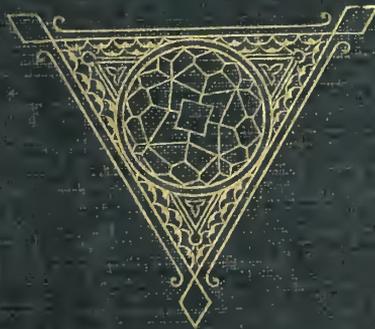


HERNANI

VICTOR HUGO



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ALBERT

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ÉDITION DE LUXE

HERNANI

A DRAMA IN FIVE ACTS

BY

VICTOR HUGO

ILLUSTRATED WITH NUMEROUS COMPOSITIONS BY ADRIEN
MOREAU, ETCHED BY CHAMPOLLION



BOSTON
ESTES AND LAURIAT

1894

ÉDITION DE LUXE

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OF WHICH THIS IS NO. 9

University Press :

JOHN WILSON AND SON, CAMBRIDGE, U.S.A.

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HERNANI.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

HERNANI.
DON CARLOS.
DON LEO DE SYLVA.
DON HENRIQUEZ.
THE DUKE OF BAVARIA.
THE DUKE OF GOTHA.
DON MATTHIAS.
DON RICARDO.
DE HARO.
DUKE ALCALA.
DUKE PARMA.
KING OF BOHEMIA.
FIRST CONSPIRATOR.
SECOND CONSPIRATOR.
A MOUNTAINEER.
BLACK DOMINO.
DONNA ZANTHE.
JOSEPIA.
ISADORE.

Conspirators of the Holy League, Germans and Spaniards, Mountaineers, Lords, Soldiers, Pages, Folk, etc.

SPAIN, 1519.

✕





A Michelena inv

Leon Boisson sc

HERNANI.

ACT I.

SCENE. — *A bed chamber. Night. A lamp on a table; door of a closet, L. 2 E.; a small door, R. C.; a door R. 2 E.; door of entrance, L. C.; a table, R. C., and chairs. JOSEPHA discovered at embroidery. A knocking heard at a small door on the R. C.; she listens; knocking a second time.*

JOSEPHA.

He knocks. Yet sure 't is scarcely yet his time!

[*Knocking heard a third time.*]

Yes, 't is his signal. And from thence it comes.

No loiterer he. [*Goes to the door, R. C., and opens it.*]

DON CARLOS *enters, wrapped in a cloak, and a broad hat covering his eyes.*

JOSEPHA.

Good day, young cavalier. [*Looks closer.*]

Ah! 't is a stranger. Ho! within there! help!

DON CARLOS (*seizing her arm*).

Another word, old woman, is thy last,
Save at my pleasure. Thou art dumb; 't is well —

Then is there reason in thee! Answer me:

This chamber is the privacy, is 't not,

Of Donna Zanche, — she that is affianced

VOL. XIII. — 1

To wed her kinsman, old Don Leo Gomez ?
 The veteran, that despite grey hairs, yet vaunts
 A soul as fiery in love or war
 As we of nimbler pulse and rounder limb !
 Is 't so ?

JOSEPHA.

It is. This is her chamber, signor.

DON CARLOS.

Good. And the fair betrothed yields, as I think,
 To strange disloyal fancies : dreams o' nights,
 While Grey-beard sleeps securely, of a chin
 Furnished in daintier fashion, of moustachios
 Sleek and ungrizzled, that encumber not
 The lips of love, and above all, an eye,
 Stood rival legions armed against his hopes,
 Would look a fierce defiance to them all, —
 How 's this, old dame ?

JOSEPHA.

You bade me hold my peace.

DON CARLOS.

Save at my pleasure, that will have thee speak,
 And quickly. For thy conscience and discretion,
 This gripe acquits them both. Wilt answer me ?

JOSEPHA.

I will.

DON CARLOS.

Your amorous dotard is abroad, no doubt ?

JOSEPHA.

He is.

DON CARLOS.

The youth expected?

JOSEPHA.

Yes.

DON CARLOS.

And here the turtles are to meet and coo.

JOSEPHA.

So you spoil not their cooing.

DON CARLOS.

That may happen.
Conceal me.

JOSEPHA.

Lo, the door by which you entered
Is open, signor, and the city's wide.
Go and conceal yourself.

DON CARLOS.

Here, in this chamber,
Find me a hiding place.

JOSEPHA.

Find *you*? For what?
What seek ye with my mistress?

DON CARLOS.

I — oh! nothing.

JOSEPHA.

What then with me?

DON CARLOS.

Nay, truly, nothing either.

JOSEPHA.

Begone then.

DON CARLOS.

In good time. Wilt hide me ?

JOSEPHA.

Never.

DON CARLOS.

I have some precious metals here may help me.

[*Draws from his girdle a dagger and a purse.*]

Wilt please you choose between them, —
Steel or gold ?

JOSEPHA.

You are the devil, then.

DON CARLOS.

To-night I am.

JOSEPHA.

I think so ; and despite my sanctity,
I needs must hold a candle to thee.

DON CARLOS.

Wisely resolved.

JOSEPHA.

Give me thy gold. 'T is lusty, faith !

[*Takes it, then opens a closet, L.*]

Now enter here.

DON CARLOS (*crosses to the closet*).

Here ! Art thou mad, old lady ?
What fiddle-case is this ? I could not thrust
My cloak in it.

JOSEPHA.

You 'll find no other here,
Depend on 't ; so, since hiding is your pleasure,
If 't is a fiddle-case, be you the fiddle.

You'll not be first, that I can tell you, signor,
Nor like to make much music in our concert.

DON CARLOS (*entering*).

If I out come alive, it must be quickly.

JOSEPHA.

Hark! I hear
My mistress coming. Shut the door.

DON CARLOS.

Now, mark me:
Unless you'd have the steel, as well as gold,
Be trusty. Not a word!

JOSEPHA.

I shall remember. [*Shuts him in.*]
Who can the savage be? What brings him here?
Shall I be bold and call for help? From whom?
All in the palace sleep except myself
And Donna Zanthé. Then I'll keep my counsel.
The brave Hernani cannot tarry long.
And let him look to it. His gold may fail,
But for his steel, he'll match with this gallant,
I'll warrant him.

Enter DONNA ZANTHE R. 2 E.

ZANTHE.

Josepha!

JOSEPHA.

Madam.

ZANTHE.

I begin to fear
Some accident. Hernani should be here
Ere this. Have you not heard his signal?

JOSEPHA.

No, madam. Once I fancied I had heard it,
But found I was mistaken.

ZANTHE (*listening*).

Didst not hear
A footstep?

JOSEPHA.

No. At night one hears so plainly —
Dogs, cats, and other restless animals
That fidget strangely. Some such thing you heard.

ZANTHE.

No, no, his step approaches. To the door
Before he knocks. [JOSEPHA *crosses to R. D., opens it.*

[HERNANI *enters in a large cloak and hat, and beneath the dress of a Mountaineer of Arragon, grey, with a cuirass of leather, wearing a sword, a poniard suspended from his left shoulder, and a horn in his girdle.*

HERNANI.

Donna Zante!
Do I again behold thee? hear my name
Uttered by thy sweet voice, whose music dwells
Forever on my fancy, lulling me
Even on my mountain couch with happy dreams?

ZANTHE.

Heavens!
Your cloak is drenched. Has it then rained so hard?

HERNANI.

I mark'd it not.

You must be cold.

ZANTHE.

'T is nothing.

HERNANI.

ZANTHE.

Nay, let me dry thy mantle.
Thou'rt cold I'm sure; let me have fire to cheer thee.

HERNANI (*his hand to his breast*).

Here,
Here resides a power
To mock the elements, or storm for storm
Encounter them, — a fire that sets at nought
The falling torrent or the wintry blast.
Feel this wild pulse. These water-drops refresh me.

ZANTHE (*taking his cloak*).

But this encumbers you — and this (*his sword*) — I'll
take them.

HERNANI.

Nay, not my good sword, unless for jealousy —
Of one more friend, constant and true as thou art;
A friend well proved and trusty. Your duke — your
lord
(Your lord so named abroad by every voice) —
Where is he?

ZANTHE.

Speak not of him now. This hour
Belongs to us.

HERNANI.

This hour, — alas! it may be
This and no more, — a bright and starry hour
In one long night of darkness — desolation! [*crosses to L.*]

ZANTHE.

Hernani!

HERNANI (*bitterly*).

Yet this hour I must enjoy,
 Be proud to steal one hour of love from him
 Who robs me of my life to come.

ZANTHE.

Nay, calm thee. Good Josepha, dry his mantle.
 [*Exit JOSEPHA with mantle, R. 2 E.*]

ZANTHE (*takes a seat L. of table and beckons HERNANI*).
 Come, come and sit by me.

HERNANI.

The Duke is absent, then?

ZANTHE.

Nay, think not of him! [*Rising and coming down C.*]

HERNANI.

Not think of him! You mock me. Hath he not
 A burning love for thee? Have I not seen
 His withered lips imprint on thine a kiss?

ZANTHE.

'T was a kinsman's kiss,
 And such as fathers to their children give.

HERNANI.

A kiss thou art unschooled in, — such a kiss
 'T would madden me to think thou could'st requite.
 I cry you mercy. I offend, perhaps,
 His blooming bride. You doubtless wed him freely;

ZANTHE.

I have shown pity for an inward grief
That long oppressed him, and he hath been to me
A kind protector and a loving kinsman ;
But with my own good-will I ne'er will wed him.

HERNANI.

Not with thy own good-will ? Dost think the lunatic
Will forge thy chains of iron ?

ZANTHE.

The King, 't is said, will have it so.

HERNANI (*surprised and much excited*).

The King ! the King !
A heavier, bitterer curse
Than all I yet have breathed, now light on him.
My noble father on the scaffold died,
Condemned by his ! Sworn and relentless foes,
Full thirty years their strife endured. The grave
Has closed on both. But in their sons their hate,
Sacred inheritance, survives more fiercely.
My love for thee, that for a time had seemed
To soothe my stubborn rancour, arms it now
With sting more deadly. Carlos of Castile !
I 've hunted thee as famished wolves their prey ;
Watched, traced thee like a bloodhound. In good time
Thou com'st athwart my path. Thou 'rt welcome
heartily. [Crosses to R

ZANTHE.

You terrify me.

HERNANI.

Hear me. The man to whom foul tyranny
Would link thy youth, is a grandee, rich, powerful.

His youth is past, — long past. Thy heart's free throb
 Of honest sympathy can ne'er be his.
 What then? Thou 'lt be a duchess; move in pageants,
 Bravely apparel'd as the Queen herself;
 Thy sphere a court; thy home a palace! I
 Am poor; in woods and wilds I dwell,
 And live as lives the tiger. It may chance
 I have my blazon of nobility,
 Tho' a brave father's blood may somewhat rust it;
 Rights and titles
 In the black scaffold-cloth enveloped long,
 Which this good sword may one day bring to light.
 Meantime the beam that blesses all, the free
 And common elements, are all my portion.
 I cannot waste my heart in jealous fears:
 This hour unites, or else forever parts us.
 Decide, then. Wed thy duke — or follow me.

ZANTHE.

I'll follow thee.

HERNANI.

Thou wilt? Rash maid! Thou 'lt share a lot like mine!
 For noble as I am by birth, by nature
 The friend of man, the foe alone of tyrants,
 I am proclaimed an outlaw. Throughout Spain
 The death-shout hath pursued me, till secure
 Amid old Catalonia's wilderness
 Of savage rocks, I stood at bay
 And won her lusty mountaineers in troops
 To stand by me. This horn now musters them,
 Three thousand strong! You tremble! Such is he
 Thou lov'st. Think well on't! Caves and dark ravines
 Our only shelter; couched on the bare earth;
 Fed by the changeful fortune of the chase,
 Or hostile plunder; every sound a larum



A. F. T. 1848

M. Michelena inv.

Léon Boisson sc.

To lynx-eyed caution, yielding not an hour
 Of tranquil rest — oh! think, day after day,
 To wander with me thus; it may be, follow me
 Where I my father follow, — to the scaffold.

ZANTHE.

I'll follow thee!

HERNANI.

The Duke will have thee pillowed
 On softest down! The Duke lives proud in favour,
 His name untarnished, his escutcheon bright —

ZANTHE (*eagerly*).

I'll follow *thee*. To-morrow will we fly.
 I owe my life to thee. I am thine.
 The spell that won thee
 Three thousand followers hath won me too.
 With thee I'll wander, or with thee abide.
 To see thee, hear thee, know and share thy fortunes,
 Is all I ask. Oh! we will never part.
 When thy last footstep hath escaped my ear
 My heart no longer seems to beat — entombed
 And dead within my bosom; dead to all things —
 Till, heard afar, the sweet returning music
 Dissolves the trance and brings me life again.

HERNANI.

Was I reserved for this! Unlooked-for-hour!
 Such love is only woman's; it hath changed
 My tyrant heart, abashed by selfish will,
 And now I shudder at my rash demand,
 For yet you know not half the history —
 [*Here DON CARLOS breaks from the closet, L., with a vio-*
lent crash. ZANTHE shrieks and clings to HERNANI.]

DON CARLOS.

Your history's too long. You that are fond
Of air should have more mercy for a man,
Stifled as I have been.

HERNANI.

Who is this man ?

ZANTHE.

I know not ! Sure, some robber.

DON CARLOS.

Softly, Donna.

My crippled limbs have had such lame amends
In satisfaction of my eyes or ears
That who your favoured visitor may be
'T were rash to guess at ; yet I scarcely think
Our fellowship will much disgrace him.

ZANTHE.

Leave us.

HERNANI (*crosses to C.*).

What seek you here ?

DON CARLOS.

First let me know, rough sir,
Your proud authority to question me.
What if I seek an hour or two's diversion ?

HERNANI.

Unless your will bequeath it to your heir,
Your raillery may be brief.

DON CARLOS.

Nay, every man
His turn. I have, with all due courtesy,
Allowed you yours, and claim requital, signor.
That you should love this lady's bright black eyes,

I marvel not; for by St. Dominick
 I love them too, and could not choose but know
 The youth who found o' nights such prompt admittance
 While I stood patient sentinel below.

HERNANI.

I'd have your curiosity provoke
 No further knowledge of him. Hence!

DON CARLOS.

Your pardon.

Of you I know enough; but for the lady [*crosses to c.*],
 She is a mine so rich in sweet instruction
 As may excuse my tarrying to explore.
 A boon I ask, for her sake and for yours.
 The steed who walks an undisputed course
 Wins an inglorious race. I may afford you
 A trophy for your victory, and exercise
 The lady's judgment with a choice at least.

ZANTHE.

I know you not. How got you here admittance?

DON CARLOS.

I was mistaken for a happier man,
 But not so well disposed of.

HERNANI.

Insolent!

DON CARLOS.

If thus you swell, keep clear of yonder closet;
 You would explode as quickly there —

HERNANI.

As now

My sword would quit its scabbard. [*Draws*

DON CARLOS (*crossing R., draws also*).

Give it air ;
We'll find it exercise.

ZANTHE.

Hernani ! hold !
For my sake ! [*Throws herself between them.*]

HERNANI (*puts her across to his L.*).

'T is an ill-placed quarrel, sir ;
An honest foe in fitter time will end it.
Your name !

DON CARLOS.

In fair exchange — yours ?

HERNANI.

'T is a secret, —
Marr'd in its purpose by a rash disclosure,
Reserved for one into whose ear I'll whisper it,
When by a conqueror's knee transfixed I hold him
And plunge my dagger in his heart.

DON CARLOS.

Brave talking !
Your vengeance in contingency is deadly,
Your present wisely sacrificed.

HERNANI.

No more ! Defend yourself !
[*They draw. ZANTHE in despair. Loud knocking heard
at the D. L. C.*]

ZANTHE.

We are surprised ! Oh, heavens !
[*The combatants pause. JOSEPHIA enters at the door R. 2 E.
in great alarm.*]

HERNANI.

Who knocks so loud ?

JOSEPHA.

Oh, madam ! Fatal chance !
It is the Duke returned.

ZANTHE.

The Duke ! I 'm lost !

HERNANI.

This way, we 'll fly. [*Crosses to R. C.*].

JOSEPHA.

'T is guarded from without.

DON LEO (*without L. C.*).

Admit me, Zanthe.

HERNANI (*to JOSEPHA, who is going to the door*).

Woman, stay !

JOSEPHA.

Good saints defend us ! we are all undone.

HERNANI (*to DON CARLOS*).

We must conceal ourselves.

DON CARLOS.

Where ?

[HERNANI *points to closet, L.*

You 'll excuse me.

What ! two such panting spirits ! We should shake
The very walls. You, signor, where you will ;
I care not to encounter duke or devil,
And here I stand.

HERNANI.

This outrage shall o'ertake you.

DON CARLOS (*to JOSEPHA*).

Open the door.

HERNANI.

Are you then mad?

DON CARLOS (*more imperatively*).

Open the door!

JOSEPHA.

I will.

[*Runs trembling to the door.*]

ZANTHE.

Mercy!

[*The door, L. C., is opened, and enter DON LEO DE SYLVA, followed by Attendants with lights; he is dressed in black, and wears the Order of the Golden Fleece.*]

DON LEO.

So, my fair cousin, you've your midnight audience,
To which I scarce am welcome! Lights here, ho!
This is a scene worthy of witnesses.

Why what wild times, young cavaliers, are these?

Is this that same Castile that boasted once
Her Cid, her brave Bernardo, — giant hearts
Whose pride it was to bear about the world
A shield for the oppress'd, reverence for age,
And to unspotted beauty bend the knee
Of chivalrous devotion!

What seek you here; is he
Who fought at Zamora beneath defiance,
And, for a few grey hairs, to be cajoled
By ribald practices like these?

HERNANI.

Great Duke —

DON LEO.

Be silent. Have ye not your games and pastimes,
Your hunting and your falconry, your masques,
Your revels and carousals, that ye now
Will madly sport —

HERNANI.

Good signor, let me say —

DON LEO.

Say nothing; you are born but to obey me.

HERNANI.

Your tone! —

DON LEO.

My tone is courteous — does ye honour.
Boys — triflers — if ye know not who I am,
Follow me! What! the honour of my house,
The honour of my chosen wife, — a maid
Pure as the mountain snow which summer suns
Irradiate and melt not, in my charge,
And such as you invade it! Dauntless felons!
Are these the treasures you would rob me of?
Me! a De Sylva! Blood of my ancestors!
Am I become a byeword?

ZANTHE.

My lord —

DON LEO (*to his Attendants*).

My squires, to arm me! haste,
My hatchet and Toledo rapier! Follow me!
Follow me, both!

DON CARLOS (*checking him*).

Be patient, Duke ; your prowess
Or ours is not the question now. My business
Concerns the death of Maximilian,
Late Emperor of Germany.

DON LEO.

D' ye mock me ?

DON CARLOS.

No, Duke.

[*Throws off his mantle, and exposes his face by raising
his hat.*]

DON LEO.

The King ! [*Kneels.*]

ZANTHE.

The King !

HERNANI (*strongly excited*).

The King of Spain !

DON CARLOS (*to DON LEO*).

Your sovereign and your friend. How now ? Don Leo,
Is your blood still so hot ? This great event
Hath scarcely reached me, and at once I come,
In all expedient haste and privacy,
To you, my well-beloved and trusty minister,
For counsel on't. A simple case, methinks,
To stir so loud a clamour.

DON LEO.

Sire, I crave

Your pardon ; but so long denied admittance —

DON CARLOS.

It was your privacy I sought ; and hearing
A troop of lacqueys at your heels —

DON LEO.

'T is true.

DON CARLOS.

Old friend, I thought to make you governor
Of Andalusia ; but whom, I pray,
Must I appoint *your* governor ?

DON LEO.

In sooth
'T is time these storms were hushed.

DON CARLOS.

Enough ; and since
This thunder-cloud is passed, we 'll to our purpose.
The Emperor, my ancestor, 't is certain,
Is dead.

DON LEO.

On whom is 't thought
Will fall the election to his envied throne ?

DON CARLOS.

They name, as on the list of candidates,
A certain Duke of Saxony, and Francis —

DON LEO.

Your Highness means —

DON CARLOS.

Francis the First of France.

DON LEO.

A promising aspirant ! Where, my liege,
Hold the electors their assembly ?

DON CARLOS.

Faith,
I'm ill informed ; Aix-la-Chapelle, or Spire,
Or Frankfort, possibly.

DON LEO.

And has your Highness
(Whom Heaven still prosper) never yet himself
Thought of the empire ?

DON CARLOS.

Constantly.

DON LEO.

My liege,
'T is yours by right.

DON CARLOS.

I know it.

DON LEO.

Every right, —
Your father was Archduke of Austria,
And he who quits the purple for a shroud
Your ancestor direct.

DON CARLOS.

With all despatch
I start for Flanders ; and on my return,
De Sylva, see that you salute me Emperor.

DON LEO.

'T is well.
Yet, ere you go, let me remind you, sire,
You leave a hydra-headed foe behind
'T were better you disposed of, — the bold route
Of lawless rebels that so long have scourged
Our Arragon, and in their growing strength
Threaten to beard us in our very streets.

DON CARLOS.

The Duke of Arcos has command and power
To sweep them off —

DON LEO.

Brief quittance, sire. Their captain
Heeds little of your sweeping projects.

DON CARLOS.

Psha! In Galicia now he lurks, and soon
Must yield him to his fetters.

DON LEO.

I've assurance
He hovers round the city.

DON CARLOS.

You're deceived.
What matters where! To-night we lodge with you.

DON LEO (*with warmth and respect*).

A royal welcome. Ho!
The King's our guest.
Do him all honour.

[*Fresh Attendants appear with lights; the DUKE motions them into ranks towards the R. 2 E. DONNA ZANTHE moves cautiously towards HERNANI; the KING observes them.*]

ZANTHE (*to HERNANI*).

To-morrow, at the midnight hour, remember
You fail me not.

HERNANI (*comes down, L.*).

To-morrow.

DON CARLOS (*turning to HERNANI*).

I have done you, sir, the honour
To measure swords with you; and though I fear
That honour most unworthily conferred,
To-night I'll not betray you. Seek your safety;
I'll cover your retreat.

DON LEO (*advancing, observing HERNANI*).

Have I neglected —

DON CARLOS.

One of my suite, — a confidential follower;
I've sent him on a charge. Lead on.

[*Exeunt DON CARLOS, DONNA ZANTHE, DON LEO, and Attendants, DON LEO with a flambeau before the KING,*
R. 2 E. HERNANI *remains.*

HERNANI.

One of thy suite! thy follower! Aye, while life
Or motion in these limbs are left, by day,
By night, and step by step, I'll dog thee.
No courtier of thy train, whose slavish eye
Still strains to guess at each caprice in thine,
No parasite who waits thine issuing breath
To do it homage, till the fulsome poison
Recoil upon his nature, shall attend thee
With half so keen observance. Thy follower!
Aye, closely as thy shadow, till thyself,
Proud King, art but a shadow in my gripe,
And, spurning thee, I trample on a clod. [*Exit* R. 2 E.]





ACT II.

SCENE. — *The outside of the Palace of De Sylva ; a window with a balcony, L. 2 E. ; beneath, a small door ; houses, and diverging streets ; night ; lights are seen at various windows of the palace, and a few different houses.*

JOSEPHA *enters L. door.*

JOSEPHA.

There, she sits still, and takes no heed of me ; these strange events have well-nigh turned her head. Poor lamb ! Three lovers, and such lovers too, are quite enough to turn any head that stands on female shoulders.

Enter DONNA ZANTHE, L.

ZANTHE.

Josepha ! is the King gone ?

JOSEPHA.

Gone, child ! why, did n't you see him go ?

ZANTHE.

True, true, I did, but — I know not why — I thought he might be returned.

JOSEPHA.

Nay, sweet, you gave him but small encouragement to return ; and the poor dear Duke did so glory to see thee so cold and coy, I vow it made one's heart ache to see the good old soul so delude himself. Well, well ! at his years he ought to know better, that's a sure thing.

ZANTHE.

Josepha! spare me. It goes hard enough with me to think of him.

JOSEPHA.

Aye, marry, and 't will go harder with him when he knows the truth, as I suppose he must, soon; eh, lamb-kin? How is it to end, sweet? What is thy purpose?

ZANTHE (*her manner bewildered*).

I have none. Fate must guide me. My brain shuts out all purpose, all reflection.

JOSEPHA.

And the visits of the young cavalier —

ZANTHE.

Are at an end. With my consent he enters here no more.

JOSEPHA.

Thou 'lt wed Don Leo, then?

ZANTHE.

I said not so.

JOSEPHA.

Ah! would thou hadst never said so. 'T is that he relies upon, — that thou art plighted with thy consent.

ZANTHE.

Yet, sure he does me wrong. 'T was two years since.
 In all things else, 't is said, nor law nor justice
 Will have the child's rash contract bind the woman.
 I pledged to him the love a husband claims
 Ere such a love I knew, and knowing it,
 To him I feel it ne'er can be assigned. [Crosses to L.

JOSEPHA.

Ah! 't is plain, sweet, how it was with you. His first unfaithful wife had made him wretched for many a long year. To you he was ever kind; you pitied his sadness, loved him with all a young heart's gratitude, and the old fox made the most of it.

ZANTHE.

Revile him not, nor speak thus lightly of him.

JOSEPHA.

No, truly, he is not for light treatment! The phantom Honour is the idol of his worship. Did n't he make a prisoner of the late Duchess for the brief remainder of her days? Ah, well-a-day! Don Leo is an awful man.

ZANTHE.

An awful man he is; and, kind Josepha,
It is not well, so far to have allured thee
From thy allegiance to him. Shame upon me!
But I'll be wiser. Rest to-night in safety;
The evening wanes. I would retire alone,
And bring no further sin upon thee.

JOSEPHA (*in kind reproach*).

Dost thou fear me?

ZANTHE.

No, but I love thee; and if thou lovest me,
Go to thy chamber, and come not to mine. [*Exit L. door.*]

JOSEPHA.

Alas, poor thing! I know not what is in thy head, but there is little comfort at thy heart, I fear. A woeful day it may prove for thee, when this gallant mountaineer

stopped thy runaway courser on the verge of a precipice, to lure thee to a brink more dangerous. The stern Don Leo cares little for old Josepha's loyalty; but if thine fail him, woe to us all! [*Exit L. door.*]

Enter DON CARLOS, DON HENRIQUEZ, DON MATTHIAS,
and DON RICARDO *in cloaks*, R. U. E.

DON CARLOS.

That is her chamber, friends. 'T was there Don Carlos,
Whose mind must needs range empires, found his person
Suddenly circumscribed to three feet square.
That is her window; and beneath, the door
Sacred to love. Can she have changed her purpose?
The hour is nigh. Yet lights are everywhere,
Save there where I would have them.

DON HENRIQUEZ.

I ponder still, my liege, on your strange rival,
Who, as you well conjecture, may be captain
Of these marauding rebels.

DON MATTHIAS.

Heard you his name, my liege?

DON CARLOS.

I nothing heard
Distinctly; 't was Romani, or Fernani, —
Some name with such an ending.

DON HENRIQUEZ.

'T was Hernani.

DON CARLOS.

It was so.

DON MATTHIAS.

Then 't was he.

DON RICARDO.

Their chief, Hernani.

DON HENRIQUEZ.

And could your Highness let him thus escape ?

DON CARLOS (*turning on him with a grave look*).

D' ye question me, my lord ?

[*They withdraw in deference and respect.*

You 'd set a price

Upon his head, perhaps ? Yet it becomes
His shoulders. Nor can we condemn his taste.

Ambitious as it is, so we can cheat him
Of his fair mistress, to his head he 's welcome.

Now, friends, be firm, resolute. Her signal
I know. The lovers both must be secured.

We 'll share the task, — that is, you 'll understand,
The lady shall be mine, and yours the bandit.

DON HENRIQUEZ.

You 've chosen well, my liege.

DON CARLOS.

Bar his approach, at least. Away ! my task
I 'll answer for.

DON MATTHIAS.

Your Highness will confess 't is not hardest.

[*Exeunt RICARDO, MATTHIAS, and HENRIQUEZ, R. U. E.*

DON CARLOS.

Now for her signal.

[*Claps his hands thrice deliberately, and DONNA ZANTHE
opens the casement and appears at the balcony.*

ZANTHE.

Is it you, Hernani ?

DON CARLOS.

I dare not answer her. *[Repeats the signal.*

ZANTHE.

I come! I come!
[Closes the casement, and the lights disappear.

DON CARLOS.

With three such sentinels we are secure
 Of elbow-room to woo her royally.

ZANTHE enters from the little door beneath, L.

ZANTHE.

Hernani!
[Going to R., he advances briskly towards her, L.; she lets fall the light.
 Heavens! 't is not his step; I'm sure on 't.
[Endeavours to retreat; he catches her in his arms.

DON CARLOS.

My life!

ZANTHE.

'T is not his voice! I'm lost!

DON CARLOS.

Fear nothing.
 It is a voice will pledge to thee a heart
 The truest, the tenderest, — a voice of power
 To crown thy every wish; nay, to crown thee!

ZANTHE.

The King!

DON CARLOS.

And would'st thou spurn his fond embrace?
 He is thy slave. A kingdom, and a life
 Of love he offers thee for thine.

ZANTHE (*struggling*).

Help! help!

DON CARLOS.

'Gainst whom? You deal not with a robber now,
But with a king,—the foe and scourge of robbers.

ZANTHE.

'T is false! Thou art the robber, that would seek
By lawless force what honour hath denied thee!
Thou stain'st my cheek with shame, but 't is for thee, —
For thee and thy foul purpose. Were it honest,
Would'st thou at midnight snare a helpless woman?
And darest thou talk of robbers, — thou! Hernani
Is noble, generous; and I tell thee, King,
Were each man station'd where his heart should place
 him,
The sceptre would be his, the dagger thine.
Was not my father noble?

DON CARLOS.

I will make
Thee greater. Thou shalt be a queen —
An empress.

ZANTHE.

'T were treason! I have pledged, as woman will,
My life and soul in bond irrevocable
By human power tho' tongue had never shaped it;
And rather would I share Hernani's fortune
Ev'n at its bleakest, — cold abandonment,
War, exile, beggary, and worst of all,
The scourge, great King, of thine immaculate justice, —
Than be enthroned an empress with an emperor.

DON CARLOS.

You hate me, then?

ZANTHE.
I love you not. [*Crosses to L.*]

DON CARLOS (*with increased violence*).
No matter!

ZANTHE.
Oh, heavens! my liege, behold me then thy suppliant.
Be gracious, merciful. What! when around thee
Beauty in thronging constellation shines,
Courting thy love, and eager to requite it?
And what has he, — the branded, the proscribed?
Canst thou not cull thy joys
Throughout thy rich Castile and Arragon?
And would'st thou, sovereign lord
Of this wide world of treasures, rob an outcast
Of one poor heart, who has but that on earth?

DON CARLOS (*still dragging her*).
Thy words are breath to fire! Hence, hence, *my* world
For thee and for thy love; claim what thou wilt.

ZANTHE.
I ask but one thing.

DON CARLOS.
Speak.

ZANTHE (*snatching a dagger from his belt*).

I have it.
Now. [*The KING falls back.*]
Advance one step —

DON CARLOS.
I' faith, I marvel not
You love a rebel. Yet 't were sin to fear thee.
[Inclining to her.]



ZANTHE.

Forbear! or on my soul, you lightly hold
Your life and mine. Hernani! ho! Hernani!

DON CARLOS.

Your cries are vain. I have at hand to aid me
Three of my followers.

HERNANI (*suddenly appearing from R. U. E.*).

One you have forgotten.

[*The KING turns suddenly round. HERNANI stands motionless before him, enveloped in his eloak, his hat slightly raised. DONNA ZANTHE, with an exclamation of joy, rushes and elings to him.*

Heaven knows, great sir,
I could have wished our place of meeting now
Had been at fitter distance from the last.

ZANTHE (R.).

Nay, let us fly from him.

HERNANI (*calmly*).

There is no haste.

DON CARLOS.

Ho, there, cravens!

HERNANI.

Your friends are in the power of mine.
Our quarrel here must end, and 'twixt us two.
What! you have laid a hand of violence
Upon a noble lady! King of Spain,
'T was a rash act, and not a valiant one.

DON CARLOS.

Peace, thou fantastic ruffian! Dost flatter thee
We meet as yesternight?

HERNANI.

Do you forget —

DON CARLOS.

Last night we both were maskers ;
 To-day discloses us for what we are.
 Thou art my rebel subject ; I am thy king.

HERNANI.

You rave ; yet urge me not.

DON CARLOS.

I spurn thy challenge.
 Whistle thy gang. Let all your daggers strike !
 The combat I disdain.

HERNANI.

Of this I dreamed not.

DON CARLOS.

What ! dreamed you then a king could be entrapp'd
 To play thy game, and aid thy broad imposture,
 Gild o'er thy crimes, and, stain'd with blood and plunder,
 Assist thee with a garish cloak of chivalry
 To dazzle a weak woman ? No ; that cloak
 I strip, and leave thee in thy naked infamy.
 Stick to thy trade. Give place, or, bravo, stab me !

HERNANI (*inwardly struggling*).

Hell !

ZANTHE (*stopping him*).

My Hernani ! Wilt thou kill the King ?
 That King so long the friend of the De Sylvas !
 For thine honour
 (Which if his words wrong, let not thine own deeds),
 Fly ! fly ! and heed him not.

HERNANI (*to the KING, after a struggle and convulsive movement of his sword*).

You are free.

The time may come when we may meet as equals,
Each at the head of armies. [*The KING smiles.*] Aye,
an army.

My gathering bands may form as well as thine ;
For what (save numbers only) hath conferr'd
That prouder name on many a robber band
Whose deeds make us illustrious crusaders.
And kings, to spoil and trample on the weak,
By fifty thousands lead their armies forth,
Who hang up modest fifty as banditti.
Pass, but be sure you will not be forgotten.

DON CARLOS (*crosses R.*).

Gramercy ! Sir, nor you ; and your forbearance,
I warn you still, is at your utmost peril.
I hold thee for a traitor and a rebel,
If nothing worse. My refuge is at hand,
With power unlimited, to crush at once
Thy boast and thee. Yet with this notice, signor,
As tranquilly I turn my back on thee
As if so fierce a foe had never been. [*Exit R.*]

HERNANI.

What trial more than this can nature prove ?
Do I not love thee now ?

ZANTHE.

Too well ; and yet
The King, whate'er his threats, is ever generous.

HERNANI.

The King hath rarely said the thing he means not,
Nor lingers in the act. Ere this the cry

Is up. The lion is abroad ; and soon,
 Martial and civil, grooms, lacqueys, magistrates,
 And men at arms, will run an eager race
 To win the price of this devoted head.

ZANTHE.

Oh, Heaven defend us ! Let us fly at once.

HERNANI.

Nay, not together ; let my hastening doom
 Restore thee to thy safety. Here we part.

ZANTHE.

Is this to stab me with reproach ?

HERNANI.

Reproach ?
 Oh ! though the only light that yet hath cheer'd,
 How blessedly ! my dark and wintry fortune, —
 Sweet comforter ! most pure and beautiful,
 That thro' their burning channels still can draw
 These tears, — not an eternity of torture
 Should wring from me one bitter thought of thee,
 Or any but of love, of boundless love.

ZANTHE.

Alas !

HERNANI.

But when assured, and in my sight the scaffold
 Stands the black boundary of hope and fortune,
 Thy path be far from mine.

ZANTHE.

Then thou art false, —
 To me more cruel than thy foes to thee.
 I cannot leave thee.

HERNANI.

Nay, this is not well.
 The storm that rives the mountain pine may spare
 The flower that courts its shelter. Shall I drag
 Thee down a gulf that yawns before me, blot
 Thy maiden fame with foul disgrace? Away!
 Preserve thy life and honour. Angels guard thee!

ZANTHE.

For what — if I abandon thee? Plead not
 Against my right; no, I will cling to thee
 Till the last pulse hath fluttered at thy heart,
 And wrap me in thy winding sheet.

HERNANI (*breaking from her to R.*).

Return!

ZANTHE.

Am I cast from thee? Here then will I perish.
[Falls on the ground.]

HERNANI (*alarmed at her situation*).

So desperate, noble Zanthe!
 Since thou wilt have it so, we will not part.
 Hallowed and heaven-protected, we will not fear.
 Steals not now
 Peace to thy bosom? Peerless Donna Zanthe,
 We still are blessed! Look brightly thro' thy tears.

ZANTHE.

I do; I am blest. *[The bells of the city are heard ringing
 an alarm.]* Ha! the tocsin!

HERNANI.

No, it is our nuptial peal.
*[The clamour increases. Shouts are heard, R.; a glare of
 torches through the streets.]*

ZANTHE.

Rise, rise, and fly! The city's roused! The glare
Approaches!

HERNANI.

'T is to light us to our bridal.

ZANTHE.

To light thee to thy tomb.

HERNANI.

My lovely bride!
Thus will we give them welcome.

[Clasps her with his left arm.]

A MOUNTAINEER enters, with drawn sword, R.

MOUNTAINEER.

We are surprised.
The Sbirri, the Alcaldi and their followers
Beset us closely.

ZANTHE.

And I have delayed thee!

HERNANI.

Rally as you may. I follow.
[Cries without, R.] This way! upon them. *[Shouts, R.]*

HERNANI (*to ZANTHE*).

Since it must be so,
Farewell!

ZANTHE.

You rush upon destruction. Here
With me you still may shelter. *[Points to door, L.]*

HERNANI.

And desert my gallant friends? *[Going, R.]*

ZANTHE (*calling*).

Hernani! Thou wilt strive to save thee!

HERNANI (*returning*).

Aye, by this holy pledge I now first dare
To print upon thy cheek. Farewell. [*Kisses her cheek.*
[*Shouts and clash of swords continued till end of act.*

ZANTHE.

Farewell!

[HERNANI *rushes out, R.* She totters, exhausted, towards the portico. JOSEPHA *enters from the door under the balcony, L.* ZANTHE *falls against a pillar of the portico.* JOSEPHA *hastens to her assistance, and the curtain falls quickly.*





ACT III.

SCENE. — *Interior of the Castle of De Sylva, in the mountains of Arragon. A gallery of family portraits, which are surrounded with ducal coronets, and gilt escutcheons. A lofty gothic door in the flat. Between each portrait a panoply of the armour of different ages. DONNA ZANTHE, in white, standing before a table, R. C. DON LEO in a splendid dress, and seated in a chair of state.*

DON LEO.

The rich atonement for repining years
At length arrives. Most dear and gentle cousin,
Long my sole comfort, now my better self,
To-day will give thee rank above all dames
That bear De Sylva's name.
Where are thy smiles? I fear
Thou hast not yet forgiven the wrong I did thee,
That I should bring a blush upon that cheek
With base suspicion; thou art pale and sad!
Much it hath grieved me, more perchance than thee;
Yet, certes, they were there; two gallant forms
Of men, at midnight, in thy chamber, Zanthe,
Was not a sight to mend an old man's rest
Who was to call thee wife.

ZANTHE.

It is forgotten;
Let me entreat you speak of it no more.

DON LEO.

It will no more be questioned, — trust me, never.
I must have charity for some weak thoughts
My sixty years have brought me. Time, I fear,

Hath scored them with unsparing hand. Yet do I love thee
 As light and shallow youth can never love.
 As yet there are no wrinkles at my heart;
 And ever gladdened with thy grace and beauty
 It will forever beat with young delight.

ZANTHE.

Alas!

DON LEO.

Or when it faintlier throbs, 't is thy
 Fond care will soothe it till it throb no more.

ZANTHE.

My lord, that care perhaps may not be mine.

DON LEO.

Not thine!

ZANTHE.

The young oft rush into the tomb,
 Leaving the old still lingering on its verge,
 To close it o'er them.

DON LEO.

Fie on these sad thoughts!
 Dost thou forget thou art a blooming bride?
 Do maidens talk of tombs, while holy men
 Prepare for them the altar? We detain them.
 Wilt not attire thee?

ZANTHE.

There is time enough.

DON LEO.

Not so.

ISADORE, *a page, enters at c. doors.*

What says our Isadore?

ISADORE.

A lowly stranger, as I think a pilgrim,
Entreats asylum in the castle.

DON LEO.

Grant it.
He comes in happy time. Whoe'er he be,
For rest or safety, weary or in peril,
Seek he our shelter, it shall be to him
Refuge assured. So tell him, and so pledge
Our hospitality. Stay! what news
Of our marauding rebels?

ISADORE.

They are routed.
Some taken, many killed. Their bold Hernani,
The lion of the hills, beset on all sides,
Has no escape.

ZANTHE (R. *aside*).

I sink.

DON LEO.

How know you this?

ISADORE.

From some employed to hunt them down. The King
Himself pursues their chief. A thousand crowns
Are offered for his head; but 't is the rumour
He is among the slain.

ZANTHE (*aside*).

And I still live!
Hernani!

DON LEO.

So, that were the better chance,
Haply for him, and, doubtless, for his hunters.
(To ZANTHE) Still tarrying? Josepha waits. I pry'thee
let her
Adorn thee fitly.

ZANTHE (*aside*).

Fitly, were in weeds, —

Weeds for my widowed heart.

[*Exit* ZANTHE R.]

ISADORE.

Would my lord ask —

DON LEO.

No more ; admit the stranger, crave his pardon

For thy delay. And, Isadore, that done,

Convey the casket destined for thy mistress.

[*Exit* ISADORE, C.]

I'll have her decked like a Madonna ; thus,

With that dark eye so ample, soft, and saintly,

Half veiled beneath its deep and downcast lid,

Our pilgrim may kneel down and do her homage.

His coming 'bodes us good ; it pleases me.

The stranger ever at my gate is welcome, —

To-day most warmly.

[HERNANI *appears at the great entrance, C., disguised as a pilgrim.*]

HERNANI.

To my noble lord

All peace and happiness.

DON LEO.

As much to you.

Free cheer, true welcome, and, if such your need,

Inviolable asylum here are yours.

You are —

HERNANI.

A pilgrim.

DON LEO.

From Armillas ?

HERNANI.

No.

That way was strife and bloodshed, and I shunn'd it.

DON LEO.

Whither speed you then ?

HERNANI.

To Saragossa.

DON LEO.

With holy vows to thy protecting saint,
No doubt; or to our Lady del Pilar.

HERNANI.

With such intent, and to our Lady's shrine.

DON LEO.

If any wrong oppress thee, done or suffered,
Within these walls forget it, while they grin
With jubilee, and from all outward harm
Protect you as they shall. I may anon
Enquire your name and fortunes, which concern me
Only to serve you as I may. You are
My guest, what else I care not.
My bride! [Crosses R. HERNANI is startled.

[DONNA ZANTHE enters in her bridal attire, R., Attendants,
etc. Two Females bearing a velvet cushion, on which
is placed a casket of polished steel, richly carved,
which they place on a table. It contains the cor-
onet of a duchess, necklace, bracelets, and a set of
diamonds.

DON LEO.

Behold our lady of the castle.
Whate'er of our devotions earth may claim,
Here, pilgrim, may be well bestowed.
Fair saint! [Taking her hand.

Approach. What's here? A naked hand?
Where are thy rings — thy gems — thy coronet?

HERNANI (*in desperation throws off his disguise*).
Who's for a thousand crowns? Here stands Hernani.

ZANTHE (*aside*).

Alive!

HERNANI.

Come all, behold the man so famed,
The head so prized!
Duke, you would know my name, — it is Hernani.
Is't not a brave one? Introduce your guest
At court; he'll serve you better there than all
Your scars —

ZANTHE.

He's lost!
Regard him not. He raves.

[*Crosses to L., and aside to him.*]

Dear Hernani!

HERNANI.

Ah!
Some one of this good company recalls
And names me. Yes, I am Hernani. Since
There's marriage here, I am for wedding, too.
My bride elect, the Moor's dark angel, Death!
She's cold but constant, Duke.

DON LEO (*in a firm tone*).

I understand you not, but yet believe
There is no cause for desperation here.
The man who aims at thy head risks his own.
My guest, and in the name of Heaven received
Beneath my roof, Hernani, though you be,
These walls are compromised unharmed to hold you;



A Michelena inv

Léon Boisson sc

And till my head surmount a breathless trunk,
 For every hair of thine I'll warrant it. [To ZANTHE.
 My best beloved, retire awhile. [To Suite.] All follow me,
 To arm my vassals and secure my gates.

[Exit DUKE and Attendants, c. DONNA ZANTHE seems
 to follow her waiting-women, who go off, R., then stops
 and turns. HERNANI gazes on her steadfastly, but
 with strong emotion.

HERNANI.

I give you joy, fair Duchess. On my life
 Thou'rt furnished splendidly. A casket too.
 [Taking it from the table.
 Gems in reserve, most brilliant and complete ;
 Diamonds and pearls! Rings, chains, and coronet!
 No bauble left to sigh for. Precious store,
 And well bestowed on love so pure, so lofty. [Crosses R.

ZANTHE (taking a dagger from the casket).

You have not searched it through.

HERNANI (starting, then throwing himself at her feet).
 Forgive me!

ZANTHE.

This
 I snatched from Carlos, when he would have had me
 Partake his throne, which I refused for one
 Who thus requites me!

HERNANI.

Strike it to his heart!
 From thy hand merited, from thy hand welcome.

ZANTHE.

That hand can only raise thee from thy penitence.
 The worst of wrongs, from thee, my heart can pardon, —

Much more the wild and frantic thoughts that drive thee,
For my sake, to despair.

HERNANI.

Oh! ever merciful,
Devoted, measureless in love and truth!
'T is time this untamed savage should resign thee
To that benign and gentle peace he found
The native inmate of thy bosom.

ZANTHE.

No. For thy woes it bleeds,
But not thy cruelty. I should have died —

HERNANI.

For me!

ZANTHE.

For whom, if not for thee? *[In a flood of tears.*

HERNANI.

Still tears,
And I the cause! and none will punish me, —
Not e'en my much abused and noble host.
I cannot shun, yet wherefore do I haunt thee?
I know not how to love, yet love to madness.
My friends are dead, or in their dungeons. I
Am left to be indeed a scourge — a ruffian!

ZANTHE (*with ardent abandonment*).

No, thou art good and generous, and with all
My heart I love thee. *[Falls on his neck.*

HERNANI.

Carlos, strike! for earth
Can yield no more.
*[They are linked in each other's arms, absorbed in looks of
love and tenderness.*

Enter DON LEO, c. ; he stands amazed and motionless.

DON LEO.

And this is then the world
 I live in! this is now the recompense
 Of hospitality! and this the man
 Who, in the name of Christian brotherhood,
 Demands our shelter! Thou besotted host,
 Unbar thy gates, and let thy heart be opened
 To give the stranger welcome in his need;
 Arouse thy pride, and string thy sinews up
 To champion him, at sixty years;
 Gird on thy trustiest weapon, man thy towers
 To fence him in his danger; venture all
 For him, and thus much will he do for you!
 Bandits and murderers have I seen, who died
 Scoffers, impenitent and unconfessed,
 But never man betraying thus his host
 Who had not trembled. Flower of old Castilians!
[Addressing the portraits.
 What man is he who thus profanes your presence?

HERNANI.

One who devoutly bends in veneration
 For them and thee. The outrage I have done you
 Defies alike or patience or redress;
 But I have blood, a hot ungoverned tide,
 O'erswelling bound and barrier — let it gush!
 Cleanse thy polluted sanctuary, and be
 The rest forgotten!

ZANTHE.

Nay! Strike rather here!
 Hence was the sin, hence flow the expiation.
 This heart, defiled with pity for the brave,
 Be the peace-offering to thine anger.

DON LEO.

Neither.

It is not thus the sacrifice is made
To my insulted honour. Leave us.

ZANTHE.

Wherefore ?

That look I know ; it 'bodes some fatal purpose, —
Death or a living sepulchre ! Forbear,
For he is as noble as thyself : deserving
Thy love as mine.

DON LEO (*roused*).

Thine ?

ZANTHE.

No, no !

DON LEO.

'T is enough. [*A trumpet sounds.* LEO *draws his sword.*

Enter ISADORE, C.

What sound is that ?

ISADORE.

My lord, the King in person,
Attended by a troop of archers, claims
Admittance by his herald's trumpet.

DON LEO (*calmly*).

Claims !

ZANTHE.

The King ! 'T is fatal !

ISADORE.

Our delay offends him ; but your command —

DON LEO.

Well, for the King we 'll waive it ;
Admit him.

ZANTHE.

He is lost!

[*Exit ISADORE, C.*

[DON LEO goes to a large picture, L., of himself, which is the last on the left, and presses a spring, when the picture opens like a door, and discovers a recess in the wall.

HERNANI (*not observing him*).

He triumphs!

DON LEO.

No.

[*Points to the recess L.*

HERNANI.

Ah!

DON LEO.

Enter.

HERNANI.

Gladly.

Rescued from him, dispose me as you will.

[*Enters the recess L.; it closes on him.*ZANTHE (*exultingly*).

Does he relent—protect him still!

Enter ISADORE, C.

ISADORE.

His Highness the King.

[*A flourish of drums and trumpets. ZANTHE throws on her veil. The folding doors open and the KING enters in warlike attire, followed by Arquebusiers, Archers, Gentlemen-at-Arms, etc.; he advances deliberately, C., and fixes on DON LEO, R., a look of anger and distrust. The DUKE meets and salutes him with profound respect. The KING, on approaching, raises his head abruptly, and as in rebuke.*

DON CARLOS.

How comes it, cousin, that to-day
 Your bolts and bars are so tenacious? Why
 This watch and ward, question, and hostile parley?
 Your falchion, too, still glittering in your grasp!
 I thought it rusty.
 [*The DUKE goes to speak; the KING stops him by an
 imperial gesture.*]
 Put it up. Are we
 Encountered like a troop of turban'd foes?
 Am I a Saib, a Mahomet, or Carlos,
 That your porteullis falls at my approach?

DON LEO.

My liege —

DON CARLOS (*to his Attendants*).

Secure the keys. Let every door
 Be guarded strongly. Is it here I find
 Expiring treason nourished and restored?
 Of that devouring fire that long has blazed
 Even in our faces, yet a spark remains;
 Where is it smouldering, to be fann'd and foster'd?
 'T is here. The outlaw chief is in the castle.

DON LEO.

My liege, 't is true.

DON CARLOS.

Surrender him, or wear
 His chains thyself. Choose.

DON LEO.

My election 's easy.
 To take *me* fettered or to leave me free,
 Is the sole choice I can accord your Highness.

DON CARLOS.

Defer your pleasantry. I trifle not.
Bring forth your prisoner; I must have him; think on't.

[*The DUKE crosses his arms and pauses in brief deliberation; then raises his head and leads the KING to the most ancient of the portraits, L. U. E. DONNA ZANTHE watching him with great agitation.*

DON LEO.

Sire, by your gracious leave, behold the first,
The founder, of our race, Don Silvias, —
The father of its glory. Thrice in Rome,
Still great, was he elected consul, and recalled
The days when she was greatest. Next to him
Stands Ruy Gomez, worthy to succeed him, —
Grand master of St. James and Calatrava.
Three hundred standards,
In thirty battles fought and won, he made
His trophies and memorial. For the king
He conquered Moril, Suez, Antiquera,
And died in poverty. Salute him, sire.

[*He himself uncovers and bends in salutation; the KING exhibits constant impatience; DON LEO passes to another.*

His son, Don Gaspar, follows, — the reproachless;
Amidst corruption, incorruptible;
Whose hand to touch had sanctified an oath.
Your patience, — for I will not multiply
An echo of renown still equal, still
The highest! Here's my father, — undegenerate!
Friendship's proud champion! With six hundred spears
His friend Don Alvar Giron he redeemed
From hostile thousands.

DON CARLOS.

I demand my prisoner.

DON LEO.

Show me, sire, but one of these
Had soiled his honour and betrayed his guest.

DON CARLOS.

Hernani!

DON LEO.

Here is another yet. His son, myself,
[Pointing to his own portrait.]
 Has dared take place beside him, and must not
 Disgrace him.

DON CARLOS.

The rebel's head or yours.

DON LEO.

For surety, sire,
 Take that within your reach.

DON CARLOS.

Beware of both. *[To his Suite]*
 From topmost tower to deepest dungeon, search
 The castle through.

DON LEO.

My castle, like its lord,
 Is firm and faithful, and will keep our secret.

DON CARLOS.

This, to thy King!

DON LEO.

This, and a brief addition. *[With firm resolution.]*
 From base to battlement, till stone from stone

Be sundered, and their master limb from limb,
Master he will be, and his guest secure.

DON CARLOS.

Is 't resolved ?

DON LEO.

It is.

DON CARLOS.

Arrest him !

[Guards disarm him. ZANTHE throws up her veil

ZANTHE (R.)

Hold ! Carlos, the brave, the great !
You are a wicked king ;
Nor have a true and noble Spanish heart,
Like him you seek, or him you would oppress.

DON CARLOS.

Judgment so harsh ne'er uttered voice so gentle.
[Approaches her and lowers his tone.
I am what you have made me,— will be still.
If you would teach me mercy, let me learn it
From your example, not your precepts, Donna.
Still to be cruel, where you look for kindness,
Flatters the saucy satirist alone,
Who calls your sex unreasonable.

ZANTHE.

Sire,
Kings are no traffickers in grace and bounty,
But deal it unconditioned, or 't is none.

DON CARLOS.

Be it so,
You shall prevail. Release him. Brave De Sylva,
My long esteem, and a soft influence here,

Still shake our stern resolve. We cannot see you
 In Spanish hands a captive; well assured
 Your loyalty will suffer brief suspense.
 Meantime, we 'll only take, by way of hostage,
 Your kinsmaid here, — your Donna Zanthé.

DON LEO.

Take her.
 Only take —

ZANTHE.

Me!

DON CARLOS.

Fair maid, you go with us.

DON LEO.

No more! Oh, admirable clemency!
 Most gracious monarch, who can thus respect
 A servant's head to wring his heart!

DON CARLOS.

A choice
 Remains with thee,— your Donna Zanthé,
 Or your vile refuge.

DON LEO.

He must remain.

ZANTHE (*flies to DON LEO*).

Oh, save me!

DON CARLOS.

Trust me; *you* have nought to fear.

ZANTHE (*aside—recovering her thoughts*).

It may be not; and those I go to shield
 May die! It is enough. I follow you.

DON CARLOS.

You're wise, and may confide in me.

ZANTHE (*emphatically*).

I will.

[*Goes to the casket, takes the dagger and conceals it in her bosom.*]

DON CARLOS (*aside*).

'T was inspiration! [*To her.*] Come, my gentle hostage,
What seek you there?

ZANTHE.

Sire, 't is a valued token
I would not part from.

DON CARLOS.

You make me curious ;
May I not see a toy so prized ?

ZANTHE.

Ere long
You may. It is not now a time. [*To DON LEO.*] Farewell.
[*She gives her hand to DON CARLOS. They are about to go when DON LEO, who had remained absorbed, bursts into a paroxysm of despair.*]

DON LEO.

My Zanthe! Heaven and earth! Down with my walls!
Shatter them down, and crush me! What remains
When she is gone? Leave *her*, and take all else.

DON CARLOS.

My prisoner then.

DON LEO (*dropping his head, and after great agitation raising his clasped hands towards the portraits*).

You are relentless. [*To the KING.*]

DON CARLOS.

Fixed!

[DON LEO *advances slowly towards his portrait.* ZANTHE
watches him with breathless anxiety.

ZANTHE.

I am chilled!

DON LEO (*nearly reaching the spot, and again looking up*).
Lo! every eye
Flashes indignant lightning while I pause.
Base falterer! Suspense should damn thee — [*Struggles.*]
No,
The pang is past! Take her, and leave me still
My proud inheritance.

DON CARLOS.

Even make the most of it.
Heaven speed you, cousin.
[*Flourish of drums and trumpets.* *Exeunt* KING, ZANTHE,
and Attendants, c.

DON LEO.

[*Watches them in wild emotion for a moment, grappling
for his dagger, then returns, gasping, and remains
awhile motionless; then looking round, and finding
himself alone, withdraws two swords from a panoply,
measures and places them on a table; then proceeds to
the spring and opens the recess.*

Come forth!

HERNANI *enters from panel, L.*

Thou 'rt safe. My honour stands to thee
Clear and acquitted. What is due from thee,
Thou know'st. Select [*Pointing to the swords.*] and let us
hence.

HERNANI.

Contend with thee in arms! So foul a deed
Felon ne'er died for.

DON LEO.

Thou know'st my wrongs, and what alone can right them.
What! closely linked with thee, caressing! loving!
The thought for ever stinging me! 'T were madness!
'T is time, — 't is fit — 't is the sole course of honour
That one of us should die. Such lots are drawn
By brave men with their swords, as ours must be;
Or thy refusal be thy forfeiture, —
For so, by Heaven, I'll hold it!

HERNANI.

Hold it so.

DON LEO.

Thou 'rt warned.

HERNANI.

I am. The blood of my brave friends
Reproaches me the life you saved. To them
And thee let it atone. The prize is thine;
Be mine the forfeit.

DON LEO.

Make thy last prayer.

HERNANI.

To thee I make it: To behold once more,
And breathe a blessing on thy Donna Zanthe.

DON LEO.

Behold her!

HERNANI.

Nay, let me but hear her voice
Once, and no more!

DON LEO.

Was thy concealment then
So closed against the passing scene ?

HERNANI.

For thy sake
I sought its inmost depths.

DON LEO.

And nothing heard ?

HERNANI.

Nothing. Yet, what imports it to my boon ?

DON LEO.

The King demanded thee or Donna Zanthe.

HERNANI.

And bore her hence ?

DON LEO.

For thee my roof was sacred.

HERNANI.

Madman ! she 's lost ; he loves her !

DON LEO.

Loves her !

HERNANI.

Aye, as a lewd and reckless tyrant loves, —
To laugh at thee and me — dishonour her.

DON LEO.

Curse on his treachery ! Confiding fool !
Was this his midnight purpose ! Ho ! within !

[Attendants appear at c.

Let all my followers, mounted at the best,

In arms attend me quick.

[Exeunt Attendants, c.



HERNANI.

And for my boon,
 Give but a band of them to my command,
 On one great hazard more to set my hate
 Against this ravisher, thy Donna Zanthe
 To rescue or revenge; by the big throb
 That shakes thy own proud heart, oh grant but this!
 And should my life escape the desperate issue,
 Still, still 't is thine.

DON LEO.

Trust thee! Thou vindicate her!

HERNANI.

Thou hast my bond.

DON LEO.

Unpledged — unwitnessed.

HERNANI.

No;
 To these thy ancestors I make appeal, —
[Then pointing upwards.]
 To mine, a race as noble as thine own.
 And for a pledge take this, and hear my words.
[Gives his horn.]

Whate'er befalls me, at whatever time
 Or place thou would'st demand my life, 't is thine,
 And claim it. Only sound this horn, —
 I sha'n't mistake it, — and thy will be done.

DON LEO.

Thy hand! One law then rules us; I will trust thee.
[Exeunt, c.]

ACT IV.

SCENE. — *The monumental caverns of Aix-la-Chapelle. Spacious vaults of Lombard architecture, low and massy pillars, with ornamental capitals. On the right the tomb of Charlemagne, with a small low door of brass, the inscription "Karolo Magno" rendered conspicuous by the light of a lamp, which is suspended singly from the centre of the vaults. The eye is lost in the undefined depths of the Arcades.*

Enter CARLOS and RICARDO, the latter leading the way with a lantern, L. U. E.

DON RICARDO.

We have now, my liege, wound through the murky labyrinth. Here, no doubt, the traitors will assemble; and here is your chosen concealment.

DON CARLOS.

We'll use it anon. Thanks to our diligence and the speed of our horses, we are far in advance of their appointed hour. And this, then, is to be the council hall of conspiracy? They'll sharpen their daggers on the tomb of Charlemagne, as if Carlos of Castile were unworthy to succeed him. Your list of these formidable conspirators.

DON RICARDO.

'T is here, my liege, with the exception of two who have lately reinforced them, and who appear to be father and son; but their names I know not.

DON CARLOS.

We may soon engrave them on their monument for public information. But in thus disposing of our pigmy



CHILDA



foes, what is our dependence on our friends? The empire, Count, the empire! The crisis of its fate is near at hand.

DON RICARDO.

The council, sire, is at this moment deliberating. You will succeed.

DON CARLOS.

Three voices, as I think, would secure me. Three suffrages! Could I but purchase them for as many cities, — Ghent, Toledo, Salamanca. In Spain or Flanders let them make their choice, and they shall have the richest and the proudest.

DON RICARDO.

'T were a tempting bribe, sire.

DON CARLOS.

'T is nothing, Count, — a trifle. [*Tapping him familiarly.*] Cities, my sagacious friend, may be recovered; the empire once lost becomes a forlorn hope. [RICARDO *puts on his hat.*] Your hat, sir!

DON RICARDO.

My liege, you have touched and familiarly accosted me. I am a grandee of Spain, *ipso facto*.

DON CARLOS.

Ha, ha, ha! You are learned in the law, Count, and prompt at illustration. We venture not to litigate your claim, and therefore, grandee, we must admit you. Our Donna Zanthé, how has she sustained her journey?

DON RICARDO.

Marvellously well, sire, since the worthy duchess you gave her in charge to, and her own experience, have assured her of your Highness's chivalrous forbearance.

DON CARLOS.

Therein she flatters not *my* love, my lord.
 But she is woman still, and should I triumph —
 Have you considered our impatience, Count?
 How shall we quickliest know the council's choice?

DON RICARDO.

From the cannon's mouth, my liege. The discharge of
 one only will announce the election of the Duke of
 Saxony; two will report for Francis; and three will
 thunder for your Highness.

DON CARLOS.

'T is well devised. They'll boldly speak the worst, un-
 minced with flattery. And now to prepare for our con-
 spirators, — these self-elected guardians of the state and
 empire! Forget not my instructions.

DON RICARDO.

I do not, my liege.

DON CARLOS.

The key of the monument.

DON RICARDO.

'T is here! [*Gives it.*]

DON CARLOS.

Now leave us, and obey our orders strictly.

[*Exit RICARDO, R.*]

DON CARLOS (*remains for a time in profound abstraction,
 then turns toward the tomb of Charlemagne.*)

Charlemagne! mighty spirit! now enthroned
 Above this coil and buzz of mortal passions,
 Oh, let me commune with thee! Say, is all
 Thy power, the wisdom and the mastery

Of soul, that with thy mortal nature came
 On earth, gone with it, — perished, marbled up
 With that poor dust, which balanced with the vilest,
 Nor weighs, nor values more? Let them be dumb
 Who deem so, while a heart is swelling here,
 That unrebuked, even in this awful presence,
 Dares hope to track thee in thy giant path,
 And do thy mighty deeds. Oh, empire! empire!
 Winning thee fairly shall I not desire thee?
 And having won thee, when I spot thy purple
 With sloth or slavish passion, to my bosom
 Take other counsellors than truth and justice,
 Then strip it from me, Heaven, and degrade
 The mightiest monarch to the meanest man.
 And thou, immortal spirit! by my strength;
 Sustain me; poise me on my height, and yield me
 Awhile thy sanctuary. Dare I enter?
 Should I in shadowy majesty behold him,
 How would he palsy my presumption? Hark!
 What step, save mine, profanes thy sacred rest?
 [*Smiling.*] I had forgot. I wait for my assassins.
 They come.

[*He enters the tomb and closes it. Several Men enter with cautious step, enveloped in their mantles, finally meet each other, and speak in a low voice.*

SECOND CONSPIRATOR.

Who goes there?

FIRST CONSPIRATOR (*carrying a lighted torch*).

Ad Augusta.

SECOND CONSPIRATOR.

Per Augusta.

FIRST CONSPIRATOR.

The saints protect us!

SECOND CONSPIRATOR.

The dead befriend us!

FIRST CONSPIRATOR.

Heaven preserve us! [*The sound of other steps.*]

SECOND CONSPIRATOR.

Who goes there?

DE HARO (*in the distance, c.*).

Ad Augusta.

SECOND CONSPIRATOR.

Per Augusta.

FIRST CONSPIRATOR.

Saw you the Duke of Gotha?

DE HARO.

Not an hour ago. He will not fail us.

FIRST CONSPIRATOR.

Methinks I hear his step.

[*The DUKE of GOTHA and other Conspirators advance from the obscurity in the centre.*]

DE HARO.

Who goes there?

GOTHA.

Ad Augusta.

DE HARO.

Per Augusta.

FIRST CONSPIRATOR.

We are all met.

[*The Conspirators form an open semicircle; the first Conspirator takes the centre.*]

FIRST CONSPIRATOR.

Now, Gotha, your report. What is to be the decision of the Great Council?

GOTHA.

We must prepare for the worst; 't is scarcely doubted the Duke of Saxony's humility will turn their choice on Carlos.

SECOND CONSPIRATOR.

We must be speedy then. 'T is said his eagerness to snatch at the imperial crown has brought him hither. Let him once wear it and he is safe; his august person becomes sacred; who dares profane it is damned past hope.

FIRST CONSPIRATOR.

'T is certain. We must secure the safety of our souls, and kill him without loss of time.

SECOND CONSPIRATOR.

Down with him!

ALL.

Agreed!

FIRST CONSPIRATOR.

Let him die! Who shall strike the blow? One arm will despatch him as well as fifty. The reserve will make all sure.

SECOND CONSPIRATOR.

Decide it by lot.

ALL.

Aye, aye, by lot, by lot!

FIRST CONSPIRATOR.

About it then — your names.

[The Conspirators write their names on tablets, then tear the leaves, fold them, and throw them into an urn forming an ornament to one of the tombs.]

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Now listen every man. To whomsoever
The glorious hazard fall, let him resolve
To strike like an old Roman, and to die
Defying block, wheel, and brand.

ALL.

We do. Draw! draw!

[*First Conspirator draws and opens the lot.*]

The name?

FIRST CONSPIRATOR (*reads*).

Hernani!

HERNANI (*starting forward*, L. C.).

'T is mine! A smile of fortune comes at last.
Friends, she has done her best for you, be sure.

DON LEO (*joining him*, L. C.).

I doubt it. You are young, light-tongued, light-witted;
Your arm may be unsteady as your head.
Transfer your right. I'll buy it at your price,
Tho' 't were your pledge here [*his horn*] and your mort-
gaged life.

HERNANI.

Your bidding must be better, Duke. My price
I need not name, — Zante; or Death is welcome.
My life is yours. The King's belongs to me.

DON LEO.

'T is true. Keep then the rights you have, as I
Will mine.

SECOND CONSPIRATOR.

Aye, let him strike; we'll follow close.

HERNANI.

You may
For I will lead where following shall not shame you.

This Carlos,
 Who looks to be fifth emperor of that name,
 All despot as he is, claims better of us
 Than a base war of darkness and stilletoes.

[*Draws his sword.*]

This be our weapon, then.
 Show him who strikes, and openly be hailed
 Deliverers, or die like martyrs.

DON LEO (*with impatient energy*).

No more.
 He dies — no matter how to-morrow. Swear it.

ALL.

We swear!

[*A report of cannon is heard; they pause in silent suspense. The door of the tomb opens, and DON CARLOS appears, pale and anxious; a second and third report follow successively; advances to C. and stands motionless.*]

DON CARLOS.

Signors, aloof! The *Emperor* hears you. What
 The angry swarm plunged into night and silence,
 And all this muffled thunder but a dream!
 Strike! He is here! Carlos,
 Now the fifth emperor of that name! You dare not!
 But now your torches glared defiance. Has
 A breath extinguished them? I must supply
 Their places, then.

[*Strikes the brazen door with the key, and the vault is instantly filled with Soldiers bearing torches, and partizans; the DUKES ALCALA and PARMA at their head.*]

HERNANI.

Defend yourselves!

[*Having made an effort, he is overwhelmed with the rest, who offer no resistance, and they are disarmed.*]

DON CARLOS.

Vile company, good signor. You are lighted
Now to our mind. Is 't not a goodly blaze?
And shows one face I'm proud to look upon.

HERNANI.

And in this crowd he is but Carlos, then,
Whom juggled fancy swelled to Charlemagne.

DON RICARDO (*eagerly saluting the EMPEROR*).

Sire! let me welcome you
To empire.

DON CARLOS.

You have been trusty, and my Lord
Grandee, be now my Chamberlain!

DON RICARDO.

Without
Wait two Electors of the Golden Chamber
With their congratulations.

DON CARLOS.

Let them enter!

[*In an under tone.*] And Donna Zanthe!

[RICARDO *ushers in the KING of BOHEMIA and the DUKE of BAVARIA crowned and in costumes of state, followed by German Barons carrying the banner of the EMPEROR, — a spread eagle, with the escutcheon of Spain in the centre. They salute the EMPEROR, who salutes them in return, c.*

DUKE.

King of the Romans! sacred majesty!
We speak the general voice when we proclaim you
Worthily raised to that imperial throne
The proudest monarchs vainly have aspired to!

Frederic of Saxony, elected first,
 His conscience yielding to your sounder claim,
 In honesty of heart for you renounced it.
 Your coronation only waits your presence.

DON CARLOS.

Crowned in default of Frederic the Wise,
 We must assert his wisdom in the transfer.

[DONNA ZANTHE *appears from* R. U. E.

And Donna Zanthé comes the first to prove us.

DON RICARDO (*conducting* ZANTHE).

The Emperor.

ZANTHE (R. C.).

Emperor!

HERNANI (L. C.).

Donna Zanthé!

DON LEO (L.).

Ah!

ZANTHE.

Hernani!

DON LEO.

Me she marks not!

ZANTHE.

And a prisoner!

HERNANI.

There is no more to fear on my account!
 The worst is on my head.

ZANTHE.

May I

Implore the Emperor's gracious leave to speak,
 Doing him justice, hoping for his mercy!

DON CARLOS.

Here you are mistress.

ZANTHE.

If I have been tranquil [*Crosses to HERNANI.*],
 'T is that my worst of fears were stolen from me,
 Committed to a noble lady's charge,
 Ne'er sought in my unwitnessed loneliness,
 With honour and with due regard invested.
 Had it been otherwise, I had a trinket,
 You will remember, as a charm of safety.
 Happy I have not been. The Emperor knows
 His clemency alone can make me so.

DON CARLOS.

Lady, you go too far. Has he not sapped
 The firmest pillar of my throne, — the Duke
 De Sylva, prisoner by his side ?

ZANTHE.

Don Leo !

DON CARLOS.

A traitor !

DON LEO.

Yes, as Julian was a traitor
 To King Rodrigo.

DON CARLOS.

Alcala, let those
 Of rank be parted from the rest, to die
 As should become them.

[*The Guards divide the prisoners, etc., leaving HERNANI
 and three on L., taking the others to R.*]

HERNANI.

Slaves ! am I then left
 To die with dogs ? I claim my place with *them*,
 And at their head. You, King, that will have me
 Exalted to be worth your sword or hatchet,
 Know, the same power that made thee what thou art,

Gave me a station in the sight of honour
 No jot beneath your level. Let your headsman
 Record me in his list of noble martyrs,
 Duke of Segovia and Cardona,
 Count Albatira, Marquis of Monroy,
 Viscount de Gor, and lord of lands unnumbered.
 Yes, I am John of Arragon, the exiled
 Son of a sire by thine unjustly sentenced
 To die upon the scaffold, — the sole heritage
 Reserved for me and proudly shared with him,
 For I will mount it nothing derogate.
 Before the king, the head of a grandee
 May bear its bonnet to the block.

[*He puts on his hat ; the rest follow his example.*

And now, De Sylva, Lara, and the rest,
 Give place to John of Arragon! [*Going over to them, R.*]

Dukes or counts,
 I stand before you! Marshals, I demand
 A well graced pageant, and a spacious scaffold!

DON CARLOS.

This history we had almost forgotten ;
 Nor e'en had guessed Hernani had recalled it.

HERNANI.

A festering wound keeps memory awake !

DON CARLOS.

Then part of *my* inheritance, I find,
 Is an unreckoned fund of treasured vengeance
 For heads King Philip, it appears, chopped off
 Without consulting me.

ZANTHE (*kneeling*).

Oh, Emperor,
 Of heart imperial! most wise and just!

Be also merciful. If he hath wronged you
 'T was rashly, not ignobly, even as I have.
 And as you pardon me, so pardon him,
 If on no better plea than that I love him ;
 That he is mine as yours the throne of empire,
 And to my heart more dear ! that we must live
 Or die together. Graciously reply.

DON CARLOS (*a moment pausing*).

Fair Donna, *you* must
 Live till this poor world
 Supply some image of thine excellence ;
 Live unobscured, a blessing and example.
 Rise, Duchess of Segovia and Cardona,
 Countess of Abatira, Viscountess
 De Gor — Your other titles, rebel ?

HERNANI.

Is it
 The *King* I hear ?

DON CARLOS.

No. 'T is the *Emperor*. [*To ZANTHE.*]
 You hold them in your lord and husband's right,
 Don John of Arragon. Your hand repays them.
 [*Joins their hands.*]

ZANTHE.

Oh, heavens !

HERNANI.

My liege — [*They go to kneel ; the KING stops them.*]

DON CARLOS.

No more ! Our time is brief. [*To DON LEO.*]
 How now, old friend, you do not envy him
 Nobility, — his own inheritance ?



АСТІСОЛЕНА.

DON LEO.

No, sire [*aside*] it is not his *nobility*.

HERNANI.

Oh, what a precious balm streams on the wound
That cankered at my heart! 'T is healed for ever.

ZANTHE.

My lord, my life, we suddenly inhabit
Another world.

DON CARLOS (*to himself, his hand on his heart*).

Heart! heart! be satisfied.

The head thy pantings have so long bewildered
Claims now to master thee, and bid thee rest.
Love! Love of aught save the confiding millions
Heaven to our charge consigns, awhile forget we;
Spain, Flanders, Germany, our subject-states,
Be now our mistresses, and, Donna Zante,
Farewell. Don John, you would have knelt;
Kneel now.

[HERNANI, *now John of Arragon; he kneels.* CARLOS
places round his neck the collar of the Golden Fleece.

Accept a bauble some will envy thee,
And rise our knight. Albe those circling arms
Still far more honour thee than our adornment, —
Those arms, the snow-white badge of innocent love,
Pure symbol of domestic bliss, which when
A king enjoys, he dying may proclaim
All else a shadow.

HERNANI.

And am I thus happy,
Standing the guiltiest among the guilty?
They have no Donna Zantes.

DON CARLOS.

Nor shall need them.
 My heart, my eyes, are full of aught but vengeance.
 Your names I know not, but all here are pardoned.

DON LEO.

I pardon not so freely.
 [*Sullenly disappears in the crowd.*]

DON CARLOS (*to RICARDO*).

Prepare that we depart.
 [RICARDO *withdraws the crowd, who pass in utter silence through the vaults to R. U. E. CARLOS turns towards the tomb of Charlemagne.*]

DON CARLOS.

Ascendant shade!
 Have I so far invoked thee not in vain?
 Uphold me now in the momentous toils,
 The thronging cares, a dense and mighty cloud,
 That suddenly approaching, daunts my pride
 And lours upon my grandeur. I implored thee
 Greatly to guide me through my awful trust,
 And thou hast whispered me, "Begin with mercy."

[*Tableau.*]





ACT V.

SCENE. — *A wide and magnificent terrace in the Palace of Arragon at Saragossa, bordered by a balustrade which crosses the stage, adorned with Moorish arcades, beyond which are seen the gardens, with fountains, bowers, etc., illuminated. In the centre is a broad flight of steps leading to the gardens. The palace, with Gothic and Arabian embellishments, also illuminated on the R. U. E.; moonlight.*

DON HENRIQUEZ, DON MATTHIAS, DON RICARDO, *and other Young Nobles come forward from L. U. E., conversing with hilarity.*

DON HENRIQUEZ.

By the imperial crown of King Carlos, this is a feast worthy of a prodigal's return, and of the generosity of an emperor.

DON MATTHIAS.

In sooth is it; worthy at once to celebrate a wedding and a coronation, a feast that has studded all the windows in Saragossa with bright eyes, a feast that has set every young foot and every old heart dancing with joy.

DON RICARDO.

Yes, and a few heads reeling, into the bargain.

DON MATTHIAS.

And let decorum wink at it. Never was measure filled to braver lord or fairer lady.

DON RICARDO.

Who would have dreamed our eavesdropping expedition among the rogues and rebels was to end in this? I thought it much their captain escaped with his head.

DON HENRIQUEZ.

He has proved an overmatch for us all, — even for the veteran campaigner, Don Leo, who, in my mind, for generosity and forbearance, transcends the King himself, and bears his disappointment like a sturdy old soldier.

DON RICARDO.

Not so sturdily as you may imagine. You see he has not attended the celebration of the wedding.

DON MATTHIAS.

'T is true! though the Emperor sent a special messenger to enjoin his presence. But 't is time we thought of absenting ourselves also. Hymen, methinks, beckons us away; and not a guest of us, I am confident, but will vote his entertainment superlative.

DON RICARDO.

I beg your pardon, I suspect one black ball.

DON MATTHIAS.

From whom?

DON HENRIQUEZ.

I guess; he means the black domino.

DON RICARDO.

I do.

DON MATTHIAS.

The black domino?

DON HENRIQUEZ.

Why, have n't you remarked, overhung with rainbow garlands, and surrounded by dames and cavaliers in all their brilliant varieties, a spectre in black, leaning with folded arms against a column, in grim and sullen majesty, like Pluto on the wrong side of the Styx?

DON MATTHIAS.

I saw him not.

DON RICARDO.

I marked him well. Hush! here he comes.

[The Black Domino enters, L., and gloomily crosses the stage, absorbed, and not appearing to notice them, and disappears by the flight of steps R. U. E., every eye fixed upon him.]

DON MATTHIAS.

Whoe'er he be, he carries it admirably.

Watch him, Henriquez.

DON HENRIQUEZ.

He is at the bottom of the terrace, and now he disappears in the orange grove.

DON RICARDO.

He has my consent to disappear altogether.

Enter DONNA ZANTHE and HERNANI, hand-in-hand, L. U. E., their noble guests and masks ranged to do them honour. A salutation of music.

HERNANI.

Dear friends, accept my grateful thanks.

ZANTHE.

And mine,
From an o'erflowing heart.

DON RICARDO.

Your happiness
Among us all hath circulated freely.

HERNANI.

You and your friends, I hope, are well bestowed
Within the palace, long to be our guests.

DON HENRIQUEZ.

While 't is the Emperor's pleasure 't will be ours.
A happy rest to both.

HERNANI.

Be yours untroubled.

Again we thank you ; and good friends, farewell.

[*The company disperse, R., accompanied by strain of music, which gradually dies away ; and during the following, the lights are extinguished and all is hushed.* HERNANI and DONNA ZANTHE remaining alone.

HERNANI.

At length we are alone once more,
The festive glare grows dim, the nimble foot
Drags weary to its rest. The song, the minstrel,
The busy tongue of mirth and gratulation, —
All, all, are hushed, and we abandoned wholly
To the sweet silence of our heart's content.
Oh, solitude most welcome !

ZANTHE.

Even so ;
For 'mid the blaze and hurry of our fortunes
I yet have seemed as one-but half awaken'd
From hideous dreams, o'er dazzled by the light
That strives to break them. Now, assured, I feel
My disenthralment and my happiness.

HERNANI.

Proudly I hear you ; yes, the cloud is past.
Snatched from impending wreck, our hopes are now
Harboured in peace and love. And now, bethink thee,
The falling dews may harm thee.

ZANTHE.

How good,
How tender art thou, my beloved Hernani!

HERNANI.

Hernani! Such a man I know there was,
In discontent enshrouded, gloating on
His own dark thoughts, and loving nought beside.
And call you me by his unhallowed name?
I am Don John of Arragon.
The husband of the noble Donna Zanthe,
Envied and happy!

ZANTHE.

Fortune is but just to thee;
These rich habiliments, this badge of honour,
Who, with a better grace, may claim to wear?

HERNANI.

Still you forget my counsel. Will you not
O'ertask your spirits?

ZANTHE.

Yet one little moment;
These stealing tears are not from weariness.
One look, one parting gaze, on this fair scene —

[From the balustrade.

My noble Duke of Arragon, come hither.
Inhale the breeze awhile from yonder hills,
Thy sleep will be the sweeter. How profound
The calm is now become. All Nature watches,
Enamoured of our loneliness, to guard it.
With what a fragrance
The rose and orange flower embalm the air!
Elysium! and behold, the moon hath tarried

To shed her first mild lustre o'er this hour.
 Living for such a moment, is it not
 To live for all that mortals may dare hope for?

HERNANI.

You droop.

ZANTHE.

Methinks I do, and feel as if
 Soaring too far above the common lot
 I needs must fall; this calm seems now too deep,
 And sad. Could I but hear a nightingale
 Warbling in mystery, one knows not where,
 A lover's lute, or —

[*The distant sound of a horn is heard, R. U. E.*]

HERNANI (*startled with terror*).

What appalling sound
 Is that?

ZANTHE.

Some spirit hears, — our guardian angel.

HERNANI (*with inward bitterness*).

Yes, 't is our guardian angel. [*Horn sounds again*]. Ah!
 again.

ZANTHE.

'T is thine own signal!

HERNANI.

Do you recognise it?

ZANTHE.

I do.

HERNANI (*aside*).

And so do I. [*Horn repeated*].

ZANTHE.

Again! Who is it?

HERNANI (*wildly*).

A tiger howling for his prey.

ZANTHE.

My lord !

HERNANI (*with fearful emotion*).

Call me Hernani ! Still Hernani ! now
That name alone is mine for ever !

ZANTHE.

You are distracted. On my knees I charge you
Tell me the secret of thy thoughts.

HERNANI.

I have sworn —

ZANTHE (*watching him anxiously*).

Sworn what ?

HERNANI (*raising his hand to his forehead, and recovering himself*).

Nay, nothing. I know not what I say.

ZANTHE.

You said —

HERNANI.

No matter what. My brain is troubled.
I am not well ; but let it not alarm thee.

ZANTHE.

Let me seek something that may relieve thee.

[*Horn repeated.*]

HERNANI.

Ere this it should be done — oh !

ZANTHE.

You are suffering keenly.

HERNANI.

Aye, of an ancient wound I thought had healed;
But 't is envenomed newly. [*Aside.*] She must leave us
Listen ; there is a coffer I have always
With me.

ZANTHE.

There is ? Contains it that will soothe thee ?

HERNANI.

I recollect it does. Desire thy page
To seek and bring it hither.

ZANTHE.

'T is an office
For me alone.

HERNANI.

And this is then the lot
The emperor in his magnanimity,
My Donna Zante in her matchless love,
Prepared for me. Amid the festal, lo !
The finger on the wall, and in the bower
Of bliss I lead an angel to, a demon
Waits me ! A desperate life I pledged to him ;
How different is the coin in which I pay
The fatal debt ! Yet all is still again.
Perhaps (Heaven grant it !) 't was the sound deceived me.
[*The Mask in the black domino appears at the end of the
terrace, R. HERNANI shrinks at the sight, and stands
petrified.*

DON LEO.

"Whate'er befall me, at whatever time,
Or place thou would'st demand my life, 't is thine,

And claim it. Only sound this horn,
I sha'n't mistake it, and thy will be done."
This compact by the noble dead was witnessed,
Yet performed it is not.

HERNANI.

'T is he.

DON LEO.

I claim my right.

HERNANI.

Take it. I am prepared.

DON LEO.

I am no executioner. Proud honour
Pays its own debts, nor waits disgraceful seizure.

HERNANI.

Show me the means.

DON LEO.

They are not wanting. I
Come both to claim and share thy sacrifice,
And bring a potion which will deal quickly with us,
Or, if thou wilt, a dagger; make thy choice,
And the alternative be mine.

HERNANI.

The poison.

DON LEO.

Thou'rt prompt, and bravely wilt give up the soul
Of a Castilian nobleman. 'T is here. [*Gives it.*]
Thy hand. Now, mercy for us both! Drink thou,
And I will strike. Dost shrink?

HERNANI.

I do.

Thy claim is sacred, I disown it not;

Yet, if thou 'rt human, art not more than fiend,
 Only till to-morrow
 Remit thy claim. Strike not this icy horror
 To the warm bosom of an innocent bride,
 But grant one day for lenity.

DON LEO.

Ha! ha! ha!
 To-morrow! Am I for thy mirth? Think'st thou
 The raging fire that feeds upon my heart
 Will leave its pulses beating till to-morrow?
 Shame on thy trifling! Fate is urgent with me,
 And we must die together.

HERNANI.

Demon! — hence!

DON LEO (*tauntingly*).

Why so? 'T was but an oath,
 Pledged by the honour of thy ancestors, —
 Thy father's and thine own.

HERNANI.

Yet for thy name man, the world thou livest in --

DON LEO.

I deal with it as it has dealt with me.
 Art thou a slave, a liar, and a coward,
 Or the legitimate Duke of Arragon?

HERNANI.

Art thou —

DON LEO.

I am a rock the whirlwind stirs not.
 Confront thine infamy or die!

HERNANI.

No more.

This do I quaff to thine eternal torment.

[Goes to drink, when DONNA ZANTHE enters L., suddenly.
She speaks as she enters, then observes him with
surprise.

ZANTHE.

I found it not. What drug is that? You shudder.
My voice affrights thee. Here are some dark doings
Thou would'st conceal from me. Still silent.

[The Mask strikes her attention, and discovers himself.

Ah!

Horrible vision! wherefore are ye met
Thus secretly? He brings thee poison! Speak!

HERNANI.

I cannot.

ZANTHE.

Cannot? Am I not thy wife that thus
Thou deal'st with me in dreadful mystery?
I must be told the truth.

HERNANI.

And art thou doomed
From me to hear it? I sold
My life to him, when it was cheaply bartered
For present safety, and reserv'd in trust
To save thee from dishonour. 'T was my bond.

ZANTHE.

An impious bond!

DON LEO.

An oath,—
A soldier's, and a noble Spaniard's oath.

A devilish oath.

ZANTHE.

An oath inviolable.

HERNANI.

ZANTHE.

A vain, a guilty, and a damning oath !
Tremble, both.

Idolaters ! an earthly god you worship
In mockery of the Great Eternal [*Draws a dagger.*] Lo !
[*To DON LEO.*]

My fears have armed me, and thou know'st me not.
Am I not of thy race ? Thy wrathful blood
On thee I'll prove. My father had assail'd
My husband's life at peril of his own,
As thou dost. No relenting word ? Forgive me !

[*Throws away the dagger, and falls at his feet.*]

Alas ! Alas ! Have pity on us both ;
I am a fond weak woman, and my heart
Still yearns to love thee as it ever loved.
I am subdued, and at thy feet implore thee,
Spare him. Have pity on us both !

HERNANI.

Canst thou
Thus humble thee in vain ? The fiend is smiling.

ZANTHE.

A smile of mercy, of compassion. Look !
[*Alluding to HERNANI.*]
Behold him in his bravery ! And canst thou
Kill him for loving me ? 'T is past recall.
I'm sworn to him.

DON LEO.

And he to me.

ZANTHE.

Let him —
 Let him do flintiest penance, but not die.

HERNANI.

Delude thee not,
 Dishonoured must I live, or here must die

DON LEO.

The choice perplexes thee.

HERNANI.

Thou liest!

[Raises the poison, ZANTHE still opposing.]

ZANTHE.

Hold!
 Oh, hear, yet hear me both, ye cruel men!
 I am a wife, and to a dying husband
 Would ease a bursting heart.

DON LEO.

Be brief. We wait.

ZANTHE (*bewildered, hanging on him*).

A moment.

Let me say all, and then I shall be strong.

[Leaning on HERNANI, she convulsively grasps the poison.]
 I have it! Slay him now some other way.

DON LEO.

Woman, farewell! The power is left me still
 To trumpet forth thy shame on earth, and then
 To tell this tale among thine ancestors.

HERNANI.

Yet stay! [*To ZANTHE.*] Be firm and hear me. My proud
 Zanthe,
 Lofty of soul as beautiful of form!
 Shall I then live to bear about the brand
 Of perjury and dastard fear, disgrace
 Nobility, endure the taunting finger
 That marks me out a recreant to my name,
 Outcast of honour, and the stain of knighthood,
 'Till even thyself despise me? No, I charge thee,
 By the pure passion of our hearts, restore
 The poison!

ZANTHE.

These are solemn words. Awhile
 I will consider them.
 [*Retires a little, suddenly drinks of the phial, and then
 presents it to him.*]
 Drink now.

HERNANI.

What hast thou done?

DON LEO (*horror-stricken*).

Was it for her?

HERNANI.

Murderer, dost shrink at last?
 It is too late.

ZANTHE.

Be satisfied; thy share
 Is left thee. Hadst thou done as much
 For me, thou selfish lord? But I'm content.
 Now sacrifice thee to thy phantom god.

HERNANI (*gazing in anguish*).

A death so fearful —

ZANTHE.

No, 't is nothing fearful.
 We 'll sleep together still, soundly and sweetly
 As on our bed of down.

HERNANI (*to DON LEO*).

Still I forget thee.

[Drinks and throws away the phial.

Now revel in thy work.

ZANTHE (*clinging to him*).

Didst drink it? Would thou hadst not.
 'T will gender in thy heart a nest of vipers.
 They are here with tongues of fire. And now 't is ice, —
 A drowsy chill. Dost thou not suffer?

HERNANI.

Nothing.

ZANTHE.

Then lay me down to rest, and come thou too,
[She sinks gently down in his embrace.
 Thy bride looks somewhat pale, I fear; but thou
 Still lovest her; in thy arms she still will rest,
 And 't will content her.

HERNANI.

These pangs! Yet hers are soothed.

ZANTHE.

Where art thou?
 'T is dark, but soon we shall ascend together
 To realms of light.

HERNANI (*becoming faint*).

Dark — dark, indeed, hath been
My doom ; yet all I prayed for at the worst
Was thus to die, my lips upon this hand.

DON LEO.

Die, die, that I may hear no more ! They 're happy !

ZANTHE.

My love !

HERNANI.

I 'm dizzy — and thy sufferings !

ZANTHE.

Gone, —
Quite gone.

HERNANI.

Then all is well — 't is mercy — oh !

[Falls and expires.

ZANTHE.

Before me ?

DON LEO.

Dead !

ZANTHE.

No, no,
He sleeps. Thou, angry Duke, awake him not.
He is my husband — this our bridal bed.
Hush — trouble not our dreams — near, near.

[Turns his face, and draws it towards her.

And now —
Good night. *[Dies.*

DON LEO.

Dead ! dead ! and smiling still.
Within there ! ho ! A murderer in the palace !
The rack ! The rack !



*Enter DON HENRIQUEZ and DON MATTHIAS, followed by
the other guests, S. R. E.*

DON LEO.

Flames!

Flames! and the rack! Torture my limbs — and ease

My soul. It is too late.

[Gasps and expires in their arms.

Tableau — solemn music — and

CURTAIN.

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