master Scroope! huzza! Throw up your cap, sir!
I'm the deliverer! huzza! shout all!
I am the hero, sir, the valiant hero,
Who hath run faster than e'er hero ran.
To bring the tidings——

SCROOPE.

What, man?

FLAW.

Look you here!
Your niece, sir!

Enter MARIANA and RIVERS.

SCROOPE.

Safe! art safe? art safe, my child?
Unstain'd? unharm'd?

MARIANA.

Safe and unharm'd, dear uncle !

SCROOPE.

Who hath preserved thee ? Who was it hath wronged thee ?

Yet that I know—I'm sure. Oh my full heart !

Behold my son ! thy husband, Mariana !

Richard, thy lover ! All is joy and wonder,

And I have only tears to tell the story ;

Oh, my dear children !

MARIANA.

'Tis one dream of rapture !

Yet true, I feel it.

RICHARD.

Mariana ! mine !

My restor'd bride !

SCROOPE.

Ay, fold her in your arms,

My heart yearns as 'twould burst to hold you in it.

My son and daughter ! Look you here, proud sir ! (*to*

EDWARD.)

Yet I'm so happy that I would not triumph

Over the guiltiest.

MARIANA.

Know, sir, my preservers ;

These gentlemen, whose faults you must forgive,

And recompense their virtues.

RIVERS.

I am recompensed ;

I have not breath'd for many years so freely.

SCROOPE.

And you too, Master Flaw ?

FLAW.

Ay, even I, sir ;
I've pepper'd some of my associates,
Bled Master Bloodmore, frighted valiant Mouseheart :
To do him justice though, my brave ally,
Good Master Rivers here, unbound me first,
And now, to emulate Scipio Africanus,
I freely yield my conquest to my rival.

RICHARD.

And he's as grateful as was Scipio's client.

FLAW.

Yet there was one, a figure in a cloak,
Who, with two valiant fellows, watch'd to aid us ;
And, though he drew no sword himself, his followers
Help'd us to beat the rascals that opposed us,
And sure that's like him—only that's a woman.

Enter ISABEL.

ISABEL.

Yes, 'tis a woman ! Richard ! 'tis thy sister !
Say, have I acted still a sister's part ?
I promis'd ne'er to speak of what I fear'd,
But 'twere no womanhood to know thy bride
In such base toils, and strive not to release her.

RICHARD.

How shall I thank thee ?

MARIANA.

I ?

SCROOPE.

That task is mine.

I know what you would ask, yet pause awhile—
I only know your wishes to prevent them.

SCROOPE.

Now, sir, though (*to EDWARD*)
You're in your father's treaty pardon'd, yet
I would befriend you better than your vices,
If you would quit them for a juster counsel.

EDWARD.

Sir, I ask nothing. I am still your captive.

SCROOPE.

No, you are free, release him. (*Exeunt OFFICERS.*)

EDWARD.

There are regions
Yet unexplor'd on earth; there I'll essay
To regain a fame I've forfeited. Farewell, sir,
(*To LORD BEAUFORT.*)

If you again should hear of Edward Beaufort,
It may be that he has perish'd, or done that
May merit kinder thoughts. Seek not to stay me. [*Exit.*]

SCROOPE.

He shall be aided in his enterprise.
Give me your hand, my brother, will you not?
Is not all enmity at rest between us?

LORD BEAUFORT.

With me most truly.

SCROOPE.

Take your house and lands,
They are Richard's gift unto his noble uncle,
And Mariana's offering to her sister.
What says my son? What joy to call thee so!

RICHARD.

You grant me favours ere I ask them, sir.

SCROOPE.

You will be rich enough, and Mariana
Will yet lose no part of her dowry, you
Sharing it with her.

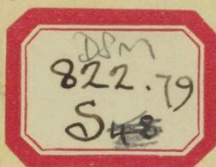
MARIANA.

Every way increas'd, sir,
In love and dear content.

SCROOPE.

Bless you, my children ;
And you (*to ISABEL*) a new-adopted daughter to me.
Now may I well rejoice in my wealth's power.
My gold, again I thank thee. May such fortune
Still crown the just thrift of THE LONDON MERCHANT.

THE END.



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