

and only made it so much the worse, and upon his likewise presuming to tease him about Mr. Royston, he fell into a violent passion, and gave away the place directly to poor Mr. Drudgewell, who had no recommendation at all, but fifteen years hard service in the office.

360

ROY. Well, now! well, now! you see how the world goes: sim-pletons and ideots carry every thing before them.

WITH. Nay, Royston, blame yourself too. Did not I tell you, you had found out too many roads to one place, and would lose your way amongst them?

ROY. No, no, it is all that cursed perverse fate of mine! By the Lord, half the trouble I have taken for this paltry office, would have procured some people an archbishoprick. There is Harwood, now, fortune presses herself upon him, and makes him, at one stroke, an idle gentleman for life.

HAR. No, sir, an idle gentleman I will never be: my Agnes shall never be the wife of any thing so contemptible.

AG. I thank you, Harwood; I do, indeed, look for an honourable distinction in being your wife; you shall still exert your powers in the profession you have chosen: you shall be the weak one's stay, the poor man's advocate; you shall gain fair fame in recompense, and that will be our nobility.

380

WITH. Well said, my children! you have more sense than I thought you had amongst all these whimsies. Now, let us take our leave of plots and story-telling, if you please, and all go to my house to supper. Royston shall drown his dis-appointment in a can of warm negus,¹ and Mr. Opal shall have something more palatable than his last spare morsel.

[EXEUNT.]

THE END OF THE TRYAL.

1 A hot mulled wine made from sherry or port named after its inventor, Colonel Francis Negus (d. 1732), who served under Marlborough.

PERSONS OF THE DRAMA.

MEN.

DE MONFORT.

REZENVELT.

COUNT FREBERG, *Friend to De Monfort and Rezenvelt.*

MANUEL, *Servant to De Monfort.*

JEROME, *De Monfort's old Landlord.*

GRIMBALD, *an artful knave.*

BERNARD, *a Monk.*

Monks, Gentlemen, Officers, Page, &c. &c.

WOMEN.

JANE DE MONFORT, *sister to De Monfort.*

COUNTESS FREBERG, *Wife to Freberg.*

THERESA, *Servant to the Countess.*

Abbess, Nuns, *and a Lay Sister, Ladies, &c.*

Scene, a Town in Germany.

DE MONFORT.

ACT I.—SCENE I.

JEROME'S House. A large old-fashioned Chamber.

JER. (*speaking without.*) This way good masters.

Enter JEROME, bearing a light, and followed by Manuel, and Servants carrying luggage.

Rest your burdens here.

This spacious room will please the Marquis best. He takes me unawares; but ill prepar'd: If he had sent, e'en tho' a hasty notice, I had been glad.

MAN.

Be not disturb'd, good Jerome; Thy house is in most admirable order; And they who travel o' cold winter nights Think homeliest quarters good.

JER. He is not far behind?

MAN.

A little way,

(*To the servants.*) Go you and wait below till he arrives.

JER. (*Shaking Manuel by the hand.*)

Indeed, my friend, I'm glad to see you here, Yet marvel wherefore.

MAN. I marvel wherefore too, my honest Jerome: But here we are, pri'thee be kind to us.

JER. Most heartily I will. I love your master:

He is a quiet and a lib'ral man:

A better inmate! never cross'd my door.

MAN. Ah! but he is not now the man he was.

Lib'ral he will, God grant he may be quiet.

JER. What has befallen him?

I Lodger.



"Alone with thee!" (*De Monfort* 5.3.70).

Engraving by N. Schiavonetti. Courtesy University of Chicago Library.

MAN. I cannot tell thee;
 But faith, there is no living with him now.
 JER. And yet, methinks, if I remember well,
 You were about to quit his service, Manuel,
 When last he left this house. You grumbled then.
 MAN. I've been upon the eve of leaving him
 These ten long years; for many times is he
 So difficult, capricious, and distrustful,
 He galls my nature—yet, I know not how,
 A secret kindness binds me to him still.
 30 JER. Some, who offend from a suspicious nature,
 Will afterwards such fair confession make
 As turns e'en the offence into a favour.
 MAN. Yes, some indeed do so: so will not he;
 He'd rather die than such confession make.
 JER. Ay, thou art right, for now I call to mind
 That once he wrong'd me with unjust suspicion,
 When first he came to lodge beneath my roof;
 And when it so fell out that I was proved
 Most guiltless of the fault, I truly thought
 He would have made profession of regret;
 But silent, haughty, and ungraciously
 He bore himself as one offended still.
 Yet shortly after, when unwittingly
 I did him some slight service, o' the sudden
 He overpower'd me with his grateful thanks;
 And would not be restrain'd from pressing on me
 A noble recompense. I understood
 His o'erstrain'd gratitude and bounty well,
 And took it as he meant.
 MAN. 'Tis often thus.
 50 I would have left him many years ago,
 But that with all his faults there sometimes come
 Such bursts of natural goodness from his heart,
 As might engage a harder churl than I
 To serve him still.—And then his sister too,
 A noble dame, who should have been a queen:

The meanest of her hinds,¹ at her command,
 Had fought like lions for her, and the poor,
 E'en o'er their bread of poverty had bless'd her—
 She would have griev'd if I had left my Lord.
 JER. Comes she along with him?

MAN. No, he departed all unknown to her,
 Meaning to keep conceal'd his secret route;
 But well I knew it would afflict her much,
 And therefore left a little nameless billet,
 Which after our departure, as I guess,
 Would fall into her hands, and tell her all.
 What could I do? O 'tis a noble lady!

JER. All this is strange—something disturbs his mind—
 Belike he is in love.

MAN. No, Jerome, no.

Once on a time I serv'd a noble master,
 Whose youth was blasted with untoward love,
 And he with hope and fear and jealousy
 For ever toss'd, led an unquiet life:

Yet, when unruffled by the passing fit,
 His pale wan face such gentle sadness wore
 As mov'd a kindly heart to pity him;
 But Monfort, even in his calmest hour,
 Still bears that gloomy sternness in his eye
 Which sullenly repels all sympathy.
 O no! good Jerome, no, it is not love.

JER. Hear I not horses trampling at the gate?
 (*Listening.*)

He is arriv'd—stay thou—I had forgot—
 A plague upon't! my head is so confus'd—
 I will return i'the instant to receive him.

(*EXIT hastily.*)

(*A great bustle without. EXIT Manuel with lights, and returns again lighting in DE MONFORT, as if just alighted from his journey.*)

1 Rustics or servants.

MAN. Your ancient host, my lord, receives you gladly,
And your apartment will be soon prepar'd.

DE MON. 'Tis well.

MAN. Where shall I place the chest you gave in charge?
So please you, say my lord.

90 DE MON. (*Throwing himself into a chair.*) Where-e'er thou wilt.

MAN. I would not move that luggage till you came.

(*Pointing to certain things.*)

DE MON. Move what thou wilt, and trouble me no more.

(*Manuel, with the assistance of other Servants, sets about putting the things in order, and De Monfort remains sitting in a thoughtful posture.*)

Enter JEROME, bearing wine, &c. on a salver. As he approaches De Monfort, Manuel pulls him by the sleeve.

MAN. (*Aside to Jerome.*) No, do not now; he will not be disturb'd.

JER. What not to bid him welcome to my house,
And offer some refreshment?

100 MAN. No, good Jerome.

Softly, a little while: I pri'thee do.

(*Jerome walks softly on tip-toes, till he gets near De Monfort, behind backs, then peeping on one side to see his face.*)

JER. (*Aside to Manuel.*) Ah, Manuel, what an alter'd man is here!

His eyes are hollow, and his cheeks are pale—
He left this house a comely gentleman.

DE MON. Who whispers there?

100 MAN. 'Tis your old landlord, sir:
JER. I joy to see you here—I crave your pardon—
I fear I do intrude.—

DE MON. No, my kind host, I am oblig'd to thee.

JER. How fares it with your honour?

DE MON. Well enough.

JER. Here is a little of the fav'rite wine

That you were wont to praise. Pray honour me.
(*Fills a glass.*)

DE MON. (*After drinking.*) I thank you, Jerome, 'tis delicious.
JER. Ay, my dear wife did ever make it so.

DE MON. And how does she?

JER. Alas, my lord! she's dead.

DE MON. Well,¹ then she is at rest.

JER. How well, my lord?

DE MON. Is she not with the dead, the quiet dead,

Where all is peace. Not e'en the impious wretch,

Who tears the coffin from its earthy vault,

And strews the mould'ring ashes to the wind

Can break their rest.

JER. Woe's me! I thought you would have griev'd for her.

She was a kindly soul! Before she died,

When pining sickness bent her cheerless head,

She set my house in order—

And but the morning ere she breath'd her last,

Bade me preserve some flasks of this wine,

That should the Lord De Monfort come again

His cup might sparkle still.

(*De Monfort walks across the stage, and wipes his eyes.*)

Indeed I fear I have distress'd you, sir:

I surely thought you would be griev'd for her.

DE MON. (*Taking Jerome's hand.*) I am, my friend. How long has she been dead?

JER. Two sad long years.

DE MON. Would she were living still!

I was too troublesome, too heedless of her.

JER. O no! she lov'd to serve you.

(*Lord knocking without.*)

DE MON. What fool comes here, at such untimely hours,

To make this cursed noise. (*To Manuel.*) Go to the gate.

[EXIT Manuel.]

All sober citizens are gone to bed;

It is some drunkards on their nightly rounds,

¹ The initial "well" here indicates a matter for thankfulness and an acceptance of the situation.

Who mean it but in sport.

JER. I hear unusual voices—here they come.

Re-enter MANUEL, shewing in Count FREBERG and his LADY.

FREB. (*Running to embrace De Monfort.*)

My dearest Monfort! most unlook'd-for pleasure.

Do I indeed embrace thee here again?

I saw thy servant standing by the gate,

His face recall'd, and learnt the joyful tidings.

Welcome, thrice welcome here!

140

DE MON. I thank thee, Freberg, for this friendly visit,

And this fair Lady too. (*Bowing to the Lady.*)

LADY.

I fear, my Lord,

We do intrude at an untimely hour:

But now returning from a midnight mask,

My husband did insist that we should enter.

FREB. No, say not so; no hour untimely call,

Which doth together bring long absent friends.

Dear Monfort, wherefore hast thou play'd so sly,

To come upon us thus all suddenly?

150

DE MON. O! many varied thoughts do cross our brain,

Which touch the will, but leave the memory trackless;

And yet a strange compounded motive¹ make

Wherefore a man should bend his evening walk

To th' east or west, the forest or the field.

Is it not often so?

FREB. I ask no more, happy to see you here

From any motive. There is one behind,

Whose presence would have been a double bliss:

Ah! how is she? The noble Jane de Monfort.²

160 DE MON. (*Confused.*) She is—I have—I have left my sister well.

LADY. (*To Freberg.*) My Freberg, you are heedless of respect:

1 Writers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries spoke of action *on* a motive rather than *from* one as we do today.

2 In the Larpent performance version, a treatment of *De Monfort* by John Philip Kemble, Rezenvelt's name is mentioned in this dialogue, eliminating Freberg's surprise in 1.1.198. For this and other interesting textual variants see Cox, *Seven Gothic Dramas* 232-313.

You surely meant to say the Lady Jane.

FREB. Respect! No, Madam; Princess, Empress, Queen,

Could not denote a creature so exalted

As this plain native appellation doth,

The noble Jane de Monfort.

LADY. (*Turning from him displeas'd to Monfort.*)

You are fatigued, my Lord; you want repose;

Say, should we not retire?

FREB.

Ha! is it so?

My friend, your face is pale, have you been ill?

DE MON. No, Freberg, no; I think I have been well.

170

FREB. (*Shaking his head.*) I fear thou hast not, Monfort—Let it pass.

We'll re-establish thee: we'll banish pain.

I will collect some rare, some cheerful friends,

And we shall spend together glorious hours,

That gods might envy. Little time so spent

Doth far outvalue all our life beside.

This is indeed our life, our waking life,

The rest dull breathing sleep.

DE MON. Thus, it is true, from the sad years of life

180

We sometimes do short hours, yea minutes strike,

Keen, blissful, bright, never to be forgotten;

Which thro' the dreary gloom of time o'erpass

Shine like fair sunny spots¹ on a wild waste.

But few they are, as few the heaven-fir'd souls

Whose magick power creates them. Bless'd art thou,

If in the ample circle of thy friends

Thou canst but boast a few.

FREB. Judge for thyself: in truth I do not boast.

There is amongst my friends, my later friends,

A most accomplish'd stranger. New to Amberg,²

190

But just arriv'd; and will ere long depart.

I met him in Franconia³ two years since.

He is so full of pleasant anecdote,

1 Cf. William Wordsworth, *The Prelude* Bk. 12: 208-18.

2 A city approximately 50 km east of Nuremberg.

3 A region of Bavaria.

So rich, so gay, so poignant is his wit,
Time vanishes before him as he speaks,
And ruddy morning thro' the lattice peeps
Ere night seems well begun.

DE MON.

How is he call'd?

FREB. I will surprise thee with a welcome face:

I will not tell thee now.

200

LADY. (to Mon.) I have, my Lord, a small request to make,

And must not be denied. I too may boast

Of some good friends, and beauteous countrywomen:

To-morrow night I open wide my doors

To all the fair and gay; beneath my roof

Musick, and dance, and revelry shall reign.

I pray you come and grace it with your presence.

DE MON. You honour me too much to be denied.

LADY. I thank you, Sir; and in return for this,

We shall withdraw, and leave you to repose.

FREB. Must it be so? Good night—sweet sleep to thee.

210

(To De Monfort.)

DE MON. (to Freb.) Good night. (To Lady.)

Good-night, fair Lady.

LADY.

Farewell!

[EXEUNT Freberg and Lady.]

DE MON. (to Jer.) I thought Count Freberg had been now in
France.

JER. He meant to go, as I have been inform'd.

DE MON. Well, well, prepare my bed; I will to rest.

[EXIT Jerome.]

DE MON. (alone.) I know not how it is, my heart stands back,

And meets not this man's love.—Friends! rarest friends!

Rather than share his undiscerning praise

With every table wit, and book-form'd sage,

And paltry poet puling to the moon,

I'd court from him proscription; yea abuse,

And think it proud distinction.

220

[EXIT.]

SCENE II.

A Small Apartment in JEROME'S House: a table and breakfast set out.
Enter DE MONFORT, followed by MANUEL, and sets himself down
by the table, with a cheerful face.

DE MON. Manuel, this morning's sun shines pleasantly:

These old apartments too are light and cheerful.

Our landlord's kindness has reviv'd me much;

He serves as though he lov'd me. This pure air

Braces the listless nerves, and warms the blood:

I feel in freedom here.

(Filling a cup of coffee, and drinking.)

MAN. Ah! sure, my Lord,

No air is purer than the air at home.

DE MON. Here can I wander with assured steps,

Nor dread, at every winding of the path,

Lest an abhorred serpent cross my way,

And move—(Stopping short.)

MAN. What says your honour?

There are no serpents in our pleasant fields.

DE MON. Think'st thou there are no serpents in the world

But those who slide along the grassy sod,

And sting the luckless foot that presses them?

There are who in the path of social life

Do bask their spotted skins in Fortune's sun,

And sting the soul—Ay, till its healthful frame

Is chang'd to secret, fest'ring, sore disease,

So deadly is the wound.

MAN. Heaven guard your honour from such horrid skathe:¹

They are but rare, I hope?

DE MON. (Shaking his head.) We mark the hollow eye, the

wasted frame,

The gait disturb'd of wealthy honour'd men,

But do not know the cause.

MAN. 'Tis very true. God keep you well, my Lord!

1 A dialectical variant of "scathe"; hurt, harm, or damage, with a potential connection to witchcraft.

DE MON. I thank thee, Manuel, I am very well.

I shall be gay too, by the setting sun.

I go to revel it with sprightly dames,

And drive the night away.

(*Filling another cup and drinking.*)

MAN. I should be glad to see your honour gay.

DE MON. And thou too shalt be gay. There, honest Manuel,

Put these broad pieces in thy leathern purse,

And take at night a cheerful jovial glass.

Here is one too, for Bremer;¹ he loves wine;

And one for Jacques: be joyful all together.

30

Enter SERVANT.

SER. My Lord, I met e'en now, a short way off,

Your countryman the Marquis Rezenvelt.

DE MON. (*Starting from his seat, and letting the cup fall from his hand.*)

Who, say'st thou?

SER. Marquis Rezenvelt, an' please you.

DE MON. Thou ly'st—it is not so—it is impossible.

SER. I saw him with these eyes, plain as yourself.

DE MON. Fool! 'tis some passing stranger thou hast seen,

And with a hideous likeness been deceiv'd.

SER. No other stranger could deceive my sight.

DE MON. (*Dashing his clenched hand violently upon the table, and overturning every thing.*)

Heaven blast thy sight! it lights on nothing good.

SER. I surely thought no harm to look upon him.

DE MON. What, dost thou still insist? Him must it be?

Does it so please thee well? (*Servant endeavours to speak.*)
hold thy damn'd tongue.

By heaven I'll kill thee. (*Going furiously up to him.*)

MAN. (*In a soothing voice.*)

Nay harm him not, my Lord; he speaks the truth;

I've met his groom, who told me certainly

30

¹ Cf. Cox, *Seven Gothic Dramas* 239 n37.

His Lord is here. I should have told you so,

But thought, perhaps, it might displease your honour.

DE MON. (*Becoming all at once calm, and turning sternly to Manuel.*)

And how dar'st thou to think it would displease me?

What is't to me who leaves or enters Amberg?

But it displeases me, yea ev'n to frenzy,

That every idle fool must hither come

To break my leisure with the paltry tidings

Of all the cursed things he stares upon.

(*Servant attempts to speak—De Monfort stamps with his foot.*)

Take thine ill-favour'd visage from my sight,

And speak of it no more. [*EXIT Servant.*]

DE MON. And go thou too; I choose to be alone.

(*De Monfort goes to the door by which they went out; opens it, and looks.*)

But is he gone indeed? Yes, he is gone.

(*Goes to the opposite door, opens it, and looks: then gives loose to all the fury of gesture, and walks up and down in great agitation.*)

It is too much: by heaven it is too much!

He haunts me—stings me—like a devil haunts—

He'll make a raving maniac of me—Villain!

The air wherein thou draw'st thy fulsome breath

Is poison to me—Oceans shall divide! (*Pauses.*)

But no; thou think'st I fear thee, cursed reptile!

And hast a pleasure in the damned thought.

Though my heart's blood should curdle at thy sight,

I'll stay and face thee still.

(*Knocking at the chamber door.*)

Ha! Who knocks there?

FREBERG. (*Without.*) It is thy friend, De Monfort.

DE MON. (*Opening the door.*) Enter, then.

Enter FREBERG.

Ha! Who knocks there?

FREBERG. (*Without.*) It is thy friend, De Monfort.

DE MON. (*Opening the door.*) Enter, then.

Enter FREBERG.

FREB. (*Taking his hand kindly.*)

How art thou now? How hast thou past the night?
Has kindly sleep refresh'd thee?

DE MON. Yes, I have lost an hour or two in sleep,
And so should be refresh'd

FREB.

And art thou not?

Thy looks speak not of rest. Thou art disturb'd.

80 DE MON. No, somewhat ruffled from a foolish cause,
Which soon will pass away.

FREB. (*Shaking his head.*) Ah no, De Monfort! something in thy
face

Tells me another tale. Then wrong me not:

If any secret grief distracts thy soul,

Here am I all devoted to thy love;

Open thy heart to me. What troubles thee?

DE MON. I have no grief: distress me not, my friend.

FREB. Nay, do not call me so. Wert thou my friend,

Would'st thou not open all thine inmost soul,

90 And bid me share its every consciousness?

DE MON. Freberg, thou know'st not man; not nature's man,

But only him who, in smooth studied works

Of polish'd sages, shines deceitfully

In all the splendid foppery of virtue.

That man was never born whose secret soul

With all its motley treasure of dark thoughts,

Foul fantasies, vain musing, and wild dreams,

Was ever open'd to another's scan.

Away, away! it is delusion all.

100 FREB. Well, be reserved then: perhaps I'm wrong.

DE MON. How goes the hour?

FREB. 'Tis early: a long day is still before us,

Let us enjoy it. Come along with me;

I'll introduce you to my pleasant friend.

DE MON. Your pleasant friend?

FREB.

Yes, he of whom I spake.

(*Taking his hand.*)

There is no good I would not share with thee,

And this man's company, to minds like thine,

110 Is the best banquet-feast I could bestow.

But I will speak in mystery no more,

It is thy townsman, noble Rezenvelt.

(De Mon. *Pulls his hand hastily from Freberg, and shrinks back.*)

Ha! What is this? Art thou pain-stricken, Monfort?

Nay, on my life, thou rather seem'st offended:

Does it displease thee that I call him friend?

DE MON. No, all men are thy friends.

FREB. No, say not all men. But thou art offended.

I see it well. I thought to do thee pleasure.

But if his presence is not welcome here,

He shall not join our company to-day.

DE MON. What dost thou mean to say? What is't to me

Whether I meet with such a thing as Rezenvelt

To-day, to-morrow, every day, or never.

FREB. In truth, I thought you had been well with him.

He prais'd you much.

DE MON. I thank him for his praise—Come, let us move:

This chamber is confin'd and airless grown.

(*Starting.*)

I hear a stranger's voice!

FREB.

'Tis Rezenvelt.

Let him be told that we are gone abroad.¹

DE MON. (*Proudly.*)

No; let him enter. Who waits there? Ho! Manuel!

Enter MANUEL.

What stranger speaks below?

MAN.

The Marquis Rezenvelt.

I have not told him that you are within.

DE MON. (*Angrily.*) And wherefore did'st thou not? Let him

ascend.

(*A long pause. De Monfort walking up and down with a quick pace.*)

¹ Out of one's house; outdoors.

Enter REZENVELT, and runs freely up to De Monfort.

REZ. (to De Mon.) My noble Marquis, welcome.

DE MON.

Sir, I thank you.

REZ. (to Freb.) My gentle friend, well met. Abroad so early?
FREB. It is indeed an early hour for me.

How sits thy last night's revel on thy spirits?

REZ. O, light as ever. On my way to you

E'en now I learnt De Monfort was arriv'd,

And turn'd my steps aside; so here I am.

(*Bowing gaily to De Monfort.*)

DE MON. I thank you, Sir; you do me too much honour.
(*Proudly.*)

REZ. Nay, say not so; not too much honour, Marquis,
Unless, indeed, 'tis more than pleases you.

DE MON. (*Confused.*) Having no previous notice of your
coming,

I look'd not for it.

REZ. Ay, true indeed; when I approach you next,
I'll send a herald to proclaim my coming.

And make my bow to you by sound of trumpet.

DE MON. (to Freb.) (*Turning haughtily from Rezenvelt with affected
indifference.*)

How does your cheerful friend, that good old man?

FREB. My cheerful friend? I know not whom you mean.

DE MON. Count Waterlan.

FREB. I know not one so named.

DE MON. (*Very confused.*) O pardon me—it was at Bâle I knew
him.

FREB. You have not yet enquired for honest Reisdale.

I met him as I came, and mention'd you.

He seem'd amaz'd; and fain he would have learnt

What cause procur'd us so much happiness.

He question'd hard, and hardly would believe

I could not satisfy his strong desire.

REZ. And know you not what brings De Monfort here?

FREB. Truly, I do not.

REZ. O! 'tis love of me.

I have but two short days in Amberg been,
And here with postman's speed¹ he follows me,
Finding his home so dull and tiresome grown.

FREB. (to De Mon.) Is Rezenvelt so sadly miss'd with you?
Your town so chang'd?

DE MON.

Not altogether so:

Some wittings and jest-mongers still remain
For fools to laugh at.

REZ. But he laughs not, and therefore he is wise.

He ever frowns on them with sullen brow

Contemptuous; therefore he is very wise.

Nay, daily frets his most refined soul

With their poor folly, to its inmost core;

Therefore he is most eminently wise.

FREB. Fy, Rezenvelt! You are too early gay;

Such spirits rise but with the ev'ning glass.

They suit not placid morn.

(*To De Monfort, who after walking impatiently up and down,
comes close to his ear, and lays hold of his arm.*)

What would you, Monfort?

DE MON. Nothing—Yet, what is't o'clock?

No, no—I had forgot—'tis early still.

(*Turns away again.*)

FREB. (to Rez.) Waltser informs me that you have agreed

To read his verses o'er, and tell the truth.

It is a dangerous task.

REZ.

Yet I'll be honest:

1 We can imagine the frantic and precarious nature of this speed, particularly in a mail coach designed for rapid transport. English roads, as Roy Porter describes in *English Society in the Eighteenth Century*, were notoriously unpleasant, since "the bulk goods hauled in huge waggons rutted them, and livestock droves turned them into ribbon dungheaps" (191). By 1750, however, turnpike roads—a system of toll highways begun in Stuart times—connected London to other major centres such as Manchester, Bristol, Birmingham, York, and Dover. At that time, 143 turnpike trusts controlled 3,400 miles of highway, and by 1770, 500 trusts administered 5,000 miles of roads. Public passenger traffic between Leicester and London began in 1753, loosely servicing the link, as the owner of the service described, "on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday," and by 1765 even a "flying machine" was servicing the link in one day. See Thomas De Quincey's (1785-1850) *The English Mail Coach* (1849).

I can but lose his favour and a feast.
(Whilst they speak, De Monfort walks up and down impatiently and irresolute; at last pulls the bell violently.)

Enter SERVANT.

DE MON. *(to Ser.)* What dost thou want?—

SER.

I thought your honour rung.

DE MON. I have forgot—Stay; are my horses saddled?

SER. I thought, my Lord, you would not ride to-day, after so long a journey.

DE MON. *(Impatiently.)* Well—'tis good.

Begone!—I want thee not.

[EXIT Servant.

REZ. *(Smiling significantly.)* I humbly crave your pardon, gentle Marquis.

It grieves me that I cannot stay with you,

And make my visit of a friendly length.

I trust your goodness will excuse me now;

Another time I shall be less unkind.

(To Freberg.) Will you not go with me?

FREB. Excuse me, Monfort, I'll return again.

[EXEUNT Rezenvelt and Freberg.

DE MON. *(Alone, tossing his arms distractedly.)*

Hell hath no greater torment for th' accurs'd

Than this man's presence gives—

Abhorred fiend! he hath a pleasure too,

A damned pleasure in the pain he gives!

Oh! the side glance of that detested eye!

That conscious smile! that full insulting lip!

It touches every nerve: it makes me mad.

What, does it please thee? Dost thou woo my hate?

Hate shalt thou have! determin'd, deadly hate,

Which shall awake no smile. Malignant villain!

The venom of thy mind is rank and devilish,

And thin the film that hides it.

Thy hateful visage ever spoke thy worth:

I loath'd thee when a boy.

That ——¹ should be besotted with him thus!

And Freberg likewise so bewitched is,

That like a hireling flatt'rer, at his heels

He meanly paces, off'ring brutish praise.

O! I could curse him too.

[EXIT.

¹ In the Larpent version the line reads "That all the world should be besotted thus!" Cf. Cox, *Seven Gothic Dramas* 249.

ACT II.—SCENE I.

A very splendid apartment in Count FREBERG'S house, fancifully decorated. A wide folding door opened, shews another magnificent room lighted up to receive company. Enter through the folding doors the Count and Countess, richly dressed.

FREB. (*Looking round.*) In truth, I like those decorations well:

They suit those lofty walls. And here, my love,

The gay profusion of a woman's fancy

Is well display'd. Noble simplicity

Becomes us less on such a night as this

Than gaudy show.

LADY. Is it not noble, then? (*He shakes his head.*) I thought it so,

And as I know you love simplicity,

I did intend it should be simple too.

10 FREB. Be satisfy'd, I pray; we want to-night

A cheerful banquet-house, and not a temple.

How runs the hour?

LADY. It is not late, but soon we shall be rous'd

With the loud entry of our frolick guests.

Enter a PAGE, richly dressed.

PAGE. Madam, there is a Lady in your hall,

Who begs to be admitted to your presence.

LADY. Is it not one of our invited friends?

PAGE. No, far unlike to them, it is a stranger.

LADY. How looks her countenance?

20 PAGE. So queenly, so commanding, and so noble,

I shrunk at first in awe; but when she smil'd,

For so she did to see me thus abash'd,

Methought I could have compass'd sea and land

To do her bidding.

LADY. Is she young or old?

PAGE. Neither, if right I guess, but she is fair;

For time hath laid his hand so gently on her,

As he too had been aw'd.

LADY. The foolish stripling!

She has bewitch'd thee. Is she large in stature?

PAGE. So stately and so graceful is her form,

I thought at first her stature was gigantic,

But on a near approach I found, in truth,

She scarcely does surpass the middle size.¹

LADY. What is her garb?

PAGE. I cannot well describe the fashion of it.

She is not deck'd in any gallant trim,

But seems to me clad in the usual weeds

Of high habitual state; for as she moves

Wide flows her robe in many a waving fold,

As I have seen unfurled banners play

With the soft breeze.

LADY. Thine eyes deceive thee, boy,

It is an apparition thou hast seen.

FREB. (*Starting from his seat, where he has been sitting during the conversation between the Lady and the Page.*)

It is an apparition he has seen.

Or it is Jane De Monfort.

[EXIT, hastily.]

LADY. (*Displeas'd.*) No; such description surely suits not her.

Did she enquire for me?

PAGE. She ask'd to see the lady of Count Freberg.

LADY. Perhaps it is not she—I fear it is—

Ha! here they come. He has but guess'd too well.

Enter FREBERG, leading in JANE DE MONFORT.

FREB. (*Presenting her to Lady.*) Here, madam, welcome a most worthy guest.

LADY. Madam, a thousand welcomes. Pardon me;

I could not guess who honour'd me so far;

I should not else have waited coldly here.

JANE. I thank you for this welcome, gentle Countess,

1 Other descriptive words at this time to denote relative size of one's figure, were "fair-," "full-," "great-," and "large-." William MacMichael's *The Gold-Headed Cane*, a biography of selected medical acquaintances, describes Joanna Baillie's brother, Dr. Matthew Baillie, as being "considerably below the middle size" (156).

But take those kind excuses back again;
I am a bold intruder on this hour,
And am entitled to no ceremony.
I came in quest of a dear truant friend,
But Freberg has inform'd me—
(To Freberg.) And he is well you say?

FREB.

Yes, well, but joyless.

60 JANE. It is the usual temper of his mind:

It opens not, but with the thrilling touch
Of some strong heart-string o' the sudden press'd.

FREB. It may be so, I've known him otherwise.
He is suspicious grown.

JANE. Not so, Count Freberg, Monfort is too noble.

Say rather, that he is a man in grief,

Wearing at times a strange and scowling eye;

And thou, less generous than besseems a friend,

Hast thought too hardly of him.

FREB. (*Bowing with great respect.*) So will I say

70 I'll own nor word, nor will, that can offend you.

LADY. De Monfort is engag'd to grace our feast,

Ere long you'll see him here.

JANE. I thank you truly, but this homely dress

Suits not the splendour of such scenes as these.

FREB. (*Pointing to her dress.*) Such artless and majestic elegance,

So exquisitely just, so nobly simple,

Will make the gorgeous blush.

JANE. (*Smiling.*) Nay, nay, be more consistent, courteous knight,

And do not praise a plain and simple guise

With such profusion of unsimple words.

80 I cannot join your company to-night.

LADY. Not stay to see your brother?

JANE. Therefore it is I would not, gentle hostess.

Here he will find all that can woo the heart

To joy and sweet forgetfulness of pain;

The sight of me would wake his feeling mind!

1 Jane De Monfort alludes here to what was by 1798 the well-ripened tradition of sentimentality. With Locke, a break was made from the religious notion of the immateriality of the mind to radical notions that ideas proceed from feelings. Then

To other thoughts. I am no doting mistress,
No fond distracted wife, who must forthwith
Rush to his arms and weep. I am his sister:

The eldest daughter of his father's house:

Calm and unwearied is my love for him;

And having found him, patiently I'll wait,

Nor greet him in the hour of social joy,

To dash his mirth with tears.—

The night wears on; permit me to withdraw.

FREB. Nay, do not, do not injure us so far!

Disguise thyself, and join our friendly train.

JANE. You wear not masks to-night?

LADY. We wear not masks, but you may be conceal'd

Behind the double foldings of a veil.

JANE. (*After pausing to consider.*) In truth, I feel a little so
inclin'd.

100 Methinks unknown, I e'en might speak to him,

And gently prove the temper of his mind:

But for the means I must become your debtor.

(To Lady.)

LADY. Who waits? (*Enter her Woman.*) Attend this lady to my

wardrobe,

And do what she commands you.

[*Exit Jane and Waiting-woman.*]

FREB. (*Looking after Jane, as she goes out, with admiration.*)

Oh! what a soul she bears! see how she steps!

Nought but the native dignity of worth

E'er taught the moving form such noble grace.

LADY. Such lofty mien, and high assumed gait

I've seen ere now, and men have call'd it pride.

FREB. No, 'faith! thou never did'st, but oft indeed

The paltry imitation thou hast seen.

as the understanding of physiology developed, mental life could be traced through analogies of body processes. Especially before Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey* (1768) "sentiment" suggested richness in moral reflection. Cf. Locke, Appendix A; see also Janet Todd's *Sensibility. An Introduction*.

(*Looking at her.*) How hang those trappings on thy motly gown?

They seem like garlands on a May-day queen,
Which hinds have dress'd in sport.

LADY. I'll doff it, then, since it displeases you.

FREB. (*Sofening.*) No, no, thou art lovely still in every garb.
But see the guests assemble.

Enter groups of well dressed people, who pay their compliments to Freberg and his Lady; and followed by her pass into the inner apartment, where more company appear assembling, as if by another entry.

FREB. (*Who remains on the front of the stage, with a friend or two.*)
How loud the hum of this gay meeting croud!

'Tis like a bee-swarm in the noonday sun.

Musick will quell the sound. Who waits without?
Musick strike up.

(*A grand piece of musick is playing, and when it ceases, enter from the inner apartment REZENVELT, with several gentlemen, all richly dressed.*)

FREB. (*To those just entered.*)

What lively gallants quit the field so soon?

Are there no beauties in that moving croud
To fix your fancy?

REZ. Ay, marry, are there! men of ev'ry mind

May in that moving croud some fair one find,

To suit their taste, tho' whimsical and strange,

As ever fancy own'd.

Beauty of every cast and shade is there,

From the perfection of a faultless form,

Down to the common, brown, unnoted maid,

Who looks but pretty in her Sunday gown.

IST GENT. There is, indeed, a gay variety.

REZ. And if the liberality of nature

Suffices not, there's store of grafted charms

Blending in one the sweets of many plants

So obstinately, strangely opposite,

As would have well defy'd all other art
But female cultivation. Aged youth,
With borrow'd locks in rosy chaplets bound,
Cloaths her dim eye, parch'd lip, and skinny cheek
In most unlovely softness.

And youthful age, with fat round trackless face,
The down-cast look of contemplation deep,
Most pensively assumes.

Is it not even so? The native prude,
With forced laugh, and merriment uncouth,
Plays off the wild coquet's successful charms
With most unskilful pains; and the coquet,
In temporary crust of cold reserve,

Fixes her studied looks upon the ground
Forbiddingly demure.

FREB. Fy! thou art too severe.

REZ.

Say, rather, gentle.

I' faith! the very dwarfs attempt to charm
With lofty airs of puny majesty,

Whilst potent damsels, of a portly make,

Totter like nurselings, and demand the aid
Of gentle sympathy.

From all those diverse modes of dire assault,

He owns a heart of hardest adamant,

Who shall escape to-night.

FREB. (*To De Monfort, who has entered¹ during Rezenvelt's speech, and heard the greatest part of it.*)

Ha, ha, ha, ha!

How pleasantly he gives his wit the rein,

Yet guides its wild career!

(*De Monfort is silent.*)

REZ. (*Smiling archly.*)

What, think you, Freberg, the same powerful spell

Of transformation reigns o'er all to-night?

Or that De Monfort is a woman turn'd,

So widely from his native self to swerve,

¹ In the Larpent version a stage direction indicates this entrance at the end of line 139.

170

As grace my gai'ty with a smile of his?
 DE MON. Nay, think not, Rezenvelt, there is no smile
 I can bestow on thee. There is a smile,
 A smile of nature too, which I can spare,
 And yet, perhaps, thou wilt not thank me for it.
 (*Smiles contemptuously.*)

REZ. Not thank thee! It were surely most ungrateful
 No thanks to pay for nobly giving me
 What, well we see, has cost thee so much pain.
 For nature hath her smiles, of birth more painful
 Than bitt'rest execrations.¹

180 FREQ. These idle words will lead us to disquiet:
 Forbear, forbear, my friends. Go, Rezenvelt,
 Accept the challenge of those lovely dames,
 Who thro' the portal comes² with bolder steps
 To claim your notice.

(*Enter a group of Ladies from the other apartment. Rezenvelt shrugs up his shoulders, as if unwilling to go.*)

185 IST GENT. (*to Rez.*) Behold in sable veil a lady comes,
 Whose noble air doth challenge fancy's skill
 To suit it with a countenance as goodly.
 (*Pointing to Jane De Mbnfort, who now enters in a thick black veil.*)

190 REZ. Yes, this way lies attraction. (*To Freberg.*) With
 permission,
 (*Going up to Jane.*)

195 Fair lady, tho' within that envious shroud
 Your beauty deigns not to enlighten us,
 We bid you welcome, and our beauties here
 Will welcome you the more for such concealment.
 With the permission of our noble host—

(*Taking her hand, and leading her to the front of the stage.*)
 JANE. (*to Freb.*) Pardon me this presumption, courteous sir:
 I thus appear, (*pointing to her veil.*) not careless of respect
 Unto the gen'rous lady of the feast.
 Beneath this veil no beauty shrouded is,

1 Curses; expressions of extreme loathing.

2 Changed to "come" in 1806.

200 That, now, or pain, or pleasure can bestow.

Within the friendly cover of its shade
 I only wish unknown, again to see
 One who, alas!—is heedless of my pain.

DE MON. Yes, it is ever thus. Undo that veil,
 And give thy count'nance to the cheerful light.
 Men now all soft, and female beauty scorn,
 And mock the gentle cares which aim to please.
 It is most damnable! undo thy veil,
 And think of him no more.

JANE. I know it well, even to a proverb grown,
 Is lovers' faith, and I had borne such slight:

210 But he who has, alas! forsaken me
 Was the companion of my early days,
 My cradle's mate, mine infant play-fellow.
 Within our op'ning minds with riper years
 The love of praise and gen'rous virtue sprung:
 Thro' varied life our pride, our joys, were one;
 At the same tale we wept: he is my brother.

DE MON. And he forsook thee?—No, I dare not curse him:
 My heart upbraids me with a crime like his.

JANE. Ah! do not thus distress a feeling heart.
 All sisters are not to the soul entwined

220 With equal bands; thine has not watch'd for thee,
 Weep'd for thee, cheer'd thee, shar'd thy weal and woe,
 As I have done for him.

DE MON. (*Eagerly.*) Ha! has she not?

By heaven! the sum of all thy kindly deeds
 Were but as chaff pois'd against the massy gold,
 Compar'd to that which I do owe her love.
 Oh pardon me! I mean not to offend—
 I am too warm—But she of whom I speak
 Is the dear sister of my earliest love;

230 In noble virtuous worth to none a second:
 And tho' behind those sable folds were hid
 As fair a face as ever woman own'd,
 Still would I say she is as fair as thee.
 How oft amidst the beauty-blazing throng,

I've proudly to th' inquiring stranger told
Her name and lineage! yet within her house,
The virgin mother of an orphan race
Her dying parents left, this noble woman
Did, like a Roman matron, proudly sit,
Despising all the blandishments of love;
Whilst many a youth his hopeless love conceal'd,
Or, humbly distant, woo'd her like a queen.
Forgive, I pray you! O forgive this boasting!
In faith! I mean you no discourtesy.

JANE. (*Off her guard, in a soft natural tone of voice.*) Oh no! nor do
me any.

DE MON. What voice speaks now? Withdraw, withdraw this
shade!

For if thy face bear semblance to thy voice,
I'll fall and worship thee. Pray! pray undo!

(*Puts forth his hand eagerly to snatch away the veil, whilst she
shrinks back, and Rezenvelt steps between to prevent him.*)
REZ. Stand off: no hand shall lift this sacred veil.

250 DE MON. What, dost thou think De Monfort fall'n so low,
That there may live a man beneath heav'n's roof
Who dares to say he shall not?

REZ. He lives who dares to say—

JANE. (*Throwing back her veil, very much alarmed, and rushing
between them.*)

Forbear, forbear!

(*Rezenvelt, very much struck, steps back respectfully and makes her a
very low bow. De Monfort stands for a while motionless, gazing upon
her, till she, looking expressively to him, extends her arms, and he, rush-
ing into them, bursts into tears. Freberg seems very much pleased. The
company then gather about them, and the scene closes.*)

SCENE II.

De Monfort's apartments. Enter DE MONFORT, with a disordered
air, and his hand pressed upon his forehead, followed by JANE.

DE MON. No more, my sister, urge me not again:
My secret troubles cannot be revealed.

From all participation of its thoughts

My heart recoils: I pray thee be contented.

JANE. What, must I, like a distant humble friend,

Observe thy restless eye, and gait disturb'd,

In timid silence, whilst with yearning heart

I turn aside to weep? O no! De Monfort!

A nobler task thy noble mind will give;

Thy true intrusted friend I still shall be.

DE MON. Ah, Jane, forbear! I cannot e'en to thee.

JANE. Then fy upon it! fy upon it, Monfort!

There was a time when e'en with murder stain'd,

Had it been possible that such dire deed

Could e'er have been the crime of one so piteous,

Thou would'st have told it me.

DE MON. So would I now—but ask of this no more.

All other trouble but the one I feel

I had disclos'd to thee. I pray thee spare me.

It is the secret weakness of my nature.

JANE. Then secret let it be; I urge no farther.

The eldest of our valiant father's hopes,

So sadly orphan'd, side by side we stood,

Like two young trees, whose boughs, in early strength,

Screen the weak saplings of the rising grove,

And brave the storm together—

I have so long, as if by nature's right,

Thy bosom's inmate and adviser been,

I thought thro' life I should have so remain'd,

Nor ever known a change. Forgive me, Monfort,

A humbler station will I take by thee:

The close attendant of thy wand'ring steps;

The cheerer of this home, by strangers sought;

The soother of those griefs I must not know,

This is mine office now: I ask no more.

DE MON. Oh Jane! thou dost constrain me with thy love!

Would I could tell it thee!

JANE. Thou shalt not tell me. Nay, I'll stop mine ears,

40 Nor from the yearnings of affection wring
 What shrinks from utterance. Let it pass, my brother.
 I'll stay by thee; I'll cheer thee, comfort thee:
 Pursue with thee the study of some art,
 Or nobler science,¹ that compels the mind
 To steady thought progressive, driving forth
 All floating, wild, unhappy fantasies;
 Till thou, with brow unclouded, smil'st again,
 Like one who from dark visions of the night,
 When th' active soul within its lifeless cell
 Holds its own world, with dreadful fancy press'd
 Of some dire, terrible, or murd'rous deed,
 Wakes to the dawning morn, and blesses heaven.
 DE MON. It will not pass away: 'twill haunt me still.
 JANE. Ah! say not so, for I will haunt thee too;
 And be to it so close an adversary,
 That, tho' I wrestle darkling with the fiend,
 I shall o'ercome it.

DE MON. Thou most gen'rous woman!
 Why do I treat thee thus? It should not be—
 And yet I cannot—O that cursed villain!
 He will not let me be the man I would.

60 JANE. What say'st thou, Monfort? Oh! what words are these?
 They have awak'd my soul to dreadful thoughts.
 I do beseech thee speak!

(*He shakes his head and turns from her; she following him.*)
 By the affection thou didst ever bear me;
 By the dear mem'ry of our infant days;
 By kindred living ties, ay, and by those
 Who sleep i'the tomb, and cannot call to thee,
 I do conjure thee speak.

(*He waves her off with his hand, and covers his face with the other, still turning from her.*)

Ha! wilt thou not?

1 It would appear that Jane de Monfort is aware of contemporary moral thinkers. As Mary Berry (1763-1832) observed in a letter to her friend Mrs. Cholmley (March 1799), contemporary male authors often made their women characters "clever, captivating, heroic, but never rationally superior...." (see Appendix A).

(*Assuming dignity.*)

Then, if affection, most unwearied love,
 Tried early, long, and never wanting found,
 O'er gen'rous man hath more authority,
 More rightful power than crown and sceptre give,
 I do command thee.

(*He throws himself into a chair greatly agitated.*)

DE MONFORT, do not thus resist my love.
 Here I entreat thee on my bended knees.
 (*Kneeling.*)

Alas! my brother!

(*De Monfort starts up, and, catching her in his arms, raises her up, then placing her in the chair, kneels at her feet.*)

DE MON. Thus let him kneel who should the abased be,
 And at thine honour'd feet confession make.

I'll tell thee all—but oh! thou wilt despise me.

For in my breast a raging passion burns,

To which thy soul no sympathy will own.

A passion which hath made my nightly couch

A place of torment; and the light of day,

With the gay intercourse of social man,

Feel like th' oppressive airless pestilence.

O Jane! thou wilt despise me.

JANE.

Say not so:

I never can despise thee, gentle brother.

A lover's jealousy and hopeless pangs

No kindly heart contemns.

DE MON.

A lover, say'st thou?

No, it is hate! black, lasting, deadly hate;

Which thus hath driv'n me forth from kindred peace,

From social pleasure, from my native home,

To be a sullen wand'rer on the earth,

Avoiding all men, cursing and accurs'd.

JANE. De Monfort, this is fiend-like, frightful, terrible!

What being, by th' Almighty Father form'd,

Of flesh and blood, created even as thou,

Could in thy breast such horrid tempest wake,

Who art thyself his fellow?

100
Unknit thy brows, and spread those wrath-clench'd hands;
Some sprite accurst within thy bosom mates
To work thy ruin. Strive with it, my brother!
Strive bravely with it; drive it from thy breast:
'Tis the degrader of a noble heart;
Curse it, and bid it part.

DE MON. It will not part. (*His hand on his breast.*) I've lodged it
here too long;

With my first cares I felt its rankling touch,
I loath'd him when a boy.

JANE. Who did'st thou say?

DE MON.

Oh! that detested Rezenvelt!
E'en in our early sports, like two young whelps
Of hostile breed, instinctively reverse,

Each 'gainst the other pitch'd his ready pledge,
And frown'd defiance. As we onward pass'd

From youth to man's estate, his narrow art,
And envious gibing malice, poorly veil'd
In the affected carelessness of mirth,
Still more detestable and odious grew.

There is no living being on this earth

Who can conceive the malice of his soul,

With all his gay and damned merriment,

To those, by fortune or by merit plac'd

Above his paltry self. When, low in fortune,

He look'd upon the state of prosp'rous men,

As nightly birds, rous'd from their murky holes,

Do scowl and chatter at the light of day,

I could endure it; even as we bear

Th' impotent bite of some half-trodden worm,

I could endure it. But when honours came,

And wealth and new-got titles fed his pride;

Whilst flatt'ring knaves did trumpet forth his praise,

And grov'ling idiots grinn'd applauses on him;

Oh! then I could no longer suffer it!

It drove me frantick.—What! what would I give!

What would I give to crush the bloated toad,

So rankly do I loathe him!

JANE. And would thy hatred crush the very man
Who gave to thee that life he might have ta'en?
That life which thou so rashly did'st expose
To aim at his! Oh! this is horrible!

DE MON. Ha! thou hast heard it, then? From all the world,
But most of all from thee, I thought it hid.

JANE. I heard a secret whisper, and resolv'd

Upon the instant to return to thee.

Did'st thou receive my letter?

DE MON. I did! 'twas that which drove me hither.

I could not bear to meet thine eye again.

JANE. Alas! that, tempted by a sister's tears,

I ever left thy house! these few past months,

These absent months, have brought us all this woe.

Had I remain'd with thee it had not been.

And yet, methinks, it should not move you thus.

You dar'd him to the field; both bravely fought;

He more adroit disarm'd you; courteously

Return'd the forfeit sword,¹ which, so return'd,

You did refuse to use against him more;

And then, as says report, you parted friends.

DE MON. When he disarm'd this curs'd, this worthless hand

Of its most worthless weapon, he but spar'd

From dev'lish pride, which now derives a bliss

In seeing me thus fetter'd, sham'd, subjected

With the vile favour of his poor forbearance;

Whilst he securely sits with gibing brow

And basely bates me, like a muzzled cur

Who cannot turn again.—

Until that day, till that accursed day,

I knew not half the torment of this hell,

Which burns within my breast. Heaven's lightning blast
him!

JANE. O this is horrible! Forbear, forbear!

Lest heaven's vengeance light upon thy head,

For this most impious wish.

1 Another duelling brother, James Harlowe in Samuel Richardson's (1689-1761) *Clarissa* (1747-48), is disarmed of his sword from "unskillfulness or passion" (1).

Then let it light.

Torments more fell than I have felt already

It cannot send. To be annihilated;

What all men shrink from; to be dust, be nothing,

Were bliss to me, compar'd to what I am.

JANE. Oh! would'st thou kill me with these dreadful words?

DE MON. (*Raising his arms to heaven.*) Let me but once upon his ruin look,

Then close mine eyes for ever!

(*Jane, in great distress, staggers back, and supports herself upon*

the side scene. De Monfort, alarm'd, runs up to her with a

soften'd voice.)

Ha! how is this? thou'rt ill; thou'rt very pale.

What have I done to thee? Alas, alas!

I meant not to distress thee.—O my sister!

JANE. (*Shaking her head.*) I cannot speak to thee.

DE MON.

I have kill'd thee.

Turn, turn thee not away! look on me still!

Oh! droop not thus, my life, my pride, my sister!

Look on me yet again.

JANE.

Thou too, De Monfort,

In better days, wert wont to be my pride.

DE MON. I am a wretch, most wretched in myself,

And still more wretched in the pain I give.

O curse that villain! that detested villain!

He hath spread misery o'er my fated life:

He will undo us all.

JANE. I've held my warfare through a troubled world,

And borne with steady mind my share of ill;

For then the helpmate of my toil wert thou.

But now the wane of life comes darkly on,

And hideous passion tears thee from my heart,

Blasting thy worth.—I cannot strive with this.

DE MON. (*Affectionately.*) What shall I do?

JANE.

Call up thy noble spirit,

Rouse all the generous energy of virtue;

And with the strength of heaven-endued man,

Repel the hideous foe. Be great; be valiant.

O, if thou could'st! E'en shrouded as thou art
In all the sad infirmities of nature,

What a most noble creature would'st thou be!

DE MON. Ay, if I could: alas! I cannot.

JANE. Thou can'st, thou may'st, thou wilt.

We shall not part till I have turn'd thy soul.

Enter MANUEL.

DE MON. Ha! some one enters. Wherefore com'st thou here?

MAN. Count Freberg waits your leisure.

DE MON. (*Angrily.*) Be gone, be gone.—I cannot see him now.

[*EXIT, Manuel.*]

JANE. Come to my closet; free from all intrusion,

I'll school thee there; and thou again shalt be

My willing pupil, and my generous friend;

The noble Monfort I have lov'd so long,

And must not, will not lose.

DE MON. Do as thou wilt; I will not grieve thee more.

[*EXEUNT.*]

SCENE III.¹

Count FREBERG'S House. *Enter the COUNTESS, followed by the PAGE, and speaking as she enters.*

LADY. Take this and this. (*Giving two packets.*) And tell my gentle friend,

I hope to see her ere the day be done.

PAGE. Is there no message for the Lady Jane?

LADY. No, foolish boy, that would too far extend

Your morning's route, and keep you absent long.

PAGE. O no, dear Madam! I'll the swifter run.

The summer's light'ning moves not as I'll move,

¹ See Cox, *Seven Gothic Dramas* 265 for critical changes to this scene in the Larpent version and the 1851 edition.

If you will send me to the Lady Jane.
LADY. No, not so slow, I ween. The summer's light'ning!
Thou art a lad of taste and letters grown:
Would'st poetry admire, and ape thy master.
Go, go; my little spaniels are unkempt;
My cards unwritten, and my china broke:
Thou art too learned for a lady's page.
Did I not bid thee call Theresa here?
PAGE. Madam she comes.

Enter THERESA, carrying a robe over her arm.

LADY. (to Ther.) What has employ'd you all this dreary while?
I've waited long.

THER. Madam, the robe is finish'd.
LADY. Well, let me see it.

(Theresa spreads out the robe.)

(Impatiently to the Page.)

Boy, hast thou ne'er a hand to lift that fold?
See where it hangs.

(Page takes the other side of the robe, and spreads it out to its full extent before her, whilst she sits down and looks at it with much dissatisfaction.)

THER. Does not my lady like this easy form?
LADY. That sleeve is all awry.

THER. Your pardon, madam;

'Tis but the empty fold that shades it thus.

I took the pattern from a graceful shape;

The Lady Jane De Monfort wears it so.

LADY. Yes, yes, I see 'tis thus with all of you.

Whate'er she wears is elegance and grace,

Whilst ev'ry ornament of mine, forsooth,

Must hang like trappings on a May-day queen.

(Angrily to the Page, who is smiling to himself.)

Youngster be gone. Why do you loiter here?

[EXIT Page.]

THER. What would you, madam, chuse to wear to-night?
One of your newest robes?

LADY. I hate them all.

THER. Surely, that purple scarf became you well,
With all those wreaths of richly hanging flowers.
Did I not overhear them say, last night,
As from the crouded ball-room ladies past,
How gay and handsome, in her costly dress,
The Countess Freberg look'd.

LADY. Did'st thou o'erhear it?

THER. I did, and more than this.

LADY. Well, all are not so greatly prejudic'd;

All do not think me like a May-day queen,
Which peasants deck in sport.

THER. And who said this?

LADY. (*Putting her handkerchief to her eyes.*) E'en my good lord,
Theresa.

THER. He said it but in jest. He loves you well.

LADY. I know as well as thee he loves me well;

But what of that? he takes no pride in me.

Elsewhere his praise and admiration go,

And Jane De Monfort is not mortal woman.

THER. The wond'rous character this lady bears

For worth and excellence; from early youth

The friend and mother of her younger sisters

Now greatly married, as I have been told,

From her most prudent care, may well excuse

The admiration of so good a man

As my good master is. And then, dear madam,

I must confess, when I myself did hear

How she was come thro' the rough winter's storm,

To seek and comfort an unhappy brother,

My heart beat kindly to her.

LADY. Ay, ay, there is a charm in this I find:

But wherefore may she not have come as well.

Through wintry storms to seek a lover too?

THER. No, madam, no, I could not think of this.

LADY. That would reduce her in your eyes, mayhap,

To woman's level.—Now I see my vengeance!
I'll tell it round that she is hither come,

Under pretence of finding out De Monfort,

To meet with Rezenvelt. When Freberg hears it
'Twill help, I ween, to break this magick charm.

70

THER. And say what is not, madam?

LADY. How can'st thou know that I shall say what is not?

'Tis like enough I shall but speak the truth.

THER. Ah no! there is—

LADY. Well, hold thy foolish tongue.

Carry that, robe into my chamber, do:

I'll try it there myself.

[EXEUNT.]

ACT III. —SCENE I.

DE MONFORT *discovered sitting by a table reading. After a little time he lays down his book, and continues in a thoughtful posture. Enter to him JANE DE MONFORT.*

JANE. Thanks, gentle brother.—

(Pointing to the book.)

Thy willing mind has been right well employ'd.

Did not thy heart warm at the fair display

Of peace and concord and forgiving love?

DE MON. I know resentment may to love be turn'd;

Tho' keen and lasting, into love as strong:

And fiercest rivals in th'ensanguin'd field

Have cast their brandish'd weapons to the ground,

Joining their mailed¹ breasts in close embrace,

With gen'rous impulse fir'd. I know right well

The darkest, fellest wrongs have been forgiven

Seventy times o'er from blessed heavenly love:

I've heard of things like these; I've heard and wept.

But what is this to me?

JANE. All, all, my brother!

1 Armour'd.

It bids thee too that noble precept learn,
To love thine enemy.

DE MON. Th' uplifted stroke that would a wretch destroy

Gorg'd with my richest spoil, stain'd with my blood,

I would arrest and cry, hold! hold! have mercy:

But when the man most adverse to my nature,

Who e'en from childhood hath, with rude malevolence,

Withheld the fair respect all paid beside,

Turning my very praise into derision;

Who galls and presses me where'er I go,

Would claim the gen'rous feelings of my heart,

Nature herself doth lift her voice aloud,

And cries, it is impossible.¹

JANE. *(Shaking her head.)*—Ah Monfort, Monfort!

DE MON. I can forgive th' envenom'd reptile's sting,

But hate his loathsome self.

JANE. And canst thou do no more for love of heaven?

DE MON. Alas! I cannot now so school my mind

As holy men have taught, nor search it truly:

But this, my Jane, I'll do for love of thee;

And more it is than crowns could win me to,

Or any power but thine. I'll see the man.

Th' indignant risings of abhorrent nature;

The stern contraction of my scowling brows,

That, like the plant,² whose closing leaves do shrink

1 Cf. Appendix A.4.i.

2 Most likely *Mimosa pudica* or the "Sensitive plant" whose compound leaves fold and collapse when touched. Erasmus Darwin includes the *Mimosa* in a poetic catalogue personifying plants in the second part of *The Botanic Garden* (1791) entitled "The Loves of the Plants," first published alone in 1789. He writes:

Weak with nice sense, the chaste MIMOSA stands,

From each rude touch withdraws her timid hands;

Oft as light clouds o'erpass the Summer-glade,

Alarm'd she trembles at the moving shade;

And feels, alive through all her tender form,

The whisper'd murmurs of the gathering storm;

Shuts her sweet eye-lids to approaching night;

And hails with freshen'd charms the rising light.

Veil'd, with gay decency and modest pride,

Slow to the mosque she moves, an eastern bride;

40
 At hostile touch, still knit at his approach;
 The crooked curving lip, by instinct taught,
 In imitation of disgusting things
 To pout and swell, I strictly will repress;
 And meet him with a tamed countenance,
 E'en as a townsman, who would live at peace,
 And pay him the respect his station claims.
 I'll crave his pardon too for all offence
 My dark and wayward temper may have done;
 Nay more, I will confess myself his debtor
 For the forbearance I have curs'd so oft.
 Life spar'd by him, more horrid than the grave
 With all its dark corruption! This I'll do.
 Will it suffice thee? More than this I cannot.
 JANE. No more than this do I require of thee
 In outward act, tho' in thy heart, my friend,
 I hop'd a better change, and still will hope.
 I told thee Freberg had propos'd a meeting.
 DE MON. I know it well.
 JANE. And Rezenvelt consents.
 He meets you here; so far he shews respect.
 DE MON. Well, let it be; the sooner past the better.
 JANE. I'm glad to hear you say so, for, in truth,
 He has propos'd it for an early hour.
 'Tis almost near his time; I came to tell you.
 DE MON. What, comes he here so soon? shame on his speed!

There her soft vows unceasing love record,
 Queen of the bright seraglio of her Lord. —
 So sinks or rises with the changeful hour
 The liquid silver in its glassy tower.
 So turns the needle to the pole it loves,
 With fine vibrations quivering, as it moves. (1.247-61)

In a following note, Darwin likens the plant's collapse after being touched to a deeper sleep "owing to a numbness or paralysis consequent to too violent irritation, like the faintings of animals from pain or fatigue." Interestingly, Margaret Carhart in her *The Life and Work* notes that a production of Mary Berry's *Fashionable Friends* at Strawberry Hill for which Baillie provided the prologue and epilogue was described in a contemporary Dublin review as a "hot-house plant ... of the modish mimosa class" (*Hibernia Magazine*, June 1810) in that it was performed only twice. See Percy Bysshe Shelley's "The Sensitive Plant" (1820).

It is not decent thus to rush upon me.
 He loves the secret pleasure he will feel
 To see me thus subdued.

JANE. O say not so! he comes with heart sincere.
 DE MON. Could we not meet elsewhere? from home—i' the
 fields,

Where other men—must I alone receive him?
 Where is your agent, Freberg, and his friends,
 That I must meet him here?
 (*Walks up and down very much disturbed.*)
 Now did'st thou say?—how goes the hour?—e'en now!
 I would some other friend were first arriv'd.

JANE. See, to thy wish comes Freberg and his dame.
 DE MON. His lady too! why comes he not alone?
 Must all the world stare upon our meeting?

Enter COUNT FREBERG and his COUNTESS.

FREB. A happy morrow to my noble marquis
 And his most noble sister.

JANE. Gen'rous Freberg,
 Your face, methinks, forbodes a happy morn
 Open and cheerful. What of Rezenvelt?

FREB. I left him at his home, prepar'd to follow:
 He'll soon appear. (*To De Monfort.*) And now, my worthy
 friend,

Give me your hand; this happy change delights me.

(*De Monfort gives him his hand coldly, and they walk to the
 bottom of the stage together, in earnest discourse, whilst Jane and
 the Countess remain in the front.*)

LADY. My dearest madam, will you pardon me?

I know Count Freberg's bus'ness with De Monfort,
 And had a strong desire to visit you,

So much I wish the honour of your friendship.

For he retains no secret from mine ear.

JANE. (*archly.*) Knowing your prudence.—You are welcome,
 madam,

So shall Count Freberg's lady ever be.

(De Monfort and Freberg returning towards the front of the stage, still engaged in discourse.)

FREB. He is indeed a man, within whose breast,

Firm rectitude and honour hold their seat,

Tho' unadorned with that dignity

Which were their fittest garb. Now, on my life!

I know no truer heart than Rezenvelt.

DE MON. Well, Freberg, well,—there needs not all this pains

To garnish out his worth; let it suffice.

I am resolv'd I will respect the man,

As his fair station and repute demand.

Methinks I see not at your jolly feasts

The youthful knight, who sung so pleasantly.

FREB. A pleasant circumstance detains him hence;

Pleasant to those who love high gen'rous deeds

Above the middle pitch of common minds;

And, tho' I have been sworn to secrecy,

Yet must I tell it thee.

This knight is near a kin to Rezenvelt

To whom an old relation, short while dead,

Bequeath'd a good estate, some leagues distant.

But Rezenvelt, now rich in fortune's store,

Disdain'd the sordid love of further gain,

And gen'rously the rich bequest resign'd

To this young man, blood of the same degree

To the deceas'd, and low in fortune's gifts,

Who is from hence to take possession of it.

Was it not nobly done?

DE MON. 'Twas right, and honourable.

This morning is oppressive, warm, and heavy:

There hangs a foggy closeness in the air;

Dost thou not feel it?

120 FREB. O no! to think upon a gen'rous deed

Expands my soul, and makes me lightly breath.¹

DE MON. Who gives the feast to night? His name escapes me.

You say I am invited.

¹ Changed to "breathe" in 1806.

Old Count Waterlan.

FREB. In honour of your townsman's gen'rous gift
He spreads the board.¹

DE MON. He is too old to revel with the gay.

FREB. But not too old is he to honour virtue.

I shall partake of it with open soul;

For, on my honest faith, of living men

I know not one, for talents, honour, worth,

That I should rank superior to Rezenvelt.

DE MON. How virtuous he hath been in three short days!

FREB. Nay, longer, Marquis, but my friendship rests

Upon the good report of other men;

And that has told me much.

(De Monfort aside, going some steps hastily from Freberg, and
rending his cloak with agitation as he goes.)

Would he were come! by heaven I would he were!

This fool besets me so.

(Suddenly correcting himself, and joining the Ladies, who have
retired to the bottom of the stage, he speaks to Countess

Freberg with affected cheerfulness.)

The sprightly dames of Amberg rise by times

Untarnish'd with the vigils of the night.

LADY. Praise us not rashly, 'tis not always so.

DE MON. He does not rashly praise who praises you;

For he were dull indeed—

(Stopping short, as if he heard something.)

LADY.

How dull indeed?

DE MON. I should have said—It has escap'd me now—

(Listening again, as if he heard something.)

JANE. (to De Mon.) What, hear you ought?

DE MON. (hastily.)

'Tis nothing.

LADY. (to De Mon.) Nay, do not let me lose it so, my lord.

Some fair one has bewitch'd your memory,

And robs me of the half-form'd compliment.

JANE. Half-utter'd praise is to the curious mind,

As to the eye half-veiled beauty is,

¹ Table.

More precious than the whole. Pray pardon him.
Some one approaches. (*Listening.*)

FREB. No, no, it is a servant who ascends;

He will not come so soon.

MON. (*Off his guard.*) 'Tis Rezenvelt: I heard his well-known
foot!

From the first stair-case, mounting step by step.

FREB. How quick an ear thou hast for distant sound!

I heard him not.

(*De Monfort looks embarrassed, and is silent.*)

Enter REZENVELT.

(*De Monfort, recovering himself, goes up to receive Rezenvelt, who meets him with a cheerful countenance.*)

DE MON. (*to Rez.*) I am, my lord, beholden to you greatly.

This ready visit makes me much your debtor.

160 REZ. Then may such debts between us, noble marquis,

Be oft incurr'd, and often paid again.

(*To Jane.*) Madam, I am devoted to your service,

And ev'ry wish of yours commands my will.

(*To Countess.*) Lady, good morning. (*To Freb.*) Well, my
gentle friend,

You see I have not linger'd long behind.

FREB. No, thou art sooner than I look'd for thee.

REZ. A willing heart adds feather to the heel,

And makes the clown a winged mercury.

DE MON. Then let me say, that with a grateful mind

170 I do receive these tokens of good will;

And must regret that, in my wayward moods,

I have too oft forgot the due regard

Your rank and talents claim.

REZ. No, no, De Monfort,

You have but rightly curb'd a wanton spirit,

Which makes me too neglectful of respect.

Let us be friends, and think of this no more.

FREB. Ay, let it rest with the departed shades

Of things which are no more; whilst lovely concord,

180 Follow'd by friendship sweet, and firm esteem,
Your future days enrich. O heavenly friendship!

Thou dost exalt the sluggish souls of men,

By thee conjoin'd, to great and glorious deeds;

As two dark clouds, when mix'd in middle air,

The vivid lightning's flash, and roar sublime.

Talk not of what is past, but future love.

DE MON. (*With dignity.*)

No, Freberg, no, it must not. (*To Rezenvelt.*) No, my lord.

I will not offer you an hand of concord

And poorly hide the motives which constrain me.

I would that, not alone these present friends,

But ev'ry soul in Amberg were assembled,

That I, before them all, might here declare

I owe my spared life to your forbearance.

(*Holding out his hand.*) Take this from one who boasts no
feeling warmth,

But never will deceive.

(*Jane smiles upon De Monfort with great approbation, and*

Rezenvelt runs up to him with open arms.)

REZ. Away with hands! I'll have thee to my breast.

Thou art, upon my faith, a noble spirit!

DE MON. (*Shrinking back from him.*)

Nay, if you please, I am not so prepar'd—

My nature is of temperature too cold—

I pray you pardon me. (*Jane's countenance changes.*)

But take this hand, the token of respect;

The token of a will inclin'd to concord;

The token of a mind that bears within

A sense impressive of the debt it owes you:

And curs'd be its power, unnerv'd its strength,

If e'er again it shall be lifted up

To do you any harm.

REZ. Well, be it so, De Monfort, I'm contented;

I'll take thy hand since I can have no more.

(*Carelessly.*) I take of worthy men whate'er they give.

Their heart I gladly take; if not, their hand:

If that too is withheld, a courteous word,

Or the civility of placid looks;
And, if e'en these are too great favours deem'd,
'Faith, I can set me down contentedly
With plain and homely greeting, or, God save ye!
(*De Monfort aside, starting away from him some paces.*)
By the good light, he makes a jest of it!
(*Jane seems greatly distressed, and Freberg endeavours to cheer her.*)

FREB. (*to Jane.*) Cheer up, my noble friend; all will go well;
For friendship is no plant of hasty growth.
Tho' planted in esteem's deep-fixed soil,
The gradual culture of kind intercourse
Must bring it to perfection.

(*To the Countess.*) My love, the morning, now, is far
advanced;

Our friends elsewhere expect us; take your leave.

LADY. (*to Jane.*) Farewell! dear madam, till the ev'ning hour.
FREB. (*to De Mon.*) Good day, De Monfort. (*To Jane.*) Most
devoutly yours.

REZ. (*to Freb.*) Go not too fast, for I will follow you.

[*EXEUNT Freberg and his Lady.*]

(*To Jane.*) The Lady Jane is yet a stranger here:
She might, perhaps, in the purlieus¹ of Amberg
Find somewhat worth her notice.

230 JANE. I thank you, Marquis, I am much engaged;
I go not out to-day.

REZ. Then fare ye well! I see I cannot now

Be the proud man who shall escort you forth,
And shew to all the world my proudest boast,
The notice and respect of Jane De Monfort.

DE MON. (*Aside, impatiently.*) He says farewell, and goes not!
JANE. (*to Rez.*) You do me honour.

REZ. Madam, adieu! (*To Jane.*) Good morning, noble marquis.

[*EXIT.*]

1 Outskirts; perhaps a scenic forest retreat for riding or walking.

(*Jane and De Monfort look expressively to one another, without speaking, and then EXEUNT, severally.*)

SCENE II.

A splendid Banqueting Room. DE MONFORT, REZENVELT, FREBERG, MASTER OF THE HOUSE, and GUESTS, are discovered sitting at table, with wine, &c. before them.

SONG.—A GLEE.

Pleasant is the mantling bowl,
And the song of merry soul;
And the red lamps cheery light,
And the goblet glancing bright;
Whilst many a cheerful face, around,
Listens to the jovial sound.
Social spirits, join with me;
Bless the God of jollity.

FREB. (*to De Mon.*) (*Who rises to go away.*)

Thou wilt not leave us, Monfort? wherefore so?

DE MON. (*Aside to Freberg.*) I pray thee take no notice of me
now.

Mine ears are stunned with these noisy fools;
Let me escape.

10

[*EXIT, hastily.*]

MASTER OF THE HOUSE. What, is De Monfort gone?

FREB. Time presses him.

REZ. It seem'd to sit right heavily upon him,
We must confess.

MASTER. (*to Freb.*) How is your friend? he wears a noble mien,
But most averse, methinks, from social pleasure.
Is this his nature?

FREB. No, I've seen him cheerful,
And at the board, with soul-enliven'd face,

Push the gay goblet round.—But it wears late.
 We shall seem toppers¹ more than social friends,
 If the returning sun surprise us here.
 (*To Mast.*) Good rest, my gen'rous host; we will retire.
 You wrestle with your age most manfully,
 But brave it not too far. Retire to sleep.
 MAST. I will, my friend, but do you still remain,
 With noble Rezenvelt, and all my guests.
 Ye have not fourscore years upon your head;
 Do not depart so soon. God save you all!

[EXIT Master, leaning upon a Servant.

FREB. (*to the Guests.*) Shall we resume?

GUESTS.

The night is too far spent.

FREB. Well then, good rest to you.

REZ. (*to Guests.*) Good rest, my friends.

[EXEUNT all but Freberg and Rezenvelt.

FREB. Alas! my Rezenvelt!

I vainly hop'd the hand of gentle peace,
 From this day's reconciliation sprung,
 These rude unseemly jarrings had subdu'd:
 But I have mark'd, e'en at the social board,
 Such looks, such words, such tones, such untold things,
 Too plainly told, 'twixt you and Monfort pass,
 That I must now despair.

Yet who could think, two minds so much refin'd,
 So near in excellence, should be remov'd,
 So far remov'd, in gen'rous sympathy.

REZ. Ay, far remov'd indeed.

FREB. And yet, methought, he made a noble effort,
 And with a manly plainness bravely told
 The galling debt he owes to your forbearance.
 REZ. 'Faith! so he did, and so did I receive it;

1 Drinking companions; drunkards.

When, with spread arms, and heart e'en mov'd to tears,
 I frankly proffer'd him a friend's embrace:

And, I declare, had he as such receiv'd it,

I from that very moment had forborne

All opposition, pride-provoking jest,

Contemning carelessness, and all offence;

And had caress'd him as a worthy heart,

From native weakness such indulgence claiming:

But since he proudly thinks that cold respect,

The formal tokens of his lordly favour,

So precious are, that I would sue for them

As fair distinction in the world's eye,

Forgetting former wrongs, I spurn it all;

And but that I do bear the noble woman,

His worthy, his incomparable sister,

Such fix'd profound regard, I would expose him;

And as a mighty bull, in senseless rage,

Rous'd at the baiter's will, with wretched rags

Of ire-provoking scarlet, chaffs and bellows,

I'd make him at small cost of paltry wit,

With all his deep and manly faculties,

The scorn and laugh of fools.

FREB. For heaven's sake, my friend! restrain your wrath;

For what has Monfort done of wrong to you,

Or you to him, bating one foolish quarrel,

Which you confess from slight occasion rose,

That in your breasts such dark resentment dwells,

So fix'd, so hopeless?

REZ. O! from our youth he has distinguish'd me

With ev'ry mark of hatred and disgust.

For e'en in boyish sports I still oppos'd

His proud pretensions to pre-eminence;

Nor would I to his ripen'd greatness give

That fulsome adulation of applause

A senseless croud bestow'd. Tho' poor in fortune,

I still would smile at vain-assuming wealth:

But when unlook'd-for fate on me bestow'd

Riches and splendour equal to his own,

90
Tho' I, in truth, despise such poor distinction,
Feeling inclin'd to be at peace with him,
And with all men beside, I curb'd my spirit,
And sought to soothe him. Then, with spiteful rage,
From small offence he rear'd a quarrel with me,
And dar'd me to the field. The rest you know.
In short, I still have been th' opposing rock,
O'er which the stream of his o'erflowing pride
Hath foam'd and bellow'd. See'st thou how it is?
FREB. Too well I see, and warn thee to beware.
Such streams have oft, by swelling floods surcharg'd,
Borne down with sudden and impetuous force
The yet unshaken stone of opposition,
Which had for ages stopp'd their flowing course.
I pray thee, friend, beware.

100
REZ. Thou canst not mean—he will not murder me?
FREB. What a proud heart, with such dark passion toss'd,
May, in the anguish of its thoughts, conceive,
I will not dare to say.

REZ. Ha, ha ! thou know'st him not.
Full often have I mark'd it in his youth,
And could have almost lov'd him for the weakness;
He's form'd with such antipathy, by nature,
To all infliction of corporeal pain,
To wounding life, e'en to the sight of blood,
He cannot if he would.

110 FREB. Then fy upon thee!
It is not gen'rous to provoke him thus.
But let us part; we'll talk of this again.
Something approaches.—We are here too long.
REZ. Well, then, to-morrow I'll attend your call.
Here lies my way. Good night.

[EXIT.]

Enter GRIMBALD.

GRIM. Forgive, I pray, my lord, a stranger's boldness.
I have presum'd to wait your leisure here,
Though at so late an hour.

FREB. But who art thou?
GRIM. My name is Grimbald, sir,

120
A humble suitor to your honour's goodness,
Who is the more embolden'd to presume,
In that the noble Marquis of De Monfort
Is so much fam'd for good and gen'rous deeds.
FREB. You are mistaken, I am not the man.

GRIM. Then, pardon me; I thought I could not err.
That mien so dignified, that piercing eye
Assur'd me it was he.

FREB. My name is not De Monfort, courteous stranger;
But, if you have a favour to request,
I may, perhaps, with him befriend your suit.

130
GRIM. I thank your honour, but I have a friend
Who will commend me to De Monfort's favour:

The Marquis Rezenvelt has known me long,
Who, says report, will soon become his brother.

FREB. If thou would'st seek thy ruin from De Monfort,
The name of Rezenvelt employ, and prosper;
But, if ought good, use any name but his.

GRIM. How may this be?

FREB. I cannot now explain.

140
Early to-morrow call upon Count Freberg;
So am I call'd, each burgher knows my house,
And there instruct me how to do you service.
Good-night.

[EXIT.]

GRIM. (*Alone.*) Well, this mistake may be of service to me;
And yet my bus'ness I will not unfold
To this mild, ready, promise-making courtier;
I've been by such too oft deceiv'd already:
But if such violent enmity exists
Between De Monfort and this Rezenvelt,
He'll prove my advocate by opposition.
150
For, if De Monfort would reject my suit,
Being the man whom Rezenvelt esteems,

Being the man he hates, a cord as strong,
Will he not favour me? I'll think of this.

[EXIT.]

SCENE III.

A lower Apartment in JEROME'S House, with a wide folding glass door, looking into a garden, where the trees and shrubs are brown and leafless. Enter DE MONFORT with his arms crossed, with a thoughtful frowning aspect, and paces slowly across the stage, Jerome following behind him with a timid step. De Monfort hearing him, turns suddenly about.

DE MON. (*Angrily.*) Who follows me to this sequester'd room?
JER. I have presum'd, my lord. 'Tis somewhat late:

I am inform'd you eat at home to-night;

Here is a list of all the dainty fare

My busy search has found; please to peruse it.

DE MON. Leave me: begone! Put hemlock in thy soup,

Or deadly night-shade, or rank hellebore,¹

And I will mess² upon it.

JER. Heaven forbid!

Your honour's life is all too precious, sure—

DE MON. (*Sternly.*) Did I not say begone?

JER. Pardon, my lord, I'm old, and oft forget.

[EXIT.]

DE MON. (*Looking after him, as if his heart smote him.*)

Why will they thus mistime their foolish zeal,

That I must be so stern?

1 Continuing the botanical allusions in the play, De Monfort speaks of hemlock, the powerful medical sedative famous for its role in Socrates' death; night-shade, which features highly poisonous black berries; and hellebore, another highly poisonous plant used by the Ancients to treat mental disorders.

2 Dine.

O! that I were upon some desert coast!

Where howling tempests and the lashing tide

Would stun me into deep and senseless quiet;

As the storm-beaten traveller droops his head,

In heavy, dull, lethargick weariness,

And, midst the roar of jarring elements,

Sleeps to awake no more.

What am I grown? All things are hateful to me.

20

Enter MANUEL.

(*Stamping with his foot.*) Who bids thee break upon my
privacy?

MAN. Nay, good, my lord! I heard you speak aloud,

And dreamt not, surely, that you were alone.

DE MON. What, dost thou watch, and pin thine ear to holes,

To catch those exclamations of the soul,

Which heaven alone should hear? Who hir'd thee, pray?

Who basely hir'd thee for a task like this?

MAN. My lord, I cannot hold. For fifteen years,

Long-troubled years, I have your servant been,

Nor hath the proudest lord in all the realm,

With firmer, with more honourable faith

His sov'reign serv'd, than I have served you;

But, if my honesty is doubted now,

Let him who is more faithful take my place,

And serve you better.

DE MON. Well, be it as thou wilt. Away with thee.

Thy loud-mouth'd boasting is no rule for me

To judge thy merit by.

Enter JEROME hastily, and pulls MANUEL away.

JER. Come, Manuel, come away; thou art not wise.

The stranger must depart and come again,

For now his honour will not be disturb'd.

40

[EXIT Manuel sulkily.]

DE MON. A stranger said'st thou.

(*Drops his handkerchief.*)

JER. I did, good sir, but he shall go away;
You shall not be disturb'd.

(*Steeping to lift the handkerchief.*)

You have dropp'd somewhat.
DE MON. (*Preventing him.*) Nay, do not stoop, my friend! I pray
thee not!

Thou art too old to stoop.—

I am much indebted to thee.—Take this ring—

I love thee better than I seem to do.

I pray thee do it—thank me not.—What stranger?

JER. A man who does most earnestly entreat

To see your honour, but I know him not.

DE MON. Then let him enter.

[EXIT Jerome.]

A pause. Enter GRIMBALD.

DE MON. You are the stranger who would speak with me?

GRIM. I am so far unfortunate, my lord,

That, though my fortune on your favour hangs,
I am to you a stranger.

DE MON. How may this be? What can I do for you?

GRIM. Since thus your lordship does so frankly ask,

The tiresome preface of apology

I will forbear, and tell my tale at once.—

In plodding drudgery I've spent my youth,

A careful penman in another's office;

And now, my master and employer dead,

They seek to set a stripling o'er my head,

And leave me on to drudge, e'en to old age,

Because I have no friend to take my part.

It is an office in your native town,

For I am come from thence, and I am told

You can procure it for me. Thus, my lord,

From the repute of goodness which you bear,

I have presum'd to beg.

DE MON. They have befool'd thee with a false report.

GRIM. Alas! I see it is in vain to plead.

Your mind is pre-possess'd against a wretch,

Who has, unfortunately for his weal,

Offended the revengeful Rezenvelt.

DE MON. What dost thou say?

GRIM. What I, perhaps, had better leave unsaid.

Who will believe my wrongs if I complain?

I am a stranger, Rezenvelt my foe,

Who will believe my wrongs?

DE MON. (*Eagerly catching him by the coat.*)

I will believe them!

Though they were base as basest, vilest deeds,

In ancient record told, I would believe them.

Let not the smallest atom of unworthiness

That he has put upon thee be conceal'd.

Speak boldly, tell it all; for, by the light!

I'll be thy friend, I'll be thy warmest friend,

If he has done thee wrong.

GRIM. Nay, pardon me, it were not well advis'd,

If I should speak so freely of the man,

Who will so soon your nearest kinsman be.

DE MON. What canst thou mean by this?

GRIM.

That Marquis Rezenvelt

Has pledg'd his faith unto your noble sister,

And soon will be the husband of her choice.

So, I am told, and so the world believes.

DE MON. 'Tis false! 'tis basely false!

What wretch could drop from his envenom'd tongue

A tale so damn'd?—It chokes my breath—

(*Stamping with his foot.*) What wretch did tell it thee?

GRIM. Nay, every one with whom I have convers'd

Has held the same discourse. I judge it not.

But you, my lord, who with the lady dwell,

You best can tell what her deportment speaks;

Whether her conduct and unguarded words

Belie such rumour.

(*De Monfort pauses, staggers backwards, and sinks into a chair; then starting up hastily.*)

DE MON. Where am I now? 'midst all the cursed thoughts
That on my soul like stinging scorpions prey'd,
This never came before—Oh, if it be!

110 The thought will drive me mad.—Was it for this
She urged her warm request on bended knee?
Alas! I wept, and thought of sister's love,

No damned love like this.
Fell devil! 'tis hell itself has lent thee aid
To work such sorcery! (*Pauses.*) I'll not believe it.

I must have proof¹ clear as the noon-day sun
For such foul charge as this! Who waits without!
(*Paces up and down furiously agitated.*)

GRIM. (*Aside.*) What have I done? I've carried this too far.
I've rous'd a fierce un governable madman.

Enter JEROME.

DE MON. (*In a loud angry voice.*)

120 Where did she go, at such an early hour,
And with such slight attendance?

JER. Of whom inquires your honour?

DE MON. Why, of your lady. Said I not my sister?

JER. The Lady Jane, your sister?

DE MON. (*In a faltering voice.*) Yes, I did call her so.

JER. In truth, I cannot tell you where she went.

E'en now, from the short-beechen walk hard-by,
I saw her through the garden-gate return.

The Marquis Rezenvelt, and Freberg's Countess

Are in her company. This way they come,

As being nearer to the back apartments;

But I shall stop them, if it be your will,

And bid them enter here.

DE MON. No, stop them not. I will remain unseen,²

And mark them as they pass. Draw back a little.

(*Grimbald seems alarm'd, and steals off unnoticed.*)

De Monfort gasps Jerome tightly by the hand, and drawing

1 Cf. *Othello* 3.3.160.

2 Cf. *Othello* 4.1.75-151.

back with him two or three steps, not to be seen from the garden,
waits in silence with his eyes fixed on the glass-door.)

DE MON. I hear their footsteps on the grating sand.

How like the croaking of a carrion bird,
That hateful voice sounds to the distant ear!
And now she speaks—her voice sounds cheerly too—

O curse their mirth!—

140 Now, now, they come, keep closer still! keep steady!
(*Taking hold of Jerome with both hands.*)

JER. My lord, you tremble much.

DE MON.

What, do I shake?

JER. You do, in truth, and your teeth chatter too.

DE MON. See! see they come! he strutting by her side.

(*Jane, Rezenvelt, and Countess Freberg appear through the
glass-door, pursuing their way up a short walk leading to the
other wing of the house.*)

See how he turns his odious face to her's!

Uttering with confidence some nauseous jest.

And she endures it too—Oh! this looks vilely!

Hal mark that courteous motion of his arm—

What does he mean?—He dares not take her hand!

(*Pauses and looks eagerly.*) By heaven and hell he does!

(*Letting go his hold of Jerome, he throws out his hands
vehemently, and thereby pushes him against the scene.*)

150 JER. Oh! I am stunn'd! my head is crack'd in twain:
Your honour does forget how old I am.

DE MON. Well, well, the wall is harder than I wist.
Begone! and whine within.

[*EXIT Jerome, with a sad rueful countenance.*]

(*De Monfort comes forward to the front of the stage, and makes
a long pause, expressive of great agony of mind.*)

It must be so; each passing circumstance;

Her hasty journey here; her keen distress

Whene'er my soul's abhorrence I express'd;

Ay, and that damned reconciliation,

With tears extorted from me: Oh, too well!

All, all too well bespeak the shameful tale.
I should have thought of heav'n and hell conjoin'd,
The morning star¹ mix'd with infernal fire,
Ere I had thought of this—
Hell's blackest magick, in the midnight hour,
With horrid spells and incantation dire,
Such combination opposite, unseemly,
Of fair and loathsome, excellent and base,
Did ne'er produce.—But every thing is possible,
So as it may my misery enhance!

Oh! I did love her with such pride of soul!
When other men, in gayest pursuit of love,
Each beauty follow'd, by her side I stay'd;
Far prouder of a brother's station there,
Than all the favours favour'd lovers boast.
We quarrel'd once, and when I could no more
The alter'd coldness of her eye endure,
I slipp'd o' tip-toe to her chamber door;
And when she ask'd who gently knock'd—Oh! oh!
Who could have thought of this?
(*Throws himself into a chair, covers his face with his hand, and bursts into tears. After some time he starts up from his seat furiously.*)

Hell's direst torment seize th' infernal villain!
Detested of my soul! I will have vengeance!²
I'll crush thy swelling pride—I'll still thy vaunting—
I'll do a deed of blood—Why shrink I thus?
If, by some spell or magick sympathy,
Piercing the lifeless figure on that wall
Could pierce his bosom too, would I not cast it?
(*Throwing a dagger against the wall.*)
Shall groans and blood affright me? No, I'll do it.
Tho' gasping life beneath my pressure heav'd,

1 Lucifer ('light bringer') is the morning star (Venus). Cf. Isaiah 14 and John Milton's *Paradise Lost* 3.80-135.
2 Cf. note to *Count Basil* 4.5.95 and Richardson, "The Dangers of Sympathy" and Thorslev, "Incest as Romantic Symbol."
3 Cf. *Othello* 3.3.447-62.

And my soul shudder'd at the horrid brink,
I would not flinch.—Fy this recoiling nature!
O that his sever'd limbs were strew'd in air,
So as I saw him not!

(*Enter Rezenvelt behind, from the glass door. De Monfort turns round, and on seeing him starts back, then drawing his sword, rushes furiously upon him.*)

Detested robber; now all forms are over:
Now open villany, now open hate!
Defend thy life.

REZ. De Monfort, thou art mad.

DE MON. Speak not, but draw. Now for thy hated life!

(*They fight: Rezenvelt parries his thrusts with great skill, and at last disarms him.*)

Then take my life, black fiend, for hell assists thee.
REZ. No, Monfort, but I'll take away your sword.

Not as a mark of disrespect to you,

But for your safety. By to-morrow's eve

I'll call on you myself and give it back;

And then, if I am charged with any wrong,

I'll justify myself. Farewell, strange man!

[EXIT

(*De Monfort stands for some time quite motionless, like one stupified. Enter to him a SERVANT: he starts.*)

DE MON. Hal' who art thou?

SER. 'Tis I, an' please your honour.

DE MON. (*Staring wildly at him.*) Who art thou?

SER. Your servant Jacques.

DE MON. Indeed I know thee not.

Leave me, and when Rezenvelt is gone,

Return and let me know.

SER. He's gone already, sir.

DE MON. How, gone so soon?

SER. Yes, as his servant told me,

He was in haste to go, for night comes on,

And at the ev'ning hour he must take horse,

To visit some old friend whose lonely mansion
Stands a short mile beyond the farther wood;
And, as he loves to wander thro' those wilds
Whilst yet the early moon may light his way,
He sends his horses round the usual road,
And crosses it alone.

I would not walk thro' those wild dens alone
For all his wealth. For there, as I have heard,
Foul murders have been done, and ravens scream;
And things unearthly, stalking thro' the night,
Have scar'd the lonely traveller from his wits.

(De Monfort stands fixed in thought.)

I've ta'en your mare, an please you, from her field,
And wait your farther orders.

(De Monfort heeds him not.)

Her hoofs are sound, and where the saddle gall'd
Begins to mend. What further must be done?

(De Monfort still heeds him not.)

His honour heeds me not. Why should I stay?

DE MON. (*Eagerly, as he is going.*) He goes alone saidst thou?
SER. His servant told me so.

DE MON. And at what hour?

SER. He parts from Amberg by the fall of eve.

Save you, my lord? how chang'd your count'nance is!

Are you not well?

DE MON. Yes, I am well: begone!

And wait my orders by the city wall:

I'll that way bend, and speak to thee again.

[EXIT, Servant.]

(De Monfort walks rapidly two or three times across the stage;
then seizes his dagger from the wall; looks steadfastly at its point,
and EXIT, hastily.)

220

230

ACT IV.—SCENE I.

Moon-light. A wild path in a wood, shaded with trees. Enter DE MONFORT, with a strong expression of disquiet, mixed with fear, upon his face, looking behind him, and bending his ear to the ground, as if he listened to something.

DE MON. How hollow groans the earth beneath my tread!

Is there an echo here? Methinks it sounds

As tho' some heavy footstep follow'd me.

I will advance no farther.

Deep settled shadows rest across the path,

And thickly-tangled boughs o'er-hang this spot.

O that a tenfold gloom did cover it!

That 'midst the murky darkness I might strike;

As in the wild confusion of a dream,

Things horrid, bloody, terrible, do pass,

As tho' they pass'd not; nor impress the mind

With the fix'd clearness of reality.

(*An owl is heard screaming near him.*)

(*Starting.*) What sound is that?

(*Listens, and the owl cries again.*)

It is the screech-owl's cry.

Foul bird of night! what spirit guides thee here?

Art thou instinctive drawn to scenes of horror?

I've heard of this. (*Pauses and listens.*)

How those fall'n leaves so rustle on the path,

With whisp'ring noise, as tho' the earth around me

Did utter secret things!

The distant river, too bears to mine ear

A dismal wailing. O mysterious night!

Thou art not silent; many tongues hast thou.

A distant gath'ring blast sounds thro' the wood,

And dark clouds fleetly hasten o'er the sky:

O! that a storm would rise, a raging storm;

Amidst the roar of warring elements;

I'd lift my hand and strike: but this pale light,

20

30 The calm distinctness of each stilly¹ thing,
Is terrible. (*Starting.*) Footsteps are near—
He comes, he comes! I'll watch him farther on—
I cannot do it here.

[EXIT.]

Enter REZENVELT, and continues his way slowly across the stage, but just as he is going off the owl screams, he stops and listens, and the owl screams again.

REZ. Ha! does the night-bird greet me on my way?

How much his hooting is in harmony
With such a scene as this! I like it well.
Oft when a boy,² at the still twilight hour,
I've leant my back against some knotted oak,
And loudly mimick'd him, till to my call
He answer would return, and thro' the gloom
We friendly converse held.

40 Between me and the star-bespangl'd sky
Those aged oaks their crossing branches wave,
And thro' them looks the pale and placid moon.
How like a crocodile, or winged snake,
Yon sailing cloud bears on its dusky length!
And now transformed by the passing wind,
Methinks it seems a flying Pegasus.
Ay, but a shapeless band of blacker hue
Come swiftly after.—

A hollow murmur'ing wind comes thro' the trees;
I hear it from afar; this bodes a storm.
I must not linger here—
(*A bell heard at some distance.*)

What bell is this?

It sends a solemn sound upon the breeze.
Now, to a fearful superstitious mind,

1 Characterized by stillness; secret.

2 Cf. Wordsworth, *Lyrical Ballads* vol. 2 and *The Prelude* 5.364-425 (Appendix D.2).

In such a scene, 'twould like a death-knell come:
For me it tells but of a shelter near,
And so I bid it welcome.

[EXIT.]

SCENE II.

The inside of a Convent Chapel, of old Gothic architecture, almost dark; two torches only are seen at a distance, burning over a newly-made grave.¹ The noise of loud wind, beating upon the windows and roof, is heard. Enter two MONKS.

1ST MONK. The storm increases: hark how dismally
It howls along the cloisters. How goes time?

2D MONK. It is the hour: I hear them near at hand;
And when the solemn requiem has been sung
For the departed sister, we'll retire.

Yet, should this tempest still more violent grow,
We'll beg a friendly shelter till the morn.

1ST MONK. See, the procession enters: let us join.

(*The organ strikes up a solemn prelude. Enter a procession of Nuns, with the Abbess, bearing torches. After compassing the grave twice, and remaining there some time, whilst the organ plays a grand dirge, they advance to the front of the stage.*)

SONG, BY THE NUNS.

Departed soul, whose poor remains
This hallow'd lowly grave contains;
Whose passing storm of life is o'er,

1 In the revised fourth edition (1802) and fifth edition (1806) Baillie provided the following note to this stage direction: "I have put above *newly-covered* instead of *new-made* grave, as it stands in the former editions, because I wish not to give the idea of a funeral procession, but merely that of a hymn or requiem sung over the grave of a person who has been recently buried."

Whose pains and sorrows are no more!
Bless'd be thou with the bless'd above!
Where all is joy, and purity, and love.

Let him, in might and mercy dread,
Lord of the living and the dead;
In whom the stars of heav'n rejoice,
To whom the ocean lifts his voice,
Thy spirit purified to glory raise,
To sing with holy saints his everlasting praise.

20

Departed soul, who in this earthly scene
Hast our lowly sister been.
Swift be thy way to where the blessed dwell!
Until we meet thee there, farewell! farewell!

Enter a LAY SISTER, with a wild terrified look, her hair and dress all scattered, and rushes forward amongst them.

ABB. Why com'st thou here, with such disorder'd looks,
To break upon our sad solemnity?

SIST. Oh! I did hear, thro' the receding blast,
Such horrid cries! it made my blood run chill.

ABB. 'Tis but the varied voices of the storm,

30 Which many times will sound like distant screams:
It has deceiv'd thee.

IST SIST. O no, for twice it call'd, so loudly call'd,
With horrid strength, beyond the pitch of nature.
And murder! murder! was the dreadful cry.
A third time it return'd with feeble strength,
But o' the sudden ceas'd, as tho' the words
Were rudely smother'd in the grasped throat;

And all was still again, save the wild blast

Which at a distance growl'd—

40 Oh! it will never from my mind depart!
That dreadful cry all I' the instant still'd,
For then, so near, some horrid deed was done,
And none to rescue.

ABB. Where didst thou hear it?
SIST.

In the higher cells,
As now a window, open'd by the storm,
I did attempt to close.

1ST MONK. I wish our brother Bernard were arriv'd;
He is upon his way.

ABB. Be not alarm'd; it still may be deception.

'Tis meet we finish our solemnity,

Nor shew neglect unto the honour'd dead.

(*Gives a sign, and the organ plays again: just as it ceases a loud knocking is heard without.*)

ABB. Ha! who may this be? hush!

(*Knocking heard again.*)

2D MONK. It is the knock of one in furious haste,

Hush, hush! What footsteps come? Ha! brother Bernard.

50

Enter BERNARD bearing a lantern.

1ST MONK. See, what a look he wears of stiffen'd fear!

Where hast thou been, good brother?

BERN. I've seen a horrid sight!

(*All gathering round him and speaking at once.*)

What hast thou seen?

BERN. As on I hasten'd, bearing thus my light,

Across the path, not fifty paces off,

I saw a murther'd corpse stretch'd on its back,

Smear'd with new blood, as tho' but freshly slain.

ABB. A man or woman?

BERN. A man, a man!

ABB. Did'st thou examine if within its breast

There yet is lodg'd some small remains of life?

Was it quite dead?

BERN. Nought in the grave is deader.

I look'd but once, yet life did never lodge

In any form so laid.—

A chilly horror seiz'd me, and I fled.

1ST MONK. And does the face seem all unknown to thee?

BERN. The face! I would not on the face have look'd

70

For e'en a kingdom's wealth, for all the world.
O no! the bloody neck, the bloody neck!

(*Shaking his head, and shuddering with horror. Loud knocking heard without.*)

SIST. Good mercy! who comes next?

BERN.

Not far behind

I left our brother Thomas on the road;

But then he did repent him as he went,

And threaten'd to return.

2D MONK. See, here he comes.

Enter brother THOMAS, with a wild terrified look.

1ST MONK. How wild he looks!

BERN. (*Going up to him eagerly.*) What, hast thou seen it too?

THOM. Yes, yes! it glar'd upon me as it pass'd.

80 BERN. What glar'd upon thee?

(*All gathering round Thomas and speaking at once.*)

O! what hast thou seen?

THOM. As, striving with the blast, I onward came,

Turning my feeble lantern from the wind,

Its light upon a dreadful visage gleam'd,

Which paus'd, and look'd upon me as it pass'd.

But such a look, such wildness of despair,

Such horror-strain'd features never yet

Did earthly visage show. I shrank and shudder'd.

If damned spirits may to earth return

I've seen it.

BERN. Was there blood upon it?

90 THOM. Nay, as it pass'd, I did not see its form;

Nought but the horrid face.

BERN. It is the murderer.

1ST MONK. What way went it?

THOM. I durst not look till I had pass'd it far,

Then turning round, upon the rising bank,

I saw, between me and the paly sky,

A dusky form, tossing and agitated.

I stopp'd to mark it, but, in truth, I found

'Twas but a sapling bending to the wind,
And so I onward hied,' and look'd no more.

100 1ST MONK. But we must look to't; we must follow it:

Our duty so commands. (*To 2d Monk.*) Will you go, brother?

(*To Bernard.*) And you, good Bernard?

BERN.

If I needs must go.

1ST MONK. Come, we must all go.

ABB.

Heaven be with you, then!

[*EXEUNT Monks.*]

SIST. Amen, amen! Good heaven be with us all!

O what a dreadful night!

ABB. Daughters retire; peace to the peaceful dead!

Our solemn ceremony now is finish'd.

SCENE III.

A large room in the Convent, very dark. Enter the ABBESS, Lay Sister bearing a light, and several Nuns. Sister sets down the light on a table at the bottom of the stage, so that the room is still very gloomy.

ABB. They have been longer absent than I thought;

I fear he has escap'd them.

1ST NUN. Heaven forbid!

SIST. No no, found out foul murder ever is,

And the foul murd'rer too.

2D NUN. The good Saint Francis will direct their search;

The blood so near his holy convent shed

For threefold vengeance calls.

ABB. I hear a noise within the inner court,

They are return'd; (*listening.*) and Bernard's voice I hear:

They are return'd.

SIST. Why do I tremble so?

1 Spec.

It is not I who ought to tremble thus.

2D NUN. I hear them at the door.

BERN. (*Without.*) Open the door, I pray thee, brother Thomas; I cannot now unhand the prisoner.

(*All speak together, shrinking back from the door, and staring upon one another.*)

He is with them.

(*A folding door at the bottom of the stage is opened, and enter Bernard, Thomas, and the other two Monks, carrying lanterns in their hands, and bringing in De Monfort. They are likewise followed by other Monks. As they lead forward De Monfort the light is turned away, so that he is seen obscurely; but when they come to the front of the stage they all turn the light side of their lanterns on him at once, and his face is seen in all the strengthened horror of despair, with his hands and cloaths bloody.*)

(*Abbess and Nuns speak at once, and starting back.*) Holy saints be with us!

BERN. (*to Abb.*) Behold the man of blood!

ABB. Of misery too; I cannot look upon him.

BERN. (*to Nuns.*) Nay, holy sisters, turn not thus away.

Speak to him, if, perchance, he will regard you.

For from his mouth we have no utterance heard,

Save one deep and smother'd exclamation,

When first we seiz'd him.

ABB. (*to De Mon.*) Most miserable man, how art thou thus? (*Pauses.*)

Thy tongue is silent, but those bloody hands
Do witness horrid things. What is thy name?

DE MON. (*Roused; looks steadfastly at the Abbess for some time, then speaking in a short hurried voice.*) I have no name.

ABB. (*to Bern.*) Do it thyself: I'll speak to him no more.

SIST. O holy saints! that this should be the man,

Who did against his fellow lift the stroke,

Whilst he so loudly call'd.—

Still in mine ear it sounds: O murder! murder!

DE MON. (*Starting.*) He calls again!

SIST. No, he did call, but now his voice is still'd.

'Tis past.

DE MON. (*In great anguish.*) 'Tis past!

SIST. Yes it is past, art thou not he who did it?

(*De Monfort utters a deep groan, and is supported from falling by the Monks. A noise is heard without.*)

ABB. What noise is this of heavy lumbering steps,

Like men who with a weighty burden come?

BERN. It is the body: I have orders given

That here it should be laid.

(*Enter men bearing the body of Rezenvelt, covered with a white cloth, and set it down in the middle of the room: they then uncover it. De Monfort stands fixed and motionless with horror, only that a sudden shivering seems to pass over him when they uncover the corps. The Abbess and Nuns shrink back and retire to some distance, all the rest fixing their eyes steadfastly upon De Monfort. A long pause.*)

BERN. (*to De Mon.*) See'st thou that lifeless corps, those bloody wounds,

See how he lies, who but so shortly since

A living creature was, with all the powers

Of sense, and motion, and humanity?

Oh! what a heart had he who did this deed!

1ST MONK. (*Looking at the body.*) How hard those teeth against
the lips are press'd,

As tho' he struggled still!

2D MONK. The hands, too, clench'd: the last efforts of nature.

(*De Monfort still stands motionless. Brother Thomas then goes to the body, and raising up the head a little, turns it towards De Monfort.*)

THOM. Know'st thou this gastly face?

DE MON. (*Putting his hands before his face in violent perturbation.*)

Oh do not! do not! veil it from my sight!

Put me to any agony but this!

THOM. Ha! dost thou then confess the dreadful deed?

Hast thou against the laws of awful heav'n

Such horrid murder done? What fiend could tempt thee?

(*Pauses and looks steadfastly at De Monfort.*)

DE MON. I hear thy words but do not hear their sense—

Hast thou not cover'd it?

BERN. (*to Thom.*) Forbear, my brother, for thou see'st right well
He is not in a state to answer thee.

Let us retire and leave him for a while.

These windows are with iron grated o'er;

He cannot 'scape, and other duty calls.

THOM. Then let it be.

BERN. (*to Monks, &c.*) Come, let us all depart.

(*EXEUNT Abbess and Nuns, followed by the Monks. One Monk
lingering a little behind.*)

DE MON. All gone! (*Perceiving, the Monk.*)

O stay thou here!

MONK.

It must not be.

DE MON. I'll give thee gold; I'll make thee rich in gold,

If thou wilt stay e'en but a little while.

MONK. I must not, must not stay.

DE MON.

I do conjure thee!

MONK. I dare not stay with thee.

DE MON.

And wilt thou go?

(*Catching hold of him eagerly.*)

O! throw thy cloak upon this grizly form!

The unclos'd eyes do stare upon me still.

O do not leave me thus!

[*Monk covers the body, and EXIT.*]

DE MON. (*Alone, looking at the covered body, but at a distance.*)

Alone with thee! but thou art nothing now,

'Tis done, 'tis number'd with the things o'erpast,

Would! would it were to come!

What fated end, what darkly gath'ring cloud

Will close on all this horror?

O that dire madness would unloose my thoughts,¹

And fill my mind with wildest fantasies,

¹ See Appendix A.5.iii.

Dark, restless, terrible! ought, ought but this!
(*Pauses and shudders.*)

How with convulsive life he heav'd beneath me,

E'en with the death's wound gor'd. O horrid, horrid!

Methinks I feel him still.—What sound is that?

I heard a smother'd groan.—It is impossible!

(*Looking steadfastly at the body.*)

It moves! it moves! the cloth doth heave and swell.

It moves again.—I cannot suffer this—

Whate'er it be I will uncover it.

(*Runs to the corps and tears off the cloth in despair.*)

All still beneath.

Nought is there here but fix'd and grizly death.

How sternly fixed! Oh! those glazed eyes!

They look me still.

(*Shrinks back with horror.*)

Come, madness! come unto me senseless death!

I cannot suffer this! Here, rocky wall,

Scatter these brains, or dull them.

(*Runs furiously, and, dashing his head against the wall, falls
upon the floor.*)

Enter two MONKS, hastily.

1ST MONK. See; wretched man, he hath destroy'd himself.

2D MONK. He does but faint. Let us remove him hence.

1ST MONK. We did not well to leave him here alone.

2D MONK. Come, let us bear him to the open air.

[*EXEUNT, bearing out De Monfort.*]

ACT V.—SCENE I.

Before the gates of the Convent. Enter JANE DE MONFORT, FREGRE and MANUEL. As they are proceeding towards the gate, JANE stops short and shrinks back.

FREGRE. Ha! wherefore? has a sudden illness seiz'd thee?
JANE. No, no, my friend.—And yet I am very faint—
I dread to enter here!

MAN. Ay! so I thought:
For, when between the trees, that abbey tower
First shew'd its top, I saw your count'nance change.
But breathe a little here; I'll go before,
And make enquiry at the nearest gate.

FREGRE. Do so, good Manuel.
(Manuel goes and knocks at the gate.)
Courage, dear madam: all may yet be well.
Rezenvelt's servant, frighten'd with the storm,
And seeing that his master join'd him not,
As by appointment, at the forest's edge,
Might be alarm'd, and give too ready ear
To an unfounded rumour.

He saw it not; he came not here himself.

JANE. (Looking eagerly to the gate, where Manuel talks with the Porter.)

Ha! see, he talks with some one earnestly.
And sees't thou not that motion of his hands?
He stands like one who hears a horrid tale.
Almighty God!
(Manuel goes into the convent.)

He comes not back; he enters.
FREGRE. Bear up, my noble friend.

JANE. I will, I will! But this suspense is dreadful.
(A long pause. Manuel re-enters from the convent, and comes forward slowly, with a sad countenance.)
Is this the pace¹ of one who bears good tidings?

¹ "pace" in Larpent version; "face" in 1806 and 1851 editions.

O God! his face doth tell the horrid fact;
There is nought doubtful here.

FREGRE. How is it, Manuel?

MAN. I've seen him through a crevice in his door:
It is indeed my master.

(Bursting into tears.)

(Jane faints, and is supported by Fregre.—Enter ABBESS and several NUNS from the convent who gather about her, and apply remedies. She recovers.)

1ST NUN. The life returns again.

2D NUN. Yes, she revives.

ABB. (to Fregre.) Let me entreat this noble lady's leave

To lead her in. She seems in great distress:

We would with holy kindness soothe her woe,

And do by her the deeds of christian love.

FREGRE. Madam, your goodness has my grateful thanks.

10

[EXEUNT, supporting Jane into the convent.]

SCENE II.

De Monfort is discovered sitting in a thoughtful posture. He remains so for some time. His face afterwards begins to appear agitated, like one whose mind is harrowed with the severest thoughts; then, starting from his seat, he clasps his hands together, and holds them up to heaven.

DE MON. O that I had ne'er known the light of day!

That filmy darkness on mine eyes had hung,
And clos'd me out from the fair face of nature!
O that my mind, in mental darkness pent,
Had no perception, no distinction known,
Of fair or foul, perfection nor defect;

Nor thought conceiv'd of proud pre-eminence!

O that it had! O that I had been form'd

An idiot from the birth! a senseless changeling,
Who eats his glutton's meal with greedy haste,
Nor knows the hand who feeds him.—

10

(*Pauses; then, in a calmer sorrowful voice.*)
What am I now? how ends the day of life?
For end it must; and terrible this gloom,
The storm of horrors that surround its close.
This little term of nature's agony
Will soon be o'er, and what is past is past:
But shall I then, on the dark lap of earth
Lay me to rest, in still unconsciousness,
Like senseless clod that doth no pressure feel
From wearing foot of daily passenger;
Like steeped rock o'er which the breaking waves
Bellow and foam unheard? O would I could!

20

Enter MANUEL, who springs forward to his master, but is checked upon perceiving De Monfort draw back and look sternly at him.

MAN. My lord, my master! O my dearest master!

(*De Monfort still looks at him without speaking.*)

Nay, do not thus regard me; good my lord!

Speak to me: am I not your faithful Manuel?

DE MON. (*In a hasty broken voice.*) Art thou alone?

MAN. No, Sir, the lady Jane is on her way;

She is not far behind.

DE MON. (*Tossing his arm over his head in an agony.*)

This is too much! All I can bear but this!

It must not be.—Run and prevent her coming.

Say, he who is detain'd a pris'ner here

Is one to her unknown. I now am nothing.

I am a man, of holy claims bereft;

Out from the pale of social kindred cast;

Nameless and horrible.—

Tell her De Monfort far from hence is gone

Into a desolate, and distant land,

Ne'er to return again. Fly, tell her this;

For we must meet no more.

30

Enter JANE DE MONFORT, bursting into the chamber, and followed by FREBERG, ABBESS, and several NUNS.

JANE. We must! we must! My brother, O my brother!

(*De Monfort turns away his head and hides his face with his arm. Jane stops short, and, making a great effort, turns to Freberg, and the others who followed her; and with an air of dignity stretches out her hand, beckoning them to retire. All retire but Freberg, who seems to hesitate.*)

And thou too, Freberg: call it not unkind.

[*EXIT Freberg, Jane and De Monfort only remain.*]

JANE. My hapless Monfort!

(*De Monfort turns round and looks sorrowfully upon her; she opens her arms to him, and he, rushing into them, hides his face upon her breast and weeps.*)

JANE. Ay, give thy sorrow vent: here may'st thou weep.

DE MON. (*In broken accents.*) Oh! this, my sister, makes me feel again

The kindness of affection.

My mind has in a dreadful storm been tost;

Horrid and dark.—I thought to weep no more.—

I've done a deed.—But I am human still.

JANE. I know thy sufferings: leave thy sorrow free:

Thou art with one who never did upbraid;

Who mourns, who loves thee still.

DE MON. Ah! sayst thou so? no, no; it should not be.

(*Shrinking from her.*) I am a foul and bloody murderer,

For such embrace unmeet. O leave me! leave me!

Disgrace and publick shame abide me now;

And all, alas! who do my kindred own

The direful portion share.—Away, away!

Shall a disgrac'd and publick criminal

Degrade thy name, and claim affinity

To noble worth like thine?—I have no name—

I am nothing, now, not e'en to thee; depart.

(*She takes his hand, and grasping it firmly, speaks with a determined voice.*)

JANE. De Monfort, hand in hand we have enjoy'd

The playful term of infancy together;

50

60

And in the rougher path of ripen'd years
We've been each other's stay. Dark lowers our fate,
And terrible the storm that gathers over us;
But nothing, till that latest agony
Which severs thee from nature, shall unloose
This fix'd and sacred hold. In thy dark prison-house;
In the terrific face of armed law;
Yea, on the scaffold, if it needs must be,
I never will forsake thee.

70

DE MON. (*Looking at her with admiration.*)

Heav'n bless thy gen'rous soul, my noble Jane!
I thought to sink beneath this load of ill,
Depress'd with infamy and open shame;
I thought to sink in abject wretchedness:
But for thy sake I'll rouse my manhood up,
And meet it bravely; no unseemly weakness,
I feel my rising strength, shall blot my end,
To clothe thy cheek with shame.

80

JANE. Yes, thou art noble still.

DE MON. With thee I am; who were not so with thee?
But, ah, my sister! short will be the term:
Death's stroke will come, and in that state beyond,
Where things unutterable wait the soul,
New from its earthly tenement discharg'd,
We shall be sever'd far.
Far as the spotless purity of virtue
Is from the murd'rer's guilt, far shall we be.

90

This is the gulf of dread uncertainty
From which the soul recoils.
JANE. The God who made thee is a God of mercy;
Think upon this.

DE MON. (*Shaking his head.*) No, no! this blood! this blood!
JANE. Yea, e'en the sin of blood may be forgiv'n,
When humble penitence hath once aton'd.
DE MON. (*Eagerly.*) What, after terms of lengthen'd misery,
Imprison'd anguish of tormented spirits,
Shall I again, a renovated soul,
Into the blessed family of the good

Admittance have? Think'st thou that this may be?
Speak if thou canst: O speak me comfort here!
For dreadful fancies, like an armed host,
Have push'd me to despair. It is most horrible—
O speak of hope! if any hope there be.

100

(*Jane is silent and looks sorrowfully upon him; then clasping her hands, and turning her eyes to heaven, seems to mutter a prayer.*)

DE MON. Ha! dost thou pray for me? heav'n hear thy prayer!
I fain would kneel—Alas! I dare not do it.

JANE. Not so; all by th' Almighty Father form'd

May in their deepest mis'ry call on him.

Come kneel with me, my brother.

(*She kneels and prays to herself; he kneels by her, and clasps his hands fervently, but speaks not. A noise of chains clanking is heard without, and they both rise.*)

DE MON. Hear'st thou that noise? They come to interrupt us.

110

JANE. (*Moving towards a side door.*) Then let us enter here.

DE MON. (*Catching hold of her with a look of horror.*) Not there—not there—the corps—the bloody corps.

JANE. What, lies he there?—Unhappy Rezenvelt!

DE MON. A sudden thought has come across my mind;

How came it not before? Unhappy Rezenvelt!

Say'st thou but this?

JANE. What should I say? he was an honest man;¹

I still have thought him such, as such lament him.

(*De Monfort utters a deep groan.*)

What means this heavy groan?

DE MON.

It hath a meaning.

Enter ABBESS and MONKS, with two OFFICERS of justice carrying fetters in their hands to put upon DE MONFORT.

JANE. (*Starting.*) What men are these?

120

1ST OFF. Lady, we are the servants of the law,

And bear with us a power, which doth constrain

To bind with fetters this our prisoner.

¹ Between lines 118 and 119 the Larpent version includes the line: "Spite of the levities which misbecame him"; cf. Cox, *Seven Gothic Dramas* 304.

(Pointing to De Monfort.)

JANE. A stranger uncondemn'd? this cannot be.

1ST OFF. As yet, indeed, he is by law unjudg'd,

But is so far condemn'd by circumstance,

That law, or custom sacred held as law,

Doth fully warrant us, and it must be.

JANE. Nay, say not so; he has no power to escape:

Distress hath bound him with a heavy chain;

There is no need of yours.

1ST OFF. We must perform our office.

JANE. O! do not offer this indignity!

1ST OFF. Is it indignity in sacred law

To bind a murderer? (To 2d Officer.) Come, do thy work.

JANE. Harsh are thy words, and stern thy harden'd brow;

Dark is thine eye; but all some pity have

Unto the last extreme of misery.

I do beseech thee! if thou art a man—

(Kneeling to him.)

(De Monfort roused at this, runs up to Jane, and raises her hastily from the ground; then stretches himself up proudly.)

140 DE MON. (to Jane.) Stand thou erect in native dignity;

And bend to none on earth the suppliant knee,

Though cloath'd in power imperial. To my heart

It gives a feller gripe than many irons.

(Holding out his hands.)

Here, officers of law, bind on those shackles,

And if they are too light bring heavier chains.

Add iron to iron, load, crush me to the ground;

Nay, heap ten thousand weight upon my breast,

For that were best of all.

(A long pause, whilst they put irons upon him. After they are on,

Jane looks at him sorrowfully, and lets her head sink on her

breast. De Monfort stretches out his hands, looks at them, and

then at Jane; crosses them over his breast, and endeavours to

suppress his feelings.²)

1 "equal" in Larpent version; cf. Cox, *Seven Gothic Dramas* 305.

2 Later editions also include this note: "Should this play ever again be acted, perhaps it would be better that the curtain should drop here; since here the story may be

150
1ST OFF. I have it, too, in charge to move you hence,
(To De Monfort.)

Into another chamber, more secure.

DE MON. Well, I am ready, sir.

(Approaching Jane, whom the Abbess is endeavouring to comfort, but to no purpose.)

Ah! wherefore thus! most honour'd and most dear?

Shrink not at the accoutrements of ill,

Daring the thing itself.

(Endeavouring to look cheerful.)

Wilt thou permit me with a gyved hand?

(She gives him her hand, which he raises to his lips.)

This was my proudest office.

[EXEUNT, De Monfort leading out Jane.]

SCENE III.

A long narrow gallery in the convent, with the doors of the cells on each side. The stage darkened. A Nun is discovered at a distance listening. Enter another Nun at the front of the stage, and starts back.

1ST NUN. Ha! who is this not yet retir'd to rest?

My sister, is it you?

(To the other who advances.)

2D NUN. Returning from the sister Nina's cell,

Passing yon door where the poor pris'ner lies,

The sound of one who struggl'd with despair

Struck on me as I went: I stopp'd and listen'd;

O God! such piteous groans!

1ST NUN. Yes, since the evening sun it hath been so.

The voice of misery oft hath reach'd mine ear,

E'en in the cell above.

2D NUN. How is it thus?

considered as completed, and what comes after, prolongs the piece too much when our interest for the fate of De Monfort is at an end."

1 Shackled.

Methought he brav'd it with a manly spirit,
And led, with shackl'd hands, his sister forth,
Like one resolv'd to bear misfortune boldly.
1ST NUN. Yes, with heroick courage, for a while
He seem'd inspir'd; but, soon depress'd again,
Remorse and dark despair o'erwhelm'd his soul,
And so he hath remain'd.

Enter Father BERNARD, advancing from the further end of the gallery, bearing a crucifix.

1ST NUN. How goes it, father, with your penitent?
We've heard his heavy groans.

20 BERN. Retire, my daughters; many a bed of death,
With all its pangs and horror I have seen,
But never ought like this.

2D NUN. He's dying, then?

BERN.

Yes, death is dealing with him.
From violent agitation of the mind,
Some stream of life within his breast has burst;
For many times, within a little space,
The ruddy-tide has rush'd into his mouth.
God, grant his pains be short!

1ST NUN.

Amen, amen!

2D NUN. How does the lady?

30 BERN. She sits and bears his head upon her lap;
And like a heaven-inspir'd angel, speaks
The word of comfort to his troubled soul:
Then does she wipe the cold drops from his brow,
With such a look of tender wretchedness,
It wrings the heart to see her.

1ST NUN. Ha! hear ye nothing?

2D NUN. (*Alarmed.*) Yes, I heard a noise.

1ST NUN. And see'st thou nothing?

(*Creeping close to her sister.*)

BERN.

'Tis a nun in white.

Enter LAY SISTER in her night cloaths, advancing from the dark end of the gallery.

(*To Sister.*) Wherefore, my daughter, hast thou left thy cell?
It is not meet at this untimely hour.

40 SIST. I cannot rest. I hear such dismal sounds,
Such wailings in the air, such shrilly shrieks,
As though the cry of murder rose again
From the deep gloom of night. I cannot rest:
I pray you let me stay with you, good sisters!
(*Bell tolls.*)

NUNS. (*Starting.*) What bell is that?

BERN.

It is the bell of death.

A holy sister was upon the watch

To give this notice. (*Bell tolls again.*) Hark! another knell!
The wretched struggler hath his warfare clos'd;¹
May heaven have mercy on him.
(*Bell tolls again.*)

Retire, my daughters; let us all retire,
For scenes like this to meditation call.

50

[*EXEUNT, bell tolling again.*]

SCENE IV.

A hall or large room in the convent. The bodies of DE MONFORT and REZENVELT are discovered laid out upon a low table or platform, covered with black. FREBERG, BERNARD, ABBESS, MONKS, and NUNS attending.

ABB. (*to Freb.*) Here must they lie, my lord, until we know
Respecting this the order of the law.

¹ Though the 1851 edition does not retain them, on the 7th of December 1815, Bailie wrote in a letter of making changes to De Monfort's death. She wrote: "Did I not tell you in a former letter that I have altered *De Monfort* and made the ending more dramatic by killing De Mon. on the stage? and I really think it a great improvement and Mr. Lamb and Lord Byron I am told think so too." (Quoted in Donkin, 220 n39. National Library of Scotland, MS 3886.)

FRÉB. And you have wisely done, my rev'rend mother.

(*Goes to the table, and looks at the bodies, but without uncovering them.*)

Unhappy men! ye, both in nature rich,
With talents and with virtues were endu'd.
Ye should have lov'd, yet deadly rancour came,
And in the prime and manhood of your days
Ye sleep in horrid death. O direful hate!
What shame and wretchedness his portion is,
Who, for a secret inmate, harbours thee!
And who shall call him blameless who excites,
Ungenerously excites, with careless scorn,
Such baleful passion in a brother's breast,
Whom heav'n commands to love. Low are ye laid:
Still all contention now.—Low are ye laid.

I lov'd you both, and mourn your hapless fall.

ABB. They were your friends, my lord?

FRÉB. I lov'd them both. How does the Lady Jane?

ABB. She bears misfortune with intrepid soul.

I never saw in woman bow'd with grief
Such moving dignity.

FRÉB.

Ay, still the same.

I've known her long; of worth most excellent;
But, in the day of woe, she ever rose
Upon the mind with added majesty,
As the dark mountain more sublimely tow'rs
Mantled in clouds and storm.

Enter MANUEL and JEROME.

MAN. (*Pointing.*) Here, my good Jerome, there's a piteous sight.

JER. A piteous sight! yet I will look upon him:

I'll see his face in death. Alas, alas!

I've seen him move a noble gentleman;

And when with vexing passion undisturb'd,

He look'd most graciously.

(*Lifts up in mistake the cloth from the body of Rezenvelt, and starts back with horror.*)

Oh! this was bloody work! Oh, oh! oh, oh!

That human hands could do it!

(*Drops the cloth again.*)

MAN. That is the murder'd corps; here lies De Monfort.

(*Going to uncover the other body.*)

JER. (*Turning away his head.*) No, no! I cannot look upon him
now.

MAN. Didst thou not come to see him?

JER. Fy! cover him—inter him in the dark—

Let no one look upon him.

BERN. (*to Jer.*) Well dost thou show the abhorrence nature feels

For deeds of blood, and I commend thee well.

In the most ruthless heart compassion wakes

For one who, from the hand of fellow man,

Hath felt such cruelty.

(*Uncovering the body of Rezenvelt.*)

This is the murder'd corse,

(*Uncovering the body of De Monfort.*)

But see, I pray!

Here lies the murderer. What think'st thou here?

Look on those features, thou hast seen them oft,

With the last dreadful conflict of despair,

So fix'd in horrid strength.

See those knit brows, those hollow sun'ken eyes;

The sharpen'd nose, with nostrils all distent;

That writhed mouth, where yet the teeth appear,

In agony, to gnash the nether lip.

Think'st thou, less painful than the murd'rer's knife

Was such a death as this?

Ay, and how changed too those matted locks!

JER. Merciful heaven! his hair is grisly grown,

Chang'd to white age,¹ what was, but two days since,

Black as the raven's plume. How may this be?

¹ Folklore had it that hair, which retained a natural sympathetic connection to the body, was the seat of one's soul. Byron writes in the opening lines of "The Prisoner of Chillon":

My hair is grey, but not with years,
Nor grew it white

60 BERN. Such change, from violent conflict of the mind,
Will sometimes come.

JER.

Alas, alas! most wretched!
Thou wert too good to do a cruel deed,
And so it kill'd thee. Thou hast suffer'd for it.
God rest thy soul! I needs must touch thy hand,
And bid thee long farewell.
(*Laying his hand on De Monfort.*)

BERN. Draw back, draw back! see where the lady comes.

Enter JANE DE MONFORT. FREBERG, who has been for sometime retired by himself to the bottom of the stage, now steps forward to lead her in, but checks himself on seeing the fixed sorrow of her countenance, and draws back respectfully. JANE advances to the table, and looks attentively at the covered bodies. MANUEL points out the body of DE MONFORT, and she gives a gentle inclination of the head, to signify that she understands him. She then bends tenderly over it, without speaking.

MAN. (*To Jane, as she raises her head.*) Oh, madam! my good lord.

JANE. Well says thy love, my good and faithful Manuel;
But we must mourn in silence.

MAN. Alas! the times that I have follow'd him!

JANE. Forbear, my faithful Manuel. For this love

Thou hast my grateful thanks; and here's my hand:

Thou hast lov'd him, and I'll remember thee:

Where'er I am; in what'er spot of earth

I linger out the remnant of my days,

I'll remember thee.

In a single night,

As men's have grown from sudden fears....

Ernest Hartley Coleridge comments in a note to these lines in his 1901 edition of *The Works of Lord Byron* (4.13) that "it has been said that the Queen's [Marie Antoinette] hair turned grey during the return from Varennes to Paris; but Carlyle (*French Revolution*, 1839, I.182) notes that as early as May 4, 1789, on the occasion of the assembly of the States-General, 'Her hair is already grey with many cares and crosses'" (13).

MAN. Nay, by the living God! where'er you are,
There will I be. I'll prove a trusty servant:
I'll follow you, e'en to the world's end.

My master's gone, and I, indeed, am mean,
Yet will I show the strength of nobler men,
Should any dare upon your honour'd worth
To put the slightest wrong. Leave you, dear lady!
Kill me, but say not this!
(*Throwing himself at her feet.*)

JANE. (*Raising him.*) Well, then! be thou my servant, and my friend.

Art thou, good Jerome, too, in kindness come?

I see thou art. How goes it with thine age?

JER. Ah, madam! woe and weakness dwell with age:

Would I could serve you with a young man's strength!
I'd spend my life for you.

JANE.

Thanks, worthy Jerome.

O! who hath said, the wretched have no friends!¹

FREB. In every sensible and generous breast

Affliction finds a friend; but unto thee,

Thou most exalted and most honourable,

The heart in warmest adoration bows,

And even a worship pays.

JANE. Nay, Freberg, Freberg! grieve me not, my friend.

He to whose ear my praise most welcome was,

Hears it no more; and, oh our piteous lot!

What tongue will talk of him? Alas, alas!

This more than all will bow me to the earth;

I feel my misery here.

The voice of praise was wont to name us both:

I had no greater pride.

(*Covers her face with her hands, and bursts into tears. Here they all hang about her: Freberg supporting her tenderly; Manuel embracing her knees, and old Jerome catching hold of her robe affectionately. Bernard, Abbess, Monks, and Nuns, likewise, gather round her, with looks of sympathy.*)

¹ Cf. Dryden, *All for Love* 3.1.83.

Enter Two OFFICERS of law.

1ST OFF. Where is the prisoner?
Into our hands he straight must be consign'd.
BERN. He is not subject now to human laws;
The prison that awaits him is the grave.
1ST OFF. Ha! sayst thou so? there is foul play in this.
MAN. (*to Off.*) Hold thy unrighteous tongue, or hie thee hence,
Nor, in the presence of this honour'd dame,
Utter the slightest meaning of reproach.
1ST OFF. I am an officer on duty call'd,
And have authority to say, how died?
(*Here Jane shakes off the weakness of grief, and repressing Manuel, who is about to reply to the Officer, steps forward with dignity.*)

110

JANE. Tell them by whose authority you come,
He died that death which best becomes a man
Who is with keenest sense of conscious ill
And deep remorse assail'd, a wounded spirit.
A death that kills the noble and the brave,
And only them. He had no other wound.

1ST OFF. And shall I trust to this.

JANE. Do as thou wilt:
To one who can suspect my simple word
I have no more reply. Fulfill thine office.

1ST OFF. No, lady, I believe your honour'd word,
And will no farther search.

JANE. I thank your courtesy: thanks, thanks to all!
My rev'rend mother, and ye honour'd maids;
Ye holy men; and you, my faithful friends,
The blessing of the afflicted rest with you:
And he, who to the wretched is most piteous,
Will recompense you.—Freberg, thou art good,
Remove the body of the friend you lov'd,
'Tis Rezenvelt I mean. Take thou this charge:
'Tis meet that, with his noble ancestors,
He lie entomb'd in honourable state.

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And now, I have a sad request to make,
Nor will these holy sisters scorn my boon;
That I, within these sacred cloister walls
May raise a humble, nameless tomb to him,
Who, but for one dark passion, one dire deed,
Had claim'd a record of as noble worth,
As e'er enrich'd the sculptur'd pedestal.¹

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[EXEUNT.]

FINIS.

1 [Baillie's note from the later editions] The last three lines of the last speech are not intended to give the reader a true character of *De Mouffort*, whom I have endeavoured to represent throughout the play as, notwithstanding his other good qualities, proud, suspicious, and susceptible of envy, but only to express the partial sentiments of an affectionate sister, naturally more inclined to praise him from the misfortune into which he had fallen.
[Second Baillie note] The Tragedy of *De Mouffort* has been brought out at Drury-Lane Theatre, adapted to the stage by *Mr. Kemble*. I am infinitely obliged to that gentleman for the excellent powers he has exerted, assisted by the incomparable talents of his sister, *Mrs. Siddons*, in endeavouring to obtain for it that public favour, which I sincerely wish it had been found more worthy of receiving.