

THE ADULATEUR. A Tragedy, As it is now acted in UPPER SERVIA.

Then let us rise my friends, and strive to fill
This little interval, this pause of life,
(While yet our liberty and fates are doubtful)
With resolution, friendship, Roman bravery,
And all the virtues we can crowd into it;
That Heav'n may say it ought to be prolong'd.
CATO's Tragedy.

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DRAMATIS PERSONAE.

RAPATIO,— Governor of Servia.
Limput,— Married to Rapatio's Sister.
Hazlerod,— L. C. Justice. Brother to Limput.
Dupe,— Secretary of State.
P—p,— An Officer.
Gripeall,— Captain Bashaw.
Bagshot,— Aga of the Janizaries
Meagre,— Brother to Rapatio.
E—r,— A Friend to Government.
Brutus,— Chief of the Patriots.
Junius, Cassius, Portius, PATRIOTS.
Marcus, a Young Patriot,
Citizens, Senators, Ghosts,—

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A street in SERVIA.

Enter BRUTUS and CASSIUS.

BRUTUS.

IS this the once fam'd mistress of the north?
The sweet retreat of freedom? dearly pur|chas'd!
A clime matur'd with blood; from whose rich soil,
Has sprung a glorious harvest.—Oh! my friend,
The change how drear! the sullen ghost of bondage,
Stalks full in view—already with her pinions,
She shades the affrighted land—th' insulting soldi|ers,
Tread down our choicest rights; while hoodwink'd justice
Drops her scales, and totters from her basis.
Thus torn with nameless wounds, my bleeding country
Demands a tear—that tear I'll freely give her,

Cassius.

Oh! Brutus, our noble ancestors,
Who liv'd for freedom, and for freedom dy'd:
Who scorn'd to roll in affluence, if that state
Was sicken'd o'er with the dread name of slaves:
Who in this desert stock'd with beasts and men,
Whose untam'd souls breath'd nought but slaugh|ter—
Grasp'd at freedom, and they nobly won it;
Then smil'd and dy'd contented, Should these heroes,
Start from their tombs and view their dear possessi|ons,
The price of so much labor, cost and blood,
Gods! what a pang 'twould cost them; yes, they'd weep,
Nor weep in vain. That good old spirit,
Which warm'd them once, would rouse to noble actions.
E're they would cringe they'd bathe their swords in blood;
In heaps they'd fall, and on the pile of freedom,
Expire like heroes, or they'd save their country.

Brutus.

Oh! Cassius, you inspire a noble passion,
It glows within me, and every pulse I feel,
Beats high for glory.—I sprang, and Oh! it fires me,
I sprang from men, who fought, who bled for freedom:
From men, who in the conflict laugh'd at danger:
Struggl'd like patriots, and through seas of blood,
Waded to conquest.—I'll not disgrace them.
I'll show a spirit worthy of my fire.
Tho' malice dart her stings;—tho' poverty
Stares full upon me;—tho' power with all her thun|der,
Rolls o'er my head,—thy cause my bleeding country
I'll never leave—I'll struggle hard for thee,
And if I perish, perish like a freeman.

Cassius.

You're not alone—there are, I know, ten thousand,
Ne'er bow'd the knee to idol power—Repeated in|sults
Have rous'd the most lethargic. E'en the old man
Whose blood has long creep'd sluggish thro' his veins,
Now feels his warmth renew'd—his pulse beat quick—
His eyes dart fire—he grasps his sword,
And calls on youth to aid him—yea my son,
My little son, who sportive climbs my knees,
Fondly intreats my aid, and lisps out freedom.
But see our friends—their generous bosoms glow;
With manly Sentiment:—I will accost them.
Patriots hail!—

Enter JUNIUS and PORTIUS.

Portius.

All hail my friends!—
Well met I trust, and with one heart and mind.
We have lately seen a piece of pageantry,
Near Imports mansion, big with mighty meaning.
The period dawns, when all those parricides,
Who long had sported with their country's ruin,
Begin to tremble—Shame, contempt croud on them.
The boy despises and the stripling smiles.

Brutus.

'Tis well—here lies my hope:—let but a sense,
A manly sense of injur'd freedom wake them,
The day's half won. The cold inactive spirit
That slumbers in its chains,—at this I tremble.
Oh! patriots rouse. The distant branches lop'd;
The root now groans—let not the thought of power,
Ungenerous thought! freeze up the genial current.
'Tis not a conquest, merely, leads to fame—
Th' attempt enobles. Yes, the suffering patriot
Tow'rs while he bleeds, and triumphs while he dies.

Junius.

When Brutus speaks, old age grows young.
Whatever right I've lost! I've still a dagger,
And have a hand to wield it—'tis true it shakes—
With age it shakes: Yet in the cause of freedom,
It catches vigor. You shall find it strike
The tyrant from his Throne.

Brutus.

Thou good old man. Thy words a noble ardor kindle in me.
Come patriots, let the bright example fire you.
By all that's sacred! by our father's shades!
Illustrious shades! who hover o'er this country,
And watch like guardian angels o'er its rights:
By all that blood, that precious blood they spilt,
To gain for us the happiest boon of Heaven:
By life—by death—or still to catch you more,
By LIBERTY, by BONDAGE. I conjure you.

All.

Nor is it vain. We swear, e'er we'll be slaves,
We'll pour our choicest blood. No terms shall move us.
These streets we'll pave with many an human skull.
Carnage, blood and death, shall be familiar,
Tho' Servia weep her desolated realms.

Brutus.

'Tis bravely spoke. And now thou power supreme!
Who hatest wrong, and wills creation happy,

Hear and revenge a bleeding country's groans;
Teach us to act with firmness and with zeal:
'Till happier prospects gild the gloomy waste.
While from our fate shall future ages know,
Virtue and freedom are thy care below.

[Exeunt.

SCENE II.

A Chamber in Repatio's House.

Enter RAPATIO, solus.

HAIL happy day! In which I find my wishes,
My gayest wishes crown'd. Brundo retir'd,
The stage is clear. Whatever gilded prospects
E'er swam before me—Honor, places, pensions—
All at command—Oh! my full heart! 'twill burst!
Now patriots think, think on the past and tremble,
Think on that gloomy night, when, as you phras'd it,
Indignant justice rear'd her awful front,
And frown'd me from her—when ten thousand monsters,
Wretches who only claim'd mere outward form,
To give a sanction to humanity
Broke my retirement—rush'd into my chamber,
And rifled all my secrets—then flung me helpless,
Naked and destitute, to beg protection.
Hell! what a night was this—and do they think,
I'll e'er forget such treatment! No. Ye gods—
If there is any secret sympathy,
Which born, and bred together, they may claim,
I give it to the winds—out! out! vile passion,
I'll trample down the choicest of their rights,
And make them curse the hour that gave me birth;
That hung me up a meteor in the sky,
Which from its tail, shook pestilence and ruin.
But here comes Dupe, a creature form'd by nature
To be a sycophant—Tho' I despis'd him,
Yet he's too necessary for my purpose,
To be relinquish'd—I'll take him by the hand—
Give him a bow, and buoy up his hopes—
He's mine for ever.—

Enter DUPE.

Dupe.

It gives me highest joy to see your honor.
Servia's sole ruler—what tho' not complete,
And primly seated in the chair of power,

Yet all the reins of government you hold.
And should that happy period e'er arrive
When Brundo quits for thee entire possession,
Remember Dupe, and think on former friendships.

Rapatio.

I'll not forget. And well thou said I held
The reins of power; and I will make them feel it.
And, happy for me, all the posts of honor,
Are fill'd with beings wholly at my service.
The b—b what are they? Creatures of my own;
Who if I spoke, would mangle law and reason,
And nobly trample on the highest ties.
And hence the soldier, whose security,
Is the prime basis of my government,
May scoff, insult, nay, in the face of day,
Abuse the citizens, yet go unpunish'd.
P—p too, an happy creature this
To serve a turn—tho' men whose breath was slaughter,
Should urge the meanest of our servants on—
To bathe their daggers in their masters blood,
P—p stays, proceedings—At my nod,
Will break thro' every tie of law and justice,
And bid those monsters go—In short all orders
Obey my summons, and perform my will.

Dupe.

What halcyon days!—And have I liv'd to see them?
And share them too? enough—I've liv'd my day.

Rapatio.

But tell me Dupe, they say these mut|tering wretches,
Grow fond of riot, and with pageantry,
Do ridicule the friends of government.

Dupe.

The thing is fact—The worthy citizen
Finds property precarious—all things tend
To anarchy and ruin.

Rapatio.

I'll make the scoundrels know who sways the sceptre,
Before I'll suffer this, I'll throw the state,
In dire confusion, nay I'll hurl it down,
And bury all things in one common ruin.
O'er fields of death, with hastning step I'll speed,
And smile at length to see my country bleed:
From my tame heart the pang of virtue fling,

And mid the general flame, like Nero sing.—

[Exeunt.

End of the first ACT.

ACT II.

SCENE I.

Enter BRUTUS and CASSIUS.

BRUTUS.

HA! is it come to this?—and did you see it?

Cassius.

I saw it—and could paint a scene of woe,
Would make the sun collect his scatter'd rays
And shroud himself in night—While numbers crouded,
Thoughtless of harm to see the pageantry,
And sportive youths play'd gamesome in the street,
That wretch, that cursed E—r,
Whom long this country blush'd to own her son—
Urg'd on by hell and malice, unprovok'd—
Hurl'd thro' the croud promiscuous death and slaughter—
One youth, unhappy victim fell—he lies
Reeking in gore, and bites the hated ground.

Brutus.

Oh! this poor land—what scenes await it!
This is the dawn—if murders open here,
What will the day disclose! Oppression strews
Her earliest paths with blood—gods! are we men?
And stand we still and bear it? where's our sense?
Our ancient sense of freedom? even the boy,
Should we be tame, would feel his pulse beat high:
And nobly grasp the sword he scarce could wield.

Cassius.

It must be so—we'll right ourselves or die—
But what approaches here?

Enter PORTIUS and a croud.

Portius.

who's there?

Brutus.

a friend.

Portius.

Ha! Brutus, take the sword and bravely [plunge it!

Brutus.
In whom?

Portius.
a wretch.

Brutus.
a wretch?

Portius.
a murderer.

Let not one motive damp thy rising ardor—
The parent weeps his child, the staff of age,
Untimely slain. Pity, revenge—rage—fury—
Ten thousand boistrous passions glow within me
And call for blood. Not this poor wretch alone—
The grand prime spring shall fall a sacrifice.
Tho' all his legions fondly hover'd round him.
I'd cut my way thro' all—and this my sword
Drench in the tyrant's blood, then on the pile
Of bleeding freedom, pour the rich libation.

Brutus.
Stay, Portius, stay—let reason calm thy passions.
Let us not fully by unmeaning actions,
The cause of injur'd freedom; this demands
A cool, sedate and yet determin'd spirit.

Portius.
Brutus, thy mind compos'd can reason well,
But when I see even innocence itself
Can find no shelter—my pulse beat high!
I'm all on fire?—speak to the distant winds!
Command a storm! or lull an hurricane!—

Brutus.
But hear me, Portius, one word more I ask thee.
You know the foes of freedom, eagle-ey'd,
Watch every deed. They wish to see us act
Up to the character, they long have painted:
Headstrong—rebellious—factious—uncontroul'd,—
Rather to justice drag the murderer.

Portius.
Brutus you know, who fill that sacred bench.
Rapatio's tools, mere creatures of the tyrant.

Depend upon't they'll vilely wrest the law,
And save the villain—yes, depend upon't,
Should he be brought before that brib'd tribunal,
They'll plead his cause, and save the murderer's life.—

Brutus.

Well Portius, that's with them.

We've done as patriots ought—like men who scorn.

The name of faction—men who nobly act

From sense of honor. If they save the villain.

THEIRS IS THE GUILT OF BLOOD: and he who holds

Impartial justice, will demand an answer.

Portius.

'Tis well—you've charm'd my angry soul to rest.

I'll go and soothe the boistrous multitude,

Calm all their souls, and make them act like freemen. Exit.

Brutus.

Oh! Cassius—Oh! my friend—my heart it bleeds,

It bleeds to hear the groans of gasping freedom.

Could but my life atone and save my country,

Pleas'd cou'd I bare this breast, and die in transport.

Cassius.

No Brutus, live, and live to rescue virtue.

For this ten-thousand motives croud upon us.

Our fathers seem to murmur in their tombs,

And urge us on. Last night as I lay musing,

On evils past, and trembling at the future:

A gleam of light broke in on my retirement.

My father's ghost burst on my startled fancy,

And froze the current of my blood—he star'd—

Horrid he star'd—then frown'd and spoke in thun|der.

"Cassius attend. Where is that noble spirit,

"I once instill'd—behold this fair possession

"I struggled hard to purchase, fought and bled

"To leave it your's unsullied—Oh defend it,

"Nor lose it but in death." He spake and vanish'd.

Yes, I reply'd, thou injur'd shade, I will defend;

And e'er I'll lose it meet ten thousand deaths.

Brutus.

Nor these alone—all those who fought for freedom,

Chide the unmanly sloth—mean while, my friend,

Let's see the mournful obsequies perform'd.

Give to the dust, the relics of a youth,

Untimely crop'd, and lost—like some gay flow'r

Which vernal zephyrs fan'd and gentle sun beams

Wak'd to life—awhile, it chear'd our sight,

And promis'd—pleasure when the rigorous north
Blasted its bloom, and froze up every sweet.
Let's pay this last sad tribute to the dead,
Together in the funeral pomp let's go
Share in there grief, and join the general woe.
[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

Enter BAGSHOT, and RAPATIO.

BAGSHOT.
IT must not—shall not be—the dirty scoundrels,
Foaming with passion animate each other—
Abuse my men and trample on my bands.

Rapatio.
Insulting dogs! and are they wrought to this?
'Tis well—a scene now opens to my mind.
And hark'ee Bagshot—should these high swoln wretches
Again insult, remember you are soldiers—

Bagshot.
Well then, since you approve,
I'll give those orders, which I dare not do
By my mere motion.
Repeated wrongs have blown up all their courage.
They stretch like steeds, and snuffs the distant battle;
And like the vulture, couch in dreadful ambush
Exeunt.
And wait a day of carnage—fire, adieu—

SCENE II.

Changes to a street in Servia.

Enter BRUTUS, solus.
TO be the sport of every flying moment—
The butt at which old time may throw his shafts,
And vex him oft—light tennis ball of fortune—
This is thy fate, O man. Weak helpless creature,
Design'd to crawl with other little reptiles
Round this dull globe of earth—to sport a while,
And wanton in the sun shine of an hour.
Frolic and gay he trifles on the stage,
Nor sees the various ills behind the scene.
These dart their baneful stings unnotic'd at him
And spoils his mirth—misfortune treads on joy,

And every hour comes loaded with new sorrows.
This I experience—each succeeding day
Affords fresh scenes of woe—not only one
Deaf to the call of nature pleading in him
Imbrues his hands in blood—ten thousand join him.
The soldier heated by the curs'd example,
His poinard whets,
And swear to fill these streets with blood and slaughter,

Enter CASSIUS in much agitation.

Cassius.
Oh! Brutus, what a scene! the hour is come—
Our fates are at a crisis—Servia shakes—
Thro' this once happy seat of gaiety and pleasure
The soldier foams, and belches nought but slaughter.
This fatal night, the plan before concerted,
Bursts into flames—the virtuous citizen
Flies from one death, and rushes on another.
Hard by I saw a little innocent,
Whose quiv'ring tears might make e'en Nero weep,
Clasp the rough knees of the inhuman ruffian,
And beg for pity—but he begs in vain—
High o'er his head the sabre dreadful gleam'd,
He fell and spake no more—but hark!—
[a confus'd sound of voices, clashing of arms, with frequent oaths is heard.]
It must be so—
Brutus, the citizen now falls a victim,
To brutal malice—ha!—a gun—another—
And another still—O my poor country,
When will thy troubles end!—

Enter JUNIUS PORTIUS and others, in much agitation.

Junius.
Th' inhuman soldiers stamp the hostile ground,
His garments stain'd with blood,
The streets of Servia sweat with human gore.
Oh! Brutus, I'm on fire—hand me my sword,
And give me to the foe—
And if we die—let's die like men
And bravely fall expiring on the foe.—
That man dies well who sheds his blood for freedom.

Portius.
Oh! had you seen promiscuous slaughter hurl'd—
Or had you heard the groans of innocence,
'Twould rouse you into action.
While I can boast one short reprieve from death,

I'll breathe revenge. This unstain'd guiltless dagger
Shall sweat with blood, and rust with humane gore.

Brutus.

'Tis well—there Portius spoke like himself,
Let's wake the latent seeds of honor into action.
What do I see?—or is it merely fancy?
Methinks you rising ghost stares full in view,
Points to its wounds and cries aloud—REVENGE.—
My country groans—and can ye hear her sighs,
And hear them tamely?—Oh! my heart 'twill burst.

Junius.

Her sighs?—and hear them tamely? never|never—
Who knows the secrets of my soul,
Knows 'tis on fire, and bursting for revenge.
What tho' I totter with a weight of years,
And palsied age relaxes every nerve,
Yet such soul deeds have rous'd the genial current,
That long had lag'd—this life by nature's laws,
Like an old garment must have soon been drop'd:
And never could I, had I liv'd to ages,
Have dy'd so well as now—to die at ease,
And drop into the grave, unheard, unknown,
This is but common fate—
He, who bleeds in freedom's cause, expires illustri|ous.
He falls, but catches immortality.
While greatful millions croud around,
And with a generous tear bedew his urn.
[Exeunt.

SCENE III.

In a large HALL.

Enter BRUTUS and a croud of CITIZENS. With servants bearing the dead bodies.

BRUTUS

HERE lay them down, and bare their bleeding bosoms,
That I may feel their wounds, and weep upon them.
These wounds gape wide, and speak expressive language,
They speak your state, the sport of every ruffian,
Who plays with death and thirsts for freemen's blood.
For you they fell—but hark! they cry REVENGE.

Citizens.

REVENGE—

Brutus.

True 'tis a mornful sight—to see a brother

Fall by a brothers hand—the desert savage,
Who kills his foe and feasts upon his flesh,
Yet spares his kindred—the forest monster,
Who stains the passage to his den with blood,
Abhors such deeds—but shocking as they are,
They teach a powerful lesson.
This soon may be your fate, the furious soldier
Breaths nought but death—

Brutus.

These twinkling stars that glimmer in their orbs
And seem to weep—these pale and ghastly forms—
This scene of woe, and death's incumbent shade,
All join to rouse us—these embers here conceal'd,
If set on fire, would burst into a flame,
And burn up the globe—take hence these bodies,
And decently entomb them—
Croud round their bier, and weep upon their graves.
[Exeunt.

[With the bodies attended with a long train of mourners, The bells tolling]

Enter BRUTUS.

Brutus.

Oh! what a scene of woe! you oft, my friends,
Have found me pleading in the cause of freedom,
And warding off the blows intended for her.
I'm struggling now with a superior stream;
It baffles every effort—But the conflicts glorious
Should we succeed an happy tide of comfort,
Flows on the soul—new scenes of joy await us,
And gild the ev'ning of our days.
But if we chance to fall, we fall for virtue.
The cause disarms the tyrant of his sting
And wards off his shafts—while our memories
For ages live and blossom round the tomb.
Such thoughts as these now buoy up my spirits,
And brighten all the gloom;—what tho' misfortunes
And scenes of blood and carnage croud upon me;
F•re long my soul shall leave
These dismal tracks of misery, and go
Where tides of joy in happier currents flow.
Where the proud wretch that laugh'd at every tie,
And from the breast of virtue forc'd a sigh;
No more invade—but endless pleasures roll,
And one eternal sun shine cheers the soul.
[Exeunt.

End of the second ACT.

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A spacious HALL.

Enter JUNIUS, BRUTUS, CASSIUS, CITIZENS, &c.

JUNIUS

IT'S time, high time to check the rage of slaughter
And let our actions show that we are freemen.

Brutus.

Welcome thrice happy day! for so I call thee,
Tho' scenes of woe attend us—
I feel a ray of hope that richest gem,
Which glimmers in the darkest night,
And gilds the gloom—that firm determin'd spirit,
Which seems to animate this grand assembly,
The most august that ever set in Servia,
We'll rescue freedom—yes, thy wounds my country
Shall soon be clos'd, and from the precious gore,
Which stains thy streets shall spring a glorious har|vest.
Now is the crisis; if we lose this moment,
All's gone for ever—Catch the happy period, us?
And boldly hurl oppression from her basis.

Cassius.

And can you want for motives to perswade
Go to yon tomb and ask the weeping marble,
The fate of those, who sleep within it's bosom.
They fell in cries (and listen to the tale)
Unhappy victims to inhuman ruffians;
Who wish to drink this countries richest blood,
And crush expiring freedom—Tell me ye patriots
Will you submit to fall without a struggle?
The very worm you tread on shews resentment.

Brutus.

'Tis true there's mighty danger—
But shall that thought, that mean ungenerous thought
Damp in the left our ardor!
We ne'er can be seduc'd by gaudy charms of riches
Pleasure's fantastick ray—
Leave this for weaker minds—We scorn them all.
Rather let Servia tumble from her basis,
And in one general ruin cover all,
Than see her citizens oppress'd with chains
And sweetly slumb'ring in the gilded fetters.
The man who boasts his freedom,

Feels solid joy—tho' poor and low his state,
He looks with pity on the honor'd slave.

Cassius.

These are sentiments, Which make us men.
Has life so many charms,
That it can sweeten every hour of bondage?
Look to the Furk, and relish if you can,
A life in chains—he sighs, but sighs unpitied.
Groans are so frequent, that they pass unnotic'd,
And no one counts the steps of misery.
Enter a GHOST with naked breasts exposing his wounds. Cassius proceeds,
Oh! Heaven! see yonder ghastly
It comes to push us on, and cries again REVENGE, form,
Points to it's wounds, and beckons us away. ghost sinks
And shall we falter?

Brutus.

There glow'd the flame of heroes.
If thus resolv'd, some to Rapatio speed;
Tell him we are determin'd—fix'd as fate—
The soldier stay no longer—if deni'd—
A scene of woe shall quickly open.
Yon sun shall set in blood—the weeping moon,
Shrink in her orb—we'll dare, what men can dare;
And with our daggers force a way to freedom.
[A number are sent to RAPATIO's with an account of this resolution.]

SCENE II.

The great HALL.

Enter RAPATIO and SENATORS.

RAPATIO.

WELL, friends, you hear the issue of their coun|cils.
The soldier goes, or else they swear to bathe
These streets in blood—ask my resolution.
Say, shall the soldier go?

1st. Senator.

The people's fury's rais'd: they scorn to trifle longer.
'Tis not the efforts of expiring faction—
The weak attempts of a distracted party.
But men, who act on principles of honor,
Now grasp the sword, and glorious in the struggle.
Will force their way to freedom.—

Rapatio.

True, but remember—

These troops;—no power of mine
Can contract—I'm but a servant—

2d. Senator.

But stop, Rapatio, stop.

'Tis the cause of freedom they defend:—

Thy very life's connected with the issue.

They will not suffer unreveng'd:

You too may fall—

Go mark the gloom that broods on every feature.

Where mournful echo heaves along the wall,

And strikes with all the elegance of woe.

No headstrong opposition actuates.

They coolly weigh, and cautiously determine;

Speak what they feel, and what they feel they act.

Rapatio.

Well, I'll see Bagshot, as he advises

[Exit.

So will I act—

3d. Senator.

Unhappy state of mind!

What tho' ten thousand pleasures beam around him,

The gilded couch—the airy post of honor:

No balm of peace, can mitigate his pain.

The ghost of freedom haunts his midnight hours.

This is thy state, O guilt—to stop, is ruin—

To follow on is death—give me but virtue,

That sun-shine of the soul—enough—I'm happy.

Scene changes to a private apartment—

Enter RAPATIO and BAGSHOT.

Rapatio.

The cause is lost! the Patriot's up in arms,

Pant for revenge—the soldier must retire—

Say, Bagshot. Can you stand the gathering storm?

Bagshot.

'Tis an hard case indeed—what can I do?

A soldier's honor should remain unsullied.

True to his post, should laugh at every danger,

Enjoy his fate, and smile amid the storm.

But when ten thousand furies burst upon me,

Despise my utmost force, and breathe defiance—

Honor says, stand—but prudence says, retire.

Rapatio.

But, Bagshot! how this scoundrell mob will triumph.

Rather rouse up some noble purpose in you;
Burn down their airy towers, and let the flames
Light thee to conquest.

Bagshot.

These are charming words.

Close in his cell, the calm philosopher
Enjoys the storm, grasps at the palm of glory,
And fights the distant battles of the world.
It will not, cannot do—if they're determin'd,
We yield to conquering fate, and curse our fortune.

Rapatio.

Bagshot farewell—I'll to the hall,
[Exeunt.]

SCENE III.

The upper HALL.

Enter RAPATIO and SENATORS.

RAPATIO.

SINCE you advis'd to this, call in the patriots—

Enter PATRIOTS—

It grieves my soul, to hear the groans of freedom;
And I'm resolv'd, whatever it may cost me,
To heal these wounds and save my bleeding country.
I've struggled hard, to get the cause remov'd.
The soldier goes—and 'tis my fervent prayer—
Each other wrong may find a quick remove,
And prince and peasant join in mutual love.
[Exeunt.]

Scene changes to the SENATE House. Enter BRUTUS.

Brutus.

Patriots all hail! the happy hour approaches,
When vanquish'd freedom rears again her head,
And sweetly smiles. Our constant manly conduct
Has won the day—the sullen foe is tiring—
[He is interrupted with an universal shout]—
Oh! what a burst of joy was that—there broke
The warm effusion of an heart that feels
In virtue's cause. Gods! what a throb of pleasure
To look around this vast, this crowded hall
And hail them freemen—what though some have bled,

Unhappy victims—what tho' I have wept,
And struggl'd hard to rescue thee, my country,
This glorious harvest richly compensates
For dangers past—nature looks gay around me,
And all creation seems to join my joy.
With transport now I take my little offspring,
And hug them to my bosom, while they catch
The throbs I feel, and prattle out their joys.
Now I can toil for them contented—freeze
In winter's cold, and burn in summer's heat,
And sing my cares away, while what I earn,
I'll call my own, and leave it their's for ever.
And hence, ye patriots learn an useful lesson—
He who in virtue's cause remain unmov'd,
And nobly struggles for his country's good:
Shall more than conquer—better days shall beam,
And happier prospects croud again the scene—
Exeunt

SCENE IV.

Enter RAPATIO, LIMPET, MEAGRE and P—p.

RAPATIO.
WHAT say my friends? shall patriots, grov'ling patriots,
Thus thwart our schemes? push back the plan of ac|tion!
And make it thus recoil? mistaken wretches!
Unthinking fools! they work their own destruction.
Let them amuse themselves with thoughts of free|dom,
And bask amid the sunshine of an hour;—
They hover o'er the secret precipice—
The leap is death. Come, cunning be my guide,
Beleagu'd with hell—Come all those hateful passi|ons,
That rouse the mind to action.

Meagre.
Bravely spoke!
And here's a soul, like thine, that never linger'd,
When prompted by revenge—If thirst of power;
A spirit haughty, four, implacable,
That bears a deadly enmity to freedom,
But mean and base; who never had a notion
Of generous and manly; who would stab,
Stab in the dark, but what he'd get revenge;
If such a soul is suitable to thy purpose,
'Tis here.

Rapatio.
I thank thee—thy fraternal love

I always knew, twin brother in affection.
Bagshot complains his numbers are but few;
We must have more: and here the field's extensive.
But then their dev'lish coolness comes athwart us,
To represent them factious and rebellious;
Mov'd on by malice to attack the soldier—
There lies the doubt—the simple bare assertion
Would sway but weak.

Limput.
If this is all you want—
If breaking thro' the sanction of an oath,
And trampling on the highest obligations
Would back this good design—here's one will do it.
In youth when all my soul was full of virtue,
And growing age had not matur'd my practice, habits
I felt a pang and shudder'd at a crime.
But thoughts like these have long since slept; old
Have fear'd my conscience—Vice is now familiar—
Prescribe whatever form you chuse—I sign it—

Rapatio.
'Tis well—then swear—that in our gene|ral meeting,
This was declar'd, that long before that night,
In which we snuff'd the blood of innocence,
The factious citizens, urg'd on by hell,
Had leagu'd together, to attack the soldier;
Trample on laws; murder the friends of power
And bury all things in one common ruin.
All this you call the majesty of heaven
To witness to as truth—

Limput.
I do, and swear.

Rapatio.
There's one thing more and then my mind's at rest.
Those noble men who fought for government
Are now confin'd, and soon must have a trial.
Let's all unite and use our utmost efforts
To get them off. There's worthy Hazlerod
Who hears with too much joy the groans of freedom,
To see her executioners expire.
On you my dear P—p much depends.

P—p.
And is Rapatio grown distrustful of me!
Of me, who long had facrific'd my honor,
To be a tool?—who've cring'd and bow'd and fawn'd
To get a place?—Fear not I e'er should prove

An alien here—Go wash the AEthiop white
Then bid my soul grow fond and pleas'd with virtue.

Rapatio.

Then I'm secure—Know patriots this and tremble.
Grief shall again its wonted seat resume,
And piles of mangled corpses croud the tomb.
Thro' all the wanton streets of pow'r I'll rove,
And soar exulting like the bird of Jove,
On lofty pinions put a sovereign sway,
And glow illustrious in the blaze of day.
[Exeunt.

End of the third ACT.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

Enter RAPATIO and GRIPEALL.

RAPATIO.

HAIL halcyon days! when every flying moment,
Affords new scenes of joy; what tho' the soldier
True to my purpose hurls promiscuous slaughter;
He lives and triumphs while the scales of justice,
Thus by my tools are held. The day is ours.
Such acts my Hazlerod, demand promotion—
And thou shall have it—Yes the time approaches,
The happy period dawns, when thou shall swell
The chair of state, and roll in wish'd for honors—
Thus while each post is garnish'd with my creatures,
I'll show my pow'r, and trample on my country.

Gripeall.

'T was nobly spoke—there breath'd the soul of Caesar.
Nor will I pause—my faithful myrmidons
Wait thy command and hang upon thy will.
I'll use the little pow'r that's lodg'd within me.
I'll cramp their trade 'till pale ey'd poverty
Haunts all their streets, and frowns destruction on them
While many a poor man, leaning on his staff,
Beholds a numerous, famish'd offspring round him,
Who weep for bread. God's how his bosom heaves!
Ghastly he rolls an aching eye upon them,
Then blasts my name, and with a groan expires.

Rapatio.
What throbs of joy—Nero, I tow'r above thee.
[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

RAPATIO'S House.

RAPATIO solus.
O FORTUNATE!—
Could I have tho't my stars would be so kind
As thus to bring my deep laid schemes to bear.
Tho' from my youth ambition's path I trod,
Suck'd the contagion from my mother's breast;
The early taint has rankled in my veins;
Dispotic rule my first, my sov'reign wish.
Yet to succeed, beyond my sanguine hope,
To quench the generous flame, the ardent love
Of liberty in Servia's free born sons,
Destroy their boasted rights, and mark them slaves:
To ride triumphant o'er my native land,
And revel on its spoils—But hark!—it groans!
The heaving struggles of expiring freedom!—
Her dying pangs—and I the guilty cause:—
I shudder at the thought—why this confusion?
The phantom conscience, whom I've bid adieu—
Can she return?—O let me, let me fly!
I dare not meet my naked heart alone.
I'll hast for comfort to the busy scenes,
Where fawning courtiers, creatures of my own,
With adulating tongue, midst gaping crouds,
Shall strive to paint me fair—the day is lucky—
The divan meets and Hazlerod presides.
'Tis true in rhetoric he don't excell
Demosthenes, or Cicero of old:
But what of that, his gratitude to me,
Will animate each period of applause.
I from a fribbling, superficial dabler,
A vain pretender to each learned science,
A poet, preacher, conjurer and quack—
Rear'd the obsequious trifler to my purpose,
Rob'd him in scarlet, dignifi'd the man:
An hecatomb of incense is my due.
How grateful to my ear, these flatt'ring strains!
His fulsome requiem's sooth my soul to peace.
Who else wou'd place in such a sacred seat,
Credulity in wove with the extremes,
Of servile, weak, implacable and proud.
But see he comes—see that important phiz,

A speech prepar'd, but what I must correct,
If interlarded with profuse encomiums.—
To hold me up the paragon of virtue—
But it may pass—of modern composition,
That's the test—

Enter HAZLEROD.

—Welcome, my Hazlerod.—
My friend, my brother, or still dearer name,
Thou firm abettor of my grand design!
Thou now canst cover what the world call crimes.
We'll then securely crush the scoundrell mob,
And Claudia like, the citizens ride o'er,
And execute what Nero durst not do—
[HAZLEROD going hastily off, RAPATIO stops him.]
I'll call my myrmidons, they shall attend,
Swell the parade with all the venal herd.
Gripeall, that minion of oppressive power,
With simple Dupe, the ready tool of state;
And virtuous Limput perjur'd only once,
Then indispensable to serve a cause
Which truth would ruin; doubtless they'll be there.
Exeunt.

SCENE III.

Opens with a procession of coaches, chariots, &c. Changes to the Chamber, where the Divan is opened with a speech by HAZLEROD, highly pleasing to the creatures of arbitrary power, and equally disgusting to every man of virtue.

Enter HAZLEROD.

RAPATIO

—hail! 'tis by thy •aust'ring hand,
This happy day beholds me rob'd in honor,
Pow'r! 'tis a charm the gods can only know:
These, while they view this little globe of earth,
And trace the various movements of mankind,
With pleasure mark that soul, that dares aspire,
To catch this heavenly flame and copy from them.
And sure Rapatio, if mortality
Could ever boast an elevated genius,
That scorns the dust, and tow'rs above the stars;
A soul that only grasps at high achievements,
And drinks intoxicating draughts of power,
The claim is thine—while simple yet they station,
True greatness peer'd, and promis'd future glory.
Yea while an infant, hanging at the breast,
With life, you largely suck'd the lust of power.

In youth, in age, invariably the same.
Thy easy flow of passion, happy talent!
Which work'd on unsuspecting minds so strangely,
Push'd on the plan, and pav'd the road to honor.
With this in view, you'd imitate devotion,
Which like a mantle, cover'd great designs,
With virtue glow, and set among her sons:
While these with transport listned to the tale,
Gaz'd as they heard, and wonder'd how they lov'd
To catch this prize, in what have you not toil'd.
When nature slept, thy busy mind awoke,
And por'd on future scenes, and plan'd thy fate.
Then, when the ties of virtue and thy country,
Unhappy check'd thy lust of pow'r—like Caesar,
You nobly scorn'd them all, and on the ruins,
Of bleeding freedom, sounded all thy greatness.
And what a rich, a glorious compensation
For dangers past—gilded all o'er with pensions,
Here like a mighty deity you sit,
Enthron'd in state, nor envy Jove his thunder.
While aw'd by thee, the distant nations gaze
And thousands yield their tribute of amaze.
Mean while at humble distance I pursue,
And grow illustrious as I copy you.
Then when I've trampil'd on my country's fate,
And no one lives my actions to relate,
With my own ashes light the funeral fire,
Die as I liv'd, and in a flash expire.
[Exeunt.]

End of the fourth ACT.

ACT V.

SCENE I.

Enter BRUTUS.

BRUTUS.
O my poor country!—
I've wak'd and wept, and would have fought for thee,
And emptied every vein, when threatn'd ruin.
Lowr'd o'er thy head; but now too late. I fear
The manacles prepar'd by Brundo's hand,
Cruel Rapatio, with more fatal art,
Has fix'd, has rivetted beyond redress—
My indignation's rous'd, my soul disdains,
Nor will I longer stay where poisonous breath,
Of Sycophants applause, pollutes the air.
The shameless tyrant snuffs the base perfume;

With unreienting heart and brazen front
He rears his guilty head amidst the fear
Of Servia's virtuous sons, whose latest breath
Shall execrate a wretch, who dare enslave,
A generous, free and independent people.
—If, ye pow'rs divine,
Ye mark the movements of this nether world,
And bring them to account—crush, crush these vipers,
Who singl'd out by a community,
To guard their rights—shall for a grasp of oar,
Or paltry office sell them to the foe.
[Exit.

SCENE II.

A PRISON.

E—R, solus.

IT'S done; not all their boasted pow'r can save me!
Not Hazlerod himself with all his art,
Who long had buoy'd up my sinking spirits,
Can soothe the sullen passions of my soul,
Or pour one ray of comfort on my mind.
Condemn'd!—to die! perdition seize them all.
Where are now all the gilded airy prospects
That swam before me—Honors, places, pensions—
'Tis all a cheat, a damn'd a cruel cheat.
The wretch that feasts himself on promises,
Pursues a phantom, and but grasps at air;
Th' illusive vapour leads him to a bog
Then leaves him to his fate—cursed enticers!
Ye who seduc'd my soul to laugh at virtue,
To give up all my right to future bliss,
And hid me dare to stamp the die for ever:
Ye who encourag'd me with hopes of pardon,
To glut your vengeance, for the cause was yours,
On weeping innocence; to act a deed,
Which sportive fame shall blow about the world,
Where are ye now?—

Enter HAZLEROD.

Hazlerod.
What lost to grief!—dejected! can it be!
Can the poor verdict of some half form'd peasants,
Unmeaning dull machines, thus damp your courage
Rouse up my friend, for friend I still will call thee
By every tie that links the humane mind,
That surest sympathy which cement souls,

Which like two rivers mingle mutual streams,
And roll together—thou art and shalt be mine.
Know then we all have met and all determin'd
To aid the cause in hand—decrepid Meagre
In whom a passion of revenge is virtue;
And he, the life of all:—whose simple breath
Sways every action, cautious Latat
Whose soul ne'er knew one generous sentiment,
Which gives a sanction to humanity.
Steady and vigilant, in one sole plan,
To crush the friends of freedom, extirpate
The dear remains of virtue, and like Nero,
At one dread blow to massacre his millions.
Steady to this one plan, tho' dreary spectres
Scare all his soul and haunt his midnight slumber.
Yes, we will still protect thee.—'Tis impossible
A cause so much at heart, shou'd droop and lan|guish,
And we not lend an aid—when S—r bled,
We snuff'd the rich perfume, the groans of youth.
Gods! they were musick in our ears—you therefore
Shall one day leave this dismal tenement,
Again with pleasing scenes of blood and carnage,
To glut our vengeance—yes—by heaven we swear,
You shall be free whatever pangs it cost us.
We'll laugh at all the howls of patriotism.
Should virtue check, should conscience whisperter|ror,
And lash our troubled minds, we'll brave it all.—
[Exeunt.

SCENE III.

Enter BRUTUS, and MARCUS a young Patriot.

Brutus.
It must be so—our fates are too unkind.
Who would have thought, beneath an air of virtue,
Solemn grimace, and proffer of fair deeds,
Should lurk such boseness—To see the Patriot,
Reeking in gore, excites the keenest transport,
Oh! my poor country! when I see thee wounded,
Bleeding to death—it pains me to the soul.
Long have I wept in secret—nay, could weep
'Till tears were chang'd to blood—When will it be,
When high-soul'd honor beats within our bosoms,
And calls to action—when thy sons like heroes,
Shall dare assert thy rights, and with their swords,
Like men, like freemen, force a way to conquest
Or on thy ruins gloriously expire.—

Marcus.

Oh! Brutus, you excite a generous trans|port.
In such a cause, pleas'd could I bare my bosom,
And pour my choicest blood—yes, I have seen,
Tho' young I've seen, such crimes by ermind wretches,
As would have shock'd a century, one thing I wonder,
That deeds so foul should find such warm abettors.

Brutus.

You little know the world—there greater vices,
Lead to preferment, the man of honest mind,
Whose generous soul disdains a grov'ling action,
And grasps alone at virtue—sinks neglected:
Yes, my young friend, would you be great and powerful
Loaded with wealth and honor, be a rascall,
Stoop low and cringe—stick not at oaths, nor let
Thy shrinking soul, start at the thought of MURDER,
Then to Rapatio go, and Hazlerod,
And all the band shall give an hearty welcome.

Marcus.

Oh no! I scorn it—better live a poor man,
And die so too—while virtue and my conscience,
Speak peace within—better, tho' hate and malice,
May shoot their shafts against me—better thus
To make my Exit, while the soul with comfort
Reviews the past and smiles upon the future.

Brutus.

Yes, Marcus, poverty must be thy fate,
If thou'rt thy country's friend—Think upon it
When I'm gone, as soon perhaps I may be
Remember it—those men whose crimes now shock,
May close their measures—Yes, the wish'd for period
May soon arrive, when murders, blood and carnage,
Shall crimson all these streets; when this poor coun|try
Shall loose her richest blood, forbid it heaven!
And may these monsters find their glories fade,
Crush'd in the ruins they themselves had made.
While thou my country, shall again revive,
Shake off misfortune, and thro' ages live.
See thro' the waste a ray of virtue gleame,
Dispell the shades and brighten all the scene.
Wak'd into life, the blooming forest glows,
And all the desart blossoms as the role.
From distant lands see virtuous millions fly
To happier climates, and a milder sky.
While on the mind successive pleasures pour,
'Till time expires, and ages are no more.
[Exeunt omnes.

FINIS.