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Saul, An Oratorio

Jennens, Charles

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Act. III.

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A C T III. S C E N E I.

SAUL *disguis'd at Endor.*

WRETCH that I am ! of my own Ruin Author !
 Where are my old Supports ? The valiant Youth,
 Whose very Name was Terror to my Foes,
 My Rage has drove away. Of God forsaken,
 In vain I ask his Counsel ! He vouchsafes
 No Answer to the Sons of Disobedience !
 Ev'n my own Courage fails me ! — Can it be ?
 Is *Saul* become a Coward ? — I'll not believe it !
 If Heav'n denies thee Aid, seek it from Hell !
 'Tis said, here lives a Woman, close Familiar
 With th' Enemy of Mankind. Her I'll consult,
 And know the Worst. Her Art is Death by Law ;
 And while I minded Law, sure Death attended
 Such horrid Practices : Yet, O hard Fate !
 My self am now reduc'd to ask the Counsel
 Of those I once abhorr'd !

S C E N E II.

SAUL *and the Witch of Endor.*

Witch. With me what would'st thou ?

Saul. I wou'd, that by thy Art thou bring me up
 The Man whom I shall name.

Witch. Alas ! thou know'st
 How *Saul* has cut off those who use this Art.
 Would'st thou insnare me ?

Saul. As Jehovah lives,
 On this Account no Mischief shall befall thee.

Witch. Whom shall I bring up to thee ?

Saul. Bring up *Samuel*.

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Witch.



Witch.

*Infernal Spirits, by whose Pow'r
 Departed Ghosts in living Forms appear,
 Add Horror to the Midnight Hour,
 And chill the holdest Hearts with Fear :
 To this Stranger's wond'ring Eyes
 Let the Prophet Samuel rise.*

S C E N E III.

Apparition of SAMUEL, SAUL.

Sam. Why hast thou forc'd me from the Realms of Peace
 Back to this World of Woe ?

Saul. O holy Prophet !

Refuse me not thy Aid in this Distress.
 The num'rous Foe stands ready for the Battle :
 God has forsaken me : No more He answers
 By Prophets or by Dreams : No Hope remains,
 Unless I learn of thee what Course to take.

Sam. Hath God forsaken thee ? And dost thou ask
 My Counsel ? Did I not foretel thy Fate,
 When, madly disobedient, thou didst spare
 The curst *Analekite*, and on the Spoil
 Didst fly rapacious ? Therefore God this Day
 Hath verify'd my Words in thy Destruction ;
 Hath rent the Kingdom from thee, and bestow'd it
 On *David*, whom thou hatest for his Virtue.
 Thou and thy Sons shall be with me To-morrow,
 And *Israel* by *Philistine* Arms shall fall.
 The Lord hath said it : He will make it good.

S C E N E



S C E N E IV.

DAVID, &c. *To them an Amalekite.*

David. Whence comest thou ?

Amal. Out of the Camp of *Israel.*

David. Thou canst inform me then : How went the Battle ?

Amal. The People, put to flight, in Numbers fell,
And *Saul*, and *Jonathan* his Son, are dead.

David. Alas ! my Brother ! — But how know'st thou
That they are dead ?

Amal. Upon Mount *Gilboa*

I met with *Saul*, just fall'n upon his Spear.

Swiftly the Foe pursu'd. He cry'd to me,

Begg'd me to finish his imperfect Work,

And end a Life of Pain and Ignominy.

I knew he could not live, and therefore slew him ;

Took from his Head the Crown, and from his Arms

The Bracelets, and have brought them to my Lord.

David. Whence art thou ?

Amal. I am an *Amalekite.*

DAVID.

Impious Wretch, of Race accurst !

And of all that Race the worst !

How hast thou dar'd to lift thy Sword

Against th' Anointed of the Lord ?

Fall on him — smite him — let him die ;

On thy own Head thy Blood will lie ;

Since thy own Mouth has testify'd,

By Thee the Lord's Anointed dy'd.

[To one of his At-
tendants, who kills
the *Amalekite.*

S C E N E



SCENE V.

ELEGY on the Death of SAUL and JONATHAN.

I.

MOURN, Israel, *mourn, thy Beauty lost,*
Thy choicest Youth on Gilboa slain.
How have thy fairest Hopes been crost!
What Heaps of mighty Warriors strow the Plain!

II.

O let it not in Gath be heard,
The News in Askelon let none proclaim;
Lest we, whom once so much they fear'd,
Be by their Women now despis'd,
And lest the Daughters of th' Uncircumcis'd
Rejoice and triumph in our Shame.

III.

From this unbappy Day,
No more, ye Gilboan Hills, on you
Descend refreshing Rain or kindly Dew,
Which erst your Heads with Plenty crown'd;
Since there the Shield of Saul, in Arms renown'd,
Was vilely cast away.

IV.

Brave Jonathan his Bow ne'er drew,
But wing'd with Death his Arrow flew,
And drank the Blood of slaughter'd Foes:
Nor drew Great Saul his Sword in vain;
It reek'd, where'er he dealt his Blows,
With Entrails of the mighty Slain.

V. Eagles

V.

*Eagles were not so swift as they,
Nor Lions with so strong a Grasp held fast and tore the Prey.*

VI.

*In sweetest Harmony they liv'd,
Nor Death their Union cou'd divide :
The pious Son ne'er left his Father's Side,
But him defending bravely dy'd :
A Loss too great to be surviv'd !*

VII.

*For Saul, ye Maids of Israel, moan,
To whose indulgent Care
You owe the Scarlet and the Gold you wear,
And all the Pomp in which your Beauty long has shone.*

VIII.

*O fatal Day ! How low the Mighty lie !
O Jonathan ! how nobly didst thou die,
For thy King and Country slain !
For thee, my Brother Jonathan,
How great is my Distress !
What Language can my Grief express ?
Great was the Pleasure I enjoy'd in thee !
And more than Woman's Love thy wondrous Love to me !*

IX.

*O fatal Day ! How low the Mighty lie !
Where, Israel, is thy Glory fled ?
Spoil'd of thy Arms, and sunk in Infamy,
How canst thou raise again thy drooping Head !*

ABIATHAR.



A B I A T H A R.

*Ye Men of Judah, weep no more ;
 Let Gladness reign in all our Host ;
 For pious David will restore
 What Saul by Disobedience lost.
 The Lord of Hosts is David's Friend,
 And Conquest will his Arms attend.*

C H O R U S.

*Gird on thy Sword, thou Man of Might,
 Pursue thy wonted Fame :
 Go on, be prosperous in Fight,
 Retrieve the Hebrew Name.
 Thy strong Right-Hand, with Terror arm'd,
 Shall thy obdurate Foes dismay ;
 While others, by thy Virtue charm'd,
 Shall crowd to own thy Righteous Sway.*

F I N I S.



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