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W. L. Lawrence
DAMON AND PYTHIAS, *Post*

A PLAY,

IN FIVE ACTS.

BY RICHARD SHIEL, ESQ.

AUTHOR OF "THE APOSTATE," &c.

**AS PERFORMED AT THE
CHESTNUT-STREET THEATRE,
PHILADELPHIA.**

PHILADELPHIA :
NEAL & MACKENZIE, No. 201 CHESTNUT-STREET.
Mifflin & Parry, Printers.

1829.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

Dec 1848

Manchester Museum

Philadelphia.

Damon,	<i>Mc Gowen</i>	Mr. COOPER.
Pythias,	<i>Le Favour</i>	Mr. DUFF.
Nicias,	.	Mr. GREENE.
Dionysius,	<i>Bruger</i>	Mr. DARLEY.
Damocles,	<i>Lighthouse</i>	Mr. WHEATLEY
Philistius,	<i>Steel</i>	Mr. HATHWELL
Procles,	<i>Davis</i>	Mr. PORTER.
Lucullus,	<i>Lighthouse</i>	Mr. BIGNALL.
Damon's child,	<i>Master Gordon</i>	Master BURKE.

Senators, Guards, Servants, &c.

Calanthe,	<i>Mrs. Steel</i>	Mrs. DUFF.
Hermion,	<i>Mrs. Groves</i>	Mrs. ANDERSON.
Arria,	<i>Mrs. Garrington</i>	Mrs. JEFFERSON.

Scene—SYRACUSE.

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W. A. Loughton.

East

DAMON AND PYTHIAS.

PR 4057

B2D3

1827



ACT I.

SCENE I.—*A Street in Syracuse.*

DIONYSIUS and PROCLES discovered, as expecting tidings.

Dion. Ere this the senate should have closed its councils,
And chosen the new year's president. I pant
To know their meeting's issue.

Proc. Good my lord,
There's but light doubt a great majority
Of easy purchas'd voices will be found
For your fast friend, Philistius.

Dion. On his choice
Hangs the long chain of complicated purpose
Has ta'en such time in linking. Plague upon
The law, that from the senate-house excludes
All soldiers, like ourselves, or we should soon
Outvote all difficulty! (*Senators cross the Stage.*) Ha!
methinks

The assembly hath dissolved.
By Jupiter,
Philistius' self doth hasten to us here,
And with him Damocles! How now, my friend?

Enter PHILISTIUS and DAMOCLES.

Art thou the president?

Phil. I am, my lord.
Chosen by a large majority to take
The honourable office: in the which
I may, at least, requite the benefits

Which you have heaped upon me.

Dam. Yes, my lord,
We have at last attain'd the 'vantage ground,
Whence your broad view may take a boundless prospect.

Dion. 'Tis a bold step upon the mountain-path,
Wherein I have long been toiling. I no longer
Doubt of the senate's inclination.
What say the soldiers? Thou hast hinted to them
That we confided to thee?

Proc. Yes, my lord;
And they are ready for it.

Dion. Go thou hence,
And speak to them again; disperse more gold;
'Twill give a relish to thine eloquence;
And, hark ye, lead them this way: I shall here
Await thy coming. / Ha! behold, in air,
Where a majestic eagle floats above
The northern turrets of the citadel;
And, as the sun breaks through yon rifted cloud,
His plumage shines, embath'd in burning gold,
And sets off his regality in heaven.
Thou knowest how readily the multitude
Are won by such bright augury—make use
Of divination,—haste thee. [Exit Procles.

Philistius, give me your hand. I thank you:
Things look in smiles upon me. It was otherwise
But a year since, when I impeach'd the magistrates
For treasonable dealing with the foe,
And the senate hurl'd me from my topmost height
Of popularity.

Dam. Degraded you
From power, and office.

Dion. Ay! at the appeal
Of that stale pedant, the Pythagorean,
Who hangs out his austerity for sale,
In frowns, clos'd lips, and pithy sentences.

Dam. Thou speakest of Damon?

Dion. Ay, mine enemy,
The patriot, and philosophic knave,
Who hath been busy with my purposes,—

And one day shall not smile at it. He came
Into the senate-house, with a fierce crew
Of his associates in philosophy,
Silent and frowning, at his back; he rail'd
And had his triumph.—Times have alter'd since;
And to the mould and fashion of my will,
Shall yet take stranger shape, when, Damocles,
These long-trained lawgivers, these austere sages,
Shall find I can remember.

Dam. Let them feel it.

Dion. In all that biting bitterness of heart
Which clings, and gnaws, by inches, to its object,
More keen, because a first essay hath fail'd,
In shame and suffering, failed, thus have I sped
My work, in silence, on. It did become
A thought inwoven with my inmost being.

Dam. The steps
Which since most visible you have ascended,
Must have requir'd much effort?

Dion. Yes! to have flung
Into the shade of public disrepute
The very men whose voices were most loud
In working out my ruin;—after that,
To gain the army's suffrage;—to be chosen
Its head and general, that was another;
To have won that very senate——

Phil. Yet pause, my lord,—
Howe'er complying you have hitherto
Found that assembly, and though most of them
Are plung'd into your debt, beyond all means
Of their redemption, yet may there be still
Some sudden reluctance to the last
And mightiest of all hopes.

Dion. The garrison
Is not a bad ally methinks?

Phil. The war
Hath ta'en the flower of all the troops from Syracuse,
And Damon heading the vile populace——

Dion. I came from Agrigentum, to entreat
Arms, corn, and money, from the senators,
While I myself have purposely delay'd

The granting them; meantime, the city is filled
With many thousands of my followers.

Phil. But, are they not unweapon'd?

Dion. This city of Syracuse—
It hath a citadel?

Phil. True, sir,—it hath.

Dion. And therein, as I deem, its national stock
Of corn, and arms, and gold, is treasur'd?

Phil. True.

Dion. The citadel is not impregnable;
And when it is mann'd, and order'd to my will,
What of these frothy speech-makers?

[A shout is heard abroad.]

Phil. My lord,
The soldiers shout for you.

Dion. Procles, I see,
Is at his work.—Good Damocles, Philistius,
As you are senators, retire ye hence;
It were not meet that you should look to have been
Parties to any act, which afterwards
May grow into discussion.—And, Philistius,
One effort more among our city friends;
I will forewarn thee of the time to call
The senators together—Yet, I mean not
Exclusively to trust them, good Philistius;—
Sure means sure ends.—I'll have a friend or two
Within my call, to help them.—If their councils
Become too knotty for unravelling,
A sharp sword may be useful.—Fare you well.

[Exeunt Philistius and Damocles.]

Voices (Without.) Ay, to the citadel—The citadel.

Enter PROCLES and SOLDIERS.

Dion. Who talks of moving to the citadel?

1st Soldier. It is himself,—huzza!

All. Huzza! our general!

Dion. Good friends, I thank ye. Procles, art thou
here?

Hast thou distributed to these much-wrong'd men,
The trifling bounty which I charg'd thee with?

Proc. They have it, noble general.

Dion. My friends,
'Twas a poor offering and beneath your taking ;
But, as yourself do know, my private purse
Is light as that of any other veteran,
Within the walls of Syracuse. Speak, Procles,
Who talks of moving on the citadel ?

All. We, Dionysius, we.

Proc. Yes, these brave spirits,
Indignant at the senate's heedlessness
Of you, and them, and of the general honour—

1st Soldier. Ay, we will spurn their yoke, and
have no master

But our most noble general Dionysius !

Dion. Give me not cause, my friends, to deem my-
self

Dishonour'd and endanger'd in your love ;
For, as I am a soldier and a man,
Could I believe that any other thought
Engag'd you to possess the citadel,
Save your anxiety for the soldier's weal,
And the state's safety, I would raise my hand,
In supplication 'gainst your enterprize ;—
But, as the time now urges, and cries out
For sudden muster, and organization
Of the brave thousands, who but wait for swords,
To join your ranks, and rush with you to glory,—
And yet the senate,—

Proc. Speak not of the senate :
We do renounce its service and despise it.

Dion. It was my thought to say, if they object,
We may submit it, as a needful step,
Claiming allowance in the exigency
Of the occasion.

Proc. They shall not control it.
We seek not for their judgment of our act.

All. On, general, on !

Dion. When did ye call,
That I replied not with my word and deed,
My heart and hand ? Even as you say it, on,
On, fellow-soldiers, to the citadel !
And let your swords be out, more in the show

Of what ye are, soldiers and fighting-men,
Than with a harmful purpose. Let us on!

All. On to the citadel! the citadel!

[*Exeunt, with cries, and brandishing their swords.*]

SCENE II.—*Another Street.*

Enter DAMON.

Damon. Philistius, then, is president at last,
And Dionysius has o'ersway'd it? Well,
It is what I expected: There is now
No public virtue left in Syracuse.
What should be hop'd from a degenerate,
Corrupted, and voluptuous populace,
When highly-born and meanly-minded nobles
Would barter freedom for a great man's feast,
And sell their country for a smile? The stream,
With a more sure eternal tendency
Seeks not the ocean, than a sensual race
Their own devouring slavery. I am sick,
At my inmost heart, of every thing I see
And hear! Oh Syracuse, I am, at last,
Forc'd to despair of thee! And yet thou art
My land of birth,—thou art my country still;
And like an unkind mother, thou hast left
The claims of holiest nature in my heart,
And I must sorrow for, not hate thee? (*Shouts*) Ha!
What shouts are these? 'Tis from the citadel
The uproar is descending.

Enter LUCULLUS.

Speak, Lucullus,
What has befallen?

Luc. Have you heard the news?

Damon. What news?

Luc. As through the streets I pass'd, the people
Said that the citadel was in the hands
Of Dionysius.

Damon. The citadel
In Dionysius' hands? What dost thou tell me?
How,—wherefore,—when? In Dionysius' hands?

The traitor Dionysius ?—Speak, Lucullus,
And quickly.

Luc. It was said, that by rude force,
Heading a troop of soldiers, he has ta'en
Possession of the citadel, and seiz'd
The arms and treasure in't.

[*Exit*

Damon. I am thunder stricken !
The citadel assaulted, and the armory
In that fierce soldier's power ! (*Shouts*) Again ! By
all

The gods on high Olympus, I behold
His standard waving o'er it,—and they come,
His most notorious satellites, high heaped
With arms and plunder ! Parricidal slaves,
What have ye done ?

Enter PROCLES and SOLDIERS.

Soldiers. For Dionysius ! Ho !
For Dionysius !

Damon. Silence ! obstreperous traitors !
Your throats offend the quiet of the city ;
And thou, who standest foremost of these knaves,
Stand back, and answer me,—a senator.
What have you done ?

Proc. But that I know 'twill gall thee,
Thou poor and talking pedant of the school
Of dull Pythagoras, I'd let thee make
Conjecture from thy senses : But, in hope
'Twill stir your solemn anger, learn from me,
We have taken possession of the citadel,
And——

Damon. Patience, ye good gods ! a moment's pa-
tience,
That these too ready hands may not enforce
The desperate precept of my rising heart—
Thou most contemptible and meanest tool
That ever tyrant used !——

Proc. Do you hear him, soldiers ?
First, for thy coward railings at myself,
And since thou hast called our Dionysius tyrant,
Here, in the open streets of Syracuse,

I brand thee for a liar, and a traitor!

Damon. Audacious slave!

Proc. Upon him, soldiers,—
Hew him to pieces!

Soldiers. On him!

Enter PYTHIAS, as they rush upon Damon.

Pyth. Back, on your lives!

Cowards, damn'd treacherous cowards, back I say!
Do you know me? Look upon me: Do you know
This honest sword I brandish? You have seen it
Among the ranks of Carthage; would you now
Taste its shrewd coldness in your quaking selves!
Back! back! I say. He hath his amour on—
I am his sword, shield, helm; I but enclose
Myself, and my own heart, and heart's blood, when
I thus stand before him.

Damon. False hearted cravens!

We are but two—my Pythias, my halved heart!—
My Pythias, and myself; but dare come on,
Ye hirelings of a tyrant! dare advance
A foot, or raise an arm, or bend a brow,
And ye shall learn what two such arms can do
Amongst a thousand of ye.—My good friend,
The gods have sent thee to me—Who had deem'd
To find thee here from Agrigentum?

[Soldiers advance.]

Pyth. Off!

Off, villains, off!—Each for the other thus,
And in that other, for his dearer self.
Why, Procles, art thou not asham'd—for I
Have seen thee do good work in battle time—
Art not asham'd, here on a single man
To rush in coward numbers? Fie upon thee!
I took thee for a soldier.

Proc. For thy sake,

Who art a warrior like ourselves, we spare him—
'Twas a good star of his that led thee hither
From Agrigentum, to lift up thine arm
In the defence of that long robe of peace
Wherein he wraps his stern philosophy,

Come, teach him better manners. Soldiers, on,—
Let us to Dionysius. [*Exeunt Procles and Soldiers.*]

Pyth. Art thou safe
From these infuriate stabbers?

Damon. Thanks to thee,
I am safe, my gallant soldier, and fast friend:
My better genius sent thee to my side,
When I did think thee far from Syracuse.

Pyth. I have won leave to spend some interval
From the fierce war, and come to Syracuse,
With purpose to espouse the fair Calanthe.—
The gods have led me hither, since I come
In time to rescue thee.

How grew this rude broil up?

Damon. Things go on here
Most execrably, Pythias. But you are come
To be a husband, are you not?

Pyth. To-morrow
I call my soft Calanthe wife.

Damon. Then, Pythias,
I will not shade the prospect of your joys
With any griefs of mine. I cry you mercy—
These are experiments too over nice
For one that has a mistress, and would wed her
With an uncut throat. I have wish'd myself,
That to the blest retreats of private life
My lot had been awarded;—every hour
Makes one more sick and weary with the sense
Of this same hopeless service of a state,
Where there is not of virtue left
To feed the flarings of our liberty.

But, my soldier,
I will not make thee a participant
In my most sad forebodings. Pythias,
I say 'twere better be the Persian's slave,
And let him tread upon thee, when he would
Ascend his horse's back, than—yet, not so,
I am too much gall'd and fretted to pronounce
A sober judgment, and the very mask
Of freedom is yet better than the bold,
Uncover'd front of tyranny.—Farewell!

Pyth. Nay, I must follow thee, and find the cause
That so perturbs thy spirit.

Damon. How, sir! you have
A mistress here in Syracuse, and, look,
Herself comes forth to meet you.

Pyth. Where! Calanthe!
Nay, I behold her not—you mock me Damon.

Damon. (*Pointing to a different side of the stage.*)
Look this way, sir.

Pyth. It is herself, indeed,
My own, my fond, betrothed one.

Enter CALANTHE.

Cal. My dear,
But most neglecting Pythias!

Pyth. By the birth
Of Venus, when she rose out of the sea,
And with her life did fill the Grecian isles
With everlasting verdure, she was not,
Fresh from the soft creation of the wave,
More beautiful than thee!

Cal. Thou fondly thinkest
To hide thy false oblivion of the maid,
That with a panting heart awaited thee.
Now, Pythias, I do take it most unkind,
That thou to friendship hast made sacrifice
Of the first moment of thy coming here.

Pyth. Nay, chide me not; for I was speeding to
thee.

Cal. Soon as I heard thou wert in Syracuse,
I ran at once to hail thee with a smile,
Although my mother would have staid me.

(*Pythias kisses her hand.*)

Damon. (*Who is lost in thought.*)

Yes,
They must at least be safe.

Pyth. And how, Calanthe,
Fares thy dear mother?

Cal. Happy in the thought
If she must needs (as she must) part with me,
It is at least to thee.

Pyth. And my poor father?

Cal. Time has almost shut up his faculties,
And he can scarce distinguish any voice
That is address'd to him. The day is pass'd
Upon his couch; at evening, in a chair,
He is carried to the terrace-walk before
The threshold of his mansion, where the wind,
Fresh from the sea, plays with his locks of gray,
Till pleas'd at last he smiles. That gentle smile,
As 'tis the first denotement of a thought
In speechless infancy, 'tis the last sign
Of the expiring mind.

Pyth. My soft Calanthe
Must be a tender on infirmity,
Before her time. But where's my silent friend?
Why, Damon, what's the matter?

Damon. (*Aside, and still lost in thought.*)
One brave blow,
And it were done! By all the gods, one blow,
And Syracuse were free!—Pythias, is't you?—
I cry you mercy, (*to Cal.*) fair one—Pythias,
You are to be married. Haste thee, Pythias,—
Love, and fight on. Thine arms to Mars, thy heart
Give to his paramour.—Take thou no care
Of the politician's study—'twill turn pale
Thy cheek, make thee grow sick at nature's love-
liness,

And see in her pure beauty but one blank
Of dismal, colourless, sterility.
Calanthe, look to it—let him not play
The statesman's sorry part.

Pyth. Damon, you let
The commonwealth o'erfret you. I was about
To pray you to cur wedding.

Damon. I intended,
Unbidden, to be there.

Pyth. From friendship's eyes
I'll win addition to my happiness.
Calanthe, come—I should be half in fear,
To seem thus loving of thee, in the sight
Of this philosopher.

Cal. Nay, he pretends
To be by half more rugged, and more wise,
Than he hath any right to : I have seen him,
(Have I not, Damon ?) looking at his wife,
When he imagin'd none was there to mark
The proud Pythagorean, with an eye
Filled with tenderness:—and his young boy too,
That seems Aurora's child, with his fine face,
Stirr'd his stern visage to complacency.
Come, come, we will be revenged upon you both :
I swear, his wife and I will be accounted
Your rivals in the godlike quality—
Your lordly sex would arrogate its own
Peculiar privilege, and show the world
The unseen, and yet unrumour'd prodigy,—
The friendship of a woman.

[*Exeunt Pythias and Calanthe.*

Enter LUCULLUS.

Damon. Hark thee, Lucullus—
My wife and child must instantly depart
From Syracuse;—you must attend them hence,
Unto my villa, on the mountain side.

Luc. Alas, my lord !

Damon. Why dost thou droop ?

Luc. My lord,
I was your slave ; you gave me liberty;
And when I see you peril'd—

Damon. Nay, Lucullus,
Where is the warrant for thy fear ?

Luc. I read
You are engag'd in some dread enterprise,
Else you would not deny them to your sight :
You fear the leaning ruin may fall down
Upon their dearer heads.

Damon. I charge you, sir,
No prying in my purposes.—Take care
You speak not to my wife of any thing
May stir her apprehensions—see, she comes—
Beware thy looks betray thee.

Enter HERMION.

Herm. Art thou safe,
Damon, art safe?

Damon. You are not a widow yet.

Herm. For shame to talk of such a thing. I have
heard

Of thy rude quarrelling with that same fierce,
And overbearing soldier. But thou art safe.—
Proud men! how reckless of the faithful hearts
That doat on you,—that hang their weakness on ye!
How reckless of us in your bustling hours
Of occupation and despatch, ye are!
Ah, then you think not of the pining mate,
Left in her solitude, with nought to do,
But weep for your return, and chide the gods,
That make your minds so stern and enterprising.

Damon. *Hermion,* I think the city's fulsome air
Likes not our boy:—The colour in his cheek
Hath lost its rich and healthful purity.

Herm. Nay, you are wrong there;—'tis like a young
peach,
Or yet more fresh and blooming.

Damon. *Hermion,*
I have resolv'd that you and he shall go
Unto my villa, near to Syracuse.

Herm. But you will come with us?

Damon. *Hermion,* you know
My occupation forbids that wish.

Luc. My lord—

Damon. Forbear sir—yet I cannot go.—
I mean, I cannot go immediately—
The state affairs lay hold upon me. You
Must hence before me thither.

Herm. *Damon—*

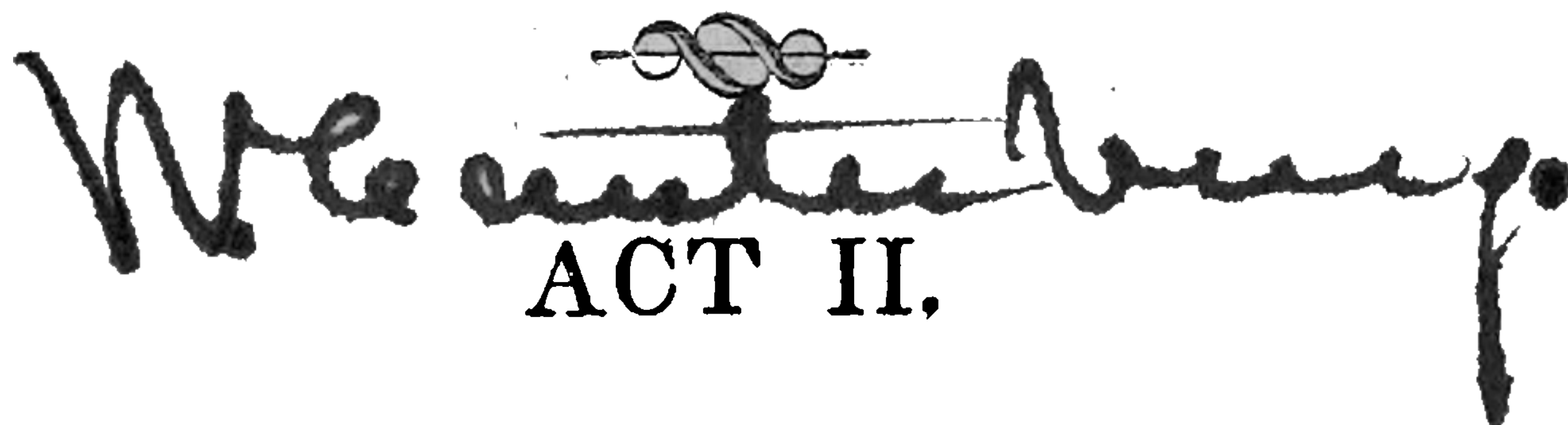
Damon. Come,
Look not thus sadly.

Herm. I have learn'd too well
The usage of obedience, to inquire
Into your purposes.

Damon. Hermion, I'll take
Occasion oft to visit you—to morrow—
If possible, to morrow.

Herm. Will you so?
Nay, will you truly promise it?

Damon. I do.—
Hermion, you must be sudden—you must despatch.—
Come—but I'll see my boy before you go.—
Hermion, he is our only one.—That child
Is made of thy own heart, and mine—I charge thee,
Have thou a care, in all vicissitudes
Of private or of public incident,
To form in him, what will out-top the height
Of the best laurel-tree in all the groves
Of the Academy,—an honest man. [Exeunt.



ACT II.

SCENE I.—*A Chamber in Arria's House.*

Enter PYTHIAS and CALANTHE.

Pyth. So, my Calanthe, you would waste the moon
Of Hymen in this lonely spot?

Cal. In sooth
I would, for 'tis the fairest place in Sicily :
A dell, made of green beauty; with its shrubs
Of aromatic sweetness, growing up
The rugged mountain's sides, as cunningly
As the nice structure of a little nest,
Built by two loving nightingales. The wind,
That comes there, full of rudeness from the sea,
Is lull'd into a balmy breath of peace,
The moment that it enters ; and 'tis said
By our Sicilian shepherds, that their songs
Have in this place a wilder melody.
The mountains all about it are the haunts
Of many a fine romantic memory !

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Of weight demand his ear, you'll find him yonder
In the pale cypress-grove. [Exit Lucullus.

Nothing I hope
Has happen'd to withdraw him from the rite
That makes thee mine.

Cal. I hope not.—Who is this
That seeks him out so earnestly?

Pyth. He is
A brave Italian, whom the Carthage pirates
Seiz'd on his native coast, and sold a slave.
Damon hath given him back his liberty,
But yet, of his free will, he tends him still;
And more than very freedom doth he hold,
The right to serve a man that is fine touch'd
With a most merciful spirit.

Cal. Nay, my Pythias,
Make not your friend's high qualities for aye
The burthen of your eloquence—In sooth,
I should be almost jealous of a steed
I saw you pat with a too liberal hand;
And—ha! he comes.

Enter DAMON.

Damon. Pythias—(*aside*) I must not let
Calanthe read my purpose. Calanthe,
The blessing, and the bounty of the gods
Be with you, over you, and all around you,
Thou gentle girl!—Pythias, a word with you.

(*aside to Pyth.*)

What heard I, think you, Pythias, even now?

Cal. There has been Pythias, all this forenoon,
Would speak to me of nothing but the esteem
In which he held thee, Damon.

Damon. What! no word
Touching the quality of that foolish love
He bears the fair Calanthe? (*To Pyth, aside.*) We
are undone,

We, and our wretched city, Pythias!

Pyth. (*aside to Damon,*) What dost thou mean?

Cal. No, not a single word—
Thou, thou alone mad'st up his eulogy.

Damon. What think'st thou, Pythias? A king?
(*aside.*)

Pyth.—(*aside to Damon.*) What! who?

Dam. (*to Cal.*) Heed not
His silken praises of me. (*To Pyth. aside.*) Dionysius
Is to be crowned in the senate-house.

Pyth. Can it be possible?

Dam. I say thee, yea—
His soldiers line the streets.

Pyth. But will the senate,
The coward senate, sanction it! Will none
Oppose him in it?

Dam. Oppose him!—(*aloud.*) all the gods
So help, or strike me, as I will oppose him!
Let Etna vent her furies on his side,
And I alone—Ha! I forgot my dagger.

[*Searching about him.*]

Cal. How now, my Pythias?

Pyth. He is mov'd, Calanthe,
By some most urgent matter of the state;
Nay, heed him not!

Damon. Pythias, as I intended
To be a witness to thy wedding-rite,
I did not bear a weapon—give me thy poniard.

Pyth. Speak, to what end?

Damon. No matter, give it me.

Cal. Ha! what does he intend? Now, by my love,
Pythias, I do adjure thee,——

Pyth. Whither Damon,
Where would'st thou go?

Damon. Unto the senate-house.

Pyth. Then I will with you, too.

Cal. He shall not!

Damon. No!

Thou say'st aright,—he shall not! Fair Calanthe,
This is no hour to leave thee! What, Calanthe,
Should bridegrooms give the law, and 'gin to rule
Even on their wedding day? I charge thee, sweet,
Assert thy brief dominion while thou canst:
'Twill speedily be his turn. (*aside to Pyth.*)
It shall not be! It is against the law

For any soldier in the senate-house
 To lift his helm of war, and what avail
 Were thy companionship? Calanthe, take him,
 Take him away, and heaven be o'er you both!

Pyth. But thou wilt promise me, upon the faith
 Of an old friendship, that thy sudden hand
 Will not attempt a rashness?

Damon. Be thou satisfied,
 I will do nought in passion. Come, Calanthe, (*aside.*)
 Assert thy right in him, and bear him hence
 Unto the garden-walk, and tell him o'er
 The names of all thy favourite plants; I pray thee,
 Keep him in busy trifles, till the hour
 For the sweet rite be come—That's well, my girl;
 There, take him by the arm!

Cal. Come, Pythias, come!
 I thank thee, Damon, for thy tender counsel.

Pyth. Nay, Damon, nay, Calanthe—

Cal. Nay me no nays;
 I say it shall be so.

Damon. May the gods pour
 Their blessings o'er your heads!—Farewell! fare-
 well!

I have no time to bide here, but my heart
 Shall be beside you at the altar-place.
 Perhaps it is an idle fear compels me
 Hence from your sight—I will, if possible,
 Return and see you wedded.—Fare you well!
 Now, Syracuse, for thee!—And may the fates
 So bless, or curse me, as I act in this!

[*Exeunt severally.*]

SCENE II.—*The Senate house of Syracuse.—Senators
 assembled.—PHILISTIUS at their head—DIONYSIUS
 stands in the front of the stage.—DAMOCLES.*

1st. Sen. So soon warn'd back again!

Dion. So soon, good fathers.
 My last despatches here set forth, that scarce
 I had amass'd and form'd our gallant legions,
 When, as by magic, word of the precaution

Was spirited to their camp—and on the word,
These Carthagenians took their second thought,
And so fell back.

Phil. I do submit to you,
That out of this so happy consequence
Of Dionysius' movement on the citadel,
Not only is his pardon for the act
Freely drawn forth, but we are call'd upon
Our thanks most manifestly to express
For such a noble service.

Dion. Good Philistius,
I am a soldier ; yours and the state's servant,
And claim no notice for my duty done
Beyond the doing it—and the best thanks
I merit, or can have, lie in the issue
Which has most happily resulted.

Dam. Nay,
It rests in us to say so.

Phil. Dionysius,
The work which of this enterprise thou hast made,
Proves that our citadel, and its resources,
Have been misus'd ; and never so controll'd
And order'd for our good, as by thyself ;—
Therefore retain it, govern and direct it.—
Would the whole state were like the citadel !
In hot and angry times like these we want
Even such a man.

Dam. I, from my heart, assent to
And second this proposal.

Dion. Most reverend fathers—

Dam. We pray thee silence, noble Dionysius !
All here do know what your great modesty
Will urge you to submit—but I will raise
This envious veil wherein you shroud yourself.
It is the time to speak ; our country's danger
Calls loudly for some measure at our hands,
Prompt and decisive.

Damon. (*without.*) Thou most lowly minion !
I'll have thee whipp'd for it, and by the head
Made less even than thou art !

Enter DAMON.

Phil. Who breaks so rude and clamorously in
To scare our grave deliberations ?

Damon. A senator !—First let me ask you why
Upon my way here to sit down with you,
I have encounter'd in the open streets,
Nay, at the very threshold of your doors,
Soldiers and satellites array'd and marshall'd
With their swords out ? Why have I been obstructed
By an armed bandit in my peaceful walk here,
To take my rightful seat in the senate-house ?
Why has a ruffian soldier privilege
To hold his weapon to my throat ? A tainted,
Disgrac'd, and abject traitor, Procles ? Who
Dar'd place the soldiers round the senate-house ?

Phil. I pray you, fathers, let not this rash man
Disturb the grave and full consideration
Of the important matter touching which
We spoke ere he rushed in.

Dam. I did require
To know from you, without a hand or head,
Such as to us hath been our Dionysius,
What now were our most likely fate ?

Damon. The fate
Of freemen in the full ; free exercise
Of all the noble rights that freemen love !
Free in our streets to walk ; free in our councils
To speak and act—

Phil. I do entreat you, senators,
Protect me from this scolding demagogue,
And let us win your—

Damon. Demagogue, Philistius !
Who was the demagogue, when at my challenge
He was denounc'd and silenc'd by the senate,
And your scant oratory spent itself
In fume and vapour ?

Dam. Silence, Damon, silence !
And let the council use its privilege.

Damon. Who bids me silence ? Damocles, the soft
And pliant willow, Damocles !—But come,

What do you dare propose? Come, I'll be silent—
Go on.

Phil. Resolve you then, is Dionysius
This head indeed to us? Acting for us—
Yea, governing, that long have proved we cannot,
Although we feign it, govern for ourselves?

Dam. Then who so fit, in such extremity,
To be the single pillar, on whose strength
All power should rest?

Phil. Ay, and what needs the state
Our crowded and contentious councils here?
And therefore, senators,—countrymen, rather,
That we may be wiser, and better rul'd
Than by ourselves we are; that the state's danger
May be confronted boldly, and that he
May have but his just meed, I do submit
That forthwith we dissolve ourselves, and choose
A king in Dionysius.

Damon. King! A king?

1st. Sen. I do approve it.

2nd. Ay, and I.

Dam. And all!

Damon. And all! are all content?
A nation's right betray'd,
And all content! O slaves! O parricides!
O, by the brightest hope a just man has,
I blush to look around and call you men!
What! with your own free willing hands yield up
The ancient fabric of your constitution,
To be a garrison, a common barrack,
A common guard-house, and for common cut-throats!
What! will ye all combine to tie a stone
Each to each other's necks, and drown like dogs
Within the tide of time, and never float
To after ages, or at best, but float
A buoyant pestilence? Can ye but dig
Your own dark graves, creep into them, and die!

3rd. Sen. I have not sanction'd it.

4th. Sen. Nor I.

5th. Sen. Nor I.

Damon. O! thanks for these few voices! but alas!

How lonely do they sound ! Do you not all
Start up at once, and cry out liberty?
Are you so bound in fetters of the mind,
That there you sit as if you were yourselves
Incorporate with the marble ! Syracusans !——
But, no ! I will not rail, nor chide, nor curse ye !
I will implore you, fellow-countrymen,
With blinded eyes, and weak and broken speech,
I will implore you—O ! I am weak in words,
But I could bring such advocates before you ;—
Your fathers' sacred images ; old men
That have been grandsires ; women with their chil-
dren,
Caught up in fear and hurry, in their arms—
And those old men should lift their shivering voices,
And palsied hands—and those affrighted mothers
Should hold their innocent infants forth, and ask,
Could you make slaves of them ?

Phil. I dissolve the senate
At its own vote and instance. (*Leaves his seat.*)

Dam. And all hail !
Hail, Dionysius, King of Syracuse !

Dion. Is this the vote ?

Damon. There is no vote ! Philistius
Hold you your seat ; keep in your places, senators.

Dion. I ask, is this the vote ?

Phil. It is the vote,
My gracious liege and sovereign !

Damon. I say nay !
You have not voted, Naxillus, or Petus—
Nor you, nor you, nor you.

Phil. In my capacity
As head, and organ of the city council,
I do asseverate it is the vote !

(*They all kneel to Dionysius except Damon.*)

Dion. I thank you, friends and countrymen, I thank
ye !

Damon. O, all the gods, my country, O, my country !

Dion. And that we may have leisure to put on
With fitting dignity our garb of power,
We do now, first assuming our own right,

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Damon. Death's the best gift to one that never yet
Wish'd to survive his country. Here are men
Fit for the life a tyrant can bestow !
Let such as these live on.

Dion. Hold thou there !
Lest having stirr'd our vengeance into wrath,
It reach unto those dearer than thyself.
Ha ! have I touch'd thee, Damon ? Is there a way
To level thee unto the feebleness
Of universal nature ? What, no word ?
Come, use thy time, my brave philosopher !
Soon will thy tongue cleave an unmoving lump
Of thickest silence and oblivion,
And that same wide and sweeping hand of thine,
Us'd to the orator's high attitude,
Lie at thy side in inutility.
Thou hast few moments left !

Damon. I know thee well—
Thou art wont to use thy tortures on the heart,
Watching its agonizing throbs, and making
A science of that fell anatomy !
These are thy bloody metaphysics—this
Thy barbarous philosophy ! I own
Thou hast struck thy venom'd sting into my soul,
But while I am wounded, I despise thee still !
My wife ! my child ?—O, Dionysius,
Thou should'st have spared me that !—Procles, lead
on. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE III.—*A Chamber in Arria's House.*

Enter PYTHIAS.

Pyth. What shouts rend the wide city ? There is
a roar
Deep as the murmuring of Etna. Gods !
I tremble for his safety. What, ho, there !

Enter Servant.

Hast thou, Sirrah,
Heard no intelligence how matters speed
Up at the senate-house ?

Ser. My lord, no word.

Pyth. And those time-cheating knaves I sent to know,—

They have not yet returned?

Ser. Not yet, my lord.

Pyth. Run thither, then—for thou art light-limb'd,
• Regard Lord Damon well; note how he seems,
And what he says—On, on.

Ser. My Lord, I will.

Pyth. And hark!

Observe of all if any words of wrath

Fall between him and Dionysius—

Begone!

[*Exit Servant.*]

Pyth. He is hotly mettled,
And not life's autumn, nor the discipline
Of cold Pythagoras' school has tam'd it yet.

Enter a Servant.

Ser. My lord,—

Pyth. Now sir, what from the senate-house?

Ser. My lord, I know not of the senate-house.

Pyth. Not, sir! I sent thee thither, did I not?

Ser. Another, sir. I am despatched to say,
That all the guests and witnesses are come,
And that with them the bride Calanthe waits
To have thy company to the temple.

Pyth. How!
Is it the hour?

Ser. The hour, my lord, is past. [*Exit Servant.*]

Pyth. Did ever man upon his wedding-day
Feel so impatient of the hour arriv'd
That is to bless him? But I dare not stir
Till I have tidings of my friend—He is
Expos'd to deadly loss, and may have need
Of Pythias' sword. By Heaven, I do him wrong
In tarrying from his presence at an hour
So full of peril, and perhaps of death.
Death, did I say? I must——

Enter ARRIA.

Arria. Now, Pythias, Pythias,

Why is it that we wait so long for thee?
Fie! thou a bridegroom! absent now?

Pyth. Gods! if that Dionysius
Should level at his life!—I prythee, Arria,
How soon might one with active and light foot
Run to the senate-house, and back again,
From hence?

Arria. Is the man craz'd and lunatic?
Is it your pleasure that we wait a season,
I, sir, Calanthe, and our guests and kinsmen,
For your best humour to get wedded in?

Pyth. Good Arria, pardon me; take not amiss
This absent seeming—but I am not well,
I know not how, but so you see it is—
Give me an half-hour—ay, the half—the tithe
Of such a time:

Arria. Pythias, indeed art ill?

Pyth. I'faith, I am—sick in the head and heart!
Bear with me, Arria; go among our guests,
And cheat their notice of this accident,
I shall be better quickly—Well, quite well.

Arria. The gods forefend it should fall otherwise.
[*Exit.*

Pyth. O how these leaden-footed limping minutes
Lag and creep beneath my lashing wish!
When fiery expectation mounts the time,
Time is a spiritless and jaded steed,
That staggers 'neath his rider. Gracious gods!
Will none of them come to relieve this weight
From my o'er loaded heart!—What shall I do?
Calanthe!

Enter CALANTHE.

Cal. My dear Pythias!

Pyth. Calanthe!

Cal. My mother whisper'd me you were not well;
And here, even as you see me, though you should not
Have seen me in my bridal garments thus
Till we were wedded—yet even thus,
To speak with you, and comfort you, I came.

Pyth. Beshrew her heart now, though she be thy
mother,

For such ill-tim'd and womanish whispering.
I am as well, as I am happy too.

Cal. She said, too, but I heeded it not——

Pyth. What said she?

Cal. She pray'd the gods your sickness might be
free

From surfeit sickness: but I heeded it not:
You know I heeded it not; I cannot think
Your heart is such a bad one, Pythias,

Pyth. How!

Cal. I do not think 'tis in your very nature
To stumble so—at least, I do not think
You would have waited till this very hour,
When, like two plants that have been long in neigh-
bourhood,

Our souls had crept and twin'd around each other,
Leaves, fibres, roots, and all!

Pyth. Tears, my Calanthe!
How like a virgin morn in May thou art,
That would be wedded to the amorous day,
In all its watery freshness! My fair girl,
'The maiden pulse beating upon thy brow
Is not so faithful to its sister pulse,
Which throbs within this little heart of thine,
As I have been, and am!—Ha! dost thou smile?
Now, by the gods! I cannot see thee smile,
And tarry longer from the property
Of this dear hand I grasp. Come, my Calanthe,
They tarry for us, do they not?

Cal. They do.

Pyth. Nay, do not bend thy head, but let me gaze
Upon thee as we go, that those fine looks,
So full of life and joy, may banish from me
The ghastly thought of death!

Cal. Death!

Pyth. Nay, forgive me;
I know not what I say.—Ye bounteous gods,
Who guard the good, because yourselves are good,
Wave your protecting arm around him!—Come,—
O, Friendship! thou must yield it for a time
To the torch-bearer, when he lights his fires

From two such eyes as these are !—Come, Calanthe.
[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV.—*A Dungeon.*

DAMON *discovered at a table, writing.*

Damon. Existence ! what is that ? a name for nothing !

It is a cloudy sky chas'd by the winds ;
Its fickle form no sooner chosen than chang'd ;
It is the whirling of the mountain flood,
Which, as we look upon it, keeps its shape,
'Though what compos'd that shape, and what com-
poses,
Hath pass'd—will pass—nay, and is passing on,
Even while we think to hold it in our eyes,
And deem it there. Fie ! fie ! a feverish vision,
A crude and crowded dream, unwill'd, unbidden,
By the weak wretch that dreams it.

Enter PROCLES and Guards.

Proc. Damon, thine hour is come.

Damon. Fast, sir, say past,—to come argues a stay
Upon the coming. He has refus'd me then—
Your general, Dionysius !—the king—
He has refused me even this little respite
I ask'd of him ?

Proc. All ! he refuses all.

Damon. Did'st tell him why I ask'd it ? Did'st explain
It was to have my wife warn'd here to Syracuse,
From her near dwelling upon Etna's side,
To see me ere I die ?

Proc. I said it, sir.

Damon. And he refused it ?

Proc. Ay, sir ; he refus'd.

Damon. Upon the instant.

Proc. Yes, upon the instant.

Damon. Is he not wedded ?

Proc. Yes.

Damon. A father, too ?

Proc. He is a father, too.

Damon. And he refus'd it?

I will attend you, and I pray you pardon—
This is no time to play the catechist—
The little boon I have to beg of thee,
It is the last; I would not fain be irksome;
It is the last I shall prefer on earth
Unto my fellow-men. This is my testament—
I pray thee give it to a friend of mine
Who may inquire about me; he will hold it
And use it for my wife.

Proc. His name?

Damon. It is——

I did not wish to trust my coward tongue
With utterance of that name; I fear'd it would
Pluck up all manhood by the roots; but, sir,
This now is childish; Pythias, sir—Alas!
To-day will prove a woful wedding-day
To thee, and thy Calanthe!—and my Hermion,
My fond, poor Hermion, and my boy——Good Pro-
cles,
Let me not stand here talking idly thus—
I am quite ready—on, sir; I attend you! [*Exeunt.*]



ACT III.

SCENE I.—*A Temple of Hymen.*

PYTHIAS and CALANTHE discovered, with ARRIA, Guests,
Priests, and Virgins—Pythias holding Calanthe's
hand.

Hymn. 1st Priest and 1st Virgin,

Thou beneath whose holy smile
Lips may meet, and not defile,
And hands and hearts together cling,
Fearless of shame and sorrowing:
The vows we offer, Hymen, hear;
Record the oath thy votaries swear;

Bless the hands that now are plight,
And sanctify the nuptial rite !

CHORUS.

Bless the hands that now are plight,
And sanctify the nuptial rite !

1st Priest.

Thou, who turn'st to holy fire
The sinful blaze of young desire.

1st Virgin.

Thou, whose hand-maid virtues deck
The bridal flowers for beauty's neck,
That the fond maid as blest may be,
And meet his wooing modestly.

CHORUS.

Bless the hands that now are plight,
And sanctify the nuptial rite !

At the beginning of this Chorus, Pythias and Calanthe kneel; at the close of it, LUCULLUS enters, and runs up to Pythias, and whispers him; Pythias lets drop Calanthe's hand, and starts up.

Pyth. Hold ! hush your songs of Hymen, for I hear
A raven's croaking, that discordantly
Breaks in upon your joyous melody !

(To Luc.) Where, sirrah, where ? Where, 'shall I
speak with him ?

Luc. He did desire, my lord, that I should lead you.

Pyth. And not say where ?

Luc. It was his charge, my lord.

Pyth. In one word, say the hour and place of this,
Or—ha ! I see it in thine eye—his life,
His life is forfeit—he is doom'd to death !

Luc. Alas ! my lord.

Pyth. O, by the gods, it is so !
And like a selfish coward did I stand,
And saw him rush and singly front himself
Against a host, when it was evident

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Enter PYTHIAS, preceded by Soldiers, who obstruct his way.

I am his nearest friend! I should receive
His dying words—hold back! (*Breaks through them.*)
O, Damon! Damon!

Damon. I wish'd for this, but fear'd it, Pythias!
Tush!—we are men, my Pythias, we are men,
And tears do not become us.

Pyth. Doom and death
In the same moment! is there no hope, Damon?
Is every thing impossible?

Damon. For me,
With Dionysius, every thing—I crav'd
But six hours' respite, that my wife may come,
And see me—

Pyth. And he would not?

Damon. Not an hour—
Just to have kiss'd her, and my little boy—
Just to have kiss'd her—

Pyth. The cold villain!

Damon. Well,
All that is o'er now, and this talk superfluous.
Ere you came up, my friend, I was about
To leave a greeting for you with the officer—
I bade him say, too,—for, despite of rules
Well coun'd and understood, in such a time
As this—so sudden, hopeless, and unlook'd for,
The eye will water, and the heart grow cowardly
At thoughts of home, and things we love at home;
And something like a sorrow, or a fear,
For what may happen, will stick in the throat,
To choke our words, and make them weak and wo-
manish.

Pyth. Tears have a quality of manhood in them,
When shed for what we love.

Damon. I bade him say,
That half my fear for her, and my young boy,
As to their future fate, was banished,
In the full certainty I felt of all
The care and kindness thou wilt have of them.

Pyth. That was a true thought, Damon.

Damon. I know it, Pythias ;

O, I know it Pythias ;

And when the shock of this hath pass'd away,

And thou art happy with thy sweet Calanthe,—

Pyth. Damon.

Damon. Well, Pythias ?

Pyth. Did'st thou not say

It was thy last desire to look upon

Thy wife and child, before—

Damon. I would give up,

Were my life meted out by destiny

Into a thousand years of happiness,

All that long measure of felicity,

But for a single moment, in the which

I might compress them to my heart.

Pyth. Good Procles,

Lead me at once to Dionysius—

I mean unto the king—that's his new name—

Lead me unto the king—Ha ! here he comes !

Enter DIONYSIUS and DAMOCLES.

Behold me, Dionysius, at thy feet !

As thou dost love thy wife, and thy sweet children ;

As thou art a husband and a father, hear me !

Let Damon go and see his wife and child

Before he dies—for four hours respite him—

Put me in chains : plunge me into his dungeon,

As pledge for his return ; do this—but this—

And may the gods themselves build up thy greatness

As high as their own heaven.

Dion. What wonder's this ?

Is he thy brother ?

Damon. No, not quite my brother !

Not—yes, he is—he is my brother !

Dion. Damon, is this a quibble of thy school ?

Pyth. No quibble, for he is not so in kin,

Not in the fashion that the world puts on,

But brother in the heart !

Dion. (*To Damon.*) Did'st urge him on
To this ?

Pyth. By the gods, no !

Dion. And should I grant
Thy friend's request, leaving thee free to go.
Unwatch'd, unguarded, thou mak'st nought of it,
Quite sure that thou wilt come and ransom him,
At the imminent time?

Damon. Sure of it? Hearest thou, Heaven?
The emptiest things reverberate most sound,
And hollow hearts have words of boisterous promise.
I can say only—I am sure !

Dion. 'Tis granted.
How far abides thy wife from hence?

Damon. Four leagues.

Dion. For six hours we defer thy death. 'Tis now
The noon exactly ; and at the sixth hour
See that thou stand'st not far from him ; away !
Conduct that man to prison.

Damon. Farewell, Pythias !

Pyth. And farewell, Damon ! Not a word upon it.
Speed thee. What, tears ?—Forbear.

Damon. I did not think
To shed one tear ; but friendship like to thine—

Pyth. Farewell ! Come, Officer.

Damon. I pray thee, Procles,
Give me the testament thou had'st of me. .

[Procles gives it him.]

Pythias, thy hand again ; Pythias, farewell !

Pyth. Farewell !

*[Exit Damon on one side, Pythias, Procles and
Guards on the other.]*

Dion. O, by the wide world, Damocles,
I did not think the heart of man was moulded
To such a purpose,

Dam. It is wondrous.

Dion. Wondrous !

Sir, it doth win from the old imaginers
Their wit and novelty !—

I'll visit Pythias in his dungeon :—get me
A deep disguise.—We'll use such artifice
As the time, and our own counsel may suggest.—
If they should triumph, crowns are nothingness,

Glory is sound—and grandeur, poverty ! [Exeunt.

SCENE III.—*Another Street.*

Enter DAMON and LUCULLUS.

Luc. O my dear lord, my master, and my friend,
The sight of you thus safe——

Damon. Safe !

Luc. For at least
A respite, my kind lord.

Damon. No more, Lucullus.
Is my horse ready ?

Luc. Yes, the gallant grey
Of Anaxagoras you lately purchas'd.

Enter CALANTHE.

Cal. Hold sir !—Is what they tell me true ?

Damon. Calanthe,
At any time save this, thy voice would have
The power to stay me—Pr'ythee, let me pass—
Nor yet abridge me of that fleeting space
Given to my heart.

Cal. Speak, have they said the truth ?
Have you consented to put in the pledge
Of Pythias' life for your return ?

Damon. 'Tis better
That I should say to her,—“Hermion I die !”
Than that another should hereafter tell
“Damon is dead !”

Cal. No, you would say to her,
“Pythias has died for me”—even now the citizens
Cried in mine ear, “Calanthe, look to it !”

Damon. And do you think I would betray him !

Cal. Think of it ?—
I give no thought upon it—Possibility,
Though it should weigh but the least part of a chance,
Is quite enough—Damon may let him die—
Ay, meanly live himself, and let him die !

Damon. Calanthe, I'll not swear—When men lift up
Their hands unto the gods, it is to give
Assurance to a doubt : But to confirm

By any attestation the return
Of Damon unto Pythias, would profane
The sanctity of friendship—Fare thee well—
Nay, cling not to me.

Cal. So will Hermion cling—
But Damon will not so reject her.—
She will implore thee back to life again,
And her loud cries will pierce thy inmost breast,
And Pythias will be murder'd.

Damon. I must unloose thy grasping.

Cal. Mercy, Damon!

Damon. Unwillingly I stay thy struggling hands—
Forgive me for't.

Cal. Damon, have mercy on me!

Damon. May the gods bless thee!

[*Exeunt Damon and Lucullus.*]

Cal. Damon, mercy, Damon!
He flies! and there's a voice that from my heart,
As from the grave, cries out, that never more
He will return to Pythias.—Hermion—his child—
And his own selfish instinct—or some accident
May fall, and stay him back, and that will be
The axe to Pythias!—O, I will follow him—
I'll tell him that, and, like a drowning wretch,
Fasten about his neck, and cling to him!
But, ah!—he flies—his steed is on the wind!
My evil demon wings him, and he tramps
Already the wide distance!—Pythias,
The flowers in bridal mockery on my brow
Thus I rend off, and keep them for the grave!

Enter DIONYSIUS disguised.

Dion. Thy name's Calanthe, and thou art the bride
Of Pythias—is't not thus?

Cal. What dost thou come
To say to me of Pythias?

Dion. Art thou not
His bride?

Cal. The marriage-temple was prepar'd,
The virgin's voices were sent up to Heaven,
When death did all at once

Rise up, and all that pomp did disappear,
And for the altar, I behold the tomb!—
He never will return.

Dion. He will not.

Cal. Ha!

Dost thou confirm my apprehensions?

They were black enough already—and thy smile
It is the gloss upon the raven's plumes—
Thy smile is horrible!

Dion. Calanthe, hear me.

The tyrant Dionysius, has resolved
To intercept this Damon, and prevent
His coming back to Syracuse.

Cal. O, gods!

Dion. I am an inmate in the tyrant's house,
And learn'd his fell decree!

Cal. Then, speed thee hence:

Mount thou the fleetest steed in Syracuse.
Pursue the unhappy Damon—tell him this;
I know he has a brave and generous nature,
Will not betray his friend! Go after him
And save my husband!

Dion. I have found a way
To rescue him already: thou and Pythias
Shall fly from Syracuse.

Cal. What! shall he 'scape
The tyrant's fangs?

Dion. For ever!—But thou must
Follow my precept.

Cal. I will obey you, sir,
And bless you!

Dion. Then to Pythias—come with me. [*Exeunt.*

SCENE IV.—*A Terrace attached to the Prison, with the
Sea outstretched before it.—A Portal on one side—
on the other, the dungeon-door of Pythias, barred and
chained.*

*Enter DIONYSIUS, preceded by an Officer who points to
the dungeon.*

Dion. Is this the dungeon?—Unbar the door.—

I'll probe him deeply.—

Slave !

Observe well the orders that I gave thee !

[Motions him away, and opens the door.]

My lord Pythias !—

Pyth. (within.) How now ! who calls me ?

Dion. A friend, Pythias :—the time is precious ;—

haste,

And follow me.

Enter PYTHIAS.

Pyth. Where do you lead me ?

Dion. I come

To serve and succour thee.

Pyth. And who art thou,
And how can'st succour me ?

Dion. I dwell beneath the tyrant's roof, and learn'd
by accident

This fell determination—he hath resolv'd——

Pyth. My life !—

Dion. Thy life !

Ere this, he has despatch'd some twenty men

To intercept thy friend, on his approach

To meet and ransom thee.

Pyth. Almighty Heaven !

Dion. He not arriving at the appointed hour,
Thy life is forfeited.

Pyth. We try the depth together ; I had hop'd
That one or other of us could have liv'd

For thy poor Hermion's, or Calanthe's sake.—

No matter.

Dion. Pythias, I came to save thee.

Pyth. What dost thou mean ?

Dion. Urg'd by my pity for such noble friends,
So trusting and betray'd—anxious, besides,
To leave the tyrant's court,

Hither I brib'd my way.—Thy fair Calanthe
Shall be the partner of thy flight.—Thy father—

Pyth. Sir !—

Dion. Yes, thy father, too—thy time-struck father,
Who, till this day, for many circling years

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His brow is fix'd; his eye is resolute.

Cal. Pythias, mine idoliz'd and tender Pythias—
Am I then scorn'd?—Behold! look, Pythias, there!

Pyth. What do I see?

Cal. Thy father,—Nicias!
He who did give thee being, and the blood
That bubbles round thy heart. Since my poor tears
Are valueless, hear him, and disobey not.

Pyth. Ha! dream I this?

Dion. (*aside.*) There! he is shaken there!

Enter NICIAS, extremely old and feeble.

Nicias. Where is my son, the child of my old years,
The last of all my blood—where is my son?
I scarce behold the day-light—where is my son?

Pyth. Here, father, here!

Nicias. Is this my Pythias' hand?
Are these his arms that press me? O, my son,
Come to thy father's heart! Child of my age,
I do believe thou lov'st me!

Pyth. O, my father!
Witness these burning tears, tears which came not
In such a gush as now.

Nicias. Upon my lonely bed, thy long lost name,
Pronounc'd in shrieking anguish, to mine ear
Came, and I heard it—the first human sound
That for a lapse of time held intercourse
With my forgotten heart—and lo! I heard it!
And then I ask'd of thee, and what they purpos'd
To do on thee—and here I came, my son,
To go with thee to safety.

Pyth. Spare me that!
All things
I'll do but that; and that I dare not do.

Nicias. The tyrant doth break faith with thee.

Pyth. 'Tis said so.

Cal. And Damon cannot come to be thy ransom.

Pyth. I have heard it, my Calanthe.

Cal. And that thou—
That thou—O gods!—must die when he comes not?

Pyth. And that I know, Calanthe.

Cal. If thou knowest it,
What is thy heart, that it can still be obstinate ?

Pyth. I should not have heard it ; or, having heard
it,
I still may hold it false. This busy world
Is but made up of slight contingencies—
There are a thousand that may alter this,
Or leave it where it was :—there is not one
Should push us a mere point from any pledge
Of manliness and honour.

Nicias. Look on thy father, Pythias—he scarce
sees
His son—darkness has pour'd her waters on him,
Quenching the spark that lights up human life,
In gay variety ; yet I would live.

Pyth. And yet would I, my father,
~~Live to support, befriend, and cherish you !~~
Live to possess my own Calanthe here,
Who recommends existence with a smile
So sad and beautiful !—Yet would I live,
But not dishonour'd—Still, Calanthe, he may return!
May ! may !—That word ends all !—Death looks but
grimly,

And the deep grave is cheerless—yet I do—
I do prefer the certainty of death
Unto the possibility of dishonour !

Nicias. Pythias my son, the cold dim house of
death—
To be a lonely, shuddering tenant in it,
Or live in sunshine one's own young heart gives out!
Thy hand, Calanthe ; give thy hand, my girl,—
And thine, my son—here, take her—save, or lose
her !

Cal. Thyself, and me ! Save both !

Dion. Behold ! Behold !

(*Pointing to the side of the stage.*)

The good ship hath her streaming signal out !
The canvass swells up to the wooing wind !
The boat puts off—now, now, or never !

Cal. See
How swiftly, in her gallant liberty

She comes through the calm sea!—O, hark! the oars,
How rapidly they plash in harmony!

O look at freedom, Pythias look at it!

How beautiful it is upon the sea!

Pythias, my Pythias—O! how we shall laugh
While bounding o'er the blessed wave that bears us
From doom and death, to some fair Grecian isle!

Dion. See, they approach! dost hesitate?

Nicias. My son!

Cal. Pythias!—my husband, Pythias!

Pyth. No! no! so help me heaven!—'Tis hard!—
It plucks my heart up—but, no! no! (*Kneels.*)

Cal. O, gods! (*She falls into his arms.*)



ACT IV.

SCENE I.—*The exterior of Damon's Villa.*

Enter DAMON and LUCULLUS.

Damon. At last, I have arriv'd! At last, Lucullus,
I've reach'd the place to which my heart did send
Its throbbing far before me. (*Leans on Lucullus.*)

Luc. Good, my lord.

Damon. It is not for the beauty of this place,
It is not for the keen intenser sense
Existence hath in this delicious spot,
Where every breath is a new act of bliss,—
Lucullus, no; it is, that here my wife—
That here in this enchanting solitude,
My boy, my only one—I dare not see them!
Lucullus, wer't not better to go back,
And die without beholding them?

Luc. My lord,
The day moves on in Heaven; you have little time
Left for this fatal parting.

Damon. Come, I must wake
My manhood up again!—I will go in
At once, Lucullus; go thou hence, Lucullus,

And tend our horses.—I have scarcely power
To lift the latch. (*Looks out.*) O, gods!

Luc. What is the matter?

Damon. Look! there she is, Lucullus, and my boy
Beside her.—She (poor sweet thing!) in the bower
Of jasmine, where she knows I love to sit
And look upon the setting of the sun,
Prepares a little feast for me. Behold
With what a diligence she puts in trim
Her banquet of fair fruits!—My little boy, too,
Waits at her side, and with uplifted hands
Unto her care doth minister! To-day,
I said that I should visit her, and this
Is meant for my reception.—Come, come, Damon,
Be a man again!—Lucullus, take thou care
To have our horses ready.—How I tremble!

[*Exit Damon.*

Luc. Never shall he return, if there be power
In this quick hand to cast an intercept
Between him and perdition: though it cost
My life, he shall not die; perhaps he'll kill me,
But time shall come, when at Lucullus' name,
He will lift up his hands, and weep for me! [*Exit.*

SCENE II.—A Garden.

HERMION *discovered* arranging a little Feast.—Her
Child beside her, with a basket of Flowers.

Child. Will he come soon home, mother!

Herm. I pray the gods
He may, my child.

Child. It seems so long a time
Since he has ta'en me on his knee, and kiss'd me.

Herm. Hark thee, my boy!
This is the hour, wherein Lucullus said
He would arrive to-day to visit us.
Go, see if he be coming; he'll be glad
To greet the rosy fruit upon thy cheeks,
Even as he enters our sweet garden here.
Hie thee, and bear me word if he approaches—
The first kiss shall be thine. [*Exit Child.*

Herm. Thou unkind Damon !
To send me here to woman's loneliness,
A prey to all the sickening hopes and fears
I must have of thee, in these blustering times.

Enter DAMON, with the Child in his arms.

Child See, I have found him for you, mother !

Herm. Ha !

Damon. Hermion ! my treasure, Hermion !

Herm. My dear lord
I had prepar'd this little feast for you,
But hope at last grew sick within my heart,
And I could hardly force it to a thought
That yet thou would'st arrive—Oft I look'd out
Upon the weary way thou should'st have journey'd,
And oft the hills' dim vapour rose like Damon,
Till the sun came to shape it, and to show me
That yet thou wert away.

Damon. And are ye then,
Are ye so helpless in our absence, Hermion !

Herm. Come, now—you know it. O my dear, dear
husband !
If I should tell thee of my quaking heart,
While thou art bustling there in Syracuse,—
Why wilt thou start ?—'twould cheat thee of thy tears,
And make thee womanish ; and—for I know
Thou lov'st thy own poor Hermion,—thou should'st
swear

Never again to leave her.

Damon. Nerve me, Heaven !

Herm. Indeed thou should'st ! and look thee here,
my Damon,
But for this little boy, who is so like thee——

Damon. Is he so very like me, Hermion ?

Herm. Nay,
A very little self of thee ;—and, but
For looking long into his face—so long
That the tears blinded me,—I've half consented
To think it was thyself ; and then I kiss'd
My boy, and I was happy for a time.
And but for this, my Damon, and his talk,

His childish prattle on my knee, of what
He would achieve and be—Come, Sir, rehearse
These matters over; say what would'st thou be?

Damon. What would'st thou be, my boy?

Child. A soldier, father.

Damon. Come, come, now, not a soldier.

Child. Nay, but I'd choose, sir,
To be what Pythias is.

Damon. (*Much moved.*) Thou art a brave boy!
Go pluck a flower from yonder gay recess,
At the other end of the garden.—Wreath me now
The fairest garland for my welcome—there—
A brave, brave boy. [*Exit Child.*
Now, gods!—(*Aside.*)

Herm. Dost thou not think
He grows apace?

Damon. Have I in all my life
Given thee an angry look, or word, or been
Ever an unkind mate, my Hermion?

Herm. Never! the gods know, never!

Damon. From thy heart
Thou sayest this?

Herm. Yea, from my inmost heart!

Damon. I am glad of it: for thou wilt think of this
When I am dead, my Hermion: and 'twill make thee
The kindest mother to our boy!

Herm. O, gods!

Why dost thou talk of death? Damon, thy cheek,
Thy lip is quivering—art sick, or griev'd
With some discomfiture? O, these wild wars
And bickerings of the state, how have they robbed
thee
Of thy soul's quiet!

Damon. Tell me, tell me, Hermion,—
Suppose I should impart the heaviest news
That could possess thine ear, how would'st thou bear
it?

Herm. Laugh at it!—mock at it to make thee smile,
And teach thee to be happy in despite
Of any turn of fortune.—What dost thou mean?
What heavy news? I know the part thou takest
In the state's service.—Hath the tyrant risen?

Damon. He hath; but that's not it.

Herm. The Carthagenians
Have sack'd the city?

Damon. No!

Herm. Why then thy friend
So well belov'd of thee—Pythias!—'tis he!

Damon. No, thank the gods, not he!

Herm. What is it then?—

The heaviest news that could possess mine ear!—
Ha! 'tis thyself—some danger hath befallen thee,
Or threatens thee.—Speak, my dear Damon, speak,
Or I shall die of thoughts that come to kill me!

Damon. When I woo'd thee, Hermion,
'Twas not the fashion of thy face, or form,—
Though from the hand of Heaven thou camest so rich
In all external loveliness, it was not
Such excellence that rivetted my heart
And made me thine; but I said to myself,
Thus:—Here is one, who, haply were I wreck'd,
Or, were I to-morrow, or a later day,
Struck down by fortune—

Herm. Wert thou made as low
From what thou art as earth's foundation-stone
Is from the top of Etna—did men scorn thee—

Damon. Nay, thus I said, my Hermion:—Did the
blow
Fall deadly as it might—here is a woman
Who hath such firm devotion in her love,
She would not rend my heart, but for my sake,—
And, should we have a child, for his sake too,—
Bear firmly up, though death itself—

Herm. Death! Death!

Damon. (*Giving her the testament.*)
Take this—read this—'twill speak what I cannot—
I thought I could, and by the gods I cannot!

Herm. Ha! here's a poisoning adder in this scroll,
It eats into my heart!—Die, Damon! Death!
When? how? I cannot understand it—Die!
Where? what offence?

Damon. I have been doom'd to death by Dionysius.

Herm. But thou hast 'scaped the sentence; thou
art here,

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And bid me murder him that I may live !
Hermion farewell !

(*Turning round and embracing her.*)

Herm. (*In agony*) Live Damon ! live ! live ! live !

Damon. Hermion, my life, look up ! awake, my
Hermion. (*She swoons in his arms.*)

Enter an old Servant.

Damon. The hour is past ! I trifle with necessity !
Hermion ! I now indeed must part from thee,
All pale and cold and death-like as thou art :
Thus may I part from thee, to go and be
Myself full soon as cold !—Here, here, old man,
Here, hold her from the earth,—

(*Giving Hermion to the old Servant.*)

And say to her,
With what a broken-hearted love I press'd her
For the last time !—And, Neucles, for my sake
Be thou a faithful servant when I am gone !
Once more—My child too !—O, this is too much !
My little orphan !—My dear boy ! the gods,
The gods will take my care of thee, my child !
[*Rushes out.*

SCENE III.—*The exterior of Damon's Villa.*

Enter LUCULLUS.

Luc. It is achiev'd ! He comes ! in desperate haste
He rushes from the garden—Shall I fly
From the swift fury that will wait upon
The terrible revealment ?—'Tis too late !

Enter DAMON.

Damon. 'Tis o'er, Lucullus—Bring thou forth my
horse—

I have staid too long, Lucullus, and my speed
Must leave the winds behind me : By the gods,
The sun is rushing down the west !

Luc. My Lord—

Damon. Why dost thou tremble ? Fetch the co-
lour back

Into thy cheek, man, nor let thy weak knees
Knock on each other in their cowardice!
Time flies--be brief--go bring my horse to me!
Be thou as swift as speech, or as my heart is!

Luc. My lord,——

Damon. Why, slave, dost hear me?
My horse, I say! The hour is past already
Whereon I bade old Neucles summon me.

Luc. My generous master, do not slay me!

Damon. Slave!

Art mad? or dost thou mock me in the last
And fearfullest extremity?—Yet you speak not!

Luc. You were ever kind and merciful, nor yet
Commended me unto the cruel whip,
And I did love you for it!

Damon. Where's my steed?

Luc. When I beheld the means of saving you
I could not hold my hand—my heart was in it,
And in my heart, the hope of giving life
And liberty to Damon; and——

Damon. Go on!

I am listening to thee!

Luc. And in hope to save you,
I slew your steed!

Damon. Almighty heavens!

Luc. Forgive me!

Damon. I am standing here to see if the great gods
Will with their lightning execute my prayer
Upon thee! But thy punishment be mine!
I'll tear thee into pieces! (seizes him.)

Luc. Spare me! Spare me!
'Tis horrible to die!—I saved thy life,—O do not thou
take mine!

Damon. My friend! my friend! O that the word
would kill thee!
Pythias is slain!—his blood is on my soul!
He cries, where art thou, Damon? Damon, where
art thou?

And Damon's here!—The axe is o'er his neck,—
And in his blood I'm delug'd!

Luc. Spare me! Spare me!

Damon. A spirit cries, 'Revenge and sacrifice !'
I'll do it—I'll do it—Come—

Luc. Where should I go ?

Damon. To the eternal river of the dead !
The way is shorter than to Syracuse,—
'Tis only far as yonder yawning gulf—
I'll throw thee with one swing to Tartarus,
And follow after thee !—Nay, slave, no struggling !
Pythias is grown impatient ! His red ghost
Starts from the ground, and with a bloody hand
Waves to the precipice !

Luc. Have mercy !

Damon. Call

For mercy on the Furies—not on me !

[*Exit Damon, dragging Lucullus out.*]



ACT V.

SCENE I.—*A public Place in Syracuse.—A Scaffold, with steps ascending to it, upon the right hand—In the back of the Stage, the Gates of a prison.—Executioner, with an Axe, and Guards discovered.*

Enter DAMOCLES and PROCLES.

Proc. It is a marvellous fantasy, thou speakest of
In Dionysius.

Dam. Yes, his mind is made
Of strange materials, that are almost cast
In contrariety to one another.
The school and camp in his ambition make
A strange division : with the trumpet's call,
He blends the languor of the poet's lyre !
The fierce intrepid captain of the field
Hath often on the great Athenian stage
Cop'd with the mightiest monarchs of the Muse,
And in mine apprehension, he doth prize
The applauses of that polished populace
More than the rising shout of victory,

Proc. And over all, that science which doth hold
Touching the soul and its affections,
Its high discoursing hath attracted him.
It is his creed that in this flesh of ours
Self ever entertains predominance,
And to all friendship he hath ever been
A persevering infidel. For this,
Belike, he tries a strange experiment.
What sayest thou? Will Damon come again?
It urges on the crisis of the danger.

Dam. Our love of life is in the very instinct
Of mere material action! when we do
Even so slight a thing, as wink an eye
Against the wind. Place me a soulless dog
Upon the bare edge of a height, and he
Shall shudder and shrink back, though none have
prov'd

To his capacity that the fall were dangerous.
I hold the thing impossible.

Proc. He'll not?

Dam. What, when he feels his pent-up soul abroad,
His limbs unfetter'd, and the mountain-breeze
Of liberty all around him, and his life
Or death upon his own free choice dependent?
'Tis visionary!

Proc. But is there no hope
Of Dionysius' mercy?

Dam. He'll not give
A second's hundredth part to take a chance in.
His indignation swells at such a rashness,
That in its fling of proud philosophy
Can make him feel so much out-soar'd and humbled.
What a vast multitude upon the hills
Stretch their long blackening outline in the round
Of the blue heavens!

Proc. They wait the great event.
Mute expectation spreads its anxious hush
O'er the wide city, that as silent stands
As its reflection in the quiet sea.
Behold upon the roof what thousands gaze
Toward the distant road that leads to Syracuse!

An hour ago a noise was heard afar,
Like to the pulses of the restless surge ;
But as the time approaches, all grows still
As the wide dead of midnight !

Calanthe. (*Without.*) There's no power
Shall stay me back ! I must behold him die,
Then follow him !

Enter CALANTHE, followed by ARRIA.

Arria. My child !

Cal. I cannot hear thee !
The shrieking of the Furies drowns thy cries !

Arria. This is no place for thee—no place, Calan-
the,
For such a one as thou !

Cal. No other place
Is fit for such a wretch ! I am his wife
Betrothed, though not married. There is no place
For me but at his side : In life or death
There is no other.

There is the scaffold with the block on it !
There is the—O, good gods !

Arria. Come back, my child !
Good Damocles, give me your aid to bear
This wretched woman hence.

Cal. O, mother, mother,
I'll not be grudg'd that horrible delight !
I'll take a long and maddening look of him,
Whom in the morning I thought I should have wait-
ed,

Blushing within the chamber of a bride,
And with a heart all full of love and fear.
Now I await him in a different place,
And with a cheek that ne'er shall blush again ;
Whose marble may be spotted o'er with blood,
But not with modesty : love yet remains,
But fear its old companion's fled away,
And made room for despair !

Enter DIONYSIUS, still in disguise.

Ha ! are you come ?

'Twas you that brought it to me for a guest,
And froze the running currents in my bosom
To one deep cake of ice! You said too well
That Damon would not come—The selfish traitor!
The traitor Damon!

Dion. Hark thee, Calanthe!
It was an idle tale I told to thee!

Cal. Ha!

Dion. A mere coinage, an invention.

Cal. I do not ask thee why that tale was fram'd,—
Fram'd in thy cold deliberate cruelty—
But only this—one question:—May he yet—
May Damon yet return?

Dion. He may—he is
As free to come, or stay, as are the winds.

Cal. And Dionysius withholds him not?

Dion. He does not.

Cal. Whatsoe'er thou art, the gods
For that one word, be unto thee and thine
Guardians for ever!—O, that ray of hope
That breaks upon my soul, is worth a flood
Of the sweet day-light of Elysium!
Damon may yet return!—But, powers of Heaven!
Death is prepared already!—What is the time!

Dion. Thou may'st perceive by yonder dial-plate
Against the temple, six poor minutes only
Are left for his return.

Cal. And yet he comes not!
O but that temple, where the shade of time
Moves unrelentingly, is dedicate
To the great goddess of Fidelity—
She will not in the face of her high fane
Let such a profanation hurl for ever
The altars of her worship to the ground;
For who will offer incense to her name
If Damon's false to Pythias? Ha! they unbar
The ponderous gates!—There is a clank of chains!
They are leading him to death!

Dam. Bring forth the prisoner!

The gates of the Prison are flung open, and PYTHIAS is discovered.—He advances.

Cal. Pythias !

Pyth. Calanthe here !—My poor fond girl !
Thou art the first to meet me at the block,
Thou wilt be the last to leave me at the grave !
How strangely things go on in this bad world—
This was my wedding day ; but for the bride,
I did not think of such a one as death !
I deemed I should have gone to sleep to-night,
This very night—not on the earth's cold lap,
But, with as soft a bosom for my pillow,
And with as true and fond a heart-throb in it
To lull me to my slumber, as e'er yet
Couch'd the repose of love.—It was, indeed,
A blissful sleep to wish for !

Cal. O, my Pythias,
He yet may come !

Pyth. Calanthe, no !—Remember
That Dionysius hath prevented it.

Cal. That was an idle tale of this old man,
And he may yet return !

Pyth. May yet return !
Speak !—how is this ? return !—O life, how strong
Thy love is in the hearts of dying men !
Thou art he did'st say the tyrant would prevent
His coming back to Syracuse.

Dion. I wrong'd him.

Pyth. Ha ! were it possible !—may he yet come ?

Cal. Into the sinews of the horse that bears him
Put swiftness, gods !—let him outrace and shame
The galloping of clouds upon the storm !
Blow breezes with him ; lend every feeble aid
Unto his motion !—and thou, thrice-solid earth,
Forget thy immutable fixedness—become
Under his feet like flowing water, and
Hither flow with him !

Pyth. I have taken in
All the horizon's vast circumference
That in the glory of the setting sun

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Cal. (*Who, during this speech, has been looking wildly towards the side of the stage.*)

Hush ! Hush !

Stand back there !

Pyth. Take her, you eternal gods,
Out of my arms into your own !—Befriend her !
And let her life glide on in gentleness,
For she is gentle, and doth merit it.

Cal. I think I see it——

Proc. Lead her from the scaffold !

Pyth. Arria, receive her !—yet one kiss—farewell !
Thrice—thrice—farewell !—I am ready, sir.

Cal. Forbear !

There is a minute left—look there ! look there !
But 'tis so far off, and the evening shades
Thicken so fast, there are no other eyes
But mine can catch it—Yet, 'tis there ! I see it—
A shape as yet so vague and questionable
'Tis nothing, just about to change and take
The faintest form of something !

Pyth. Sweetest love !

Dam. Your duty, officer.

Cal. I will not quit him
Until ye prove I see it not !—no force
Till then shall separate us.

Dam. Tear them asunder !

Arria, conduct your daughter to her home.

Cal. O, send me not away—Pythias, thine arms—
Stretch out thine arms, and keep me'—see, it comes !
Barbarians !—Murderers !—O, yet a moment—
Yet but one pulse—one heave of breath ! O, heavens !

[*She swoons, and is carried away by Arria and Guards.*]

Pyth. (*To the Executioner*)

There is no pang in thy deep wedge of steel
After that parting.—Nay, sir, you may spare
Yourself the pains to fit me for the block.—

[*Drawing the lining of his tunic lower.*]

Damon, I do forgive thee !—I but ask
Some tears unto my ashes !—

[*A shout is heard—Pythias leaps up on the scaffold.*]

By the gods,
 A horse, and horseman!—Far upon the hill
 They wave their hats, and he returns it—yet
 I know him not—his horse is at the stretch. (*A shout*)
 Why should they shout as he comes on? It is——
 No!—that was too unlike—but there now—there!
 O, life, I scarcely dare to wish for thee,
 And yet—that jutting rock has hid him from me—
 No!—let it not be Damon!—he has a wife
 And child!—gods! keep him back!

Damon (Without) Where is he?

[*He rushes in, and stands for a moment, looking round.*
 Ha!

He is alive! untouched! Ha! ha! ha!

[*Falls with an hysterical laugh upon the scaffold.*
 (*Low! shouts without.*)

Pyth. The gods do know I could have died for him!
 And yet I dared to doubt!—I dared to breathe
 The half-utter'd blasphemy!

(*Damon is raised up.*)

He faints!—How thick
 This wreath of burning moisture on his brow!
 His face is black with toil, his swelling bulk
 Heaves with swift pantings—Damon, my dear friend!
Damon. Where am I? Have I fallen from my horse,
 That I am stunn'd, and on my head I feel
 A weight of thickening blood!—What has befallen
 me?

The horrible confusion of a dream
 Is yet upon my sight.—For mercy's sake,
 Stay me not back—he is about to die!
 Pythias, my friend!—Unloose me, villains, or
 You will find the might of madness in mine arm!
 (*Sees Pyth.*) Speak to me, let me hear thy voice!

Pyth. My friend!

Damon. It pierc'd my brain, and rush'd into my
 heart!

There's lightning in it!—That's the scaffold—there
 The block—the axe—the executioner!
 And here he lives!—I have him in my soul!
 (*Embraces Pythias.*) Ha! ha! ha!

Pyth. Damon !

Damon. Ha ! ha !

I can but laugh !—I cannot speak to thee !

I can but play the maniac, and laugh !

Thy hand !—O, let me grasp thy manly hand !—

It is an honest one, and so is mine !

They are fit to clasp each other ! Ha ! ha ! ha !

Pyth. Would that my death could have preserv'd thee !

Damon. Pythias,

Even in the very crisis to have come,—

To have hit the very forehead of old time !

By heavens ! had I arrived an hour before,

I should not feel this agony of joy,—

This triumph over Dionysius !

Ha ! ha !—But did'st thou doubt me ? Come, thou did'st—

Own it, and I'll forgive.

Pyth. For a moment.

Damon. O that false slave !—Pythias, he slew my horse,
In the base thought to save me ! I would have kill'd him,

And to a precipice was dragging him,

When from the very brink of the abyss

I did behold a traveller afar,

Bestriding a good steed—I rush'd upon him ;

Choking with desperation, and yet loud

In shrieking anguish, I commanded him

Down from his saddle : he denied me—but

Would I then be denied ? as hungry tigers

Clutch their poor prey, I sprung upon his throat.

Thus, thus I had him, Pythias !

Dion. (*advancing.*) Damon !

Damon. I am here upon the scaffold ; look at me :
I am standing on my throne ; as proud a one
As yon illumin'd mountain, where the sun
Makes his last stand : let him look on me too ;
He never did behold a spectacle
More full of natural glory. Death is—Ha !
All Syracuse starts up upon her hills,

And lifts her hundred thousand hands. She shouts,
Hark, how she shouts! (*shouts heard.*) O, Dionysius,
When wert thou in thy life hail'd with a peal
Of hearts and hands like that one? Shout again!
' Again, until the mountains echo you,
And the great sea joins in that mighty voice,
And old Enceladus, the son of earth,
Stirs in his mighty caverns. Tell me, slaves,
Where is your tyrant! Let me see him now;
Why stands he hence aloof? Where is your master?
What is become of Dionysius?
I would behold, and laugh at him.

(*DIONYSIUS advances between Damon and Pythias,—Damon being on the scaffold,—and throws off his disguise.*)

Dion. Behold me.

Damon and Pyth. How?

Dion. Stay your admiration for awhile,
Till I have spoken my commandment here.
Go, Damocles, and bid a herald cry
Wide through the city, from the eastern gate
Unto the most remote extremity,
That Dionysius, tyrant as he is,
Gives back his life to Damon.

[*exit Damocles.*]

Pyth. How, Dionysius?
Speak that again.

Dion. I pardon him.

Pyth. O, gods!
You give his life to Damon?

Dion. Life and freedom.

Damon remains mute with astonishment upon the scaffold.)

Pyth. O, Dionysius! O, my sovereign! Life
And freedom! Let me fall down at your feet,
And open all the sluices of my heart
In one wild gush of weeping gratitude!
O, Damon! (*Damon continues motionless.*)

Dion. Almighty virtue,
Now do I own and worship thee. I see
The glorious spark which the Eternal one
Struck from himself into the soul of man.

Blaze up into such excelling majesty,
It awes, while it illumines my heart. What hoa !
How, Damon, is it with thee? Come, descend :
Let me conduct thee from this place of death,
Into the bosom of your friend.

Pyth. O, Damon !

Damon. Pythias—good Dionysius—no, I cannot ;
Lend me your hand, good Pythias—I could weep.
(*they take each other's hands, and remain looking at each other.*)

Dion. Until this wond'rous hour I walk'd in error,
And liv'd in darkness. Either my heart was born
Blind to the light of virtue, or some film
Hath crept upon its fine susceptibility.
Pythias, 'twas I that visited your dungeon,
To put your faith unto the test ; and one thing
Hath griev'd me in its issue—your old father—

Pyth. He is dead ?

Dion. The shock was terrible.

Pyth. The earth
Lie lightly on his bosom.

Dion. But here is
The loveliest face that ever yet was worn
By consolation.

Enter CALANTHE.

Cal. O, my Pythias !

Pyth. Calanthe !

Cal. My dear husband !

Pyth. Thou hast heard all ?

Cal. Yes—through the city a loud voice goes forth,
Of gratitude, and piety, and exultation.

Damon. Pythias ! O, Dionysius ! I did not
In the wild wonder of recover'd life
Appreciate the blessing ; but it rushes
Now full and deep in one wide gush of joy,
Bursts in one tide of exultation.

Oh, Pythias ! the thought
Of Hermion is at my heart, and I
Cannot hold back these tears.

Dion. Damon and Pythias,

You have rewarded me : I now begin
To taste of pleasures never touch'd before.
Perfect the work you have begun,
And I myself, by the continued light
Of your example, may at last essay
To tread such wond'rous ways of virtue with you.

(the curtain falls.)

THE END.