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

Containing, *Silvia; or, The Country Burial. A Ballad Opera.* *George Barnwell, A Tragedy.* *The Life of Scanderbeg.* And *The Christian Hero, A Tragedy*

Lillo, George

London, 1775

The Christian Hero.

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THE
CHRISTIAN HERO.

ACT I. SCENE I.

A Royal Pavilion. HELLENA on a Sofa in a melancholy Posture. CLEORA attending near her. Eunuchs, Mutes, Singers and Dancers.

SONG.

The regent of night with her beams
Had chequer'd each valley and grove,
And swell'd with her influence the streams,
When Fatima, pining for love,
To the ocean, despair for her guide,
Repair'd for relief from her pain;
Where plunging, receive me, she cry'd,
I'm fair, young and royal in vain.

HELLENA rises and comes forward.

HELLENA.

NO more, Cleora! I accept thy love,
But thy officious kindness is in vain.
It is not musick, nor the sprightly dance,
The harmony of motion, or of sound,
That can assuage my grief.

CLEORA.

Let all retire.

[Exeunt Eunuchs, &c.]

How long, my royal mistress, will you sooth
This secret, pining grief? how long averse,
To ev'ry dawn of joy, thus seek retirement;

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Q

And



And shun the gay delights, the pomp and power,
That ever wait the daughter of our sultan,
And first of womankind?

HELLENA.

How long shall love
And torturing despair, like ling'ring fevers,
Feed on the springs of life and drink my blood?
How long shall Amurath, my awful father,
Tho' press'd and overwhelm'd with disappointments,
Provoke the malice of his adverse stars,
And urge his own destruction; whilst in vain
With unrelenting hatred he pursues,
Whom heav'n protects, th'ever victorious hero
Of Epirus?

CLEORA.

Thus do you always talk,
Of love and death, despair and the Epirot.
Why will you ever strive to hide the cause,
The cruel cause of all this mighty anguish?
Believe me, princess, 'tis better to intrust
A faithful slave, than keep the secret thus
To rack your breast; 'twill ease those pains——

HELLENA.

That death
Alone can cure: but yet, my best Cleora,
Such is thy truth, thy tenderness and love,
I can deny thee nought. Yes, thou shalt know
All thou desir'st, and share the very heart
Of sad Hellenia.—You must think I love.—
What else cou'd make thy princess far more wretched
Than the meanest slave, and who but Castriot
Cou'd merit so sublime a flame as mine?

CLEORA.

'Tis as I fear'd: she's lost beyond redemption. [*Aside.*

HEL-

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HELLENA.

A royal hostage to my father's court
 When young he came, who lov'd him as a son ;
 I as a brother ; so I fondly thought,
 Nor found my error, till the fatal flame,
 That now consumes me, cherish'd by my weakness,
 Was grown too great, too fierce to be controll'd.
 O matchless prince ! who can display thy worth ?
 Thou favourite of heaven, and first of men !
 In courts more soft, more lovely, more attractive
 Than those fair youths who with eternal bloom
 Enjoy the fragrant mansions of the blest ;
 In council wiser than a whole divan ;
 In anger awful ; and in war as fierce
 As those bright ministers, whom heav'n sends forth
 To punish the presuming sons of men ;
 In justice th' image of that sacred power,
 Whom he still serves with most unfeign'd devotion ;
 Like him in mercy too, in bounty like him ;
 Excelling in magnificence the princes
 Of th' East, yet temperate and self-denying
 As a Dervise.— Who know, and love thee not,
 Avow their malice and contempt of virtue.

CLEORA.

Think, princess, think what 'tis you say ; of whom
 It is you speak. Can he, that cruel christian,
 That enemy t'our prophet and your father,
 Deserve such praise from you ?

HELLENA.

Unjust Cleora !

To call him cruel — But thou know'st him not ;
 Or sure thy gentle nature wou'd abhor
 To wrong him thus. And wherefore dost thou urge
 His diff'rent faith to me ? Love biases not
 Himself with reconciling creeds, nor heeds

Q²

The



The jarrings of contentious priests : from courts
 To shades, from shades to courts he flies
 To conquer hearts, and overthrow distinction,
 Treating alike the monarch and the slave ;
 But shuns the noisy school, and leaves the race
 Of proud, litigious men to their own folly ;
 Who wise in words alone, consume their days
 In fierce debate, nor know the end of life.

C L E O R A .

Now I no longer wonder you contemn'd
 Amasie and his flame.

H E L L E N A .

O name him not,
 The most detested traitor ! who, tho' next
 In blood, and late the dearest friend of his
 Indulgent prince, without a cause renounc'd
 His faith, his country, and his vow'd allegiance.

C L E O R A .

Say not without a cause, his love to you ———

H E L L E N A .

Insolent slave ! ambitious bloody traitor !
 To claim my love for cruelty and fraud !
 Must I have been a recompence for murder !
 For regicide, the murder of his king !
 But his defeat has freed me from that danger :
 My father now retracts his former promise,
 And treats him with aversion and contempt.

C L E O R A .

May treason ever meet the like reward. ———
 But see the man we speak of comes this way.

H E L L E N A .

I wou'd avoid him, do thou hear his message ;
 His name is hateful, but whene'er I see him,

My

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My blood runs back, my sinews all relax,
And life itself seems ready to forsake me.

[Exit HELLENA.]

Enter AMASIE.

CLEORA.

What wou'd you, prince?

AMASIE.

I am inform'd the sultan
Past this way, and came in hopes to have found him
With the princefs.

CLEORA.

Your hopes deceiv'd you, Sir.

AMASIE.

May I not see

The princefs?

CLEORA.

No.

AMASIE.

I bring her happy news.

CLEORA.

Nor happinefs, nor truth can come from thee;
For ev'ry word, and ev'ry thought of thine
Are full of deep deceit, and threaten mischief.

[Exit CLEORA.]

AMASIE *alone.*

Seen and avoided!—rated by her slave!—
Suspected by the sultan!—scorn'd by all!—
Is this the gratitude of Turkish courts?
This my reward for heav'n and honour lost?—
Soul poisoning envy, eldest born of hell,
Thou sin of devils, and their torment too,
To what contempt, what mis'ry hast thou brought me?

Q 3

III



Ill-tim'd reflection!—I shall still succeed—
 Love and ambition, hatred and revenge—
 There's not a with my restless soul has form'd,
 But shall be quickly crown'd—then whence this an-
 guish?

Sure 'tis much harder to attain perfection
 In ill, than to be truly good.—The sultan!—

Enter AMURATH and VISIER.

AMURATH.

Away; my fame is lost; my laurels won
 With pain and toil, and water'd with my blood,
 That well I hop'd wou'd flourish o'er my grave
 When I that planted them thou'd be but dust,
 Are wither'd all. O! wherefore did I tempt,
 In the declining winter of my age,
 The vigour of a youthful rebel's arms?
 Whose curst success, 'gainst such prodigious odds,
 Makes credibility doubt what she sees,
 And truth appear like falsehood.

AMASIE.

Mighty sultan!—

AMURATH.

What wou'd'st thou, slave! Thou renegade, thou
 spy!
 Hence from my sight: avaunt, perfidious traitor.

VISIER.

My ever gracious lord, you wrong the prince;
 None can be more devoted to your service.

AMURATH.

'Tis false. Did he not lead my spahies forth
 With hate profess'd, and boasts of pure revenge
 On Scanderbeg; then leave my gallant troops

To

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To swell the triumph, and to glut the rage
Of that damn'd, damn'd destroyer of the faithful?

VISIÉR.

O righteous heav'n! when will thy judgments cease?
For six revolving moons have we in vain
Besieg'd yon city, proud, imperious Croia;
With famine, pestilence, and Scanderbeg
More terrible than both, like threat'ning meteors,
Hov'ring o'er our heads. Our strengths consum'd:
By painful watchings and incessant toils
Do not our numbers ev'ry hour decrease?
Are we not all devoted to destruction?
Those that escape the plague, of hunger die;
Or sav'd from famine, perish by the sword.
Yet to behold you thus, burning with rage,
And tortur'd by despair, afflicts us worse
Than all our other griefs. Why will you still refuse
The only help your present state admits,
That sov'reign balm for minds like yours diseas'd,
And cure for ev'ry ill— all healing patience?

AMURATH.

Name patience again while th' Epirot lives
And lives victorious, and thou art thyself
A base, insulting traitor. Hear me, Allah,
If thou art ought beside an empty name,
If thou dost still exist, as priests affirm,
Decree our fate, and govern all below,
Behold, and aid a cause so much your own.
To slaves, to subjects and to priests give patience,
But if it be within your power to grant
Ought that is worthy of a monarch's prayer,
Give me revenge, or I'll renounce thy worship.

[Shouts.

Ha! whence those loud, those joyful acclamations?



A M A S I E

But that it pleas'd my lord to strike me dumb,
I had ere this inform'd him of the cause.
Just heav'n, at length indulgent to your wishes,
Has blest you with the power to end our woes,
Or wreck your vengeance on the man you hate.

A M U R A T H.

Ha! what say'st thou? take heed thou triflest not:
A second time thou'st rais'd my expectation;
If thou deceiv'st it now, as at the first,
Death is the lightest ill thou hast to fear:
But if, beyond my hopes, thou tell'st me truth,
Thou shalt no longer droop beneath our frown,
(Your service slighted, and your love despis'd;)
Our former lavish grant shall be renew'd,
And my Hellena be thy rich reward.

A M A S I E *kneeling.*

Bounty immense! thus let—

A M U R A T H.

Rise, and proceed;
Make it appear that vengeance may be had;
Let it be merely possible—O Allah!
I ask no more—and leave the rest to me.

A M A S I E.

Ever invincible, you're not to learn
That Arantes, prince of Durazzo, who derives
His high descent from Charlemagne, that most
Illustrious Frank, Santon and king, has long
Approv'd himself aspiring Castriot's friend,
And firm ally. His wisdom, wealth and power
May well indear him to that haughty rebel;
But yet a tie much stronger binds their friendship:
The fair Althea, daughter to Arantes,
Beholds the youthful conqueror her slave:
Nor are his ardent vows prefer'd in vain;

With

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With conscious virtue, join'd with true affection,
 With majesty and mildness sweetly temper'd,
 The charming maid (for all who see her must
 Confess her charms,) returns his constant flame.
 This friend and mistress, the partner and hoped
 Reward of all his toils, are in your power.

A M U R A T H.

Prophet, thou'rt just; where are his conquests now?
 Anguish has left my soul to live in his.
 Perhaps ere this the news has reach'd his ears.
 His promis'd joys are come to swell my heart;
 I have 'em all, but doubled by his pain.
 Haste and inform us by what means, Amasie,
 These precious pledges came into our hands.

A M A S I E.

This morning from Durazzo they set forth,
 Slightly attended for the christian camp,
 Fearing no danger; for they knew your army
 Had been for months immur'd within these plains;
 The neighb'ring mountains being all possess'd
 By their rebellious minion's conquering troops.
 Of this inform'd, not daring to approach
 Your sacred presence, I inform'd your son,
 Your empire's second hope, the brave prince Ma-
 homet.

Strait with two thousand horse guided by me,
 Who, as a native here, best knew the route
 The little troop must take; he left the trenches:
 The foe was quickly found; tho' few in number
 They yet resisted long, and dearly sold
 Their liberty or lives: Arantes last
 Yielded himself and daughter to our power.

[Shouts.

Enter



*Enter MAHOMET, ARANTHES, ALTHEA, Lords
and Ladies in Chains.*

MAHOMET.

Long live great Amurath, my royal father ;
O may his days for ages yet roll on,
And ev'ry day encrease his fame like this !

AMURATH.

Rise to my arms ; thou bring'ft me life and fame,
And what my soul much more desir'd, revenge.
When from the womb they brought thee to these arms,
The first dear fruit of my Maria's love
And heir to all my kingdoms ; ev'n then
I clasp'd thee with less joy, than at this moment.—
But let us view the captives thou hast brought.
Now by our prophet's head, a noble troop ;
A fairer purchase never grac'd my arms.
This must be Arantes, and this his daughter.
They seem to scorn their fortune : conscious majesty
Frowns on his brow, and beauty smiles on hers.
Proud christian, now where is your prophet's power ?

ARANTHES.

Where it was ever, sultan ;—in himself.

AMURATH.

If it be such as vainly you suppose,
Why art thou fallen thus beneath my power ?
Whose eyes ne'er pitied, and whose hand ne'er spar'd
The followers of his sect.

ARANTHES.

Presumptuous man !
Shall finite knowledge tax eternal wisdom ?
Or shameless guilt dare, with invidious eyes,
To search for spots in purity itself,
And call impartial justice to account ?

2

Impious

Impious and vain! it is enough we know
Such is his will, who orders all things right,
To make ev'n these thy chains, insulting king,
Easy to us; and well content we bear 'em.

A M U R A T H.

Ill doth it suit with your reputed wisdom
T'abet a rash rebellious boy.

A R A N T H E S.

Rebellious!

By the heroic virtue of the youth,
And more th' eternal justice of our cause,
I must retort the charge. Since first the angels
By their ambition fell; the greatest rebels,
The most accurs'd, perfidious and ungrateful,
Are those, who have abus'd the sovereign power.
Why shines the sun, why do the seasons change,
The teeming earth lavish her yearly store,
And all to bless the sons of men in vain?
O! is it not that tyranny prevails,
And the true end of government is lost;
That those, who shou'd defend each in his right,
Betray their trust, and seize upon the whole?
This, this is to rebel against that power,
By which kings reign, and turn the arms of heaven
Against itself. Then take the rebel back.
A virtuous prince, the patron of mankind,
With just contempt may hear a lawless tyrant
Arraign that conduct, which condemns his own.

A M U R A T H.

'Tis hard to say whether thy insolence,
Who tho' in chains dar'st brave me to my face,
Or the unprincely meanness of thy soul,
Who wou'd by law restrain the will of kings;
Amaze me most. Let Scanderbeg and you

Like

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Like fools contend, and shed your blood in vain,
While subjects reap the harvest of your toil ;
O'ercome, that you may live the slave of slaves ;
I fight to reign, and conquer for myself.

A R A N T H E S.

A gen'rous slave wou'd scorn the abject thought,
What shou'd a king do then ?

A M U R A T H.

Think like a king,
Whose glory is his power.

A R A N T H E S.

Of doing good.

A M U R A T H.

Of doing what he will ; the other's none.

A R A N T H E S.

Has heav'n no power because it doth no ill ?

A M U R A T H.

Were these the thoughts of other christian princes,
Wou'd they stand neuter and unmov'd behold
Th' Epirot and thyself sustain this war ;
Nor lend you their assistance ?

A R A N T H E S.

Foul dishonour !

O everlasting shame ! wou'd they unite,
Afflicted Europe wou'd no longer groan
Beneath your yoke and mourn her freedom lost :
Nor Verna's nor Basilia's fatal fields
Smoke with the blood of christians unreveng'd :
But to the scandal of our holy faith,
Some such there are, who owe their very lives,
Their peace and safety to the blood of others,
Yet think themselves born for themselves alone.

A M U -

A M U R A T H.

'Tis time to quit a cause so ill supported ;
And your misfortunes may inform your friend,
What sure destruction waits the desp'rate wretch,
That tempts his wrath, who rules o'er half mankind,
And strikes the rest with terror at his name.

A R A N T H E S.

Cease thy vain boasts, and by example learn
The frail uncertain state of human greatness.
Where are now th' Assyrians, where the Medes ;
The Persians and their conquerors, the Greeks ;
Or the stupendous power of ancient Rome ?
Has not the breath of time blasted their pride,
And laid their glory waste ?

A M U R A T H.

I need not boast
T'assert my power o'er thee. And yet perhaps
On Scanderbeg's submission we may grant
Your freedom, and vouchsafe to give him peace.

A R A N T H E S.

If by submission vainly you design
Dishonourable terms, a shameful peace,
Give up such thoughts ; those his great soul must
scorn ;
Nor wou'd we be redeem'd at such a price :
Hope not to triumph over him in us.

A M U R A T H.

Where is the majesty that us'd to awe
My trembling slaves ? art thou in love with death ?

A R A N T H E S.

No ; nor with life, when purchas'd at th' expence
Of others happiness, or my own honour.

A M U-

A M U R A T H.

Behold this maid, this comfort of thy age.
 I, as a father, know what 'tis to love
 A child like this—I have been deem'd a man,
 A brave one too—The fair, sacred to peace,
 Have never yet been number'd with my foes :
 But if presumptuously thou dost dispute
 Thy own and daughter's ransom on my terms ;
 Or teach thy pupil to oppose my will,
 Renounce me, heav'n, if like thy bloody priests,
 Those consecrated murderers of thy sect,
 I cast not off all bowels of compassion,
 All pity, all remorse—Her tender sex,
 Her youth, her blooming beauty shall not save her.
 Away ; I'll hear no more. Prudence may yet
 Instruct you to avoid th'impending ruin.
 Amasie, we commit him to your charge.

A L T H E A.

O my father ! tho' torn from your embraces,
 Your precepts, your example shall be ever
 Present with Althea ; in doubts my guide,
 In troubles my support.

A R A N T H E S.

This wounds indeed.
 'Tis hard to part and leave her thus expos'd ;
 But heav'n must be obey'd. [*Aside.*] Farewell my child !
 Tho' reason and religion teach us patience,
 Pain will be felt and nature have her course. [*Aside.*]
 [*Exit* A R A N T H E S.

A M U R A T H.

Mourn not, bright maid ; you can have nought to fear :
 A father and a lover rule your fate.

A L T H E A.

ALTHEA.

I see and scorn your arts, infidious king :
 And for your threats, pursue 'em when you dare ;
 Your pride to see your cruelty despis'd,
 Shall give you greater pain than you inflict,
 And turn your rage to shame. O prince below'd !
 O my affianc'd lord ! let not my danger
 One moment stop the progress of your arms :
 I have my wish if dying I may share
 In your renown, and justify your choice.

AMURATH.

Osmin, attend the lady to Hellena.

[*Exeunt* AMURATH, &c.

VISIÉR.

Fair princess, you shall know no more restraint
 Than what is common to the sex with us.

ALTHEA.

Lead me to instant death, or let me groan
 Whole years in chains—dispose me as you please—
 Tho' my lov'd sire and lord no more I see,
 You hope in vain to conquer them in me.



ACT

A C T II.

S C E N E I.

*A Plain the whole Length of the Stage. One Side lined
with Christian, the other with Turkish Soldiers.*

VISI ER AND PAULINUS.

VISI ER.

ALREADY has the trumpet's lofty sound
From either camp twice echo'd thro' the plain;
At the third summons both the kings appear.
May gracious heaven, in pity to mankind,
Incline their breasts to sheath the sword, to stop
The tide of blood, and give the world repose.

PAULINUS.

What may we not expect from such a treaty?
And yet the caution us'd on either side
To guard against surprize, betrays distrust.

VISI ER.

A thousand injuries, suppos'd or real,
With keen resentment whet each jealous chief,
And seem to urge suspicion.

PAULINUS.

Scipio,

And the fierce African, whom he subdu'd,
With greater ardor never strove to attain
For Rome, or Carthage, universal sway;
Than your great sultan to impose the yoke
Of arbitrary power and make men slaves;
Or our brave prince to guard their liberties,
Or break their chains and purchase freedom for 'em.

VISI ER.

VISI ER.

Then their known zeal for their respective faith
Must yet much farther alienate their minds.

PAULINUS.

'Tis hardly to be thought a youthful hero,
With victories replete, will stoop to take
Abject conditions from a beaten foe.

VISI ER.

Or that an artful prince will fail t'improve
Ev'ry advantage to increase his power.

PAULINUS.

Fortune stands neuter, and impartial heaven
Holds with an equal hand the trembling beam :
Superior wisdom, fortitude, and courage
Must turn the scale (*Trumpets.*) But see their guards
appear.

The great intelligencies that inform
The planetary worlds, if such there be,
With all their vast experience might attend
This interview, and pass improv'd away.

Enter AMURATH, SCANDERBEG, MAHOMET,
ARANTHES, AMASIE, &c.

AMURATH.

Doth it not swell thy fond, ambitious heart ?
Dost thou not burst with pride, vain boy, to see
The majesty of hoary Amurath,
Whose numerous years are fewer than his conquests,
Reduc'd to terms, and stoop to treat with thee ?

SCANDERBEG.

With gratitude and wonder I confess
Myself th' unworthy instrument of heaven,
To scourge thy falshood, cruelty and pride,

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R

And



And free a virtuous people from thy chains.
 With pity I behold your fierce impatience,
 Your arrogance and scorn; ev'n while the hand
 Of righteous heaven is heavy on thy crimes,
 And deals thee forth a portion of those woes,
 Which thy relentless heart, with lawless lust
 And never sated avarice of power,
 Has spread o'er half the habitable earth.

A M U R A T H.

And must I answer to thy bold impeachment?
 Thou infidel relaps'd! thou very christian!
 Without distinction and without a name
 But what implies thy guilt. In vain thy flatt'ers
 Proclaim thee king of Macedon, Epirus,
 Illyria, Albania and Dalmatia;
 Gain'd by surprize, by treachery and fraud;
 What art thou but the more exalted traitor?

S C A N D E R B E G.

Let abject minds, the slaves of mean ambition,
 Affect vain titles and external pomp!
 And take the shadow for substantial glory.
 Superior birth, unmerited success,
 The name of prince, of conqueror and king,
 Are gifts of fortune and of little worth.
 They may be, and too often are, possess'd
 By sordid souls who know no joy but wealth;
 By riotous fools, or tyrants drench'd in blood;
 A Cræsus, Alexander, or a Nero.
 The best are sure the greatest of mankind.
 Our actions form our characters. Let me
 Approve myself a christian and a foldier,
 And flatt'ry cannot add, or envy take
 Ought that I wish to have, or fear to lose.

A M U -

A M U R A T H.

Canst thou behold unmov'd, thou steady traitor,
 Thy most munificent and loving patron,
 Prest with the weight of more than fourscore years,
 With feeble hands compell'd to reassume
 The stubborn reins of power, and taste again,
 When appetite is pall'd, the bitter sweets
 Of sovereign command? shou'd I descend
 To reason with thee, what cou'dst thou reply?
 Have I not been a father to thy youth?
 Did I not early form thy mind to greatness,
 And teach thy infant hands the use of arms?
 Tho' the unerring maxims of our state
 (The only rule of right and wrong in courts)
 Had mark'd thee for destruction; still I spar'd thee.
 Trusted, belov'd, advanc'd thou hast betray'd me:
 First seiz'd the provinces you call'd your own,
 Then join'd my foes to rob me of my fame;
 The perjur'd Uladislaus, fierce Hunniades,
 And the Venetians, who have since forsook thee.
 Tho' to remote Magnesia I retir'd,
 Quitting the toils of empire to my son,
 To seek for rest and find a peaceful grave;
 Yet there the cries and clamours of my slaves,
 Who fled the terrors of thy dreadful name,
 Forbad their old o'erlabour'd king repose;
 Forc'd me once more in hostile steel to clothe
 These weary limbs, and rouse to their defence.
 But that thy soul is lost to all remorse,
 Thy black ingratitude must fright thyself.

S C A N D E R B E G.

Can all your kingdoms bribe the voice of truth?
 Which, while you speak, pleads for me in your breast;
 Or rage efface the mem'ry of your guilt,
 More than ten thousand witnesses against thee?

R 2

But



But slander, like the loathsome leper's breath,
 Infects the healthful with its poisonous steams,
 Unless repell'd, and bids me guard my fame.
 My ancestors for ages fill'd this throne,
 A brave, a virtuous, legal race of princes.
 No arbitrary tyrants; the same laws,
 That made them kings, declar'd their people free.
 My royal father, fam'd for his success
 In war and love of peace, had govern'd long;
 When with resistless force your conquering troops
 Pour'd like a deluge o'er the realms of Greece:
 To save his people from impending ruin,
 At your request, the pious gen'rous prince
 Gave up his sons as hostages of peace.
 He died—the best of kings and men. O Castriot!
 I were unworthy of thy race and name
 Cou'd I unmov'd remember thou'rt no more——
 I wou'd have said, he died in firm reliance
 On your promise given, your faith and honour;
 But sure the memory of such a loss
 May well o'er-bear, and drive me from my purpose.
 'Twas then in scorn of ev'ry obligation,
 Of truth and justice, gratitude and honour,
 Of noblest trust and confidence repos'd:
 You like a lawless, most perfidious tyrant,
 Amidst her griefs, seiz'd on his widow'd kingdom:
 And to secure your lawless acquisition——
 Oh! how shall I proceed!—My bleeding heart
 Is pierc'd anew, new horrors wound my soul
 At every pause; whenever I rehearse,
 Whene'er I think upon thy monstrous crimes—
 O Repossio! Staniffa! Constantine!
 My slaughter'd brothers, whose dear blood still cries
 Aloud to heaven---your wrongs shall find redress.
 Justice defer'd deals forth the heavier blow.



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A M U R A T H.

Shall the great monarchs of our sublime race
Cut off their brothers, when they mount the
throne,

Yet spare the lives of christians they suspect ?
Their death was wise, and I approve it yet,
But curse my folly that preserv'd thy life.

S C A N D E R B E G.

What was then my life ? debarr'd of my right,
And kept t'augment the number of your slaves.
The only benefit you e'er confer'd,
Was that you train'd me to the use of arms :
You had my service and was overpaid ;
Yet those whom I oppos'd were, like yourself,
Tyrants, who made a merchandize of men ;
And propagate religion by the sword.
Ever determin'd not to stain my hands
With christian blood, when you commanded me
To turn my arms against th' Hungarian king,
I purpos'd from that hour, by heaven's assistance,
At once t'avoid the guilt and free my country.

A M U R A T H.

O traitor ! dost thou glory in thy shame ?
Think not I have forgot thy vile declension.
Yes, on that fatal, that detested day,
When deep Moravia's waves, dyed with the blood
Of forty thousand of my faithful slaves,
Losing their azure, flow'd in purple tides ;
Too well I know, thou didst forsake thy charge ;
And ere the news of thy revolt arriv'd,
Surpriz'd my bassa that commanded here ;
Drove out my garrisons, and ravish'd from me
This fair and fertile kingdom.



SCANDERBEG.

False asperſion!
 The charge impos'd was ne'er accepted by me.
 I arm'd my ſubjects for their common rights;
 The love of liberty, that fired their ſouls,
 That made them worthy, crown'd them with ſucceſs.
 I did my duty——'Twas but what I ow'd
 To heaven, an injur'd people and myſelf.

AMURATH.

You will be juſtified in all that's paſt:
 But I ſhall bend thy ſtubborn temper yet.
 I know the worth of thoſe dear pledges now
 Within my power. Thou know'ſt me too--then think,
 And yield in time, while mercy may be had.

SCANDERBEG.

I know your mercy by my brother's fate.

AMURATH.

Then you may judge the future by the paſt.

SCANDERBEG.

Tho' pity be a ſtranger to your breaſt,
 Your preſent dangerous ſtate may teach you fear.

AMURATH.

Danger and I have been acquainted long;
 Full oft I've met her in the bloody field,
 And drove her back with terror on my foes:
 Your other phantom, fear, I know her not;
 Or in thy viſage I behold her now.

SCANDERBEG.

I fear not for myſelf.

AMURATH.

Yet ſtill thou fear'ſt.
 Confeſs thyſelf ſubdu'd and ſue for favour.

SCAN=

THE CHRISTIAN HERO. 247

SCANDERBEG.

When I submit to guilt, I'll own your conquest.

AMURATH.

Think on your friends.

SCANDERBEG.

Afflictions are no crimes.

AMURATH.

You wou'd redeem them!

SCANDERBEG.

Yes; on any terms,

That honour may permit, and justice warrant.

AMURATH.

Hear the conditions then.

SCANDERBEG.

Why sinks my heart?

Why do I tremble thus? when at the head
Of almost twice a hundred thousand souls
I with a hundred charg'd this fierce old chief,
Thou art my witness, heaven, I fear'd him not.

[*Aside.*]

AMURATH.

When I look back on what you were before
Your late revolt, charm'd with the pleasing view,
I wish to see those glorious days restor'd;
When I with honour may indulge my bounty,
And make you great and happy as you're brave.

SCANDERBEG.

Flattery! — Nay, then he's dangerous indeed! [*Aside.*]

AMURATH.

Renounce the errors of the christian sect,
And be instructed in the law profess'd
By Ishmael's holy race; that light divine,

That



248 THE CHRISTIAN HERO.

That darts from Mecca's ever sacred fane,
 T'illuminate the darken'd souls of men,
 And fill 'em with its brightness.

SCANDERBEG.

O Althea! [*Aside.*]

AMURATH.

Break your alliance with the christian princes,
 And let my foes be thine.

SCANDERBEG.

That follows well;
 Th' abandon'd wretch, that breaks his faith with
 Will hardly stop at any future crime. [*heav'n,*
 [*Aside.*]

AMURATH.

Forego th' advantage that your arms have won,
 Give up this little part of spacious Greece,
 Its cities and its people to my power:
 And in return reign thou my substitute
 O'er all my conquer'd provinces in Europe,
 From Adrianople to the walls of Buda.

SCANDERBEG.

Assist me, heav'n! assist me to suppress
 The rising indignation in my breast,
 That struggles, heaves and rages for a vent—
 Arantes! Althea! how shall I preserve you? [*Aside.*]

VISIER.

He's greatly mov'd, his visage flames with wrath.

AMASIE.

Just so he looks when rushing on the foe,
 The eager blood starts from his trembling lips.

AMURATH.

I wait your resolution.

SCAN-

THE CHRISTIAN HERO. 249

SCANDERBEG.

Three days the truce concluded is to last ;
That space I ask to answer your demands.

AMURATH.

'Tis well ; enjoy your wish - but yet remember
Honour and int'rest, gratitude and love
Bleed while you pause, and press you to comply.
Farther, to favour you in all I may,
Aranthes shall attend you to your camp:
Consult, resolve, your interests are the same;
Althea justly claims the care of both.

[Exit AMURATH, &c.]

SCANDERBEG.

O thou, who art my righteousness and strength,
Distress'd and tempted, still in thee I trust:
The pilot, when he sees the tempest rise,
And the proud waves insult the low'ring skies,
Fix'd to the helm, looks to that power to lay
The raging storm, whom winds and seas obey.

[Exit SCANDERBEG, &c.]

AMASIE alone.

Shou'd he comply, as sure he's hardly press'd ;
Restor'd to favour, where is my revenge?
He's but a man - less tempted I fell worse ;
But I'm not Scanderbeg ——— say, he refuses ;
It follows that the sultan, in his rage,
Murthers the captives, tho' we all shou'd perish.
Which side so'er I view, I like it not.
There is no peace for me, while Castriot lives ;
Plagued and distress'd, he soars above me still ;
Insults my hate, and awes me with his virtue.
His virtue ! ha ! how have I dreamt till now,
How scap'd the thought? his virtue shall betray him.
Hypocrisy, that with an angel's likeness



May well deceive the wisdom of an angel,
 Shall re-infatuate me in his gen'rous heart:
 Which if I fail to pierce, may all the ill
 I ever wish'd to him fall on myself.—
 Th' amorous prince—I know his haughty soul
 Ill brooks his subtle father's peaceful schemes.
 He loves Althea, and depends on me
 'T' assist his flame.

Enter MAHOMET.

MAHOMET.

Amasie, what success?

You saw the captive prince—

AMASIE.

Yes, my lord.

MAHOMET.

Curse on the jealous customs of our court:
 Why is that privilege deny'd to me?

AMASIE.

You know why I'm indulg'd.

MAHOMET.

'Tis true, but say,

What hast thou done that may advance my hopes?

AMASIE.

I've thought, my lord——

MAHOMET.

What tell'st thou me of -thoughts!

Hast thou not spoke?—what says the charming fair?
 —— Shall I be blest?

AMASIE.

Spoke, what? alas! my prince!

How little do you know that haughty christian?
 Bred in the rigid maxims of her sect,

Chaste

THE CHRISTIAN HERO. 251

Chaste as its precepts, most severely virtuous,
Althea wou'd treat me with the last contempt,
Shou'd I but name your gen'rous passion to her;
And proudly term it shameful and unjust.

MAHOMET.

Now as you wou'd avoid a prince's hatred,
That must one day command you; or expect
E'er to attain my sister's love, the scope
Of your ambition, aid me with your counsel.
My blood's on fire, and I will quench the flame,
Tho' universal ruin shou'd ensue.
By heaven I will; I'll plunge in seas of blifs,
And with repeated draughts of cordial love,
Expell the raging fever from my veins.

A M A S I E.

Glorious mischief! — [*Aside.*] If I judge right her will
Is ne'er to be subdu'd, you can't possess
Her mind, my lord—and without that you know—

MAHOMET.

Her mind! a shadow! give me solid joys,
And let her christian minion take the rest.
I love her for myself; my appetite
Must be appeas'd, or live my constant plague.
Let me but clasp her in my longing arms,
Prest her soft bosom to my panting breast,
And crown my wishes; tho' attain'd by force,
Tho' amidst strugglings, shrieks and gushing tears;
Or while she faints beneath my strong embrace,
And I have all my raging passions crave.

A M A S I E.

Already I've conceiv'd the means to serve you,
But time must give th' imperfect embryo form,
And hail th' auspicious birth.

MAHOMET.



MAHOMET.

She's justly mine,
 The purchase of my sword. Our prophet thus,
 By manly force all prior right destroy'd;
 Power was his claim; he conquer'd and enjoy'd:
 Beauty and fame alike his ardor mov'd;
 Fiercely he fought, and as he fought he lov'd.



ACT

A C T III.

S C E N E I.

The Christian Camp.

SCANDERBEG AND ARANTHES.

A R A N T H E S.

ALTHEA mourns for this your fond delay,
And thinks already she has liv'd too long;
Since living she protracts the tyrant's fate,
And clouds the matchless lustre of your arms.

S C A N D E R B E G.

Justice herself would here suspend her sword;
Nor with one indiscriminating blow,
Blind as she is, destroy both friends and foes.

A R A N T H E S.

It is appointed once for all to die:
Then what am I, or what a child of mine,
Weigh'd with the honour of the christian name,
To bid the cause of liberty attend,
While gravely you debate those very trifles,
The time and circumstances of our death:
As justly nature might suspend her course
To wait the dissolution of an insect.
—No, let me bear defiance to the sultan;
Tell him, that you already are determin'd;
And dare his worst.

S C A N D E R B E G.

Not for ten thousand worlds
Wou'd I so tempt the fretful tyrant's rage.
The pangs of death are light to those of absence;
Then who can bear eternal separation?

Transf-



Transported as you are with pious zeal,
 Look inward, search your heart, and then confess
 The love of heav'n excludes not sacred friendship.
 Think if my task were your's, how you wou'd act.
 Wou'd you not pause, conclude, retract, and pause
 again

To the last moment of the time prefixt?
 Wou'd you not count it virtue to contend,
 Tho' against hope, and struggle with despair?
 I know you wou'd; for tho' your tongue be mute,
 Spite of yourself, your streaming eyes confess it.

A R A N T H E S.

My weakness is no precedent for you.

S C A N D E R B E G.

If thus the friend, what must the lover suffer?
 Think good Arantes, if you ever lov'd,
 What I endure: think on Althea's charms,
 And judge from thence the greatness of my pain.

A R A N T H E S.

Why will you dwell upon the dang'rous theme?
 The strength of Sampson prov'd too weak for love;
 David's integrity was no defence;
 The king, the hero and the prophet fell
 Beneath the same inevitable power:
 The wisdom of his son was folly here;
 And he that comprehended all things else
 Knew not himself, till dear experience taught
 Him late repentance, anguish, grief and shame.
 Then think no more but give us up at once;
 Give up Althea; heaven demands it of you;
 For while she lives, your virtue is not safe.

S C A N D E R B E G.

Is this a father's voice?

A R A N-

A R A N T H E S.

Wou'd I had died,
 Ere I was honour'd with a father's name;
 Or that my child had been less good and fair.
 What was my greatest joy, is now my grief:
 Ev'ry perfection wrings my heart with pain.
 For all her charms are now so many snares,
 Which you must break, or be undone for ever.
 — Still unresolv'd—forgive me if I think,
 You have the weakness now of other men.

S C A N D E R B E G.

If to rejoice when virtue is rewarded;
 Or mourn th' afflictions of the good and brave,
 Who mourn not for themselves; if love and friend-
 ship

Denote me weak, I wou'd be weaker still.
 He who disclaims the softness of humanity,
 Aspiring to be more than man, is less.
 Yet know, my father, rev'rend good Arantes!
 Whatever tender sentiments I feel;
 Tho' as a man, a lover and a friend,
 I fear the sultan's cruelty and malice;
 Yet as a christian, I despise 'em both.
 'Tis not for man to glory in his strength;
 The best have fallen, and the wisest err'd.
 Yet when the time shall come, when heaven shall by
 Its providence declare, this is my will,
 And this the sacrifice that I demand,
 Why who can tell, but full of that same energy,
 Which swells your breast, I may reply ev'n so,
 Thy will be done.

A R A N T H E S.

How have my fears deceiv'd me?

S C A N -



SCANDERBEG.

The careful gard'ner turns the limpid stream,
 This way, or that, as suits his purpose best.
 The wrath of man shall praise his maker's name;
 The residue, restrain'd, rest on himself.
 Let us not rashly antedate our woes.
 Tho' I defer the sentence of your death,
 Tho' I cou'd die ten thousand times to save you,
 I do not, nay I dare not bid you live.

ARANTHES.

Excellent man! why did I ever doubt thee?
 Your zeal's no less, your wisdom more than mine.
 My time's expir'd; illustrious prince—farewel!

SCANDERBEG.

My father! my Althea!—

ARANTHES.

O my son!

Our part is little in this noble conflict,
 The worst is death; your's harder, but more glorious,
 To live and suffer. Heaven inspire thy soul
 With more than Roman fortitude and courage:
 They poorly fled to death, t'avoid misfortunes;
 May christian patience teach thee to o'ercome 'em.

[Exit ARANTHES.

SCANDERBEG *alone.*

In this extremity shall I invoke
 Thy awful genius, O majestick Rome;
 Or Junius Brutus, thine; who sacrificed
 To public liberty, paternal love:
 The younger Brutus; or the Greek Timoleon;
 Of self-denial great examples all:
 But all far short of what's required of me.
 These patriots offer'd to an injur'd world
 But guilty wretches, who deserv'd their fates.

Would

THE CHRISTIAN HERO. 257

Wou'd they have given up the best of men,
And the most perfect of the gentler sex
To death, to worfe than death, a tyrant's rage?
No, nature unassisted cannot do it.
To thee I bow me then, fountain of life,
Of wisdom and of power,
Who know'st our frame, and mad'st us what we are;
I ask not length of days, nor fame, nor empire:
Give me to know and to discharge my duty,
And leave th' event to thee—Amasie here!

*Enter AMASIE, who kneels and lays his sword at
SCANDERBEG's feet.*

A M A S I E.

Well may you turn away, justly disdain
To cast one look upon the lost Amasie.
Constant as truth, inflexible as justice,
Above ambition, and the joys of sense,
You must abhor the wretch, whose fatal weakness
Betray'd him to such crimes, as make him hateful
To heaven, to all good men and to himself.

S C A N D E R B E G.

What com'st thou for, what can'st thou hope from me?

A M A S I E.

I come for justice.

S C A N D E R B E G.

Justice must condemn thee.

A M A S I E.

I have condemn'd myself; but dare not die,
Till you, the proper judge, confirm the sentence.

S C A N D E R B E G.

When first you fell, I deeply mourn'd your loss;
But from that moment gave you up for ever.

VOL. I.

S

A M A S I E.



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A M A S I E.

Still you're my prince! my native rightful prince,

S C A N D E R B E G.

Then what art thou?

A M A S I E.

The blackest, worst of traitors,

S C A N D E R B E G.

Be that thy punishment.

A M A S I E.

Dreadful decree!

'Tis more than I can bear—leave me not thus.
Is not the blood, that runs in either's veins,
Deriv'd from the same source? was I not once,
Howe'er unworthy, honour'd with your friendship,
Nam'd your successor? so belov'd, so trusted,
That all the envious pin'd, and all the good
Look'd up with wonder at the glorious height,
To which your partial friendship had advanc'd me.

S C A N D E R B E G.

Illjudging man, thou aggravat'st thy crimes.

A M A S I E.

That cannot be; I but excite your justice.
Behold my guilty breast; strike and maintain
The honour of our house, wipe out this stain
Of its illustrious race and blot of friendship.

S C A N D E R B E G.

If your ambition were to fall by me,
You thou'd have met me in the front of battle
With manly opposition, and receiv'd
The death thou seek'st for in the rage of war.
My sword descends not on a prostrate foe.

The³

THE CHRISTIAN HERO. 259

Tho' you've deserv'd to die, I've not deserv'd
To be your executioner.

A M A S I E.

Just heaven!

Are you a christian prince, and will you spare
A black apostate?

S C A N D E R B E G.

Heaven can right itself
Without my aid, nor do I know on earth
So great, so just an object of compassion.
Live and repent.

A M A S I E.

I have and do repent,
But cannot live. The court of Amurath
Abhors a christian; ev'ry christian court
Detests a traitor.

S C A N D E R B E G.

Miserable man!

[*Aside.*

A M A S I E.

We're taught that heav'n is merciful and kind.

S C A N D E R B E G.

What wretch dares doubt of that?

A M A S I E.

Then why am I
Deny'd to sue for peace and pardon there,
Since I must never nope for them on earth?

S C A N D E R B E G.

Have I the seeds of frailty in my nature?
Am I a man, like him, and can I see,
Unpitying and unmov'd, the bitter anguish,
The deep contrition of his wounded soul?
It will not be — O nature take your course,

§ 2

P 11



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I'll not resist your tenderest impressions. [*Aside.*
 Suppress the tumult of your troubled mind;
 You have o'ercome; I feel and share your sorrows.

A M A S I E.

O be less good, or I shall die with shame.

S C A N D E R B E G.

I have been too slow to pardon. [*Embracing.*

A M A S I E.

O my prince!

My injur'd prince!

S C A N D E R B E G.

Thy friend, thy friend, Amasie.

A M A S I E.

How have you rais'd me from the last despair?
 And dare you trust this rebel, this apostate?

S C A N D E R B E G.

'Tis heaven's prerogative alone to search
 The hearts of men, and read their inmost thoughts;
 I wou'd be circumspect, not over wise;
 Nor for one error, lose a friend for ever.
 No, let me be deceiv'd ere want humanity.

A M A S I E.

The wisdom and beneficence of heaven
 Flow in your words and blefs all those who hear'em.
 [*Trumpets sound a parley.*

S C A N D E R B E G.

What means this summons to a second parley?

A M A S I E.

The sultan's haste anticipates my purpose. [*Aside.*
 Something that much concerns your love and honour,
 I have to say; but must defer it now,

And

THE CHRISTIAN HERO. 261

And once more join his council; if I'm seen,
I lose the only means that's left to serve you.

SCANDERBEG.

You will return —

AMASIE.

As certain as the night;
About the which you may expect me.

SCANDERBEG.

You'll find me in my tent; the word's, *Althea*.

Enter OFFICER.

OFFICER.

The Visier, with the princess of Durazzo,
Demands an audience.

SCANDERBEG.

Fly, and introduce 'em.

Can this be true?

AMASIE.

Most true. The sultan hopes
That your *Althea's* eyes will conquer for him:
Heaven guard your heart. Farewell—at night expect
me.

He's well deceiv'd: Hypocrisy, I thank thee.
Dark and profound as hell, what line canstathom,
Or eye explore the secret thoughts of men?
Yet once I fear'd I shou'd betray myself,
And be indeed the penitent I feign'd;
So much his virtue mov'd me. Curse his virtue!
He ever will excell me— Let him die,
Tho' all my peace die with him— wretched man!
When shall I rest from envy and remorse? [*Aside.*

[Exit AMASIE.

S 3

SCAN-



SCANDERBEG.

I shall once more behold Althea then.
 So wretches are indulg'd the sight of heaven
 To sharpen pain, and aggravate their loss.
 The blended beauties of the teeming spring,
 Whate'er excells in nature's works besides,
 Are vile to her, the glory of the whole.
 Flowers fade and lose their odours, gems their bright-
 nefs,
 And gold its estimation in her presence.
 But see, she comes—Sure such a form betray'd
 The first of men to quit his paradise,
 And all the joys of innocence and peace,
 For those he found in her; yet had the lovely,
 Alas! too lovely parent of mankind,
 Possess'd a mind, as much superior to
 Her outward form, as my Althea doth;
 Mankind had never fell.

Enter VISIER, ALTHEA, &c. SCANDERBEG
kneels and kisses her hand.

SCANDERBEG.

O my princefs!

ALTHEA.

My ever honour'd lord!

SCANDERBEG.

To be your slave,
 A captive to your charms, is more than to
 Belord of human kind.

ALTHEA.

The Visier, prince—

[SCANDERBEG rises.]

VISIER.

Far be it, noble Scanderbeg, from me
 To intercept my royal master's bounty,

Who

THE CHRISTIAN HERO. 263

Who wills you to enjoy freedom of speech,
Uninterrupted, with the christian princess.
I'll with the guards retire and wait your leisure.

[Exit VISIER, &c.]

SCANDERBEG.

O my Althea!

ALTHEA.

Speak, I'm all attention.

SCANDERBEG.

O who can raise his thoughts to the occasion?
Or doing that, reduce such thoughts to words?

ALTHEA.

I will assist you—we must part for ever.

SCANDERBEG.

Is that, is that so easy? righteous heaven!
It doth amaze me, and confound my reason
To hear thee, thus calm and serene, pronounce
The dreadful sentence.

ALTHEA.

Is it not determin'd?

SCANDERBEG.

To give thee back to slavery and chains!
To bear the malice of a bloody tyrant,
Enrag'd by my refusal!—O Althea!
Tho' heaven must be obey'd, something is due
To virtuous love. We may, we must confess
A sense of such unutterable woe.
When in return of my incessant vows,
You deign'd to crown my love, when expectation
Of the long sigh'd for bliss had rais'd my joys
To that exalted pitch, that I look'd down
With pity on mankind; and only griev'd
To think they stood expos'd to disappointment,

S 4

Mis'ry



Mis'ry and pain, while I alone was happy—
Then, then to lose thee—

ALTHEA.

O complain no more.

You move a weakness here, unworthy her,
Who would aspire to deserve your love.
I wou'd have died like the mute sacrifice;
Which goes as chearful and as unconcern'd,
To bleed upon the altar, as to sleep
Within its nightly fold.

SCANDERBEG.

Coud'st thou do this!

ALTHEA.

Had I not seen you thus, I think I shou'd:
But at your grief my resolution fails me:
I'm subdued: the woman, the weak, fond woman,
Swells in my heart, and gushes from my eyes.

SCANDERBEG.

What have I done? the greatness of thy soul,
Not to be comprehended but by minds
Exalted as thy own, stagger'd my reason;
And what was prudence and superior virtue,
I thought a wrong to love. Rash, thoughtless man!
To force a tenderness thou can'st not bear,
That stabs the very soul of resolution,
And leaves thee without strength to stem a torrent,
That asks an angel's force to meet its rage.

ALTHEA.

To combat inclination, to subdue
Our own desires, and conquer by submission;
Are virtues, prince, no angel ever knew.
While these are your's, shall I indulge my grief?
— The storm is o'er, and I am calm again.

SCAN-

THE CHRISTIAN HERO. 265

SCANDERBEG.

O thou eternal source of admiration!
What new wonder hast thou prepar'd to charm
My ravish'd soul? where didst thou learn the art
To stop the tide of grief in its full flow,
And triumph o'er despair?

ALTHEA.

In you I triumph.

Tho' rack'd and torn with more than mortal grief,
Amidst the pangs of disappointed love
And suffer'ing friendship, do I not behold thee,
Still constant as the sun, that keeps its course,
Tho' storms and tempests vex the nether sky,
And low'ring clouds a while obscure his brightness?

SCANDERBEG.

Excellent, heavenly maid! thou rob'st thyself,
And attribut'st to me thy own perfections.

ALTHEA.

Have you once question'd whether you should part
With two the dearest things to man on earth,
A friend and mistress, or renounce your faith,
The int'rest of mankind and cause of virtue?

SCANDERBEG.

That were to purchase ev'n thee too dear:
That were a misery beyond thy loss:
That were, my princess! to deserve to lose thee.

ALTHEA.

That gracious power that wrought you for this
purpose,
That made you great to struggle with adversity,
And teach luxurious princes, by example,
What kings shou'd be, and shame 'em into virtue;
Beholds, with pleasure, you discharge the trust,
And act up to the dignity you're form'd for.

SCAN-



SCANDERBEG.

O whither wou'd thy dazzling virtue soar ?
 Is't not enough we yield to our misfortunes,
 And bear afflictions, tho' with bleeding hearts ?
 Wou'd'st thou attempt to raise pleasure from pain,
 And teach the voice of mourning, songs of joy ?

ALTHEA.

Small is my part and suited to my strength.
 What is dying ? a wanton Cleopatra
 Cou'd smile in death and infants die in sleep.
 What tho' my days are few and fill'd with sorrow !
 Cou'd vain prosperity to hoary age
 Afford a happiness to be compar'd
 To dying now in such a glorious cause ?
 Lamented and belov'd by thee, the best
 And greatest of mankind—Then let us haste
 And close the scene.—You, good Paulinus, let
 The Visier know, I'm ready to return.
 Why are you pale, why do gushing tears
 Blot the majestic beauty of your face ?
 Why is the hero in the lover lost ?

SCANDERBEG.

Let angels who attend in crowds to hear thee ;
 Let all the sons of liberty and fame ;
 Those, who still wait, and those who have obtain'd
 The end of all their labours ; heaven and earth ;
 Angels and men, the living and the dead ;
 Behold and judge if ever man before
 Purchas'd the patriot's name, or sav'd his country,
 His faith and honour, at a price so dear.

Enter VISIER.

VISIER.

Well prince, may we not hope that those bright eyes
 Have charm'd your soul to peace ? who wou'd resist,
 When

THE CHRISTIAN HERO, 267

When honour's gain'd by being overcome?
To yield to beauty, crowns the warrior's fame.

SCANDERBEG.

I'm not to learn how to esteem the princefs;
But know the sultan over-rates his power,
When he presumes to barter for her love.
Her mind is free and royal as his own;
Nor is she to be gain'd by doing what
Wou'd forfeit her esteem. And I must think
This haste to know my mind, is fraud or fear.
What needs there more? the truce is unexpired:
If your proud master wishes for a peace,
We yet may treat on honourable terms.
In the mean time receive the princefs back.

VISI ER.

Think what you do, great sir.

SCANDERBEG.

I know my duty.

ALTHEA.

Farewell, my lord!

SCANDERBEG.

Farewell!—protect her heaven!

ALTHEA.

Now let the fretful tyrant storm and rage,
The only danger we cou'd fear is past.

[*Exeunt ALTHEA and VISIER.*]

SCANDERBEG.

T'encounter hosts of foes is easier far,
Than to sustain this innate, bosom war;
This one unbloody conquest costs me more
Than all the battles I e'er won before.

ACT



A C T IV.

S C E N E I.

*The out-ward Apartment in the Womens Tent. A
Guard of Eunuchs.*

Enter KISLER AGA.

AGA.

'TIS as I thought: our master is betray'd.
Who ever knew a renegade sincere?
This dog's a christian still!

Enter AMASIE.

AMASIE.

The victim's prepar'd.
If lust holds on her course, and revels yet
In the hot veins of rash, luxurious youth,
This christian heroine, this second Lucrece,
In Mahomet shall find another Tarquin,
As cruel and remorseless as the first.
If I shou'd fail in my attempt to night,
And Scanderbeg survive - Althea ravish'd -
He'll wish himself, I had succeeded better. [*Aside.*
Dismiss your useles train of prying slaves;
I've business that requires your ear alone.

[*Exeunt Eunuchs.*

A Grecian chief, who owns our master's cause,
Must be admitted to the captive princefs.
'Tis of importance to the sultan's service,
That he shou'd enter and depart unknown:
I'll introduce him, while you watch without
That none approach to give him interruption.

AGA.

This I conceive; but why he mov'd the lady

To

THE CHRISTIAN HERO. 269

To the remotest part of the pavilion
I cannot comprehend.

[*Aside.*

A M A S I E.

You know your duty ;
Your life shall answer for the least neglect.

A G A.

I shall take care—(*Exit AMASIE.*) to ruin thee, thou
traitor.

S C E N E II.

Another Apartment; Stage darken'd; Table and Lamp.

ALTHEA discovered.

A L T H E A.

Is this a time and place for virtuous love ?
This is the wanton's hour: now she forsakes
Her home, and, hid in darkness, watches for her prey:
The soul, whom heaven abhors, falls in her snares;
And pierc'd with guilt, as with an arrow dies,
Yon sickly lamp, that glimmers thro' my tears,
Faintly contending with prevailing darkness,
Spreads o'er the place a melancholy gloom,
That sooths the joyless temper of my mind.
So a pale meteor's dull and beamless flame
To the bewilder'd traveller appears,
And adds new horrors to the cheerless night.
— Is error then the lot of all mankind ?
It is, it is—for Scanderbeg is fallen.—
O! what cou'd move him to the rash attempt ?
If he shou'd perish, as the danger's great,
How will th' insulting infidels rejoice ?
How will the foe with scornful triumph sing,
As a fool dies, so died this mighty chief ;
His hands unbound, no fetters on his feet,
But as an idiot by his folly falls,
So sell the champion of the christian cause.

Enter



270 THE CHRISTIAN HERO.

*Enter MAHOMET dress'd like SCANDERBEG, fastening
the door on the inside.*

He's come, and all my sorrows are compleat.
Are you pursu'd?—O my prophetick fears!
If undiscover'd you have enter'd here,
This caution's needless; if betray'd, in vain.

MAHOMET.

Of such a prize who can be too secure?

ALTHEA.

'Tis not his voice—defend me, O defend me,
All gracious heaven!

MAHOMET.

Dost thou not know me, princess?

ALTHEA.

Alas! too well! (*Aside.*) Sure you've mistook your
way,
Or came perchance to seek some other here;
Howe'er that be, permit me to retire.

MAHOMET.

Mistaken fair! or is this ign'rance feign'd?
'Tis you alone I seek. Impetuous love,
That will not be resisted, brought me here
To lay my life and fortune at your feet.

ALTHEA.

Then I'm betray'd, basely betray'd; just heaven!
Expos'd, perhaps devoted to a ruin,
From which the grave itself is no retreat,
And time can ne'er repair—be gracious, Sir,
To an unhappy maid!—Or I'm deceiv'd,
Or you, my lord, were pleas'd to mention love;
Of that, alas! I am forbid to hear;
Compassion better suits my humble state.

That

THE CHRISTIAN HERO. 271

That I intreat ; have pity on me, prince,
Dispel my fears, and send me from your presence.

M A H O M E T.

Grant what you ask ; I need compassion too :
Your beauty's necessary to my peace :
Then yield, in pity to yourself and me,
What else I'll take by force : consent to make me
Happy, and in return, when time shall give
The scepter to my hand, I'll make thee queen
Of half the conquer'd globe.

A L T H E A.

Know, impious prince !
If one loose thought wou'd buy the whole, I'd scorn
It at that price.

M A H O M E T.

Then rifed and abandon'd,
Live thou the scorn both of the world and me.
You have your choice ; I came not here to talk.

A L T H E A.

O ! what were all my former woes to this ?
Under the pain of absence, hard captivity
And my late fears, patience and fortitude
Were my support ; patience and fortitude
Are uselefs now. Shame and dishonour are
Not to be borne. Father ! Arantes ! haste,
And like Virginius preserve your daughter.
Come Castriot, come, Althea calls thee now
To certain death, to save her from pollution,

M A H O M E T.

Call louder yet ; your idols do not hear.

A L T H E A.

Tho' none shou'd hear, yet sorrow must complain,

M A H O-



M A H O M E T.

Your moving softness fans my am'rous flame—
 No help can reach thee--all thy friends are absent ;
 Wisely comply, and make a friend of me.

A L T H E A.

All are not absent ; he whose presence fills
 Both heaven and earth ; he, he is with me still ;
 Sees my distress, numbers my flowing tears,
 And understands the voice of my complainings,
 Tho' sorrow drowns my speech.

M A H O M E T.

I'll wait no longer ;
 Nor ask again for what I've power to take.
 Now you may strive, as I have beg'd, in vain.

A L T H E A.

O thou, whose hand sustains the whole creation ;
 Who cloth'st the woods, the vallies and the fields ;
 Who hear'st the hungry lion, when he roars ;
 And feed'st the eagle on the mountain's top ;
 Shut not thine ear—turn not away thy face ;
 Be not as one far off, when danger's near ;
 Or like an absent friend to the distress'd—
 Assist me, save me—Only thou canst save me—
 O let me not invoke thy aid in vain.

AMURATH *without.*

Force, force an entrance.

M A H O M E T.

Ha ! who dares do this ?

[The door burst open.]

Enter AMURATH, VISIER, KISLER AGA and Guards

M A H O M E T.

Sham'd and prevented ! O my curst fortune !

A L T H E A.

A L T H E A.

My prayers are heard ; let virtue ne'er despair.

V I S I E R.

Guard well the passage.

A G A.

Who secures his sword ?

V I S I E R.

Scanderbeg yield ! thou canst not hope t'escape.

A M U R A T H.

To fall so meanly after all thy wars—
Well may'ft thou hide thy face.

V I S I E R.

Blinded by love,
My lord, he mis'd his way.

A M U R A T H.

True, Osmyn, true :

That poor excuse for madness, vice and folly,

Is all this mighty hero has to plead.

—A fair account of life and honour lost.

I hoped not triumph---Prophet, 'tis too much—

I ask'd but vengeance—bring him to my tent.

When mirth declining calls for something new,

We'll think upon the manner of his death.

M A H O M E T.

Away, you dogs ! confusion, death and hell ! [*Exit.*]

A L T H E A.

They stand aghast. Deliverance waits the just,

But short's the triumph of deceitful men.

Turn'd on themselves, their own devices cover

Them with shame. (*Aside.*) [*Exit.*]



VISIER.

I'm lost in admiration !

It is the prince Mahomet.

A M U R A T H.

Wonder, rage

And disappointment drive me to distraction.
Kisler Aga, expect to answer this.

A G A.

Let not my lord condemn his slave unheard.
Amase, whom I ever thought a villain,
Going this evening to the captive princess ;
I follow'd unperceiv'd, and so dispos'd me
As to o'erhear him : who, with many oaths,
Assur'd Althea, Scanderbeg was come ;
Conceal'd by night, and in his faith secure,
Once more to see her and repeat his vows.
Of this I thought myself in duty bound
T'inform my royal master.

A M U R A T H.

You are clear.

A G A.

The caution us'd to introduce the prince,
Seem'd to confirm the truth of what I heard.

A M U R A T H.

Leave us---enough ; your conduct merits praise.

[Exit KISLER AGA.]

V I S I E R.

Th' affrighted fair is fled to her apartment.

A M U R A T H.

Degenerate boy ! thou art my witness, Allah,
Not so I spent my youth and won his mother ;
Tho' much I lov'd, and long I figh'd in vain.
'Tis vile and base to do a private wrong :

When

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When kings, as kings, do ill; the office then
Must justify the man.

V I S I E R.

A believing monarch,
Obedient to the messenger of heaven,
Can never err.

A M U R A T H.

Our prophet, by the sword,
First taught the stubborn Arabs to believe,
And write his laws in blood.

V I S I E R.

He knew mankind.
Nay, yet the priests of all religions teach,
Whate'er is done to propagate the faith,
Must, from its end, be good.

A M U R A T H.

Thus do I stand
Acquitted to myself; and Scanderbeg,
Tho' by assassination, justly falls.
To-morrow's sun shall shine for me alone.
Yet, O! my faithful Ofmin, all's not well:
I know not how. my spirits kindle not
As they were wont, when glory was in view.
True I rejoice; and yet, methinks, my joy
Is like the mirth wrung from a man in pain.

V I S I E R.

Guard, righteous heaven, thy great vicegerent's
health.

A M U R A T H.

The body sympathises with the mind;
As that with what we love. My languor may
Be the effect of my Hellena's grief;
I live in her. My pleasures are improv'd,

T 2

My



My pains forgot, when I behold her face ;
The tenderest, fondest, most belov'd of children.

VISI ER.

O! what has happen'd, fir?

A M U R A T H.

This evening, Ofmin,
When I commanded her to love Amasie,
And look upon him as her future lord,
An ashy paleness spread o'er all her face,
And gushing tears bespoke her strong aversion :
But when t' enhance his merit I disclosed
The purpos'd murder of his native prince ;
Had I pronounc'd the sentence of her death,
Sure less had been her terror and surprize.
Kneeling, she call'd on heav'n and earth to witness
Her utter detestation of the fact,
And everlasting hatred of Amasie,
His person and design.

VISI ER.

Unhappy princess!
To be compell'd to marry where she hates.

A M U R A T H.

O! she abhors him, loaths his very name ;
Yet still her filial piety prevail'd ;
She hung upon my neck ; pray'd for my life,
My honour, my success ; and took her leave
In such endearing strains, as if she never
Had been to see me more. Her moving softness
Melted my old tough heart - I kiss'd her - sigh'd,
And wept as fast as she. Our mingled tears
Together flow'd down my shrunk wither'd cheeks,
And trickled from my beard - O! shou'd my thirst
Of vengeance kill my child ; shou'd she, t' avoid
Amasie, fly to death - what cou'd support me ?

3

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III.

A Wood, thro' which is seen the Christian Camp.
Enter HELLENA and CLEORA in Mens Apparel

CLEORA.

Where are we, princess! whither will you wander?

HELLENA.

We've gain'd the utmost summit of the mountain.
I hear the neigh of horses - See'st thou not
Those lights that glimmer thro' the trees, Cleora?
The Christian camp's before us.

CLEORA.

Righteous Allah! the Christian camp!—

HELLENA.

'Tis thither I am bound.

CLEORA.

Distraction!

HELLENA.

I am determined.

CLEORA.

Hear me, princess!

Once take the counsel of your faithful slave,
And yet return before our flight be known.

HELLENA.

O! no, Cleora! I must ne'er return.

CLEORA.

Then in your father's empire let us seek
Some far remote and unfrequented village;
Where thus disguis'd, you may remain unknown
To all, but me; till death shall end your sorrows.
Why are you come to find new dangers here?
Alas! I thought you only fled Amasie.

T 3

HEL-

HELLENA.

Why shou'd I fly from him? in his despite
I cou'd have died, ev'n in my father's arms.
Death, ever at my call, had been a sure
Defence from his more loath'd embraces. Gentle
maid,

Think it not hard, that I've conceal'd from thee
My real intention, till 'twas past thy power,
Had'st thou the inclination to prevent it.

CLEORA.

Break, break my heart, for I have liv'd too long,
Since I'm suspected by my royal mistress.

HELLENA.

I fear'd thy fond affection wou'd have weigh'd
Each danger with too scrupulous a hand.
I know 'twill strike thee with the last amazement
To hear I've left the bosom of a father,
Howe'er severe to others kind to me,
To seek his mortal foe.

CLEORA.

Your reason's lost.

HELLENA.

No; I remember well the terrors past,
And count on those to come: both worse than death.
Conscious of my weak sex, with all its fears,
To pass by night thro' camps of hostile men,
And urge the presence of that awful prince,
My soul in secret has so long ador'd—
When I shall see him, shou'd his piercing eye
Trace me thro' my disguise!—O my Cleora!
Will not my falt'ring tongue, my crimson cheeks,
My panting heart and trembling limbs betray me?
What think'st thou? say; shall I not die with shame
When I wou'd speak, and leave my tale untold?

CLEORA.

CLEORA.

These and a thousand difficulties more
Oppose your purpose; then in time retire.

HELLENA.

No more; away; my resolution's fixt.
The glory and the danger's both before me,
And both are mine — you were necessary
To my escape — that's past — 'Tis true, indeed,
Your service has by far excell'd my bounty:
Here take these jewels, and go seek thy safety:
I can pursue my purpose by myself.

*Enter PAULINUS, with a guard; who come from
the farther part of the stage to the front, and stand
listening for some time.*

CLEORA.

O how have I deserv'd this cruel usage?
If I've discover'd any signs of fear,
'Twas never for myself — Go where you please,
I'll follow you to death.

HELLENA

Kind, faithful maid —
Wherefore shou'd I involve thee in my ruin?

CLEORA.

'Tis ruin to forsake you.

HELLENA.

Mine is certain;
Thou may'st have many happy years to come.

PAULINUS.

Stand, there. — Who are you? — Answer to the guard.

HELLENA.

Fatal surprize! what must we answer?

CLEORA.

Friends.

PAULINUS.

Make it appear — this instant — give the word.
 — Silent — Some spies sent from the Sultan's camp.
 Left, favour'd by the darkness of the night,
 The traitors shou'd escape, guard ev'ry passage.
 [*Guards surround them.*]

HELLENA.

Scanderbeg must die.

OFFICER.

Not by thy hand;
 If mine can aim aright, thou bloody villain!

[*Wounds HELLENA. She falls.*]

HELLENA.

Untimely fate!

CLEORA.

Where are you?

HELLENA.

Here on the earth.

CLEORA.

You're wounded then?

HELLENA.

Alas! to death, Cleora,

CLEORA.

Prophet, I do not charge you with injustice;
 But I must grieve, and wonder things are thus.

HEL-

HELLENA.

Too hasty death, cou'dst thou not stay a little,
Little longer; the business of my life
Had soon been done, and I had come to thee.

PAULINUS.

Moving sounds! I fear you've been too rash.
Ill fated youths, who are you, and from whence?
What dire misfortune brought you to this place?

HELLENA.

It matters not, who, or from whence we are:
But as you prize your royal master's life,
Conduct me to him strait: mine ebbs apace,
Yet on its short duration his depends.

PAULINUS.

Your adjuration is of such a force,
His own commands wou'd scarce oblige me more.
Sir, I'll attend you.

HELLENA.

All you fleeting powers,
Sight, speech and motion; O! forsake me not
So near my journey's end; assist me to
Perform this only task, and take your flight for ever.

SCENE IV.

SCANDERBEG'S *Tent.*

SCANDERBEG.

Degenerate Rome! by godlike Brutus freed
From Cæsar and his temporary chain,
Your own ingratitude renew'd those bonds,
Beneath whose galling weight you justly perish'd.
If freedom be heaven's universal gift,
Th' unalienable right of humankind,
Were all men virtuous, there wou'd be no slaves.
Despotic



Despotic power, that root of bitterness,
That tree of death, that spreads its baleful arms
Almost from pole to pole; beneath whose cursed
shade

No good thing thrives, and ev'ry ill finds shelter;
Had found no time for its detested growth,
But for the follies and the crimes of men.
In ev'ry climate, and in ev'ry age,
Where arts and arms and public virtue flourish'd,
Ambition, dangerous only to itself,
Crush'd in its infancy, still found a grave
Where it attempted to erect a throne.

*Enter HELLENA, supported by PAULINUS and
CLEORA; Guards following.*

HELLENA.

My blood flows faster, and my throbbing heart
Beats with redoubled force, now I behold him;
O take me to thy arms—I die, Cleora! [*Swoons.*]

PAULINUS.

He faints; support him, while we search his wound.

CLEORA.

Away; and touch him not—O gracious prince!
If ever pity moved your royal breast,
Let all depart except yourself and us.

SCANDERBEG.

Let all withdraw. [*Exit PAULINUS, &c.*]

Now, gentle youth, inform me,
Why you oppose th' assistance of your friend?

CLEORA.

She's gone, she's gone: O heavens! she's past
assistance.

SCAN-

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SCANDERBEG.

Think what you say, and recollect your reason.

CLEORA.

O mighty prince! we are not what we seem,
But hapless women.

SCANDERBEG.

Ha!

CLEORA.

Women; and sure
The most distress'd, and wretched of our sex.
T' increase your admiration, view this face.

SCANDERBEG.

Sure I have known those lovely features well;
But when, or where, my recollection, fails me.

CLEORA.

And well it may. O! who cou'd know thee now?
Never enough deplor'd, unhappy princess.

SCANDERBEG.

Fearful suggestion! sure my eyes deceive me!
Forbid it heaven, that this shou'd be Hellena.

HELLENA.

Who was it call'd upon the lost Hellena?

SCANDERBEG.

Ha! she revives; fly instantly for aid.

HELLENA.

It was his voice—false maid, thou hast betray'd me.
Stay—whither wou'd'st thou go? I'm past all aid:
The friendly hand of death will quickly close
These ever streaming eyes, and end my shame.
O prince! the most distinguish'd and belov'd
By righteous Allah, of his works below;
You see the daughter of relentless Amurath,

Sunk



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Sunk with her father's crimes, o'erwhelm'd with
flame,

Expiring at your feet. My weakness stands
Confess'd, but be it so, I will no more
Lament my painful, hopeless, fatal flame,
Since heaven ordain'd it for your preservation.

SCANDERBEG.

When will my wonder and my anguish cease?

HELLENA.

I'm come to save you, prince, from falling by
A vile assassin's arm; the false Amasie
Has deeply sworn your death; ev'n now he comes
To plunge his bloody poniard in your breast.

SCANDERBEG.

Fatal mistake! what base detractor has
Traduc'd my friend; and wrought thee, gen'rous
Princess,
To thy ruin?

HELLENA.

Doth not the traitor come
Here by appointment?

SCANDERBEG.

Ha!

HELLENA.

Whence learnt I that?
Be not deceiv'd, but guard your precious life;
Or I shall die in vain. For me this bloody
Enterprize was form'd; my feeble charms,
That wound but where I hate, the motive to
This crime,

SCANDERBEG.

Just heaven! that I cou'd longer doubt it!

C L E-

CLEORA.

Alas; she's going, raise her, gently raise her.

HELLENA.

My head grows dizzy.

SCANDERBEG.

Lean it on my breast.

HELLENA.

This is indeed no time to stand on forms.

SCANDERBEG.

The pains, the agonies, of death are on her;
And yet she suffers less, much less, than I.
What generous heart can bear it?

HELLENA.

Do not grieve:

And yet methinks your pity sooths my pain.

SCANDERBEG.

Why wou'dst thou give thy life to ransom mine?
Wou'd I had died, or yet cou'd die, to save thee.

HELLENA.

I'd not exchange my death, lamented thus
And in your arms, for any other's life —
Unless Althea's.

SCANDERBEG.

Were Althea here,

She wou'd forget her own severe distress,
And only weep for yours.

HELLENA.

May she be happy!

Yet had you never seen her, who can tell,
You sometimes might, perhaps, have thought on me.

SCAN-



SCANDERBEG.

He in my place who cou'd refrain from tears,
Unenvied let him boast of his brutality.
I'm not a sham'd to own myself a man.

HELLENA.

Farewel, Cleora! — weep not, gentle maid;
I recommend her, sir, to your protection.
And, O victorious prince! if e'er hereafter
Conquest shou'd give my father to your sword
— Then think on me — suspend your lifted arm,
And spare — O spare his life — forget your wrongs;
Or think them punish'd in his daughter's loss. [*Dies.*]

SCANDERBEG.

Her gentle soul is fled; she rests in peace;
While we, methinks, like gratitude and grief,
Form'd by the sculpture's art to grace her urn;
Moving, tho' lifeless; eloquent, tho' dumb;
Excite incurious mortals to explore,
Virtues so rare, and trace the shining store,
That cou'd a life so short so well supply;
Yet mourn with us such excellence shou'd die.



ACT

ACT V.
SCENE I.

The Christian Camp.

*Enter SCANDERBEG: AMASIE in chains,
PAULINUS, &c.*

SCANDERBEG.

COULD love, that fills each honest generous
breast,
With double ardor to excel in virtue,
Conclude, thou wretch! what malice first begun,
And finish thee a villain? thou wou'dst die—
We'll disappoint thee—Live tortur'd with guilt,
A terror to thyself: or let the sultan,
The vile abettor of thy crimes, reward thee;
We know no punishment to suit thy guilt.
This is a Christian land. Our laws were made
For men, not monsters.—Take him from my sight.

[Exit AMASIE.]

'Tis needless to repeat that by hostility,
Of the worst kind, our faithless enemies
Have broke the truce. We're now again prepar'd
Once more to prove the fortune of our arms;
And try by honest force, seeing all treaties
With such perfidious men are vain, to free
Our captive friends, and drive these fierce destroyers
From Epirus. Paulinus with your squadrons
Attack the trenches westward of the city,
'T' amuse the foe, and draw their force that way;
Then PH, with the remaining troops, assault
Th' east; where doubly intrench'd the royal tents,
The prison of Althea and her father,
Raise their aspiring heads. I need not say,

Acquit



Acquit yourselves like men ; I know you well ;
 Nor spur you on with hopes of promis'd wealth.
 I have no useles stores of hoarded gold.
 My revenues, you know, have been the spoils
 Of vanquish'd foes ; these I have shar'd amongst you.
 Wou'd you have more ? Our enemies have enough :
 Subdue your foes, and satisfy yourselves.
 Let each commit himself to that just power,
 Who still has been our guide and sure defence.
 Be valiant, not presumptuous. Seek his aid,
 Who by our weakness magnifies his strength.
 Now follow me, my fellow-soldiers, and remember
 [*Drawing his sword.*]

You fight the cause of liberty and truth,
 Your native land, Arantes and Althea.

ALL.

Huzza ! Liberty ! Justice ! Arantes and Althea !
 [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE II.

The Sultan's Tent.

AMURATH, K. AGA, and an Officer.

AMURATH.

Amasie's not return'd—shou'd he betray me
 And join with Scanderbeg to free the captives ! —
 That officer's his creature — Mustapha !
 Resign Arantes to the Kisler Aga —
 Conduct him to Althea. Let Amasie,
 That unauspicious slave, be true or false,,
 Succeed or perish, they shall surely die :
 So tell the father—hence, you slaves, be gone.
 Now let me think—there must have been a change,
 A revolution in the source of things.
 The former chain of beings is dissolv'd :
 Effects roll backward, and direct their causes,
 And

And nature is no more. Thou hoary wretch,
Tear thy white locks, abandon ev'ry hope,
Renounce humanity and all its tyes.
Duty and virtue, gratitude and love,
Forfook the world, when my Hellena fled.
May order ne'er return to blefs mankind ;
Let discord rage, ne'er let affections meet ;
But parents curse, and children disobey ;
Or either's kindness be repaid with hate.
Till ev'ry child, and ev'ry sire on earth,
Be in each other curs'd, as me and mine.

Enter VISIER.

VISIER.

Not yet at rest ?

A MURATH.

A parent and at rest !—

VISIER.

The christians have storm'd the trenches toward the
west ;

Unless our presence animate the troops
All will be lost.

A MURATH.

Hellena's lost already !

VISIER.

Sure Amasie has sail'd, and Scanderbeg
Is come upon us to revenge th' attempt.

A MURATH.

'Tis well. Wak'd from my lethargy of grief,
I yet may reach his heart.

VISIER.

Regard your health,
And leave the business of this night to us ;
A burning fever rages in your blood. [*Alarm.*
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A M U R A T H.

Fame calls me forth. Again I hear her voice;
 Earth shakes, and heaven reverberates the sound.
 Affrighted night sits trembling on her throne; like
 Tumult has driven silence from her confines,
 And half her empire's lost. When glory calls,
 Shall age or sickness keep me from the field?
 No; in spite of both I'll die like Amurath yet,
 Like what I've liv'd, a soldier and a king. [*Exit.*]

V I S I E R.

He's desperate and will not be oppos'd. [*Exit.*]

S C E N E III.

*Turkish Camp.**Alarm, Soldiers flying.*

S O L D I E R S W I T H I N.

Fly, fly; Scanderbeg, Scanderbeg; fly, fly.

Enter AMURATH and VISIER, meeting the Rout.

A M U R A T H.

Turn back you slaves.

S O L D I E R S W I T H I N.

Fly, fly; Scanderbeg, fly!

A M U R A T H.

Ah! cowards, villains! doth his name affright you?
 Are there such terrors in an empty sound?
 And is my rage contemn'd? but you shall find
 Death is as certain from my arm as his.

V I S I E R.

O spare your faithful slaves! what can men do
 Against a power, invincible, like heaven's?

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A M U R A T H.

And must it be, like heaven's, eternal too?

V I S I E R.

Retire, my lord, into the inner camp,
And there securely wait a better hour:
For this is the Epirot's.

A M U R A T H.

Slave, thou lyest!

This hour is mine: I'll triumph o'er him yet.
This hour his friend and mistress both shall die.
The royal brute, tho' in the hunter's toils,
Pierc'd with a thousand wounds is still a lion;
Dreadful in death and dang'rous to the last.

[*Exeunt.*]

S C E N E IV.

ALTHEA'S Apartment.

A L T H E A.

Was ever night like this? what terrors have
I past? and, O! what terrors yet surround me?
A loud deaf'ning sound, that seem'd the voice
Of a chas'd multitude, or many waters
Vex'd to a storm, first spread thro' all the camp;
Then shrieks and cries and yellings of despair;
Mix'd with the shouts of victory and joy.
Sure sleep has left all eyes, as well as mine.
Fate is at work; I sink beneath my fears.
Since I have known a danger worse than death
My courage has forsook me.

Enter ARANTHES.

Ha! who comes

At this late hour? protect me, righteous heaven!

A R A N T H E S.

Why, my Althea! dost thou fly thy father?

U 2

A L T H E A.



ALTHEA.

Sure 'tis his voice! O gracious heaven! it is,
It is my father.—Most unlook'd for joy!

ARANTHES.

Do I once more behold thee, my Althea!

ALTHEA.

To whose bless'd bounty do we owe this meeting?

ARANTHES.

Thou dearest earthly bliss, this moment's ours,
No matter how attain'd; I have thee now
In my fond arms, and wou'd indulge my joy,
Nor think how soon 'twill end. Why shou'd poor
mortals,

To trouble born, anticipate their pains?

ALTHEA.

I can't conceal my fears: if you again
Must leave me here, the sun in all its course
Sees not a wretch so lost as poor Althea.

ARANTHES.

Alas! why will you urge me to disclose
What wou'd, tho' I were silent, soon be known?
'The wrathful sultan has pronounc'd our death.
Yes, I am come to die with thee, my child!

ALTHEA.

Then we shall part no more.

My soul's at peace—Forgive, O righteous heaven,
My weak distrust of thy almighty power,
Thy kindness and protection. O my father!
I wish'd t'have died alone; yet at your death,
I must not, dare not murmur or complain;
Since heaven with you permits me to descend,
Pure and unspotted to the peaceful grave.

ARANTHES.

A R A N T H E S.

Heroic maid! O most exalted virtue!

[*Aside weeping.*]

A L T H E A.

Why do you hide your face, why turn you from me?
Be not surpriz'd, nor charge me with unkindness.
There is, my dearest father! one calamity,
Tho' sure but one, by far more dreadful
Ev'n than thy death—O speak, speak to me, sir!

A R A N T H E S.

Good heaven! my joy's too great;—I cannot speak.
Tears must relieve me, or my heart will burst.
I thank thee, heav'n! I have not liv'd in vain.
This happy hour o'erpays an age of sorrow.
My child! my life! my soul! my dear Althea!
Thy bright example fires my emulation;
Thou hast the start, but must not bear away
The victor's palm alone, and shame thy father.
No, my Althea! to that bounteous hand
Which made thee what thou art, and made thee mine,
Without the least reluctance, I'll resign thee.—
And see the trial comes.

Enter KISLER AGA and Mutes.

A G A.

Forgive, fair princess, a devoted slave, [*Kneeling.*]
Who knows no will, but his imperial lord's;
No merit, but obedience. Cou'd my tears
Have mov'd the sultan, I had been excus'd
This fatal visit.

A L T H E A.

Kisler Aga, rise;
Spite of thy office, thou hast a human soul.
What are thy master's orders? art thou come
A second time to my deliverance?

U 3

AGA.



A G A.

If

Death, sudden, violent and immature,
Be a deliverance; you will soon be free.

A L T H E A.

To minds prepar'd, death strip'd of all its terrors,
In any form, at any hour is welcome.

A G A.

Whether the sultan, raging for the loss
Of his lov'd daughter, thinks that other's pain,
In the same kind, wou'd mitigate his own;
Or from some other cause, I cannot say;
But he has order'd that the lady first
Shou'd suffer death, her father being present.—
I see you're mov'd.

A R A N T H E S.

I am — but 'tis with scorn
Of your proud master's impotence and malice.
Alas! I'm not to learn my child is mortal.

A G A.

These eager blood hounds growl at my delay,
And will, perhaps, accuse me to the sultan.

A L T H E A.

Obey the tyrant, let them do their office.

A G A.

I must; but heaven can tell with what reluctance.
The only favour in my power to grant,
Is the sad choice of dying by the bowstring,
The fatal poniard, or this pois'nous draught.

A L T H E A.

Give me the bowl. Death this way seems less
frightful,
Than from the hands of rude and barbarous men.

A R A N T

ARANTHES.

Farewel, my child!

ALTHEA.

Assist me with your prayers.

ARANTHES.

My prayers have been incessant as thy own,
And both are heard—fear not—thy crown's prepar'd;
And heav'n, with all its glories, lies before thee:
Millions of angels wait to guard the passgae;
Thou can'st not miss thy way.

ALTHEA.

Shou'd heav'n preserve you—
Shou'd you live to see him---commend me to
My lord—tell him, that I die his—that heaven,
Which calls me now, is only lov'd beyond him.—
That I'm not lost - that we shall meet again—
Bid him not grieve. — [Alarm.

Enter SCANDERBEG, &c. He flies to ALTHEA,

SCANDERBEG.

Away you sacrilegious slaves—she lives—
I have her warm and panting in my arms—
Lift up thy eyes, dearer to mine than light.—
O let me hear the musick of thy voice,
Lest I shou'd doubt I come too late to save thee,
And discord seize my soul.

ALTHEA.

Surprize is dumb.

So sudden a transition who can bear?
My thoughts were all just reconcil'd to death,
But thou hast call'd them back. The love of life,
That seem'd extinguish'd in me, now returns.
O! if there is a happiness on earth,
Here I must find it, here and only here.

U 4

SCA

SCANDERBEG.

Aranthes too!—he lives!—consummate joy!

ARANTHES.

And lives by thee, thou glorious happy youth—
 O let me press thee in my longing arms—
 My child too!—my Althea!

ALTHEA.

O my father!

ARANTHES.

Compleat felicity!

ALTHEA.

O dangerous blifs! *[Weeps.]*

SCANDERBEG.

Why weeps my life?

ALTHEA.

Some have their portion here :
 Flatt'ring prosperity has ruin'd thousands,
 Whom death with all its terrors cou'd not shake.

SCANDERBEG.

Thy pious fears shall guard us from that danger,

ALTHEA.

Is not the glory of both worlds too much
 For frail, imperfect mortals to expect?

SCANDERBEG.

Our happiness, tho' great, is far from perfect ;
 Since she, the fair unfortunate Hellena,
 To whom, next heaven we owe it, is no more.
 I cannot blame your tears ; this is no time
 To tell the mournful tale, that must whene'er
 Remember'd, make me sad, tho' crown'd with
 victory,

And

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And in thy arms. Croia, reliev'd, expects us:
My grateful subjects will for thy deliv'rance
Express more joy, than that their foes are fled.

Enter PAULINUS and the SULTAN, prisoner.

PAULINUS.

Hail glorious king! your conquest is compleat;
Behold ambitious Amurath your captive.

SCANDERBEG.

Take off his chains.

AMURATH.

What pageantry is this?

SCANDERBEG.

Sound a retreat; since none resist, let war
And slaughter cease. It grieves my soul to think
The crimes of one shou'd cost mankind so dear.

PAULINUS.

Sir, how will you dispose the cruel tyrant?

SCANDERBEG.

Give him his liberty, and leave him here
Till he shall think it proper to retire.
Such of his subjects as attend him now,
Or shall repair hither to do him service,
Shall all be safe. His lovely, virtuous daughter,
Worthy a better race and happier fate,
Preserv'd my life.

AMURATH.

Dogs! slaves! will none dispatch me?
Must I hear this yet be compell'd to live?

SCANDERBEG.

Unhappy man! how will he bear the rest?
When justice strikes let guilty mortals tremble,
And all revere her power, but none insult



The miserable. Her impartial sword
Scorns to assist man's selfish, low revenge :
T'avoid her anger let us shun the thought.
Be witness, heaven ! I pity and forgive him.

[*Exeunt* SCAN. ARAN. & ALTHEA,

A M U R A T H,

Can this be true ! am I cast down from that
Majestic height, where like an earthly god,
For more than half an age, I sat enthron'd,
To the abhor'd condition of a slave ?
A pardon'd slave ! what ! live to be forgiven !
And all this brought upon me by Hellena !
Shou'd our prophet return to earth and swear it,
I'd tell him to his face that he was perjur'd.
Hell wants the power and heaven wou'd never curse
To that degree a doating, fond, old man.—
What make my child ! my loving, gentle child !
The instrument and author of my ruin !

Enter VISIER, Officers, and AMASIE.

V I S I E R.

Beg them to halt ; blast not a parent's eye
With such a sight.

A M U R A T H.

What fight ? but 'tis no matter ;
There's nothing left for me to hope or fear.

V I S I E R.

A mourning troop of christians from their camp
In solemn pomp's arriv'd ; who, bath'd in tears,
(What en'my could refrain ?) attend a chariot,
That bears Hellena bleeding, pale and dead.

A M U R A T H.

False Mahomet !

[*Swoons.*

OFFICER,

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OFFICER.

Our royal master's dead!

VISIER.

No! he revives; alas! he's not so happy!

AMURATH.

I saw Amasie.

VISIER.

Here the traitor stands,
By Scanderbeg committed to your mercy,

AMASIE.

Hellena did prevent me.—

AMURATH.

Damn'd apostate!

I've heard enough and have no time to lose.—
See him impal'd alive; we'll let him know
As much of hell as can be known on earth,

[Exit AMASIE,

And go from pain to pain. Where is my son?

VISIER.

Fled towards Adrianople.

AMURATH.

He doth well:

Death has o'ertook me here. Lord of so many
Fair, spacious kingdoms, in a hostile land,
Oppress'd with age, misfortunes, grief and shame,
Amurath breathes his last; and leaves his bones
To beg from foes an ignominious grave.
False or ungrateful prophet! have I spread
Fell devastation over half the globe,
To raise thy crescent's pale, uncertain light!
Above the christians glowing, crimson crosses,
In hoary age to be rewarded thus —
When the Hungarian king had broke his faith;

Dis-



300 THE CHRISTIAN HERO.

Distress'd, to his own prophet I appeal'd,
 A stranger, and an enemy; he did me right;
 Restor'd lost vict'ry to my flying troops,
 And gave the perjur'd monarch to my sword.
 But I have done — Cou'dst thou repent, there's no-
 thing

In thy power worth my acceptance now.
 Glory, to thee I've liv'd, but pining grief
 Robs thee of half the honour of my death.
 Osmín, and you my other faithful chiefs,
 'The poor remains of all the mighty host
 I brought to this curs'd siege, this grave of my re-
 nown,

If you return, and live to see my son,
 Bid him remember how his father fell;
 Bid him ne'er sheath the sword,
 'Till my diminish'd fame shine forth and blaze a-new
 In his revenge — revenge me — Oh! revenge. [*Dies.*]

VISIER.

Eclips'd and in a storm our sun is set:
 And now, methinks, as when our prophet fled,
 Terror shou'd seize on each believing heart.
 Let some inform the king — this was his fate;
 'Tis ours to be left without a guide.
 Disperse, wander, away; our shepherd's lost.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE THE LAST.

Enter SCANDERBEG, ARANTHES, ALTHEA,
 PAULINUS, and *Guards.*

SCANDERBEG.

That you are free and happy I rejoice.
 If I have faithfully discharg'd my trust
 I'm well rewarded here.

P A U-

PAULINUS.

O royal fir!

Your happiness is ours; this virtuous princess
An equal blessing to yourself and people.

SECOND OFFICER.

To say each subject loves you as himself,
Is less than truth: we love you as we ought;
As a free people shou'd a patriot king.

SCANDERBEG.

This is to reign, this is to be a king.
Who can controul his power, who rules the will
Of those o'er whom he reigns? or count his wealth,
Who has the hearts of subjects that abound?
Was ever prince so absolute as I?

PAULINUS.

Or ever subjects so intirely free?
Whose duty's interest, and obedience choice.

SCANDERBEG.

For this alone was government ordain'd;
And kings are gods on earth but while, like gods,
They do no ill, but reign to bless mankind.
May proud, relentless Amurath's misfortunes
Teach future monarchs to avoid his crimes.
Th' impious prince, who does all laws disown,
Yet claims from heaven a right to hold his throne,
Blasphemes that power, which righteous kings obey;
For justice and mercy bound ev'n th' Almighty's
sway.

E P I-

