

FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER

THE ROBBERS

Friedrich Schiller

The Robbers

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Friedrich Schiller

The Robbers

SCHILLER'S PREFACE

AS PREFIXED TO THE FIRST EDITION OF THE ROBBERS

PUBLISHED IN 1781.

Now first translated into English.

This play is to be regarded merely as a dramatic narrative in which, for the purpose of tracing out the innermost workings of the soul, advantage has been taken of the dramatic method, without otherwise conforming to the stringent rules of theatrical composition, or seeking the dubious advantage of stage adaptation. It must be admitted as somewhat inconsistent that three very remarkable people, whose acts are dependent on perhaps a thousand contingencies, should be completely developed within three hours, considering that it would scarcely be possible, in the ordinary course of events, that three such remarkable people should, even in twenty-four hours, fully reveal their characters to the most penetrating inquirer. A greater amount of incident is here crowded together than it was possible for me to confine within the narrow limits prescribed by Aristotle and Batteux.

It is, however, not so much the bulk of my play as its contents which banish it from the stage. Its scheme and economy require that several characters should appear who would offend the finer feelings of virtue and shock the delicacy of our manners. Every delineator of human character is placed in the same dilemma if he proposes to give a faithful picture of the world as it really is, and not an ideal phantasy, a mere creation of his own. It is the course of mortal things that the good should be shadowed by the bad, and virtue shine the brightest when contrasted with vice. Whoever proposes to discourage vice and to vindicate religion, morality, and social order against their enemies, must unveil crime in all its deformity, and place it before the eyes of men in its colossal magnitude; he must diligently explore its dark mazes, and make himself familiar with sentiments at the wickedness of which his soul revolts.

Vice is here exposed in its innermost workings. In Francis it resolves all the confused terrors of conscience into wild abstractions, destroys virtuous sentiments by dissecting them, and holds up the earnest voice of religion to mockery and scorn. He who has gone so far (a distinction by no means enviable) as to quicken his understanding at the expense of his soul – to him the holiest things are no longer holy; to him God and man are alike indifferent, and both worlds are as nothing. Of such a monster I have endeavored to sketch a striking and lifelike portrait, to hold up to abhorrence all the machinery of his scheme of vice, and to test its strength by contrasting it with truth. How far my narrative is successful in accomplishing these objects the reader is left to judge. My conviction is that I have painted nature to the life.

Next to this man (Francis) stands another who would perhaps puzzle not a few of my readers. A mind for which the greatest crimes have only charms through the glory which attaches to them, the energy which their perpetration requires, and the dangers which attend them. A remarkable and important personage, abundantly endowed with the power of becoming either a Brutus or a Catiline, according as that power is directed. An unhappy conjunction of circumstances determines him to choose the latter for, his example, and it is only after a fearful straying that he is recalled to emulate the former. Erroneous notions of activity and power, an exuberance of strength which bursts through all the barriers of law, must of necessity conflict with the rules of social life. To these enthusiast

dreams of greatness and efficiency it needed but a sarcastic bitterness against the unpoetic spirit of the age to complete the strange Don Quixote whom, in the Robber Moor, we at once detest and love, admire and pity. It is, I hope, unnecessary to remark that I no more hold up this picture as a warning exclusively to robbers than the greatest Spanish satire was levelled exclusively at knight-errants.

It is nowadays so much the fashion to be witty at the expense of religion that a man will hardly pass for a genius if he does not allow his impious satire to run a tilt at its most sacred truths. The noble simplicity of holy writ must needs be abused and turned into ridicule at the daily assemblies of the so-called wits; for what is there so holy and serious that will not raise a laugh if a false sense be attached to it? Let me hope that I shall have rendered no inconsiderable service to the cause of true religion and morality in holding up these wanton misbelievers to the detestation of society, under the form of the most despicable robbers.

But still more. I have made these said immoral characters to stand out favorably in particular points, and even in some measure to compensate by qualities of the head for what they are deficient in those of the heart. Herein I have done no more than literally copy nature. Every man, even the most depraved, bears in some degree the impress of the Almighty's image, and perhaps the greatest villain is not farther removed from the most upright man than the petty offender; for the moral forces keep even pace with the powers of the mind, and the greater the capacity bestowed on man, the greater and more enormous becomes his misapplication of it; the more responsible is he for his errors.

The "Adramelech" of Klopstock (in his Messiah) awakens in us a feeling in which admiration is blended with detestation. We follow Milton's Satan with shuddering wonder through the pathless realms of chaos. The Medea of the old dramatists is, in spite of all her crimes, a great and wondrous woman, and Shakespeare's Richard III. is sure to excite the admiration of the reader, much as he would hate the reality. If it is to be my task to portray men as they are, I must at the same time include their good qualities, of which even the most vicious are never totally destitute. If I would warn mankind against the tiger, I must not omit to describe his glossy, beautifully-marked skin, lest, owing to this omission, the ferocious animal should not be recognized till too late. Besides this, a man who is so utterly depraved as to be without a single redeeming point is no meet subject for art, and would disgust rather than excite the interest of the reader; who would turn over with impatience the pages which concern him. A noble soul can no more endure a succession of moral discords than the musical ear the grating of knives upon glass.

And for this reason I should have been ill-advised in attempting to bring my drama on the stage. A certain strength of mind is required both on the part of the poet and the reader; in the former that he may not disguise vice, in the latter that he may not suffer brilliant qualities to beguile him into admiration of what is essentially detestable. Whether the author has fulfilled his duty he leaves others to judge, that his readers will perform theirs he by no means feels assured. The vulgar – among whom I would not be understood to mean merely the rabble – the vulgar I say (between ourselves) extend their influence far around, and unfortunately – set the fashion. Too shortsighted to reach my full meaning, too narrow-minded to comprehend the largeness of my views, too disingenuous to admit my moral aim – they will, I fear, almost frustrate my good intentions, and pretend to discover in my work an apology for the very vice which it has been my object to condemn, and will perhaps make the poor poet, to whom anything rather than justice is usually accorded, responsible for his simplicity.

Thus we have a *Da capo* of the old story of Democritus and the Abderitans, and our worthy Hippocrates would needs exhaust whole plantations of hellebore, were it proposed to remedy this mischief by a healing decoction.

[This alludes to the fable amusingly recorded by Wieland in his *Geschichte der Abderiten*. The Abderitans, who were a byword among the ancients for their extreme simplicity, are said to have sent express for Hipocrates to cure their great townsman Democritus, whom they believed to be out of his senses, because his sayings were beyond their comprehension. Hippocrates, on conversing with Democritus, having

at once discovered that the cause lay with themselves, assembled the senate and principal inhabitants in the market-place with the promise of instructing them in the cure of Democritus. He then banteringly advised them to import six shiploads of hellebore of the very best quality, and on its arrival to distribute it among the citizens, at least seven pounds per head, but to the senators double that quantity, as they were bound to have an extra supply of sense. By the time these worthies discovered that they had been laughed at, Hippocrates was out of their reach. The story in Wieland is infinitely more amusing than this short quotation from memory enables me to show. H. G. B.]

Let as many friends of truth as you will, instruct their fellow-citizens in the pulpit and on the stage, the vulgar will never cease to be vulgar, though the sun and moon may change their course, and "heaven and earth wax old as a garment." Perhaps, in order to please tender-hearted people, I might have been less true to nature; but if a certain beetle, of whom we have all heard, could extract filth even from pearls, if we have examples that fire has destroyed and water deluged, shall therefore pearls, fire, and water be condemned. In consequence of the remarkable catastrophe which ends my play, I may justly claim for it a place among books of morality, for crime meets at last with the punishment it deserves; the lost one enters again within the pale of the law, and virtue is triumphant. Whoever will but be courteous enough towards me to read my work through with a desire to understand it, from him I may expect – not that he will admire the poet, but that he will esteem the honest man.

SCHILLER.

EASTER FAIR, 1781.

ADVERTISEMENT TO THE ROBBERS

AS COMMUNICATED BY SCHILLER TO DALBERG IN 1781, AND SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN USED AS A PROLOGUE.

— This has never before been printed with any of the editions. —

The picture of a great, misguided soul, endowed with every gift of excellence; yet lost in spite of all its gifts! Unbridled passions and bad companionship corrupt his heart, urge him on from crime to crime, until at last he stands at the head of a band of murderers, heaps horror upon horror, and plunges from precipice to precipice into the lowest depths of despair. Great and majestic in misfortune, by misfortune reclaimed, and led back to the paths of virtue. Such a man shall you pity and hate, abhor yet love, in the Robber Moor. You will likewise see a juggling, fiendish knave unmasked and blown to atoms in his own mines; a fond, weak, and over-indulgent father; the sorrows of too enthusiastic love, and the tortures of ungoverned passion. Here, too, you will witness, not without a shudder, the interior economy of vice; and from the stage be taught how all the tinsel of fortune fails to smother the inward worm; and how terror, anguish, remorse, and despair tread close on the footsteps of guilt. Let the spectator weep to-day at our exhibition, and tremble, and learn to bend his passions to the laws of religion and reason; let the youth behold with alarm the consequences of unbridled excess; nor let the man depart without imbibing the lesson that the invisible hand of Providence makes even villains the instruments of its designs and judgments, and can marvellously unravel the most intricate perplexities of fate.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION

The eight hundred copies of the first edition of my *ROBBERS* were exhausted before all the admirers of the piece were supplied. A second was therefore undertaken, which has been improved by greater care in printing, and by the omission of those equivocal sentences which were offensive to the more fastidious part of the public. Such an alteration, however, in the construction of the play as should satisfy all the wishes of my friends and critics has not been my object.

In this second edition the several songs have been arranged for the pianoforte, which will enhance its value to the musical part of the public. I am indebted for this to an able composer,* who has performed his task in so masterly a manner that the hearer is not unlikely to forget the poet in the melody of the musician.

DR. SCHILLER.

STUTTGART, Jan. 5, 1782.

* Alluding to his friend Zumsteeg. – ED.

THE ROBBERS. A TRAGEDY

*"Quae medicamenta non sanant, ferrum sanat; quae ferrum non sanat,
ignis sanat."*
– *HIPPOCRATES.*

DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

MAXIMILIAN, COUNT VON MOOR.

CHARLES, |

FRANCIS, | his Sons.

AMELIA VON EDELREICH, his Niece.

SPIEGELBERG, |

SCHWEITZER, |

GRIMM, |

RAZMANN, | Libertines, afterwards Banditti

SCHUFTERLE, |

ROLLER, |

KOSINSKY, |

SCHWARTZ, |

HERMANN, the natural son of a Nobleman.

DANIEL, an old Servant of Count von Moor.

PASTOR MOSER.

FATHER DOMINIC, a Monk.

BAND OF ROBBERS, SERVANTS, ETC.

The scene is laid in Germany. Period of action about two years.

ACT I

SCENE I. – Franconia

Apartment in the Castle of COUNT MOOR.

FRANCIS, OLD MOOR.

FRANCIS. But are you really well, father? You look so pale.

OLD MOOR. Quite well, my son – what have you to tell me?

FRANCIS. The post is arrived – a letter from our correspondent at Leipsic.

OLD M. (eagerly). Any tidings of my son Charles?

FRANCIS. Hem! Hem! – Why, yes. But I fear – I know not – whether I dare – your health. – Are you really quite well, father?

OLD M. As a fish in water.* Does he write of my son? What means this anxiety about my health? You have asked me that question twice.

[*This is equivalent to our English saying "As sound as a roach."]

FRANCIS. If you are unwell – or are the least apprehensive of being so – permit me to defer – I will speak to you at a fitter season. – (Half aside.) These are no tidings for a feeble frame.

OLD M. Gracious Heavens? what am I doomed to hear?

FRANCIS. First let me retire and shed a tear of compassion for my lost brother. Would that my lips might be forever sealed – for he is your son! Would that I could throw an eternal veil over his shame – for he is my brother! But to obey you is my first, though painful, duty – forgive me, therefore.

OLD M. Oh, Charles! Charles! Didst thou but know what thorns thou plantest in thy father's bosom! That one gladdening report of thee would add ten years to my life! yes, bring back my youth! whilst now, alas, each fresh intelligence but hurries me a step nearer to the grave!

FRANCIS. Is it so, old man, then farewell! for even this very day we might all have to tear our hair over your coffin.*

[* This idiom is very common in Germany, and is used to express affliction.]

OLD M. Stay! There remains but one short step more – let him have his will! (He sits down.) The sins of the father shall be visited unto the third and fourth generation – let him fulfil the decree.

FRANCIS (takes the letter out of his pocket). You know our correspondent! See! I would give a finger of my right hand might I pronounce him a liar – a base and slanderous liar! Compose yourself! Forgive me if I do not let you read the letter yourself. You cannot, must not, yet know all.

OLD M. All, all, my son. You will but spare me crutches.*

[* *Du ersparst mir die Krucke*; meaning that the contents of the letter can but shorten his declining years, and so spare him the necessity of crutches.]

FRANCIS (reads). "Leipsic, May 1. Were I not bound by an inviolable promise to conceal nothing from you, not even the smallest particular, that I am able to collect, respecting your brother's career, never, my dearest friend, should my guiltless pen become an instrument of torture to you. I can gather from a hundred of your letters how tidings such as these must pierce your fraternal heart. It seems to me as though I saw thee, for the sake of this worthless, this detestable" – (OLD M. covers his face). Oh! my father, I am only reading you the mildest passages – "this detestable man, shedding a thousand tears." Alas! mine flowed – ay, gushed in torrents over these pitying cheeks. "I already picture to myself your aged pious father, pale as death." Good Heavens! and so you are, before you have heard anything.

OLD M. Go on! Go on!

FRANCIS. "Pale as death, sinking down on his chair, and cursing the day when his ear was first greeted with the lisping cry of 'Father!' I have not yet been able to discover all, and of the little I do know I dare tell you only a part. Your brother now seems to have filled up the measure of his infamy. I, at least, can imagine nothing beyond what he has already accomplished; but possibly his genius may soar above my conceptions. After having contracted debts to the amount of forty thousand ducats," – a good round sum for pocket-money, father-"and having dishonored the daughter of a rich banker, whose affianced lover, a gallant youth of rank, he mortally wounded in a duel, he yesterday, in the dead of night, took the desperate resolution of absconding from the arm of justice, with seven companions whom he had corrupted to his own vicious courses." Father? for heaven's sake, father! How do you feel?

OLD M. Enough. No more, my son, no more!

FRANCIS. I will spare your feelings. "The injured cry aloud for satisfaction. Warrants have been issued for his apprehension – a price is set on his head – the name of Moor" – No, these unhappy lips shall not be guilty of a father's murder (he tears the letter). Believe it not, my father, believe not a syllable.

OLD M. (weeps bitterly). My name – my unsullied name!

FRANCIS (throws himself on his neck). Infamous! most infamous Charles! Oh, had I not my forebodings, when, even as a boy, he would scamper after the girls, and ramble about over hill and common with ragamuffin boys and all the vilest rabble; when he shunned the very sight of a church as a malefactor shuns a gaol, and would throw the pence he had wrung from your bounty into the hat of the first beggar he met, whilst we at home were edifying ourselves with devout prayers and pious homilies? Had I not my misgivings when he gave himself up to reading the adventures of Julius Caesar, Alexander the Great, and other benighted heathens, in preference to the history of the penitent Tobias? A hundred times over have I warned you – for my brotherly affection was ever kept in subjection to filial duty – that this forward youth would one day bring sorrow and disgrace on us all. Oh that he bore not the name of Moor! that my heart beat less warmly for him! This sinful affection, which I can not overcome, will one day rise up against me before the judgment-seat of heaven.

OLD M. Oh! my prospects! my golden dreams!

FRANCIS. Ay, well I knew it. Exactly what I always feared. That fiery spirit, you used to say, which is kindling in the boy, and renders him so susceptible to impressions of the beautiful and grand – the ingenuousness which reveals his whole soul in his eyes – the tenderness of feeling which melts him into weeping sympathy at every tale of sorrow – the manly courage which impels him to the summit of giant oaks, and urges him over fosse and palisade and foaming torrents – that youthful thirst of honor – that unconquerable resolution – all those resplendent virtues which in the father's darling gave such promise – would ripen into the warm and sincere friend – the excellent citizen – the hero – the great, the very great man! Now, mark the result, father; the fiery spirit has developed itself – expanded – and behold its precious fruits. Observe this ingenuousness – how nicely it has changed into effrontery; – this tenderness of soul – how it displays itself in dalliance with coquettes, in susceptibility to the blandishments of a courtesan! See this fiery genius, how in six short years it hath burnt out the oil of life, and reduced his body to a living skeleton; so that passing scoffers point at him with a sneer and exclaim – "*C'est l'amour qui a fait cela.*" Behold this bold, enterprising spirit – how it conceives and executes plans, compared to which the deeds of a Cartouche or a Howard sink into insignificance. And presently, when these precious germs of excellence shall ripen into full maturity, what may not be expected from the full development of such a boyhood? Perhaps, father, you may yet live to see him at the head of some gallant band, which assembles in the silent sanctuary of the forest, and kindly relieves the weary traveller of his superfluous burden. Perhaps you may yet have the opportunity, before you go to your own tomb, of making a pilgrimage to the monument which he may erect for himself, somewhere between earth and heaven! Perhaps, – oh, father – father,

look out for some other name, or the very peddlers and street boys who have seen the effigy of your worthy son exhibited in the market-place at Leipsic will point at you with the finger of scorn!

OLD M. And thou, too, my Francis, thou too? Oh, my children, how unerringly your shafts are levelled at my heart.

FRANCIS. You see that I too have a spirit; but my spirit bears the sting of a scorpion. And then it was "the dry commonplace, the cold, the wooden Francis," and all the pretty little epithets which the contrast between us suggested to your fatherly affection, when he was sitting on your knee, or playfully patting your cheeks? "He would die, forsooth, within the boundaries of his own domain, moulder away, and soon be forgotten;" while the fame of this universal genius would spread from pole to pole! Ah! the cold, dull, wooden Francis thanks thee, heaven, with uplifted hands, that he bears no resemblance to his brother.

OLD M. Forgive me, my child! Reproach not thy unhappy father, whose fondest hopes have proved visionary. The merciful God who, through Charles, has sent these tears, will, through thee, my Francis, wipe them from my eyes!

FRANCIS. Yes, father, we will wipe them from your eyes. Your Francis will devote – his life to prolong yours. (Taking his hand with affected tenderness.) Your life is the oracle which I will especially consult on every undertaking – the mirror in which I will contemplate everything. No duty so sacred but I am ready to violate it for the preservation of your precious days. You believe me?

OLD M. Great are the duties which devolve on thee, my son – Heaven bless thee for what thou has been, and wilt be to me.

FRANCIS. Now tell me frankly, father. Should you not be a happy man, were you not obliged to call this son your own?

OLD M. In mercy, spare me! When the nurse first placed him in my arms, I held him up to Heaven and exclaimed, "Am I not truly blest?"

FRANCIS. So you said then. Now, have you found it so? You may envy the meanest peasant on your estate in this, that he is not the father of such a son. So long as you call him yours you are wretched. Your misery will grow with his years – it will lay you in your grave.

OLD M. Oh! he has already reduced me to the decrepitude of fourscore.

FRANCIS. Well, then – suppose you were to disown this son.

OLD M. (startled). Francis! Francis! what hast thou said!

FRANCIS. Is not your love for him the source of all your grief? Root out this love, and he concerns you no longer. But for this weak and reprehensible affection he would be dead to you; – as though he had never been born. It is not flesh and blood, it is the heart that makes us sons and fathers! Love him no more, and this monster ceases to be your son, though he were cut out of your flesh. He has till now been the apple of your eye; but if thine eye offend you, says Scripture, pluck it out. It is better to enter heaven with one eye than hell with two! "It is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body should be cast into hell." These are the words of the Bible!

OLD M. Wouldst thou have me curse my son?

FRANCIS. By no means, father. God forbid! But whom do you call your son? Him to whom you have given life, and who in return does his utmost to shorten yours.

OLD M. Oh, it is all too true! it is a judgment upon me. The Lord has chosen him as his instrument.

FRANCIS. See how filially your bosom child behaves. He destroys you by your own excess of paternal sympathy; murders you by means of the very love you bear him – has coiled round a father's heart to crush it. When you are laid beneath the turf he becomes lord of your possessions, and master of his own will. That barrier removed, and the torrent of his profligacy will rush on without control. Imagine yourself in his place. How often he must wish his father under ground – and how often, too, his brother – who so unmercifully impede the free course of his excesses. But call you this a requital

of love? Is this filial gratitude for a father's tenderness? to sacrifice ten years of your life to the lewd pleasures of an hour? in one voluptuous moment to stake the honor of an ancestry which has stood unspotted through seven centuries? Do you call this a son? Answer? Do you call this your son?

OLD M. An undutiful son! Alas! but still my child! my child!

FRANCIS. A most amiable and precious child – whose constant study is to get rid of his father. Oh, that you could learn to see clearly! that the film might be removed from your eyes! But your indulgence must confirm him in his vices! your assistance tend to justify them. Doubtless you will avert the curse of Heaven from his head, but on your own, father – on yours – will it fall with twofold vengeance.

OLD M. Just! most just! Mine, mine be all the guilt!

FRANCIS. How many thousands who have drained the voluptuous bowl of pleasure to the dregs have been reclaimed by suffering! And is not the bodily pain which follows every excess a manifest declaration of the divine will! And shall man dare to thwart this by an impious exercise of affection? Shall a father ruin forever the pledge committed to his charge? Consider, father, if you abandon him for a time to the pressure of want will not he be obliged to turn from his wickedness and repent? Otherwise, untaught even in the great school of adversity, he must remain a confirmed reprobate? And then – woe to the father who by a culpable tenderness bath frustrated the ordinances of a higher wisdom! Well, father?

OLD M. I will write to him that I withdraw my protection.

FRANCIS. That would be wise and prudent.

OLD M. That he must never come into my sight again

FRANCIS. 'Twill have a most salutary effect.

OLD M. (tenderly). Until he reforms.

FRANCIS. Right, quite right. But suppose that he comes disguised in the hypocrite's mask, implores your compassion with tears, and wheedles from you a pardon, then quits you again on the morrow, and jests at your weakness in the arms of his harlot. No, my father! He will return of his own accord, when his conscience awakens him to repentance.

OLD M. I will write to him, on the spot, to that effect.

FRANCIS. Stop, father, one word more. Your just indignation might prompt reproaches too severe, words which might break his heart – and then – do you not think that your deigning to write with your own hand might be construed into an act of forgiveness? It would be better, I think, that you should commit the task to me?

OLD M. Do it, my son. Ah! it would, indeed, have broken my heart! Write to him that —

FRANCIS (quickly). That's agreed, then?

OLD M. Say that he has caused me a thousand bitter tears – a thousand sleepless nights – but, oh! do not drive my son to despair!

FRANCIS. Had you not better retire to rest, father? This affects you too strongly.

OLD M. Write to him that a father's heart – But I charge you, drive him not to despair. [Exit in sadness.]

FRANCIS (looking after him with a chuckle). Make thyself easy, old dotard! thou wilt never more press thy darling to thy bosom – there is a gulf between thee and him impassable as heaven is from hell. He was torn from thy arms before even thou couldst have dreamed it possible to decree the separation. Why, what a sorry bungler should I be had I not skill enough to pluck a son from a father's heart; ay, though he were riveted there with hooks of steel! I have drawn around thee a magic circle of curses which he cannot overleap. Good speed to thee, Master Francis. Papa's darling is disposed of – the course is clear. I must carefully pick up all the scraps of paper, for how easily might my handwriting be recognized. (He gathers the fragments of the letter.) And grief will soon make an end of the old gentleman. And as for her – I must tear this Charles from her heart, though half her life come with him.

No small cause have I for being dissatisfied with Dame Nature, and, by my honor, I will have amends! Why did I not crawl the first from my mother's womb? why not the only one? why has she heaped on me this burden of deformity? on me especially? Just as if she had spawned me from her refuse.* Why to me in particular this snub of the Laplander? these negro lips? these Hottentot eyes? On my word, the lady seems to have collected from all the race of mankind whatever was loathsome into a heap, and kneaded the mass into my particular person. Death and destruction! who empowered her to deny to me what she accorded to him? Could a man pay his court to her before he was born? or offend her before he existed? Why went she to work in such a partial spirit?

No! no! I do her injustice – she bestowed inventive faculty, and set us naked and helpless on the shore of this great ocean, the world – let those swim who can – the heavy** may sink. To me she gave naught else, and how to make the best use of my endowment is my present business. Men's natural rights are equal; claim is met by claim, effort by effort, and force by force – right is with the strongest – the limits of our power constitute our laws.

It is true there are certain organized conventions, which men have devised to keep up what is called the social compact. Honor! truly a very convenient coin, which those who know how to pass it may lay out with great advantage.*** Conscience! oh yes, a useful scarecrow to frighten sparrows away from cherry-trees; it is something like a fairly written bill of exchange with which your bankrupt merchant staves off the evil day.

* See Richard III., Act I, Sc. 1, line 17.

**Heavy is used in a double meaning; the German word is plump, which Means lumpish clumsy awkward.

***So Falstaff, Hen. IV., Pt. I., Act V., Sc. 1, "Honor is a mere scutcheon."

Well! these are all most admirable institutions for keeping fools in awe, and holding the mob underfoot, that the cunning may live the more at their ease. Rare institutions, doubtless. They are something like the fences my boors plant so closely to keep out the hares – yes I' faith, not a hare can trespass on the enclosure, but my lord claps spurs to his hunter, and away he gallops over the teeming harvest!

Poor hare! thou playest but a sorry part in this world's drama, but your worshipful lords must needs have hares!

*[This may help to illustrate a passage in Shakespeare which puzzles the commentators – "Cupid is a good hare-finder." – Much ADO, Act I., Sc. 1.

The hare, in Germany, is considered an emblem of abject submission and cowardice. The word may also be rendered "Simpleton," "Sawney," or any other of the numerous epithets which imply a soft condition.]

Then courage, and onward, Francis. The man who fears nothing is as powerful as he who is feared by everybody. It is now the mode to wear buckles on your smallclothes, that you may loosen or tighten them at pleasure. I will be measured for a conscience after the newest fashion, one that will stretch handsomely as occasion may require. Am I to blame? It is the tailor's affair? I have heard a great deal of twaddle about the so-called ties of blood – enough to make a sober man beside himself. He is your brother, they say; which interpreted, means that he was manufactured in the same mould, and for that reason he must needs be sacred in your eyes! To what absurd conclusions must this notion of a sympathy of souls, derived from the propinquity of bodies, inevitably tend? A common source of being is to produce community of sentiment; identity of matter, identity of impulse! Then again, – he is thy father! He gave thee life, thou art his flesh and blood – and therefore he must be sacred to thee! Again a most inconsequential deduction! I should like to know why he begot me;** certainly not out of love for me – for I must first have existed!

**[The reader of Sterne will remember a very similar passage in the first chapter of Tristram Shandy.]

Could he know me before I had being, or did he think of me during my begetting? or did he wish for me at the moment? Did he know what I should be? If so I would not advise him to acknowledge it or I should pay him off for his feat. Am I to be thankful to him that I am a man? As little as I should have had a right to blame him if he had made me a woman. Can I acknowledge an affection which is not based on any personal regard? Could personal regard be present before the existence of its object? In what, then, consists the sacredness of paternity? Is it in the act itself out of which existence arose? as though this were aught else than an animal process to appease animal desires. Or does it lie, perhaps, in the result of this act, which is nothing more after all than one of iron necessity, and which men would gladly dispense with, were it not at the cost of flesh and blood? Do I then owe him thanks for his affection? Why, what is it but a piece of vanity, the besetting sin of the artist who admires his own works, however hideous they may be? Look you, this is the whole juggle, wrapped up in a mystic veil to work on our fears. And shall I, too, be fooled like an infant? Up then! and to thy work manfully. I will root up from my path whatever obstructs my progress towards becoming the master. Master I must be, that I may extort by force what I cannot win by affection.*

*[This soliloquy in some parts resembles that of Richard, Duke of Gloster, in Shakespeare's Henry VI., Act V. Sc. 6.]

[Exit.]

SCENE II. – A Tavern on the Frontier of Saxony

CHARLES VON MOOR intent on a book; SPIEGELBERG drinking at the table.

CHARLES VON M. (lays the book aside). I am disgusted with this age of puny scribblers when I read of great men in my Plutarch.

SPIEGEL. (places a glass before him, and drinks). Josephus is the book you should read.

CHARLES VON M. The glowing spark of Prometheus is burnt out, and now they substitute for it the flash of lycopodium,* a stage-fire which will not so much as light a pipe. The present generation may be compared to rats crawling about the club of Hercules.**

*[Lycopodium (in German Barlappen-mehl), vulgarly known as the Devil's Puff-ball or Witchmeal, is used on the stage, as well in England as on the continent, to produce flashes of fire. It is made of the pollen of common club moss, or wolf's claw (*Lycopodium clavatum*), the capsules of which contain a highly inflammable powder. Translators have uniformly failed in rendering this passage.]

**[This simile brings to mind Shakespeare's: "We petty men Walk under his huge legs, and peep about." JULIUS CAESAR, Act I., Sc. 2.]

A French abbe lays it down that Alexander was a poltroon; a phthisicky professor, holding at every word a bottle of sal volatile to his nose, lectures on strength. Fellows who faint at the veriest trifle criticise the tactics of Hannibal; whimpering boys store themselves with phrases out of the slaughter at Cannae; and blubber over the victories of Scipio, because they are obliged to construe them.

SPIEGEL. Spouted in true Alexandrian style.

CHARLES VON M. A brilliant reward for your sweat in the battle-field truly to have your existence perpetuated in gymnasiums, and your immortality laboriously dragged about in a

schoolboy's satchel. A precious recompense for your lavished blood to be wrapped round gingerbread by some Nuremberg chandler, or, if you have great luck, to be screwed upon stilts by a French playwright, and be made to move on wires! Ha, ha, ha!

SPIEGEL. (drinks). Read Josephus, I tell you.

CHARLES VON M. Fie! fie upon this weak, effeminate age, fit for nothing but to ponder over the deeds of former times, and torture the heroes of antiquity with commentaries, or mangle them in tragedies. The vigor of its loins is dried up, and the propagation of the human species has become dependent on potations of malt liquor.

SPIEGEL. Tea, brother! tea!

CHARLES VON M. They curb honest nature with absurd conventionalities; have scarcely the heart to charge a glass, because they are tasked to drink a health in it; fawn upon the lackey that he may put in a word for them with His Grace, and bully the unfortunate wight from whom they have nothing to fear. They worship any one for a dinner, and are just as ready to poison him should he chance to outbid them for a feather-bed at an auction. They damn the Sadducee who fails to come regularly to church, although their own devotion consists in reckoning up their usurious gains at the very altar. They cast themselves on their knees that they may have an opportunity of displaying their mantles, and hardly take their eyes off the parson from their anxiety to see how his wig is frizzled. They swoon at the sight of a bleeding goose, yet clap their hands with joy when they see their rival driven bankrupt from the Exchange. Warmly as I pressed their hands, – "Only one more day." In vain! To prison with the dog! Entreaties! Vows! Tears! (stamping the ground). Hell and the devil!

SPIEGEL. And all for a few thousand paltry ducats!

CHARLES VON M. No, I hate to think of it. Am I to squeeze my body into stays, and straight-lace my will in the trammels of law. What might have risen to an eagle's flight has been reduced to a snail's pace by law. Never yet has law formed a great man; 'tis liberty that breeds giants and heroes. Oh! that the spirit of Herman* still glowed in his ashes!

*[Herman is the German for Armin or Arminius, the celebrated deliverer of Germany from the Roman yoke. See Menzel's History, vol. i., p. 85, etc.]

Set me at the head of an army of fellows like myself, and out of Germany shall spring a republic compared to which Rome and Sparta will be but as nunneries. (Rises and flings his sword upon the table.)

SPIEGEL. (jumping up). Bravo! Bravissimo! you are coming to the right key now. I have something for your ear, Moor, which has long been on my mind, and you are the very man for it – drink, brother, drink! What if we turned Jews and brought the kingdom of Jerusalem again on the tapis? But tell me is it not a clever scheme? We send forth a manifesto to the four quarters of the world, and summon to Palestine all that do not eat Swineflesh. Then I prove by incontestable documents that Herod the Tetrarch was my direct ancestor, and so forth. There will be a victory, my fine fellow, when they return and are restored to their lands, and are able to rebuild Jerusalem. Then make a clean sweep of the Turks out of Asia while the iron is hot, hew cedars in Lebanon, build ships, and then the whole nation shall chaffer with old clothes and old lace throughout the world. Meanwhile —

CHARLES VON M. (smiles and takes him by the hand). Comrade! There must be an end now of our fooleries.

SPIEGEL. (with surprise). Fie! you are not going to play the prodigal son! – a fellow like you who with his sword has scratched more hieroglyphics on other men's faces than three quill-drivers could inscribe in their daybooks in a leap-year! Shall I tell you the story of the great dog funeral? Ha! I must just bring back your own picture to your mind; that will kindle fire in your veins, if nothing else has power to inspire you. Do you remember how the heads of the college caused your dog's leg to be shot off, and you, by way of revenge, proclaimed a fast through the whole town? They fumed and fretted at your edict. But you, without losing time, ordered all the meat to be bought up in Leipsic,

so that in the course of eight hours there was not a bone left to pick all over the place, and even fish began to rise in price. The magistrates and the town council vowed vengeance. But we students turned out lustily, seventeen hundred of us, with you at our head, and butchers and tailors and haberdashers at our backs, besides publicans, barbers, and rabble of all sorts, swearing that the town should be sacked if a single hair of a student's head was injured. And so the affair went off like the shooting at Hornberg,* and they were obliged to be off with their tails between their legs.

*[The "shooting at Hornberg" is a proverbial expression in Germany for any expedition from which, through lack of courage, the parties retire without firing a shot.]

You sent for doctors – a whole posse of them – and offered three ducats to any one who would write a prescription for your dog. We were afraid the gentlemen would stand too much upon honor and refuse, and had already made up our minds to use force. But this was quite unnecessary; the doctors got to fisticuffs for the three ducats, and their competition brought down the price to three groats; in the course of an hour a dozen prescriptions were written, of which, of course, the poor beast very soon died.

CHARLES VON M. The vile rascals.

SPIEGEL. The funeral procession was arranged with all due pomp; odes for the dog were indited by the gross; and at night we all turned out, near a thousand of us, a lantern in one hand and our rapier in the other, and so proceeded through the town, the bells chiming and ringing, till the dog was entombed. Then came a feed which lasted till broad daylight, when you sent your acknowledgments to the college dons for their kind sympathy, and ordered the meat to be sold at half-price. *Mort de ma vie*, if we had not as great a respect for you as a garrison for the conqueror of a fortress.

CHARLES VON M. And are you not ashamed to boast of these things? Have you not shame enough in you to blush even at the recollection of such pranks?

SPIEGEL. Come, come! You are no longer the same Moor. Do you remember how, a thousand times, bottle in hand, you made game of the miserly old governor, bidding him by all means rake and scrape together as much as he could, for that you would swill it all down your throat? Don't you remember, eh? – don't you remember?' O you good-for-nothing, miserable braggart! that was speaking like a man, and a gentleman, but —

CHARLES VON M. A curse on you for reminding me of it! A curse on myself for what I said! But it was done in the fumes of wine, and my heart knew not what my tongue uttered.

SPIEGEL. (shakes his head). No, no! that cannot be! Impossible, brother! You are not in earnest! Tell me! most sweet brother, is it not poverty which has brought you to this mood? Come! let me tell you a little story of my youthful days. There was a ditch close to my house, eight feet wide at the least, which we boys were trying to leap over for a wager. But it was no go. Splash! there you lay sprawling, amidst hisses and roars of laughter, and a relentless shower of snowballs. By the side of my house a hunter's dog was lying chained, a savage beast, which would catch the girls by their petticoats with the quickness of lightning if they incautiously passed too near him. Now it was my greatest delight to tease this brute in every possible way; and it was enough to make one burst with laughing to see the beast fix his eyes on me with such fierceness that he seemed ready to tear me to pieces if he could but get at me. Well, what happened? Once, when I was amusing myself in this manner, I hit him such a bang in the ribs with a stone that in his fury he broke loose and ran right upon me. I tore away like lightning, but – devil take it! – that confounded ditch lay right in my way. What was to be done? The dog was close at my heels and quite furious; there was no time to deliberate. I took a spring and cleared the ditch. To that leap I was indebted for life and limb; the beast would have torn me to atoms.

CHARLES VON M. And to what does all this tend?

SPIEGEL. To this – that you may be taught that strength grows with the occasion. For which reason I never despair even when things are the worst. Courage grows with danger. Powers of resistance increase by pressure. It is evident by the obstacles she strews in my path that fate must have designed me for a great man.

CHARLES VON M. (angrily). I am not aware of anything for which we still require courage, and have not already shown it.

SPIEGEL. Indeed! And so you mean to let your gifts go to waste? To bury your talent? Do you think your paltry achievements at Leipsic amount to the *ne plus ultra* of genius? Let us but once get to the great world – Paris and London! where you get your ears boxed if you salute a man as honest. It is a real jubilee to practise one's handicraft there on a grand scale. How you will stare! How you will open your eyes! to see signatures forged; dice loaded; locks picked, and strong boxes gutted; all that you shall learn of Spiegelberg! The rascal deserves to be hanged on the first gallows that would rather starve than manipulate with his fingers.

CHARLES VON M. (in a fit of absence). How now? I should not wonder if your proficiency went further still.

SPIEGEL. I begin to think you mistrust me. Only wait till I have grown warm at it; you shall see wonders; your little brain shall whirl clean round in your pericranium when my teeming wit is delivered. (He rises excited.) How it clears up within me! Great thoughts are dawning in on my soul! Gigantic plans are fermenting in my creative brain. Cursed lethargy (striking his forehead), which has hitherto enchained my faculties, cramped and fettered my prospects! I awake; I feel what I am – and what I am to be!

CHARLES VON M. You are a fool! The wine is swaggering in your brain.

SPIEGEL. (more excited). Spiegelberg, they will say, art thou a magician, Spiegelberg? 'Tis a pity, the king will say, that thou wert not made a general, Spiegelberg, thou wouldst have thrust the Austrians through a buttonhole. Yes, I hear the doctors lamenting, 'tis a crying shame that he was not bred to medicine, he would have discovered the *elixir vitae*. Ay, and that he did not take to financiering, the Sullys will deplore in their cabinets, – he would have turned flints into louis-d'ors by his magic. And Spiegelberg will be the word from east to west; then down into the dirt with you, ye cowards, ye reptiles, while Spiegelberg soars with outspread wings to the temple of everlasting fame.

CHARLES VON M. A pleasant journey to you! I leave you to climb to the summit of glory on the pillars of infamy. In the shade of my ancestral groves, in the arms of my Amelia, a nobler joy awaits me. I have already, last week, written to my father to implore his forgiveness, and have not concealed the least circumstance from him; and where there is sincerity there is compassion and help. Let us take leave of each other, Moritz. After this day we shall meet no more. The post has arrived. My father's forgiveness must already be within the walls of this town.

Enter SCHWEITZER, GRIMM, ROLLER, SCHUFTERLE, and RAZMAN.

ROLLER. Are you aware that they are on our track!

GRIMM. That we are not for a moment safe from being taken?

CHARLES VON M. I don't wonder at it. It must be as it will! Have none of you seen Schwarz? Did he say anything about having a letter for me?

ROLLER. He has been long in search of you on some such errand, I suspect.

CHARLES VON M. Where is he? where, where? (is about to rush off in haste).

ROLLER. Stay! we have appointed him to come here. You tremble?

CHARLES VON M. I do not tremble. Why should I tremble? Comrades, this letter – rejoice with me! I am the happiest man under the sun; why should I tremble?

Enter SCHWARZ.

CHARLES VON M. (rushes towards him). Brother, brother! the letter, the letter!

SCHW. (gives him a letter, which he opens hastily). What's the matter? You have grown as pale as a whitewashed wall!

CHARLES VON M. My brother's hand!

SCHW. What the deuce is Spiegelberg about there?

GRIMM. The fellow's mad. He jumps about as if he had St. Vitus' dance.

SCHUF. His wits are gone a wool gathering! He's making verses, I'll be sworn!

RAZ. Spiegelberg! Ho! Spiegelberg! The brute does not hear.

GRIMM. (shakes him). Hallo! fellow! are you dreaming? or —

SPIEGEL. (who has all this time been making gestures in a corner of the room, as if working out some great project, jumps up wildly). Your money or your life! (He catches SCHWEITZER by the throat, who very coolly flings him against the wall; Moor drops the letter and rushes out. A general sensation.)

ROLLER. (calling after him). Moor! where are you going? What's the matter?

GRIMM. What ails him? What has he been doing? He is as pale as death.

SCHW. He must have got strange news. Just let us see!

ROLLER. (picks up the letter from the ground, and reads). "Unfortunate brother!" – a pleasant beginning – "I have only briefly to inform you that you have nothing more to hope for. You may go, your father directs me to tell you, wherever your own vicious propensities lead. Nor are you to entertain, he says, any hope of ever gaining pardon by weeping at his feet, unless you are prepared to fare upon bread and water in the lowest dungeon of his castle until your hair shall outgrow eagles' feathers, and your nails the talons of a vulture. These are his very words. He commands me to close the letter. Farewell forever! I pity you.

"FRANCIS VON MOOR"

SCHW. A most amiable and loving brother, in good truth! And the scoundrel's name is Francis.

SPIEGEL. (slinking forward). Bread and water! Is that it? A temperate diet! But I have made a better provision for you. Did I not say that I should have to think for you all at last?

SCHWEIT. What does the blockhead say! The jackass is going to think for us all!

SPIEGEL. Cowards, cripples, lame dogs are ye all if you have not courage enough to venture upon something great.

ROLLER. Well, of course, so we should be, you are right; but will your proposed scheme get us out of this devil of a scrape? eh?

SPIEGEL. (with a proud laugh). Poor thing! Get us out of this scrape? Ha, ha, ha! Get us out of the scrape! – and is that all your thimbleful of brain can reach? And with that you trot your mare back to the stable? Spiegelberg would have been a miserable bungler indeed if that were the extent of his aim. Heroes, I tell you, barons, princes, gods, it will make of you.

RAZ. That's pretty well for one bout, truly! But no doubt it is some neck-breaking piece of business; it will cost a head or so at the least.

SPIEGEL. It wants nothing but courage; as to the headwork, I take that entirely upon myself. Courage, I say, Schweitzer! Courage, Roller! Grimm! Razman! Schufterle! Courage!

SCHW. Courage! If that is all, I have courage enough to walk through hell barefoot.

SCHUFT. And I courage enough to fight the very devil himself under the open gallows for the rescue of any poor sinner.

SPIEGEL. That's just what it should be! If ye have courage, let any one of you step forward and say he has still something to lose, and not everything to gain?

SCHW. Verily, I should have a good deal to lose, if I were to lose all that I have yet to win!

PAZ. Yes, by Jove! and I much to win, if I could win all that I have not got to lose.

SCHUFT. Were I to lose what I carry on my back on trust I should at any rate have nothing to lose on the morrow.

SPIEGEL. Very well then! (He takes his place in the middle of them, and says in solemn adjuration) – if but a drop of the heroic blood of the ancient Germans still flow in your veins – come! We will fix our abode in the Bohemian forests, draw together a band of robbers, and – What are you gaping at? Has your slender stock of courage oozed out already?

ROLLER. You are not the first rogue by many that has defied the gallows; – and yet what other choice have we?

SPIEGEL. Choice? You have no choice. Do you want to lie rotting in the debtor's jail and beat hemp till you are bailed by the last trumpet? Would you toil with pick-axe and spade for a morsel of dry bread? or earn a pitiful alms by singing doleful ditties under people's windows? Or will you be sworn at the drumhead – and then comes the question, whether anybody would trust your hang-dog visages – and so under the splenetic humor of some despotic sergeant serve your time of purgatory in advance? Would you like to run the gauntlet to the beat of the drum? or be doomed to drag after you, like a galley-slave, the whole iron store of Vulcan? Behold your choice. You have before you the complete catalogue of all that you may choose from!

ROLLER. Spiegelberg is not altogether wrong! I, too, have been concocting plans, but they come much to the same thing. How would it be, thought I, were we to club our wits together, and dish up a pocketbook, or an almanac, or something of that sort, and write reviews at a penny a line, as is now the fashion?

SCHUFT. The devil's in you! you are pretty nearly hitting on my own schemes. I have been thinking to myself how would it answer were I to turn Methodist, and hold weekly prayer-meetings?

GRIMM. Capital! and, if that fails, turn atheist! We might fall foul of the four Gospels, get our book burned by the hangman, and then it would sell at a prodigious rate.

RAZ. Or we might take the field to cure a fashionable ailment. I know a quack doctor who has built himself a house with nothing but mercury, as the motto over his door implies.

SCHWEIT. (rises and holds out his hand to Spiegelberg). Spiegelberg, thou art a great man! or else a blind hog has by chance found an acorn.

SCHW. Excellent schemes! Honorable professions! How great minds sympathize! All that seems wanting to complete the list is that we should turn pimps and bawds.

SPIEGEL. Pooh! Pooh! Nonsense. And what is to prevent our combining most of these occupations in one person? My plan will exalt you the most, and it holds out glory and immortality into the bargain. Remember, too, ye sorry varlets, and it is a matter worthy of consideration: one's fame hereafter – the sweet thought of immortality —

ROLLER. And that at the very head of the muster-roll of honorable names! You are a master of eloquence, Spiegelberg, when the question is how to convert an honest man into a scoundrel. But does any one know what has become of Moor?

SPIEGEL. Honest, say you? Do you think you'll be less honest than you are now? What do you call honest? To relieve rich misers of half of those cares which only scare golden sleep from their eyelids; to force hoarded coin into circulation; to restore the equalization of property; in one word, to bring back the golden age; to relieve Providence of many a burdensome pensioner, and so save it the trouble of sending war, pestilence, famine, and above all, doctors – that is what I call honesty, d'ye see; that's what I call being a worthy instrument in the hand of Providence, – and then, at every meal you eat, to have the sweet reflection: this is what thy own ingenuity, thy lion boldness, thy night watchings, have procured for thee – to command the respect both of great and small!

ROLLER. And at last to mount towards heaven in the living body, and in spite of wind and storm, in spite of the greedy maw of old father Time, to be hovering beneath the sun and moon and all the stars of the firmament, where even the unreasoning birds of heaven, attracted by noble instinct, chant their seraphic music, and angels with tails hold their most holy councils? Don't you see? And, while monarchs and potentates become a prey to moths and worms, to have the honor of receiving visits from the royal bird of Jove. Moritz, Moritz, Moritz! beware of the three-legged beast.*

*[The gallows, which in Germany is formed of three posts.]

SPIEGEL. And does that fright thee, craven-heart? Has not many a universal genius, who might have reformed the world, rotted upon the gallows? And does not the renown of such a man live for hundreds and thousands of years, whereas many a king and elector would be passed over in history, were not historians obliged to give him a niche to complete the line of succession, or that the mention of him did not swell the volume a few octavo pages, for which he counts upon hard cash from the publisher. And when the wayfarer sees you swinging to and fro in the breeze he will mutter to himself, "That fellow's brains had no water in them, I'll warrant me," and then groan over the hardship of the times.

SCHWEIT. (slaps him on the shoulder). Well said, Spiegelberg! Well said! Why the devil do we stand here hesitating?

SCHW. And suppose it is called disgrace – what then? Cannot one, in case of need, always carry a small powder about one, which quietly smooths the weary traveller's passage across the Styx, where no cock-crowing will disturb his rest? No, brother Moritz! Your scheme is good; so at least says my creed.

SCHUFT. Zounds! and mine too! Spiegelberg, I am your recruit.

RAZ. Like a second Orpheus, Spiegelberg, you have charmed to sleep that howling beast, conscience! Take me as I stand, I am yours entirely!

GRIMMM. *Si omnes consentiunt ego non dissentio*;* mind, without a comma. There is an auction going on in my head – methodists – quack doctors – reviewers – rogues; – the highest bidder has me. Here is my hand, Moritz!

*[The joke is explained by placing a comma after non.]

ROLLER. And you too, Schweitzer? (he gives his right hand to SPIEGELBERG). Thus I consign my soul to the devil.

SPIEGEL. And your name to the stars! What does it signify where the soul goes to? If crowds of *avantcouriers* give notice of our descent that the devils may put on their holiday gear, wipe the accumulated soot of a thousand years from their eyelashes, and myriads of horned heads pop up from the smoking mouth of their sulphurous chimneys to welcome our arrival! 'Up, comrades! (leaping up). Up! What in the world is equal to this ecstasy of delight? Come along, comrades!

ROLLER. Gently, gently! Where are you going? Every beast must have a head, boys!

SPIEGEL. (With bitterness). What is that incubus preaching about? Was not the head already there before a single limb began to move? Follow me, comrades!

ROLLER. Gently, I say! even liberty must have its master. Rome and Sparta perished for want of a chief.

SPIEGEL. (in a wheedling manner). Yes, – stay – Roller is right. And he must have an enlightened head. Do you understand? A keen, politic head. Yes! when I think what you were only an hour ago, and what you are now, and that it is all owing to one happy thought. Yes, of course, you must have a chief, and you'll own that he who struck out this idea may claim to have an enlightened and politic head?

ROLLER. If one could hope, if one could dream, but I fear he will not consent.

SPIEGEL. Why not? Speak out boldly, friend! Difficult as it may be to steer a laboring vessel against wind and tide, oppressive as may be the weight of a crown, speak your thought without hesitation, Roller! Perhaps he may be prevailed upon after all!

ROLLER. And if he does not the whole vessel will be crazy enough. Without Moor we are a "body without a soul."

SPIEGEL. (turning angrily from him). Dolt! blockhead!

(Enter CHARLES VON MOOR in violent agitation, stalking backwards)

and forwards, and speaking to himself.)

CHARLES VON M. Man – man! false, perfidious crocodile-brood! Your eyes are all tears, but your hearts steel! Kisses on your lips, but daggers couched in your bosoms! Even lions and tigers nourish their young. Ravens feast their brood on carrion, and he – he Malice I have learned to bear; and I can smile when my fellest enemy drinks to me in my own heart's blood; but when kindred turn traitors, when a father's love becomes a fury's hate; oh, then, let manly resignation give place to raging fire! the gentle lamb become a tiger! and every nerve strain itself to vengeance and destruction!

ROLLER. Hark ye, Moor! What think ye of it? A robber's life is pleasanter, after all, than to lie rotting on bread and water in the lowest dungeon of the castle?

CHARLES VON M. Why was not this spirit implanted in a tiger which gluts its raging jaws with human flesh? Is this a father's tenderness? Is this love for love? Would I were a bear to rouse all the bears of the north against this murderous race! Repentance, and no pardon! Oh, that I could poison the ocean that men might drink death from every spring! Contrition, implicit reliance, and no pardon!

ROLLER. But listen, Moor, – listen to what I am telling you!

CHARLES VON M. 'Tis incredible! 'tis a dream – a delusion! Such earnest entreaty, such a vivid picture of misery and tearful penitence – a savage beast would have been melted to compassion! stones would have wept, and yet he – it would be thought a malicious libel upon human nature were I to proclaim it – and yet, yet – oh, that I could sound the trumpet of rebellion through all creation, and lead air, and earth, and sea into battle array against this generation of hyenas!

GRIMM. Hear me, only hear me! You are deaf with raving.

CHARLES VON M. Avaunt, avaunt! Is not thy name man? Art thou not born of woman? Out of my sight, thou thing with human visage! I loved him so unutterably! – never son so loved a father; I would have sacrificed a thousand lives for him (foaming and stamping the ground). Ha! where is he that will put a sword into my hand that I may strike this generation of vipers to the quick! Who will teach me how to reach their heart's core, to crush, to annihilate the whole race? Such a man shall be my friend, my angel, my god – him will I worship!

ROLLER. Such friends behold in us; be but advised!

SCHW. Come with us into the Bohemian forests! We will form a band of robbers there, and you (MOOR stares at him).

SCHWEIT. You shall be our captain! you must be our captain!

SPIEGEL. (throws himself into a chair in a rage). Slaves and cowards!

CHARLES VON M. Who inspired thee with that thought? Hark, fellow! (grasping ROLLER tightly) that human soul of thine did not produce it; who suggested it to thee? Yes, by the thousand arms of death! that's what we will, and what we must do! the thought's divine. He who conceived it deserves to be canonized. Robbers and murderers! As my soul lives, I am your captain!

ALL (with tumultuous shouts). Hurrah! long live our captain!

SPIEGEL. (starting up, aside). Till I give him his *coup de grace*!

CHARLES VON M. See, it falls like a film from my eyes! What a fool was I to think of returning to be caged? My soul's athirst for deeds, my spirit pants for freedom. Murderers, robbers! with these words I trample the law underfoot – mankind threw off humanity when I appealed to it. Away, then, with human sympathies and mercy! I no longer have a father, no longer affections; blood and death shall teach me to forget that anything was ever dear to me! Come! come! Oh, I will recreate myself with some most fearful vengeance; – 'tis resolved, I am your captain! and success to him who Shall spread fire and slaughter the widest and most savagely – I pledge myself He shall be right royally rewarded. Stand around me, all of you, and swear to me fealty and obedience unto death! Swear by this trusty right hand.

ALL (place their hands in his). We swear to thee fealty and obedience unto death!

CHARLES VON M. And, by this same trusty right Hand, I here swear to you to remain your captain, true and faithful unto death! This arm shall make an instant corpse of him who doubts, or fears, or retreats. And may the same befall me from your hands if I betray my oath! Are you content?

[SPIEGELBERG runs up and down in a furious rage.]

ALL (throwing up their hats). We are content!

CHARLES VON M. Well, then, let us be gone! Fear neither death nor danger, for an unalterable destiny rules over us. Every man has his doom, be it to die on the soft pillow of down, or in the field of blood, or on the scaffold, or the wheel! One or the other of these must be our lot! [Exeunt.]

SPIEGEL. (looking after them after a pause). Your catalogue has a hole in it. You have omitted poison.

[Exit.]

SCENE III. – MOOR'S Castle. – AMELIA'S Chamber

FRANCIS, AMELIA.

FRANCIS. Your face is averted from me, Amelia? Am I less worthy than he who is accursed of his father?

AMELIA. Away! Oh! what a loving, compassionate father, who abandons his son a prey to wolves and monsters! In his own comfortable home he pampers himself with delicious wines and stretches his palsied limbs on down, while his noble son is starving. Shame upon you, inhuman wretches! Shame upon you, ye souls of dragons, ye blots on humanity! – his only son!

FRANCIS. I thought he had two.

AMELIA. Yes, he deserves to have such sons as you are. On his deathbed he will in vain stretch out his withered hands for his Charles, and recoil with a shudder when he feels the ice-cold hand of his Francis. Oh, it is sweet, deliciously sweet, to be cursed by such a father! Tell me, Francis, dear brotherly soul – tell me what must one do to be cursed by him?

FRANCIS. You are raving, dearest; you are to be pitied.

AMELIA. Oh! indeed. Do you pity your brother? No, monster, you hate him! I hope you hate me too.

FRANCIS. I love you as dearly as I love myself, Amelia!

AMELIA. If you love me you will not refuse me one little request.

FRANCIS. None, none! if you ask no more than my life.

AMELIA. Oh, if that is the case! then one request, which you will so easily, so readily grant. (Loftily.) Hate me! I should perforce blush crimson if, whilst thinking of Charles, it should for a moment enter my mind that you do not hate me. You promise me this? Now go, and leave me; I so love to be alone!

FRANCIS. Lovely enthusiast! how greatly I admire your gentle, affectionate heart. Here, here, Charles reigned sole monarch, like a god within his temple; he stood before thee waking, he filled your imagination dreaming; the whole creation seemed to thee to centre in Charles, and to reflect him alone; it gave thee no other echo but of him.

AMELIA (with emotion). Yes, verily, I own it. Despite of you all, barbarians as you are, I will own it before all the world. I love him!

FRANCIS. Inhuman, cruel! So to requite a love like this! To forget her —

AMELIA (starting). What! forget me?

FRANCIS. Did you not place a ring on his finger? – a diamond ring, the pledge of your love? To be sure how is it possible for youth to resist the fascinations of a wanton? Who can blame him for it, since he had nothing else left to give away? and of course she repaid him with interest by her caresses and embraces.

AMELIA (with indignation). My ring to a wanton?

FRANCIS. Fie, fie! it is disgraceful. 'Twould not be much, however, if that were all. A ring, be it ever so costly, is, after all, a thing which one may always buy of a Jew. Perhaps the fashion of it did not please him, perhaps he exchanged it for one more beautiful.

AMELIA (with violence). But my ring, I say, my ring?

FRANCIS. Even yours, Amelia. Ha! such a brilliant, and on my finger; and from Amelia! Death itself should not have plucked it hence. It is not the costliness of the diamond, not the cunning of the pattern – it is love which constitutes its value. Is it not so, Amelia? Dearest child, you are weeping. Woe be to him who causes such precious drops to flow from those heavenly eyes; ah, and if you knew all, if you could but see him yourself, see him under that form?

AMELIA. Monster! what do you mean? What form do you speak of?

FRANCIS. Hush, hush, gentle soul, press me no further (as if soliloquizing, yet aloud). If it had only some veil, that horrid vice, under which it might shroud itself from the eye of the world! But there it is, glaring horribly through the sallow, leaden eye; proclaiming itself in the sunken, deathlike look; ghastly protruding bones; the faltering, hollow voice; preaching audibly from the shattered, shaking skeleton; piercing to the most vital marrow of the bones, and sapping the manly strength of youth – faugh! the idea sickens me. Nose, eyes, ears shrink from it. You saw that miserable wretch, Amelia, in our hospital, who was heavily breathing out his spirit; modesty seemed to cast down her abashed eye as she passed him; you cried woe upon him. Recall that hideous image to your mind, and your Charles stands before you. His kisses are pestilence, his lips poison.

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