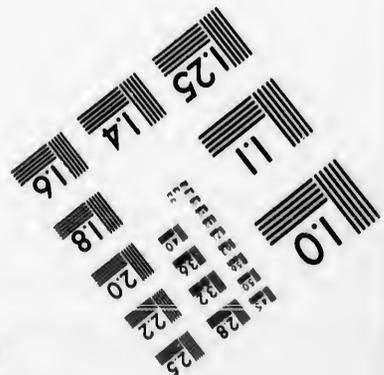
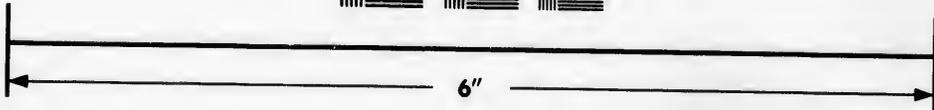
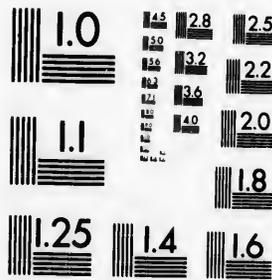


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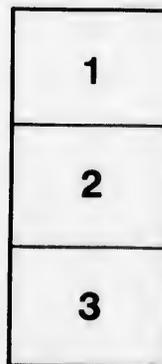
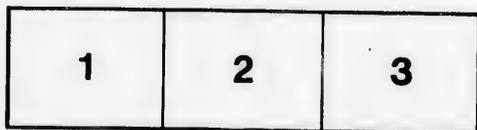
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LE LUCCIOLE;
A TALE OF GENOA.

A TRAGEDY IN THREE ACTS.

BY JNO. ERVIN, JUNR.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

FERNANDO, a reduced Gentleman of Genoa, but now employed
by the Lady Beatrice.
MARCO, Son of the Marquis D'Estello, and Lover of Bianca.
BASSO, Servant of Marco.
MARQUIS D'ESTELLO, Father of Marco.
DIABOLO, a Banker of Genoa, and Creditor of the Marquis.
COUNT MARINO, Father of Lady Beatrice.
PEITRO, Father of Bianca.
LADY BEATRICE, the Rival of Bianca.
MARCHIONESS D'ESTELLO, the Mother of Marco.
BIANCA.
COUNTESS MARINO.
Ladies and Gentlemen, Law Officers, Servants, &c.

ACT FIRST.

Scene First.—An Olive Grove in Genoa.

Enter MARCO and BASSO.

Mar. Art sure thou gavest her the note?
Bas. Yes my Lord, into her own hand.
Mar. And what reply did she send?

Bas. None my Lord, but what was favorable :
 "Tell him," she said, "I will be there."

Mar. Ah then, she'll not fail to come.
 I thank thee, good Basso, thou art a faithful
 Fellow, and some day thy master will reward
 Thee for thy zeal. I pray thee now, good Basso,
 Retire awhile; I think I hear her footsteps—
 Go—watch at yonder gate, and if the revellers
 Come forth, as no doubt they will, to seek me
 When they find me absent from the castle,
 Give me due notice of their approach.

Bas. I will my Lord, but I pray you speak not
 Again of reward for him whose lifelong
 Service cannot repay thy kindness.

Basso retires.

Mar. How slow the moments approach which bring
 Me near to her who loves me, and shall I say it
 Whom I love—yes better than life itself;
 For life would be a blank without her.
 How happy that love doth make me! How blest
 I am with her! Still there is a thought of evil
 Mingled with my love for her, which haunts
 Me in my happiest hours, and casts a shadow
 O'er the bright vision of my life :
 My sire, the proud and haughty Marquis,
 What will he say when I shall present to him
 My rustic love, as the future Marchioness of our
 House? I think I see the scorn, perhaps
 The anger, with which he'll spurn her
 And my prayers for happiness. My tender
 Mother, also—whom next to Bianca I cherish
 With a fond pure love—what will she say;
 What will she think? At least I'll hope the best

Bian.

Mar.

Bian.

You dear mother, will feel for me, and perhaps
 Will plead with my stern sire, for the folly
 Of thy son, if to love an angel can be folly.
 In childhood we play'd together—for her I cull'd
 The rarest flowers, which grew within the cas-
 tle garden—

Happy if she rewarded me with a smile.
 'Twas thus I learn'd to love her, not knowing it,
 Morning, noon and night I linger'd at her side,
 Sometimes at the castle, sometimes 'twas in the
 Vineyard, where I help'd her pluck the clust'ring
 Grapes. Happy thus our young lives pass'd
 Until that hour, when forc'd to go upon my
 travels;

The completion of my studies being the object
 thereof.

I awoke from my dream of bliss.
 Then I knew I lov'd the gentle Bianca,
 And in the knowledge was blest; for her pure
 Heart disdaining the coquetry which the world
 Calls coyness, freely confess'd her love for me.
 But hist! I hear her footstep. [*Enter Bianca.*
 What has detain'd thee, my love?

Bian. My father. I could not leave him till his eyes
 Were clos'd in slumber.

Mar. What—and did'st thou prefer an old man
 To me? Could not the old dotard fall
 Asleep without thine aid?

Bian. Marco thou painest me. Thinkest thou
 I could forget my duty to my father?
 No, not even for thee, much as I love thee.
 For shame Marco—for shame! [*Weeps*]

Mar. Forgive me Bianca, but love is so impatient;
And think dear one, 'tis long since we have
met—

Even if thy prayers detain'd thee, I would
Feel jealous of them.

Bian. Well, I forgive thee, but promise never
To offend again, thou selfish creature.

[*Tapping him playfully on the cheek.*]

Mar. No! No! I'll not offend again—but thou art
so unselfish,

Bianca, so pure in heart. The very air
Grows holy when thou art near.

[*Kisses her hand.*]

Bian. Ah flatterer!

Mar. Nay, nay, not flattery—love never flatters.

Bian. Come Marco, where hast thou been these many
days?

Mar. In the city. 'Tis the festival of St. John,
And the carnival rages high. I could not
Escape sooner from my companions.

Bian. Ah Marco, thou wilt forget thy low-born
Peasant love!

Mar. Forget thee—never.

I swear—[*falling at her feet.*]

Bian. [*Placing her hand on his mouth.*]

Nay swear not, but list to me—

Last noon I help'd my father in the vineyard;

The marquis was there, but saw me not—

The clustering vines hid me from his view.

Thy sire held converse with mine. Thou wert

The subject of it. I heard him tell how a lady

Noble born was destin'd for thy bride.

Mar. [*Aside.*] S'death!

Bian. Nay stir not, but list, I heard him also tell
That the nuptials would soon take place;
All was in readiness, the notaries were in-
structed

To draw the marriage deeds, the lady being rich
Will bring thee a princely dower.

Mar. [*starting up.*

The fiend take it! I'll have none of it.

Bian. Dost thou love her Marco? dost thou love her?

Mar. No Bianca, no—by all that's holy
I tell thee no. Thee only do I love; and more,
Thou hast told me what I knew not myself.
The Lady Beatrice 'tis true now visits at
My father's hall, and I have shown
Her courtesy, but nothing more.

Bian. Heard you not a rustling amongst those trees?
[*Points to back of stage.*

Mar. Not I sweet one, but to satisfy you I will seek.

[*Goes to where she points and shakes
the foliage, as if to detect the presence
of some suspected lurker. A swarm
of fireflies arise from the shaken boughs
and alight again.*

There, silly one! now art thou satisfied? The
Lucciole have displayed their lamps on purpose to
show thee the emptiness of thy fears; and see, in
honor of St. John did we not have a brave illumina-
tion—a show of fireworks shaming the brightest that
are let off yonder? Aye and my loved one, thou
shalt not want for diamonds in thy hair—gems which
the proudest of yon city ~~can~~ display not one to

James

equal. [*Taking several of the fireflies in his hand, approaches and fastens them in her hair.*]

Bian. [*Shrieking.*] Marco, for the love of heaven do not so! These Lucciole—if you knew how I dread them.

Mar. Dread them?

Bian. Yes; bright as they look they come from the dark graves, and with us, in our family they have always been omens—warning of death and sorrow. Before my poor mother was killed—

Mar. Nay, nay—now thou art more silly than I deemed thee. But I will relieve thee of them. [*Tries to take them off. After some trouble succeeds, when one of the insects which had alighted on his hands flies back to Bianca's head, who screams.*]

Bian. Oh Marco! Marco! I am fated for death!

Mar. Nay, nay, sweet one; thy fears are groundless. There then, 'tis gone. [*Throws it far into the underwood.*]

Enter Basso,

Bas. My Lord

The Lady Beatrice and her companions approach.

Mar. Curse them! I say.

Bian. I must away.

Farewell, Marco.

Mar. Nay stay, and let us brave
Them. I fear them not, and thus will I prove
To you how much I love thee.

Bian. No, no! Farewell. [*Kisses her hand and exit.*]

Enter Diavolo and other Gentlemen, the Lady Beatrice and Lady Companions.

Beat. How now, my Lord Marco? One would think

Thou art moonstruck, wandering here alone ;
 And wearing such a doleful face too.
 Fie, fie, my Lord Marco ! Is our poor company
 So displeasing, that thou leavest us so abruptly,
 And welcomes me so discourteously ?

Diav. [*Aside to a Gentleman.*] He's more than
 moonstruck.

Gent. [*Aside.*] Eh ! what !

Diav. [*Whispering.*] There is an intrigue here.
 I caught a glimpse of a lady's skirt just through the
 trees yonder. Do you understand ? [*Poking him in
 the side.*]

Mar. I crave your pardon Lady Beatrice for my
 neglect ;

I was wearied with the revel, and came
 Forth to breathe the pure air of heaven.
 But how fares the Lady Beatrice ?

Beat. Poor enough without thy presence.

Indeed I have come to seek thee,
 And indulge a whim of these gentlemen,
 Who propos'd a dance in the grove, under
 The rays of yon moon. Wilt join Marco ?

Mar. With pleasure ; the idea is charming.

[*They join hands and dance an Italian
 measure, and then exit off the stage dancing.*]

Enter FERNANDO.

Fern. Ah ! ha ! my Lord Marco, I have discover'd
 You at last. Truly I did not dream
 That the beardless boy lov'd the peerless Bianca.
 Well I can hardly blame him for that ;
 For I love her too. Yes, and it is the only passion
 Which has ever warm'd this heart ; and now it
 is hard

That my Lord Marco, with all the world
 To chose from, should place the seal of despair
 Upon my love, just at the moment when
 I thought that all was secure. Why it is but
 A half hour ago I gain'd the old
 Vine dresser's consent to wed his daughter.
 But what of that? She will think but poorly
 of me

When her head is turn'd with the devotion of
 the young Lord Marco.

But this [*drawing a stiletto*] would soon end his
 pretensions—a quiet thrust

In an unguarded moment would end our rivalry.

But I scorn such a step. I'd be a villain

To gain her; but I hate a cut throat villain

That murders a man in the dark. No, no, I'd
 rather

Outwit the devil a thousand times than kill him
 once;

And I'll outwit Marco. But how is it to be
 done?

Let me think. Ah! I have it. The Lady Beatrice
 Loves him, that's evident; by the byé I re-
 member

Now, she told me to keep my eye on this fair
 Youth, and discover if it was not some rustic
 beauty

That beguil'd him so often from the castle

And the influence of her charms.

I've play'd the spy. I'll now act the informer,

And tell the Lady Beatrice what I have seen.

She loves Marco, and I, Bianca, and between

Beat.

Fer.

Beat.

Fer.

Beat.

Fer.

Beat.

Fer.

Us two we'll contrive a plan to disappoint
Them both. [*Exit.*]

Scene Second.—The Boudoir of Lady Beatrice.

Enter Lady BEATRICE and FERNANDO.

Beat. Well Fernando, have you perform'd my bidding?
If so, what tidings do you bring?
Fer. None Lady that will please thee. I have dis-
cover'd

The rustic charmer of Lord Marco.

Beat. How's this? Beware Fernando—if you deceive
Me in this, your life is not worth a minute's
Purchase, faithful as thou hast hitherto been.

Fer. Let me be accurs'd, if what I say is not true.
I tell thee most lov'd mistress that I have
Discover'd the lover of Lord Marco, and that
They are pledged to each other.

Beat. Heavens! is this true?

How know you this, Fernando, and who is the
lady?

Where is she? and what does she look like?

Tell me quick.

Fer. Ah, ever the way with a woman:

Ask a dozen questions at once, and expect them
To be answered in one——

Beat. Quick slave, tell me

All; keep me no longer in suspense.

Fer. Well Lady, last eve, as I was passing through
The olive grove, on my way from the cottage
Of Pietro the vine dresser, where he and his
daughter

The lovely Bianca reside—she is a charming
creature, Lady,

And I love her—

Beat. What has that to do with Marco?

On with thy story, man; quick! out with it.

Fer. The saints bless us, Lady, I am coming to it
with all

Possible speed. As I was saying, I was passing
Through the olive grove, when I thought I heard
A voice which sounded familiar.

I peeped through the shrubbery, and saw my
Lord Marco standing where the four olives
Form a delightful arbor just fitted for a lovers'
retreat.

Beat. Heavens, Fernando! if you speed not better
with your tale,

And tell me what I desire to know,
I'll tear the secret from your heart!

[*Draws a stiletto.*]

Fer. Put up that weapon Lady—if you do that,
You will destroy your most faithful servant,
And after all lose the benefit of my information.
My Lord Marco was evidently in a reverie,
And unconsciously gave utterance to the thought
Which oppress'd him. I drew near to hear
What he utter'd, and heard him talking
Of early childhood; of wandering through
Olive groves and vineyards; of flowers and
Grapes; of happy hours and happy love.
Presently there flash'd upon us both a vision
Which disturb'd him from his reverie,
And made the hot blood leap through

My veins like fire. It was Bianca the daughter
Of Pietro, the old vine dresser, whom I love
with a wild passionate love,
And whom to gain I would sell my soul—
Aye to perdition.

Beat. [*Aside.*] Heavens! my fears are realized. I
wonder

If Marco loves her. [*To Fernando*] Is she
beautiful, Fernando?

Fer. Beautiful—the word cannot express her beauty.
You are beautiful Lady, but your beauty and
hers

Are different—yours: the glittering
Beauty of the diamond; hers the pale loveliness
Of the pearl that seems as brilliant
In its modest shell, beneath the famed waters
Of the gorgeous Ind, as when set in gold
And surrounded with kindred jewels
It adorns the bosom of some haughty dame of
fashion.

Yours is the beauty of the noonday sun,
When in the magnificence of his meridian glory
He dazzles the eye with his splendor;
Hers is the beauty of the midnight moon
As she serenely smiles from the eastern heavens,
And lights with a silver glory the blue ether
In which float the attendant stars.

Beat. You are poetical, Fernando. Is she lowborn,
This girl?

Fer. Report says she is the daughter
Of the peasant Pietro, the vine dresser,
But she has a most princely air, and
Seems higher than the station in which nature

Has plac'd her.
 Beat. Then it is only a boyish passion
 Which Marco cherishes for her. Perhaps he
 designs
 Her for his mistress.

Fer. No Lady, it is no boyish love,
 But the strong deep earnest love of a man
 That animates his bosom. A love which is
 engrafted

In every feeling of his heart, looks forth from
 His eyes, walks in his footsteps, and dreams
 In his dreams. I tell thee Lady he designs
 Her for his Duchess—not his mistress.

Beat. [*Aside.*] How can I separate them?—Good
 Fernando,

I must make you my confidant, I love Marco
 As you love this girl. From the cradle
 I have been destined as his bride, he is mine,
 And I alone should possess him, you love
 This girl?

Fer. Yes, Lady as my life.

Beat. Assist me then to obtain the hand of Marco,
 And I will use my exertions to have thee
 Wedded to Bianca.

Fer. How can I help thee?

Beat. In this way, the old Marquis is in debt,
 I know the two bankers who are his creditors,
 One of them is the Chevalier Diavolo, who
 Is immensely rich, and has had the presumption
 To offer for my hand. Go to him and tell him
 I desire to see him at once; he loves me
 And I will engage him to purchase the debt from

The other creditor, and then to press the
Marquis for the whole. It will be impossible
For the marquis to raise the sum. My bridal
Dower will then be more necessary than ever,
And Marco, to save his father from the horrors
Of a prison, will be forc'd to marry me.
Once married you need have no further fear
Of him as a rival. Is the plan good, Fernando?

Fer. Most excellent, Lady; well thought of.

Shall I execute the commission at once?

Beat. Stay a moment—after I have seen Diavolo
And arrang'd it with him, go you then to the
Marquis and tell him of this amour between
Marco

And Bianca, and advise him to send her away;
You can get yourself appointed her conductor,
And while on the journey will have ample
Opportunity to cultivate her good graces.
Now leave me, and perform what I have
Bidden thee.

Fer. At once, Lady, it shall be

Done with dispatch. [*Exit Fernando.*]

Beat. And am I destin'd to be for ever foil'd? Is this
girl

Who is my rival for the wealth and station
which I possess,

To be also my rival for the heart of Marco—
It must be she of whom the old woman spoke---

Ah! why have I not destroyed the papers
Which I stole from her dying hand, after
I had plunged my dagger deep in her bosom,
Those papers, which if revealed to other eyes

Would in a moment degrade
 Me to her low position and raise her
 To mine. Those papers, I must destroy them
 now.

[*Goes to a draw and takes out a packet.*

Ah! here they are, addressed to Bianca, the
 suppos'd

Daughter of Pietro, the vine dresser. Ugh!
 there's

A spot of the old woman's blood. It looks
 Darker than ever. [*Opens the packet and reads,*

Daughter of a Noble race,—When you have to read
 these lines, pardon I beseech you the great sin which
 the ambition of her, whom you supposed to be your
 mother, prompted her to commit against you. Know
 then my dear child that you are the daughter of the
 Count Marino, and that her whom he fancies is his
 daughter is my child.

When you were only a few weeks old, you were
 placed in my charge by the Count and Countess, who
 went abroad, my own child was about the same age
 as yourself, they remained abroad for many years,
 and when they returned I substituted my child for
 theirs, they did not know the deception, and the
 Lady Beatrice whom they suppose to be their daugh-
 ter, is still considered as such. In the accompany-
 ing packet you will find evidence enough to prove
 what I say.

MARIANA PIETRO,

Your unhappy Foster Mother.

Ah, memory! how you haunt me with the
 Vision of that old woman whom I stabb'd!

Serv.

Beat.

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Gracious heavens! If these papers be true she
was my mother.

And now while I think of it I must destroy
thém.

Here is a taper—I will light it and destroy them
at once.

Hist! who's this?

[*Knock outside—places the paper in her bosom.*

Enter a Servant.

Serv. My Lady, the chevalier Diavolo
Awaits you.

Beat. Say I will attend him. [*Exit both.*

Enter FERNANDO.

Fer. Ha! ha! more secrets. See what it is to
be steward to a noble lady, which gives you the
privilege of entering unannounced into her presence.
Coming here to announce the chevalier whom I
brought with me, in obedience to my Lady's instruc-
tions, I overheard a great family secret. Ha! ha!
isn't it capital? [*rubbing his hands.*] The Lady
Beatrice is Bianca, and Bianca is Lady Beatrice.
Ha! ha! [*Again rubbing his hands.*] What a secret
to be sure! Confound it if I don't outwit them all,
and put Bianca right; but if I do so will she be
Madame Fernando? Ah! there's the rub. Ah! Fer-
nando, be careful how you proceed. If you make
her Lady Beatrice will she think anything more of
you? Confound it all—what shall I do? I am a spy,
I have been an informer, I am a fool, I am a villain;
but hang it all if I'll be a bad villain. No, I'll be a
good villain, and right Bianca.

Scene Third.—A Room in the Castle.

Enter the old MARQUIS and MARCO.

Marq. My son I have chosen a bride for you.

Mar. Thou art kind father, but I thought that would
Be my own task.

Marq. But I have sav'd you the trouble.
The lady is rich.

Mar. Indeed.

Marq. I need only add that she is amiable, witty
And beautiful.

Mar. Rich, amiable, witty and beautiful ;
O ye gods, what a picture ! I suppose then
I am to take her by proxy ; but who is the lady ?

Marq. Thou wilt learn soon enough, but first tell me
How likest thou the Lady Beatrice ?

Mar. Fair enough.

Marq. Is she not rich ?

Mar. Report says so.

Marq. And amiable ?

Mar. She seems so.

Marq. And witty ?

Mar. I have felt the sharpness of her wit.

Marq. And beautiful ?

Mar. Every one tells her so.

Marq. Then the Lady Beatrice is the bride
Whom I have chosen for thee.

Mar. Father !

Marq. Well, why put so much stress on that name ?

• Mar. The Lady Beatrice shall never be the bride of
Marco.

Marq. [*Starting.*] And why not ? this is strange.

Mar. Because I love her not.

Marq. H

Mar. I

Marq. T

Mar. N

Marq. A

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Marq.

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Marq. Pshaw! thou wilt learn to love her after thy Marriage. Thou dost not hate her, Marco?

Mar. I hate no one.

Marq. Then thou wilt learn to love her.

Mar. Never,—if I read my heart aright.

Marq. And what readest thou there?

Mar. Love for another—which makes me proof
Against all other passions: A love that
Shall live with me through life, and dying
Shall reanimate my soul when life becomes
Immortal.

Marq. And who is this other? Is she rich?

Mar. Yes, in all that pertains to goodness.

Marq. And beautiful?

Mar. If an angel can be so.

Marq. And no doubt noble. [*Sarcastically.*]

Mar. If to be virtuous is noble, then she is doubly so.

Marq. Ah I see it all, I have been correctly inform'd.

Thou lovest the daughter of my minion.

Fool that I was to trust thee with her.

Mar. Father forgive me, 'tis true I love the maid.

Marq. Say no more!—Do not taunt me with the

Downfall of all my hopes, lest I curse thee

In mine anger! Thou lovest whom?—a base-
born

Peasant maid, the daughter of my servant,

Who seeks to raise herself from her low position

To one of affluence, by allying herself with our

house;

And thou Marco, fool that thou art, hast been

Made her willing tool. Thy heart has been

The instrument on which she play'd. Can'st

Thou not see through her wiles—thus laid
To entrap thee ?

Mar.

Father !

Marq.

Call me not father !

Thou art no son of mine, if thus you
Forget the honor of our house, and seek
To ally thyself with minions and baseborn
peasants.

Mar.

Love is a leveller, and respects no person,
Quality or degree. In his eyes the prince
Is no better than the beggar—all are his
Subjects—all feel his power and bow before it.
He assimilates all things ; and by his power
Binds things the most opposite together.
He tones down our high and selfish motives,
And makes us forget the rough edges
Of each other's character. His magic
Pencil paints with rays divine those
Whom our hearts have chosen.

'Tis thus with me. Love throws a veil
O'er the lowliness of Bianca, and makes me feel
When in her presence unworthy of her.
Oh father ! did you but know her purity
And her truth ; could you but feel her love
As I have felt it, you would not hesitate
To bless me in my choice, and call her daughter.

Marq.

This is monstrous !—terrible !
Alas ! little did I dream when I allow'd
Her as a child to enter into the castle, solely
To amuse thine infant hours, that I was cherish-
ing one
Who in after years would destroy my peace !

But it must not be, my son; you must forget
this passion.

Mar. I cannot, father!

Marq. Then my bitter——

Mar. Stay!

Do not curse me father—do not curse me!

Marq. No; I cannot curse thee even if I would.

But Marco, you must forget this lowborn
peasant.

Would you ally yourself with poverty? for I tell
Thee Marco, I am now no longer rich but poor.
Come, sit down, while in a friendly manner
I unfold to you my alter'd circumstances,
And the reasons thereof; and when perhaps
You have heard all, you may feel it to be
Your duty to succor your unfortunate father,
And much lov'd mother, whose sole hope
Of deliverance is plac'd in you. Now listen
Marco—

The extravagance of my ancestors had largely
reduc'd

The princely rent roll of the estate to which
You are now the apparent heir. In the hope
Of being able to pay off the large debts which
Had accumulated, I embark'd some months
Ago, my all in a speculation which promis'd
Well. That speculation fail'd, and with
It all my hopes. My principal creditor has
Made a demand on me for payment, which
I am unable to meet; and in a few weeks
All my estates will be confiscated, and you
My son will be depriv'd of the luxuries

To which all your life you have been
Accustom'd. Can you bear poverty and disgrace?
Mar. Aye father, with Bianca for my bride I can
Be happy in a lowly lot.

Marq. Yes—but think of me;
Unless within a week two hundred thousand
Ducats are mine, with which to pay my
Creditors, I shall be the occupant of a gloomy
Prison cell, and prison fare will be the only
Sustenance of him, who was born and rear'd
In affluence!

Mar. Oh! say not so!

Marq. 'Tis too true;
But that is not all. Your mother, your tender
mother—

She also will feel the reverse of fortune
More bitterly than either you or I; and for want
Of better shelter, will be forc'd to repose
Her aged limbs within her husband's cell!
And there our only thought will be,
That the son, whom we have lov'd
And shower'd blessings upon, refus'd
To succor us in the hour of our adversity!

Mar. How can I save you? only tell me.

Marq. By marrying the Lady Beatrice. The dower
Which she shall bring you will relieve us
Of all our creditors. See, here are the papers
Which will disclose the extent of my liabilities,
If you believe not my word.

Mar. 'Tis enough;
I do not doubt your word.

Marq. Here is the marriage bond. Render thy

Father happy by signing it, and forgetting
This foolish passion.

Mar. [*Taking up the pen.*] Oh heavens! Bianca
Can I forget thee? No—I cannot! will not sign!
[*Dashes down the pen.*]

Enter the MARCHIONESS D'ESTELLO.

Marq. [*To her.*] He refuses to sign, and willingly, for
the sake

Of one who has no call upon him, consigns
Us to a prison—was ever ingratitude so base!

M.d'E. Oh! Marco, my dear son, it is not for myself
I plead, but for thy dear father. Wilt thou
Consent that his last days should be passed
In a prison? No! no!—thou wilt save him!

Mar. [*Takes up the pen.*] 'Twill kill Bianca! but
better one life than two.

O God! thou knowest the fearful choice—
Surely my parents should be my first thought;
I will save them! [*Writes rapidly.*]

Marq. Is it signed?

Mar. It is, my Lord Marquis—[*aside*] the death
Warrant of Bianca.

M.d'E. Then heaven bless thee, my son!

Mar. Ah! you may bless me; but my heart
Curses the deed. I have sav'd you—but
Alas! destroy'd Bianca—and in the destruction
Of her have destroy'd myself! [*He faints.*]

End of Act First.

ACT SECOND.

Scene First.—Peitro's Cottage.

[*Bianca in the Cottage with her father, old Peitro, who busies himself hanging clusters of grapes to dry.*]

Bian. And do you not wish to go, father?

Peit. Well child, I have lived so long in Genoa, that to leave it now is somewhat of a hardship; and these aged limbs are not the best for a sea voyage. However, when my Lord wishes it, that wish is law.

Bian. But father, we shall be as happy there as in Genoa. Naples is a beautiful city, and the estate which the Marquis wishes you to take charge of is a very fine one. You will not have to labor so hard; and I will be a lady, father, with nothing to do but to make thee happy.

Peit. Thou art a lady now, Bianca, and hast always made me happy; but is all in readiness?

Bian. Yes, father, all is in readiness; when do we leave?

Peit. To-morrow, child, at the earliest dawn sails the ship which will bear us far from hence, never perhaps to return. But I grow weary and will seek the repose so necessary and you Bianca had better retire also.

Bian. Not till you have first slept.

Peit. Well, be it so daughter. [*Retires to a couch and lies down.*]

Bian. He sleeps at last, and leaves me alone with my sorrow.

Alone—alone with my wretched thoughts! I have been

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Deserted—neglected—and cast off. Oh, Marco!
 Have I deserv'd such treatment from you?
 You—whom I trusted, confiding all my hap-
 piness

In your truth. Would that we had never met!
 And yet perhaps, 'twas sent to punish me;
 Perhaps, Oh, gracious Father! thou hast sent
 It as a penance, for having lov'd a man
 When I was destin'd and decreed to be the bride
 of heaven.

When at the altar I receiv'd, upon mine in-
 fant brow,

The holy benediction—'twas then my mother
 Vow'd to make me, if I liv'd, a holy
 Self-sacrificing nun. I render'd null
 That vow by loving Marco, and thus
 I am punish'd for my sin. Holy Mother!
 Pardon me, and when I have clos'd
 My father's eyes [*Points to the room in which*
P. retired] in that last sleep, which falls

Upon all men, then will I dedicate myself
 To thee.

[*Kneels at a crucifix for a few minutes and then rises*]

The hour is late, methinks I would once more
 Revisit the old familiar scenes—
 The vineyard, the olive grove and the piazza—
 Where I have often in happier days walk'd side
 By side with Marco. Oh, no fear of meeting
 him now;

The revel at the castle is too pleasant
 For him to think of bidding farewell

To the poor peasant girl.

[Puts on a pelisse, and exit.]

Scene Second.—The Olive Grove; midsummer night; City of Genoa in the distance.

Enter BIANCA

Bian. Now, as I pause, the ghosts of former days arise.
Oh memory; potent power for ill or good!
Why do you taunt me with the recollection
Of happy hours gone by? Oh, my mother!

[Kneels down.]

Look down upon thy daughter to-night,
And bless her, for the sake of him who died
For all.—Oh, sainted mother! even the stars
Look coldly on me. Oh, my mother! bless me—
Bless thy wretched daughter! Oh, Marco!
Thou can'st not dream how much Bianca
Loves, and suffers for thee! [Weeps.]

Enter MARCO and kneels by her side.

Mar. Dear Bianca, mine thou art,
And mine thou shalt be—

Bian. [Starting up.] Away, Marco!
You have deserted me for another. Do you wish
To insult me?—Go, give your vows
To the Lady Beatrice, and break them
If you dare! [With scorn.]

Mar. Yes, I dare to break them—
Hear me Bianca! Yon vessel which you think
will
Bear you far from me, will carry me also with
you,

But
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Bian. Saint
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Bian. Oh ne
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Bian. Oh, M
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But not to Naples. The South of France
Will be our destination. The captain is brib'd
To do my will. A holy man, the rev'rend father
Who was my tutor, goes with us, and as soon
as her

Gallant prow has pass'd yon rocky peak, his
Blessing and the ritual of the church will
Make us one. Then dear Bianca none shall
Separate us. Say, wilt thou consent?

Bian. Sainted mother! what shall I do?

Oh teach me! No Marco, I cannot go with thee.
Return to the Lady Beatrice; make her thy
Bride, and take with thee my blessing.

Mar. Hear me Bianca; you must—you will go.

You do not know me. I came prepar'd for life
Or death—with you to live, or without you—
die.

You refuse to go—then here at your feet
I offer up my worthless life, as some atonement
For the misery I have caus'd you.

[Points a stiletto at his breast.]

Bian. Oh! you must not do it, wretched man!

I am destin'd as the bride of heaven—

Mar. Then I shall be there before you.

I die, Bianca—farewell! *[Again points the steel.]*

Bian. Oh no! live Marco—live! *[Seizing his hand.]*

Mar. I take the life which you have spared

But only to devote it to you.

Bian. Oh, Marco! some fearful presentiment weighs

On my heart! 'Twas only to-night I vow'd

To devote myself to the service of him

Who rules all, and now I have broken that vow.

Mar. Yes, but ratified it by another equally as
Binding—because it was a prior one.
The church itself, sweet one, forbids the making
of vows

That preclude the fulfilment of a vow.
Fear not Bianca, you can serve our holy
Redeemer equally as well as a wife
As if you were mured within a cloister.

[*Lady Beatrice is seen to pass at the top
of the stage. Pauses and listens.*]

To night love, soon as sleep falls upon all
Within the castle, my tutor and myself will
Embark in yonder vessel; you and your father
Will join us at early dawn,
And ere pursuit is thought of we shall
Be far upon the ocean.

Beat. (*Aside.*) Ah, I hear enough;
But I'll outwit you both, and wreak
A vengeance deep and lasting
On that upstart girl. [*Exit.*]

Bian. Marco, I heard a voice! What can it be?

Mar. 'Tis some of the guests from the hall come
to seek me. I will rejoin them; and you Bianca fly
to the cottage, where good angels guard you 'till
dawn. Farewell! [*They embrace hurriedly, and
Marco exits.*]

Bian. Again my bosom throbs with hopes
I thought long since were dead;
Once more I feel the dear pleasure of an
Accepted love. Doubts and tears have
Fled. Marco loves me, and in his love

I sha
Thou

Beat. He lo
The

Bian. And

Beat. Know

Bian. No!

Marco

Beat. I am

Bian. Then

Beat. Aye,

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Marco

Bian. (*See*

Beat. There

Bian. Oh La

Beat. None,

Bian. For th

Give up

Beat. There

Bian. [*Sta*

Help!

Beat. Ha! y

[*Stabs her*

arise a s

I shall be happy. Once again dear Marco
Thou art mine.

Enter LADY BEATRICE.

Beat. Fool, to trust one like him—
He loves you not; for on the morrow he weds
The Lady Beatrice.

Bian. 'Tis false, he loves her not,
And will not wed her. (*Aside.*) Ah I forgot.

Beat. Know you who I am?

Bian. No! save that you are the slanderer of
Marco.

Beat. I am your rival girl, the Lady Beatrice.

Bian. Then heaven save me! [*Clasping her hands.*]

Beat. Aye, but your prayer is useless!

[*Laughing wildly.*]

You've had your triumph—I'll have mine now.
Fool! slave! minion! you have robb'd me of
His love—you have dar'd to step between
Marco and me—and for that you must die!

[*Draws a stiletto.*]

Bian. (*Screams*) Mercy! mercy!

Beat. There is no mercy—the heavens are brass.

Bian. Oh Lady! have you no pity? [*Kneels.*]

Beat. None, none. Revenge—

Bian. For the sake of my father—spare me, and I will
Give up Marco—yes, everything—only spare me!

Beat. There is no mercy—you must die!

Bian. [*Starts up screaming and attempts to escape.*]
Help! help!

Beat. Ha! you would escape.

[*Stabs her. Bianca falls against a tree, from which
arise a shower of fireflies, and Beatrice exits.*]

Enter FERNANDO.

Fer. Methought I heard a cry for help.

[Looks about the stage and observes the fireflies,
Holy virgin! the Lucciole lamps are brilliant
To-night, surely there is death in the air!

[Observes Bianca.

What's this? [Approaches her.] Bianca! Holy
mother!

[Stoops down.

Preserve us!—She's murder'd. Help! help!

[Picks up a package of papers.

Ha! what's this? The very papers I am in
search of.

And this? [Picks up a bracelet] I know this,

'tis the bracelet which my Lord Marco

Lately presented to the Lady Beatrice. Is she
connected

With this accursed deed? [Picks up a stiletto.]

This perhaps will tell.

Holy Mother! 'tis the weapon of Lady Beatrice,
and see!

See! here is her name engraven on its hilt.

Oh misery! she has done this deed—this cursed
deed!

Oh sweet—Oh murdered innocence! Was
savage and

Brutal jealousy the cause of this thy sudden and
fearful taking off?—

But let me examine the papers—they perhaps
may

Throw some light over the mystery of this dark
deed.

[Reads the address—

"To Bianca the supposed daughter of Peitro."

[*Opens the package, and with deep emotion reads,*

“ Daughter of a Noble Race,—When you have to read these lines, pardon I beseech you the great sin which the ambition of her, whom you supposed to be your mother, prompted her to commit against you. Know then my dear child that you are the daughter of the Count Marino, and that her whom he fancies is his daughter is my child. When you were only a few weeks old, you were placed in my charge by the Count and Countess, who went abroad; my own child was about the same age as yourself. They remained abroad for many years, and when they returned I substituted my child for theirs. They did not know the deception, and the Lady Beatrice whom they suppose to be their daughter, is still considered as such. In the accompanying packet you will find evidence enough to prove what I say.

“ MARIANA PEITRO, your unhappy Foster Mother.”

These are the papers which for weeks past I have

Diligently sought, but could not find.

I have them now, but alas! what avails the knowledge

Which they contain, since she whom it would

Have benefitted is dead? Oh no—it cannot be!

She is not dead—perhaps she only sleeps—
alas! no—

This crimson tide proclaims the fearful truth!

Oh death!

Thou dread unfathom'd word—I realize it now!

What! shall this dear mouth no longer breathe
forth smiles—

These eyes, now clos'd, no longer flash out and
reveal

The love, which these sweet lips have syllab'd
so oft

In song? There—let me kiss them for the first
and only time. [*Kisses her.*]

How cold they are! Oh, pitying angels from
above!

Look down and pour your kindest tears

On this dear form, from which has fled

The sweetest life that ever lived.

Oh vengeance—my heart doth crave for thee!

[*Looks at the stiletto.*]

Oh cursed steel! thou shalt aid me to obtain the
Vengeance which I seek. By this—and this—

[*Holding up the stiletto and bracelet.*]

I'll bring home the

Guilt to her who has done this deed. I swear it.

Hear me, Oh ye heavens! and record my vow:

Fernando swears never to rest until he has

Avenged this murdered angel.

[*Prostrates himself over her body.*]

TABLEAU.—A swarm of Lucciole arise from the ground and
hover over the prostrate pair. Curtain falls. End of Act
Second.

ACT THIRD.

(TIME BETWEEN SECOND AND THIRD ACT—TWO YEARS.)

Scene First.—A Chamber in the Castle. Time, Evening.

Enter DIAVOLO *and* the Lady BEATRICE.

Diav. I have come in obedience to your Ladyship's commands, and am anxious to know the business which your messenger informed me was so pressing.

Beat. It is indeed urgent. At my request Chevalier Diavolo, you desisted from pressing the Marquis for the money which he owes you. I have sent to inform you that I withdraw my request, and you are at liberty to put the law in force.

Diav. But I am not in need of money.

Beat. If you do not press the Marquis you will be in danger of losing it.

Diav. Well, I can afford to lose it; and I would like to do the Marquis a favor by letting him have the money as his own. Indeed I contemplated giving him up the bond which stands between us.

Beat. (*Aside.*) I must prevent that, or I shall be foiled. Good chevalier Diavolo, you must press him for the money; you ought not to lose such a sum.

Diav. Ah, I begin to fancy that there is some motive in your desiring me to press the Marquis.

Beat. I have no other motive than good friendship for you.

Diav. Prove to me that you really mean what you say.

Beat. How can I do so?

Diav. By accepting the offer of love which I have long since tendered to you.

Beat. I am flattered good Diavolo, by your offer, but I would prefer waiting a few years.

Diav. I shall wait a thousand years.

Beat. [*Laughing.*] Is there no other alternative.

Diav. There is none Lady, unless you give me your pledge to marry me, either now or in the future, I shall certainly release the Marquis from the bond.

Beat. I accept your offer, and give you my pledge [*taking his hands*] that if you press him for the bond, I will bestow my hand on you. (*Aside*) I shall find means to break my pledge.

Diav. You will? Ecod, I'll put it in force at once. I must see my lawyer. Adieu, Lady Beatrice—soon to be Lady Diavolo! [*Bows and retires right, and knocks against FERNANDO, who enters.*] How now, fellow—what do you mean?

Fer. I beg pardon chevalier, but I was in such haste to bring the tidings of the arrival of the Lord— [*Beatrice signs for him to be silent.*]

Diav. Of whom—did you say?

Fer. Of the young Lord— [*Beatrice again signs.*]

Diav. Yes—go on—who—what the devil do you stop for?

Beat. He means my brother. Will you hasten about the bond?

Diav. Oh he does, eh? (*Aside.*) I fancy there is something in all this. [*Exit.*]

Beat. I know your tidings—Marco has arrived. I learnt it an hour ago.

Fer. Aye Lady, he has arrived, and has changed in all save one thing.

Beat. And what is that?

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Fer. His love for Bianca. His servant Basso informed me that nothing but the hope of meeting Bianca has lured him back to Genoa. Notwithstanding the belief of her death—confirmed by the marks of blood and violence found in the grove, where he parted with her—he still believes her to be alive. Basso says his master has dreamed every night, for weeks past, that Bianca appeared to him, and told him to come to Genoa—as she would meet with him there. So Lady, judging by this, I fear your hopes of gaining Marco will be false.

Beat. Not so—I cannot give up hope. The general belief of her death, which prevails here, will at last convince him of the utter hopelessness of her being alive. Besides my plans are all laid; ere this the officers of the law will have seized the old Marquis. They will convey him to prison at the suit of Diavolo; and Marco seeing no other way to relieve his father will marry me.

Fer. But what if at the altar, in the moment of anticipated happiness, Bianca should appear alive and well—[*Beatrice starts*—]—would not that be a surprise?

Beat. (*Agitated.*) Oh but that cannot be, after what I have suffered to gain him (*aside*) and committed also. (*To Fernando.*) You cannot have any belief that she is alive.

Fer. No Lady; I believe nothing but what I behold. Only this, I have had a strange dream; methought I saw the lovely Beatrice about to be united to Marco. He appeared unwilling for the union, until by some supernatural power you assumed the

form of Bianca. I thought I saw also a fiend fleeing from the altar which she had cursed with her presence, and pardon me Lady, I did not see the face of the fiend, but it wore the dress of the Lady Beatrice.

Beat. (*Fearfully agitated.*) Oh! Oh!—Go on! Go on.

Fer. On the arm of the fiend was the bracelet which you say you have long missed.

Beat. (*Aside.*) Oh! Oh!

Fer. In her hand a stiletto. It was wet—mark me—it was wet—with the blood of Bianca.

Beat. (*Fiercely.*) Is this a dream which you have conjured up to fright me, or is it a reality? [*Goes to him and lays hold of his arm.*] Why talk to me of stilettos and Bianca's blood, and emphasise the word as if I am guilty of her blood? Who dares charge me with murder? Who says I murdered Bianca? Who is my accuser?

Fer. I am thy accuser!

Beat. You! Villain! Let the damned lie die in your throat! [*Attempts to stab him. Fernando disarms her and retains hold of her hands.*]

Fer. Yes—I charge you with the blood of Bianca, and will shortly charge you before the world! [*Beatrice screams and struggles in the grasp of Fernando, who dashes her to the ground and exits.*]

Scene Second.—Reception Room of the Castle,

Enter Marquis D'ESTELLO and Officers of the Law, left.

Marq. Well gentlemen, to what am I indebted for the honor of your visit—business or pleasure?

1st Officer
to us is a sad

Marq. Wh

2nd Officer

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Marq. Oh

1st Officer

Marq. Ah

2nd Officer

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Mar. S'de

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Mar. Wha

[*Turns and*

officers.] M

1st Officer. To business, my Lord Marquis; which to us is a sad duty.

Marq. What mean you?

2nd Officer. In fact my Lord Marquis, we have a process to serve on you. [*Hands him a paper.*]

Marq. Oh, an officer of the law.

1st Officer. Yes, your Excellency.

Marq. Ah—whose suit is this?

2nd Officer. At the suit of Diavolo.

Marq. I can satisfy his claim.

2nd Officer. But he is now the possessor of the claims of all the other creditors. [*Hands him other papers.*]

Marq. Then I am undone. I cannot pay him.

1st Officer. It will be our sad duty to convey you to prison.

Marq. A hard fate for me in my old days.

Enter MARCO and BASSO, right.

Mar. This is a strange welcome after my long absence, Basso. What mean those guards placed at the gates; have you learned?

Bas. It seems the estate has been seized for debt; a notice posted on the pavillion informs the public it will be sold to-morrow.

Mar. S'death! Going to sell the old castle over my father's head!

Bas. But that is not all—I am informed that the officers of the law entered a few minutes before, in search of the Marquis, whom they intend to arrest.

Mar. What! my father! I must go and seek him. [*Turns and meets the Marquis in the custody of the officers.*] My father! do you not know me?

Marq. My son—my son! Welcome to your old father's heart! [*Breaks from the officers and embraces Marco.*]

Mar. What mean these men, father—those guards at the gate who would hardly let me pass?

Marq. Alas! I am ruined and arrested for debt. These gentlemen were conveying me to—a prison.

Mar. (*After a pause*) Is there no way to save you—the Lady Beatrice, is she still unmarried—will her dower release you?

Marq. (*Eagerly.*) Yes, she is still unmarried! still anxious for the marriage which your flight frustrated; but Ah I cannot ask you to make this sacrifice to which you are so bitterly opposed.

Mar. It matters not now—my hopes of meeting Bianca are false; and I thank heaven I have escaped the death which I courted so often. At last dear father I shall be able to repay you for all your kindness. Let us go (*to the officers*) gentlemen, this matter shall be arranged—follow me.

Marq. My noble son! [*Exit all.*]

Scene Third.—A Chapel in Genoa.

Enter MARCO, dressed for a wedding ceremony, and BASSO.

Bas. You seem unhappy my Lord; one would think the ceremony was to be a funeral—not a wedding.

Mar. Would it were my funeral; then this poor Heart would be at rest.

O Death! why shrinks man from thy presence?
Why fear to meet thee, and at thy summons

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Bas. 'Tis
The

Enter BE

*Count a
Gentlem
takes hi
left in a
him on
shop.*

Stand appall'd, as if thou wert not the herald
Of eternal rest? Basso.

Bas. Yes my Lord.
Mar. Good faithful Basso! here take this ring—
Wear it Basso for thy master's sake, whose
fortunes

You have so faithfully followed.
Wear it I say for my sake, and the friendship
Which is ours; and Basso, when thy master
Is no more, see that I am buried
In the olive grove—where last I parted from
Bianca.

Bas. [*Taking the ring.*] Why talk of death, my Lord
Marco?

You are young yet, and have many years
Of happiness I trust before you.

Mar. Yes I am young in years Basso, but my heart
Is old. At what hour does
The ceremony take place?

Bas. At noon.

Mar. 'Twill soon be here—I long for it, and yet I
Wish it were further off. Basso I have
A presentiment that Bianca yet lives.

Bas. 'Tis impossible my Lord—but see here is
The bridal party.

*Enter BEATRICE, the MARQUIS, the MARCHIONESS,
Count and Countess MARINO and other Ladies and
Gentlemen. Enter also a Priest from centre, and
takes his place at the altar. Marco stands at the
left in a reverie; Marquis advances and touches
him on the shoulder; the others converse in dumb
show.*

Marq. Marco your bride the Lady Beatrice and guests have arrived, are you not prepared for the ceremony?

Mar. (*Starting.*) Eh—Beatrice—the guests—yes I am ready for the sacrifice—I mean the ceremony. [*Goes over to Lady Beatrice.*] Lady can you take a hand without a heart?

Beat. (*Aside.*) Fernando's dream—he is unwilling. Mar. No answer. Then there is no hope.

Marq. What delay is this? [*To the Priest.*] Let the ceremony go on.

Mar. Eh—let it go on; it matters not now. [*They advance to the Altar and arrange themselves before it.*]

Priest. If any man can show any just cause why these two may not lawfully be joined together, let him now speak, or else hereafter forever hold his peace.

Enter DIAVOLO.

Diav. I forbid the ceremony.

Count Marino (*Interposing.*) Who are you?

Diav. She's mine. She's pledged to me. S'death! I'll murder every one and hang myself afterwards! [*Pacing up and down the stage.*]

Mar. What means this fellow Lady Beatrice?

Beat. He is a ruffian of a fellow called Diavolo, and has taken proceedings against your father. I offered to buy the bond which he holds, but he refused unless I married him; but I would not, and thus he persecutes me.

Mar. And you have been thus kind.

Diav. I tel

Mar. What
Remove this
Diav. [*Str*
help me?

[*They drag
them.*]

Fer. Hold
him.] What

Marq. He
bidding it.

Fer. I also
criminal.

Marq. For

Fer. For m

All. Murde

Count Mari
reputation of

Fer. Peace

Beat. 'Tis
I demand the

Fer. Here
papers to the

Marq. Who

Fer. I four
anca, in the ol

[*Producing a*
think you will

Mar. Yes,

Fer. This s
of Lady Beat

Lord Marco.

Diav. I tell you she's mine.

Mar. What ho! without there. [*Enter Servants.*]

Remove this fellow. [*Servants seize Diavolo.*]

Diav. [*Struggles.*] Help! help! Will no one help me?

[*They drag him left. Enter FERNANDO, and stops them.*]

Fer. Hold! Release this man. [*They release him.*] What has he done?

Marq. He has disturbed the ceremony by forbidding it.

Fer. I also forbid it, and arrest the bride as a criminal.

Marq. For what do you arrest her?

Fer. For murder.

All. Murder!

Count Marino. Sir, be careful how you asperse the reputation of my daughter.

Fer. Peace old man; she is no daughter of thine.

Beat. 'Tis an infamous lie! The proofs villain—I demand the proofs.

Fer. Here are the proofs. [*Hands a package of papers to the Marquis, who opens and reads.*]

Marq. Where got you these papers?

Fer. I found them by the inanimate body of Bianca, in the olive grove; near it also lay this bracelet. [*Producing a bracelet, and handing it to Marco.*] I think you will recognize your gift.

Mar. Yes, 'tis the one I gave Beatrice.

Fer. This stiletto I found also. It has the name of Lady Beatrice on its hilt—see for yourself my Lord Marco.

- Mar. This bracelet—this stiletto—the name
Upon the hilt—and see, here's blood—
- Fer. It is Bianca's! It has not been disturb'd
Since the morning I found it in the grove.
- Mar. Bianca's blood! (*Kisses the blade.*) Oh, cruel
fate!
Oh, damnable deed! (*To Beatrice.*) Woman,
fiend!
Have you committed this deed? this bloody
deed!
Here, gaze on this weapon! and if thou art
guilty
Let each spot of crimson rusted in the steel
Be drops of agony, from thy fiendish soul!
- Beat. Oh Marco! I am innocent.
You will see me righted. Surely I shall not
Be condemn'd upon the unsupported testimony
Of this man.
- Mar. No, by heaven thou shalt have
Fair trial. (*To Fernando.*) You hear what she
says;
You must produce witnesses—aye and witnesses
Whose testimony heaven itself cannot doubt.
- Beat. (*Triumphantly.*) And that he cannot do.
How now, Fernando—where is your charge of
murder
Against me? Marco, is there guilt in my face?
Look well into my eyes—search well each
feature—
And see if murder lies conceal'd within me.
Seest thou guilt Marco—all?
- Mar. No, Lady,

- I see no
- Beat. Look M
Ah! no
He stole
He lov'd
See—he
He! He
- Mar. By heav
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Sir, you
Fer. I shall
That w
[Exit
in
Mar. Bianca
Bian. Marco
Beat. (*Screa
Come
Mar.
Art no
Bian. No M
And F
Of the
Diav. What
Ecce*

I see no guilt upon you. Oh! cruel deed!

[Looks at the stiletto.]
 Beat. Look Marco, at my accuser; see his pale face.
 Ah! now it flushes—and see his averted eye.
 He stole my weapon—my bracelet!
 He lov'd her, but she scorned his suit.
 See—he cannot look upon you—
 He! He—is the murderer!

Mar. By heaven I doubt my senses.

[Approaches Fernando.]
 May the gods eternal blast thee, if thou hast
 Prefert'd a charge which cannot be prov'd,
 And made me doubt this fair and honorable
 Lady.

Sir, you must produce witnesses.

Fer. I shall produce a witness my Lord
 That will convince even this honorable Lady.

[Exit for a moment, and then returns leading
 in BIANCA:]

Mar. Bianca!) Bianca rushes to Marco, who clasps
 Bian. Marco!) her in his arms.

Beat. (Screaming with terror.) Holy Mother! 'tis her
 spirit

Come forth to haunt me!

Mar.

Dear one, thou

Art no spirit.

Bian. No Marco—I thank the fates

And Fernando, who preserv'd me from the steel
 Of that dreadful woman: [Points to Beatrice!]

Diav. What a wretch I have escaped marrying!

Ecod she might have murder'd me the first—

[Shaking his head.]

Mar. Thus have I thought of thee—thus held thee
In my fever'd dreams—when on the battle
plain

I wounded lay. Victory's moment it made
More glorious; aye, and in defeat's sad hour—
When droop'd the standards of our legions
Brave, and warlike hearts were fill'd with
Shame and grief—it cheer'd me still
To think that I might once more
Hold thee thus—

Bian.

Dear Marco!

Beat. (*Aside.*) The slight of their happiness brings
back

All my hatred of that girl. Oh, vengeance!
Fernando shall suffer for this.

(*To Marco, with mock gravity.*)

Farewell, my Lord Marco—I wish you every
happiness.

Diav. You do indeed! Perhaps you'll take me now—
(*Aside.*) That's if she can get me.

Count Marino. Hold—stay Lady Beatrice; a word
before you go. It is fitting that I should inform you
and the company present, that the Countess and my-
self have examined these documents and found them
authentic; and we recognize this sweet creature as
our daughter.

Countess Marino. (*Embracing Bianca.*) Dear
daughter!

Bian. Dear mother!

Count Marino. As for you, (*to Beatrice,*) who have
so long usurped her place in our love, depart hence
into a nunnery, and endeavor by repentance to atone

for your ex-
tence shall
in the prac-
Diav.

Bian. S
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who found
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I owe my

Mar. (*in-
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Beat.
Fer. I
Beat.

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for your crime. One word more—a deceitful competence shall be allowed you, so long as you continue in the practice of virtue.

Diav. Perhaps you would like to have the bond.
[*Exit Beatrice.*]

Bian. She desired proofs a minute ago. I charge her with attempting to murder me in the olive grove; here is the scar. (*Opening her dress.*) To Fernando, who found me senseless from loss of blood, and conveyed me to his home—where I have since remained—I owe my life.

Mar. (*Approaching Fernando, who has been standing in deep thought.*) Sir, you have my life long thanks—[*While the others are conversing in dumb show and examining the papers, BEATRICE enters and stabs FERNANDO.*]

Beat. Traitor! thus am I revenged!

Fer. I am murdered!

Beat. That blow will do its work—the steel is poisoned! [*Dashes the stiletto at the feet of Marco; and exits.*]

Mar. Secure her! Let her be arrested and conveyed to prison.

Exit all but Marquis, Marchioness, the Count and Countess Marino—and Marco and Bianca, who support Fernando.

Bian. Oh, speak Fernando! Speak to me—say! thou art not dead? [*Kneels.*] Oh heaven save him
As he saved me!

Fer. (*Opening his eyes.*) Where art I?—Ah yes.—
'Tis too

Late—I'm dying! Marco—all—farewell!

Bianca

Here—quick!

Bian. Here am I, Fernando; what is it?

Fer. I love you—Give me one—one—last kiss,

[She kisses him.] Farewell—I—~~you~~—will

meet—me—

In heaven. [Dies.]

CURTAIN FALLS.

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