

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

A Gothic Hall in the Castle of Siegendorf, near Prague.

Enter ERIC and HENRICK, Retainers of the Count.

ERIC. So, better times are come at last; to these Old walls new masters and high wassail—both A long desideratum.

HEN. Yes, for masters, It might be unto those who long for novelty, Though made by a new grave: but as for wassail, Methinks the old Count Siegendorf maintain'd His feudal hospitality as high As e'er another prince of the empire.

ERIC. Why, For the mere cup and trencher, we no doubt Fared passing well; but as for merriment And sport, without which salt and sauces season The cheer but scantily, our sizings were Even of the narrowest.

HEN. The old count loved not The roar of revel, are you sure that *this* does?

ERIC. As yet he hath been courteous as he's bounteous,

And we all love him.

HEN. His reign is as yet Hardly a year o'erpast its honeymoon, And the first year of sovereigns is bridal: Anon, we shall perceive his real sway And moods of mind.

ERIC. Pray Heaven he keep the present! Then his brave son, Count Ulric—there's a knight! Pity the wars are o'er!

HEN. Why so?

ERIC. Look on him! And answer that yourself.

HEN. He's very youthful, And strong and beautiful as a young tiger.

ERIC. That's not a faithful vassal's likeness.

HEN. But Perhaps a true one.

ERIC. Pity, as I said, The wars are over: in the hall, who like Count Ulric for a well-supported pride, Which awes, but yet offends not? in the field, Who like him with his spear in hand, when, gnashing His tusks, and ripping up from right to left The howling hounds, the boar makes for the thicket? Who backs a horse, or bears a hawk, or wears A sword like him? Whose plume nods knightlier?

HEN. No one's, I grant you. Do not fear, if war Be long in coming, he is of that kind Will make it for himself, if he hath not Already done as much.

ERIC. What do you mean?

HEN. You can't deny his train of followers (But few our native fellow vassals born On the domain) are such a sort of knaves As—(Pauses.)

ERIC. What?

HEN. The war (you love so much) leaves living. Like other parents, she spoils her worst children.

ERIC. Nonsense! they are all brave iron-visaged fellows, Such as old Tilly loved.

HEN. And who loved Tilly? Ask that at Magdebourg—or for that matter Wallenstein either;—they are gone to—

ERIC. Rest; But what beyond 't is not ours to pronounce.

HEN. I wish they had left us something of their rest: The country (nominally now at peace) Is over-run with—God knows who: they fly By night, and disappear with sunrise; but Leave us no less desolation, nay, even more, Than the most open warfare.

ERIC. But Count Ulric— What has all this to do with him?

HEN. With him! He—might prevent it. As you say he's fond Of war, why makes he it not on those marauders?

ERIC. You'd better ask himself.

HEN. I would as soon Ask the lion why he laps not milk.

ERIC. And here he comes!

HEN. The devil! you'll hold your tongue?

ERIC. Why do you turn so pale?

HEN. 'T is nothing—but

Be silent.

ERIC. I will, upon what you have said.

HEN. I assure you I meant nothing,—a mere sport Of words, no more; besides, had it been otherwise, He is to espouse the gentle Baroness, Ida of Stralenheim, the late baron's heiress; And she, no doubt, will soften whatsoever Of fierceness the late long intestine wars Have given all natures, and most unto those Who were born in them, and bred up upon The knees of Homicide; sprinkled, as it were, With blood even at their baptism. Prithee, peace On all that I have said!

Enter ULRIC and RODOLPH.

ULR. Good morrow, worthy Henrick. Eric, is All ready for the chase?

ERIC. The dogs are order'd Down to the forest, and the vassals out To beat the bushes, and the day looks promising. Shall I call forth your excellency's suite? What courser will you please to mount?

ULR. The dun, Walstein.

ERIC. I fear he scarcely has recover'd The toils of Monday: 't was a noble chase: You spear'd *four* with your own hand.

ULR. True, good Eric; I had forgotten—let it be the grey, then, Old Ziska: he has not been out this fortnight.

ERIC. He shall be straight caparison'd. How many Of your immediate retainers shall Escort you?

ULR. I leave that to Weilburg, our Master of the horse. [Exit ERIC.]

ROD. My lord!

ULR. The news Is awkward from the—(RODOLPH points to HENRICK.)

How now, Henrick? why

Loiter you here?

HEN. For your commands, my lord.

ULR. Go to my father, and present my duty, And learn if he would aught with me before

I mount. [Exit HENRICK.]

RODOLPH, our friends have had a check Upon the frontiers of Franconia, and 'T is rumour'd that the column sent against them Is to be strengthen'd. I must join them soon.

ROD. Best wait for further and more sure advices.

ULR. I mean it—and indeed it could not well Have fallen out at a time more opposite To all my plans.

ROD. It will be difficult To excuse your absence to the count your father.

ULR. Yes, but the unsettled state of our domain In high Silesia will permit and cover My journey. In the mean time, when we are Engaged in the chase, draw off the eighty men Whom Wolfe leads—keep the forests on your route: You know it well?

ROD. As well as on that night

When we— We will not speak of that until We can repeat the same with like success: And when you have join'd, give Rosenberg this letter.

[Gives a letter.]

Add further, that I have sent this slight addition To our force with you and Wolfe, as herald of My coming, though I could but spare them ill

At this time, as my father loves to keep Full numbers of retainers round the castle, Until this marriage, and its feasts and fooleries, Are rung out with its peal of nuptial nonsense.

ROD. I thought you loved the lady Ida?

ULR. Why,

I do so—but it follows not from that I would bind in my youth and glorious years, So brief and burning, with a lady's zone, Although 't were that of Venus;—but I love her, As woman should be loved, fairly and solely.

ROD. And constantly?

ULR. I think so; for I love Nought else.—But I have not the time to pause Upon these gewgaws of the heart. Great things We have to do ere long. Speed! speed! good Rodolph!

ROD. On my return, however, I shall find

The Baroness Ida lost in Countess Siegendorf?

ULR. Perhaps my father wishes it; and sooth

'T is no bad policy: this union with

The last bud of the rival branch at once

Unites the future and destroys the past.

ROD. Adieu.

ULR. Yet hold—we had better keep together Until the chase begins; then draw thou off, And do as I have said.

ROD. I will. But to Return—'t was a most kind act in the count Your father to send up to Konigsberg For this fair orphan of the baron, and To hail her as his daughter.

ULR. Wondrous kind!

Especially as little kindness till

Then grew between them.

ROD. The late baron died

Of a fever, did he not?

ULR. How should I know?

ROD. I have heard it whisper'd there was something

strange

Who says that?

ULR. That he died alone.

Who says that?

ULR. That he died alone.

Who says that?

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Who says that?

ULR. That he died alone.

About his death—and even the place of it Is scarcely known.

ULR. Some obscure village on The Saxon or Silesian frontier.

ROD. He

Has left no testament—no farewell words?

ULR. I am neither confessor nor notary,

So cannot say.

ROD. Ah! here's the lady Ida.

Enter IDA STRALENHEIM.¹

ULR. You are early, my sweet cousin!

IDA. Not too early,

Dear Ulric, if I do not interrupt you.

Why do you call me "cousin?"

ULR. (smiling). Are we not so?

IDA. Yes, but I do not like the name; methinks

It sounds so cold, as if you thought upon

Our pedigree, and only weigh'd our blood.

ULR. (starting). Blood!

IDA. Why does yours start from your cheeks?

ULR. Ay! doth it?

IDA. It doth—but no! it rushes like a torrent

Even to your brow again.

ULR. (recovering himself). And if it fled,

It only was because your presence sent it

Back to my heart, which beats for you, sweet cousin!

IDA. "Cousin" again.

ULR. Nay, then I'll call you sister.

IDA. I like that name still worse.—Would we had ne'er

Been aught of kindred!

ULR. (gloomily). Would we never had!

IDA. Oh heavens! and can you wish that?

ULR. Dearest Ida!

Did I not echo your own wish?

IDA. Yes, Ulric,

But then I wish'd it not with such a glance,

And scarce knew what I said; but let me be

Sister, or cousin, what you will, so that

I still to you am something.

ULR. You shall be

All—all—

IDA. And you to me are so already;

But I can wait!

ULR. Dear Ida!

IDA. Call me Ida,

Your Ida, for I would be yours, none else's—

Indeed I have none else left, since my poor father—

[She pauses.]

ULR. You have mine—you have me.

IDA. Dear Ulric, how I wish

My father could but view my happiness,

Which wants but this!

ULR. Indeed!

IDA. You would have loved him,

He you; for the brave ever love each other:

His manner was a little cold, his spirit

Proud (as is birth's prerogative); but under [other!]

This grave exterior—Would you had known each

Had such as you been near him on his journey,

He had not died without a friend to soothe

His last and lonely moments.

ULR. Who says that?

IDA. What?

ULR. That he died alone.

Who says that?

ULR. That he died alone.

Who says that?

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Who says that?

ULR. That he died alone.

¹ [Ida, the new personage, is a precocious girl of fifteen, in a great hurry to be married; and who has very little to do in the business of the play, but to produce an effect by faint-

ing at the discovery of the villainy of her beloved, and partially touching on it in a previous scene.—*Ecl. Rev.*]

Ida. The general rumour
And disappearance of his servants, who
Have ne'er return'd : that fever was most deadly
Which swept them all away.

Ulr. If they were near him,
He could not die neglected or alone.

Ida. Alas ! what is a menial to a deathbed,
When the dim eye rolls vainly round for what
It loves ? — They say he died of a fever.

Ulr. Say !

It was so.

Ida. I sometimes dream otherwise.

Ulr. All dreams are false.

Ida. And yet I see him as
I see you.

Ulr. Where ?

Ida. In sleep — I see him lie
Pale, bleeding, and a man with a raised knife
Beside him.

Ulr. But you do not see his face ?

Ida (looking at him). No ! Oh, my God ! do you ?

Ulr. Why do you ask ?

Ida. Because you look as if you saw a murderer !

Ulr. (agitatedly). *Ida,* this is mere childishness ;
your weakness
Infects me, to my shame ; but as all feelings
Of yours are common to me, it affects me.
Prithee, sweet child, change —

Ida. Child, indeed ! I have
Full fifteen summers !

[A bugle sounds.]

Rod. Hark, my lord, the bugle !

Ida (peevishly to *RODOLPH*). Why need you tell
him that ? Can he not hear it
Without your echo ?

Rod. Pardon me, fair baroness !

Ida. I will not pardon you, unless you earn it
By aiding me in my dissuasion of
Count *Ulric* from the chase to-day.

Rod. You will not,
Lady, need aid of mine.

Ulr. I must not now
Forego it.

Ida. But you shall !

Ulr. Shall !

Ida. Yes, or be
No true knight. — Come, dear *Ulric* ! yield to me
In this, for this one day : the day looks heavy,
And you are turn'd so pale and ill.

Ulr. You jest.

Ida. Indeed I do not : — ask of *Rodolph*.

Rod. Truly,

My lord, within this quarter of an hour
You have changed more than e'er I saw you change
In years.

Ulr. 'Tis nothing ; but if 't were, the air
Would soon restore me. I'm the true chameleon,
And live but on the atmosphere ; your feasts
In castle halls, and social banquets, nurse not
My spirit — I'm a forester and breather
Of the steep mountain-tops, where I love all
The eagle loves.

Ida. Except his prey, I hope.

Ulr. Sweet *Ida,* wish me a fair chase, and I
Will bring you six boars' heads for trophies home.

Ida. And will you not stay, then ? You shall not
Come ! I will sing to you. [go !

Ulr. *Ida,* you scarcely
Will make a soldier's wife.

Ida. I do not wish
To be so ; for I trust these wars are over,
And you will live in peace on your domains.

Enter *WERNER* as *COUNT SIEGENDORF*.

Ulr. My father, I salute you, and it grieves me
With such brief greeting. — You have heard our bugle ;
The vassals wait.

Sieg. So let them. — You forget
To-morrow is the appointed festival
In Prague for peace restored. You are apt to follow
The chase with such an ardour as will scarce
Permit you to return to-day, or if
Return'd, too much fatigued to join to-morrow
The nobles in our marshall'd ranks.

Ulr. You, count,
Will well supply the place of both — I am not
A lover of these pageantries.

Sieg. No, *Ulric* :
It were not well that you alone of all
Our young nobility —

Ida. And far the noblest
In aspect and demeanour.

Sieg. (to *IDA*). True, dear child,
Though somewhat frankly said for a fair damsel. —
But, *Ulric,* recollect too our position,
So lately reinstated in our honours.
Believe me, 't would be mark'd in any house,
But most in *ours*, that one should be found wanting
At such a time and place. Besides, the Heaven
Which gave us back our own, in the same moment
It spread its peace o'er all, hath double claims
On us for thanksgiving : first, for our country ;
And next, that we are here to share its blessings.

Ulr. (aside). Devout, too ! Well, sir, I obey at once.
(Then aloud to a Servant.)
Ludwig, dismiss the train without ! [Exit *LUDWIG*.]

Ida. And so
You yield at once to him what I for hours
Might supplicate in vain.

Sieg. (smiling). You are not jealous
Of me, I trust, my pretty rebel ! who
Would sanction disobedience against all
Except thyself ? But fear not ; thou shalt rule him
Hereafter with a fonder sway and firmer.

Ida. But I should like to govern now.

Sieg. You shall,
Your *harp,* which by the way awaits you with
The countess in her chamber. She complains
That you are a sad truant to your music :
She attends you.

Ida. Then good morrow, my kind kinsmen !
Ulric, you'll come and hear me ?

Ulr. By and by.

Ida. Be sure I'll sound it better than your bugles ;
Then pray you be as punctual to its notes :
I'll play you King *Gustavus'* march.

Ulr. And why not
Old *Tilly's* ?

Ida. Not that monster's ! I should think
My harp-strings rang with groans, and not with music,
Could aught of his sound on it : — but come quickly ;
Your mother will be eager to receive you. [Exit.]

Sieg. *Ulric,* I wish to speak with you alone.

Ulr. My time's your vassal.
(Aside to *RODOLPH*.) *Rodolph,* hence ! and do
As I directed : and by his best speed
And readiest means let *Rosenberg* reply.

Rod. Count *Siegenderf,* command you aught ? I
am bound
Upon a journey past the frontier.

Sieg. (starts). Ah ! —
Where ? on what frontier ?

Rod. The Silesian, on
My way — (Aside to *ULRIC*.) — Where shall I say ?
Ulr. (aside to *RODOLPH*). To Hamburg.
(Aside to himself.) That
Word will, I think, put a firm padlock on
His further inquisition.

Rod. Count, to Hamburg.

Sieg. (agitated). Hamburg ! No, I have nought
to do there, nor

Am aught connected with that city. Then
God speed you !

Rod. Fare ye well, Count *Siegenderf* !
[Exit *RODOLPH*.]

Sieg. *Ulric,* this man, who has just departed, is
One of those strange companions whom I fain
Would reason with you on.

Ulr. My lord, he is
Noble by birth, of one of the first houses
In Saxony.

Sieg. I talk not of his birth,
But of his bearing. Men speak lightly of him.

Ulr. So they will do of most men. Even the monarch
Is not fenced from his chamberlain's slander, or
The sneer of the last courtier whom he has made
Great and ungrateful.

Sieg. If I must be plain,
The world speaks more than lightly of this *Rodolph* :
They say he is leagued with the "black bands" who
Ravage the frontier.

Ulr. And will you believe
The world ?

Sieg. In this case — yes.

Ulr. In any case,
I thought you knew it better than to take
An accusation for a sentence.

Sieg. Son !
I understand you ; you refer to — but
My destiny has so involved about me
Her spider web, that I can only flutter
Like the poor fly, but break it not. Take heed,
Ulric ; you have seen to what the passions led me :
Twenty long years of misery and famine [chance,
Quench'd them not — twenty thousand more, per-
Hereafter (or even here in moments which
Might date for years, did Anguish make the dial)
May not obliterate or expiate
The madness and dishonour of an instant.
Ulric, be warn'd by a father ! — I was not
By mine, and you behold me !

Ulr. I behold
The prosperous and beloved *Siegenderf,*
Lord of a prince's appanage, and honour'd
By those he rules and those he ranks with.

Sieg. Ah !
Why wilt thou call me prosperous, while I fear
For thee ? Beloved, when thou lovest me not !
All hearts but one may beat in kindness for me —
But if my son's is cold ! —

Ulr. Who dare say that ?

Sieg. None else but I, who see it — feel it — keener
Than would your adversary, who dared say so,
Your sabre in his heart ! But mine survives
The wound.

Ulr. You err. My nature is not given
To outward fondling : how should it be so,
After twelve years' divorcement from my parents ?
Sieg. And did not I too pass those twelve torn
years
In a like absence ? But 't is vain to urge you —
Nature was never call'd back by remonstrance.
Let's change the theme. I wish you to consider
That these young violent nobles of high name,
But dark deeds (ay, the darkest, if all Rumour
Reports be true), with whom thou consortest,
Will lead thee —

Ulr. (impatently). I'll be led by no man.
Sieg. Nor
Be leader of such, I would hope : at once
To wean thee from the perils of thy youth
And haughty spirit, I have thought it well
That thou shouldst wed the lady *Ida* — more
As thou appear'st to love her.

Ulr. I have said
I will obey your orders, were they to
Unite with *Hecate* — can a son say more ?
Sieg. He says too much in saying this. It is not
The nature of thine age, nor of thy blood,
Nor of thy temperament, to talk so coolly,
Or act so carelessly, in that which is
The bloom or blight of all men's happiness
(For *Glory's* pillow is but restless if
Love lay not down his cheek there) : some strong bias,
Some master fiend is in thy service to
Misrule the mortal who believes him slave,
And makes his every thought subservient ; else
Thou'dst say at once — "I love young *Ida,* and
Will wed her : " or, "I love her not, and all
The powers of earth shall never make me." — So
Would I have answer'd.

Ulr. Sir, you wed me for love.

Sieg. I did, and it has been my only refuge
In many miseries.

Ulr. Which miseries
Had never been but for this love-match.

Sieg. Still
Against your age and nature ! Who at twenty
E'er answer'd thus till now ?

Ulr. Did you not warn me
Against your own example ?

Sieg. Boyish sophist !
In a word, do you love, or love not, *Ida* ?

Ulr. What matters it, if I am ready to
Obey you in espousing her ?

Sieg. As far
As you feel, nothing, but all life for her.
She's young — all beautiful — adores you — is
Endow'd with qualities to give happiness,
Such as rounds common life into a dream
Of something which your poets cannot paint,
And (if it were not wisdom to love virtue)
For which Philosophy might barter Wisdom ;
And giving so much happiness, deserves
A little in return. I would not have her
Break her heart for a man who has none to break ;
Or wither on her stalk like some pale rose
Deserted by the bird she thought a nightingale,
According to the Orient tale. She is —

Ulr. The daughter of dead *Stralenheim,* your foe :
I'll wed her, ne'ertheless ; though, to say truth,
Just now I am not violently transported
In favour of such unions.

Sieg. But she loves you.
Ulr. And I love her, and therefore would think twice.

Sieg. Alas ! Love never *did* so.
Ulr. Then 't is time

He should begin, and take the bandage from His eyes, and look before he leaps : till now He hath ta'en a jump i' the dark.

Sieg. But you consent ?
Ulr. I did, and do.

Sieg. Then fix the day.
Ulr. 'T is usual,

And certes courteous, to leave that to the lady.

Sieg. I will engage for her.
Ulr. So will not I

For any woman ; and as what I fix, I fain would see unshaken, when she gives Her answer, I'll give mine.

Sieg. But 't is your office To woo.

Ulr. Count, 't is a marriage of your making So be it of your wooing ; but to please you I will now pay my duty to my mother, With whom, you know, the lady Ida is. — What would you have ? You have forbid my stirring For manly sports beyond the castle walls, And I obey ; you bid me turn a chamberer, To pick up gloves, and fans, and knitting needles, And list to songs and tunes, and watch for smiles, And smile at pretty prattle, and look into The eyes of feminine, as though they were The stars receding early to our wish Upon the dawn of a world-winning battle — What can a son or man do more ? [Exit ULRIC.]

Sieg. (solus). Too much ! — Too much of duty, and too little love ! He pays me in the coin he owes me not : For such hath been my wayward fate, I could not Fulfil a parent's duties by his side Till now ; but love he owes me, for my thoughts Ne'er left him, nor my eyes long'd without tears To see my child again, and now I have found him ! But how ! — obedient, but with coldness ; duteous In my sight, but with carelessness ; mysterious — Abstracted — distant — much given to long absence, And where — none know — in league with the most riotous

Of our young nobles ; though, to do him justice, He never stoops down to their vulgar pleasures ; Yet there 's some tie between them which I cannot Unravel. They look up to him — consult him — Throng round him as a leader : but with me He hath no confidence ! Ah ! can I hope it After — what ! doth my father's curse descend Even to my child ? Or is the Hungarian near To shed more blood ? or — Oh ! if it should be ! Spirit of Stralenheim, dost thou walk these walls To wither him and his — who, though they slew not, Unlatch'd the door of death for thee ? 'T was not Our fault, nor is our sin : thou wert our foe, And yet I spared thee when my own destruction Slept with thee, to awake with thine awakening ! And only took — Accursed gold ! thou liest Like poison in my hands ; I dare not use thee, Nor part from thee ; thou camest in such a guise, Methinks thou wouldst contaminate all hands Like mine. Yet I have done, to atone for thee, Thou villainous gold ! and thy dead master's doom,

Though he died not by me or mine, as much As if he were my brother ! I have ta'en His orphan Ida — cherish'd her as one Who will be mine.

Enter an ATTENDANT.

Atten. The abbot, if it please Your excellency, whom you sent for, waits Upon you. [Exit ATTENDANT.]

Enter the PRIOR ALBERT.

Prior. Peace be with these walls, and all Within them !

Sieg. Welcome, welcome, holy father ! And may thy prayer be heard ! — all men have need Of such, and I —

Prior. Have the first claim to all The prayers of our community. Our convent, Erected by your ancestors, is still Protected by their children.

Sieg. Yes, good father ; Continue daily orisons for us In these dim days of heresies and blood, Though the schismatic Swede, Gustavus, is Gone home.

Prior. To the endless home of unbelievers, Where there is everlasting wail and woe, Gnashing of teeth, and tears of blood, and fire Eternal, and the worm which dieth not ! [one,

Sieg. True, father : and to avert those pangs from Who, though of our most faultless holy church, Yet died without its last and dearest offices, Which smooth the soul through purgatorial pains, I have to offer humbly this donation In masses for his spirit.

[SIEGENDORF offers the gold which he had taken from STRALENHEIM.]

Prior. Count, if I Receive it, 't is because I know too well Refusal would offend you. Be assured The largess shall be only dealt in alms, And every mass no less sung for the dead. Our house needs no donations, thanks to yours, Which has of old endow'd it ; but from you And yours in all meet things 't is fit we obey. For whom shall mass be said ?

Sieg. (faltering). For — for — the dead.

Prior. His name ?
Sieg. 'T is from a soul, and not a name,

I would avert perdition.

Prior. I meant not To pry into your secret. We will pray For one unknown, the same as for the proudest.

Sieg. Secret ! I have none ; but, father, he who 's gone

Might have one ; or, in short, he did bequeath — No, not bequeath — but I bestow this sum For pious purposes.

Prior. A proper deed In the behalf of our departed friends. [foe,

Sieg. But he who 's gone was not my friend, but The deadliest and the stanchest.

Prior. Better still ! To employ our means to obtain heaven for the souls Of our dead enemies is worthy those Who can forgive them living.

Sieg. But I did not Forgive this man. I loathed him to the last,

As he did me. I do not love him now, But —

Prior. Best of all ! for this is pure religion ! You fain would rescue him you hate from hell — An evangelical compassion — with Your own gold too !

Sieg. Father, 't is not my gold.

Prior. Whose then ? You said it was no legacy.

Sieg. No matter whose — of this be sure, that he Who own'd it never more will need it, save In that which it may purchase from your altars : 'T is yours, or theirs.

Prior. Is there no blood upon it ?

Sieg. No ; but there 's worse than blood — eternal shame !

Prior. Did he who own'd it die in his bed ?
Sieg. Alas !

He did.

Prior. Son ! you relapse into revenge,

If you regret your enemy's bloodless death.

Sieg. His death was fathomlessly deep in blood.

Prior. You said he died in his bed, not battle.

Sieg. He Died, I scarce know — but — he was stabb'd i' the dark,

And now you have it — perish'd on his pillow By a cut-throat ! — Ay ! — you may look upon me ! I am not the man. I'll meet your eye on that point, As I can one day God's.

Prior. Nor did he die

By means, or men, or instrument of yours ?

Sieg. No ! by the God who sees and strikes !

Prior. Nor know you Who slew him ?

Sieg. I could only guess at one, And he to me a stranger, unconnected, As unemploy'd. Except by one day's knowledge, I never saw the man who was suspected.

Prior. Then you are free from guilt.

Sieg. (eagerly). Oh ! am I ? — say !

Prior. You have said so, and know best.

Sieg. Father ! I have spoken The truth, and nought but truth, if not the whole :

Yet say I am not guilty ! for the blood Of this man weighs on me, as if I shed it,

Though, by the Power who abhorreth human blood, I did not ! — nay, once spared it, when I might

And could — ay, perhaps, should (if our self-safety Be e'er excusable in such defences

Against the attacks of over-potent foes) :

But pray for him, for me, and all my house ;

For, as I said, though I be innocent,

I know not why, a like remorse is on me,

As if he had fallen by me or mine. Pray for me,

Father ! I have pray'd myself in vain.

Prior. I will

Be comforted ! You are innocent, and should

Be calm as innocence.

Sieg. But calmness is not

Always the attribute of innocence.

I feel it is not.

Prior. But it will be so,

When the mind gathers up its truth within it.

Remember the great festival to-morrow,

In which you rank amidst our chiefest nobles,

As well as your brave son ; and smooth your aspect ;

Nor in the general orison of thanks

For bloodshed stopt, let blood you shed not rise

A cloud upon your thoughts. This were to be Too sensitive. Take comfort, and forget Such things, and leave remorse unto the guilty.

[Exeunt.]

ACT V.

SCENE I.

A large and magnificent Gothic Hall in the Castle of Siegendorf, decorated with Trophies, Banners, and Arms of that Family.

Enter ARNHEIM and MEISTER, attendants of COUNT SIEGENDORF.

Arn. Be quick ! the count will soon return : the Already are at the portal. Have you sent [ladies The messengers in search of him he seeks for ?

Meis. I have, in all directions, over Prague, As far as the man's dress and figure could By your description track him. The devil take These revels and processions ! All the pleasure (If such there be) must fall to the spectators.

I'm sure none doth to us who make the show.

Arn. Go to ! my lady countess comes.

Meis. I'd rather Ride a day's hunting on an outworn jade,

Than follow in the train of a great man

In these dull pageantries.

Arn. Begone ! and rail

Within.

[Exeunt.]

Enter the COUNTESS JOSEPHINE SIEGENDORF and IDA STRALENHEIM.

Jos. Well, Heaven be praised, the show is over !

Ida. How can you say so ! never have I dreamt Of aught so beautiful. The flowers, the boughs, The banners, and the nobles, and the knights, The gems, the robes, the plumes, the happy faces, The coursers, and the incense, and the sun Streaming through the stain'd windows, even the tombs, Which look'd so calm, and the celestial hymns, Which seem'd as if they rather came from heaven Than mounted there. The bursting organ's peal Rolling on high like an harmonious thunder ; The white robes and the lifted eyes ; the world At peace ! and all at peace with one another ! Oh, my sweet mother ! [Embracing JOSEPHINE.]

Jos. My beloved child !

For such, I trust, thou shalt be shortly.

Ida. Oh !

I am so already. Feel how my heart beats !

Jos. It does, my love ; and never may it throb

With aught more bitter.

Ida. Never shall it do so !

How should it ? What should make us grieve ? I hate

To hear of sorrow : how can we be sad,

Who love each other so entirely ? You,

The count, and Ulric, and your daughter Ida.

Jos. Poor child !

Ida. Do you pity me ?

Jos. No ; I but envy,

And that in sorrow, not in the world's sense

Of the universal vice, if one vice be

More general than another.

Ida. I'll not hear

A word against a world which still contains

You and my Ulric. Did you ever see

B b

Aught like him? How he tower'd amongst them all!
How 'all eyes follow'd him! The flowers fell faster—
Rain'd from each lattice at his feet, methought,
Than before all the rest; and where he trod
I dare be sworn that they grow still, nor e'er
Will wither.

Jos. You will spoil him, little flatterer,
If he should hear you.

Ida. But he never will.
I dare not say so much to him—I fear him.

Jos. Why so? he loves you well.

Ida. But I can never
Shape my thoughts of him into words to him.
Besides, he sometimes frightens me.

Jos. How so?

Ida. A cloud comes o'er his blue eyes suddenly,
Yet he says nothing.

Jos. It is nothing: all men,
Especially in these dark troublous times,
Have much to think of.

Ida. But I cannot think
Of aught save him.

Jos. Yet there are other men,
In the world's eye, as goodly. There's, for instance,
The young Count Waldorf, who scarce once withdrew
His eyes from yours to day.

Ida. I did not see him,
But Ulric. Did you not see at the moment
When all knelt, and I wept? and yet methought,
Through my fast tears, though they were thick and
I saw him smiling on me. [warm,

Jos. I could not
See aught save heaven, to which my eyes were raised
Together with the people's.

Ida. I thought too
Of heaven, although I look'd on Ulric.

Jos. Come,
Let us retire; they will be here anon
Expectant of the banquet. We will lay
Aside these nodding plumes and dragging trains.

Ida. And, above all, these stiff and heavy jewels,
Which make my head and heart ache, as both throb
Beneath their glitter o'er my brow and zone.
Dear mother, I am with you.

Enter COUNT SIEGENDORF, in full dress, from the
solemnity, and LUDWIG.

Sieg. Is he not found?
Lud. Strict search is making every where; and if
The man be in Prague, be sure he will be found.

Sieg. Where's Ulric?

Lud. He rode round the other way
With some young nobles; but he left them soon;
And, if I err not, not a minute since
I heard his excellency, with his train,
Gallop o'er the west drawbridge.

Enter ULTRIC, splendidly dressed.

Sieg. (to LUDWIG). See they cease not
Their quest of him I have described. [*Exit* LUDWIG.
Oh, Ulric!

How have I long'd for thee!

Ulr. Your wish is granted—
Behold me!

Sieg. I have seen the murderer.

Ulr. Whom? Where?

Sieg. The Hungarian, who slew Stralenheim.

Ulr. You dream.

Sieg. I live! and as I live, I saw him—
Heard him! he dared to utter even my name.

Ulr. What name?

Sieg. Werner! 't was mine.

Ulr. It must be so

No more: forget it.

Sieg. Never! never! all
My destinies were woven in that name:
It will be not engraved upon my tomb,
But it may lead me there.

Ulr. To the point—the Hungarian?
Sieg. Listen!—The church was throng'd; the
hymn was raised;

“*Te Deum*” peal'd from nations, rather than
From choirs, in one great cry of “God be praised”
For one day's peace, after thrice ten dread years,
Each bloodier than the former: I arose,
With all the nobles, and as I look'd down
Along the lines of lifted faces,—from
Our banner'd and escutcheon'd gallery, I
Saw, like a flash of lightning (for I saw
A moment and no more), what struck me sightless
To all else—the Hungarian's face! I grew
Sick; and when I recover'd from the mist
Which curl'd about my senses, and again
Look'd down, I saw him not. The thanksgiving
Was over, and we march'd back in procession.

Ulr. Continue.

Sieg. When we reach'd the Muldau's bridge,
The joyous crowd above, the numberless
Barks mann'd with revellers in their best garbs,
Which shot along the glancing tide below,
The decorated street, the long array,
The clashing music, and the thundering
Of far artillery, which seem'd to bid
A long and loud farewell to its great doings,
The standards o'er me, and the trappings round,
The roar of rushing thousands,—all—all could not
Chase this man from my mind, although my senses
No longer held him palpable.

Ulr. You saw him
No more, then?

Sieg. I look'd, as a dying soldier
Looks at a draught of water, for this man:
But still I saw him not; but in his stead—

Ulr. What in his stead?

Sieg. My eye for ever fell
Upon your dancing crest; the loftiest
As on the loftiest and the loveliest head
It rose the highest of the stream of plumes,
Which overflow'd the glittering streets of Prague.

Ulr. What's this to the Hungarian?

Sieg. Much; for I
Had almost then forgot him in my son;
When just as the artillery ceased, and paused
The music, and the crowd embraced in lieu
Of shouting, I heard in a deep, low voice,
Distinct and keener far upon my ear
Than the late cannon's volume, this word—“*Werner!*”

Ulr. Uttered by—

Sieg. Him! I turn'd—and saw—and fell.

Ulr. And wherefore? Were you seen?

Sieg. The officious care
Of those around me dragg'd me from the spot,
Seeing my faintness, ignorant of the cause:
You, too, were too remote in the procession
(The old nobles being divided from their children)
To aid me.

Ulr. But I'll aid you now.

Sieg. In what?

Ulr. In searching for this man, or—When he's
found

What shall we do with him?

Sieg. I know not that.

Ulr. Then wherefore seek?

Sieg. Because I cannot rest

Till he is found. His fate, and Stralenheim's,
And ours, seem intertangled! nor can be
Unravell'd till—

Enter an ATTENDANT.

Atten. A stranger to wait on

Your excellency.

Sieg. Who?

Atten. He gave no name.

Sieg. Admit him, ne'ertheless.

[*The ATTENDANT introduces GABOR, and
afterwards exit.*

Gab. Ah!

'T is, then, Werner!
Sieg. (haughtily). The same you knew, sir, by
that name; and you!

Gab. (looking round). I recognise you both: father
and son,

It seems. Count, I have heard that you, or yours,
Have lately been in search of me: I am here.

Sieg. I have sought you, and have found you: you
are charged

(Your own heart may inform you why) with such
A crime as— [He pauses.

Gab. Give it utterance, and then

I'll meet the consequences.

Sieg. You shall do so—

Unless—

Gab. First, who accuses me?

Sieg. All things.

If not all men: the universal rumour—

My own presence on the spot—the place—the
time—

And every speck of circumstance unite

To fix the blot on you.

Gab. And on me only?

Pause ere you answer: is no other name,

Save mine, stain'd in this business?

Sieg. Trifling villain!
Who play'st with thine own guilt! Of all that breathe
Thou best dost know the innocence of him [der,

'Gainst whom thy breath would blow thy bloody slan-
But I will talk no further with a wretch,

Further than justice asks. Answer at once,

And without quibbling, to my charge.

Gab. 'T is false!

Sieg. Who says so?

Gab. I.

Sieg. And how disprove it?

Gab. By

The presence of the murderer.

Sieg. Name him!

Gab. He

May have more names than one. Your lordship

had so

Once on a time.

Sieg. If you mean me, I dare

Your utmost.

Gab. You may do so, and in safety!

I know the assassin.

Sieg. Where is he?

Gab. (pointing to ULTRIC). Beside you!

[ULTRIC rushes forward to attack GABOR;
SIEGENDORF interposes.

Sieg. Liar and fiend! but you shall not be slain;

These walls are mine, and you are safe within them.

[He turns to ULTRIC.

Ulric, repel this calumny, as I

Will do. I avow it is a growth so monstrous,

I could not deem it earth-born: but be calm;

It will refute itself. But touch him not.

[ULTRIC endeavours to compose himself.

Gab. Look at him, count, and then hear me.

Sieg. (first to GABOR, and then looking at ULTRIC).

I hear thee.

My God! you look—

Ulr. How?

Sieg. As on that dread night

When we met in the garden.

Ulr. (composes himself). It is nothing.

Gab. Count, you are bound to hear me. I came

hither

Not seeking you, but sought. When I knelt down

Amidst the people in the church, I dream'd not

To find the beggar'd Werner in the seat

Of senators and princes; but you have call'd me,

And we have met.

Sieg. Go on, sir.

Gab. Ere I do so,

Allow me to inquire who profited

By Stralenheim's death? Was't I—as poor as ever;

And poorer by suspicion on my name!

The baron lost in that last outrage neither

Jewels nor gold; his life alone was sought,—

A life which stood between the claims of others

To honours and estates scarce less than princely.

Sieg. These hints, as vague as vain, attach no less

To me than to my son.

Gab. I can't help that.

But let the consequence alight on him

Who feels himself the guilty one among us.

I speak of you, Count Siegendorf, because

I know you innocent, and deem you just.

But ere I can proceed—dare you protect me?

Dare you command me?

[SIEGENDORF first looks at the Hungarian, and
then at ULTRIC, who has unbuckled his sabre,
and is drawing lines with it on the floor—
still in its sheath.

Ulr. (looks at his father and says)

Let the man go on!

Gab. I am unarm'd, count—bid your son lay down

His sabre.

Ulr. (offers it to him contemptuously).

Take it.

Gab. No, sir, 't is enough

That we are both unarm'd—I would not choose

To wear a steel which may be stain'd with more

Blood than came there in battle.

Ulr. (casts the sabre from him in contempt).

It—or some

Such other weapon, in my hands—spared yours

Once when disarm'd and at my mercy.

Gab. True—

I have not forgotten it: you spared me for

Your own especial purpose—to sustain

An ignominy not my own.

Ulr. Proceed.

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