

SCENE NINTH

[*Hall in the castle. Enter ZARA.*]

ZARA. Selim said the packet would be here [*takes the paper.*] Ah, 'tis from Ernest! He is near me,—we may meet again [*opens letter and reads*].

LADY,—Thy father will this night betray the city to the Spanish king, who hath promised his life and liberty for this treachery. He will not keep his oath, and thy father will be slain. Then bid him fly, and save all he most loves, for no mercy will be shown to those within the walls when once the Spanish army enters there. Save thyself. Heaven bless thee.

ERNEST.

Brave and true unto the last! O heart! thou mayst well beat proudly, for thou hast won a noble prize in the love of Ernest L'Estrange. Time flies; this night the city is betrayed, and we must fly. Bernardo, lord of fair Castile, is a traitor. Ah, thank Heaven he is *not* my father! Yet for the love I bore him as a child, he shall be saved; and I will cheer and comfort him now that the dark hour of his life has come.

[*Enter BERNARDO.*]

BER. Zara, why dost thou look thus on me? I come to bid thee gather all thou dost most prize, for the army is before the city, and we may be conquered ere to-morrow's sun shall set.

ZARA. Seek not to deceive me. I know all; and the love I bore thee as my father is now turned to pity and contempt for the traitor who will this night betray Castile.

BER. Girl, beware, lest thy wild folly anger me too far! What meanest thou? Who has dared to tell thee this?

ZARA. Thou wouldst betray, and art thyself betrayed; and were it not for him whom thou hast wronged and hunted, ere to-morrow's dawn thou wouldst be no more, and I a homeless wanderer. Here! read the scroll, and see how well the false king keeps his word he plighted thee for thy deed of treachery.

BER. [*reads, and drops the paper*]. Lost! lost! Fool that I was to trust the promise of a king! Disgraced,