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### **The Works Of Mr. George Lillo; With Some Account Of His Life**

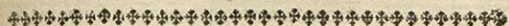
Containing, The Fatal Curiosity. A Tragedy. Marina. A Tragedy. Elmerick.  
A Tragedy. Britannia And Batavia. A Masque. And Arden Of Feversham. A  
Tragedy

**Lillo, George**

**London, 1775**

Elmerick: Or, Justice Triumphant.

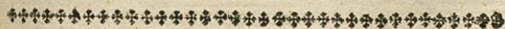
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E L M E R I C K :

O R,

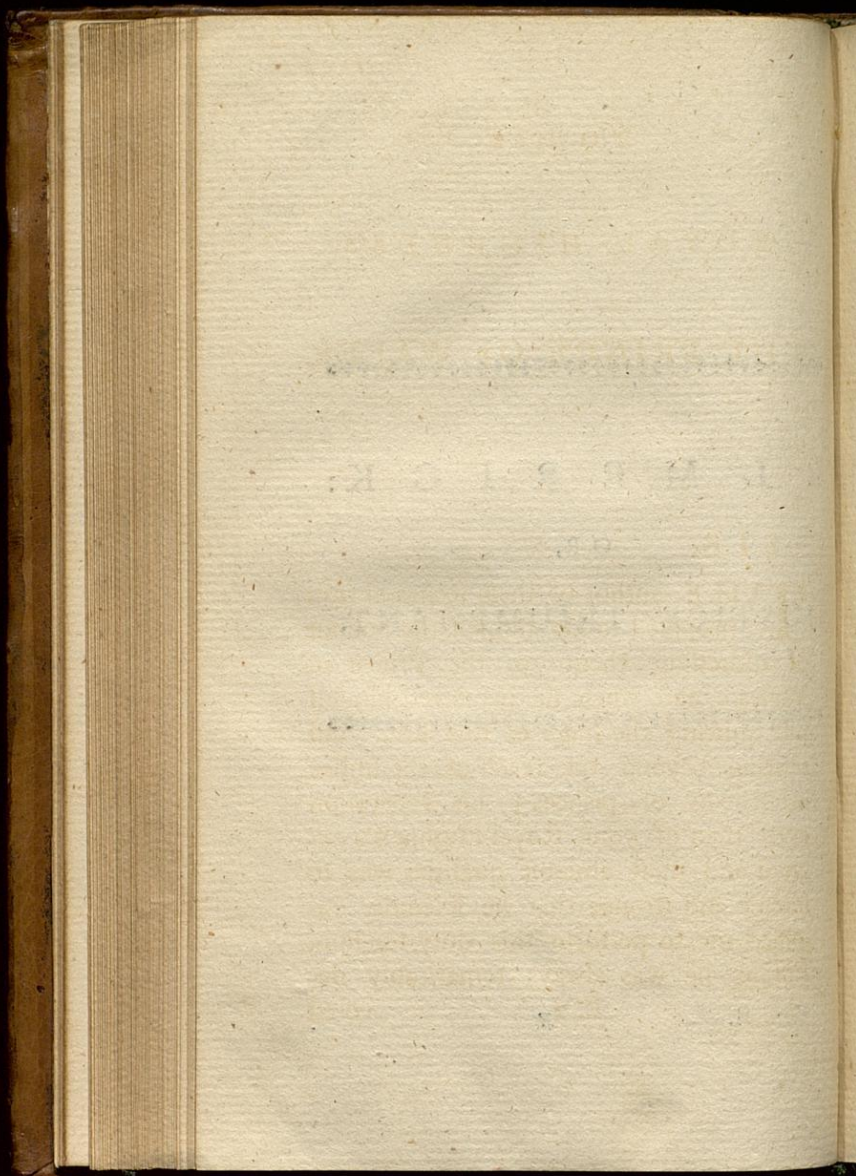
JUSTICE TRIUMPHANT.



Vol. II.

K





TO HIS

ROYAL HIGHNESS

THE PRINCE OF WALES.

S I R,

**T**HE author of these scenes always proposed to do himself the honour of addressing them to the Prince of Wales: and when he perceived himself just quitting the stage of this life, and retiring beyond the reach of the smiles or frowns of princes; his veneration even then of your Royal Highness's exalted and most amiable qualities was so intense and strong, that he solemnly enjoined me to perform this duty for him. For as he was always remarkably de-

K 2

voted





## DEDICATION.

voted to the cause of liberty and justice, (for the advancement of which the following piece was written) he thought it would be a kind of injury, not to consecrate it to the most illustrious patron of justice, heroick virtue, and the rights of mankind. Your Royal Highness's great condescension in permitting me to execute the will of my departed friend, and in patronizing his orphan play, is a circumstance that is very glorious to him, and gives a sanction to his fame.

All true Englishmen in general, as well as the friends of Mr. Lillo in particular, have great reason to congratulate one another on the protection which your Royal Highness was graciously pleased to afford this piece during the performance of it: for to see the heir apparent of these kingdoms so generously countenancing a tragedy, in which the character of a righteous king, who founds all his glory on the liberty and happiness of his subjects, is drawn in such strong and lively colours, must



## DEDICATION.

must give a very sensible pleasure to the whole nation; it serves to keep alive the hopes which the publick has long since conceived, and is an undoubted pledge of many future blessings from your auspicious influence.

Your elegancy of taste, and illustrious virtues render you the most generous protector and the noblest theme of all who cultivate the politer arts; as the continual overflowings of your bounty towards all objects of distress daily endear you to every heart that has any feelings of humanity: this your princely heavenly disposition is universally felt and acknowledged, and considered with all its circumstances without a parallel.

That your Royal Highness may long continue the munificent encourager of arts and letters, an example to princes of public spiritedness, humanity, and condescension, is the ardent wish of every honest Briton: for notwithstanding all





DEDICATION.

our divisions, the voice of the whole nation is unanimous in praying for your life, honour, and prosperity: and this we should do from motives of interest and self-love, were we not impelled to it by gratitude and duty. I am,

S I R,

Your Royal Highness's

Most devoted

Humble servant,

JOHN GRAY.



# P R O L O G U E.

Spoken by Mr. QUIN.

*N*O labour'd scenes to night adorn our stage,  
Lillo's plain sense wou'd here the heart engage.  
He knew no art, no rule; but warmly thought  
From passion's force, and as he felt he wrote.  
His BARNWELL once no critick's test could bear,  
Yet from each eye still draws the natural tear.  
With generous candour hear his latest strains,  
And let kind pity shelter his remains.  
Deprest by want, afflicted by disease,  
Dying he wrote, and dying wish'd to please.  
Oh may that wish be now humanely paid,  
And no harsh critic vex his gentle shade.  
'Tis yours his unsupported fame to save,  
And bid one laurel grace his humble grave.





## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

### M E N.

|  |   |                      |
|--|---|----------------------|
| ANDREW II. king of Hungary:<br>commonly called Andrew of<br>Jerusalem. | } | Mr. <i>Mills.</i>    |
| CONRADE, prince of Moravia.  |   | Mr. <i>Millward.</i> |
| ELMERICK.  |   | Mr. <i>Quin.</i>     |
| BATHORI, father to Ismena.   |   | Mr. <i>Wright.</i>   |
| BELUS, secretary to Elmerick.  |   | Mr. <i>Winstone.</i> |

### W O M E N.

|                                      |   |                     |
|--------------------------------------|---|---------------------|
| MATILDA, queen of Hungary.           |   | Mrs. <i>Butler.</i> |
| ISMENA, wife to Elmerick.            |   | Mrs. <i>Mills.</i>  |
| ZENOMIRA, attendant on the<br>queen. | } | Miss <i>Bennet.</i> |

Lords, Deputies, and Guards.

S C E N E *the King's Palace at BUDA.*



# ELMERICK.

## ACT I. SCENE I.

ISMENA's Apartment in ELMERICK's House.

ISMENA alone.

WHEN we are blest'd even to our utmost wish,  
Is it the nature of the restless mind  
To work its own disquiet, and extract  
Pain from delight? O Elmerick! my life,  
My lord, my husband! when I count with transport  
Thy amiable virtues, when I think  
How fair a treasure I possess in thee,  
I'm lost in scenes of soft, bewild'ring bliss;  
Yet fear, I know not why, some fatal change  
May rob me of my happiness.

Enter BATHORI.

BATHORI.

So melancholy, and alone, my daughter!

ISMENA.

My lord is with some nobles of the states.

BATHORI.

You shou'd remember 'tis the greatest honour  
To be so oft consulted, so rever'd  
By men who stand the foremost in their country.

ISMENA.

Remember too, how dear a sacrifice  
My Elmerick made, when he forsook retreat,  
And chang'd our solid peace for courts and senates.  
We knew no want, no avarice, no ambition:

In-





Intruding business and corroding cares,  
 Though hid beneath the pomp of wealth and power,  
 Must take from our felicity; who find,  
 Each in the other, what the world besides  
 Is much too poor to give.

BATHORI.

You must not weigh  
 Your single quiet with the good of millions.  
 Your noble husband's rank and high abilities  
 Have destin'd him the servant of his country:  
 For Elmerick has every gift of heaven  
 That renders publick care a debt to virtue,  
 And soft retirement poor, unmanly baseness.

ISMENA.

Still you forget the graces that have made  
 Your only child, your lov'd Ismena, happy.

BATHORI.

Thou dearest comfort of thy father's age!  
 My heart is pleas'd that thou art mindful of them.  
 Your well plac'd love, this tender gratitude,  
 Are proofs you merit, what you justly boast of,  
 To have the hand and heart, to be the wife  
 Of Elmerick—I cannot praise thee higher.

ISMENA.

The highest praise my vainest wish aspires to,  
 Is that my ardent love bears some proportion  
 To its exalted object.

BATHORI.

Both are happy;  
 And heaven preserve you so!—I judge that now  
 The states may be assembling in the palace,  
 As summon'd by the king. He has not met them  
 Since they elected Elmerick their palatine,  
 Pursuant to the grant he gave his people.

He

He means this morning to appoint a regent,  
Then to set forth for Palestine.

ISMENA.

What dangers

He generously meets!

BATHORI.

For me, I own,

I ne'er approv'd this rash, romantick war,  
Begot by hot-brain'd bigots, and fomented  
By the intrigues of proud, designing priests.  
All ages have their madness, this is ours.  
The king is wise, benevolent and brave,  
But covetous of glory to excess;  
And if he steer amiss, 'tis in a torrent  
That bears down all before it.

ISMENA.

His fair queen,

No doubt, will greatly mourn so long an absence.

BATHORI.

Perhaps she may.—Yet—I cou'd wish, Ismena,  
(I speak in confidence and with concern)  
The queen were wise, and gentle like thyself.

ISMENA.

My place and near attendance on her person  
Have given me means to know her, and 'tis sure,  
To nature none owes more.

BATHORI.

Yes, I confess,

Matilda wants not charms, sharp female wit,  
And dignity of form; but her warm passions,  
And the wild eagerness with which she follows  
Each gust of inclination, may, I fear,  
Prove dangerous to herself, the king and realm.

ISMENA.





I S M E N A.

Detraction cannot say she e'er transgress'd  
The strictest bounds of virtue.

B A T H O R I.

Suppose her chaste, 'tis pride, not virtue in her.  
Can she be virtuous, who beheld unmov'd  
The treacherous arts of her licentious brother  
To tempt your virgin honour, while he stay'd  
To grace his sister's nuptials, and stain'd Buda  
With his Moravian riot?

I S M E N A.

I reveal'd

Her thoughtless conduct, which indeed amaz'd me,  
Only to you, my father. — Let it die:  
Be all her errors mended and forgot,  
Her worth improv'd and honour'd.

B A T H O R I.

Nay, I wish it:

Wou'd I cou'd add, with truth, I hop'd it too! —  
Thou dearest pleasure of my ebbing life,  
With thee conversing, I forgot the hours  
Were passing on — I go: the fates demand me.

*[Exeunt separately.]*

S C E N E II.

*The Assembly of the States.*

F I R S T L O R D.

That the king means this day to join the army  
Is then no longer doubted?

E L M E R I C K.

No, my lord.

F I R S T

FIRST LORD.

May health and safety wait upon his person!

SECOND LORD.

May fortune never cross his generous labours,  
But victory and triumph bring him home!

ELMERICK.

So please just heaven! 'tis the devoutest wish  
Of every honest heart in Hungary.

*To them enter KING, BATHORI, Attendants.*

*KING taking a seat of state.*

KING.

You nobles, and you deputies of Hungary,  
And you confederate states that own our scepter,  
Know, I this day depart for Palestine:  
Where like a mourning matron, by her sons  
Neglected or forgot in her distress,  
Lies sacred Sion, captiv'd and profan'd.  
But ere I name the regent of my kingdoms,  
Which you shall witness, and, I trust, applaud;  
I greet, with heart-felt joy, your wise election  
Of Elmerick, first palatine of Hungary:  
The conservator of your laws and rights,  
Guardian of liberty, and judge of power.  
His manly virtues answer my big thought,  
And give full vigour to the awful title:  
Wisdom consummate in the fire of youth,  
The hardiest valour join'd with soft compassion,  
And justice never to be brib'd or aw'd—

ELMERICK.

My life's poor labours never can deserve  
My country's favour, or my sov'reign's praise.  
And, O perpetual source of bounteous virtue,  
Who but a king, whose wide expanding heart

1 Feels





Feels a whole people's bliss, humanely great,  
 Wisely ambitious, ere, benignant, plan'd,  
 In his high soaring thought, so large a gift;  
 Gave to a subject right to judge his acts,  
 And say to sov'reign power—here shalt thou stay?

K I N G.

What we have thought of regal government,  
 Its bounds and end, I hope our reign has witness'd,  
 To make a people wretched, to entail  
 The curse of bondage on their drooping race,  
 Can add no joy to sense, can sooth no passion  
 That hath its seat in nature—may reproach  
 Sound through the loathing world his guilty name  
 Who dares attempt it—what can be his motive,  
 Whom long descent, or a free people's love,  
 Has rais'd an earthly God, so to degrade  
 Himself, and take the office of a fiend!—  
 Too foul mistake!—Let me aspire to glory  
 By glorious means! to have my reign illustrious,  
 The theme of loud-tongued fame and echoing nations,  
 May it give birth to an eternal æra,  
 And be the happy date when publick liberty  
 Receiv'd its last perfection!

B A T H O R I.

Matchless king!  
 How shalt thy subjects pay this God-like gift!

K I N G.

Defend it as your lives—said I your lives?  
 That's poor, and far unworthy its importance;  
 Defend it as you wou'd your fame and virtue.  
 And if, hereafter, some ill judging monarch  
 Invade your rights with bold oppressive power;  
 Under the conduct of your palatine,  
 Repel by legal force the known injustice,  
 And place the sacred crown of holy Stephen,

Thus

Thus forfeited and impiously profan'd,  
On some more worthy head. [*Pauses*]—All gracious  
heaven!

Affection melts their hearts—there's not an eye  
But swells with tears in all this great assembly.  
The active warmth of youth, the cool experience  
Of venerable age, the statesman's wisdom,  
And hardy soldier's courage, overcome  
By obligation, melt to infant softness,  
And speechless tears.

BATHORI.

O gracious monarch!

FIRST LORD.

Father!

ELMERICK.

Glory, and guardian angel of our country!

KING.

Why, let the envious call this flattery,  
Unmanly art! to which unhappy slaves  
Are forc'd to form their lips—You need it not—  
My last, just care has made it useless to you.

ELMERICK.

When gratitude o'erflows the swelling heart,  
And breathes in free and uncorrupted praise  
For benefits receiv'd; propitious heaven  
Takes such acknowledgement as fragrant incense,  
And doubles all its blessings.

KING.

'Tis enough——

The powerful theme had sway'd my glowing thought  
From the important business of this day,  
Which claims your high attention—I shall now  
Repose the sov'reign power in proper hands,  
During the war I wage in Palestine.

ELMERICK.





## ELMERICK.

May heaven direct your choice!  
 For what is law more than the breathless form  
 Of some fall'n hero, spiritless and cold,  
 To be dispos'd and trampled on at pleasure  
 By every bold offender; unless steady  
 And vig'rous execution give it life.

## KING.

'Tis justly urg'd, my lord, and you yourself  
 Shall in my absence guard it from contempt  
 By vig'rous execution. Take the sword,  
 And bear it not in vain.---Shou'd any dare,  
 Presuming on their birth or place for safety,  
 Disturb my subjects peace with bold injustice;  
 Let no consideration hold your hand,  
 As you shall answer it to me and heaven:  
 Think well how I wou'd act, or ought to act,  
 Were I in person here, and do it for me.

## ELMERICK.

An awful trust, my liege, and strongly urg'd:  
 And while I rule your realm, shou'd some bold  
 crime  
 Demand the righteous rigour you enjoin;  
 May heaven deal with me, as I shall discharge  
 With faithfulness and courage, or neglect,  
 Through treachery or fear, the painful duty.

## KING.

Unblest'd a king, whose self-reproaching heart  
 Ne'er calm reposes on a subject's virtue!  
 Thank heaven, I am not such: I taste the safe,  
 The generous joys of confidence well plac'd.  
 With you, brave Elmerick, the states have lodg'd  
 Their noblest right, and I dare trust my crown.  
 But there is yet a dearer, tenderer charge,

And

And let me recommend, ere I dismiss you,  
 [Turning to the *States*.  
 More than my crown, my queen to your affections.  
 I go, once more, to take my last adieu,  
 Then lead my hallow'd banners to the east.  
 [*Exeunt*.

S C E N E III.

QUEEN AND ZENOMIRA.

QUEEN.

To stoop beneath a constant weight of cares  
 To purchase ease for others!--poor and senseless!  
 Injurious to himself, and base to me!

ZENOMIRA.

The king is held by all most wise and just.

QUEEN.

For me, I cannot think so--then this start  
 To Palestine, this warlike pilgrimage,  
 This holy madness will bear no excuse.  
 Need he regard whether the line of Baldwin,  
 Or Saladin, be victors in a clime  
 So far remote, who might enjoy repose  
 And pleasure here? I tell thee, Zenomira,  
 I'm not, by far, so happy as Ismena.  
 For Elmerick, the theme of every tongue,  
 Can love: and to our sex, love crowns all merit.

ZENOMIRA.

Madam, the king——

QUEEN.

He comes to take his leave. Ungrateful man!  
 He merits not my heart, who vainly dares  
 To rate his pride above it. [*Exit ZENOMIRA*.

VOL. II.

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*Enter*





*Enter KING.*

K I N G.

The urgent business of this day, Matilda,  
How has it robb'd me of thy dear society!

Q U E E N.

You will have constant business, sir—The camp  
Detains you from me now, and now the senate;  
And when your court receives you, restless still,  
And fir'd with some bright phantom of ambition,  
You mix with hoary heads, and plan new glories.

K I N G.

If, faithful to the trust impos'd by heaven,  
I oft have born with grief thy painful absence;  
O think me not less thine, my lov'd Matilda,  
But pity my sad duty.

Q U E E N.

Said you duty?—

Your idol honour rather—that you worship—  
That sends your banners to the distant east,  
To fruitless wars, and visionary triumphs.

K I N G.

Honour's a duty, madam, and the noblest;  
And ardent I pursue the powerful impulse.  
There are (with shame I speak it) those who loiter  
In this religious warfare. The emperor  
Cannot unite his Germans; France delays:  
Grim death has forc'd the slaught'ring battle-axe  
From Cœur de Lion's strong unerring hand;  
And John of England, his unthrifty brother,  
Repell'd abroad, prepares his luckless sword  
To wound the liberties, rescind the laws,  
And sheath it in the bowels of his kingdom.  
Our troops are ready: Sion's mournful cries  
Call loud for instant succour—and I go.

2

Q U E E N.

Q U E E N.

Then I must learn to bear my king's neglect,  
And endless solitude.

K I N G.

No, my Matilda;  
The time will come when war's rough labours ended  
Shall give me up devoted to thy beauties,  
And all our days to come shall blended flow  
In one pure stream of calm, unruffled love.

Q U E E N.

Our days to come  
Are dark uncertainties; and doating age,  
Shou'd we attain it, painful or insipid.

K I N G.

Do not distract me, call back these reproaches.  
Urge not, my queen, thy soft'ning power too far,  
But think thy husband's triumphs will be thine.—  
Mean-time, to soften my unwilling absence  
Thy brother comes, the partner of thy heart:  
Each day my court expects him from Moravia.  
His sprightly temper, his engaging converse,  
Will steal all sorrow from thee.

Q U E E N.

In my brother  
I still have found a friend; and friendship now  
Is all the good my widow'd heart must hope for.—  
But in your absence, sir, the sovereign power  
To whom intrust you? whom must I obey?

K I N G.

Lord Elmerick, as you know was my fix'd purpose,  
I have appointed regent of my kingdoms.

Q U E E N.

The world talks loud of Elmerick's fair merits,  
L 2 And





And I, unus'd to think on such grave subjects,  
Congratulate your choice.—

K I N G.

You're just and kind;  
To crown with your auspicious praise the man  
Whom I so love and honour.—May I hope  
That all those lips have dropt less gentle to me,  
Was but the tender fears of love alarm'd?  
Oh say but this! and I will think it kinder  
Than all th' endearments of affected fondness.

Q U E E N.

Think what will please you best, and that I said it,—  
And may the shining fame you seek so far  
Pay your long labours!

K I N G.

One embrace, Matilda!  
May heaven on all thy days shed sweetest comfort,  
And peace with angel wings o'er shade thy slumbers!  
Eager for fame, and zealous to chastize  
The foes of heaven, I thought I cou'd resist  
This heart-invading softness—Fond mistake!  
Call'd to begin the task by leaving thee,  
I find my fancy'd heroism vain,  
And all the feeble tender man returns.—  
I must not give it way.—Once more, farewell.

*[Exeunt separately.]*

A C T

## A C T II.

## S C E N E I.

## Q U E E N A N D I S M E N A.

Q U E E N.

Y E S, I resent the king has left me thus! —  
Thus in the bloom of youth to be forsaken! —  
I'll have revenge.

I S M E N A.

Forgive your servant, madam;  
Grief and impatience interrupt your reason:  
You think not what you speak, or will not think it.  
When time shall give you leisure to reflect,  
The king, howe'er in this—

Q U E E N.

Excuse him not;  
I never lov'd him, and now never will.—  
You seem amaz'd! is it so very strange,  
A lady shou'd not love the man she weds?

I S M E N A.

My happy fortune, madam, makes me think so,  
Nor wou'd I lose that thought to be a queen.

Q U E E N.

I wou'd I were no queen!—at least not here!  
When in Moravia, at my father's court,  
The only daughter and the darling joy  
Of my fond parents love; officious fame  
Proclaim'd me as a miracle of beauty:  
Justly or not is now of small importance,  
'Twas then thought true, and princes came in crowds  
To love and be refus'd. The noblest triumphs  
Our sex can boast, charm'd my aspiring thoughts;

L 3

And



And constant revels, feasting, mirth and music  
 Sooth'd every sense. No grave grimace, that's call'd  
 Religion here; no visionary schemes  
 To set the rabble free, and fetter kings;  
 No anxious cares for what regards not us,  
 Remote posterity; obscur'd the lustre,  
 Or damp'd the joys of Olmutz' gallant court:  
 Soft am'rous sighs were all the mournful sounds,  
 And deep intrigues to gain some haughty fair  
 Were all the business of that happy place  
 I left for this proud solemn seat of dulness,  
 This pompous grave of pleasure, hated Buda.

I S M E N A.

What wit and charms has education marr'd! [*Aside.*]

Q U E E N.

Then judge, Ismena,  
 Who know'st this formal court, and sober king,  
 My hopeless, lost condition.

I S M E N A.

May I hope  
 Your majesty's forgiveness, should I ask,  
 The absence of your royal lord excepted,  
 What more cou'd kind, indulgent heaven bestow?  
 Power, wealth, and honour wait upon your will.

Q U E E N.

Power, wealth and honour feed man's high ambi-  
 tion;  
 But for our humbler sex, we're true to nature,  
 And rest content with pleasure. But to me  
 Pleasure's impossible, whilst my grave master  
 More than forbids it by his wife example.  
 And then this last injurious flight has mov'd me  
 Beyond the power to pardon.

I S M E N A.

I S M E N A.

Shou'd my lord  
Have left me thus, I might, I must have griev'd—  
I think to death; but sure no angry thought  
Had ruffled my sad bosom.

Q U E E N.

You, Ismena,  
Are a rare instance of felicity,  
A happy, marry'd woman.

I S M E N A.

'Tis true, my lord,  
Or I am partial, has not many equals:  
The manly beauty of his pleasing face,  
His perfect symmetry and noble mien,  
His tender language, and his soft address—

Q U E E N.

I am no stranger to them—wou'd I were! [*Aside.*]

I S M E N A.

But then the matchless beauty of his mind—  
Ne'er were the great and tender so united  
As in the soul of Elmerick.

Q U E E N.

Rash creature! [*Aside.*]

I S M E N A.

How happy were our sex if more were like him!

Q U E E N.

Why was not I reserv'd for such a lover?  
My passions must have vent. [*Aside.*] Gentle Ismena!  
Wait for me near the fountain in the garden.

[*Exit* I S M E N A.]

When murmur'ing at my fate, to set before me,  
And in so full a light, those very graces  
That long have charm'd me! vain officious woman!—

L 4

Why





Why have you, heaven, so form'd this heart for love,  
With no more reason, than you must foresee,  
Subservient to that love, will make me wretched?

*Enter* ELMERICK.

E L M E R I C K.

Hail to the queen! and may the news I bear,  
Prove a glad omen of my future service  
From this auspicious hour! your royal brother,  
The valiant Conrade, is arriv'd at Buda.

Q U E E N.

Now by the joys my soul has long been lost to,  
This kind, this gen'rous haste to bring relief  
To a forsaken solitary queen,  
Does justice to your character. My thanks—  
But that's a poor reward, current at courts  
For want of something better.—I wou'd find  
Some solid favour to engage your service,  
Worthy of me, and worthy your acceptance.

E L M E R I C K.

Is there a man so venal or so vain,  
As not to think the happiness to serve  
So good and great a queen, a full reward  
For all he can perform?—and then the honour  
Done to my wife!—your favour to Ismena  
Exceeds all gratitude.

Q U E E N.

Gall, gall and poison. [*Aside.*]

E L M E R I C K.

Madam, I take my leave. The prince is ent'ring.

Q U E E N.

My lord, when our first interview is over,  
We shall expect your presence.

[*Exit* ELMERICK.  
*Enter*



*Enter CONRADE.*

CONRADE.

My Matilda!

Long let me press thee to my joyful breast,  
 I who have often mourn'd thy tedious absence,  
 Thou dear, dear object, both by choice and nature,  
 Of my fond love, my sister and my friend!

QUEEN.

And was it tedious? did you think it long?  
 Why shou'd I doubt it? when was you not kind?  
 When did thy active genius let me want  
 New pleasures to repel intruding thought,  
 And lash the lazy minutes into swiftness?  
 Our parents —

CONRADE.

Are well. There is no sorrow in Moravia  
 But from the want of thee.

QUEEN.

I have not known,  
 Till now, a joyful moment since I left it.

CONRADE.

We have been happy: and shou'd fortune prove  
 Once more propitious to me, those gay fires  
 That shone so bright at Olmutz, may revive  
 And blaze at Buda.

QUEEN.

What, my dearest Conrade,  
 Has Hungary to give worth thy desiring?

CONRADE.

Forgive, Matilda, while I own my heart.  
 Though I have ever lov'd and fondly love thee,  
 I had, besides the joy of seeing thee,

Another



Another powerful hope that fir'd my soul,  
And wing'd my haste to Buda.

QUEEN.

You surprize me!

CONRADE.

When first I led you here to warlike Buda,  
And gave you blooming to your royal husband,  
You must remember, during my short stay,  
I saw and lov'd the daughter of Bathori.

QUEEN.

I know it well, and all her rigors to you;  
But thought your am'rous and inconstant heart  
(Lost often, and as many times retriev'd  
Since I beheld you last) had not retain'd  
The least impression of Ismena's charms.

CONRADE.

Not all the gaudy pleasures I once courted,  
Can cure the rooted passion, raging still,  
Invincible as ever. It has cost me,  
While distant from her charms I pin'd in absence,  
A sickness almost fatal to my life;  
Which though my youth recover'd, the soft poison  
Still preys upon thy brother's heart, Matilda,  
And makes me hate my being:—I will die,  
Or find relief. And therefore am I come,  
Determin'd, to attempt my fate once more:  
My fate cannot be worse.—That she is wedded  
To Elmerick, I know: yet he's a subject;  
And were he more, his greatness shou'd not awe me.

QUEEN.

This favours my design on Elmerick's heart,—  
If he shou'd gain Ismena, Elmerick's mine. [*Aside.*]  
Let me dissuade you from a wild attempt,  
Your rashness must defeat. Lord Elmerick,

Who

Who now resides, as regent, in the palace,  
Must soon perceive your love, and will find means  
To guard his honour, and secure Ismena  
From bold sollicitation.

CONRADE.

I'm convinc'd  
That course were wrong, do you direct me better,  
Or see me die the victim of despair.

QUEEN.

How, Conrade! can you think I wou'd assist  
In such a purpose?—But were virtue silent,  
A cloud of difficulties rise before me:  
Lord Elmerick is palatine and regent—  
Terms must be kept with him. And then Ismena,  
Fond of her lord, and vain of such a choice,  
Will hear you with disdain. For happy Elmerick  
Fills all her tender wishes, all her heart.—  
Yet should some accident disturb their loves,  
There might be hope: for she who once has lov'd,  
May love again. The softness in our frame,  
That has dispos'd us first to the fond passion,  
Is ready to betray us ever after.

CONRADE.

This distant glimpse of hope, this poor reverfion,  
To one that loves as I do, is despair—  
But 'tis from her alone, who rules my fate,  
That I can learn my doom. Where may I find her?

QUEEN.

I gave her charge to wait me in the garden,  
And soon will meet her there.

CONRADE.

Unkind Matilda,  
Cou'dst thou know this, and yet detain me here?  
I wou'd



I wou'd not lose the present, lucky moment  
For ages in reverſion. [Exit CONRADE.

QUEEN.

Yes, my Conrade,  
Though you was ever dearly welcome to me,  
I now behold you with unuſual tranſport.  
O! may your ſighs, your vows, your importunities  
Subdue Iſmena's heart; as Elmerick,  
Without their pleaſing aid, has conquer'd mine:  
At leaſt divide, break, and confound their peace:  
Raiſe ſtorms of jealousy, and fill their ſouls  
With darkneſs and deſpair: till in the tempeſt  
Love be for ever loſt, and the wild wreck  
Compel abandon'd Elmerick to ſeek  
For ſhelter in ſome near and friendly port,  
And find the bleſt aſylum in my arms.

[Exit QUEEN.

SCENE II.

*A Garden.*

CONRADE AND ISMENA.

CONRADE.

Her charms are ſtill the ſame, and at her ſight  
Love burns with double fury: yet I want  
My former reſolution: I am aw'd,  
And ſcarce have courage left me to approach her. [Aside.

— Be not ſurpriz'd, adorable Iſmena,  
To ſee me here, and ſee me ſtill your ſlave:  
Yes, thoſe all-powerful beauties, that ſubdu'd  
My ranging heart to conſtancy and truth,  
Still hold the binding charm: to love Iſmena  
Is, as I feel too well, to love for ever.

ISMENA.

I S M E N A.

As you are brother to my royal mistress,  
I'm not surpriz'd to see you here, prince Conrade;  
But as I'm wife to noble Elmerick,  
To hear you hold this language does surprize me.

C O N R A D E.

Nor time, nor absence, nor the last despair,  
For I have prov'd them all, can cure my passion,  
A mortal passion, that must soon consume me,  
Unless you bid me live.

I S M E N A.

Live, and be wise;  
Live, and be noble: break your vassalage  
To passions that debase the name of prince,  
While that of man is forfeited and lost.

C O N R A D E.

This high disdain, this counsel urg'd in scorn,  
Is cruel and unjust.—Too haughty fair!  
Wilt thou ne'er learn compassion? never melt  
At my long tender sorrows? Let me hope——

I S M E N A.

What have I done to raise your vanity  
To this presumptuous height?

C O N R A D E.

O call it love,  
And I'll confess it soars to all the heights  
Of fond, distracted passion.

I S M E N A.

Impious trifles!  
Are these the arts by which false man betrays?—  
Unhappy woman! do they yield to guilt  
Because a madman raves, a traitor flatters?—  
I thought, vain prince, I had been better known;  
And



And that your rash attempt when here before,  
At least, had taught you wisdom.

C O N R A D E.

I confess  
My love was then to blame, so to expose  
Your virgin honour: you have now a husband—

I S M E N A.

You sink beneath my scorn——I have a husband—  
And such an one as loose incontinence  
Would want the will to wrong. Sir, if I bear  
This insult unreveng'd, 'tis to my prudence,  
Not to your birth and name, you owe your safety.

C O N R A D E.

My safety!—Hell!—let the proud palatine  
But dare to threaten thus—

I S M E N A.

Take my advice,  
And dare not to provoke him. Thus far, prince,  
I judge my scorn sufficient.

C O N R A D E.

Oh! 'tis too much, and all that I can fear:—  
I'll conquer it or perish.

I S M E N A.

Since your reason  
Is wholly lost in this impetuous phrenzy,  
To shun your madness shall be all my care.

C O N R A D E.

Fly where you will, honour, as well as love,  
Compels me now for ever to pursue you.

I S M E N A.

The light, vain libertine grows formidable!—  
His insulence may lay a scene of ruin,  
That chills my blood with horror but to think on.

C O N R A D E.

CONRADE.

Her cynick father! — there's another champion.  
What with her innate pride and high alliances  
She makes a strong resistance; and my passion,

*Enter* BATHORI.

By opposition irritated, burns  
More fiercely to attempt the noble conquest.  
[*Exit* CONRADE.]

BATHORI.

Prince Conrade just now leaves you?

ISMENA.

Let him go.

BATHORI.

You seem disorder'd.

ISMENA.

Howe'er misplac'd by fortune, nature form'd me  
For the domestick joys of calm retreat:  
I'm sick of court already.

BATHORI.

For what cause?

You know your lord, by his high trust compell'd,  
Here must reside: it cannot be dispens'd with.

ISMENA.

'Tis true, and all our happy days are past:  
For insolence and Conrade still pursue me.  
Then judge when this shall reach my husband's ear,  
As soon it must, how will his soul endure  
This outrage on my virtue and his honour?  
Shall I not see his hands stain'd with the blood  
Of the queen's brother, or the noble Elmerick  
(A thousand, thousand deaths are in the thought)  
Bleed by the rage of impious, desperate Conrade?

BATHORI.



BATHORI.

Unheard of insolence! he shall be taught  
 The difference between the passive slaves  
 Of loose Moravia, and our free Hungarians.  
 Your lord must never learn this daring insult:  
 For know my child, I hold myself sufficient  
 To shield my daughter from this princely libertine,  
 And awe him into silence and respect.

ISMENA.

You know him not: he is not to be aw'd:  
 There is but one, one onely way to shun him:  
 Let me forsake the court, with you retire  
 Till Conrade quits the kingdom.

BATHORI.

Rightly judg'd.

Thy prudence is thy guard; safer in that  
 From being made the theme of busy rumour,  
 Ever injurious to a woman's fame,  
 Than in an army rais'd for thy defence.  
 My house and arms are ready to receive thee.

[Exeunt.]

ACT

ACT III.

SCENE I.

QUEEN AND ZENOMIRA.

QUEEN.

**B**E dumb, vain, busy wretch : because thou'rt  
 trusted,  
 Dost thou presume to offer thy advice?  
 Wou'd'st thou be hated too?

ZENOMIRA.

Think, royal Madam,  
 To whom I, undeserving, owe my fortune.  
 My gratitude—

QUEEN.

A servant's gratitude!—

Consider well your interest and your safety.  
 Remember I, who made you what you are,  
 Can make you more or speak you into nothing.  
 If Elmerick return the love I proffer,  
 I shall employ you often : shou'd he not,  
 (Do not my eyes dart ruin while I speak it?)  
 My first command in this shall be my last.  
 Seek him now,  
 And bring him hither.—No, I see my brother :  
 Wait in the anti-chamber till he's gone,  
 Then do as I directed. [Exit ZENOMIRA.]

*Enter* CONRADE.

CONRADE.

Curst be the hour,  
 When, sated with delight, I quitted Olmutz,  
 Where all my vows were heard with extasy,  
 Vol. II. M And



And beauty took its value from my breath,  
 To meet contempt, despair and death at Buda,  
 Ismena at this instant leaves the court:  
 No hope is left, no patience—I'm distracted.  
 The subtle tyrant love, who led me long  
 Through flow'ry paths, and spread elysium round me;  
 Whose fires, till now, serv'd but to heighten pleasure,  
 And quicken it to transport; has betray'd me  
 To plagues and torments not to be supported.  
 Ismena is essential to my being. O Matilda!  
 Assist me with your counsel or I'm lost.

QUEEN.

Alas! he knows not it too much imports me.

[*Aside.*]

Do not abandon hope, but leave despair  
 To fools and cowards. Know, exalted souls  
 Have passions in proportion violent,  
 Refitless, and tormenting: they're a tax  
 Impos'd by nature on preheminnence,  
 And fortitude and wisdom must support them.

CONRADE.

Who but Matilda e'er cou'd flatter misery,  
 And prove superior merit from our weaknes?  
 At thy awak'ning voice my hope revives.  
 Cou'd'st thou but stop Ismena's purpos'd flight  
 (And nothing is too hard for wit like thine)  
 I yet may triumph o'er her pride and virtue.

QUEEN.

By stratagem to keep Ismena here  
 Can serve no end: when she perceives the fraud,  
 She'll fly more irritated than before.

CONRADE.

But I shall see her first;

QUEEN.

## QUEEN.

What can you hope  
 From such an interview? while Elmerick  
 Continues kind, he'll prove too strong a rival.  
 Her pride and virtue are meer accidents:  
 She chanc'd to marry where she chanc'd to like;  
 But should he, touch'd with some new flame, ne-  
 glect her,  
 As time is fruitful of more strange events,  
 Her pride wou'd make her hate him.--You must wait.

## CONRADE.

You talk of ease whole ages hence to one  
 Stretch'd on the rack of violent desire.  
 By heav'n I will pursue to her retreat,  
 And bear her thence in spite of father, husband,  
 And every sword that dares oppose my purpose.  
 She shall return to court, she shall behold  
 And hear my raging love, she shall be mine.

## QUEEN.

Forbear such wild and unbecoming thoughts:  
 The palatine is regent, you a stranger,  
 And I, perhaps, have reasons of my own  
 To keep his good opinion. If to see her  
 Within this palace, with the due respect  
 You owe her birth and rank, may satisfy  
 For once your present ardour, I'll assist you.  
 Love may perhaps inspire your soothing tongue  
 With eloquence to soften, and persuade  
 The melting fair to break her resolution,  
 And hear at least, if not return your love:  
 The firmest purpose of a woman's heart  
 To well-tim'd, artful flattery may yield.





CONRADE.

And shall I see again my lov'd Ismena?  
Oh say what pow'r, what art can bring her hither?

QUEEN.

Belus, chief secretary to the regent,  
Shall be, unknowingly, a proper agent:  
He has been Zenomira's lover long—  
But see she comes, she must not see you now:  
Trust in a sister's love, and wait th' event.

[Exit CONRADE.]

*Enter ZENOMIRA.*

ZENOMIRA.

Madam, my lord the regent will attend you.

QUEEN.

Is Belus still thy lover, Zenomira?

ZENOMIRA.

So he professes, madam.

QUEEN.

Then shou'd you feign a message from his lord,  
He'd not distrust you?

ZENOMIRA.

His believing passion  
Ne'er yet has seem'd to doubt whate'er I utter'd.  
What must I say?

QUEEN.

Say that her lord intreats  
Ismena, some time hence, to meet him here.  
I think she has conceiv'd some slight disgust  
Which I wou'd fain remove. This artifice  
I shall so well account for when I see her,  
You and your lover shall incur no blame.

ZENOMIRA.

## ZENOMIRA.

What dangers wou'd I meet, cou'd I improve  
Your friendship for that lady! may I hope  
Your thoughts of Elmerick are chang'd already?

## QUEEN.

The plague of confidents!—do as directed.

## [Exit ZENOMIRA.]

And yet this wretch, this little busy wretch,  
Whose love, whose care and counfel I despise,  
Is infinitely wiser than Matilda!  
I've sent for Elmerick—but let me think  
Ere yet my sliding feet forego the shore,  
That quitted once can never be recover'd  
In what a boundless ocean am I plunging,  
With only one uncertain light to guide me!  
If that should fail, I sink o'erwhelm'd for ever.—  
But shou'd the grateful Elmerick stretch forth  
His saving hand, and snatch me from the billows,  
Love will return a thousand solid joys  
For every transient pain.—But O the hazard!—  
A woman and a queen to offer love,  
And hear herself refus'd!—'Tis misery!  
'Tis everlasting shame! 'Tis death and hell!  
I will not think so poorly of my fate,  
Myself, or Elmerick—My present lot  
Is cheerless and forlorn—impetuous gusts  
Of stormy passions drive me through the gloom,  
Unsteady and uncertain. All before me  
Is the profound, unfathomable deep;  
And all behind a dark and boundless waste—  
But he appears, the star that must direct me  
To peace and joy—or light me to my ruin.

*Enter ELMERICK.*

I fear, my lord, this importunity

M 3

May





May interrupt your labours for the publick,  
I shall become your trouble.

E L M E R I C K.

I serve the king,  
I serve the publick, madam, serving you:  
My pride and joy is to attend your person.

Q U E E N.

And are you pleas'd, most noble Elmerick,  
To hear a woman's talk, and soothe my cares?  
But you are wond'rous good: and let me boast  
That I've a heart susceptible of kindness,  
In all its various forms, ev'n to a fault.

E L M E R I C K.

How infinitely bountiful is nature?  
Giving such softness to the pleasing sex,  
As well rewards the toils she lays on ours,  
If we excel, 'tis when the glorious hopes  
Of serving or delighting you inspire us:  
And to obtain your smiles is to be happy.

Q U E E N.

If happiness be in our pow'r to give,  
'Tis hard to want the blessings we bestow:  
To love and to be lov'd is to be happy.

E L M E R I C K.

Your sex by nature form'd to merit love,  
Can rarely want it.

Q U E E N.

Possibly the brave,  
Who hate ingratitude, wou'd not despise  
A lady who renounc'd her native pride,  
The painful'st proof our sex can give of love.

E L M E R I C K.

E L M E R I C K.

A generous man must think it double grace,  
When love and virtue condescend to chuse him:

Q U E E N.

My lord, shou'd fate reduce some hapless woman,  
Trembling and almost dying with confusion,  
To make an offer of her love to you ;  
And such a love as instant death or madness  
Were certain to ensue, shou'd you refuse it ?  
How wou'd you act ? how treat a suppliant heart,  
Whose weakness you had caus'd ?

E L M E R I C K.

Your pardon, madam ;  
'Tis what I can't suppose ; and asks no answer.

Q U E E N.

Why not suppose ? is it impossible ?  
Say—I—shou'd love ; and trusting to your honour,  
Have laid this fair occasion in your way  
To break my fall, and spare me half my shame.

E L M E R I C K.

What vanity  
Have I betray'd, what baseness, what presumption,  
To need so strange a trial ? if you doubt  
My loyalty, and think I entertain  
Designs injurious to my sovereign's honour,  
And your fair virtue —

Q U E E N.

'Tis too much, my lord,  
This diffidence, this cold reserve—you urge me  
To what I wou'd avoid, beyond the bounds  
I had prescrib'd myself: yes, I cou'd die  
Ere speak more plain ; but must not have you think  
I wou'd betray you. Heavens ! what feign a passion  
I wou'd betray you. Heavens ! what feign a passion

M 4

My



My foul ne'er knew! No, rather let me bear  
Your utmost cruelty, your scorn and hatred,  
For what I am, a lost unhappy queen,  
Than once be thought so mean and so perfidious.

E L M E R I C K.

Confounded and amaz'd, my fault'ring tongue  
Scarce does its office.—Whither wou'd you urge me?  
'Tis too severe a proof!—as you are fair;  
As charms like yours may warm the coldest heart,  
And shake the most resolv'd; what if my senses  
Should mutiny against my weaker reason,  
And tempt me to betray you—horrid thought!—  
To sure and endless ruin!

Q U E E N.

What do you see  
That looks like ruin here?

E L M E R I C K.

Guilt:—that is ruin.

Q U E E N.

Why be it so, your love shall make it glorious.

E L M E R I C K.

No, shame and just remorse must still pursue  
Foul, trust-betraying love. And shou'd I say  
Ev'n that were in my power, I must deceive you.  
Shou'd wild desire, in an unguarded moment,  
Rifle your charms, and lay your virtue waste;  
The first return of thought wou'd bear me back  
To her, who claims me by the dearest ties  
Of virtuous, grateful love. Oh then return,  
With recollected powers o'ercome this weakness,  
And rise more glorious from this short decline.

Q U E E N.

This short decline!—no, let victorious love  
Here end a queen's confusion, or your scorn

Sink

Sink my despairing and indignant soul  
Where calm repose and hope shall never find it,  
And your repentance come too late to save me.

E L M E R I C K.

I must assert your honour and my own.  
Remember who I am, my trust, and office—  
Almighty Power! shall I, who bear the sword  
To punish bold offenders, break the laws  
Your Providence has call'd me to defend?  
Doth the least subject look to me for justice,  
And shall my king, my ever gracious master,  
In recompence for his unbounded favour,  
Receive the highest, most opprobrious wrong  
A king or man can suffer?

Q U E E N.

Shame and ruin!

E L M E R I C K.

Not to deceive you, madam, not to flatter  
Views so unworthy of yourself and me:  
I must avow the ample power I hold,  
Each thought, each toil, my life, devoted all  
To gratitude and justice.

Q U E E N.

Enough, my lord—your gratitude has charm'd me—  
Who shall oppose your justice? here display it:  
Rise by my ruin to the height of glory,  
And let fame deafen the astonish'd world  
With your triumphant virtue.

E L M E R I C K.

I wou'd triumph,

But o'er your weakness, not your peace and fame:  
So you may triumph too.—oh hear me, queen—

Q U E E N.



Q U E E N.

I have heard too much,  
 I've heard my lover refus'd. — Death, horror! — shame,  
 And burning indignation! — pierce my heart,  
 Dispatch me, give me death. Is that too much? —  
 Is pity to the wretched, is compassion  
 Of every kind among the hateful crimes  
 The gen'rous, valiant Elmerick abhors?  
 Then give me this, afford the means of death,  
 And leave me to apply them. [*Going to seize his sword.*]

E L M E R I C K.

Heavens! what frenzy  
 Possesses you! — yet hear me —

Q U E E N.

Off, be gone,  
 And let me die!

E L M E R I C K.

Safe as my foul the secret  
 Shall be preserv'd.

Q U E E N.

What! be oblig'd to you! —  
 Owe my precarious honour to your silence! —  
 But keep your sword, I shall not want ev'n that —

E L M E R I C K.

She is not to be trusted with her life —  
 Royal, unhappy fair, what can I say  
 To calm this raging tempest in your bosom?  
 For though I dare not be, what you must hate,  
 False to my trust and sovrain; I wou'd die  
 To save your life and honour, to restore  
 Your peace of mind, and raise declining virtue —

*Enter* CONRADE.

Shame and confusion! — Madam, see, the prince —

C O N R A D E.

CONRADE.

Well may'st thou start, proud lord: the queen's  
 disorder,  
 And your confusion, must import some rudeness.

QUEEN.

Rudeness! — that word suggests an happy thought —  
 Yes, let despair and shame give way to vengeance.

[*Aside.*]

O brother! if I dare to call you brother  
 After the vile indignity I've suffer'd;  
 That wretch, presuming on his boundless power,  
 Has talk'd to me of love.

ELMERICK.

What can I answer?

When accidents concur with calumny,  
 Her pois'nous breath obscures the brightest fame,  
 And conscious virtue only can support us.

CONRADE.

I saw and heard too much. The traitor's life  
 Is a mean sacrifice.

ELMERICK.

To plead my cause

Before a judge like thee, were mean and vain;  
 Yet be advis'd, young prince, nor rashly draw  
 A sword that can't avail you.

QUEEN.

Will you hear him?

Think on the affront done to our royal house:—  
 Remember who he is, think on Ismena:  
 Who, if he 'scapes your sword, is lost for ever.

[*To CONRADE.*]

CONRADE.

Then love inspire me.

[*They fight.*]

QUEEN.



QUEEN.

Ah! my brother!—  
Elmerick has the advantage. [CONRADE *disarm'd*

E L M E R I C K.

Take your life,  
Young prince. The false appearance that misled you,  
Withholds my hand from punishing your rashness;  
But as the king's authority lives in me,  
It may be fatal to repeat these insults,  
Which nor my spirit nor my place will bear.  
Remember you are warn'd. For you, proud queen,  
I pity and forgive your groundless hatred,  
And still have that attention to your happiness,  
To wish, ev'n from my soul, you wou'd review,  
With an impartial eye, our different conduct.  
Wou'd you atone for error, make it short;  
Reproach yourself, and use this as a motive,  
That he, whom you have wrong'd, scorns to re-  
proach you. [Exit ELMERICK.

QUEEN.

Most exquisite! Legions of plagues and curses!  
Has heaven nor hell no vengeance in reserve,  
No bolts to strike, no light'ning to consume  
This overbearing traitor; who has dar'd  
To talk of wrongs, reproach, and teach us fear!

CONRADE.

Vain of th'advantage fortune gave him o'er me,  
He us'd me with the last indignity,  
Gave me my life in scorn, check'd, rated, threaten'd,  
But may my sword ne'er do me right in battle,  
May I be blasted with a coward's name,  
If I forget to pay him this foul outrage  
With double weight of vengeance.

*Enter*

Enter ZENOMIRA.

ZENOMIRA.

Madam, Ismena—

QUEEN.

Ha! Ismena, say'st thou!—

Say, Zenomira, that her lord expects her.

[Exit ZENOMIRA.]

CONRADE.

Ismena in my power! O fortune, fortune!  
From this blest hour I'll worship none but thee.  
I might have rack'd my thoughts in vain for ages,  
And ne'er have found the thousandth, thousandth  
part  
Of this complete, this most luxurious vengeance.

QUEEN.

Revenge, thou com'st too sudden;  
And risest to my view in such a form,  
So shocking, so tremendous, that my soul  
Shrinks back with horror now I thou'd embrace thee.  
—I justify thy scorn, proud Elmerick,  
By this degenerate pity.—Let it be—  
The haughty regent's heart shall know such anguish,  
That his complaints shall move ev'n fiends to pity,  
And vengeance to repent.—Retire, my Conrade,  
And watch till I have sent Ismena hence.

[CONRADE retires.]

I am so lost, that only horror, ruin,  
Can cover my disgrace.

Enter ISMENA looking round.

ISMENA.

Lord Elmerick not here!—

Have my unheeded steps mistook their way—

The queen!—and deep in thought!

QUEEN.





QUEEN.

She has not wrong'd me—  
But misery is cruel and remorseless.

ISMENA.

Forgive me, gracious queen, if I am rude,  
In vent'ring thus to press on your retirement;  
I was inform'd Lord Elmerick was here.

QUEEN.

Yes, —no, —he was — Good heavens! how shall I  
frame  
My tongue to this vile office. [Aside.

ISMENA.

Are you well? —  
Pray, heaven preserve the queen! — You're strangely  
alter'd —  
The blood forsakes your cheeks — you start and  
tremble.

QUEEN.

You'd see your lord, seek him in those apartments.

ISMENA.

For that I came; but dare not leave you thus.

QUEEN.

It was a short disorder, and 'tis past —  
Go, you're expected — [Exit ISMENA.  
She is gone, and ruin,

Inevitable ruin meets her there.  
The mean, perfidious, barb'rous task is done.  
My heart is adamant, or heaven-born pity  
Had melted my resentments. Poor Ismena!  
To be so plac'd by fate, that love or vengeance  
Cou'd find no passage to the stubborn breast  
Of Elmerick, but through thy breaking heart,

A C T

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

BELUS AND ZENOMIRA.

BELUS.

THEN you confess that I've been made the tool  
Of some vile purpose, that my lord ne'er sent  
The message you deliver'd?-- faithless woman!  
How shall I meet my lord's just indignation,  
Or make my conduct clear?

ZENOMIRA.

Prepare to curse,  
Prepare to kill me, Belus; or my fears  
Will quickly end me, and prevent your justice.

BELUS.

False woman! you've betray'd me into ruin.

ZENOMIRA.

O we are both betray'd, and both are ruin'd:  
Both made t'assist in such a villainy  
As hell would blush to own, and heav'n and earth  
Must join to see reveng'd. O cruel queen!  
Curst Conrade! lost Ismena!

BELUS.

Conrade!---queen!

ZENOMIRA.

I say the Queen, and Conrade, and Ismena.  
I saw her pass to the queen's own apartment,  
And curst Conrade follow her soon after.  
The rooms were bar'd.--But O the dismal cries,  
The lamentations and the shrieks that followed!---

BELUS.



B E L U S.

O lost Ismena! O unhappy lord!——  
Yes they become thee well, these gushing tears——

Z E N O M I R A.

But danger presses on us—What's our duty  
In this extreme?

B E L U S.

To be both just and cautious:  
Not rashly to proclaim what we have heard,  
But boldly dare to evidence the truth,  
And justify ourselves, whenever call'd on——  
But see, Ismena comes. Merciful heav'ns!  
Who that beholds her now, can doubt her sufferings!

Z E N O M I R A.

Heart-breaking spectacle!

B E L U S.

She thinks us guilty:  
We must avoid her sight. [*Going.*] Her father's here!

*Enter at opposite doors BATHORI and ISMENA.*

O what a woful greeting! now! by heaven,  
I know not which demands compassion most.

[*Exeunt BELUS and ZENOMIRA.*]

B A T H O R I.

The regent sent to see Ismena here?—  
Perhaps, then——

I S M E N A.

Oh!——

B A T H O R I.

From whence that mournful sound!

I S M E N A.

Since life is but a witness of my shame,  
Why do I longer bear it?

BATHORI.

Some sad child  
Of sorrow and despair, hiding her face,  
And bending t'wards the earth, seems to bewail,  
In bitterness of soul, some dire misfortune.

ISMENA.

Why is the grave, the hospitable grave,  
The silent seat of darkness, clos'd to me?  
Almighty power! [*Raising her face.*] My father! ha!—  
[*Seeing* BATHORI.]

BATHORI.

Impossible:—  
Art thou Imena?— Let me doubt it still—  
To see thee thus, and know thee for my child,  
Must split my brain with horror.

ISMENA.

Since my woes  
Renounce all cure, and, told, must blast the hearer;  
O let me pour them out to wilds and deserts,  
Shun all mankind but chiefly those I love!

BATHORI.

Come, my Ismena, to my shelt'ring bosom—  
Close, closer still— and while I thus weep o'er thee,  
Tell me, my child—I know 'twill break my heart,  
But let it break—come, tell me all thy suff'rings.

ISMENA.

Think where I am, remember what I told you  
Of the detested rage of brutal Conrade.

BATHORI.

Then art thou ruin'd, past redemption ruin'd!

ISMENA.

Past, past redemption! every other ill  
May be reliev'd by hope, or born with patience;

VOL. II.

N

Here





Here hope's impossible, and patience guilt.

BATHORI.

Then the last sacred business is revenge—

ISMENA.

Look down, all-pitying heaven, on these my woes,  
Woes undeserv'd, and guiltless misery :  
They plead my cause, the cause of innocence,  
An injur'd, violated, matron's cause ;  
And shall they plead in vain ?

BATHORI.

Yes, my dear child,  
In whom thy father's secret soul rejoic'd ;  
Whose goodness and whose happiness was such,  
He found old age delightful ; let thy foes,  
Those kindred-fiends, to this thy just appeal  
Plead their highrank, and try its weight with heaven.

ISMENA.

Or Elmerick, whose wrath perhaps they fear  
Much more than heaven's.

BATHORI.

And therefore may avoid.  
This asks some thought——  
For who can answer for thy husband's transport,  
Wife as he is, when he shall hear thy wrongs ?

ISMENA.

O what a scene of horror have you rais'd !  
He'll rush, unarm'd, on our insidious foes,  
Fall in their toils, and perish. Yes, my woes,  
My miseries, enormous as they are,  
Admit of aggravation.

BATHORI.

His danger wou'd be great. Some hand less fear'd  
May make revenge more certain. Nay, 'twere kind  
To

To spare thy lord such anguish and despair.

I S M E N A.

O heaven! and earth! to whom shall I complain,  
Where pour my sorrows forth, if not to him?

B A T H O R I.

Think you expose his life.

I S M E N A.

Death seal my lips!

B A T H O R I.

Retire and trust our vengeance to my prudence.  
Compose thyself, and when thou see'st thy lord—

I S M E N A.

Madness will seize me,  
Or raging grief disclose the horrid secret. [*Exit.*]

B A T H O R I.

Suspense was ease to this confirm'd despair.  
Would thou wert dead, Ismena!--O my child!  
Thou art so lost beyond the reach of hope,  
That love itself compels thy wretched father  
To wish thee dead; and in the bitterness  
Of anguish mourn that ever thou wert born.  
May one kind grave soon hide thy woes and mine.  
Ismena!--oh!-- But while I weep thy wrongs,  
The spoiler lives—Those are the queen's apartments,  
And, doubtless, there her brutal brother lurks.  
Nor courts, nor shrines and altars shall protect him,  
What, ho! within! prince of Moravia! Conrade!  
If thou'rt a man, stand forth, appear and answer.

*Enter* CONRADE.

C O N R A D E.

What insolence is this!—Ismena's father!—

N 2

BATHORI,



BATHORI.

Yes, impious prince, the father of Ismena.

CONRADE.

Forbear, rash man; this foul reproach I pardon.  
Somewhat, I grant, is due to thy first transports  
Of jealous honour, and much more from me  
To fair Ismena's father.

BATHORI.

Yes, thy blood.

CONRADE.

Yet hold; I've that to say may calm thy fury.

BATHORI.

Coward!

CONRADE.

I smile, old man,

And will be heard. Your daughter has been wrong'd,  
But most by her ungrateful, faithless lord;  
Whose rude attempt upon the queen, my sister,  
Makes what I've done a just, though bold, reprisal.  
Let him atone his treasonous presumption,  
Which, be assur'd, he answers with his life;  
And let me perish, if I not restore  
The injur'd honour of your lov'd Ismena  
With vast increase, and seat her on a throne.

BATHORI.

I'd rather see her in the arms of death  
Than reigning o'er the universe with thee.  
Mark thy progression,  
From rape to subornation, thence to murder.  
Long-suffering heaven, whose patience thou hast  
tir'd.

Calls loud for vengeance on thee. *[Draws.]*

CONRADE.

CONRADE.

Frantick man!

*Enter* QUEEN, LORDS, and *Guards, who interpose.*

QUEEN.

You lords of Hungary, behold this fight,  
And vindicate your hospitality.

Is this fit treatment for a royal guest?  
Will you endure this more than barb'rous outrage,  
And share the guilt of him and his confed'rates?  
Who twice this day, and for a cause too vile  
For me to name, have fought my brother's life.

FIRST LORD.

How shall we reconcile what we have seen  
With your known wisdom, and consummate virtue?

BATHORI.

Believe me, friends, there is, there is a cause  
For what you saw, for what I fain wou'd hide,  
These eyes still swelling with unmanly tears;  
Which when you know, you'll join with me to curse  
The chance that brought you, to prevent my justice.

FIRST LORD.

The great, good man! so long, so often prov'd  
The fearless advocate of injur'd innocence,  
Wou'd he shed tears,  
And call for justice when no wrong was done him?  
Judge others as they please, I will not think it.

SECOND LORD.

Nor I.

THIRD LORD.

Nor I.

FOURTH LORD.

Why is that wrong conceal'd?

N 3

BATHORI.



BATHORI.

For most important reasons: Though I fear  
It will too soon be known.

FOURTH LORD.

'Till then, my lord.  
Excuse me, if I think our country's honour  
Must suffer by your conduct.

FIFTH LORD.

That's my judgment.

BATHORI.

If your knowledge of me cannot gain  
Some credit to my word, at least suspend  
Your hasty censures.

[Going.]

FIRST LORD.

We accept your word,  
And vow to share your counsels and your fortune.

BATHORI.

You're truly noble. And be well assur'd  
That 'tis an honest cause, and worth espousing.

[Exeunt BATHORI, 1, 2, 3 Lords.]

QUEEN.

Unmanner'd traitors!  
From you, my lords, who think and act more nobly,  
What may insulted majesty expect?

FOURTH LORD.

All that becomes good subjects, who will guard  
The venerable rights of hospitality.

FIFTH LORD.

Bathori, whose rash conduct we condemn,  
At our joint charge, shall answer to the regent  
His bold attempt.

QUEEN.

QUEEN.

The regent! —  
His daughter's husband! his confed'rate! —

FIFTH LORD.

No kindred, madam, will prevail with Elmerick  
To stop the course of justice.

QUEEN.

Left to him,  
Whose daring insolence has been the source  
Of these fierce discords! Lords, if you regard  
The publick safety, if you love the king,  
Or dare defend your queen from foulest insult;  
Go find him now, attack him unprepar'd,  
Stand not on forms, the least delay is fatal.

FOURTH LORD.

Your pardon, madam —

FIFTH LORD.

Our zeal shall never make assassins of us.

QUEEN.

Nor men, tame lords. You who have seen my brother

Assaulted with a murderous intent,  
Is this your boasted loyalty and honour?

FOURTH LORD.

These bind us to respect the character,  
The dignity and person of the regent.

FIFTH LORD.

If you, my queen, or you, great prince are wrong'd,  
The king will do you justice. [Exeunt LORDS.]

CONRADE.

Canting traitors!  
They go to join our foe, and swell his power:

N 4

This





This shrub of one day's growth, this idol regent  
Attracts their ready worship.

QUEEN.

Let them go.

Now by the burning rage that drinks my blood  
The fools spoke true: the king shall do us justice.

CONRADE.

Elmerick,  
His influence—

QUEEN.

We will accuse him first.

The king has not yet reach'd Alba-Regalis,  
You soon will overtake him. What you saw  
Of Elmerick's base purpose strongly urg'd,  
Join'd with the earnest letters I shall write,  
Will so alarm and prepossess the king,  
That all complaints of their Ismena's sufferings  
Will be regarded as an after feint,  
A mean device to screen her guilty lord.  
What are your thoughts?

CONRADE.

That thou wast born to triumph,  
This traitor, when unmask'd, shall fall unpitied  
By all mankind, and hated by Ismena.

QUEEN.

Still your Ismena!

CONRADE.

O my best Matilda!

The hopes that freed by death from her false husband,  
And of his crimes convinced, she then may deign  
To bless my vows, and share my future throne,  
Are more than safety, life, or vengeance to me.  
My blind impetuous passion once desist'd

Those charms alone which violence cou'd gain;  
 But now the avarice of love aspires  
 To mutual bliss, and more refin'd disdains  
 Th' imperfect pleasure which her will deny'd.

QUEEN.

She may be wholly and for ever your's.  
 You mark'd with how much care the cautious fire  
 Preserv'd the secret of his daughter's wrongs.

CONRADE.

Oh may I live to make her reparation  
 By gentlest love for wrongs which now my soul  
 Detests, and sickens at the vile remembrance.

QUEEN.

Live and be bless'd. I do not hate Ismena:  
 Cut off, that source of both our wrongs, her husband,  
 And my tormenting thirst of vengeance ceases.

CONRADE.

Prepare your letters. I'll be instant ready.

[Exit CONRADE.]

QUEEN.

Yes, I will humble that exalted mien,  
 And teach this new made regent's pride submission.  
 He is secure, and let him be so still;  
 Till my revenge, a slighted queen's revenge,  
 Burst forth, and blast him with unthought of ruin.

[Exit QUEEN.]

SCENE





## S C E N E II.

ISMENA'S Apartment.

*Enter ELMERICK running to embrace her.*

E L M E R I C K.

Thou hast too long been absent, my Ismena!  
 A thousand anxious cares have fill'd my heart  
 Since I beheld thee last. But thou art found,  
 Who ne'er appear'd to my desiring eyes  
 But peace and comfort and delight came with thee.  
 O take me to thy arms, and quite extinguish  
 The memory of pain.

I S M E N A.

O misery!

*[Refusing to embrace him.]*

Unequal'd misery! I am excluded  
 For ever from those arms.

E L M E R I C K.

All-gracious heaven!  
 What mean these broken thoughts, this lab'ring  
 anguish,  
 My soul, thou sum of all my joys, my wife!

I S M E N A.

Thou hast no wife.

E L M E R I C K.

Distraction!

I S M E N A.

I'm a wretch  
 Without a name, and fain wou'd quit my being.

E L M E R I C K.

Protect me, heaven! Ismena! what dire thought  
 Shakes thy sweet soul with such tempestuous agony!  
 What ill so sudden, since we parted last,  
 Preventing

Preventing e'en my fears, has burst upon thee?  
Say, tell me —

I S M E N A.

No, I cannot, dare not tell you:  
You cannot bear it. Though I ne'er conceal'd  
A thought before, I must be silent now.

E L M E R I C K.

What can this mean? and yet I dread to know —  
Perhaps the envious queen has wrong'd my truth,  
Can you suspect my love?

I S M E N A.

You love too well:  
O that 'twere in your power to love me less!

E L M E R I C K.

Nay, then I'm lost indeed — pronounce my doom;  
But let me hear it folded in thy arms.

I S M E N A.

Avoid me, fly, and think of me no more.

E L M E R I C K.

What! shun my arms, Imena!

I S M E N A.

There's my misery  
I must for ever shun 'em — Now, my father,  
Where is your prudence? must I seem a monster,  
Ungrateful, false to Elmerick; or bring  
— Detested thought — pollution to his arms?

E L M E R I C K.

Pollution! madness!

I S M E N A.

I have been betray'd,  
Basely betray'd to infamy and ruin,  
Render'd unworthy of thy chaste embraces.

That



That execrable fiend, that monster Conrade  
Has robb'd me of my honour.

ELMERICK.

Hear me, heaven!  
Let not this whirlwind of o'erwhelming passion  
Tear up my being — let me live whole ages  
Though raging with despair, rather than die  
And leave her unreveng'd.

ISMENA.

Had not religion  
Withheld my hand, whose law forbids self-murder,  
(That short and easy cure for shame and anguish)  
These sorrows ne'er had reach'd you.

ELMERICK.

Talk not thus,  
Talk not of dying; thou art innocent,  
Thy mind unfain'd; thy wrongs shall be reveng'd,  
And thou still blest my days.

ISMENA.

It cannot be:  
My power to bless is lost. I am the blot,  
The only blot of Elmerick's fair honour.—  
O! why was it committed to the charge  
Of one so heedless, so improvident,  
Guardian unworthy of a trust so noble?

ELMERICK.

O my Ismena!

ISMENA.

O my dearest lord!  
Alas you weep—I cannot bear your tears,  
They melt my firmest purpose — but farewell—  
One last embrace, as on a dying friend,  
It will not stain your glory to bestow  
On your undone Ismena—

ELMERICK.

## E L M E R I C K.

To my bosom

With tenderer fondness did I never press thee.  
Here rest, my love, awhile, and lose thy woes.

## I S M E N A.

The greatness of my woes will make 'em short :  
I feel my vital powers decay apace.  
To part with thee, was all that e'er appear'd  
Dreadful to me in death—that's past already—  
And all to come is ease and soft repose.  
When I'm no more, remember, Elmerick,  
My reverend father ; comfort and support him  
The best you can : my loss will touch him nearly.  
I see you burn for vengeance, but beware ;  
The cruel, treach'rous queen conspir'd with Conrade.

## E L M E R I C K.

Alike remote from rashness and from fear,  
I'll trace this hellish mystery to its source,  
And deal to each, with an inflexible  
And equal hand, the portion they deserve :  
I'll weigh it as the action of my life  
That must give name and value to the whole ;  
And raise a monument to thee and justice  
Shall strike exalted wickedness with terror,  
And freeze the boiling blood of future Conrades.  
Farewell, be patient, and expect th' event.

[Exeunt.]

A C T





## A C T V.

## S C E N E I.

Q U E E N.

**T**O recollect and judge our actions past,  
 May yield instruction I approve my caution,  
 And bless the fortune that conceal'd my weakness  
 For the proud regent, even from my brother.  
 My seeming innocence preserves respect,  
 And gives him life and vigour to pursue  
 My daring scheme to crush the man I hate.  
 Shou'd it succeed, secure from all reproach,  
 Life may be worth my care.

*Enter ZENOMIRA.*

I had forgot—  
 This woman knows too much—her lover too—  
 They may be dangerous—that too shou'd be thought  
 on,  
 And shall be so hereafter—What's your business?

Z E N O M I R A.

Madam, the regent asks to be admitted.

Q U E E N.

Why shou'd I be alarm'd?—No, 'tis not fear  
 That gives this sudden sickness to my heart:  
 'This tremor, these convulsive starts proceed  
 From strong aversion only—I contemn him. [*Apart.*  
 Yes, let him enter. [*Exit ZENOMIRA.*

I'll enjoy his anguish  
 Safe in my sex and dignity, I'll tell him,  
 That 'tis my pride and glory to have made him  
 The very wretch he is.

*Enter*

Enter ELMERICK and ZENOMIRA.

ZENOMIRA.

Madam, the regent—

ELMERICK.

I've orders, madam, from your lord and mine  
Fit only for your ear.

QUEEN.

What gloomy grandeur he assumes!  
What insolent tranquillity he bears!  
You may withdraw. [Exit ZENOMIRA.]

ELMERICK.

I hear, Conrade is fled.

QUEEN.

You've bad intelligence, the state must suffer  
While you're no better serv'd: he scorns to fly,  
And will confront you soon.

ELMERICK.

Till then, let guilt  
And fear attend, and keep the villain waking.

QUEEN.

You come to rail: begin, I stand collected,  
Nay, will assist you. You refus'd my love,  
And in my turn, I have undone Ismena.

ELMERICK.

You do confess it then?

QUEEN.

I glory in it.  
To wound you where I knew you most secure,  
To taint your heaven, to curse you in Ismena,  
Was my contrivance: Conrade's desperate passion,  
Subservient to my vengeance, wrought her ruin.

ELMERICK.



E L M E R I C K.

This I had charg'd you with; but, self-convicted,  
My pains are spar'd, and here your process ends.

[*A pause.*  
Thou awful power, whose bright tremendous sword  
Rules heaven and earth, while hell resists in vain,  
Inexorably firm, eternal justice;  
Fearless I offer up this high delinquent  
To you and to Ismena: deign t' accept  
No common sacrifice, and may it prove  
A solemn lesson and a dreadful warning  
T'instruct and to alarm a guilty world.

Q U E E N.

Dost thou presume, the subject of our throne,  
To menace me with justice?

E L M E R I C K.

You're no sovereign,  
Your king's authority resides in me.

Q U E E N.

Not to assassinate his queen. Help. Treason. [*Calls.*

E L M E R I C K.

Cease your vain clamour, and prepare to die:  
I've taken measures not to be prevented.

Q U E E N.

Traitor, think who I am, respect my rank.

E L M E R I C K.

That you shou'd have respected.  
The blackest aggravation of your guilt  
Is from your rank, and other benefits  
Receiv'd from heaven: not to have done much good.  
With your advantages, forfeits them all,  
And leaves you debtor to a vast account;  
But their abuse

Q U E E N.

Q U E E N.

And who shall judge of that?

E L M E R I C K.

All may, and must, who feel and suffer by it;  
 But I've a double right to judge and punish.  
 The ignominy of a bar and scaffold,  
 Which our strict laws, and your high crimes demand;  
 For the king's honour, here I take upon me  
 At my own peril to remit, and make  
 Myself your only judge, and this your scaffold.  
 If you've not sin'd beyond the hopes of pardon,  
 But wou'd in pray'r and penitential tears  
 Employ a few short moments, they are yours —  
 The utmost of my mercy.

Q U E E N.

So determin'd!

The king's arrival yet wou'd change our fates.

[*Aside.*]

Cruel man!

Blame your own scorn for what I've rashly done,  
 And let us now exchange mutual forgiveness.

[*Weeps.*]

E L M E R I C K.

I have not gone thus far without consulting  
 Reason and justice, with the extent and end  
 Of that great power and trust impos'd upon me:  
 No, had the wrong you've basely done my wife,  
 Been done the meanest peasant's wife in Hungary,  
 Nor rank, nor vain intreaties shou'd protect you.

Q U E E N.

Conrade is gone t' accuse you to the king —  
 You know how well the strong appearance won  
 My brother's credit to th' imputed crime;  
 My death wou'd be so full a confirmation

V O L. II.

O

Of





Of all I charg'd you with, that certain ruin,  
And everlasting infamy, must follow.

ELMERICK.

And do you thus atone for your offences?  
Is this the use you make of my indulgence,  
To boast new crimes?

QUEEN.

To warn you of your danger.  
I tell you once again, you dare not kill me.

ELMERICK.

I dare not let you live, for that's injustice,  
The only thing I fear: and had you fear'd it,  
You had been safe and happy. Enter now  
Ye ministers of justice: do your office.

*Enter the Executioners. While they prepare to strangle her, she speaks.*

QUEEN.

Is there no help then? must I fall his victim?—  
Almighty power, who gav'it me my existence,  
And with it strong affections and aversions,  
Why hast thou dealt so very hardly with me?  
If you have mercy— [*They pull her into the recess in the  
back scene and strangle her.*]

ELMERICK.

O let her life atone for all its errors!—  
Thus I supply the interrupted pray'r  
That death breaks off, and may it find acceptance!  
The fiercest anger in the human mind  
Shou'd reach but to the grave.—Belus.

*Enter BELUS.*

BELUS.

What is your pleasure?

My lord,

ELMERICK.

E L M E R I C K.

We must seek the king.

B E L U S.

'My lady's father, and th' assembled peers —

E L M E R I C K.

'Tis true, I had forgot. Behold within there.

[*Pointing to the recess in the back scene.*]

B E L U S.

Alas! my lord! — [*Seeing the Queen.*]

E L M E R I C K.

At what are you surpriz'd?

B E L U S.

The queen is dead!

E L M E R I C K.

She is, and by my sentence.

Have I done ought unjust?

B E L U S.

I dare not say it,

Yet stand astonish'd at the rigorous deed.

E L M E R I C K.

So do not I that wickedness abounds,  
When justice is a wonder. Seek the peers,  
And bring 'em to behold what thou hast seen.

B E L U S.

You wou'd not have this known?

E L M E R I C K.

Not have it known!

The business of my life is to proclaim it.

[*Exit BELUS.*]

O thou impartial, universal power,  
Wise nature's eldest law, wrote by herself

O z

Upon



Upon the heart of man, eternal justice;  
 Inspir'd by thee, with one determin'd blow,  
 I have redrest my poor Ismena's wrongs,  
 (As far as wrongs like her's can be redrest'd)  
 And wip'd dishonour from my house and name:  
 And now if I am call'd to be thy martyr,  
 My race will end with glory.

*Enter BATHORI and Lords.*

BATHORI.

I have declar'd  
 To these right noble lords, as you commanded,  
 The queen and Conrade's most inhuman guilt.

ELMERICK.

Then judge, my lords, whether this dreadful act  
 Merits reproach or praise. [*Pointing to the queen.*]

FIRST LORD.

Speak he that can.

SECOND LORD.

Astonishingly bold—

THIRD LORD.

But righteous vengeance:  
 Unprecedented justice!

BATHORI.

Yes, this transcends example. Gracious heaven!  
 May I but live to see her brother thus!—

FIRST LORD.

Sir, your interest  
 May make you partial: not that we condemn  
 Or justify the regent: to the king  
 We must refer his sentence.

ELMERICK.

ELMERICK.

'Tis but just.

And so may heaven deal with my soul hereafter,  
When I shall stand at that all-seeing bar;  
As I will render up a strict account,  
Urge to the king himself his queen's misdoing,  
And seek my judge with his wife's blood upon me.

FIRST LORD.

Heard you that trumpet? [*Flourish of Trumpets.*]

SECOND LORD.

See, the king appears.

*Enter KING, CONRADE, and Attendants.*

KING.

Where is this patriot who defies all law,  
And uses our authority for treason?  
I ask for Elmerick.

ELMERICK.

Your loyal subject,

The palatine and regent of your kingdom,  
Who bears that name, is here.

KING.

Doth not the presence of thy king confound thee?

ELMERICK.

I burnt with strong impatience till I saw him.

KING.

Where is Matilda? go and call the queen:  
Let her appear, and strike the traitor dumb.  
—What means this gloomy silence? are you motion-  
less?

Why am I not obey'd?

O 3

ELMERICK.





E L M E R I C K.

I pray, give back—  
Behold, unhappy king, to what my justice  
Has brought thy guilty queen.

K I N G.

Heavenly powers!  
Matilda! am I come, though on the wings  
Of love, too late to save thee?

*[Runs to the body in the recess.]*

C O N R A D E.

O my sister!  
Are these our promis'd joys? is this our triumph?

E L M E R I C K.

Suspend the husband, and exert the king.

K I N G.

Inhuman wretch! I will exert the king,  
And give new majesty and double terror  
To that important name, for thy destruction.

E L M E R I C K.

Sir, I resign my life without reluctance;  
Take, if you please, my head. But know, your fame  
Is in the balance, and your conduct now  
Must fix your character to all posterity;  
Must place you in the list of lawless tyrants,  
Or kings, whose virtue dignify'd the office,  
And honour'd human nature. If you think  
The abject fear of death, not a regard  
To your yet spotless virtue and renown,  
Inspires my tongue, you've my compassion, sir.  
Monarchs are men—P've said—and use your pleasure.

K I N G.

I thought I knew thee well: hence my amazement  
Is equal to my grief and indignation.

Had'st

Had'st thou the tongue of angels, cou'dst thou hope  
To clear thyself of my Matilda's death?

E L M E R I C K.

Nor was it e'er my purpose to attempt it;  
But I've a right to justify myself  
If innocent, and to be heard with patience.  
But if thro' passionate and blind prevention  
You do refuse to hear, I had rather die  
Than bear the unavailing name of palatine,  
First guardian of the rights of freeborn Hungary,  
And live a witness to an innovation  
So fatal to my country.

K I N G.

Thou hast touch'd  
My inmost soul. I'd rather thou shoud'st 'scape,  
Than fix a precedent which may be urg'd  
Hereafter, to suppress the voice of truth;  
Lose the benignant character of king,  
And change my glories for a tyrant's shame.  
You shall be heard: A feat - O my Matilda  
Forgive this short delay. Let the rash man,  
Endeavouring to defend, convict himself,  
And fall the more abhorr'd.

E L M E R I C K.

You may remember, sir,  
When you appointed me your substitute,  
You did pronounce, in presence of your states,  
The worst abuse of law and all just power,  
Is when the great offend and pass unpunish'd.  
This you injoin'd me strongly not to suffer,  
Nor bear the sword in vain. You've been obey'd -  
The queen transgress'd - and I have done my duty.

K I N G.

Your duty, sir! dare you affirm the queen -

O 4

E L M E R I C K.





## E L M E R I C K.

Deserv'd the death I gave her. Hear me out.  
 If, with deep fore-thought and delib'rate malice,  
 To plot and to effect a matron's ruin,  
 To give her up to a lewd spoiler's rage,  
 By laws divine and human, be pronounc'd  
 A crime deserving death, the guilty queen  
 Drew on herself the justice I inflict.  
 Her wicked agent Conrade, her vile brother,  
 Who stain'd the purity of my Ismena,  
 Is left to prove your justice. [KING rises.

K I N G.

Can it be!

Thy lovely, chaste Ismena!

E L M E R I C K.

She, my wife.

Lovely she was, and chaste; and not less worthy  
 That just regard the meanest may pretend to,  
 I trust, for being mine.

C O N R A D E.

Evasive traitor!

Say for what cause, with impious profanation,  
 You dar'd attempt your master's sacred bed;  
 And I may deign to answer to your charge.

K I N G.

Is this the court of Buda? this vile stage  
 Of lewdness, death, and black recrimination?  
 Of what a sudden growth is rank corruption?  
 That, during my short absence, hath infested  
 My house and throne, those I most lov'd and trusted.  
 —But bring the clearest proof of this foul charge  
 Against my queen and brother, or expect  
 The self-same mercy thou hast shewn to her:

2

Whom,

Whom, if thy accusation be unjust,  
Thou'lt basely murder'd twice.

E L M E R I C K.

I have the strongest proofs,  
My wife's accusing tears, who cou'd not forge  
To her own ruin and to my dishonour  
A tale so full of shame. But more, the queen,  
The queen herself, triumphant in her malice,  
Confess'd it to my face and glory'd in it.

K I N G.

And will Ismena vouch it?—I think highly  
Of your wife's truth;—so did I of Matilda's—  
I'll not condemn her on a single witness:  
Ismena is but one, thy word is nothing.

E L M E R I C K.

I have yet farther proofs. Peruse this scroll,  
[*Giving the king a paper.*  
This full avowal of the hellish deed,  
Witness'd by these who both were actors in it,  
[*Pointing to BELUS and ZENOMIRA.*  
Without designing ill, which I produce  
With strong reluctance, as it speaks a weakness  
Of the lost queen, which I wou'd fain conceal.

K I N G.

Why shou'd I tremble thus? let truth appear,  
And shame light where it will. Madness and death!  
[*Reads.*

Confess a guilty passion for the regent! —  
Can these things be!—that dignity of spirit,  
That high demeanour stoop to such dishonour! —  
How shall I credit—what I can't reject?  
How root out fixt ideas from a heart  
Matilda fill'd, and bend it to conviction? —

O Elmerick!





202 E L M E R I C K.

O Elmerick! I see the pois'nous source  
Of our united woes.

E L M E R I C K.

Her will refus'd,  
She offer'd at her life---

C O N R A D E.

This claims attention. [*Aside.*]

E L M E R I C K.

Which while I strove to save, her brother enter'd;  
And, by her art deceiv'd, attempted mine:  
The rest that paper speaks.

C O N R A D E.

Too fatal truth!  
'Twas gallant in him then not to accuse her.  
I see my fate, and am prepar'd to meet it. [*Aside.*]

K I N G.

You do acknowledge, and confirm for truth  
All that is here contain'd? [*To BEL. and ZEN.*]

B O T H.

So heaven deal with us.

K I N G.

'Tis all too plain: her lawless love, fierce malice,  
Conrade's foul rage, and poor Ismena's ruin—  
To find her guilty, is to find her hateful:  
And I wou'd hate—what once I dearly lov'd.  
No blood - but tears, and those too weakly shed,  
Must stream o'er thy dishonourable hearse,  
Unhappy, false Matilda!— but no more. —  
I will dismiss this weak unworthy softness.  
Let Elmerick go weep. — Ismena's wrongs  
May call forth tears that manhood may be proud of,  
To weep Ismena is to feel for virtue.

How



How is it with her sorrows? from this hour  
My tenderest care shall be to give them comfort.

E L M E R I C K.

I fear her sorrows ne'er will taste of comfort.  
But see, the messenger I sent returns.

*Enter* M E S S E N G E R.

M E S S E N G E R.

I come, my lord ———

E L M E R I C K.

Be brief: how fares my wife?

M E S S E N G E R.

As angels fare,  
With whom she now inhabits. When you sent me,  
I found her in the arms of her attendants —  
Fainting she seem'd — but when I told my message  
She rais'd her head, and lifting up her eyes,  
'Till then just clos'd, propitious heaven! she cried,  
Defend this noblest pattern of your justice,  
Nor let his matchless love go unrewarded.  
Then with an heavenly smile address me thus. —  
Assure my lord I die without reluctance.  
My soul, that melts with gratitude, presages  
Unequal'd blessings shall attend him here,  
While I enjoy — and then her speech forsook her,  
And she, without one painful sigh, expir'd.

K I N G.

Too sure a testimony hast thou given  
Of thy foul wrongs, Ifmena — Elmerick! —  
Quite speechless and o'erwhelm'd! — her father too!  
Turn not away — I do not offer comfort —  
I mean but to mourn with you.

E L M E R I C K.





## ELMERICK.

So to die! —

Her delicately chaste and heavenly soul  
 Forsook its earthly temple when profan'd  
 Without the steel or poison's lawless aid —  
 And lives the man who wrong'd me in Ismena?  
 Hear then, O righteous king, my high appeal  
 To thee, and to the law of warlike Hungary.  
 Give me to meet this impious prince in battle;  
 There, in the crowded hills, dread scene of justice,  
 There only can I sue for retribution,  
 Wrong'd as I am, without a soldier's shame.  
 And thou, Ismena, from thy fainted seat,  
 Where high thou sit'st crown'd with the starry wreaths  
 That angels weave for purity like thine,  
 Look down propitious on me, and accept  
 This high, this second sacrifice of vengeance.

## CONRADE.

Then I have murder'd thee, ador'd Ismena.  
 These mourn thy fate with tears, but what's the sorrow

That streaming eyes can utter and relieve!  
 Though thou disdain'st my grief, yet learn this truth

[Turning to ELMERICK,  
 From him thou most abhor'st: — the innocent  
 Are not the fittest objects of compassion:  
 O there's no pain, no misery like guilt —  
 Nor do I fall thy sacrifice, for know,  
 Had I been plac'd above the power of vengeance;  
 Ismena's fate, th' effect of my rash love,  
 Had been lamented thus, and thus reveng'd —

[Stabs himself.]

## KING.

This is t'atone one error by another.

## CONRADE

## CONRADE.

Nothing but error: I was born to err:  
 The willing slave of every youthful passion.  
 'Tis now too late to learn — my day is past —  
 'Tis night — Ismena — oh! [Dis.]

## E L M E R I C K.

Unerring power! whose deep and secret counsels  
 No finite mind can fathom and explore;  
 It must be just to leave your creatures free,  
 And wise to suffer what you most abhor:  
 Supreme and absolute of these your ways  
 You render no account — we ask for none.  
 For mercy, truth, and righteous retribution  
 Attend at length your high and awful throne.  
 Ismena is aveng'd — let me be wretched!

## K I N G.

Our sorrows must be felt. Yet, O! brave Elmerick,  
 Let not the publick suffer! thou'st done greatly.  
 Still hold the sov'reign power till I return  
 From Jordan's sacred stream and holy Sion;  
 My substitute till then, my friend for ever.  
 The face of justice as she shines in heaven,  
 In native purity, unclouded splendor,  
 Alone can charm beyond thy virtuous daring.  
 That be thy praise — that I approve it mine.

T H E E N D.





# E P I L O G U E.

Spoken by MR. MILWARD.

*YOU, who supreme o'er ev'ry work of wit,  
 In judgement here unaw'd, unbiass'd sit,  
 The palatines and guardians of the pit;  
 If to your minds this merely-modern play,  
 No useful sense, no gen'rous warmth convey;  
 If fustian here, thro' each unnat'ral scene,  
 In strain'd conceits sound high, and nothing mean;  
 If lofty dulness for your vengeance call;  
 Like Elmerick judge, and let the guilty fall.  
 But if simplicity, with force and fire,  
 Unlabour'd thoughts and artless words inspire;  
 If, like the action which these scenes relate,  
 The whole appear irregularly great;  
 If master strokes the nobler passions move,  
 Then, like the king, acquit us, and approve.*