



The Maid of Orleans

Friedrich Schiller

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The Maid of Orleans

Friedrich Schiller

The Maid of Orleans Friedrich Schiller
Ay, my good neighbors! we at least today
Are Frenchmen still, free citizens and lords
Of the old soil which our forefathers tilled.
Who knows whom we tomorrow must obey?
For England her triumphal banner waves
From every wall: the blooming fields of France
Are trampled down beneath her chargers' hoofs;
Paris hath yielded to her conquering arms,
And with the ancient crown of Dagobert
Adorns the scion of a foreign race.
Our king's descendant, disinherited,
Must steal in secret through his own domain;
While his first peer and nearest relative
Contends against him in the hostile ranks;
Ay, his unnatural mother leads them on.
Around us towns and peaceful hamlets burn.
Near and more near the devastating fire
Rolls toward these vales, which yet repose in peace.
Therefore, good neighbors, I have now resolved,
While God still grants us safety, to provide
For my three daughters; for 'midst war's alarms
Women require protection, and true love
Hath power to render lighter every load.
[To the first Shepherd.
Come, Etienne! You seek my Margot's hand.
Fields lying side by side and loving hearts
Promise a happy union!
[To the second.
Claude! You're silent,
And my Louison looks upon the ground?
How, shall I separate two loving hearts
Because you have no wealth to offer me?
Who now has wealth? Our barns and homes afford
Spoil to the foe, and fuel to the fires.
In times like these a husband's faithful breast
Affords the only shelter from the storm.

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