

**BLANCHE OF  
NAVARRRE: A PLAY**

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Blanche of Navarre: A Play by G. P. R. James

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**G. P. R. JAMES**

**BLANCHE OF  
NAVARRE: A PLAY**



BLANCHE OF NAVARRE.

A PLAY.

BY

G. P. R. JAMES, ESQ.,

AUTHOR OF "THE GENTLEMAN OF THE OLD SCHOOL," "THE MUGUENOT," "THE GIPSY," "THE ROBBERS,"  
&c., &c., &c.

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HARPER & BROTHERS, 82 CLIFF-STREET.

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1839.

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John Henry Cabot Lodge  
Wahnet

DEDICATION.

TO

THOMAS NOON TALFOURD, ESQ.,

&c., &c., &c.

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MY DEAR SIR,

You have so many claims on personal regard, as well as on public admiration and respect, that I hardly know whether to address this little work to you as to one from whose legal talents I have received important professional aid; one from whose noble poetry I have derived unmixed delight; or one to whom I, as well as every literary man, am deeply indebted for a gallant, and, I trust, successful, struggle in assertion of our undeniable rights against the virulent and iniquitous opposition of a greedy and devouring faction.

Suffer me, however, to make this the vehicle for expressing many various feelings towards you; and accept this first attempt at dramatic composition, as a testimony of gratitude for your excellent legal advice upon a difficult question, of esteem for your generous and persevering efforts in behalf of the literature of your country, of admiration for the poet, and regard for the friend.

Believe me, also,

Ever yours faithfully,

G. P. R. JAMES.

## DRAMATIS PERSONÆ.

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### MEN.

PHILIP, KING OF NAVARRE.

DON FERDINAND DE LEYDA.

THE CHANCELLOR.

FRANCIS, COUNT OF FOIX.

DON JOHN.

TWO NAVARRE LORDS.

Officer of the Guard.

Priest.

Jailer.

French and Navarrese Noblemen, Pages, Surgeons,  
Attendants, Soldiers, &c.

### WOMEN.

ISABEL OF VALOIS, Queen of Navarre.

BLANCHE, Princess of Navarre.

Maids, Ladies, Attendants, &c.



# BLANCHE OF NAVARRE.

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## ACT I.

### SCENE I.

*A Gothic Hall in the Palace of Pampeluna, with large folding doors in the back scene, and decorations as for a royal bridal. Loud acclamations from without heard as the curtain rises.*

PHILIP, King of NAVARRE, BLANCHE, Princess of NAVARRE, DON FERDINAND DE LEYDA, Commander of the KING'S Guard, the CHANCELLOR, Nobles, Ladies attending on the Princess, &c., &c.

BLANCHE.

HARK, how they shout! Hark, Philip! She is here,  
Thine Isabel! thy bride! Fly we to meet her!  
I long to see the bright reality  
Whereof a shade has reach'd us.

THE CHANCELLOR (*detaining the KING, who has taken a step towards the gates*).

Gracious lord!

Forget not a just pride in too much love!  
We have no rule that monarchs go like grooms,  
Unto their palace gates, and wait unbanned  
Their lady's coming. Those who abjure their state  
To gratify a woman, soon will find  
They give themselves a ruler, not a bride.

KING.

That must not be! and yet I fain would go,  
My heart beats high to welcome her. [*Shouts without.*]

BLANCHE.

Oh, the chill shackles of this icy world!

(To the CHANCELLOR.)

Frown not, my lord, I know they may be needful.  
I know that wholesome customs are the guards  
Which keep the monarch, Reason, from the pressure  
Of the wild crowd of passions and caprices  
That throng around him in the human heart;  
But let not guards be masters! Nevertheless,  
Doubtless your counsel is discreet and timely!  
And now, to end dispute, lo! here she comes,  
And, in the radiance of her beauty, sweeps  
All clouds away.

[As she speaks, the great doors in the back scene open.  
Enter ISABEL of Valois, the French Ambassador,  
FRANCIS, COUNT OF FOIX, and other French noble-  
men, with guards, attendants, &c. While the KING  
and CHANCELLOR meet and welcome the QUEEN,  
BLANCHE and the rest remain in front.]

DON FERDINAND DE LEYDA (gazing at ISABEL).

Lovely, indeed! Yet how  
That nostril curls! How that lip's rubied bow  
Seems bent to give a wound!

BLANCHE (remarking her).

She gazes on him  
As if she knew him not; nor could divine  
Which is her promised husband, which the king  
Of her new land! She will not—no, ah, no!—  
She cannot cloud this bright day with one look  
Unworthy him or her! No! Now, she smiles!  
'Twas but the dizzy brain and beating heart  
Made bright eyes sightless, and made warm lips cold.  
Lo! now she meets his greeting fondly too!  
My heart's at rest. [Goes forward to meet ISABEL.]

DON FERDINAND DE LEYDA.

So were not mine, were I the king!  
That eye's too keen and fearless for a bride;  
And the full lip quivers with a quick spirit,  
But not with dread of these new scenes and faces,  
Nor at the change from maiden into wife.  
If e'er I wed, may I find humbled looks  
In her I love, and warm but timid smiles.

BLANCHE (*advancing hand-in-hand with ISABEL*).

Nay, lady, nay! My tongue and heart are one.  
Sweet Isabel, there's not within my breast  
One pulse but bids you welcome. In these halls,  
From the calm morning of my life till now,  
'Tis true, I've reign'd supreme. Childhood's command  
O'er the fond parent's heart was my first away;  
I ask'd, and all was granted. Next, the love  
Of this dear brother, gave into my hands  
A sceptre of sweet rule—

ISABEL.

Thy life has been

Most happy, then!

BLANCHE.

Happy, indeed! The people  
Were friends, were brethren to me. Hitherto,  
Queen of myself, ruler of all around,  
If ever care I felt, the fault was mine,  
And my imperfect nature's. Thou art come,  
And all is changed! No longer mistress here:  
My brother's halls are thine, sweet Isabel.  
His realm, his subjects, nay, his heart itself,  
Owns o'er her sway: and, in the happy home  
Where my glad childhood sported uncontroll'd,  
There stands beside me one, by whom henceforth  
The hourly current of my after-life,  
Each thought, each feeling, every act and word,  
Must be affected. To thy brow I look  
As to the sky. Its smiles and frowns, my sister,  
Are now my sunshine or my storms.

ISABEL.

Fear not!

No storms, I trust, shall ever mar thy fate;  
And, for the rest, we'll use our utmost power  
To compensate for that we take away.

BLANCHE.

Think not I grudge it. If my brother's hand,  
When, Isabel, to thee he gives that sway  
Which once was mine, gave thee a thousand realms,  
I'd think my loss repaid by gaining thee.  
Nor, looking on thee, do I doubt my fate.