

## The Deformed Transformed :

A DRAMA.<sup>1</sup>

### ADVERTISEMENT.

This production is founded partly on the story of a novel called "The Three Brothers<sup>2</sup>," published many years ago, from which M. G. Lewis's "Wood Demon" was also taken, and partly on the "Faust" of the great Goethe. The present publication contains the two first Parts only, and the opening chorus of the third. The rest may, perhaps, appear hereafter.

### DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

STRANGER, afterwards CÆSAR.  
ARNOLD.  
BOURBON.  
PHILIBERT.  
CELLINI.  
BERTHA.  
OLIMPIA.

*Spirits, Soldiers, Citizens of Rome, Priests,  
Peasants, &c.*

<sup>1</sup> [This drama was begun at Pisa in 1821, but was not published till January, 1824. Mr. Medwin says, — "On my calling on Lord Byron one morning, he produced the 'Deformed Transformed.' Handing it to Shelley, he said — 'Shelley, I have been writing a Faustish kind of drama: tell me what you think of it.' After reading it attentively, Shelley returned it. 'Well,' said Lord B., 'how do you like it?' 'Least,' replied he, 'of any thing I ever saw of yours. It is a bad imitation of 'Faust,' and besides, there are two entire lines of Southey's in it.' Lord Byron changed colour immediately, and asked hastily, 'what lines?' Shelley repeated,

'And water shall see thee,  
And fear thee, and flee thee.'

They are in the 'Curse of Kehama.' His Lordship instantly threw the poem into the fire. He seemed to feel no chagrin at seeing it consume — at least his countenance betrayed none, and his conversation became more gay and lively than usual. Whether it was hatred of Southey, or respect for Shelley's opinion, which made him commit the act that I considered a sort of suicide, was always doubtful to me. I was never more surprised than to see, two years afterwards, 'The Deformed Transformed' announced (supposing it to have perished at Pisa); but it seems that he must have had another copy of the manuscript, or that he had re-written it perhaps, without changing a word, except omitting the Kehama lines. His memory was remarkably retentive of his own writings. I believe he could have quoted almost every line he ever wrote."

Mrs. Shelley, whose copy of "The Deformed Transformed" lies before us, has written as follows on the fly-leaf: — "This had long been a favourite subject with Lord Byron. I think that he mentioned it also in Switzerland. I copied it — he sending a portion of it at a time, as it was finished, to me. At this time he had a great horror of its being said that he plagiarised, or that he studied for ideas, and wrote with difficulty. Thus he gave Shelley Aikin's edition of the British Poets, that it might not be found in his house by some English loungee, and reported home: thus, too, he always dated when he began and when he ended a poem, to prove hereafter how quickly it was done. I do not think that he altered a line in this drama after he had once written it down. He composed and corrected in his mind. I do not know how he meant to finish it; but he said himself, that the whole conduct of the story was already conceived. It was at this time that a brutal paragraph alluding to his lameness appeared, which he re-

## The Deformed Transformed.<sup>3</sup>

### PART I.

#### SCENE I.

*A Forest.*

*Enter ARNOLD and his mother BERTHA.*

*Bert.* OUT, hunchback!

*Arn.* I was born so, mother! <sup>4</sup>

*Bert.* Out, Thou incubus! Thou nightmare! Of seven sons,  
The sole abortion!

*Arn.* Would that I had been so,  
And never seen the light!

*Bert.* I would so too!  
But as thou hast — hence, hence — and do thy best!  
That back of thine may bear its burthen; 'tis  
More high, if not so broad as that of others.

*Arn.* It bears its burthen; — but, my heart! Will it  
Sustain that which you lay upon it, mother?  
I love, or, at the least, I loved you: nothing

peated to me; lest I should hear it first from some one else. No action of Lord Byron's life — scarce a line he has written — but was influenced by his personal defect."

<sup>2</sup> [Published in 1803, the work of a Joshua Pickersgill, jun.]

<sup>3</sup> [A clever anonymous critic thus sarcastically opens his notice of this poem: — "The reader has no doubt often heard of the Devil and Dr. Faustus: this is but a new birth of the same unrighteous couple, who are christened, however, by the noble hierophant who presides over the infernal ceremony, — Julius Cæsar and Count Arnold. The drama opens with a scene between the latter, who is to all appearance a well-disposed young man, of a very deformed person, and his mother: this good lady, with somewhat less maternal piety about her than adorns the mother-ape in the fable, turns her dutiful incubus of a son out of doors to gather wood. Arnold, upon this, proceeds incontinently to kill himself, by falling, after the manner of Brutus, on his wood-knife: he is, however, piously dissuaded from this guilty act, by — whom does the reader think? A monk, perhaps, or a methodist preacher? no; — but by the Devil himself, in the shape of a tall black man, who rises, like an African water-god, out of a fountain. To this stranger, after the exchange of a few sinister compliments, Arnold, without more ado, sells his soul, for the privilege of wearing the beautiful form of Achilles. In the midst of all this absurdity, we still, however, recognise the master-mind of our great poet: his bold and beautiful spirit flashes at intervals through the surrounding horrors, into which he has chosen to plunge after Goethe, his *magnus Apollo*."]

<sup>4</sup> ["One of the few pages of Lord Byron's 'Memoranda,' which related to his early days, was where, in speaking of his own sensitiveness on the subject of his deformed foot, he described the feeling of horror and humiliation that came over him, when his mother, in one of her fits of passion, called him 'a lame brat!' It may be questioned, whether this drama was not indebted for its origin to this single recollection." — MOORE.]

"Lord Byron's own mother, when in ill humour with him, used to make the deformity in his foot the subject of taunts and reproaches. She would (we quote from a letter written by one of her relations in Scotland) pass from passionate caresses to the repulsion of actual disgust; then devour him with kisses again, and swear his eyes were as beautiful as his father's." — *Quar. Rev.*]

Save you, in nature, can love aught like me.  
You nursed me — do not kill me!

*Bert.* Yes — I nursed thee,  
Because thou wert my first-born, and I knew not  
If there would be another unlike thee,  
That monstrous sport of nature. But get hence,  
And gather wood!

*Arn.* I will: but when I bring it,  
Speak to me kindly. Though my brothers are  
So beautiful and lusty, and as free  
As the free chase they follow, do not spurn me;  
Our milk has been the same.

*Bert.* As is the hedgehog's,  
Which sucks at midnight from the wholesome dam  
Of the young bull, until the milkmaid finds  
The nipple next day sore and udder dry.<sup>1</sup>  
Call not thy brothers brethren! Call me not  
Mother; for if I brought thee forth, it was  
As foolish hens at times hatch vipers, by  
Sitting upon strange eggs. Out, urchin, out!

[*Exit BERTHA.*  
*Arn. (solus).* Oh mother! — She is gone, and I  
Her bidding; — wearily but willingly [must do  
I would fulfil it, could I only hope  
A kind word in return. What shall I do?

[*ARNOLD begins to cut wood: in doing this he  
wounds one of his hands.*

My labour for the day is over now.  
Accursed be this blood that flows so fast;  
For double curses will be my meed now  
At home — What home? I have no home, no kin,  
No kind — not made like other creatures, or  
To share their sports or pleasures. Must I bleed too  
Like them? Oh that each drop which falls to earth  
Would rise a snake to sting them, as they have stung  
me!

Or that the devil, to whom they liken me,  
Would aid his likeness! If I must partake  
His form, why not his power? Is it because  
I have not his will too? For one kind word  
From her who bore me would still reconcile me  
Even to this hateful aspect. Let me wash  
The wound.

[*ARNOLD goes to a spring, and stoops to wash  
his hand: he starts back.*

They are right; and Nature's mirror shows me,  
What she hath made me. I will not look on it  
Again, and scarce dare think on't. Hideous wretch  
That I am! The very waters mock me with  
My horrid shadow — like a demon placed  
Deep in the fountain to scare back the cattle  
From drinking therein. [He pauses.

And shall I live on,  
A burden to the earth, myself, and shame  
Unto what brought me into life! Thou blood,  
Which flowest so freely from a scratch, let me  
Try if thou wilt not in a fuller stream  
Pour forth my woes for ever with thyself  
On earth, to which I will restore at once  
This hateful compound of her atoms, and  
Resolve back to her elements, and take  
The shape of any reptile save myself,  
And make a world for myriads of new worms!  
This knife! now let me prove if it will sever  
This wither'd slip of nature's nightshade — my

<sup>1</sup> [This is now generally believed to be a vulgar error; the smallness of the animal's mouth rendering it incapable of the

Vile form — from the creation, as it hath  
The green bough from the forest.

[*ARNOLD places the knife in the ground, with  
the point upwards.*

Now 'tis set,  
And I can fall upon it. Yet one glance  
On the fair day, which sees no foul thing like  
Myself, and the sweet sun which warm'd me, but  
In vain. The birds — how joyously they sing!  
So let them, for I would not be lamented:  
But let their merriest notes be Arnold's knell;  
The fallen leaves my monument; the murmur  
Of the near fountain my sole elegy.

Now, knife, stand firmly, as I fain would fall!

[*As he rushes to throw himself upon the knife, his  
eye is suddenly caught by the fountain, which  
seems in motion.*

The fountain moves without a wind: but shall  
The ripple of a spring change my resolve?  
No. Yet it moves again! The waters stir,  
Not as with air, but by some subterranean  
And rocking power of the internal world.  
What's here? A mist! No more? —

[*A cloud comes from the fountain. He stands  
gazing upon it; it is dispelled, and a tall  
black man comes towards him.*

*Arn.* What would you? Speak!  
Spirit or man?

*Stran.* As man is both, why not

Say both in one?

*Arn.* Your form is man's, and yet  
You may be devil.

*Stran.* So many men are that  
Which is so call'd or thought, that you may add me  
To which you please, without much wrong to either.  
But come: you wish to kill yourself; — pursue  
Your purpose.

*Arn.* You have interrupted me.

*Stran.* What is that resolution which can e'er  
Be interrupted? If I be the devil  
You deem, a single moment would have made you  
Mine, and for ever, by your suicide;  
And yet my coming saves you.

*Arn.* I said not  
You were the demon, but that your approach  
Was like one.

*Stran.* Unless you keep company  
With him (and you seem scarce used to such high  
Society) you can't tell how he approaches;  
And for his aspect, look upon the fountain,  
And then on me, and judge which of us twain  
Look likeliest what the boors believe to be  
Their cloven-footed terror.

*Arn.* Do you — dare you  
To taunt me with my born deformity?

*Stran.* Were I to taunt a buffalo with this  
Cloven foot of thine, or the swift dromedary  
With thy sublime of humps, the animals  
Would revel in the compliment. And yet  
Both beings are more swift, more strong, more mighty  
In action and endurance than thyself,  
And all the fierce and fair of the same kind  
With thee. Thy form is natural: 't is only  
Nature's mistaken largess to bestow  
The gifts which are of others upon man.

mischief laid to its charge. For an amusing controversy on the subject, see *Gent. Mag.* vols. lxxx. and lxxxii.]



Arn. Give me the strength then of the buffalo's foot,  
When he spurs high the dust, beholding his  
Near enemy; or let me have the long  
And patient swiftness of the desert-ship,  
The helmless dromedary!—and I'll bear  
Thy fiendish sarcasm with a saintly patience.

Stran. I will.

Arn. (with surprise). Thou canst?

Stran. Perhaps. Would you aught else?

Arn. Thou mockest me.

Stran. Not I. Why should I mock  
What all are mocking? That's poor sport, methinks.  
To talk to thee in human language (for  
Thou canst not yet speak mine), the forester  
Hunts not the wretched coney, but the boar,  
Or wolf, or lion, leaving paltry game  
To petty burghers, who leave once a year  
Their walls, to fill their household caldrons with  
Such scullion prey. The meanest gibe at thee,—  
Now I can mock the mightiest.

Arn. Then waste not  
Thy time on me: I seek thee not.

Stran. Your thoughts  
Are not far from me. Do not send me back:  
I am not so easily recall'd to do  
Good service.

Arn. What wilt thou do for me?

Stran. Change  
Shapes with you, if you will, since yours so irks you;  
Or form you to your wish in any shape.

Arn. Oh! then you are indeed the demon, for  
Nought else would wittingly wear mine.

Stran. I'll show thee  
The brightest which the world e'er bore, and give thee  
Thy choice.

Arn. On what condition?

Stran. There's a question;  
An hour ago you would have given your soul  
To look like other men, and now you pause  
To wear the form of heroes.

Arn. No; I will not.  
I must not compromise my soul.

Stran. What soul,  
Worth naming so, would dwell in such a carcass?

Arn. 'Tis an aspiring one, whate'er the tene-  
ment

In which it is mislaid. But name your compact;  
Must it be sign'd in blood?

Stran. Not in your own.

Arn. Whose blood then?

Stran. We will talk of that hereafter.  
But I'll be moderate with you, for I see  
Great things within you. You shall have no bond  
But your own will, no contract save your deeds.  
Are you content?

Arn. I take thee at thy word.

Stran. Now then!—

[The Stranger approaches the fountain, and  
turns to ARNOLD.]

A little of your blood.

Arn. For what?

Stran. To mingle with the magic of the waters,  
And make the charm effective.

<sup>1</sup> This is a well-known German superstition—a gigantic shadow produced by reflection on the Brocken. [The Brocken is the name of the loftiest of the Hartz mountains, a picturesque range which lies in the kingdom of Hanover. From

Arn. (holding out his wounded arm). Take it all.  
Stran. Not now. A few drops will suffice for this.

[The Stranger takes some of ARNOLD'S blood in  
his hand, and casts it into the fountain.]

Stran. Shadows of beauty!

Shadows of power!

Rise to your duty—

This is the hour!

Walk lovely and pliant

From the depth of this fountain,

As the cloud-shapen giant

Bestrides the Hartz Mountain.<sup>1</sup>

Come as ye were,

That our eyes may behold

The model in air

Of the form I will mould,

Bright as the Iris

When ether is spann'd;—

Such his desire is, [Pointing to ARNOLD.]

Such my command!

Demons heroic—

Demons who wore

The form of the stoic

Or sophist of yore—

Or the shape of each victor,

From Macedon's boy

To each high Roman's picture

Who breathed to destroy—

Shadows of beauty!

Shadows of power!

Up to your duty—

This is the hour!

[Various Phantoms arise from the waters, and  
pass in succession before the Stranger and  
ARNOLD.]

Arn. What do I see?

Stran. The black-eyed Roman, with  
The eagle's beak between those eyes which ne'er  
Beheld a conqueror, or look'd along  
The land he made not Rome's, while Rome became  
His, and all theirs who heir'd his very name.

Arn. The phantom's bald; my quest is beauty.  
Could I

Inherit but his fame with his defects! [Hairs.  
Stran. His brow was girt with laurels more than  
You see his aspect—choose it, or reject.  
I can but promise you his form: his fame  
Must be long sought and fought for.

Arn. I will fight too,

But not as a mock Caesar. Let him pass;

His aspect may be fair, but suits me not.

Stran. Then you are far more difficult to please

Than Cato's sister, or than Brutus's mother,

Or Cleopatra at sixteen—an age

When love is not less in the eye than heart.

But be it so! Shadow, pass on!

[The Phantom of Julius Cæsar disappears.]

Arn. And can it

Be, that the man who shook the earth is gone,

And left no footprint?

Stran. There you err. His substance

Left graves enough, and woes enough, and fame

More than enough to track his memory;

But for his shadow, 'tis no more than yours,

the earliest periods of authentic history, the Brocken has been the seat of the marvellous. For a description of the phenomenon alluded to by Lord Byron, see Sir David Brewster's "Natural Magic," p. 128.]

Except a little longer and less crook'd

I the sun. Behold another!

[A second phantom passes.]

Arn. Who is he?

Stran. He was the fairest and the bravest of  
Athenians.<sup>1</sup> Look upon him well.

Arn. He is

More lovely than the last. How beautiful!

Stran. Such was the curled son of Clinias;—  
wouldst thou

Invest thee with his form?

Arn. Would that I had  
Been born with it! But since I may choose further,  
I will look further.

[The shade of Alcibiades disappears.]

Stran. Lo! behold again! [eyed satyr,

Arn. What! that low, swarthy, short-nosed, round-  
With the wide nostrils and Silenus' aspect,  
The splay feet and low stature?<sup>2</sup> I had better  
Remain that which I am.

Stran. And yet he was  
The earth's perfection of all mental beauty,  
And personification of all virtue.

But you reject him?

Arn. If his form could bring me  
That which redeem'd it—no.

Stran. I have no power  
To promise that; but you may try, and find it  
Easier in such a form, or in your own.

Arn. No. I was not born for philosophy,  
Though I have that about me which has need on't.  
Let him fleet on.

Stran. Be air, thou hemlock-drinker!

[The shadow of Socrates disappears: another rises.]

Arn. What's here? whose broad brow and whose  
curly beard

And manly aspect look like Hercules,<sup>3</sup>

Save that his jocund eye hath more of Bacchus

Than the sad purger of the infernal world,

Leaning dejected on his club of conquest,

As if he knew the worthlessness of those

For whom he had fought.

Stran. It was the man who lost  
The ancient world for love.

Arn. I cannot blame him,

Since I have risk'd my soul because I find not

That which he exchanged the earth for.

Stran. Since so far

You seem congenial, will you wear his features?

Arn. No. As you leave me choice, I am difficult,

If but to see the heroes I should ne'er

Have seen else on this side of the dim shore

Whence they float back before us.

Stran. Hence, triumvir!

Thy Cleopatra's waiting.

[The shade of Anthony disappears: another rises.]

<sup>1</sup> [In one of Lord Byron's MS. Diaries we find the following passage:—"Alcibiades is said to have been 'successful in all his battles'—but what battles? Name them! If you mention Caesar, or Hannibal, or Napoleon, you at once rush upon Pharsalia, Munda, Alesia, Cannæ, Thrasymene, Trebia, Lodi, Marengo, Jena, Austerlitz, Friedland, Wagram, Moskwa: but it is less easy to pitch upon the victories of Alcibiades; though they may be named too, though not so readily as the Leuctra and Mantinea of Epaminondas, the Marathon of Miltiades, the Salamis of Themistocles, and the Thermopylae of Leonidas. Yet, upon the whole, it may be doubted, whether there be a name of antiquity which comes down with such a general charm as that of Alcibiades. Why? I cannot answer. Who can?"]

<sup>2</sup> ["The outside of Socrates was that of a satyr and buffoon,

Arn. Who is this?  
Who truly looketh like a demigod,  
Blooming and bright, with golden hair, and stature,  
If not more high than mortal, yet immortal  
In all that nameless bearing of his limbs,  
Which he wears as the sun his rays—a something  
Which shines from him, and yet is but the flashing  
Emanation of a thing more glorious still.  
Was he e'er human only?<sup>4</sup>

Stran. Let the earth speak,

If there be atoms of him left, or even

Of the more solid gold that form'd his urn.

Arn. Who was this glory of mankind?

Stran. The shame

Of Greece in peace, her thunderbolt in war—

Demetrius the Macedonian, and

Taker of cities.

Arn. Yet one shadow more.

Stran. (addressing the shadow). Get thee to Lamia's  
lap!

[The shade of Demetrius Poliorcetes vanishes:  
another rises.]

I'll fit you still,

Fear not, my hunchback: if the shadows of

That which existed please not your nice taste,

I'll animate the ideal marble, till

Your soul be reconciled to her new garment.

Arn. Content! I will fix here.

Stran. I must commend

Your choice. The godlike son of the sea-goddess,

The unshorn boy of Peleus, with his locks

As beautiful and clear as the amber waves

Of rich Pactolus, roll'd o'er sands of gold,

Softened by intervening crystal, and

Rippled like flowing waters by the wind,

All vow'd to Sperchius as they were—behold them!

And him—as he stood by Polixena,

With sanction'd and with soften'd love, before

The altar, gazing on his Trojan bride,

With some remorse within for Hector slain

And Priam weeping, mingled with deep passion

For the sweet downcast virgin, whose young hand

Trembled in his who slew her brother. So

He stood in the temple! Look upon him as

Greece look'd her last upon her best, the instant

Ere Paris' arrow flew.

Arn. I gaze upon him

As if I were his soul, whose form shall soon

Envelope mine.

Stran. You have done well. The greatest

Deformity should only barter with

The extremest beauty, if the proverb's true

Of mortals, that extremes meet.

Arn. Come! Be quick!

I am impatient.

Stran. As a youthful beauty

but his soul was all virtue, and from within him came such divine and pathetic things, as pierced the heart, and drew tears from the hearers."—PLATO.]

<sup>3</sup> ["His face was as the heavens; and therein stuck  
A sun and moon; which kept their course, and lighted  
The little O, the earth.  
His legs bestrid the ocean: his rear'd arm  
Crested the world: his voice was propertied  
As all the tuned spheres," &c.—SHAKESPEARE.]

<sup>4</sup> ["The beauty and mien of Demetrius Poliorcetes were so inimitable, that no statuary or painter could hit off a likeness. His countenance had a mixture of grace and dignity, and was at once amiable and awful, and the unsubdued and eager air of youth was blended with the majesty of the hero and the king."—PLUTARCH.]



Before her glass. *You both* see what is not,  
But dream it is what must be.

*Arn.* Must I wait?

*Stran.* No; that were a pity. But a word or two:  
His stature is twelve cubits; would you so far  
Outstep these times, and be a Titan? Or  
(To talk canonically) wax a son  
Of Anak?

*Arn.* Why not?

*Stran.* Glorious ambition!  
I love thee most in dwarfs! A mortal of  
Philistine stature would have gladly pared  
His own Goliath down to a slight David:  
But thou, my manikin, wouldst soar a show  
Rather than hero. Thou shalt be indulged,  
If such be thy desire; and yet, by being  
A little less removed from present men  
In figure, thou canst sway them more; for all  
Would rise against thee now, as if to hunt  
A new-found mammoth; and their cursed engines,  
Their culverins, and so forth, would find way  
Through our friend's armour there, with greater ease  
Than the adulterer's arrow through his heel,  
Which Thetis had forgotten to baptize  
In Styx.

*Arn.* Then let it be as thou deem'st best. [seest,

*Stran.* Thou shalt be beautiful as the thing thou  
And strong as what it was, and——

*Arn.* I ask not

For valour, since deformity is daring.<sup>1</sup>  
It is its essence to o'ertake mankind  
By heart and soul, and make itself the equal—  
Ay, the superior of the rest. There is  
A spur in its halt movements, to become  
All that the others cannot, in such things  
As still are free to both, to compensate  
For stepdame Nature's avarice at first.  
They woo with fearless deeds the smiles of fortune,  
And oft, like Timour the lame Tartar, win them.<sup>2</sup>

*Stran.* Well spoken! And thou doubtless wilt  
remain  
Form'd as thou art. I may dismiss the mould  
Of shadow, which must turn to flesh, to incase  
This daring soul, which could achieve no less  
Without it.

*Arn.* Had no power presented me  
The possibility of change, I would  
Have done the best which spirit may to make  
Its way with all deformity's dull, deadly,  
Discouraging weight upon me, like a mountain,  
In feeling, on my heart as on my shoulders—  
An hateful and unsightly molehill, to  
The eyes of happier man. I would have look'd  
On beauty in that sex which is the type  
Of all we know or dream of beautiful  
Beyond the world they brighten, with a sigh—  
Not of love, but despair; nor sought to win,  
Though to a heart all love, what could not love me

<sup>1</sup> ["Whosoever," says Lord Bacon, "hath any thing fixed  
in his person that doth induce contempt, hath also a perpetual  
spur in himself to rescue and deliver himself from scorn;  
therefore, all deformed persons are extreme bold: first, as in  
their own defence, as being exposed to scorn, but in process  
of time by a general habit: also it stirreth in them industry,  
and especially of this kind: to watch and observe the weak-  
ness of others, that they may have somewhat to repay.  
Again, in their superiors, if quencheth jealousy towards them,  
as persons that they think they may at pleasure despise: and  
it layeth their competitors and emulators asleep, as never be-  
lieving they should be in possibility of advancement till they

In turn, because of this vile crooked clog,  
Which makes me lonely. Nay, I could have borne  
It all, had not my mother spurn'd me from her.  
The she-bear licks her cubs into a sort  
Of shape;—my dam beheld my shape was hopeless.  
Had she exposed me, like the Spartan, ere  
I knew the passionate part of life, I had  
Been a clod of the valley,—happier nothing  
Than what I am. But even thus, the lowest,  
Ugliest, and meanest of mankind, what courage  
And perseverance could have done, perchance  
Had made me something—as it has made heroes  
Of the same mould as mine. You lately saw me  
Master of my own life, and quick to quit it;  
And he who is so is the master of  
Whatever dreads to die.

*Stran.* Decide between  
What you have been, or will be.

*Arn.* I have done so.

You have open'd brighter prospects to my eyes,  
And sweeter to my heart. As I am now,  
I might be fear'd, admired, respected, loved  
Of all save those next to me, of whom I  
Would be beloved. As thou showest me  
A choice of forms, I take the one I view.  
Haste! haste!

*Stran.* And what shall I wear?

*Arn.* Surely, he

Who can command all forms will choose the highest,  
Something superior even to that which was  
Pelides now before us. Perhaps his  
Who slew him, that of Paris: or—still higher—  
The poet's god, clothed in such limbs as are  
Themselves a poetry.

*Stran.* Less will content me;

For I, too, love a change.

*Arn.* Your aspect is

Dusky, but not uncomely.  
*Stran.* If I chose,  
I might be whiter; but I have a penchant  
For black—it is so honest, and besides  
Can neither blush with shame nor pale with fear;  
But I have worn it long enough of late,  
And now I'll take your figure.

*Arn.* Mine!

*Stran.* Yes. You  
Shall change with Thetis' son, and I with Bertha,  
Your mother's offspring. People have their tastes:  
You have yours—I mine.

*Arn.* Despatch! despatch!  
*Stran.* Even so.

[*The Stranger takes some earth and moulds it  
along the turf, and then addresses the phan-  
tom of Achilles.*

Beautiful shadow  
Of Thetis's boy!  
Who sleeps in the meadow  
Whose grass grows o'er Troy:

see them in possession: so that upon the matter, in a great  
wit, deformity is an advantage to rising."—*Essay* lv.]

<sup>2</sup> ["Lord Byron's chief incentive, when a boy, to distinction,  
was that mark of deformity, by an acute sense of which he  
was first stung into the ambition of being great. In one of  
his letters to Mr. Hunt, he declares it to be his own opinion  
that 'an addiction to poetry is very generally the result of an  
uneasy mind in an uneasy body; disease or deformity,' he  
adds, 'have been the attendants of many of our best: Col-  
lins mad—Chatterton, I think, mad—Cowper mad—Pope  
crooked—Milton blind,' &c. &c."—*MOORE.*]

From the red earth, like Adam,<sup>1</sup>

Thy likeness I shape,  
As the being who made him,  
Whose actions I ape.

Thou clay, be all glowing,  
Till the rose in his cheek  
Be as fair as, when blowing,  
It wears its first streak!  
Ye violets, I scatter,

Now turn into eyes!  
And thou, sunshiny water,  
Of blood take the guise!

Let these hyacinth boughs  
Be his long flowing hair,  
And wave o'er his brows,  
As thou waviest in air!

Let his heart be this marble  
I tear from the rock!

But his voice as the warble  
Of birds on yon oak!

Let his flesh be the purest  
Of mould, in which grew  
The lily-root surest,

And drank the best dew!  
Let his limbs be the lightest  
Which clay can compound,

And his aspect the brightest  
On earth to be found!

Elements, near me,  
Be mingled and stirr'd,  
Know me, and hear me,  
And leap to my word!

Sunbeams, awaken  
This earth's animation!  
'T is done! He hath taken  
His stand in creation!

[*ARNOLD falls senseless; his soul passes into the  
shape of Achilles, which rises from the  
ground; while the phantom has disappeared,  
part by part, as the figure was formed from  
the earth.*

*Arn.* (*in his new form.*) I love, and I shall be be-  
loved! Oh life!

At last I feel thee! Glorious spirit!

*Stran.* Stop!

What shall become of your abandon'd garment,  
Yon hump, and lump, and clod of ugliness,  
Which late you wore, or were?

*Arn.* Who cares? Let wolves  
And vultures take it, if they will.

*Stran.* And if  
They do, and are not scared by it, you'll say  
It must be peace-time, and no better fare  
Abroad i' the fields.

*Arn.* Let us but leave it there;  
No matter what becomes on't.

*Stran.* That's ungracious,  
If not ungrateful. Whatso'er it be,  
It hath sustain'd your soul full many a day.

*Arn.* Ay, as the dunghill may conceal a gem  
Which is now set in gold, as jewels should be.

*Stran.* But if I give another form, it must be  
By fair exchange, not robbery. For they  
Who make men without women's aid have long  
Had patents for the same, and do not love

Had patents for the same, and do not love

Had patents for the same, and do not love

Had patents for the same, and do not love

<sup>1</sup> Adam means "red earth," from which the first man was  
formed.

Your interlopers.—The devil may take men,  
Not make them,—though he reap the benefit  
Of the original workmanship:—and therefore  
Some one must be found to assume the shape  
You have quitted.

*Arn.* Who would do so?

*Stran.* That I know not,

And therefore I must.

*Arn.* You!

*Stran.* I said it ere

You inhabited your present dome of beauty.

*Arn.* True. I forget all things in the new joy  
Of this immortal change.

*Stran.* In a few moments

I will be as you were, and you shall see

Yourself for ever by you, as your shadow.

*Arn.* I would be spared this.

*Stran.* But it cannot be.

What! shrink already, being what you are,

From seeing what you were?

*Arn.* Do as thou wilt.

*Stran.* (*to the late form of ARNOLD, extended on  
the earth.*)

Clay! not dead, but soul-less!

Though no man would choose thee,

An immortal no less

Deigns not to refuse thee.

Clay thou art; and unto spirit

All clay is of equal merit.

Fire! *without* which nought can live;

Fire! *but in* which nought can live,

Save the fabled salamander,

Or immortal souls, which wander,

Praying what doth not forgive,

Howling for a drop of water,

Burning in a quenchless lot:

Fire! the only element

Where nor fish, beast, bird, nor worm,

Save the worm which dieth not,

Can preserve a moment's form,

But must with thyself be blent:

Fire! man's safeguard and his slaughter:

Fire! Creation's first-born daughter,

And Destruction's threaten'd son,

When heaven with the world hath done:

Fire! assist me to renew

Life in what lies in my view

Stiff and cold!

• His resurrection rests with me and you!

One little, marshy spark of flame—

And he again shall seem the same;

But I his spirit's place shall hold!

[*An ignis-fatuus flits through the wood and rests  
on the brow of the body. The Stranger dis-  
appears: the body rises.*

*Arn.* (*in his new form.*) Oh! horrible! [thou?

*Stran.* (*in ARNOLD's late shape.*) What! tremblest

*Arn.* Not so—

I merely shudder. Where is fled the shape

Thou lately worest?

*Stran.* To the world of shadows.

But let us thread the present. Whither wilt thou?

*Arn.* Must thou be my companion?

*Stran.* Wherefore not?

Your betters keep worse company.

*Arn.* My betters!

*Stran.* Oh! you wax proud, I see, of your new  
form:



I'm glad of that. Ungrateful too! That's well;  
You improve apace;—two changes in an instant,  
And you are old in the world's ways already.  
But bear with me: indeed you'll find me useful  
Upon your pilgrimage. But come, pronounce  
Where shall we now be errant?

*Arn.* Where the world  
Is thickest, that I may behold it in  
Its workings.

*Stran.* That's to say, where there is war  
And woman in activity. Let's see!  
Spain—Italy—the new Atlantic world—  
Afric, with all its Moors. In very truth,  
There is small choice: the whole race are just now  
Tugging as usual at each other's hearts.

*Arn.* I have heard great things of Rome.

*Stran.* A goodly choice—  
And scarce a better to be found on earth,  
Since Sodom was put out. The field is wide too;  
For now the Frank, and Hun, and Spanish scion  
Of the old Vandals are at play along  
The sunny shores of the world's garden.

*Arn.* How  
Shall we proceed?

*Stran.* Like gallants, on good coursers.  
What ho! my chargers! Never yet were better,  
Since Phaeton was upset into the Po.  
Our pages too!

*Enter two Pages, with four coal-black horses.*

*Arn.* A noble sight!

*Stran.* And of  
A nobler breed. Match me in Barbary,  
Or your Kochlini race of Araby,  
With these!

*Arn.* The mighty steam, which volumes high  
From their proud nostrils, burns the very air;  
And sparks of flame, like dancing fire-flies, wheel  
Around their manes, as common insects swarm  
Round common steeds towards sunset.

*Stran.* Mount, my lord:  
They and I are your servitors.

*Arn.* And these  
Our dark-eyed pages—what may be their names?

*Stran.* You shall baptize them.

*Arn.* What! in holy water?  
*Stran.* Why not? The deeper sinner, better  
saint.

*Arn.* They are beautiful, and cannot, sure, be  
demons. [beauty]

*Stran.* True; the devil's always ugly; and your  
is never diabolical.

*Arn.* I'll call him  
Who bears the golden horn, and wears such bright  
And blooming aspect, *Huon*; for he looks  
Like to the lovely boy lost in the forest,  
And never found till now. And for the other  
And darker, and more thoughtful, who smiles not,  
But looks as serious though serene as night,  
He shall be *Memnon*, from the Ethiop king  
Whose statue turns a harper once a day.  
And you?

*Stran.* I have ten thousand names, and twice  
As many attributes; but as I wear  
A human shape, will take a human name.

*Arn.* More human than the shape (though it was  
mine once)

I trust.

*Stran.* Then call me *Cæsar*.

*Arn.* Why, that name  
Belongs to empires, and has been but borne  
By the world's lords.

*Stran.* And therefore fittest for  
The devil in disguise—since so you deem me,  
Unless you call me pope instead.

*Arn.* Well, then,  
*Cæsar* thou shalt be. For myself, my name  
Shall be plain *Arnold* still.

*Cæs.* We'll add a title—  
"Count *Arnold*:" it hath no ungracious sound,  
And will look well upon a billet-doux.

*Arn.* Or in an order for a battle-field. [steed]

*Cæs. (sings).* To horse! to horse! my coal-black  
Paws the ground and snuffs the air!  
There's not a foal of Arab's breed

More knows whom he must bear;

On the hill he will not tire,

Swifter as it waxes higher;

In the marsh he will not slacken,

On the plain be overtaken;

In the wave he will not sink,

Nor pause at the brook's side to drink;

In the race he will not pant,

In the combat he'll not faint!

On the stones he will not stumble,

Time nor toil shall make him humble;

In the stall he will not stiffen,

But be winged as a griffin,

Only flying with his feet:

And will not such a voyage be sweet?

Merrily! merrily! never unsound,

Shall our bonny black horses skim over the ground!

From the Alps to the Caucasus, ride we, or fly!

For we'll leave them behind in the glance of an eye.  
[*They mount their horses and disappear.*]

## SCENE II.

*A Camp before the Walls of Rome.*

*ARNOLD and CÆSAR.*

*Cæs.* You are well enter'd now.

*Arn.* Ay; but my path  
Has been o'er carcasses: mine eyes are full  
Of blood.

*Cæs.* Then wipe them, and see clearly. Why!  
Thou art a conqueror; the chosen knight  
And free companion of the gallant Bourbon,  
Late constable of France: and now to be  
Lord of the city which hath been earth's lord  
Under its emperors, and—changing sex,  
Not sceptre, an hermaphrodite of empire—  
*Lady* of the old world.

*Arn.* How old? What! are there  
New worlds?

*Cæs.* To you. You'll find there are such shortly,  
By its rich harvests, new disease, and gold;  
From one half of the world named a whole new one,  
Because you know no better than the dull  
And dubious notice of your eyes and ears.

*Arn.* I'll trust them.

*Cæs.* Do! They will deceive you sweetly,  
And that is better than the bitter truth.

*Arn.* Dog!

*Cæs.* Man!

*Arn.* Devil!

*Cæs.* Your obedient humble servant.

*Arn.* Say *master* rather. Thou hast lured me on,  
Through scenes of blood and lust, till I am here.

*Cæs.* And where wouldst thou be?

*Arn.* Oh, at peace—in peace.

*Cæs.* And where is that which is so? From the star  
To the winding worm, all life is motion; and  
In life commotion is the extremest point

Of life. The planet wheels till it becomes

A comet, and destroying as it sweeps

The stars, goes out. The poor worm winds its way,

Living upon the death of other things,

But still, like them, must live and die, the subject

Of something which has made it live and die.

You must obey what all obey, the rule

Of fix'd necessity: against her edict

Rebellion prospers not.

*Arn.* And when it prospers—

*Cæs.* 'Tis no rebellion.

*Arn.* Will it prosper now?

*Cæs.* The Bourbon hath given orders for the assault,  
And by the dawn there will be work.

*Arn.* Alas!

And shall the city yield? I see the giant

Abode of the true God, and his true saint,

Saint Peter, rear its dome and cross into

That sky whence Christ ascended from the cross,

Which his blood made a badge of glory and

Of joy (as once of torture unto him,

God and God's Son, man's sole and only refuge).

*Cæs.* 'Tis there, and shall be.

*Arn.* What?

*Cæs.* The crucifix

Above, and many altar shrines below.

Also some culverins upon the walls,

And harquebusses, and what not; besides

The men who are to kindle them to death

Of other men.

*Arn.* And those scarce mortal arches,

Pile above pile of everlasting wall,

The theatre where emperors and their subjects

(Those subjects *Romans*) stood at gaze upon

The battles of the monarchs of the wild

And wood, the lion and his tusky rebels

Of the then untamed desert, brought to joust

In the arena (as right well they might,

When they had left no human foe unconquer'd);

Made even the forest pay its tribute of

Life to their amphitheatre, as well

As Dacia men to die the eternal death

For a sole instant's pastime, and "Pass on

To a new gladiator!"—Must it fall?

*Cæs.* The city, or the amphitheatre?

The church, or one, or all? for you confound

Both them and me.

*Arn.* To-morrow sounds the assault

With the first cock-crow.

*Cæs.* Which, if it end with

The evening's first nightingale, will be

Something new in the annals of great sieges;

For men must have their prey after long toil.

*Arn.* The sun goes down as calmly, and perhaps

More beautifully, than he did on Rome

On the day *Remus* leapt her wall.

<sup>1</sup> [Suetonius relates of Julius Cæsar, that his baldness gave him much uneasiness, having often found himself, upon that account, exposed to the ridicule of his enemies; and that, therefore, of all the honours conferred upon him by the

*Cæs.* I saw him.

*Arn.* You!

*Cæs.* Yes, sir. You forget I am or was

Spirit, till I took up with your cast shape

And a worse name. I'm *Cæsar* and a hunchback

Now. Well! the first of *Cæsars* was a bald-head,

And loved his laurels better as a wig

(So history says) than as a glory.<sup>1</sup> Thus

The world runs on, but we'll be merry still.

I saw your *Romulus* (simple as I am)

Slay his own twin, quickborn of the same womb,

Because he leapt a ditch ('twas then no wall,

Whate'er it now be); and Rome's earliest cement

Was brother's blood; and if its native blood

Be spilt till the choked *Tiber* be as red

As e'er 'twas yellow, it will never wear

The deep hue of the ocean and the earth,

Which the great robber sons of fratricide

Have made their never-ceasing scene of slaughter

For ages.

*Arn.* But what have these done, their far

Remote descendants, who have lived in peace,

The peace of heaven, and in her sunshine of

Piety?

*Cæs.* And what had they done, whom the old

*Romans* o'erswept?—Hark!

*Arn.* They are soldiers singing

A reckless roundelay, upon the eve

Of many deaths, it may be of their own.

*Cæs.* And why should they not sing as well as

swans?

They are black ones, to be sure.

*Arn.* So, you are learn'd,

I see, too?

*Cæs.* In my grammar, certes. I

Was educated for a monk of all times,

And once I was well versed in the forgotten

Etruscan letters, and—were I so minded—

Could make their hieroglyphics plainer than

Your alphabet.

*Arn.* And wherefore do you not?

*Cæs.* It answers better to resolve the alphabet

Back into hieroglyphics. Like your statesman,

And prophet, pontiff, doctor, alchemist,

Philosopher, and what not, they have built

More Babels, without new dispersion, than

The stammering young ones of the flood's dull ooze,

Who fail'd and fled each other. Why? why, marry,

Because no man could understand his neighbour.

They are wiser now, and will not separate

For nonsense. Nay, it is their brotherhood,

Their *Shibboleth*, their *Koran*, *Talmud*, their

*Cabala*; their best brick-work, wherewithal

They build more—

*Arn. (interrupting him).* Oh, thou everlasting

sneerer!

Be silent! How the soldiers' rough strain seems

Softened by distance to a hymn-like cadence!

Listen!

*Cæs.* Yes. I have heard the angels sing.

*Arn.* And demons howl.

*Cæs.* And man too. Let us listen:

I love all music.

senate and people, there was none which he either accepted or used with so much pleasure as the right of wearing constantly a laurel crown.]