

Pizarro

Richard Brinsley Sheridan

Table of Contents

<u>Pizarro</u>	1
<u>Richard Brinsley Sheridan</u>	2
<u>ACT I</u>	3
<u>SCENE I</u>	4
<u>ACT II</u>	16
<u>SCENE I</u>	17
<u>SCENE II</u>	21
<u>SCENE III</u>	24
<u>SCENE IV</u>	26
<u>ACT III</u>	32
<u>SCENE I</u>	33
<u>SCENE II</u>	37
<u>SCENE III</u>	39
<u>ACT IV</u>	46
<u>SCENE I</u>	47
<u>SCENE III</u>	56
<u>ACT V</u>	61
<u>SCENE I</u>	62
<u>SCENE II</u>	67
<u>SCENE III</u>	72
<u>SCENE IV</u>	74

Pizarro

Richard Brinsley Sheridan

This page copyright © 2001 Blackmask Online.
<http://www.blackmask.com>

- ACT I.
 - SCENE I.
 - ACT II.
 - SCENE I.
 - SCENE II.
 - SCENE III.
 - SCENE IV.
 - ACT III.
 - SCENE I.
 - SCENE II.
 - SCENE III.
 - ACT IV.
 - SCENE I.
 - SCENE III.
 - ACT V.
 - SCENE I.
 - SCENE II.
 - SCENE III.
 - SCENE IV.
-

Pizarro

ACT I.

SCENE I.

A magnificent Pavilion near Pizarro's Tent—a View of the Spanish Camp in the back Ground.—Elvira is discovered sleeping under a canopy on one side of the Pavilion—Valverde enters, gazes on Elvira, kneels, and attempts to kiss her hand; Elvira, awakened, rises and looks at him with indignation.

Elv.

Audacious! Whence is thy privilege to interrupt the few moments of repose my harassed mind can snatch amid the tumults of this noisy camp? Shall I inform your master of this presumptuous treachery? shall I disclose thee to Pizarro? Hey!

Val.

I am his servant, it is true—trusted by him—and I know him well; and therefore 'tis I ask, by what magic could Pizarro gain your heart, by what fatality still holds he your affection?

Elv.

Hold! thou trusty **Secretary!**

Val.

Ignobly born! in mind and manners rude, ferocious, and unpolished, though cool and crafty if occasion need—in youth audacious—ill his first manhood—a licensed pirate—treating men as brutes, the world as booty; yet now the Spanish hero is he styled—the first of Spanish conquerors! and for a warrior so accomplished, 'tis fit Elvira should leave her noble family, her fame, her home, to share the dangers, humours, and the crimes of such a lover as Pizarro!

Elv.

What! Valverde moralizing! But grant I am in error, what is my incentive? Passion, infatuation, call it as you will; but what attaches *thee* to this despised, unworthy leader?—Base lucre is thy object, mean fraud thy means. Could you gain me, you only hope to win a higher interest in Pizarro—I know you.

Val.

On my soul, you wrong me; what else my faults, I have none towards you: but indulge the scorn and levity of your nature; do it while yet the time permits; the gloomy hour, I fear, too soon approaches.

Elv.

Valverde, a prophet too!

Val.

Hear me, Elvira—Shame from his late defeat, and burning wishes for revenge, again have brought Pizarro to Peru; but trust me, he over-rates his strength, nor measures well the foe. Encamped in a strange country, where terror cannot force, nor corruption buy a single friend, what have we to hope? The army murmuring at increasing hardships, while Pizarro decorates with gaudy spoil the gay pavilion of his luxury! each day diminishes our force.

Elv.

But are you not the heirs of those that fall?

Val.

Are gain and plunder then our only purpose? Is this Elvira's heroism?

Pizarro

Elv.

No, so save me Heaven! I abhor the motive, means, and end of your pursuits; but I will trust none of you:—in your whole army there is not one of you that has a heart, or speaks ingenuously—aged Las-Casas, and he alone, excepted.

Val.

He! an enthusiast in the opposite and worse extreme!

Elv.

Oh! had I earlier known that virtuous man, how different might my lot have been!

Val.

I will grant, Pizarro could not then so easily have duped you; forgive me, but at that event I still must wonder.

Elv.

Hear me, Valverde.—When first my virgin fancy waked to love, Pizarro was my country's idol. Self-taught, self-raised, and self-supported, he became a hero; and I was formed to be won by glory and renown. 'Tis known that when he left Panama in a slight vessel, his force was not an hundred men. Arrived in the island of Gallo, with his sword he drew a line upon the sands, and said, "Pass those who fear to die or conquer with their leader." Thirteen alone remained, and at the head of these the warrior stood his ground. Even at the moment when my ears first caught this tale, my heart exclaimed, "Pizarro is its lord!" What since I have perceived, or thought, or felt! you must have more worth to win the knowledge of.

Val.

I press no further; still assured that while Alonzo de Molina, our General's former friend and pupil, leads the enemy, Pizarro never more will be a conqueror. (*Trumpets without.*)

Elv.

Silence! I hear him coming; look not perplexed.—How mystery and fraud confound the countenance! Quick, put on an honest face, if thou canst.

Pizarro. (Speaking without.)

Chain and secure him; I will examine him myself.

Pizarro enters.

(*Valverde bows—Elvira laughs.*)

Piz.

Why dost thou smile, Elvira?

Elv.

To laugh or weep without a reason, is one of the few privileges we women have.

Piz.

Elvira, I will know the cause, I am resolved!

Elv.

SCENE I.

Pizarro

I am glad of that, because I love resolution, and am resolved not to tell you. Now my resolution, I take it, is the better of the two, because it depends upon myself, and yours does not.

Piz.

Psha! trifler!

Val.

Elvira was laughing at my apprehensions that—

Piz.

Apprehensions!

Val.

Yes—that Alonzo's skill and genius should so have disciplined and informed the enemy, as to—

Piz.

Alonzo! the traitor! How I once loved that man! His noble mother entrusted him, a boy, to my protection. At my table did he feast—in my tent did he repose. I had marked his early genius, and the valorous spirit that grew with it. Often I had talked to him of our first adventures—what storms we struggled with—what perils we surmounted. When landed with a slender host upon an unknown land—then, when I told how famine and fatigue, discord and toil, day by day, did thin our ranks; amid close—pressing enemies, how still undaunted I endured and dared—maintained my purpose and my power in despite of growling mutiny or bold revolt, till with my faithful few remaining I became at last victorious!—When, I say, of these things I spoke, the youth, Alonzo, with tears of wonder and delight, would throw him on my neck, and swear, his soul's ambition owned no other leader.

Val.

What could subdue attachment so begun?

Piz.

Las-Casas—he it was, with fascinating craft and canting precepts of humanity, raised in Alonzo's mind a new enthusiasm, which forced him, as the stripling termed it, to forego his country's claims for those of human nature.

Val.

Yes, the traitor left you, joined the Peruvians, and became thy enemy and Spain's.

Piz.

But first with weariless remonstrance he sued to win me from my purpose, and untwine the sword from my determined grasp. Much he spoke of right, of justice and humanity, calling the Peruvians our innocent and unoffending brethren.

Val.

They!—Obdurate heathens!—They our brethren!

Piz.

But when he found that the soft folly of the pleading tears he dropt upon my bosom fell on marble, he flew and joined the foe: then, profiting by the lessons he had gain'd in wrong'd Pizarro's school, the youth so disciplined and led his new allies, that soon he forc'd me—Ha! I burn with shame and fury while I own it! in base retreat and foul discomfiture to quit the shore.

Val.

But the hour of revenge is come.

SCENE I.

Pizarro

Piz.

It is; I am returned—my force is strengthened, and the audacious Boy shall soon know that Pizarro lives, and has—a grateful recollection of the thanks he owes him.

Val.

'Tis doubted whether still Alonzo lives.

Piz.

'Tis certain that he does; one of his armour-bearers is just made prisoner: twelve thousand is their force, as he reports, led by Alonzo and Peruvian Rolla. This day they make a solemn sacrifice on their ungodly altars. We must profit by their security, and attack them unprepared—the sacrificers shall become the victims.

Elv. (Aside.)

Wretched innocents! And their own blood shall bedew their altars!

Piz.

Right! (*Trumpets without.*) Elvira, retire!

Elv.

Why should I retire?

Piz.

Because men are to meet here, and on manly business.

Elv.

O, men! men! ungrateful and perverse! O, woman! still affectionate though wrong'd! The Beings to whose eyes you turn for animation, hope, and rapture, through the days of mirth and revelry; and on whose bosoms in the hour of sore calamity you seek for rest and consolation; **them**, when the pompous follies of your mean ambition are the question, you treat as playthings or as slaves!—I shall not retire.

Piz.

Remain then—and, if thou canst, be silent.

Elv.

They only babble who practise not reflection. I shall think—and thought is silence.

Piz.

Ha!—there's somewhat in her manner lately—

[Pizarro looks sternly and suspiciously towards Elvira, who meets him with a commanding and unaltered eye.]

Enter Las-Casas, Almagro, Gonzalo, Davilla, Officers and Soldiers.—Trumpets without.

Las-C.

Pizarro, we attend your summons.

Piz.

Welcome, venerable father—my friends, most welcome. Friends and fellow-soldiers, at length the hour is

Pizarro

arrived, which to Pizarro's hopes presents the full reward of our undaunted enterprise and long-enduring toils. Confident in security, this day the foe devotes to solemn sacrifice: if with bold surprise we strike on their solemnity—trust to your leader's word—we shall not fail.

Alm.

Too long inactive have we been mouldering on the coast—our stores exhausted, and our soldiers murmuring—Battle! Battle!—then death to the arm'd, and chains for the defenceless.

Dav.

Death to the whole Peruvian race!

Las-C.

Merciful Heaven!

Alm.

Yes, General, the attack, and instantly! Then shall Alonzo, basking at his ease, soon cease to scoff our suffering and scorn our force.

Las-C.

Alonzo!—scorn and presumption are not in his nature.

Alm.

'Tis fit Las-Casas should defend his pupil.

Piz.

Speak not of the traitor—or hear his name but as the bloody summons to assault and vengeance. It appears we are agreed?

Alm. and Dav.

We are.

Gon.

All!—Battle! Battle!

Las-C.

Is then the dreadful measure of your cruelty not yet compleat?—Battle!—gracious Heaven! Against whom?—Against a King, in whose mild bosom your atrocious injuries even yet have not excited hate! but who, insulted or victorious, still sues for peace. Against a People who never wronged the living Being their Creator formed: a People, who, children of innocence received you as cherish'd guests with eager hospitality and confiding kindness. Generously and freely did they share with you their comforts, their treasures, and their homes: you repaid them by fraud, oppression, and dishonour. These eyes have witnessed all I speak—as Gods you were received; as Fiends have you acted.

Piz.

Las-Casas!

Las-C.

Pizarro, hear me!—Hear me, chieftains! —And thou, All-powerful! whose thunders can shiver into sand the adamantine rock— whose lightnings can pierce to the core of the rived and quaking earth—Oh! let thy power give effect to thy servant's words, as thy spirit gives courage to his will! Do not, I implore you, Chieftains—Countrymen—Do not, I implore you, renew the foul barbarities which your insatiate avarice has

Pizarro

inflicted on this wretched, unoffending race!—But hush, my sighs—fall not, drops of useless sorrow!—heart-breaking anguish, choke not my utterance—All I entreat is, send me once more to those you *call* your enemies—Oh! let me be the messenger of penitence from you, I shall return with blessings and with peace from them.—Elvira, you weep! —Alas! and does this dreadful crisis move no heart but thine?

Alm.

Because there are no women here but she and thou.

Piz.

Close this idle war of words: time flies, and our opportunity will be lost. Chieftains, are ye for instant battle?

All.

We are.

Las—C.

Oh, men of blood!—(*Kneels.*) God! thou hast anointed me thy servant—not to curse, but to bless my countrymen: yet now my blessing on their force were blasphemy against thy goodness.—(*Rises.*) No! I curse your purpose, homicides! I curse the bond of blood by which you are united. May fell division, infamy, and rout, defeat your projects and rebuke your hopes! On you, and on your children, be the peril of the innocent blood which shall be shed this day! I leave you, and for ever! No longer shall these aged eyes be seared by the horrors they have witnessed. In caves, in forests, will I hide myself; with Tigers and with savage beasts will I commune: and when at length we meet again before the bless'd tribunal of that Deity, whose mild doctrines and whose mercies ye have this day renounced, then shall **you** feel the agony and grief of soul which tear the bosom of your accuser now! (*Going.*)

Elv.

Las-Casas! Oh! take me with thee, Las-Casas.

Las—C.

Stay! lost, abused lady! I alone am useless here. Perhaps thy loveliness may persuade to pity, where reason and religion plead in vain. Oh! save thy innocent fellow-creatures if thou canst: then shall thy frailty be redeemed, and thou wilt share the mercy thou bestowest.

[*Exit.*

Piz.

How, Elvira! wouldst thou leave me?

Elv.

I am bewildered, grown terrified!— Your inhumanity—and that good Las-Casas— oh! he appeared to me just now something more than heavenly: and you! ye all looked worse than earthly.

Piz.

Compassion sometimes becomes a beauty.

Elv.

Humanity always becomes a conqueror.

Alm.

Well! Heaven be praised, we are rid of the old moralist.

Pizarro

Gon.

I hope he'll join his preaching pupil, Alonzo.

Piz.

Now to prepare our muster and our march. At mid-day is the hour of the sacrifice. Consulting with our guides, the route of your divisions shall be given to each commander. If we surprise, we conquer; and if we conquer, the gates of Quito will be open to us.

Alm.

And Pizarro then be monarch of Peru.

Piz.

Not so fast—ambition for a time must take counsel from discretion. Ataliba still must hold the shadow of a sceptre in his hand—Pizarro still appear dependant upon Spain: while the pledge of future peace, his daughter's hand, secures the proud succession to the crown I seek.

Alm.

This is best. In Pizarro's plans observe the statesman's wisdom guides the warrior's valour.

Val. (Aside to Elvira.)

You mark, Elvira?

Elv.

O, yes—this is best—this is excellent.

Piz.

You seem offended. Elvira still retains my heart. Think—a sceptre waves me on.

Elv.

Offended?—No!—Thou know'st thy glory is my idol; and this will be most glorious, most just and honourable.

Piz.

What mean you?

Elv.

Oh! nothing—mere woman's prattle—a jealous whim, perhaps; but let it not impede the royal hero's course.—(*Trumpets without.*) The call of arms invites you—Away! away! you, his brave, his worthy fellow-warriors.

Piz.

And go you not with me?

Elv.

Undoubtedly! I needs must be the first to hail the future monarch of Peru.

Enter Gomez.

Alm.

How, Gomez! what bring'st thou?

SCENE I.

Pizarro

Gom.

On yonder hill among the palm-trees we have surprised an old cacique; escape by flight he could not, and we seized him and his attendant unresisting; yet his lips breathe nought but bitterness and scorn.

Piz.

Drag him before us.

[Gomez leaves the tent, and returns conducting Orozembo and Attendant, in chains, guarded.]

What art thou, stranger?

Oro.

First tell me which among you is the captain of this band of robbers.

Piz.

Ha!

Alm.

Madman!—Tear out his tongue, or else—

Oro.

Thou'lt hear some truth.

Dav. (Shewing his poniard.)

Shall I not plunge this into his heart?

Oro. (To Piz.)

Does your army boast many such heroes as this?

Piz.

Audacious!—This insolence has sealed thy doom. Die thou shalt, grey-headed ruffian. But first confess what thou knowest.

Oro.

I know that which thou hast just assured me of—that I shall die.

Piz.

Less audacity perhaps might have preserved thy life.

Oro.

My life is as a withered tree—it is not worth preserving.

Piz.

Hear me, old man. Even now we march against the Peruvian army. We know there is a secret path that leads to your strong-hold among the rocks: guide us to that, and name thy reward. If wealth be thy wish—

Oro.

Ha! ha! ha! ha!

Piz.

Dost thou despise my offer?

SCENE I.

Pizarro

Oro.

Thee and thy offer!—Wealth!—I have the wealth of two dear gallant sons—I have stored in heaven the riches which repay good actions here—and still my chiefest treasure do I bear about me.

Piz.

What is that? Inform me.

Oro.

I will; for it never can be thine—the treasure of a pure unsullied conscience.

Piz.

I believe there is no other Peruvian who dares speak as thou dost.

Oro.

Would I could believe there is no other Spaniard who dares act as thou dost!

Gon. (Aside.)

Obdurate Pagan!—How numerous is your army?

Oro.

Count the leaves of yonder forest.

Alm.

Which is the weakest part of your camp?

Oro.

It has no weak part—on every side 'tis fortified by justice.

Piz.

Where have you concealed your wives and your children?

Oro.

In the hearts of their husbands and their fathers.

Piz.

Know'st thou Alonzo?

Oro.

Know him!—Alonzo!—Know him!—Our nation's benefactor!—The guardian angel of Peru!

Piz.

By what has he merited that title?

Oro.

By not resembling thee.

Alm.

Who is this Rolla, joined with Alonzo in command?

Oro.

SCENE I.

Pizarro

I will answer that; for I love to hear and to repeat the hero's name. Rolla, the kinsman of the King, is the idol of our army; in war a tiger, chafed by the hunter's spear; in peace as gentle as the unweaned lamb. **Cora** was once betrothed to him; but finding she preferred Alonzo, he resigned his claim, and, I fear, his peace, to friendship and to **Cora's** happiness; yet still he loves her with a pure and holy fire.

Piz.

Romantic savage!—I shall meet this Rolla soon.

Oro.

Thou hadst better not! The terrors of his noble eye would strike thee dead.

Dav.

Silence, or tremble!

Oro.

Beardless robber! I never yet have trembled before God—why should I tremble before man?—Why before thee, thou less than man!

Dav.

Another word, audacious heathen, and I strike!

Oro.

Strike, Christian! Then boast among thy fellows—I too have murdered a Peruvian!

Dav.

Hell and vengeance seize thee! (*Stabs him.*)

Piz.

Hold!

Dav.

Couldst thou longer have endured his insults?

Piz.

And therefore should he die untortured?

Oro.

True! Observe, young man—your unthinking rashness has saved me from the rack; and you yourself have lost the opportunity of a useful lesson; you might have seen with what cruelty vengeance would have inflicted torments, and with what patience virtue would have borne them.

Elv. (Supporting Orozembo's head upon her bosom.)

Oh! ye are monsters all. Look up, thou martyr'd innocent—look up once more, and bless me ere thou diest. God! how I pity thee!

Oro.

Pity me!—Me! so near my happiness! Bless thee, lady!—Spaniards—Heaven turn your hearts, and pardon you as I do. (*Orozembo is borne off dying.*)

Piz.

Away!—Davilla! If thus rash a second time—

Pizarro

Dav.

Forgive the hasty indignation which—

Piz.

No more—unbind that trembling wretch—let him depart; 'tis well he should report the mercy which we show to insolent defiance. —Hark!—our troops are moving.

Attendant. (On passing Elvira.)

If through your gentle means my master's poor remains might be preserved from insult—

Elv.

I understand you.

Att.

His sons may yet thank your charity, if not avenge their father's fate.

[Exit.]

Piz.

What says the slave?

Elv.

A parting word to thank you for your mercy.

Piz.

Our guard and guides approach. (*Soldiers march through the tents.*) Follow me, friends— each shall have his post assigned, and ere Peruvia's God shall sink beneath the main, the Spanish banner, bathed in blood, shall float above the walls of vanquish'd Quito.

[Exeunt.]

Manent Elvira and Valverde.

Val.

Is it now presumption that my hopes gain strength with the increasing horrors which I see appal Elvira's soul?

Elv.

I am mad with terror and remorse! Would I could fly these dreadful scenes!

Val.

Might not Valverde's true attachment be thy refuge?

Elv.

What wouldst thou do to save or to avenge me?

Val.

I dare do all thy injuries may demand— a word—and he lies bleeding at your feet.

Elv.

SCENE I.

Pizarro

Perhaps we will speak again of this. Now leave me.

[Exit Valverde.]

Elv. (Alone.)

No! not this revenge—no! not this instrument. Fie, Elvira! even for a moment to counsel with this unworthy traitor! —Can a wretch, false to a confiding master, be true to any pledge of love or honour?—Pizarro will abandon me—yes; me—who, for his sake, have sacrificed—Oh, God!—What have I not sacrificed for him; yet, curbing the avenging pride that swells this bosom, I still will further cry him. Oh, men! ye who, wearied by the fond fidelity of virtuous love, seek in the wanton's flattery a new delight, oh, ye may insult and leave the hearts to which your faith was pledged, and, stifling self-reproach, may fear no other peril; because such hearts, howe'er you injure and desert them, have yet the proud retreat of an unspotted fame—of unrepublishing conscience. But beware the desperate libertine who forsakes the creature whom his arts have first deprived of all natural protection—of all self-consolation! What has he left her?—Despair and vengeance!

[Exit.]

END OF THE FIRST ACT.

Pizarro

ACT II.

SCENE I.

A Bank surrounded by a wild Wood, and Rocks.—Cora, sitting on the root of a tree, is playing with her Child.—Alonzo looks over them with delight and cheerfulness.

Cora.

Now confess, does he resemble thee, or not?

Al.

Indeed he is liker thee—thy rosy softness, thy smiling gentleness.

Cora.

But his auburn hair, the colour of his eyes, Alonzo.—O! my lord's image, and my heart's adored! (*Pressing the Child to her bosom.*)

Al.

The little daring urchin robs me, I doubt, of some portion of thy love, my Cora. At least he shares caresses, which till his birth were only mine.

Cora.

Oh no, Alonzo! a mother's love for her dear babe is not a stealth, or taken from the father's store; it is a new delight that turns with quicken'd gratitude to **Him**, the author of her augmented bliss.

Al.

Could Cora think me serious?

Cora.

I am sure he will speak soon: then will be the last of the three holydays allowed by Nature's sanction to the fond anxious mother's heart.

Al.

What are those three?

Cora.

The ecstasy of his birth I pass; that in part is selfish: but when first the white blossoms of his teeth appear, breaking the crimson buds that did incase them; that is a day of joy: next, when from his father's arms he runs without support, and clings, laughing and delighted, to his mother's knee; that is the mother's heart's next holyday: and sweeter still the third, whene'er his little stammering tongue shall utter the grateful sound of, Father, Mother!—O! that is the dearest joy of all!

Al.

Beloved Cora!

Cora.

Oh! my Alonzo! daily, hourly, do I pour thanks to Heaven for the dear blessing I possess in him and thee.

Al.

To Heaven and Rolla.

Pizarro

Cora.

Yes, to Heaven and Rolla: and art thou not grateful to them too, Alonzo? art thou not happy?

Al.

Can Cora ask that question?

Cora.

Why then of late so restless on thy couch? Why to my waking watching ear so often does the stillness of the night betray thy struggling sighs?

Al.

Must not I fight against my country, against my brethren?

Cora.

Do they not seek our destruction, and are not all men brethren?

Al.

Should they prove victorious?

Cora.

I will fly, and meet thee in the mountains.

Al.

Fly, with thy infant, Cora?

Cora.

What! think you a mother, when she runs from danger, can feel the weight of her child?

Al.

Cora, my beloved, do you wish to set my heart at rest?

Cora.

Oh yes! yes! yes!

Al.

Hasten then now to the concealment in the mountains; there dwells your father, and there all our matrons and virgins, and our warriors' offspring, are allotted to await the issue of the war. Cora will not alone resist her husband's, her sisters', and her monarch's wish.

Cora.

Alonzo, I cannot leave you: Oh! how in every moment's absence would my fancy paint you, wounded, alone, abandon'd! No, no, I cannot leave you.

Al.

Rolla will be with me.

Cora.

Yes, while the battle rages, and where it rages most, brave Rolla will be found. He may revenge, but cannot save thee. To follow danger, he will leave even thee. But I have sworn never to forsake thee but with life. Dear, dear Alonzo! can you wish that I should break my vow?

Al.

Then be it so. Oh! excellence in all that's great and lovely, in courage, gentleness, and truth; my pride, my content, my all! Can there on this earth be fools who seek for happiness, and pass by love in the pursuit?

Cora.

Alonzo, I cannot thank you: silence is the gratitude of true affection: who seeks to follow it by sound will miss the track. (*Shout without.*) Does the King approach?

Al.

No, 'tis the General placing the guard that will surround the temple during the sacrifice. 'Tis Rolla comes, the first and best of heroes. (*Trumpets sound.*)

Rolla.

Rol. (as entering.)

Then place them on the hill fronting the Spanish camp. (*Enters.*)

Cora.

Rolla! my friend, my brother!

Al.

Rolla! my friend, my benefactor! how can our lives repay the obligations which we owe you?

Rol.

Pass them in peace and bliss.—Let Rolla witness it, he is overpaid.

Cora.

Look on this child—He is the life—blood of my heart; but if ever he loves or reveres thee less than his own father, his mother's hate fall on him!

Rol.

Oh, no more!—What sacrifice have I made to merit gratitude? The object of my love was Cora's happiness.—I see her happy.—Is not my object gain'd, and am I not rewarded? Now, Cora, listen to a friend's advice. You must away; you must seek the sacred caverns, the unprofan'd recess, whither, after this day's sacrifice, our matrons, and e'en the Virgins of the Sun, retire.

Cora.

Not secure with Alonzo and with thee, Rolla?

Rol.

We have heard Pizarro's plan is to surprise us.—Thy presence, Cora, cannot aid, but may impede our efforts.

Cora.

Impede!

Rol.

Yes, yes. Thou know'st how tenderly we love thee; we, thy husband and thy friend. Art thou near us? our thoughts, our valour—vengeance will not be our own.—No advantage will be pursued that leads us from the spot where thou art placed; no succour will be given but for thy protection. The faithful lover dares not be all himself amid the war, until he knows that the beloved of his soul is absent from the peril of the fight.

Al.

Thanks to my friend! 'tis this I would have urged.

Cora.

This timid excess of love, producing fear instead of valour, flatters, but does not convince me: the wife is incredulous.

Rol.

And is the mother unbelieving too?

Cora.

No more—Do with me as you please. My friend, my husband! place me where you will.

Al.

My adored! we thank you both. (*March without.*) Hark! the King approaches to the sacrifice. You, Rolla, spoke of rumours of surprise.— A servant of mine, I hear, is missing; whether surprised or treacherous, I know not.

Rol.

It matters not. We are every where prepared. Come, Cora, upon the altar 'mid the rocks thou'lt implore a blessing on our cause. The pious supplication of the trembling wife, and mother's heart, rises to the throne of mercy, the most resistless prayer of human homage.

[Exeunt.]

SCENE II.

The Temple of the Sun: it represents the magnificence of Peruvian idolatry: in the centre is the altar.—A solemn march.—The Warriors and King enter on one side of the Temple.—Rolla, Alonzo, and Cora, on the other.

Ata.

Welcome, Alonzo!—(To Rolla.) Kinsman, thy hand.—(To Cora.) Bless'd be the object of the happy mother's love.

Cora.

May the sun bless the father of his people!

Ata.

In the welfare of his children lives the happiness of their King. Friends, what is the temper of our soldiers?

Rol.

Such as becomes the cause which they support; their cry is, Victory or death! our King! our Country! and our God!

Ata.

Thou, Rolla, in the hour of peril, hast been wont to animate the spirit of their leaders, ere we proceed to consecrate the banners which thy valour knows so well to guard.

Rol.

Yet never was the hour of peril near, when to inspire them words were so little needed. My brave associates—partners of my toil, my feelings and my fame!—can Rolla's words add vigour to the virtuous energies which inspire your hearts?—No—**you** have judged as I have, the foulness of the crafty plea by which these bold invaders would delude you—Your generous spirit has compared as mine has, the motives, which, in a war like this, can animate *their* minds, and **ours**.—**They**, by a strange frenzy driven, fight for power, for plunder, and extended rule—**we**, for our country, our altars, and our homes.—**They** follow an Adventurer whom they fear—and obey a power which they hate—**we** serve a Monarch whom we love—a God whom we adore.—Whene'er they move in anger, desolation tracks their progress! —Where'er they pause in amity, affliction mourns their friendship!—They boast, they come but to improve our state, enlarge our thoughts, and free us from the yoke of error!— Yes—**they** will give enlightened freedom to *our* minds, who are themselves the slaves of passion, avarice, and pride.—They offer us their protection—Yes, such protection as vultures give to lambs—covering and devouring them! —They call on us to barter all of good we have inherited and proved, for the desperate chance of something better which they promise.—Be our plain answer this: The throne **we** honour is the **people's choice**—the laws we reverence are our brave Fathers' legacy—the faith we follow teaches us to live in bonds of charity with all mankind, and die with hope of bliss beyond the grave. Tell your invaders this, and tell them too, we seek no change; and, least of all, such change as they would bring us.

[Trumpets sound.]

Ata. (Embracing Rolla.)

Now, holy friends, ever mindful of these sacred truths, begin the sacrifice. (*A solemn Procession commences from the recess of the Temple above the Altar—The Priests and Virgins of the Sun arrange themselves on either side—The High—Priest approaches the Altar, and the solemnity begins—The Invocation of the High—Priest is followed by the Chorusses of the Priests and Virgins—Fire from above lights upon the Altar.— The whole*

Pizarro

assembly rise, and join in the Thanksgiving.) Our offering is accepted.—Now to arms, my friends, prepare for battle.

Enter Orano.

Ora.

The enemy!

Ata.

How near?

Ora.

From the hill's brow, e'en now as I o'erlooked their force, suddenly I perceived the whole in motion: with eager haste they march towards our deserted camp, as if apprised of this most solemn sacrifice.

Rol.

They must be met before they reach it.

Ata.

And you, my daughters, with your dear children, away to the appointed place of safety.

Cora.

Oh, Alonzo! (*Embracing him.*)

Al.

We shall meet again.

Cora.

Bless us once more, ere you leave us.

Al.

Heaven protect and bless thee, my beloved; and thee, my innocent!

Ata.

Haste, haste!—each moment is precious!

Cora.

Farewell, Alonzo! Remember thy life is mine.

Rol.

Not one farewell to Rolla?

Cora. (Giving him her hand.)

Farewell! The God of war be with you: but, bring me back Alonzo.
[Exit with the Child.]

Ata. (Draws his sword.)

Now, my brethren, my sons, my friends, I know your valour.— Should ill success assail us, be despair the last

Pizarro

feeling of your hearts.—If successful, let mercy be the first. Alonzo, to you I give to defend the narrow passage of the mountains. On the right of the wood be Rolla's station. For me, strait forwards will I march to meet them, and fight until I see my people saved, or they behold their Monarch fall. Be the word of battle —God! and our native land. (*A march.*)

[Exeunt.

Pizarro

SCENE III.

The Wood between the Temple and the Camp.

*Enter **Rolla** and **Alonzo**.*

Rol.

Here, my friend, we separate—soon, I trust, to meet again in triumph.

Al.

Or perhaps we part to meet no more. Rolla, a moment's pause; we are yet before our army's strength; one earnest word at parting.

Rol.

There is in language now no word but battle.

Al.

Yes, one word more—Cora!

Rol.

Cora! Speak!

Al.

The next hour brings us—

Rol.

Death or victory!

Al.

It may be victory to one—death to the other.

Rol.

Or both may fall.

Al.

If so, my wife and child I bequeath to the protection of Heaven and my King. But should I only fall, Rolla, be thou my heir.

Rol.

How?

Al.

Be Cora thy wife—be thou a father to my child.

Rol.

Rouse thee, Alonzo! Banish these timid fancies.

Al.

SCENE III.

Pizarro

Rolla! I have tried in vain, and cannot fly from the foreboding which oppresses me: thou know'st it will not shake me in the fight: but give me your promise.

Rol.

If it be Cora's will—Yes—I promise— (*Gives his hand.*)

Al.

Tell her it was my last wish! and bear to her and to my son, my last blessing.

Rol.

I will.—Now then to our posts, and let our swords speak for us. (*They draw their swords.*)

Al.

For the King and Cora!

Rol.

For Cora and the King!

[Exeunt different ways. Alarms without.]

SCENE IV.

A View of the Peruvian Camp, with a distant View of a Peruvian Village. Trees growing from a rocky Eminence on one Side. Alarms continue.

Enter an Old blind Man and a Boy.

O. Man.

Have none returned to the camp?

Boy.

One messenger alone. From the temple they all march'd to meet the foe.

O. Man.

Hark! I hear the din of battle. O! had I still retain'd my sight, I might now have grasp'd a sword, and died a soldier's death! Are we quite alone?

Boy.

Yes!—I hope my father will be safe!

O. Man.

He will do his duty. I am more anxious for thee, my child.

Boy.

I can stay with you, dear grandfather.

O. Man.

But should the enemy come, they will drag thee from me, my boy.

Boy.

Impossible, grandfather! for they will see at once that you are old and blind, and cannot do without me.

O. Man.

Poor child! you little know the hearts of these inhuman men.— (*Discharge of cannon heard.*) Hark! the noise is near—I hear the dreadful roaring of the fiery engines of these cruel strangers.— (*Shouts at a distance.*) At every shout, with involuntary haste I clench my hand, and fancy still it grasps a sword! Alas! I can only serve my country by my prayers. Heaven preserve the Inca and his gallant soldiers!

Boy.

O father! there are soldiers running—

O. Man.

Spaniards, boy?

Boy.

No, Peruvians!

O. Man.

Pizarro

How! and flying from the field!— It cannot be.

Enter two Peruvian Soldiers.

O speak to them, boy!—Whence come you? How goes the battle?

Sol.

We may not stop; we are sent for the reserve behind the hill. The day's against us.

[Exeunt Soldiers.]

O. Man.

Quick, then, quick!

Boy.

I see the points of lances glittering in the light.

O. Man.

Those are Peruvians. Do they bend this way?

Enter a Peruvian Soldier.

Boy.

Soldier, speak to my blind father.

Sol.

I'm sent to tell the helpless father to retreat among the rocks: all will be lost, I fear. The King is wounded.

O. Man.

Quick, boy! Lead me to the hill, where thou may'st view the plain. *(Alarms)*

Enter Ataliba, wounded, with Orano, Officers, and Soldiers.

Ata.

My wound is bound; believe me, the hurt is nothing: I may return to the fight.

Ora.

Pardon your servant; but the allotted priest who attends the sacred banner has pronounced that the Inca's blood once shed, no blessing can await the day until he leave the field.

Ata.

Hard restraint! O! my poor brave soldiers! —Hard that I may no longer be a witness of their valour. But haste you; return to your comrades: I will not keep one soldier from his post. Go, and avenge your fallen brethren.

[Exeunt Orano, Officers, and Soldiers.] I will not repine; my own fate is the last anxiety of my heart. It is for you, my people, that I feel and fear.

Old Man and Boy advance.

O. Man.

Did I not hear the voice of an unfortunate? —Who is it complains thus?

Ata.

One almost by hope forsaken.

O. Man.

Is the King alive?

Ata.

The King still lives.

O. Man.

Then thou art not forsaken! Ataliba protects the meanest of his subjects.

Ata.

And who shall protect Ataliba?

O. Man.

The immortal Powers, that protect the just. The virtues of our Monarch alike secure to him the affection of his people and the benign regard of Heaven.

Ata.

How impious, had I murmured! How wondrous, thou supreme Disposer, are thy acts! Even in this moment, which I had thought the bitterest trial of mortal suffering, thou hast infused the sweetest sensation of my life—it is the assurance of my people's love.

Boy. (Turning forward.)

O, father!—Stranger, see those hideous men that rush upon us yonder!

Ata.

Ha! Spaniards!—And I—Ataliba— ill-fated fugitive, without a sword even to try the ransom of a monarch life.

Enter Davilla, Almagro, and Spanish Soldiers.

Dav.

'Tis he—our hopes are answered—I know him well—it is the King!

Alm.

Away! Follow with your royal prize. Avoid those Peruvians, though in flight. This way we may regain our line.

[Exeunt Davilla, Almagro, and Soldiers, with Ataliba prisoner.]

O. Man.

The King! Wretched old man, that could not see his gracious form!—Boy, would thou hadst led me to the

Pizarro

reach of those ruffians' swords!

Boy.

Father! all our countrymen are flying here for refuge.

O. Man.

No—to the rescue of their King— they never will desert him. (*Alarms without.*)

Enter Peruvian Officers and Soldiers, flying across the stage; Orano following.

Ora.

Hold, I charge you! Rolla calls you.

Officer.

We cannot combat with their dreadful engines.

Enter Rolla.

Rol.

Hold, recreants! cowards!—What, fear ye death, and fear not shame? By my soul's fury, I cleave to the earth the first of you that stirs, or plunge your dastard swords into your leader's heart, that he no more may witness your disgrace. Where is the King?

Ora.

From this old man and boy I learn that the detachment of the enemy which you observed so suddenly to quit the field, have succeeded in surprising him; they are yet in sight.

Rol.

And bear the Inca off a prisoner?— Hear this, ye base, disloyal rout! Look there! The dust you see hangs on the bloody Spaniards' track, dragging with ruffian taunts your King, your father!—Ataliba in bondage. Now fly, and seek your own vile safety, if you can.

O. Man.

Bless the voice of Rolla—and bless the stroke I once lamented, but which now spares these extinguished eyes the shame of seeing the pale trembling wretches who dare not follow Rolla though to save their King!

Rol.

Shrink ye from the thunder of the foe— and fall ye not at this rebuke? Oh! had ye each but one drop of the loyal blood which gushes to waste through the brave heart of this sightless veteran! Eternal shame pursue you, if you desert me now!—But do—alone I go— alone—to die with glory by my monarch's side!

Soldiers.

Rolla! we'll follow thee. (*Trumpets sound; Rolla rushes out, followed by Orano, Officers, and Soldiers.*)

O. Man.

O godlike Rolla!—And thou sun, send from thy clouds avenging lightning to his aid!—Haste, my boy; ascend some height, and tell to my impatient terror what thou seest.

Pizarro

Boy.

I can climb this rock, and the tree above. (*Ascends a rock, and from thence into the tree.*) O—now I see them—now—yes—and the Spaniards turning by the steep.

O. Man.

Rolla follows them?

Boy.

He does—he does—he moves like an arrow!—now he waves his arm to our soldiers— (*Report of cannon heard.*) Now there is fire and smoke.

O. Man.

Yes, *fire* is the weapon of those fiends.

Boy.

The wind blows off the smoke: they are all mixed together.

O. Man.

Seest thou the King?

Boy.

Yes—Rolla is near him! His sword sheds fire as he strikes!

O. Man.

Bless thee, Rolla! Spare not the monsters.

Boy.

Father! father! the Spaniards fly!—O —now I see the King embracing Rolla. (*Waving his cap for joy. Shouts of victory, flourish of trumpets, &c.*)

O. Man. (*Falls on his knees.*)

Fountain of life! how can my exhausted breath bear to thee thanks for this one moment of my life! My boy, come down, and let me kiss thee—My strength is gone! (*The Boy having run to the Old Man*)

Boy.

Let me help you, father—You tremble so—

O. Man.

'Tis with transport, boy!

[*Boy leads the Old Man off.*]

Shouts, Flourish, &c.

Enter Ataliba, Rolla, and Peruvian Officers and Soldiers.

Ata.

In the name of my people, the saviour of whose sovereign you have this day been, accept this emblem of his gratitude. (*Giving Rolla his sun of diamonds.*) The tear that falls upon it may for a moment dim its lustre, yet does

Pizarro

it not impair the value of the gift.

Rol.

It was the hand of Heaven, not mine, that saved my King.

Enter Orano, and Soldiers.

Rol.

Now, soldier, from Alonzo?

Ora.

Alonzo's genius soon repaired the panic which early broke our ranks; but I fear we have to mourn Alonzo's loss; his eager spirit urged him too far in the pursuit!

Ata.

How! Alonzo slain?

1st Sol.

I saw him fall.

2d Sol.

Trust me I beheld him up again and fighting—he was then surrounded and disarmed.

Ata.

O! victory, dearly purchased!

Rol.

O Cora! Who shall tell thee this?

Ata.

Rolla, our friend is lost—our native country saved! Our private sorrows must yield to the public claim for triumph. Now go we to fulfil the first, the most sacred duty which belongs to victory—to dry the widowed and the orphaned tear of those whose brave protectors have perished in their country's cause.

[Triumphant march, and exeunt.]

END OF THE SECOND ACT.

Pizarro

ACT III.

SCENE I.

A wild Retreat among stupendous Rocks.—Cora and her Child, with other Wives and Children of the Peruvian Warriors, are scattered about the scene in groups.—They sing alternately, Stanzas expressive of their situation, with a Chorus, in which all join.

1st Peruvian Woman.

Zuluga, seest thou nothing yet?

Zul.

Yes, two Peruvian soldiers, one on the hill; the other entering the thicket in the vale.

2d Per. Woman.

One more has pass'd.—He comes—but pale and terrified.

Cora.

My heart will start from my bosom.

Enter a Peruvian Soldier, panting for breath.

Wom.

Well! joy or death?

Sold.

The battle is against us. The King is wounded, and a prisoner.

Wom.

Despair and misery!

Cora. (In a faint voice.)

And Alonzo?

Sold.

I have not seen him.

1st Wom.

Oh! whither must we fly?

2d Wom.

Deeper into the forest.

Cora.

I shall not move.

Pizarro

Another Peruvian Soldier, (without.)
Victory ! victory!

He enters hastily.

Rejoice! Rejoice! We are victorious!

Wom. (Springing up.)
Welcome! welcome! thou messenger of joy: but the King!

Sold.
He leads the brave warriors, who approach.

(The triumphant march of the army is heard at a distance.—The Women and Children join in a strain expressive of anxiety and exultation.—The Warriors enter singing the Song of Victory, in which all join.—The King and Rolla follow, and are met with rapturous and affectionate respect. Cora, during this scene, with her Child in her arms, runs through the ranks searching and inquiring for Alonzo.)

Ata.
Thanks, thanks, my children! I am well: believe it; the blood once stopp'd, my wound was nothing. *(Cora at length approaches Rolla, who appears to have been mournfully avoiding her.)* Where is Alonzo?
(Rolla turns away in silence.)

Cora. (Falling at the King's feet.)
Give me my husband, give this child his father.

Ata.
I grieve that Alonzo is not here.

Cora.
Hop'd you to find him?

Ata.
Most anxiously.

Cora.
Ataliba! is he not dead?

Ata.
No! the Gods will have heard our prayers.

Cora.
Is he not dead, Ataliba?

Ata.
He lives—in my heart.

Cora.

SCENE I.

Pizarro

Oh King! torture me not thus! speak out, is this child fatherless?

Ata.

Dearest Cora! do not thus dash aside the little hope that still remains.

Cora.

The little hope! yet still there *is* hope! Speak to me, Rolla: *you* are the *friend of truth*.

Rol.

Alonzo has not been found.

Cora.

Not found! What mean you? will not *you*, Rolla, tell me truth? Oh! let me not hear the thunder rolling at a distance; let the bolt fall and crush my brain at once.—Say not that he is not found: say at once that he is dead.

Rol.

Then should I say false.

Cora.

False! Blessings on thee for that word! But snatch me from this terrible suspense. Lift up thy little hands, my child; perhaps thy ignorance may plead better than thy mother's agony.

Rol.

Alonzo is taken prisoner.

Cora.

Prisoner! and by the Spaniards? Pizarro's prisoner? Then is he dead.

Ata.

Hope better—the richest ransom which our realm can yield, a herald shall this instant bear.

Per. Wom.

Oh! for Alonzo's ransom—our gold, our gems!—all! all!—Here, dear Cora, —here! here!

(The Peruvian Women eagerly tear off all their ornaments, and run and take them from their children, to offer them to Cora.)

Ata.

Yes, for Alonzo's ransom they would give all!—I thank thee, Father, who hast given me such hearts to rule over!

Cora.

Now one boon more, beloved monarch. Let me go with the herald.

Ata.

Remember, Cora, thou art not a wife only, but a mother too: hazard not your own honour, and the safety of your infant. Among these barbarians the sight of thy youth, thy loveliness, and innocence, would but rivet faster your Alonzo's chains, and rack his heart with added fears for thee.—Wait, Cora, the return of the herald.

Cora.

Teach me how to live till then.

Pizarro

Ata.

Now we go to offer to the Gods, thanks for our victory, and prayers for our Alonzo's safety.

[March and procession. Exeunt omnes.]

Pizarro

SCENE II.

The Wood.

Enter Cora and Child.

Cora.

Mild innocence, what will become of thee?

Enter Rolla.

Rol.

Cora, I attend thy summons at th' appointed spot.

Cora.

Oh my child, my boy!—hast thou still a father?

Rol.

Cora, can thy child be fatherless, while Rolla lives?

Cora.

Will he not soon want a mother too?—For canst thou think I will survive Alonzo's loss?

Rol.

Yes! for his child's sake.—Yes, as thou didst love Alonzo, Cora, listen to Alonzo's friend.

Cora.

You bid me listen to the world.—Who was not Alonzo's friend?

Rol.

His parting words—

Cora.

His parting words! (*Wildly.*) Oh, speak!

Rol.

Consign'd to me two precious trusts—his blessing to his son, and a last request to thee.

Cora.

His *last* request! his *last*!—Oh, name it!

Rol.

If I fall, said he—(and sad forebodings shook him while he spoke)—promise to take my Cora for thy wife; be thou a father to my child. —I pledged my word to him, and we parted.—Observe me, Cora, I repeat this only, as my faith to do so was given to Alonzo—for myself, I neither cherish claim or hope.

Cora.

Ha! does my reason fail me, or what is this horrid light that presses on my brain? Oh, Alonzo! It may be thou hast fallen a victim to thy own guileless heart—hadst thou been silent, hadst thou not made a fatal legacy of these wretched charms—

Rol.

Cora! what hateful suspicion has possessed thy mind?

Cora.

Yes, yes, 'tis clear—his spirit was ensnar'd; he was led to the fatal spot, where mortal valour could not front a host of murderers— He fell—in vain did he exclaim for help to Rolla. At a distance you look'd on and smil'd—You could have saved him—could—but did not.

Rol.

Oh, glorious sun! can I have deserved this? Cora, rather bid me strike this sword into my heart.

Cora.

No! live! live for love! for that love thou seekest; whose blossoms are to shoot from the bleeding grave of thy betray'd and slaughter'd friend!—But thou hast borne to me the *last words* of my *Alonzo*! Now hear *mine*—Sooner shall this boy draw poison from this tortured breast—sooner would I link me to the pallid corse of the meanest wretch that perish'd with Alonzo, than he call Rolla father— than I call Rolla husband!

Rol.

Yet call me what I am—thy friend, thy protector!

Cora. (Distractedly.)

Away! I have no protector but my God!—With this child in my arms will I hasten to the field of slaughter—There with these hands will I turn up to the light every mangled body—seeking, howe'er by death disfigur'd, the sweet smile of my Alonzo:—with fearful cries I will shriek out his name till my veins snap! If the smallest spark of life remains, he will know the voice of his Cora, open for a moment his unshrouded eyes, and bless me with a last look: But if we find him not—Oh! then, my boy, we will to the Spanish camp—that look of thine will win me passage through a thousand swords— They too are men.—Is there a heart that could drive back the wife that seeks her bleeding husband; or the innocent babe that cries for his imprison'd father? No, no, my child, every where we shall be safe.—A wretched mother bearing a poor orphan in her arms, has Nature's passport through the world. Yes, yes, my son, we'll go and seek thy father.

[Exit with the Child.]

Rol. (After a pause of agitation.)

Could I have merited one breath of thy reproaches, Cora, I should be the wretch—I think I was not formed to be.—**Her** safety must be my present purpose— then to convince her she has wronged me!

[Exit.]

Pizarro

SCENE III.

Pizarro's Tent.

Pizarro, traversing the scene in gloomy and furious agitation.

Well, capricious idol, Fortune, be my ruin thy work and boast. To myself I will still be true.—Yet ere I fall, grant me thy smile to prosper in one act of vengeance, and be that smile Alonzo's death.

Enter Elvira.

Who's there? who dares intrude? Why does my guard neglect their duty?

Elv.

Your guard did what they could—but they knew their duty better than to enforce authority, when I refused obedience.

Piz.

And what is it you desire?

Elv.

To see how a hero bears misfortune. Thou, Pizarro, art not now collected—not thyself.

Piz.

Wouldst thou I should rejoice that the spears of the enemy, led by accurs'd Alonzo, have pierced the bravest hearts of my followers?

Elv.

No!—I would have thee cold and dark as the night that follows the departed storm; still and sullen as the awful pause that precedes Nature's convulsion: yet I would have thee feel assured that a new morning shall arise, when the warrior's spirit shall stalk forth—nor fear the future, nor lament the past.

Piz.

Woman! Elvira!—Why had not all my men hearts like thine?

Elv.

Then would thy brows have this day worn the crown of Quito.

Piz.

Oh! hope fails me while that scourge of my life and fame, Alonzo, leads the enemy.

Elv.

Pizarro, I am come to probe the hero farther: not now his courage, but his magnanimity —Alonzo is your prisoner.

Piz.

Pizarro

How!

Elv.

'Tis certain; Valverde saw him even now dragged in chains within your camp. I chose to bring you the intelligence myself.

Piz.

Bless thee, Elvira, for the news!—Alonzo in my power!—then I am the conqueror—the victory is **mine**!

Elv.

Pizarro, this is savage and unmanly triumph. Believe me, you raise impatience in my mind to see the man whose valour, and whose genius, awe Pizarro; whose misfortunes are Pizarro's triumph; whose bondage is Pizarro's safety.

Piz.

Guard!—(*Enter Guard.*)—Drag here the Spanish prisoner, Alonzo!—Quick bring the traitor here.
[*Exit Guard.*]

Elv.

What shall be his fate?

Piz.

Death! death! in lingering torments! protracted to the last stretch that burning vengeance can devise, and fainting life sustain.

Elv.

Shame on thee! Wilt thou have it said that the Peruvians found Pizarro could not conquer till Alonzo felt that he could murder?

Piz.

Be it said—I care not. His fate is sealed.

Elv.

Follow then thy will: but mark me; if basely thou dost shed the blood of this brave youth, Elvira's lost to thee for ever.

Piz.

Why this interest for a stranger? What is Alonzo's fate to thee?

Elv.

His fate!—nothing!—thy glory, every thing!—Think'st thou I could love thee stript of fame, of honour, and a just renown?—Know me better.

Piz.

Thou shouldst have known ME better. Thou shouldst have known, that, once provoked to hate, I am for ever fixed in vengeance.—(*Alonzo is brought in, in chains, guarded. Elvira observes him with attention and admiration.*)—Welcome, welcome, Don Alonzo de Molina; 'tis long since we have met: thy mended looks should speak a life of rural indolence. How is it that amid the toils and cares of war thou dost preserve the healthful bloom of careless ease? Tell me thy secret.

Pizarro

Al.

Thou wilt not profit by it. Whate'er the toils or cares of war, peace still is *here*. (*Putting his hand to his heart.*)

Piz.

Sarcastic boy!

Elv.

Thou art answered rightly. Why sport with the unfortunate?

Piz.

And thou art wedded too, I hear; aye, and the father of a lovely boy—the heir, no doubt, of all his father's loyalty; of all his mother's faith.

Al.

The heir, I trust, of all his father's scorn of fraud, oppression, and hypocrisy—the heir, I hope, of all his mother's virtue, gentleness, and truth—the heir, I am sure, to all Pizarro's hate.

Piz.

Really! Now do I feel for this poor orphan; for fatherless to-morrow's fun shall see that child. Alonzo, thy hours are numbered.

Elv.

Pizarro—no!

Piz.

Hence—or dread my anger.

Elv.

I will not hence; nor do I dread thy anger.

Al.

Generous loveliness! spare thy unavailing pity. Seek not to thwart the tiger with his prey beneath his fangs.

Piz.

Audacious rebel! Thou, a renegado from thy monarch and thy God!

Al.

'Tis false.

Piz.

Art thou not, tell me, a deserter from thy country's legions—and, with vile heathens leagued, hast thou not warred against thy native land?

Al.

No! Deserter I am none! I was not born among robbers! pirates! murderers!—When those legions, lured by the abhorred lust of gold, and by thy foul ambition urged, forgot the honour of Castilians, and forsook the duties of humanity, **they** deserted **me**. I have not warred against my native land, but against those who have usurped its power. The banners of my country, when first I followed arms beneath them, were Justice, Faith, and Mercy. If these are beaten down and trampled under foot—I have no country, nor exists the power entitled to reproach me with revolt.

Pizarro

Piz.

The power to judge and punish thee at least exists.

Al.

Where are my judges?

Piz.

Thou wouldst appeal to the war council?

Al.

If the good Las-Casas have yet a seat there, yes; if not, I appeal to Heaven!

Piz.

And to impose upon the folly of Las-Casas, what would be the excuses of thy treason?

Elv.

The folly of Las-Casas!—Such, doubtless, his mild precepts seem to thy hard-hearted wisdom!—O! would I might have lived as I will die, a sharer in the follies of Las-Casas!

Al.

To him I should not need to urge the foul barbarities which drove me from your side; but I would gently lead him by the hand through all the lovely fields of Quito; there, in many a spot where late was barrenness and waste, I would show him how now the opening blossom, blade, or perfumed bud, sweet bashful pledges of delicious harvest, wafting their incense to the ripening sun, give chearful promise to the hope of industry. This, I would say, is my work! Next I should tell how hurtful customs, and superstitions strange and sullen, would often scatter and dismay the credulous minds of these deluded innocents; and then would I point out to him where now, in clustered villages, they live like brethren, social and confiding, while through the burning day Content sits basking on the cheek of Toil, till laughing Pastime leads them to the hour of rest—this too is mine!—And prouder yet—at that still pause between exertion and repose, belonging not to pastime, labour, or to rest, but unto Him who sanctions and ordains them all, I would show him many an eye, and many a hand, by gentleness from error won, raised in pure devotion to the true and only God!—this too I could tell him is Alonzo's work!—Then would Las-Casas clasp me in his aged arms; from his uplifted eyes a tear of gracious thankfulness would fall upon my head, and that one blessed drop would be to me at once *this* world's best proof, that I had acted rightly *here*, and surest hope of my Creator's mercy and reward *hereafter*.

Elv.

Happy, virtuous Alonzo! And thou, Pizarro, wouldst appal with fear of death a man who thinks and acts as he does!

Piz.

Daring, obstinate enthusiast! But know the pious blessing of thy preceptor's tears does not await thee here: he has fled like thee—like thee, no doubt, to join the foes of Spain. The perilous trial of the next reward you hope, is nearer than perhaps you've thought; for, by my country's wrongs, and by mine own, tomorrow's sun shall see thy death.

Elv.

Hold!—Pizarro—hear me!—If not always *justly*, at least act always *greatly*. Name not thy country's wrongs—'tis plain they have no share in thy resentment. Thy fury 'gainst this youth is private hate, and deadly personal revenge; if this be so—and even now thy detected conscience in that look avows it—profane not the name of justice or thy country's cause, but let him arm, and bid him to the field on equal terms.

Pizarro

Piz.

Officious advocate for treason—peace! —Bear him hence—he knows his sentence.

Al.

Thy revenge is eager, and I'm thankful for it—to me thy haste is mercy. For thee, sweet pleader in misfortune's cause, accept my parting thanks. This camp is not thy proper sphere. Wert thou among yon *savages*, as they are called, thou'dst find companions more congenial to thy heart.

Piz.

Yes; she shall bear the tidings of thy death to Cora.

Al.

Inhuman man! that pang at least might have been spared me; but thy malice shall not shake my constancy. I go to death—many shall bless, and none will curse my memory. Thou still wilt live, and still wilt be—Pizarro.

[Exit, guarded.]

Elv.

Now by the indignant scorn that burns upon my cheek, my soul is shamed and sickened at the meanness of thy vengeance.

Piz.

What has thy romantic folly aimed at? He is mine enemy, and in my power.

Elv.

He is in your power, and therefore is no more an enemy. Pizarro, I demand not of thee virtue—I ask not from thee nobleness of mind— I require only just dealing to the fame thou hast acquired; be not the assassin of thine own renown. How often have you sworn that the sacrifice which thy wondrous valour's high report had won you from subdued Elvira, was the proudest triumph of your fame? Thou knowest I bear a mind not cast in the common mould—not formed for tame sequestered love— content 'mid household cares to prattle to an idle offspring, and wait the dull delight of an obscure lover's kindness—no! my heart was framed to look up with awe and homage to the object it adored; my ears to own no music but the thrilling records of his praise; my lips to scorn all babbling but the tales of his achievements; my brain to turn giddy with delight, reading the applauding tributes of his monarch's and his country's gratitude; my every faculty to throb with transport, while I heard the shouts of acclamation which announced the coming of my hero; my whole soul to love him with devotion! with enthusiasm! to see no other object—to own no other tie—but to make **him** my **world**! Thus to love is at least no common weakness. —Pizarro!—was not such my love for thee?

Piz.

It *was*, Elvira!

Elv.

Then do not make me hateful to myself, by tearing off the mask at once—barring the hideous imposture that has undone me!—Do not an act which, howe'er thy present power may gloss it to the world, will make thee hateful to all future ages—accursed and scorned by posterity.

Piz.

And should posterity applaud my deeds, think'st thou my mouldering bones would rattle then with transport in my tomb?—This is renown for visionary boys to dream of—I understand it not. The fame I value shall uplift my living estimation—o'erbear with popular support the envy of my foes—advance my purposes, and aid my power.

Pizarro

Elv.

Each word thou speakest—each moment that I hear thee—dispels the fatal mist through which I've judged thee. Thou man of mighty name, but little soul, I see thou wert not born to feel what genuine fame and glory are—yes, prefer the flattery of thy own fleeting day to the bright circle of a deathless name—yes, prefer to stare upon the grain of sand on which you trample, to musing on the starred canopy above thee. Fame, the sovereign deity of proud ambition, is not to be worshipped so: who seeks alone for living homage, stands a mean canvasser in her temple's porch, wooing promiscuously from the fickle breath of every wretch that passes, the brittle tribute of his praise. He dares not approach the sacred altar—no noble sacrifice of his is placed there, nor ever shall his worship'd image, fix'd above, claim for his memory a glorious immortality.

Piz.

Elvira, leave me.

Elv.

Pizarro, you no longer love me.

Piz.

It is not so, Elvira. But what might I not suspect—this wondrous interest for a stranger! —Take back thy reproach.

Elv.

No, Pizarro; as yet I am not lost to you—one string still remains, and binds me to your fate. Do not, I conjure you—do not for thine own sake, tear it asunder—shed not Alonzo's blood!

Piz.

My resolution 's fixed.

Elv.

Even though that moment lost you Elvira for ever?

Piz.

Even so.

Elv.

Pizarro, if not to honour, if not to humanity, yet listen to affection; bear some memory of the sacrifices I have made for thy sake. Have I not for thee quitted my parents, my friends, my fame, my native land? When escaping, did I not risk in rushing to thy arms to bury myself in the bosom of the deep? Have I not shared all thy perils, heavy storms at sea, and frightful 'scapes on shore? Even on this dreadful day, amid the rout of battle, who remained firm and constant at Pizarro's side? Who presented her bosom as his shield to the assailing foe?

Piz.

'Tis truly spoken all. In love thou art thy sex's miracle—in war the soldier's pattern— and therefore my whole heart and half my acquisitions are thy right.

Elv.

Convince me I possess the first—I exchange all title to the latter, for—mercy to Alonzo.

Piz.

No more!—Had I intended to prolong his doom, each word thou utterest now would hasten on his fate.

Elv.

SCENE III.

Pizarro

Alonzo then at morn will die?

Piz.

Think'st thou yon sun will set?—As surely at his rising shall Alonzo die.

Elv.

Then be it done—the string is crack'd —sundered for ever.—But mark me—thou hast heretofore had cause, 'tis true, to doubt my resolution, howe'er offended—but mark me now —the lips which, cold and jeering, barbing revenge with rancorous mockery, can insult a fallen enemy, shall never more receive the pledge of love: the arm unshaken by its bloody purpose, which shall assign to needless torture the victim who avows his heart, never more shall press the hand of faith!—Pizarro, scorn not my words—beware you slight them not!—I feel how noble are the motives which now animate my thoughts—who *could* not feel as I do, I condemn —who, feeling so, yet *would* not act as I **shall**, I despise!

Piz. (After a pause, looking at her with an affected smile of contempt.)

I have heard thee, Elvira, and know well the *noble* motives which inspire thee—fit advocate in virtue's cause!— Believe me, I pity thy tender feelings for the youth Alonzo!—He dies at sun—rise!

[Exit.]

Elv.

'Tis well! 'tis just I should be humbled —I had forgot myself, and in the cause of innocence assumed the tone of virtue. 'Twas sit I should be rebuked—and by Pizarro. Fall, fall, ye few reluctant drops of weakness—the last these eyes shall ever shed. How a woman can love Pizarro, thou hast known too well— how she can hate, thou hast yet to learn. Yes, thou undaunted! Thou, whom yet no mortal hazard has appalled! Thou, who on Panama's brow didst make alliance with the raving elements, that tore the silence of that horrid night —when thou didst follow, as thy pioneer, the crashing thunder's drift, and stalking o'er the trembling earth, didst plant thy banner by the red volcano's mouth! Thou, who when battling on the sea, and thy brave ship was blown to splinters, wast seen—as thou didst bestride a fragment of the smoking wreck—to wave thy glittering sword above thy head—as thou wouldst defy the world in that extremity!—Come, fearless man—now meet the last and fellest peril of thy life—meet! and survive—an injured woman's fury, if thou canst.

[Exit.]

END OF THE THIRD ACT.

Pizarro

ACT IV.

Pizarro

SCENE I.

A Dungeon in the Rock, near the Spanish Camp.—Alonzo in Chains.—A Centinel walking near the Entrance.

Alonzo.

For the last time, I have beheld the shadow'd ocean close upon the light.— For the last time, thro' my cleft dungeon's roof, I now behold the quivering lustre of the stars.— For the last time, O sun! (and soon the hour) I shall behold thy rising, and thy level beams melting the pale mists of morn to glittering dewdrops. —Then comes my death, and in the morning of my day, I fall, which—No, Alonzo, date not the life which thou hast run, by the mean reck'ning of the hours and days, which thou hast breath'd: A life spent worthily should be measured by a nobler line—by deeds—not years—Then woud'st thou murmur not—but bless the Providence, which in so short a span, made **thee** the instrument of wide and spreading blessings, to the helpless and oppress'd!— Tho' sinking in decrepid age—**he** prematurely falls, whose memory records no benefit conferred by him on man: They only have lived long, who have lived virtuously.

Enter a Soldier—shews the Centinel a Passport, who withdraws.

Alonzo.

What bear you there?

Sol.

These refreshments I was order'd to leave in your dungeon.

Al.

By whom order'd?

Sol.

By the lady Elvira; she will be here herself before the dawn.

Al.

Bear back to her my humblest thanks; and take thou the refreshments, friend—I need them not.

Sol.

I have served under you, Don Alonzo.— Pardon my saying, that my heart pities you.

[Exit.]

Al.

In Pizarro's camp, to pity the unfortunate, no doubt requires forgiveness.—*(Looking out)* Surely, even now, thin streaks of glimmering light steal on the darkness of the East.—If so, my life is but one hour more.—I will not watch the coming dawn; but in the darkness of my cell, my last prayer to thee, Power Supreme! shall be for my wife and child!—Grant them to dwell in innocence and peace; grant health and purity of mind—all else his worthless. *(Enters the Cavern.)*

Cent.

Who's there? answer quickly! who's there?

Pizarro

Rol.

A Friar, come to visit your prisoner.

Rolla enters, disguised as a Monk.

Rol.

Inform me, friend—Is not Alonzo, the Spanish prisoner, confined in this dungeon?

Cen.

He is.

Rol.

I must speak with him.

Cen.

You must not.

Rol.

He is my friend.

Cent.

Not if he were your brother.

Rol.

What is to be his fate?

Cen.

He dies at sun—rise.

Rol.

Ha!—then I am come in time.

Cen.

Just—to witness his death.

Rol.

Soldier—I must speak with him.

Cent.

Back,—back.—It is impossible!—

Rol.

I do entreat you, but for one moment!

Cen.

You entreat in vain—my orders are most strict.

Rol.

SCENE I.

Pizarro

Even now, I saw a messenger go hence.

Cen.

He brought a pass, which we are all accustomed to obey.

Rol.

Look on this wedge of massive gold—look on these precious gems.—In thy own land they will be wealth for thee and thine, beyond thy hope or wish. Take them—they are thine.—Let me but pass one minute with Alonzo.

Cen.

Away!—would'st thou corrupt me?— Me!—an old Castilian!—I know my duty better.

Rol.

Soldier!—hast thou a wife?

Cen.

I have.

Rol.

Hast thou children?

Cen.

Four—honest, lively boys.

Rol.

Where did'st thou leave them?

Cen.

In my native village—even in the cot where myself was born.

Rol.

Do'st thou love thy children and thy wife?

Cen.

Do I love them! God knows my heart,— I do.

Rol.

Soldier! imagine thou wer't doom'd to die a cruel death in this strange land—What would be thy last request?

Cen.

That some of my comrades should carry my dying blessing to my wife and children.

Rol.

Oh! but if that comrade was at thy prison gate—and should there be told—thy fellow soldier dies at sun-rise,—yet thou shalt not for a moment see him—nor shalt thou bear his dying blessing to his poor children or his wretched wife, —what would'st thou think of him, who thus cou'd drive thy comrade from the door?

Cen.

How!

Rol.

SCENE I.

Pizarro

Alonzo has a wife and child—I am come but to receive for *her*, and for her *babe*, the last blessing of my friend.

Cen.

Go in.—(*Retires.*)

Rol.

Oh! holy Nature! thou do'st never plead in vain.—There is not, of our earth, a creature bearing form, and life, human or savage—native of the forest wild, or giddy air—around whose parent bosom, thou hast not a cord entwined of power to tie them to their offspring's claims, and at thy will to draw them back to thee. On iron pennons borne—the blood—stain'd vulture, cleaves the storm—yet, is the plumage closest to her heart, soft as the Cygnet's down, and o'er her unshell'd brood, the murmuring ring-dove sits not more gently!—Yes—now he is beyond the porch, barring the outer gate! Alonzo!—Alonzo!—my friend! Ha!—in gentle sleep!—Alonzo—rise!

Al.

How!—Is my hour elaps'd?—Well, (*returning from the recess,*) I am ready.

Rol.

Alonzo,—know me.

Al.

What voice is that?

Rol.

'Tis Rolla's.

Al.

Rolla!—my friend!—(*Embraces him.*) Heavens! how could'st thou pass the guard? Did this habit—

Rol.

There is not a moment to be lost in words; —this disguise I tore from the dead body of a Friar, as I pass'd our field of battle—it has gain'd me entrance to thy dungeon—now take it thou, and fly.

Al.

And Rolla—

Rol.

Will remain here in thy place.

Al.

And die for me!—No!—Rather eternal tortures rack me.

Rol.

I shall not die, Alonzo.—It is thy life Pizarro seeks, not Rolla's—and from my prison soon will thy arm deliver me;—or, should it be otherwise —I am as a blighted Plantain standing alone amid the sandy desert—Nothing seeks or lives beneath my shelter—Thou art a husband, and a father —The being of a lovely wife and helpless infant hang upon thy life—Go!—Go!—Alonzo!— Go—to save—not thyself—but Cora, and thy child!—

Al.

Urge me not thus, my friend—I had prepar'd to die in peace.

Pizarro

Rol.

To die in peace!—devoting her you've sworn to live for,—to madness, misery, and death! —For, be assured—the state I left her in forbids all hope, but from thy quick return.

Al.

Oh! God!

Rol.

If thou art yet irresolute, Alonzo—now heed me well.—I think thou hast not known that Rolla ever pledg'd his word, and shrunk from its fulfilment.—And, by the heart of truth I swear, if thou art proudly obstinate to deny thy friend the transport of preserving Cora's life, in thee,—no power that sways the will of man shall stir me hence;—and thou'lt but have the desperate triumph, of seeing Rolla perish by thy side,—with the assur'd conviction, that Cora, and thy child, are lost for ever.

Al.

Oh! Rolla!—you distract me!

Rol.

A moment's further pause, and all is lost— The dawn approaches—Fear not for me—I will treat with Pizarro as for surrender and submission; —I shall gain time, doubt not—while thou, with a chosen band, passing the secret way, may'st at night return—release thy friend, and bear him back in triumph.—Yes—hasten—dear Alonzo!— Even now I hear the frantic Cora call thee!— Haste!—Haste!—Haste!

Al.

Rolla, I fear your friendship drives me from honour, and from right.

Rol.

Did Rolla ever counsel dishonour to his friend?

Al.

Oh! my preserver!—(*Embracing him.*)

Rol.

I feel thy warm tears dropping on my cheek—Go!—I am rewarded— (*Throws the Friar's garment over Alonzo.*) —There!—conceal thy face; and that they may not clank, hold fast thy chains— Now—God be with thee!

Al.

At night we meet again.—Then,—so aid me Heaven! I return to save—or—perish with thee!

[Exit.

Rol. (alone.)

He has pass'd the outer porch—He is safe!—He will soon embrace his wife and child! —Now, Cora, did'st thou not wrong me? This is the first time throughout my life I ever deceived man—Forgive me, God of truth! if I am wrong— Alonzo flatters himself that we shall meet again— Yes—There! (*lifting his hands to heaven*) assuredly, we shall meet again:—there possess in peace, the joys of everlasting love, and friendship—on earth, imperfect, and embitter'd.—I will retire, lest the guard return before Alonzo may have pass'd their lines.

[Retires into the Recess.

Enter Elvira.

Pizarro

Elv.

No—not Pizarro's brutal taunts—not the glowing admiration which I feel for this noble youth, shall raise an interest in this harass'd bosom which honour would not sanction. If he reject the vengeance my heart has sworn against the tyrant, who's death alone can save this land—yet, shall the delight be mine to restore him to his Cora's arms, to his dear child, and to the unoffending people, whom his virtues guide, and valour guards.—Alonzo, come forth!

Enter Rolla.

Ha!—who art thou?—Where is Alonzo?

Rol.

Alonzo's fled.

Elv.

Fled!

Rol.

Yes—and he must not be pursued—Pardon this roughness, (*seizing her hand*)—but a moment's precious to Alonzo's flight.

Elv.

What if I call the guard?

Rol.

Do so—Alonzo still gains time.

Elv.

What if thus I free myself? (*Shews a dagger.*)

Rol.

Strike it to my heart—Still, with the convulsive grasp of death, I'll hold thee fast.

Elv.

Release me—I give my faith, I neither will alarm the guard, nor cause pursuit.

Rol.

At once, I trust thy word—A feeling boldness in those eyes assures me that thy soul is noble.

Elv.

What is thy name? Speak freely—By my order the guard is remov'd beyond the outer porch.

Rol.

My name is Rolla.

Elv.

The Peruvian Leader?

Rol.

SCENE I.

Pizarro

I was so yesterday—To-day, the Spaniard's captive.

Elv.

And friendship for Alonzo, moved thee to this act?

Rol.

Alonzo is my friend—I am prepared to die for him. Yet is the cause a motive stronger far than friendship.

Elv.

One only passion else could urge such generous rashness.

Rol.

And that is—

Elv.

Love?

Rol.

True!

Elv.

Gallant!—ingenuous Rolla!—Know that my purpose here was thine; and were I to save thy friend—

Rol.

How!—a woman bless'd with gentleness and courage, and yet not Cora!

Elv.

Does Rolla think so meanly of all female hearts?

Rol.

Not so—you are worse and better than we are!—

Elv.

To save thee, Rolla, from the tyrant's vengeance—restore thee to thy native land—and thy native land to peace—would'st thou not rank Elvira with the good?

Rol.

To judge the action, I must know the means.

Elv.

Take this dagger.

Rol.

How to be used?

Elv.

I will conduct thee to the tent where fell Pizarro sleeps—The scourge of innocence—the terror of thy race—the fiend, that desolates thy afflicted country.

Rol.

Have you not been injur'd by Pizarro?

SCENE I.

Elv.

Deeply as scorn and insult can infuse their deadly venom.

Rol.

And you ask that I shall murder him in his sleep!

Elv.

Would he not have murder'd Alonzo in his chains? He that sleeps, and he that's bound, are equally defenceless. Hear me, Rolla—so may I prosper in this perilous act as searching my full heart, I have put by all rancorous motive of private vengeance there, and feel that I advance to my dread purpose in the cause of human nature, and at the call of sacred justice.

Rol.

The God of Justice sanctifies no evil as a step towards good. Great actions cannot be achieved by wicked means.

Elv.

Then, Peruvian! since thou do'st feel so coldly for thy country's wrongs, this hand, tho' it revolt my soul, shall strike the blow.

Rol.

Then is thy destruction certain, and for Peru thou perishest!—Give me the dagger!

Elv.

Now follow me;—but first—and dreadful is the hard necessity—you must strike down the guard.

Rol.

The soldier who was on duty here?

Elv.

Yes, him—else, seeing thee, the alarm will be instant.

Rol.

And I must stab that soldier as I pass?— Take back thy dagger.

Elv.

Rolla!

Rol.

That soldier, mark me, is a man.—All are not men that bear the human form. He refus'd my prayers—refus'd my gold—denying to admit me—till his own feelings brib'd him.—For my nation's safety, I would not harm that man!

Elv.

Then he must with us—I will answer for his safety.

Rol.

Be that plainly understood between us:— for, whate'er betide our enterprize, I will not risk a hair of that man's head, to save my heartstrings from consuming fire.

[Exeunt.]

Pizarro

Pizarro

SCENE III.

The inside of Pizarro's Tent.—Pizarro on a Couch, in disturbed sleep.

Piz. (in his sleep.)

No mercy, traitor.—Now at his heart!—Stand off there, you—Let me see him bleed!—Ha! ha! ha!—Let me hear that groan again.

Enter Rolla and Elvira.

Elv.

There!—Now, lose not a moment.

Rol.

You must leave me now.—This scene of blood fits not a woman's presence.

Elv.

But a moment's pause may—

Rol.

Go!—Retire to your own tent—and return not here—I will come to you—Be thou not known in this business, I implore you!

Elv.

I will withdraw the guard that waits.

[Exit Elvira.]

Rol.

Now have I in my power the accurs'd destroyer of my country's peace: yet tranquilly he rests.—God!—can this man sleep?

Piz. (in his sleep.)

Away! away!—Hideous fiends!—Tear not my bosom thus!

Rol.

No:—I was in error—the balm of sweet repose he never more can know.—Look here, ambition's fools!—Ye, by whose inhuman pride, the bleeding sacrifice of nations is held as nothing— behold the rest of the guilty!—He is at my mercy—and one blow!—No!—my heart and hand refuse the act: Rolla cannot be an assassin!—Yet Elvira must be saved! (*Approaches the Couch.*) Pizzaro! awake!—

Piz. (Starts up.)

Who?—Guard!—

Rol.

Speak not—another word is thy death— Call not for aid!—this arm will be swifter than thy guard.

Pizarro

Piz.

Who art thou? and what is thy will?

Rol.

I am thine enemy! Peruvian Rolla!—Thy death is not my will, or I could have slain thee sleeping.

Piz.

Speak, what else?

Rol.

Now thou art at my mercy—answer me! Did a Peruvian ever yet wrong or injure thee, or any of thy nation? Didst thou, or any of thy nation, ever yet shew mercy to a Peruvian in your power? Now shalt thou feel—and if thou hast a heart, thou'lt feel it keenly!—a Peruvian's vengeance! (*Drops the dagger at his feet*) There!

Piz.

Is it possible! (*Walks aside confounded.*)

Rol.

Can Pizarro be surprised at this? I thought Forgiveness of Injuries had been the Christian's precept—Thou seest, at least, it is the Peruvian's practice.

Piz.

Rolla—thou hast indeed surpris'd—subdued me. (*Walks again aside as in irresolute thought.*)

Re—enter Elvira, (not seeing Pizarro.)

Elv.

Is it done? Is he dead? (*Sees Pizarro*) How!—still living! Then I am lost! And for you, wretched Peruvians! mercy is no more!—Oh! Rolla! treacherous, or cowardly?—

Piz.

How can it be, that—

Rol.

Away! Elvira speaks she knows not what! Leave me (*to Elvira*) I conjure you, with Pizarro.

Elv.

How!—Rolla, do'st thou think I shall retract—or that I meanly will deny, that in thy hand *I* plac'd a poignard to be plung'd into that tyrant's heart? No:—my sole regret is, that I trusted to thy weakness, and did not strike the blow myself.—Too soon thou'lt learn that mercy to that man is direst cruelty to all thy race!

Piz.

Guard! quick! a guard, to seize this frantic woman.

Elv.

Yes, a guard! I call them too! And soon I know they'll lead me to my death. But think not, Pizarro, the fury of thy flashing eyes shall awe me for a moment!—Nor think that woman's anger, or the feelings of an injur'd heart, prompted me to this design—No! Had I been only influenced so—thus failing, shame and remorse would weigh

Pizarro

me down. But tho' defeated and destroyed, as now I am, such is the greatness of the cause that urged me, I shall perish, glorying in the attempt, and my last breath of life shall speak the proud avowal of my purpose—to have rescued millions of innocents from the blood-thirsty tyranny of **one**—by ridding the insulted world of **thee**.

Rol.

Had the act been noble as the motive—Rolla would not have shrunk from its performance.

Enter Guards.

Piz.

Seize this discover'd fiend, who sought to kill your Leader.

Elv.

Touch me not, at the peril of your souls; —I am your prisoner, and will follow you.—But thou, their triumphant Leader, shalt hear me. Yet, first—for thee, Rolla, accept my forgiveness: even had I been the victim of thy nobleness of heart, I should have admir'd thee for it—But 'twas myself provok'd my doom—Thou would'st have shielded me.—Let not thy contempt follow me to the grave. Didst thou but know the spell-like arts, by which this hypocrite first undermin'd the virtue of a guileless heart! how, even in the pious sanctuary wherein I dwelt, by corruption and by fraud, he practis'd upon those in whom I most confided—'till my distemper'd fancy led me, step by step, into the abyss of guilt—

Piz.

Why am I not obey'd?—Tear her hence!

Elv.

'Tis past—but didst thou know my story, Rolla, thou would'st pity me.

Rol.

From my soul I do pity thee!

Piz.

Villains! drag her to the dungeon!—prepare the torture instantly.

Elv.

Soldiers—but a moment more—'Tis to applaud your General—It is to tell the astonished world, that, for once, Pizarro's sentence is an act of justice: Yes, rack me with the sharpest tortures that ever agoniz'd the human frame; it will be justice. Yes—bid the minions of thy fury—wrench forth the sinews of those arms that have caress'd, and—even have defended thee! Bid them pour burning metal into the bleeding cases of these eyes, that so oft—oh, God!—have hung with love and homage on thy looks—then approach me bound on the abhorred wheel—there glut thy savage eyes with the convulsive spasms of that dishonour'd bosom, which was once thy pillow!—Yet, will I bear it all; for it will be justice, all! And when thou shalt bid them tear me to my death, hoping that thy unshrinking ears may at last be feasted with the music of my cries, I will not utter one shriek or groan—but to the last gasp, my body's patience shall deride thy vengeance, as my soul defies thy power.

Piz. (Endeavouring to conceal his agitation.)

Hear'st thou the wretch whose hands were even now prepared for murder?

Rol.

Yes! And if her accusation's false, thou wilt not shrink from hearing her: if true, thy barbarity cannot make *her*

Pizarro

suffer the pangs thy conscience will inflict on *thee*.

Elv.

And now, farewell, world!—Rolla, farewell! —Farewell, thou condemn'd of Heaven! (*to Pizarro*;)—for repentance and remorse, I know, will never touch thy heart.—We shall meet again.—Ha! be it thy horror here, to know that we shall meet hereafter! And when thy parting hour approaches—hark to the knell, whose dreadful beat will strike to thy despairing soul. Then, will vibrate on thy ear the curses of the cloister'd saint from whom you stole me. Then, the last shrieks which burst from my mother's breaking heart, as she died, appealing to her God against the seducer of her child! Then the blood-stifled groan of my murder'd brother—murdered by thee, fell monster!—seeking atonement for his sister's ruin'd honour.—I hear them now! To me, the recollection's madness!—At such an hour,— what will it be to thee?

Piz.

A moment's more delay, and at the peril of your lives—

Elv.

I have spoken—and the last mortal frailty of my heart is past.—And now, with an undaunted spirit, and unshaken firmness, I go to meet my destiny. That I could not *live* nobly, has been **Pizarro's act**. That I will *die* nobly, shall be my **own**.

[Exit, guarded.]

Piz.

Rolla, I would not thou, a warrior, valiant and renown'd, should'st credit the vile tales of this frantic woman. The cause of all this fury—O! a wanton passion for the rebel youth Alonzo, now my prisoner.

Rol.

Alonzo is not now thy prisoner.

Piz.

How!

Rol.

I came to rescue him—to deceive his guard—I have succeeded;— *I* remain thy prisoner.

Piz.

Alonzo fled!—Is then the vengeance dearest to my heart never to be gratified?

Rol.

Dismiss such passions from thy heart; then thou'lt consult it's peace.

Piz.

I can face all enemies that dare confront me—I cannot war against my nature.

Rol.

Then, Pizarro, ask not to be deem'd a hero—To triumph o'er ourselves, is the only conquest, where fortune makes no claim. In battle, chance may snatch the laurel from thee, or chance may place it on thy brow—but in a contest with yourself, be resolute, and the virtuous impulse must be the victor.

Piz.

Peruvian! thou shalt not find me to *thee* ungrateful, or ungenerous—Return to your countrymen —You are at

liberty.

Rol.

Thou do'st act in this, as honour, and as duty, bid thee.

Piz.

I cannot but admire thee, Rolla; I wou'd we might be friends.

Rol.

Farewell.—Pity Elvira!—Become the friend of virtue—and thou wilt be mine.

[Exit.]

Piz.

Ambition! tell me what is the phantom I have follow'd? where is the one delight which it has made my own? My fame is the mark of envy—my love the dupe of treachery—my glory eclips'd by the boy I taught—my revenge defeated and rebuked by the rude honour of a savage foe—before whose native dignity of soul I have sunk confounded and subdued! I would I cou'd retrace my steps—I cannot—Would I could evade my own reflections!—No!—thought and memory are my Hell.

[Exit.]

END OF THE FOURTH ACT.

Pizarro

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A thick Forest—In the back ground, a Hut almost covered by Boughs of Trees—A dreadful Storm, with Thunder and Lightning.—Cora has covered her Child on a Bed of Leaves and Moss—Her whole appearance is wild and distracted.

Cora.

O nature! thou hast not the strength of love. My anxious spirit is untired in its march; my wearied, shivering frame, sinks under it. And, for thee, my boy—when faint beneath thy lovely burthen, could I refuse to give thy slumbers that poor bed of rest! O my child! were I assured thy father breathes no more, how quickly would I lay me down by thy dear side—but down—down for ever. (*Thunder and lightning.*) I ask thee not, unpitying storm! to abate thy rage, in mercy to poor Cora's misery; nor while thy thunders spare his slumbers will I disturb my sleeping cherub. Though Heaven knows I wish to hear the voice of life, and feel that life is near me. But I will endure all while what I have of reason holds.

SONG.

Yes, yes, be merciless, thou Tempest dire;
Unaw'd, unshelter'd, I thy fury brave,
I'll bare my bosom to thy forked fire,
Let it but guide me to **Alonzo's** grave!
O'er his pale corse then while thy lightnings glare,
I'll press his clay—cold lips, and perish there.
But thou wilt wake again, my boy,
Again thou'lt rise to life and joy,
Thy father never!—
Thy laughing eyes will meet the light,
Unconscious that eternal night
Veils his for ever.

On yon green bed of moss there lies my child,
Oh! safer lies from these chill'd arms apart;
He sleeps, sweet lamb! nor heeds the tempest wild,
Oh! sweeter sleeps, than near this breaking heart.
Alas! my babe, if thou would'st peaceful rest,
Thy cradle must not be thy mother's breast.
Yet, thou wilt wake again, my boy,
Again thou'lt rise to life and joy,
Thy father never!—
Thy laughing eyes will meet the light,
Unconscious that eternal night
Veils his for ever.

(*Thunder and lightning.*)

Still, still, implacable! unfeeling elements! yet still dost thou sleep, my smiling innocent! O, death! when wilt thou grant to this babe's mother such repose? Sure I may shield thee better from the storm; my veil may—

Pizarro

While she is wrapping her mantle and her veil over him, Alonzo's voice is heard at a great distance.

Al.
Cora!

Cora.
Hah!!! (*rises.*)

Al. (again)
Cora!

Cora.
O, my heart! Sweet Heaven deceive me not!—Is it not Alonzo's voice?

Al. (nearer)
Cora!

Cora.
It is—it is Alonzo!

Al. (nearer still)
Cora! my beloved!—

Cora.
Alonzo!—Here!—here!—Alonzo!
[Runs out.]

Enter two Spanish Soldiers.

1st Sol.
I tell you we are near our out-posts, and the word we heard just now was the countersign.

2d Sol.
Well, in our escape from the enemy, to have discover'd their secret passage thro' the rocks, will prove a lucky chance to us—Pizarro will reward us.

1st Sol.
This way—The sun, though clouded, is on our left. (*Perceives the child.*) What have we here?—A child!—as I'm a soldier.

2d Sol.
'Tis a sweet little babe. Now would it be a great charity to take this infant from its pagan mother's power.

1st Sol.
It would so—I have one at home shall play with it.—Come along.
[Takes the child.]

Pizarro

Exeunt.

Re-enter Cora with Alonzo.

Cora. (speaking without)

This way, dear Alonzo. Now am I right—there—there—under that tree. Was it possible the instinct of a mother's heart could mistake the spot! Now will you look at him as he sleeps, or shall I bring him waking with his full blue laughing eyes to welcome you at once—Yes—yes.—Stand thou there—I'll snatch him from his rosy slumber, blushing like the perfum'd morn.

She runs up to the spot, and finding only the mantle and veil, which she tears from the ground, and the child gone, (shrieks) and stands in speechless agony.

Al. (running to her)

Cora!—my heart's beloved!

Cora.

He is gone!

Al.

Eternal God!

Cora.

He is gone!—my child! my child!

Al.

Where did you leave him?

Cora. (Dashing herself on the spot.)

Here!

Al.

Be calm, beloved Cora—he has wak'd, and crept to a little distance—we shall find him—Are you assured this was the spot you left him in?

Cora.

Did not these hands make that bed, and shelter for him?—and is not this the veil that covered him?

Al.

Here is a hut yet unobserved.

Cora.

Ha! yes, yes! there lives the savage that has rob'd me of my child—*(Beats at the door, exclaiming)* Give me back my child—restore to me my boy!

Enter Las Casas from the Hut.

Pizarro

Las C.

Who calls me from my wretched solitude?

Cora.

Give me back my child! (*Goes into the but, and calls*) Fernando!

Al.

Almighty powers! do my eyes deceive me! Las Casas!!!

Las C.

Alonzo,—my belov'd young friend!

Al.

My rever'd instructor. (*Embracing.*)

Cora. (Return'd.)

Will you embrace this man before he restores my boy?

Al.

Alas, my friend—in what a moment of misery do we meet!

Cora.

Yet his look is goodness and humanity.— Good old man, have compassion on a wretched mother—and I will be your servant while I live.— But do not, for pity's sake—do not say, you have him not—do not say, you have not seen him.

(*Runs into the Wood.*)

Las C.

What can this mean?

Al.

She is my wife, just rescued from the Spaniards' prison.—I learn'd she had fled to this wild forest—Hearing my voice, she left the child, and flew to meet me—he was left sleeping under yonder tree.

Las. C.

How! did you leave him?—(*Cora returns.*)

Cora.

O, you are right!—right!—unnatural mother, that I was—I left my child—I forsook my innocent—but I will fly to the earth's brink, but I will find him.

(*Runs out.*)

Al.

Forgive me, Las Casas, I must follow her: for at night, I must attempt brave Rolla's rescue.

Las C.

I will not leave thee, Alonzo—you must try to lead her to the right—that way lies your camp—Wait not my infirm steps,—I follow thee, my friend.

[*Exeunt.*]

Pizarro

Pizarro

SCENE II.

The Out-Post of the Spanish Camp.—The back ground wild and rocky, with a Torrent falling down the Precipice, over which a Bridge is formed. A fell'd Tree.

[Trumpets sound without.]

Almagro. (Without.)

Bear him along—his story must be false. *(Entering.)*

Rolla (in Chains) brought in by Soldiers.

Rol.

False!—Rolla, utter falsehood!—I would I had thee in a desert with thy troop around thee; —and I, but with my sword in this unshackled hand!—*(Trumpets without.)*

Alm.

Is it to be credited that Rolla, the renown'd Peruvian hero—shou'd be detected like a spy, skulking thro' our camp?

Rol.

Skulking!

Alm.

But answer to the General—he is here.

Enter Pizarro.

Piz.

What do I see! Rolla!

Rol.

O! to thy surprise, no doubt.

Piz.

And bound too!

Rol.

So fast, thou need'st not fear approaching me.

Alm.

The guards surpris'd him, passing our out-post.

Piz.

Pizarro

Release him instantly.—Believe me, I regret this insult.

Rol.

You feel then as you ought.

Piz.

Nor can I brook to see a warrior of Rolla's same disarm'd—Accept this, tho' it has been thy enemy's. (*Gives a sword*) The Spaniards know the courtesy that's due to valour.

Rol.

And the Peruvian, how to forget offence.

Piz.

May not Rolla and Pizarro cease to be foes?

Rol.

When the sea divides us; yes!—May I now depart?

Piz.

Freely.

Rol.

And shall I not again be intercepted?

Piz.

No!—let the word be given that Rolla passes freely.

Enter Davilla and Soldiers, with the Child.

Dav.

Here are two soldiers, captived yesterday, who have escap'd from the Peruvian hold,—and by the secret way we have so long endeavoured to discover.

Piz.

Silence,—imprudent!—Seest thou not—? (*pointing to Rolla.*)

Dav.

In their way, they found a Peruvian child, who seems—

Piz.

What is the imp to me?—Bid them toss it into the sea.

Rol.

Gracious heaven! it is Alonzo's child!— give it to me.

Piz.

Ha! Alonzo's child!—Welcome, thou pretty hostage.—Now Alonzo is again my prisoner!

Rol.

SCENE II.

Pizarro

Thou wilt not keep the infant from it's mother?

Piz.

Will I not!—What, when I shall meet Alonzo in the heat of the victorious fight— think'st thou I shall not have a check upon the valour of his heart, when he is reminded that a word of mine is this child's death?

Rol.

I do not understand you.

Piz.

My vengeance has a long arrear of hate to settle with Alonzo!—and this pledge may help to settle the account.

Rol.

Man! Man!—Art thou a man?—Could'st thou hurt that innocent?—By Heaven! it's smiling in thy face.

Piz.

Tell me, does it resemble Cora?

Rol.

Pizarro! thou hast set my heart on fire— If thou do'st harm that child—think not his blood will sink into the barren sand—No!—faithful to the eager hope that now trembles in this indignant heart—'twill rise to the common God of nature and humanity, and cry aloud for vengeance on it's accurs'd destroyer's head.

Piz.

Be that peril mine.

Rol. (Throwing himself at his feet)

Behold me at thy feet—Me, Rolla!—Me, the preserver of thy life!—Me, that have never yet bent or bow'd before created man!—In humble agony I sue to you—prostrate I implore you—but spare that child, and I will be your slave.

Piz.

Rolla! still art thou free to go—this boy remains with me.

Rol.

Then was this sword Heaven's gift, not thine! (*Seizes the Child*) —Who moves one step to follow me, dies upon the spot.

[Exit, with the Child.]

Piz.

Pursue him instantly—but spare his life. [*Exeunt Almagro and soldiers.*] With what fury he defends himself!—Ha!—he fells them to the ground—and now—

Enter Almagro.

Alm.

Three of your brave soldiers are already victims to your command to spare this madman's life; and if he once gains the thicket—

Pizarro

Piz.

Spare him no longer. *[Exit Almagro.]* Their guns must reach him—he'll yet escape—hollow to those horse—the Peruvian sees them—and now he turns among the rocks—then is his retreat cut off.

(Rolla crosses a wooden bridge over the cataract, pursued by the soldiers—they fire at him—a shot strikes him—Pizarro exclaims—

Piz.

Now! quick! quick! seize the child!—

[Rolla tears from the rock the tree which supports the bridge, and retreats by the back ground, bearing off the child.]

Re-enter Almagro.

Alm.

By Hell! he has escaped!—and with the child unhurt.

Dav.

No—he bears his death with him—Believe me, I saw him struck upon the side.

Piz.

But the child is sav'd—Alonzo's child! Oh! the furies of disappointed vengeance!

Alm.

Away with the revenge of words—let us to deeds—Forget not we have acquired the knowledge of the secret pass, which thro' the rocky cavern's gloom brings you at once to the strong hold, where are lodg'd their women, and their treasures.

Piz.

Right, Almagro! Swift as thy thought draw forth a daring and a chosen band—I will not wait for numbers.—Stay, Almagro! Valverde is informed Elvira dies to-day?

Val.

He is—and one request alone she—

Piz.

I'll hear of none.

Val.

The boon is small—'tis but for the noviciate habit which you first beheld her in—she wishes not to suffer in the gaudy trappings, which remind her of her shame.

Piz.

Well, do as thou wilt—but tell Valverde, that at our return, as his life shall answer it, to let me hear that she is dead.

Pizarro

[Exeunt, severally.]

Pizarro

SCENE III.

Ataliba's Tent.

Enter Ataliba, follow'd by Cora and Alonzo.

Cora.

Oh! Avoid me not, Ataliba! To whom, but to her King, is the wretched mother to address her griefs?—The Gods refuse to hear my prayers! Did not my Alonzo fight for *you*?—and will not my sweet boy, if thou'lt but restore him to me, one day fight thy battles too?

Alon.

Oh! my suffering love—my poor heartbroken Cora!—you but wound our Sovereign's feeling soul, and not relieve thy own.

Cora.

Is he our Sovereign, and has he not the power to give me back my child?

Ata.

When I reward desert, or can relieve my people, I feel what is the real glory of a King— when I hear them suffer, and cannot aid them, I mourn the impotence of all mortal power.

(Voices behind)

Rolla! Rolla! Rolla!

Enter Rolla, bleeding, with the child, follow'd by Peruvian soldiers.

Rol.

Thy child! *(Gives the child into Cora's arms, and falls.)*

Cora.

Oh God!—there's blood upon him!

Rol.

'Tis my blood, Cora!

Alon.

Rolla, thou diest!

Rol.

For thee, and Cora.—*(Dies.)*

Enter Orano.

Pizarro

Orano.

Treachery has revealed our asylum in the rocks. Even now the foe assails the peaceful band retired for protection there.

Alon.

Lose not a moment!—Swords be quick! —Your wives and children cry to you—Bear our lov'd hero's body in the van—'Twill raise the fury of our men to madness.—Now, fell Pizarro! the death of one of us is near!—Away! Be the word of assault, Revenge and Rolla!—

[Exeunt.

(Charge.)

Pizarro

SCENE IV.

A romantic part of the Recess among the Rocks— (Alarms) Women are seen flying, pursued by the Spanish Soldiers.—The Peruvian Soldiers drive the Spaniards back from the Field.—The Fight is continued on the Heights.

Enter Pizarro, Almagro, Valverde, and Spanish Soldiers.

Piz.

Well!—if surrounded, we must perish in the centre of them—Where do Rolla and Alonzo hide their heads?

Enter Alonzo, Orano, and Peruvians.

Alon.

Alonzo answers thee, and Alonzo's sword shall speak for Rolla.

Piz.

Thou know'st the advantage of thy numbers. —Thou dar'st not singly face Pizarro.

Alon.

Peruvians, stir not a man!—Be this contest only our's.

Piz.

Spaniards!—observe ye the same.

(Charge.)

They fight. Alonzo's shield is broken, and he is beat down.

Piz.

Now, traitor, to thy heart!

At this moment Elvira enters, habited as when Pizarro first beheld her.—Pizarro, appalled, staggers back.—Alonzo renews the Fight, and slays him.

(Loud shouts from the Peruvians.)

Ataliba enters, and embraces Alonzo.

Ata.

My brave Alonzo!

Pizarro

Alm.

Alonzo, we submit.—Spare us! we will embark, and leave the coast.

Val.

Elvira will confess I sav'd her life; she has sav'd thine.

Alon.

Fear not. You are safe. (*Spaniards lay down their arms.*)

Elv.

Valverde speaks the truth;—nor could he think to meet me here.—An awful impulse which my soul could not resist, impell'd me hither.

Alon.

Noble Elvira! my preserver! How can I speak what I, Ataliba, and his rescued country, owe to thee? If amid this grateful nation thou would'st remain—

Elv.

Alonzo, no!—the destination of my future life is fix'd. Humbled in penitence, I will endeavour to atone the guilty errors, which, however mask'd by shallow cheerfulness, have long consum'd my secret heart—When, by my sufferings purified, and penitence sincere, my soul shall dare address the Throne of Mercy in behalf of others,—for thee, Alonzo—for thy Cora, and thy child,—for thee, thou virtuous Monarch, and the innocent race you reign over, shall Elvira's prayers address the God of Nature.—Valverde, you have preserved my life. Cherish humanity—avoid the foul examples thou hast view'd.—Spaniards returning to your native home, assure your rulers, they mistake the road to glory, or to power.—Tell them, that the pursuits of avarice, conquest, and ambition, never yet made a people happy, or a nation great.—(*Casts a look of agony on the dead body of Pizarro as she passes, and exit.*)

(*Flourish of Trumpets.*)

Valverde, Almagra, and Spanish Soldiers, exeunt, bearing off Pizarro's Body.—On a signal from Alonzo, flourish of Music.

Alon.

Ataliba! think not I wish to check the voice of triumph—when I entreat we first may pay the tribute due to our lov'd Rolla's memory.

A solemn March—Procession of Peruvian Soldiers, bearing Rolla's Body on a Bier, surrounded by Military Trophies. The Priests and Priestesses attending, chaunt a Dirge over the Bier.—Alonzo and Cora kneel on either side of it, and kiss Rolla's hands in silent agony.—In the looks of the King, and of all present, the Triumph of the Day is lost, in mourning for the fallen Hero.

(*The Curtain slowly descends.*)