

I will pretend my brain with grief dis-
tracted;
It may gain easy credit, and, beside
The taking off examination
For great Columbo's death, it makes
what act 319
I do, in that believed want of my reason,
Appear no crime, but my defense. Look
down,
Soul of my lord, from thy eternal shade,
And unto all thy blessed companions
boast
Thy duchess busy to revenge thy ghost!
Exit.

[SCENE iii.

A lonely spot outside the city.]

*Enter Columbo, Hernando, Alphonso, Colo-
nel.*

COL. Hernando, now I love thee, and do
half
Repent the affront my passion threw
upon thee.

HER. You wo' not be too prodigal o' your
penitence.

COL. This makes good thy nobility of
birth;

Thou mayst be worth my anger and my
sword,

If thou dost execute as daringly
As thou provok'st a quarrel. I did think
Thy soul a starveling, or asleep.

HER. You'll find it
Active enough to keep your spirit wak-
ing,

Which, to exasperate, for yet I think 10
It is not high enough to meet my rage—
D'e smile?

COL. This noise is worth it.—Gentle-
men,

I'm sorry this great soldier has engaged
Your travail; all his business is to talk.

HER. A little of your lordship's patience.
You shall have other sport, and swords
that will

Be as nimble 'bout your heart as you can
wish.

'Tis pity more than our two single lives
Should be at stake.

COLONEL. Make that no scruple, sir.

HER. To him then that survives, if fate
allow 20

That difference, I speak, that he may tell
The world I came not hither on slight
anger,
But to revenge my honor, stained and
trampled on
By this proud man. When general, he
commanded
My absence from the field.

COL. I do remember,

And I'll give your soul now a discharge.

HER. I come

To meet it, if your courage be so fortu-
nate.

But there is more than my own injury
You must account for, sir, if my sword
prosper,

Whose point and every edge is made more
keen 30

With young Alvarez' blood, in which I
had

A noble interest. Does not that sin be-
numb

Thy arteries, and turn the guilty flowings
To trembling jelly in thy veins? Canst
hear

Me name that murder, and thy spirits
not

Struck into air, as thou wert shot by
some

Engine from heaven?

COL. You are the duchess' champion!

Thou hast given me a quarrel now. I
grieve

It is determined all must fight, and I

Shall lose much honor in his fall.

HER. That duchess 40
(Whom but to mention with thy breath
is sacrilege),

An orphan of thy making, and con-
demned

By thee to eternal solitude, I come

To vindicate; and, while I am killing
thee,

By virtue of her prayers sent up for
justice,

At the same time in heaven I am par-
doned for 't.

COL. I cannot hear the bravo.

HER. Two words more,
And take your chance. Before you all I
must

Pronounce that noble lady without
knowledge 49

Or thought of what I undertake for her.

Poor soul, she's now at her devotions,
 Busy with heaven, and wearing out the
 earth
 With her stiff knees, and bribing her
 good angel
 With treasures of her eyes, to tell her
 lord
 How much she longs to see him. My
 attempt

Needs no commission from her. Were I
 A stranger in Navarre, the inborn right
 Of every gentleman to Alvarez' loss
 Is reason to engage their swords and
 lives 59

Against the common enemy of virtue.
 COL. Now have you finished? I have an
 instrument

Shall cure this noise, and fly up to thy
 tongue

To murder all thy words.

HER. One little knot
 Of phlegm, that clogs my stomach, and
 I ha' done:

You have an uncle, called a cardinal.
 Would he were lurking now about thy
 heart,

That the same wounds might reach you
 both, and send

Your reeling souls together! Now have
 at you!

ALPH. We must not, sir, be idle.

They fight; Columbo's Second slain.

HER. What think you now of praying?

COL. Time enough. 70

He kills Hernando's Second.

Commend me to my friend; the scales
 are even.

I would be merciful, and give you time
 Now to consider of the other world;

You'll find your soul benighted pres-
 ently.

HER. I'll find my way i' th' dark.

*They fight, and close; Columbo gets both the
 swords, and Hernando takes up the Sec-
 ond's weapon.*

COL. A stumble's dangerous.
 Now ask thy life. Ha!

HER. I despise to wear it,
 A gift from any but the first bestower.

COL. I scorn a base advantage. Ha!
Columbo throws away one of the swords.

They fight; Hernando wounds Columbo.

HER. I am now
 Out of your debt.

COL. Th'ast done 't and I forgive thee.
 Give me thy hand. When shall we meet
 again? 80

HER. Never, I hope.

COL. I feel life ebb apace, yet I'll look
 upwards,

And show my face to heaven. [Dies.]

HER. The matter's done;
 I must not stay to bury him. Exit.

ACT V. [SCENE I.]

A garden.

Enter two Lords.

1 Lo. Columbo's death doth much afflict
 the king.

2 Lo. I thought the cardinal would have
 lost his wits

At first, for 's nephew; it drowns all the
 talk

Of the other that were slain.

1 [Lo.] We are friends.
 I do suspect Hernando had some interest,
 And knew how their wounds came.

2 [Lo.] His flight confirms it,
 For whom the cardinal has spread his
 nets.

1 [Lo.] He is not so weak to trust himself
 at home

To his enemy's gripe.

2 [Lo.] All strikes not me so much
 As that the duchess, most oppressed
 lady, 10

Should be distracted, and before Co-
 lumbo

Was slain.

1 [Lo.] But that the cardinal should be
 made

Her guardian is to me above that wonder.

2 [Lo.] So it pleased the king; and she,
 with that small stock

Of reason left her, is so kind and smooth
 Upon him.

1 [Lo.] She's turned a child again. A
 madness,

That would ha' made her brain and blood
 boil high,

In which distemper she might ha'
 wrought something—

2 [Lo.] Had been to purpose.

1 [Lo.] The cardinal is cunning, and, how-
 e'er 20