

FRIEDRICH VON SCHILLER

DON CARLOS

Friedrich Schiller

Don Carlos

«Public Domain»

Schiller F.

Don Carlos / F. Schiller — «Public Domain»,

Содержание

DRAMATIS PERSONAE	5
АКТ I	6
SCENE I	6
SCENE II	12
SCENE III	22
SCENE IV	29
SCENE V	37
SCENE VI	49
SCENE VII	54
SCENE VIII	55
SCENE IX	56
АКТ II	60
SCENE I	60
SCENE II	62
SCENE III	71
SCENE IV	73
SCENE V	78
SCENE VI	85
SCENE VII	86
Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.	87

Friedrich Schiller

Don Carlos: A Play

DRAMATIS PERSONAE

PHILIP THE SECOND, King of Spain.

DON CARLOS, Prince, Son of Philip.

ALEXANDER FARNESE, Prince of Parma.

MARQUIS DE POSA.

DUKE OF ALVA.

Grandeess of Spain:

COUNT LERMA, Colonel of the Body Guard,

DUKE OF FERIA, Knight of the Golden Fleece,

DUKE OF MEDINA SIDONIA, Admiral,

DON RAIMOND DE TAXIS, Postmaster-General,

DOMINGO, Confessor to the King.

GRAND INQUISITOR of Spain.

PRIOR of a Carthusian Convent.

PAGE of the Queen.

DON LOUIS MERCADO, Physician to the Queen.

ELIZABETH DE VALOIS, Queen of Spain.

INFANTA CLARA FARNESE, a Child three years of age.

DUCHESS D'OLIVAREZ, Principal Attendant on the Queen.

Ladies Attendant on the Queen:

MARCHIONESS DE MONDECAR,

PRINCESS EBOLI,

COUNTESS FUENTES,

Several Ladies, Nobles, Pages, Officers of the Body-Guard, and mute Characters.

ACT I

SCENE I

The Royal Gardens in Aranjuez.
CARLOS and DOMINGO.

DOMINGO

Our pleasant sojourn in Aranjuez
Is over now, and yet your highness quits
These joyous scenes no happier than before.
Our visit hath been fruitless. Oh, my prince,
Break this mysterious and gloomy silence!
Open your heart to your own father's heart!
A monarch never can too dearly buy
The peace of his own son – his only son.

[CARLOS looks on the ground in silence.

Is there one dearest wish that bounteous Heaven
Hath e'er withheld from her most favored child?
I stood beside, when in Toledo's walls
The lofty Charles received his vassals' homage,
When conquered princes thronged to kiss his hand,
And there at once six mighty kingdoms fell
In fealty at his feet: I stood and marked
The young, proud blood mount to his glowing cheek,
I saw his bosom swell with high resolves,
His eye, all radiant with triumphant pride,
Flash through the assembled throng; and that same eye
Confessed, "Now am I wholly satisfied!"

[CARLOS turns away.

This silent sorrow, which for eight long moons
Hath hung its shadows, prince, upon your brow —
The mystery of the court, the nation's grief —
Hath cost your father many a sleepless night,
And many a tear of anguish to your mother.

CARLOS (turning hastily round)

My mother! Grant, O heaven, I may forget
How she became my mother!

DOMINGO

Gracious prince!

CARLOS (passing his hands thoughtfully over his brow)

Alas! alas! a fruitful source of woe
Have mothers been to me. My youngest act,
When first these eyes beheld the light of day,
Destroyed a mother.

DOMINGO

Is it possible
That this reproach disturbs your conscience, prince?

CARLOS

And my new mother! Hath she not already
Cost me my father's heart? Scarce loved at best.
My claim to some small favor lay in this —
I was his only child! 'Tis over! She
Hath blest him with a daughter – and who knows
What slumbering ills the future hath in store?

DOMINGO

You jest, my prince. All Spain adores its queen.
Shall it be thought that you, of all the world,
Alone should view her with the eyes of hate —

Gaze on her charms, and yet be coldly wise?
How, prince? The loveliest lady of her time,
A queen withal, and once your own betrothed?
No, no, impossible – it cannot be!
Where all men love, you surely cannot hate.
Carlos could never so belie himself.
I prithee, prince, take heed she do not learn
That she hath lost her son's regard. The news
Would pain her deeply.

CARLOS. Ay, sir! think you so?

DOMINGO

Your highness doubtless will remember how,
At the late tournament in Saragossa,
A lance's splinter struck our gracious sire.
The queen, attended by her ladies, sat
High in the centre gallery of the palace,
And looked upon the fight. A cry arose,
"The king! he bleeds!" Soon through the general din,
A rising murmur strikes upon her ear.
"The prince – the prince!" she cries, and forward rushed,
As though to leap down from the balcony,
When a voice answered, "No, the king himself!"
"Then send for his physicians!" she replied,
And straight regained her former self-composure.

[After a short pause.

But you seem wrapped in thought?

CARLOS. In wonder, sir,
That the king's merry confessor should own
So rare a skill in the romancer's art.

[Austerely.

Yet have I heard it said that those
Who watch men's looks and carry tales about,
Have done more mischief in this world of ours
Than the assassin's knife, or poisoned bowl.
Your labor, Sir, hath been but ill-bestowed;
Would you win thanks, go seek them of the king.

DOMINGO

This caution, prince, is wise. Be circumspect
With men – but not with every man alike.
Repel not friends and hypocrites together;
I mean you well, believe me!

CARLOS. Say you so?
Let not my father mark it, then, or else
Farewell your hopes forever of the purple.

DOMINGO (starts).

CARLOS

How!

CARLOS. Even so! Hath he not promised you
The earliest purple in the gift of Spain?

DOMINGO

You mock me, prince!

CARLOS. Nay! Heaven forefend, that I
Should mock that awful man whose fateful lips
Can doom my father or to heaven or hell!

DOMINGO

I dare not, prince, presume to penetrate
The sacred mystery of your secret grief,
Yet I implore your highness to remember
That, for a conscience ill at ease, the church
Hath opened an asylum, of which kings
Hold not the key – where even crimes are purged
Beneath the holy sacramental seal.
You know my meaning, prince – I've said enough.

CARLOS

No! be it, never said, I tempted so
The keeper of that seal.

DOMINGO

Prince, this mistrust —
You wrong the most devoted of your servants.

CARLOS

Then give me up at once without a thought
Thou art a holy man – the world knows that —
But, to speak plain, too zealous far for me.
The road to Peter's chair is long and rough,
And too much knowledge might encumber you.
Go, tell this to the king, who sent thee hither!

DOMINGO

Who sent me hither?

CARLOS. Ay! Those were my words.
Too well-too well, I know, that I'm betrayed,
Slandered on every hand – that at this court
A hundred eyes are hired to watch my steps.
I know, that royal Philip to his slaves
Hath sold his only son, and every wretch,
Who takes account of each half-uttered word,
Receives such princely guerdon as was ne'er
Bestowed on deeds of honor, Oh, I know
But hush! – no more of that! My heart will else
O'erflow and I've already said too much.

DOMINGO

The king is minded, ere the set of sun,

To reach Madrid: I see the court is mustering.
Have I permission, prince?
CARLOS. I'll follow straight.

[Exit DOMINGO.]

CARLOS (after a short silence)

O wretched Philip! wretched as thy son!
Soon shall thy bosom bleed at every pore,
Torn by suspicion's poisonous serpent fang.
Thy fell sagacity full soon shall pierce
The fatal secret it is bent to know,
And thou wilt madden, when it breaks upon thee!

SCENE II

CARLOS, MARQUIS OF POSA.

CARLOS

Lo! Who comes here? 'Tis he! O ye kind heavens,
My Roderigo!

MARQUIS. Carlos!

CARLOS. Can it be?
And is it truly thou? O yes, it is!
I press thee to my bosom, and I feel
Thy throbbing heart beat wildly 'gainst mine own.
And now all's well again. In this embrace
My sick, sad heart is comforted. I hang
Upon my Roderigo's neck!

MARQUIS. Thy heart!
Thy sick sad heart! And what is well again
What needeth to be well? Thy words amaze me.

CARLOS

What brings thee back so suddenly from Brussels?
Whom must I thank for this most glad surprise?
And dare I ask? Whom should I thank but thee,
Thou gracious and all bounteous Providence?
Forgive me, heaven! if joy hath crazed my brain.
Thou knewest no angel watched at Carlos' side,
And sent me this! And yet I ask who sent him.

MARQUIS

Pardon, dear prince, if I can only meet
With wonder these tumultuous ecstasies.
Not thus I looked to find Don Philip's son.
A hectic red burns on your pallid cheek,
And your lips quiver with a feverish heat.
What must I think, dear prince? No more I see

The youth of lion heart, to whom I come
The envoy of a brave and suffering people.
For now I stand not here as Roderigo —
Not as the playmate of the stripling Carlos —
But, as the deputy of all mankind,
I clasp thee thus: — 'tis Flanders that clings here
Around thy neck, appealing with my tears
To thee for succor in her bitter need.
This land is lost, this land so dear to thee,
If Alva, bigotry's relentless tool,
Advance on Brussels with his Spanish laws.
This noble country's last faint hope depends
On thee, loved scion of imperial Charles!
And, should thy noble heart forget to beat
In human nature's cause, Flanders is lost!

CARLOS

Then it is lost.

MARQUIS

What do I hear? Alas!

CARLOS

Thou speakest of times that long have passed away.
I, too, have had my visions of a Carlos,
Whose cheek would fire at freedom's glorious name,
But he, alas! has long been in his grave.
He, thou seest here, no longer is that Carlos,
Who took his leave of thee in Alcala,
Who in the fervor of a youthful heart,
Resolved, at some no distant time, to wake
The golden age in Spain! Oh, the conceit,
Though but a child's, was yet divinely fair!
Those dreams are past!

MARQUIS

Said you, those dreams, my prince!
And were they only dreams?

CARLOS

Oh, let me weep,
Upon thy bosom weep these burning tears,
My only friend! Not one have I – not one —
In the wide circuit of this earth, – not one
Far as the sceptre of my sire extends,
Far as the navies bear the flag of Spain,
There is no spot – none – none, where I dare yield
An outlet to my tears, save only this.
I charge thee, Roderigo! Oh, by all
The hopes we both do entertain of heaven,
Cast me not off from thee, my friend, my friend!

[POSA bends over him in silent emotion.]

Look on me, Posa, as an orphan child,
Found near the throne, and nurtured by thy love.
Indeed, I know not what a father is.
I am a monarch's son. Oh, were it so,
As my heart tells me that it surely is,
That thou from millions hast been chosen out
To comprehend my being; if it be true,
That all-creating nature has designed
In me to reproduce a Roderigo,
And on the morning of our life attuned
Our souls' soft concords to the selfsame key;
If one poor tear, which gives my heart relief,
To thee were dearer than my father's favor —

MARQUIS

Oh, it is dearer far than all the world!

CARLOS

I'm fallen so low, have grown so poor withal,
I must recall to thee our childhood's years, —
Must ask thee payment of a debt incurred

When thou and I were scarce to boyhood grown.
Dost thou remember, how we grew together,
Two daring youths, like brothers, side by side?
I had no sorrow but to see myself
Eclipsed by thy bright genius. So I vowed,
Since I might never cope with thee in power,
That I would love thee with excess of love.
Then with a thousand shows of tenderness,
And warm affection, I besieged thy heart,
Which cold and proudly still repulsed them all.
Oft have I stood, and – yet thou sawest it never
Hot bitter tear-drops brimming in mine eyes,
When I have marked thee, passing me unheeded,
Fold to thy bosom youths of humbler birth.
"Why only these?" in anguish, once I asked —
"Am I not kind and good to thee as they?"
But dropping on thy knees, thine answer came,
With an unloving look of cold reserve,
"This is my duty to the monarch's son!"

MARQUIS

Oh, spare me, dearest prince, nor now recall
Those boyish acts that make me blush for shame.

CARLOS

I did not merit such disdain from thee —
You might despise me, crush my heart, but never
Alter my love. Three times didst thou repulse
The prince, and thrice he came to thee again,
To beg thy love, and force on thee his own.
At length chance wrought what Carlos never could.
Once we were playing, when thy shuttlecock
Glanced off and struck my aunt, Bohemia's queen,
Full in the face! She thought 'twas with intent,
And all in tears complained unto the king.
The palace youth were summoned on the spot,
And charged to name the culprit. High in wrath
The king vowed vengeance for the deed: "Although
It were his son, yet still should he be made
A dread example!" I looked around and marked
Thee stand aloof, all trembling with dismay.
Straight I stepped forth; before the royal feet
I flung myself, and cried, "'Twas I who did it;

Now let thine anger fall upon thy son!"

MARQUIS

Ah, wherefore, prince, remind me?

CARLOS

Hear me further!
Before the face of the assembled court,
That stood, all pale with pity, round about,
Thy Carlos was tied up, whipped like a slave;
I looked on thee, and wept not. Blow rained on blow;
I gnashed my teeth with pain, yet wept I not!
My royal blood streamed 'neath the pitiless lash;
I looked on thee, and wept not. Then you came,
And fell half-choked with sobs before my feet:
"Carlos," you cried, "my pride is overcome;
I will repay thee when thou art a king."

MARQUIS (stretching forth his hand to CARLOS)

Carlos, I'll keep my word; my boyhood's vow
I now as man renew. I will repay thee.
Some day, perchance, the hour may come —

CARLOS

Now! now!
The hour has come; thou canst repay me all.
I have sore need of love. A fearful secret
Burns in my breast; it must – it must be told.
In thy pale looks my death-doom will I read.
Listen; be petrified; but answer not.
I love – I love – my mother!

MARQUIS

O my God!

CARLOS

Nay, no forbearance! spare me not! Speak! speak!
Proclaim aloud, that on this earth's great round
There is no misery to compare with mine.
Speak! speak! – I know all – all that thou canst say
The son doth love his mother. All the world's
Established usages, the course of nature,
Rome's fearful laws denounce my fatal passion.
My suit conflicts with my own father's rights,
I feel it all, and yet I love. This path
Leads on to madness, or the scaffold. I
Love without hope, love guiltily, love madly,
With anguish, and with peril of my life;
I see, I see it all, and yet I love.

MARQUIS

The queen – does she know of your passion?

CARLOS

Could I
Reveal it to her? She is Philip's wife —
She is the queen, and this is Spanish ground,
Watched by a jealous father, hemmed around
By ceremonial forms, how, how could I
Approach her unobserved? 'Tis now eight months,
Eight maddening months, since the king summoned me
Home from my studies, since I have been doomed
To look on her, adore her day by day,
And all the while be silent as the grave!
Eight maddening months, Roderigo; think of this!
This fire has seethed and raged within my breast!
A thousand, thousand times, the dread confession
Has mounted to my lips, yet evermore
Shrunk, like a craven, back upon my heart.
O Roderigo! for a few brief moments
Alone with her!

MARQUIS

Ah! and your father, prince!

CARLOS

Unhappy me! Remind me not of him.
Tell me of all the torturing pangs of conscience,
But speak not, I implore you, of my father!

MARQUIS

Then do you hate your father?

CARLOS

No, oh, no!
I do not hate my father; but the fear
That guilty creatures feel, – a shuddering dread, —
Comes o'er me ever at that terrible name.
Am I to blame, if slavish nurture crushed
Love's tender germ within my youthful heart?
Six years I'd numbered, ere the fearful man,
They told me was my father, met mine eyes.
One morning 'twas, when with a stroke I saw him
Sign four death-warrants. After that I ne'er
Beheld him, save when, for some childish fault,
I was brought out for chastisement. O God!
I feel my heart grow bitter at the thought.
Let us away! away!

MARQUIS

Nay, Carlos, nay,
You must, you shall give all your sorrow vent,
Let it have words! 'twill ease your o'erfraught heart.

CARLOS

Oft have I struggled with myself, and oft
At midnight, when my guards were sunk in sleep,
With floods of burning tears I've sunk before
The image of the ever-blessed Virgin,
And craved a filial heart, but all in vain.
I rose with prayer unheard. O Roderigo!
Unfold this wondrous mystery of heaven,
Why of a thousand fathers only this
Should fall to me – and why to him this son,
Of many thousand better? Nature could not
In her wide orb have found two opposites
More diverse in their elements. How could
She bind the two extremes of human kind —
Myself and him – in one so holy bond?
O dreadful fate! Why was it so decreed?
Why should two men, in all things else apart,
Concur so fearfully in one desire?
Roderigo, here thou seest two hostile stars,
That in the lapse of ages, only once,
As they sweep onwards in their orb'd course,
Touch with a crash that shakes them to the centre,
Then rush apart forever and forever.

MARQUIS

I feel a dire foreboding.

CARLOS

So do I.
Like hell's grim furies, dreams of dreadful shape
Pursue me still. My better genius strives
With the fell projects of a dark despair.
My wildered subtle spirit crawls through maze
On maze of sophistries, until at length
It gains a yawning precipice's brink.
O Roderigo! should I e'er in him
Forget the father – ah! thy deathlike look
Tells me I'm understood – should I forget
The father – what were then the king to me?

MARQUIS (after a pause)

One thing, my Carlos, let me beg of you!
Whate'er may be your plans, do nothing, – nothing, —
Without your friend's advice. You promise this?

CARLOS

All, all I promise that thy love can ask!
I throw myself entirely upon thee!

MARQUIS

The king, I hear, is going to Madrid.
The time is short. If with the queen you would
Converse in private, it is only here,
Here in Aranjuez, it can be done.
The quiet of the place, the freer manners,
All favor you.

CARLOS

And such, too, was my hope;
But it, alas! was vain.

MARQUIS

Not wholly so.
I go to wait upon her. If she be
The same in Spain she was in Henry's court,
She will be frank at least. And if I can
Read any hope for Carlos in her looks —
Find her inclined to grant an interview —
Get her attendant ladies sent away —

CARLOS

Most of them are my friends – especially
The Countess Mondecar, whom I have gained
By service to her son, my page.

MARQUIS

'Tis well;
Be you at hand, and ready to appear,
Whene'er I give the signal, prince.

CARLOS

I will, —
Be sure I will: – and all good speed attend thee!

MARQUIS

I will not lose a moment; so, farewell.

[Exeunt severally

SCENE III

The Queen's Residence in Aranjuez. The Pleasure Grounds, intersected by an avenue, terminated by the Queen's Palace.

The QUEEN, DUCHESS OF OLIVAREZ, PRINCESS OF EBOLI, and MARCHIONESS OF MONDECAR, all advancing from the avenue.

QUEEN (to the MARCHIONESS)

I will have you beside me, Mondecar.
The princess, with these merry eyes of hers,
Has plagued me all the morning. See, she scarce
Can hide the joy she feels to leave the country.

EBOLI

'Twere idle to conceal, my queen, that I
Shall be most glad to see Madrid once more.

MONDECAR

And will your majesty not be so, too?
Are you so grieved to quit Aranjuez?

QUEEN

To quit – this lovely spot at least I am.
This is my world. Its sweetness oft and oft
Has twined itself around my inmost heart.
Here, nature, simple, rustic nature greets me,
The sweet companion of my early years —
Here I indulge once more my childhood's sports,
And my dear France's gales come blowing here.
Blame not this partial fondness – all hearts yearn
For their own native land.

EBOLI

But then how lone,
How dull and lifeless it is here! We might
As well be in La Trappe.

QUEEN

I cannot see it.
To me Madrid alone is lifeless. But
What saith our duchess to it?

OLIVAREZ

Why, methinks,
Your majesty, since kings have ruled in Spain,
It hath been still the custom for the court
To pass the summer months alternately
Here and at Pardo, – in Madrid, the winter.

QUEEN

Well, I suppose it has! Duchess, you know
I've long resigned all argument with you.

MONDECAR

Next month Madrid will be all life and bustle.
They're fitting up the Plaza Mayor now,
And we shall have rare bull-fights; and, besides,
A grand auto da fe is promised us.

QUEEN

Promised? This from my gentle Mondecar!

MONDECAR

Why not? 'Tis only heretics they burn!

QUEEN

I hope my Eboli thinks otherwise!

EBOLI

What, I? I beg your majesty may think me
As good a Christian as the marchioness.

QUEEN

Alas! I had forgotten where I am, —
No more of this! We were speaking, I think,
About the country? And methinks this month
Has flown away with strange rapidity.
I counted on much pleasure, very much,
From our retirement here, and yet I have not
Found that which I expected. Is it thus
With all our hopes? And yet I cannot say
One wish of mine is left ungratified.

OLIVAREZ

You have not told us, Princess Eboli,
If there be hope for Gomez, — and if we may
Expect ere long to greet you as his bride?

QUEEN

True — thank you, duchess, for reminding me!

[Addressing the PRINCESS.

I have been asked to urge his suit with you.
But can I do it? The man whom I reward
With my sweet Eboli must be a man
Of noble stamp indeed.

OLIVAREZ

And such he is,
A man of mark and fairest fame, – a man
Whom our dear monarch signally has graced
With his most royal favor.

QUEEN

He's happy in
Such high good fortune; but we fain would know,
If he can love, and win return of love.
This Eboli must answer.

**EBOLI (stands speechless and confused, her eyes bent
on the ground; at last she falls at the QUEEN's feet)**

Gracious queen!
Have pity on me! Let me – let me not, —
For heaven's sake, let me not be sacrificed.

QUEEN

Be sacrificed! I need no more. Arise!
'Tis a hard fortune to be sacrificed.
I do believe you. Rise. And is it long
Since you rejected Gomez' suit?

EBOLI

Some months —
Before Prince Carlos came from Alcala.

QUEEN (starts and looks at her with an inquisitive glance)

Have you tried well the grounds of your refusal?

EBOLI (with energy)

It cannot be, my queen, no, never, never, —
For a thousand reasons, never!

QUEEN

One's enough,
You do not love him. That suffices me.
Now let it pass.

[To her other ladies.

I have not seen the Infanta
Yet this morning. Pray bring her, marchioness.

OLIVAREZ (looking at the clock)

It is not yet the hour, your majesty.

QUEEN

Not yet the hour for me to be a mother!
That's somewhat hard. Forget not, then, to tell me
When the right hour does come.

[A page enters and whispers to the first lady, who

thereupon turns to the QUEEN.

OLIVAREZ

The Marquis Posa!
May it please your majesty.

QUEEN

The Marquis Posa!

OLIVAREZ

He comes from France, and from the Netherlands,
And craves the honor to present some letters
Intrusted to him by your royal mother.

QUEEN

Is this allowed?

OLIVAREZ (hesitating)

A case so unforeseen
Is not provided for in my instructions.
When a Castilian grandee, with despatches
From foreign courts, shall in her garden find
The Queen of Spain, and tender them —

QUEEN

Enough! I'll venture, then, on mine own proper peril.

OLIVAREZ

May I, your majesty, withdraw the while?

QUEEN

E'en as you please, good duchess!

[Exit the DUCHESS, the QUEEN gives the PAGE a sign, who thereupon retires.]

SCENE IV

The QUEEN, PRINCESS EBOLI, MARCHIONESS OF MONDECAR, and
MARQUIS OF POSA.

QUEEN

I bid you welcome, sir, to Spanish ground!

MARQUIS

Ground which I never with so just a pride
Hailed for the country of my sires as now.

QUEEN (to the two ladies)

The Marquis Posa, ladies, who at Rheims
Coped with my father in the lists, and made
My colors thrice victorious; the first
That made me feel how proud a thing it was
To be the Queen of Spain and Spanish men.

[Turning to the MARQUIS.

When we last parted in the Louvre, Sir,
You scarcely dreamed that I should ever be
Your hostess in Castile.

MARQUIS

Most true, my liege!
For at that time I never could have dreamed
That France should lose to us the only thing
We envied her possessing.

QUEEN

How, proud Spaniard!
The only thing! And you can venture this —
This to a daughter of the house of Valois!

MARQUIS

I venture now to say it, gracious queen,
Since now you are our own.

QUEEN

Your journey hither
Has led you, as I hear, through France. What news
Have you brought with you from my honored mother
And from my dearest brothers?

MARQUIS (handing letters)

I left your royal mother sick at heart,
Bereft of every joy save only this,
To know her daughter happy on the throne
Of our imperial Spain.

QUEEN

Could she be aught
But happy in the dear remembrances
Of relatives so kind – in the sweet thoughts
Of the old time when – Sir, you've visited
Full many a court in these your various travels,
And seen strange lands and customs manifold;
And now, they say, you mean to keep at home
A greater prince in your retired domain
Than is King Philip on his throne – a freer.
You're a philosopher; but much I doubt
If our Madrid will please you. We are so —
So quiet in Madrid.

MARQUIS

And that is more
Than all the rest of Europe has to boast.

QUEEN

I've heard as much. But all this world's concerns
Are well-nigh blotted from my memory.

[To PRINCESS EBOLI.

Princess, methinks I see a hyacinth
Yonder in bloom. Wilt bring it to me, sweet?

[The PRINCESS goes towards the palace, the QUEEN

softly to the MARQUIS.
I'm much mistaken, sir, or your arrival
Has made one heart more happy here at court.

MARQUIS

I have found a sad one – one that in this world
A ray of sunshine —

EBOLI

As this gentleman
Has seen so many countries, he, no doubt,
Has much of note to tell us.

MARQUIS

Doubtless, and
To seek adventures is a knight's first duty —
But his most sacred is to shield the fair.

MONDECAR

From giants! But there are no giants now!

MARQUIS

Power is a giant ever to the weak.

QUEEN

The chevalier says well. There still are giants;
But there are knights no more.

MARQUIS

Not long ago,
On my return from Naples, I became
The witness of a very touching story,
Which ties of friendship almost make my own
Were I not fearful its recital might
Fatigue your majesty —

QUEEN

Have I a choice?
The princess is not to be lightly balked.
Proceed. I too, sir, love a story dearly.

MARQUIS

Two noble houses in Mirandola,
Weary of jealousies and deadly feuds,
Transmitted down from Guelphs and Ghibellines,
Through centuries of hate, from sire to son,
Resolved to ratify a lasting peace

By the sweet ministry of nuptial ties.
Fernando, nephew of the great Pietro,
And fair Matilda, old Colonna's child,
Were chosen to cement this holy bond.
Nature had never for each other formed
Two fairer hearts. And never had the world
Approved a wiser or a happier choice.
Still had the youth adored his lovely bride
In the dull limner's portraiture alone.
How thrilled his heart, then, in the hope to find
The truth of all that e'en his fondest dreams
Had scarcely dared to credit in her picture!
In Padua, where his studies held him bound;
Fernando panted for the joyful hour,
When he might murmur at Matilda's feet
The first pure homage of his fervent love.

[The QUEEN grows more attentive; the MARQUIS continues, after a short pause, addressing himself chiefly to PRINCESS EBOLI.

Meanwhile the sudden death of Pietro's wife
Had left him free to wed. With the hot glow
Of youthful blood the hoary lover drinks
The fame that reached him of Matilda's charms.
He comes – he sees – he loves! The new desire
Stifles the voice of nature in his heart.
The uncle woos his nephew's destined bride,
And at the altar consecrates his theft.

QUEEN

And what did then Fernando?

MARQUIS

On the wings
Of Jove, unconscious of the fearful change,
Delirious with the promised joy, he speeds
Back to Mirandola. His flying steed
By starlight gains the gate. Tumultuous sounds
Of music, dance, and jocund revelry
Ring from the walls of the illumined palace.
With faltering steps he mounts the stair; and now
Behold him in the crowded nuptial hall,
Unrecognized! Amid the reeling guests

Pietro sat. An angel at his side —
An angel, whom he knows, and who to him
Even in his dreams, seemed ne'er so beautiful.
A single glance revealed what once was his —
Revealed what now was lost to him forever.

EBOLI

O poor Fernando!

QUEEN

Surely, sir, your tale
Is ended? Nay, it must be.

MARQUIS

No, not quite.

QUEEN

Did you not say Fernando was your friend?

MARQUIS

I have no dearer in the world.

EBOLI

But pray
Proceed, sir, with your story.

MARQUIS

Nay, the rest
Is very sad – and to recall it sets
My sorrow fresh abroad. Spare me the sequel.

[A general silence.]

QUEEN (turning to the PRINCESS EBOLI)

Surely the time is come to see my daughter,
I pray thee, princess, bring her to me now!

[The PRINCESS withdraws. The MARQUIS beckons a Page. The QUEEN opens the letters, and appears surprised. The MARQUIS talks with MARCHIONESS MONDECAR. The QUEEN having read the letters, turns to the MARQUIS with a penetrating look.]

QUEEN

You have not spoken of Matilda! She
Happily was ignorant of Fernando's grief?

MARQUIS

Matilda's heart has no one fathomed yet —
Great souls endure in silence.

QUEEN

You look around you. Who is it you seek?

MARQUIS

Just then the thought came over me, how one,
Whose name I dare not mention, would rejoice,
Stood he where I do now.

QUEEN

And who's to blame,
That he does not?

MARQUIS (interrupting her eagerly)

My liege! And dare I venture
To interpret thee, as fain I would? He'd find
Forgiveness, then, if now he should appear.

QUEEN (alarmed)

Now, marquis, now? What do you mean by this?

MARQUIS

Might he, then, hope?

QUEEN

You terrify me, marquis.
Surely he will not —

MARQUIS

He is here already.

SCENE V

The QUEEN, CARLOS, MARQUIS POSA, MARCHIONESS MONDECAR.
The two latter go towards the avenue.

CARLOS (on his knees before the QUEEN)

At length 'tis come – the happy moment's come,
And Charles may touch this all-beloved hand.

QUEEN

What headlong folly's this? And dare you break
Into my presence thus? Arise, rash man!
We are observed; my suite are close at hand.

CARLOS

I will not rise. Here will I kneel forever,
Here will I lie enchanted at your feet,
And grow to the dear ground you tread on?

QUEEN

Madman! To what rude boldness my indulgence leads!
Know you, it is the queen, your mother, sir,
Whom you address in such presumptuous strain?
Know, that myself will to the king report
This bold intrusion —

CARLOS

And that I must die!
Let them come here, and drag me to the scaffold!
A moment spent in paradise like this
Is not too dearly purchased by a life.

QUEEN

But then your queen?

CARLOS (rising)

O God, I'll go, I'll go!
Can I refuse to bend to that appeal?
I am your very plaything. Mother, mother,
A sign, a transient glance, one broken word
From those dear lips can bid me live or die.
What would you more? Is there beneath the sun
One thing I would not haste to sacrifice
To meet your lightest wish?

QUEEN

Then fly!

CARLOS

God!

QUEEN

With tears I do conjure you, Carlos, fly!
I ask no more. O fly! before my court,
My guards, detecting us alone together,
Bear the dread tidings to your father's ear.

CARLOS

I bide my doom, or be it life or death.
Have I staked every hope on this one moment,
Which gives thee to me thus at length alone,

That idle fears should balk me of my purpose?
No, queen! The world may round its axis roll
A hundred thousand times, ere chance again
Yield to my prayers a moment such as this.

QUEEN

It never shall to all eternity.
Unhappy man! What would you ask of me?

CARLOS

Heaven is my witness, queen, how I have struggled,
Struggled as mortal never did before,
But all in vain! My manhood fails – I yield.

QUEEN

No more of this – for my sake – for my peace.

CARLOS

You were mine own, – in face of all the world, —
Affianced to me by two mighty crowns,
By heaven and nature plighted as my bride,
But Philip, cruel Philip, stole you from me!

QUEEN

He is your father?

CARLOS

And he is your husband!

QUEEN

And gives to you for an inheritance,
The mightiest monarchy in all the world.

CARLOS

And you, as mother!

QUEEN

Mighty heavens! You rave!

CARLOS

And is he even conscious of his treasure?
Hath he a heart to feel and value yours?
I'll not complain – no, no, I will forget,
How happy, past all utterance, I might
Have been with you, – if he were only so.
But he is not – there, there, the anguish lies!
He is not, and he never – never can be.
Oh, you have robbed me of my paradise,
Only to blast it in King Philip's arms!

QUEEN

Horrible thought!

CARLOS

Oh, yes, right well I know
Who 'twas that knit this ill-starred marriage up.
I know how Philip loves, and how he wooed.
What are you in this kingdom – tell me, what?

Regent, belike! Oh, no! If such you were,
How could fell Alvas act their murderous deeds,
Or Flanders bleed a martyr for her faith?
Are you even Philip's wife? Impossible, —
Beyond belief. A wife doth still possess
Her husband's heart. To whom doth his belong?
If ever, perchance, in some hot feverish mood,
He yields to gentler impulse, begs he not
Forgiveness of his sceptre and gray hairs?

QUEEN

Who told you that my lot, at Philip's side
Was one for men to pity?

CARLOS

My own heart!
Which feels, with burning pangs, how at my side
It had been to be envied.

QUEEN

Thou vain man!
What if my heart should tell me the reverse?
How, sir, if Philip's watchful tenderness,
The looks that silently proclaim his love,
Touched me more deeply than his haughty son's
Presumptuous eloquence? What, if an old man's
Matured esteem —

CARLOS

That makes a difference! Then,
Why then, forgiveness! – I'd no thought of this;
I had no thought that you could love the king.

QUEEN

To honor him's my pleasure and my wish.

CARLOS

Then you have never loved?

QUEEN

Singular question!

CARLOS

Then you have never loved?

QUEEN

I love no longer!

CARLOS

Because your heart forbids it, or your oath?

QUEEN

Leave me; nor never touch this theme again.

CARLOS

Because your oath forbids it, or your heart?

QUEEN

Because my duty – but, alas, alas!
To what avails this scrutiny of fate,
Which we must both obey?

CARLOS

Must – must obey?

QUEEN

What means this solemn tone?

CARLOS

Thus much it means
That Carlos is not one to yield to must
Where he hath power to will! It means, besides,
'That Carlos is not minded to live on,
The most unhappy man in all his realm,
When it would only cost the overthrow
Of Spanish laws to be the happiest.

QUEEN

Do I interpret rightly? Still you hope?
Dare you hope on, when all is lost forever?

CARLOS

I look on naught as lost – except the dead.

QUEEN

For me – your mother, do you dare to hope?

[She fixes a penetrating look on him, then continues with dignity and earnestness.

And yet why not? A new elected monarch
Can do far more – make bonfires of the laws
His father left – o'erthrow his monuments —
Nay, more than this – for what shall hinder him? —
Drag from his tomb, in the Escorial,
The sacred corpse of his departed sire,
Make it a public spectacle, and scatter
Forth to the winds his desecrated dust.
And then, at last, to fill the measure up —

CARLOS

Merciful heavens, finish not the picture!

QUEEN

End all by wedding with his mother.

CARLOS

Oh!
Accursed son!

[He remains for some time paralyzed and speechless.

Yes, now 'tis out, 'tis out!
I see it clear as day. Oh, would it had
Been veiled from me in everlasting darkness!
Yes, thou art gone from me – gone – gone forever.
The die is cast; and thou art lost to me.
Oh, in that thought lies hell; and a hell, too,
Lies in the other thought, to call thee mine.
Oh, misery! I can bear my fate no longer,
My very heart-strings strain as they would burst.

QUEEN

Alas, alas! dear Charles, I feel it all,
The nameless pang that rages in your breast;
Your pangs are infinite, as is your love,
And infinite as both will be the glory
Of overmastering both. Up, be a man,
Wrestle with them boldly. The prize is worthy
Of a young warrior's high, heroic heart;
Worthy of him in whom the virtues flow
Of a long ancestry of mighty kings.
Courage! my noble prince! Great Charles's grandson
Begins the contest with undaunted heart,
Where sons of meaner men would yield at once.

CARLOS

Too late, too late! O God, it is too late!

QUEEN

Too late to be a man! O Carlos, Carlos!
How nobly shows our virtue when the heart
Breaks in its exercise! The hand of Heaven
Has set you up on high, – far higher, prince,
Than millions of your brethren. All she took
From others she bestowed with partial hand
On thee, her favorite; and millions ask,
What was your merit, thus before your birth
To be endowed so far above mankind?
Up, then, and justify the ways of Heaven;
Deserve to take the lead of all the world,
And make a sacrifice ne'er made before.

CARLOS

I will, I will; I have a giant's strength
To win your favor; but to lose you, none.

QUEEN

Confess, my Carlos, I have harshly read thee;
It is but spoken, and waywardness, and pride,
Attract you thus so madly to your mother!
The heart you lavish on myself belongs
To the great empire you one day shall rule.
Look that you sport not with your sacred trust!
Love is your high vocation; until now
It hath been wrongly bent upon your mother:
Oh, lead it back upon your future realms,
And so, instead of the fell stings of conscience,
Enjoy the bliss of being more than man.
Elizabeth has been your earliest love,
Your second must be Spain. How gladly, Carlos,
Will I give place to this more worthy choice!

CARLOS (overpowered by emotion, throws himself at her feet)

How great thou art, my angel! Yes, I'll do
All, all thou canst desire. So let it be.

[He rises.

Here in the sight of heaven I stand and swear —
I swear to thee, eternal – no, great Heaven! —
Eternal silence only, – not oblivion!

QUEEN

How can I ask from you what I myself
Am not disposed to grant?

MARQUIS (hastening from the alley)

The king!

QUEEN

Oh God!

MARQUIS

Away, away! fly from these precincts, prince!

QUEEN

His jealousy is dreadful – should he see you —

CARLOS

I'll stay.

QUEEN

And who will be the victim then?

CARLOS (seizing the MARQUIS by the arm)

Away, away! Come, Roderigo, come!

[Goes and returns.

What may I hope to carry hence with me?

QUEEN

Your mother's friendship.

CARLOS

Friendship! Mother!

QUEEN

And

These tears with it – they're from the Netherlands.

[She gives him some letters. Exit CARLOS with the MARQUIS.

The QUEEN looks restlessly round in search of her ladies, who are nowhere to be seen. As she is about to retire up, the KING enters.

SCENE VI

The KING, the QUEEN, DUKE ALVA, COUNT LERMA, DOMINGO,
LADIES, GRANDEES, who remain at a little distance.

KING

How, madam, alone; not even one of all
Your ladies in attendance? Strange! Where are they?

QUEEN

My gracious lord!

KING

Why thus alone, I say?

[To his attendants.

I'll take a strict account of this neglect.
'Tis not to be forgiven. Who has the charge
Of waiting on your majesty to-day?

QUEEN

Oh, be not angry! Good, my lord, 'tis I
Myself that am to blame – at my request
The Princess Eboli went hence but now.

KING

At your request!

QUEEN

To call the nurse to me,
With the Infanta, whom I longed to see.

KING

And was your retinue dismissed for that?
This only clears the lady first in waiting.
Where was the second?

MONDECAR (who has returned and mixed with the other ladies, steps forward)

Your majesty, I feel
I am to blame for this.

KING

You are, and so
I give you ten years to reflect upon it,
At a most tranquil distance from Madrid.

[The MARCHIONESS steps back weeping. General silence.

The bystanders all look in confusion towards the QUEEN.

QUEEN

What weep you for, dear marchioness?

[To the KING.

If I
Have erred, my gracious liege, the crown I wear,
And which I never sought, should save my blushes
Is there a law in this your kingdom, sire,
To summon monarch's daughters to the bar?
Does force alone restrain your Spanish ladies?

Or need they stronger safeguard than their virtue?
Now pardon me, my liege; 'tis not my wont
To send my ladies, who have served me still
With smiling cheerfulness, away in tears.

Here, Mondecar

[She takes off her girdle and presents it to the MARCHIONESS.

You have displeased the king,
Not me. Take this remembrance of my favor,
And of this hour. I'd have you quit the kingdom.
You have only erred in Spain. In my dear France,
All men are glad to wipe such tears away.
And must I ever be reminded thus?
In my dear France it had been otherwise.

[Leaning on the MARCHIONESS and covering her face.

KING

Can a reproach, that in my love had birth,
Afflict you so? A word so trouble you,
Which the most anxious tenderness did prompt?

[He turns towards the GEANDEES.

Here stand the assembled vassals of my throne.
Did ever sleep descend upon these eyes,
Till at the close of the returning day
I've pondered, how the hearts of all my subjects
Were beating 'neath the furthest cope of heaven?
And should I feel more anxious for my throne
Than for the partner of my bosom? No!
My sword and Alva can protect my people,
My eye alone assures thy love.

QUEEN

My liege,
If that I have offended —

KING

I am called
The richest monarch in the Christian world;
The sun in my dominions never sets.
All this another hath possessed before,
And many another will possess hereafter.
That is mine own. All that the monarch hath
Belongs to chance – Elizabeth to Philip.
This is the point in which I feel I'm mortal.

QUEEN

What fear you, sire?

KING

Should these gray hairs not fear?
But the same instant that my fear begins
It dies away forever.

[To the grandees.

I run over
The nobles of my court and miss the foremost.
Where is my son, Don Carlos?

[No one answers.

He begins
To give me cause of fear. He shuns my presence
Since he came back from school at Alcala.
His blood is hot. Why is his look so cold?
His bearing all so stately and reserved?
Be watchful, duke, I charge you.

ALVA

So I am:
Long as a heart against this corslet beats,

So long may Philip slumber undisturbed;
And as God's cherub guards the gates of heaven
So doth Duke Alva guard your royal throne.

LERMA

Dare I, in all humility, presume
To oppose the judgment of earth's wisest king?
Too deeply I revere his gracious sire
To judge the son so harshly. I fear much
From his hot blood, but nothing from his heart.

KING

Lerma, your speech is fair to soothe the father,
But Alva here will be the monarch's shield —
No more of this.

[Turning to his suite.

Now speed we to Madrid,
Our royal duties summon us. The plague
Of heresy is rife among my people;
Rebellion stalks within my Netherlands —
The times are imminent. We must arrest
These erring spirits by some dread example.
The solemn oath which every Christian king
Hath sworn to keep I will redeem to-morrow.
'Twill be a day of doom unparalleled.
Our court is bidden to the festival.

[He leads off the QUEEN, the rest follow.

SCENE VII

DON CARLOS (with letters in his hand), and MARQUIS POSA enter from opposite sides.

CARLOS

I am resolved – Flanders shall yet be saved:
So runs her suit, and that's enough for me!

MARQUIS

There's not another moment to be lost:
'Tis said Duke Alva in the cabinet
Is named already as the governor.

CARLOS

Betimes to-morrow will I see the king
And ask this office for myself. It is
The first request I ever made to him,
And he can scarce refuse. My presence here
Has long been irksome to him. He will grasp
This fair pretence my absence to secure.
And shall I confess to thee, Roderigo?
My hopes go further. Face to face with him,
'Tis possible the pleading of a son
May reinstate him in his father's favor.
He ne'er hath heard the voice of nature speak;
Then let me try for once, my Roderigo,
What power she hath when breathing from my lips.

MARQUIS

Now do I hear my Carlos' voice once more;
Now are you all yourself again!

SCENE VIII

The preceding. COUNT LERMA.

COUNT

Your grace,
His majesty has left Aranjuez;
And I am bidden —

CARLOS

Very well, my lord —
I shall overtake the king —

MARQUIS (affecting to take leave with ceremony)

Your highness, then,
Has nothing further to intrust to me?

CARLOS

Nothing. A pleasant journey to Madrid!
You may, hereafter, tell me more of Flanders.

[To LERMA, who is waiting for him.

Proceed, my lord! I'll follow thee anon.

SCENE IX

DON CARLOS, MARQUIS POSA.

CARLOS

I understood thy hint, and thank thee for it.
A stranger's presence can alone excuse
This forced and measured tone. Are we not brothers?
In future, let this puppet-play of rank
Be banished from our friendship. Think that we
Had met at some gay masking festival,
Thou in the habit of a slave, and I
Robed, for a jest, in the imperial purple.
Throughout the revel we respect the cheat,
And play our parts with sportive earnestness,
Tripping it gayly with the merry throng;
But should thy Carlos beckon through his mask,
Thou'dst press his hand in silence as he passed,
And we should be as one.

MARQUIS

The dream's divine!
But are you sure that it will last forever?
Is Carlos, then, so certain of himself
As to despise the charms of boundless sway?
A day will come – an all-important day —
When this heroic mind – I warn you now —
Will sink o'erwhelmed by too severe a test.
Don Philip dies; and Carlos mounts the throne,
The mightiest throne in Christendom. How vast
The gulf that yawns betwixt mankind and him —
A god to-day, who yesterday was man!
Steeled to all human weakness – to the voice
Of heavenly duty deaf. Humanity —
To-day a word of import in his ear —
Barters itself, and grovels 'mid the throng
Of gaping parasites; his sympathy
For human woe is turned to cold neglect,
His virtue sunk in loose voluptuous joys.
Peru supplies him riches for his folly,
His court engenders devils for his vices.
Lulled in this heaven the work of crafty slaves,

He sleeps a charmed sleep; and while his dream
Endures his godhead lasts. And woe to him
Who'd break in pity this lethargic trance!
What could Roderigo do? Friendship is true,
And bold as true. But her bright flashing beams
Were much too fierce for sickly majesty:
You would not brook a subject's stern appeal,
Nor I a monarch's pride!

CARLOS

Tearful and true,
Thy portraiture of monarchs. Yes – thou'rt right,
But 'tis their lusts that thus corrupt their hearts,
And hurry them to vice. I still am pure.
A youth scarce numbering three-and-twenty years.
What thousands waste in riotous delights,
Without remorse – the mind's more precious part —
The bloom and strength of manhood – I have kept,
Hoarding their treasures for the future king.
What could unseat my Posa from my heart,
If woman fail to do it?

MARQUIS

I, myself!
Say, could I love you, Carlos, warm as now,
If I must fear you?

CARLOS

That will never be.
What need hast thou of me? What cause hast thou
To stoop thy knee, a suppliant at the throne?
Does gold allure thee? Thou'rt a richer subject
Than I shall be a king! Dost covet honors?
E'en in thy youth, fame's brimming chalice stood
Full in thy grasp – thou flung'st the toy away.
Which of us, then, must be the other's debtor,
And which the creditor? Thou standest mute.
Dost tremble for the trial? Art thou, then,
Uncertain of thyself?

MARQUIS

Carlos, I yield!
Here is my hand.

CARLOS

Is it mine own?

MARQUIS

Forever —
In the most pregnant meaning of the word!

CARLOS

And wilt thou prove hereafter to the king
As true and warm as to the prince to-day?

MARQUIS

I swear!

CARLOS

And when round my unguarded heart
The serpent flattery winds its subtle coil,
Should e'er these eyes of mine forget the tears
They once were wont to shed; or should these ears
Be closed to mercy's plea, – say, wilt thou, then,
The fearless guardian of my virtue, throw
Thine iron grasp upon me, and call up
My genius by its mighty name?

MARQUIS

I will.

CARLOS

And now one other favor let me beg.
Do call me thou! Long have I envied this
Dear privilege of friendship to thine equals.
The brother's thou beguiles my ear, my heart,
With sweet suggestions of equality.
Nay, no reply: – I guess what thou wouldst say —
To thee this seems a trifle – but to me,
A monarch's son, 'tis much. Say, wilt thou be
A brother to me?

MARQUIS

Yes; thy brother, yes!

CARLOS

Now to the king – my fears are at an end.
Thus, arm-in-arm with thee, I dare defy
The universal world into the lists.

[Exeunt

ACT II

SCENE I

The royal palace at Madrid.

KING PHILIP under a canopy; DUKE ALVA at some distance, with his head covered; CARLOS.

CARLOS

The kingdom takes precedence – willingly
Doth Carlos to the minister give place —
He speaks for Spain; I am but of the household.

[Bows and steps backward.]

KING

The duke remains – the Infanta may proceed.

CARLOS (turning to ALVA)

Then must I put it to your honor, sir,
To yield my father for a while to me.
A son, you know, may to a father's ear
Unbosom much, in fulness of his heart,
That not befits a stranger's ear. The king
Shall not be taken from you, sir – I seek
The father only for one little hour.

KING

Here stands his friend.

CARLOS

And have I e'er deserved
To think the duke should be a friend of mine?

KING

Or tried to make him one? I scarce can love
Those sons who choose more wisely than their fathers.

CARLOS

And can Duke Alva's knightly spirit brook
To look on such a scene? Now, as I live,
I would not play the busy meddler's part,
Who thrusts himself, unasked, 'twixt sire and son,
And there intrudes without a blush, condemned
By his own conscious insignificance,
No, not, by heaven, to win a diadem!

KING (rising, with an angry look at the Prince)

Retire, my lord!

[ALVA goes to the principal door, through which CARLOS had entered, the KING points to the other.

No, to the cabinet,
Until I call you.

SCENE II

KING PHILIP. DON CARLOS.

CARLOS (as soon as the **DUKE** has left the apartment, advances to the **KING**, throws himself at his feet, and then, with great emotion)

My father once again!
Thanks, endless thanks, for this unwonted favor!
Your hand, my father! O delightful day!
The rapture of this kiss has long been strange
To your poor Carlos. Wherefore have I been
Shut from my father's heart? What have I done?

KING

Carlos, thou art a novice in these arts —
Forbear, I like them not —

CARLOS (rising)

And is it so?
I hear your courtiers in those words, my father!
All is not well, by heaven, all is not true,
That a priest says, and a priest's creatures plot.
I am not wicked, father; ardent blood
Is all my failing; – all my crime is youth; —
Wicked I am not – no, in truth, not wicked; —
Though many an impulse wild assails my heart,
Yet is it still untainted.

KING

Ay, 'tis pure —
I know it – like thy prayers —

CARLOS

Now, then, or never!
We are, for once, alone – the barrier
Of courtly form, that severed sire and son
Has fallen! Now a golden ray of hope
Illumes my soul – a sweet presentment
Pervades my heart – and heaven itself inclines,
With choirs of joyous angels, to the earth,
And full of soft emotion, the thrice blest
Looks down upon this great, this glorious scene!
Pardon, my father!
[He falls on his knees before him.]

KING

Rise, and leave me.

CARLOS

Father!

KING (tearing himself from him)

This trifling grows too bold.

CARLOS

A son's devotion
Too bold! Alas!

KING

And, to crown all, in tears!
Degraded boy! Away, and quit my sight!

CARLOS

Now, then, or never! – pardon, O my father!

KING

Away, and leave my sight! Return to me
Disgraced, defeated, from the battle-field,
Thy sire shall meet thee with extended arms:
But thus in tears, I spurn thee from my feet.
A coward's guilt alone should wash its stains
In such ignoble streams. The man who weeps
Without a blush will ne'er want cause for tears!

CARLOS

Who is this man? By what mistake of nature
Has he thus strayed amongst mankind? A tear
Is man's unerring, lasting attribute.
Whose eye is dry was ne'er of woman born!
Oh, teach the eye that ne'er hath overflowed,
The timely science of a tear – thou'lt need
The moist relief in some dark hour of woe.

KING

Think'st thou to shake thy father's strong mistrust
With specious words?

CARLOS

Mistrust! Then I'll remove it.
Here will I hang upon my father's breast,
Strain at his heart with vigor, till each shred
Of that mistrust, which, with a rock's endurance,
Clings firmly round it, piecemeal fall away.
And who are they who drive me from the king —

My father's favor? What requital hath
A monk to give a father for a son?
What compensation can the duke supply
For a deserted and a childless age?
Would'st thou be loved? Here in this bosom springs
A fresher, purer fountain, than e'er flowed
From those dark, stagnant, muddy reservoirs,
Which Philip's gold must first unlock.

KING

No more,
Presuming boy! For know the hearts thou slanderest
Are the approved, true servants of my choice.
'Tis meet that thou do honor to them.

CARLOS

Never!
I know my worth – all that your Alva dares —
That, and much more, can Carlos. What cares he,
A hireling! for the welfare of the realm
That never can be his? What careth he
If Philip's hair grow gray with hoary age?
Your Carlos would have loved you: – Oh, I dread
To think that you the royal throne must fill
Deserted and alone.

KING (seemingly struck by this idea, stands in deep thought; after a pause)

I am alone!

CARLOS (approaching him with eagerness)

You have been so till now. Hate me no more,
And I will love you dearly as a son:
But hate me now no longer! Oh, how sweet,
Divinely sweet it is to feel our being
Reflected in another's beautiful soul;
To see our joys gladden another's cheek,

Our pains bring anguish to another's bosom,
Our sorrows fill another's eye with tears!
How sweet, how glorious is it, hand in hand,
With a dear child, in inmost soul beloved,
To tread once more the rosy paths of youth,
And dream life's fond illusions o'er again!
How proud to live through endless centuries
Immortal in the virtues of a son;
How sweet to plant what his dear hand shall reap;
To gather what will yield him rich return,
And guess how high his thanks will one day rise!
My father of this early paradise
Your monks most wisely speak not.

KING (not without emotion)

Oh, my son,
Thou hast condemned thyself in painting thus
A bliss this heart hath ne'er enjoyed from thee.

CARLOS

The Omniscient be my judge! You till this hour
Have still debarred me from your heart, and all
Participation in your royal cares.
The heir of Spain has been a very stranger
In Spanish land – a prisoner in the realm
Where he must one day rule. Say, was this just,
Or kind? And often have I blushed for shame,
And stood with eyes abashed, to learn perchance
From foreign envoys, or the general rumor,
Thy courtly doings at Aranjuez.

KING

Thy blood flows far too hotly in thy veins.
Thou would'st but ruin all.

CARLOS

But try me, father.
'Tis true my blood flows hotly in my veins.
Full three-and-twenty years I now have lived,
And naught achieved for immortality.
I am aroused – I feel my inward powers —
My title to the throne arouses me
From slumber, like an angry creditor;
And all the misspent hours of early youth,
Like debts of honor, clamor in mine ears.
It comes at length, the glorious moment comes
That claims full interest on the intrusted talent.
The annals of the world, ancestral fame,
And glory's echoing trumpet urge me on.
Now is the blessed hour at length arrived
That opens wide to me the list of honor.
My king, my father! dare I utter now
The suit which led me hither?

KING

Still a suit?
Unfold it.

CARLOS

The rebellion in Brabant
Increases to a height – the traitor's madness
By stern, but prudent, vigor must be met.
The duke, to quell the wild enthusiasm,
Invested with the sovereign's power, will lead
An army into Flanders. Oh, how full
Of glory is such office! and how suited
To open wide the temple of renown
To me, your son! To my hand, then, O king,
Intrust the army; in thy Flemish lands
I am well loved, and I will freely gage
My life for their fidelity and truth.

KING

Thou speakest like a dreamer. This high office
Demands a man – and not a stripling's arm.

CARLOS

It but demands a human being, father:
And that is what Duke Alva ne'er hath been.

KING

Terror alone can tie rebellion's hands:
Humanity were madness. Thy soft soul
Is tender, son: they'll tremble at the duke.
Desist from thy request.

CARLOS

Despatch me, sire,
To Flanders with the army – dare rely
E'en on my tender soul. The name of prince,
The royal name emblazoned on my standard,
Conquers where Alva's butchers but dismay.
Here on my knees I crave it – this the first
Petition of my life. Trust Flanders to me.

KING (contemplating CARLOS with a piercing look)

Trust my best army to thy thirst for rule,
And put a dagger in my murderer's hand!

CARLOS

Great God! and is this all – is this the fruit
Of a momentous hour so long desired!

[After some thought, in a milder tone.

Oh, speak to me more kindly – send me not
Thus comfortless away – dismiss me not
With this afflicting answer, oh, my father!

Use me more tenderly, indeed, I need it.
This is the last resource of wild despair —
It conquers every power of firm resolve
To beat it as a man – this deep contempt —
My every suit denied: Let me away —
Unheard and foiled in all my fondest hopes,
I take my leave. Now Alva and Domingo
May proudly sit in triumph where your son
Lies weeping in the dust. Your crowd of courtiers,
And your long train of cringing, trembling nobles,
Your tribe of sallow monks, so deadly pale,
All witnessed how you granted me this audience.
Let me not be disgraced. Oh, strike me not
With this most deadly wound – nor lay me bare
To sneering insolence of menial taunts!
"That strangers riot on your bounty, whilst
Carlos, your son, may supplicate in vain."
And as a pledge that you would have me honored,
Despatch me straight to Flanders with the army.

KING

Urge thy request no farther – as thou wouldst
Avoid the king's displeasure.

CARLOS

I must brave
My king's displeasure, and prefer my suit
Once more, it is the last. Trust Flanders to me!
I must away from Spain. To linger here
Is to draw breath beneath the headsman's axe:
The air lies heavy on me in Madrid
Like murder on a guilty soul – a change,
An instant change of clime alone can cure me.
If you would save my life, despatch me straight
Without delay to Flanders.

KING (with affected coldness)

Invalids,
Like thee, my son – need not be tended close,

And ever watched by the physician's eye —
Thou stayest in Spain – the duke will go to Flanders.

CARLOS (wildly)

Assist me, ye good angels!

KING (starting)

Hold, what mean
Those looks so wild?

CARLOS

Father, do you abide
Immovably by this determination?

KING

It was the king's.

CARLOS

Then my commission's done.

[Exit in violent emotion.]

SCENE III

King, sunk in gloomy contemplation, walks a few steps up and down; Alva approaches with embarrassment.

KING

Hold yourself ready to depart for Brussels
Upon a moment's notice.

ALVA

All is prepared, my liege.

KING

And your credentials
Lie ready sealed within my cabinet, —
Meanwhile obtain an audience of the queen,
And bid the prince farewell.

ALVA

As I came in
I met him with a look of frenzy wild
Quitting the chamber; and your majesty
Is strangely moved, methinks, and bears the marks
Of deep excitement – can it be the theme
Of your discourse —

KING

Concerned the Duke of Alva.

[The KING keeps his eye steadfastly fixed on him.]

I'm pleased that Carlos hates my councillors,

But I'm disturbed that he despises them.

[ALVA, coloring deeply, is about to speak.

No answer now: propitiate the prince.

ALVA

Sire!

KING

Tell me who it was that warned me first
Of my son's dark designs? I listened then
To you, and not to him. I will have proof.
And for the future, mark me, Carlos stands
Nearer the throne – now duke – you may retire.

[The KING retires into his cabinet. Exit DUKE by another door.

SCENE IV

The antechamber to the QUEEN'S apartments. DON CARLOS enters in conversation with a PAGE. The attendants retire at his approach.

CARLOS

For me this letter? And a key! How's this?
And both delivered with such mystery!
Come nearer, boy: – from whom didst thou receive them?

PAGE (mysteriously)

It seemed to me the lady would be guessed
Rather than be described.

CARLOS (starting)

The lady, what!
Who art thou, boy?

[Looking earnestly at the PAGE.]

PAGE

A page that serves the queen.

CARLOS (affrighted, putting his hand to the PAGE's mouth)

Hold, on your life! I know enough: no more.

[He tears open the letter hastily, and retires to read it; meanwhile DUKE ALVA comes, and passing the Prince, goes unperceived by him into the QUEEN'S apartment, CARLOS trembles violently and changes color; when he has read the letter he remains a long time speechless, his eyes steadfastly fixed on it; at last he turns to the PAGE.]

She gave you this herself?

PAGE

With her own hands.

CARLOS

She gave this letter to you then herself?
Deceive me not: I ne'er have seen her writing,
And I must credit thee, if thou canst swear it;
But if thy tale be false, confess it straight,
Nor put this fraud on me.

PAGE

This fraud, on whom?

**CARLOS (looking once more at the letter,
then at the PAGE with doubt and earnestness)**

Your parents – are they living? and your father —
Serves he the king? Is he a Spaniard born?

PAGE

He fell a colonel on St. Quentin's field,
Served in the cavalry of Savoy's duke —
His name Alonzo, Count of Henarez.

CARLOS (taking his hand, and looking fixedly in his eyes)

The king gave you this letter?

PAGE (with emotion)

Gracious prince,
Have I deserved these doubts?

CARLOS (reading the letter)

"This key unlocks
The back apartments in the queen's pavilion,
The furthest room lies next a cabinet
Wherein no listener's foot dare penetrate;
Here may the voice of love without restraint
Confess those tender feelings, which till now
The heart with silent looks alone hath spoken.
The timid lover gains an audience here,
And sweet reward repays his secret sorrow."

[As if awakening from a reverie.

I am not in a dream, do not rave,
This is my right hand, this my sword – and these
Are written words. 'Tis true – it is no dream.
I am beloved, I feel I am beloved.

[Unable to contain himself, he rushes hastily through the room, and raises his arms to heaven.

PAGE

Follow me, prince, and I will lead the way.

CARLOS

Then let me first collect my scattered thoughts.
The alarm of joy still trembles in my bosom.
Did I e'er lift my fondest hopes so high,
Or trust my fancy to so bold a flight?
Show me the man can learn thus suddenly
To be a god. I am not what I was.
I feel another heaven – another sun
That was not here before. She loves – she loves me!

PAGE (leading him forward).

But this is not the place: prince! you forget.

CARLOS

The king! My father!

[His arms sink, he casts a timid look around, then collecting himself.

This is dreadful! Yes,
You're right, my friend. I thank you: I was not
Just then myself. To be compelled to silence,
And bury in my heart this mighty bliss,
Is terrible!

[Taking the PAGE by the hand, and leading him aside.

Now here! What thou hast seen,
And what not seen, must be within thy breast
Entombed as in the grave. So now depart;
I shall not need thy guidance; they must not
Surprise us here! Now go.

[The PAGE is about to depart.

Yet hold, a word!

[The PAGE returns. CARLOS lays his hand on his shoulder, and looks him steadily in the face.

A direful secret hast thou in thy keeping,
Which, like a poison of terrific power,
Shivers the cup that holds it into atoms.
Guard every look of thine, nor let thy head
Guess at thy bosom's secret. Be thou like
The senseless speaking-trumpet that receives
And echoes back the voice, but hears it not.
Thou art a boy! Be ever so; continue
The pranks of youth. My correspondent chose
Her messenger of love with prudent skill!
The king will ne'er suspect a serpent here.

PAGE

And I, my prince, shall feel right proud to know

I am one secret richer than the king.

CARLOS

Vain, foolish boy! 'tis this should make thee tremble.
Approach me ever with a cold respect:
Ne'er be induced by idle pride to boast
How gracious is the prince! No deadlier sin
Canst thou commit, my son, than pleasing me.
Whate'er thou hast in future for my ear,
Give not to words; intrust not to thy lips,
Ne'er on that common high road of the thoughts
Permit thy news to travel. Speak with an eye,
A finger; I will answer with a look.
The very air, the light, are Philip's creatures,
And the deaf walls around are in his pay.
Some one approaches; fly, we'll meet again.

[The QUEEN'S chamber opens, and DUKE ALVA comes out.

PAGE

Be careful, prince, to find the right apartment.

[Exit.

CARLOS

It is the duke! Fear not, I'll find the way.

SCENE V

DON CARLOS. DUKE OF ALVA.

ALVA (meeting him)

Two words, most gracious prince.

CARLOS

Some other time.

[Going.

ALVA

The place is not the fittest, I confess;
Perhaps your royal highness may be pleased
To grant me audience in your private chamber.

CARLOS

For what? And why not here? Only be brief.

ALVA

The special object which has brought me hither,
Is to return your highness lowly thanks
For your good services.

CARLOS

Thanks to me —
For what? Duke Alva's thanks!

ALVA

You scarce had left
His majesty, ere I received in form
Instructions to depart for Brussels.

CARLOS

What!
For Brussels!

ALVA

And to what, most gracious prince,
Must I ascribe this favor, but to you —
Your intercession with the king?

CARLOS

Ob, no!
Not in the least to me; but, duke, you travel,
So Heaven be with your grace!

ALVA

And is this all?
It seems, indeed, most strange! And has your highness
No further orders, then, to send to Flanders?

CARLOS

What should I have?

ALVA

Not long ago, it seemed,
The country's fate required your presence.

CARLOS

How?
But yes, you're right, – it was so formerly;
But now this change is better as it is.

ALVA

I am amazed —

CARLOS

You are an able general,
No one doubts that – envy herself must own it.
For me, I'm but a youth – so thought the king.

CARLOS

The king was right, quite right. I see it now
Myself, and am content – and so no more.
God speed your journey, as you see, just now
My hands are full, and weighty business presses.
The rest to-morrow, or whene'er you will,
Or when you come from Brussels.

ALVA

What is this?

CARLOS

The season favors, and your route will lie
Through Milan, Lorraine, Burgundy, and on
To Germany! What, Germany? Ay, true,
In Germany it was – they know you there.
'Tis April now, May, June, – in July, then,
Just so! or, at the latest, soon in August, —
You will arrive in Brussels, and no doubt
We soon shall hear of your victorious deeds.
You know the way to win our high esteem,
And earn the crown of fame.

ALVA (significantly)

Indeed! condemned
By my own conscious insignificance!

CARLOS

You're sensitive, my lord, and with some cause,
I own it was not fair to use a weapon
Against your grace you were unskilled to wield.

ALVA

Unskilled!

CARLOS

'Tis pity I've no leisure now
To fight this worthy battle fairly out
But at some other time, we —

ALVA

Prince, we both
Miscalculate – but still in opposite ways.
You, for example, overrate your age
By twenty years, whilst on the other hand,
I, by as many, underrate it —

CARLOS

Well

ALVA

And this suggests the thought, how many nights
Beside this lovely Lusitanian bride —
Your mother – would the king right gladly give
To buy an arm like this, to aid his crown.
Full well he knows, far easier is the task
To make a monarch than a monarchy;
Far easier too, to stock the world with kings
Than frame an empire for a king to rule.

CARLOS

Most true, Duke Alva, yet —

ALVA

And how much blood,
Your subjects' dearest blood, must flow in streams
Before two drops could make a king of you.

CARLOS

Most true, by heaven! and in two words comprised,
All that the pride of merit has to urge
Against the pride of fortune. But the moral —
Now, Duke Alva!

ALVA

Woe to the nursling babe
Of royalty that mocks the careful hand
Which fosters it! How calmly it may sleep
On the soft cushion of our victories!
The monarch's crown is bright with sparkling gems,
But no eye sees the wounds that purchased them.
This sword has given our laws to distant realms,
Has blazed before the banner of the cross,
And in these quarters of the globe has traced
Ensanguined furrows for the seed of faith.
God was the judge in heaven, and I on earth.

CARLOS

God, or the devil – it little matters which;
Yours was his chosen arm – that stands confessed.
And now no more of this. Some thoughts there are
Whereof the memory pains me. I respect
My father's choice, – my father needs an Alva!
But that he needs him is not just the point
I envy in him: a great man you are,
This may be true, and I well nigh believe it,
Only I fear your mission is begun
Some thousand years too soon. Alva, methinks,
Were just the man to suit the end of time.
Then when the giant insolence of vice
Shall have exhausted Heaven's enduring patience,
And the rich waving harvest of misdeeds
Stand in full ear, and asks a matchless reaper,
Then should you fill the post. O God! my paradise!
My Flanders! But of this I must not think.
'Tis said you carry with you a full store
Of sentences of death already signed.
This shows a prudent foresight! No more need
To fear your foes' designs, or secret plots:
Oh, father! ill indeed I've understood thee.
Calling thee harsh, to save me from a post,
Where Alva's self alone can fitly shine!

'Twas an unerring token of your love.

ALVA

These words deserve —

CARLOS

What!

ALVA

But your birth protects you.

CARLOS (seizing his sword)

That calls for blood! Duke, draw your sword!

ALVA (slightinglly)

On whom?

CARLOS. (pressing upon him)

Draw, or I run you through.

ALVA

Then be it so.

[They fight.]

SCENE VI

The QUEEN, DON CARLOS, DUKE ALVA.

QUEEN (coming from her room alarmed)

How! naked swords?

[To the PRINCE in an indignant and commanding tone.

Prince Carlos!

CARLOS (agitated at the QUEEN's look, drops his arm, stands motionless, then rushes to the DUKE, and embraces him)

Pardon, duke!

Your pardon, sir! Forget, forgive it all!

[Throws himself in silence at the QUEEN'S feet, then rising suddenly, departs in confusion.

ALVA

By heaven, 'tis strange!

QUEEN (remains a few moments as if in doubt, then retiring to her apartment)

A word with you, Duke ALVA.

[Exit, followed by the DUKE.

SCENE VII

The PRINCESS EBOLI's apartment.
The PRINCESS in a simple, but elegant dress, playing on the lute.
The QUEEN's PAGE enters.

PRINCESS (starting up suddenly)

He comes!

PAGE (abruptly)

Are you alone? I wonder much

Конец ознакомительного фрагмента.

Текст предоставлен ООО «ЛитРес».

Прочитайте эту книгу целиком, [купив полную легальную версию](#) на ЛитРес.

Безопасно оплатить книгу можно банковской картой Visa, MasterCard, Maestro, со счета мобильного телефона, с платежного терминала, в салоне МТС или Связной, через PayPal, WebMoney, Яндекс.Деньги, QIWI Кошелек, бонусными картами или другим удобным Вам способом.