

**BARABBAS: A DREAM OF  
THE WORLD'S  
TRAGEDY, IN THREE  
VOLUMES. VOL. II**

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Barabbas: a dream of the world's tragedy, In three Volumes. Vol. II by Marie Corelli

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**MARIE CORELLI**

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# BARABBAS

*A DREAM OF THE WORLD'S TRAGEDY*

'And they consulted how they might take Him, *by subtilty.*'  
—*Matthew xxvi. v. 4.*

# BARABBAS

*A DREAM OF THE WORLD'S TRAGEDY*



BY

MARIE CORELLI

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'THELMA' 'A ROMANCE OF TWO WORLDS' 'ARDATH'  
'VENDETTA!' 'WORMWOOD: A DRAMA OF PARIS'  
'THE SOUL OF LILITH'

*IN THREE VOLUMES*

*VOL. II*

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XVIII

**S**HRIEKS and groans,—confusion and clamour,— wild shouts for help,—wilder cries for light,— and the bewildering, maddening knowledge that numbers of reckless terrified human beings were rushing hither and thither, unseeingly and distractedly, —these were the first results of that abrupt descent of black night in bright day. ‘Light! Give us light, O God!’ wailed a woman’s voice, piercing through the dismal dark; and the frantic appeal, ‘Light! light!’ was re-echoed a thousand times by the miserable, desperate, wholly panic-stricken crowd. To and fro wandered straggling swarms of men and women, touching each other, grasping each other,



but unable to discern the faintest outline of each other's forms or features. Some sought to grope their way down the hill, back to the city,—some wrestled furiously with opposing groups of persons in their path,—others, more timorous, stayed where they were, weeping, shrieking, striking their breasts and repeating monotonously, 'Light,—light! O God of our fathers, give us light!'

But no answer to their supplications came from the sable pall that solemnly loomed above them, for now not even the lightning threw a chance spear across the clouds, though with incessant, unappeased ferocity the thunder roared, or rolling to a distance muttered and snarled. A soldier of more self-possession and sense than his fellows managed after a little while to strike a light from flint and steel, and as soon as the red spark shone, a hundred hands held out to him twigs and branches that they might be set on fire and so create a blazing luminance within the heavy gloom. But scarcely had a branch or two been kindled, when such a shriek went up from those on the edge of the crowd as froze the blood to hear.

'The faces of the dead!' they cried—'The dead

are there,—there, in the darkness! Shut them out! Shut them out! They are all dead men!

This mad outcry was followed by the screams of women, mingled with hysterical bursts of laughter and weeping, many persons flinging themselves face forward on the ground in veritable agonies of terror,—and the soldier who had struck the light dropped his implements, paralysed and aghast. The kindled branches fell and sputtered out,—and again the unnatural midnight reigned, supreme, impermeable. There was no order left; the soldiery were scattered; the mob were separated into lost and wandering sections; and 'Light! light!' was the universal moan. Truly, in that sepulchral blackness, they were 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel,' ignorantly and foolishly clamouring for 'light!' when the one and only Light of the World was passing through the 'Valley of the Shadow,' and all Nature in the great name of God, was bound to go with Him! The atmosphere lost colour,—the clouds thundered,—earth trembled,—the voices of birds and animals were mute,—the trees had ceased to whisper their leafy loves and confidences,—the streams stopped in their

silver-sounding flow,—the sun covered its burning face,—the winds paused on their swift wings,—and only Man asserted, with puny groans and tears, his personal cowardice and cruelty in the presence of the Eternal. But at this awful moment the powers of heaven were deaf to his complaining, and his craven cries for help were vain. Our shuddering planet, stricken with vast awe and wonder to its very centre, felt with its suffering Redeemer the pangs of dissolution, and voluntarily veiled itself in the deep shadow of death,—a shadow that was soon to be lifted and gloriously transformed into light and life immortal!

The heavy moments throbbed away,—moments that seemed long as hours,—and no little gleaming rift broke the settled and deepening blackness over Calvary. Many of the people, giving way to despair, cast themselves down in the dust and wept like querulous children,—others huddled themselves together in seated groups, stunned by fright into silence,—a few howled and swore continuously,—and all the conflicting noises merging together, suggested the wailing of lost beings in spiritual