# *Ruy Blas*

## A Grand Opera in Four Acts

---

**The Music and Text by Howard Glover**

See https://englishromanticopera.org/operas/Ruy_Blas.htm for more details on the opera.

This libretto is a transcription from two sources: firstly, the manuscript submitted to the censor held in the British Library (Add MS 53008 A) and secondly a printed version from Boosey and Sons, London, presumably published in 1861, and now available at the Library of Congress (https://www.loc.gov/item/2010657981/ ).

The manuscript was neatly copied out and, unusually, the copyist wrote in his name and address after each act: Thomas Joseph Anderson, Copyist, 36 Elliott Row, St Georges Road, Southwark. The printed version was taken as the basis for the transcription although it was later found to contain a few sloppy errors. However, there are few differences between the two sources. Those which have been spotted have been listed in the footnotes. The main discrepancy between the two is at the very end and both endings are included. The ending included in the manuscript seems the most coherent and satisfactory.

Spellings are as in the manuscript and include such words as “favorite” for “favourite”. The transcription attempts to reproduce the not entirely consistent layout, capitalisation and punctuation of the printed version.

Known vocal numbers are in bold but there are a few places where Glover used rhyming verses, which may have been sung rather than spoken. These are referenced in the footnotes.

**{xx}** marks the page numbers of the manuscript and **[xx]** the page numbers of the printed version

Please send any comments or corrections to englishromanticopera@gmail.com.

R Burdekin, September 2021
(updated 10 November 2021)
www.victorianenglishopera.org
www.englishromanticopera.org

# Dramatis Personae

The printed libretto shows the following. The manuscript has the same list of characters but does not include who sang what. Ruy Blas is described as "afterwards Duke of Olmedo" and "Don Pedro" is omitted.

| | |
|---|---|
| Don Sallust de Bazan (Prime Minister to Charles II, King of Spain) ..... | Mr Santley |
| Don Caesar de Bazan (his relative) …… | Mr Charles Lyall |
| Don Manuel } | Mr Collins |
| Don Diego } (Ministers of State) | Mr F. Payne |
| Don Glozman } | Mr. H. Payne |
| Don Gomez } | Mr Aynsley Cook |
| Don Pedro (an Old Courtier) ……. | Mr Eugene Dussek |
| Ruy Blas …… | Mr W. Harrison |
| Gudiel (Don Sallust's Secret Agent) ..... | Mr Patey |
| Sancho ……... | Mr. Friend |
| Oscar (Page to the Queen) …… | Madame Laura Baxter |
| Duchess D'Alberquerque (Duenna to the Queen) ... | Miss Susan Pyne |
| Casilda (Favorite Maid of Honour to the Queen) .... | Miss Thirlwall |
| Anne of Neuberg (Queen of Spain) …..... | Miss Louisa Pyne |

Nobles Courtiers, Knights, Priests, Soldiers, Masquers, Alguazils, Valets, Peasants, &c.,

Ladies of the Court, Maids of Honour, Nuns, Masquers, Peasants, &c.

The Action takes place in Madrid
Period, 169-

# Ruy Blas

## Act 1

Scene 1 – *A magnificent Saloon in that portion of the Royal Palace occupied by* Don Sallust*;* Nobles *and* Courtiers *are assembled for a grand fete in honour of the* King*'s birthday*

OPENING CHORUS
Accompanied by Dancing

*Nobles and Courtiers*
**Gaily pass the jocund hours,**
**Let us sing, and dance, and play,**
**Come, enjoy life's transient flowers,**
**Soon, too soon, they'll fade away.**

**List the music that entrances!**
**Mark the lover's tender glances!**
**Sing, sing, dance and play.**
**Drink and join the brilliant dances,**
**Ruby wine all joy enhances,**
**Makes the gay more gay.**

*Semi-chorus of Maskers dressed as Flower Girls*
**Fresh love-flowers here we cry**
**Who'll deck the hours as they trip by?**

*Semi-chorus of Men who attempt to embrace the Girls*
I, and I, and I

*Women* **Fie! Oh fie! Oh fie! {4}**
*Men* **Fresh love-flowers I will buy**
**To deck the hours that hurry by**
*Other Men* **And I! and I! and I!**
*Women* **Fie! Oh fie! Oh fie!**
*Men* **Prythe why so shy?**

GENERAL CHORUS REPEATED

**Gaily pass the jocund hours,**
**As we sing, and dance, and play,**
**Twine we wreaths of life's fair flowers**
**Soon, too soon, they'll fade away.**

**Louder, louder, raise the strain!**
**Cymbals strike, and clarions sound**
**With your songs, again, again,**
**Makes the vaulted roof resound.**

**Gaily pass the jocund hours,**
**As we sing, and dance, and play,**
**Twine we wreaths of life's fair flowers**
**Soon, too soon, they'll fade away.**

[*The Company divide on either side of the Stage as* OSCAR, *the page, enters splendidly attired in the costume of the time from the centre*.]

**[4]**

*Oscar* Her Majesty the Queen will come tonight
To grace this fete in honour of her Lord
**{5}** Whose royal birthday, as you know,
Is ever celebrated here.
*Courtiers* (*with astonishment*)
The Queen!
*Other Courtiers*
*Oscar* The Queen!
*Courtier* The Queen, whence this surprise?
*Oscar* Honour Don Sallust with her presence?
*Courtiers* And why not? Is he not Spain's first Minister?
*Oscar* (*mysteriously*) Yes – but –
*Courtiers* But what?
*Oscar* (*After a pause*) *Yo*u know
Really, gentlemen –
I understand you not.
What should I know.

AIR WITH CHORUS

*Oscar* **Gentlemen, what would you learn**
**From a simple little page like me?**
**You to know state secrets burn,**
**In such things I nought can see.**

**A fiery glance from woman's eye**
**For me possesses greater charms.**
**Dearer to me is passion's sigh,**
**Sweeter to me are love's alarms.**

*Chorus of Ladies* **Oh hear the amorous page!**

*Oscar* **Such joys alone can earthly woes assuage!**
**Solemn debate,**
**{6}** **Affairs of state,**
**Mystery great,**
**Such stuff I hate.**

**Gentlemen, what would you learn**
**From a simple little page like me?**
**You to know state secrets burn,**
**In such things I nought can see.**

[*Male* COURTIERS *very mysteriously surround the* PAGE; *and give the following semi-chorus, sotto voce, one voice coming in after another*]

**'Tis widely spread – reports are rife –**
**That some one should be made a wife –**
**That a fair girl has been beguil**
**That – the Prime Minister – a little child –**
**The Queen knows all – and it were vain –**
**You understand us – pray explain!**

*Oscar* (*bursting into a fit of laughter*)
Ha! ha! ha!
( *Slyly and mysteriously, with mock gravity*)
Well then draw very near
If it must be so
[*A long pause, during which the* PAGE *carefully collects all the* COURTIERS *around him*]
From me the great news hear –
[*All gather more closely round with intense curiosity*]

**[5]**
*Oscar* (*breaking off suddenly*)
**{7}** That I nothing know!

*Chorus of Men* **Oh! the insolent Page!**
(*furiously*) **I am boiling with rage!**

*Oscar* **Ha! ha! ha!**
**Gentlemen, what would you learn**
**From a simple little page like me?**
**You to know state secrets burn,**
**In such things I nought can see.**
**To the magic lore**
**Enveloped in love's mystery,**
**Sweeter by far the honey store**
**That's hived[1] in cupid's history**

*Chorus-Men* **Oh! the insolent Page!**

*Women* **Oh! the amorous Page!**

[1] The printed version has a blank instead of "hived", as in the manuscript.

*Men* **I am boiling with rage!**

*Women* **Oh! the amorous Page!**

REPETITION OF A PORTION OF THE OPENING CHORUS
*Accompanied by dancing*
**Gaily pass the jocund hours,**
**Let us sing, and dance, and play,**
**Come, enjoy life's transient flowers,**
**Soon, too soon, they'll fade away.**

[*The* PAGE *and the whole of the Company retire from the stage to another part of the Palace during the execution of the Chorus*]

**{8}**

*Sallust* How tedious is this fete,
How dull its music to my ear,
And yet state etiquette
Demands my presence.
Alas! but little know these fawning Courtiers,
These satellites of fortune, who would bask in the sunshine of my favour,
What rage and grief
Are gnawing at the heart
Of Spain's first Minister –
How imminent is his fall;
[*Speaking hurriedly*]
To be ruined too by a miserable love affair,
The tender weakness of a [2]
German Girl
For a Grandee of Spain,
Is to be requited with his hand,
Simply because that Girl
Is Anne of Neuburgh's
Countrywoman and protigée [*sic*].
Even now I wait intelligence of my fate from Gudiel,
My faithful follower,
News that must decide my destiny for ever.
Ah! He is here.

**{9}** Enter GUDIEL

*Sallust* Gudiel!
**[6]** Thy looks betoken me no good.
Speak – and quickly!

[2] The manuscript includes the word "Plebeian" here

*Gudiel* My Lord! the worst is to be feared!
Unless within one week you obey the Queen's behest,
And wed the mother of your child,
Public disgrace and banishment await you-
Such is the royal will.

*Sall.* (*furiously*) Enough!
I will not yield
One of ignoble birth
Shall never be Don Sallust's wife.
But the Court shall enjoy
No public triumph.
By voluntary exile
I'll evade the intended insult.
Gudiel! This very night I'll quit Madrid,
And brood on future vengeance.

SCENA

*Sall.* **My heart with rage is swelling,**
**Now bleeds my wounded pride,**
**A thousand tongues, the story telling,**
**Will soon my fallen state deride**

**Thus vanishes at once in air**
**{10}** **The dream of many anxious years,**
**But yet, proud Queen, beware! beware!**
**This act may cost thee bitter tears!**

*Sall. (Recit.)* **Yes, Gudiel!**
**This very night I go;**
**But you, my faithful confidant,**
**Stay here.**
**There may be work for you.**
**Vengeance! vengeance! sweet is the thought.**
**This insult, vain woman, I soon may repay.**
**The pride of my race thou hast dared set at nought,**
**The hopes of a life thou hast driven away!**
**Spirits of darkness, thy cunning impart**
**Teach me to wither and crush her proud heart!**
**Vengeance! vengeance! sweet is the thought.**
**This insult, vain woman, I soon may repay.**
**The pride of my race thou hast dared set at nought,**
**The hopes of a life thou hast driven away!**

[Exit DON SALLUST hastily, followed by GUDIEL]

[*A great noise and angry altercation heard without, on the opposite side of the stage to that* DON SALLUST *and* GUDIEL *have just quitted. Enter* DON CESAR *in very ragged attire, sword in hand, driving before him the* VALETS *of* DON SALLUST.]

**{11}**

*Cesar* Away ye hireling knaves!

*Chorus of valets* You cannot enter here.

*Cesar* Stand off, ye wretched slaves.

*Valets* Your sword we do not fear.

*Cesar* Away, ye hireling knaves,
For I will enter here!

*Valets* You shall not enter here!
[DON CESAR *fights his way to the centre of the stage*]

**[7]**

*Cesar* Not let me in, although I showed the pass-
Exclude me, a grandee of Spain,
From the Palace!
Insolent Ruffians!

[CESAR *threatens to cut down the* VALETS, *who recoil in dismay, until* RUY BLAS, *called to the scene by the uproar, rushes between them and arrests the arm of* DON CESAR[3] *about to strike.* RUY BLAS *is struck like the rest of the* VALETS ]

*Blas* What means this outrage?

*Cesar* (*recognising* RUY BLAS)
What do I see? Ruy Blas?

*Blas* Zafari! Why, what brings you here?

*Cesar* Business. These dogs would stay me, despite the passport from their Lord!

*Blas* (*examining pass, and motions Valets to retire*)
Give me thy hand

**{12}** That I may press it to my heart,
As in that early time when I lived without home,
When the day brought me hunger,
When the night brought me cold,
But when I was still free.
Ah! Zafari! In those days I was at least a man.
Constant companions, together we hailed the dawn with songs of joy,

[3] The printed libretto has Don Sallust, but the manuscript has Don Cesar, which is clearly the correct identification

And side by side we slept at night,
Under the starry vault of heaven.
And after four long years thus to meet you again!
And always the same!
Careless as a child, free as a gypsy!
But in me how sad a change!
An orphan educated by charity at college,
With a scholar's learning,
I acquired a scholar's pride,
And instead of a good artizan[4],
The State made me (fatal mistake!) a dreamer!
Strange thoughts, and wilder aspirations,
Flew from my lips in senseless rhymes.
You laughed, but could not reason with me.
Toward[5] some mysterious goal
I seemed to be advancing.
To my young fancy every thing appeared possible,
I hoped all from destiny.

**{13}** At length, dying of hunger on the street,
I sought for bread where alone for me it could be found,
In servitude and degradation!
Oh! when at twenty years, believing in my genius,
Barefoot I trod the streets of this great city,
Meditating upon human woes,
Pitying Spain's wretched misruled people,
And dreaming of means to crush the privileged oppressors of mankind,
I thought myself wanted in the world!
Friend, see the result.
The patriot's laurel crown
(*Bitterly*) a bartered for the lackey's badge!

Well I know that hunger has no law
**[8]** But destiny's tide has its flux and reflux,
*Cesar* Hope still my friend!

Hope!
But you know nothing as yet –
*Blas* Hear now the sequel of my wild sad story

SCENA

*Blas* **Ambition's early, golden dreams had flown;**
**Sad and dejected was my heart.**
**That bright world which young hope had shown,**
**Appeared, alas! but to depart.**

[4] The printed version has "artizan" while the manuscript has "artisan".
[5] The printed version has "Inward"

**{14}**

**Heedless I strayed in sorrow's night,**
**Reckless what destiny might bring.**
**Nought to my soul could give delight,**
**Or ease the pain of disappointment's sting.**
**Until a glorious light**
**Shone in my desert way,**
**Changing my spirit's night**
**Into effulgent day!**

**Oh, blessed was that light!**
**It raised me from despair;**
**But yet so wondrous bright,**
**Its beams I scarce could bear.**

**Star-like it shone,**
**Far, far above my head,**
**Bidding my grief begone-**
**Yet filling me with dread.**

**I worshiped it with fevered brain -**
**I knew such love might aye prove vain,**
**And yet despite the torturing pain,**
**I madly braved its power again.**

**So dear was that light**
**Which shone on my despair,**
**I thought, though wondrous bright,**
**To love it I might dare**

**{15}**

**Yes, fond hope whispered still to me,**
**In spite of all she may be thine;**
**The humble lackey yet may be**
**Destined with the great to shine.**

**This love prevailed, and still I live,**
**All hope I cannot lose;**
**For fortune yet to me may give**
**What custom would refuse.**

**Oh, rapturous thought![6]**
**The right to love – nature's first boon**
**The pride of man shall ne'er destroy.**

*Cesar* You love, then, some high-born lady
Whom, may I ask?

[6] The manuscript titles these lines "Coda"

*Blas* Search in your brain!
Imagine all that is extravagantly wild-
**[9]** You will not, cannot guess!
(*after a pause*) Zafari!
I love the queen!

[*During the latter part of the preceding Scena,* DON SALLUST *followed by* GUDIEL *has entered unobserved by* CESAR *and* BLAS, *and been listening attentively to the latter*]

*Cesar* The queen!
**{16}**
*Sallust* The queen!

TRIO

*Cesar*
**Oh, madness worse than all!**
**'Twill cost thee, friend, thy life.**
**Would'st also work her fall?**
**Spain's queen a lackey's wife!**

*Sallust*
**(*aside, sotto voce*)**
**Oh, joy! Greater than all**
**To avenge a blighted life;**
**This fair prude I'll enthral,**
**And make a lackey's wife.**

*Blas*
**I'm deaf to reason's call**
**Despite my bosom's strife;**
**The dangers that appal,**
**I love her more than life.**

*Blas* (*to* CESAR) Oh, Zafari!
Hear more ere you condemn me quite.
[SALLUST *listens with deep attention*]
Betrothed to a man whom she has seen but once,
And cannot love – a bride only in name –
Yoked to a gross being whose only joy
Is in the chase.
Sacrificed, in short, to political expedience –
Anne of Neuburgh's life is that of a prisoner,
**{17}** Rather than of a queen.
The miserable tedium of her existence knows no interruption.
The voice of love has ne'er yet spoken
To her pure fresh heart.
In losing her, King Charles the Second
Would lose nothing.
Respecting him, I have no scruples.

*Cesar* (*drily*) Possibly
But does the queen know of this love?

BALLAD

*Ruy Blas*

**Beside her lattice every night**
**Some gentle flow'rets bloom;**
**Oh! who would scale that giddy height,**
**In darkness' thickest gloom?**

**Who brings these flowers with toil and pain**
**Departs, and leaves no trace?**
**Who could those lofty turrets gain,**
**And why such dangers face?**

**Nor arméd guard, nor lofty wall,**
**With fear his bosom moves.**
**Heedless he climbs, with joy risks all,**
**To bring the flower she loves!**

**[10]**

**She nothing knows – but still will take**
**The tribute to her breast –**
**{18}** **And all the joy these flowers make**
**To no one is confessed.**

**A letter, too, lay once concealed**
**'Neath leaves of the bouquet;**
**Yet its contents were ne'er revealed,**
**Nor was it cast away.**

**Nor sentry keen, nor lofty wall,**
**With fear my bosom maves.**
**Fearless I climb – would hazard all -**
**To bring the flower she loves!**

[*During the preceding,* DON SALLUST *whispers to* GUDIEL, *who immediately retires to the private apartment of the Minister*]

TRIO (*resumed*)

*Cesar*

**Oh, madness worse than all!**
**'Twill cost thee, friend, thy life.**
**Would'st also work her fall?**
**Spain's queen a lackey's wife!**

*Sallust*

**Oh, joy! Greater than all**
**To avenge a blighted life;**
**This fair prude I'll enthral,**
**And make a lackey's wife.**

*Blas* **I'm deaf to reason's call**
**Despite my bosom's strife;**
**{19}** **The dangers that appal,**
**I love thee[7] more than life.**

[*Towards the end of the trio,* SALLUST *comes slowly forward and stands between* DON CESAR *and* RUY BLAS, *both of whom seem startled and confused.* SALLUST *bows distantly to* DON CESAR, *and, throwing upon* RUY BLAS *a searching glance, proceeds*]

*Sallust* Ruy Blas! retire into my chamber,
Where you will find a suit
Differing from that you wear,
One, far more suited to you!
Go and put it on!

*Ruy Blas* (*astonished*) My lord!

*Sall.* Leave us, and do my bidding. [*Exit* RUY BLAS]

*Sall.* (*to* CESAR) Well, brigand!
Or must I call you "noble cousin?"
'Tis sometime since we met.
What seek you here?

*Cesar* Money

*Sall.* Money!

DUET[8]

*Cesar* **Money I would have, old friend -**
**Creditors are hard with me.**

*Sall.* **More cash you would have me lend -**
**Pray, sir, what's the sum to be?**

**{20}**
*Cesar* A thousand reals.
**[11]**
*Sall.* A thousand reals
(*Laughing*) Your audacity is very great,
After all the sums you've had

*Cesar* Too much modesty I hate,
And things are really looking bad

[7] The manuscript has "her", as in the initial trio

[8] It is not clear whether the duet includes all the text until Don Cesar leaves. The manuscript does not identify the text as a duet.

*Sall.* (*with assumed severity of manner*)
The town does nought but talk of you-
Your midnight brawls – your desperate life.

*Cesar* Of other things the town talks too.
I hear you're going to take a wife.

*Sall. (ruffled)* Idle jokes! But list to me
I've some serious work in view.

*Cesar* Why, whatever can it be?

*Sall.* I know that I can trust in you.

*Cesar* Is't to trick some knavish Jew,
Or some miserly grandee;
Or to run some rascal through,
It is quite the same to me!

*Sall* Your moral scruples, well I know,
Are not of the nicest kind.

*Cesar* I would not hear this from a foe; but yours is a congenial mind!
So speak out and nothing fear,
I'll meet your wishes if I can.

**{21}**
*Sall.* (*fiercely*) Vengeance I'd have.

*Cesar* - pray make all clear
Is it a duel? Name your man!

*Sall.* Well- not precisely so.
Women sometimes can offend-
Gentle arms may deal a blow,
Causing mischief hard to mend.

*Cesar* Women! bless their darling hearts –
What can they do to hurt men?
Cause some little amorous smarts –
Laugh at us – and pray what then?

*Sall.* Listen (*with concentrated rage*)
Gold is yours (*gives him a purse*). What sum you please.
But a woman must be snared.
One who, to insult our race;
Openly this day hath dared!

*Cesar* (*indignantly*) Ensnare a woman!
[*After a pause and with chivalrous feeling*]

Don Sallust, I'm a fallen man –
Desp'rate – and sick of life,
To take a purse from o'er-stocked wealth,
To meet a knave in open strife;
Such things I've done; but heaven be praised,
My honour is not yet quite sold
I've ne'er 'gainst hapless woman warr'd.

**{22}** You ask in vain. So take you gold.
[*Returns purse indignantly*]
Ha! ha! ha!

*Sall.* (*after a pause*) Give me thy hand!
I've tried thee well, and love thee for thy chivalry.

Indeed!

*Cesar* (*drily*)
**[12]** The thing was really too funny

*Sall.*
Perhaps. But how about the money?

*Cesar*
The money you shall have

*Sall.* But get you hence from here
For such a place as this
Far too ragged you appear. (*gives him a purse*)

Oh, wondrous adventure!

*Cesar* (*aside*) The best I've had yet.
Such a purse full of money,
For nothing to get!
'Tis really romantic,
He surely is frantic,
His niggardly habits so far to forget.
You'll rue this adventure,

*Sall.* (*aside*) The worst you've had yet;
For my long purse of gold
The full value I'll get
He thinks it romantic –
With joy he is frantic;
But my gen'rous gifts he'll not quickly forget.

**{23}**

[*Exit* DON CESAR *bowing, and chuckling over his success; but looking rather mystified. The instant he is gone,* DON SALLUST *calls* GUDIEL, *who, during the preceding duet, has returned to the stage, and been lurking about the back of the scene.*]

*Sall.* Gudiel!
Take six of my most trusty Alguazils,
Follow that man, and see him safely bound,
Then placed on board the earliest sailing transport for the Indies,
What gold you find on him
Divide it with my faithful followers.
Away! Lose not a moment (*Exit* GUDIEL *hastily*)

Now for Ruy Blas (*Opens the door of his private apartment*)
Come forth my noble friend!
*[Enter Ruy Blas splendidly attired as a grandee of Spain*]

*Blas* My gracious lord!
What means this change?

**{24}**

*Sall.* Ruy Blas! I have marked thy genius,
Have noted thine ambition,
And would befriend thee,
Would aid thy rising.

*Blas* But – may I not know!

*Sall.* For the present ask no more,
But follow my directions
And your fortune's made.
Firstly, however, write here a few lines under my direction.

*Sall.* "I hereby engage myself to serve Don Sallust de Bazan, and be to him on all occasions a faithful valet" (RUY BLAS *writes and gives the paper to* SALLUST)

*Sall.* 'Tis well – now sign "RUY BLAS" (BLAS *signs*) Excellent. Why, what a charming hand to write! (BLAS *is about to rise from the writing table, when* SALLUST *stops him*)

*Sall.* Yet a few lines more. United as we now are, I need keep nothing from you. I am about to quit Madrid, and fain would see **[13]** my mistress, Donna Elvira, the little "Queen of Love" as I always foolishly call her, before my departure.
Write then once more as I shall dictate **{25}**– "A terrible danger is hanging over my head. The queen alone can save me by coming to my house. If she refuses, I am lost for ever." (SALLUST *reads what has been written by* RUY BLAS, *who, on coming to the word "Queen" starts, and for an instant hesitates*)
Excellent! The "terrible danger" is admirably contrived to bring her to my house! Women must have some excuse for gratifying their inclinations.
(*To* BLAS) Continue – " By the private door at end of the avenue you may enter unobserved. Some one will be in attendance to receive you." (SALLUST *reads again*)
Capital! upon my word. Now sign.

*Blas* Your name, my lord?

*Sall.* No, sign[9] "Cesar;" that is my name – *nom de guerre*.

*Blas* (*after signing*)But does not the lady know your hand?

[9] The manuscript has 'sign Don "Cesar"'

*Sall.* (*carelessly*) Oh! my seal will suffice to show from whom the letter comes. This is my usual method of correspondence. But see, the company are returning, the festivities are about to commence. Now, walk with me, and follow closely my directions.

[ DON SALLUST *and* RUY BLAS *now mingle with the crowd of* **{26}** NOBLES, COURTIERS, *&c, &c as it gradually fills the stage.*]

[*The fete is continued.* COURTIERS, MASKERS, DANCERS, &c *fill the stage as at the commencement of the act.*]

CHORUS WITH TARANTELLA

**Dulcet music, blithe as sweet,**
**With Spain's joyous native dance:**
**Glowing limbs, and amorous signs,**
**Twinkling feet, and sunny glance,**
**Now our every sense entrance.**
**Briskly strike the castanets,**
**Raise on high the well known strain;**
**Joy like this improve to-night,**
**Ne'er perchance may come again**.

[Numerous characteristic Spanish and other national dances. After the ballet, DON SALLUST emerges from the crowd, accompanied by RUY BLAS.]

*Sall. (to the COURTIERS)* Permit me , gentlemen, to introduce
My honoured cousin – Cesar de Bazan.

[RUY BLAS *appears much embarrassed*. COURTIERS *bow*]

*Very old Courtier* Dear me! 'tis years since we last met!
And yet I should have known him anywhere.

*Other old Courtier* He is changed though.

[*Examining* RUY BLAS *very closely*]

*Sall. (hurriedly interposing)* Oh! ten years of travel – foreign climate. **{27}**

*All the Courtiers* Oh, of course, of course!

*Very old Courtier (pettishly)* I tell you 'tis the same face and form
That once I knew so well. I'd swear it.

*Sall. (aside to* RUY BLAS*)* Your ancient friend being nearly blind. **[14]**
Would show how well he sees
His evidence might be useful!

[*All the* COURTIERS *throng round* RUY BLAS, *and obsequiously pay him attention. Flourish of trumpets. Enter the Page* OSCAR.]

*Oscar* Place for her Majesty the Queen!
[*All the Company divide on either side of the stage*]

CHORUS

Hail to the queen!
Raise high the strain!
Long may she live!
Long may she reign!

[*Grand march and procession. The* QUEEN *passes slowly along a gallery at the back of the stage in grand state. All the characters stand around to look on.* RUY BLAS, *overpowered by emotion, rushes to the front of the stage, as if dreading to look upon the* QUEEN. *Sallust follows him hurriedly*[10].]

*Sall. (aside to* BLAS*)* Ruy Blas! what means this childish weakness? Is't thus that you requite my pains?
Cover your head – remember you are a grandee of Spain.

*Ruy Blas* (*in the greatest agitation*)
Forgive, my lord, my benefactor! I know not what I do!
[*Turns again and gazes with rapture upon the* QUEEN]

*Blas* (*to SALLUST*) Oh, for all this wondrous change!
How can I grateful prove?

*Sall.* 'Tis easy quite. Keep faith with me.
Follow the queen and win her love.

*Blas* Her love! Oh, bliss!

CHORUS
"Hail to the Queen!"[11]

[*Resumed with march, dancing, &c. As the curtain falls, the company cheer.* RUY BLAS *standing in front of the stage with* SALLUST, *who is endeavouring to calm his agitation.*]

END of ACT 1

[10] The manuscript has "hastily"
[11] The manuscript follows this with &c, &c.

## [15] {30} Act II

Scene 1 – *A Saloon in the Palace contiguous to the Sleeping Apartment of the* QUEEN. *The* QUEEN *discovered seated at a worktable knitting;* CASILDA *at her feet. The Duchess of* ALBAQUERQUE*, Duenna to the* QUEEN*, is seated some distance off in an old-fashioned easy chair. The Page,* OSCAR*, in attendance, also at some distance from the* QUEEN. *An Oratory, surmounted by a picture of Virgin Mary, is on right hand side of Stage.*

*A few young Girls, Maids of Honour to the QUEEN, present her with flowers.*

PART-SONG[12]

**We have wandered through the gardens,**
**Seeking flowers to deck thy brow;**
**We have twined for thee fresh garlands,-**
**Oh! accept our tribute now!**

**With choice buds of brightest hue,**
**Bearing odours rare as sweet;**
**Our love has shaped the blooming wreaths**
**We lay, dear mistress, at thy feet!**

**We have wandered through the gardens,**
**Seeking flowers to deck thy brow;**
**{31}** **We have twined for thee fresh garlands,-**
**Oh! accept our tribute now!**

*Queen* Thanks, my young friends! Your wreaths are indeed beautiful. (*Aside*) And yet the one loved flower is absent.

[*Maids of Honour Exeunt*]

Casilda! Is it true that Don Sallust has departed for Madrid?

*Cas.* According to your wish. Was he not banished?

*Queen* 'Twas so decreed; but yet a week was left him for consideration. Nevertheless, I am well pleased that he is gone. Casilda! that man detests me!

*Cas.* Your Majesty!

*Queen* Yes! strange as it may appear, Don Sallust seems like an evil genius to me. The other morning in the drawing-room, even amid the dense crowd of courtiers, I could see but him, as he slowly approached the throne, playing with the hilt of his poignard, and darting upon me looks of flame. And when suddenly he crouched with assumed servility at my feet, and touched my fingers with his icy lips, a cold shudder crept through all my veins.

**{32}**

[12] Vocal score describes this as "Part Song – for eight voices only". It only includes the last line of the third verse. Perhaps surprisingly, Glover did not set the song that Hugo included in this act.

*Casilda* He only discharged his duty as a subject. Yours, as a Queen, you've not neglected, and well he knows it.

*Queen* Ah, Casilda! Before that terrible being I am no longer a Queen, but a poor helpless woman.

ARIA

*Queen*

**In the stillness of night, when alone in my bed,**
**Spite of prayer, comes like fate,**
**The stern form of that man; and with dread,**
**I must take his cold kiss of hate.**

**Like Death's wings he darkens and chills the air;**
**To my thought, day and night, he is ever nigh.**
**My grief-worn heart faints 'neath his eye's fierce glare,**
**And when young Hope would speak, he stands sneeringly by.**

**Like a storm-cloud he hangs o'er my desolate head,**
**All menace, and darkness, and terror to me.**
**My heart is frozen, its flowers are dead,**
**And 'tis almost now a curse to be!**

**Oh! friendless, helpless girl!**
**Virgin Mother, see, ah, see!**
**What they child is suffering now;**
**Pray Heaven to rescue me!**

*Cas.* Oh! your Majesty, these are mere phantoms of **{33}** the brain. It is not in Don Sallust's power to injure you. Why, one would really think you have some other griefs – (*Queen starts*) weighing on your heart. Would that my humble love could ease you of your pain.

*Queen* Dearest Casilda! my only friend, in this cold, formal Court of Spain, fain would I tell you all that agitates my bosom.

BALLAD[13]

*Queen*

**A trusty heart to sorrow's need,**
**In all this world can give;**
**And without one to heed our woes,**
**Oh, who would care to live?**

**If pleasures spring from pomp or state,**
**True love's of them no part,**
**For neither power nor wealth can make**
**A sympathising heart.**

[13] The text of the vocal score differs slightly.

**Who would such cheering love forego,**
**E'en for a splendid throne?**
**Who'd court any worldly power,**
**To reign on earth alone?**

**If pleasures spring from pomp or state,**
**{34}** **True love's of them no part,**
**For neither power nor wealth can make**
**A sympathising heart.**

CHORUS OF MENDICANTS (*heard without*)[14]

**Largesse! Largesse! Noble lady,**
**Long and weary is our way;**
**Largesse! Largesse! Noble lady,**
**On this blessed apostle's day!**

*Queen* What do I hear; is it the voices of the wandering mendicants, whom the Duchess Albaquerque forbade to approach the palace?

*Cas.* It is madam; they are even now under the window.

*Queen* Throw them this purse.

*Cas.* (*Throws purse out of the window*. DUCHESS *turns indignantly in her chair.*) And now, as you are so charitably disposed, can you find nothing to bestow on our little, sighing, dying friend here. (*pointing to* OSCAR) See how pale he looks!

[QUEEN *smiles, and* OSCAR *abashed, constantly pulls the sleeve of* CASILDA *to make her quiet*.]

**[17]**
*Cas,* (*To OSCAR*) Oh, sir, 'tis useless to interrupt me (*Aside*) Does not the Queen look beautiful to-day?

**{35}**
*Oscar* (*Throwing a timid, but intensely amorous glance at the Queen and sighing deeply*.) Most angelic!

*Cas. & Queen* Ha! ha! ha!

*Queen* (*Aside to* CASILDA) Mad-cap girl, what silly joke is this?

*Cas.* (*Also aside*) Anything, dearest mistress, just to cheer and divert you.

*Cas.* Oscar! (OSCAR *looks beseechingly at* CASILDA) Ha! ha! ha! – Don't look so woebegone.

[14] Published as a "Part song for male voices"

*Oscar* (*Much embarrassed to the* QUEEN) Madam, permit me to retire.

*Cas.* (*Standing before him, as he is about to depart*) Leave us? Oh! by no means; you're far too amusing to be spared just now, in this dreary old palace. (*In arresting his progress she observes a folded paper in his bosom*) Hey-day! What's this? (*Snatching paper*.)

*Oscar* Oh, heaven!

*Cas.* Some love verses, as I'm alive! Your Majesty, shall he read them?

*Oscar* (*Aside to*) Casilda!

*Queen* By all means.

*Cas.* Now sir; come, and mind your emphasis.

*Oscar* (*After considerable hesitation*)

TRIO[15]

**{36}**

*Oscar*

**Beauteous lady, list my strain,**
**Humble though it be;**
**Could'st thou know all this heart's pain,**
**Caused by loving thee!**

**Could'st thou know my anxious fears,**
**Painful joy, and gayful woe;**
**Could'st thou see my falling tears,**
**Thou wouldst pity show.**

*Cas.*

**Truly, sir, e'en for your years,**
**These lines are but so, so,**
**For maudlin grief and mawkish[16] tears,**
**No girl will pity show.**

**Oh, tender page![17]**
**Ha! ha! ha!**

*Duchess*

**What is that? Sighs and tears!**
**Quickly! Quickly! I must know.**
**Amorous words to Royal ears!**
**It surely cannot be so.**
**No! no! no!**
**No! no! no!**

[15] It is not clear whether the whole of the next section was sung or whether there was some dialogue between the two sections marked as "TRIO". Here it has been marked as dialogue.

[16] The printed version misspelled this as "maukish".

[17] The manuscript does not include these two lines

*Oscar* (*Aside*) I'm in a rage
Ha! ha! ha!

*Cas.* With riper age!
Ha! ha! ha!
He'll grow more sage

*Oscar* Some mercy show

[DUCHESS having gradually approached the front of the Stage, suddenly interrupts CASILDA]

*Duchess* I'll hear no more, forth he shall go!

*Cas. & Page* Some mercy show!
**{37}**
*Duchess* No! no! no! no!

TRIO

*Duchess* (*Furiously*) **Leave the presence! quick away!**
**Such silly scenes must be repressed.**
**My power in this you must obey,**
**Or I will place you in arrest**

*Cas.* (*Laughing*) **Alas! the poor page!**

*Page* **Why all this rage!**

*Duchess* **Impudent page!**
**Brave not my rage!**

*Cas.* **Just is your rage!**

*Page* **Why all this rage!**

*Duchess* **Go, quickly go!**

*Cas.* **No mercy show!**

*Page* **Some mercy show!**

*Cas.* **No! make him go!**

[DUCHESS *follows the* PAGE *menacingly to the door.* CASILDA *follows laughing heartily, and encouraging the* DUCHESS]
[DUCHESS *retires to the arm-chair at the back of the Stage with great dignity!* CASILDA *stands overpowered by laughter at the door by which the* PAGE *went out.*]
[PAGE *breaks away from* CASILDA, *who teazes, and endeavours to restrain him to the last*.]
[Exit OSCAR]

**{38}**

*Queen* Oh, giddy mischievous girl, thus to torment the poor lad.

*Cas.* Has not the sport roused your majesty a little? I'm sure it has. Come, now, what can next be done to enliven you. (*Looking out at the window*) The day is beautiful; what say you to a drive through the palace gardens?

*Queen* Anything to banish thought. Duchess Albaquerque, let the carriage be ordered.

*Duchess* (*Rising very stiffly from her chair, and making a ridiculous curtsey*) When the Queen of Spain would go forth, the state portals must be unlocked by Grandees of the Empire, having charge of the keys. At the moment no officers holding such rank are in the palace. (*Making another curtsey, and reseats herself with absurd dignity*)

*Queen* I am then a prisoner in my own house?
[DUCHESS *shrugs her shoulders*]

*Queen* Well, at least we can enjoy the fresh breeze of the morning, and the lovely prospect from this window. (*Moves towards the window with* CASILDA)

**{39}**

*Duchess* (*Rising and curtseying as before*) It is contrary to all rules and customs for a Queen of Spain to look out of the windows. (*Reseats herself as before*)

**[19]**

*Queen* (*Aside*) Grant me patience, heaven! (*Aloud*) Casilda! call my Maids of Honour, and let us play a game at casquenet.

*Duchess* (*Rising as before*) An ancient law of Spain decrees that the Queen can play at cards only with the King, or his blood relations.

*Cas.*(*Aside*) Oh, the old horror!

*Queen* (*Very impatiently*) Invite then some of these relations.

*Duchess* Heaven has not vouchsafed to the King and blood relations. The Queen-Mother being no more, her son is the sole representative of the family.

*Cas.* (*Aside*) Oh, Lord!

*Queen* (*After a pause, during which she endeavours to restrain her anger*) Let luncheon be served here! Casilda give me your company.

*Cas.* Thanks your majesty. Eating is an amusement, too, in its way.

*Duchess* (*Rising as before*) An antique law of Spain prescribes that when the King is absent, the Queen must take her meals alone. (*Reseats herself as before*).

*Queen* (*Greatly exasperated*) What! am I neither to go out, {**40}** nor move, nor play, nor eat, but as others will! Oh, this miserable bondage will break my heart! At least, Casilda, we may have some music. Sing me that little Spanish song I love so well?

ARIETTA

*Cas.*

**'Tis sweet to roam, on summer night,**
**By the soft flowing Guadalquiver,**
**Where the moonbeams, silvery bright,**
**Irradiate all the beauteous river.**

**For then Zelita loves to sit,**
**And strike the chords of her guitar,**
**The strain for angel's ear is fit,**
**A worthy hymn to love's bright star.**

**The fire that beams from her dark eye,**
**Is like the lightning's vivid glance;**
**Would you be safe, its radiance fly,**
**Or you may rue its power perchance.**

**Each amorous glance is like a dart,**
**Escape is vain if once you meet her;**
**Each 'wildering look goes to the heart,**
**Fond youths! Beware of sweet Zelita.**

[*After the second verse,* DUCHESS ALBAQUERQUE *comes* **{41}** *forward in a pompous manner.*]

*Duchess* 'Tis twelve o'clock; and at this hour the holy festival of the sainted apostles commences. Her Majesty must now be left to her devotions. (DUCHESS *motions* CASILDA *to depart*)

*Queen* (To CASILDA) You leave me!

(*Looking towards the* DUCHESS) Madam, I am commanded to depart.
[*Exit* CASILDA]

[*The* QUEEN *retires up the Stage, leaving the* DUCHESS *alone in the front. A pause. The* DUCHESS *looks slyly, first at the* QUEEN, *and then after CASILDA, who has just retired, and shakes her finger significantly*]

**[20]**

*Duchess* (*Aside*) Ha! the Duenna's office is no sinecure, and thankless are her pains. However, if she cannot be loved, she must be feared, and that is a great consolation.

SONG

**Where a husband's eye must fail,**
**To detect each small offence;**
**Where no written laws avail,**
**The Duenna's powers commence.**
**Watchful eye, with practised skill,**
**Into everything, she pries;**
**Wrap up matters as you will,**
**{42} Nought escapes her Argus eyes.**
**Worrying, fidgetting, every one,**
**She can tease, if she can't please.**
**Cunningly, spitefully, spoiling fun,**
**She can tease, if she can't please.**

**18**
**When a woman's youth is past,**
**And o'er man she holds no sway,**
**When for girls aside she's cast,**
**How can she such wrongs repay?**
**Though of life's best joys bereft;**
**Though for love she seeks in vain;**
**One resource to her is left,**
**By which vengeance she may gain.**
**Worrying, fidgetting, every one,**
**She can tease, if she can't please.**
**Cunningly, spitefully, spoiling fun,**
**She can tease, if she can't please.**

[*Exit* DUCHESS]

*Queen* They leave me to my devotions! Oh, bitter mockery! Say rather to the wild desires that run like subtle poison through mt veins – to the dread thoughts that rush like fire through my brain! Oh, my dear land of Germany! my early friends! the freedom of my youth all gone! all gone, gone forever! And what has fortune given me in return? One morning – I remember it well, my sister and myself were playing like happy children in the palace gardens; when a man habited in black approached us, and said to me, "Hail to the future Queen of Spain" It was the Ambassador of Charles the Second. My father smiled – my mother wept; but both, alas! weep now as I do. Here, never do the accents of my fatherland vibrate on my ear. Not even a German book is to be seen; the very birds are dead which sang me songs of home.

BALLAD

**Home of my youth, thy vine clad hills,**

[18] The second verse was written on the reverse side of page 41 of the manuscript.

**Shine forth in fancy's mirror clear;**
**{43}** **Youth's joy once more my bosom fills,**
**Life's rosy morn again is here!**

**Oh, memory how dear thy power,**
**Such scenes beloved back to bring;**
**So sweetly to restore the hour**
**When we found joy in everything!**

**[21]**

**On my sad path,**
**Linger dear rays!**
**Illumine each thought**
**With thy sunny haze!**

**Still on dear childhood's home**
**Let fancy gaze;**
**Linger bright visions**
**Of innocent days!**

RECITATIVE AND SCENA

*Queen* [19] (*taking stealthily from her bosom a small bouquet*) Sweet flowrets! These are the only objects here belonging to my native land. But- oh heaven! I dare not think by whom, or how they are obtained. That ensanguined print of a man's hand upon the wall, beside my bedroom window! Is he then wounded? Ah, why encounter such danger? To bring the flowers which at court they refuse to procure! **{44}** For so little as this to risk a life? It was doubtless upon the iron spikes which encircle the balcony that he was wounded, for there suspended I found this piece of blood-stained lace. Ah! who would shed blood for me, the deserted, neglected, Anne of Neuburgh?

But he has not been here for three days: Heaven grant he may not be dangerously hurt! (*Agitated*) All, all is mystery. Again and again I have said, "I will not take the flowers," and as often returned to the objects of my fear and love.

And this letter (*pressing her hand to her breast*) – oh! it seems to scotch my heart. Merciful heaven look down upon the anguish of this hour! ( *Throws herself before the oratory over which is a picture of the Virgin Mary*).

**Holy Mother! Virgin mild,**
**Oh protect thy feeble child,**
**See the anguish of this hour**
**Mother! oh, exert thy power.**

[19] The following text may have been sung recitative although it hardly looks conducive to it.

**Trembling, weeping, here behold me**
**Bright and eathless star of the sea;**
**Trembling, weeping, helpless, friendless,**
**Mother dear, I cling to thee.**

**{45}**

[*Suddenly breaking off with horror*]

I cannot pray! My soul is not with my words. These flowers – this lace – the letter – they must tear away from my bosom. The thought of them distracts me. (*She tears the flower, &c, from her breast, and throwing them on a table rushes away as if in dread of their power. Then sinks into a chair burying her face in her hands as if to shut out some hideous vision. Soft music is played as the* QUEEN *gradually recovers herself*)

*Queen* Where am I? Surely my o'erfraught brain has been wandering. These flowers – this letter what do they here? Poor emblems! at least they mean kindness and affection. Why should I slight humble gifts – brought too, with so much toil and danger ? The donor, perchance, one who knows and pities Anne of Neubergh's sorrows. I'll read his letter once again – and, then – destroy it. (*Reads*) :-

**[22]**

"Madam! at thy feet is one
Who lost in the obscurity of night
Adores you, as an[20] earth worm might worship a star.
One who for you would give his life
But who **{46}** is perishing in lowliness
While you are shining on high"

(*After some hesitation, she appears about to destroy the letter, but has not the resolution to do so*). I have not the heart to do it. Oh when the soul is thirsting for sympathy it cannot choose but drink, even though the drink be poison. This humble letter, full of respectful affection – containing the first words that have touched my heart since I arrived in this splendid prison, why should it be spurned? Why should I, deserted and menaced, reject the proffered service of a faithful heart? My soul yearns for love, and here at court I find it not; oh vainly would I reason, as Don Sallust, my evil genius, seems, so[21] this stranger who speeds through darkness and peril to give me joy, appears sent by destiny to be my guardian angel.

**Why then for such loving care**
**Should I all ungrateful be;**
**Why, ah why, drive to despair**
**One who'd give his life for me?**

[20] The printed version has "on" which is clearly incorrect. The manuscript has "an".
[21] The printed version has "to" but the manuscript has "so", which makes more sense.

**{47}**

**Sure heaven has sent him to protect**
**The object of Don Sallust's ire;**
**Dare I then such aid reject**
**And singly war with treachery dire?**

**Strange messenger of hope and joy,**
**Accept my spirit's love,**
**May happiness without alloy**
**Your brave kind nature prove!**

*Enter a* LACKEY *of the Court*

*Lackey* A letter from the King!

*Queen* The King! Thank heaven!

*The* DUCHESS ALBAQUERQUE, CASILDA, OSCAR *with* LADIES *and* GENTLEMEN *of the court now enter to receive the king's message; and immediately after enter* RUY BLAS *with* ATTENDANTS, *among whom is* GUDIEL.

*Ruy Blas* (*aside, gazing on th*e QUEEN) How beautiful she looks

*Queen* Where is the letter? Give it quickly. Whence comes it?

*Duchess* From Aranjuez, Madam, where his Majesty is enjoying the pleasures of the chase.

*Queen* O this thoughtful attention touches my soul. He has felt how dull I must be here, and **{48}** how much I wanted a loving word from him. Give me the letter.

*Duchess* Excuse me, your Majesty, but ancient usage demand that this letter should be opened first and read by me.

*Queen* Well then, read!

*Duchess* (*After carefully adjusting a large pair of spectacles, and slowly unfolding the letter* -)
"Madam
"'Tis very windy today, and I have killed six wolves.
"(Signed), "Charles"

**[23]**

*Queen* Is that all?

*Duchess* Would your Majesty be pleased to read? (*offering letter*)

*Queen* (*indignantly*) No

*Cas.* (*aside to* DUCHESS) Is this really all.

*Duchess* (*aloud*) Certainly! And pray what more was required? His Majesty is on a hunting excursion, and briefly describes what sport he has had, and the state of the weather – that is, he does not write but dictates.

*Queen* What say you (*Snatches letter from the* DUCHESS, *who looks much astonished and disgusted*)

*Queen* (*aside, after examining the paper carefully)* It is too true. The signature only is in his handwriting. **{49}** (*Gazing with intense anxiety upon the paper*). Great heavens, what do I see! 'Tis from the same hand that which penned the fatal letter. (*Returns letter to Duchess. Aloud with assumed calmness*) Who brought this missive?

*Duchess* (*pointing to* RUY BLAS) The messenger is here.

*Queen* (h*alf turning to* RUY BLAS *but without looking at him*)
This gentleman.

*Duchess* The same your Majesty. A new lord-in-waiting sent you by the King

*Queen* (*her face still averted*) His name?

*Duchess* Don Cesar de Bazan, Count of Garofa, belonging to one of Spain's most ancient families; and if report speak truly, a most accomplished gentleman.

*Queen* 'Tis well. I would confer with him. (*All the characters retire up the stage*).

*Queen* (*after a long pause*) My lord!

*Ruy Blas*[22]
(*aside*)
She looks on me, she speaks to me,
I dare not raise my eyes,
Oh! heaven grant strength to bear this joy
My feelings to disguise.

*Queen* (*aside*)
Why looks he thus, why turn from me?
Strange fears within me rise,
Oh aid me heaven, in this wild hour
**{50}** My feelings to disguise

*Queen* 'Tis from Aranjuez you come?

*Blas* Madam it is.

[22] These two verses may have been sung although there is no indication of this in either the printed version or the manuscript.

*Queen* The King is well – for me this letter he directed?

*Blas* From horseback, Madam, to one who stood beside him.

*Queen* His look penetrates my very soul. I dare not ask who wrote the letter (turning as with great effort to RUY BLAS). Thanks, my lord, you may retire. (Blas is about to go). Yet stay – tell me, were there many esquires with the King? (Aside) Why does the sight of this man agitate me thus?

*Blas* Your Majesty, there were.

*Queen* And who were they?

*Blas* I know not their names. I was but a few moments with the King, and quitted Madrid only three days ago.

*Queen* (*rapidly*) Three days! (*The* QUEEN *fixes her eyes upon* RUY BLAS *with looks of doubt and trouble*)

*Blas* (*aside*) And she is destined for another! A dreadful jealousy is rising in my heart.

**[24]**

*Duchess* (*approaching stiffly*) As equerry to the Queen, know you, my lord, your duty? It is to occupy the ante-room to the royal bed **{51}** chamber and open the door for the King whenever he may think fit to visit his bride.

*Blas* (*aside*) Pass the King to her room! (*Aloud*) But his Majesty is absent, Madam.

*Duchess* At any moment he might come.

*Blas* (*aside*) Great heaven!

*Queen* (*whose eyes have remained fixed on* RUY BLAS *during the whole of the proceeding dialogue*) How pale he grows!

[ BLAS *staggers, and is forced to sustain himself by holding on to the arm-chair*]

*Casilda* Madam, he is fainting!

*Blas* (*endeavouring to rouse himself*) No! no! 'Tis nothing – the intense heat, long journey. (*Aside*) Let in the King! (*He falls exhausted into the arm-chair. His mantle falls aside revealing his left hand enveloped in blood-stained linen*).

*Casilda* His hand is wounded!

*Queen* Wounded?

*Cas.* Help quickly! he is swooning.

*Queen* Here, take my bottle (*observing* RUY BLAS' *sleeve. Aside*) 'Tis the same lace! (*In taking the smelling bottle from her bosom the* QUEEN *also draws out the* **{52}** *piece of blood-stained lace belonging to* RUY BLAS).

*Blas* (*whose eyes have ever been fixed upon the* QUEEN) Oh, joy! (*aside*)

*Queen* 'Tis he! (*aside*)

*Blas* (*aside*) Upon her heart!

*Queen* (*aside*) 'Tis he!

FINALE

*Queen*
**Oh cease fond heart to flutter,**
**What tremor steals o'er me?**
**Joy! fear! too great to utter**
**Some dream this sure must be.**

*Blas*
**Oh cease fond heart to flutter**
**My sufferings none must see;**
**Joy! fear! too great to utter**
**Thus to be near to thee.**

*Cas.*
**What makes her young heart flutter**
**All is mystery to me!**
**Vague words are all they utter,**
**He seems as moved as she.**

*Gudiel*
**Well may their young hearts flutter**
**Soon in our toils they'll be,**
**Soon, Queen, will ruin utter**
**Fall on this youth and thee!**

*Duchess*
**Strange words I hear them utter**
**{53}** **Their conduct, somewhat free,**
**Puts me into a flutter**
**I'll doubly watchful be.**

*Oscar*
**Oh rage! too great to utter,**
**This stranger here to see,**
**He makes the Queen's heart flutter,**
**No more she'll think of me!**

**[25]**
*Chorus*
**Vague words I hear them utter**
**What can their purport be?**

[DUCHESS ALBAQUERQUE *approaches the* QUEEN, *and causes the King's letter to be presented to her on an embroidered cushion by two pages ceremoniously*]

*Duchess* (*spoken*) Madam! it is contrary to all courtly rules and practices that this royal missive should be held by me; and duty compels me to insist that you alone now take possession of the precious document.

[QUEEN *hesitates for a moment and then grasping the letter tears it into pieces. General amazement and consternation, all excepting* RUY BLAS]
What means this?

*Chorus* **What means this insult to Spain's King**
**{54}** **Such rashness quick revenge may bring.**

*Casilda* **Oh madness thus to brave the king,**
**Pray heaven it may no vengeance bring**

*Duchess* **This public insult to Spain's king**
**A terrible revenge should bring.**

*Queen* Outrage too great to bear!
(*reciting*) More galling still than injury
Is this slight.

*Queen* **A woman's indignation now**
**My tortured bosom burns**
**'Neath cold contempt I ne'er will be**
**Such slights my proud heart spurns.**

**'Twixt rage and fear my being's tossed,**
**Oh bondage vile! Oh cruel fate!**
**True love! for thee I'l gladly lose**
**The empty pomp of regal state.**

*Blas* **With love, remorse, and fury now**
**My tortured bosom burns;**
**Oh heaven why am I forced to stoop**
**To deeds my nature spurns?**

**Be still my heart or all is lost**
**{55}** **Does she love me? Oh joy too great!**
**Poor helpless girl, to set thee free**
**I'd brave the direst shocks of fate.**

*Casilda* **Oh madness! thus to brave the king**
**Pray heav'n it may no vengeance bring.**

*Oscar* **Oh madness! Thus to treat Spain's king**
**Pray heaven it may no vengeance bring.**

*Chor.* **What means this insult to Spain's king?**
**Such rashness quick revenge may bring.**

*Duchess* **This public insult to Spain's king**
**A terrible revenge should bring.**

*Gudiel* **This insult is the very thing**
**Both closer in our toils to bring.**

[*The* QUEEN *overpowered by emotion sinks fainting in a chair.* CASILDA, *maids of honour, and page, throng around to assist her.* RUY BLAS *is about to rush to her aid, when* GUDIEL *restrains him*.]

TABLEAU

END OF ACT II

## Act III

**[26] {57}**

Scene 1 – *Grand Saloon in the Imperial Palace at Madrid. The Scene is decorated with flags, banners, garlands, &c. as Peace Festival. At the back of the Stage, in the centre, is a spacious Gallery.* DON MANUEL, DON RIEGO, DON GUZMAN, DON GOMEZ (*Councillors of State), with other Nobles, Courtiers, &c, are assembled in the front of the Stage.*

CONCERTED PIECE

*Manuel* **A happy moment this for Spain**
**To welcome thus her heroes back.**
**The Flemish war so quickly ended.**

*Riego* **In Milan, too, and Naples,**
**Our national honours nearly lost.**
**How nobly he has retrieved!**

*Guzman* **Does not the man who has done such deeds**
**Deserve our homage?**

*Chorus* **He does! He does!**

*Gomez* (*sneeringly*) **The rather as he has nought received for all this service.**
**The splendid dukedom of Olmedo,**
**The Order of the Golden Fleece,**
**Power all but regal,**
**Are, of course, nothing!**

**{58}**

*Manuel* **Your sneers, Don Gomez,**
**Well we understand.**

*Chorus* **They'd nought avail:**
**Olmedo's power stands firm as rock!**

*Gomez* **And pray whence comes it?**
**The abdication of King Charles,**
**In hopeless idiotcy** [*sic*] **now lost,**
**The exile of Don Sallust,**
**Left sway all absolute in the hands of**
**Anne of Neuburgh.**
**Who now has created your new idol?**
**Who has made the wily reprobate,**
**Don Cesar de Bazan,**
**First Minister of State?**

*Chorus* **The Queen! and pray what then?**

*Manuel* **Doubtless, the Queen!**
**But only in obedience to the popular will.**
**The masses love Olmedo;**
**Familiarly, by them he, is called**
**"The people's friend"**

*Chorus* **Aye, the people's friend!**
**So is he termed;**
**Never was statesman so beloved!**

*Gomez*[23] **The people's friend!**
**Yes! and the noble's foe!**

**{59}**

*Diego and Semi-chorus* **These disaffected words we will not hear!**

**[27]**

*Gomez* **As friends of freedom, you of course object**
**That any save yourselves should have a voice!**
**He is the noble's foe!**
**Hear it once again!**

*Man. And Chorus*[24] **The reasons well we know**
**Why you his fame would stain**

*Gomez and Chorus* **He is the noble's foe!**
**Your opposition's vain.**

*Man. And Chorus* **His purpose well we know.**

*Man.* **Your angry tongues restrain.**

[*Flourish of Trumpets. A Grand March is played by a Military Band without. Grand procession, Military and Civic, preceded by Heralds. All the* NOBLES *retire up the stage to receive* RUY BLAS. *As the Procession advances, crowds of citizens, peasants, &c., fill the gallery, waiving* [*sic*] *hats and handkerchiefs. Dancing Girls strew flowers before* RUY BLAS ]

GENERAL CHORUS

*In which all take part excepting GOMEZ and his followers, who stand gloomily apart from the rest*

**{60}** CHORUS

**Shout in his praise as he proudly advances;**
**Long may he live, our land's rights to defend;**
**May heaven shower on his head every blessing,**
**Spain's worthiest chief, and the people's best friend!**

[23] The manuscript has "Gomez with semi-chorus of his allies" which makes more sense in the context of the following group "Diego and semi-chorus".

[24] The reference to chorus must be to the earlier semi-chorus. Thus the chorus was split into two opposing camps.

**Now let each loyal heart**
**In the song bear a part.**
**Long live Olmedo, the weak to defend,**
**Send forth the hymn again,**
**Heaven echoes back the strain;**
**Long live Olmedo! the people's best friend**

[RUY BLAS *advances to the centre of the stage, followed by a numerous retinue of Knights, among whom is* GUDIEL. *Soldiers present arms*]

GRAND TABLEAU

*Ruy Blas* (*more particularly to the people in the gallery*)
**Thanks, my dear friends! If my warm zeal**
**Has merited the triumph of this hour,**
**Believe me, 'tis your love that most I feel;**
**For that to me is more than pomp or power.**

CHORUS[25]

**Sing with joy, loud in his praise!**
**Honour this festive day;**
**Spain triumphs now on all her foes**
**Send forth the Victor's lay!**

**The gloom that overspread out land,**
**{61}** **The shadows round us cast;**
**Have fled dispelled by Victory's sun,**
**And all our woe is past.**

*Ruy Blas* Affairs of State are pressing, so permit me, fellow citizens, to say farewell!

**[28]**
[*The crowd, marshalled by Soldiers, depart gradually from the gallery repeating the chorus.*]

**"Sing with joy, loud in his praise!"**
**&c. &c. &c.**

*Ruy Blas* Among this noble company
Many I see who sympathise with me
And are well pleased to aid my policy.
Such loyal hearts have my full confidence.
(*Sternly*) But if I knew how to reward
Good faith, and patriotism;
If to mercy's side I a'ye would lean:
'Tis also known to me what evils may arise
From ill-timed clemency.

[25] The vocal score differs slightly in the wording.

Don Gomez (GOMEZ *and his party start*) – of treason
I accuse you!
Your misuse of the public money,
Your merciless taxation of the people,
Your sale of honours, which on merit only
Should have been conferred.
**{62)** Have rendered you amenable to justice.
Such crimes must not unpunished go.
The proofs of your delinquencies I hold,
Don Gomez! you are no longer
In the service of the Queen of Spain!

[*Great sensation among the* COURTIERS]

(*addressing* MANUEL *and his followers*)
*Blas* Gentlemen!
For loyalty to Her Majesty,
Honours and rewards
Await you all!
[Turning to GOMEZ and his paty]
But of bad faith, or disaffection,
Dismissal or banishment
Is the certain consequence!
Your leaves awhile!
I would be alone.

[NOBLES, COURTIERS, &c., *bow and retire slowly, whispering among themselves*]

*Manuel,&c.* (*Aside*)[26] Their due they do but get.

*Gomez, &c.* (*Aside*) We will have vengeance yet

[*Exeunt*]

[RUY BLAS *sits down as a writing table and begins to examine the Letters left for him. A curtain concealing a secret door* R.H. *of stage is cautiously raised and* **{63}** *the* QUEEN *enters stealthily*]

*Ruy Blas* What do I see? the Queen!
Oh! destiny!
For six long months have I avoided her,
And thus again so suddenly to meet!

*Queen* Duke, receive the homage of a grateful heart!

*Ruy Blas* (*embarrassed*) I dream't not, Madam,
That you were so near.

[26] It would seem reasonable to assume that this short exchange was done to music from the earlier exchange between these two groups.

*Queen* From a secret spot, close to the place,
I overheard your converse
**[29]** With our Ministers.
But not alone of that I'd speak!
Your genius, courage, magnaminity [*sic*];
Your zeal untiring in Spain's cause;
The benefits you have conferred
On our poor, suffering, Kingless country,
Have won for you the love of all.
Why then should your Queen
Withhold the expression of her feelings?
Why wait until the rigid forms of State
Extort from her
A public recognition of your services.
(warmly) Cesar, I come to press your hand,
To tell you from my heart
How I respect and prize you.

**{64}**

*Ruy Blas* (*much moved, after struggling for some instants with his feelings*)

DUET

**Madam!**
**If I have striven well;**
**If I have raised Spain's name;**
**If, amid the nations high,**
**I have placed our country's fame;**
**My only inspiration,**
**Sole cause of aspiration,**
**Lady was love for you!**
**For months to see you I forbore;**
**The secret in my breast concealed;**
**Although it touched my very life,**
**'Till now was ne'er to you revealed.**

**If I have striven well;**
**If I have raised Spain's name;**
**If, amid the nations high,**
**I have placed our country's fame;**
**My only inspiration,**
**Sole cause of aspiration,**
**Lady was love for you!**

*Queen* (*aside*) **His tones fall sweetly on mine ear!**
**{65}** **Fresh flowers in my young heart are springing.**
**So new these words of love, - so dear!**
**Sure angels their bright songs are singing.**
**Yet am I tied, by adverse fate,**
**In bondage strange, a widowed wife,**
**Enthralled by rigid laws of State**
**'Twixt love and fear how dire the strife!**

*Blas* **Oh! rapturous hour, away with fear!**
**New flowers within my heart are springing.**
**Hope's blessed star now shines forth clear,**
**Its brightest rays around me flinging!**
**This hour supreme decides my fate.**
**Soon, soon must end my bosom's strife,**
**Nature transcends all rules of State,**
**I love thee, lady, more than life!**

**[30]**

*Queen* **Those tones of love, how new, how dear!**
**Sure angels their bright songs are singing.**

*Blas* **Linger, linger, moment dear!**
**Such rapture to this heart thou'rt bringing.**

*Queen* **He melts my very soul!**

*Blas* **I love thee more than life!**

*Queen* **My joy I can't controul** [*sic*]**!**

*Blas* **Dearest! yes, more than life!**

**{66}**

[BLAS *has gradually approached the* QUEEN, *and by the termination of the Duet, has taken her hand, which he presses to his lips, kneeling at her feet. A long pause*.]

*Queen*[27] (*turning frankly to* RUY BLAS *and withdrawing her hand with dignity, but yet with affection*).
Don Cesar well you know
By me how highly you are honoured
Of every great achievement
Capable I deem you.

You can be generous as great;
(*With much emotion*) But ask me not,
Whether your love's reciprocated;
Pity a woman's weakness.
If you can love, you can also respect me

[27] It is not clear whether this section was spoken or sung but probably the former given the lack of rhyme.

BALLAD

**Could life's dark scene be changed for me,**[28]
**{67}** **Where my heart is, there my hand I'd give;**
**But duty stern must be obeyed,**
**With honour stained I cannot live.**

**Woman can rarely choose her state;**
**By others oft her doom is sealed.**
**And warmest longings of the heart,**
**For ever must remain concealed.**

**The fire of genius lights your soul;**
**Be merciful as you are great.**
**Oh! spare a woman's weakness now,**
**Nor madly strive to war with fate.**

**The gloomy present soon may pass,**
**Hope's star more brightly shine;**
**And should this hand be ever free,**
**'Tis thine, and only thine.**

[RUY BLAS *would approach the* QUEEN, *but she motions him back, and slowly raising the curtain retires by the secret door which it covers*.]

*Blas* Oh! bounteous heaven accept my thanks!
Ne'er did I hope to feel
The rapture of this hour.

SONG[29]

**Oh what rapture thrills my soul**
**Heaven opens to my view**
**Ecstasy beyond controul**
**{68}** **Vibrates all my being through.**

**Spain lies subject to my will**
**As more than King I proudly shine**
**And what to me is dearer still**
**The heart of Anne of Neuburgh's mine.**

**Oh what rapture thrills my soul**
**Heaven opens to my view**
**Ecstasy beyond controul**
**Vibrates all my being through.**

[28] The first verse was not included in the manuscript.
[29] This song is omitted in the printed edition. Perhaps the censor may have deleted it, although that ruling would not apply to the printed version. More likely it was an oversight.

[*At the end of the Song* DON SALLUST, *who has entered stealthily at the back of the Stage, slowly approaches* RUY BLAS, *and touches him on the shoulder*]

*Sall.* Good morrow, my Lord Duke!

*Blas* (*starting with horror*) Great heaven! I am lost.

*Sall.* (*ironically*) I'll wager now you did not hope to see me back so soon!

**[31]**

*Blas* (much embarrassed) My Lord – indeed – you take me by surprise.

**{69}**

[SALL. *Takes off a large cloak in which he was enveloped, and displays underneath the dress of a Valet, similar to that worn by* RUY BLAS *in the First Act*]

*Blas* This attire!

*Sall.* 'Twas necessary to pass unnoticed through the throng of nobles waiting your grace's antichamber [*sic*], and so I borrowed this suit for the occasion. 'Tis yours. Once I lent you clothes of mine, now we are quits.

*Blas* But still, my Lord, being exiled, did you not fear detection – a face so well known.

*Sall.* (smiling grimly) Fear!
What means that ridiculous word?
Besides, whoever notices a lackey's features?

[*Seats himself in an arm chair*, RUY BLAS *standing*]

Well, Duke, and pray what is going on in the gay city of Madrid? Is it true that you have banished my old friend, Don Gomez? Itwas not well to treat thus our near relations. **{70}** Know you not he is your cousin? Is Don Cesar de Bazan, Count of Garofa, Duke of Olmedo, unacquainted with his own genealogy?

*Blas.* Marquis he was guilty of peculation – he stole the public money – he was an oppressor of the people, and, as first Minister of State, I thought it my duty to –

*Sall.* (*coldly*) This room is somewhat chilly, - oblige me by closing the window. (RUY BLAS *oppressed by shame and anger, hesitates a moment, and then, with an effort, does* DON SALLUST's *bidding*).

*Blas.* With impoverished funds, how could we have sustained our army? How could I have gained those victories, of which the whole world speaks? How –

*Sall.* (*superciliously*) I believe you were saying something?

**{71}**

*Blas.* (*endeavouring to conquer his feelings*) Briefly – the object of my administration has been to unveil that miserable spirit of intrigue which has long been the curse of out Court; to unmask deception and hypocrisy; to render the people of this great country free and happy; to make Spain's government loved as well as feared; to –

*Sall.* (*staring coldly at* RUY BLAS) Ha! ha! ha! You are really astonishing! Ruy Blas, the footman, would give liberty to Spain! Ruy Blas, the imposter, would unmask deception! Ha! ha! ha! (*Rises from his chair; then, in a brief, imperious tone*) But 'tis to speak of more serious matters, Ruy Blas! You will wait for me to-morrow in the secluded house I used to occupy. My long and deep-laid plan is ripe for execution. Hidden among the trees, let a travelling carriage be in readiness to start at any moment. The necessary relays and money I will provide.

**{72}**

*Blas* My lord, you shall be obeyed. But assure me first that your scheme will in no way affect the happiness of the Queen.

*Sall.* I make no conditions!

**[32]**

*Blas*[30] Then I refuse:
Against Spain's angel Queen no man,
Whilst I live, hostile arts shall use

DUET

*Sall.* **Fool-hardy serf you *must* obey;**
**Vainly you struggle, vainly rave:**
**You are in my hands, you know it well.**

*Blas* **Kind heaven will aid the Queen to save.**
**The Duke d'Olmedo can arrest**
**Sallust the hated, banished man.**

*Sall.* **Not to *Ruy Blas* this title's given,**
**But the false *Cesar de Bazan*!**

*Blas* **Great heaven, aid me in this hour!**

*Sall.* **Vain upstart! where is now thy power?**

*Blas* (*throws himself on his knees before* DON SALLUST)
**If justice my sad fall decrees,**
**Trample your valet in the dust!**
**But (I entreat it on my knees)**
**To Spain's young Queen be also just.**

[30] This speech was not included in the manuscript.

**Her widowed life is blameless all,**
**In nothing has she guilty been;**
**On me, then, let your fury fall,**
**{73}** **But spare, oh, spare our angel Queen.**

**Mercy! Mercy! For her**

[*Detaining* SALLUST *by the arm as in the act of supplication*]

*Sall* Enough of this. [*Shaking off* RUY BLAS]
Ruy Blas, you have dared to threaten me.
Now hear my irreversible decision.
[*With very marked emphasis*]
If you obey not strictly my behest,
If ought by word or look you do betray,
A certain document, by me possessed,
Shall be made public as the light of day.
With infamy thy name I'll brand.
A bye word and a jest 'twill be.
That signature – you understand,
Will serve to crush both her and thee.

*Blas* (*completely overwhelmed*)
Great Heaven! (*A pause*)
My Lord – your will be done.

*Sall.* (*hurriedly*) The Members of the Council are returning (*Muffles himself up to the chin in his mantle. Enter the* COUNCIL *and* NOBLES)

*Sall.* (*respectfully salluting* [*sic*] RUY BLAS) My Lord Duke, I am your humble Valet.**{74}** (RUY BLAS, *overpowered by emotion, sinks into a chair and buries his face in his hands. The* NOBLES *look at each other in mute astonishment*.)

End of ACT III

**[33] {76}**

## Act IV

Scene 1 – *An Apartment in a private house of* DON SALLUST. *A spacious balcony runs along the back of the Stage. This night* RUY BLAS*, enveloped in a large cloak, is seated pensively as a writing table. The room is dimly lighted by a shaded lamp.*

*Ruy Blas*

All! All! is over now!
One effort more to save the Queen,
And my earthly mission is fulfilled.
By the Page Oscar
I have sent her word.
On no account to leave
The Palace for three days;
By that time I shall be far from her.
Heaven protect her! poor suffering angel,
Would that the sacrifice of my life could save her
Oh! bitter anguish

Where are the bright hopes of my youth?
Where the towering spirit
Which would have grasped the universe?
Where the glorious crown which genius joined with honour,
**{77}** Has a right to claim?
(*As if in reverie*) I shall never see her more,
This night must end my earthly woes.

BALLAD[31]

**Never on earth we meet again;**
**The eye, which was my dark soul's light;**
**The voice, that charmed away life's pain;**
**The angel-nature pure as bright,**
**Exist no more – no more for me!**

**Her coming step, that made me stop,**
**And tremble as it smote the ground,**
**The hand's soft pressure full of heart,**
**Her gentle sighs of mystic sound!**
**No more, no more will pleasure me!**

**Never on earth we meet again;**
**The eye, which was my dark soul's light;**
**The voice, that charmed away life's pain;**
**The angel-nature pure as bright,**
**Exist no more – no more for me!**

[31] The published vocal score for this ballad differs slightly from this version.

[32]

**{78}** But the termination of my suffering approaches; the contents of the vial will give eternal rest; and thus I flee from shame and from despair.
(*He raises the vial to his lips, and is about to drink, when one of the doors of the chamber is opened, and the* QUEEN *enters, pale and agitated. She is carefully disguised*.)

*Blas* What do I see? The Queen! Oh shameful snare! She's lost! She's lost.

*Queen* Cesar![33] What means this cry of horror?

*Blas* Alas! Who told you to come hither?

*Queen* 'Twas you yourself.

*Blas* I! when and how?

*Queen* From you I hold –

*Blas* Oh quickly speak?

*Queen* A letter.

*Blas* And from me you say?

*Queen* Your hand it is –

*Blas* I wrote no letter.

*Queen* Read, and for yourself decide!

*Blas* (*Seizes the letter offered by the* QUEEN *and reads*) " A terrible danger is hanging over me, my Queen alone can avert it" (RUY BLAS *stops suddenly as if stupified, and is* **{79}** *unable to proceed*)

*Queen* (*continues*) "Come to me this evening at my house, or I am lost. By the private door at the end of the avenue you can enter unobserved."

*Blas* (*Aside*) Oh frightful treachery! I had forgotten this letter (*Suddenly to the* QUEEN *with terrible energy*) Away! Away! Away!

*Queen* (*terrified*) I will go at once, Cesar! what have I done that you should use me thus?

*Blas* Done! You have destroyed yourself! Fly! Fly! for heaven's sake fly!

[32] The manuscript headed the following exchange "Duet" but this does seem to be likely.
[33] The printed version has "Oscar!" but the manuscript's "Cesar!" is clearly the correct one.

*Queen* (*pressed by* RUY BLAS *is about to depart, but stops sudd*enly) No! some dreadful danger threatens you. I shall remain.

*Blas* Madam! A hideous snare is spread around you, the arts of hell have been employed to crush you! Fly! Fly! lose not an instant!

*Blas* (*looking round for means of escape*) How did you gain admittance to this house?

*Queen* Some man wearing a mask opened the private door.

*Blas* A man – what man? Speak!

**{80}**

*Sallust* (appearing masked at the door) It was I.

[RUY BLAS *rushes towards the door, leading the* QUEEN. SALLUST *motions them back.*)

*Sallust* It is too late! Your lot is cast,
Madame de Neuburgh is no longer Queen of Spain.
Henceforth, madam, is your earthly fate
Indissolubly bound to his.
In the private chamber of Don Cesar,
At night, when all are sleeping,
Alone with him I find you.
This damning fact made public,
Would cease your marriage with Spain's King.
To be annulled at Rome;
The Holy Father, promptly informed,
Would promptly act, and infamy indelible,
Must fall upon your head.

**[35]**

TRIO

*Queen (aside*) **Too true were my forebodings,**
**The hour is come at last,**
**His evil genius triumphs,**
**For aye[34], my lot is cast.**

*Blas* **Too true were my forebodings.**
**The hour is come at last,**
**His demon spirit triumphs,**
**{81}** **All hope to save her's** [*sic*] **past.**

*Sallust* **Ha! Ha! despite forebodings,**
**You're fairly caught at last;**
**My better genius triumphs,**
**All hope for you is past.**

*Sallust* Yet, Madam, there are means of escape;

[34] The printed version has "Nor age" but the manuscript's "For aye" makes more sense.

Sign but this paper to the King addressed;[35]
Hard by a carriage well lined with gold,
Is ready to receive you. Depart at once
Both of you. At this moment I alone
Am master of your secret –
Obey me – and it shall go no further.
Refuse me and[36] all Madrid shall know it.
(*leading the QUEEN gradually to her writing table*)
Come, now sign! – Sign!

*Queen* (*in despair*) I am in his power!

*Sallust* What is a Crown? Especially such an one
As you have worn – a crown of thorns!
(*Whispering in her ear*)
Are not the joys of love
Better than regal pomp?
Is not voluntary abdication
**{82}** Preferable to dethronement,
Public scandal, and the cloister?
Don Cesar adores you, and is most worthy of your love.
A man of genius and great lineage,
Count of Garofa, Grandee of Spain,
Duke of Olmedo
Almost a Prince.

[RUY BLAS, *who has been gradually approaching the table, snatches the pen from the hand of the* QUEEN, *just as she is about to sign*]

*Blas* Believe it not! My name's Ruy Blas,
And I am this man's lackey.

*Queen & Sall.* What do I hear?

*Blas* I say we have had enough of treason,
I have awoke from my long dream –
Madam! the vassal's lot,
Is shared between us two.

(*Pointing to* DON SALLUST, *dropping the cloak in which he was muffled*)

*Blas* I have a lackey's livery,
He has a lackey's soul.

**[36]**
*Sallust* (*Aside***)** The blow is struck too soon
(*To Ruy Blas*) Is it thus you would brave me?
[*Turning fiercely upon the* QUEEN]

[35] The manuscript has "this paper addressed to the King".
[36] The manuscript has "and tomorrow all Madrid shall know it".

Away at once with all disguise,
**{83}** His words, proud woman, are quite true.
My lackey 'tis who has won your love,
And brought disgrace and shame on you.

Yet not unaided has he wrought,
I, madam, I have led him on;
Have fed his hopes, and given him gold,
And helped him 'till the goal was won.

Dethroned, and banished, and disgraced,
You sent me forth – shame on my brow –
My ancient name you made a jest.
Ha! Ha! Behold! who triumphs now?

Your Serving Woman, generous Queen.
As wife, you would have given to me
My lackey footman! In return,
As husband, dear, I give to thee!

Has heaven no thunderbolt to crush this wretch?
*Queen* My wrongs are more than I can bear.
Deceived where I had placed my love;
Reviled and mocked in my despair,
Oh! where for consolation turn,
Where! Where! Ah! Where!

(*following the* QUEEN *menacingly*)
*Sallust* To brave me thou didst dare.

**{84}** Insult not my despair!
*Queen*
His fate thou aye must share[37].
*Sallust*
This cruelty forbear!
*Queen*
(*standing exultingly over the* QUEEN, *who sinks in terror at his feet*)
*Sallust* My triumph's thy despair!

[RUY BLAS *having previously barred the door, has been stealthily following* DON SALLUST, *and contrived to whip his sword from the scabbard, he now seizes* DON SALLUST, *whirls him to the other side of the Stage, and raising the* QUEEN *from the ground, stands between her and* DON SALLUST]

*Blas* (*calmly with concentrated rage*). It seems Marquis that you insult your Queen!

[37] The printed version has "His fate then age must share" but the manuscript makes more sense.

*Sallust* (*moves rapidly towards the door, as if to make his escape*)

*Blas* Trouble yourself not!
That door is locked.
Don Sallust, how long has Satan been your friend;
But if now he would tear you from these hands,
He must appear in person.
**{85}** Caitiff[38], more vile than words can tell,
'Tis now my turn.
In vain you would call,
Or move, or struggle –
Nobody can enter here to aid you –
This morning I was your valet,
This night I am your executioner!

*Sallust* Would you then murder me?
**[37]**

TRIO

*Blas* **Don Sallust, if to pray you dare,**
**Quick – crave forgiveness for the past,**
**For solemnly, by heaven, I swear,**
**This fearful night shall be your last.**

*Queen* **For heaven's sake do not rashly swear!**
**He'll make atonement for the past.**
**His wretched life then spare – Ah, spare!**
**Oh heed my tears, now falling fast.**

*Sallust* **If I were armed, you would not dare**
**These insults upon me to cast.**
**Had I a sword. By heaven I swear,**
**This fearful night should be your last!**

*Queen* Have mercy!

*Blas* No

*Queen* Mercy

*Blas* No! No!
**{86}**

[RUY BLAS *pursues* SALLUST *as if the determination to cut him down. The* QUEEN *throws herself between them.*]

*Queen* Steal[39] not his blood!

[*A pause*]

*Blas* Do we not slay the poisonous Serpent –

[38] Cowardly or contemptible person
[39] The manuscript has "Shed"

The rabid venomous wolf –
Or aught else that's hostile
To human life or happiness;
Why then should I spare
This miserable assassin of the human heart and soul?

*Sallust* Cowardly ruffian!
Give me at least a sword!

*Blas* A sword! And for what purpose?
You, a Grandee of Spain, descend to
Fight a duel with your footman.

*Sallust* You should be still a man

*Blas* A man! Yes. I was a man,
Until your arts corrupted me –
Until your crimes changed –
To an avenging demon!
Yet still one chance I'll give
Though 't will avail thee little
(*Throws down the sword*)
You have a dagger – so have I.
**{87}** We are now on equal terms,
Strike for your life!

*Queen* (*clinging to* RUY BLAS) Hold, hold thy desperate hand.

(*Whilst endeavouring to extricate himself from the* QUEEN's *grasp*, SALLUST *glides rapidly behind* RUY BLAS, *stabs him in the back, and then rushes precipitately to the balcony at the back of the Stage*]

*Ruy Blas* Ah! treacherous to the last!
**[38]**
(*Pursues* SALLUST *like lightning to the balcony, seizes him by the throat, and having stabbed him in the breast, hurls him over the parapet. A long Pause. The moon shines brightly on* RUY BLAS *as he stands, dagger in hand, upon the balcony, gazing over the parapet. The* QUEEN, *overwhelmed by emotion, has sunk on the ground in the front of the Stage.* RUY BLAS *then slowly approaches the* QUEEN *and raises her. She regards him with fear and horror.)*

FINALE[40]

*Blas* Madam – quickly fly from here,
**{88}** Your name is safe, your reign secure,
No more Don Sallust you need fear,
No more my wretched frauds endure.
One boon alone to ask I dare,
Before eternally we part.

[40] This is entitled "Finale" in the manuscript but not in the printed version.

Forgiveness! that one blessing spare,
From all the love that's in your heart.

*Queen* (*indignantly*) Forgive thee! Never[41]!

*Blas* You will not!

*Queen* Never!

*Blas* ( *Remains for an instant immovable, then vacillates, and falls to the ground*)[42]
(*faintly*) Don Sallust!
I thank you for that blow!

*Queen* (*starting*) Great heavens!
What ails thee!

*Blas* Nothing your Majesty. My earthly sufferings are drawing a close.
(*Bitterly*) And must I die unpardoned?

*Queen* Don Cesar! (*Rushing to him in the wildest agitation*)

*Blas* Poor wronged girl!
You would curse me!
But my last words
**{89}** Ask blessings upon you!

*Queen* Your last words! Cesar –
Speak to me. I pardon you,
And love you!

*Blas* [43]My name's Ruy Blas!

*Queen* Ruy Blas! you have my pardon and eternal love!

*Blas* Forgiveness and love for the poor lackey! Thanks! thanks, bright angel!

(*Chorus, accompanied by the Organ, heard without*)
**A bright light has risen, joy to earth![44]**
**True faith all crime atone[45];**
**'Tis love alone can save mankind.**

*Ruy Blas* (*Faintly raising himself upon his hands*)
What sounds are those?
Sure, angel voices – steal upon mine ears.

---

[41] The printed version has "Man" rather than "Never" as in the manuscript.
[42] This Blas action and speech follows the manuscript layout rather than the printed version.
[43] The manuscript prefaces this sentence with "Cesar!"
[44] This chorus was written on the back of page 88 of the manuscript.
[45] The printed version had "stones" rather than "atone" as found in the manuscript..

*Queen* ‘Tis Easter morn, and in the church hard by
The priests their native hymns are singing.

*Ruy Blas* Bright day to dawn on such a night
A strange light falls upon my soul, and animates my being.

*Queen* Ruy Blas! Ruy Blas, my only love,
This wretched heart is breaking!

**[39]**

*Ruy Blas* (*Rising as with sudden inspiration*)

**In heaven we shall meet again;**
**List, and believe those holy sounds;**
**{90}** **True love must triumph, says the strain,**
**And the sad heart with joy rebounds.**

**Beloved! This deep solemn hour,**
**Reveals the truth, so pure, so grand;**
**That subject to Almighty power,**
**The king and beggar equal stand.**

**Ah! yes! We yet may meet again**
**With hope my saddened heart rebounds**
**On earth all but true love is vain,**
**Like you I hear and trust those sounds.**

**Beloved, this deep solemn hour**
**Reveals thy mind so pure, so grand,**
**Mere images of earthly power**
**Before thy genius humble stand!**

[*A violent knocking is heard within*]

*Chorus* Open! Open! in the name of the Queen!

*Blas* Fly, madam, fly! ‘tis the patrol!

CHORUS (*without*)

**Beneath your window on the earth**
**Lies a pool of human blood,**
**A body is stretched on the stones,**
**The murderer ‘tis our task to find**

Open! open! (*Knocking continued*)

*Chorus of Priests simultaneously with this*.

**A bright light has risen, joy to earth!**
**True faith all crime atone;**
**‘Tis love alone can save mankind.**

*Blas* Fly! madam, fly!
**{91}** No moment's to be lost.

*Queen* Ruy Blas! my love, my husband!

Ending according to the printed version

*Blas* Away! away!

(*He forces her to the door, and closing it after her with one last effort places the key in his breast, and catching up the sword of* DON SALLUST, *leans against the door as if to secure the flight of the* QUEEN.)
(*The knocking has become louder and louder, the double chorus always continuing, at length a violent crash is heard, and the patrol, followed by a mob, break in at the door opposite to the one at which* RUY BLAS *is standing. Other soldiers climb over the balcony*.)

*Ruy Blas* (*faintly*) I can do no more! (*Sinks to the earth*)

*Queen.*[46] Now fate has done its worst! (*Falls upon the body of* RUY BLAS)

Ending according to the manuscript

*Blas* Away! Away! For my sake

(*He forces her to the door, and closing it after her with one last effort places the key in his breast, and catching up the sword of* DON SALLUST, *leans against the door as if to secure the flight of the* QUEEN.)

*Blas* (*in a faint voice*) She is saved!

(*The knocking has become louder and louder, the double chorus always continuing, at length a violent crash is heard, and the patrol, followed by a mob, break in at the door opposite to the one at which* RUY BLAS *is standing. Other soldiers climb over the balcony. The patrol seize* RUY BLAS *who sinks into the arms of the men. He dies in the act of prayer, as if endeavouring to join the priests in their hymn*)

*The sun rises on the scene. The curtain slowly descends.*

GENERAL TABLEAU

FINIS

[46] Quite how or why the Queen has reappeared at this point is unclear.