



SLA 218

Ukrainian Literature and Culture

Ukrainian Baroque Poetry

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UKRAINIAN BAROQUE POETRY AND DRAMA IN TRANSLATION

Kyrylo Trankvilion-Stavrovec'kyj (? -1646)

A SONG SUITABLE FOR THE FEASTS OF LORDS*

O sudden Death,
Thou catchest me ere I my breath.
Woe's me, a mighty wealthy lord,
Thou'st snatched away my precious hoard,
And hid for aye in dark what once my eyes adored.
Where now my castles, their costly fortifications,
My palaces, their fine and splendid decorations?
My gold-laden coffers?
My gold-bridled horses?
Where my shining finery embroidered with gold thread?
My lynx and sable furs, my splendid silks and satins red?
O Death, thy coming snatched all this away
And from my eyes 'tis hid in dark for aye.
My gardens where?
My vineyards fair?
These by thy feet, O Death, downtrodden be
And snatched from me for aye most suddenly

*The original is written in non-isosyllabic lines rhymed generally in couplets but with occasional runs of three or more consecutive rhymes. The rhymes are often inexact, which the translation mirrors. The poem is part of Trankvilion-Stavrovec'kyj's cycle of prose and verse pieces published under the title *Perlo mnohocénnoe*/The Pearl of Great Price I. The text is reproduced in *Ukrains'ka Poezija (kinec' XVI—počatok XVII st.)*, ed. V.P. Kolosova and V.I. Krekoten' (Kiev, 1978), 316–18. Translation by I.R. Titunik.

By underlings of thine

and enemies of mine.

My treasures are spoiled and stripped,

My costly tapestries to shreds are ripped.

O Death, thou surly art and full of spite,

My misery alone is thy delight.

Thou dost me suddenly of all undo

And midst the stinking corpses lay'st me out to stew.

My friends who whiff my body's stench

Stand far from me and noses clench.

But yesterday my house held lavish cheer,

Musicians plinging,

singers gaily singing,

From brass trumpets blares out ringing,

Dancers hopping, skipping, springing,

Goblets filled with wine and swilled and spilled,

My tables covered o'er with choicest meat,

My company all guests and friends from the elite.

But now all cheerful, goodly things have gone,

Glory and wealth have fled into oblivion,

Now only what is evil doth me dote upon.

Fear, anguish, groans

and tearful moans.

Death, thou full of spite and surly art,

Stingy of ear and hard of heart,

Sollicitous alone to cause us smart.

Thou'st struck me down still young and quick

And played on me a double trick:

My well-loved friends, they weep for me;

Mine enemies, they leap with glee.

Servants but yesterday flocked to my call,

Today I have not one to be with me at all.

They stand aside

and noses hide.

My retinue, who now me so abhor

And just a stinking carcass take me for,

One final duty only do me owe:

Into the dark box me to bestow

And upon me heavy earth to throw

That vicious worms may quickly fatter grow.

Stefan Javors'kyj (1658–1722)

from **EMBLEMATA ET SYMBOLA***

Emblemma I

My mortal body wound in shroud of murk and night,
 no straight way could I gaze upon the Triune Light.
 But as in mirror peering, beyond unending space,
 I oped the eye of Faith and saw my Maker's face.¹
 But now, behold, Death hath demolisht all that mirror
 and giveth me the hope to see my God the clearer.

II

A blessing Death bestows on me, not strife,
 by sundering my union brief with life;
 For Death not me but chains round me doth tear
 that held me down in dungeon of despair.
 Thus, that Death giveth me which I willed well,
 that I might be released in Christ to dwell.

III

My house of flesh, which Death's resistless thrust
 doth tumble down, was made of wretched dust.
 But Heaven holds our other domicile;
 that home is, *this*—a refuge for a while.
 And so I feel about this downfall no distress:
 my Father's house once reached, I'll need no refuges.

*Translation of the first six emblems which constitute a self-contained unit having the dedicatee as speaker. The entire cycle memorializes the death of Varlaam Jasyns'kyj (1627–1707) and consists of eight emblem and eleven symbol poems in six-line stanzas of thirteen-syllable rhymed couplets. It has been speculated that the first six emblems were meant to serve as Jasyns'kyj's epitaph. The entire text is reproduced in I.P. Eremin, "K voprosu o stixotvorenijax Feofana Prokopoviča," *Trudy Otdela drevnerusskoj literatury*, VI, 1960, 507–10. Translation by I.R. Titunik.

IV

Well knowing where all laid up treasures ought to lie,²
 my spirit ever soared to dwelling place on high.
 There rests my precious pearl, and there our gold is held,
 there, too, eternally is where my heart hath dwelled.
 How vain that Death my fleshly house doth cave in,
 when safe and sound remains my home in Heaven.

V

My fam'ly blazonry's adorning sign, the Moon,³
 my mind inscribed in me as lay I in Death's swoon;
 For earth will cover me when in the earth I'm laid
 and there, as doth the moon's, so my light, too, will fade.
 But up above where Triune Sun its light eternal
 doth shine, I shall emblazoned be with Sun supernal.

VI

Of Jacob have I heard who laid on stone his head⁴
 and, dreaming, saw a ladder that up to Heaven led.
 Fain to follow Jacob, asleep in Death's repose,
 I tomb of Virgin Mother to be my pillow chose.⁵
 I see thee, Jacob's ladder, thou lead'st us unto God!
 O guide me, Holy Mary, on high to His abode.

Notes

¹ Reference to 1 Corinthians 13:12.

² Reference to Matthew 6:19–21.

³ A moon appears in the Jasyns'kyj family coat of arms. Heraldic poetry, extremely popular in the seventeenth and early eighteenth century, is of course emblematic poetry par excellence.

⁴ Reference to Genesis 28:10–17.

⁵ Jasyns'kyj was buried in the chapel dedicated to the Blessed Virgin Mother of God in the Kiev Crypt Monastery.

Stefan Javors'kyj (1658–1722)

Two versions of a poem based on the *ikos* “Radujsja, čertože bezsemennago uneveščeniija”/“Hail, Chamber of the Nuptial without Seed.”*

a)

Thy chamber, Holy Mary, I see—'tis wondrous fair,
 Lord God our human flesh upon Himself took there.
 How dare I unto Thee approach, who am all gloom,
 as doth make manifest my foul and stained costume?
 Shed light, I pray, on me whom darkness hath dismayed:
 a shadow I, but Thou art all in Sun arrayed.

b)

O Virgin Mother of God, Thou art in Sun arrayed;
 how dare I unto Thee approach, who am all shade?
 Thou Beauty art, I—filth, in Thee is no spot found,
 whilst I in the deep slough of foulnesses am drowned.
 Thou Grace art, meanness—I; Thou—Paradise, I—hell;
 the Holy Spirit in thine every part doth dwell,
 Whilst I'm the devil's man, crammed full of devil's spite.
 No mingling, then, can be betwixt me, murk, Thee, Light.

* Both poems are in thirteen-syllable rhymed couplets. The first appeared, with the author identified as Javors'kyj, in Lavrentij Horka's *Ideo Artis Poeseos* (manuscript of the first decade of the eighteenth century). The second (variant) was included by Feofan Prokopovyč in an appendix to his *De Arte Poetica*, prefaced by a statement that these were verses “in which a certain most eminent and learned man, held in high esteem by our college, . . . in so very reverent a manner addresses the Blessed Virgin” (Feofan Prokopovyč, *Sočinenija*, ed. I.P. Eremin [Moscow, 1961], 262). That the expression “most eminent and learned man” refers to Javors'kyj is a fact long ago established by N.I. Petrov (see below) and reconfirmed more recently by Ryszard Łuźny (see his “‘Poëtika’ Feofana Prokopoviča i teorija počezii v Kievo-Mogiljanskoj akademii (Pervaja polovina XVIII veka),” *Rol' i značenie literatury XVIII veka v istorii ruskoj kul'tury* [Moscow-Leningrad, 1966], 51, and “Stefan Jaworski—poeta nieznaný,” *Slavia Orientalis*, no. 4, XVI, 1967, 376). Both poems are printed in N.I. Petrov, “O slovesnyx naukax i literaturnyx zanjatijax v Kievskoj Akademii ot načala ee do preobrazovanija v 1819 g.,” *Trudy Kievskoj Duxovnoj Akademii*, I, 1867, 86, from which the texts for translation were taken. Translation by I.R. Titunik.

Feofan Prokopovyč (1681–1736)

**AN EPITAPH FOR THE RECENTLY DECEASED
DEACON ADAM***

Thou laughed, O Adam, over worldly vanity
 (Thyself its folly having known to some degree),
 How some men after empty honours hotly lust,
 Whence they so sick at heart become they bite the dust;
 Or someone spends his days and nights, and never sleeps,
 Scheming how he might feast his eyes on golden heaps;
 Or there are those who kiss the high and mighty's feet
 And reckon naught too lowly or too indiscreet.
 These things thou mocked. Now called to Heaven's
 heights from Earth,
 Thou mock'st our fuss and fume with even greater mirth,
 While we shed bitter tears for thee, all woebegone
 That death so soon, so swiftly thee descended on.
 This, too, becomes a target for thy comic jeers
 And we who mourn for thee give over shedding tears.

*A translation of Feofan's Slavic version, in thirteen-syllable rhymed couplets, of his original poem in Latin elegiac couplets. Both texts are reproduced in Feofan Prokopovič, *Sočinenija*, ed. I.P. Eremin (Moscow-Leningrad, 1961), 220 (Slavic) and 486 (Latin). Translation by I.R. Titunik.

Dmytro Rostovs'kyj [Daniil Tuptalo] (1651–1709)

RACHEL'S LAMENT*

Shall I force my tongue to speak, or utter no reply
 When I hear you question me, from where and who am I?
 Lamentation hinders me from speaking forth my tale;
 Often sobs well up in me and cause my words to fail.
 Yet I cannot be silent; my heart is seized with pain
 And my soul full wounded is, great grief it does sustain.
 How can a fire be hidden that rages in the breast?
 How can I conceal the pain of spirit so distressed?
 From out my soul's affliction, my spirit's voice proclaims
 The grief alive within it, and "Woe, o Woe!" exclaims.
 Thus do I announce to all who fix their gaze on me,
 Desiring to be apprised of what this is they see:
 I am Rachel's mournful wail, I am her sad lament,
 And truly many sorrows to Rachel's heart were sent.
 My people, do you not know this Rachel I speak of?
 Once she lived together with her husband named Jacob;
 She was the wife of Jacob, a saintly man and fair,
 Who once saw in the heavens a vision of a stair
 On which the feet of angels were climbing up and down,
 And to the sleeping Jacob many secrets were made known.
 He was husband of that wife of whom the prophet said:
 "A voice was heard in Ramah, loud tears did Rachel shed
 For her beloved children, children dearly cherished,
 Who at the hands of evil, pitiless men perished.
 Thenceforth Rachel would refuse to be consoled again
 Having seen the dreadful sight of all her children slain."
 But may not someone gainsay: "Few fruits did Rachel bear;
 For long her womb was barren, then two sons did appear:
 Joseph, a youth most handsome, and Benjamin, her last;
 After Rachel bore these two, her time on earth had passed.
 Yet her sons lived a long while; her children both were sound,
 They multiplied their people, and both great tribes did found:

*Scene 10 of Rostovs'kyj's *Roždestvenskaja Drama* (Nativity Play). The text was translated from *Russkaja dramaturgija poslednej četverti XVII i načala XVIII v.*, Moscow, 1972, ed. O.A. Derzhavina et al. The scene is written in 13-syllable and 11-syllable line couplets. Translated by Mary Ann Szporluk.

Over whom, then, I wonder, grieves this mother forlorn?
Over whom does she sorrow? What infant does she mourn?"
Whoever thus has spoken knows not the secrets great
Of God; he has not perceived the vast abyss of fate.
Let that mystery be known that many do not know:
What took place in Jacob's home in that time long ago.
Rachel, who yet was childless, had long in spirit grieved,
For no fruit by her husband had she ever conceived.
Then God remembered Rachel, her barrenness, her prayer;
Hearing her warm entreaty, a child He let her bear.
And with this gift He gave her out of His great mercy
The spirit of a prophet—prophetic would she be
Fully able to foresee what the future would bring
And to know what would befall each one of her offspring:
Her children and their children to the very last age;
Their fortunes and misfortunes, their freedom and bondage.
Thus as Rachel was about to bring forth her first son,
E'en before she gave to suck that tiny new-born one,
She saw visions in her sleep in the night as she lay:
All that Joseph would endure her visions did portray.
She saw his brothers sell him into captivity,
He was bound and led away; a slave he was, unfree;
Rachel heard his sobs and wails; to her he wept in pain,
He cried "Rachel, o Rachel," imploring her again,
"Rachel, o mother mine, why have you forsaken me?
Mother, from these evil hands your first-born child set free!"
Rachel often saw this sight in the midst of a dream,
She would awake in horror; in darkness she would scream
And clasp the child to her breast; often she held him so,
While the tears from her eyes like a river would flow.
And again when she conceived Benjamin, her second,
Before he was delivered, she could see far beyond;
What his future was she knew when he was in her womb,
And her prophetic visions made known all that would come:
She saw all that would befall the tribe of Benjamin—
Its trials and tribulations, the downfall of his kin:
Some by foreign tribes were scattered, some by their own dispersed,
But none were spared destruction; his stock was most accursed.
And in its full unfolding this prophetess beheld
The feuding that was to be, and the folk cruelly felled:

From the bright face of the earth the tribe of Benjamin
 Would be torn and uprooted by his very own kin,
 And this in retribution for a sinful, cruel deed
 Which even now to recall is most loathsome indeed.
 This mother also foresaw a second evil hour
 When the sword of Assyria would utterly devour
 The last part of Benjamin, and her eye fell upon
 Those not slain, now chained as slaves, sent off to Babylon.
 Rachel, having seen this sight with her prophetic eye,
 Then sobbed forth sobs most bitter, and doubly did she cry:
 First for those of hers now slain, and then for those enslaved
 Children, her most beloved, who never would be saved.
 Yet for none of these children did Rachel lament more
 Than in that evil hour of pain and dire dolour
 When she beheld the sharp sword unsheathed in such hurry
 To murder all Bethlehem's small children in fury.
 Those kin who fought in battle their foes' offenses braved,
 And others hoped for freedom, though now they were enslaved;
 But these innocent infants wrapped up in swaddling clothes,
 How could they defend themselves against these
 murderous foes?

The sight of this dread vision moved Rachel's tears to flow,
 And from her bitter weeping no comfort did she know
 Even till the hour of death. But when, as she still cried,
 She gave birth to Benjamin and soon thereafter died,
 Her venerable body was buried in a grave
 Which to the site then hallowed the name of Rachel gave.
 And later in this same place was Bethlehem laid down
 Which from the tomb of Rachel was known as Rachel's town.
 And when murder most savage in Bethlehem was done,
 Again the lamentation of Rachel was begun:
 For although deprived of life in the tomb she rested,
 Nonetheless to Rachel's soul all was manifested.
 Thus, for that which was to be, just as she once had cried
 When she was alive, so now she sobs, though she has died;
 Most bitterly still she sobs for what shall come to be,
 Just as the evangelist wrote down for men to see:
 "A voice is heard in Ramah; most woeful come its moans
 From the town of Bethlehem, whose dirge it now intones.
 Rachel's weeping voice is heard, and with more pain it sounds

Than did her first lament, in grief it so abounds.
 For then the cry of mourning from one lone throat was born,
 And from a single pair of eyes tears issued forth forlorn;
 But now for every infant, for each whose blood is shed,
 A mother's voice is howling in mourning for her dead."
 Of this plaint I am the voice; its herald everywhere,
 From the time when Rachel lived till now its pain I bear.
 Tidings to all who hear me I bring most piteous
 Of mere babes cruelly slaughtered the death most hideous.
 Let him who to compassion can render up his heart
 Commiserate with Rachel at least in some small part,
 With Rachel's suffering heart let his heart sympathize,
 Let Rachel's endless weeping bring warm tears to his eyes.
 For Herod, that cruel tyrant, despiser of all good,
 The very embodiment 'mong men of Satanhood,
 Thinking he would thus be rid of the newly born king,
 Marked all of the innocent infants for slaughtering.
 Troops of soldiers he dispatched, well-armed as though for war,
 As though they were to battle a foreign conqueror.
 O, most renowned tormentor, to my words now listen:
 As you have these gentle youths assaulted by your men,
 Have they gathered warriors to fight against your reign?
 Are they raising regiments that threaten your domain;
 These infants whom you tear away from their mothers' breast?
 And cruelly these innocents your swords now put to rest.
 When I contemplate these things with my spiritual eye,
 In mournful words I address my heart with heavy sigh:
 "O heart, o my heart, you are harder than stone,
 Why hold back your tears, in rivers they would run;
 Why, in your sorrow, are your tears yet unfelt
 like wax that does not melt?
 Behold how piteous and grievous these times be!
 The wails of mothers din deep inside of me,
 Mothers for children raising tearful dirge,
 in village and burg.
 Dear babes are soaking in the blood that has bled,
 Mothers are drowning in the bitter tears shed;
 While ignoble troops strike the children dead
 sans pity or dread.
 Most furious beasts seize babes from mothers' hands,

Lavrentyj Horka (1671–1737)

JOSEPH THE PATRIARCH*

Joseph the Patriarch,

Who through his betrayal, bondage, servitude, and the honour of the royal throne prefigured Christ, the Son of God, who was betrayed, who suffered and was resurrected with glory, is presented in the magnificent Kievan Academy for the sight of the Christian-loving people of the Russian Empire by its noble Imperial Russian sons in a performance called a tragicomedy by the poets, on the 25th day of May in the year 1708 on the Tuesday after Pentecost.

ACT 1, SCENE I

In Egypt a friend of Joseph's rejoices, for Joseph, though he was once on the point of death and then sold by his brothers into slavery, had not perished; he announces that Joseph lives well in the house of the nobleman Potiphar and is in full charge of all Potiphar's wealth.

O, that blessing such as this, which we have now received
 Would dwell with us forever, for without hope we grieved
 Till this day brought news of him; O, that such grace would stay!
 I could want nothing better than what I have this day,
 That my beloved Joseph, my friend, beauteous to see,
 Sold unto certain death, is alive, from death is free!
 A joy which knows no measure is nurtured in my breast,
 It fills my heart and my mind; this joy I manifest.
 And so my soul makes merry, and my heart is as light
 As if something I had lost reappeared in my sight.
 Join me now, o chosen friends, in my glad rejoicing:
 For lo! Joseph, who was sold, is found among the living!
 Leap for joy, o ye mountains! O high hills hereabout,
 From your depths release rivers, let your sweet streams rush out!
 Land of Canaan, celebrate this day for ever more,

* Translated from the text in Nikolaj Tikhonravov, *Dramaticheskija Proizvedenija 1672–1725*, vol. 2, St. Petersburg, 1874. A number of scenes have been omitted in the translation. The synopses of the omitted scenes appear in the source. Most of *Joseph* is written in couplet rhyme in 13-syllable lines. Other meters and rhyme schemes are used in the choruses. The translation is faithful to the original form. Translated by Mary Ann Szporluk.

Because your fruit has blossomed upon a distant shore.
 Jacob, though your older years are troubled with great woes,
 And filled with bitter weeping, dress now in unrent clothes;
 For lo! today God wishes to wipe the tears you shed
 From off your eyes and give you jubilant tears instead.
 Fratricidal envy will presently appear:
 Shown by God, who dwells on high, and sees all that is here.
 Even the blood-soaked garments will be revealed most plain,
 Though the blood was not Joseph's but a goat's which was slain.
 For lo, unto slavery was your son sold away,
 Though his kin had conspired to murder him that day;
 Yet in Potiphar's house now he is the very lord,
 Living with nobility and having great reward.
 Over all his master's wealth is he given command,
 And rightly does he rule and oversee his land.
 Each of you be joyful, then, who have lived in truth's ways,
 And chosen the path of light over dark all your days.
 For behold, from death God saved an innocent young man,
 And did not let his brothers fulfill their evil plan!
 Be filled with joy then, Reuben, for what has been fulfilled
 Is what you so desired: your brother was not killed,
 But lives and dwells in Egypt, and lacks for nothing there;
 Neither in want nor in woe has Joseph had to share.
 You cried aloud when Joseph was not found in the pit,
 Today among foreigners in favour does he sit.
 "The lad is gone," you shouted, "without me he will die!"
 "And I, where shall I go now? In agony I cry."
 Judah, you spoke also then: "Do not kill our brother,
 But sell him into bondage; would that in another
 Land he die; for he is ours, our own blood and our flesh."
 And behold, like a lily does he blossom so fresh.
 He blooms among the thistles; his spirit does not fade;
 In glory most splendid is Joseph now arrayed.
 Therefore I do make merry, and joyfully I play,
 Because I see my Joseph, who is alive this day.
 Jacob, if you are able to see what is ahead,
 What glad tidings you will have of the son you thought dead.
 Wherefore the light of your eyes was extinguished before,
 Now it is kindled again, his light now shines once more;
 It shines throughout all Egypt, proclaiming to all men

That in Potiphar's house our Joseph lives again.

ACT 1, SCENE II

Envy

The spirit of fratricidal envy, which incited the brothers to slay Joseph, having heard from Joseph's friend that Joseph is alive, rages and curses Joseph and his brothers, as well as Potiphar and that day on which Joseph was not murdered; and it wants Joseph to die by any means.

Alas! Alas! O woe is me! O woe so dolorous!
 O madness! I am tortured by grief most furious!
 O sorrow! What do I hear? What madness do you sound?
 What nonsense? What joy is this you weave your words around?
 What kind of joy? Speak out now! Utter your words so bold!
 Joseph, the despised, still lives? Repeat what you have told.
 And where is he? Does he still make his way on this earth?

Joseph's friend.

He lives in Potiphar's house, and all his master's worth
 Joseph has full charge of; his is a life most fair.

Envy.

No, no! Your words are false: in no way and nowhere
 Can he be alive. Why, then, do you idly chatter?
 I do not believe you, idiot! Of this matter
 You know nothing. I did incite the brothers to kill
 Him in fury, but you say he keeps on living still?
 This I cannot bear to hear. Today he is alive?
 O, cursed be that time when Joseph did survive,
 When he was spared from dying! O, most deceitful hour,
 When death that wretched Joseph did not foully devour!
 He did escape for a while, did escape from my clutch,
 That perfidious dreamer, but I'll not abide such
 News, not abide it at all. I will not let him be,
 But hasten to slaughter him presently, presently.
 Against him I shall raise the nethermost depths of hell,
 With poison most fatal I'll make many hearts swell,
 All of Satan's forces to my bidding I shall call,

They will swiftly scurry forth and bring about his fall.
 O, idiotic brothers, no murder did you dare!
 You have no minds! No reason at all! For you did spare
 The enemy, your brother. And if this enemy
 Remains alive, then what we dreamt will come to be:
 When he sits upon the throne you needs must tribute pay.
 It would have been better had he not been sold away
 Unto slavery; if in the desert you did slay
 Him, but now you'll have to toil every moment of the day.
 Woe to you! For you will have to minister unto
 Your younger brother as unto a lord, to him who
 Should have had to serve you; his rule you now will know.
 Alas! What great misfortune! O woe to you! O woe!
 O dearly beloved hell! Even your dominion
 So powerful—alack!—will certain be undone
 And made most shameful if this single youth so mighty
 Conquers you and proves hell helpless for eternity.
 This youth does not desire joy, nor pleasure does he crave,
 He does not honour common gods, nor is he power's slave.
 He scorns the sacred customs of Egypt and all those
 Gods who are beloved to you he hurries to oppose.
 How stupid this Potiphar! O, let him be cursed, who
 Does not coerce Joseph in every way to do
 His will: indolently, he troubles not to direct
 Him to good fortune: what's more, he shows him great respect.
 O woe to my very self, because this deceitful
 Dreamer is alive! Most detestable and shameful
 Is that hour when from my clutches he did slip away!
 I shall seek bitter torments for him day after day.

ACT 1, SCENE III

The Power of Hell comes from hell with devils to help Envy and to contemplate various deaths for Joseph; finally, in compliance with the wishes of Envy, she desires to put Joseph's body and soul to dishonourable death.

The Power of Hell.

Do not be so troubled! Do not be afraid! For all

Our hope has not yet perished, nor is our strength made small.
 We shall destroy him certain, destroy him, we do vow;
 Such do we ourselves desire. His death is ready now,
 And it will be most sudden; for soon he needs must die,
 As in our power his life and bitter end do lie.
 But let us now beforehand take counsel on which end
 Will be the cruellest one for him.

Envy.

Make ready to send
 The strongest legions of death; against him they shall be
 Fully unleashed that we may kill him most speedily
 And lead him down to hell.

The Power of Hell.

I shall this day prepare them,
 And I offer you my praise for your fine stratagem.
 But now let us select a doom for him which will be
 Most strong. Shall we cleave his abominable body
 With a sword, or drown him alive in the deepest sea?

Envy.

Yea, but in neither of these ways do I wish to see
 Him die: for even good men time and again are cleft,
 And to the waves of the sea many men have been left.

The Power of Hell.

Shall we give him fatal drops, as to an enemy,
 That make his insides tear apart, or rather shall we
 Impale his severed head upon a stake? In the heat
 Of fire burn him alive, or all his bones with hammers beat?

Envy.

I desire for him a dire demise.

The Power of Hell.

In that event
 With a knife into small pieces he can cleanly be rent;
 Or shall horses tear apart his limbs? Or else with saws
 Shall we obliterate him, or feed him to the jaws

Of beasts while he still lives?

Envy.

Such deaths are most savage,
But none will suffice, and none of them my passion will assuage:
For even if he does die, his name and all his fame
The world will honour, and holy and true will proclaim
Him; I want his very soul!—his soul! his body, too;
And his honourable name I will kill through and through.

The Power of Hell.

All will be well, very well, if we can damn his soul.
We have need of nothing more, for from the very hole
Of hell to aid us now I will charge an enemy
Who is most strong—the body; how to snare men quickly
It knows well, it has much power: and in the hearts of rich
Wives it can ignite great lust for him, passion from which
A young man can not escape: for it is inherent
In youth to be well disposed to worldly enjoyment.

ACT 1, SCENE IV

The protection of God disperses the hellish throngs and foretells of Joseph; now he will suffer many temptations, fetters, woes, and prison, but will come to be seated on the throne of Pharaoh.

(scene omitted)

Chorus.

The chorus shows the inconstancy of this world; how men are exalted and thrown down, persecuted, envied, and killed; it sings of Joseph's misfortunes, persecutions, and sorrows, those which he suffered from his brothers at home, and those while in bondage to envy.

CHORUS, OR SONG

O man so favoured, open your eyes and see
 How the world proceeds in its inconstancy.
 First it lifts you high and seats you on a throne;
 But in a short while to fate's hands you are thrown.
 Not long does the world let you live without woe,
 But quickly it wants to entrap you and sow
 Hatred about you, let jealousy ensue,
 And the instruments of death prepare for you.
 No outcry or wail can avert the world's way;
 From every tribe it needs must take its prey.
 Thus tribulation remains man's constant lot,
 Mother and father are parted from their tot;
 The poor are seated with princes in renown,
 And lo! on this morn the world will cast you down!
 For so does it want you to live in misery,
 And chooses a death for you accordingly.

This deceitful world suffered Joseph not
 To live in glory; his brothers it sought
 and urged them to slay
 their brother that day
 Or sell him away into slavery.
 Many men wanted to strike Joseph down,
 Yet with a noble he lives in renown.
 He lives in great might
 and shines with the light
 Of his faith to all mankind's sight.

(a different tune)

They neither did succeed
 Nor had the might indeed . . . to slay;
 For God's right hand did give
 Joseph the power to live . . . that day.
 And when dishonourable death a second time he'll meet
 In prison he will be,

Where great woe he will see . . . again;
 Then hatred he will smash
 And the nets of death slash . . . certain.
 For madly then will perish all the powers of deceit.

ACT 2, SCENE I

A lady, the wife of Potiphar, seduced by the demon of flesh, is possessed by an indecent desire.

Most high and almighty Gods, who have the power to let
(The demon of flesh wounds the lady's heart with an arrow.)
 Men spend their lives in pleasure, or misfortune beget
 For them; why have you left me, wherefore abandoned me
 To a life of bitter tears and great adversity?

(Potiphar's wife cries.)

I have suffered many wounds from one sorrow alone,
 Yet to evil torment's hands by another I am thrown.
 My friend has gone far away; does he live? I know not.
 And I who have a husband, in widowhood do rot.
 O would it not be better with no man to abide
 In this world than to live now with my desires denied?
 Neither the sleep I long for, nor the depths of the night
 Free me from my mad sorrow. O, painful is my plight!
 Most cruel is this wild passion which burns inside of me,
 Stabs my womb, and in my heart blazes rampantly
 Like a raging fire. Today no sacrifice I'll make
 To any of the Gods; nor in any work partake;
 For my wish is but to die when I behold the one
 I love. I'll follow his steps; full of fire will I run.
 What are you doing, vile one? Are you so insolent
 To flee? O, my wretched life! O perilous moment!
 How ill-fated is the time! For who will bring relief
 To my burning body in this hour so full of grief?

ACT 2, SCENE II

*Conscience appears**Conscience*

O, lady of noble birth and most excellent bride!
 Listen to my urgent words; hear them and set aside
 Your unprofitable grief. Pay heed to my advice,
 As I understand full well how idle hopes entice
 You now, how you are so bound, yet, know these hopes are vain;
 And what you so desire now, you never will obtain.
 Cast them quickly from your heart; whoever so defies
 Evil at its birth, who even casts out fears, ties
 The mighty enemy in bonds most powerful; but he
 Who is subject to passion, his own can never be.
 He is not healthy, nor glad, nor will he long endure
 In life. Oft he will succumb, I know, to an impure
 Incurable love; without shame he will be and dry;
 And one day his very soul he will give up. So I
 Say to you full honestly; forbear from suffering
 Such depravities from love; as this love is a thing
 Most evil. And do you think that it can be concealed?
 There never is a secret which cannot be revealed.
 For certainly you know how men use their tongues for ill;
 They are arrows bearing death, they are swords meant to kill.
 Therefore I entreat you: uproot your passion, then;
 That you do not fall prey to the tongues of other men.

Lady.

All these things you speak about I understand full well;
 What you say is very true, yet I cannot compel
 My heart to cease its burning; believe me, that my heart
 Only scorns the good advice you would to me impart.
 I fear that to a worse deed fury does impel me:
 As when on a stormy sea, a ship most heavily
 Laden down with goods is rocked by waves around it—vain
 To offer then advice, nor efforts are of gain:
 All lose heart in their alarm, while the vessel with a roar

Breaks apart and sinks to the very bottom with its store
 Of wealth; for there was no one able to restrain it.
 Such is our own suffering. Therefore without profit
 Now is the advice you give; for once it bursts in flame,
 Love is not so easily extinguished as you claim.

Conscience.

It is hard for the powerful to curb their desires.
 They rest themselves, not labouring, and nothing requires
 Them to tame their lust. They eat and drink to satiety
 And the more thereto when they enjoy authority
 And strength and power. Men such as these do always burn
 Beyond any measure; yet all the more do they yearn
 Wantonly to flaunt their rule: for he who can do much
 Also desires to do that which he cannot. And such
 A man obeys no one; he lives according to his will;
 He falls into a wild rage and flies about until
 He is brought down. Poor homes do not enjoy such license:
 There is neither freedom there, nor pleasures so immense.
 Therefore think what it befits noble ladies to do,
 And deign to keep your lord in consideration, too.

Lady.

My husband is my lord, and he loves me very much.
 He will want to forgive me, I think, and keep dark such
 A deed.

Conscience.

All his love will be changed to mad anger though;
 As soon as he discovers this, no mercy will he show,
 Nor will he forgive you then.

Lady.

O, do not trouble me.

Conscience.

I trouble you not; from shame and dishonour I free
 You for the sake of love.

Lady.

Wherefore dishonour and shame
When the heart wishes such?

Conscience.

It is great shame.

Lady.

All the same

I do not think it so.

Conscience.

Know it as such; for extreme
Love does also make deep anger; and your friend does seem
Most hard.

Lady.

He is a strong man, but lions are not known
To kill each other, nor do leopards attack their own.

Conscience.

But your father will beat you.

Lady.

My father did nurture
Me on sweet things from childhood, he'll not want to injure
His very own child.

Conscience.

Your mother will kill you.

Lady.

For her

Own very child every mother is ready to suffer
Wounds. And if she is ready her very soul to lay
Down for her daughter, why, then, would she desire to slay?

Conscience.

But you know not well the one to whom you will succumb.

Lady.

Wherefore not well?

Conscience.

He is steadfast.

Lady.

Love will overcome

This steadfast man.

Conscience.

He will flee you.

Lady.

Though he run away

To a land beyond the sea, I will pursue and some day
Conquer him.

Conscience.

The more I beseech you, then, my lady:
If you remember youth, when all knew you to be
An honourable young girl; if there is little shame
To taint you now; and if you would escape from the blame
Of many mouths; if an illustrious stock, honour,
And fame you do not wish to see consumed away, or
Cast off from the world: then do I beg you not to let
This impure fire burn on still; for in your hands is yet
The power to vanquish this passion of yours so vain;
And if you conquer it, you'll be worthy to attain
Immortal happiness. If my advice, however,
You disdain, in a short time you will die forever.

Lady.

I die? What do you mean? What are you saying, foolish
Creature? That I shall perish? I say you will perish!
At my hands you will die. How dare she speak against me
With such strong words! O, she herself has now come to see
My authority. Servants, come and quickly take her!
Cast her into prison now; bind her hands together!
"I am," she says, "your Conscience; and I will teach you

All the virtuous deeds you are duty bound to do.”
 What virtuous deed is that, which would make me beat my
 Very self, or cause my needy flesh to further die?
 Such deeds as these I do not need; Conscience I'll defeat.
 All advice I will refuse, for I want what is sweet.

ACT 2, SCENE III

Deceit praises the lady for not having obeyed her conscience and promises to help the lady and to seduce Joseph; on which account to her own servant she praises her clever power and goes to catch the holy man.

(scene omitted)

ACT 2, SCENE IV

Workers, who are going to the village, wait for Joseph, their overseer; he gives them a steward, and on his orders they leave to do their work. Joseph, who wants to depart for another place, prays to God.

(scene omitted)

ACT 2, SCENE V

Deceit, having found Joseph, who is still praying, begins to seduce him with false words, praising his management, works, his high ability, and his physical beauty; and strives to bend him to the lady's desire; but Joseph chases deceit away, and tearfully prays that he not be overcome by her temptation.

(scene omitted)

ACT 2, SCENE VI

Deceit informs the lady that Joseph did not heed her advice, and that having chased away deceit, he became firm and unpliant; she says that it is easier to do unseemly things in this world than to seduce Joseph: for Joseph, having chased away deceit, fell to his knees, and prayed to God that God keep him from the sin which was at hand.

(scene omitted, followed by a Chorus)

A chorus of young boys sings of Joseph's courage; for though he was often tempted, he was not seduced; and they reveal Joseph to be the image of Christ, the Son of God, who was tempted in the desert by the devil; the chorus goes on to say that Joseph, who is praying, signifies Christ as He prayed in the garden.

(omitted)

ACT 3, SCENE I

A seer discloses the secret of what the shameless wife of Potiphar dared to do: that is, how she tempted him often and in many different ways, that still she did not seduce Joseph to her will, and that finally she fell shamelessly upon Joseph and he fought her shamelessness; how he left his garment and fled from her hands, and how the lady, having kept this garment of Joseph's, wants to slander the innocent Joseph before Potiphar.

(scene omitted)

ACT 3, SCENE II

Potiphar's wife is furious that Joseph did not obey her desire, and she slanders Joseph unjustly before Potiphar, who has just returned from a trip; for proof of her false slander she shows the garment of Joseph.

(scene omitted)

ACT 3, SCENE III

Potiphar reasonlessly believes the false words of his wife, quickly orders that Joseph be found, and becomes enraged at the innocent man.

(scene omitted)

ACT 3, SCENE IV

Joseph, who was innocently slandered, stands before Potiphar, and on Potiphar's order is bound, fettered, beaten, and thrown into prison; in the meantime Potiphar rages because of Joseph and feels pain in his heart.

(scene omitted, followed by a Chorus)

Chorus.

The virtues mourn for Joseph, who was innocently thrown into prison, and they explain that Joseph, tied, beaten, and fettered, is the image of the suffering Christ; he who was thrown into prison prefigures Christ, who descended into the lowest parts of the earth.

(omitted)

ACT 4, SCENE I

King Pharaoh, having seen a terrible vision in his dream, and most troubled by it, narrates this same vision to his princes and boyars, and announces that he has ordered his page to seek astrologers from the city in order that this dream might be interpreted to all.

(scene omitted)

ACT 4, SCENE II

The astrologers arrive and interpret the Pharaoh's dream to everyone, but they are not able to interpret it decisively, for which reason they are sent forth to their homes.

(scene omitted)

ACT 4, SCENE III

Pharaoh orders princes from all over Egypt to gather astrologers to interpret his dream from all the Egyptian lands; whoever interprets it is promised many honours.

(scene omitted)

ACT 4, SCENE IV

Enmity, fearing that Joseph might interpret the Pharaoh's dream, has conceived a new wile to secure eternal death for Joseph: before Potiphar he accuses Joseph of having bragged (while he was departing) that he would destroy Potiphar and all his house; he advises Potiphar to kill Joseph once and for all.

(scene omitted)

ACT 4, SCENE V

Potiphar, who has listened to enmity's advice, rushes to kill Joseph, and after he has already ordered him brought forth from prison to be tortured, suddenly, as a servant from the king delivers Pharaoh's order to attend to the necessary business then occurring, Potiphar leaves Joseph, who is still alive, and departs to attend the king; having returned, however, once more he wants to put Joseph to death.

(scene omitted, followed by a Chorus)

Chorus.

Arabian youths appear, dancing in triumph, for they trouble and torment with sorrow and sadness in many ways not only the rich and the poor, but the mightiest kings in daytime and at night, in dreams and while awake.

Arabian youths (sing and dance)

THE DANCE

Glory gorgeous to behold,
 Royal robe of purest gold,
 Floods upon us woes,
 Gives us no repose,
 When it holds in hand,
 Taking full command,
 Multitudes in thrall,
 Both the great and small.
 Dream of fancy not acquired
 Does not give the sleep desired,
 Much does it perplex,
 And most greatly vex,
 Wealthy men and meek,
 Powerful and weak,
 Troubling them at night,
 Filling days with spite.

ACT 5, SCENE I

The king asks the senators whether they have found a man to interpret the dream, but there was no one to be found in all the Egyptian lands, wherefore Pharaoh becomes all the more troubled and promises to empower doubly the one who interprets the dream.

(scene omitted)

ACT 5, SCENE II

The chief butler informs the king that when he was in prison, sentenced to death, he had a terrible dream, which Joseph interpreted for him at that time, and what he interpreted soon came to pass. Pharaoh

orders that Joseph be brought to him quickly; however, Potiphar wants to hinder the matter, yet his attempt is in vain.

(scene omitted)

ACT 5, SCENE III

Senator 4 (asks the Chief Butler).
Is this one Joseph?

Chief Butler.

This one: to him the dream disclose.

Pharaoh.

Take away these chains from him, and bring him better clothes
To wear. Joseph, we have heard of your ability
To understand a dream and to interpret any
Vision in a dream. Interpret now for us if you
Are able to.

Joseph.

Only God on high who can look through
All future time and years, for He is powerful,
Is able, if He wishes, to give so plentiful
A gift to his own servants, and thereby to unveil
All secrets that are not known; for without God we fail,
Else it is not possible to interpret to men
Those secrets which can save them.

Senator.

Hear what he did dream then.
The Pharaoh thought that he stood by a river; and out
Of it came seven cows of good appearance; full stout
Were they in body, and so well fed that seldom were
They taken out to pasture. After this another
Seven cows came forth; and these were thin in form and build.
They walked beside the first cows, and right away they killed

Those cows, they tore apart their limbs; the thin cows ate
 All seven of the fat cows; and though they so did sate
 Themselves, the sated cows ate on, because they were so gaunt,
 So very thin were they, that still more food did these cows want.
 From his sleep the Pharaoh woke, then dozed again until
 He fell asleep and had a second dream which did fill
 Him with fright: he saw how seven ears sprung from one stem;
 These ears were full and plump, seven more ears after them
 Sprouted up; the east wind these withered ears had blasted;
 And these ate up the first ears; yet their hunger lasted.
 This dream we told to many, but none of those neither
 In all Assyria nor in Lydia either
 Could interpret it to us; thus do we agonize,
 For we do not comprehend what the dream signifies.
 Therefore deign by that grace which your God to you does show
 To take away this sorrow from the heart of Pharaoh
 And explain to us clearly what lies behind this sight
 So very strange.

Joseph.

It means that days most good and bright
 Approach, but also days of raging death and sorrow:
 There will be seven years of plenty when fruits will grow,
 And there will be abundance of all sorts. This is what
 The seven fatted cows and ears do signify. But
 Seven years will follow these, when famine will be seen;
 When upon the earth there will be neither grass, nor green,
 Nor bread, nor any oxen for the next seven years:
 Therefore the thin cows ate the fat cows. And the dry ears
 Reveal the same interpretation: for lo!
 They swallowed up the plump ears and were not sated. So
 The seven years of plenty will pass by, and each one
 On the earth will fast forget his former plenty. None
 Will know earthly abundance because the plague will last
 For seven years; nor will any comforts be amassed
 To feed the hungry nation. And this will come to be
 Most certainly. Therefore, God has given us to see
 The same interpretation in the two dreams of the ears
 And cows. And truly there is nothing more which appears
 In either of these dreams that I can reveal to you.

Therefore, today, great Pharaoh, deign to take from your true
 Servant this advice: select a man wise and discreet
 And set him over the land. Let him collect the wheat
 And all the harvest from the seven years of plenty
 Of which this is the first year, and from both the mighty
 And the rich let him gather all the food, all the wheat
 And grain, and let there be saved enough for all to eat
 In those seven years of ill when famine on the land will fall,
 So that the kingdom of Egypt may not perish at all.

Pharaoh.

What do you think, my princes: does he counsel us well?

Senator 1.

No one will interpret better.

Senator 4.

There does not dwell
 In all of Egypt so wise a man.

Senator 5.

I say there is no person who is more perfect than
 Joseph in all the world in these times in which we dwell,
 Who secrets of the future is full able to tell,
 As it is not possible through reasoning to know
 These things which God openly to his servant does show.

Pharaoh.

And know that my heart also is most comforted now;
 For I sense in my spirit a joyfulness somehow
 Most wondrous, because of all that Joseph has made known:
 I feel as though the heaviest weight has just been thrown
 Off my head. So gladdened am I by his most fit
 Interpretation of these dreams and by his wit.

ACT 5, SCENE IV

For his great wisdom Pharaoh orders that Joseph be clothed in the royal garments; placing a chain of gold around Joseph's neck, Pharaoh makes him the second king of all Egypt and gives him full power over all his kingdom. Having witnessed this, Potiphar, out of fear, exits in secret.

Pharaoh.

Inasmuch as God has shown all this knowledge to you,
 There is no man wiser or more discreet than you. New
 Glory are you worthy of therefore; you shall collect
 The fruit of all the harvest, and now I do elect
 You to head all my people: moreover, you alone
 Shall be first in my kingdom; as second, then, to none
 Save Pharaoh shall you be praised by all men with the same
 Regard which they pay to me; and only by my claim
 Upon the throne shall I be thought more great than you. Bring
 Me the royal vestments. Princes! Clothe him like a king.
 Step forward, Joseph. This very day I do embrace
 You as the second king of Egypt, and therefore place
 My entire kingdom under your rule. Then let no man
 In all of Egypt dare do any other thing than
 That which is your wish. And never in my land
 Without your love or your consent shall I lift up my hand.
 Henceforth the name "Saviour of the World" shall you embrace;
 Inasmuch as you have spread throughout the world the grace
 Of heaven: for verily a secret you did tell
 Which all of Egypt did not know; and the world as well
 Knew nothing of this secret, which, had we not been told,
 We would have had to perish from famine uncontrolled.

ACT 5, SCENE V

Potiphar, having seen that Joseph, whom he had strongly chained in iron and wanted to kill, now has been made the second king, grows afraid and is greatly troubled; he tells his wife that Joseph unexpectedly has become Lord of all Egypt. His wife discloses her wicked cunning to him, by which Joseph innocently suffered on her account, and they vow to ask forgiveness from Joseph.

Potiphar.

Alas! we now are done for! O woe! A grievous fate
Draws near!

Wife.

My lord! This cannot be!

Potiphar.

So great
A sorrow looms ahead that if it chance upon us
We will most surely perish.

Wife.

What kind of sorrow thus
Cruel?

Potiphar.

Do you not know, then, what today has come to be
In Egypt?

Wife.

I do not.

Potiphar.

To us is born jeopardy.

Wife.

What jeopardy?

Potiphar.

Joseph, our slave, is made lord today
Of us and of all Egypt, and lo! all men do pay
Him honour equal to the Pharaoh; he is seated
In full glory and as a king by all is greeted,
As to the throne of Pharaoh is he raised. I from fear
Went secretly from there, lest we be ordered here
To perish together with our children or be
Sent away to exile.

Wife.

Have no fear.

Potiphar.

Do you not see
The danger herein; these woes do you not comprehend?

Wife.

I will reveal the whole truth to you. I did intend
With many wiles to tempt our Joseph to my distraught
Passion, he did scorn me though; and from that time I sought
To revenge myself on him, as he was not seduced.
And if he suffered torments, it was I who unloosed
Them by my injustice, for he was most innocent
Of such abomination; it was my indecent
Mind that did invent all this.

Potiphar.

O, I am undone now!
Why were you so bold, you foolish woman? He will vow
To kill us surely for our guilt.

Wife.

Fear not. For I know
That he is most good-hearted; I expect he will show
His forgiveness to us. As it was because of me
That he gained his present fame: for after all if he
Had not been slandered by me, he'd not have had to sit
In jail. Then Pharaoh would not know of him. Therefore it
Was I who brought this glory to him.

Potiphar.

Wherefore in vain
Do you speak? He will kill us.

Wife.

He will not. I remain
Certain in my heart he will forgive us all; thus
Let us go to him.

Potiphar.

Would that he forgave us! Let us
Go and fall before his feet.

ACT 5, SCENE VI

All the virtues and all the choirs with music and songs and the entire royal assembly accompany Joseph to the royal throne. The princes rejoice for the one seated on the throne and kneel before him as their lord. Potiphar and his wife arrive and confess their sin before all present; they wish to receive forgiveness and most humbly bow before Joseph, as if their king and ruler.

CHOIR, OR VIRTUES

Fall to your knees, o noble men, before your newest lord,
Who in magnificent glory governs with one accord:
Revere and magnify him; let all your praises flow;
To the saviour of all nations your full devotion show.

Senator 1.

Be filled with joy, our sovereign, so glorified today,
All the peoples of the nation to you their homage pay!

Senator 3.

Celebrate in all of Egypt, a land plentiful now,
Where to be destroyed by famine the Lord does not allow!

Senator 5.

O new and most wise sovereign, we magnify your name.
All cast down their eyes most humbly before your mighty fame!

Senator 7.

Let all nations their praises to the holy Joseph sing,
For through him will be glorified the palace of the king!

Senator 9.

O sovereign most judicious, we rejoice for your sake!
Who are most worthy this command unto your hands to take.

Senator 11.

All the princes and the people today in you delight,
And your enemies in legion will bow before your might.

(Potiphar and his wife bow down before Joseph)

Potiphar.

We have sinned against you, sovereign! Forgive us for
This madness! And grant us absolution, we implore
You, for our sin. Forget all of our trespasses now,
And may we be worthy of your great goodness. Bestow
Upon us your bountiful grace. For we did harass
You most improperly, and all that has come to pass
Was done in foolishness. The sin is ours alone; you
Are all truth and innocence. Give pardon to us who
Sinned against you so. Compassionate lord, all forgive
Us from your heart, we beg you; and do not be vindictive
Towards us for our folly.

Joseph.

God alone Almighty
Decided this; I recognize in what befell me
The acts of God as well. But you need not be afraid
Of any evil at all, for this matter will fade
From my memory without a trace for evermore.
Never will I want to take revenge on you therefore.

The Chorus together, and Epilogue

Announces that Joseph, delivered from his chains in prison and honoured with the throne of Pharaoh, is the prefigurement of Christ, who rose from the dead, and is crowned with glory and honour for the suffering of death, and most high in all the heavens on the throne of God is seated.

A fearful secret does God to us disclose

When in Joseph's life Christ's image he foreshows;
A most wondrous boy, a youth full blessed indeed,
From prison and chains miraculously freed
To take the throne; as a king in glory grand
Did he proceed and over all in the land
Had sovereignty. To him all princes paid
Their loyal tribute, and enemies obeyed
Him, bowing their heads, when out of shame and fear
They came, and Joseph as their king did revere.
Like the risen Christ is this image we see:
He who will raise up to heaven our body,
He who is seated on the right hand of God,
And honoured with glory divine and great laud.
To him in full awe victorious song sings
The angelic choir of most peaceful beings
With the hosts of saints, as on God it bestows
Great adoration and much reverence shows.
And now we ask our Christ, the king of glory,
To crown the heads of those who hear this story.

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