

CATILINE

Henrik Ibsen

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Translated by Anders Orbeck

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

LUCIUS CATILINE A noble Roman.

AURELIA His wife.

FURIA A vestal.

CURIUS A youth related to Catiline.

MANLIUS An old warrior.

LENTULUS Young and noble Roman.

GABINIUS

STATILIUS

COEPARIUS

CETHEGUS

AMBIORIX Ambassador of the Allobroges.

OLLOVICO

An old MAN.

PRIESTESSES and SERVANTS in the Temple of Vesta.

GLADIATORS and WARRIORS.

ESCORT of the Allobroges.

Sulla's GHOST.

SETTING

The first and second acts are laid in and near Rome, the third act in Etruria.

FIRST ACT

[The Flaminian Way outside of Rome. Off the road a wooded hillside. In the background loom the walls and the heights of the city. It is evening.]

[CATILINE stands on the hill among the bushes, leaning against a tree.]

CATILINE. I must! I must! A voice deep in my soul
Urges me on,—and I will heed its call.
Courage I have and strength for something better,
Something far nobler than this present life,—
A series of unbridled dissipations—!
No, no; they do not satisfy the yearning soul.

CATILINE. I rave and rave,—long only to forget.
'Tis past now,—all is past! Life has no aim.

CATILINE. [After a pause.]
And what became of all my youthful dreams?
Like flitting summer clouds they disappeared,
Left naught behind but sorrow and remorse;—
Each daring hope in turn fate robbed me of.

[He strikes his forehead.]

CATILINE. Despise yourself! Catiline, scorn yourself!
You feel exalted powers in your soul;—
And yet what is the goal of all your struggle?
The surfeiting of sensual desires.

CATILINE. [More calmly.]
But there are times, such as the present hour,
When secret longings kindle in my breast.
Ah, when I gaze on yonder city, Rome,
The proud, the rich,—and when I see that ruin
And wretchedness to which it now is sunk
Loom up before me like the flaming sun,—

Then loudly calls a voice within my soul:
Up, Catiline;—awake and be a man!

CATILINE. [Abruptly.] Ah, these are but delusions of the night,
Mere dreaming phantoms born of solitude.
At the slightest sound from grim reality,—
They flee into the silent depths within.

[The ambassadors of the Allobroges, AMBIORIX and OLLOVICO, with
their Escort, come down the highway without noticing CATILINE.]

AMBIORIX. Behold our journey's end! The walls of Rome!
To heaven aspires the lofty Capitol.

OLLOVICO. So that is Rome? Italy's overlord,
Germany's soon,—and Gaul's as well, perchance.

AMBIORIX. Ah, yes, alas;—so it may prove betimes;
The sovereign power of Rome is merciless;
It crushes all it conquers, down to earth.
Now shall we see what lot we may expect:
If here be help against the wrongs at home,
And peace and justice for our native land.

OLLOVICO. It will be granted us.

AMBIORIX. So let us hope;
For we know nothing yet with certainty.

OLLOVICO. You fear somewhat, it seems?

AMBIORIX. And with good reason.
Jealous was ever Rome of her great power.
And bear in mind, this proud and haughty realm
Is not by chieftains ruled, as is our land.
At home the wise man or the warrior reigns,—
The first in wisdom and in war the foremost;
Him choose we as the leader of our people,
As arbiter and ruler of our tribe.
But here—

CATILINE. [Calls down to them.]
—Here might and selfishness hold sway;—

Intrigue and craft are here the keys to power.

OLLOVICO. Woe to us, brethren, woe! He spies upon us.

AMBIORIX. [To CATILINE.]

Is such the practice of the high-born Roman?
A woman's trick we hold it in our nation.

CATILINE. [comes down on the road.]

Ah, have no fear;—spying is not my business;
By chance it was I heard your conversation.—
Come you from Allobrogia far away?
Justice you think to find in Rome? Ah, never!
Turn home again! Here tyranny holds sway,
And rank injustice lords it more than ever.
Republic to be sure it is in name;
And yet all men are slaves who cringe and cower,
Vassals involved in debt, who must acclaim
A venal senate—ruled by greed and power.
Gone is the social consciousness of old,
The magnanimity of former ages;—
Security and life are favors sold,
Which must be bargained for with hire and wages.
Not righteousness, but power here holds sway;
The noble man is lost among the gilded—

AMBIORIX. But say,—who then are you to tear away
The pillars of the hope on which we builded?

CATILINE. A man who burns in freedom's holy zeal;
An enemy of all unrighteous power;
Friend of the helpless trodden under heel,—
Eager to hurl the mighty from their tower.

AMBIORIX. The noble race of Rome—? Ah, Roman, speak—
Since we are strangers here you would deceive us?
Is Rome no more the guardian of the weak,
The dread of tyrants,—ready to relieve us?

CATILINE. [Points towards the city and speaks.]

Behold the mighty Capitol that towers
On yonder heights in haughty majesty.
See, in the glow of evening how it lowers,

Tinged with the last rays of the western sky.—
So too Rome's evening glow is fast declining,
Her freedom now is thralldom, dark as night.—
Yet in her sky a sun will soon be shining,
Before which darkness quick will take its flight.

[He goes.]

[A colonnade in Rome.]

[LENTULUS, STATILIUS, COEPARIUS, and CETHEGUS enter, in eager conversation.]

COEPARIUS. Yes, you are right; things go from bad to worse; And what the end will be I do not know.

CETHEGUS. Bah! I am not concerned about the end. The fleeting moment I enjoy; each cup Of pleasure as it comes I empty,—letting All else go on to ruin as it will.

LENTULUS. Happy is he who can. I am not blessed With your indifference, that can outface The day when nothing shall be left us more, Nothing with which to pay the final score.

STATILIUS. And not the faintest glimpse of better things! Yet it is true: a mode of life like ours—

CETHEGUS. Enough of that!

LENTULUS. Today because of debt The last of my inheritance was seized.

CETHEGUS. Enough of sorrow and complaint! Come, friends! We'll drown them in a merry drinking bout!

COEPARIUS. Yes, let us drink. Come, come, my merry comrades!

LENTULUS. A moment, friends; I see old Manlius yonder,— Seeking us out, I think, as is his wont.

MANLIUS. [Enters impetuously.] Confound the shabby dogs, the paltry scoundrels! Justice and fairness they no longer know!

LENTULUS. Come, what has happened? Wherefore so embittered?

STATILIUS. Have usurers been plaguing you as well?

MANLIUS. Something quite different. As you all know, I served with honor among Sulla's troops; A bit of meadow land was my reward. And when the war was at an end, I lived Thereon; it furnished me my daily bread. Now is it taken from me! Laws decree— State property shall to the state revert For equal distribution. Theft, I say,— It is rank robbery and nothing else! Their greed is all they seek to satisfy.

COEPARIUS. Thus with our rights they sport to please themselves. The mighty always dare do what they will.

CETHEGUS. [Gaily.] Hard luck for Manlius! Yet, a worse mishap Has come to me, as I shall now relate. Listen,—you know my pretty mistress, Livia,— The little wretch has broken faith with me, Just now when I had squandered for her sake The slender wealth that still remained to me.

STATILIUS. Extravagance—the cause of your undoing.

CETHEGUS. Well, as you please; but I will not forego My own desires; these, while the day is fair, To their full measure I will satisfy.

MANLIUS. And I who fought so bravely for the glory And might which now the vaunting tyrants boast! I shall—! If but the brave old band were here, My comrades of the battlefield! But no; The greater part of them, alas, is dead; The rest live scattering in many lands. —

MANLIUS. Oh, what are you, the younger blood, to them? You bend and cringe before authority; You dare not break the chains that bind you fast; You suffer patiently this life of bondage!

LENTULUS. By all the Gods,—although indeed he taunts us, Yet, Romans, is there truth in what he says.

CETHEGUS. Oh, well,—what of it? He is right, we grant, But where shall we begin? Ay, there's the rub.

LENTULUS. Yes, it is true. Too long have we endured This great oppression. Now—now is the time To break the bonds asunder that injustice And vain ambition have about us forged.

STATILIUS. Ah, Lentulus, I understand. Yet hold; For such a thing we need a mighty leader,— With pluck and vision. Where can he be found?

LENTULUS. I know a man who has the power to lead us.

MANLIUS. Ah, you mean Catiline?

LENTULUS. The very man.

CETHEGUS. Yes, Catiline perchance is just the man.

MANLIUS. I know him well. I was his father's friend; Many a battle side by side we fought. Often his young son went with him to war. Even his early years were wild and headstrong; Yet he gave open proof of rare endowments,— His mind was noble, dauntless was his courage.

LENTULUS. We'll find him, as I think, most prompt and willing. I met him late this evening much depressed; He meditates in secret some bold plan;— Some desperate scheme he long has had in mind.

STATILIUS. No doubt; the consulate he long has sought.

LENTULUS. His efforts are in vain; his enemies Have madly raged against him in the senate;— He was himself among them; full of wrath He left the council—brooding on revenge.

STATILIUS. Then will he surely welcome our proposal.

LENTULUS. I hope so. Yet must we in secret weigh Our enterprise. The time is opportune.

[They go.]

[In the Temple of Vesta in Rome. On an altar in the background burns a lamp with the sacred fire.]

[CATILINE, followed by CURIUS, comes stealing in between the pillars.]

CURIUS. What, Catiline,—you mean to bring me here? In Vesta's temple!

CATILINE. [Laughing.] Well, yes; so you see!

CURIUS. Ye gods,—what folly! On this very day Has Cicero denounced you in the council; And yet you dare—

CATILINE. Oh, let that be forgotten!

CURIUS. You are in danger, and forget it thus— By rushing blindly into some new peril.

CATILINE. [Gaily.] Well, change is my delight. I never knew Ere now a vestal's love,—forbidden fruit;— Wherefore I came to try my fortune here.

CURIUS. What,—here, you say? Impossible! A jest!

CATILINE. A jest? Why, yes,—as all my loving is. And yet I was in earnest when I spoke. During the recent games I chanced to see The priestesses in long and pompous train. By accident I cast my roving eye

On one of them,—and with a hasty glance She met my gaze. It pierced me to the soul. Ah, the expression in those midnight eyes I never saw before in any woman.

CURIUS. Yes, yes, I know. But speak—what followed then?

CATILINE. A way into the temple I have found, And more than once I've seen and spoken to her. Oh, what a difference between this woman And my Aurelia!

CURIUS. And you love them both At once? No,—that I cannot understand.

CATILINE. Yes, strange, indeed; I scarcely understand myself. And yet— I love them both, as you have said. But oh, how vastly different is this love! The one is kind: Aurelia often lulls With soothing words my soul to peace and rest;— But Furia—. Come, away; some one approaches.

[They hide themselves among the pillars.]

FURIA. [Enters from the opposite side.] Oh, hated walls,—witnesses of my anguish. Home of the torment I must suffer still! My hopes and cherished aspirations languish Within my bosom,—now with feverish chill Pervaded, now with all the heat of passion, More hot and burning than yon vestal fire.

FURIA. Ah, what a fate! And what was my transgression That chained me to this temple-prison dire,— That robbed my life of every youthful pleasure,— In life's warm spring each innocent delight?

FURIA. Yet tears I shall not shed in undue measure; Hatred and vengeance shall my heart excite.

CATILINE. [Comes forward.] Not even for me, my Furia, do you cherish Another feeling,—one more mild than this?

FURIA. Ye gods! you, reckless man,—you here again? Do you not fear to come—?

CATILINE. I know no fear. 'Twas always my delight to mock at danger.

FURIA. Oh, splendid! Such is also my delight;— This peaceful temple here I hate the more, Because I live in everlasting calm, And danger never lurks within its walls.

FURIA. Oh, this monotonous, inactive life, A life faint as the flicker of the lamp—! How cramped a field it is for all my sum Of fervid longings and far-reaching plans! Oh, to be crushed between these narrow walls;— Life here

grows stagnant; every hope is quenched; The day creeps slowly on in drowsiness,— And not one single thought is turned to deeds.

CATILINE. O Furia, strange, in truth, is your complaint! It seems an echo out of my own soul,— As if with flaming script you sought to paint My every longing towards a worthy goal. Rancour and hate in my soul likewise flourish; My heart—as yours—hate tempers into steel; I too was robbed of hopes I used to nourish; An aim in life I now no longer feel.

CATILINE. In silence still I mask my grief, my want; And none can guess what smoulders in my breast. They scoff and sneer at me,— these paltry things; They can not grasp how high my bosom beats For right and freedom, all the noble thoughts That ever stirred within a Roman mind.

FURIA. I knew it! Ah, your soul, and yours alone, Is born for me,— thus clearly speaks a voice That never fails and never plays me false. Then come! Oh, come—and let us heed the call.

CATILINE. What do you mean, my sweet enthusiast?

FURIA. Come,—let us leave this place, flee far away, And seek a new and better fatherland. Here is the spirit's lofty pride repressed; Here baseness smothers each auspicious spark Ere it can break into a burning flame. Come, let us fly;—lo, to the free-born mind The world's wide compass is a fatherland!

CATILINE. Oh, irresistibly you lure me on—

FURIA. Come, let us use the present moment then! High o'er the hills, beyond the sea's expanse,— Far, far from Rome we first will stay our journey. Thousands of friends will follow you outright; In foreign lands we shall a home design; There shall we rule; 'twill there be brought to light That no hearts ever beat as yours and mine.

CATILINE. Oh, wonderful!—But flee? Why must we flee? Here too our love for freedom can be nourished; Here also is a field for thought and action, As vast as any that your soul desires.

FURIA. Here, do you say? Here, in this paltry Rome, Where naught exists but thraldom and oppression? Ah, Lucius, are you likewise one of those Who can Rome's past recall without confession Of shame? Who ruled here then? Who rule to-day? Then an heroic race—and now a rabble, The slaves of other slaves—

CATILINE. Mock me you may;— Yet know,—to save Rome's freedom from this babble, To see yet once again her vanished splendor, Gladly I should, like Curtius, throw myself Into the abyss—

FURIA. I trust you, you alone; Your eyes glow bright; I know you speak the truth. Yet go; the priestesses will soon appear; Their wont it is to meet here at this hour.

CATILINE. I go; but only to return again. A magic power binds me to your side;— So proud a woman have I never seen.

FURIA. [With a wild smile.] Then pledge me this; and swear that you will keep Whatever you may promise. Will you, Lucius?

CATILINE. I will do aught my Furia may require; Command me,—tell me what am I to promise.

FURIA. Then listen. Though I dwell a captive here, I know there lives a man somewhere in Rome Whom I have sworn deep enmity to death— And hatred even beyond the gloomy grave.

CATILINE. And then—?

FURIA. Then swear, my enemy shall be Your enemy till death. Will you, my Lucius?

CATILINE. I swear it here by all the mighty gods! I swear it by my father's honored name And by my mother's memory—! But, Furia,— What troubles you? Your eyes are wildly flaming,— And white as marble, deathlike, are your cheeks.

FURIA. I do not know myself. A fiery stream Flows through my veins. Swear to the end your oath!

CATILINE. Oh, mighty powers, pour out upon this head Your boundless fury, let your lightning wrath Annihilate me, if I break my oath; Aye, like a demon I shall follow him!

FURIA. Enough! I trust you. Ah, my heart is eased. In your hand now indeed rests my revenge.

CATILINE. It shall be carried out. But tell me this,— Who is your foe? And what was his transgression?

FURIA. Close by the Tiber, far from the city's tumult, My cradle stood; it was a quiet home! A sister much beloved lived with me there, A chosen vestal from her childhood days.— Then came a coward to our distant valley;— He saw the fair, young priestess of the future—

CATILINE. [Surprised.] A priestess? Tell me—! Speak—!

FURIA. He ravished her. She sought a grave beneath the Tiber's stream.

CATILINE. [Uneasy.] You know him?

FURIA. I have never seen the man. When first I heard the tidings, all was past. His name is all I know.

CATILINE. Then speak it out!

FURIA. Now is it famed. His name is Catiline.

CATILINE. [Taken aback.] What do you say? Oh, horrors! Furia, speak—!

FURIA. Calm yourself! What perturbs you? You grow pale. My Lucius,— is this man perhaps your friend?

CATILINE. My friend? Ah, Furia, no;—no longer now. For I have cursed,—and sworn eternal hate Against myself.

FURIA. You—you are Catiline?

CATILINE. Yes, I am he.

FURIA. My Sylvia you disgraced? Nemesis then indeed has heard my prayer;— Vengeance you have invoked on your own head! Woe on you, man of violence! Woe!

CATILINE. How blank The stare is in your eye. Like Sylvia's shade You seem to me in this dim candle light.

[He rushes out; the lamp with the sacred fire goes out.]

FURIA. [After a pause.] Yes, now I understand it. From my eyes The veil is fallen,—in the dark I see. Hatred it was that settled in my breast, When first I spied him in the market-place. A strange emotion; like a crimson flame! Ah, he shall know what such a hate as mine, Constantly brewing, never satisfied, Can fashion out in ruin and revenge!

A VESTAL. [Enters.] Go, Furia, go; your watch is at an end; Therefore I came—. Yet, sacred goddess, here— Woe unto you! The vestal fire is dead!

FURIA. [Bewildered.] Dead, did you say? So bright it never burned;— 'Twill never, never die!

THE VESTAL. Great heavens,—what is this?

FURIA. The fires of hate are not thus lightly quenched! Behold, love bursts forth of a sudden,—dies Within the hour; but hate—

THE VESTAL. By all the gods,— This is sheer madness!

[Calls out.]

THE VESTAL. Come! Oh, help! Come, help!

[VESTALS and temple SERVANTS rush in.]

SOME. What is amiss?

OTHERS. The vestal fire is dead!

FURIA. But hate burns on; revenge still blazes high!

THE VESTALS. Away with her to trial and punishment!

[They carry her out between them.]

CURIUS. [Comes forward.] To prison now they take her. Thence to death.— No, no, by all the gods, this shall not be! Must she, most glorious of womankind, Thus perish in disgrace, entombed alive?— Oh, never have I felt so strangely moved. Is this then love? Yes, love it is indeed.— Then shall I set her free!—But Catiline? With hate and vengeance will she follow him. Has he maligners not enough already? Dare I still others to their number add? He was to me as were an elder brother; And gratitude now bids me that I shield him.— But what of love? Ah, what does it command? And should he quake, the fearless Catiline, Before the intrigues of a woman? No;— Then to the rescue work this very hour! Wait, Furia;—I shall drag you from your grave To life again,—though at the risk of death!

[He goes away quickly.]

[A room in CATILINE's house.]

CATILINE. [Enters impetuous and uneasy.] "Nemesis then indeed has heard my prayer, Vengeance you have invoked on your own head!" Such were the words from the enchantress' lips. Remarkable! Perchance it was a sign,— A warning of what time will bring to me.

CATILINE. Now therefore I have pledged myself on oath The blood avenger of my own misdeed. Ah, Furia,—still I seem to see your eye, Wildly aflame like that of death's own goddess! Your words still echo hollow in my ears;— The oath I shall remember all my life.

[During the following AURELIA enters and approaches him unnoticed.]

CATILINE. Yet, it is folly now to go on brooding Upon this nonsense; it is nothing else. Far better things there are to think upon; A greater work awaits my energies. The restless age is urgent with its plea; Toward this I must direct my thought in season; Of hope and doubt I am a stormy sea—

AURELIA. [Seizes his hand.] And may not your Aurelia know the reason? May she not know what moves within your breast, What stirs therein and rages with such madness? May she not cheer and soothe your soul to rest, And banish from your brow its cloud of sadness?

CATILINE. [Tenderly.] O, my Aurelia, — O, how kind and tender—. Yet why should I embitter all your life? Why should I share with you my many sorrows? For my sake you have borne enough of anguish. Henceforth upon my own head I shall bear What ill-designing fate allotted me, — The curse that lies in such a soul as mine, Full of great spiritual energies, Of fervent longings for a life of deeds, Yet dwarfed in all its work by sordid cares. — Must you, too, sharing in my wretched life, Bitter with blasted hopes, then with me perish?

AURELIA. To comfort is the role of every wife, Though dreams of greatness she may never cherish. When the man, struggling for his lofty dream, Reaps nothing but adversity and sorrow, — Her words to him then sweet and tender seem, And give him strength sufficient for the morrow; And then he sees that even the quiet life Has pleasures which the most tumultuous lacks.

CATILINE. Yes, you are right; I know it all too well. And yet I cannot tear myself away. A ceaseless yearning surges in my breast, — Which only life's great tumult now can quiet.

AURELIA. Though your Aurelia be not all to you, — Though she can never still your restless soul, — Your heart yet open to a gentle word, A word of comfort from your loving wife. Though she may never slake your fiery thirst, Nor follow in their flight your noble thoughts, — Know this, that she can share your every sorrow, Has strength and fortitude to ease your burden.

CATILINE. Then listen, dear Aurelia; you shall hear What has of late depressed so deep my spirits. You know, I long have sought the consulate— Without avail. You know the whole affair— How to increase the votes for my election, I have expended—

AURELIA. Catiline, no more; You torture me—

CATILINE. Do you too blame my course? What better means therefor had I to choose?— In vain I lavished all that I possessed; My one reward was mockery and shame. Now in the senate has my adversary, The crafty Cicero, trampled me to earth. His speech was a portrayal of my life, So glaring that I, even I, must gasp. In every look I read dismay and fear; With loathing people speak of Catiline; To races yet unborn my name will be A symbol of a low and dreadful union Of sensuality and wretchedness, Of

scorn and ridicule for what is noble. — And there will be no deed to purge this name And crush to earth the lies that have been told! Each will believe whatever rumor tells —

AURELIA. But I, dear husband, trust no such reports. Let the whole world condemn you if it will; And let it heap disgrace upon your head; — I know you hide within your inmost soul A seed that still can blossom and bear fruit. Only it cannot burst forth here in Rome; Poisonous weeds would quickly prove the stronger. Let us forsake this degradation's home; — What binds you here? Why should we dwell here longer?

CATILINE. I should forsake the field, — and go away? I should my greatest dreams in life surrender? The drowning man still clutches firm and fast The broken spars — though hope is frail and slender; And should the wreck be swallowed in the deep, And the last hope of rescue fail forever, — Still clings he to the lone remaining spar, And sinks with it in one last vain endeavor.

AURELIA. But should a kindly seacoast smile on him, With groves all green along the rolling billows, Hope then awakens in his heart again, — He struggles inward, toward the silvery willows. There reigns a quiet peace; 'tis beautiful; There roll the waves, in silence, without number; His heated brow sweet evening breezes cool, As weary-limbed he rests himself in slumber; Each sorrow-laden cloud they drive away; A restful calm his weary mind assuages; — There he finds shelter and prolongs his stay And soon forgets the sorry by-gone ages. The distant echo of the world's unrest Alone can reach his dwelling unfrequented. It does not break the calm within his breast; — It makes his soul more happy and contented; It calls to mind the by-gone time of strife, Its shattered hopes and its unbridled pleasures; He finds twice beautiful this quiet life — And would not change it for the greatest treasures.

CATILINE. You speak the truth; and in this very hour From strife and tumult I could go with you. But can you name me some such quiet spot, Where we can live in shelter and in peace?

AURELIA. [Joyful.] You will go, Catiline? What happiness, — Oh, richer than my bosom can contain! Let it be so, then! Come! This very night We'll go away —

CATILINE. But whither shall we go? Name me the spot where I may dare to rest My head in homely peace!

AURELIA. How can you ask? Have you forgot our villa in the country, Wherein I passed my childhood days, where since, Enraptured during love's first happy dawn, We two spent many a blithesome summer day?

Where was the grass indeed so green as there? Where else the groves so shady and sweet-smelling? The snow-white villa from its wooded lair Peeps forth and bids us there to make our dwelling. There let us flee and dedicate our life To rural duties and to sweet contentment;— You will find comfort in a loving wife, And through her kisses banish all resentment.

[Smiling.]

AURELIA. And when with all the flowers of the land You come to me, your sovereign, in my bowers, Then shall I crown you with the laurel band, And cry, All hail to you, my king of flowers!— But why do you grow pale? Wildly you press My hand,—and strangely now your eyes are glowing—

CATILINE. Aurelia, alas, past is your happiness;— There we can never, never think of going. There we can never go!

AURELIA. You frighten me! Yet, surely,—you are jesting, Catiline?

CATILINE. I jest! Would only that it were a jest! Each word you speak, like the avenging dart Of Nemesis, pierces my heavy heart, Which fate will never grant a moment's rest.

AURELIA. O gods! speak, speak! What do you mean?

CATILINE. See here! Here is your villa,—here your future joys!

[He draws out a purse filled with gold and throws it on the table.]

AURELIA. Oh, you have sold—?

CATILINE. Yes,—all I sold today;— And to what end? In order to corrupt—

AURELIA. O Catiline, no more! Let us not think On this affair; sorrow is all it brings.

CATILINE. Your quiet-patience wounds me tenfold more Than would a cry of anguish from your lips!

[An old SOLDIER enters and approaches CATILINE.]

THE SOLDIER. Forgive me, master, that thus unannounced I enter your abode at this late hour. Ah, be not wroth—

CATILINE. What is your errand here?

THE SOLDIER. My errand here is but a humble prayer, Which you will hear. I am a needy man, One who has sacrificed his strength for Rome. Now I am feeble, can no longer serve; Unused my weapons rust away at home. The hope of my old age was in a son, Who labored hard and was

my one support. Alas,—in prison now he's held for debt. And not a ray of hope—. Oh, help me, master!

[Kneeling.]

THE SOLDIER. If but a penny! I have gone on foot From house to house; each door is long since closed. I know not what to do—

CATILINE. The paltry knaves! A picture this is of the many's want. Thus they reward the old brave company. No longer gratitude is found in Rome! Time was I might have wished in righteous wrath To punish them with sword and crimson flames; But tender words have just been spoken here; My soul is moved; I do not wish to punish;— To ease misfortune likewise is a deed.— Take this, old warrior;—clear with this your debt.

[He hands him the purse with the gold.]

THE SOLDIER. [Rising.] O gracious lord,—dare I believe your words?

CATILINE. Yes; but be quick, old man; go free your son.

[The SOLDIER goes hurriedly out.]

CATILINE. A better use,—not so, Aurelia dear?— Than bribery and purchasing of votes? Noble it is to crush the tyrant's might; Yet quiet solace too has its reward.

AURELIA. [Throws herself in his arms.] Oh, rich and noble is your spirit still. Yes,—now I know my Catiline again.

[An underground tomb with a freshly walled-in passage high on the rear wall. A lamp burns faintly.]

[FURIA, in long black robes, is standing in the tomb as if listening.]

FURIA. A hollow sound. 'Tis thunder rolls above. I hear its rumble even in the tomb. Yet is the tomb itself so still—so still! Am I forever damned to drowsy rest? Never again am I to wander forth By winding paths, as ever was my wish?

FURIA. [After a pause.] A strange, strange life it was;—as strange a fate. Meteor-like all came—and disappeared. He met me. A mysterious magic force, An inner harmony, together drew us. I was his Nemesis;—and he my victim;— Yet punishment soon followed the avenger.

FURIA. [Another pause.] Now daylight rules the earth.—Am I perchance To slip—unknowing—from the realm of light? 'Tis well, if so it be,—if this

delay Within the tomb be nothing but a flight Upon the wings of lightning into Hades,— If I be nearing even now the Styx! There roll the leaden billows on the shore; There silently old Charon plies his boat. Soon am I there! Then shall I seat myself Beside the ferry,—question every spirit, Each fleeting shadow from the land of life, As light of foot he nears the river of death,— Shall ask each one in turn how Catiline Fares now among the mortals of the earth,— Shall ask each one how he has kept his oath. I shall illumine with blue sulphur light Each spectral countenance and hollow eye,— To ascertain if it be Catiline. And when he comes, then shall I follow him;— Together we shall make the journey hence, Together enter Pluto's silent hall. I too a shadow shall his shade pursue;— Where Catiline is, must Furia also be!

FURIA. [After a pause, more faintly.] The air is growing close and clammy here,— And every breath in turn more difficult.— Thus am I drawing near the gloomy swamps, Where creep the rivers of the underworld.

FURIA. [She listens; a dull noise is heard.] A muffled sound? 'Tis like the stroke of oars. It is the ferryman of shades who comes To take me hence. No, here—here will I wait!

[The stones in the freshly walled-in passage are broken asunder. CURIUS comes into view on the outside; he beckons to her.]

FURIA. Ah, greetings, Charon! Are you ready now To lead me hence, a guest among the spirits? Here will I wait!

CURIUS. [Whispering.] I come to set you free!

SECOND ACT

[A room in CATILINE's house with a colonnade in the rear; a lamp lights up the room.]

[CATILINE paces the floor back and forth; LENTULUS and CETHEGUS are with him.]

CATILINE. No, no! I say, you do not understand Yourselfs what you demand of me. Should I Turn traitor and incite a civil war,— Besmear my hand with Roman blood? No, no! I'll never do it! Let the entire state Condemn me if—

LENTULUS. You will not, Catiline?

CATILINE. No.

LENTULUS. Tell me,—have you nothing to avenge? No insult? No one here you fain would strike?

CATILINE. Let him who will avenge; I shall not stir. Yet silent scorn is likewise a revenge;— And that alone shall be enough.

CETHEGUS. Aha,— Our visit was, I see, inopportune. Yet doubtless will the morrow bring you back To other thoughts.

CATILINE. But why the morrow?

CETHEGUS. There are mysterious rumors in the air. A vestal recently was led to death—

CATILINE. [Surprised.] A vestal,—say you? Ah, what do you mean?

LENTULUS. Why, yes, a vestal. Many people murmur—

CATILINE. What do they murmur?

CETHEGUS. That in this dark affair You are not altogether innocent.

CATILINE. This they believe of me?

LENTULUS. Such is the rumor; Of course,—to us, to all your good old friends, Such talk is trifling and of no account;— The world, however, judges more severely.

CATILINE. [Deep in thought.] And is she dead?

CETHEGUS. Undoubtedly she is. An hour's confinement in the convict tomb Is quite enough—

LENTULUS. That is not our affair. It was not therefore that we spoke of her. But hear me, Catiline! Bethink yourself. You sought the consulate; and all your welfare Hung on that single fragile thread of hope. Now is it sundered; everything is lost.

CATILINE. [Still deep in thought.] "Vengeance you have invoked on your own head!"

CETHEGUS. Shake off these useless thoughts; they profit naught; Act like a man; still can this fight be won; A bold resolve now—; you have friends enough; Speak but the word, and we shall follow you.— You are not tempted? Answer!

CATILINE. No, I say! And why are you so eager to conspire? Be honest! Are you driven by thirst for freedom? Is it in order to renew Rome's splendor That you would ruin all?

LENTULUS. Indeed, 'tis not; Yet surely is the hope of personal greatness Sufficient motive for our enterprise!

CETHEGUS. And means enough to taste the joys of life Are not, in truth, to be so lightly scorned. That is my motive;—I am not ambitious.

CATILINE. I knew it. Only mean and paltry motives, The hope of private vantage, urge you on. No, no, my friends; I aimed at nobler things! True, I have sought with bribes and promises To seize ere now the consulate, and yet My plan was greater and comprised much more Than means like these would point to. Civic freedom, The welfare of the state,—these were my aims. Men have misjudged, appearances belied me; My fate has willed it so. It must so be!

CETHEGUS. True; but the thought of all your many friends Whom you can save from ruin and disgrace—? You know, we shall ere long be driven to take The beggars' staff because of our wild living.

CATILINE. Then stop in season; that is my resolve.

LENTULUS. What, Catiline,—now you intend to change Your mode of life? Ha, ha! you surely jest?

CATILINE. I am in earnest,—by the mighty gods!

CETHEGUS. Then there is nothing we can do with him. Come, Lentulus, the others we'll inform What answer he has given. We shall find The merry company with Bibulus.

CATILINE. With Bibulus? How many a merry night We have caroused at Bibulus' table! Now is the tempest of my wild life ended; Ere dawns the day I shall have left the city.

LENTULUS. What is all this?

CETHEGUS. You mean to go away?

CATILINE. This very night my wife and I together Shall bid farewell to Rome forevermore. In quiet Gaul we two shall found a home;— The land I cultivate shall nourish us.

CETHEGUS. You will forsake the city, Catiline?

CATILINE. I will; I must! Disgrace here weighs me down. Courage I have to bear my poverty, But in each Roman face to read disdain And frank

contempt—! No, no; that is too much! In Gaul I'll live in quiet solitude;
There shall I soon forget my former self, Dull all my longings for the greater
things, And as the vaguest dream recall the past.

LENTULUS. Then fare you well; may fortune follow you!

CETHEGUS. Remember us with kindness, Catiline, As we shall you
remember! To our brothers We will relate this new and strange resolve.

CATILINE. Then give them all a brother's hearty greeting!

[LENTULUS and CETHEGUS leave.]

[AURELIA has entered from the side, hut-stops frightened at the sight of
those who are leaving; when they are gone she approaches CATILINE.]

AURELIA. [Gently reprimanding.] Again these stormy comrades in your
house? O Catiline—!

CATILINE. This was their final visit. I bade them all farewell. Now every
bond Forevermore is broken that bound me fast And fettered me to Rome.

AURELIA. I've gathered up Our bit of property. Not much perhaps;—
Yet, Catiline, enough for our contentment.

CATILINE. [Engrossed in thought.] More than enough for me who
squandered all.

AURELIA. Oh, brood no more on things we can not change;— Forget
what—

CATILINE. Happy he who could forget, — Who could the memory tear
from out his soul, The many hopes, the goal of all desires. Ah, time is
needed ere I reach that state; But I shall struggle—

AURELIA. I shall help you strive; You shall be comforted for all your loss.
Yet we must leave as soon as possible. Here life calls to you with a
tempter's voice. Is it not so, — we go this very night?

CATILINE. Yes, yes, — we leave this very night, Aurelia!

AURELIA. The little money left I've gathered up; And for the journey it
will be enough.

CATILINE. Good! I shall sell my sword and buy a spade. What value
henceforth is a sword to me?

AURELIA. You clear the land, and I shall till the soil. Around our home
will grow in floral splendor A hedge of roses, sweet forget-me-nots, The

silent tokens of a chastened soul, When as some youthful comrade you
can greet Each memory recurrent of the past.

CATILINE. That time, Aurelia? Ah, beloved, I fear— That hour lies in a
distant future's keeping.

CATILINE. [In a milder tone.] But go, dear wife, and, while you may,
repose. Soon after midnight we shall start our journey. The city then is
lapped in deepest slumber, And none shall guess our hidden destination.
The first glow in the morning sky shall find us Far—far away; there in the
laurel grove We'll rest ourselves upon the velvet grass.

AURELIA. A new life opens up before us both— Richer in happiness
than this that's ended. Now will I go. An hour's quiet rest Will give me
strength— . Good-night, my Catiline!

[She embraces him and goes out.]

CATILINE. [Gazes after her.] Now is she gone! And I—what a relief! Now
can I cast away this wearisome Hypocrisy, this show of cheerfulness,
Which least of all is found within my heart. She is my better spirit. She
would grieve Were she to sense my doubt. I must dissemble. Yet shall I
consecrate this silent hour To contemplation of my wasted life.— This
lamp,—ah, it disturbs my very thoughts;— Dark it must be here,—dark as
is my soul!

[He puts out the light; the moon shines through the pillars in the rear.]

CATILINE. Too light,—yes, still too light! And yet, no matter;— The pallid
moonlight here does well befit The twilight and the gloom that shroud my
soul,— Have ever shrouded all my earthly ways.

CATILINE. Hm, Catiline, then is this day your last; Tomorrow morning
you will be no longer The Catiline you hitherto have been. Distant in barren
Gaul my life shall run Its course, unknown as is a forest stream.— Now am
I wakened from those many visions Of power, of greatness, of a life of
deeds;— They vanished like the dew; in my dark soul They struggled long
and died,—unseen of men.

CATILINE. Ah, it is not this dull and drowsy life, Far from all mundane
tumult, that affrights me. If only for a moment I could shine, And blaze in
splendor like a shooting star,— If only by a glorious deed I could
Immortalize the name of Catiline With everlasting glory and renown,—
Then gladly should I, in the hour of triumph, Forsake all things,—flee to a
foreign strand;— I'd plunge the dagger in my exiled heart, Die free and
happy; for I should have lived!

CATILINE. But oh,—to die without first having lived. Can that be possible? Shall I so die?

[With uplifted hands.]

CATILINE. A hint, oh angry powers,—that it is My fate to disappear from life forgotten, Without a trace!

FURIA. [Outside behind the pillars.] It is not, Catiline!

CATILINE. [Taken aback.] Who speaks? What warning voice is this I hear? A spirit voice from out the underworld!

FURIA. [Comes forward in the moonlight.] I am your shadow.

CATILINE. [Terrified.] What,—the vestal's ghost!

FURIA. Deep must your soul have sunk if you recoil From me!

CATILINE. Speak! Have you risen from the grave With hatred and with vengeance to pursue me?

FURIA. Pursue you,—did you say? I am your shadow. I must be with you wheresoe'er you go.

[She comes nearer.]

CATILINE. She lives! O gods,—then it is she,—no other, No disembodied ghost.

FURIA. Or ghost or not,— It matters little; I must follow you.

CATILINE. With mortal hate!

FURIA. Hate ceases in the grave, As love and all the passions do that flourish Within an earthly soul. One thing alone In life and death remains unchangeable.

CATILINE. And what? Say forth!

FURIA. Your fate, my Catiline!

CATILINE. Only the gods of wisdom know my fate,— No human being.

FURIA. Yet I know your fate. I am your shadow;—strange, mysterious ties Bind us together.

CATILINE. Bonds of hatred.

FURIA. No! Rose ever spirit from the dankest grave For hate and vengeance? Listen, Catiline! The rivers of the underworld have quenched Each earthly flame that raged within my breast. As you behold me here, I

am no longer The stormy Furia,—wild and passionate,— Whom once you loved—

CATILINE. You do not hate me then?

FURIA. Ah, now no more. When in the tomb I stood,— And faltered on the path that separates This life from death, at any moment ready To greet the underworld,—lo, seized me then An eerie shuddering; I know not what—; I felt in me a mystic transformation;— Away flowed hate, revenge, my very soul; Each memory vanished and each earthly longing;— Only the name of "Catiline" remains Written in fiery letters on my heart.

CATILINE. Ah, wonderful! No matter who you are,— A human form, a shadow from the dead,— There lies withal a dreadful fascination In your dark eyes, in every word you speak.

FURIA. Your mind is strong as mine; yet you give up, Disheartened and irresolute, each hope Of triumph and dominion. You forsake The battlefield, where all your inmost plans Could grow and blossom forth into achievement.

CATILINE. I must! Inexorable fate decrees it!

FURIA. Your fate? Why were you given a hero's strength,— If not to struggle with what you call fate?

CATILINE. Oh, I have fought enough! Was not my life A constant battle? What are my rewards? Disgrace and scorn—!

FURIA. Ah, you are fallen low! You struggle towards a high and daring goal, Are eager to attain it; yet you fear Each trifling hindrance.

CATILINE. Fear is not the reason. The goal I sought is unattainable;— The whole was but a fleeting dream of youth.

FURIA. Now you deceive yourself, my Catiline! You hover still about that single project;— Your soul is noble,—worthy of a ruler,— And you have friends—. Ah, wherefore hesitate?

CATILINE. [Meditating.] I shall—? What do you mean—? With civil blood—?

FURIA. Are you a man,—yet lack a woman's courage? Have you forgot that nimble dame of Rome, Who sought the throne straight over a father's corpse? I feel myself a Tullia now; but you—? Scorn and despise yourself, O Catiline!

CATILINE. Must I despise myself because my soul No longer harbors selfish aspirations?

FURIA. You stand here at a cross-road in your life; Yonder a dull, inactive course awaits you, — A half-way something, neither sleep nor death; — Before you, on the other hand, you see A sovereign's throne. Then choose, my Catiline!

CATILINE. You tempt me and allure me to destruction.

FURIA. Cast but the die, — and in your hand is placed Forevermore the welfare of proud Rome. Glory and might your silent fate conceals, And yet you falter, — dare not lift a hand! You journey yonder to the forests, where Each longing that you cherished will be quenched. Ah, tell me, Catiline, is there no trace Of thirst for glory left within your heart? And must this princely soul, for triumphs born, Vanish unknown in yonder nameless desert? Hence, then! But know that thus you lose forever What here you could by daring deeds attain.

CATILINE. Go on, go on!

FURIA. With trembling and with fear The future generations will recall Your fate. Your life was all a daring game; — Yet in the lustre of atonement it would shine, Known to all men, if with a mighty hand You fought your way straight through this surging throng, — If the dark night of thralldom through your rule Gave way before a new-born day of freedom, — If at some time you —

CATILINE. Hold! Ah, you have touched The string that quivers deepest in my soul. Your every word sounds like a ringing echo Of what my heart has whispered day and night.

FURIA. Now, Catiline, I know you once again!

CATILINE. I shall not go! You have recalled to life My youthful zeal, my manhood's full-grown longings. Yes, I shall be a light to fallen Rome, — Daze them with fear like some erratic star! You haughty wretches, — you shall soon discover You have not humbled me, though for a time I weakened in the heat of battle!

FURIA. Listen! Whatever be the will of fate, — whatever The mighty gods decree, we must obey. Just so! My hate is gone; — fate thus decreed, And so it had to be! Give me your hand In solemn compact! — Ah, you hesitate? You will not?

CATILINE. Will — ? I gaze upon your eyes: They flash, — like lightning in the gloom of night. Now did you smile! Just so I've often pictured Nemesis —

FURIA. What? Herself you wish to see,— Then look within. Have you forgot your oath?

CATILINE. No, I remember;—yet you seem to me A Nemesis—

FURIA. I am an image born From your own soul.

CATILINE. [Meditating.] What is all this you say? I sense but vaguely what I fail to grasp; I glimpse mysterious, strangely clouded visions,— But can not understand. I grope in darkness!

FURIA. It must be dark here. Darkness is our realm;— In darkness is our rule. Give me your hand In solemn pledge!

CATILINE. [Wildly.] O lovely Nemesis,— My shadow,—image of my very soul,— Here is my hand in everlasting compact.

[He seizes her hand violently; she looks at him with a stern smile.]

FURIA. Now we can never part!

CATILINE. Ah, like a stream Of fire your touch went coursing through my veins! 'Tis blood no more that flows, but fiery flames;— My breast now cabins and confines my heart; My sight grows dull. Soon shall a flaming sea illumine with its light the Roman state!

[He draws his sword and brandishes it.]

CATILINE. My sword! My sword! Do you see how it flashes? Soon will it redden in their tepid blood!— What change is this in me? My brow burns hot; A multitude of visions flit before me.— Vengeance it is,—triumph for all those dreams Of greatness, regal power, and lasting fame. My watch-word shall be: livid flames and death! The capitol! Now first I am myself!

[He rushes out; FURIA follows him.]

[The inside of a dimly illumined tavern.]

[STATILIUS, GABINIUS, COEPARIUS, and other young ROMANS enter.]

STATILIUS. Here, comrades, we can while away the night; Here we are safe; no one will overhear us.

GABINIUS. Ah, yes; now let us drink, carouse, enjoy! Who knows how long it will be granted us?

STATILIUS. No, let us first await whatever tidings Lentulus and Cethegus have for us.

GABINIUS. Bah, let them bring whatever news they will! Meanwhile the wine is here; come, let us taste. Quick, brothers, quick, — let's have a merry song!

[SERVANTS bring in wine and glasses.]

THE ASSEMBLED FRIENDS. (Sing.)

Bacchus, all praise to thee!
Joyful we raise to thee
Brimful the beaker!
Hail to thee, hail!
Wine, red and glowing,
Merrily flowing,
Drink of the wine-god, —
This be our song.

Gracious and friendly
Smiles father Liber;
Drunkenness waits us;
Clear is the wine.
Come, do not tarry!
Wine will make merry,
Joyful and airy,
Body and soul.

Thou above all the
Glittering bubbles,
Sparkling Falernian,
Glorious drink!
Courage and power,
These are your dower.
Gladsome the gift you
Bring to the soul.

Bacchus, all praise to thee!
Joyful we raise to thee
Brimful the beaker!
Hail to thee, hail!
Wine, red and glowing,
Merrily flowing,
Drink of the wine-god, —
This be our song.

[LENTULUS and CETHEGUS enter.]

LENTULUS. Cease all your song and merriment!

STATILIUS. What now? Is Catiline not in your company?

GABINIUS. Surely he was quite willing?

COEPARIUS. Come, say forth! What was his answer?

CETHEGUS. Ah, quite otherwise Than we expected was his answer.

GABINIUS. Well?

LENTULUS. Well, all of our proposals he declined;— He would not even hearken to our counsels.

STATILIUS. Is this the truth?

COEPARIUS. And wherefore would he not?

LENTULUS. In short, he will not. He forsakes his friends, — Abandons us, — and leaves the city.

STATILIUS. What? He leaves, you say?

CETHEGUS. 'Tis true; — he goes away This very night. Yet, — blamed he can not be; His ground was valid —

LENTULUS. Fear was his excuse! In danger he forsakes us faithlessly.

GABINIUS. That is the friendship of our Catiline!

COEPARIUS. Never was Catiline faithless or afraid!

LENTULUS. And yet he leaves us now.

STATILIUS. Our hopes go with him. Where's now the man to take the leadership?

COEPARIUS. He'll not be found; our plan we must forego.

LENTULUS. Not yet, not yet, my friends! First you shall hear What I will say. Now what have we resolved? That we should win at last by force of arms What an unrighteous destiny denied. Tyrants oppress us; — yet we wish to rule. We suffer want; — yet wealth is our desire.

MANY VOICES. Yes, wealth and power! Wealth and power we want!

LENTULUS. Yes, yes; we chose a comrade as our chief, On whom there was no doubt we could rely. Our trust he fails and turns his back to danger. Ah, brothers, — be not daunted. He shall learn We can succeed without him. What we need Is some one man, fearless and resolute, To take the lead —

SOME. Well, name us such a man!

LENTULUS. And should I name him, and should he come forth, — Will you then straightway choose him as your leader?

SOME. Yes, we will choose him!

OTHERS. Yes, we will, we will!

STATILIUS. Then name him, friend!

LENTULUS. Suppose it were myself?

GABINIUS. Yourself?

COEPARIUS. You, Lentulus—!

SEVERAL. [In doubt.] You wish to lead us?

LENTULUS. I do.

CETHEGUS. But can you? Such a task requires The strength and courage of a Catiline.

LENTULUS. I do not lack the courage, nor the strength. Each to his task! Or will you now turn back, Now when the moment seems most opportune? 'Tis now or never! All things prophesy Success for us—

STATILIUS. Good;—we will follow you!

OTHERS. We'll follow you!

GABINIUS. Well, now that Catiline Forsakes our cause, you are no doubt the man To lead us in our enterprise.

LENTULUS. Then hear What plan of action I have outlined. First—

[CATILINE enters hastily.]

CATILINE. Here, comrades, here I am!

ALL. Catiline!

LENTULUS. He? Oh, damned—

CATILINE. Speak out,—what do you ask of me? Yet stay; I know already what it is. I'll lead you on. Say—will you follow me?

ALL (EXCEPT LENTULUS). Yes, Catiline,—we follow if you lead!

STATILIUS. They have deceived us—

GABINIUS. —and belied your name!

COEPARIUS. They said you did intend to leave the city And wash your hands completely of our cause.

CATILINE. Yes, so I did. Yet now no more; henceforth Only for this great purpose do I live.

LENTULUS. What is this mighty purpose you proclaim?

CATILINE. My purpose here is higher than you think— Perhaps than any thinks. Ah, hear me, friends! First will I win to us each citizen Who prizes liberty and values most The public honor and his country's weal. The spirit of ancient Rome is yet alive;— The last faint spark is not yet wholly dead. Now into brilliant flames it shall be fanned, More glorious than ever flames before! Alas, too long the stifling gloom of thralldom, Dark as the night, lay blanketed on Rome. Behold,—this realm—though proud and powerful It seems—totters upon the edge of doom. Therefore the stoutest hand must seize the helm. Rome must be cleansed,—cleansed to the very roots; The sluggish we must waken from their slumber,— And crush to earth the power of these wretches Who sow their poison in the mind and stifle The slightest promise of a better life. Look you,— 'tis civic freedom I would further,— The civic spirit that in former times Was regnant here. Friends, I shall conjure back The golden age, when Romans gladly gave Their lives to guard the honor of the nation, And all their riches for the public weal!

LENTULUS. Ah, Catiline, you rave! Nothing of this Had we in mind.

GABINIUS. What will it profit us To conjure up again those ancient days With all their dull simplicity?

SOME. No, no! Might we demand—

OTHERS. —and means enough to live A gay and carefree life!

MANY VOICES. That is our aim!

COEPARIUS. Is it for others' happiness and freedom We stake our lives upon a throw of dice?

THE WHOLE GROUP. We want the spoils of victory!

CATILINE. Paltry race! Are you the offspring of those ancient fathers? To heap dishonor on your country's name,— In such a way you would preserve its lustre!

LENTULUS. And you dare taunt us,—you who long since were A terrifying token—

CATILINE. True, I was; I was a terror to the good; and yet, So paltry as you are was never I.

LENTULUS. Restrain your tongue; we brook no ridicule.

MANY. No, no, — we will not —

CATILINE. [Calmly.] So? You timid brood, — You dare to think of doing something, — you?

LENTULUS. Ah, down with him!

MANY VOICES. Yes, down with Catiline!

[They draw their daggers and rush in on him; CATILINE calmly removes the cloak from his breast and regards them with a cold, scornful smile; they lower their daggers.]

CATILINE. Thrust! Thrust! You dare not? Oh, my friends, my friends, — I should respect you, if you plunged your daggers In this uncovered bosom, as you threaten. Is there no spark of courage in your souls?

SOME. He means our weal!

OTHERS. His taunts we have deserved.

CATILINE. You have, indeed. — Yet, see, — the hour is come When you can wash away the blot of shame. All that is of the past we will forget; — A new existence is in store for us.

CATILINE. [With bitterness.] Fool that I am! To stake success on you! Burns any zeal within this craven mob?

CATILINE. [Carried away.] Time was my dreams were glorious; great visions Rushed through my mind or swept before my gaze. I dreamed that, winged like Icarus of old, I flew aloft beneath the vault of heaven; I dreamed the gods endued my hands with strength Of giants, offered me the lightning flash. And this hand seized the lightning in its flight And hurled it at the city far beneath. And when the crimson flames lapped all, and rose As Rome fell crumbling in a heap of ruins, — Then called I with a loud and mighty voice, And conjured Cato's comrades from the grave; Thousands of spirits heard my call and came, — Took life again — raised Rome from out her ashes.

[He breaks off.]

CATILINE. These were but dreams! Gods do not conjure up The by-gone past into the light of day, — And parted spirits never leave the grave.

CATILINE. [Wildly.] Is now this hand unable to restore The ancient Rome, our Rome it shall destroy. Where marble colonnades now towering

stand, Pillars of smoke through crackling flames shall whirl; Then shall the Capitol crumble from its heights, And palaces and temples sink to ruin!

CATILINE. Swear, comrades, that you dedicate your lives To this great purpose! I shall take the lead. Say,—will you follow me?

STATILIUS. We'll follow you!

[Several seem to be in doubt, and speak in whispers to one another. CATILINE regards them with a scornful smile.]

LENTULUS. [In an undertone.] 'Tis best we follow him. In sunken ruins We're likeliest to realize our goal.

ALL. [Shouting.] Yes, Catiline; we'll all—all follow you!

CATILINE. Swear to me by the gods of our great sires That you will heed my every nod!

THE WHOLE GROUP. [With uplifted hands.] Yes, yes; We swear in all things blindly to obey!

CATILINE. Then singly steal your way, by different paths, Into my house. Weapons you there will find. I shall come later; you shall then discover What plan of action I propose. Now go!

[They all go out.]

LENTULUS. [Detains CATILINE.] A word! Know you the Allobrogian tribes Have to the Senate sent ambassadors With grievances and charges?

CATILINE. Yes, I know. They came today into the city.

LENTULUS. Good. What if we should attune them to our plans? With them all Gaul will rise up in revolt; And stir up strife against our enemies.

CATILINE. [Reluctant.] Ah, we should seek barbarian allies?

LENTULUS. But such a league is a necessity. With our own strength alone the fight is lost; Help from without—

CATILINE. [With a bitter smile.] Ah, Rome is fallen low! Her walls no longer harbor men with strength Enough to overthrow a tottering ruin!

[They go out.]

[A garden to the rear of CATILINE's house, which is visible through the trees. To the left a side-building.]

[CURIUS, CETHEGUS, and OTHER CONSPIRATORS enter cautiously from the right in whispered conversation.]

CURIUS. But is it really true what you relate?

CETHEGUS. Yes, every word is true. A moment since It was decided.

CURIUS. He takes charge of all?

CETHEGUS. Of everything. Just speak with him yourself.

[All, except CURIUS, enter the house.]

CURIUS. An eerie night! How all my thoughts are tossed About in circles! Did I dream perchance? Ah, real or fancied,—now I am awake,— Whichever way I turn I see her form.

[CATILINE enters from the right.]

CATILINE. [Goes toward him.] You here, my Curius? I have missed you much.— My visit with the vestal took a turn Quite unexpected—

CURIUS. [Confused.] So? Yes, you are right!

CATILINE. I shall no longer think of this affair. It was a visit fraught with fate for me.

CATILINE. [Meditating.] The furies, we are told, return at times From the dark underworld to follow us Through life forever.— Ah, if it were so!

CURIUS. [Uneasy.] What? Have you seen her—?

CATILINE. She was here tonight.— Yet let this be forgotten. Curius, listen,— A weighty undertaking is on foot—

CURIUS. I know it all. Cethegus told me here—

CATILINE. Who knows what issue for this work the gods Have set? Perchance it is my destiny To perish now, crushed by malignant forces,— And never reach my goal. Well, be it so! But you, dear Curius, you whom I have loved Since childhood,—you shall not be drawn within This fateful maelstrom. Promise me,—remain Within the city if I elsewhere choose To open my attack,—which is quite likely; Nor aid us till success has crowned our work.

CURIUS. [Moved.] Oh, what a friend and father! All this care—!

CATILINE. You promise this? Then here we say farewell; Wait but a moment; I shall soon return.

[He goes into the house.]

CURIUS. [Gazing after him.] He loves me still. Of naught is he distrustful.

[LENTULUS and OTHER CONSPIRATORS enter from the right.]

LENTULUS. Ah, Curius, did not Catiline just now Pass through the garden?

CURIUS. Yes, he is within.

[They go into the house.]

CURIUS. [Paces about uneasy.] How shall I curb this longing in my soul? There is a restless turmoil in my blood. Ah, Furia, — what a strange, mysterious woman! Where are you? When shall I see your face again?

CURIUS. Where has she fled? Ah, shadow-like she slipped Away, when I had freed her from the grave. And those mysterious, prophetic words, — And more, her eyes, gleaming at once and dimmed —! What if it were but madness? Has the grave With all its terror darkened — ?

FURIA. [Behind him among the trees.] No, pale youth!

CURIUS. [With a cry.] My Furia! You — ?

FURIA. [Comes nearer.] Here dwells Catiline. Where he is, — there must Furia also be.

CURIUS. Oh, come with me, beloved. I shall lead You into safety. Think — if some one saw you!

FURIA. The dead need have no fear. Have you forgotten — You took my corpse and brought it from the grave?

CURIUS. Again those terrifying words! Oh, hear me; — Come to your senses, — come with me away!

[He tries to seize her hand.]

FURIA. [Thrusts him wildly back.] You reckless fool, — do you not shrink with fear Before this child of death, but risen up A fleeting moment from the underworld?

CURIUS. Before you now I fear. And yet this fear, This strange, mysterious dread, is my delight.

FURIA. What would you me? In vain is all your pleading. I'm of the grave, and yonder is my home; — With dawn's approach I must again be speeding Back to the vale of shadows whence I come. You doubt me, — do not think that I have sat Among the pallid shades in Pluto's hall? I tell you, I was even now below, — Beyond the river and the gloomy marshes.

CURIUS. Then lead me there!

FURIA. You?

CURIUS. I shall gladly follow, Though you should lead me through the jaws of death!

FURIA. It cannot be! On earth we two must part;— Yonder the dead and living dare not meet.—

FURIA. Why do you rob me of my fleeting moments? I've but the hours of night in which to work; My task is of the night; I am its herald. But where is Catiline?

CURIUS. Ah, him you seek?

FURIA. Yes, him I seek.

CURIUS. Then him you still pursue?

FURIA. Why rose I from the spirit underworld Tonight, if not because of Catiline?

CURIUS. Alas, this fury that has seized your soul—! Yet you are lovely even in your madness. Oh, Furia, think no more of Catiline! Come, flee with me! Command me,—I shall serve you!

[He prostrates himself before her.]

CURIUS. A prostrate slave I here entreat of you One single look. Oh, hear me, Furia, hear me! I love but you! A sweet and lethal fire Consumes my soul, and you—ah, you alone— Can ease my suffering.—

FURIA. [Looks towards the house.] Yonder there's a light— And many men. What now is going on Within the house of Catiline?

CURIUS. [Jumps up.] Again This name! Around him hover all your thoughts. Oh, I could hate him—!

FURIA. Has he then resolved To launch at last the daring enterprise He long has cherished?

CURIUS. Then you know—?

FURIA. Yes, all.

CURIUS. Ah, then you doubtless know, too, he himself Is foremost in this daring enterprise? Yet, I adjure you, beg you, think no more Of Catiline!

FURIA. Answer me this alone; 'Tis all I ask of you. Do you go with him?

CURIUS. He is to me a tender father—

FURIA. [Smiling.] He? My Catiline?

CURIUS. Ah!

FURIA. He,—round whom my thoughts Course without rest?

CURIUS. My brain is in a tumult— I hate this man—! Oh, I could murder him!

FURIA. Did you not lately swear you were prepared To do my bidding?

CURIUS. Ask me what you will; In everything I serve you and obey! I only beg,—forget this Catiline.

FURIA. I shall forget him first—when he has stepped Into his grave.

CURIUS. [Draws back.] Ah, you demand that I—?

FURIA. You need not use the steel; you can betray His enterprise—

CURIUS. Murder and treachery At once! Remember, Furia, he is still My foster-father and—

FURIA. —My aim in life! Ah, timid fool,—so you dare speak of love,— Who lack the fortitude to strike him down That stands across your path? Away from me!

[She turns her back on him.]

CURIUS. [Holding her back.] No;—do not leave me! I am in all things willing! A shudder chills me as I look on you; And yet I cannot break this net asunder Wherein you trapped my soul.

FURIA. Then you are willing?

CURIUS. Why do you mock me with such questioning? If I am willing? Have I any will? Your gaze is like the serpent's when 'tis fixed With magic power upon the bird, that circles Wildly about in terror-stricken awe, Drawn ever nearer to the dreadful fangs.

FURIA. Then to your task!

CURIUS. And when I've sacrificed My friendship to my love for you,— what then?

FURIA. I shall forget that Catiline existed. Then will my task be ended. Ask no more!

CURIUS. For this reward I should—?

FURIA. You hesitate? Is then your hope so faint that you forget What gifts a grateful woman can bestow, When first the time—?

CURIUS. By all the powers of night,— I'll not delay! He only stands between us. Then let him perish! Quenched is every spark Of feeling for him; every bond is sundered!— Who are you, lovely vision of the night? Near you I'm turned to marble, burned to ashes. My longing chills me,— terror fires the soul; My love is blended hate and sorcery. Who am I now? I know myself no more; One thing I know; I am not he I was, Ere you I saw. I'll plunge into the deep To follow you! Doomed—doomed is Catiline! I'll to the Capitol. This very night The senate is assembled. Then farewell! A written note betrays his enterprise.

[He goes out hastily.]

FURIA. [To herself.] The heavens grow dark; soon will the lightning play. The end is fast approaching, Catiline;— With measured steps you journey to your grave!

[The Allobrogian ambassadors, AMBIORIX and OLLOVICO, come out of the house without noticing FURIA, who stands half concealed in the shade between the trees.]

AMBIORIX. So then it is decided! Venturesome It was to enter into such a compact.

OLLOVICO. True; Yet their refusal of each righteous claim Opens no other way to liberty. The prize of victory,— should our friends succeed,— Outweighs indeed the perils of the conflict That now awaits us.

AMBIORIX. Brother, so it is!

OLLOVICO. Emancipation from the rule of Rome,— Freedom long lost is surely worth a struggle.

AMBIORIX. Now we must hasten homeward with all speed, Kindling through Gaul the flames of insurrection. It will be easy to persuade the tribes To 'rise up in revolt; they'll follow us And join the partisans of Catiline.

OLLOVICO. Hard will the fight be; mighty still is Rome.

AMBIORIX. It must be risked. Come, Ollovico, come!

FURIA. [Calls warningly to them.] Woe unto you!

AMBIORIX. [Startled.] By all the gods!

OLLOVICO. [Terrified.] Ah, hear! A voice cries warning to us in the dark!

FURIA. Woe to your people!

OLLOVICO. Yonder stands she, brother,— The pale and ill-foreboding shadow. See!

FURIA. Woe unto all who follow Catiline!

AMBIORIX. Home, home! Away! We'll break all promises!

OLLOVICO. A voice has warned us, and we shall obey.

[They go out hurriedly to the right.]

[CATILINE comes out of the house in the background.]

CATILINE. Ah, desperate hope—to think of crushing Rome With such a host of cowards and poltroons! What spurs them on? With frankness they confess— Their only motive is their want and greed. Is it then worth the trouble for such aims To shed men's blood? And what have I to win? What can I gain?

FURIA. [Invisible among the trees.] Revenge, my Catiline!

CATILINE. [Startled.] Who speaks! Who wakes the spirit of revenge From slumber? Came this voice then from the deep Within my soul? Revenge? Yes, that's the word,— My watch-word and my battle-cry. Revenge! Revenge for all the hopes and all the dreams Which ever a vindictive fate destroyed! Revenge for all my years of wasted life!

[The CONSPIRATORS come armed out of the house.]

LENTULUS. Still rest the shades of darkness on the city. Now is it time to break away.

SEVERAL. [Whispering.] Away!

[AURELIA comes out of the side-building without noticing the CONSPIRATORS.]

AURELIA. Beloved,— are you here?

CATILINE. [With a cry.] Aurelia!

AURELIA. Say,— Have you been waiting for me?

[She becomes aware of the Conspirators and rushes to him.]

AURELIA. Gracious gods!

CATILINE. [Thrusts her aside.] Woman, away from me!

AURELIA. Speak, Catiline! These many men in arms—? And you as well—? Oh, you will go—

CATILINE. [Wildly.] Yes, by the spirits of night,— A merry journey! See— this flashing sword! It thirsts for blood! I go—to quench its thirst.

AURELIA. My hope,—my dream! Ah, blissful was my dream! Thus am I wakened from my dreaming—

CATILINE. Silence! Stay here,—or follow! But my heart is cold To tears and lamentations.—Friends, behold How bright the full moon in the west declines! When next that full moon in its orient shines, An avalanche of fire shall sweep the state And all its golden glory terminate. A thousand years from now, when it shall light Mere crumbling ruins in the desert night,— One pillar in the dust of yonder dome Shall tell the weary wanderer: Here stood Rome!

[He rushes out to the right; all follow him.]

THIRD ACT

[CATILINE's camp in a wooded field in Etruria. To the right is seen CATILINE's tent and close by it an old oak tree. A camp fire is burning outside the tent; similar fires are to be seen among the trees in the background. It is night. At intervals the moon breaks through the clouds.]

[STATILIUS lies stretched out asleep by the camp fire. MANLIUS paces back and forth in front of the tent.]

MANLIUS. Such is the way of young and buoyant souls. They slumber on as peaceful and secure As though embosomed in their mothers' arms, Instead of in a forest wilderness. They rest as though they dream some merry game Were held in store for them when they awake, Instead of battle,—the last one, perchance, That will be theirs to fight.

STATILIUS. [Awakes and rises.] Still standing guard? You must be weary? I'll relieve you now.

MANLIUS. Go rest yourself instead. Youth needs his sleep; His untamed passions tax his native strength. 'Tis otherwise when once the hair turns gray, When in our veins the blood flows lazily, And age weighs heavily upon our shoulders.

STATILIUS. Yes, you are right. Thus I too shall in time, An old and hardened warrior—

MANLIUS. Are you sure The fates decreed you such a destiny?

STATILIUS. And pray, why not? Why all these apprehensions? Has some misfortune chanced?

MANLIUS. You think no doubt That we have naught to fear, foolhardy youth?

STATILIUS. Our troops are strongly reenforced—

MANLIUS. Indeed,— With fugitive slaves and gladiators—

STATILIUS. Well,— Grant that they are; together they may prove No little aid, and all the tribes of Gaul Will send us help—

MANLIUS. —Which has not yet arrived.

STATILIUS. You doubt that the Allobroges will keep Their promised word?

MANLIUS. I know these people well From days gone by. However, let that pass. The day that dawns will doubtless bring to light What destinies the gods have set for us.

MANLIUS. But go the rounds, my friend, and ascertain If all the guards perform their proper tasks. For we must fend against a night attack; We know not where the enemy makes his stand.

[STATILIUS goes into the forest.]

MANLIUS. [Alone by the camp fire.] The clouds begin to gather thick and fast; It is a dark and storm-presaging night;— A misty fog hangs heavy on my breast, As though foreboding mishap to us all. Where is it now, that easy carefree spirit With which in former times I went to war? Ah, can it be the weight of years alone That now I feel? Strange—strange, indeed,—last night Even the young seemed sorely out of heart.

MANLIUS. [After a pause.] The gods shall know revenge was not the aim For which I joined and followed Catiline. My wrath flared up within me for a space When first I felt I had been wronged, insulted;— The old blood is not yet entirely cold; Now and again it courses warmly through my veins. But the humiliation is forgotten. I followed Catiline for his own sake; And I shall watch o'er him with zealous care. Here stands he all alone amidst these hosts Of paltry knaves and dissolute companions. They cannot comprehend him,—he in turn Is far too proud to wish to fathom them.

[He throws some branches on the fire and remains standing in silence. CATILINE comes out of the tent.]

CATILINE. [To himself.] Midnight approaches. Everything is hushed;— Only to my poor eyes sleep fails to come. Cold is the night wind; 'twill refresh my soul And give me strength anew— . I sorely need it!

[He becomes aware of MANLIUS.]

CATILINE. 'Tis you, old Manlius? And do you stand guard Alone on such a night?

MANLIUS. Oft have I stood Guard over you in childhood's early days. Say, do you not recall?

CATILINE. Those days are gone; With them, my peace; wherever now I go, I'm haunted by a multitude of visions. All things find shelter in my bosom, Manlius;— Save peace alone. That—that is far away.

MANLIUS. Cast off these gloomy thoughts and take your rest! Remember that the morrow may require Your utmost strength for our deliverance.

CATILINE. I cannot rest. If I but close my eyes One fleeting moment in forgetful slumber, I'm tossed about in strange, fantastic dreams. Here on my couch I lay now, half asleep, When these same visions reappeared again, More strange than ever,— more mysterious And puzzling— . Ah, if I could only know What this forebodes! But no—

MANLIUS. Confide your dream To me. Perhaps I can expound its meaning.

CATILINE. [After a pause.] If I slept or if I waked, scarcely can I say; Visions fast pursued each other in a mad array. Soon a deepening twilight settles over everything; And a night swoops down upon me on her wide-spread wing, Terrible and dark, unpierced, save by the lightning's flare; I am in a grave-like dungeon, filled with clammy air. Lofty is the ceiling and with thunderclouds o'ercast; Multitudes of shadow forms go racing wildly past, Whirl around in roaring eddies, as the ocean wave Draws the raging storm and breaks against a rocky cave. Yet amid this frenzied tumult children often come, Decked in flowers, singing of a half-forgotten home. Soon the darkness round them changes to a vivid glare,— Dimly in the center I descry a lonely pair; Ah, two women,— stern the one and gloomy as the night,— And the other gentle, like the evening in its flight. How familiar to my eyes the two lone figures seemed! With her smiling countenance the one upon me beamed; Like the zigzag lightning flashed the other's piercing eye; Terror seized my soul,— yet on I gazed in ecstasy. Proudly upright stands the one, the other leans in weariness On the solitary table, where they play a game of chess. Pawns they barter, or they

move them now from place to place; — Then the game is lost and won, — she fades away in space, — She who radiantly smiled, ah, she who lost the game; Instantly the bands of children vanish whence they came. Tumult rises; darkness deepens; but from out the night Two eyes fix upon me, in a victor's gloating right; Then my brain reels; I see nothing but those baleful eyes. But what else I dreamed of in that frenzied slumber lies Far within me hidden, buried deep beyond recall. Could I but remember. Gone forever is it all.

MANLIUS. Remarkable, indeed, my Catiline, Is this your dream.

CATILINE. [Meditating.] If I could but remember — But no; my memory fails me —

MANLIUS. Brood no longer Upon these thoughts. For what are dreams, indeed, But pale chimeras only, darkling visions, On nothing founded, and by naught explained?

CATILINE. Yes, you are right; I will no longer brood; — Already I am calm. But go your way; You need some rest. The meanwhile I shall walk In privacy and meditate my plans.

[MANLIUS goes into the forest.]

CATILINE. [Paces for some time back and forth by the camp fire, which is about to go out; then he stops and speaks thoughtfully.] If I could only — . Ah, it is unmanly To brood and be distressed by thoughts like these. And yet, — here in the stillness of the night, This lonely solitude, again I see Rising before me life-like all I dreamed.

[A SHADOW, attired like an old warrior in armor and toga, stems to rise from the earth among the trees a short distance from him.]

CATILINE. [Recoils before THE SHADOW.] Great powers of heaven —!

THE SHADOW. Greetings, Catiline!

CATILINE. What will you have? Who are you, pallid shade?

THE SHADOW. One moment! It is here my right to question, — And you shall answer. Do you no longer know This voice from ages long since passed away?

CATILINE. Methinks I do; yet certain I am not — . But speak, whom seek you at this midnight hour?

THE SHADOW. 'Tis you I seek. Know that this hour alone Is granted me as respite here on earth.

CATILINE. By all the gods! Who are you? Speak!

THE SHADOW. Be calm! Hither I come to call you to account. Why do you envy me the peace of death? Why do you drive me from my earthy dwelling? Why do you mar my rest with memories, That I must seek you, whisper menaces, To guard the honor I so dearly bought?

CATILINE. Alas! this voice—! Somehow I seem to know—

THE SHADOW. What is there left of my imperial power? A shadow like myself; yes, scarcely that. Both sank into the grave—and came to naught. 'Twas dearly bought; dear, dear was it attained. For it I sacrificed all peace in life, And waived all claims to peace beyond the grave. And now you come and want to wrest from me With daring hands what little I have left. Are there not paths enough to noble deeds? Why must you choose the one that I have chosen? I gave up everything in life to power; My name—so dreamed I—should forever stand, Not beaming like a star with friendly lustre, — No, like a flash against the midnight sky! I did not covet fame, the goal of hundreds, For magnanimity and noble deeds; Nor admiration;—far too many share That fate already: so will many more Until the end of time. Of blood and horror I wished to build me my renown and fame. With silent dread, as on some meteor That now appears in mystery and is gone Again, —men should gaze back upon my life, And look askance on me, whom no one ever, Before or since then, dared to emulate. Yes, thus I dreamed and dreamed,—and was deceived. Why did I not surmise, when you stood near me, The secret thoughts then growing in your soul. Yet, Catiline, beware; know that I see Beyond the veil that hides from you the future. Written among the stars—I read your fate!

CATILINE. You read my fate? Expound it then to me!

THE SHADOW. No, first beyond death's gloomy gate
Shall fade away the mists that hide
The gruesome and the nobly great,
Borne ever on by time and tide.
This from thy book of fate alone
A liberated soul may tell thee:
Perish thou shalt by deed thine own,
And yet a stranger's hand shall fell thee.

[THE SHADOW glides away as in a mist.]

CATILINE. [After a pause.] Ah, he has vanished. Was it but a dream? No, no; even here he stood; the moonbeams played Upon his sallow visage. Yes, I knew him! It was the man of blood, the old dictator, Who sallied from his grave to frighten me. He feared lest he should lose the victor's

crown,— Not the reward of honor, but the terror Whereby his memory lives. Are bloodless shades Spurred onward also by the thought of glory?

[Paces to and fro uneasily.]

CATILINE. All things storm in upon me. Now Aurelia In gentle admonition speaks,—and now In me reëchoes Furia's warning cry. Nay, more than that;—out of the grave appear The pallid shadows of a by-gone age. They threaten me. I should now stop and pause? I should turn back? No. I shall venture on Unfaltering;—the victory soon is mine!

[CURIUS comes through the forest in great agitation.]

CURIUS. O Catiline—!

CATILINE. [Surprised.] What, you,—you here, my friend!

CURIUS. I had to—

CATILINE. Wherefore staid you not in town?

CURIUS. Fear prompted me; I had to seek you here.

CATILINE. You rush for my sake blindly into danger. You thoughtless lad! Yet, come into my arms!

[Moves to embrace him.]

CURIUS. [Draws back.] No! Do not touch me! Do not even come near me!

CATILINE. What ails you, my dear Curius?

CURIUS. Up! Break camp! Flee, if you can, even this very hour! On every highway come the enemy troops; Your camp is being surrounded.

CATILINE. Calm yourself; You rave. Speak, has the journey shaken you—?

CURIUS. Oh no; but save yourself while there is time! You are betrayed—

[Prostrates himself before him.]

CATILINE. [Starts back.] Betrayed! What are you saying?

CURIUS. Betrayed by one in friendly guise!

CATILINE. You err; These stormy friends are loyal even as you.

CURIUS. Then woe to you for all their loyalty!

CATILINE. Compose yourself! It is your love for me, Your interest in my safety, that has wakened Imaginary dangers in your mind.

CURIUS. Oh, do you know these words do murder me? But flee! I do entreat you earnestly—

CATILINE. Be calm and speak your mind. Why should I flee? The enemy knows not where I make my stand.

CURIUS. Indeed he does,—he knows your every plan!

CATILINE. What, are you mad? He knows—? Impossible!

CURIUS. Oh, were it so! But use the hour remaining; Still you may save yourself perhaps in flight!

CATILINE. Betrayed? No,—ten times no; impossible!

CURIUS. [Seizes his dagger and holds it out to him.] Catiline, plunge this dagger in my bosom;— Straight through the heart! 'Twas I betrayed your plans!

CATILINE. You? What madness!

CURIUS. Yes, it was in madness! Ask not the reason; scarce I know myself; I say,—I have revealed your every counsel.

CATILINE. [In bitter grief.] Now have you killed my faith in sacred friendship!

CURIUS. Oh, send the dagger home, and torture me No longer with forbearance—!

CATILINE. [Kindly.] Live, my Curius! Arise! You erred;—but I forgive you all.

CURIUS. [Overcome.] O Catiline, my heart is crushed with grief—! But hasten; flee! There is no time to tarry. Soon will the Roman troops invade your camp; They're under way; on every side they come.

CATILINE. Our comrades in the city—?

CURIUS. They are captured;— Some were imprisoned, most of them were killed!

CATILINE. [To himself.] What fate—what fate!

CURIUS. [Again holds out the dagger to him.] Then plunge it in my heart!

CATILINE. [Looks at him calmly.] No, you were but a tool. You acted well—

CURIUS. Oh, let me die and expiate my sin!

CATILINE. I have forgiven you.

CATILINE. [As he goes.] But one thing now is there to choose!

CURIUS. [Jumps up.] Yes, flight!

CATILINE. Heroic death!

[He goes away through the forest.]

CURIUS. 'Tis all in vain! Ruin awaits him here. This mildness is a tenfold punishment! I'll follow him; one thing I shall be granted:— To perish fighting by the hero's side!

[He rushes out. LENTULUS and TWO GLADIATORS come stealing among the trees.]

LENTULUS. [Softly.] Some one was speaking—

ONE OF THE GLADIATORS. Aye, but now all's quiet.

THE OTHER GLADIATOR. Perchance it was the sentinel relieved Of duty.

LENTULUS. That may be. This is the place; Here shall you wait. Are both your weapons sharp, Ground for their purpose?

THE FIRST GLADIATOR. Bright as is the lightning!

THE SECOND GLADIATOR. Mine, too, cuts well. In the last Roman games Two gladiators died beneath this sword.

LENTULUS. Then stand you ready in this thicket here. And when a man, whom I shall designate, Goes toward the tent, then shall you rush out quick And strike him from behind.

THE FIRST GLADIATOR. It shall be done!

[Both GLADIATORS conceal themselves; LENTULUS goes spying around.]

LENTULUS. [To himself.] It is a daring game I here attempt;— Yet must it be performed this very night, If done at all.— If Catiline should fall, No one can lead them on except myself; I'll purchase them with golden promises, And march without delay upon the city, Where still the senate, struck with panic fear, Neglects to arm itself against the danger.

[He goes in among the trees.]

THE FIRST GLADIATOR. [Softly to the other.] Who is this stranger we must fall upon?

THE SECOND GLADIATOR. What matters it to us who he may be? Lentulus pays our hire; the blame is his: He must himself defend the act we do.

LENTULUS. [Returns quickly.] Stand ready now; the man we wait is coming!

[LENTULUS and the GLADIATORS lie in wait among the bushes.]

[Soon after, CATILINE comes through the forest and goes toward the tent.]

LENTULUS. [Whispering.] Out! Fall upon him! Strike him from behind!

[All three rush on CATILINE.]

CATILINE. [Draws his sword and defends himself.] Ah, scoundrels, — do you dare to — ?

LENTULUS. [To the GLADIATORS.] Cut him down!

CATILINE. [Recognizes him.] You, Lentulus, would murder Catiline?

THE FIRST GLADIATOR. [Terrified.] He it is!

THE SECOND GLADIATOR. [Draws back.] Catiline! I'll never use The sword on him. Come flee!

[Both GLADIATORS make their escape.]

LENTULUS. Then die by mine!

[They fight; CATILINE strikes the sword from the hand of Lentulus; the latter tries to escape, but CATILINE holds him fast.]

CATILINE. Murderer! Traitor!

LENTULUS. [Entreating.] Mercy, Catiline!

CATILINE. I spell your plans upon your countenance. You wished to murder me, and put yourself into the chieftain's place. Was it not so?

LENTULUS. Yes, Catiline, it was even so!

CATILINE. [Looks at him with repressed scorn.] What then? If 'tis the power you want, — so let it be!

LENTULUS. Explain, — what do you mean?

CATILINE. I shall resign; And you may lead the army—

LENTULUS. [Surprised.] You resign?

CATILINE. I shall. But be prepared for all events; Know this—our undertaking is revealed: The senate is informed of every plan; Its troops hem us about—

LENTULUS. What do you say?

CATILINE. Now shall I call a council of our friends; Do you come too,— announce your leadership; I shall resign.

LENTULUS. [Detains him.] One moment, Catiline!

CATILINE. Your time is precious; ere the dawn of day You may expect an onslaught—

LENTULUS. [Anxiously.] Hear me, friend! Surely you jest? It is impossible—

CATILINE. Our project, I have told you, is betrayed. Show now your firmness and sagacity!

LENTULUS. Betrayed? Then woe to us!

CATILINE. [Smiles scornfully.] You paltry coward! You tremble *now*;— yet *you* would murder *me*; You think a man like you is called to rule?

LENTULUS. Forgive me, Catiline!

CATILINE. Make your escape By hurried flight, if still it can be done.

LENTULUS. Ah, you permit me then—?

CATILINE. And did you think It was my purpose to forsake this post In such an hour as this? You little know me.

LENTULUS. O, Catiline—!

CATILINE. [Coldly.] Waste not your moments here! Seek your own safety;—I know how to die.

[He turns away from him.]

LENTULUS. [To himself.] I thank you for these tidings, Catiline;— I shall make use of them to serve my end. 'Twill stand me in good stead now that I know This region well; I'll seek the hostile army And guide it hitherward by secret paths, To your destruction and to my salvation.— The serpent that you trample in the dust So arrogantly still retains its sting!

[He goes.]

CATILINE. [After a pause.] This is the trust I built my hopes upon! Thus one by one they leave me. Oh ye gods! Treason and cowardice alone stir up The sullen currents of their slavish souls. Oh, what a fool am I with all my hopes! I would destroy yon viper's nest, that Rome,— Which is long since a heap of sunken ruins.

[The sound of arms is heard approaching; he listens.]

CATILINE. They come, they come! Still are there valiant men Among them. Ah, the joyous clang of steel! The merry clash of shields against each other! Anew the fire kindles in my breast; The reckoning is near,— the mighty hour That settles every doubt. I hail the day!

[MANLIUS, STATILIUS, GABINIUS, and many OTHER CONSPIRATORS come through the forest.]

MANLIUS. Here, Catiline, come your friends and comrades true; In camp I spread the alarm, as you commanded—

CATILINE. And have you told them—?

MANLIUS. Yes,— they know our plight.

STATILIUS. We know it well, and we shall follow you With sword in hand to fight for life and death.

CATILINE. I thank you all, my comrades brave in arms! But do not think, my friends, that life or death Is ours to choose;—our only choice is this: Death in heroic battle with the foe, Or death by torture when like savage beasts We shall be hounded down relentlessly. Ah, which do you prefer? To risk in flight A wretched life prolonged in misery, Or like your proud and worthy sires of old To perish nobly on the battlefield?

GABINIUS. We choose to fight and die!

MANY VOICES. Lead us to death!

CATILINE. Then let us be off! Through death we shall achieve The glorious life of immortality. Our fall, our name, through distant generations Shall be proclaimed with lofty pride—

FURIA. [Calls out behind him among the trees.] —O terror!

SOME VOICES. Behold,— a woman—!

CATILINE. [Startled.] Furia! You—you here? What brought you here?

FURIA. Ah, I must lead you on To your great goal.

CATILINE. Where is my goal, then? Speak!

FURIA. Each mortal seeks his goal in his own way. And you seek yours through ever hopeless strife; The struggle yields defeat and certain death.

CATILINE. Yet also honor and immortal fame! Go, woman! Great and noble is this hour! My heart is closed against your raucous cries.

[AURELIA appears in the door of the tent.]

AURELIA. My Catiline—!

[She stops, terrified at the sight of the throng.]

CATILINE. [Painfully.] Aurelia,—oh, Aurelia!

AURELIA. What is the trouble? All this stir in camp— What is on foot here?

CATILINE. You I could forget! What will your fate be now—?

FURIA. [Whispers scornfully, unnoticed by AURELIA.] Ah, Catiline, Already wavering in your high resolve? Is this your death defiance?

CATILINE. [Flaring up.] No, by the gods!

AURELIA. [Comes nearer.] Oh, speak, beloved! Keep me in doubt no longer—

FURIA. [In an undertone behind him.] Flee with your wife—the while your comrades die!

MANLIUS. Tarry no longer; lead us out to battle—

CATILINE. Oh, what a choice! And yet,—here is no choice;— I must go on,—I dare not stop midway.

CATILINE. [Calls out.] Then follow me to battle on the plain!

AURELIA. [Throws herself in his arms.] Catiline,—do not leave me,—take me with you!

CATILINE. No, stay, Aurelia!

FURIA. [As before.] Take her, Catiline! Worthy your death will be, as was your life, When you are vanquished—in a woman's arms!

CATILINE. [Thrusts AURELIA aside.] Away, you who would rob me of my fame! Death shall o'ertake me in the midst of men. I have a life to atone, a name to clear—

FURIA. Just so; just so, my gallant Catiline!

CATILINE. All things I will uproot from out my soul That bind me to my life of empty dreams! All that is of the past shall henceforth be As if 'twere not—

AURELIA. Oh, cast me not away! By all the love I bear you, Catiline, — I beg you, I adjure, —let us not part!

CATILINE. My heart is dead, my sight is blind to love. From life's great mockery I turn my eyes; And gaze but on the dim, yet mighty star Of fame that is to be!

AURELIA. O gods of mercy!

[She leans faint against the tree outside the tent.]

CATILINE. [To the Warriors.] And now away!

MANLIUS. The din of arms I hear!

SEVERAL VOICES. They come, they come.

CATILINE. Good! We will heed their warning. Long was our night of shame; our dawn is near—. To battle in the crimson sky of morning! By Roman sword, with Roman fortitude, The last of Romans perish in their blood!

[They rush out through the forest; a great alarm, rent with battle-cries, is heard from within the camp.]

FURIA. He is gone forever. My great task in life is done. Cold and rigid we shall find him in the morning sun.

AURELIA. [Aside.] In his passion-glutted bosom then should love no longer dwell? Was it nothing but a dream? His angry words I heard full well.

FURIA. Hark, the weapons clash; already at the brink of death he stands; Soon a noiseless shadow he will hasten toward the spirit lands.

AURELIA. [Startled.] Who are you, prophetic voice, that yonder comes to me, Like the night-owl's cry of warning from some far-off tree! Are you from the clammy underworld of spirits come Hence to lead my Catiline into your gloomy home?

FURIA. Home is ay the journey's goal, and all his wanderings lay Through the reeking swamps of life—

AURELIA. But only for a day. Free and noble was his heart, his spirit strong and true, Till around it serpent-like a poisoned seedling grew.

FURIA. So the plane-tree, too, keeps fresh and green its leafy dress, Till its trunk is smothered in a clinging vine's caress.

AURELIA. Now did you betray your source. For time and time again Echoed from the lips of Catiline this one refrain. You the serpent are, who poisoned all my joy in life, Steeled his heart against my kindness through your deadly strife. From those waking night-dreams well I know your infamy, Like a threat I see you stand between my love and me. With my husband at my side I cherished in my breast Longings for a tranquil life, a home of peace and rest. Ah, a garden-bed I planted in his weary heart; As its fairest ornament our love I hedged apart. Flower and all have you uprooted with malignant hand; In the dust it lies where thriving it did lately stand.

FURIA. Foolish weakling; you would guide the steps of Catiline? Do you not perceive his heart was never wholly thine? Think you that in such a soil your flower can survive? In the sunny springtime only violets can thrive, While the henbane grows in strength beneath a clouded grey; And his soul was long ago a clouded autumn day. All is lost to you. Soon dies the spark within his breast; As a victim of revenge he shall go to his rest.

AURELIA. [With increasing vehemence.] Thus he shall not perish; no, by all the gods of day! To his weary heart my tears will somehow force a way. If I find him pale and gory on the battlefield, I shall throw my arms about him and his bosom shield, Breathe upon his speechless lips the love within my soul, Ease the pain within him and his suffering mind console. Herald of revenge, your victim from you I shall wrest, Bind him to the land of sunshine, to a home of rest; If his eyes be dimmed already, stilled his beating heart, Linked together arm in arm we shall this life depart. Grant me, gods of mercy, in return for what I gave, By the side of him I love, the stillness of the grave.

[She goes.]

FURIA. [Gazes after her.] Seek him, deluded soul;—I have no fear; I hold the victory safe within my hands.

FURIA. The roar of battle grows; its rumble blends With death-cries and the crash of broken shields. Is he perchance now dying? Still alive? Oh, blessed is this hour! The sinking moon Secludes herself in massive thunderclouds. One moment more it will be night anew Ere comes the day;—and with the coming day All will be over. In the dark he dies, As in the dark he lived. O blessed hour!

[She listens.]

FURIA. Now sweeps the wind by, like an autumn gust, And lapses slowly in the far-off distance. The ponderous armies slowly sweep the plain. Like angry ocean billows on they roll, Unyielding, trampling down the fallen dead. Out yonder I hear whines and moans and sighs,— The final lullaby,— wherewith they lull Themselves to rest and all their pallid brothers. Now speaks the night-owl forth to welcome them Into the kingdom of the gloomy shadows.

FURIA. [After a pause.] How still it is. Now is he mine at last,— Aye, mine alone, and mine forevermore. Now we can journey toward the river Lethe— And far beyond where never dawns the day. Yet first I'll seek his bleeding body yonder, And freely glut my eyes upon those features, Hated and yet so fair, ere they be marred By rising sunshine and by watchful vultures.

[She starts to go, but is suddenly startled at something.]

FURIA. What is that gliding o'er the meadow yonder? Is it the misty vapors of the moor That form a picture in the morning chill? Now it draws near.— The shade of Catiline! His spectre—! I can see his misty eye, His broken shield, his sword bereft of blade. Ah, he is surely dead; one thing alone,— Remarkable,— his wound I do not see.

[CATILINE comes through the forest, pale and weary, with drooping head and troubled countenance.]

CATILINE. [To himself.] "Perish thou shalt by deed thine own, And yet a stranger's hand shall fell thee." Such was his prophecy. Now am I fallen— Though struck by no one. Who will solve the riddle?

FURIA. I greet you after battle, Catiline!

CATILINE. Ah, who are you?

FURIA. I am a shadow's shadow.

CATILINE. You, Furia,— you it is! You welcome me?

FURIA. Welcome at last into our common home! Now we can go— two shades— to Charon's bark. Yet first— accept the wreath of victory.

[She picks some flowers, which she weaves into a wreath during the following.]

CATILINE. What make you there?

FURIA. Your brow I shall adorn. But wherefore come you hither all alone? A chieftain's ghost ten thousand dead should follow. Then where are all your comrades, Catiline?

CATILINE. They slumber, Furia!

FURIA. Ah, they slumber still?

CATILINE. They slumber still,—and they will slumber long. They slumber all. Steal softly through the forest, Peer out across the plain,—disturb them not! There will you find them in extended ranks. They fell asleep lulled by the clang of steel; They fell asleep,—and wakened not, as I did, When in the distant hills the echoes died. A shadow now you called me. True, I am A shadow of myself. But do not think Their slumber yonder is so undisturbed And void of dreams. Oh, do not think so!

FURIA. Speak! What may your comrades dream?

CATILINE. Ah, you shall hear.— I led the battle with despairing heart, And sought my death beneath the play of swords. To right and left I saw my comrades fall; Statilius first,—then one by one the rest; My Curius fell trying to shield my breast; All perished there beneath Rome's flaming sword,— The sword that me alone passed by untouched. Yes, Catiline was spared by the sword of Rome. Half-stunned I stood there with my broken shield, Aware of nothing as the waves of battle Swept o'er me. I recovered first my senses When all grew still again, and I looked up And saw the struggle seething—far behind me! How long I stood there? Only this I know,— I stood alone among my fallen comrades. But there was life within those misty eyes; The corners of their mouths betrayed a smile; And they addressed their smile and gaze to me, Who stood alone erect among the dead,— Who had for ages fought for them and Rome,— Who stood there lonely and disgraced, untouched By Roman sword. Then perished Catiline.

FURIA. False have you read your fallen comrades' dreams; False have you judged the reason of your fall. Their smiles and glances were but invitations To sleep with them—

CATILINE. Yes, if I only could!

FURIA. Have courage,—spectre of a former hero; Your hour of rest is near. Come, bend your head;— I shall adorn you with the victor's crown.

[She offers the wreath to him.]

CATILINE. Bah,—what is that? A poppy-wreath—!

FURIA. [With wild glee.] Well, yes; Are not such poppies pretty? They will glow Around your forehead like a fringe of blood.

CATILINE. No, cast the wreath away! I hate this crimson.

FURIA. [Laughs aloud.] Ah, you prefer the pale and feeble shades?
Good! I shall bring the garland of green rushes That Sylvia carried in her
dripping locks, The day she came afloat upon the Tiber?

CATILINE. Alas, what visions—!

FURIA. Shall I bring you rather The thorny brambles from the market-
place, With crimson-spots, the stain of civic blood, That flowed at your
behest, my Catiline?

CATILINE. Enough!

FURIA. Or would you like a crown of leaves From the old winter oak near
mother's home, That withered when a young dishonored woman With
piercing cries distraught leaped in the river?

CATILINE. Pour out at once your measures of revenge Upon my head—

FURIA. I am your very eye,— Your very memory, your very doom.

CATILINE. But wherefore now?

FURIA. His goal at length attained, The traveller spent looks back from
whence he came.

CATILINE. Have I then reached my goal? Is this the goal? I am no longer
living,— nor yet buried. Where lies the goal?

FURIA. In sight,—if you but will.

CATILINE. A will I have no longer; my will perished When all the things I
willed once, came to naught.

CATILINE. [Waves his arms.] Away,—away from me, ye sallow shades!
What claim you here of me, ye men and women? I cannot give you—! Oh,
this multitude—!

FURIA. To earth your spirit still is closely bound! These thousand-
threaded nets asunder tear! Come, let me press this wreath upon your
locks,— 'Tis gifted with a strong and soothing virtue; It kills the memory,
lulls the soul to rest!

CATILINE. [Huskily.] It kills the memory? Dare I trust your word? Then
press your poison-wreath upon my forehead.

FURIA. [Puts the wreath on his head.] Now it is yours! Thus decked you
shall appear Before the prince of darkness, Catiline!

CATILINE. Away! away! I yearn to go below;— I long to pass into the
spirit lands. Let us together go! What holds me here? What stays my

steps? Behind me here I feel Upon the morning sky a misty star;— It holds me in the land of living men; It draws me as the moon attracts the sea.

FURIA. Away! Away!

CATILINE. It beckons and it twinkles. I cannot follow you until this light is quenched entirely, or by clouds obscured,— I see it clearly now; 'tis not a star; It is a human heart, throbbing and warm; It binds me here; it fascinates and draws me As draws the evening star the eye of children.

FURIA. Then stop this beating heart!

CATILINE. What do you mean?

FURIA. The dagger in your belt— . A single thrust,— The star will vanish and the heart will die That stand between us like an enemy.

CATILINE. Ah, I should—? Sharp and shining is the dagger—

CATILINE. [With a cry.] Aurelia! O Aurelia, where—where are you? Were you but here—! No, no,—I will not see you! And yet methinks all would be well again, And peace would come, if I could lay my head Upon your bosom and repent—repent!

FURIA. And what would you repent?

CATILINE. Oh, everything! That I have been, that I have ever lived.

FURIA. 'Tis now too late—too late! Whence now you stand No path leads back again.—Go try it, fool! Now am I going home. Place your head Upon her breast and see if there you find The blessed peace your weary soul desires.

FURIA. [With increasing wildness.] Soon will the thousand dead rise up again; Dishonored women will their numbers join; And all,—aye, they will all demand of you The life, the blood, the honor you destroyed. In terror you will flee into the night,— Will roam about the earth on every strand, Like old Actean, hounded by his dogs,— A shadow hounded by a thousand shades!

CATILINE. I see it, Furia. Here I have no peace. I am an exile in the world of light! I'll go with you into the spirit realms;— The bond that binds me I will tear asunder.

FURIA. Why grope you with the dagger?

CATILINE. She shall die.

[The lightning strikes and the thunder rolls.]

FURIA. The mighty powers rejoice at your resolve!— See, Catiline,— see, yonder comes your wife.

[AURELIA comes through the forest in an anxious search.]

AURELIA. Where shall I find him? Where—where can he be! I've searched in vain among the dead—

[Discovers him.]

AURELIA. Great heavens,— My Catiline!

[She rushes toward him.]

CATILINE. [Bewildered.] Speak not that name again!

AURELIA. You are alive?

[Is about to throw herself in his arms.]

CATILINE. [Thrusting her aside.] Away! I'm not alive.

AURELIA. Oh, hear me, dearest—!

CATILINE. No, I will not hear! I hate you. I see through your cunning wiles. You wish to chain me to a living death. Cease staring at me! Ah, your eyes torment me,— They pierce like daggers through my very soul! Ah, yes, the dagger! Die! Come, close your eyes—

[He draws the dagger and seizes her by the hand.]

AURELIA. Keep guard, oh gracious gods, o'er him and me!

CATILINE. Quick, close your eyes; close them, I say;—in them I see the starlight and the morning sky—. Now shall I quench the heavenly star of dawn!

[The thunder rolls again.]

CATILINE. Your heart; your blood! Now speak the gods of life Their last farewell to you and Catiline!

[He lifts the dagger toward her bosom; she escapes into the tent; he pursues her.]

FURIA. [Listens.] She stretches out her hand imploringly. She pleads with him for life. He hears her not. He strikes her down! She reels in her own blood!

[CATILINE comes slowly out of the tent with the dagger in his hand.]

CATILINE. Now am I free. Soon I shall cease to be. Now sinks my soul in vague oblivion. My eyes are growing dim, my hearing faint, As if through rushing waters. Ah, do you know What I have slain with this my little dagger? Not her alone,—but all the hearts on earth,— All living things, all things that grow and bloom;— The starlight have I dimmed, the crescent moon, The flaming sun. Ah, see,—it fails to rise; 'Twill never rise again; the sun is dead. Now is the whole wide realm of earth transformed Into a huge and clammy sepulchre, Its vault of leaden grey;—beneath this vault Stand you and I, bereft of light and darkness, Of death and life,—two restless exiled shadows.

FURIA. Now stand we, Catiline, before our goal!

CATILINE. No, one step more—before I reach my goal. Relieve me of my burden! Do you not see, I bend beneath the corpse of Catiline? A dagger through the corpse of Catiline!

[He shows her the dagger.]

CATILINE. Come, Furia, set me free! Come, take this dagger;— On it the star of morning I impaled;— Take it—and plunge it straightway through the corpse; Then it will loose its hold, and I am free.

FURIA. [Takes the dagger.] Your will be done, whom I have loved in hate! Shake off your dust and come with me to rest.

[She buries the dagger deep in his heart; he sinks down at the foot of the tree.]

CATILINE. [After a moment comes to consciousness again, passes his hand across his forehead, and speaks faintly.] Now, mysterious voice, your prophecy I understand! I shall perish by my own, yet by a stranger's hand. Nemesis has wrought her end. Shroud me, gloom of night! Raise your billows, murky Styx, roll on in all your might! Ferry me across in safety; speed the vessel on Toward the silent prince's realm, the land of shadows wan. Two roads there are running yonder; I shall journey dumb Toward the left—

AURELIA. [From the tent, pale and faltering, her bosom bloody.] —no, toward the right! Oh, toward Elysium!

CATILINE. [Startled.] How this bright and lurid picture fills my soul with dread! She herself it is! Aurelia, speak,—are you not dead?

AURELIA. [Kneels before him.] No, I live that I may still your agonizing cry,— Live that I may lean my bosom on your breast and die.

CATILINE. Oh, you live!

AURELIA. I did but swoon; though my two eyes grew blurred, Dimly yet I followed you and heard your every word. And my love a spouse's strength again unto me gave;— Breast to breast, my Catiline, we go into the grave!

CATILINE. Oh, how gladly would I go! Yet all in vain you sigh. We must part. Revenge compels me with a hollow cry. You can hasten, free and blithesome, forth to peace and light; I must cross the river Lethe down into the night.

[The day dawns in the background.]

AURELIA. [Points toward the increasing light.] No, the terrors and the gloom of death love scatters far. See, the storm-clouds vanish; faintly gleams the morning star.

AURELIA. [With uplifted arms.] Light is victor! Grand and full of freshness dawns the day! Follow me, then! Death already speeds me on his way.

[She sinks down over him.]

CATILINE. [Presses her to himself and speaks with his last strength.] Oh, how sweet! Now I remember my forgotten dream, How the darkness was dispersed before a radiant beam, How the song of children ushered in the new-born day. Ah, my eye grows dim, my strength is fading fast away; But my mind is clearer now than ever it has been: All the wanderings of my life loom plainly up within. Yes, my life a tempest was beneath the lightning blaze; But my death is like the morning's rosy-tinted haze.

[Bends over her.]

CATILINE. You have driven the gloom away; peace dwells within my breast. I shall seek with you the dwelling place of light and rest!

CATILINE. [He tears the dagger quickly out of his breast and speaks with dying voice.] The gods of dawn are smiling in atonement from above; All the powers of darkness you have conquered with your love!

[During the last scene FURIA has withdrawn farther and farther into the background and disappears at last among the trees. CATILINE's head sinks down on AURELIA's breast; they die.]

THE END

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