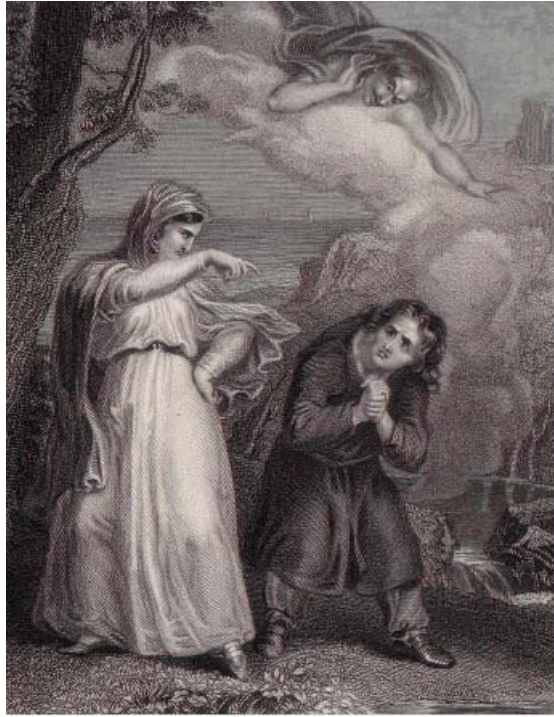


Lord Byron:
The Deformed Transformed
edited by Peter Cochran

At the end of this document will be found an Appendix on Joshua Pickersgill's *The Three Brothers*.



Scene I, engraved by Finden.

Byron's last play was started in January and February 1822, but was published without having been finished. Much later in the year, the recently-widowed Mary Shelley copied it, with more pleasure than she derived from copying *Don Juan* – the sixth canto of which he had also started, secretly, in either January or February. His casual attitude to the play can be seen from the first of only two references to it in all his correspondence. This comes at the end of a letter to Leigh Hunt of July 25th 1823:

... in the mean time I send to Mrs. S[helley] – a few Scenes more of the drama before begun – for her transcriptive leisure.¹

Mary, however, admired the play. On October 30th 1822 she had written to him:

You could not have sent me a more agreeable task than to copy your drama, but I hope you intend to continue it, it is a great favourite of mine.²

On November 16th, referring to Act I, she wrote:

1: BLJ X 90.

2: *Letters of Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley*, ed. Bennett, I 285.

I have copied your MSS. The “Eternal Scoffer” seems a favourite of yours. The Critics, as they used to make you a Childe Harold, Giaour, & Lara all in one, will now make a compound of Satan & Cæsar to form your prototype, & your 600 firebrands in Murray’s hands will be in costume. I delight in your new style more than in your former glorious one, & shall be much pleased when your fertile brain gives my fingers more work.³

On December 14th, referring to Canto XII, she said:

I liked your Canto extremely; it has only touches of your highest style of poetry, but it is very amusing & delightful. It is a comfort to get anything to gild the dark clouds now my sun is set. – Sometimes when very melancholy I repeat your lyric in “The Deformed”, & that for a while enlivens me ...⁴

Finally, in or around February 1823 (still, it seems, copying it), she wrote:

The more I read this Poem that I send, the more I admire it. I pray that Your Lordship will finish it. – It must be your own inclination that will govern you in that, but from what you have said, I have some hopes that you will. You never wrote anything more beautiful than one lyric in it – & the whole, I am tempted to say, surpasses “Your former glorious style” – at least it fully surpasses the very best parts of your best productions.⁵

But he didn’t finish it. The play waited another year before being published – by John Hunt, not John Murray – on February 24th 1824. It shares one feature with *Heaven and Earth*: although Byron had an excellent plan for the next stage of its composition, he hadn’t the confidence or the conviction – or the interest – or the time – to conclude it. “I have also,” he wrote to Kinnaid on May 21st 1823, “*two parts* completed of an odd sort of drama – but I doubt if I shall go on with it ...”⁶ This is the other one of his two references to it.

The *Deformed Transformed* is – or would be – the third of Byron’s plays to derive its main theme from Goethe’s *Faust* and its ancillary legends – the two others being *Manfred* and *Cain*. He had known Faust in outline since de Staël’s *de l’Allemagne* in 1813. He was sent by Murray, on January 12th 1822, *Retsch’s Twenty-Six Outlines, Illustrative of Goethe’s Tragedy of Faust, Engraved from the Originals by Henry Moses, and an Analysis of the Tragedy*.⁷ He would have been amused by its opening peroration:

Would you warn the young man who enters upon society, freed from the controul of the school or the superintendence of the tutor – would you point out to him all the dangers to which he will be exposed in the world – you need only give him *Goethe’s Faust*, and desire him to read and reflect.⁸

3: Ibid, I 289.

4: Ibid, I 299.

5: Ibid, I 311.

6: BLJ X 182.

7: Boosey and Sons, 1820. B. asks Murray for the book on 4 December 1822 (BLJ IX 75); and on 22 May 1822 (BLJ IX 162) gives it away to Catherine Potter Stith, whom he had met on board the USS. *Constitution*.

8: Retsch, p.1

Once past this fatuity, he would have found the entire play paraphrased, large parts translated, and would have read, in the commentary, "... the easiest clue to the moral part of this didactic action is, to consider Faust and Mephistopheles as *one* person, represented symbolically, in a two-fold shape".⁹

Byron had already combined the two protagonists into the protagonist of *Manfred*, where, as George Sand wrote in 1839, we see "Faust délivré de l'odieuse compagnie de Mephistopheles".¹⁰

Goethe himself, who had enjoyed reading *Manfred*, told Ekermann that the Stranger / Cæsar / Lucifer in the later play, "derives from my Mephistopheles," but that the play as a whole "is no imitation. Everything is absolutely original and new."¹¹

Some of Retsch's illustrations to *Faust* will be found printed in the text of Byron's play below.

In *Manfred*, the protagonist needs no tempter; in *Cain*, the relationship between Tempter and Tempted is more conventional in outline, though subtle in the way it is worked out: Lucifer does not bring about the First Murder by ordering or suggesting it, but by making his victim angry and frustrated by a new sense of the limitations imposed on him. *The Deformed Transformed* makes a still more radical adjustment, and has the Tempted first change his unsatisfactory body for a better one, and then has the Tempter step into the old body thus abandoned. If we understand his intentions aright, the abandoned body would have had a new lease of life in the uncompleted conclusion, when the good catholic heroine, Olimpia, would have fallen in love with Lucifer / Cæsar, who is disguised in it, in preference to the now-beautiful hero Arnold.

The body-swap engenders a twinning or doubling theme which echoes through the text. Huon and Memnon, the twin attendants brought on stage only to be forgotten, Romulus and Remus, whose story duplicates that of Cain and Abel, and lastly the creator Cellini and the destroyer Bourbon (the latter being perhaps destroyed by the "creative" former).

Byron was never entirely happy with the human body: he regretted, for example, that women had to sit down at table and eat. With his own paradoxical body – at once beautiful and deformed – he was still less happy, and had been since childhood. Moore records,

In a few anecdotes of his early life which he related in his "Memoranda," though the name of his mother was never mentioned but with respect, it was not difficult to perceive that the recollections she had left behind – at least, those that had made the deepest impression – were of a painful nature. One of the most striking passages, indeed, in the few pages of that Memoir which related to his early days, was where, in speaking of his own sensitiveness, on the subject of his deformed foot, he described the feeling of horror and humiliation that came over him, when his mother, in one of her fits of passion, called him "a lame brat." As all that he had felt strongly through life was, in some shape or other, reproduced in his poetry, it was

9: Ibid, p.2.

10: *Essai sur le drama fantastique: Gæthe, Byron, Mickiewicz: Revue des Deux Mondes*, December 1st 1839, 612.

11: Quoted Anne Barton, *Don Juan Transformed in Byron Augustan and Romantic* ed. Rutherford, Macmillan 1990, p.201.

not likely that an expression such as this should fail of being recorded. Accordingly we find, in the opening of his drama, “The Deformed Transformed,”

Bertha. Out, hunchback!
Arnold. I was born so, mother!

It may be questioned, indeed, whether that whole drama was not indebted for its origin to this single recollection.¹²

Byron rarely refers to his deformed leg. Here is one exception, inspired by a newspaper jibe in 1814:

... in another [riposte], I am an *atheist* – a *rebel* – and, at last, the *Devil* (*boiteux*, I presume). My demonism seems to be a female’s conjecture: if so, I could convince her that I am but a mere mortal, – if a queen of the Amazons may be believed, who says *αρῖζον χολος οἶφει*. I quote from memory, so my Greek is probably deficient: but the passage is *meant* to mean.¹³

Moore, our source for the letter, discreetly substitutes asterisks for the Greek phrase “a lame beast covers best”, or, “a cripple makes the best fuck”. Here is another reference – also in a letter to Moore. Byron is speaking (now in 1823), of the lame Henry Fox:

I always liked that boy – perhaps, in part, from some resemblance in the least fortunate part of our destinies – I mean, to avoid mistakes, his lameness. But there is this difference, that *he* appears a halting angel, whilst I am *Le Diable Boiteux*, – a soubriquet, which I marvel that, amongst their various *nominis umbræ*, the Orthodox have not hit upon.¹⁴

Le Diable Boiteux is Asmodeus, the urbane devil from Le Sage’s novel of the same name. Byron had used him in *The Vision of Judgement*; *nominis umbræ* is from Lucan’s *Pharsalia*, and is a phrase also used (in the singular) in *The Vision*, as a nickname for Junius, the pseudonymous pamphleteer.

Mary Shelley wrote on the fly-leaf of her copy of *The Deformed Transformed*:

This had long been a favourite subject with Lord Byron. I think that he mentioned it also in Switzerland. I copied it – he sending portion of it at a time, as it was finished, to me. At this time he had a great horror of its being said that he plagiarised, or that he studied for ideas, and wrote with difficulty. Thus he gave Shelley Aikins’ edition of the British poets, that it might not be found in his house by some English loungeur, and reported home; thus, too, he always dated when he began and when he ended a poem, to prove hereafter how quickly it was done. I do not think that he altered a line in this drama after he had once written it down. He composed and corrected in his mind. I do not know how he meant to finish it; but he said himself that the whole conduct of the story was already conceived. It was at this time that a brutal paragraph alluding to his lameness appeared which he repeated to me lest I should hear

12: Moore’s Life, I pp.25-6.

13: BLJ IV 51.

14: BLJ X 136.

it from some one else. No action of Lord Byron's life – scarce a line he has written – but was influenced by his personal defect.¹⁵

Lady Blessington, too, has an interesting passage on the play:

"I often think," said Byron, "that I inherit my violence and bad temper from my poor mother – not that my father, from all I could ever learn, had a much better; so that it is no wonder I have such a very bad one. As long as I can remember anything, I recollect being subject to violent paroxysms of rage, so disproportioned to the cause, as to surprise me when they were over, and this still continues. I cannot coolly view anything that excites my feelings; and once the lurking devil in me is roused, I lose all command of myself. I do not recover a good fit of rage for days after: mind, I do not by this mean that the ill-humour continues, as, on the contrary, that quickly subsides, exhausted by its own violence; but it shakes me terribly, and leaves me low and nervous after. Depend on it, people's tempers must be corrected while they are children; for not all the good resolutions in the world can enable a man to conquer habits of ill-humour or rage, however he may regret having given way to them. My poor mother was generally in a rage every day, and used to render me sometimes almost frantic; particularly when, in her passion, she reproached me with my personal deformity, I have left her presence to rush into solitude, where, unseen, I could vent the rage and mortification I endured, and curse the deformity that I now began to consider as a signal mark of the injustice of Providence. Those were bitter moments: even now, the impression of them is vivid in my mind, and they cankered a heart that I believe was naturally affectionate, and destroyed a temper always disposed to be violent. It was my feelings of this period that suggested the idea of 'The Deformed Transformed.' I often look back on the days of my childhood, and am astonished at the recollection of the intensity of my feelings at that period; – first impressions are indelible. My poor mother, and after her my schoolfellows, by their taunts, led me to consider my lameness as the greatest misfortune, and I have never been able to conquer this feeling. It requires great natural goodness of disposition, as well as reflection, to conquer the corroding bitterness that deformity engenders in the mind, and which, while preying on itself, sours one towards all the world. I have read, that where personal deformity exists, it may be always traced in the face, however handsome the face may be. I am sure that what is meant by this is, that the consciousness of it gives to the countenance an habitual expression of discontent, which I believe is the case; yet it is too bad (added Byron with bitterness) that, because one had a defective foot, one cannot have a perfect face."

He indulges a morbid feeling on this subject that is extraordinary, and that leads me to think it has had a powerful effect in forming his character. As Byron had said that his own position had led to his writing "The Deformed Transformed," I ventured to remind him that, in the advertisement to that drama, he had stated it to have been founded on the novel of "The Three Brothers." He said that both statements were correct, and then changed the subject without giving me an opportunity of questioning him on the unacknowledged, but visible, resemblances between other of his works and that extraordinary production. It is possible that he is unconscious of the plagiarism of ideas he has committed; for his reading is so desultory, that he seizes thoughts which, in passing through the glowing alembic of his mind, become so embellished as to lose all identity with the original crude embryos he had adopted. This was proved to me in another instance, when a book that he was constantly in the habit of looking over fell into my hands, and I traced various passages marked by his pencil or by his notes, which gave me the idea of having led to certain trains of thought in his works. He told me

15: Quoted E.H.Coleridge, *Byron's Works*, Vol.V p.474.

that he rarely ever read a page that did not give rise to chains of thought, the first idea serving as the original link on which the others were formed, –

Awake but one, and lo! what myriads rise.

I have observed, that, in conversation, some trifling remark has often led him into long disquisitions, evidently elicited by it; and so prolific is his imagination, that the slightest spark can warm it.¹⁶

Our interest in what she reports about the play is only slightly modified by our realisation that, when she met Byron, it was still a year from publication. Perhaps she saw the manuscript.

Other influential texts which we know to have been in Byron's proximity at the time he wrote the play are two dramas by Calderon, *El Magico Prodigioso* (itself a subtext to *Faust*), and *El Purgatorio de San Patricio*. To both these he was introduced by Shelley.¹⁷ He would also have known, probably from his Harrow days, Plautus' comedy *Amphytrion*, which features two complementary gods impersonating two complementary humans.

A story circulated about the play, after Thomas Medwin reported¹⁸ that Byron had thrown it on the fire upon Shelley's accusation that it contained a quotation from Southey's *The Curse of Kehama*. But Trelawny described Medwin's tale as "a plumper;¹⁹ and if Byron did destroy anything in this way, it was only an early fragment. All the story illustrates is Byron's continued horror of being associated with Southey.

As with *Werner*, his previous dramatic piece, *The Deformed Transformed* allows Byron to create situations in which one part of his character can interact with another. Arnold is his romantic part, The Stranger / Cæsar / Lucifer his mocking part. Arnold is his heterosexual half, Cæsar (see note to below to II III 182), perhaps his homosexual half – in this he would resemble Goethe's Mephistopheles, who is, in the play's penultimate scene of Part 2 (written after Byron's death, however), unable to concentrate on getting Faust's soul because his attention is distracted by all the pretty cherubim at Heaven's gate. Arnold is the Byron who would be a man of action; Cæsar the Byron who knows action to be futile, and who prefers to comment on that theme with pseudo-objectivity.

Both principals turn up in different guises, in parts of *Don Juan* written in the play's proximity. Arnold has a *doppelgänger* in Canto VIII, in the fifth of the sons of the brave Tartar Khan:

The fifth, who, by a Christian mother nourished,
Had been neglected, ill-used, and what not,

16: Lady Blessington, *Conversations of Lord Byron* (ed. Lovell, Princeton, 1969) pp.80-2. Lovell comments on the unlikelihood of B. discussing his lameness at such length.

17: See Charles E. Robinson, *The Devil as Doppelgänger in The Deformed Transformed: The Sources and Meaning of Byron's Unfinished Drama*, BNYPL 1970 (rptd. in *The Plays of Lord Byron*, ed. Beatty and Gleckner, 1997).

18: Thomas Medwin, *Conversations of Lord Byron* (ed. Lovell, Princeton, 1966) pp.153-4.

19: *Ibid*, p.155.

Because deformed, yet died all game and bottom,
To save a Sire, who blushed that he begot him.

... and Byron himself is Mephistopheles in Canto XIII:

For my part, I am but a mere Spectator,
And gaze where'er the palace or the hovel is, 55
Much in the mode of Goethe's Mephistophilis; –

But neither love nor hate in much excess,
Though 'twas not once so; if I sneer sometimes,
It is because I cannot well do less,
And now and then it also suits my rhymes ...²⁰

Compare Arnold and Cæsar at II ii 50-6:

Arnold: Why dost not strike?
Cæsar: Your old philosophers
Beheld mankind, as mere spectators of
The Olympic games.

A memorandum on the manuscript (reproduced below at the Fragment of Part III, line 15), indicates the way in which Byron intended the play to develop. The war being over, Arnold would have become frustrated and bitter at the way Olimpia continued to tolerate him without loving him, despite his physical beauty and the fact that he had saved her life. Olimpia, however, would have conceived a love for the deformed Cæsar / Lucifer (with how much cunning play-acting on the devil's part we can only guess). Arnold would thus have felt jealous of a rival who inhabited his body as it once had been.

If we assume a tragic end, Arnold would kill Olimpia, and try to kill Cæsar / Lucifer – except that, that personage being immortal, he would fail – succeeding only, perhaps, in killing himself.

If we assume a comic end, Arnold would try to kill Cæsar / Lucifer *before* killing Olimpia, and Cæsar / Lucifer would slip out of his “Arnold” body, back into his Act I body, causing Arnold to resume his deformed shape. But would Arnold be able to reproduce whatever it was in the personality of Cæsar / Lucifer which had caused Olimpia to love his deformed shape?

It's a problem which Goldsmith created, but did not solve, in *She Stoops to Conquer*. Kate Hardcastle is skilful at arousing the interest of Young Marlow in her disguise as a chambermaid; but Goldsmith does not dramatise the moment when Young Marlow adjusts to the idea that the middle-class girl before whom he's shy (because she reminds him of his mother), is the same as the working-class girl before whom he feels relaxed: “They retire, she tormenting him, to the back scene”,²¹ and he loses his Freudian inhibitions in mime only. How does Kate create a continuum in his mind between her real

20: *Don Juan* XIII sts.7-8.

21: Goldsmith, *She Stoops to Conquer*, final scene.

and artificial personalities, so that Marlow can, while respecting her socially, still find her sexually attractive? We do not see the moment of transference.

Would Byron have been able to decide whether or not Olympia could continue loving the new Arnold in the old body? "... he said himself that the whole conduct of the story was already conceived", wrote Mary Shelley. But the problem of exactly how to conclude it may have been as important a reason why he didn't finish the play as busyness or laziness.



Retsch's *Faust*, Plate XXI: FAUST AND MEPHISTOPHELES ASCEND THE BROCKEN.

THE DEFORMED TRANSFORMED;
A DRAMA.
by Lord Byron

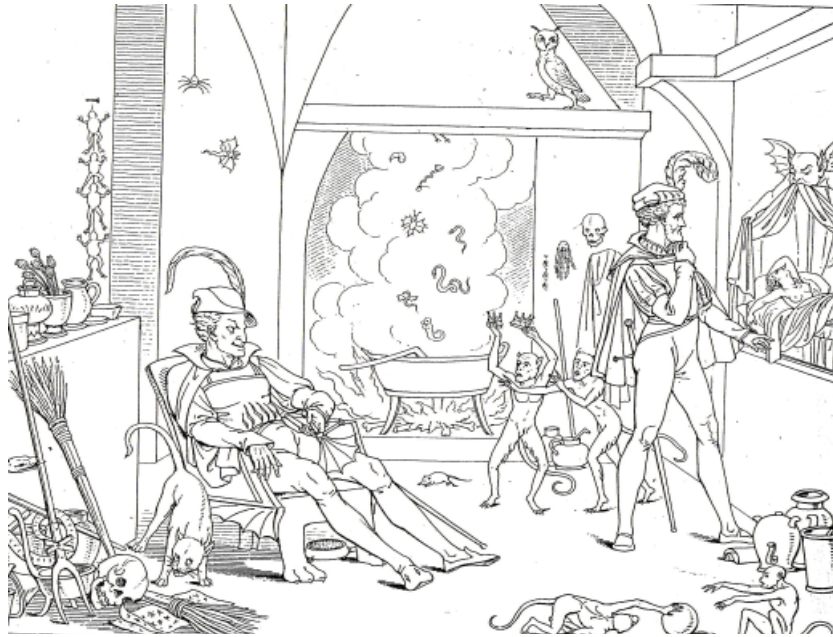
This production is founded partly on the story of a Novel called “The Three Brothers,” published many years ago, from which M.G.Lewis’s “Wood Demon” was also taken – and partly on the “Faust” of the great Goëthe. The present publication contains the first two Parts only, and the opening chorus of the third. The rest may perhaps appear hereafter.

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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

BERTHA.
OLIMPIA.

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



Retsch's *Faust*, Plate VI: FAUST AND MEPHISTOPHELES IN THE WITCHES' CAVE.

Part I Scene I. – A Forest.
Enter Arnold and his mother Bertha.

Bertha: Out, Hunchback!
 Arnold: I was born so, Mother!
 Bertha: Out,
 Thou Incubus! Thou Nightmare! Of seven sons
 The sole abortion!
 Arnold: Would that I had been so,
 And never seen the light!
 Bertha: I would so, too!
 But as thou *hast* – hence, hence – and do thy best!
 That back of thine may bear its burthen; 'tis
 More high, if not so broad as that of others.
 Arnold: It *bears* its burthen; but, my heart! Will it
 Sustain that which you lay upon it, Mother?
 I love, or, at the least, I loved you: nothing 10
 Save you, in nature, can love aught like me.
 You nursed me – do not kill me!
 Bertha: Yes – I nursed thee,
 Because thou wert my first-born, and I knew not
 If there would be another unlike thee,
 That monstrous sport of Nature. But get hence,
 And gather wood!²²
 Arnold: I will: but when I bring it,
 Speak to me kindly. Though my brothers are
 So beautiful and lusty, and as free
 As the free chase they follow,²³ do not spurn me:
 Our milk has been the same.
 Bertha: As is the hedgehog's, 20
 Which sucks at midnight from the wholesome dam
 Of the young bull, until the milkmaid finds
 The nipple, next day, sore, and udder dry.
 Call not thy brothers brethren! Call me not
 Mother; for if I brought thee forth, it was
 As foolish hens at times hatch vipers, by
 Sitting upon strange eggs. Out, urchin, out!

Exit Bertha.

Arnold (*solus*): Oh, Mother! – She is gone, and I must do
 Her bidding – wearily but willingly
 I would fulfil it, could I only hope 30

²²: Prospero's order to the "savage and deformed" Caliban at *The Tempest*, I ii 366. Arnold is a kind of Caliban.

²³: His brothers (who never appear), resemble Ulric in *Werner*, or the Second Brother in *PoC*.

A kind word in return. What shall I do?

Arnold begins to cut wood: in doing this he wounds one of his hands.

My labour for the day is over now.
 Accursed be this blood that flows so fast;
 For double curses will be my meed now
 At home – What home? I have no home, no kin,
 No kind – not made like other creatures, or
 To share their sports or pleasures. Must I bleed, too,
 Like them? Oh, that each drop which falls to earth
 Would rise a snake to sting them, as they have stung me!
 Or that the Devil, to whom they liken me, 40
 Would aid his likeness! If I must partake
 His form, why not his power? Is it because
 I have not his will too? For one kind word
 From her who bore me would still reconcile me
 Even to this hateful aspect. Let me wash
 The wound.

Arnold goes to a spring, and stoops to wash his hand: he starts back.

They're right; and Nature's mirror shows me
 What she hath made me. I will not look on it
 Again, and scarce dare think on't. Hideous wretch
 That I am! The very waters mock me with
 My horrid shadow – like a dæmon placed 50
 Deep in the fountain to scare back the cattle
 From drinking therein.

He pauses.

And shall I live on,
 A burthen to the earth, myself, and shame
 Unto what brought me into life? Thou blood,
 Which flow'st so freely from a scratch, let me
 Try if thou wilt not, in a fuller stream,
 Pour forth my woes for ever with thyself
 On earth, to which I will restore, at once,
 This hateful compound of her atoms, and
 Resolve back to her elements, and take 60
 The shape of any reptile save myself,
 And make a world for myriads of new worms!
 This knife! now let me prove if it will sever
 This withered slip of Nature's nightshade – my
 Vile form – from the creation, as it hath

The green bough from the forest.

Arnold places the knife in the ground, with the point upwards.

Now 'tis set,
 And I can fall upon it. Yet one glance
 On the fair day, which sees no foul thing like
 Myself, and the sweet sun which warmed me, but
 In vain. The birds – how joyously they sing! 70
 So let them, for I would not be lamented:
 But let their merriest notes be Arnold's knell;
 The fallen leaves my monument; the murmur
 Of the near fountain my sole elegy.
 Now, knife, stand firmly, as I fain would fall!²⁴

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

The fountain moves without a wind: but shall
 The ripple of a spring change my resolve?
 No. Yet it moves again! The waters stir,
 Not as with air, but by some subterranean
 And rocking power of the internal world. 80
 What's here? A mist! No more?

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

Arnold: What would you? Speak!
 Spirit or man?
 Stranger: As man is both, why not
 Say both in one?
 Arnold: Your form is man's, and yet
 You may be devil.
 Stranger: So many men are that
 Which is so called or thought, that you may add me
 To which you please, without much wrong to either.
 But come: you wish to kill yourself – pursue
 Your purpose.
 Arnold: You have interrupted me.
 Stranger: What is that resolution which can e'er
 Be interrupted? If I be the devil 90
 You deem, a single moment would have made you
 Mine, and for ever, by your suicide;
 And yet my coming saves you.

24: Compare Manfred contemplating suicide in I ii.

Arnold: I said not
 You *were* the Dæmon, but that your approach
 Was like one.

Stranger: Unless you keep company
 With him (and you seem scarce used to such high
 Society) you can't tell how he approaches;
 And for his aspect, look upon the fountain,
 And then on me, and judge which of us twain
 Looks likest what the boors believe to be 100
 Their cloven-footed terror.

Arnold: Do you – dare you
 To taunt me with my born deformity?

Stranger: Were I to taunt a buffalo with this
 Cloven foot of thine, or the swift dromedary
 With thy Sublime of Humps, the animals
 Would revel in the compliment. And yet
 Both beings are more swift, more strong, more mighty
 In action and endurance than thyself,
 And all the fierce and fair of the same kind
 With thee. Thy form is natural: 'twas only 110
 Nature's mistaken largess to bestow
 The gifts which are of others upon man.

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

Stranger: I will.

Arnold (*with surprise*): Thou *canst*?

Stranger: Perhaps. Would you aught else?

Arnold: Thou mockest me.

Stranger: Not I. Why should I mock 120
 What all are mocking? That's poor sport, methinks.
 To talk to thee in human language (for
 Thou canst not yet speak mine), the forester
 Hunts not the wretched coney, but the boar,
 Or wolf, or lion – leaving paltry game
 To petty burghers, who leave once a year
 Their walls, to fill their household cauldrons with
 Such scullion prey. The meanest gibe at thee –
 Now *I* can mock the mightiest.

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

Stranger: Your thoughts 130
 Are not far from me. Do not send me back:

I'm not so easily recalled to do
 Good service.

Arnold: What wilt thou do for me?

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

Arnold: Oh! then you are indeed the Dæmon, for
 Nought else would wittingly wear mine.

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

Arnold: On what condition?

Stranger: There's a question!
 An hour ago you would have given your soul 140
 To look like other men, and now you pause
 To wear the form of heroes.

Arnold: No; I will not.
 I must not compromise my soul.

Stranger: What soul,
 Worth naming so, would dwell in such a carcase?

Arnold: 'Tis an aspiring one, whate'er the tenement
 In which it is misloded. But name your compact:
 Must it be signed in blood?

Stranger: Not in your own.

Arnold: Whose blood then?

Stranger: We will talk of that hereafter.
 But I'll be moderate with you, for I see
 Great things within you. You shall have no bond 150
 But your own will, no contract save your deeds.
 Are you content?

Arnold: I take thee at thy word.

Stranger: Now then!

The Stranger approaches the fountain, and turns to Arnold.

A little of your blood.

Arnold: For what?

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

Arnold (*holding out his wounded arm*): Take it all.

Stranger: Not now. A few drops will suffice for this.

The Stranger takes some of Arnold's blood in his hand, and casts it into the fountain.

Shadows of Beauty!
 Shadows of Power!

Rise to your duty –
 This is the hour! 160
 Walk lovely and pliant
 From the depth of this fountain,
 As the cloud-shapen giant
 Bestrides the Hartz Mountain.²⁵
 Come as ye were,
 That our eyes may behold
 The model in air
 Of the form I will mould,
 Bright as the Iris
 When ether is spanned; 170
 Such *his* desire is,

Pointing to Arnold.

Such *my* command!
 Dæmons heroic –
 Dæmons who wore
 The form of the Stoic
 Or sophist of yore –
 Or the shape of each victor –
 From Macedon's boy,²⁶
 To each high Roman's picture,
 Who breathed to destroy – 180
 Shadows of Beauty!
 Shadows of Power!
 Up to your duty –
 This is the hour!

*Various phantoms arise from the waters, and pass in succession before the Stranger and Arnold.*²⁷

Arnold: What do I see?
 Stranger: The black-eyed Roman,²⁸ with
 The eagle's beak between those eyes which ne'er
 Beheld a conqueror, or looked along
 The land he made not Rome's, while Rome became
 His, and all theirs who heired his very name.
 Arnold: The phantom's bald; *my* quest is beauty. Could I 190

25: BYRON'S NOTE: This is a well-known German superstition – a gigantic shadow produced by reflection on the Brocken.

26: Alexander the Great.

27: The pedantic and occasionally obscure “classics-teacher's tone” the Stranger uses in this next show can be compared with Manfred after the Witch of the Alps disappears, at II ii 180-93.

28: Julius Caesar (twinned, in Plutarch, with Alexander the Great).

Inherit but his fame with his defects!
 Stranger: His brow was girt with laurels more than hairs.²⁹
 You see his aspect – choose it, or reject.
 I can but promise you his form; his fame
 Must be long sought and fought for.
 Arnold: I will fight, too,
 But not as a mock Cæsar. Let him pass:
 His aspect may be fair, but suits me not.
 Stranger: Then you are far more difficult to please
 Than Cato's sister, or than Brutus's mother,³⁰
 Or Cleopatra at sixteen³¹ – an age 200
 When love is not less in the eye than heart.
 But be it so! Shadow, pass on!

The phantom of Julius Cæsar disappears.

Arnold: And can it
 Be, that the man who shook the earth is gone,
 And left no footstep?
 Stranger: There you err. His substance
 Left graves enough, and woes enough, and fame
 More than enough to track his memory;
 But for his shadow – 'tis no more than yours,
 Except a little longer and less crooked
 I'the sun. Behold another!

A second phantom passes.

Arnold: Who is he?
 Stranger: He was the fairest and the bravest of 210
 Athenians.³² Look upon him well.
 Arnold: He is
 More lovely than the last. How beautiful!
 Stranger: Such was the curled son of Clinias³³ – wouldst thou
 Invest thee with his form?
 Arnold: Would that I had
 Been born with it! But since I may choose further,
 I will *look* further.

The shade of Alcibiades disappears.

29: Caesar was ashamed of his baldness and used his victor's laurel-wreath to cover it.

30: A slipshod line: Cato's sister *was* Brutus' mother.

31: Cleopatra became Caesar's lover at the age of sixteen.

32: Alcibiades, Athenian statesman and general (45-404 BC), famous for his good looks.

33: Alcibiades' father (Kleinias).

- Stranger: Lo! behold again!
- Arnold: What! that low, swarthy, short-nosed, round-eyed satyr,³⁴
 With the wide nostrils and Silenus³⁵ aspect,
 The splay feet and low stature! I had better
 Remain that which I am.
- Stranger: And yet he was 220
 The earth's perfection of all mental beauty,
 And personification of all virtue.
 But you reject him?
- Arnold: If his form could bring me
 That which redeemed it – no.
- Stranger: I have no power
 To promise that; but you may try, and find it
 Easier in such a form – or in your own.
- Arnold: No. I was not born for philosophy,
 Though I have that about me which has need on't.
 Let him fleet on.
- Stranger: Be air, thou Hemlock-drinker!
- The shadow of Socrates disappears: another rises.*
- Arnold: What's here? whose broad brow and whose curly beard 230
 And manly aspect look like Hercules,³⁶
 Save that his jocund eye hath more of Bacchus
 Than the sad purger of the infested world,³⁷
 Leaning dejected on his club of conquest,
 As if he knew the worthlessness of those
 For whom he had fought?
- Stranger: It was the man who lost
 The ancient world for love.
- Arnold: I cannot blame him,
 Since I have risked my soul because I find not
 That which he exchanged the earth for.
- Stranger: Since so far
 You seem congenial, will you wear his features? 240
- Arnold: No. As you leave me choice, I am difficult.
 If but to see the heroes I should ne'er
 Have seen else, on this side of the dim shore,
 Whence they float back before us.
- Stranger: Hence, Triumvir,³⁸
 Thy Cleopatra's waiting.

34: Socrates.

35: Silenus – Bacchus, jovial-looking, but squat, fat, and plain. Socrates was all three of these last.

36: Mark Antony, who claimed descent from Hercules.

37: Refers to Hercules dragging Cerberus up from Hades: see *TVoJ*, 50, 8.

38: Antony was one of three who ruled the Roman world, the others being Octavius and Lepidus.

The altar, gazing on his Trojan bride,
 With some remorse within for Hector slain
 And Priam weeping, mingled with deep passion
 For the sweet downcast virgin, whose young hand
 Trembled in *his* who slew her brother. So
 He stood i'the temple! Look upon him as 280
 Greece looked her last upon her best, the instant
 Ere Paris' arrow flew.⁴⁴

Arnold: I gaze upon him
 As if I were his soul, whose form shall soon
 Envelope mine.

Stranger: You have done well. The greatest
 Deformity should only barter with
 The extremest beauty – if the proverb's true
 Of mortals, that Extremes meet.

Arnold: Come! Be quick!
 I am impatient.

Stranger: As a youthful beauty
 Before her glass. *You both* see what is not,
 But dream it is what must be.

Arnold: Must I wait? 290

Stranger: No; that were a pity. But a word or two:
 His stature is twelve cubits; would you so far
 Outstep these times, and be a Titan? Or
 (To talk canonically) wax a son
 Of Anak?⁴⁵

Arnold: Why not?

Stranger: Glorious ambition!
 I love thee most in dwarfs! A mortal of
 Philistine stature would have gladly pared
 His own Goliath down to a slight David:
 But thou, my manikin, wouldst soar a show
 Rather than hero. Thou shalt be indulged, 300
 If such be thy desire; and, yet, by being
 A little less removed from present men
 In figure, thou canst sway them more; for all
 Would rise against thee now, as if to hunt
 A new-found Mammoth; and their cursed engines,
 Their culverins, and so forth, would find way
 Through our friend's armour there, with greater ease
 Than the Adulterer's⁴⁶ arrow through his heel
 Which Thetis had forgotten to baptize

44: Paris shot Achilles with an arrow in the heel as he was leading his bride, Polyxena, to the altar.

45: See Numbers 13, 33: *And there we saw the giants, the sons of Anak, which come of the giants: and we were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight.*

46: ... the Adulterer is Paris.

In Styx.

Arnold: Then let it be as thou deem'st best. 310

Stranger: Thou shalt be beauteous as the thing thou seest,
And strong as what it was, and –

Arnold: I ask not
For Valour, since Deformity is daring.
It is its essence to o'ertake mankind
By heart and soul, and make itself the equal –
Aye, the superior of the rest. There is
A spur in its halt movements, to become
All that the others cannot, in such things
As still are free to both, to compensate
For stepdame Nature's avarice at first. 320
They woo with fearless deeds the smiles of fortune,
And oft, like Timour the lame Tartar,⁴⁷ win them.

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

Arnold: Had no power presented me
The possibility of change, I would
Have done the best which spirit may to make
Its way with all Deformity's dull, deadly, 330
Discouraging weight upon me, like a mountain,
In feeling, on my heart as on my shoulders –
A hateful and unsightly molehill to
The eyes of happier men. I would have looked
On Beauty in that sex which is the type
Of all we know or dream of beautiful,
Beyond the world they brighten, with a sigh –
Not of love, but despair; nor sought to win,
Though to a heart all love, what could not love me
In turn, because of this vile crooked clog, 340
Which makes me lonely. Nay, I could have borne
It all, had not my mother spurned me from her.
The she-bear licks her cubs into a sort
Of shape – my Dam beheld my shape was hopeless.
Had she exposed me, like the Spartan, ere
I knew the passionate part of life, I had
Been a clod of the valley – happier nothing
Than what I am. But even thus – the lowest,
Ugliest, and meanest of mankind – what courage
And perseverance could have done, perchance 350
Had made me something – as it has made heroes

47: Tamburlaine the Great, who had a limp.

Of Thetis's boy!
Who sleeps in the meadow
Whose grass grows o'er Troy:
From the red earth, like Adam,⁵⁰
Thy likeness I shape,
As the Being who made him,
Whose actions I ape.
Thou Clay, be all glowing,
Till the Rose in his cheek
Be as fair as, when blowing, 390
It wears its first streak!
Ye Violets, I scatter,
Now turn into eyes!
And thou, sunshiny Water,
Of blood take the guise!
Let these Hyacinth boughs
Be his long flowing hair,
And wave o'er his brows,
As thou wavest in air!
Let his heart be this marble 400
I tear from the rock!
But his voice as the warble
Of birds on yon oak!
Let his flesh be the purest
Of mould, in which grew
The Lily-root surest,
And drank the best dew!
Let his limbs be the lightest
Which clay can compound,
And his aspect the brightest 410
On earth to be found!
Elements, near me,
Be mingled and stirred,
Know me, and hear me,
And leap to my word!
Sunbeams, awaken
This earth's animation!
'Tis done! He hath taken
His stand in creation!

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

Arnold (*in his new form*): I love, and I shall be beloved! Oh, life! 420

50: BYRON'S NOTE: Adam means “*red earth*”, from which the first man was formed.

At last I feel thee! Glorious Spirit!

Stranger: Stop!
 What shall become of your abandoned garment,
 Yon hump, and lump, and clod of ugliness,
 Which late you wore, or were?

Arnold: Who cares? Let wolves
 And vultures take it, if they will.

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

Arnold: Let us but leave it there;
 No matter what becomes on't.

Stranger: That's ungracious;
 If not ungrateful. Whatsoe'er it be, 430
 It hath sustained your soul full many a day.

Arnold: Aye, as the dunghill may conceal a gem
 Which is now set in gold, as jewels should be.

Stranger: But if I give another form, it must be
 By fair exchange, not robbery. For they
 Who make men without women's aid have long
 Had patents for the same, and do not love
 Your Interlopers. The Devil may take men,
 Not make them – though he reap the benefit
 Of the original workmanship – and therefore 440
 Some one must now be found to assume the shape
 You have quitted.

Arnold: Who would do so?

Stranger: That I know not,
 And therefore I must.

Arnold: You!

Stranger: I said it ere
 You inhabited your present dome of beauty.

Arnold: True. I forget all things in the new joy
 Of this immortal change.

Stranger: In a few moments
 I will be as you were, and you shall see
 Yourself for ever by you, as your shadow.

Arnold: I would be spared this.

Stranger: But it cannot be.
 What! shrink already, being what you are, 450
 From seeing what you were?

Arnold: Do as thou wilt.

Stranger (*to the late form of Arnold, extended on the earth*):
 Clay! not dead, but soul-less!
 Though no man would choose thee,

An Immortal no less
 Deigns not to refuse thee.
 Clay thou art; and unto spirit
 All clay is of equal merit.
 Fire! *without* which nought can live;
 Fire! but in which nought can live,
 Save the fabled salamander,⁵¹ 460
 Or immortal souls, which wander,
 Praying what doth not forgive,
 Howling for a drop of water,
 Burning in a quenchless lot:
 Fire! the only element
 Where nor fish, beast, bird, nor worm,
 Save the Worm which dieth not,
 Can preserve a moment's form,
 But must with thyself be blent:
 Fire! man's safeguard and his slaughter: 470
 Fire! Creation's first-born Daughter,
 And Destruction's threatened Son,
 When Heaven with the world hath done:
 Fire! assist me to renew
 Life in what lies in my view
 Stiff and cold!
 His resurrection rests with me and you!
 One little, marshy spark of flame –
 And he again shall seem the same;
 But I his Spirit's place shall hold! 480

An ignis-fatuuus flits through the wood and rests on the brow of the body.⁵² The Stranger disappears: the body rises.⁵³

Arnold (*in his new form*): Oh! horrible!
 Stranger (*in Arnold's late shape*): What! tremblest thou?
 Arnold: Not so –
 I merely shudder. Where is fled the shape
 Thou lately worst?
 Stranger: To the world of shadows.
 But let us thread the present. Whither wilt thou?
 Arnold: Must thou be my companion?
 Stranger: Wherefore not?

51: The salamander was a fabled reptile said to live in fire.

52: The *ignis fatuuus* or will'o'th'wisp is one of B.'s favourite images – compare *PoC* 35, *Manfred*, 1 i 195, *Don Juan*, XI, 27, 6-8, *TVoJ* 105, 5, *Island* IV 86, and *Werner* III iii 40-1. At last he brings one on the stage.

53: There would be a need for three actors: the first to play Arnold before this effect, and The Stranger after it; the second to play The Stranger before the effect; and a third to play Achilles before the effect, and Arnold after it. Matching voices would be a problem.

Your betters keep worse company.

Arnold: *My betters!*

Stranger: Oh! you wax proud, I see, of your new form:
I'm glad of that. Ungrateful too! That's well;
You improve apace – two changes in an instant,
And you are old in the World's ways already. 490
But bear with me: indeed you'll find me useful
Upon your pilgrimage. But come, pronounce
Where shall we now be errant?

Arnold: *Where the World*
Is thickest, that I may behold it in
Its workings.

Stranger: *That's to say, where there is War*
And Woman in activity. Let's see!
Spain – Italy – the new Atlantic world –
Afric with all its Moors. In very truth,
There is small choice: the whole race are just now
Tugging as usual at each other's hearts. 500

Arnold: I have heard great things of Rome.

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

Arnold: *How*
Shall we proceed?

Stranger: *Like gallants, on good coursers.*
What, ho! my chargers! Never yet were better,
Since Phaeton was upset into the Po.⁵⁴
Our pages too!

Enter two pages, with four coal-black horses.

Arnold: *A noble sight!*

Stranger: *And of* 510
A nobler breed. Match me in Barbary,
Or your Kochlani race of Araby,⁵⁵
With these!

Arnold: *The mighty steam, which volumes high*
From their proud nostrils, burns the very air;
And sparks of flame, like dancing fire-flies wheel

54: Phaeton tried to take over the chariot of the sun, but the horses ran away and overset him.

55: Kochlani or Kochlini horses were thoroughbreds with a pedigree dating back to Solomon. B.'s granddaughter, Lady Anne Blunt, imported into England the Arab horses from which all current Arab horses come.

Around their manes, as common insects swarm
 Round common steeds towards sunset.
 Stranger: Mount, my lord:
 They and I are your servitors.
 Arnold: And these
 Our dark-eyed pages – what may be their names?
 Stranger: You shall baptize them.
 Arnold: What! in holy water? 520
 Stranger: Why not? The deeper sinner, better saint.
 Arnold: They are beautiful, and cannot, sure, be demons.
 Stranger: True; the devil's always ugly: and your beauty
 Is never diabolical.
 Arnold: I'll call him
 Who bears the golden horn, and wears such bright
 And blooming aspect, *Huon*; for he looks
 Like to the lovely boy lost in the forest,
 And never found till now. And for the other
 And darker, and more thoughtful, who smiles not,
 But looks as serious though serene as night, 530
 He shall be *Memnon*, from the Ethiop king
 Whose statue turns a harper once a day.⁵⁶
 And you?
 Stranger: I have ten thousand names, and twice
 As many attributes; but as I wear
 A human shape, will take a human name.
 Arnold: More human than the shape (though it was mine once)
 I trust.
 Stranger: Then call me Cæsar.⁵⁷
 Arnold: Why, that name
 Belongs to Empire, and has been but borne
 By the World's lords.
 Stranger: And therefore fittest for
 The Devil in disguise – since so you deem me, 540
 Unless you call me Pope instead.
 Arnold: Well, then,
 Cæsar thou shalt be. For myself, my name
 Shall be plain Arnold still.
 Cæsar: We'll add a title –
 "Count Arnold": it hath no ungracious sound,
 And will look well upon a billet-doux.
 Arnold: Or in an order for a battle-field.
 Cæsar (*sings*): To horse! to horse! my coal-black steed

56: Huon is the hero of Wieland's *Oberon*, translated in 1798 by the reviled William Sotheby; his son is kidnapped by Titania. Memnon was a Greek hero, whose black statue in Egypt was said to make a sound like a string breaking. These two pages echo the spirits Eros and Anteros, mentioned by Manfred at II ii 94.

57: Cæsar (a) as in Julius (b) often used as the name of a dog.

Paws the ground and snuffs the air!
 There's not a foal of Arab's breed
 More knows whom he must bear; 550
 On the hill he will not tire,
 Swifter as it waxes higher;
 In the marsh he will not slacken,
 On the plain be overtaken;
 In the wave he will not sink,
 Nor pause at the brook's side to drink;
 In the race he will not pant,
 In the combat he'll not faint;
 On the stones he will not stumble,
 Time nor toil shall make him humble; 560
 In the stall he will not stiffen,
 But be winged as a Griffin,
 Only flying with his feet:
 And will not such a voyage be sweet?
 Merrily! merrily! never unsound,
 Shall our bonny black horses skim over the ground!⁵⁸
 From the Alps to the Caucasus, ride we, or fly!
 For we'll leave them behind in the glance of an eye.

They mount their horses, and disappear.



Retsch's *Faust*, Plate XXIV: *MEPHISTOPHELES AND FAUST PASS THE PLACE OF EXECUTION.*

⁵⁸: They resemble Faust and Mephistopheles, flying / riding through the air in Part I of Goethe's play.

Part I Scene II. – *A camp before the walls of Rome.*⁵⁹ *Arnold and Cæsar.*

Cæsar: You are well entered now.
 Arnold: Aye; but my path
 Has been o'er carcasses: mine eyes are full
 Of blood.
 Cæsar: Then wipe them, and see clearly. Why!
 Thou art a conqueror; the chosen knight
 And free companion of the gallant Bourbon,
 Late constable of France;⁶⁰ and now to be
 Lord of the city which hath been Earth's Lord
 Under its emperors, and – changing sex,
 Not sceptre, an Hermaphrodite of Empire –
 Lady of the old world.⁶¹
 Arnold: How *old*? What! are there 10
New worlds?
 Cæsar: To *you*.⁶² You'll find there are such shortly,
 By its rich harvests, new disease, and gold;⁶³
 From one *half* of the world named a *whole* new one,
 Because you know no better than the dull
 And dubious notice of your eyes and ears:
 Arnold: I'll trust them.
 Cæsar: Do! They will deceive you sweetly,
 And that is better than the bitter truth.
 Arnold: Dog!
 Cæsar: Man!
 Arnold: Devil!
 Cæsar: Your obedient humble servant.
 Arnold: Say *Master* rather. Thou hast lured me on,
 Through scenes of blood and lust, till I am here. 20
 Cæsar: And where wouldst thou be?
 Arnold: Oh, *at* peace – *in* peace!
 Cæsar: And where is that which is so? From the star
 To the winding worm, all life is motion; and
 In life *commotion* is the extremest point
 Of life. The planet wheels till it becomes
 A comet, and destroying as it sweeps
 The stars, goes out. The poor worm winds its way,
 Living upon the death of other things,

59: It is 1527, and Rome is being sacked by the armies of the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V.

60: Charles, duc de Bourbon, was a French traitor in league with Charles V. It was Charles' inability to pay his troops which led to the Sack of Rome.

61: Lucifer's joke means that when Rome was a political and military power, he / she was masculine, but when the Roman Empire fell and he / she became a spiritual power, he / she was feminine.

62: Compare *The Tempest*, V i 183-4: Miranda: *Oh, brave new world ...!* Prospero: *'Tis new to thee.*

63: This is only 1527, thirty-nine years after 1492, and not everyone has heard of America. Syphilis came to Europe in 1492: see *Don Juan* I, 131, 1.

But still, like them, must live and die, the subject
 Of something which has made it live and die. 30
 You must obey what all obey, the rule
 Of fixed Necessity: against her edict
 Rebellion prospers not.

Arnold: And when it prospers –
 Cæsar: 'Tis no rebellion.
 Arnold: Will it prosper now?
 Cæsar: The Bourbon hath given orders for the assault,
 And by the dawn there will be work.
 Arnold: Alas!⁶⁴
 And shall the city yield? I see the giant
 Abode of the true God, and his true saint,
 Saint Peter, rear its dome and cross into
 That sky whence Christ ascended from the cross, 40
 Which his blood made a badge of glory and
 Of joy (as once of torture unto him) –
 God and God's Son, man's sole and only refuge!

Cæsar: 'Tis there, and shall be.
 Arnold: What?
 Cæsar: The Crucifix
 Above, and many altar shrines below.
 Also some culverins⁶⁵ upon the walls,
 And harquebusses,⁶⁶ and what not; besides
 The men who are to kindle them to death
 Of other men.

Arnold: And those scarce mortal arches,⁶⁷
 Pile above pile of everlasting wall, 50
 The theatre where Emperors and their subjects
 (Those subjects *Romans*) stood at gaze upon
 The battles of the monarchs of the wild
 And wood – the lion and his tusky rebels
 Of the then untamed desert, brought to joust
 In the arena – as right well they might,
 When they had left no human foe unconquered –
 Made even the forest pay its tribute of
 Life to their amphitheatre, as well
 As Dacia men⁶⁸ to die the eternal death 60
 For a sole instant's pastime, and "Pass on
 To a new gladiator!" – Must it fall?

Cæsar: The city, or the amphitheatre?

64: Arnold is a good Catholic, and does not look forward to Rome's destruction.

65: *culverins* – cannon.

66: *harquebusses* (arquebuses) – crude muzzle-loading rifles, fired from the shoulder.

67: He refers to the Colosseum; see *CHP* IV st.139 et seq. and *Manfred* III iv, opening speech.

68: Dacia was a Roman province by the Danube. The Dying Gladiator (*CHP* IV 141, 6) is Dacian.

- The church, or one, or all? for you confound
Both them and me.
- Arnold: To-morrow sounds the assault
With the first cock-crow.
- Cæsar: Which, if it end with
The evening's first nightingale, will be
Something new in the annals of great sieges;
For men must have their prey after long toil.
- Arnold: The sun goes down as calmly, and perhaps 70
More beautifully, than he did on Rome
On the day Remus⁶⁹ leapt her wall.
- Cæsar: I saw him.
- Arnold: You!
- Cæsar: Yes, Sir! You forget I am or was
Spirit, till I took up with your cast shape,
And a worse name. I'm Cæsar and a hunch-back
Now. Well! the first of Cæsars was a bald-head,
And loved his laurels better as a wig
(So history says) than as a glory. Thus
The world runs on, but we'll be merry still.
I saw your Romulus (simple as I am) 80
Slay his own twin, quick-born of the same womb,
Because he leapt a ditch ('twas then no wall,
Whate'er it now be); and Rome's earliest cement
Was brother's blood;⁷⁰ and if its native blood
Be spilt till the choked Tiber be as red
As e'er 'twas yellow, it will never wear
The deep hue of the Ocean and the Earth,
Which the great robber sons of fratricide
Have made their never-ceasing scene of slaughter,
For ages.
- Arnold: But what have these done, their far 90
Remote descendants, who have lived in peace,
The peace of Heaven, and in her sunshine of
Piety?⁷¹
- Cæsar: And what had *they* done, whom the old
Romans o'erswept? – Hark!
- Arnold: They are soldiers singing
A reckless roundelay,⁷² upon the eve
Of many deaths, it may be of their own.
- Cæsar: And why should they not sing as well as swans?⁷³

69: Remus, with his twin brother Romulus, co-founder of Rome in legend.

70: Romulus killed Remus when in joke he jumped over the battlements they had been building. See Livy I, 6. Rome thus started with a repetition of Cain's murder of Abel.

71: Arnold has a very innocent conception of the Papacy.

72: *roundelay* – song with a chorus.

They are black ones, to be sure.

Arnold: So, you are learned,
I see, too?

Cæsar: In my grammar, certes. I
Was educated for a monk of all times, 100
And once I was well versed in the forgotten
Etruscan letters, and – were I so minded –
Could make their hieroglyphics plainer than
Your alphabet.⁷⁴

Arnold: And wherefore do you not?

Cæsar: It answers better to resolve the alphabet
Back into hieroglyphics.⁷⁵ Like your statesman,
And prophet, pontiff, doctor, alchymist,
Philosopher, and what not, they have built
More Babels, without new dispersion, than
The stammering young ones of the flood's dull ooze, 110
Who failed and fled each other. Why? why, marry,
Because no man could understand his neighbour.
They are wiser now, and will not separate
For nonsense. Nay, it is their brotherhood,
Their Shibboleth – their Koran – Talmud – their
Cabala⁷⁶ – their best brick-work, wherewithal
They build more –

Arnold (*interrupting him*): Oh, thou everlasting sneerer!
Be silent! How the soldier's rough strain seems
Softened by distance to a hymn-like cadence!
Listen!

Cæsar: Yes. I've heard the angels sing.⁷⁷ 120

Arnold: And demons howl.

Cæsar: And men, too. Let us listen:
I love all music.⁷⁸

Song of the Soldiers within.

The Black Bands⁷⁹ came over
The Alps and their snow;
With Bourbon, the rover,

73: Swans were said, on no evidence, to sing just before they die.

74: The Etruscans pre-date the Romans in Italy. Their alphabet has never been deciphered, though Lucifer says he can read it.

75: Lucifer argues – half in jest – that language has been the curse of mankind.

76: He omits “their Bible” from the list of books which have added to man's misery.

77: Compare *Cain*, I 132-4, where it is Adam, not Lucifer, who has heard the Seraphs sing.

78: If he is a true Byronic Hero, Lucifer will not love music, and is being sarcastic. But he loves the music of warfare, for a different reason

79: Black Bands – lawless mercenaries. Compare *Werner* (set in the following century), II i 124 and IV i 301.

They passed the broad Po.
 We have beaten all foemen,
 We have captured a King,
 We have turned back on no men,
 And so let us sing!
 Here's the Bourbon for ever! 130
 Though penniless all,
 We'll have one more endeavour
 At yonder old wall.
 With the Bourbon we'll gather
 At day-dawn before
 The gates, and together
 Or break or climb o'er
 The wall: on the ladder,
 As mounts each firm foot, 140
 Our shout shall grow gladder,
 And Death only be mute.
 With the Bourbon we'll mount o'er
 The walls of old Rome,
 And who then shall count o'er
 The spoils of each dome?
 Up! up with the Lily!
 And down with the Keys!⁸⁰
 In old Rome, the seven-hilly,
 We'll revel at ease. 150
 Her streets shall be gory,
 Her Tiber all red,
 And her temples so hoary
 Shall clang with our tread.
 Oh, the Bourbon! the Bourbon!
 The Bourbon for aye!
 Of our song bear the burden!
 And fire, fire away!
 With Spain for the vanguard,
 Our varied host comes, 160
 And next to the Spaniard
 Beat Germany's drums;
 And Italy's lances⁸¹
 Are couched at their mother;
 But our leader from France is,
 Who warred with his brother.
 Oh, the Bourbon! the Bourbon!
 Sans country or home,

80: *the Lily* – emblem of the Bourbons; *the Keys* – emblem of Rome.

81: The troops who sacked Rome were a mixture of Italians, Germans, and Spanish, Catholic and Protestant.

We'll follow the Bourbon,
 To plunder old Rome. 170

Cæsar: An indifferent song
 For those within the walls, methinks, to hear.

Arnold: Yes, if they keep to their chorus. But here comes
 The general with his chiefs and men of trust.
 A goodly rebel.

Enter the Constable Bourbon "cum suis," &c., &c.

Philibert:⁸² How now, noble Prince,
 You are not cheerful?

Bourbon: Why should I be so?

Philibert: Upon the eve of conquest, such as ours,
 Most men would be so.

Bourbon: If I were secure!

Philibert: Doubt not our soldiers. Were the walls of adamant,
 They'd crack them. Hunger is a sharp artillery. 180

Bourbon: That they will falter is my least of fears.
 That they will be repulsed, with Bourbon for
 Their chief, and all their kindled appetites
 To marshal them on – were those hoary walls
 Mountains, and those who guard them like the gods
 Of the old fables, I would trust my Titans –
 But now –

Philibert: They are but men who war with mortals.

Bourbon: True: but those walls have girded in great ages,
 And sent forth mighty spirits. The past earth
 And present phantom of imperious Rome 190
 Are peopled with those warriors; and methinks
 They flit along the eternal City's rampart,
 And stretch their glorious, gory, shadowy hands,
 And beckon me away!

Philibert: So let them! Wilt thou
 Turn back from shadowy menaces of shadows?

Bourbon: They do not menace me. I could have faced,
 Methinks, a Sylla's⁸³ menace; but they clasp,
 And raise, and wring their dim and deathlike hands,
 And with their thin ashen faces and fixed eyes
 Fascinate mine. Look there!

Philibert: I look upon 200
 A lofty battlement.

82: Philibert de Châlon took over command of the Imperial forces at Bourbon's death.

83: He means, "I could have faced a real military threat". Lucius Cornelius Sulla (138-78 BC) Roman general victor over Marius in the civil war, and over Mithridates, King of Pontus.

Bourbon: And there!

Philibert: Not even
A guard in sight; they wisely keep below,
Sheltered by the grey parapet from some
Stray bullet of our lansquenets,⁸⁴ who might
Practise in the cool twilight.

Bourbon: You are blind.

Philibert: If seeing nothing more than may be seen
Be so.

Bourbon: A thousand years have manned the walls
With all their heroes – the last Cato stands
And tears his bowels,⁸⁵ rather than survive
The liberty of that I would enslave. 210
And the first Cæsar with his triumphs flits
From battlement to battlement.

Philibert: Then conquer
The walls for which he conquered and be greater!

Bourbon: True: so I will, or perish.

Philibert: You can *not*.
In such an enterprise to die is rather
The dawn of an eternal day, than death.

Count Arnold and Cæsar advance.

Cæsar: And the mere men – do they, too, sweat beneath
The noon of this same ever-scorching glory?

Bourbon: Ah!
Welcome the bitter Hunchback! and his master,
The beauty of our host, and brave as beauteous, 220
And generous as lovely. We shall find
Work for you both ere morning.

Cæsar: You will find,
So please your Highness, no less for yourself.

Bourbon: And if I do, there will not be a labourer
More forward, Hunchback!

Cæsar: You may well say so,
For you have seen that back – as general,
Placed in the rear in action – but your foes
Have never seen it.

Bourbon: That's a fair retort,
For I provoked it – but the Bourbon's breast
Has been, and ever shall be, far advanced 230
In danger's face as yours, were you the *devil*.

⁸⁴: *lansquenets* – French form of the German word *landsknechts*, foot-soldiers.

⁸⁵: Cato of Utica, Roman republican who killed himself rather than yield to the imperial Caesar. Subject of a famous but unperformed tragedy by Addison.

- Cæsar: And if I were, I might have saved myself
The toil of coming here.
- Philibert: Why so?
- Cæsar: One half
Of your brave bands of their own bold accord
Will go to him, the other half be sent,
More swiftly, not less surely.
- Bourbon: Arnold, your
Slight crooked *friend's* as snake-like in his words
As his deeds.
- Cæsar: Your Highness much mistakes me.
The first snake⁸⁶ was a flatterer – I am none;
And for my deeds, I only sting when stung. 240
- Bourbon: You are brave, and *that's* enough for me; and quick
In speech as sharp in action – and that's more.
I am not alone the soldier, but the soldiers'
Comrade.
- Cæsar: They are but bad company, your Highness;
And worse even for their friends than foes, as being
More permanent acquaintance.
- Philibert: How now, fellow!
Thou waxest insolent, beyond the privilege
Of a buffoon.
- Cæsar: You mean I speak the truth.
I'll lie – it is as easy: then you'll praise me
For calling you a hero.
- Bourbon: Philibert! 250
Let him alone; he's brave, and ever has
Been first, with that swart face and mountain shoulder,
In field or storm, and patient in starvation;
And for his tongue, the camp is full of licence,
And the sharp stinging of a lively rogue
Is, to my mind, far preferable to
The gross, dull, heavy, gloomy execration
Of a mere famished sullen grumbling slave,
Whom nothing can convince save a full meal,
And wine, and sleep, and a few Maravedis,⁸⁷ 260
With which he deems him rich.
- Cæsar: It would be well
If the earth's princes asked no more.
- Bourbon: Be silent!
- Cæsar: Aye, but not idle. Work yourself with words!
You've few to speak.
- Philibert: What means the audacious prater?

86: He refers to his own role in the temptation of Eve and the Fall of Man.

87: *Maravedis* – low-denomination Spanish coin, made of copper.

Cæsar: To prate, like other prophets.
 Bourbon: Philibert!
 Why will you vex him? Have we not enough
 To think on? Arnold! I will lead the attack
 To-morrow.
 Arnold: I have heard as much, my Lord.
 Bourbon: And you will follow?
 Arnold: Since I must not lead.
 Bourbon: 'Tis necessary for the further daring 270
 Of our too needy army, that their chief
 Plant the first foot upon the foremost ladder's
 First step.
 Cæsar: Upon its topmost, let us hope:
 So shall he have his full deserts.
 Bourbon: The world's
 Great capital perchance is ours tomorrow.
 Through every change the seven-hilled city hath
 Retained her sway o'er nations, and the Cæsars
 But yielded to the Alarics,⁸⁸ the Alarics
 Unto the pontiffs. Roman, Goth, or priest,
 Still the world's masters! Civilised, barbarian, 280
 Or saintly, still the walls of Romulus
 Have been the circus of an Empire. Well!
 'Twas *their* turn – now 'tis ours; and let us hope
 That we will fight as well, and rule much better.
 Cæsar: No doubt, the camp's the school of civic rights.
 What would you make of Rome?
 Bourbon: That which it was.
 Cæsar: In Alaric's time?
 Bourbon: No, slave! in the first Cæsar's,
 Whose name you bear like other curs –
 Cæsar: And kings!
 'Tis a great name for blood-hounds.
 Bourbon: There's a demon
 In that fierce rattlesnake thy tongue. Wilt never 290
 Be serious?
 Cæsar: On the eve of battle, no; –
 That were not soldier-like. 'Tis for the general
 To be more pensive: we adventurers
 Must be more cheerful. Wherefore should we think?
 Our tutelar Deity, in a leader's shape,
 Takes care of us. Keep thought aloof from hosts!
 If the knaves take to thinking, you will have
 To crack those walls alone.
 Bourbon: You may sneer, since

88: Alaric, King of the Goths, sacked Rome in 410 AD.

'Tis lucky for you that you fight no worse for't.
 Cæsar: I thank you for the freedom; 'tis the only 300
 Pay I have taken in your Highness' service.
 Bourbon: Well, sir, tomorrow you shall pay yourself.
 Look on those towers; they hold my treasury:
 But, Philibert, we'll in to council. Arnold,
 We would request your presence.
 Arnold: Prince! my service
 Is yours, as in the field.
 Bourbon: In both we prize it,
 And yours will be a post of trust at daybreak.
 Cæsar: And mine?
 Bourbon: To follow glory with the Bourbon.
 Good night!
 Arnold (to Cæsar): Prepare our armour for the assault,
 And wait within my tent.

Exeunt Bourbon, Arnold, Philibert, &c.

Cæsar (*solus*): Within thy tent! 310
 Think'st thou that I pass from thee with my presence?
 Or that this crooked coffer, which contained
 Thy principle of life, is aught to me
 Except a mask? And these are men, forsooth!
 Heroes and chiefs, the flower of Adam's bastards!
 This is the consequence of giving matter
 The power of thought. It is a stubborn substance,
 And thinks chaotically, as it acts,
 Ever relapsing into its first elements.
 Well! I must play with these poor puppets: 'tis 320
 The Spirit's pastime in his idler hours.
 When I grow weary of it, I have business
 Amongst the stars, which these poor creatures deem
 Were made for them to look at. 'Twere a jest now
 To bring one down amongst them, and set fire
 Unto their anthill: how the pismires⁸⁹ then
 Would scamper o'er the scalding soil, and, ceasing
 From tearing down each other's nests, pipe forth
 One universal orison! ha! ha!

Exit Cæsar.

89: *pismires* – ants; contemptuous word for a person (from the pissy smell of an anthill).

Part II Scene I. – *Before the walls of Rome. – The assault: the army in motion,*⁹⁰ *with ladders to scale the walls; Bourbon with a white scarf over his armour, foremost. Chorus of Spirits in the air.*

1.

'Tis the morn, but dim and dark.
Whither flies the silent lark?
Whither shrinks the clouded sun?
Is the day indeed begun?
Nature's eye is melancholy
O'er the city high and holy:
But without there is a din
Should arouse the saints within,
And revive the heroic ashes
Round which yellow Tiber dashes. 10
Oh, ye seven hills! awaken,
Ere your very base be shaken!

2.

Hearken to the steady stamp!
Mars is in their every tramp!
Not a step is out of tune,
As the tides obey the moon!
On they march, though to self-slaughter,
Regular as rolling water,
Whose high-waves o'ersweep the border
Of huge moles, but keep their order, 20
Breaking only rank by rank.
Hearken to the armour's clank!
Look down o'er each frowning warrior,
How he glares upon the barrier:
Look on each step of each ladder,
As the stripes that streak an adder.

3.

Look upon the bristling wall,
Manned without an interval!
Round and round, and tier on tier,
Cannon's black mouth, shining spear, 30
Lit match, bell-mouthed Musquetoone,⁹¹
Gaping to be murderous soon;
All the warlike gear of old,

90: B.'s most important model for the dramatisation of a battle is *Coriolanus*, Act I; but there are echoes of the battle of Shrewsbury in Act V of *Henry IV I*, with Lucifer / Cæsar providing a Falstaffian commentary.

91: *musquetoone* – a blunderbuss. The word occurs at Letter IX Smollett's *Travels through France and Italy*.

Mixed with what we now behold,
 In this strife 'twixt old and new,
 Gather like a locusts' crew.
 Shade of Remus! 'tis a time
 Awful as thy brother's crime!
 Christians war against Christ's shrine –
 Must its lot be like to thine? 40

4.

Near – and near – and nearer still,
 As the earthquake saps the hill,
 First with trembling, hollow motion,
 Like a scarce awakened ocean,
 Then with stronger shock and louder,
 Till the rocks are crushed to powder;
 Onward sweeps the rolling host!
 Heroes of the immortal boast!
 Mighty chiefs! eternal shadows!
 First flowers of the bloody meadows 50
 Which encompass Rome, the mother
 Of a people without brother!
 Will you sleep when nations' quarrels
 Plough the root up of your laurels?
 Ye who weep o'er Carthage burning,
 Weep not – *strike!* for Rome is mourning!⁹²

5.

Onward sweep the varied nations!
 Famine long hath dealt their rations.
 To the wall, with hate and hunger,
 Numerous as wolves, and stronger, 60
 On they sweep. Oh, glorious city!
 Must thou be a theme for pity?
 Fight, like your first sire, each Roman!
 Alaric was a gentle foeman,
 Matched with Bourbon's black banditti!
 Rouse thee, thou eternal city;
 Rouse thee! Rather give the torch
 With thine own hand to thy porch,
 Than behold such hosts pollute
 Your worst dwelling with their foot. 70

92: BYRON'S NOTE: Scipio, the second Africanus, is said to have repeated a verse of Homer and wept o'er the burning of Carthage. He had better have granted it a capitulation. The Roman general Scipio Africanus defeated Hannibal at Zama in 202 BC, and went on to destroy Carthage. The verse(s) is / are *Iliad VI 447-8: For I know this thing well in my heart, and my mind knows it: / there will come a day when sacred Ilium shall perish* (Richmond Lattimore's translation).

6.

Ah! behold yon bleeding spectre!
 Ilion's children find no Hector;
 Priam's offspring loved their brother;
 Rome's great sire forgot his mother,
 When he slew his gallant twin,
 With inexpressible sin.
 See the giant shadow stride
 O'er the ramparts high and wide!
 When the first o'erleapt thy wall,
 Its foundation mourned thy fall. 80
 Now, though towering like a Babel,
 Who to stop his steps are able?
 Stalking o'er thy highest dome,
 Remus claims his vengeance, Rome!

7.

Now they reach thee in their anger:
 Fire and smoke and hellish clangour
 Are around thee, thou world's wonder!
 Death is in thy walls and under.
 Now the meeting steel first clashes,
 Downward then the ladder crashes, 90
 With its iron load all gleaming,
 Lying at its foot blaspheming!
 Up again! for every warrior
 Slain, another climbs the barrier.
 Thicker grows the strife: thy ditches
 Europe's mingling gore enriches.
 Rome! although thy wall may perish,
 Such manure thy fields will cherish,
 Making gay the harvest-home;
 But thy hearths, alas! oh, Rome! 100
 Yet be Rome amidst thine anguish,
 Fight as thou wast wont to vanquish!

8.

Yet once more, ye old Penates!
 Let not your quenched hearts be Ates!⁹³
 Yet again, ye shadowy Heroes,
 Yield not to these stranger Neros!
 Though the son who slew his mother⁹⁴

93: *Penates* (trisyllabic) were Roman household gods; *Ate* (bisyllabic, *Até*) was a goddess of destruction, to be paralleled with Bellona (below, II ii 44).

94: Nero – Roman emperor who killed his mother, Agrippina.

Shed Rome's blood, he was your brother:
 'Twas the Roman curbed the Roman –
 Brennus was a baffled foeman.⁹⁵ 110
 Yet again, ye saints and martyrs,
 Rise! for yours are holier charters!
 Mighty Gods of temples falling,
 Yet in ruin still appalling!
 Mightier founders of those altars,
 True and Christian – strike the assaulters!
 Tiber! Tiber! let thy torrent
 Show even Nature's self abhorrent.
 Let each breathing heart dilated
 Turn, as doth the lion baited! 120
 Rome be crushed to one wide tomb,
 But be still the Roman's Rome!

Bourbon, Arnold, Cæsar,⁹⁶ and others, arrive at the foot of the wall. Arnold is about to plant his ladder.

Bourbon: Hold, Arnold! I am first.
 Arnold: Not so, my Lord.
 Bourbon: Hold, sir, I charge you! Follow! I am proud
 Of such a follower, but will brook no leader.

Bourbon plants his ladder, and begins to mount.

Now, boys! On! on!

A shot strikes him, and Bourbon falls.

Cæsar: And off!
 Arnold: Eternal powers!
 The host⁹⁷ will be appalled – but vengeance! vengeance!
 Bourbon: 'Tis nothing – lend me your hand.

Bourbon takes Arnold by the hand, and rises; but as he puts his foot on the step, falls again.

Arnold! I am sped.
 Conceal my fall – all will go well – conceal it!
 Fling my cloak o'er what will be dust anon; 130
 Let not the soldiers see it.

⁹⁵: Brennus – leader of the Gauls who sacked Rome (except the Capitol) in 390 BC, but was beaten back.

⁹⁶: These three contrasting soldiers, all engaged in taking a city, should be compared with Juan, Johnson and Suworov, besieging Ismael in *Don Juan* VII and VIII (written May / June 1822, after this play).

⁹⁷: *The host* – the main part of the army.

Arnold: You must be
Removed; the aid of –

Bourbon: No, my gallant boy!
Death is upon me. But what is one life?
The Bourbon's spirit shall command them still.
Keep them yet ignorant that I am but clay,
Till they are conquerors – then do as you may.

Cæsar: Would not your Highness choose to kiss the cross?
We have no priest here, but the hilt of sword
May serve instead – it did as much for Bayard.⁹⁸

Bourbon: Thou bitter slave! to name him at this time! 140
But I deserve it.⁹⁹

Arnold (to Cæsar): Villain, hold your peace!

Cæsar: What, when a Christian dies? Shall I not offer
A Christian "Vade in pace?"¹⁰⁰

Arnold: Silence! Oh!
Those eyes are glazing which o'erlooked the world,
And saw no equal.

Bourbon: Arnold, shouldst thou see
France – But hark! hark! the assault grows warmer – Oh!
For but an hour, a minute more of life,
To die within the wall! Hence, Arnold, hence!
You lose time – they will conquer Rome without thee.

Arnold: And without *thee*.

Bourbon: Not so; I'll lead them still 150
In spirit. Cover up my dust, and breathe not
That I have ceased to breathe. Away! and be
Victorious.

Arnold: But I must not leave thee thus.

Bourbon: You must – farewell – Up! up! the world is winning.

Bourbon dies.

Cæsar (to Arnold): Come, Count, to business.

Arnold: True. I'll weep hereafter.

Arnold covers Bourbon's body with a mantle, mounts the ladder, crying:

The Bourbon! Bourbon! On, boys! Rome is ours!

Cæsar: Good night, Lord Constable! thou wert a Man.

98: The Seigneur de Bayard was the original *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche* (fearless and irreproachable knight). At his death in 1524 he kissed the hilt of a sword when no cross was available.

99: Bourbon had been present at Bayard's death. Bayard had reproached him for fighting against Frenchmen and against Christians. Lucifer / Cæsar reminds Bourbon that he is now dying, still in the same evil cause.

100: *Vade in pace* – "Go in peace".

Cæsar follows Arnold; they reach the battlement; Arnold and Cæsar are struck down.

Cæsar: A precious somerset!¹⁰¹ Is your countship injured?
 Arnold: No.

Remounts the ladder.

Cæsar: A rare blood-hound, when his own is heated!
 And 'tis no boy's play. Now he strikes them down! 160
 His hand is on the battlement – he grasps it
 As though it were an altar; now his foot
 Is on it, and – what have we here? – a Roman?
 The first bird of the covey! he has fallen

A man falls.

On the outside of the nest. Why, how now, fellow?
 Wounded Man: A drop of water!
 Cæsar: Blood's the only liquid
 Nearer than Tiber.
 Wounded Man: I have died for Rome.

Dies.

Cæsar: And so did Bourbon, in another sense.
 Oh, these immortal men! and their great motives!
 But I must after my young charge. He is 170
 By this time i'the Forum. Charge! charge!
 To the wall!

Cæsar mounts the ladder; the scene closes.

101: *somerset* – somersault, spectacular fall.

Part II Scene II. – *The City. – Combats between the Besiegers and Besieged in the streets. Inhabitants flying in confusion.*

Enter Cæsar.

Cæsar: I cannot find my hero; he is mixed
 With the heroic crowd that now pursue
 The fugitives, or battle with the desperate.
 What have we here? A cardinal or two
 That do not seem in love with martyrdom.
 How the old red-shanks scamper! Could they doff
 Their hose as they have doffed their hats, 'twould be
 A blessing, as a mark the less for plunder.
 But let them fly; the crimson kennels now
 Will not much stain their stockings, since the mire 10
 Is of the self-same purple hue.¹⁰²

Enter a Party fighting – Arnold at the head of the Besiegers.

He comes,
 Hand in hand with the mild twins – Gore and Glory.
 Holla! hold, Count!

Arnold: Away! they must not rally.

Cæsar: I tell thee, be not rash; a golden bridge
 Is for a flying enemy. I gave thee
 A form of beauty, and a frame of power –
 Exemption from some maladies of body,
 But not of mind, which is not mine to give.
 But though I gave the form of Thetis' son,
 I dipped thee not in Styx; and 'gainst a foe 20
 I would not warrant thy chivalric heart
 More than Pelides; heel; why, then, be cautious,
 And know thyself a mortal still.

Arnold: And who
 With aught of soul would combat if he were
 Invulnerable? That were pretty sport.
 Think'st thou I beat for hares when lions roar?

Arnold rushes into the combat.

Cæsar: A precious sample of humanity!
 Well, his blood's up; and, if a little's shed,
 'Twill serve to curb his fever.

Arnold engages with a Roman,¹⁰³ who retires towards a portico.

102: A devilish joke comparing the red of the cardinals' hosiery with the blood flowing in the streets.

Arnold: Yield thee, slave!
 I promise quarter.
 Roman: That's soon said.
 Arnold: And done – 30
 My word is known.
 Roman: So shall be my deeds.

They re-engage. Cæsar comes forward.

Cæsar: Why, Arnold! hold thine own: thou hast in hand
 A famous artisan, a cunning sculptor;
 Also a dealer in the sword and dagger.
 Not so, my musqueteer; 'twas he who slew
 The Bourbon from the wall.
 Arnold: Aye, did he so?
 Then he hath carved his monument.
 Roman: I yet
 May live to carve your better's.
 Cæsar: Well said, my man of marble! Benvenuto,
 Thou hast some practice in both ways; and he 40
 Who slays Cellini will have worked as hard
 As e'er thou didst upon Carrara's blocks.¹⁰⁴

Arnold disarms and wounds Cellini, but slightly: the latter draws a pistol, and fires; then retires, and disappears through the portico.

Cæsar: How farest thou? Thou hast a taste, methinks,
 Of red Bellona's¹⁰⁵ banquet.
 Arnold (*staggers*): 'Tis a scratch.
 Lend me thy scarf. He shall not 'scape me thus.
 Cæsar: Where is it?
 Arnold: In the shoulder, not the sword arm –
 And that's enough. I am thirsty: would I had

103: The *Roman* is the sculptor and silversmith Benvenuto Cellini (1500-71), who claims in his memoirs to have fired the shot which killed Bourbon: *Alessandro*, in a panic, cried: "Would God that we had never come here!" and turned in maddest haste to fly. I took him up somewhat sharply with these words: "Since you have brought me here, I must perform some action worthy of a man;" and directing my arquebuse where I saw the thickest and most serried troop of fighting men, I aimed exactly at one whom I remarked to be higher than the rest; the fog prevented me from being certain whether he was on horseback or on foot. Then I turned to *Alessandro* and *Cecchino*, and bade them discharge their arquebuses, showing them how to avoid being hit by the besiegers. When we had fired two rounds apiece, I crept cautiously up to the wall, and observing among the enemy a most extraordinary confusion, I discovered afterwards that one of our shots had killed the Constable of Bourbon; and from what I subsequently learned, he was the man whom I had first noticed above the heads of the rest – tr. J.A.Symonds.

104: *Carrara* – famous Italian marble-quarry; though Cellini rarely worked in marble.

105: *Bellona* – goddess of war, to be paralleled with Ate (above, II i 104).

A helm of water!

Cæsar: That's a liquid now
In requisition, but by no means easiest
To come at.

Arnold: And my thirst increases – but 50
I'll find a way to quench it.

Cæsar: Or be quenched
Thyself.

Arnold: The chance is even; we will throw
The dice thereon. But I lose time in prating;
Prithee be quick.

Cæsar binds on the scarf.

And what dost thou so idly?
Why dost not strike?

Cæsar: Your old philosophers
Beheld mankind, as mere spectators of
The Olympic games. When I behold a prize
Worth wrestling for, I may be found a Milo.

Arnold: Aye, 'gainst an oak.¹⁰⁶

Cæsar: A forest, when it suits me:
I combat with a mass, or not at all. 60
Meantime, pursue thy sport as I do mine;
Which is just now to gaze, since all these labourers
Will reap my harvest gratis.

Arnold: Thou art still
A fiend!

Cæsar: And thou – a man.

Arnold: 'Tis the moment
When such I fain would show me.

Cæsar: True – as men are.

Arnold: And what is that?

Cæsar: Thou feelest and thou see'st.

Exit Arnold, joining in the combat which still continues between detached parties. The scene closes.

106: Milo was an ancient Greek athlete of great strength who was killed when an oak he was trying to tear apart trapped him, and he was eaten by wolves.

Part II Scene III. – *St. Peter's. The interior of the Church. The Pope¹⁰⁷ at the altar – priests, &c., crowding in confusion, and citizens flying for refuge, pursued by soldiery.*

Enter Cæsar.

A Spanish Soldier: Down with them, comrades, seize upon those lamps!
Cleave yon bald-pated shaveling to the chine!
His rosary's of gold!¹⁰⁸

Lutheran Soldier: Revenge! revenge!
Plunder hereafter, but for vengeance now –
Yonder stands Anti-Christ!¹⁰⁹

Cæsar (*interposing*): How now, schismatic?
What wouldst thou?

Lutheran Soldier: In the holy name of Christ,
Destroy proud Anti-Christ. I am a Christian.

Cæsar: Yea, a disciple that would make the founder
Of your belief renounce it, could he see
Such proselytes. Best stint thyself to plunder. 10

Lutheran Soldier: I say he is the Devil.

Cæsar: Hush! keep that secret,
Lest he should recognise you for his own.

Lutheran Soldier: Why would you save him? I repeat he is
The Devil, or the Devil's vicar upon earth.

Cæsar: And that's the reason: would you make a quarrel
With your best friends? You had far best be quiet;
His hour is not yet come.

Lutheran Soldier: That shall be seen!

*The Lutheran soldier rushes forward: a shot strikes him from one of the Pope's guards,
and he falls at the foot of the altar.*

Cæsar (*to the Lutheran*): I told you so.

Lutheran Soldier: And will you not avenge me?

Cæsar: Not I! You know that "Vengeance is the Lord's:"¹¹⁰
You see he loves no interlopers.

Lutheran Soldier (*dying*): Oh! 20
Had I but slain him, I had gone on high,
Crowned with eternal glory! Heaven, forgive
My feebleness of arm that reached him not,
And take thy servant to thy mercy. 'Tis
A glorious triumph still; proud Babylon's
No more; the Harlot of the Seven Hills

107: The Pope in 1527 was Clement VII.

108: Even though he must be a Catholic, the Spanish soldier only sees the Pope as an object of plunder.

109: The Lutheran adds a theological motive to the straightforward greed of the Spaniard.

110: Romans 12: 19: ... for it is written, *Vengeance is mine, I will repay, saith the Lord.*

Hath changed her scarlet raiment for sackcloth
And ashes!

The Lutheran dies.

Cæsar: Yes, thine own amidst the rest.
Well done, old Babel!

The guards defend themselves desperately, while the Pontiff escapes, by a private passage, to the Vatican and the castle of St. Angelo.

Cæsar: Ha! right nobly battled!
Now, priest! now, soldier!¹¹¹ the two great professions, 30
Together by the ears and hearts! I have not
Seen a more comic pantomime since Titus
Took Jewry.¹¹² But the Romans had the best then;
Now they must take their turn.

Soldiers: He hath escaped!
Follow!

Another Soldier: They have barred the narrow passage up,
And it is clogged with dead even to the door.

Cæsar: I am glad he hath escaped: he may thank me for't
In part. I would not have his bulls abolished –
'Twere worth one half our empire: his indulgences
Demand some in return; no, no, he must not 40
Fall – and besides, his now escape may furnish
A future miracle, in further proof
Of his infallibility.

To the Spanish soldiery.

Well, cut-throats!
What do you pause for? If you make not haste,
There will not be a link of pious gold left.
And you, too, Catholics! Would ye return
From such a pilgrimage without a relic?
The very Lutherans have more true devotion:
See how they strip the shrines!

Soldiers: By holy Peter!
He speaks the truth; the heretics will bear 50
The best away.

Cæsar: And that were shame! Go to!
Assist in their conversion.

111: Compare Thersites encouraging Paris and Menelaus at *Troilus and Cressida* V vii 10: *Now, bull! Now, dog!*

112: The Roman Emperor Titus captured and destroyed Jerusalem in 70 AD.

The soldiers disperse; many quit the church, others enter.

Cæsar:

They are gone,
And others come: so flows the wave on wave
Of what these creatures call Eternity,
Deeming themselves the breakers of the ocean,
While they are but its bubbles, ignorant
That foam is their foundation. So, another!

Enter Olimpia, flying from the pursuit – she springs upon the altar.

Soldier: She's mine!
 Another Soldier (*opposing the former*): You lie, I tracked her first: and were she
 The Pope's niece, I'll not yield her.

They fight.

Third Soldier (*advancing towards Olimpia*): You may settle
Your claims; I'll make mine good.

Olimpia: Infernal slave! 60
You touch me not alive.

Third Soldier: Alive or dead!

Olimpia (*embracing a massive crucifix*): Respect your God!

Third Soldier: Yes, when he shines in gold.
Girl, you but grasp your dowry.

As he advances, Olimpia, with a strong and sudden effort, casts down the crucifix; it strikes the soldier, who falls.

Third Soldier: Oh, great God!
Olimpia: Ah! now you recognise him.
Third Soldier: My brain's crushed!
Comrades, help, ho! All's darkness!

He dies.

Other Soldiers (*coming up*): Slay her, although she had a thousand lives:
She hath killed our comrade.

Olimpia: Welcome such a death!
You have no life to give, which the worst slave
Would take. Great God! through thy redeeming Son,¹¹³
And thy Son's Mother, now receive me as 70
I would approach thee, worthy her, and him,

113: One of the few positive references to the Redemption in all of B.'s writing.

And thee!¹¹⁴



Retsch's *Faust*, Plate XVII: MARGARETE SUPPLICATING THE MATER DOLOROSA.

Enter Arnold.

Arnold: What do I see? Accursed jackals!
 Forbear!
 Cæsar (*aside and laughing*): Ha! ha! Here's equity! The dogs
 Have as much right as he. But to the issue!
 Soldiers: Count, she hath slain our comrade.

114: Compare Marlowe, *Tamburlaine the Great* Part 2, III iv 11-26:

Olympia (*a Moslem*): Death, whither art thou gone, that both we live?
 Come back again, sweet Death, and strike us both!
 One minute and our days, and one sepulchre
 Contain our bodies! Death, why com'st thou not?
 Well, this must be the messenger for thee:

Drawing a dagger.

Now, ugly Death, stretch out thy sable wings,
 And carry both our souls where his remains.
 Tell me, sweet boy, art thou content to die?
 These barbarous Scythians, full of cruelty,
 And Moors, in whom was never pity found,
 Will hew us piecemeal, put us to the wheel,
 Or else invent some torture worse than that;
 Therefore die by thy loving mother's hand,
 Who gently now will lance thy ivory throat,
 And quickly rid thee both of pain and life.

Son: Mother, despatch me, or I'll kill myself ...

Arnold: With what weapon?

Soldiers: The cross, beneath which he is crushed; behold him
Lie there, more like a worm than man; she cast it
Upon his head.

Arnold: Even so: there is a woman
Worthy a brave man's liking. Were ye such, 80
Ye would have honoured her. But get ye hence,
And thank your meanness, other God you have none,
For your existence. Had you touched a hair
Of those dishevelled locks, I would have thinned
Your ranks more than the enemy. Away!
Ye jackals! gnaw the bones the lion leaves,
But not even these till he permits.

A Soldier (*murmuring*): The lion
Might conquer for himself then.

Arnold (*cuts him down*): Mutineer!
Rebel in hell – you shall obey on earth!

The soldiers assault Arnold.

Arnold: Come on! I'm glad on't! I will show you, slaves,
How you should be commanded, and who led you 90
First o'er the wall you were so shy to scale,
Until I waved my banners from its height,
As you are bold within it.

Arnold mows down the foremost; the rest throw down their arms, crying.

Soldiers: Mercy! mercy!

Arnold: Then learn to grant it. Have I taught ye *who*
Led you o'er Rome's eternal battlements?

Soldiers: We saw it, and we know it; yet forgive
A moment's error in the heat of conquest –
The conquest which you led to.

Arnold: Get ye hence!
Hence to your quarters! you will find them fixed
In the Colonna Palace.

Olimipia (*aside*): In my father's 100
House!

Arnold (*to the Soldiers*): Leave your arms; ye have no further need
Of such: the city's rendered. And mark well
You keep your hands clean, or I'll find out a stream
As red as Tiber now runs, for your baptism.

Soldiers (*deposing their arms and departing*): We obey!

Arnold (*to Olimpia*): Lady, you are safe.¹¹⁵

Olimpia: I should be so,
 Had I a knife even; but it matters not –
 Death hath a thousand gates; and on the marble,
 Even at the altar foot, whence I look down
 Upon destruction, shall my head be dashed,
 Ere thou ascend it. God forgive thee, man! 110

Arnold: I wish to merit his forgiveness, and
 Thine own, although I have not injured thee.

Olimpia: No! Thou hast only sacked my native land –
 No injury! – and made my father's house
 A den of thieves! No injury! – this temple –
 Slippery with Roman and with holy gore!
 No injury! And now thou wouldst preserve me,
 To be – but that shall never be!

*She raises her eyes to Heaven, folds her robe round her, and prepares to dash herself
 down on the side of the altar opposite to that where Arnold stands.*

Arnold: Hold! hold!
 I swear.

Olimpia: Spare thine already forfeit soul
 A perjury for which even Hell would loathe thee. 120
 I know thee.

Arnold: No, thou know'st me not; I am not
 Of these men, though –

Olimpia: I judge thee by thy mates;
 It is for God to judge thee as thou art.
 I see thee purple with the blood of Rome;
 Take mine, 'tis all thou e'er shalt have of me,
 And here, upon the marble of this temple,
 Where the baptismal font baptized me God's,
 I offer him a blood less holy
 But not less pure (pure as it left me then,
 A redeemed infant), than the holy water 130
 The saints have sanctified!

*Olimpia waves her hand to Arnold with disdain, and dashes herself on the pavement from
 the altar.*

Arnold: Eternal God!
 I feel thee now! Help! help! she's gone.

Cæsar (*approaches*): I'm here.

Arnold: Thou! but oh, save her!

115: Arnold as a good Catholic (see above, I II 36-40) is glad to have saved a good Catholic girl. Compare Juan saving the Moslem girl Leila in *Don Juan* VIII; though Olimpia is more like Aurora Raby.

Cæsar (*assisting him to raise Olimpia*): She hath done it well!
The leap was serious.

Arnold: Oh! she is lifeless!

Cæsar: If
She be so, I have nought to do with that:
The resurrection is beyond me.

Arnold: Slave!

Cæsar: Aye, slave or master, 'tis all one: methinks
Good words, however, are as well at times

Arnold: Words! Canst thou aid her?

Cæsar: I will try. A sprinkling
Of that same holy water may be useful. 140

He brings some in his helmet from the font.

Arnold: 'Tis mixed with blood.

Cæsar: There is no cleaner now
In Rome.

Arnold: How pale! how beautiful! how lifeless!
Alive or dead, thou Essence of all Beauty,
I love but thee!

Cæsar: Even so Achilles loved
Penthesilea;¹¹⁶ with his form it seems
You have his heart, and yet it was no soft one.

Arnold: She breathes! But no, 'twas nothing, or the last
Faint flutter Life disputes with Death.

Cæsar: She breathes.

Arnold: *Thou say'st it?* Then 'tis truth.

Cæsar: You do me right –
The Devil speaks truth much oftener than he's deemed: 150
He hath an ignorant audience.

Arnold (*without attending to him*): Yes! her heart beats.
Alas! that the first beat of the only heart
I ever wished to beat with mine should vibrate
To an assassin's pulse.

Cæsar: A sage reflection,
But somewhat late i'the day. Where shall we bear her?
I say she lives.

Arnold: And will she live?

Cæsar: As much
As dust can.

Arnold: Then she is dead!

116: In one version of the myth, Achilles, having killed his beloved, the Amazon Penthesilea, in battle, made love to her dead body. Thersites mocked him – whereupon he killed Thersites. This, with Arnold as Achilles, Cæsar as Thersites, and Olimpia as Penthesilea, might (minus the necrophilia) have been the end B. intended for the play.

Cæsar: Bah! bah! You are so,
 And do not know it. She will come to life –
 Such as you think so, such as you now are;
 But we must work by human means.

Arnold: We will 160
 Convey her unto the Colonna palace,
 Where I have pitched my banner.

Cæsar: Come then! raise her up!

Arnold: Softly!

Cæsar: As softly as they bear the dead,
 Perhaps because they cannot feel the jolting.

Arnold: But doth she live indeed?

Cæsar: Nay, never fear!
 But, if you rue it after, blame not me.

Arnold: Let her but live!

Cæsar: The Spirit of her life
 Is yet within her breast, and may revive.
 Come, count! I am your servant in all things, 170
 And this is a new office – 'tis not oft
 I am employed in such; but you perceive
 How staunch a friend is what you call a fiend.
 On earth you have often only fiends for friends;
 Now *I* desert not mine. Soft! bear her hence,
 The beautiful half-clay, and nearly spirit!
 I am almost enamoured of her, as
 Of old the Angels of her earliest sex.

Arnold: Thou!

Cæsar: I! But fear not. I'll not be your rival.

Arnold: Rival!

Cæsar: I could be one right formidable; 180
 But since I slew the seven husbands of
 Tobias' future bride¹¹⁷ (and after all
 Was smoked out by some incense),¹¹⁸ I have laid
 Aside intrigue: 'tis rarely worth the trouble
 Of gaining, or – what is more difficult –
 Getting rid of your prize again; for there's
 The rub! at least to mortals.

Arnold: Prithee, peace!
 Softly! methinks her lips move, her eyes open!

Cæsar: Like stars, no doubt; for that's a metaphor
 For Lucifer and Venus.

117: In the apocryphal book of Tobit, it is the minor devil Asmodai (Asmodeus: see *HoI*, *Granta A Medley*, and *TVoJ* st.85 *et seq*), who kills seven of Sarah's husbands on the wedding night, before the marriage can be consummated. Asmodeus was often associated with gambling and homosexuality.

118: When Tobias comes to marry Sarah, the archangel Raphael tells him that Asmodeus can be driven off by the fumes from burnt fish-entrails.

Arnold: To the palace 190
Colonna, as I told you!
Cæsar: Oh! I know
My way through Rome.
Arnold: Now onward, onward! Gently!

Exeunt, bearing Olimpia. The scene closes.

PART III. Scene I. – *A Castle in the Apennines, surrounded by a wild but smiling country. Chorus of peasants singing before the gates.*

Chorus:

1.

The wars are over,
The spring is come;
The bride and her lover
Have sought their home:
They are happy, we rejoice;
Let their hearts have an echo in every voice!

2.

The spring is come; the violet's gone,
The first-born child of the early sun:
With us she is but a winter's flower,
The snow on the hills cannot blast her bower, 10
And she lifts up her dewy eye of blue
To the youngest sky of the self-same hue.

3.

And when the spring comes with her host
Of flowers, that flower beloved the most
Shrinks from the crowd that may confuse
Her heavenly odour and virgin hues.

4.

Pluck the others, but still remember
Their herald out of dim December –
The morning star of all the flowers,
The pledge of daylight's lengthened hours; 20
Nor, midst the roses, e'er forget
The virgin – virgin Violet.

Enter Cæsar.

Cæsar (*singing*): The wars are all over,
Our swords are all idle,
The steed bites the bridle,
The casque's¹¹⁹ on the wall.
There's rest for the rover;
But his armour is rusty,
And the veteran grows crusty,
As he yawns in the hall. 30
He drinks – but what's drinking?

119: casque – helmet.

A mere pause from thinking!
 No bugle awakes him with life-and-death call.
 Chorus: But the hound bayeth loudly,
 The boar's in the wood,
 And the falcon longs proudly
 To spring from her hood:
 On the wrist of the noble
 She sits like a crest,
 And the air is in trouble 40
 With birds from their nest.
 Cæsar: Oh! shadow of Glory!
 Dim image of War!
 But the chase hath no story,
 Her hero no star,
 Since Nimrod, the founder
 Of empire and chase,¹²⁰
 Who made the woods wonder
 And quake for their race.
 When the lion was young, 50
 In the pride of his might,
 Then 'twas sport for the strong
 To embrace him in fight;
 To go forth, with a pine
 For a spear, 'gainst the mammoth,
 Or strike through the ravine
 At the foaming behemoth;
 While man was in stature
 As towers in our time,
 The first born of Nature, 60
 And, like her, sublime!
 Chorus: But the wars are over,
 The spring is come;
 The bride and her lover
 Have sought their home:
 They are happy, and we rejoice;
 Let their hearts have an echo from every voice!

Exeunt the Peasantry, singing.

120: Nimrod was a mighty hunter before the Lord (I Chronicles 9).

FRAGMENT OF THE THIRD PART

Chorus: When the merry bells are ringing,
 And the peasant girls are singing,
 And the early flowers are flinging
 Their odours in the air;
 And the honey bee is clinging
 To the buds; and birds are winging
 Their way, pair by pair:
 Then the earth looks free from trouble
 With the brightness of a bubble:
 Though I did not make it, 10
 I could breathe on and break it;
 But too much I scorn it,
 Or else I would mourn it,
 To see despots and slaves
 Playing o'er their own graves.

BYRON'S MEMO: Jealous – Arnold of Cæsar. Olimpia at first not liking Cæsar – then? – Arnold jealous of himself under his former figure, owing to the power of intellect, &c., &c., &c.¹²¹

Enter Count Arnold.

Arnold: You are merry, Sir – what? singing too?
 Cæsar: It is
 The land of Song – and Canticles you know
 Were once my avocation.
 Arnold: Nothing moves you;
 You scoff even at your own calamity –
 And such calamity! how wert thou fallen 20
 Son of the Morning!¹²² and yet Lucifer
 Can smile.
 Cæsar: His shape can – would you have me weep,
 In the fair form I wear, to please you?
 Arnold: Ah!
 Cæsar: You are grave – what have you on your spirit!
 Arnold: Nothing.

121: This memorandum show how the play would have developed: Olimpia would have fallen for Cæsar's intelligence inside the old, deformed body of Arnold, and Arnold would thus have become jealous of himself. It's an inversion of the way Kate Hardcastle ensnares young Marlowe in *She Stoops to Conquer*, though, we assume, with a tragic, not a comical outcome. Perhaps Arnold would have killed Olimpia, and then "killed" Cæsar in his own old shape – thus committing suicide. B. once identified his own mother with Kate Hardcastle's mother (BLJ II 113), and identifies his late mother-in-law with her, too (BLJ IX 123).

122: Isaiah 14, 12: *How art thou fallen from Heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! How art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations!*

- Cæsar: How mortals lie by instinct! If you ask
 A disappointed courtier – What’s the matter?
 “Nothing” – an outshone Beauty what has made
 Her smooth brow crisp – “Oh, Nothing!” – a young heir
 When his Sire has recovered from the Gout,
 What ails him? “Nothing!” or a Monarch who 30
 Has heard the truth, and looks imperial on it –
 What clouds his royal aspect? “Nothing,” “Nothing!”
 Nothing – eternal nothing – of these nothings
 All are a lie – for all to them are much!
 And they themselves alone the real “Nothings.”¹²³
 Your present Nothing, too, is something to you –
 What is it?
- Arnold: Know you not?
- Cæsar: I only know
 What I desire to know! and will not waste
 Omniscience upon phantoms. Out with it!
 If you seek aid from me – or else be silent. 40
 And eat your thoughts – till they breed snakes within you.
- Arnold: Olimpia!
- Cæsar: I thought as much – go on.
- Arnold: I thought she had loved me.
- Cæsar: Blessings on your Creed!
 What a good Christian you were found to be!
 But what cold Sceptic hath appalled your faith
 And transubstantiated to crumbs again
 The *body* of your Credence?
- Arnold: No one – but –
 Each day – each hour – each minute shows me more
 And more she loves me not –
- Cæsar: Doth she rebel?
- Arnold: No, she is calm, and meek, and silent with me, 50
 And coldly dutiful, and proudly patient –
 Endures my love – not meets it.
- Cæsar: That seems strange.
 You are beautiful and brave! the first is much
 For passion – and the rest for vanity.
- Arnold: I saved her life, too; and her father’s life,
 And father’s house from ashes.
- Cæsar: These are nothing.
 You seek for gratitude – the Philosopher’s stone.

123: For similar word play, see *Othello* III iii 36, *Much Ado About Nothing* II iii 49-53, *King Lear* I i 86-8, *Hamlet* III ii 113-16, and *The Winter’s Tale* I ii 284-96. Nothing means “zero”; “noting”; and the female pudendum. The word occurs twenty-six times in *Othello*, which B. and his friends rehearsed but did not perform at Pisa at the time *Def. Tra.* was being written. Don Juan Canto VI, started at this time, is full of *Othello* echoes.

Arnold: And find it not.
 Cæsar: You cannot find what is not.
 But *found* would it content you? would you owe
 To thankfulness what you desire from passion? 60
 No! No! you would be *loved* – what you call loved –
Self-loved – loved for *yourself* – for neither health,
 Nor wealth, nor youth, nor power, nor rank, nor beauty –
 For these you may be stripped of – but *beloved*
 As an abstraction – for – you know not what!
 These are the wishes of a moderate lover –
 And *so* you love.
 Arnold: Ah! could I be beloved,
 Would I ask wherefore?
 Cæsar: Yes! and not believe
 The answer – You are jealous.
 Arnold: And of whom?
 Cæsar: It may be of yourself, for jealousy 70
 Is as a shadow of the sun. The orb
 Is mighty – as you mortals deem – and to
 Your little universe seems universal;
 But, great as He appears, and is to you,
 The smallest cloud – the slightest vapour of
 Your humid earth enables you to look
 Upon a sky which you revile as dull;
 Though your eyes dare not gaze on it when cloudless.
 Nothing can blind a mortal like to light.
 Now Love in you is as the sun – a thing 80
 Beyond you – and your jealousy's of earth –
 A cloud of your own raising.
 Arnold: Not so always!
 There is a cause at times.
 Cæsar: Oh, yes! when atoms jostle,
 The system is in peril. But I speak
 Of things you know not. Well, to earth again!
 This precious thing of dust – this bright Olimpia –
 This marvellous virgin, is a marble maid –
 An idol, but a cold one to your heat
 Promethean, and unkindled by your torch.
 Arnold: Slave!
 Cæsar: In the victor's chariot, when Rome triumphed, 90
 There was a slave of yore to tell him truth!
 You are a conqueror – command your slave.
 Arnold: Teach me the way to win the woman's love.
 Cæsar: Leave her.
 Arnold: Where that the path – I'd not pursue it.
 Cæsar: No doubt! for if you did, the remedy

Would be for a disease already cured.
 Arnold: All wretched as I am, I would not quit
 My unrequited love, for all that's happy.
 Cæsar: You have possessed the woman – still possess.
 What need you more?
 Arnold: To be myself possessed – 100
 To be her heart as she is mine.

[end of fragment]



Retsch's *Faust*, Plate XXII: *THE WITCHES REVEL*.

APPENDIX: JOSHUA PICKERSGILL, *THE THREE BROTHERS*

This 1803 novel, which Byron mentions in his introduction, is a long three-volume work of great prolixity by a writer otherwise unknown. Much of it reads like the paraphrase of a novel rather than a novel – like parts of Lee’s *The German’s Tale*, subtext to *Werner*. It has *As You Like It* and *Much Ado* as remote subtexts. Here is a sample of Pickersgill’s style:

But when another is so resolute in this kind of intellectual assassination, that on every occasion he sophisticates the style of genteel raillery to the purposes of malice and provocation, it shall prove that, in a short time, he will so far overstep the protecting limits of courtesy, as to incur the due punishment. This was early the case with the offenders of Claudio, who throughout was injured by their ill manners more than by their meanings, which were incomprehensible to him, although they appeared to exult in the audacious frankness of their expression” (IV 110-11).

Also in the fourth volume is the lengthy tale (pp.145-63) of Count Manfred of Sicily (from *Purgatorio* III) and the adulterous intrigue between his best friend Clothaire and his wife Aura. This bit is well-told: one wonders where Pickersgill stole it from? It confounds Dante’s Manfred with Dante’s Paolo and Francesca.

The principal brother is Arnaud, deformed not from birth but because of an accident. He loses all his looks and becomes unrecognisably hideous.

His family, including his brother Lewis, moves to “a pleasant villa on the banks of the Brenta” (IV 253) where the child of a neighbour is a pretty girl called Camilla. Arnaud likes her; but she (at the age of five) prefers Lewis, saying of Arnaud, “Indeed! indeed! I can’t fancy him, he has so ugly a shoulder” (IV 256: Byronic echoes start to proliferate from here on); Arnaud, hearing this, waits till Camilla has gone, runs out, and stabs Lewis in the breast. Misinformed by Arnaud, the family leaves Lewis behind in Italy and returns to France.

Arnaud grows up secretly proud of his – as he thinks – fratricide. His is “a stupendous soul in a diminutive body” (IV 261). He is selfish and arrogant, though generous and courageous: “In him pride was downcast and solitary: because it would not look up to superiority, it restrained him aloof from other men: it was truly satanic, and would have lost him divinity in the idea, that better it be to reign in hell, than to serve in heaven” (IV 263-4).

He feels himself unfit for either military, legal, literary, medical, trade, or ecclesiastical service: “He disparaged all professions in the presumption that he were born to patronise, not to share them” (IV 285). His mother reveals that she is not married to his father, and that he has a half-brother, Henri, offspring of his father’s true marriage. The Marchioness arrives, patronises Arnaud’s mother, and offers Arnaud a position as page to Henri. Arnaud retorts that his first service will be “to nail his heart with this poinard” (IV 301) whereupon he and his mother are banished by the Marquis to a remote villa.

Arnaud is tormented by all on account of his deformity. His only friend is his dog, Pepin. People joke that his hump is sign of his pregnancy, and that he resembles the recent English usurper, Richard the Yorkist: “They call me a Richard ... and providence

inspires them; for who beside can know that there are in my mind emotions congenial to those in a Richard?" (IV 305).

He becomes attached to a seeming courtesan whom he names Bellisance, his friendship with whom calls forth this meditation: "Who is unblest with sisters, is ignorant of some of the choicest sentiments and feelings of human nature; his heart, unrefined by the angelic medium of fraternal affection, leaps at once from the chill of filial duty, to the ardour of sexual love" (IV 315).

The Marchioness dies; the Marquis tries to force Arnaud's mother to become once more his mistress; Arnaud forces him at knife-point to propose to her properly; but she reveals afterwards that she is the Marchioness's sister, and Henri therefore the child of incest.

The next morning Arnaud is arrested, his father denying his own paternity, accusing Arnaud of attempted parricide, and demanding of the judges (whom he owns) that he be sent to the galleys for life.

Arnaud escapes, and flies to the courtesan Bellisance; but she turns out to be another of his father's concubines. Yes, reader, and the Marquis searches her apartment while Arnaud "opened a casement and ... leapt down on a parterre" (IV 333) in emulation and anticipation of Cherubino, Don Juan, and Julien Sorel.

Arnaud wanders in the wilderness, sees his reflection in the blade of a sword, and curses his destiny, for suffering has rendered him more hideous than ever. "The winter of my days is come, and here their end, he cried" (IV 335). He is "in act to cast himself adown" a precipice (*ibid*) but is prevented by his dog Pepin holding him by the garment. He hugs Pepin and weeps for his companionship; but then, furious, he flings him over the cliff instead of himself! (imagine a Byronic hero doing that); he meditates at length on his cursed condition.

Arnaud hies himself "to a cavern of stupendous dimensions" (IV 343) and conjures up no less a being than Satan, using convenient necromantic skills we hadn't been told he possessed. The description of Satan, and the section which Byron used, goes as follows:

His stature presented the realization of that magnificent idea of sculpturing Mount Athos into human symmetry. A shield he bore graced with the interception of ten thousand thunderbolts; in his right hand a spear, whereof the spand was shivered like a storm riven mast, and the steely blade melted by the hostile lightning: his helm was topt with plumes that waved a tempest. His presence shrivelled the herbage, and scorched up the veins of their fruitfulness; where he stood the earth quaked and yawned as though his glances inflamed the mineral combustion to infest its womb. Those glances issued not from limited [*sic*] resources as the eye of man. Satan was all eye, from which Arnaud could not escape whichever way he turned. Like the roaring of many winds that breath came round Arnaud, which was used to burn up the furnaces of the damned. His words, like the immediate thunder, stunned the sense, but informed the understanding.

Arnaud knew himself to be interrogated, what he required. Organized senses were useless in this correspondence, for the spirit of Satan supernaturally communed with its kindred parts in the disposition of Arnaud, who, as he understood without the mediation of ear, made answer without the agency of tongue. What was that answer the effects explain. The satanic gaze turned on the side of the cavern heat so powerful, that the clay in the interstices was absumed to an ash, and the flinty rock vitrified into glass pervious to the sight of Arnaud, who saw thereon visions admirable and amazing.

There passed in liveliest portraiture, the various men distinguished for that beauty and grace, which Arnaud so much desired, that he was ambitious to purchase them with his soul.

He felt that it was his part to chuse whom he would resemble, yet he remained unresolved, though the spectator of an hundred shades of renown, among which glided by Achilles and Alexander [see above, *Def. Tra.* I i 178], Alcibiades [*Def. Tra.* I i 210-11], and Hephestian [not in *Def. Tra.*; but see *Don Juan* IX: *I'm neither Alexander nor Hephæstion*]: at length appeared the supernatural effigy of a man, whose perfections human artist never could depict or insculp – Demetrius the son of Antigonus [*Def. Tra.* I i 258]. Arnaud's heart heaved quick with preference, and strait he found within his hand the resemblance of a poinard, its point inverted towards his breast. A mere automaton in the hands of the demon, he thrust the point through his heart, and underwent a painless death.

During this trance, his spirit metempsychosed from the body of his detestation to that of his admiration: like an infant new-born, that exists without consciousness of that existence, incarnate in each desirable perfection, Arnaud awoke a Julian! silence thy shriek, o priest! it cannot be annulled – the compact by which i, the wretched, the aggrieved, the despairing Arnaud! bartered my beatitude for the face and form that now thou shuddered from" (IV 345-8).

Compare *The Vision of Judgement*, stanza 24:

But bringing up the rear of this bright host
A spirit of a different aspect waved
His wings, like thunder-clouds above some coast
Whose barren beach with frequent wrecks is paved –
His brow was like the deep when tempest-tost –
Fierce and unfathomable thoughts engraved
Eternal wrath on his immortal face –
And *where* he gazed a gloom pervaded space.

Byron does it better. Notice also that the fact that Arnaud and Satan communicate wordlessly saves Pickersgill the bother of writing their conversation. Byron felt able to grasp this nettle. As has been said, his stranger is not this Satan, and this Satan does not swap forms with Arnaud: two major innovations on Byron's part. Notice also that, as with the Giaour's, there can be no sacramental point in Arnaud's confession – the last thing he does is repent! also, there's no Faustian condition to the transformation: "Neither had I conditioned with Lucifer, or he with me" (IV 364); it is just understood implicitly that, as Julian, Arnaud will do wicked things.

Father Paschal treats Julian / Arnaud to some improving moral discourses: on his deformity; on his parentage; on his fatalism; and on his treaty with Lucifer. Julian / Arnaud is unimpressed; so the Father does not scruple to call in the law, and has him arrested. Julian / Arnaud is taken to Toulouse, tried for the murder of Henri, and sentenced to be broken on the wheel; Claudio / Lewis is sentenced to be present and to assist. Julian / Arnaud rejects the offices of a priest. All of Toulouse comes out to witness the execution.

Claudio / Lewis is the only one brave enough to summon Julian / Arnaud from his cell. The pale, cadaverous Julian / Arnaud makes no sound as his limbs are smashed. A stupendous thunderstorm terminates the proceeding: "Those terrors which had ravaged the world when he, the sinless, died, were again let loose by the death of him the sinful" (IV 399: hopelessly hyperbolic: Arnaud's sins are in no way vast enough to justify such

a parallel). Claudio / Lewis escapes to the chateau in Languedoc, where a distant cousin now rules avariciously. One thing leads to another; but Claudio / Lewis is finally reunited with an outcast and distracted Camilla (some comedy may be intended in several long scenes featuring Ercolani and his drunken wife Denise), though their child is mangled to pieces by a mob. With Geoffrey, they remove to the Pyrenees, where “his bodily labour procured them future sustenance” (IV 462).

Joshua Pickersgill reveals (IV 459-60) that he was nineteen when he started *The Three Brothers*, and that it took him two-and-a-half years to write it. Would that he'd taken two-and-a-half more. When it's at its best it's very good – but it's very rarely at its best. Compare *Vathek* or *The Monk* and you see the difference between consistent professionals and someone with no self-critical instinct. Compare, even, Charlotte Dacre's *Zofloya*. Pity, because the idea's good. You have Henri, the purely treacherous brother – Julian / Arnaud, treacherous because the world is treacherous to him, and Claudio / Lewis, the innocent, straight brother, who is however gullible and perhaps impotent ... if only Pickersgill had got into proper focus and learned how to write novels

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