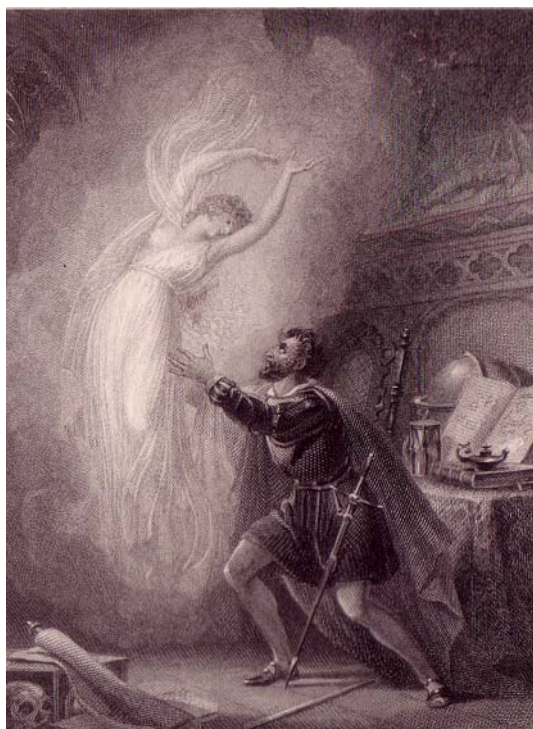


Manfred

Lord Byron

text based on Byron's manuscript usage

edited by Peter Cochran



Finden's engravings: Manfred and Astarte.

In European terms, *Manfred* was the most celebrated and influential of all Byron's works. It was translated into German, for instance, eighteen times during the nineteenth century – once by Wagner's uncle. Byron had little idea, at first, what he had written, until his anger at the way Murray and Gifford interfered with his text forced him to realise how proprietorial he felt about it.

Often ignored is the fact that *Manfred* is Byron's first full dramatic piece, done when memories of Drury Lane and its capacity for spectacular scenery would have been fresh in his mind. I have no evidence for my theory that *Manfred* is a role written for Edmund Kean. The presence of the short, dark, but mesmeric Kean behind such verse figures as Conrad in *The Corsair* has often been noted: here at last, in *Manfred*, was a role he might play.

Some mystery surrounds the play's writing. Its draft manuscript is – unusually for Byron – undated, and Hobhouse, who may be supposed to have been with Byron for much of the time of its composition, appears never to register that it is in progress.¹ If I am right, and the notes to Thomas Taylor's translation of Pausanias are a major influence on the way Byron creates its demon-hierarchy,² then he is already thinking about it between May 1st (when he is at Brussels) and June 23rd 1816 (when he is at Evian) for he asks Hobhouse for Taylor's book on those dates;³ and as Hobhouse arrives at Diodati on August 26th (with Taylor's Pausanias, we must assume: he promises on July 9th to bring it)⁴ it's unlikely that anything beyond the very first scene was written before late August. The Alpine scenes in Act I and II

1: See Cochran, "Nobody has seen it" – *Byron's First Letter Announcing Manfred*, *Byron Journal*, 1996, pp.68-76.

2: See Cochran, *Manfred and Thomas Taylor*, *Byron Journal* 2001, pp.62-71.

3: BLJ V 74 and 80.

4: BB 228.

bear a close relationship with Byron's Alpine Journal (September 17th-29th), as the notes below will show; but, as Jerome McGann writes,⁵ stanzas 5 and 6 of the Incantation in the first scene is on paper with a *fleur-de-lys* watermark of a kind Byron used in 1813 and 1814. The Incantation was fair-copied, in July 1816, by Claire Clairmont, in the notebook which also contains her version of *Childe Harold III*, and had already been published in late November or early December 1816, in *The Prisoner of Chillon, and Other Poems*. See my notes below for the suspicion of a link between the Incantation and Coleridge's *Christabel*.

The revised and received Third Act seems to have been drafted at Rome by May 5th 1817,⁶ Byron having arrived in that city on April 29th.

Manfred is a much deeper fellow than any of Byron's previous protagonists; Childe Harold makes no pretence to being a philosopher, or a theologian of dualism, still less a sun-worshipper, and The Giaour, Conrad, Selim and Alp appear not to bother with the questions which have obsessed Manfred; though his indifference and hostility to Christianity is shared by The Giaour, at least.

The play borrows from so many mythologies that even Byron was self-conscious about it: "... a mixed mythology of my own – which you may suppose is somewhat of the strangest" was the way he alerted Kinnaird, on March 25th 1817:⁷ an "Olla Podrida" was what his concoction was called in an early review, by William Roberts.⁸ Peacock, always on the alert for absurdities in Byron, gives a note to *Nightmare Abbey*:

According to Mr. Toobad, the present period would be the reign of Ahrimanes. Lord Byron seems to be of the same opinion, by the use he has made of Ahrimanes in "Manfred"; where the great Alastor, or Καχος Δαιμων, of Persia, is hailed king of the world by the Nemesis of Greece, in concert with three of the Scandinavian Valkyræ, under the name of the Destinies; the astrological spirits of the alchemists of the middle ages; an elemental witch, transplanted from Denmark to the Alps; and a chorus of Dr. Faustus's devils, who come in the last act for a soul. It is difficult to conceive where this heterogeneous mythological company could have originally met, except at a table d'hôte, like the six kings in "Candide".⁹

Peacock omits the Neo-Platonist Thomas Taylor, from whom Byron derived the revolutionary idea that Man could damn himself without help from any Evil Principle. As George Sand wrote, Manfred is "... Faust délivré de l'odieuse compagnie de Méphistophélès".¹⁰ It is the superiority Manfred displays to all the transcendental powers he encounters which makes him worrying. He is equally indifferent to the persuasions of chamoix-hunters, witches, demons and abbots, and is self-destructive purely on his own terms – not at all like Faust, or Faustus, who need and receive help in their self-destruction (and redemption, in the case of Faust). Manfred has no-one to blame for his own doom but himself; he is *cunning in [his] overthrow, / The careful pilot of [his] proper woe*.

Behind Manfred's need for oblivion at all costs may be Byron's self-horror at the way, late in 1815 and early in 1816, he had wilfully destroyed the happiness of a wife who loved him, whom he despised because she loved him, and whom he had forced to leave their home, shortly after she had born him their child. His behaviour had been so extreme that many

5: CPW III 464.

6: See Cochran, "A higher and more extended comprehension": B.'s three weeks in Rome, Keats-Shelley Review 2001, pp.49-63.

7: BLJ V 195.

8: *The British Critic*, 2nd series, VIII, July 1817, RR BI 275.

9: Peacock, *Nightmare Abbey*, note to Chapter IV.

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

about him were convinced that he was either ill or insane. Astarte – all that *Manfred* offers by way of heroine – is often taken, by those intent on creating sensation at all costs, to be a version of his half-sister Augusta; but I'd argue that in her remoteness and verbal economy Astarte is closer to Annabella. Annabella could be a very effective rhetorician (on paper, in private), but in public she said as little as possible. Even her statements about Byron's cruelty – made to convince her family and legal advisers that she had a good case – are understated. He married the woman to whom, even in 1812, he was comparing to Emma in Maria Edgeworth's *The Modern Griselda*,¹¹ knowing her to be, in her infinite patience, his perfect victim. The manipulative hypocrisy whereby, knowing that the outcome would be cruel and disastrous, he made her his wife, and his affectation of not understanding what, when she left the house, all the fuss was about, seem gross even after two centuries, and deserve the implicit critique he made of them himself in *Manfred*:

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,
By thy unfathomed gulphs of Guile,
By that most seeming virtuous eye,
By thy shut soul's Hypocrisy,
By the perfection of thine art
Which passed for human thine own heart,
By thy delight in others' pain,
And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
I call upon thee! and compell
Thyself to be thy proper Hell!¹²

In so far as he knows himself to have placed himself beyond the pale of human tolerance, *Manfred* is Byron.

Contemporary Reactions

Many reviewers were too polite to say in what way they felt Byron had gone too far with *Manfred*, but inferring what they meant wasn't hard:

This drama is interesting, yet there are in it domestic allusions, from which works of a dramatic nature should ever be free.¹³

Manfred has exiled himself from society; and what is to be the ground of our compassion for the exile? Simply the commission of one of the most revolting of crimes. He has committed incest!¹⁴

We hope, for the sake of manhood and morality, that the rumour is incorrect which has identified his inmost feelings with the subject before us ...¹⁵

The same reviewer even implied the play should be banned, on the grounds that it makes incest attractive:

We sincerely recommend Lord Byron to reflect upon the dangers that may accrue to youth and inexperience from a collision with his popular pages, if crime is again to be invested with a

11: BLJ II 199; Emma is the gentle, charitable heroine, contrasting with the eponymous one.

12: *Manfred*, I i, 252-51.

13: *La Belle Assemblée* 1817; at *The Romantics Reviewed*, ed. Reiman, Garland 1972 ("RR"), 107.

14: *Gentleman's Magazine* July 1817; RR 1107.

15: *Theatrical Inquisitor* August 1817; RR 2266.

garment that moral truth should tear in abhorrence from her polluted shoulders. This book must either be suppressed, or we shall proscribe it altogether.¹⁶

Many also objected to what they saw as its slipshod qualities, in versification and linguistic precision:

Though generally flowing, vigorous and sonorous, it is too often slovenly and careless to a great degree; and there are in the very finest passages, so many violations of the plainest rules of blank verse, that we suspect Lord Byron has a very imperfect knowledge of that finest of all music, and has yet much to learn before his language can be well adapted to dramatic compositions.¹⁷

In the invocation [*I i 28 et seq: Mysterious Agency!*] our readers will clearly perceive, that Lord Byron had the Prospero of Shakespeare in his view, but we cannot complement him on the success of his imitation. How can a “spirit dwell in subtler essence?” The essence of a spirit may perhaps be called subtle; but how a spirit, or any thing else, can dwell in essence (except it be of anchovies), we are at a loss to comprehend.¹⁸

Others objected to Byron’s plagiarism:

Now the whole of this idea [*II iv, opening: The Hymn of the Spirits to Arimanes*] is taken almost word for word from a very silly and disgusting tale, entitled VATHEK, which for various reasons we have omitted to notice ...¹⁹

The play was questioned from the point of view of incident, character, and theological consistency:

Upon this non-descript species of drama our observations will be but few. Of incident it has but little, of plot it has none. There is nothing to interest attention, nothing to raise expectation. Of the hero we know nothing, we are taught nothing, and therefore we care nothing. In the characters there is nothing remarkable, except a strange jumble of all the mythologies which ever existed. The fire worship of the Persians, the Nemesis of the Greeks, the fairy tales of our nursery, are brought into action, and what is worst of all, are combined with the appearance of Christianity. The least that can be said of this *Olla Podrida* is, that in taste it is execrable, in execution absurd.²⁰

Byron’s qualifications as a playwright were called into question:

It would be an idle parade of criticism to enter into the merits of this performance, as a specimen of dramatic composition. It has none of the properties of this kind of writing, but the division into scenes, and the conduct of the story by the means of dialogue. It affords, indeed, a pretty good ground for inferring the unfitness of the poet for this province of the art.²¹

Even Francis Jeffrey, who had a high opinion of the work (see below), wrote:

This piece is properly entitled a dramatic Poem – for it is merely poetical, and is not at all a drama or play in the modern acceptance of that term.²²

16: *Theatrical Inquisitor* August 1817; RR 2269.

17: John Wilson in *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Monthly Magazine* June 1817; RR 124.

18: *British Critic* July 1817; RR 271.

19: *Ibid*; RR 273.

20: *Ibid*; RR 275.

21: William Roberts in *The British Review* August 1817; RR 453.

22: Francis Jeffrey in *The Edinburgh Review* August 1817; RR 882.

The play is written with all that intensity of thought, with all that depth and force of colouring, so peculiar to the works of the noble author. The character of Manfred is sketched with a strong and masterly hand, nor have any pains been spared to clothe the preternatural ministers that are introduced, with the sublime horrors that belong to their “sightless substances;” but having no diversity of incident or plot, this tragedy, however adapted for the closet, is quite unfitted for the stage, where, indeed, it has not been offered, and could not possibly appear but to disadvantage. Lord Byron is not to be comprehended by every one, and least of all by the *crowd*.²³

Byron was accused of being interested only in extremes of human deformity:

The mischief that lurks in all Lord Byron’s productions is this – they are lying representations of human nature; they bring qualities of a most contradictory kind into close alliance; and so shape them into seeming union as to confound sentiments, which, for the sake of sound morality and social security, should be for ever kept contrasted, and at polar extremities with respect to each other.²⁴

Shakspeare has seldom conceived a monster, and then brought him but rarely into action; Lord Byron’s joy in the contemplation of monsters.²⁵

Here is language full of nerve, and poetry clad in beauty, but like the splendid garb of a dwarf, or the fabled mantle of a giant, they cannot hide the form of deformity, or cheat us into a belief that we behold “nature’s fair proportion”.²⁶

One voice alone stood out in the midst of this outraged conventionality; it was that of Francis Jeffrey in the *Edinburgh Review*. His appreciative account started,

This is a very strange – not a very pleasing – but unquestionably a very powerful and most poetical production.

... and concluded with a comparison of *Manfred* with *Dr Faustus*:

But these, and many other smooth and fanciful verses in this curious old drama [*Dr Faustus*], prove nothing, we think, against the originality of Manfred; for there is nothing to be found there of the pride, the abstraction, and the heartrooted misery in which that originality consists. Faustus is a vulgar sorcerer, tempted to sell his soul to the Devil for the ordinary price of sensual pleasure, and earthly power and glory – and who shrinks and shudders in agony when the forfeit comes to be exacted. The style, too, of Marlow, though elegant and scholarlike, is weak and childish compared with the depth and force of much of what we have quoted from Lord Byron; and the disgusting buffoonery and low farce of which his piece is principally made up, place it much more in contrast, than in any terms of comparison, with that of his noble successor. In the tone and pitch of the composition, as well as in the character of the diction in the more solemn parts, the piece before us reminds us much more of the Prometheus of Æschylus, than of any more modern performance. The tremendous solitude of the principal person – the supernatural beings with whom alone he holds communion – the guilt – the firmness – the misery – are all points of resemblance to which the grandeur of the poetic imagery only gives a more striking effect. The chief differences are, that the subject of the Greek poet was sanctified and exalted by the established belief of his country, and that his terrors are nowhere tempered with the sweetness which breathes from so many passages of his English rival.²⁷

23: *Lady’s Monthly Museum* August 1817; RR 1251.

24: *British Review* August 1817; RR 453.

25: *Critical Review* June 1817; RR 670.

26: *European Magazine* August 1817; RR 962.

27: Francis Jeffrey in *The Edinburgh Review*; RR 888.

For Byron's response, see his letter to Murray of October 12th 1817 (BLJ V 267-9). For relevant parts of the letter, and for more on *Manfred* and *Faust*, *Manfred* and *Faustus*, and so on, see essays on this website.

Material in red represents Byron's first thoughts for Act III. For the story of its rejection, see notes.

This edition is based on the rough draft at the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, and the fair copy and associated letter in the John Murray Archive, collated with the editions of E.H.Coleridge and J.J.McGann. It differs from the next text on this website in that it presents the play in a form as close as possible to the way in which it was written – with Byron's spelling, speech-prefixes centred, and a plethora of dashes, which readers can interpret in various ways. If students want a text which is more accommodating (as well as being twelve pages shorter, thanks to the space saved), then the next one is for them.

Manfred. A Dramatic Poem.

“There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in your philosophy.”

*The scene of the drama is amongst the higher Alps,
partly in the castle of Manfred,
and partly in the mountains.*

Act I scene i.

*Manfred*²⁸ alone. Scene, a Gothic Gallery. Time, midnight.

Manfred.

The Lamp must be replenished, but even then It will not burn so long as I must watch; My Slumbers – if I slumber – are no sleep, But a continuance of enduring thought, Which then I can resist not; in my heart	5
There is a Vigil – and these eyes but close To look within – and yet I live, and bear The aspect and the form of living men. But Grief should be the Instructor of the wise; Sorrow is knowledge: ²⁹ they who know the most	10
Must mourn the deepest o’er the fatal truth – The Tree of Knowledge is not that of Life. Philosophy and science – and the springs Of wonder – and the wisdom of the World – I have essayed, and in my mind there is	15
A power to make these subject to itself, But they avail not; I have done men good And I have met with good even among men – But this availed not; I have had my foes, And none have baffled – many fallen before me –	20
But this availed not: Good – or evil – life – Powers – passions – all I see in other beings Have been to me as rain unto the sands;	

28: *Manfred*: the name comes in part from the *Purgatorio* (III 121-4) in part from Walpole’s *The Castle of Otranto* (1764) but in part from *Bertram, or the Castle of St. Aldobrand*, by Charles Maturin (1782-1824) a play which had been mounted on B.’s recommendation, and ran, from May 9 1816, for twenty-two consecutive nights – a great success. Murray printed seven editions in the first year. B. was impressed by the piece (see his letter to Maturin of 21 December 1815, offering to get George Lamb to re-write some unsatisfactory passages – BLJ IV 336) and certainly took note of the name of the protagonist’s hideaway:

... Count Bertram,
Whose vessel had from Manfredonia’s coast
Been traced towards this realm ... (IV i)
On Manfredonia’s wild and wooded shore
His desperate followers awed the regions round ... (IV i)

Bertram (the part was created by Kean) is a gloomy misanthrope, like Manfred, who pursues and destroys the woman he loves; the play is based on a triangular love situation such as B. had exploited in *The Giaour, Lara*, and so on.

29: *Sorrow is knowledge*: see *Ecclesiastes* I, 18: *For in much wisdom is much grief: and he that increaseth knowledge increaseth sorrow.*

Since that all nameless hour, I have no dread –
 And feel the curse to have no natural fear,³⁰ 25
 Nor fluttering thro' that beats with hopes or wishes,
 Or lurking love of something on the Earth.
 Now to my task. —

Mysterious Agency!
 Ye Spirits of the unbounded Universe!
 Whom I have sought in darkness and in light, 30
 Ye! who do compass earth about – and dwell
 In subtler essence – Ye to whom the tops
 Of mountains inaccessible are haunts,
 And Earth's and Ocean's caves familiar things!
 I call upon ye by the written charm 35
 Which gives me power upon you³¹ – Rise! – Appear!

(a pause)

They come not yet. – Now by the voice of him
 Who is the first among you³² – by this sign
 Which makes you tremble – by the claims of him
 Who is undying³³ – Rise – Appear – Appear — 40

(a pause)

If it be so. – Spirits of Earth and Air!
 Ye shall not now elude me! By a power
 Deeper than all yet urged – a tyrant-spell
 Which had its birthplace in a Star condemned³⁴ –
 The burning wreck of a demolished World – 45
 A wandering Hell in the eternal Space –
 By the strong curse which is upon my Soul³⁵ –
 The thought which is within me and around me –
 I do compel you to my will – Appear! –

*A Star is seen at the darker end of the Gallery.
 It is stationary – and a voice is heard singing.*

First Spirit. –

30: *And feel the curse to have no natural fear:* compare Macbeth at V v 9: *I have almost forgot the taste of fear.*

31: *I call upon you – by the written charm / Which gives me power upon you:* what the charm is we are not told; but compare Faustus at I iii 8-9:

*Within this circle is Jehovah's name,
 Forward and backward anagrammatised:
 The abbreviated names of holy saints,
 Figures of every adjunct to the heavens,
 And characters of signs and evening stars,
 By which the spirits are enforced to rise.*

32: ... *the voice of him / Who is the first among you:* that is, Manfred's voice.

33: ... *the claims of him / Who is undying:* the highest power, the creator, the Demiurgus, the over-ruling infinite to whom Manfred refers below at II iv 47.

34: ... *a tyrant's spell / Which had its birthplace in a Star condemned:* perhaps the tyrant is Manfred himself, born under a wandering star, as we learn below, this scene, ll.110-24. Compare *Hamlet*, V i 247-9: *What is he ... whose phrase of sorrow conjures the wandering stars?*

35: *By the strong curse which is upon my Soul:* compare *CHP* I, 83, 8-9: ... *life-abhorring gloom / Wrote on his faded brow curst Cain's unresting doom.*

Mortal! to thy bidding bowed, 50
 From my mansion in the cloud,
 Which the breath of Twilight builds,
 And the Summer's Sunset gilds,
 With the azure and vermilion
 Which is mixed for my pavilion³⁶ – 55
 Though thy quest may be forbidden,
 On a starbeam I have ridden;
 To thine adjuration bowed,
 Mortal! be thy wish avowed!

Voice of the Second Spirit³⁷

Mont Blanc is the Monarch of mountains,³⁸ 60
 They crowned him long ago,
 On a throne of rocks – in a robe of clouds –
 With a Diadem of Snow.
 Around his waist are forests braced –
 The Avalanche in his hand – 65
 But ere it fall, that thundering ball
 Must pause for my command.³⁹
 The Glacier's cold and restless mass
 Moves onward day by day,
 But I am he who bids it pass, 70
 Or with its ice delay.
 I am the Spirit of the place
 Could make the mountain bow,
 And quiver to his caverned base –
 And what with me would'st *Thou*? 75

Voice of the Third Spirit

In the blue depth of the waters,
 Where the Wave hath no strife,
 Where the Wind is a stranger,
 And the Sea-Snake hath life,
 Where the Mermaid is decking 80
 Her green hair with shells,
 Like the Storm on the Surface
 Came the sound of thy spells;
 O'er my calm hall of Coral
 The deep Echo rolled – 85
 To the Spirit of Ocean

36: B. re-uses the *vermilion / pavilion* rhyme at *Don Juan* II 731-3.

37: This may interestingly be compared with Shelley's more extended Platonic meditation *Mont Blanc*, written in July 1816, when Shelley was in B.'s company.

38: ALPINE JOURNAL: B. wrote to Murray, from Venice, October 12 1817, after the completion not only of *Manfred* but of *CHP* IV and *Beppo*: ... *as to the germs of Manfred – they may be found in the Journal which I sent to Mrs. Leigh (part of which you saw) when I went over first the Dent de Jamant & then the Wengeren or Wengeberg Alp & Sheideck and made the giro of the Jungfrau Schreckhorn &c. &c. shortly before I left Switzerland – I have the whole scene of Manfred before me as if it was but yesterday – & could point it out spot by spot, torrent and all* (BLJ V 268). The relevant parts of the Journal will be printed in the appropriate places. See also edition on this website.

39: ALPINE JOURNAL: Echoes the entry for September 23: ... *heard the Avalanches falling every five minutes nearly – as if God was pelting the Devil down from Heaven with snowballs ... I made a snowball & pelted H[obhouse] with it ...* (BLJ V 101-2).

Thy wishes unfold!

Fourth Spirit. –

Where the slumbering Earthquake
Lies pillowed on fire,
And the lakes of bitumen 90
Rise boilingly higher –
Where the roots of the Andes
Strike deep in the earth,
As their Summits to heaven
Shoot soaringly forth – 95
I have quitted my birthplace
Thy bidding to bide –
Thy Spell hath subdued me,
Thy will be my Guide! –

Fifth Spirit.

I am the Rider of the Wind,⁴⁰ 100
The Stirrer of the storm,
The hurricane I left behind
Is yet with lightning warm,
To speed to thee – o'er shore and sea
I swept upon the blast; 105
The fleet I met sailed well, and yet
'Twill sink ere Night be past. –

Sixth Spirit.

My dwelling is the Shadow of the Night –
Why doth thy Magic torture me with Light? –

Seventh Spirit.⁴¹

The Star which rules thy destiny 110
Was ruled, ere Earth begun, by me;
It was a World as fresh and fair
As e'er revolved round Sun in air;
Its course was free and regular;
Space bosomed not a lovelier star. – 115
The Hour arrived – and it became
A wandering mass of shapeless flame,
A pathless Comet, and a Curse,

40: *I am the Rider of the Wind*: compare *Job* 30, 22-3: *Thou liftest me up to the wind; thou causest me to ride upon it, and dissolvest my substance. For I know that thou wilt bring me to death, and to the house appointed for all living.*

41: Is adapted to an ottava rima idiom at *TVoJ*, st.2:

*The Angels all were singing out of tune
And hoarse with having little else to do,
Excepting to wind up the Sun and Moon,
Or curb a runaway young Star or two,
Or wild Colt of a Comet, which too soon
Broke out of bounds o'er the ethereal blue,
Splitting some planet with its playful tail –
As boats are sometimes by a wanton Whale. –*

The Menace of the Universe,
 Still rolling on with innate force, 120
 Without a sphere, without a course,
 A bright deformity on high,
 The monster of the upper Sky! –
 And Thou – beneath its influence born –
 Thou Worm! whom I obey and scorn – 125
 Forced by a power (which is not thine,
 And lent thee but to make thee mine)
 For this brief moment to descend
 Where these weak Spirits round thee bend,
 And parley with a thing like thee – 130
 What would'st thou, Child of Clay! with me?

The Seven Spirits

Earth, ocean, air, night, mountains, winds, thy Star,
 Are at thy beck and bidding, Child of Clay!
 Before thee at thy quest their Spirits are –
 What would'st thou with us, Son of mortals – Say? 135

Manfred

Forgetfulness. ——

First Spirit

Of what, of whom, and why?

Manfred

Of that which is within me – read it there –
 Ye know it, and I cannot utter it.

Spirit

We can but give thee that which we possess;
 Ask of us – subjects – sovereignty – the power 140
 O'er earth – the whole – or portion – or a sign
 Which shall controul the elements, whereof
 We are the dominators each and all –
 These shall be thine. –

Manfred

Oblivion – Self-Oblivion –
 Can ye not wring from out the hidden realms 145
 Ye offer so profusely, what I ask?

Spirit

It is not in our essence – in our skill –
 But – thou may'st die.

Manfred

Will death bestow it on me?

Spirit

We are immortal, and do not forget;
We are eternal, and to us the past
Is as the future – present. Art thou answered? 150

Manfred

Ye mock me – but the power which brought ye here
Hath made you mine. Slaves – scoff not at my will!
The Mind, the Spirit, the Promethean Spark,
The Lightning of my being is as bright 155
Pervading – and far-darting as your own,
And shall not yield to yours – though cooped in clay.
Answer – or I will teach ye what I am.

Spirit

We answer as we are answered; our reply
Is even in thine own words.

Manfred

Why say ye so? 160

Spirit

If, as thou say'st, thine essence be as ours,
We have replied – in telling thee, the thing
Mortals call death hath nought to do with us.

Manfred

I then have called ye from your realms in vain –
Ye cannot, or ye will not, aid me.

Spirit

Say – 165
What we possess we offer – it is thine –
Bethink, ere thou dismiss us – ask again –
Kingdom, and sway, and strength, and length of days.⁴² –

Manfred

Accursed! What have I to do with days?
They are too long already – hence – begone! 170

Spirit

Yet pause – being here, our will would do thee service;

42: ... ask again, / Kingdom – and sway – and strength – and length of days: one of the temptations which assail Christ in the wilderness (*Matthew* 4, 8-10) and are too powerful for both Faustus and Faust.

Bethink thee, is there then no other gift
Which we can make, not worthless in thine eyes?

Manfred

No – none; yet stay – one moment, ere we part –
I would behold ye face to face – I hear 175
Your voices, sweet and melancholy sounds
As Music on the waters⁴³ – and I see
The steady aspect of a clear large Star,
But nothing more – approach me as ye are,
Or one, or all, in your accustomed forms. 180

Spirit

We have no forms, beyond the elements
Of which we are the Mind and Principle –
But chuse a form – in that we will appear.

Manfred

I have no choice – there is no form on earth
Hideous or beautiful to me – let him 185
Who is most powerful of ye take such aspect
As unto him may seem most fitting – Come!

Seventh Spirit

Appearing in the shape of a beautiful female figure

Behold!

Manfred

Oh God! if it be thus – and thou
Art not a madness and a mockery –
I yet might be most happy – I will clasp thee, 190
And we again will be –

The figure vanishes

My heart is crushed!

*Manfred falls senseless*⁴⁴

Incantation.⁴⁵ –

43: *Your voices – sweet and melancholy sounds / As Music on the waters:* compare *Stanzas to Music*, 3-4: *And like music on the waters / Is thy sweet voice to me.*

44: Iamblichus, the neo-Platonist philosopher to whom B. refers below, at II ii 92-4 and n, says this about human reaction to divine apparitions: *The gods when they appear, diffuse a light of so subtle a nature, that the corporeal eyes are not able to bear it; but are affected in the same manner as fishes when they are drawn out of turbid and thick water into attenuated and diaphanous air. For men who behold a divine fire, as soon as they perceive it are scarcely able to breathe, and their connate spirit becomes inclosed in the fire.* – *De Mysteriis*, p.70, quoted Taylor's Pausanias, III 361-2. Two earlier encounters with spectral women in B.'s poems are at *The Giaour*, 1285-95; and *The Siege of Corinth*, Parts 20-1: and the situation is cunningly inverted in the last Stanzas of *Don Juan Canto XVI*.

1.

When the Moon is on the wave,
 And the Glowworm in the grass,
 And the Meteor on the grave,
 And the Wisp on the Morass; 195
 When the falling stars are shooting,
 And the answered Owls are hooting,
 And the silent leaves are still
 In the shadow of the hill,
 Shall my Soul be upon thine, 200
 With a power, and with a sign.

2.

Though thy Slumber may be deep,
 Yet thy Spirit shall not sleep;
 There are shades which will not vanish,
 There are thoughts thou canst not banish, 205
 By a Power to thee unknown
 Thou can'st never be Alone;
 Thou art wrapt as with a Shroud,
 Thou art gathered in a cloud,
 And forever shalt thou dwell 210
 In the spirit of this spell.

3.

Though thou see'st me not pass by,
 Thou shalt feel me with thine eye
 As a thing that, though unseen,
 Must be near thee, and hath been; 215
 And when in that secret dread
 Thou hast turned around thy head,
 Thou shalt marvel I am not
 As thy shadow on the Spot,
 And the power which thou dost feel 220
 Shall be what thou must conceal.

4.

And a magic Voice and Verse
 Hath baptized thee with a curse,
 And a Spirit of the Air
 Hath begirt thee with a snare; 225
 In the Wind there is a voice
 Shall forbid thee to rejoice,
 And to thee shall Night deny
 All the quiet of her Sky,
 And the day shall have a Sun, 230
 Which shall make thee wish it done.

45: Lines 192-261 were published in December 1816, in *The Prisoner of Chillon*, with the note "The following Poem was a Chorus in an unfinished Witch Drama, which was begun some years ago".

5.⁴⁶

From thy false tears I did distill
 An essence which hath strength to kill;
 From thy own heart I then did wring
 The black blood in its blackest Spring, 235
 From thy own smile I snatched the Snake,
 For there it coiled as in a brake;
 From thy own lip I drew the charm
 Which gave all these their chiefest harm;
 In proving every poison known, 240
 I found the strongest was thine own.

6.

By thy cold breast and serpent smile,
 By thy unfathomed gulphs of Guile,
 By that most seeming virtuous eye,⁴⁷ 245
 By thy shut soul's Hypocrisy,
 By the perfection of thine art
 Which passed for human thine own heart,
 By thy delight in others' pain,
 And by thy brotherhood of Cain,
 I call upon thee! and compell 250
 Thyself to be thy proper Hell!

7.

And on thy head I pour the vial
 Which doth devote thee to this trial:
 Nor to slumber – nor to die
 Shall be in thy destiny, 255
 Though thy death shall still seem near
 To thy wish, but as a fear,⁴⁸

46: See notes below for the relationship between sts.5 and 6 of the Incantation and Coleridge's *Christabel*. However, in terms of rhymes, octosyllabic rhythm and mood the passage owes much also to such sequences as *A Midsummer Night's Dream* II ii 27-4, and *Macbeth* IV i 1-36.

47: Echoes the Ghost's words about Gertrude at *Hamlet*, I v 46: ... *my most seeming-virtuous queen*; however, all of sts.5 and 6 of the Incantation bear a more than usually close relationship, in their preoccupation with serpentine hypocrisy, to the figure of Geraldine in Coleridge's unfinished *Christabel* – some stanzas of which B. had heard Scott recite in the spring of 1815 (BLJ IV 318) and which had been published by Murray, at B.'s insistence – in April 1816 (BLJ IV 321, 331). B. had already drawn public attention to his borrowing from the poem in a note to 1.476 of *The Siege of Corinth*, published on February 13 1816 (CPW III 486). He quotes (covertly) from *Christabel* in a letter to Moore of January 5 1816 (BLJ V 15); recites its opening and others parts to Shelley and his other Geneva friends on June 18 1816 (LJ IV 296n, Polidori's Diary p.128); defends it to Murray on September 30 1816 (BLJ V 108); and by March 25 1817 – after the completion of the first version of *Manfred* – is joking about it (BLJ V 187 and 193).

48: Echoes Southey's *The Curse of Kehama*:

*And thou shalt seek Death
 To release thee, in vain;
 Thou shalt live in thy pain
 While Kehama shall reign,
 With a fire in thy heart,
 And a fire in thy brain;
 And Sleep shall obey me,*

Lo! the spell now works around thee,
 And the clankless chain hath bound thee,⁴⁹
 O'er thy heart and brain together
 Hath the word been passed – now Wither!⁵⁰

260

*And visit thee never,
 And the Curse shall be on thee
 For ever and ever.*

See also below, II ii 136 *et. seq.*

49: Complements *The Prisoner of Chillon*, 98: *His spirit withered with their clank.*

50: ALPINE JOURNAL: Echoes the entry for September 23: *Passed whole woods of withered pines – all withered – trunks stripped & barkless – branches lifeless – done by a single winter – their appearance reminded me of me & my family.* (BLJ V 102) See also Antony at *Antony and Cleopatra* IV xii 23-4: *... and this pine is barked / That overtopped them all;* also Cleopatra at IV xv 64: *O, withered is the garland of the war ...*

Act I, scene ii.

*The Mountain of the Jungfrau. Time, Morning. –
Manfred alone on the cliffs*

Manfred

The Spirits I have raised abandon me,
The spells which I have studied baffle me,
The remedy I recked of tortured me.
I lean no more on Superhuman aid –
It hath no power upon the past, and for 5
The future, till the past be gulphed in darkness,
It is not of my search. – My Mother Earth!
And thou fresh breaking Day! And you ye Mountains!
Why are ye beautiful? I cannot love ye.
And thou the bright Eye of the Universe 10
That openest over all – and unto all
Art a delight – thou shin'st not on my heart.⁵¹
And you ye Crag! upon whose extreme edge
I stand, and on the torrents' brink beneath
Behold the tall pines dwindled as to shrubs 15
In dizziness of distance,⁵² when a leap –
A stir – a motion – even a breath – would bring
My breast upon its rocky bosom's bed
To rest forever – wherefore do I pause?
I feel the impulse – yet I do not plunge – 20
I see the peril – yet do not recede –
And my brain reels – and yet my foot is firm.
There is a power upon me which witholds,
And makes it my fatality to live,⁵³
If it be life to wear within myself 25
This barrenness of Spirit, and to be
My own Soul's Sepulchre;⁵⁴ for I have ceased
To justify my deeds unto myself,
The last infirmity of evil.⁵⁵ –

51: *And thou – the bright Eye of the Universe! / That openest over all – and unto all / Art a delight; – thou shinest not on my heart:* yet see below, III ii 1-29. Evidently something occurs between now and then to render Manfred more open to the benign influence of the sun.

52: Echoes the speech of Edgar at *King Lear* IV vi 11-24:

*How fearful
And dizzy 'tis to cast one's eyes so low!
The crows and choughs that wing the midway air
Show scarce so gross as beetles ...
The fishermen that walk upon the beach
Appear like mice; and yond tall anchoring bark
Diminished to her cock ...*

53: Echoes Othello's words to Iago at V ii 92-3:

*I'd have thee live;
For, in my sense, 'tis happiness to die.*

54: *My own Soul's Sepulchre:* echoes Thomas Taylor's *On the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries* (1816) p.37: *Plato, too, it is well known, considered the body as the sepulchre of the soul ...*

55: Echoes Milton, *Lycidas*, 70-2:

*Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise
(That last infirmity of Noble mind)
To scorn delights, and live laborious days ...*

An Eagle passes.

Thou winged and cloud-cleaving Minister! 30
 Whose happy flight is highest into heaven!
 Well mayst thou swoop so near me – I should be
 Thy prey, and gorge thine Eaglets; thou art gone
 Where the eye cannot follow thee, but thine
 Yet pierces downward – onward – or above – 35
 With a pervading vision: beautiful –
 How beautiful is all this visible World!⁵⁶
 How glorious in its action and itself!⁵⁷
 But we, who name ourselves its sovereigns – we,
 Half dust, half deity, alike unfit 40
 To sink or soar, with our mixed essence make
 A conflict of its elements, and breathe
 The breath of degradation and of pride
 Contending with low wants and lofty will,
 Till our Mortality predominates, 45
 And men are what they name not to themselves,
 And trust not to each other. Hark! the note

The Shepherd's pipe in the distance is heard.

The natural music of the mountain reed –
 For here the patriarchal days are not
 A pastoral fable – pipes in the liberal air, 50
 Mixed with the sweet bells of the sauntering herd;⁵⁸
 My Soul would drink those echoes. Oh, that I were
 The viewless Spirit of a lovely sound,
 A living voice, a breathing harmony,
 A bodiless enjoyment, born and dying 55

56: Compare the Poet's address to the swan in Shelley's *Alastor*, 280-91:

*"Thou hast a home,
 Beautiful bird; thou voyagest to thine home,
 Where thy sweet mate will twine her downy neck
 With thine, and welcome thy return with eyes
 Bright in the lustre of her own fond joy.
 And what am I that I should linger here,
 With voice far sweeter than thy dying notes,
 Spirit more vast than thine, frame more attuned
 To beauty, wasting these surpassing powers
 In the deaf air, to the blind earth, and heaven
 That echoes not my thoughts?" A gloomy smile
 Of desperate hope wrinkled his quivering lips.*

By contrast, Manfred feels himself altogether inferior to the eagle. In *Prometheus Bound* the protagonist is warned that he will become the prey of eagles: Manfred would welcome the idea.

57: This section echoes *Hamlet*, *What a piece of work is a man ...* (II ii 292 *et seq*).

58: ALPINE JOURNAL: Echoes the entry for September 19: *The whole of the Mountain superb – the shepherd upon a very steep & high cliff playing upon his pipe – very different from Arcadia – (where I saw the pastors with with a long Musquet instead of a Crook – and pistols in their Girdles) – our Swiss Shepherd's pipe was sweet – & his time agreeable – saw a cow strayed – told that the often break their necks on & over the crags ... the music of the Cows' bells (for their wealth like the Patriarchs is cattle) in the pastures (which reach to a height far above any mountains in Britain –) and the Shepherds' shouting to us from crag to crag & playing on their reeds where the steeps appeared almost inaccessible, with the surrounding scenery – realized all that I have ever heard or imagined of a pastoral existence – much more so than Greece or Asia Minor – for there we are a little too much of the sabre & musquet order – and if there is a Crook in one hand, you are sure to see a gun in the other – but this was pure and unmixed – solitary – savage and patriarchal ...* (BLJ V 99)

With the blest tone which made me!

Enter from below a Chamois Hunter.

Chamois Hunter

Even so –
 This way the Chamois leapt – her nimble feet
 Have baffled me – my gains today will scarce
 Repay my breakneck travail. What is here?
 Who seems not of my trade, and yet hath reached 60
 A height which none even of our Mountaineers
 Save our best hunters may attain – his garb
 Is goodly – his mien manly – and his air
 Proud as a freeborn peasant's, at this distance;
 I will approach him nearer.

Manfred, not perceiving the other.

To be thus, 65
 Grey-haired with anguish, like these blasted pines,
 Wrecks of a single winter, barkless, branchless,
 A blighted trunk upon a cursed root
 Which but supplies a feeling to Decay;
 And to be thus, eternally but thus, 70
 Having been otherwise, now furrowed o'er
 With wrinkles ploughed by moments, not by years
 And hours – all tortured into ages – hours
 Which I outlive! Ye toppling crags of Ice!⁵⁹
 Ye Avalanches, whom a breath draws down 75
 In mountainous o'erwhelming – Come and crush me!⁶⁰
 I hear ye momentarily above – beneath –
 Crash with a frequent conflict – but ye pass,
 And only fall on things which still would live
 On the young flourishing forest, or the hut 80
 And hamlet of the harmless villager.

Chamois Hunter

The Mists begin to rise from up the valley;
 I'll warn him to descend, or he may chance
 To lose his way and life together.

Manfred

59: ALPINE JOURNAL: Echoes the entry for September 23: *Passed whole woods of withered pines – all withered – trunks stripped & barkless – branches lifeless – done by a single winter – their appearance reminded me of me & my family.* (BLJ V 102). See also Shelley's *Alastor*, ll.530-2:

*... nought but knarled roots of antient pines
 Branchless and blasted, clenched with grasping roots
 The unwilling soil. A gradual change was here,
 Yet ghastly.*

... also Antony at *Antony and Cleopatra* IV xii 23-4: *... and this pine is barked / That overtopped them all;* and Cleopatra at IV xv 64: *O, withered is the garland of the war ...*

60: Recalls *Doctor Faustus* V ii 163-4:

*Mountains and hills come, come, and fall on me,
 And hide me from the heavy wrath of God.*

The Mists boil up around the Glaciers, Clouds⁶¹ 85
 Rise curling fast beneath me, white and sulphury,
 Like foam from the roused Ocean of deep Hell,
 Whose every wave breaks on a living shore
 Heaped with the damned like pebbles. – I am giddy.

Chamois Hunter

I must approach him cautiously – if near, 90
 A sudden step will startle him, and he
 Seems tottering already.⁶²

Manfred

Mountains have fallen,
 Leaving a gap in the clouds, and with the shock
 Rocking their Alpine brethren, filling up
 The ripe green valleys with destruction's splinters, 95
 Damming the rivers with a sudden dash
 That crushed the waters into mist, and made
 Their fountains find another channel; thus,
 Thus in its old age, did Mount Rosenberg⁶³ –
 Why stood I not beneath it?

Chamois Hunter

Friend, have a care! 100
 Your next step may be fatal – for the love
 Of him who made you,⁶⁴ stand not on that brink!

61: Echoes the entry for September 23: *on the other [side] the clouds rose from the opposite valley curling up perpendicular precipices – like the foam of the the Ocean of Hell during a Springtide – it was white & sulphery – and immeasurably deep in appearance ...* (BLJ V 102). See also a letter to Murray of September 29: *we have ... looked on the clouds foaming up from the valleys below us – like the spray from the ocean of hell ...* (BLJ V 106). See also Shakespeare, Sonnet 60, ll.1-2:

*Like as the waves make towards the pebbled shore,
 So do our minutes hasten to their end ...*

62: For Manfred's encounter with the Chamois Hunter, compare Shelley's *Alastor*, ll.257-62:

*The mountaineer,
 Encountering on some dizzy precipice
 That spectral form, deemed that the Spirit of wind
 With lightning eyes, and eager breath, and feet
 Disturbing not the drifted snow, had paused
 In its career ...*

B.'s mountaineer is guilty of no such misapprehension.

63: Mount Rosenberg: in fact, Rossberg. On September 2 1806 a huge fragment of the mountain, which is near Goldau, slid into the valley below, overwhelming four villages and killing four hundred and fifty people. Hobhouse's diary for August 21 1816, made while he and Scrope Davies were travelling through Switzerland to join B. at Diodati, reads *Up at seven. Better – breakfasted at the Stag, which is a very good inn, and where we heard the landlady relate the story of the falling of the Rossberg mountain at Goldau, when she had a party that left her thirteen in the morning and came back six, the rest being killed, and naively related the saying of a gentleman who escaped – a Mr. Schmidt: "Je ne serai pas tranquille avant de quitter la Suisse – dont les montagnes décroulent comme ça!" or some such words, which he kept good by leaving the country instantly. A woman who escaped, though she was for a short time buried, thought the day of judgement was come. Nearly two villages were overwhelmed. General Pfyffer, the [] topographer of this part of the country, who died in 1800 at his house in Zurich, foretold from a view of the strata that such a catastrophe was probable. – B.L.Add. Mss. 56536, 81r.–v.*

Manfred, *not hearing him.*

Such would have been for me a fitting tomb –
 My bones had then been quiet in their depth –
 They had not been strewn upon the rocks 105
 For the wind's pastime, as thus, thus, they shall be
 In this one plunge. Farewell, ye opening Heavens!
 Look not upon me thus reproachfully,
 Ye were not meant for me.⁶⁵ Earth! Take these atoms!

*As Manfred is in act to spring from the cliff,
 the Chamois Hunter seizes and retains him with a sudden grasp.*

Chamois Hunter

Hold, Madman! though aweary of thy life, 110
 Stain not our pure vales with thy guilty blood –
 Away with me! I will not quit my hold!

Manfred

I am most sick at heart⁶⁶ – nay – grasp me not –
 I am all feebleness – the Mountains whirl
 Spinning around me – I grow blind – what art thou? 115

Chamois Hunter

I'll answer that anon – away with me –
 The clouds grow thicker – there – now lean on me –
 Place your foot here – here – take this staff, and cling
 A moment to that Shrub – now – give me your hand,
 And hold fast by my Girdle – softly – well – 120
 The Chalet will be gained within an hour.
 Come on – we'll quickly find a surer footing,
 And something like a pathway, which the torrent
 Hath washed since winter. Come – 'tis bravely done –
 You should have been a Hunter – follow me. 125

*As they descend the rocks with difficulty, the Scene closes. –
 End of Act the first.*

64: ... *for the love / Of him who made you:* the voice of orthodox Christianity heard for the first time in the play.

65: *Farewell, ye opening heavens – / Look not upon me thus reproachfully – ye were not meant for me ...* find themselves inverted in the death of the eldest son of the old Tartar Khan, at *Don Juan VIII*, st.115:

*So fully flashed the phantom on his eyes,
 That when the very lance was in his heart
 He shouted "Allah!" and saw Paradise
 With all its veil of mystery drawn apart –
 And bright Eternity without disguise
 On his soul, like a ceaseless Sunrise, dart –
 With Prophets – Houris – Angels – Saints – descried
 In one voluptuous blaze – and then he died ...*

66: Echoes Macbeth's *I am sick at heart* at V iii 20.

Act II scene i.

*A cottage amongst the Bernese Alps –
Manfred and the Chamois Hunter.*

Chamois Hunter

No, no, yet pause – thou must not yet go forth;
Thy mind and body are alike unfit
To trust each other for some hours at least;
When thou art better, I will be thy guide –
But whither? 5

Manfred

It imports not – I do know
My route full well, and need no further guidance.⁶⁷ –

Chamois Hunter

Thy garb and gait bespeak thee of high race –
One of the many chiefs whose castled crags
Look o'er the lower valleys⁶⁸ – which of these
May call thee Lord? I only know their portals – 10
My way of life leads me but rarely down
To bask by the huge hearths of those old halls,
Carousing with the vassals – but the paths
Which step from out our mountains to their doors
I know from childhood – which of these is thine? – 15

Manfred

No matter. — — —

Chamois Hunter

Well Sir! pardon me the question,
And be of better cheer – come – taste my wine –
'Tis of an ancient vintage – many a day
T'has thawed my veins among our Glaciers – now –
Let it do thus for thine. Come – pledge me fairly! – 20

Manfred

Away! Away! there's blood upon the brim!
Will it then never – never – sink in the earth?⁶⁹

Chamois Hunter

What dost thou mean? Thy senses wander from thee!

67: Echoes the words of Gloucester at *King Lear* IV i 78-9: *From that place / I shall no leading need.*

68: *One of the many chiefs – whose castled crags / Look o'er the lower valleys:* recalls *CHP* III, sts.46-9, and the lyric *The castled crag of Drachenfels* between sts.55 and 56. The poem was written earlier in 1816.

69: *Away – Away – there's blood upon the brim – / Will it then never – never – sink in the earth:* echoes Lady Macbeth in V i.

Manfred

I say 'tis blood – my blood – the pure warm stream
 Which ran in the veins of my fathers, and in ours, 25
 When we were in our youth, and had one heart,
 And loved each other as we should not love;
 And this was shed – but still it rises up,
 Colouring the clouds that shut me out from heaven,⁷⁰
 Where thou art not – and I shall never be.⁷¹ – 30

Chamois Hunter

Man of strange words – and some half-maddening sin
 That makes thee people vacancy⁷² – whate'er
 Thy dread and sufferance be, there's comfort yet –
 The aid of holy men, and heavenly patience –

Manfred

Patience, and Patience! Hence! that word was made 35
 For brutes of burthen – not for birds of prey,⁷³
 Preach it to mortals of a dust like thine –
 I am not of thine order.⁷⁴

Chamois Hunter

Thanks to heaven!
 I would not be of thine, for the free fame
 Of William Tell; but whatsoe'er thine ill, 40
 It must be borne, and these wild starts are useless.⁷⁵

Manfred

Do I not bear it? – look on me – I live. –

70: ... *still it rises up / Colouring the clouds that shut me out from heaven*: compare Faustus at V ii 156-7: *See, see, where Christ's blood streams in the firmament! One drop of it would save my soul – half a drop!*

71: ... *heaven, / Where thou art not – and I shall never be*: the addressee is clearly not the Chamois Hunter; Manfred may be addressing the absent Astarte, who would thus seem not, in her brother's opinion, to be among the blessed. However, Samuel Chew (*Lord Byron's Dramas*, p.70) wonders if this and other lines form a riddle indicating that Astarte is not dead; in which case we must perhaps read an understood "yet" between not and and. Either that, or Astarte's soul, thanks to her union with Manfred, has been extinguished in the "death more durable and profound" which Thomas Taylor asserts will be the lot of "souls in a state of impurity". See also II ii 198-9, II iv 83, and nn.

72: *some half-maddening sin / That makes thee people vacancy*: echoes Gertrude's words to *Hamlet* at III iv 116-18:

*Alas, how is't with you,
 That you do bend your eye on vacancy,
 And with th'incorporeal air do hold discourse?*

73: *Patience – and Patience – hence – that word was made / For brutes of burthen not for birds of prey*: compare *Faust*, Scene IV, 1605-6: *Fluch sei der Hoffnung! Fluch dem Glauben, / Und Fluch vor allen der Geduld!* See also Antony and Cleopatra, IV xv, 79-80: *Patience is sottish, and impatience does / Become a dog that's mad.*

74: Recalls (perhaps inadvertently) the words of Malvolio to Maria, Sir Toby and Fabian at *Twelfth Night* III iv 118-19: *You are idle shallow things: I am not of your element.*

75: Echoes the words of Lady Macbeth to Macbeth at III iv: *O, these flaws and starts – / Impostors to true fear* ...

Chamois Hunter

This is convulsion, and no healthful life.

Manfred

I tell thee, Man! – I have lived many years –
 Many long years – but they are nothing now 45
 To those which I must number – ages – ages –
 Space and eternity – and consciousness –
 With the fierce thirst of death – and still unslaked. – –

Chamois Hunter

Why, on thy brow the seal of middle age
 Hath scarce been set – I am thy elder far. – 50

Manfred

Thinks't thou existence doth depend on time?
 It doth – but actions are our epochs – mine
 Have made my days and nights imperishable⁷⁶ –
 Endless, and all alike – as sands on the shore,
 Innumerable atoms, and one desert, 55
 Barren and cold, on which the wild waves break,
 But nothing rests save carcasses and wrecks –
 Rocks – and the salt-surf weeds of bitterness.⁷⁷ –

Chamois Hunter

Alas! he's mad – but yet I must not leave him.⁷⁸ –

Manfred

I would I were – for then the things I see 60
 Would be but a distempered dream.

Chamois Hunter

What is it

76: *Thinks't thou existence doth depend on time? – / It doth – but actions are our epochs:* echoes *Childe Harold* III, 5, 1-2:

*He, who grown aged in this world of woe,
 In deeds, not years, piercing the depths of night ...*

77: Anticipates the description of Sathan at st.24 of *The Vision of Judgement*:

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

See also *Don Juan II* st.177.

78: *Alas, he's mad:* the words of Gertrude at *Hamlet*, III iv 105.

That thou dost see – or think thou looks't upon?

Manfred

Myself and thee – a Peasant of the Alps –
 Thy humble virtues, hospitable home,
 And Spirit patient, pious, proud, and free – 65
 Thy self-respect, grafted on innocent thoughts,
 Thy days of health, and nights of sleep – thy toils
 By danger dignified, yet guiltless – hopes
 Of cheerful old age – and a quiet grave,
 With cross and garland over its green turf, 70
 And thy grandchildren's love for epitaph⁷⁹ –
 This do I see – and then I look within –
 It matters not – my Soul was scorched already.

Chamois Hunter

And wouldst thou then exchange thy lot for mine?

Manfred

No, Friend! I would not wrong thee, nor exchange 75
 My lot with living being; I can bear,
 However wretchedly – 'tis still to bear –
 In life what others could not brook to dream –
 But perish in their slumber.

Chamois Hunter

And with this –
 This cautious feeling for another's pain – 80
 Can'st thou be black with evil? Say not so!
 Can one of gentle thoughts have wreaked revenge
 Upon his enemies?

Manfred

Oh, no, no, no!
 My injuries came down on those who loved me –
 On those whom I best loved – I never quelled 85
 An enemy but in my just defence;
 My wrongs were all on those I should have cherished,
 But my embrace was fatal.⁸⁰ – –

Chamois Hunter

Heaven give thee rest,
 And Penitence restore thee to thyself!
 My prayers shall be for thee –

Manfred

79: Echoes Gray, *Elegy in a Country Churchyard*, sts.6-9.

80: B. implies his own destructive behaviour towards his own home, marriage and family: "The nightmare of my own delinquencies" (BLJ V 165).

I need them not, 90
But can endure thy pity. I depart –
'Tis time. Farewell – here's Gold, and thanks for thee –
No words – it is thy due. Follow me not –
I know my path – the mountain peril's past,
And once again I charge thee, follow not. – 95

Exit Manfred.

End of scene first. –

Act II scene ii.

A lower valley in the Alps – a cataract. –

Enter Manfred

It is not noon – the Sunbow's rays still arch
 The torrent with the many hues of heaven, *
 And rolls the sheeted silver's waving column
 O'er the crag's headlong perpendicular,
 And flings its lines of foaming light along, 5
 And to and fro, like the pale courser's tail,
 The Giant steed to be bestrode by Death
 As told in the Apocalypse.⁸¹ No eyes

* Note) This Iris is formed by the rays of the Sun over the lower part of the Alpine torrents. It is exactly like a rainbow come down to pay a visit, and so close that you may walk into it. This effect lasts till Noon. –

But mine now drink this sight of loveliness –
 I should be sole in this sweet solitude, 10
 And with the Spirit of the place divide
 The homage of these waters.⁸² – I will call her. –

Manfred takes some of the water in the palm of his hand and flings it in to the air, muttering the adjuration.⁸³ – After a pause the Witch of the Alps rises beneath the arch of the Sunbow of the torrent.

Manfred

Beautiful Spirit! with thy hair of light,
 And dazzling eyes of Glory, in whose form

81: *like the pale courser's tail / The giant steed to be bestrode by Death / As told in the Apocalypse:* see Revelation 6, 8: *And I looked, and behold a pale horse: and his name that sat on him was Death, and Hell followed with him.*

82: ALPINE JOURNAL: the lines, and the scene which follow, echo the entries for September 22 and 23, when B. and Hobhouse lodged opposite the Staubbach waterfall, near Lauterbrunnen: ... *Arrived at the foot of the Mountain (the Yung-frau – i.e. the Maiden) Glaciers – torrents – one of these torrents nine hundred feet in height of visible descent – lodge at the Curate's ... very good indeed – much better than most English Vicarages – it is immediately opposite the torrent I spoke of – the torrent is in shape curving over the rock – like the tail of a white horse streaming in the wind – such as it might be conceived might be that of the "pale horse" on which Death is mounted in the Apocalypse. It is neither mist nor water but a something between both – it's immense height (nine hundred feet) gives it a wave – a curve – a spreading here – a condensation there – wonderful – & indescribable. – / Sept. 23d. / Before ascending the mountain – went to the torrent (7 in the morning) again – the Sun upon it forming a rainbow of the lower part of all colours – but principally purple and gold – the bow moving as you move – I never saw anything like this – it is only in the Sunshine. – (BLJ V 101)*

83: Manfred's ritual action may have been suggested by the following note to Thomas Taylor's Pausanias: ... *the oracle in Colophon gives its answers through the medium of water: for there is a fountain in a subterranean dwelling, from which the prophetess drinks; and on certain established nights, after many sacred rites have been previously performed, and she has drunk of the fountain, she delivers oracles, but is not visible to those that are present ... the water itself ... prepares us, and purifies our luciform spirit, so that we may be able to receive the divinity; while in the mean time there is a presence of divinity prior to this, and illuminating from on high – (Iamblichus, De Mysteriis, p.72ff, quoted Taylor's Pausanias III 353).*

The charms of Earth's least-mortal daughters grow 15
 To an unearthly stature, in an essence
 Of purer elements, while the hues of Youth,
 Carnationed like a sleeping infant's cheek
 Rocked by the beating of her mother's heart,
 Or the rose-tints which Summer's twilight leaves 20
 Upon the lofty Glacier's virgin snow –
 The blush of Earth when mingling with her heaven –
 Tinge thy celestial aspect, and make tame
 The beauties of the Sunbow which bends o'er thee,
 Beautiful Spirit! in thy calm clear brow, 25
 Wherein is glassed Serenity of Soul,
 Which of itself shows immortality,
 I read that thou wilt pardon to a Son
 Of Earth – whom the abstruser powers permit
 At times to commune with them, if that he 30
 Avail him of his spells, to call thee thus,
 And gaze on thee a moment. –

Witch of the Alps

Son of Earth!

I know thee, and the powers which give thee power;
 I know thee for a man of many thoughts,
 And deeds of good and ill – extreme in both – 35
 Fatal and fated in thy sufferings.
 I have expected this. What would'st thou with me?

Manfred

To look upon thy beauty, nothing further;
 The face of the Earth hath maddened me, and I
 Take refuge in her mysteries – and pierce 40
 To the abodes of those who govern her:
 But they can nothing aid me – I have sought
 From them what they could not bestow – and now
 I search no further. – – – –

Witch of the Alps

What could be the quest
 Which is not in the power of the most powerful, 45
 The Rulers of the Invisible?⁸⁴

Manfred

A boon –
 But why should I repeat it? 'twere in vain.

Witch of the Alps

I know not that – let thy lips utter it. –

Manfred⁸⁵

84: *the most powerful / The Rulers of the invisible:* evidently the Seven Spirits in I i answer this description.

Well – though it torture me – ’tis but the same –
 My pang shall find a voice. From my youth upwards, 50
 My Spirit walked not with the souls of men,
 Nor looked upon the earth with human eyes.
 The thirst of their Ambition was not mine –
 The aim of their existence was not mine –
 My joys – my griefs – my passions and my powers 55
 Made me a stranger, though I wore the form
 I had no sympathy with breathing flesh,
 Nor mid’st the Creatures of Clay that girded me
 Was there but One who – but of her anon.
 I said with men and with the thoughts of men 60
 I held but slight communion; but instead,
 My joy was in the Wilderness – to breathe
 The difficult air of the iced Mountain’s top
 Where the birds dare not build, nor insect’s wing
 Flit o’er the herbless Granite,⁸⁶ or to plunge 65
 Into the torrent – or to roll along
 In the swift whirl of the new breaking wave
 Of River – Stream – or Ocean in their flow –
 In these my early Strength exulted,⁸⁷ or
 To follow through the Night the moving Moon⁸⁸ 70
 The Stars and their development – or catch
 The dazzling Lightnings till my eyes grew dim,
 Or to look, listening, on the scattered leaves,
 While Autumn Winds were at their Evening-Song;
 These were my pastimes – and to be alone. – – 75
 For if the beings of whom I was one
 Hating to be so, crossed me in my path,
 I felt myself degraded back to them,
 And was all clay again. And then I dived
 In my lone wanderings to the caves of death, 80
 Searching its cause in its effect,⁸⁹ and drew
 From withered bones, and skulls, and heaped-up dust,
 Conclusions most forbidden.⁹⁰ Then I passed

85: The long speech of Manfred from 49-97 is perhaps the most obvious point at which B. is writing a riposte to *Alastor*: see especially ll.18-49 of Shelley’s poem. But see also above, I ii 29-36n, 65-74n, 90n, this speech, 81-3n, and below, II iv, 144-5n.

86: Echoes *The Prisoner of Chillon*, l.238: *Or shrubless crags within the mist ...*

87: B. was himself an accomplished swimmer from youth.

88: Echoes *The Ancient Mariner*, l.263: *The moving moon went up the sky / And nowhere did abide ...*

89: B. may intend a reference here to Aeneas’ descent into Hades in *Aeneid* Book VI, which is according to Thomas Taylor a metaphor for or parable about the Soul’s entombment in the Body.

90: E.H.Coleridge refers to the meditation on death at *CHP* II sts.5-6:

*Look on its broken arch, its ruined wall,
 Its chambers desolate, and portals foul:
 Yes, this was once Ambition’s airy hall,
 The dome of Thought, the palace of the Soul:
 Behold, through each lack-lustre, eyeless hole,
 The gay recess of Wisdom and of Wit
 And Passion’s host, that never brooked control:
 Can all saint, sage, or sophist ever writ
 People this lonely tower, this tenement refit?*

Compare also the Narrator (not the protagonist Poet) in Shelley’s *Alastor*, ll.23-9:

*I have made my bed
 In charnels and on coffins, where black death*

The nights of years in sciences untaught,
 Save in the old-time; and with time and toil, 85
 And weary vigils, and unbroken fasts,⁹¹
 And terrible Ordeal, and such penance
 As in itself has power upon the Air,
 And Spirits that do compass Air and Earth,
 Space and the peopled Infinite, I made 90
 Mine eyes familiar with Eternity –
 Such as before me did the Magi, and
 He who from out their fountain-dwellings raised
 Eros and Anteros at Gadara,*⁹²
 As I do thee – and with my knowledge grew 95

* The philosopher Iamblichus – the story of the raising of Eros and Anteros may be found in his life by Eunapius.⁹³ It is well told. –

The thirst of knowledge – and the power and joy
 Of this most bright Intelligence – until –

Witch of the Alps

Proceed. –

Manfred

*Keeps record of the trophies won from thee,
 Hoping to still these obstinate questionings
 Of thee and thine, by forcing some lone ghost,
 Thy messenger, to render up the tale
 Of what we are.*

91: This line appears in the rough draft, not in the fair copy, and has been ignored by everyone until now. See Cochran, *A Note on the Text of Manfred Act II, Byron Journal*, 1994, p.79.

92: Refers to the following dualistic myth, as reported by Thomas Taylor in a note to his translation of Pausanias: The demon Anteros.] *Of this power, who avenges the injuries of lovers, the following remarkable story is told by Eunapius in his Life of Jamblichus: “This philosopher went with his disciples to Gadara in Syria, a place so famous for baths, that after Baiae in Campania it is the second in the Roman empire. Here a dispute about baths arising while they were bathing, Jamblichus smiling said to them: ‘Though what I am to disclose is not pious, yet for your sakes it shall be undertaken;’ and at the same time he ordered his disciples to enquire of the natives, what appellations had been formerly given to two of the hot fountains, which were indeed less than the others, but more elegant. Upon enquiry, they found themselves unable to discover the cause of their nomination; but were informed that the one was called Eros or Love, and the other Anteros, or the god who avenges the injuries of lovers. Jamblichus immediately touching the water with his hand (for he sat, perhaps, on the margin of the fountain), and murmuring a few words, raised from the bottom of the fountain a fair boy, of a moderate stature, whose hair seemd to be tinged with gold, and the upper part of whose breast was of a luminous appearance. His companions being astonished at the novelty of the affair, Let us pass on, says he, to the next fountain; and at the same time he arose, fixed in thought, and, performing the same ceremonies as before, called forth the other Love, who was in all respects similar to the former, except that his hair scattered in his neck was blacker, and was like the sun in refulgence. At the same time, both boys eagerly embraced Jamblichus, as if he had been their natural parent: but he immediately restored them to their proper seats, and, when he had washed, departed from the place.” – The Description of Greece by Pausanias (1794) III 251-2.* Iamblichus (who died c. 330 A.D.) was a Syrian neo-Platonist philosopher, said to have been much admired by Julian the Apostate. B. wishes us to see Manfred as an investigator of Neo-Platonic spiritual mysteries – although the text as a whole does not finally bear a Neo-Platonic interpretation.

93: In the rough draft this note reads + the Philosopher Iamblichus – the story of the raising of Eros & Anteros may be found in his Life by Eunapius – <or quoted in the notes to Taylor's Pausanias>; rough draft, bottom of Sheet 11 sides 2 and 3. See *Manuscripts of the Younger Romantics, Byron I* (Garland 1986) pp.66-7.

Oh! I but thus prolonged my words,
 Boasting these idle attributes – because, 100
 As I approach the core of my heart's grief –
 But – to my task – I have not named to thee
 Father, or mother, mistress, friend, or being
 With whom I wore the chain of human ties;
 If I had such, they seemed not such to me – 105
 Yet there was One – –

Witch of the Alps

Spare not thyself – Proceed –

Manfred

She was like me in lineaments – her eyes
 Her hair, her features, all, to the very tone
 Even of her voice, they said, were like to mine,
 But softened all and tempered into beauty⁹⁴ – 110
 She had the same lone thoughts, and wanderings –
 The Quest of hidden knowledge, and a Mind
 To comprehend the Universe – nor these
 Alone, but with them gentler powers than mine –
 Pity, and smiles, and tears, which I had not – 115
 And tenderness – but that I had for her –
 Humility – and that I never had –
 Her faults were mine – her virtues were her own –
 I loved her and destroyed her –

Witch of the Alps

With thy hand?

Manfred

Not with my hand but Heart, which broke her Heart; 120
 It gazed on mine and withered. I have shed
 Blood, but not hers – and yet her blood was shed –
 I saw, and could not staunch it. –

Witch of the Alps

And for this,
 A being of the race thou dost despise,
 The order which thine own would rise above, 125
 Mingling with us and ours – thou dost forego
 The Gifts of our great knowledge – and shrink'st back
 To recreant Mortality – Away! – –

Manfred

Daughter of Air! I tell thee, since that hour –
 But words are breath.⁹⁵ Look on me in my sleep, 130

94: Echoes the words of Sebastian to Antonio at *Twelfth Night*, II i 21-3: *A lady sir, though it was said she much resembled me, was yet of many accounted beautiful.*

Or watch my watchings – come and sit by me!
 My Solitude is Solitude no more,
 But peopled with the Furies – I have gnashed
 My teeth in darkness till returning morn,
 Then cursed myself till Sunset. I have prayed 135
 For madness as a blessing – 'tis denied me. –
 I have affronted Death – but in the war
 Of Elements the waters shrunk from me,
 And fatal things passed harmless⁹⁶ – the cold hand
 Of an all-pitiless Demon held me back, 140
 Back by a single hair which would not break. –
 In phantasy, Imagination, all
 The Affluence of my Soul, which one day was
 A Cræsus in Creation,⁹⁷ I plunged deep –
 But like an ebbing wave it dashed me back 145
 Into the Gulph of my unfathomed Thought;
 I plunged amidst Mankind – Forgetfulness –
 I sought in all, save where 'tis to be found,
 And that I have to learn – my Sciences,
 My long pursued and superhuman art, 150
 Is mortal here – I dwell in my despair,
 And live, and live forever.

Witch of the Alps

It may be
 That I can aid thee.

Manfred

To do this thy power
 Must wake the dead – or lay me low with them;
 Do so, in any shape, in any hour – 155
 With any torture – so it be the last. –

Witch of the Alps

That is not in my province; but if thou
 Wilt swear obedience to my will, and do
 My bidding, it may help thee to thy wishes.

Manfred

95: Echoes the words of Falstaff at *Henry IV i V i* 132: *What is that honour? Air.*

96: *in the war / Of elements the waters shrunk from me / And fatal things passed harmless:* compare *The Curse of Kehama*:

*And Water shall hear me,
 And know thee and fly thee;
 And the Winds shall not touch thee
 When they pass by thee,
 And the Dews shall not wet thee,
 When they fall nigh thee ...*

See also above, I i 254-7.

97: *The affluence of my Soul which one day was / A Croesus in creation:* Croesus was the legendarily wealthy King of Lydia in the sixth century B.C.

I will not swear – obey! and whom? the Spirits
Whose presence I command? and be the slave
Of those who served me? Never. 160

Witch of the Alps

Is this all?
Hast thou no gentler answer?⁹⁸ Yet bethink thee,
And pause ere thou rejectest.

Manfred

I have said it. –

Witch of the Alps

Enough – I may retire then – Say!

Manfred

Retire! 165

The Witch disappears.

Manfred alone.

We are the fools of time and terror; days
Steal on us and steal from us, yet we live,
Loathing our life, and dreading still to die
In all the days of this detested yoke –
This heaving burthen, this accursed breath – 170
This vital weight upon the struggling heart,
Which sinks with sorrow, or beats quick with pain,
Or joy that ends in agony, or faintness –
In all the days of past and future – for
In life there is no present – we can number 175
How few, how less than few! wherein the Soul
Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws back
As from a stream in winter,⁹⁹ though the chill
Be but a moment's. I have one resource
Still in my science – I can call the dead, 180
And ask them what it is we dread to be;
The sternest answer can but be the Grave,
And that is nothing – if they answer not –
The buried Prophet answered to the Hag
Of Endor;¹⁰⁰ and the Spartan Monarch drew 185
From the Byzantine Maid's unsleeping Spirit
An answer, and his destiny – he slew
That which he loved, unknowing what he slew,
And died unpardoned, though he called in aid

98: *Hast thou no gentler answer – yet bethink thee:* compare the words of the Duke of Venice to Shylock at *The Merchant of Venice* IV i 33: *We all expect a gentle answer, Jew.*

99: *... not an hour – wherein the Soul / Forbears to pant for death, and yet draws back / As from a stream in winter:* echoes Psalm 42, 1: *As the hart panteth for the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God.*

100: For Saul and the Witch of Endor, see *II Samuel* 28 7 -5.

The Phyxian Jove, and in Phygalia roused 190
 The Arcadian Evocators, to compel
 The indignant Shadow to depose her wrath,
 Or fix her term of vengeance – she replied
 In words of dubious import, but fulfilled.¹⁰¹ –
 If I had never lived, that which I love 195
 Had still been living; had I never loved,
 That which I love would still be beautiful,
 Happy and giving happiness – what is She?¹⁰²

The Story of Pausanias King of Sparta (who commanded the Greeks at the battle of Plataea, and was afterwards punished for attempting to betray the Lacedaemonians) and Cleonice is told in Plutarch's life of Cimon, and in the Laconics of Pausanias the Sophist in his Description of Greece.

What is she now? A sufferer for my sins,
 A thing I dare not think upon, or nothing. 200
 Within few hours I shall not call in vain,
 Yet in this hour I dread the thing I dare;
 Until this hour I never shrank to gaze
 On Spirit good or evil – now I tremble,
 And feel a strange cold thaw upon my heart; 205
 But I can act even what I most abhor,
 And champion human Fears – the Night approaches.

Exit Manfred.

101: *The Spartan Monarch* is Pausanias, the general who, having beaten the Persians at Plataea, then negotiated with them with a view to becoming ruler of all Greece: a mixture of renegado, Macbeth, and Tarquinius Superbus, as the relevant part of his story, told thus in North's Plutarch, shows: ... *King Pausanias being on a time in the city of Byzance, sent for Cleonicé, a young maiden of noble house, to take his pleasure of her. Her parents durst not keep her from him, by reason of his cruelty, but suffered him to carry her away. The young gentlewoman prayed the groom of Pausanias' chamber to take away the lights, and thinking in the dark to come to Pausanias' bed that was asleep, groping for the bed as softly as she could to make no noise, she unfortunately hit against the lamp, and overthrew it. The falling of the lamp made such a noise that it wakened him on the sudden, and thought straight therewithal that some of his enemies had been come traitorously to kill him, whereupon he took his dagger lying under his bed's head, and so stabbed it in the young virgin, that she died immediately upon it. Howbeit she never let Pausanias take rest after that, because her spirit came every night and appeared unto him, as he would fain have slept, and spake this angrily to him in verse, as followeth: "Keep thou thyself upright, and justice see thou fear, / For woe and shame be unto him that justice down doth bear".* Taylor's Pausanias takes up the story: *This was the deed, from the guilt of which Pausanias could never fly, though he employed all-various purifications, received the deprecations of Jupiter Phyxius, and went to Phigalea to the Arcadian evocators [line 190] of souls. He therefore suffered a just punishment for his behaviour towards Cleonice, and divinity itself. – The Description of Greece by Pausanias (1794) I 304-5.* The full reference is *Pausanias III (Lakonia) XVII, 8.* Jupiter Phyxius was a god who assisted fugitives. Pausanias (the tyrant) was finally captured by his enemies, bricked up in a temple, and starved to death.

102: *What is she now? A sufferer for my sins, / A thing I dare not think upon, or nothing:* enlarges the hint at II i 30, that Manfred does not know whether Astarte is suffering in a Christian afterlife, or whether she has suffered a Neo-Platonic death of the soul for sharing in his blasphemous abominations. See also II ii 83 and n.

Act II scene iii.¹⁰³*The Summit of the Jungfrau Mountain.**Enter First Destiny.*¹⁰⁴

First Destiny

The Moon is rising broad and round and bright,
 And here, on snows where never human foot
 Of common mortal trod,¹⁰⁵ we nightly tread
 And leave no traces; o'er the savage Sea,
 The glassy Ocean of the mountain ice, 5
 We skim its rugged breakers, which put on
 The aspect of a tumbling tempest's foam
 Frozen in a moment – a dead Whirlpool's image.¹⁰⁶
 And this most steep fantastic pinnacle,
 The fret-work of some Earthquake, where the Clouds 10
 Pause to repose themselves in passing by,
 Is sacred to our revels – or our vigils.
 Here do I wait my sisters – on our way
 To the Hall of Arimanes – for tonight
 Is our great festival – 'tis strange they come not. 15

A Voice without singing.

The Captive Usurper¹⁰⁷
 Hurl'd down from the throne
 Lay buried in torpor –
 Forgotten and lone –
 I broke through his slumbers 20
 I shivered his chain –
 I leagu'd him with Numbers –
 He's Tyrant again!
 With the blood of a million he'll answer my care
 With a Nation's destruction – his flight and despair. 25

Second Voice without

The Ship sailed on – the Ship sailed fast –
 But I left not a sail – and I left not a mast –

103: Act II scenes iii and iv should be compared with *Macbeth* IV i *passim*: Manfred commands the scene where Macbeth only thinks he does. This gives Shakespeare opportunities for irony which B. eschews. II iii also echoes Coleridge's *Famine, Fire and Slaughter*, which Polidori (*Diary*, p.115) reports Mary Shelley to have recited on June 1 1816. More remote influences may be the *Auerbachs Keller*, *Hexenküche*, and *Walpurgisnacht* scenes from *Faust*; although Faust takes only an observer's role in the first two of these, and Goethe's scenes are squalid and farcical where B.'s is solemn.

104: The *Destinies* are the three Fates, Lachesis, who determines man's lot at birth, Clotho, who spins the thread of life, and Atropos, who cuts it at death. According to Aeschylus in *Prometheus Bound*, even Zeus has to bow to them (though what they will ultimately decree for him is left ambiguous).

105: ... *here on snows where never human foot / Of common mortal trod*: B. ignores the fact that the Jungfrau had been climbed, in 1811. Compare *CHP* IV, 73, 6-7: *But I have seen the soaring Jungfrau rear / Her never-trodden snow ...*

106: **ALPINE JOURNAL**: echoes the entry for September 23: ... *mounted again & rode to the higher Glacier – twilight – but distinct – very fine Glacier – like a frozen hurricane ...* (BLJ V 102).

107: The Captive Usurper is Napoleon. CPW (IV 473) comments, "The Spirit prophecies that Napoleon will return from St. Helena as he had from Elba."

There is not a plank of the hull or the deck –
 And there is not a wretch to lament o'er his wreck,
 Save one, whom I held as he swum by the hair, * 30
 And he was a subject well worthy my care –
 A traitor on land, and a Pirate at sea,¹⁰⁸
 But I saved him to wreak further havoc for me.¹⁰⁹

First Destiny, *answering*

The City lies sleeping;
 The Morn, to deplore it, 35
 May dawn on it weeping.
 Sullenly, slowly,
 The black Plague flew o'er it –
 Thousands lie lowly;
 Tens of thousands shall perish – 40
 The living shall fly from
 The Sick they should cherish;
 But nothing can vanquish
 The touch that they die from;
 Sorrow and Anguish, 45
 And Evil and Dread,
 Envelope a Nation;
 The blest are the dead,
 Who see not the sight
 Of their own desolation. – 50
 This work of a Night,
 This wreck of a realm, this deed of my doing,
 For ages I've done, and shall still be renewing.

Enter the Second and Third Destinies

The Three

Our hands contain the hearts of men –
 Our footsteps are their graves –
 We only give to take again 55
 The Spirits of our Slaves. –

First Destiny

Welcome – Where's Nemesis?

108: ... *one, whom I held as he swum by the hair, / And he was a subject well worthy my care – / A traitor on land, and a Pirate at sea, / But I saved to wreak further havoc for me:* E.H.Coleridge detects a reference to Thomas Cochrane, 10th earl of Dundonald (1775-1860) highly successful admiral – a *Pirate at sea*. Implicated unfairly in a financial scandal he had been imprisoned by the establishment enemies he had made in his exposure of Admiralty corruption (B.'s *A traitor on land* seems ironic). On March 11 1815, Hobhouse had received a letter from his father announcing the simultaneous escapes of Napoleon from Elba and Cochrane from Newgate. Both were recaptured. Cochrane later became famous as the friend and naval assistant of Simon Bolivar; although B. could not have known in 1816 that that was to be the case, the Second Voice's *I saved him to wreak further havoc for me* is in a way prophetic, if we take the demons to be proponents of political upheaval and freedom-fighting.

109: The Second Voice's speech at ll.26-33 derives from *Macbeth* I iii 7-25: *Her husband's from Aleppo gone, / Master o'th'Tiger; / But in a sieve I'll thither sail, / And like a rat without a tail, / I'll do, and I'll do, and I'll do ... Though his bark cannot be lost, / Yet it shall be tempest-tossed ... Here I have a pilot's thumb, / Wracked as homeward he did come ...*

Second Destiny

At some great work,
But what I know not – for my hands were full.

Third Destiny.

Behold, she cometh!

*Enter Nemesis.*¹¹⁰

First Destiny

Say, where hast thou been? 60
My Sisters and thyself are slow tonight.¹¹¹ –

Nemesis

I was detained repairing shattered thrones,¹¹²
Marrying fools, restoring dynasties,
Avenging men upon their enemies
And making them repent their own revenge; 65
Goading the wise to madness, from the dull
Shaping out Oracles to rule the world
Afresh, for they were waxing out of date;
And mortals dared to ponder for themselves,
And weigh kings in the balance, and to speak 70
Of Freedom, the forbidden fruit.¹¹³ Away!
We have outstaid the hour – mount we our Clouds! –

Exeunt.

110: *Nemesis*: Originally a minor female deity, she became synonymous with Retribution. Using her alternative name, Adrasteia, Aeschylus in *Prometheus Bound*, warns men to fear her. When proof-reading the fourth canto of *Childe Harold* (written the year after *Manfred*) William Gifford came across a repetition he was starting to find onerous, and chid B. in the margin: *Recollect you have Nemesis again. B. was unrepentant: I know it – and if I had her ten times would not alter once – she is my particular belief and acquaintance – and I wont blaspheme against her for any body* (CPW II 330). Taylor's Pausanias has this to say about her: *Proclus on Hesiod informs us that Nemesis was celebrated in hymns as the angel of justice; and that she is represented by Hesiod clothed in a white garment, because she is an intellectual power, far removed from the atheistic and dark essence of the passions* (III 201).

111: Compare *Macbeth*, I iii 1-3: *Where hast thou been, sister? – Killing swine. – Sister, where thou?* and so on.

112: *I was detained repairing shattered thrones ...* Nemesis is seen operating in recent history through the restorations which were effected at the Congress of Vienna.

113: B.'s concept of Nemesis as the protector of tyrants may be contrasted with the role assumed by Sathan in *The Vision of Judgement*, where he pretends, at least, to be the spokesman for freedom. There are feeling references to Nemesis in letters of January 28 and February 3 1817 (BLJ V 165 and 168) which perhaps indicate when B. was writing this scene. In another letter, to Lady Byron, of November 18 1818, he writes, *It was not in vain that I invoked Nemesis in the Midnight of Rome from the awfullest of her Ruins* (BLJ VI 81). It was while in Rome that he wrote his new version of the Third Act – see below, III iv, first speech. The letter relates to the death of Sir Samuel Romilly, which B. seems to see as a result of his invocation.

Act II scene iv.

*The Hall of Arimanes. --
Arimanes on his throne, a globe of fire;¹¹⁴
surrounded by the Spirits. ----*

Hymn of the Spirits.¹¹⁵

Hail to our Master, Prince of Earth and Air!¹¹⁶
Who walks the Clouds and Waters; in his hand
The sceptre of the Elements, which tear
Themselves to Chaos at his high command!
He breatheth, and a tempest shakes the sea – 5
He speaketh, and the Clouds reply in thunder –
He gazeth – from his Glance the Sunbeams flee;
He moveth – Earthquakes rend the World asunder –
Beneath his Footsteps the Volcanoes rise –
His Shadow is the Pestilence; his path 10
The Comets herald through the burning skies,
And Planets turn to ashes at his wrath. –
To him War offers daily sacrifice –
To him Death pays his tribute; Life is his,
With all its Infinite of agonies, 15
And his the Spirit of whatever is.¹¹⁷

Enter the Destinies and Nemesis.

First Destiny

Glory to Arimanes! On the earth

114: *Arimanes on his throne – a Globe of fire – surrounded by the Spirits:* echoes *Vathek*: *An infinity of elders with streaming beards, and afrits in complete armour, had prostrated themselves before the ascent of a lofty eminence; on the top of which, upon a globe of fire, sat the formidable Eblis. His person was that of a young man, whose noble and regular features seemed to have been tarnished by malignant vapours. In his large eyes appeared both pride and despair: his flowing hair retained some resemblance to that of an angel of light. In his hand, which thunder had blasted, he swayed the iron sceptre, that causes the monster Ouranbad, the afrits, and all the powers of the abyss to tremble.* (*Vathek*, ed. Lonsdale, pp.110-11.) For Arimanes (who is a separate being in *Vathek*) see D'Herbelot's *Bibliothèque Orientale*, entry for *Aherman ou Ahermen*: *C'est ainsi que les anciens Persans appeloient le principe du mal, opposé à Armozd ou Ormozd, principe du bien. Les Grecs & les Latins les ont appellés Arimanius & Oramazdes, lorsqu'ils ont expliqué la doctrine de Zoroastre touchant les deux principes. ... Un ... Poète Persien, nommé Assedi, dit que le propre d'Ahermen est de semer par tout la discorde. Les anciens Romains de Perse nous racontent des merveilles de la montagne d'Ahermen: car ils disent que c'est en ce lieu-là que les démons s'assemblent pour y recevoir les ordres de leur Prince, & qu'ils partent pour aller exercer leur malice dans toutes les parties du monde – Bibliothèque Orientale (1781-3) I 184. Ahriman, god of darkness, was the twin brother of Ormuzd, god of light, in Zoroastrian belief. B. seems anxious to keep both Christian myth and, now, Neo-Platonism, at arms' length.*

115: Noticeable here is the absence of Alpine imagery: B. has now put the *Alpine Journal* behind him as a source.

116: *Hail to our Master, Prince of Earth and Air!*: see *Ephesians 2,2*: *... in past time ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the Prince of the power of the air ...* At *The Vision of Judgement* 1.305, Sathan is referred to as *The Prince of Air*. See also Pope, *Epistle to Bathurst*, 1.353.

117: May be compared with the following part of a letter from Shelley to Peacock, written on July 22 1816 after viewing Mont Blanc and the Vale of Chamounix, before parting company with Byron: *Do you who assert the supremacy of Ahriman imagine him throned among these desolating snows, among these palaces of death & frost, sculptured in this their terrible magnificence by the unsparing hand of necessity, & that he casts round him as the first assays of his final usurpation avalanches, torrents, rocks & thunders – and above all, these deadly glaciers at once the proofs & symbols of his reign* (LPBS I 499).

His power increaseth; both my sisters did
His bidding, nor did I neglect my duty. –

Second Destiny

Glory to Arimanes! We, who bow 20
The necks of men, bow down before his throne.

Third Destiny

Glory to Arimanes! we await
His nod. –

Nemesis

Sovereign of Sovereigns, we are thine!
And all that liveth, more or less, is ours,¹¹⁸
And most things wholly so; still to increase 25
Our power, increasing thine, demands our care;
And we are vigilant; thy late commands
Hath been fulfilled to the utmost. –

Enter Manfred. –

A Spirit

What is here? –
A mortal! thou most rash and fatal wretch!
Bow down and worship. –

Second Spirit

I do know the man; 30
A Magian of great power, and fearful skill.

Third Spirit

Bow down and worship, Slave! What, know'st thou not
Thine and our Sovereign? Tremble, and obey! –

All the Spirits

Prostrate thyself and thy condemned clay,
Child of the earth; or dread the worst. –

Manfred

I know it – 35

118: ... *all that liveth, more or less, is ours, / And most things wholly so*: compare Sathan's speech to the Archangel Michael at *TVoJ*, st.40:

*“Look to our earth – or rather mine – it was,
“Once, more thy master's – but I triumph not
“In this poor planet's conquest, nor, Alas!
“Need he thou servest envy me my lot –
“With all the myriads of bright worlds which pass
“In worship round him he may have forgot
“Yon weak creation of such paltry things ...*

And yet ye see I kneel not. –

Fourth Spirit

'Twill be taught thee.

Manfred

'Tis taught already. Many a night on the earth
On the bare ground have I bowed down my face,
And strewed my head with ashes. I have known
The fullness of humiliation, for 40
I sunk before my vain despair, and knelt
To my own desolation. –

Fifth Spirit

Dost thou dare
Refuse to Arimanes on his throne
What the whole Earth accords, beholding not
The terror of his Glory? Crouch, I say! – 45

Manfred

Bid *him* bow down to that which is above him –
The over-ruling Infinite – the Maker,
Who made him not for worship; let *him* kneel,
And we will kneel together. – –

The Spirits

Crush the worm! –
Tear him in pieces! –

First Destiny

Hence! Avaunt! He's mine. 50
Prince of the Powers Invisible! – this man
Is of no common order, as his port
And presence here denote; his sufferings
Have been of an Immortal Nature – like
Our own – his knowledge and his powers and will, 55
As far as is compatible with Clay,
Which Clogs the ethereal essence, have been such
As Clay hath seldom borne; his aspirations
Have been beyond the dwellers of the earth,
And they have only taught him what we know – 60
That knowledge is not happiness, and science
But an exchange of ignorance for that
Which is another kind of ignorance.¹¹⁹ –

119: ... knowledge is not happiness – and science – / But an exchange of ignorance for that / Which is another kind of ignorance: compare *Faust*, ll.360-5:

*Heisse Magister, heisse Doktor gar
Und ziehe schon an die zehen Jahr
Herauf, herab, und quer und krumm*

This is not all; the passions, attributes
 Of Earth and Heaven, from which no power, nor being, 65
 Nor breath from the worm upwards is exempt,
 Have pierced his heart, and in their consequence
 Made him a thing, which I, who pity not,
 Yet pardon those who pity. He is mine,
 And thine, it may be; be it so, or not, 70
 No other Spirit in this region hath
 A Soul like his, or power upon his Soul. –

Nemesis

What doth he here then?

First Destiny

Let *him* answer that.

Manfred

Ye know what I have known, and without power
 I could not be amongst ye; but there are 75
 Powers deeper still beyond. I come in quest
 Of such to answer unto what I seek¹²⁰ –

Nemesis

What wouldst thou?

Manfred

Thou can’st not reply to me;
 Call up the dead – my question is for them.

Nemesis

Great Arimanes – doth thy Will avouch 80
 The wishes of this mortal?

Arimanes

Yea!

Nemesis

Uncharnel? – – – Whom would’st thou –

Manfred

*Meine Schüler an der Nase herum –
 Und sehe, dass wir nichts wissen können!
 Das will mir schier das Herz verbrennen.*

120: Should be contrasted with the more vulnerable lines of Macbeth at IV i 50-61: *I conjure you, by that which you profess, / Howe’er you come to know it, answer me ...*

One without a tomb¹²¹ – Call up
Astarte.¹²² —

Nemesis

Shadow! or Spirit!
 Whatever thou art, 85
 Which still doth inherit
 The whole or a part
 Of the form of thy birth,
 Of the mould of thy clay,
 Which returned to the earth, 90
 Reappear to the day!
 Bear what thou borest,
 The heart and the form;
 And the aspect thou worest
 Redeem from the worm; 95
 Appear – Appear – Appear!
 Who sent thee there requires thee here! –

*The Phantom of Astarte rises
and stands in the midst. —*

Manfred

Can this be death? there's bloom upon her cheek;¹²³

121: *One without a tomb:* adds to previous hints (II i 29-30, II ii 198-9) that Manfred, though he may know Astarte to be dead, has no knowledge of her spiritual fate. That she had literally had no interment and no memorial would add to his desperation, whatever the case with her soul.

122: Though she says only seven words, Astarte is first among the *ewig-weibliche* characters of B.'s poetry. The name is legendary. See *Paradise Lost*, I 437-46:

*With these in troop
 Came Astoreth, whom the Phoenicians call'd
 Astarte, Queen of Heav'n, with crescent Horns;
 To whose bright Image nightly by the Moon
 Sidonian Virgins paid thir Vows and Songs,
 In Sion also not unsung, where stood
 Her Temple on th'offensive Mountain, built
 By that uxorious King, whose heart though large,
 Beguil'd by fair Idolatresses, fell
 To idols foul.*

In near-eastern myth Astarte was confused with, or perhaps identical to, both Ashtaroth (see rejected Act III below, *Judges II* 13, *Paradise Lost* I 421, or Milton's *Nativity Ode*, 200: *Moonèd Ashtaroth, / Heav'ns Queen and Mother both*) and Astoreth (*II Kings* 23, 13, or *Paradise Lost* I 438) the wife to Adonis. Cicero (*De Natura Deorum* III) links her with Venus, and says she comes from Syria and Cyprus. With Pasiphae and Semiramis (*Don Juan* II 1239 and V 480) she was worshipped as a fertility goddess. Another important source may not be myth but the sixty-seventh of Montesquieu's *Lettres Persanes*, where the name is given to the female partner in a tale of sibling incest – both principals being Zoroastrians. Voltaire also uses the name in his eastern comic romance *Zadig*. However, the most immediate inspiration may for B. have been the dual figures of the Arab maiden and the Veilèd Maiden in Shelley's *Alastor*; see 129-39 and 149 *et. seq.* Astarte, as she appears in this scene, unites the reality of the first with the inaccessibility of the second; in general she is (was) a real "other", as opposed to a figment of the protagonist's imagination – one of the advantages B. derives from taking Shelley's narrative and recasting part of it in dramatic form.

123: (Can this be death? there's bloom upon her cheek) should be contrasted with the words of Romeo to the seemingly-dead Juliet at *Romeo and Juliet* V iii 92-6: ... beauty's ensign yet / Is crimson in thy lips and in thy cheeks, / And death's pale flag is not advanced there. B. echoes this idea at *The Prisoner of Chillon*, 190-1: With all the while a cheek whose bloom / Was as a mockery of the tomb ... However, compare also CHP IV 102 3 ...

But now I see it is no living hue,
 But a strange hectic, like the unnatural red 100
 Which Autumn plants upon the perished leaf.
 It is the same! Oh God! That I should dread
 To look upon the same! – Astarte! no,
 I cannot speak to her, but bid her speak.
 Forgive me, or condemn me. – 105

Nemesis

By the power which hath broken
 The grave which enthralled thee,
 Speak to him who hath spoken,
 Or those who have called thee!

Manfred

She is silent – 110
 And in that silence I am more than answered.

Nemesis

My power extends no further; Prince of air!
 It rests with thee alone – command her voice.

Arimanes

Spirit! obey this Sceptre!

Nemesis

Silent still! –
 She is not of our order, but belongs 115
 To the other powers. Mortal! thy quest is vain,
 And we are baffled also. –

Manfred

Hear me – Hear me¹²⁴ –

9: ... a cloud / ... yet shed / A sunset charm around her, and illumine / With hectic light, the Hesperus of the dead, / Of her consuming cheek, the autumnal leaf-like red.

124: Manfred's lines at 117-150 may be compared to Othello's words to the dead Desdemona at V ii 275-8:

*When we shall meet at compt,
 This look of thine will hurl my soul from Heaven,
 And fiends will snatch at it.*

However, a more important source – though the circumstances of the lovers differ, in that Manfred never deserted Astarte – lies in the words of Aeneas to Dido at *Aeneid* VI, 456-66:

*“infelix Dido, verus mihi nuntius ergo
 venerat extinctam, ferroque extrema secutam?
 funeris heu! tibi causa fui? per sidera iuro,
 per superos, et si qua fides tellure sub ima est,
 invitus, regina, tuo de litore cessi 460
 sed me iussa deum, quae nunc has ire per umbras,
 per loca senta situ cogunt noctemque profundam,
 imperiis egere suis; nec credere quivi
 hunc tantum tibi me discessu ferre dolorem.
 siste gradum teque aspectu ne subtrahe nostro. 465*

Astarte! my beloved – speak to me –
 I have so much endured – so much endure –
 Look on me – the Grave hath not changed thee more 120
 Than I am changed for thee – thou loved'st me
 Too much, as I loved thee – we were not made
 To torture thus each other, though it were
 The deadliest sin to love as we have loved;
 Say that thou loath'st me not – that I do bear 125
 This punishment for both¹²⁵ – that thou wilt be
 One of the blessed – and that I shall die;
 For hitherto all hateful things conspire
 To bind me in existence, in a life
 Which makes me shrink from Immortality – 130
 A future like the past; I cannot rest –
 I know not what I ask, nor what I seek –
 I feel but what thou art – and what I am –
 And I would hear yet once before I perish
 The voice which was my Music. Speak to me! 135
 For I have called on thee in the still night,
 Startled the slumbering birds from the hushed boughs,
 And woke the mountain wolves, and made the caves
 Acquainted with thy vainly echoed name,¹²⁶
 Which answered me – many things answered me – 140
 Spirits and men – but thou wert silent all;
 Yet speak to me – I have outwatched the Stars,
 And gazed o'er heaven in vain in search of thee;
 Speak to me – I have wandered o'er the earth
 And never found thy likeness.¹²⁷ Speak to me! 145
 Look on the fiends around – they feel for me –
 I fear them not – and feel for thee alone –
 Speak to me, though it be in wrath – but say –
 I reckon not what – but let me hear thee once –
 This once – once more –

The Phantom of Astarte

Manfred!

Manfred

Say on – Say on¹²⁸ – 150

quem fugis? extremum fato, quod te adloquor, hoc est."

Perhaps disgusted by his hypocrisy at 463-4, Dido says nothing to Aeneas in return.

125: *Say ... that I do bear / This punishment for both:* one of the few sympathetic references to vicarious suffering and atonement in all B.'s work. He ordinarily displayed little interest, or belief, in the idea. The fact that Manfred's offer to suffer in Astarte's place is unanswered is doubtless significant.

126: Should be compared with Viola's words to Olivia at *Twelfth Night* I v 252-60:

*Write loyal cantons of contemned love
 And sing them loud even in the dead of night;
 Halloo your name to the reverberate hills,
 And make the babbling gossip of the air
 Cry out "Olivia!"*

127: *I have wandered o'er the earth – / And never found thy likeness:* recalls the wanderings of the Poet in Alastor.

128: Compare the underdeveloped final episode in *Vathek*: *Kalilah and his sister made reciprocal gestures of imprecation; all testified their horror for each other by the most ghastly convulsions, and screams that could not*

I live but in the sound – it is thy voice!

Phantom

Manfred – tomorrow ends thine earthly ills.
Farewell!

Manfred

Yet one word more – am I forgiven?

Phantom

Farewell!

Manfred

Say – shall we meet again?

Phantom

Farewell!

Manfred

One word for Mercy – Say – thou lov'st me. – 155

Phantom

Manfred! –

The Spirit of Astarte disappears.

Nemesis

She's gone, and will not be recalled.¹²⁹
Her words will be fulfilled – return to the earth. –

A Spirit

He is convulsed – this is to be a mortal
And seek the things above Mortality. –

Another Spirit

Yet see – he mastereth himself – and makes 160
His nature tributary to his will –
Had he been one of us he would have made
An awful Spirit. –

be smothered. All severally plunged themselves into the accursed multitude, there to wander in an eternity of unabating anguish. (Vathek, ed. Lonsdale, pp.119-20.) Beckford debated whether or not to extend the story, but never printed it. For B.'s curiosity, see letter to Rogers, March 3 1818 (BLJ VI 17-18): Rogers had been to Fonthill and heard more about the extra part of Vathek.

129: *She's gone, and will not be recalled:* compare *Hamlet*, I i 52: *'Tis gone, and will not answer.*

Nemesis

Hast thou further question –
Of our great Sovereign or his worshippers?

Manfred

None.

Nemesis

Then for a time farewell.

Manfred

Where? on the earth? – We meet then – 165

Nemesis

That will be seen hereafter.

Manfred

Even as thou wilt – and for the grace accorded,
I now depart a debtor. Fare ye well! –

Exit Manfred.

*Scene closes – end of Act Second.*¹³⁰

130: II iv is the last scene of the play containing Alpine imagery, and thus any recollections of B.'s mountain excursion with Hobhouse. The last Alpine Journal entry may usefully be quoted here, at the lowest point of Manfred's suffering: *In the weather for this tour (of 13 days) I have been very fortunate – fortunate in a companion (Mr. H[obhous]e) fortunate in our prospects – and exempt from even the little petty accidents & delays which often render journeys in a less wild country – disappointing. – I was disposed to be pleased – I am a lover of Nature – and an Admirer of Beauty – I can bear fatigue – & welcome privation – and have seen some of the noblest views in the world. – But in all this – the recollections of bitterness – & more especially of recent & more home desolation – which must accompany me through life – have preyed upon me here – and neither the music of the Shepherd – the crashing of the Avalanche – nor the torrent – the mountain – the Glacier – the Forest – nor the Cloud – have for one moment – lightened the weight upon my heart – nor enabled me to lose my own wretched identity in the majesty & the power and the Glory – around – above – & beneath me. – I am past reproaches – and there is a time for all things – I am past the wish of vengeance – and I know of none like for what I have suffered – but the hour will come – when what I feel must be felt – & the — — but enough. — — – To you – dearest Augusta – I send – and for you – I have kept this record of what I have seen & felt. – Love me as you are beloved by me. — — (BLJ V 104-5).*

Act Three (first version):**Act III Scene i.**

Enter the Abbot of St. Maurice.

Abbot.

Peace be with Count Manfred!

Manfred

Thanks, holy Father! Welcome to these walls.
Thy presence honours them, and blesseth those
Who dwell within them. –

Abbot

Would it were so, Count –
But I would fain confer with thee alone. –

Manfred

Herman, retire.

Exit Herman.

What would my reverend Guest? 5

Abbot

Thus without prelude – Age and Zeal, my office,
And good intent must plead my privilege.
Our near though not acquainted Neighbourhood
May also be my herald. Rumours strange
And of unholy nature are abroad, 10
And busy with thy name – a noble name
For centuries – may he who bears it now
Transmit it unimpaired. – – –

Manfred

Proceed. – I listen.¹³¹ –

Abbot

'Tis said thou holdest converse with the things
Which are forbidden to the search of man, 15
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,
The many evil and unheavenly Spirits
Which walk the valley of the Shade of Death,

131: Compare Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, Chapter II: *My lord, said the holy man, I am no intruder into the secrets of families. My office is to promote peace, to heal divisions, to preach repentance, and teach mankind to curb their headstrong passions. I forgive your highness's uncharitable apostrophe: I know my duty, and am the minister of a mightier prince than Manfred. Hearken to him who speaks through my organs. Manfred trembled with rage and shame.*

Thou communest. – I know that with mankind –
 Thy fellows in creation – thou dost rarely 20
 Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy Solitude
 Is as an Anchorite's – were it but holy.

Manfred

And what are they who do avouch these things?

Abbot

My pious brethren – the scared peasantry –
 Even thy own vassals, who do look on thee 25
 With most unquiet eyes. Thy life's in peril –

Manfred

Take it.

Abbot

I come to save and not destroy –
 I would not pry into thy secret Soul –
 But if these things be sooth, there still is time
 For penitence and pity; reconcile thee 30
 With the true church, and through the church to heaven.

Manfred

I hear thee. – This is my reply. – Whate'er
 I may have been or am doth rest between
 Heaven and myself. I shall not choose a mortal
 To be my mediator. Have I sinned 35
 Against your ordinances? Prove and punish.¹³² –

132: Italicised lines from now on are those rejected when B. revised the third act. His decision to make the alteration was in part because of the objections which William Gifford had voiced, in a memo to John Murray on receipt of the first manuscript of the Third Act: *My dear Sir, / I found your parcel here at 4 – so that it is hardly possible to do any thing by Post time – nor indeed can I say much more. I have marked a passage or two which might be omitted with advantage: but the Act requires strengthening. There is nothing to bear it out but one speech. The Friar is despicable, & the servants uninteresting. The scene with the Friar ought to be imposing, & for that purpose the Friar should be a real[,] good man – not an idiot. More dignity should be lent to the catastrophe. See how beautifully our old poet Marlow has wrought up the death of Faustus – several of our old plays have scenes of this kind – but they strove to make them impressive. Manfred should not end in this feeble way – after beginning with such magnificence & promise – & the demons should have something to do with the scene.*

Do not send my words to Lord B. but you may take a hint from them – Say that the last Act bears no proportion in length to the two previous ... / Sincerely / W.G. (John Murray Archive / National Library of Scotland). On March 10 1817, Murray wrote to B., enclosing Gifford's letter, and writing: ... As I told you in my last letter that Mr G was very much pleased with Act 2 – & as you know he takes a paternal interest in your literary well being – he does not by any means like the Conclusion – Now I am venturing upon the confidence with which your Lordship has ever honoured me in sending the enclosed – I fear I am not doing right – I am not satisfied – but I venture – & I entreat that you will make a point of returning them. I have told him that I have made a letter from them – but there is so much friendly good sense in them that I can not refrain – I am sure you can – & I am almost sure that you will improve what begins & continues so beautifully [–] in a drama of any kind – the last Act is the difficulty & this you must surmount. (John Murray Archive / National Library of Scotland).

Abbot

*Then hear and tremble! – for the headstrong wretch,
Who in the mail of innate hardihood
Would shield himself, and battle for his sins,
There is the stake on earth, and beyond earth,
Eternal —* [40]

Manfred

*Charity, most reverend Father!
Becomes thy lips so much more than this menace,
That I would call thee back to it; but say,
What wouldst thou with me? – – –*

Abbot

*It may be there are
Things that would shake thee, but I keep them back,
And give thee till tomorrow to repent.
Then, if thou dost not all devote thyself
To penance, and with gift of all thy lands
To the Monastery¹³³ –* [45]

Manfred

I understand thee. Well.

Abbot

Expect no mercy; I have warned thee. –

Manfred, opening the casket.

However, we know Murray did have the first version of the Third Act set up in proof, for some of B.'s revisions are found on proof sheets bound up with the fair copy. Perhaps he lacked confidence in B.'s openness to criticism. On April 14 1817, B. answered Murray: ... *The speech of Manfred to the Sun is the only part of this act I thought good myself – the rest is certainly as bad as bad can be – & I wonder what the devil possessed me – I am very glad indeed that you sent me Mr Gifford's opinion without deduction – do you suppose me such a Sotheby as not to be very much obliged to him? or that in fact I was not, & am not, convinced & convicted in my conscience of the absurdity of this same act of nonsense? – I shall try at it again – in the mean time lay it upon the Shelf (the whole drama, I mean) but pray correct your copies of the 1st & 2d acts by the original M.S.* (BLJ 211-12). A mere fortnight later, on May 5th, he wrote again: ... *I send you ... the new third act of "Manfred." – I have rewritten the greater part – & returned what is not altered in the proof you sent me. – The Abbot is become a good man – & the Spirits are brought in at the death – you will find I think some good poetry in this new act here & there – & if so print it – without sending me further proofs – under Mr.G[ifford]'s correction – if he will have the goodness to overlook it* (BLJ V 219).

133: *if thou dost not all devote thyself / To penance – and with gift of all thy lands / To the monastery:* in the original third act Christianity was to have had no more spiritual and moral dignity than this, to contrast with the powerful Neo-Platonic, Zoroastrian, Hellenistic-Roman and other mythologies which B. elsewhere employs. The immediate inspiration may be the imagined words of the priest who, in *Faust*, appropriates the jewels intended for Margarete:

*Hat ganze Länder aufgefressen,
Und doch noch nie sich übergessen;
Die Kirch allein, meine lieben Frauen,
Kann ungerechtes Gut verdauen.
Die Kirche hat einen guten Magen ...*

Stop – [50]

There is a gift for thee within this casket –

Manfred opens the casket, strikes a light, and
burns some Incense.

Manfred

*Ho – Ashtaroath!*¹³⁴ –

The Demon Ashtaroath appears, saying as follows – –

Ashtaroath's Song

*The Raven sits
On the Raven-stone,
And his black wing flits* [55]
*O'er the milk-white bone,
To and fro, as the night-winds blow;
The carcase of the assassin swings,
And there alone, on the Raven-stone, +*
The Raven flaps his dusky wings; [60]
*The fetters creak, and his ebon beak
Croaks to the close of the hollow sound;
And this is the tune, by the light of the Moon,
To which the Witches dance their round. –*
*Merrily, merrily!*¹³⁵ *Cheerily, cheerily!* [65]
*Merrily, merrily speeds the ball;
The dead in their shrouds, and the demons in clouds,
Flock to the Witches' Carnival. –*

Note + Raven-stone (Rabenstein) a translation of the German word for the Gibbet, which in Germany and Switzerland is permanent and made of stone.¹³⁶

Abbot

*I fear thee not – hence – hence –
Avaunt thee, Evil One! Help! Ho! Without there!* [70]

134: *Ashtaroath*: also known as Astarte; but the goddess became a devil, and changed sex, in the middle ages. He was associated with Asmodeus (see the Apocryphal *Book of Tobit*, and *The Vision of Judgement*, 1.675 *et. seq.*) who would in the popular superstition lift people up and fly about with them. Ashtaroath's first song seems the one detail of *Manfred* lifted directly from *Faust* Part I, and it is perhaps significant that B. deleted it. Here is the penultimate scene of Goethe's play in its entirety:

FAUST: *Was weben sie dort um dem Rabenstein?*

MEPHISTOPHELES: *Weiss nicht, was sie kochen und schaffen.*

FAUST: *Schweben auf, schweben ab, neigen nich, beugen sich.*

MEPHISTOPHELES: *Eine Hexenzunft!*

FAUST: *Sie streuen und weihen.*

MEPHISTOPHELES: *Vorbei! vorbei!* (II.4399-404)

The dramatic contexts are different. In *Manfred* the gibbet is (or would have been) merely a joke to scare the Abbot: in *Faust* it is a presentiment of Margarete's death, past which Mephistopheles and Faust hurry nervously.

135: *Merrily – Merrily*: recalls Ariel's song at *The Tempest*, V i 87-94.

136: B. returns to the Raven-stone in 1821 / 2 at *Werner*, II ii 178.

Manfred

*Carry this man to the Schreckhorn¹³⁷ – to its peak –
To its extremest peak – watch with him there
From now till Sunrise – let him gaze, and know
He ne'er again will be so near to Heaven;
But harm him not – and when the Morrow breaks, [75]
Set him down safe in his cell – Away with him! –*

Ashtaroath

*Had I not better bring his brethren too,
Convent and all, to bear him company?*

Manfred

No, this will serve for the present. Take him up. –

Ashtaroath

*Come, Friar! Now an Exorcism or two, [80]
And we shall fly the lighter. –*

*Ashtaroath disappears with the Abbot,
singing as follows*

*A prodigal son, and a maid undone
And a widow re-wedded within the year,¹³⁸
And a worldly Monk, and a pregnant Nun,
Are things which every day appear. [85]*

Manfred, alone.

*Why would this fool break in on me, and force
My art to pranks fantastical? No matter –
It was not of my seeking. My heart sickens,
And weighs a fixed foreboding on my Soul;
But it is calm – calm as a sullen sea [90]*

*After the hurricane; the winds are still,
But the cold waves swell high and heavily,
And there is danger in them. Such a rest
Is no repose. My life hath been a combat,
And every thought a wound, till I am scarred [95]
In the immortal part of Me. – What now?*

Re-enter Herman.

My lord, you bade me wait on you at Sunset –

137: *The Schreckhorn:* seen by B. and Hobhouse on September 24 1816. Hobhouse recorded, *Went first by the upper glacier – the Schreckhorn rose upon us above the Mettenbergh between that mountain & the Wetterhorn – the hills before us partially covered but the white razor ridge of the great giant [the Eigher] was blazing in the sun ...*

138: *A widow re-wedded within the year:* recalls Gertrude in Hamlet.

He sinks behind the Mountain. –

Manfred

Doth he so?

I will look on him. –

Manfred advances to the window of the Hall — —

Glorious Orb! ¹³⁹ – the Idol	100
Of early Nature, and the vigorous race	
Of undiseased Mankind, the Giant Sons	
Of the embrace of Angels with a sex	
More beautiful than they, ¹⁴⁰ which did draw down	
The erring Spirits who can ne'er return. –	105
Most glorious Orb! that wert a worship e'er	
The Mystery of thy making was revealed –	
Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,	
Which gladdened on their mountain-tops the hearts	
Of the Chaldean Shepherds, ¹⁴¹ till they poured	110
Themselves in Orisons – thou material God!	
And representative of the Unknown –	
Who chose thee for his Shadow, – thou chief Star	
Centre of many Stars, which mak'st our earth	
Endurable, and temperest the hues	115
And hearts of all who walk beneath thy rays –	
Sire of the Seasons! Monarch of the climes,	
And those who dwell in them! For, near or far,	
Our inborn Spirits have a tint of thee,	
Even as our outward Aspects. Thou dost rise,	120
And shine, and set, in Glory. Fare thee well!	
I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first Glance	
Of love and wonder was for thee, then take	
My latest look – thou wilt not beam on one	
To whom the Gifts of life and warmth have been	125
Of a more fatal Nature. – He is gone –	

139: *Glorious Orb!*: this speech may owe something to the *Oration to the Sun* of Julian the Apostate, which had been translated by Thomas Taylor the Platonist. It may also be compared with the speech of Beleses about the setting sun, at *Sardanapalus* II i 1-36, and that of Myrrha about the rising sun at *Sardanapalus* V i 9-38.

140: See *Genesis* 6, 2 ... 4: ... *the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose ... There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.* This passage is in part the theme of B.'s 1821 drama *Heaven and Earth*.

141: *the Chaldean Shepherds*: compare *CHP* III, 14, 1-3:

*Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars,
Till he had peopled them with beings bright
As their own beams ...*

or 91, 1-6:

*Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places and the peak
Of earth – o'er-gazing mountains, and thus make
A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek
The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak,
Upreared of human hands.*

E.H.Coleridge, and CPW, both refer to Herodotus' description of the Persian religion at *Histories*, Book I 131, and to Wordsworth's *The Excursion*, IV 671-6. Neither point out that the phrase *Chaldean Shepherds* (no-one believes the Chaldean astronomers to have been shepherds) is from *The Excursion*, IV 694.

I follow.¹⁴²

Exit Manfred.

Note + “That the Sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair”, &c.: “There were Giants in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the Sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them; the same became mighty men, which were of old. – Genesis, Chapter 6th, verses 2d. & 4th. –

142: B. to Murray, July 9 1817: *P.S. – Pray was Manfred’s speech to the Sun still retained in Act 3d? – I hope so – it was one of the best in the thing – & better than the Colosseum. – I have done 56 stanzas of Canto 4th. of Childe Harold – so down with your ducats.* (BLJ V 249)

Act III scene ii.

*The Mountains – the Castle of Manfred at some distance.
a terrace before a tower¹⁴³ – time twilight. –
Herman, Manuel, and other dependants of Manfred. – –*

Herman

'Tis strange enough; night after night for years
He hath pursued long vigil in this tower,
Without a witness. I have been within it –
So have we all been, oft-times – but from it
Or its contents it were impossible 5
To draw conclusions absolute of aught
His studies tend to. To be sure, there is
One chamber where none enter – I would give
The fee of what I have to come these three years
To pore upon its mysteries. –

Manuel

'Twere dangerous. 10

Content thyself with what thou know'st already. –

Herman

Ah, Manuel! thou art elderly and wise,
And couldst say much; thou hast dwelt within the castle –
How many years is't? –

Manuel

Ere Count Manfred's birth
I served his father – whom he nought resembles – 15

Herman

There be more sons in like predicament. –
But wherein do they differ?

Manuel

I speak not
Of features or of form, but mind and habits.
Count Sigismund¹⁴⁴ was proud, but gay and free –

143: *a terrace before a tower:* Manfred's presence in a tower – not subsequently referred to in the act as finally received – implies that B.'s model may at this stage have been the protagonist of William Beckford's *Vathek*: ... *having ascended, for the first time, the fifteen hundred steps of his tower, he cast his eyes below, and beheld men not larger than pismires; mountains, than shells; and cities, than beehives.* [Compare above, I ii 14-16.] *The idea, which such an elevation inspired of his own grandeur, completely bewildered him: he was almost ready to adore himself; till, lifting his eyes upward, he saw the stars as high above him as they appeared when he stood on the surface of the earth. He consoled himself, however, for this intruding and unwelcome perception of his littleness, with the thought of being great in the eyes of others; and flattered himself that the light of his mind would extend beyond the reach of his sight, and extort from the stars the decrees of his destiny* (*Vathek*, ed. Lonsdale, p.4). See also below, rejected section, ll.1-2n.

A Warrior and a reveller – he dwelt not
 With books and solitude, nor made the night
 A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,
 Merrier than day; he did not walk the rocks
 And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside
 From men and their delights.

Herman

Beshrew the hour! 25
 But those were jocund times. I would that such
 Would visit the old walls again – they look
 As if they had forgotten them. –

Manuel

These walls
 Must change their chieftain first; Oh, I have seen
 Some strange things in these four years. –

Herman

Come – be friendly – 30
 Relate me some to wile away our watch.¹⁴⁵
 I've heard thee darkly speak of an event
 Which happened hereabouts by this same tower.

Manuel

That was a night indeed. I do remember
 'Twas twilight, as it may be now, and such 35
 Another evening; yon red cloud, which rests
 On Eigher's pinnacle, so rested then,
 So like that it might be the same; the wind
 Was faint and gusty, and the mountain snows
 Began to glitter with the climbing Moon. – 40
 Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower¹⁴⁶ –
 How occupied we knew not – but with him,
 The sole companion of his wanderings
 And watchings – her, whom of all earthly things

144: *Count Sigismund*: B. perhaps chooses the name because of King Sigismund of Burgundy (see above, III i 19n).

145: *Relate me some to wile away our watch*: B. may subconsciously intend an echo of *Hamlet* I i; but why Manuel and Herman should be on watch at all, since Manfred is not at war with any earthly foe, is unclear.

146: *Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower – / How occupied we knew not*: B. may consciously or unconsciously be recollecting the following passage from Rousseau's *Confessions*, about the time when he was observing the stars through a telescope: *Un soir, des paysans passant assez tard me virent dans un grotesque Équipage occupé à mon opération. La lueur qui donnait sur mon planisphère, et dont ils ne voyaient pas la cause parce que la lumière était cachée à leurs yeux par les bords du seau, ces quatre picquets, ce grand papier barbouillée de figures, ce cadre, et le jeu de ma lunette, qu'ils voyaient aller et venir, donnaient à cet objet un air de grimoire qui les effraya. Ma parure n'était pas propre à les rassurer; un chapeau clabaud par-dessus mon bonnet. et un pet-en-l'air ouaté de Maman qu'elle m'avait obligé de mettre, offrait à leurs yeux l'image d'un vrai sorcier, et comme il était près de minuit, ils ne doutèrent point que ce ne fût le commencement du sabbat. Peu curieux d'en voir davantage, ils se sauvèrent très alarmé, éveillèrent leurs voisins pour leur conter leur vision, et l'histoire courut si bien, que dès le lendemain chacun sut dans le voisinage que le sabbat se tenait chez M. Noïray (*Confessions*, Livre VI). A polite visit from two local Jesuits dispels the rumour.*

That lived, the only thing he seemed to love – 45
 As he indeed by blood was bound to do –
 The Lady Astarte, his –

Herman

*Look! Look! The tower!
 The tower's afire!¹⁴⁷ Oh heavens and earth, what sound,
 What dreadful sound is that?*

Crash like Thunder.

Manuel

*Help! Help, there! To the rescue of the Count!
 The Count's in danger! What ho, there! Approach! – [5]*

*The servants, vassals, and peasantry,
 approach, stupefied with terror. –*

Manuel

*If there be any of you who have heart,
 And love of human kind, and will to aid
 Those in distress, pause not, but follow me –
 The portal's open – follow!*

Manuel goes in.

Herman

*Come – who follows?
 What, none of ye? – ye recreants! shiver then [10]
 Without. I will not see old Manuel risk
 His few remaining years unaided. –*

Herman goes in.

A Vassal

*Hark! –
 No – all is silent – not a breath; the flame
 Which shot forth such a blaze is also gone –
 What may this mean? let's enter! – [15]*

Peasant

Faith, not I. –

147: Rejected lines 1-2: *Look – look – the tower! / The tower's on fire!*: Manfred's mysterious presence in a tower, and the conflagration which now ensues in the rejected scene, confirms that B.'s model was at this stage Beckford's *Vathek* (see also above, this scene, opening stage direction and n.): *In the mean time, the inhabitants of Samarah, scared at the light which shone over the city, arose in haste; ascended their roofs, beheld the tower on fire, and hurried, half naked, to the square. Their love for their sovereign immediately awoke; and, apprehending him in danger of perishing in his tower, their whole thoughts were occupied with the means of his safety* (*Vathek*, ed. Lonsdale, p.33.) There is no explanation in the original act for the accident – or fatal act – which occasions Manfred's death.

*Not but if one or two or more will join
I then will stay behind, but for my part –
I do not see precisely to what end.*

Vassal

Cease your vain prating – come –

Manuel (speaking within)

'Tis all in vain –

He's dead – quite stark –

Herman (within)

*Not so – even now methought he moved – [20]
But it is dark – so – bear him gently out –
Softly – how cold he is! – take care of his temples
In winding down the staircase –*

Re-enter Manuel and Herman,
bearing Manfred in their arms.

Manuel

*Hie to the Castle some of you, and bring
What aid you can – saddle the barb – and speed [25]
For the Leech to the city. Quick! – some water there! –*

Herman

*His cheek is black, but there is a faint beat
Still lingering about the heart – some water!*

*They sprinkle Manfred with water –
after a pause he gives some signs of life. – –*

Manuel

*He seems to strive to speak. Come, cheerly, Count!
He moves his lips – can't hear him? – I am old, [30]
And cannot catch faint sounds –*

Herman (inclining his head and listening)

*I hear a word
Or two; but indistinctly – what is next?
What's to be done? Let's bear him to the castle. –*

Manfred motions with his hand not to remove him.

Manuel

*He disapproves – and 'twere of no avail –
He changes rapidly. –*

Herman

'Twill soon be over. – [35]

Manuel

*Oh! what a death is this! that I should live
To shake my grey hairs over the last chief
Of the house of Sigismund – and such a death! –
Alone – we know not how – unshrived – untended,
With strange accompaniments and fearful signs¹⁴⁸ –* [40]
I shudder at the sight, but must not leave him –

Manfred

(speaking faintly and slowly)

Old Man! 'tis not so difficult to die. –

Manfred having said this expires. – –

Herman

His eyes are fixed and lifeless. He is gone. –

Manuel

*Close them. My old hand quivers. He departs –
Whither? I dread to think – but he is gone!* [45]

End of Act third – and of the poem. – – – –

148: *Alone – we know not how – unshrived – untended – / With strange accompaniments – and fearful signs:* compare the words of the Ghost at *Hamlet*, I v 77 – 79: *Unhousel'd, disappointed, unanealed, / No reckoning made, but sent to my account / With all my imperfections on my head.*

Act Three (revised version):**Act III scene i.**

*Scene – a Hall in the Castle of Manfred. –
Manfred and Herman.*

Manfred

What is the hour?

Herman

It wants but one till Sunset –
And promises a lovely twilight. –

Manfred

Say –
Are all things so disposed of in the tower
As I directed? –

Herman

All, my Lord, are ready.
Here is the key and casket. – – –

Manfred

It is well. 5
Thou may'st retire. –

Exit Herman.

Manfred alone.

There is a calm upon me,
Inexplicable stillness, which till now
Did not belong to what I knew of life. –
If that I did not know Philosophy
To be of all our Vanities the Motliest – 10
The merest word that ever fooled the ear
From out the Schoolmen's jargon – I should deem
The golden secret, the sought "Kalon"¹⁴⁹ found,
And seated in my Soul. It will not last;
But it is well to have known it, though but once; 15
It hath enlarged my thoughts with a new sense,
And I within my tablets would note down¹⁵⁰
That there is such a feeling. – – Who is there?

Re-enter Herman.

149: *the sought "Kalon"*: Greek *Kalón*, the supremely good, the morally and aesthetically perfect: Manfred thinks he may have arrived at the moment equivalent to the one at which Faust agrees that Mephistopheles can claim his soul – when he may exclaim *Verweile doch, du bist so schön!* (*Faust*, Pt I, l.1700).

150: Compare *Hamlet* I v 107-8: *My tables! – meet it is I set it down / That one may smile ...*

Herman

My Lord, the Abbot of St. Maurice¹⁵¹ craves
To greet your presence. — — —

Enter the Abbot of St. Maurice.

Abbot.

Peace be with Count Manfred! 20

Manfred

Thanks, holy Father! Welcome to these walls.
Thy presence honours them, and blesseth those
Who dwell within them. —

Abbot

Would it were so, Count —
But I would fain confer with thee alone. —

Manfred

Herman, retire.

Exit Herman.

What would my reverend Guest? 25

Abbot

Thus without prelude — Age and Zeal, my office,
And good intent must plead my privilege.
Our near though not acquainted Neighbourhood
May also be my herald. Rumours strange
And of unholy nature are abroad, 30
And busy with thy name — a noble name
For centuries — may he who bears it now
Transmit it unimpaired. — — —

Manfred

Proceed. — I listen.¹⁵² —

151: *the Abbot of St. Maurice:* St. Maurice is in the Rhone valley, south-east of Chillon, half-way between Villeneuve and Martigny. The Augustinian priory there is the earliest Christian site in Switzerland, and was endowed in 515 A.D. by a Duke of Burgundy called Sigismund — the name B. gives below (III iii 19) to Manfred's father. B. and Hobhouse passed it on October 6 1816. Hobhouse recorded in his diary, *there is scarcely room for the little town of St Maurice which we thought must be let into the perpendicular rocks here running down to the bank of the river — Springhetti or Springenetti took us to a very decent inn where they gave me a very good dinner and Byron some tea — after I had gone to my room Byron called me out to the gallery to look at the rocks and the church and the snowy top of the dent du midi sleeping in the moonlight & apparently close to us like a scene in the theatre — the little church is in a rocky nook above the town — slept well.* (BL Add. Mss. 56537 28r.)

Abbot

'Tis said thou holdest converse with the things
Which are forbidden to the search of man, 35
That with the dwellers of the dark abodes,
The many evil and unheavenly Spirits
Which walk the valley of the Shade of Death,
Thou communest. – I know that with mankind –
Thy fellows in creation – thou dost rarely 40
Exchange thy thoughts, and that thy Solitude
Is as an Anchorite's – were it but holy.

Manfred

And what are they who do avouch these things?

Abbot

My pious brethren – the scared peasantry –
Even thy own vassals, who do look on thee 45
With most unquiet eyes. Thy life's in peril –

Manfred

Take it.

Abbot

I come to save and not destroy –
I would not pry into thy secret Soul –
But if these things be sooth, there still is time
For penitence and pity; reconcile thee 50
With the true church, and through the church to heaven.

Manfred

I hear thee. – This is my reply. – Whate'er
I may have been or am doth rest between
Heaven and myself. I shall not choose a mortal
To be my mediator. Have I sinned 55
Against your ordinances? Prove and punish.¹⁵³ –

152: Compare Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, Chapter II: *My lord, said the holy man, I am no intruder into the secrets of families. My office is to promote peace, to heal divisions, to preach repentance, and teach mankind to curb their headstrong passions. I forgive your highness's uncharitable apostrophe: I know my duty, and am the minister of a mightier prince than Manfred. Hearken to him who speaks through my organs. Manfred trembled with rage and shame.*

153: *Italicised lines from now on are those rejected when B. revised the third act. His decision to make the alteration was in part because of the objections which William Gifford had voiced, in a memo to John Murray on receipt of the first manuscript of the Third Act: My dear Sir, / I found your parcel here at 4 – so that it is hardly possible to do any thing by Post time – nor indeed can I say much more. I have marked a passage or two which might be omitted with advantage: but the Act requires strengthening. There is nothing to bear it out but one speech. The Friar is despicable, & the servants uninteresting. The scene with the Friar ought to be imposing, & for that purpose the Friar should be a real[,] good man – not an idiot. More dignity should be lent to the catastrophe. See how beautifully our old poet Marlow has wrought up the death of Faustus – several of our old plays have scenes of this kind – but they strove to make them impressive. Manfred should not end in this*

Abbot

My Son! I did not speak of punishment,
 But patience and pardon; with thyself
 The choice of such remains – and for the last,
 Our institutions and our strong belief 60
 Have given me power to smooth the path from Sin
 To higher hope and better thoughts; the first
 I leave to heaven – “Vengeance is mine alone”¹⁵⁴
 So saith the Lord – and with all humbleness
 His servant echoes back the awful word. – 65

Manfred

Old Man! there is no power in holy men,
 Nor charm in prayer, nor purifying form,
 Nor penitence – nor outward look – nor fast –
 Nor agony – nor, greater than all these,
 The inward tortures of that deep Despair 70
 Which is Remorse, without the fear of hell,
 But all in all sufficient to itself¹⁵⁵ –
 Would make a hell of heaven, can exorcise
 From out the unbounded Spirit the quick sense
 Of its own sins, wrongs, sufferance, and revenge 75
 Upon itself; there is no future pains

feeble way – after beginning with such magnificence & promise – & the demons should have something to do with the scene.

Do not send my words to Lord B. but you may take a hint from them – Say that the last Act bears no proportion in length to the two previous ... / Sincerely / W.G. (John Murray Archive/ National Library of Scotland). On March 10 1817, Murray wrote to B., enclosing Gifford’s letter, and writing: ... As I told you in my last letter that Mr G was very much pleased with Act 2 – & as you know he takes a paternal interest in your literary well being – he does not by any means like the Conclusion – Now I am venturing upon the confidence with which your Lordship has ever honoured me in sending the enclosed – I fear I am not doing right – I am not satisfied – but I venture – & I entreat that you will make a point of returning them. I have told him that I have made a letter from them – but there is so much friendly good sense in them that I can not refrain – I am sure you can – & I am almost sure that you will improve what begins & continues so beautifully [–] in a drama of any kind – the last Act is the difficulty & this you must surmount. (John Murray Archive / National Library of Scotland).

However, we know Murray did have the first version of the third act set up in proof, for some of B.’s revisions are found on proof sheets bound up with the fair copy. Perhaps he lacked confidence in B.’s openness to criticism. On April 14 1817, B. answered Murray: ... *The speech of Manfred to the Sun is the only part of this act I thought good myself – the rest is certainly as bad as bad can be – & I wonder what the devil possessed me – I am very glad indeed that you sent me Mr Gifford’s opinion without deduction – do you suppose me such a Sotheby as not to be very much obliged to him? or that in fact I was not, & am not, convinced & convicted in my conscience of the absurdity of this same act of nonsense? – I shall try at it again – in the mean time lay it upon the Shelf (the whole drama, I mean) but pray correct your copies of the 1st & 2d acts by the original M.S. (BLJ 211-12).* A mere fortnight later, on May 5, he wrote again: ... *I send you ... the new third act of “Manfred.” – I have rewritten the greater part – & returned what is not altered in the proof you sent me. – The Abbot is become a good man – & the Spirits are brought in at the death – you will find I think some good poetry in this new act here & there – & if so print it – without sending me further proofs – under Mr.G[ifford]’s correction – if he will have the goodness to overlook it (BLJ V 219).*

154: “vengeance is mine alone” / *So saith the Lord: Deuteronomy 32, 35: To me belongeth vengeance, and recompense; their foot shall slide in due time: for the day of their calamity is at hand. Also Romans, 12, 19: Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord.*

155: Echoes Lodovico’s words at *Othello* 261-2: *Is this the noble Moor whom our full Senate / Call all in all sufficient?*

Can deal that justice on the self-condemned
He deals on his own Soul. – –

Abbot

All this is well –
For this will pass away – and be succeeded
By an auspicious hope, which shall look up 80
With calm assurance to that blessed place
Which all who seek may win, whatever be
Their earthly errors, so they be atoned;
And the commencement of atonement is
The sense of its necessity. Say on – 85
And all our Church can teach thee shall be taught,
And all we can absolve thee shall be pardoned.

Manfred

When Rome's sixth Emperor¹⁵⁶ was near his last,
The Victim of a self-inflicted wound
To shun the torments of a public death 90
From Senates once his slaves, a certain Soldier,
With show of loyal pity, would have staunched
The gushing throat with his officious robe;
The dying Roman thrust him back and said –
Some empire still in his expiring glance – 95
“It is too late – is this fidelity?”

Abbot

And what of this?

Manfred

I answer with the Roman
“It is too late!”

Abbot

It never can be so,

156: Rome's sixth Emperor: this was Galba. Manfred (and/or B.) confuses his death with that of Nero, the fifth Emperor. A modern version of the classical account gives different emphases: ... *with the help of his scribe, Epaphroditus, he [Nero] stabbed himself in the throat and was already half dead when a cavalry officer entered, pretending to have rushed to his rescue, and staunched the wound with his cloak. Nero muttered, "Too late! But, ah, what fidelity!"* (Suetonius, *The Twelve Caesars*, tr. Graves, p.238). The error may lie in the fact that Suetonius' *Life* is the sixth chapter of his book, which starts with a life of Julius Caesar, who was not an emperor. See also *Don Juan* III st.109. Nero could be seen as an alter ego for Manfred: Pausanias (in Thomas Taylor's translation – see above, II ii 93, commentary on B.'s note) writes thus of him: ... *Nero acted very impiously towards his mother, and behaved with a like cruelty towards his wives, which shewed that he was entirely destitute of Love* (III 60). He also portrays Nero as a sacrilegious investigator of mysteries: *I have seen ... the Alcyonian lake, through which ... Bacchus descended to Hades, in order to lead back Semele ... The depth of this lake is immense; nor do I know any man who has been able by any artifice whatever to reach its bottom: for even Nero, who joined ropes together of many stadia in length, and fastened lead at the end, with whatever else might be useful for this purpose, could never find the bottom ... It is however by no means lawful for me to divulge to all men the nocturnal ceremonies, which are performed every year by the side of this lake, to Bacchus* (ibid, I 246).

To reconcile thyself with thy own soul,
 And thy own soul within heaven. Hast thou no hope? 100
 'Tis strange — even those who do despair above,
 Yet shape themselves some phantasy on earth,
 To which frail twig they cling like drowning men. —

Manfred

Aye, Father! I have had those earthly visions,
 And noble aspirations in my youth¹⁵⁷ — 105
 To make my own the Mind of other men —
 The Enlightener of nations — and to rise,
 I knew not whither, it might be to fall,
 But fall even as the Mountain-cataract,
 Which having leapt from its more dazzling height, 110
 Even in the foaming strength of its abyss,
 (Which casts up misty columns that become
 Clouds raining from the re-ascended skies)
 Lies low but mighty still. But this is past;
 My thoughts mistook themselves. — 115

Abbot

— And wherefore so? —

Manfred¹⁵⁸

I could not tame my Nature down; for he
 Must serve who fain would sway, and soothe, and sue,
 And watch all time — and pry into all place —
 And be a living Lie — who would become 120
 A mighty thing amongst the mean — and such
 The Mass are; I disdained to mingle with
 A herd, though to be leader, and of Wolves. —

157: The dialogue about Manfred's youthful aspirations to leadership has obvious parallels with B.'s own half-hearted gestures towards political involvement in the Lords earlier in his career. One model for the Abbot may be Father Aucher, B.'s Armenian teacher on the Isola San Lazzaro, the avowed aim of whose brotherhood impressed both B. and Hobhouse when they visited the island on November 29 1816: *We all were highly delighted with the society, and shall not forget the answer given to us when we asked our monk what was the purpose of the establishment — "The illumination of our people"* (BL.Add.Mss. 56538 23 r.-v.). B., who stayed longer with the monks than did Hobhouse, probably realised that his version of *illumination* was not the same as theirs.

158: Compare *Coriolanus* III ii 110-23:

Well, I must do it.
Away, my disposition, and possess me
Some harlot's spirit! My throat of war be turn'd,
Which quired with my drum, into a pipe,
Small as an eunuch, or the virgin voice
That babies lulls asleep! The smiles of knaves
Tent in my cheeks, and schoolboys' tears take up
The glasses of my sight! A beggar's tongue
Make motion through my lips, and my armed knees,
Who bow'd but in my stirrup, bend like his
That hath received an alms! I will not do't:
Lest I surcease to honour mine own truth,
And by my body's action teach my mind
A most inherent baseness.

The Lion is alone, and so am I. –

Abbot

And why not live and act with other men? –

Manfred

Because my Nature was averse from life – 125
 And yet not cruel – for I would not make,
 But find a desolation! – like the Wind,
 The red-hot breath of the most lone Simoom,¹⁵⁹
 Which dwells but in the desert – and sweeps o'er
 The barren sands, which bear no shrubs to blast, 130
 And revels o'er their wild and arid waves,
 And seeketh not, so that it is not sought,
 But being met is deadly; such hath been
 The course of my existence – but there came
 Things in my path – which are no more. – 135

Abbot

Alas!

I 'gin to fear that thou art past all aid
 From me and from my calling – yet so young –
 I still would –

Manfred

Look on me! – there is an order
 Of mortals on the earth – who do become
 Old in their youth – and die e'er middle age, 140
 Without the violence of warlike death –
 Some perishing of pleasure, some of study
 Some worn with toil, and some with mere weariness –
 Some of disease, and some Insanity,
 And some of withered, or of broken hearts – 145
 For this last is a Malady which slays
 More than are numbered in the lists of Fate,
 Taking all shapes – and bearing many names –
 Look upon me! For even of all these things
 I have partaken, and of all these things 150

159: ... *the most lone Simoom*: compare *The Giaour*, 282:

*He came, he went, like the Simoom,
 That harbinger of fate and gloom,
 Beneath whose widely-wasting breath
 The very cypress droops to death ...*

or *Don Juan*, IV 456:

*The fire burst forth from her Numidian veins,
 Even as the Simoom sweeps the blasted plains.*

B.'s knowledge of the Simoom may have started with the huge note on it which Southey appended to Book Two of *Thalaba the Destroyer* (1801).

One were enough; then wonder not that I
Am what I am, but that I ever was,
Or, having been, that I am still on earth. –

Abbot

Yet hear me still –

Manfred

Old Man! I do respect
Thine order, and revere thine years; I deem 155
Thy purpose pious, but it is in vain;
Think me not churlish – I would spare thyself
Far more than me in shunning at this time
All further colloquy – and so – farewell.

Exit Manfred. –

Abbot Solus

This should have been a noble creature. He 160
Hath all the energy which would have made
A goodly frame of glorious elements,
Had they been wisely mingled; as it is,
It is an awful Chaos – Light and Darkness –
And Mind and Dust – and passions and pure thoughts 165
Mixed and contending without end or order –
All dormant or destructive;¹⁶⁰ he will perish –
And yet he must not; I will try once more,
For such are worth redemption – and my Duty
Is to dare all things for a righteous end. – 170
I'll follow him but – cautiously – though surely. –

Exit Abbot.

Scene closes. – –

160: Echoes several Byronic meditations on mankind, most remarkably his reflections on Burns, in the Journal entry for December 13 1813 (BLJ III 239): *Allen ... has lent me a quantity of Burns's unpublished, and never-to-be-published, Letters. They are full of oaths and obscene songs. What an antithetical mind! – tenderness, roughness – delicacy, coarseness – sentiment, sensuality – soaring and grovelling – dirt and deity – all mixed up in that one compound of inspired clay!*

Act III scene ii.

Manfred. Enter Herman.

Herman

My lord, you bade me wait on you at Sunset –
He sinks behind the Mountain. –

Manfred

Doth he so?

I will look on him. –

Manfred advances to the window of the Hall — —

Glorious Orb!¹⁶¹ – the Idol

Of early Nature, and the vigorous race	
Of undiseased Mankind, the Giant Sons	5
Of the embrace of Angels with a sex	
More beautiful than they, ¹⁶² which did draw down	
The erring Spirits who can ne'er return. –	
Most glorious Orb! that wert a worship e'er	
The Mystery of thy making was revealed –	10
Thou earliest minister of the Almighty,	
Which gladdened on their mountain-tops the hearts	
Of the Chaldean Shepherds, ¹⁶³ till they poured	
Themselves in Orisons – thou material God!	
And representative of the Unknown –	15
Who chose thee for his Shadow, – thou chief Star	
Centre of many Stars, which mak'st our earth	
Endurable, and temperest the hues	
And hearts of all who walk beneath thy rays –	
Sire of the Seasons! Monarch of the climes,	20
And those who dwell in them! For, near or far,	
Our inborn Spirits have a tint of thee,	

161: *Glorious Orb!*: this speech may owe something to the *Oration to the Sun* of Julian the Apostate, which had been translated by Thomas Taylor the Platonist. It may also be compared with the speech of Beleses about the setting sun, at *Sardanapalus* II i 1-36, and that of Myrrha about the rising sun at *Sardanapalus* V i 9-38.

162: See *Genesis* 6, 2 ... 4: ... *the sons of God saw the daughters of men, that they were fair; and they took them wives of all which they chose ... There were giants in the earth in those days; and also after that, when the sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them, the same became mighty men which were of old, men of renown.* This passage is in part the theme of B.'s 1821 drama *Heaven and Earth*.

163: *the Chaldean Shepherds*: compare *CHP* III, 14, 1-3:

*Like the Chaldean, he could watch the stars,
Till he had peopled them with beings bright
As their own beams ...*

or 91, 1-6:

*Not vainly did the early Persian make
His altar the high places and the peak
Of earth – o'er-gazing mountains, and thus make
A fit and unwall'd temple, there to seek
The Spirit, in whose honour shrines are weak,
Upreared of human hands.*

E.H.Coleridge, and CPW, both refer to Herodotus' description of the Persian religion at *Histories*, Book I 131, and to Wordsworth's *The Excursion*, IV 671-6. Neither point out that the phrase *Chaldean Shepherds* (no-one believes the Chaldean astronomers to have been shepherds) is from *The Excursion*, IV 694.

Even as our outward Aspects. Thou dost rise,
 And shine, and set, in Glory. Fare thee well!
 I ne'er shall see thee more. As my first Glance 25
 Of love and wonder was for thee, then take
 My latest look – thou wilt not beam on one
 To whom the Gifts of life and warmth have been
 Of a more fatal Nature. – He is gone –
 I follow.¹⁶⁴ 30

Note + “That the Sons of God saw the daughters of men that they were fair”, &c.: “There were Giants in the earth in those days, and also after that, when the Sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children to them; the same became mighty men, which were of old. – Genesis, Chapter 6th, verses 2d. & 4th. –

164: B. to Murray, July 9 1817: *P.S. – Pray was Manfred's speech to the Sun still retained in Act 3d? – I hope so – it was one of the best in the thing – & better than the Colosseum. – I have done 56 stanzas of Canto 4th. of Childe Harold – so down with your ducats.* (BLJ V 249)

Act III scene iii.

Herman

'Tis strange enough; night after night for years
 He hath pursued long vigil in this tower,
 Without a witness. I have been within it –
 So have we all been, oft-times – but from it
 Or its contents it were impossible 5
 To draw conclusions absolute of aught
 His studies tend to. To be sure, there is
 One chamber where none enter – I would give
 The fee of what I have to come these three years
 To pore upon its mysteries. –

Manuel

'Twere dangerous. 10
 Content thyself with what thou know'st already. –

Herman

Ah, Manuel! thou art elderly and wise,
 And couldst say much; thou hast dwelt within the castle –
 How many years is't? –

Manuel

Ere Count Manfred's birth
 I served his father – whom he nought resembles – 15

Herman

There be more sons in like predicament. –
 But wherein do they differ?

Manuel

I speak not
 Of features or of form, but mind and habits.
 Count Sigismund¹⁶⁵ was proud, but gay and free –
 A Warrior and a reveller – he dwelt not 20
 With books and solitude, nor made the night
 A gloomy vigil, but a festal time,
 Merrier than day; he did not walk the rocks
 And forests like a wolf, nor turn aside
 From men and their delights.

Herman

Beshrew the hour! 25
 But those were jocund times. I would that such
 Would visit the old walls again – they look

165: *Count Sigismund:* B. perhaps chooses the name because of King Sigismund of Burgundy (see above, III i 19n).

As if they had forgotten them. –

Manuel

These walls
Must change their chieftain first; Oh, I have seen
Some strange things in these four years. –

Herman

Come – be friendly – 30
Relate me some to wile away our watch.¹⁶⁶
I've heard thee darkly speak of an event
Which happened hereabouts by this same tower.

Manuel

That was a night indeed. I do remember
'Twas twilight, as it may be now, and such 35
Another evening; yon red cloud, which rests
On Eigher's pinnacle, so rested then,
So like that it might be the same; the wind
Was faint and gusty, and the mountain snows
Began to glitter with the climbing Moon. – 40
Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower¹⁶⁷ –
How occupied we knew not – but with him,
The sole companion of his wanderings
And watchings – her, whom of all earthly things
That lived, the only thing he seemed to love – 45
As he indeed by blood was bound to do –
The Lady Astarte, his –

*Enter the Abbot.*¹⁶⁸

Abbot

Where is your Master? –

Herman

166: *Relate me some to wile away our watch:* B. may subconsciously intend an echo of *Hamlet I i*; but why Manuel and Herman should be on watch at all, since Manfred is not at war with any earthly foe, is unclear.

167: *Count Manfred was, as now, within his tower – / How occupied we knew not:* B. may consciously or unconsciously be recollecting the following passage from Rousseau's *Confessions*, about the time when he was observing the stars through a telescope: *Un soir, des paysans passant assez tard me virent dans un grotesque Équipage occupé à mon opération. La lueur qui donnait sur mon planisphère, et dont ils ne voyaient pas la cause parce que la lumière était cachée à leurs yeux par les bords du seau, ces quatre picquets, ce grand papier barbouillée de figures, ce cadre, et le jeu de ma lunette, qu'ils voyaient aller et venir, donnaient à cet objet un air de grimoire qui les effraya. Ma parure n'était pas propre à les rassurer; un chapeau clabaud par-dessus mon bonnet. et un pet-en-l'air ouaté de Maman qu'elle m'avait obligé de mettre, offrait à leurs yeux l'image d'un vrai sorcier, et comme il était près de minuit, ils ne doutèrent point que ce ne fût le commencement du sabbat. Peu curieux d'en voir davantage, ils se sauvèrent très alarmé, éveillèrent leurs voisins pour leur conter leur vision, et l'histoire courut si bien, que dès le lendemain chacun sut dans le voisinage que le sabbat se tenait chez M. Noïray (Confessions, Livre VI). A polite visit from two local Jesuits dispels the rumour.*

168: The need to restart the dialogue between Manfred and the Abbot, with a view to meeting Gifford's objections to the Abbot's having been portrayed in the original version as *an idiot*, is not handled by B. with any dramatic subtlety.

Yonder, in the tower. –

Abbot

I must speak with him –

Manuel

'Tis impossible –

He is most private – and must not be thus
Intruded on – 50

Abbot

Upon myself I take
The forfeit of my fault, if fault there be;
But I must see him –

Herman

Thou hast seen him once
This eve already. –

Abbot

Sirrah! I command thee –
Knock, and apprise the Count of my approach – 55

Herman

We dare not. –

Abbot

Then it seems I must be herald
Of my own purpose –

Manuel

Reverend Father – stop –
I pray you pause –

Abbot

Why so? –

Manuel

But step this way –
One moment – I will tell you further. —

Exeunt – Scene closes. –

Act III scene iv.

*Interior of the tower. –
Manfred alone.*

The Stars are forth – the Moon above the tops
Of the snow-shining Mountains; Beautiful!
I linger yet with Nature, for the Night
Hath been to me a more familiar face
Than that of Man, and in her starry shade 5
Of dim and solitary loveliness,
I learned the language of another world. –
I do remember me that in my youth,
When I was wandering, upon such a Night
I stood within the Colosseum's wall 10
Midst the chief relics of Almighty Rome¹⁶⁹ –
The trees which grew along the broken arches
Waved dark in the blue Midnight – and the Stars
Shone through the rents of Ruin – from afar
The watchdog bayed beyond the Tiber; and 15
More near, from out the Cæsar's palace, came
The Owl's long cry, and, interruptedly,
Of distant Sentinels the fitful song,
Begun and died upon the gentle wind. –
Some Cypresses beyond the time-worn breach 20
Appeared to skirt the horizon – yet they stood
Within a bowshot, where the Cæsars dwelt,
And dwell the tuneless birds of Night, amidst
A Grove which springs through levelled battlements,
And twines its roots with the Imperial hearths; 25
Ivy usurps the Laurel's place of growth;
But the Gladiator's bloody Circus stands –
A noble wreck in ruinous perfection!
While Cæsar's chambers, and the Augustan halls,
Grovel on earth in indistinct decay. – – 30
And thou didst shine, thou rolling Moon! upon
All this,¹⁷⁰ and cast a wide and tender light,
Which softened down the hoar austerity
Of rugged desolation, and filled up,
As 'twere, anew, the gaps of Centuries, 35
Leaving that beautiful which still was so,
And making that which was not, till the place
Became Religion, and the heart ran o'er
With silent worship of the Great of Old! –
The dead but sceptred Sovereigns who still rule 40
Our Spirits from their Urns. – –
 'Twas such a Night!
'Tis strange that I recall it – at this time –
But I have found our thoughts take wildest flight,

169: *I stood within the Colosseum's wall / Midst the chief relics of Almighty Rome:* B. was in Rome from April 29 to May 20 1817. It is in his first letter from there (May 5: BLJ V 219) that he announces to Murray the completion and dispatch of the revised third act of *Manfred* – which includes this scene. Compare *CHP* IV sts.128-31, which are part of the original draft, preceding the additions made in Venice at Hobhouse's suggestion.

170: *And thou didst shine thou rolling moon upon / All this ... Astarte was a moon goddess.*

Even at the moment when they should array
Themselves in pensive order. — — —

Enter the Abbot.

My good Lord!¹⁷¹ 45
I crave a second grace for this approach;
But do not let my humble zeal offend
By its abruptness – all it hath of ill
Recoils on me – its good in the effect
May be upon your head – could I say – *heart* – 50
Could I touch *that* with words or prayers, I should
Recall a noble spirit which hath wandered;
But is not yet all lost. — — — —

Manfred

Thou know'st me not –
My days are numbered – and my deeds recorded –
Retire – or it will be dangerous – Away. — 55

Abbot

Thou dost not mean to menace me? –

Manfred

Not I –
I simply tell thee peril is at hand,
And would preserve thee. –

Abbot

What dost mean? –

Manfred

Look there!
What dost thou see?

Abbot

Nothing. –

Manfred

Look there I say –
And steadfastly – now tell me what thou seest? – 60

Abbot

171: For the Abbot's tone on his second entrance, compare Murray's letter to B. of March 10 requesting a rewritten third act (quoted above, page): *Now I am venturing upon the confidence with which your Lordship has ever honoured me in sending the enclosed – I fear I am not doing right – I am not satisfied – but I venture – & I entreat that you will make a point of returning them.*

That which should shake me – but I fear it not –
 I see a dusk and awful figure rise
 Like an infernal god from out the Earth –
 His face wrapt in a mantle – and his form
 Robed as with angry clouds – he stands between 65
 Thyself and me – but I do fear him not. –

Manfred

Thou hast no cause – he shall not harm thee – but
 His sight may shock thine old limbs into palsy –
 I say to thee – retire –

Abbot

And I reply –
 Never – till I have battled with this fiend – 70
 What doth he here?

Manfred

Why – aye – what doth he here?
 I did not send for him¹⁷² – he is unbidden. –

Abbot

Alas! lost Mortal! – what with guests like these
 Hast thou to do? I tremble for thy sake –
 Why doth he gaze on thee and thou on him? 75
 Ah! he unveils his aspect – on his brow
 The Thunder-scars are graven¹⁷³ – from his eye
 Glares forth the Immortality of hell –
 Avaunt! –

172: Manfred's sudden change from delight at the Abbot's terror to the realisation that the Spirit was for once not one summoned by him constitutes one of the play's few comic moments. It is borrowed from Schiller's unfinished novel *Der Geisterseher*, in which a Sicilian charlatan exclaims, when an apparition appears unannounced in his spectacle, "Who is this among us? ... You were not the one I wanted". When Byron wrote the April 2nd 1817 letter in which he refers to Schiller's novel (BLJ V 203), he had written the first version of *Manfred's* third act, but not the second, in which this line occurs.

173: *on his brow / The Thunder-scars are graven*: compare *The Vision of Judgement*, st.24:

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

Or see *Paradise Lost*, I 599-606:

*Darkend so, yet shon
 Above them all th'Arch-Angel: but his face
 Deep scars of Thunder had intrencht, and care
 Sat on his faded cheek, but under Brows
 Of dauntless courage, and considerat Pride
 Waiting revenge: cruel his eye, but cast
 Signes of remorse and passion to behold
 The fellows of his crime ...*

Manfred

Pronounce – what is thy mission?

Spirit¹⁷⁴

Come!

Abbot

What art thou, unknown Being? Answer! Speak! – 80

Spirit

The Genius of this mortal. Come! – 'tis time. –

Manfred

I am prepared for all things, but deny
The power which summons me; who sent thee here?

Spirit

Thou'lt know anon – Come – Come –

Manfred

I have commanded
Things of an essence greater far than thine, 85
And striven with thy Masters. Get thee hence! –

Spirit

Mortal! thine hour has come. Away, I say. –

Manfred

I knew and know my hour is come,¹⁷⁵ but not
To render up my Soul to such as thee –
Away! I'll die as I have lived – Alone. – 90

Spirit

Then I must summons up my brethren. Rise! –

Other Spirits rise up.

Abbot

174: The identity of the Spirit is never made clear. Despite the echoes recorded in the notes, he is not unambiguously Satan, but a form, as he says at l.81, of Genius, similar perhaps to the one given Pope Julius II in Erasmus' dialogue *Iulius Exclusus*.

175: *I knew and know my hour is come*: contrast Walpole, *The Castle of Otranto*, Chapter IV: *Manfred ... starting in an agony of terror and amazement, ... cried, Ha! what art thou, thou dreadful spectre! Is my hour come?*

Avaunt! Ye evil Ones! Avaunt! I say –
 Ye have no power where piety hath power –
 And I do charge ye in the name –

Spirit

Old Man –

We know ourselves, our mission, and thine order – 95
 Waste not thy pious words on idle uses –
 It were in vain – this Man is forfeited. –
 Once more, I summons him! Away! Away! –

Manfred

I do defy ye – though I feel my Soul
 Is ebbing from me – yet I do defy ye – 100
 Nor will I hence while I have earthly breath
 To breathe my scorn upon ye – earthly strength
 To wrestle, though with Spirits – what ye take
 Shall be ta'en limb by limb. – – –

Spirit

Reluctant Mortal!

Is this the Magian who would so pervade 105
 The world invisible, and make himself
 Almost our Equal? Can it be that thou
 Art thus in love with life? The very life
 Which made thee wretched? – –

Manfred

Thou false fiend! thou liest!

My life is in its last hour – *that* I know, 110
 Nor would redeem a moment of that hour –
 I do not combat against Death, but thee,
 And thy surrounding Angels – my past power
 Was purchased by no compact with thy crew,
 But by superior science – penance – daring, 115
 And length of watching – strength of mind – and skill
 In knowledge of our Fathers – when the Earth
 Saw Men and Spirits walking side by side,
 And gave ye no Supremacy: I stand
 Upon my Strength – I do defy – deny – 120
 Spurn back – and scorn ye!¹⁷⁶ –

Spirit

But thy many Crimes

176: Manfred's tone when faced by his Genius derives from that of Beckford's *Vathek*, similarly placed: *Whoever thou art, withhold thy useless admonitions: thou wouldst either delude me, or art thyself deceived. If what I have done be so criminal, as thou pretendest, there remains not for me a moment of grace. I have traversed a sea of blood, to acquire a power, which will make thy equals tremble: deem not that I shall retire, when in view of the port; or, that I will relinquish her, who is dearer to me than either my life, or thy mercy. Let the sun appear! Let him illumine my career! it matters not where it may end.* (*Vathek*, ed. Lonsdale, p.105.)

Have made thee — —

Manfred

What are they to such as thee?
 Must Crimes be punished but by other Crimes,
 And greater Criminals? Back to thy hell! —
 Thou hast no power upon me, *that* I feel — 125
 Thou never shalt possess me, *that* I know. — —
 What I have done is done¹⁷⁷ — I bear within
 A torture which could nothing gain from thine —
 The Mind which is immortal makes itself 130
 Requit for its good or evil thoughts —
 Is its own origin of Ill and End —
 And its own place and time¹⁷⁸ — its innate Sense,
 When stripped of this Mortality, derives
 No colour from the fleeting things without, 135
 But is absorbed in sufferance or in joy,
 Born from the knowledge of its own desert. —
Thou didst not tempt me, and thou couldst not tempt me;
 I have not been thy dupe, nor am thy prey,
 But was my own destroyer, and will be
 My own Hereafter.¹⁷⁹ — — Back, ye baffled fiends! 140
 The hand of Death is on me¹⁸⁰ — but not Yours! —

The Demons disappear. —

Abbot

Alas! how pale thou art — thy lips are white,
 And thy breast heaves — and in thy gasping throat
 The accents rattle — give thy prayers to heaven —
 Pray — though 'twere but in thought — but die not thus.

Manfred

'Tis over. — — My dull eyes can fix thee not, 145
 But all things swim around me, and the Earth
 Heaves as it were beneath me. Fare thee well —
 Give me thy hand. — — —

Abbot

Cold — Cold — even to the heart¹⁸¹ —
 But yet one prayer — Alas! how fares it with thee? 150

Manfred

177: *What I have done is done:* compare *Macbeth*, V i 66: *What's done cannot be undone ...*

178: Compare *Paradise Lost* I 254-5: *The mind is its own place, and in it self / Can make a Heav'n of Hell, a Hell of Heav'n.*

179: *I ... was my own destroyer and will be / My own hereafter:* compare *Epistle to Augusta*, 23-4: *I have been cunning in mine overthrow / The careful pilot of my proper woe.*

180: *The hand of death is on me:* compare the soldier's line at the death of Enobarbus, *Antony and Cleopatra*, IV ix 28: *The hand of death hath caught him.*

181: *Cold — Cold — even to the heart:* compare the words of Othello to the dead Desdemona at V iii 278: *Cold, cold, my girl! / Even like thy chastity.*

Old Man!¹⁸² 'tis not so difficult to die.¹⁸³ –

Manfred expires. –

Abbot

He's gone – his Soul hath ta'en its earthless flight –
Whither?¹⁸⁴ – I dread to think – but he is gone.

End of Act third, and of this poem. – – –

182: The Abbot's final line *Whither? I dread to think – but he is gone* was said in the act's first version by the senior servant Manuel. Manfred's own final line *Old Man! 'Tis not so difficult to die* gains greatly in strength by being said, not to Manuel, but to the Abbot. See next note.

183: "Three or four times he was bedewed with profuse sweats; and these again were succeeded by an extreme dryness and burning heat of the skin. He was next covered with small livid spots: symptoms of shivering followed, but these he drove away with a determined resolution. He then became tranquil and composed, and, after some time, decided to go to bed, it being already night. 'Falkland,' said he, pressing his hand, 'the task of dying is not so difficult as some imagine. When one looks back from the brink of it, one wonders that so total a subversion can take place at so easy a price.' (Godwin, *Caleb Williams*, Bk. I Chap. V). When B. received the first edition he was furious, because Manfred's final line had been cut. On August 12 1817 he wrote to Murray: ... *You have destroyed the whole effect & moral of the poem by omitting the last line of Manfred's speaking – & why this was done I know not* (BLJ V 257). On September 9 Murray wrote back: ... *Mr Gifford after consulting me omitted your close of the drama from no other motive than because he thought the words you allude too [sic] – lessened the effect – & I was convinced of this myself – and the omission to send a copy to you earlier was merely that having no direct opportunity it did not occur to me to send it by post & upon my honour the alteration was so trivial in my mind that I forgot the importance which it might have in the eye of an author – I have written up this day to have the page cancelled and your reading restored – In future I propose to send you every proof by post – with any suggestions of Mr G[ifford] upon them for your approbation* (John Murray Archive / National Library of Scotland: LJM 241).

184: An answer to the Abbot's worry may lie in the introduction to a monograph by Thomas Taylor, *A Dissertation on the Eleusinian and Bacchic Mysteries*, published early in 1816 (it had first appeared as a book in 1790) in a number of *The Pamphleteer* which also contained an essay called *On the Punishment of Death* by John William Polidori, B.'s doctor and travelling companion: ... *I now proceed to prove that the shews of the lesser mysteries were designed by the ancient theologians, their founders, to signify occultly the condition of the impure soul invested with a terrene body, and merged in a material nature: or, in other words, to signify that such a soul in the present life might be said to die, as far as it is possible for soul to die; and that on the dissolution of the present body, while in a state of impurity, it would experience a death still more durable and profound.* (*The Pamphleteer*, Vol. VIII p.36) Manfred's soul, being radically impure, may perhaps anticipate a similar fate.

Z45: Manfred: a Dramatic Poem. *Start of writing doubtful; much written in Switzerland, Milan, Venice, 1816; finished Venice with first version of Act III, 28th February 1817, with second version of Act III, 5th May 1817; first published by John Murray 16th June 1817.* (3 issues) 1817 (2nd edition)

1817. 8vo.	5s 5d	6,000
Second edition	5s 5d	1,000
Edition sold out		

Philadelphia 1817, New York 1817, 1817, London 1824, 1825, Brussels (c. 1830) London 1863 (as Manfred: a Choral Tragedy in 3 acts); ed. G. Ferrando, Florence 1826; ed. F. Carter 1829; Nineteenth Century Verse Dramas compiled by G.B.Kauvar and G.C.Sorensen (Rutherford N.J. 1973) includes Manfred [MSS: rough draft: New York Morgan; fair copy: JMA, fair copy of The Incantation by Claire Claremont; proofs, Huntington, Rosenbach Library Philadelphia.]

First edition 6,000 copies. Copyright 300 gs to Byron.

Reviewed. American Monthly Magazine (September 1817); La Belle Assemblée (supplement for 1817); Blackwood's Edinburgh Monthly Magazine (June 1817) by John Wilson; British Critic (July 1817); British Review (August 1817) by William Roberts; Champion (June 22nd 1817); Critical Review (June 1817); Eclectic Review (July 1817) by Josiah Conder; Edinburgh Review (August 1817) by Francis Jeffrey; European Magazine (August 1817); Gentleman's Magazine (July 1817, from The Day and New Times); Gloucestershire Repository (October 17th 1817); Knight Errant (July 19th 1817); Lady's Monthly Museum (August 1817); Literary Gazette (June 21st 1817) perhaps by George Croly; Monitor (June 1817, 170-6 / 177-82); Monthly Magazine (July 1817); Monthly Review (July 1817); Portico (October 1817); Sale-Room (Edinburgh: June 21st 1817); Scots Magazine / Edinburgh Magazine (June 1817); Theatrical Inquisitor (August 1817); Kunst und Alterthum Weimar (June 1820) by Goethe, reprinted in Sämtliche Werke vol 37, Stuttgart 1907, pp 184-7

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