



GIACOMO MEYERBEER

Margherita d'Anjou

Annick Massis • Bruce Ford • Daniela Barcellona
Alastair Miles • Fabio Previati
London Philharmonic Orchestra
David Parry

*Opera
Rara*

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Margherita d'Anjou



MELODRAMMA SEMISERIA IN TWO ACTS

Margherita d'Anjou, widow of Henry VI of England. Annick Massis
The Duke of Lavarenne, Grand Senechal of Normandy Bruce Ford
Isaura, his wife, disguised as Eugenio. Daniela Barcellona
Carlo Belmonte, general banished by the Queen, currently employed by Gloucester Alastair Miles
Michele Gamautte, French physician. Fabio Previati
Riccardo, Duke of Gloucester. Pauls Putnins
Bellapunta, officer of the Queen. Colin Lee
Orner, officer of the Queen Roland Wood
Highlanders, English and French soldiers, Vivandières. Geoffrey Mitchell Choir

London Philharmonic Orchestra

David Parry



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GIACOMO MEYERBEER

Margherita d'Anjou

ORC 25

*Opera
Rara*

in association with

PETER MOORES FOUNDATION

Box cover: Queen Margaret of Anjou taken Prisoner after Tewkesbury, (1875) by
Sir John Gilbert (1817-97). Guildhall Art Gallery,
Corporation of London, UK/Bridgeman Art Library

Booklet cover: Margaret of Anjou defending Prince Edward
against the Highlanders

Opposite: Meyerbeer

Giacomo Meyerbeer
MARGHERITA D'ANJOU
Melodramma semiseria in two acts

Margherita d'Anjou, *widow of Henry VI of England*.....Annick Massis
The Duke of Lavarenne, *Grand Senechal of Normandy*.....Bruce Ford
Isaura, *his wife, disguised as Eugenio*.....Daniela Barcellona
Carlo Belmonte, *general banished by the Queen, leader of the Scots*
Highlanders, currently employed by Gloucester.....Alastair Miles
Michele Gamautte, *French physician*.....Fabio Previati
Riccardo, *Duke of Gloucester*.....Pauls Putninš
Bellapunta, *official of Margherita*.....Colin Lee
Orner, *official of Margherita*.....Roland Wood

Highlanders, English and French soldiers, Vivandières
Geoffrey Mitchell Choir

Continuo: Nicholas Bosworth, piano
Susanne Beer and David Watkin, cello

The London Philharmonic Orchestra

David Parry

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Assistant Conductor: Stuart Stratford

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for this recording was prepared by
Christopher Moss

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ABOUT THE LIBRETTO

AFTER THE PREMIERE of *Margherita d'Anjou* there were the inevitable adjustments to the score and libretto. Anyone who cares to study Meyerbeer's operas is soon acquainted with his habit of revising a work, either for different theatres or, more likely, for particular singers. Often it is possible to unravel these textual alterations – often it is not.

Making this recording, we encountered a variation of this problem. In the original libretto of *Margherita d'Anjou* there are four short scenes, mainly of recitative, which are missing from all the manuscripts, German and Italian, available for the preparation of the present edition. These cuts consist chiefly of *recitativi secchi* as well as the original beginning of Act II with the chorus 'Voliamo, amici' and an earlier entrance for Gloucester. Although current practice in reviving these operas rightly encourages the composition, where necessary, of missing bars of *recitativi secchi*, the reconstruction of entire scenes with orchestral accompaniment is another matter.

What is important is that this version of the opera, made, evidently, under Meyerbeer's supervision, works without these scenes. Nonetheless, in the quest to give our listeners the most complete view possible, we include the text of the missing material in the libretto for this recording. These passages are printed in brown ink to allow the listener to follow the recording without inconvenience.

MARGHERITA D'ANJOU

GIACOMO MEYERBEER was born three months before the death of Mozart, and died a month before the birth of Richard Strauss. Like his illustrious predecessor and successor, his greatest contribution lay in the field of opera. For many, Meyerbeer is synonymous with French *grand opéra* of the July Monarchy and Second Empire; whether this is seen as the establishment and preservation of a genre or merely as a prompt for certain characteristics in Verdi and Wagner, Meyerbeer's historical importance is not in doubt. For the early 21st century, the challenge is to come to terms with the disparity between the almost unprecedented esteem in which his works were held in his lifetime, and the marginal position they hold today. One way of appreciating the aesthetic dimension of Meyerbeer's output is to acknowledge the other operatic genres in which he worked: German opera (*Ein Feldlager in Schlesien*), *opéra comique* (*L'Étoile du Nord* and *Le Pardon de Ploërmel*) and Italian melodramma. While German opera and *opéra comique* occupied the composer throughout his life, Meyerbeer's Italian works were all composed while he was enjoying the fruits of seven years in Italy between 1817 and 1824.

Around 1800, many German-speaking opera composers enjoyed success in Italy, and to a degree reversed the traffic of opera from beyond the Alps. Adalbert Gyrowetz, having spent two years early in his career in Italy, returned in 1818 to produce his *Il finto Stanislao* to a libretto by Felice Romani at La Scala. Peter von Winter produced five works during his



JOSEPH WEIGL

sojourn in Italy between 1791 and 1794, and returned to Italy, when he produced three works, all for La Scala, during 1817 and 1818: *Maometto II* and *I due Valdomiri* to libretti by Romani, and *Etelinda*, an *opera semiseria* whose libretto was by Gaetano Rossi. Joseph Weigl composed two operas for the 1807-8 season at La Scala (*Cleopatra* and *Il rivale di se stesso*, both to libretti by the La Scala house librettist, Luigi Romanelli), as well as his setting of Romanelli's *Limboscata* for the same theatre in 1815. An important predecessor of Meyerbeer's *Margherita d'Anjou* was Weigl's *L'orfana d'Inghilterra, ossia Margherita d'Anjou* (again to a libretto by Romanelli). Joseph Hartman Stuntz's two years in Italy from 1819 to 1821 yielded four important works: *La rappresaglia* (Milan, 1819), *Costantino* (Venice, 1820), *Elvira e Lucinda* (Milan, 1820) and *Argene ed Almira* (Turin, 1821) before his return to Munich in 1821 to succeed his teacher, Winter, at the Hofoper. Franz Schöberlechner was in Florence in 1817 where he wrote his *I virtuosi teatrali* and in the employ of the Duchess Marie Louise of Lucca, to whom he dedicated the score *Gli arabi nelle gallie* in 1819. Unlike many of his colleagues, he returned to Italy later in life to produce his *Rossane* at La Scala in 1839. Exactly where Franz Benedikt Dussek's *Il felice successo* was premiered is unknown, but it is evidence of composers from even further east finding their way to Italy to write opera. Underpinning these comings and goings of foreigners in Italy was the continued presence of Johann Simon Mayr from 1794 until he ceased writing operas in 1824. During that time he wrote nearly 70 works for all the major opera houses in Italy; it was therefore no surprise that Donizetti should have profited from his teaching.

GIOVANNI
SIMONE
MAYR



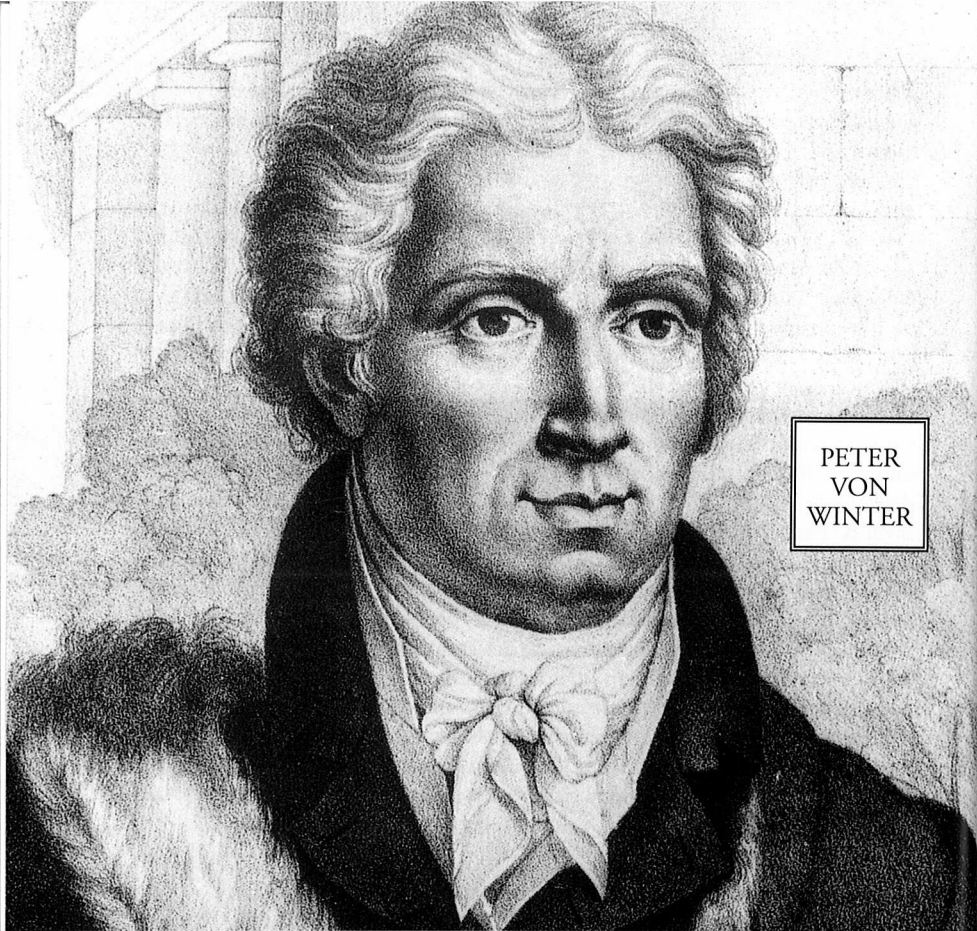
The subsequent generation of German opera composers was much less interested in pursuing careers in Italy: neither Weber, nor Spohr, Conradin Kreutzer, Marschner, Schubert or Mendelssohn wrote for Italian opera houses. Mendelssohn's well-known visit to Italy in 1830-31 was characterised by his interest in sacred music, in painting and in the plastic arts; he exhibited a limited enthusiasm for opera. Among this generation of German romantics, only Julius Benedict – Weber's pupil – spent any length of time in Italy; he worked in Naples from 1825 to 1834 and produced *Giacinta ed Ernesto* and *Un anno ed un giorno* (1827 and 1836 respectively) for the Teatro Fondo and *I portoghesi in Goa* (1830) for the Teatro San Carlo.

When Meyerbeer arrived in Italy in 1817, he was following the tradition of Gyrowetz, Weigl and Winter. The critic of the *Gazetta di Milano*, in reviewing the premiere of *Margherita d'Anjou* three years later, drew attention to just this practice when he pointed to German orchestration, about which he said that 'the abuse of these instruments persuaded the Italians that German music was nothing more than a din, before the masterworks of Mozart, Winter and Weigl convinced them to the contrary'. Meyerbeer, however, broke with the tradition by staying 'bewitched in a magic garden', as he put it, for seven years. During this time, he composed six operas for various opera houses in northern Italy; in fact he only wrote more than once for the same house on a single occasion: his *Emma di Resburgo* (1819) was written for Venice's Teatro San Benedetto, while *Il crociato in Egitto* (1824) was premiered at La Fenice, and *Romilda e Costanza* (1817) and *Semiramide riconosciuta* (1819) were composed for the Teatro Nuovo in Padua and the

Teatro Regio in Turin respectively. Meyerbeer, appeared in consecutive years at La Scala: in 1820 with *Margherita d'Anjou* and with *L'esule di Granata* in the following year.

The dates of Meyerbeer's sojourn in Italy are significant. He arrived just as Winter and Gyrowetz were finishing their final tours in the country and left just as Mayr stopped composing opera; the first part of his career coincides with Stuntz's two-year period in Italy. He marks the end of a clear tradition of German-speaking composers writing consistently for major Italian opera houses, a tradition ignored by the very different preoccupations of his romantic colleagues and the aesthetic – not to say nationalistic – imperatives of German opera. With the exception of Benedict's time in Naples, opera composed by Germans would not figure much in Italian houses until the music of Weber and Wagner was received there a quarter of a century later.

Of Meyerbeer's six Italian operas four were on serious subjects: *Emma di Resburgo* and *Il crociato in Egitto* were titled *melodramma eroico*, *L'esule di Granata* was a *melodramma serio* and *Semiramide riconosciuta* a *dramma per musica*. Two works, *Romilde e Costanza* and *Margherita d'Anjou*, were examples of *melodramma semiserio*. Apart from one, the libretti of all these works were based on French models of recent composition; the exception was Rossi's revision of Pietro Metastasio's *Semiramide riconosciuta*, a libretto that had been set for the first time by Vinci and Porpora (both in 1729), and later by most of the major names in 18th-century opera: Jomelli (1741), Hasse (1744), Gluck (1748), Galuppi (1749), Sacchini (1764), Salieri (1782) and



PETER
VON
WINTER

Gyrowetz (1791). In this respect, both Romani and Rossi were following normal practice in appropriating French *mélodrames* and the libretti of opéras comiques as the basis of their own libretti: *Emma di Resburgo* took its libretto from Jean-Nicolas Bouilly's libretto for Méhul's *Hélène*, premiered in 1803, while *Margherita d'Anjou*, *Il crociato in Egitto* and *L'esule di Granata* were based on *mélodrames* from 1810, 1813 and 1814 respectively.

The years leading up to the premiere of *Margherita d'Anjou* had been good ones for La Scala. 1819 had been dominated by two premieres of works by the veteran Francesco Basili: *Gl'illinesi* during the carnival and *Il califo e la schiava* in the autumn season; both had been well received. Giovanni Pacini was represented by the premiere of *Il falgename di Livonia* and a revival of *La sposa fedele*. The last work of the autumn season was by a German-speaking composer: Stuntz's first and most successful opera for Milan, *La rappresaglia*. 1820 was, if anything, stronger. It began with the premiere of Rossini's *Bianca e Falliero* and included the premieres of Pacini's *Vallace, o L'erose scozzese* and Carafa's *I due Figaro* (an unexpected failure). These new works were accompanied by revivals of Rossini (*La gazza ladra*), Generali (*Adelaide di Borgogna* and *Adelina*) and Pucitta (*La principessa in campagna*). The autumn season of 1820 ended – as it had the previous year – with an Italian opera by a German composer: Meyerbeer's *Margherita d'Anjou*.

Meyerbeer was never supposed to write *Margherita d'Anjou*. As far as can be established, his original contract with La Scala was for Romani's libretto, *Francesca da Rimini*, but it was banned by the Milanese censor. Meyerbeer

thought this a great pity since he had the highest regard for the libretto: 'One of the most beautiful lyric dramas that has ever been written' was how he described it in a letter to Franz Sales Kandler in November 1819. The libretto was eventually set by Feliciano Strepponi for Vicenza in 1822, and the subsequent popularity of the libretto (set by, among others, Mercadante and Morlacchi) meant that Meyerbeer was reluctant ever to approach the subject again. Romani described his *Margherita d'Anjou* as 'written in haste and without conviction', but this seems not to have stopped Meyerbeer producing a work in November 1820 that La Scala would value greatly.

The autumn season of 1820 started inauspiciously: the revival of the young Neapolitan Carlini's *La gioventù di Enrico V*, premiered in Naples, was badly received. Revivals of two successes from Rome's Teatro Argentino – Rossini's *Il barbiere di Siviglia* (1816) and Mayr's *Alfredo il grande* (1818) – dominated the season with over two dozen performances each, and the autumn ended with the Meyerbeer premiere. Personnel for the season were – as was to be expected – fairly stable; the only movement was the replacement of Paola Monticelli, who sang small roles in *La gioventù di Enrico V* and *Il barbiere*, with the alto Rosa Mariani, who took the title role in *Alfredo il grande* and that of Isaura in *Margherita d'Anjou*. There was no role for Cavara in either *La gioventù di Enrico V* or *Alfredo il grande*, and the latter's serious tone also meant that there was no role for Nicola Bassi.

Meyerbeer's cast was varied and distinguished. A lack of reliable information on the soprano Carolina Pellegrini (Margherita) makes it difficult to discuss her career. She was singing Pavesi, Mozart and Rossini in



NICOLAS-PROSPER
LEVASSEUR

This great bass created
Carlo Belmonte
in
Margherita d'Anjou.
In Paris
Meyerbeer wrote three
more extraordinary roles
for him:
Bertram in
Robert le Diable,
Marcel in
Les Huguenots
and Zacharie in
Le Prophète

Florence in 1817-1818, and the following year may have sung in Meyerbeer's *Emma di Resburgo* in Munich (from where she might have originated). Her autumn season at La Scala was framed by seasons in Trieste, after which she sang in Barcelona and then with Manuel Garcia's company in Mexico City later in the decade and into the 1830s. Nicola Tacchinardi (tenor: Lavarenne) was in mid-career; with three years at the Théâtre Italien in Paris behind him (1811-1814), he was now attached to the court of the Grand Duke of Tuscany. Nicolas-Prospér Levasseur (*basso cantante*: Carlo) overlapped by a year with Tacchinardi at the Théâtre Italien, and remained there until he moved to the Académie Royale de Musique in 1828. Here he took the principal bass roles in the first three of Meyerbeer's *grands opéras*: *Robert le Diable* (1831), *Les Huguenots* (1836) and *Le Prophète* (1849) for the last of which he was called out of retirement. Levasseur also managed to combine this career with singing in Italy, and the premiere of *Margherita d'Anjou* was a happy first encounter with Meyerbeer. Nicola Bassi was the veteran of the ensemble. Singing professionally since 1791, he excelled in *buffo* roles in Guglielmi, Mayr, Paisiello and early Rossini. He had been in Paris in 1813 (at the same time as Levasseur and Tacchinardi), where Stendhal called him 'the best Italian *buffo* of our age'. He died in 1825.

The survival of sources for early *ottocento* opera is erratic. Although most of the autograph manuscripts of Rossini, Bellini and Donizetti have survived, the works of other composers have not been so carefully preserved. In the case of Meyerbeer's Italian works, it seems that the composer conducted the first few performances – as always, from the keyboard – from a copyist's

score, keeping his autograph for archival purposes; this was then subject to the vicissitudes of history, and in the case of Meyerbeer's Italian operas there exists no autograph for many of the most important works. This is true not only for *Emma di Resburgo* and *Romilde e Costanza* but also for the most ambitious of his works for Italy, *Il crociato in Egitto* and for the work currently under discussion, *Margherita d'Anjou*. While many of the copies used for early performances are still extant, it is difficult to identify those occasions for which they were used. An exception is the copyist's score of *Il crociato in Egitto*, still in the archives of La Fenice, which was clearly used for the Venice premiere in 1824. Printed piano-vocal scores are of variable quality: they range from little more than collections of extracts – as in the case of *Semiramide riconosciuta* – right up to the Schlesinger piano-vocal score of *Il crociato*, some copies of which include the additional aria written for Giuditta Pasta for the work's 1825 Paris revival.

The copy of *Margherita d'Anjou* that serves as the source for the edition on which this recording is based is an extraordinary document. On the one hand, it is difficult to rationalise some of its characteristics with those of the 1820 libretto; on the other, it betrays unmistakable annotations in Meyerbeer's own hand, not least the meticulous metronome marks that characterise the document. These annotations make it quite clear that this manuscript was used for a performance directed by Meyerbeer himself, but also show that he was attempting to record some aspects of his views on details in the work for posterity. Some of the notes to himself have a strikingly modern character, evidence of meticulous orchestral rehearsal,

while others strongly suggest that, even if he was directing the performance from the keyboard, Meyerbeer was engaging in a degree of interpretative conducting: cueing instrumental soloists and groups of instruments as well as responding sensitively to the rhythmic nuance of his vocal artists. The score is full of markings that do nothing more than clarify – particularly at page turns – the grouping of instruments: Meyerbeer marks woodwind and brass groups, for example, at key points in the overture, clearly in order to control their entry into the texture. Similarly, in Margherita's Act II aria, he marks the soloist's line to distinguish it from those of the chorus. In exactly the same way that a modern conductor would duplicate dynamic marks where they are not clear in the score, Meyerbeer simply writes 'fortissimo' above a climax in the Act I finale where the dynamic marks are clear to the careful reader but not to the roving eye of the performer.

Such notes to streamline his direction of the performance of the work are supplemented by comments that are designed to fix aspects of the performance either for future revivals or for subsequent performances at La Scala for which Meyerbeer himself directed the first three, as contractually required by most Italian opera houses. He frequently supplements the stage directions that the copyist provided (the *introduzione* is a good example), and in the first-act finale glosses such conventional notation as the indication for a fermata with the words 'un piccolo silenzio' and writes an elaborate note concerning the *buffo basso* Michele's musical imitation of Carlo's line in the *concertato* to the effect that the comic echo need not exactly match the rhythm and tempo of the serious model. Finally, at the end of the *cabaletta*

and before the first variation in Isaura's Act II *rondò*, Meyerbeer writes a request that the soloist should not extemporise a cadenza at this point, but should elaborate the cadence with 'un crescendo di voce'. Slightly later he repeats the same instruction relating to three analogous phrases where he advocates a 'messa di voce di tutta forza'. He also indicates a possible cut for Isaura in this number. These are obvious points that not only would have been communicated directly in words to the soloist, but which Meyerbeer was also anxious to ensure adhered permanently to the work; his views on the soloist's ornamentation at this point are particularly valuable.

The manuscript score contains evidence of Meyerbeer's second thoughts on the work, some clearly driven by the exigencies of the theatre, others by genuine reflection on the way in which the music sounded in performance. In the Act I duet for Michele and Isaura, he changed the tempo indication from the copyist's *Allegro m[olto]* to *Allegro moderato*, a perfectly reasonable change on the basis of the aural experience of the performer's declamation and articulation. However, just before Lavarenne's Act II *cavatina*, Meyerbeer abbreviates the recitative that closes the *scena*, reducing 18 bars down to merely eight. In doing so, he requires a similarly revised poetic text, and this is most likely the work of the house librettist at the institution for which the score was prepared.

The traces that Meyerbeer left in the manuscript score of *Margherita d'Anjou* make it clear that the document was associated with performances supervised by the composer. Comparison between the score and the large

number of libretti surviving from early performances may in time reveal exactly which performance for which it was conceived. Two examples show the complexity of the textual tradition in which the various sources for the work sit; both come from Margherita's Act II aria (of which two versions are here recorded). The text of the *cabaletta* is as follows in the libretto, the manuscript score and the (otherwise problematic) piano-vocal score prepared by Maurice Schlesinger in Paris perhaps as late as 1826.

1820 libretto	Manuscript score	Printed piano-vocal score
Incerto palpito	Incerto palpito	Incerto palpito
Il cor m'assale:	Il cor m'assale:	Il cor m'assale:
Smania più barbara,	Smania più barbara,	Smania più barbara,
Contrasto eguale,	Contrasto eguale,	Tormento eguale,
Chi mai nell'anima	Chi mai nell'anima	Qual madre misera,
Gran Dio provò.	Chi mai provò.	Finor provò.
Fia pago il barbaro	Fia pago il barbaro	Fia pago il perfido
Destino austero	Destino austero	Destin tirano;
Già l'alma m'agita	Già l'alma m'agita	Già l'alma m'agita
Un duol si fiero,	Un duol si fiero,	Un tanto affano
Che appena reggere	Che appena reggere	Che appena reggere
Mio cor si può.	Mio cor si può.	Il cor vi può.

With the exception of line six, the manuscript score follows the 1820 libretto, and the exception is not atypical of the types of friction found between libretti and scores that are known to come from exactly the same

performance. The version in the piano-vocal score, however, differs greatly, although given that the music remains essentially the same in the two versions, the poetic structure of the text (*quinari* throughout with a liberal use of *versi sdrucchioli*) is identical. In the case of the cavatina from the same aria, differences are striking:

1820 libretto	Manuscript score	Printed piano-vocal score
Gioja svanì!	Che mai giova	Perchè mai sedurmi amore,
Per me più non sarà:	Il serto il sono	Ah sperava gioie il core
Per me sparì!	Che giova se tormenti	Ma la sorte lo tradi!
Povero cor!	Ha sol per me?	
Più non t'animerà,	La grandezza fac inutil	
Che il tuo dolor.	do	
	Se contento il cor non è.	Bella calma ch'io provai
	Bella calma ch'io provai	D'innocenza nei bei di
	Nella prima gioventu	A me più non tornerai
	Per un soglio ti cambiai	Il piacer per me finì
	Ne a brillar ritorni più	

Remarkably, the manuscript score and the piano-vocal score have more or less the same music for this section, so it is striking that the text should be so different in the two versions. But the differences between the manuscript score and the 1820 libretto are also noteworthy, and this evidence might suggest that the score could not have served as the basis for the Milan premiere. The critic of the *Corriere delle dame*, writing during the week of

the premiere, drew attention to the musical repetitions that underpinned the words 'Gioia svani' at the beginning of the *cavatina*. Whether this reinforces the difference between the libretto and the manuscript score or whether the critic was simply referring to the libretto he had, without realising the text in the score (which he can't have seen) was different, is impossible to tell.

The manuscript score of *Margherita d'Anjou* that supports the current recording might have been used at the La Scala premiere. It might equally have originated in one of the other early performances that Meyerbeer directed before yielding to Vincenzo Lavigna, the *maestro di cembalo* and later Verdi's teacher. Alternatively, it could have served both for the Milan premiere and for later performances elsewhere, and this is possibly the context for Meyerbeer's rewriting of the end of the scena before Lavarenne's Act II *cavatina*. On the other hand, the critic for the *Corriere delle dame* mentioned 'two people who, during the long, very long, recitativo which precedes the *cavatina* of Tacchinardi, were uninterruptedly yawning'. Whether the '*lungo lunghissimo recitativo che precede la cavatina di Tacchinardi*' prompted Meyerbeer to rewrite it after the premiere or merely before, say, the Venice or Munich performances in 1822 is a question that remains unanswered.

Margherita d'Anjou is a *melodramma semiserio*. By 1820, *opera semiseria* had a long and distinguished tradition, one that encompassed a variety of genres, and placing such a work as *Margherita d'Anjou* within this generic matrix is important for understanding the work. The origins of mixing *buffa* and *seria*

characteristics within the same work go back to Piccini's and Goldoni's *La Cecchina o La buona figlia* of 1760, a work based on Richardson's *Pamela*. Large numbers of composers in the second half of the 18th century were influenced by the work and its innovatory genre; the best known were Paisiello's *Nina, o La pazza per amore* (1789) and Cimarosa's *Il matrimonio segreto* (1792). Even Mozart was not immune to the charms of eliding *opere buffe* and *serie*, as any of the works to libretti by Da Ponte show; in fact, *Don Giovanni* was frequently titled '*opera semiseria*' in Italian revivals during the 19th century.

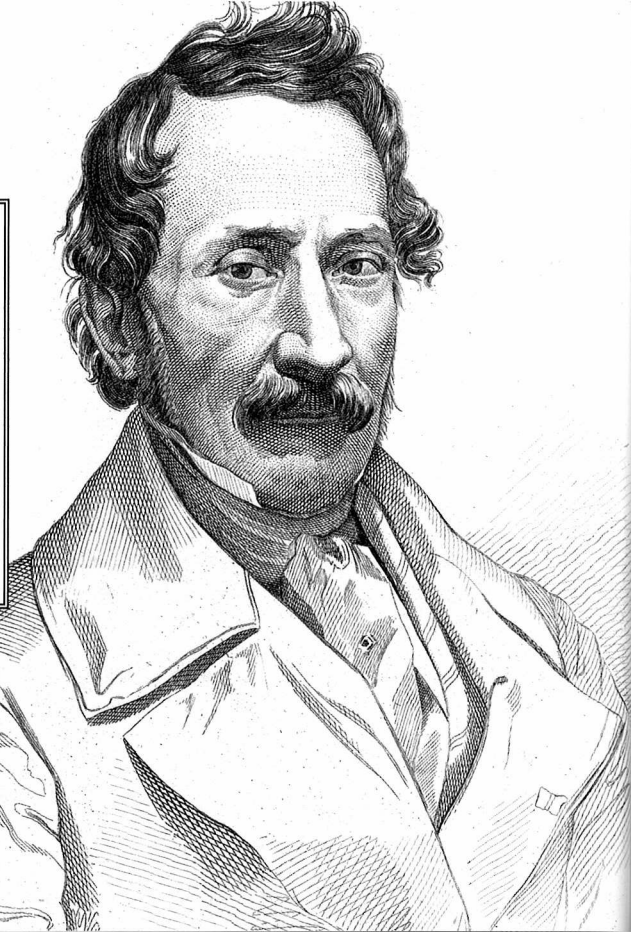
The early 19th-century *opera semiseria* was much influenced by the importation of French revolutionary opera into Italy, and the preference for French models for all types of *melodramma* is an important context for this reception. Early examples of Italian *opera semiseria* of this type were Paer's *Camilla* (1799) and Mayr's *Le due giornate* (1801). The first borrowed its libretto from *Camille, ou Le Souterrain* by Benoît-Joseph Marsollier des Vivetières, music by Dalayrac, while the second was based on Jean-Nicolas Bouilly's *Les Deux Journées*, one of Cherubini's most successful *opéras comiques*. By 1820, the term *melodramma semiserio* was used to describe a work which contained at least one comic character, and this is a productive way in which to understand *Margherita d'Anjou*: the *basso buffo* role of Michele, embodied in Nicola Bassi, who had been performing such roles for decades, is in many ways a *locus classicus*. Alongside this feature was the concentration on *recitativo semplice* (as opposed to accompanied recitative which was beginning to characterise serious opera) and an obligatory *lieto*

FELICE ROMANI

He wrote libretti
for two of
Meyerbeer's six
Italian operas:

Margherita d'Anjou (1820)
and
L'esule di Granata (1822).

Both were premiered at
Milan's
Teatro alla Scala



fine, whatever the climax of the source-text. All these qualities are found in *Margherita d'Anjou*, and the work can, with good reason, be considered a model of its time. *Melodramma semiserio* continued to be exploited until the middle of the century, at which point the term fell into disuse alongside a more fluid approach to generic classification. Most composers turned their hands to *melodramma semiserio*: Rossini's *Torvaldo e Dorliska* (1815), *La gazza ladra* (1817) and *Matilde di Shabran* (1821); and Donizetti's *Il furioso all'isola di San Domingo* (1833) and *Linda di Chamoni* (1842) are examples. There is a good case to be made for considering Bellini's *La sonnambula* as an *opera semiseria* (although it has no *buffo* role) and the latest examples of the genre are Pedrotti's *Fiorina* (1851), Petrella's *Elena di Tolosa* (1852) and Mercadante's *Violetta* (1853).

Romani might have described his libretto for *Margherita d'Anjou* as 'written in haste and without conviction', but this scarcely does justice either to the eminence of its source or to the complexity of the literary tradition in which it sat. Romani's libretto was based ultimately on the *mélodrame historique* entitled *Marguerite d'Anjou* by Charles-René Guilbert de Pixérécourt, which had been premiered at the Théâtre de la Gaîté in Paris on 11 January 1810 with music by Gérardin-Lacour. Romani's libretto also depended on an earlier Italian libretto by Luigi Romanelli – the La Scala house librettist – entitled *L'orfana d'Inghilterra, ossia Margherita d'Anjou*; this had been destined for Weigl and performance at La Scala in July 1816, but for various reasons it was never given in Italy. It is only known through a German translation, in which Romanelli's two comic characters (Bernardo

[Romani's Michele] and Carlo) were cut in order to create a 'große ernsthafte Oper' by Johann Christoph Grünbaum, that was performed at the Vienna Hofoper in 1819. Meyerbeer's re-use of a pre-existing libretto in Milan the following year is hardly surprising given that the Romanelli/Weigl work had never been performed and that the planned opera, *Francesca da Rimini*, had been banned by the censor.

Translating from *mélodrame* to *melodramma* involved the selection of certain scenes for treatment as arias and ensembles, writing suitable *versi lirici* for them, plotting the location and structure of the central finale, and transforming the remaining spoken dialogue into *versi sciolti* for *recitativo semplice*. Such essential tasks would frequently involve major reworking of the original text, and this is nowhere clearer than in the transformation of *Marguerite d'Anjou* into *Margherita d'Anjou*. Pixérécourt's *mélodrame historique* was described on its title page as a work à grand spectacle and, in its inclusion of detonating bombs and a final duel set against the conflagration of an entire forest, it easily lived up to its description. Both these scenes were excised in Romanelli's libretto and remained cut in Romani's. Pixérécourt's three acts are compressed into two in both libretti, with the core of Pixérécourt's second act being used as the Act I finale for both Italian operas. Isaura's delivery of Lavarenne's letter to Margherita, which takes place in the second act in both Romanelli and Romani is also taken from Pixérécourt's second act. The critical change in tone involves the comic characters. Pixérécourt's Morin (who becomes Bernardo in Romanelli) finally becomes Michele in Romani's libretto for Meyerbeer. Morin, like Michele, is a doctor

and in Pixérécourt's play speaks dialogue with a pronounced Gascon accent (a certain characteristic of a comic character in this repertory), and he exhibits the streetwise cowardice for which Nicola Bassi was, by 1820, well known. The role of Carlo is largely a product of Romani and Meyerbeer's enthusiasm for Levasseur; the role of Carl in Pixérécourt (or Romanelli) has nothing of the ambivalent vengeance that characterises Romani's character.

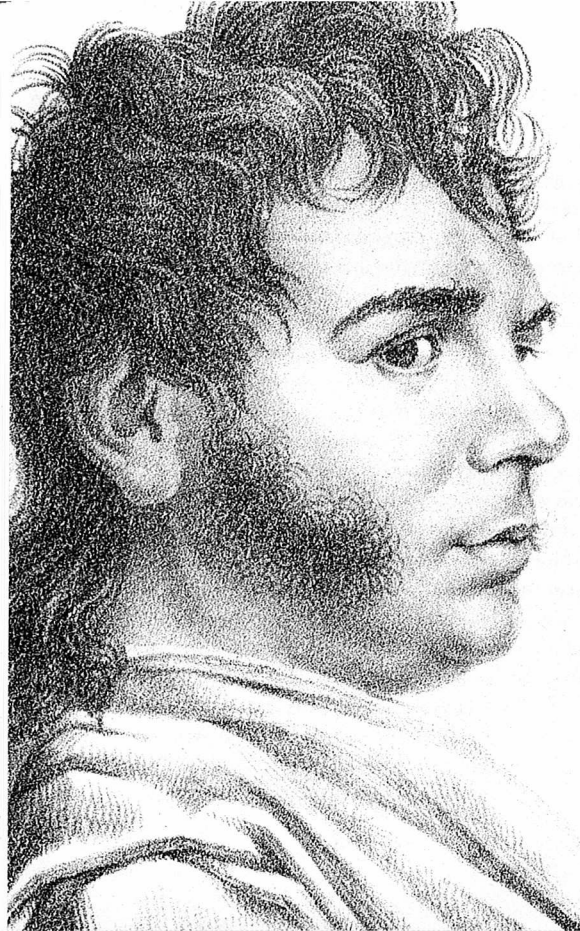
Taking a historical event as the pretext for an opera was a new departure for Meyerbeer, and *Margherita d'Anjou* is the sole example in his Italian output. Certainly, there is much historical colour in *Il crociato in Egitto* but the historical events are generic, and more motivated by orientalisising impulses than a decision to embed a narrative within a historically precise frame. The selection of a specific event during the Wars of the Roses was not to be matched until Meyerbeer, this time with Scribe, dramatised the St Bartholomew's Day massacre in *Les Huguenots* over a decade later; and such historical precision would be echoed both in *Le Prophète* and *L'Africaine*.

One of Meyerbeer's achievements in his Italian operas is his consistent success in taking the conventions of the Rossinian code, which governed the construction of aria, duet, finale and introduzione, and transforming – even subverting – them. By the time of *Il crociato in Egitto*, Meyerbeer had expanded the opening number to the massive proportions that would adorn his *grands opéras* – *Robert le diable* and *Les Huguenots* especially. But even in *Margherita d'Anjou* may be seen traces of an ambition that goes beyond the Rossinian *introduzione*, in the use of the *banda sul palco* – the stage band – and particularly in highlighting the *prima donna* in the *introduzione* itself.

Both arias for Carolina Pellegrini (Margherita) are subtly written to point up the opposition between the character's regal and maternal (lone, and therefore vulnerable) aspects. Her Act I *sortita* is embedded in the *introduzione* at the point where a number is more normally given to a minor character. At the end of the reprise of the opening chorus Carlo steers the music from its predominant F major to A flat as he sings 'My heart recognises the source of my ruin and shudders' and Margherita's aria begins with maestoso dotted rhythms in the orchestra and an elaborate cadenza as she greets her loyal followers. Her cavatina, in a leisurely 3/4, addresses the Duca di Lavarenne *in absentia*: 'After the thought of an innocent son / My heart, my mind is filled with you'. These noble sentiments are, however, undercut by Carlo's angry *pertichini* as he seeks to take courage and come forward. Levasseur received generous plaudits for the way in which he sang these *pertichini* from the critic of the *Corriere delle dame*. The *tempo di mezzo*, like the *cavatina*, features asides from Carlo as the chorus of soldiers and provisioners announce the imminent arrival of Lavarenne to the extent that the texture is reduced to a trio of Margherita, Carlo and unison chorus. In the *cabaletta*, Pellegrini hardly gets beyond her first phrase before Carlo interrupts (aside as ever) with contemptuous reference to her vain hopes and an exact imitation of her opening phrase. Those parts of the *cabaletta* that are not encumbered by the participation of the chorus are frequently characterised by a duet texture, and this section closes the *introduzione*. Contrasting with the inherent loneliness of her regal and maternal state, Margherita is never alone in this aria, even if the accompaniment is Carlo's malicious attempt at revenge.

In both versions of her Act II aria, Margherita is definitively alone: in disguise, in hiding and distanced from her lover Lavarenne. Meyerbeer's accompaniment is the virtuoso violin of the Milanese Alessandro Rolla, for whom he wrote an elaborate obbligato part that has a key role in the *scena*, the *cavatina* and *cabaletta* (this is made clear in a review by *Teatri, arti e letteratura* of the Dresden 1824 production of *Margherita d'Anjou*, a strange location for such information that is explained by the fact that Rolla's son had taken over the direction of the Italian Court Opera in Dresden the previous year). Only in the *tempo di mezzo* does the solo violin fall silent, as the chorus of Highlanders come to warn Margherita of the impending arrival of a possibly hostile soldier. The *scena* begins with an extensive solo for Rolla that is fragmented – as is typical of such *scene* – to articulate the phrases of the recitative. The *cavatina* is a real duet, the violin only absent from the texture during the minor-inflected passage 'Bella calma ch'io provai', which is missing from the 1820 libretto; otherwise Margherita is more or less constantly in company with the violin.

Margherita's two principal appearances in the opera outside her two arias are in the Act I finale. In both cases, her isolation is stressed by poetic or musical means – or both. She appears at the end of the *tempo d'attacco* and walks straight into the Highlanders' well-laid trap that the previous choral section has described. Not only does she sing alone, but she is surrounded by enemies that only the audience can see. Her solo begins 'Heaven, sustain my strength' and ends 'Must I then die this way?' to which the Highlanders bluntly reply 'Si' on an unforgiving unison. The position is momentarily



NICOLA TACHINARDI

This virtuoso tenor
created roles for
Pacini

Temistocle (1823)

Mercadante

Didone abbandonata (1823)

Nitocri (1824)

He created Lavarenne in
Margherita d'Anjou.

For Trieste, in 1824,

Meyerbeer revised

Il crociato in Egitto,

giving Tachinardi an
entrance with chorus

and stage band,

the spectacular aria

'Queste destre

l'acciario di morte'

improved by the arrival of Lavarenne and Michele, but the subsequent arrival of Carlo – who at this point has the power to save or condemn Margherita and her son – triggers the *scène de stupéfaction* and the central concertato of the finale. Since she does not know Carlo's identity (it is revealed in the *tempo di mezzo*), all Margherita can say is 'Save the Queen, save the King, in the name of mercy!'. The distribution of text in the *concertato* is important. Michele takes an obvious comic turn, and Carlo and Isaura have their own different reflections on the scene to articulate. But, in contrast to the stark isolation in which Margherita found herself at the end of the *tempo d'attacco*, in the *concertato* she sings as part of a tight ensemble where the melodic interest is shared with great care and where she sings more or less exactly the same text as Lavarenne.

The other character with arias in each act is of course the Duca di Lavarenne, sung by Niccola Tacchinardi. Lavarenne's first-act aria is complicated by the presence of a second section to the *cavatina* that is not given in the 1820 libretto, and by the fact that it is split into two separate numbers in the published piano-vocal score. The aria begins with a subtly-structured *scena* which pairs off tonal oppositions of identical material in E flat and G flat with sections in E and G, and which is followed by a fittingly militaristic (trumpets and drums) C major *cavatina* in 3/4. According to the 1820 libretto this should lead into a *tempo di mezzo* and thence to the *cabaletta*, but in all the musical sources the *cavatina* is followed by another greatly contrasted section. This is an Andantino in G major 9/8 with the melody line in the cellos marked 'dolce ma marcato'. Although this follows

logically in terms of the sense of its text, the poetic structure changes from *ottonari* to *settenari*, and its exact origins remain something of a conundrum. The *tempo di mezzo* is greatly abbreviated in the musical sources, but the *cabaletta* returns to the martial C major of the cavatina and closes the number in ambitious, not to say heroic, style.

Act II finds Lavarenne in a much more subdued mood. The *scena* that prefaces his aria begins with the words, 'Ah yes. Indeed, I am the unhappiest man / Who ever walked the earth!'. Such wrestling with the emotions he shares for both Margherita and Isaura allows him to issue a plaintive request to Isaura in his A major *cavatina*, a request that is overtaken by his anger directed against his own unfaithful spirit in the *tempo di mezzo* (A minor, tremulando strings and jagged melodic motives in the bass which recall the accompaniment to his exchanges with Isaura in the Act I duet). The number closes with an almost peremptory, unrepeatable, *cabaletta* with a similar appeal to the one articulated in the *cavatina* and in the same key.

The lion's share of Isaura's (Rosa Mariani) music in the first act is in the only two duets in the opera, and her role in the second act is – until the very end – negligible. The first duet in Act I is a lightweight affair with just a single *cantabile* movement and none of the drama associated with the duet in serious opera, and Isaura is overshadowed by Michele, whose *buffo* parts dominate here and in the *cabaletta*. Isaura's duet with Lavarenne later in Act I is a much more formal affair. The extraordinary military alliance between husband and wife-disguised-as-page is expressed in poetic and

ROSA MARIANI

Meyerbeer's first Isaura,
this contralto
also sang the first
Arsace
in
Rossini's *Semiramide*
(1823).

She also created roles
for Pacini
Il crociato in Tolomaide
(1828)

Il corsaro (1831)
and Mercadante
Uggero il Danese (1834)



musical terms that are more suitable for lovers and this relationship is highlighted by the intertwining of the voices in a way that the previous duet avoids. Mariani's reward for such a slender appearance in so much of the opera is the final *rondò*. This scene takes Isaura from the doubt and suffering of her recitative, through the lament of her *cavatina* and her relief at Margherita's renunciation of Lavarenne in the *tempo di mezzo*, to Isaura's own praise of conjugal love in a *cabaletta* with two sets of elaborate variations which ends the opera.

Apart from his complete domination of the duet with Isaura in Act I, Nicola Bassi in the role of Michele figures in the two largest concerted numbers. He has much to do in the *tempo d'attacco* in the Act I finale, diffusing some of the tension as he, Isaura and Lavarenne bumble around in the dark forest. He fulfils a similar role in the *concertato* as – while the other four characters muse on their possible fates – he notes how ugly Carlo is, how he twirls his moustache, and how he – Michele – thinks he can already feel Carlo's knife penetrating his heart. The *concertato* is dangerous ground for an opera semiseria, and incorporating Michele into this number was risky in the extreme but, in effect, a masterstroke.

Much of Michele's humour finds its way into recitative, and points to one of the main (but relatively insignificant) difficulties with the text of the opera. The 1820 libretto contains rather more text in which Michele participates than appears set in the main surviving sources for the work. Whether Meyerbeer was involved in cutting these passages, or indeed if they

were ever set to music, is currently impossible to say but it seems probable that the original Michele had rather more recitative than appears in this recording.

It is difficult to imagine how Meyerbeer could have passed up the opportunity to write a trio for three basses, given that he was writing for the best *basso cantante* (Levasseur) and the best *basso buffo* (Bassi) in the business. The Act II trio for Michele, Carlo and Gloucester is one of the most remarkable numbers in the opera and also one of the most curious. It runs on directly into the sextet as the three basses are joined by Margherita, Isaura and Lavarenne, and the structure of two numbers taken together in this way has much in common with the compositional form of the Act I finale as adopted by composers of the period. The trio functions as the first section of the *tempo d'attacco*, and the first section of the sextet as its continuation. Then follow the sections that could be expected from a finale: a *concertato* ('Oh rabbia! Oh furore!'), precipitated by Gloucester's attempt to escape by threatening Margherita's son; a *tempo di mezzo* in which Michele enters with the Highlanders and disarms Gloucester; and a *stretta* in which the latter is roundly condemned by all.

Critical reception to the successful premiere of the work was varied. German-speaking journals carried approving remarks concerning Meyerbeer's engagement with Rossinian convention; the *Österreichischen allgemeinen Musikzeitung* described *Margherita d'Anjou* as bearing 'the stamp of a true and thoughtful master'. The *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* was

NICOLA BASSI

One of the most popular comic basses of the early 19th century.

He was Meyerbeer's first Michele Gamautte in *Margherita d'Anjou*



more direct, stating simply that *Margherita d'Anjou* had nothing whatsoever to do with Rossini. Similar views were expressed by Meyerbeer's friend Kandler in the *Morgenblatt für gebildete Stände*. But for some German musicians, for their compatriots to write Italian opera in Italy was simply beyond the pale: a correspondent from Frankfurt-am-Main wrote towards the end of 1820 in the *Allgemeine musikalische Zeitung* that 'Meyerbeer, Stuntz and all their treacherous deserters to the banner of musical frivolity' should not be blamed for squandering their musical talents abroad, but they should return in order to gain fame and glory in their homeland.

Italian critics were less interested in issues of musical nationalism, and more anxious to assess the singers. *Il teatro all Scala: almanacco per l'anno 1822* praised Pellegrini unreservedly and suggested that Mariani might employ more variety, colour and even expression in her performance. For Levasseur, however, there were nothing but plaudits (remarkable given that he takes part in nothing but ensembles), and Meyerbeer was greatly praised for making such good use of the French singer. The *Gazetta di Milano* reserved its greatest praise, though, for Bassi and the trio in which he starred: 'Bassi manages his role with that mastery which has put him amongst the few very capable artists of the Italian comic theatre since long ago'. Views of Tacchinardi were lukewarm: the *Corriere delle dame* opined that 'the reluctant way with which [Tacchinardi], gifted with fine quality, undertook his role corresponded entirely to the boring pieces that were entrusted to him', and the *Gazetta de Milano* reported Tacchinardi's unfortunate attempts at falsetto, which the journalist himself claimed to have drawn to the tenor's attention, although to little avail.

In general, it was the ensembles that most attracted praise in the wake of the premiere: the *introduzione*, the finale ('vera corona dell'opera' according to *Il teatro all Scala: almanacco per l'anno 1822*) and especially the trio for three basses in the second act (the *Corriere delle dame* was particularly enthusiastic about this number, and Levasseur's stagecraft in it). The longueurs in Lavarenne's Act II *scena* – and Meyerbeer's possible response – have already been noted. The *Corriere delle dame* claimed that members of the audience found the opening of the duet for Lavarenne and Isaura boring, and that the beginning of the finale resembled Johann Caspar Aiblinger's music for Salvatore Vigano's ballet *I titani* of the previous year and that the conspiratorial 'Zitti, zitti' of the Highlanders in the same number resembled parts of *Il barbiere di Siviglia*. Such comments have more to do with critics establishing their professional credentials rather than a serious critique of Meyerbeer's opera (the allusion to *Il barbiere* does not bear serious investigation). All voices were agreed on the success of the work, and at the end of its most critical paragraph, the *Corriere delle dame* was forced to concede that Meyerbeer had been called out onto the stage at the end of both acts for all three of the performances he directed.

Margherita d'Anjou claims our attention for a number of reasons. It is an important milestone – in its treatment of a historical subject – on Meyerbeer's journey to historical grand opéra, and a useful way of understanding Meyerbeer's last Italian opera, *Il crociato in Egitto*. The latter was so obviously written with the Théâtre Italien in Paris as a potential destination that *Margherita d'Anjou's* more modest ambitions give a more

accurate and typical representation of the composer's Italian output. *Margherita d'Anjou* is an important work in the history of opera semiseria, and therefore a context for works by Bellini and Donizetti, as well as an important counterweight to the conventions at work in those operas characterised by the Rossinian code. Whether or not we believe Romani when he says that he wrote the libretto to *Margherita d'Anjou* without conviction, Meyerbeer's commitment to his singers and to the development of historical opera is clear from every note of the score.

© Mark Everist, 2003



LUIGIA
BOCCABADA
GAZZUOLI
Margherita
Teatro alla Scala
1828

PERFORMANCE HISTORY

Date	City & Theatre	Performances in Italian						
		Margherita	Isaura	Lavarenne	Riccardo	Carlo	Michele	
14-11-20	Milan-Scala	Pellegrini	Mariani	Tacchinardi	Cavara	Levasseur	Bassi	
15-2-22	Munich-Ranfagno Residenz	Bonsignori	Schiasetti	Vecchi	-	-	-	
Spring 22	Venice-San Luca	Lipparini	Sajer	Reina	-	Pozzi	-	
Fiera 23	Fermo	Aquila	-	-	-	-	-	
Carn.23-24	Mantua-Sociale	Michelesi?	Bassi	Reina	-	-	Picchi	
20-3-24	Dresden-Hof	-	-	-	-	-	-	
2-10-24	Bologna-Comunale	Grassi	Corri	Pozzi	Paltoni	Cipriani	Tavani	
27-10-24	Dresden-Hof	-	-	-	-	-	-	
10-5-25	Barcelona-Principal	Cortesi	Albini	Piermarini	-	-	-	
Fiera 25	Fermo-Aquila ¹	-	-	-	-	-	-	
9*-25	Florence-Pergola	Festa-Maffei	Centroni	Binaghi	Torri	Lauretti	Pacini	
Aut. 25	Turin-Carignano	-	-	Fusconi	-	-	-	

¹ Mark Everist informed me of the existence of a libretto in the Biblioteca Comunale di Fermo for a production in 1825. This production is listed in neither of the published books on the theatre.



MARIETTA
BRAMBILLA

Isaura
London 1828

The beauty and talent of
this contralto contributed to
the premiere of many
operas including
Mercadante's
Il giuramento
and
Donizetti's
Lucrezia Borgia
and
Linda di Chamounix

ROSALBINA
CARADORI-ALLAN

Margherita
London 1828

Roles created
by this popular soprano
included
Giulietta
in Bellini's
I Capuletti e i Montecchi
and Rebecca in
Pacini's
Ivanhoe



Date	City & Theatre	Margherita	Isaura	Lavarenne	Riccardo	Carlo	Michele
3-12-25	Dresden-Hof	-	-	-	-	-	-
20-5-26	Milan-Scala	Boccabadati	Fabbrica	Verger	Biondini	Santini	-
1827	Palma de Mallorca	-	-	-	-	-	-
12-1-28	London-King's	Caradori	Brambilla	Curioni	Pellegrini	Porto	-
2-10-28	Barcelona-Principal	-	-	-	-	-	-
Summer 31	Udine-Sociale	-	-	-	-	-	-
14-3-36	Madrid-Conservatorio	Oreiro de Lerma	Planiol	Castellanos	-	-	-
22-10-37	Lisbon-Sao Carlo	-	-	-	-	-	-

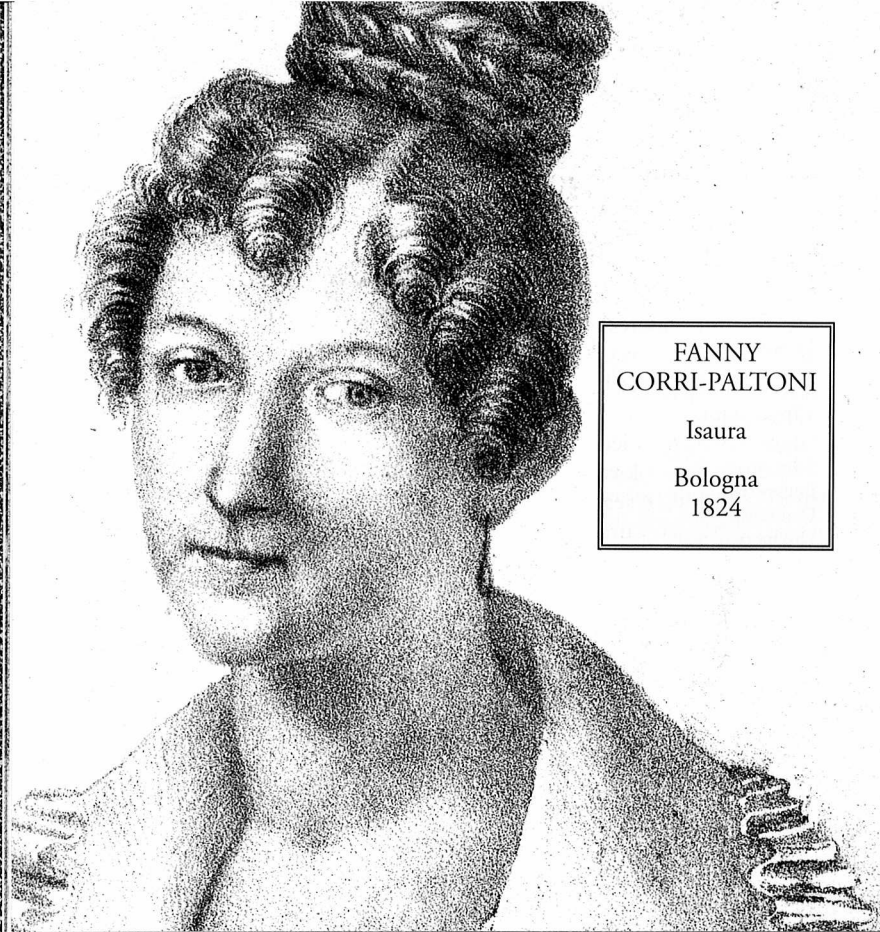
Performances in French

Date	City & Theatre	Marguerite	Isaura	Lavarenne	Richard	Norcester	Morin
11-3-26	Paris-Odeon	Lemoule	Montano	Lecomte	Thenard	Margaillan	Bizot
21-12-26	Brussels-Monnaie	Lemesle	Langlade	Damoreau	Falberg	Dessessart	Cassel
2-11-29	Liège-Grand	-	-	-	-	-	-
17-3-31	Lille-Municipal	-	-	-	-	-	-
30-1-33	Lyon-Grand	Pepin	-	Lecomte	-	-	-
1833-34	Nantes-Graslin	-	-	-	-	-	-
18-11-34	Marseille-Grand	-	-	-	-	-	-
19-11-34	Dijon-Theatre	-	-	-	-	-	-
1834-35	Strasbourg	-	-	-	-	-	-

Date	City & Theatre	Marguerite	Isaura	Lavarenne	Richard	Norcester	Morin
1835-36	Rennes	-	-	-	-	-	-
1836-37	Rennes	-	-	-	-	-	-
15-4-40	Le Havre-Grand	-	-	-	-	-	-
17-4-54	New Orleans-Opera	Bertini	Borghese	Bordas/Lapierre	Lacroix	Genibrel	-

Performances in German

Date	City & Theatre	Margherita	Isaura	Lavarenne	Richard	Carl	Michele
26-3-31	Graz	-	-	-	-	-	-
22-11-31	Berlin-Königstädtliches	Spitzeder	Hahnel	Holzmilller	Genée	Fischer	Spitzeder
12-*-31	Prague-Ständisches	-	-	-	-	-	-
2-*-32	Budapest-Deutsches	-	-	-	-	-	-
24-1-33	Ljubljana	-	-	-	-	-	-



FANNY
CORRI-PALTONI

Isaura

Bologna
1824

Margherita d'Anjou: Synopsis

ACT I

An encampment on the bank of a river. The army of Margherita d'Anjou, widow of Henry VI, led by Orner and Bellapunta, drink to their queen's honour. Carlo Belmonte, formerly one of Margherita's generals, now banished and currently in the employ of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, enters the camp. As he mingles with the soldiers and peasants Margherita enters with her retinue and addresses her troops, praising their support and promising to reward their loyalty. Margherita's excitement mounts as joyous military music in the distance promises the arrival of the Duc de Lavarenne. She goes to meet him.

Michele arrives accompanied by Eugene (Isaura – Lavarenne's wife – in disguise), who sings of her love for her husband while Michele pours scorn on her emotions. Isaura reveals Lavarenne's love for Margherita, both of whom arrive with their entourage.

Lavarenne announces an attack on Gloucester's camp for the following day and predicts victory. Isaura despairs of her position and Michele attempts to soothe her. Isaura (still disguised as Eugenio) and Michele are presented to Margherita, who immediately appoints 'Eugenio' as companion to her son.

The interior of a tent. Lavarenne has resolved to reveal to the queen the secret of his marriage. Isaura enters his tent as he is writing his confessional letter; he instructs Isaura to give the letter to the queen if he does not survive the coming day's battle.

A cannon shot is followed by distant trumpets indicating soldiers outside the encampment; Lavarenne tells Margherita that they are men of the Duke

of Somerset come to assist, but Carlo knows that they are in fact Gloucester's men that he has alerted. To the assembled throng, Margherita praises the courage of Lavarenne as she presents young Edward, the heir to the throne. The crowd cheer their future king.

A dense forest. Carlo returns to the Highlanders' camp in the forest, and reports the defeat of Margherita and Lavarenne's army. Michele is apprehended by Carlo's men and appointed doctor to the Highlanders. In the dark, Lavarenne, Isaura and Michele appear, one by one, among the rocks. The Highlanders lay a trap for Margherita who is also wandering in the forest; they ambush her. Just as they are about to assassinate her, Carlo reveals himself to Margherita and, despite her treatment of him, vows his allegiance, and instructs the Highlanders to do likewise. Carlo proposes that his Highlanders should lure the enemy away while all make their way back to the camp; Margherita, disguised as a peasant woman, will stay in Carlo's cottage in the forest. As distant trumpets reveal the approach of Gloucester's army, all pray that heaven will protect them in this moment of danger.

ACT II

[*The Scottish countryside, as in Act I. It is just before dawn.* A group of soldiers yearn for revenge as Gloucester appears. He is furious that Margherita is still at large. He orders the entire forest burned down. Carlo, his allegiance to the Queen renewed, attempts to deceive Gloucester as to her whereabouts.]

A small village with several cottages, near the forest. It is broad daylight.

Highland men and women, enjoying the beautiful day, wander off into the countryside. From the cottage where she is hiding, Margherita appears in

disguise. She reflects on recent events but returns to her cottage when an approaching soldier is spotted by the Highlanders. Isaura arrives and delivers Lavarenne's letter and reveals her true identity to Margherita. The queen, although shocked, is wise enough to see that Isaura is devoted to Lavarenne.

Inside a tent, as in Act I. Lavarenne knows he must choose between the two women in his life. Although he is fiercely loyal to Margherita, he realises he still loves Isaura.

Interior of a cottage. Michele, now the cook, sends Carlo to answer the loud knocking on the door. It is Richard, Duke of Gloucester, in search of Margherita and her son. He interrogates Michele and is suspicious of the latter's 'wife' whom he demands to see. Margherita is brought in and Gloucester recognises her. Just as he threatens her, Lavarenne and a detachment of French soldiers enter, but Gloucester grabs Margherita's son and, threatening to kill him, attempts to use him as a means of escape. Michele has, in the meantime, absented himself and now returns with some Highlanders who disarm Gloucester.

A village, as before. Bellapunta congratulates his officers on their victory. Michele attempts once more to convince Isaura that she will regain Lavarenne. Isaura is uncertain but Margherita comes in and presents the Duke to Isaura. Lavarenne asks forgiveness and Isaura expresses her happiness as the opera closes with husband and wife reunited.



LUIGI PACINI

This basso buffo sang in the first performances of Rossini's

Il Turco in Italia
and
L'occasione fa il ladro

The prolific composer Giovanni Pacini was his son, and for him Luigi created roles in five operas

Adelaide e Comingio
Il barone di Dosheim
La sposa fedele
Il falegname di Livonia
La schiava in Bagdad

Margherita d'Anjou – Résumé de l'intrigue

ACTE I

Campement au bord d'un fleuve. L'armée de la veuve d'Henri VI, Margherita d'Anjou, et ses généraux, Orner et Bellapunta, boivent en l'honneur de leur reine. Carlo Belmonte, ancien général de Margherita qui, après avoir été banni est passé au service du duc de Gloucester, Richard, fait son entrée dans le camp. Il se mêle aux soldats et aux paysans tandis que Margherita arrive avec sa suite et, s'adressant aux troupes, les remercie de leur soutien puis leur promet de récompenser leur loyauté. Le son d'une fanfare militaire annonçant le retour du duc de Lavarenne se fait alors entendre au loin. A mesure qu'il se rapproche la joie de Margherita va croissante et elle se porte à ses devants.

Michele arrive accompagné d'Eugenio (en fait, la femme de Lavarenne, Isaura, sous un déguisement), qui chante son amour pour son époux – sentiment pour lequel Michele n'a que mépris. Isaura révèle l'amour de Lavarenne pour Margherita, au moment où ceux-ci font leur entrée avec leur entourage.

Lavarenne annonce pour le lendemain une attaque contre le camp de Gloucester et prédit la victoire. Michele tente de consoler Isaura qui désespère. Michele et Isaura (toujours déguisée en Eugenio) sont présentés à Margherita, qui mande immédiatement "Eugenio" auprès de son fils comme compagnon.

Intérieur d'une tente. Lavarenne a décidé de révéler à la reine son mariage secret. Lorsqu'Isaura entre dans sa tente, elle le trouve en train de rédiger une

lettre de confession et il lui demande, au cas où il perdrait la vie durant la bataille du lendemain, de remettre cette lettre à la reine.

Un coup de canon puis, au loin, l'éclat de trompettes indiquent la présence de soldats autour du camp. Lavarenne explique à Margherita que ce sont les hommes du duc de Somerset venus à la rescousse, mais Carlo Belmonte, lui, sait bien qu'il s'agit en fait des hommes de Gloucester alertés par ses soins. Devant ses sujets rassemblés, Margherita loue le courage de Lavarenne avant de les inviter à saluer le jeune Edward, héritier du trône. La foule acclame son futur roi.

Épaisse forêt. Carlo retourne au camp des Highlanders dans la forêt pour leur annoncer la défaite de l'armée de Margherita et de Lavarenne. Michele est appréhendé par les hommes de Carlo et mis au service des Highlanders comme médecin. Malgré l'obscurité, on voit apparaître Lavarenne, Isaura et Michele parmi les rochers. Les Highlanders tendent une embuscade à Margherita qui, elle aussi, erre dans la forêt, et la capturent. Carlo intervient alors pour empêcher qu'on l'assassine et, malgré la manière dont elle l'a traité, lui fait serment d'allégeance et appelle les Highlanders à faire de même. Carlo suggère aux Highlanders de créer une diversion pendant que chacun rentre au camp. Margherita, déguisée en paysanne, se cachera chez Carlo dans la forêt. Alors que retentissent au loin les trompettes annonçant l'approche de l'armée de Gloucester, tous se mettent à prier Dieu de les protéger du danger qui les menace.

ACTE II

La campagne écossaise, comme à l'acte I, juste avant l'aube. Des soldats piaffant d'impatience parlent de revanche au moment où Gloucester fait son apparition. Furieux de savoir Margherita toujours en liberté, il ordonne à ses hommes de brûler la forêt entière. Carlo, désormais fidèle à la reine, tente de lancer Gloucester sur une fausse piste.

Un petit village de quelques âmes, en bordure de la forêt, en plein jour.

Les villageois et villageoises, profitant du beau temps, partent aux champs. Margherita sort de la chaumière où elle se cache sous un déguisement. Elle repense aux récents événements mais retourne à l'intérieur à l'approche d'un soldat remarqué par les Highlanders. Isaura se présente devant Margherita et lui révèle sa véritable identité en lui remettant la confession de Lavarenne. Bien que choquée, la souveraine a la sagesse de comprendre combien Isaura est attachée à Lavarenne.

Intérieur d'une tente, comme à l'acte I. Lavarenne sait qu'il doit choisir entre les deux femmes qui occupent sa vie. Malgré son profond attachement à Margherita, son amour pour Isaura s'avère toujours aussi fort.

Intérieur villageois. Michele, désormais chargé de préparer les repas, demande à Carlo d'aller voir qui tambourine à la porte. C'est le duc de Gloucester, Richard, toujours à la recherche de Margherita et de son fils. Il interroge Michele et, soupçonneux, exige de voir la "femme" de celui-ci. Margherita se présente et Gloucester, qui la reconnaît, essaie de s'emparer d'elle. Lavarenne, à la tête d'un détachement de soldats français, fait alors son apparition. Gloucester empoigne le fils de Margherita en menaçant de le tuer

pour pouvoir s'enfuir. Michele, qui a réussi entretemps à s'éclipser, revient accompagné de quelques Highlanders qui désarment Gloucester.

Au village, comme précédemment. Bellapunta félicite ses officiers de leur victoire.

Michele tente à nouveau de rassurer Isaura en lui disant que Lavarenne lui reviendra. Isaura en doute. C'est alors que Margherita fait son entrée et lui rend le duc. Lavarenne demande pardon à sa femme qui ne cache pas son bonheur et, au moment où s'achève l'opéra, les époux se trouvent enfin réunis.

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A detailed engraving of a young woman, likely Margherita, with her hair styled in a complex braid. She is wearing a light-colored dress with a ruffled collar and a small bow at the waist. The engraving is set within a circular frame.

CAROLINA
CORTESI

Margherita

Barcelona
1825

Margherita d'Anjou: Inhalt

1. AKT

Ein Lager am Flussufer. Das Heer Margherita d'Anjous, der Witwe Heinrichs VI., unter der Führung von Orner und Bellapunta trinkt auf das Wohl der Königin. Carlo Belmonte, ehemaliger General Margheritas, doch nun verbannt und gegenwärtig im Dienst Richards, Herzog von Gloucester, betritt das Lager. Während er sich unter die Soldaten und Bauern mischt, erscheint Margherita mit ihrem Gefolge und spricht zu ihren Truppen, dankt ihnen für ihren Einsatz und verspricht ihnen, sie für ihre Loyalität zu belohnen. Erregung erfasst Margherita, als in der Ferne fröhliche Militärmusik die Ankunft des Herzogs von Lavarenne verkündet. Sie geht ihm entgegen.

Margheritas Arzt Michele tritt ein in Begleitung von Eugenio (niemand anderes als Lavarennens Ehefrau Isaura in Verkleidung), die von ihrer Liebe zu ihrem Gemahl singt, doch Michele macht sich über ihre Gefühle lustig. Isaura weiht ihn in Lavarennens Liebe zu Margherita ein, die beide mit ihrer Entourage eintreffen.

Lavarenne verkündet, dass am folgenden Tag der Angriff auf Gloucesters Lager stattfinden wird, und gibt sich siegesgewiss. Isaura will angesichts ihrer Lage verzweifeln, doch Michele tut sein Bestes, sie zu trösten. Isaura (noch immer als Eugenio verkleidet) und Michele werden Margherita vorgestellt, die "Eugenio" sofort ihrem Sohn als Begleiter zur Seite stellt.

Im Inneren eines Zeltes. Lavarenne ist entschlossen, der Königin zu berichten, dass er insgeheim verheiratet ist. Noch während er den Brief mit

diesem Geständnis schreibt, betritt Isaura sein Zelt. Er trägt ihr auf, der Königin den Brief zu überreichen, sollte er die Schlacht am kommenden Tage nicht überleben.

Auf einen Kanondonner folgt der ferne Klang von Trompeten, die verkünden, dass Soldaten vor dem Lager stehen. Lavarenne versichert Margherita, es handle sich um Soldaten des Herzogs von Somerset, die ihnen zu Hilfe kommen, doch Carlo Belmonte weiß, dass es in Wirklichkeit Gloucesters Männer sind, die er alarmiert hat. Vor der versammelten Menge lobt Margherita Lavarenne für seinen Mut und stellt den jungen Edward als Thronerben vor. Die Versammelten jubeln dem künftigen König zu.

Ein dichter Wald. Carlo kehrt zum Lager der Highlander im Wald zurück und berichtet von der militärischen Niederlage Margheritas und Lavarennens. Michele wird von Carlos Leuten gefasst und zum Arzt der Highlander bestimmt. In der Dunkelheit erscheinen Lavarenne, Isaura und Michele nacheinander zwischen den Felsen. Die Highlander stellen Margherita, die ebenfalls durch den Wald wandert, eine Falle und überfallen sie aus dem Hinterhalt. Kurz bevor sie sie töten können, gibt Carlo sich Margherita zu erkennen und trotz allem, was sie ihm angetan hat, gelobt er ihr Treue und fordert die Highlander auf, es ihm gleichzutun. Carlo schlägt vor, dass seine Highlander den Feind in eine andere Richtung locken, während die anderen zum Lager zurückkehren. Margherita soll in der Verkleidung einer Bauersfrau in Carlos Häuschen im Wald bleiben. Als Trompeten in der Ferne die Ankunft von Gloucesters Heer verkünden, beten alle, dass der Himmel sie in diesem Augenblick der Gefahr beschützen möge.

2. AKT

[*Dieselbe Gegend in Schottland wie im 1. Akt. Kurz vor der Morgendämmerung.* Eine Gruppe Soldaten verlangt nach Rache, als Gloucester auftritt. Wütend, dass Margherita noch nicht gefasst ist, befiehlt er, den ganzen Wald abzubrennen. Carlo, der der Königin seine Treue erneut bekräftigt hat, versucht, Gloucester über ihren Aufenthaltsort zu täuschen.]

Ein kleines Dorf mit mehreren Häuschen am Waldrand. Es ist helllichter Tag.

Die Highlander, Männer wie Frauen, gehen an dem schönen Tag ins Freie. Margherita, noch verkleidet, tritt aus dem Häuschen, das ihr als Versteck dient. Sie denkt über die Ereignisse der vergangenen Tage nach, kehrt jedoch ins Häuschen zurück, als die Highlander einen Soldaten nahen sehen. Isaura tritt ein, überreicht der Königin Lavarenes Brief und erzählt ihr, wer sie in Wahrheit ist. Margherita ist zwar entsetzt, sieht in ihrer Klugheit aber auch, wie sehr Isaura ihren Mann liebt.

Im Inneren eines Zeltes, wie im 1. Akt. Lavarenne weiß, dass er sich zwischen den beiden Frauen in seinem Leben entscheiden muss. Obwohl er Margherita in Treue ergeben ist, wird ihm bewusst, dass er Isaura nach wie vor liebt.

Im Inneren eines Häuschens. Michele, jetzt der Koch, schickt Carlo zur Tür, an der laut geklopft wird. Draußen steht Richard, Herzog von Gloucester, auf der Suche nach Margherita und ihrem Sohn. Er befragt Michele und schöpft Verdacht angesichts dessen "Ehefrau", die er zu sehen verlangt. Margherita wird hereingeführt, und Gloucester erkennt sie. Als er sie bedroht, tritt Lavarenne mit einem Trupp französischer Soldaten ein, doch Gloucester packt Margheritas Sohn und will mit der Drohung, ihn zu töten, entkommen.

Mittlerweile ist Michele fortgegangen und kehrt nun mit einigen Highlander zurück, die Gloucester entwaffnen.

Ein Dorf, wie zuvor. Bellapunta gratuliert seinen Offizieren zu ihrem Sieg.

Michele versucht erneut, Isaura zu überzeugen, dass sie Lavarenne zurückgewinnen kann. Isaura ist sich unsicher, doch dann kommt Margherita herein und führt ihr den Herzog zu. Lavarenne bittet um Vergebung, Isaura verleiht ihrer Freude Ausdruck und die Oper endet mit dem Glück des wieder vereinten Paares.

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CAROLINA
BASSI

Isaura

Mantova
1824

Margherita d'Anjou: Argomento

ATTO I.

Un accampamento sulle rive di un fiume. L'esercito di Margherita d'Anjou, vedova di Enrico VI, guidato da Orner e Bellapunta, brinda alla propria regina. Entra Carlo Belmonte, un tempo generale di Margherita, ma poi esiliato e attualmente al servizio di Riccardo, duca di Gloucester, e si confonde tra soldati e contadini. Quindi fa il suo ingresso Margherita con il suo seguito e si rivolge alle truppe, elogiando il loro sostegno e promettendo di ricompensare la loro fedeltà. Il suo entusiasmo aumenta quando una vivace musica militare in lontananza preannuncia l'arrivo del duca di Lavarenne. La regina va a incontrarlo.

Arriva Michele, accompagnato da Isaura, moglie di Lavarenne, che si è travestita da uomo e si fa chiamare Eugenio. La donna dichiara il proprio amore per il marito, mentre Michele si prende gioco delle sue emozioni, e rivela che Lavarenne ama Margherita proprio prima che questi ultimi entrino in scena, ciascuno con il proprio seguito.

Lavarenne annuncia un attacco contro il campo di Gloucester per il giorno successivo e prevede la vittoria. Isaura si dispera e Michele tenta di confortarla. Poi entrambi vengono presentati a Margherita, che immediatamente nomina 'Eugenio' compagno di suo figlio.

Interno di una tenda. Lavarenne ha deciso di rivelare alla regina il segreto delle proprie nozze. Isaura entra nella tenda e lo vede mentre scrive una lettera di confessione; il duca le ordina di consegnare la lettera alla regina nel caso dovesse rimanere ucciso durante la battaglia del giorno successivo.

Un colpo di cannone, seguito da squilli di tromba in lontananza, rivela una presenza militare al di fuori dell'accampamento; Lavarenne dice a Margherita che si tratta dei rinforzi inviati dal duca di Somerset, ma Carlo sa che si tratta in realtà dei soldati di Gloucester da lui avvisati. Davanti alla folla riunita, Margherita esalta il coraggio di Lavarenne e presenta il giovane erede al trono Edoardo. La folla applaude il suo futuro re.

Una fitta foresta. Carlo ritorna all'accampamento dei montanari scozzesi nella foresta e comunica la sconfitta dell'esercito di Margherita e Lavarenne. Michele viene catturato dagli uomini di Carlo e nominato medico degli scozzesi. Nell'oscurità compaiono Lavarenne, Isaura e Michele, uno dopo l'altro, tra le rocce. I montanari tendono un tranello a Margherita che si aggira anche lei per la foresta, la catturano con un agguato e stanno per ucciderla quando Carlo le rivela la propria identità. Dimenticando il trattamento che gli è stato riserbato dalla regina, le giura fedeltà e ordina agli scozzesi di fare altrettanto. Poi ordina ai suoi di sviare l'attenzione del nemico, allontanandolo, mentre tutti ritornano all'accampamento; Margherita, vestita da contadina, rimarrà nella casa di Carlo nella foresta. Mentre trombe in lontananza rivelano l'avvicinarsi dell'esercito di Gloucester, tutti invocano la protezione divina in questo momento di pericolo.

ATTO II

[*La campagna scozzese, come nel primo atto. Poco prima dell'alba.* Tra un gruppo di soldati assetati di vendetta compare Gloucester, furibondo perché Margherita è ancora in libertà, e ordina di incendiare l'intera foresta. Carlo, rinnovata la sua fedeltà alla regina, tenta di ingannarlo sui movimenti della donna.]

Un piccolo villaggio con diverse casette sul limitare della foresta. È giorno.

I montanari scozzesi vanno e vengono, godendosi la bella giornata. Dalla casa in cui si nasconde esce Margherita, travestita, e riflette su quanto le è accaduto, ma rientra al coperto quando i montanari vedono un soldato avvicinarsi. Arriva Isaura che consegna la lettera di Lavarenne a Margherita e le rivela la sua vera identità. Per quanto sconvolta, la regina si rende conto che Isaura è innamorata di Lavarenne.

Interno di una tenda, come nell'atto I. Lavarenne sa che deve scegliere tra le due donne della sua vita. Nonostante la propria ardente fedeltà a Margherita, sa di amare ancora Isaura.

Interno di una casa. Nella sua nuova veste di cuoco, Michele manda Carlo ad aprire la porta. Qualcuno bussa forte: si tratta di Riccardo, duca di Gloucester, in cerca di Margherita e di suo figlio. Interrogato Michele, si insospettisce sull'identità di sua "moglie" e pretende di vederla. Viene condotta avanti Margherita e Gloucester la riconosce. Mentre la minaccia, entrano Lavarenne e un distaccamento di soldati francesi, ma Gloucester si fa scudo con il figlio di Margherita e, minacciando di ucciderlo, tenta di fuggire. Nel frattempo Michele si è allontanato e adesso ritorna con alcuni montanari scozzesi che disarmano Gloucester.

Villaggio come prima. Bellapunta si congratula con i suoi ufficiali per la vittoria.

Michele tenta ancora una volta di rassicurare Isaura: riuscirà a riconquistare Lavarenne. La donna è incredula, ma entra Margherita e le offre il marito. Lavarenne le chiede perdono e Isaura esprime la propria felicità mentre l'opera si conclude con la riunione dei due sposi.



Salvi amico la Regina
 Salvi il figlio del tuo Re
 Act I Sc XV

MARGHERITA D'ANJOU

Melodramma semiserio in two acts

Libretto by Felice Romani

Music by Giacomo Meyerbeer

First performance 14 November 1820

Milan, Teatro alla Scala

CHARACTERS

Margherita, widow of Henry VI of England.....	Carolina Pellegrini
Il Duca di Lavarenne.....	Nicola Tacchinardi
Isaura.....	Rosa Mariani
Carlo Belmonte.....	Nicolas-Prosper Levasseur
Michele Gamautte.....	Nicola Bassi
Riccardo, Duke of Gloucester.....	Michele Cavara

Chorus of Highlanders, English and French soldiers, Vivandières

The action takes place in 1462 on the Scottish border



David Parry and Patric Schmid

CD1

61'45

ACT ONE

[1] **Sinfonia Militare**

SCENE I

A broad plain crossed by a river, over which there is a bridge. A disordered encampment occupies the area on the near side of the river: small tents, cannons, etc. On one side is a closed pavilion. Among the soldiers can be seen armed peasants; all are busy at various activities; some are sleeping, others are eating, waited on by the camp provision. Separated from the others are Bellapunta, playing dice with Orner, and two soldiers playing cards, all are surrounded by onlooking soldiers.

[2]

BELLAPUNTA

(almost spoken)

Quattro!

Four!

ORNER

Cinque!

Five!

CHORUS OF SOLDIERS

Che bel colpetto!

What a great throw!

A SOLDIER

(almost spoken)

Fante!

Jack!

ANOTHER SOLDIER

Dama!

Queen!

Roland Wood (Orner)



Che bel giochetto!

Birra forte, vino schietto!
Frutta e paste a buon mercato!
Siam cortesi vivandiere,
Vi darem quel che vi va.
Su prendete dal paniere,
Quel che più piacer vi dà.

E' finito.

Ne ho piacere.

Alla fine, alla fin si bevèrà.

Eh! ragazze.

Comandate.

Presto, presto quà,
Buon vin, buon vin portate,
Sia squisito e sia di quello
Sia di quell' che già si sa.

E' squisito e prelibato,
E' di quel ch'ègual non ha.

CHORUS OF SOLDIERS

What a fine play!

CHORUS OF PROVISIONERS

Hearty beer, strong wine!
Fruit and inexpensive pastry!
We're eager provisioners,
We'll give you what you want.
Come, pick from our baskets
Whatever pleases you the most.

BELLAPUNTA

(rising)

That ends the game.

ORNER

I enjoyed it.

THE SOLDIERS

At last, at last we'll have a drink.

BELLAPUNTA

Hey, girls!

PROVISIONERS

At your service.

THE SOLDIERS

Quickly now, quickly,
Bring us some good wine,
Make it a tasty vintage,
The kind we were drinking before.

PROVISIONERS

It's exquisite and delicious,
There's no equal to it.



Alastair Miles (Carlo)

Su beviamo, compagni,
Su beviamo, compagni...

Su bevete, o soldati...

Su beviamo, compagni...

All'onor della Regina...

All'onor della Regina,
Sì, beviamo all'eroina
Che coraggio e ardir ci dà...

(Carlo, disguised as a peasant, enters and looks around cautiously.)

Eccomi al campo ostile;
La regia tenda è questa.
Ah quale in me si desta
Insolito terror!...

Su bevete, o soldati,
All'onor della Regina
Che coraggio e ardir vi dà...

Su beviamo, compagni,
All'onor della Regina
Che coraggio e ardir ci dà...

BELLAPUNTA

Come, comrades, let's drink,
Come, comrades, let's drink...

PROVISIONERS

Come, drink up, soldiers...

SOLDIERS

Come, comrades, let's drink...

BELLAPUNTA

To the honour of our Queen...

ALL

To the honour of our Queen,
Yes, let's drink to the heroine
Who gives us courage and boldness...

CARLO

Here I am in the enemy camp;
And there's the royal tent.
Ah, what a strange fear
Awakens within me!...

PROVISIONERS

Come, drink up, soldiers,
To the honour of our Queen
Who gives you courage and
boldness...

SOLDIERS

Come, comrades, let's drink
To the honour of our Queen
Who gives us courage and boldness...

PROVISIONERS and SOLDIERS

Viva, viva l'illustre Sovrana
Di due popoli gloria ed amore,
Viva, viva, viva, viva!
La vittoria seconda il valore,
Sorte arrida a virtude e beltà!

Viva, viva, viva, viva!
Di due popoli gloria ed onor,
Viva, viva, viva, viva! *ecc.*

Long live our illustrious sovereign,
The glory and darling of two nations,
Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!
May victory favour valour,
May Fortune smile on virtue and
beauty!

Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!
The glory and honour of two nations,
Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah, hurrah! *etc.*

THE SOLDIERS

Ragazze, a berevere ancor torniamo;
Un altro brindisi a lei facciamo.

Girls, come fill our cups again;
Let's raise another toast to her.

PROVISIONERS

E' squisito e prelibato,
E' di quel ch'egual non ha.

(The soldiers begin to dance with the provisioners.)

PROVISIONERS

Su bevete, o soldati,
All'onor della Regina, *ecc.*

Come, drink up, soldiers,
To the honour of our Queen, *etc.*

SOLDIERS

Su beviam, su beviamo, o compagni,
All'onor della Regina, *ecc.*

(A drum is heard sounding assembly; the soldiers run to line up.)

Let's drink, let's drink, comrades,
To the honour of our Queen, *etc.*

CHORUS

Il segnal della raccolta...
Presto all'armi...

The signal for assembly...
Quickly, to arms...

Annick Massis (Margherita)



Oh! lei meschina!

All'intrepida eroina
Lode eterna, eterno amor.

La cagion di mia rovina
Riconosce e freme il cor...

Carlo mixes in with the throng on one side. Margherita enters with her retinue.

SCENE II

[3]

Miei fedeli, queste prove
Di sincero e saldo amor
Sono impresse nel mio core,
Nè obbliarle io mai potrò.
Se la mano che il tutto regge
La vittoria a me concede,

Grata appieno a tanta fede
Dimostrarmi un dì saprò...
Nè del Duca è giunto ancora
Alcun messo, avviso alcuno?

No, Regina!

Ciel! nessuno!

CARLO

Oh, that wretched woman!

SOLDIERS

To our intrepid heroine
Praise eternal, eternal love!

CARLO

My heart recognises the source
Of my ruin and shudders...

MARGHERITA

My loyal followers, these proofs
Of your sincere and steadfast love
Are impressed upon my heart,
I shall never forget them.
If the hand that governs all
Grants me victory,

I shall one day demonstrate
My deep gratitude for such loyalty...
Has no messenger, no news
Of the Duke arrived yet?

CHORUS

No, my Queen!

MARGHERITA

Heavens, none!

CHORUS

But it won't be much longer now.

CARLO

(aside, raging)

(Mi confonde quell'aspetto:
Di avanzarmi ardir non ho.)

[4]

O speme d'un regno, mio solo sostegno,

Il ciel ti difenda, ti salvi per me.

Ah! dopo il pensiero d'un figlio innocente,

Il core, la mente ho piena di te...

(The sight of her confounds me;
I lack the courage to come forward.)

MARGHERITA

O hope of a kingdom, my only
support,

May Heaven protect you and save
you for me.

Ah, after the thought of an innocent
son,

My heart and mind are filled with
you...

CARLO

(Ti scuoti, mio core, riprendi coraggio,

Rammenta l'oltraggio che iniquo ti fè...)

(In the distance is heard a military band, which draws closer during the stretta.)

(Bestir yourself, my heart, take
courage,

Remember the outrage that
dishonoured you...)

[5]

SOLDIERS and PROVISIONERS

Ma qual suono da lunge si ascolta?

Frettoloso un guerrier s'avvicina...

But what distant sound do I hear?

A soldier is hastening this way...

AN OFFICER

Giunse il Duca, e tal suono, o Regina,

The Duke is coming, my Queen, and
that sound

Dice assai, ch'ei torna vincitor.

Clearly proclaims that he is returning
victorious.

MARGHERITA

Lieto giorno!

O joyful day!

CHORUS

Lieto giorno!

O joyful day!

MARGHERITA

[6]
Il contento e il piacer di vittoria
Fa più dolce il pensiero d'amor.

The pleasure and delight of victory
Make the thought of love sweeter.

CHORUS

Bel momento! lieto giorno!

O happy moment! O joyful day!

CARLO

Ah! si ascolti e si vinca il timor.

Ah, I must overcome my fear and
listen.

MARGHERITA and CHORUS

Tutto il campo si muova e si schieri

Awaken the entire camp and
assemble

E del prode festeggi l'arrivo;

Everyone to celebrate the arrival of
the hero;

Salga al cielo coi gridi guerrieri
Delle trombe lo squillo festivo,

Let the festive blare of trumpets
Resound to the skies with the warlike
shouts,

Di tal giorno la pugna e la gloria
Fia di sprone a trionfo maggior...

May the fighting and glory of this day
Be a spur to even greater triumph...

CARLO

(Cruda esulta; ma invano tu speri
Ricovrare il poter supremo.

(Rejoice, wicked woman; but in vain
Do you hope to regain supreme
power.

Vinti siamo; ma forse più fieri

We may have been defeated, but we
shall rise

Dal conflitto a pugnar sorgeremo...

From the conflict to fight even more
fiercely...

Dell'inutile vostra vittoria
Sia seguace scompiglio ed orror.)

May chaos and horror follow
On the heels of your hollow victory.)

MARGHERITA

Il contento e il piacer di vittoria
Fa più dolce il pensiero d'amor.

The pleasure and delight of victory
Make the thought of love sweeter.

CARLO

(Cruda esulta; ma invano tu speri, *ecc.*)

(Rejoice, wicked woman; but in vain,
etc.)

MARGHERITA

Il contento e il piacer di vittoria, *ecc.*

The pleasure and delight of victory,
etc.

CHORUS and MARGHERITA

Di tal giorno la pugna e la gloria
Fia di sprone a trionfo maggior...

May the fighting and glory of this day
Be a spur to even greater triumph...

Margherita marches out with her troops.

SCENE III

[7]

CARLO

(*alone*)

Profittiam del tumulto... e il campo intorno

I'll make use of the disorder... and
continue

Si segua ad esplorar. Oh! ria fortuna!

To explore around the camp. Oh,
cruel Fortune!

Fabio Prevati (Michele)



Oh! di vendetta non mai sazie brame
A qual mi riduceste ufficio infame!

Io già possente ed onorato un giorno
Inglese cavalier, or de' ribelli

Vil partigiano e spia!
Or traditor della Regina mia?
Vano rimorso! Ella ad un rio ministro
Fede prestando, il capo mio proscrisse;

Patria ed onor mi tolse...

Oh, unfulfilled desire for vengeance,
To what a base condition you've
reduced me!

Once I was a powerful and respected
English knight, now I'm a vile
partisan

And spy of the insurgents!
Now a traitor to my Queen?
Vain remorse! Believing the counsel
Of a treacherous minister, she
banished me;

She robbed me of my country and
honour...

(Noise and shouts are heard in the distance.)

VOICES

(in the distance)

Indietro, indietro!

Back, back!

MICHELE

Cospetto! io passerò.

The devil! Let me pass!

CARLO

Gente si avanza,
Ritiriamci, e osserviam tutto in distanza.

People are approaching,
I'll withdraw and watch everything
from afar.

He withdraws. Michele enters, followed by Bellapunta and some soldiers.

SCENE IV

MICHELE

Si signori... son pronto... ecco le carte...

Yes, sir... I'm ready... here are my papers...

Osservatele bene... io vengo al campo

Note them carefully... I've come to the camp

Ad offrir il mio braccio alla Regina,

To offer the Queen my arm and a thousand

E mille altre virtù, poichè le ho tutte,
 Son Michel Gamautte,
 Cerusico, barbier, musico, e vate,
 Chiaro in cantar ballate,
 In tagliar braccia e gambe, e rader peli,

Other talents, for I have them all,
 I'm Michele Gamautte,
 Surgeon, barber, musician and poet,
 An expert at singing ballads,
 At cutting arms and legs, at shaving beards,

In applicar cerotti, e sanar mali,

At applying plasters, and curing diseases,

Primo ai festini, e primo agli spedali.

First at merry-making, and first at healing.

Il mio compagno poi...

My companion here...

BELLAPUNTA

(returning the papers)

Basta... va bene.
 Attendere tu puoi liberamente,
 Che torni la Regina. Io stesso
 A lei ti voglio presentar.

Enough... that's fine.
 You may wait here at your ease
 Until the Queen returns. I want
 To present you to her myself.

(to the soldiers)

Ehi! sia concesso
 Eguamente l'accesso al giovanetto.

Hey! This young man
 Is to be granted access as well.

MICHELE

Bravo, bravo, amicone. Io qui t'aspetto.

Fine, fine, my friend. I'll wait for you here.

Bellapunta leaves. Isaura enters and Michele approaches her

SCENE V

[8]

ISAURA

Alfin respiro! I voti miei son paghi:

At last I can breathe! My prayers are answered:

Presso allo sposo io sono... oh fido amico,

I'm near my husband... Oh faithful friend,

Che non ti deggio io mai?

How can I ever repay you?

MICHELE

Niente, signora,

With nothing, my lady,

Niente in coscienza mia. Dolce è a Michele

Nothing I can think of. Michele is happy

Riunir matrimonii separati.

Just to reunite separated spouses.

Or che siam giunti, in qual modo pensate

Now that we're here, what do you hope

Di portarvi col Duca?

To learn about the Duke?

ISAURA

Io vò dappresso


I want to see

Osservar se del tutto egli m'obblia,

For myself if he has totally forgotten me,

E morir di dolor a lui davanti.

And then to die of grief in front of him.



Daniela Barcellona (Isaura)

Morir per un uomo?
Che pazzia... ce ne son tanti!

[9]

Ah! tu non sai com' io l'adoro,
Come impresso io l'ho nel core...

Ah! per me più dolce oggetto
L'universo in sè non ha.

Se mi è tolto il mio tesoro
Non ho, no, no, più felicità.

Dell'antica età dell'oro
Questi sono sentimenti;
Più bell'uso fra i viventi
S'introdusse in questa età.
E quest'uso egli è, madama,
Solamente amar chi ama,
Carezzare chi accarezza,
Disprezzare chi disprezza;
Far di amanti cambiamento
A seconda dell'evento,
Far lo stesso degli affetti
Che degli abiti si fa.
Così voglion i precetti

MICHELE

Die over a man?
What nonsense... when there are so
many!

ISAURA

(with feeling)

Ah, you don't know how I adore him,
It's as if he were engraved on my
heart...

Ah, the universe does not contain
A dearer object of love for me.

(passionately)

If my sweetheart were taken from me
I'd no longer, no, no, be able to live.

MICHELE

Those are the sentiments
Of a bygone era;
A better custom is in style
Among the living today.
And that custom is, madame,
To love whoever's in love with you,
To cherish the one who cherishes you,
To spurn anyone who spurns you;
To change your lover
According to the circumstances,
To do with your feelings
As you do with your clothes.
That's what the rules

Della bella varietà,
Sì, così voglion i precetti
Della bella varietà.

Ah! non sai quant'io l'adoro,

Come impresso l'ho nel core...

Se mi è tolto il mio tesoro
Non ho, no, no, no, no, no, più felicità...

Dell'antica età dell'oro
Questi sono sentimenti;
Più bell'uso fra i viventi
S'introdusse in questa età.
Carezzate chi accarezza,
Disprezzate chi disprezza,
Così voglion i precetti
Della bella varietà...
Così voglion i precetti...

Taci!...

Della bella varietà.

Per pietà!

Of modern fashion dictate,
Yes, that's what the rules
Of modern fashion dictate.

ISAURA

Ah, you don't know how much I
adore him,

It's as if he were engraved on my
heart...

If my sweetheart were taken from me
I'd no longer, no, no, no, no, no, be
able to live...

MICHELE

Those are the sentiments
Of a bygone era;
A better custom is in style
Among the living today.
You cherish whoever cherishes you,
You spurn the one who spurns you,
That's what the rules
Of modern fashion dictate...
That's what the rules...

ISAURA

Be quiet!...

MICHELE

Of modern fashion dictate.

ISAURA

For pity's sake!

[10]

Questa speme che mi avanza
Calma sola il mio dolor;
Ma so ben che la speranza
E' un inganno dell'amor.
Ah! se posso al caro bene
Inspirare di me pietà...
La memoria di mie pene

Fin soave a me sarà.

Per vedere, per trovare
Un marito vagabondo,
Patria e stato abbandonare,
Viaggiar per mezzo il mondo,

Gittar via danari tanti,
Disprezzare mille amanti,
E sol credersi felice
Se il primier trovar potrà...
Delle mogli la fenice
Può chiamarsi in verità...

Taci, taci, per pietà!
Deh! taci, per pietà!
Questa speme che m'avanza
Calma sola il mio dolor;
Ma so ben che la speranza

I'm urged onward only by this hope
Which calms my sorrow;
Yet I know too well that hope
Is a deception of love.
Ah, if I can inspire pity
For me in my beloved...
Then even the memory of my
suffering
Will be sweet for me.

MICHELE

To go in search of
A wandering husband,
To abandon homeland and status,
To travel over half the world,

To throw away a pile of money,
To reject a thousand suitors,
And to consider yourself happy
Only if you can find the first one...
You can truly call yourself
The phoenix of wives...

ISAURA

Shut up, shut up, for pity's sake!
Ah, shut up, ah, shut up!
I'm urged onward only by this hope
Which calms my sorrow;
Yet I know too well that hope

E' un inganno dell'amor.
Se trovassi in lui pietà,
La memoria di mie pene
Fin soave a me sarà...

Per vedere, per trovare
Un marito vagabondo,
Gittar via danari tanti,
Disprezzare mille amanti,
E sol credersi felice
Se trovar il primiero potrà...
Delle mogli la fenice
Può chiamarsi in verità...

[11]

Insomma, mia signora,
Vel dico e vel ripeto: a piedi vostri
Vedrete il Duca innamorato matto.
Per Bacco ho un certo tatto
In materia d'amor, tatto sì fino,

Che perdo il capo se non indovino.

Oh! fossi tu verace
Nel presagir così! Ma intanto è quasi
un lustro
Ch'io lo sospiro invan; di Margherita

Is a deception of love.
If only I can find some pity in him,
Then the memory of my suffering
Will be sweet for me.

MICHELE

To go in search of
A wandering husband,
To throw away a pile of money,
To reject a thousand suitors,
And to consider yourself happy
Only if you can find the first one...
You can truly call yourself
The phoenix of wives...

MICHELE

In a word, my lady,
I tell you again: you'll see the Duke
At your feet madly in love with you.
By Jove, I have a certain ability
In matters of love, a marvellous
ability,
May I lose my head if I'm not right.

ISAURA

Oh, if only your prediction
Comes true! But it's been nearly five
years
That I've longed for him in vain; he's
now

Ei si è fatto seguace, e difensore

Quivi lo spinse amor.

Lo spinse onore.
Francese è la Regina, egli è francese,
E il nostro Re gl'impose
Difenderla, aiutarla, e voi sapete...

Tutto ben so...

Tacetè,
La Regina s'appressa: è seco il Duca,

Ritiriamoci un poco, e fate core.

Andiamo. (A te mi raccomando, Amore.)

They withdraw. The Duke of Lavarenne and Margherita enter with all their followers.

SCENE VI

[12]

Fra gli applausi e lieti evviva

A partisan of Margherita, and love
drove him

To become her defender.

MICHELE

Honour drove him.
The Queen is French, he's French,
And our King ordered him
To defend her, to help her, and you
know...

ISAURA

I know everything...
(A drum roll is heard.)

MICHELE

Quiet,
The Queen is approaching; the Duke
is with her,
Let's withdraw a while... and take
heart.

ISAURA

I'm coming. (O Love, don't let him
forget me.)

CHORUS OF SOLDIERS

Come amid the cheers and jubilant
hurrahs



Bruce Ford (Lavarenne)

Che giuliva
Un'armata innalza a te,
Vieni, appaga il tuo gran core
Dell'amore
Di due popoli e d'un Rè.
Vieni! vieni! vieni! deh vieni!
Vieni, appaga il tuo gran core, *ecc.*

[13]

Regina, al nostro oprar, e ai sacri dritti
Della vostra corona il cielo arrise,
Palese in mille guise
Vi annunzia il suo favor. Vinto e sconfitto
In general conflitto
Il ribelle Warwick invan procura
A Gloucester unirsi; a voi devote,
Due provincie son fatte,
La Scozia e Somerset per voi combatte,
Anzi che manchi il sol da questo prode
E generoso Duca alfin soccorsi
Potrem più forti nel suo campo istesso
Gloucester assalir al dì novello.

LAVARENNE

That an exultant
Army raises to you,
Let your great heart take pride
In the love
Of two nations and a king.
Come! Come! Come! Ah, come!
Come, let your great heart take
pride, *etc.*
My Queen, Heaven smiled on our
enterprise
And on the sacred claims of your
crown,
It clearly proclaims its favour
In a thousand ways. Defeated and
routed
In open combat,
The rebel Warwick endeavours in vain
To join forces with Gloucester;
Two provinces have joined our side,
Scotland and Somerset are fighting
for you;
Thanks to the reinforcements
dispatched
By that brave and generous Duke,
We'll be able to attack Gloucester's
camp
With even greater forces tomorrow.

Giorno per me fia quello
Glorioso e felice,
Se vincere o morir per voi mi lice.

MARGHERITA

Sì, vincerete, o prode, il ciel che tanto

Amico e difensor in voi mi diede,

A me vi serberà: degna mercede
Alle vostre virtùdi ei vi destina,

Già prepara il mio cor.

That day will be
A glorious and happy one for me
If it permits me to win or die for you.

Yes, you'll be victorious, O hero;
Heaven,
Which gave me such a friend and
defender in you,
Will keep you alive for me: my heart
Has already prepared a reward
worthy
Of the valour for which you are
destined.

LAVARENNE

Oh mia Regina!

[14]
E' riposta in questi accenti
La più nobile mercede...
Se gradite la mia fede,
Altra brama il cor non ha...

(Margherita signals two pages to come forward, one of whom carries a cushion upon which is a medal that Margherita presents to Lavarenne.)

[15]
Da così bell' impresa
A bei vostr' occhi dinanti
Tutti riporto i vanti
Che mai guerrier bramò,
Tutti, tutti che mai guerrier bramò.

Oh, my Queen!

The noblest reward
Is contained within these words...
"If you accept my loyalty,
My heart will desire nothing else..."

With so eloquent a motto,
And before your lovely eyes,
I shall bring back all the glories
That a warrior could ever desire,
All, all that a warrior could desire.

E' la beltà difesa
Salvo è con lei l'onor,
Ah! premio ottener maggiore
Un cavalier non può, non può,
No, no, no, no, no, non può,
Di più ottener non può!...
Regina, amici... ardir, coraggio!

For if beauty is defended
Then honour is preserved with it;
Ah, a knight could not
Receive a greater reward,
No, no, no, no, could not
Receive a greater one!...
My Queen, friends... be bold, take
heart!

ISAURA

(softly to Michele)

(La mia speranza si portò il vento.)

(My hope has blown away with the
wind.)

MICHELE

(softly to Isaura)

(Ma via costanza, signora mia,
Per cortesia così dirà...)

(Come now, my lady, be firm,
Please don't talk like that...)

LAVARENNE

Regina, amici... ardir, coraggio!

My Queen, friends... be bold, take
heart!

ISAURA

(Il mio tormento equal non ha.)

(Nothing is equal to my torment.)

MARGHERITA and CHORUS

Vieni, appaga il tuo gran core
Dell'amore
Di due popoli e d'un Rè.

Come, let your great heart take pride
In the love
Of two nations and a king.

ISAURA

(La mia speranza andò al vento,
Il mio tormento equal non ha.)

(My hope has gone with the wind;
Nothing is equal to my torment.)

MICHELE

Ma signora mia,
Per cortesia così dirà.

Come now, my lady,
Please don't talk like that.

[16]

LAVARENNE

Per noi di gloria già splende un raggio...

A ray of glory is already shining for
us...

Nè fato avverso l'oscurerà.
Coi rai propizii del dì novello

And adverse fate will not darken it.
With the favourable light of
tomorrow's dawn

Più vivo e bello rifulgerà!

It will shine even brighter and more
beautiful!

MARGHERITA and CHORUS

Vieni, appaga il tuo gran core, ecc.

Come, let your great heart take pride,
etc.

ISAURA

(La mia speranza si portò al vento,

(My hope has blown away with the
wind;

Il mio martire egual non ha.)

Nothing is equal to my anguish.)

MICHELE

(Ma via, costanza, signora mia, ecc.)

(Come now, my lady, be firm, etc.)

LAVARENNE

Ah! per noi di gloria già splende un
raggio, ecc.

Ah, a ray of glory is already
shining for us, etc.

MARGHERITA, LAVARENNE, MICHELE, CHORUS

Per noi di gloria già splende un raggio, ecc.

A ray of glory is already shining for
us, etc.

ISAURA

(La mia speranza si portò al vento, ecc.) (My hope has blown away with the
wind, etc.)

[17]

BELLAPUNTA

(to Margherita)

Maestà, due Francesi
Qui giunti poco fa chiedono l'onore
Di presentarsi a voi.

Your Majesty, two Frenchmen
Who just arrived here beg the honour
Of presenting themselves to you.

ISAURA

(softly to Michele)

(Vedi che sguardo?)

(Do you see that look?)

MICHELE

(Eh che non dice niente!)

(Well, don't say anything!)

MARGHERITA

Avanzatevi.

Come forward.

ISAURA

(Io tremo.)

(I'm trembling.)

MICHELE

(Lasciate fare a me... mi sentirete.)

(Leave it to me... follow my lead.)

(They approach, bowing respectfully.)

LAVARENNE

Dunque Francesi siete?

So, you're Frenchmen?

MICHELE

Altezza, sì.

Yes, Your Highness.

(He presents their papers to Lavarenne who hands them to the Queen.)

MICHELE

Nome, stato, talenti, eccoli qui.
Io mi chiamo... ma il mio nome

Name, trade, abilities, here they are.
I'm called... but you see my name

Voi vedete in quel foglio... il mio mestiere
E' pure scritto là... de' miei talenti

Io parlerei, ma la modestia il vieta;
Quei che si loda più si fa più brutto.

Saper vi basti che fo un po' di tutto.

MARGHERITA

Da quanto io leggo, al campo mio vi guida
Il desio di servirmi.

Altro, o Regina,
Che semplice desio: fame piuttosto,
Sete ardente di gloria!

LAVARENNE

(to Isaura)

E tu pur brami
Combatter, giovinetto, al fianco mio?

ISAURA

Sì, divider vogl'io
Con sì famoso eroe perigli e sorte:

Meritar l'amor vostro oppur la morte.

LAVARENNE

Generoso garzon! (Tutto mi scosse
Di quella voce il suon.)

On that pass... my occupation
Is written there too... I'd tell you
about
My abilities, but modesty forbids me;
The more they're praised the worse
they become.
It's enough that you know I'm a jack-
of-all-trades.

From what I read, the desire to serve
me
Has brought you to my camp.

MICHELE

O Queen, more
Than a simple desire: rather a hunger,
A burning thirst for glory!

And do you too long
To fight at my side, young man?

Yes, I want to share
The dangers and fortune with so
famous a hero;
To earn your love, or die trying.

Brave lad! (The sound of that voice
Has completely shaken me.)

MARGHERITA

Quanto è gentile questo garzon!
How amiable this boy is!

LAVARENNE

Egli è gentile molto.
He's very amiable.

ISAURA

(Non ho coraggio di fissarlo in volto.)
(I don't have the courage to look him
in the eye.)

MARGHERITA

Pago, o giovin, sarai. Da questo istante
Tu sei mio paggio, e al figlio mio compagno

You'll be satisfied, young man. From
now on
You're my page, and I appoint you
companion

Io ti destino. A me sarai fedele...
Quell'amabile aspetto assai mel dice.

To my son. You'll be loyal to me...
Your pleasant demeanour tells me as
much.

Duca, andiamo.

Duke, let's go.

(She leaves with the Duke; the others follow her.)

MICHELE

(Benone!)
(Excellent!)

ISAURA

(Oh me felice!)
(How happy I am!)

Everyone leaves.



SCENE VII

The interior of a tent. Lavarenne enters deep in thought, sits down dejectedly, then paces nervously.

[18]

LAVARENNE

Non vi è riparo, è giunto infine, è giunto

There's no escaping it, the sad moment

Il doloroso istante
Di palesar alla Regina il vero.
Tacer sì gran mistero
Saria perfidia, alta viltà saria.

Has arrived, arrived at last
To reveal the truth to the Queen.
To keep so great a secret hidden
Would be disloyal, would be cowardice.

Cielo, ed io struggo ogni speranza mia.
E' necessario il passo... oh Isaura! oh nozze

Heavens, I'm destroying all my hopes.
The step is necessary... Oh, Isaura!
O marriage

Sventurate e fatali al mio riposo!

Fatal and disastrous to my peace of mind!

(He sits down at a table and writes; Isaura enters at this moment.)

[19]

ISAURA

(aside)

Eccolo... o caro sposo,
A te mi spinge il cor... timor m'arresta.

There he is... oh, beloved husband,
My heart urges me to you, but fear holds me back.

LAVARENNE

(writing)

Io svelo a voi la reità funesta.

I'm revealing my awful guilt to you.

Deh per pietà!

Che vuoi?

[20]

Sì mesto e pensoso
Vedervi partire,
E' pena, è martire,
Ch'esprimer non so...

(Qual forza in quei detti,
Che intender non posso;
Mi sento commosso,
E ignoro perchè...)

(Raffrenna gli affetti,
Mio cor, non tradirmi;
Propizio a scoprirmi
L'istante non è...)

Garzone pietoso,
Son grato a tuoi sensi,
Il ciel ti compensi
S'io far nol potrò!

ISAURA

(stopping him)

Ah, in the name of pity!

LAVARENNE

(stopping and turning back)

What do you want?

ISAURA

To see you depart
So sad and pensive,
Is painful and agonising
Beyond words...

LAVARENNE

(aside)

(There's an intensity in his words
Which I cannot fathom;
I feel deeply moved,
Yet I don't know why...)

ISAURA

(aside)

(Restrain your emotions,
O my heart, do not betray me;
This is not the moment
To reveal myself to him.)

LAVARENNE

Compassionate lad,
I'm grateful for your concern;
May Heaven reward you
If I cannot do so!

ISAURA

(aside)

(Restrain your emotions,
O my heart, do not betray me;
This is not the moment
To reveal myself to him.)

LAVARENNE

(aside)

(I feel deeply moved,
Yet I don't know why.)
Farewell then; but before I leave,
Is there anything I can do for you?

ISAURA

I only desire to accompany you
And to fight at your side.

LAVARENNE

O worthy heart! I grant your request.

ISAURA

Ah, my Duke! Now I'm satisfied.
Yes, my soul will be loyal to you
Until its dying breath.

LAVARENNE

Ah, a sweeter affection

LAVARENNE and ISAURA

Could not join two hearts!

(Raffrenna gli affetti,
Mio cor, non tradirmi;
Propizio a scoprirmi
L'istante non è.)

(Mi sento commosso,
E ignoro perchè.)
Dunque addio; ma pria ch'io parta
Che mai far per te poss'io?

Seguitarvi io sol desio,
Presso a voi pugnar.

Nobil core! io v'acconsento.

Ah mio Duca! Or son contento.
Vi fia sacra l'alma mia
Sì, fino all'ultimo sospir.

Ah! più soave simpatia

Non potea due cor unir!
[21]

Secondiam sì dolce istinto;

Let's comply with so tender an
impulse;

Dividiamo periglio e sorte,
E ci unisca in vita, e in morte
La più tenera amistà.

ISAURA

(Grazie al cielo, io quasi ho vinto,
Ad amarmi ei tornerà.)

Let's share the dangers and fortune,
And let our fond friendship
Unite us in life and in death.

(Thanks to Heaven I've nearly won,
And he'll love me once again.)

LAVARENNE

(Ah! qual palpito indistinto
Agitando il cor mi va.)

(Ah, what a strange feeling
Is stirring in my heart.)

LAVARENNE and ISAURA

Secondiam sì dolce istinto, *ecc.*

Let's comply with so tender an
impulse, *etc.*

(They leave.)

SCENE VIII

MICHELE

(alone)

Buono, buono davvero... Eh! ch'io l'ho detto,
Good, very good, indeed... Well, as I
told her,

Se va di questo passo ella fra poco

If this step succeeded, she would
soon

L'ha da vincer senz'altro, e se la cosa
Prende la piega, ch'essa ed io speriamo,
Il merto sarà mio, che qui con me

Win him back for sure, and if things
Turn out well, as both she and I hope,
The credit will be mine, for I brought
her

L'ho condotta, e protetta.

Here with me and protected her.

(A cannon shot is heard.)

Ahi! cosa ci è?
Cannonate! alla larga...
Io comincio ad aver qualche spavento...
Le palle non rispettano il talento.

Oh, dear! What's that?
Cannon-fire! Stand clear...
I'm beginning to tremble with fear...
Cannon balls have no respect for
talent.

CD2

56'14

*A cannon shot is heard, followed by distant trumpets.
Margherita, Lavarenne, Isaura and officers enter from various directions.*

SCENE IX

[1]

LAVARENNE

Regina, in questo istante
Si appressano le schiere,
Che Somerset c'invia... qua e là sul monte...

Queen, the troops dispatched
By Somerset have just
Arrived... here and there on the
mountain...

*(The tent is opened: torches can be seen on the distant mountainside and the entire stage
filled with soldiers and peasants, among them Carlo.)*

LAVARENNE

Ecco splendere i fuochi
Nunzii di lor presenza.

See the shining torches,
Harbingers of their approach.

MARGHERITA

Oh gioia!

Oh, joy!

CARLO

E' questo Gloucester,

(coming forward in the throng)

That's Gloucester,



Cui prevenne il mio biglietto.
Dell'inganno costor non han sospetto.

Olà, tosto sia dato
Il segnal di raccolta... Un sol momento

Non s'indugi a pugnar.

[2]

Eccovi, o prodi...

(showing them little Edoardo, who has been brought in)

Il prezioso pegno
Che in vostra man depongo.

Invitto duce,
Oggi due volte vincitor ti vegga
Rieder a me. Del gran campione, amici,

L'alto esempio seguite... Egli v'è caro!...

Il suo coraggio al vostro sia di sprone:
Voi che tanto l'amate,
Nell'opre l'imitate.
A Lavarenne affido
L'onor della vittoria:
S'esalti il suo valor l'alta suo gloria.

(Margherita's troops march off during the following chorus, at the end of which the tent is closed.)

Forewarned by my message.
They don't suspect the deception.

MARGHERITA

Ho there, have the signal
For assembly sounded at once... Let
the battle
Not be delayed a single moment.

Behold, brave men...
The precious pledge
That I place in your care.

(to Lavarenne)

Unconquered leader,
I would see you return to me a victor
Twice today. Friends, follow the
noble example
Of this great champion... You respect
him!...

Let his courage be a spur to yours:
You who love him so dearly,
Imitate his actions.
I entrust the honour
Of victory to Lavarenne:
May his valour exalt his great glory.

[3]

Fra gli applausi e i lieti viva

Che giuliva
Un'armata innalza a te,
Vieni, e splenda il tuo valore,
Che maggiore
Fa difesa al nostro Re.
Vieni! vieni! vieni deh veni!
Vieni e splenda il tuo valore *ecc.*

CHORUS

You come amid the cheers and
jubilant hurrahs
Which an exultant
Army raises to you,
Let your valour shine,
May it strengthen
The defence of our King.
Come! come! come! ah come
Let your valour shine *etc*

MICHELE

Creata è Isaura paggio... ed io dovrei
Esser creato almeno
De' chirurghi maggior, capo e intendente;
Non ne faremo niente,
Perchè se devo andar a una battaglia
A esercitar l'arte che tanto io stimo
Sarò, senza alcun dubbio, a morir primo.

If Isaura has been made a page...
then I
At least should be made
Head inspector of the army's
surgeons;
But I won't say anything about it,
For if I should end up in a battle
Practising the occupation I value so
highly,
No doubt I'd be the first one to die.

BELLAPUNTA

(to Michele)

E lei, signor, non favorisce?

And you, sir, won't you assist us?

MICHELE

E dove? S'è il domandar permesso?

And where's that, if I may ask?

BELLAPUNTA

Alla battaglia.

On the battlefield.

MICHELE

Io son dottor, non battagliante; il foco
Non è fatto per me.

I'm a doctor, not a fighter; shooting
Isn't my cup of tea.

BELLAPUNTA

Dunque ella venne
Di Margherita al campo
Non per l'ardente brama
D'onor, di gloria?

But didn't you come
To Margherita's camp
Because of a burning desire
For honour and glory?

MICHELE

E' ver; fu per la brama
Nol so negare, d'acquistarmi un nome
Più, son per dir, cospicuo

That's true; I can't deny it,
It was a desire to gain for myself
A more, how can I say it,
distinguished name

In questa tanto nobile arte mia,
Che si appella in volgare farmacia.
Ma l'oprar mio per or.

In this noble profession of mine,
Commonly referred to as pharmacy.
At least that's my occupation now.

BELLAPUNTA

S'ha duopo sempre
Al campo d'un dottor.

There's always a need
For a doctor on the field.

MICHELE

(Ma vedi impiccio!
Io non so se di qua vivo mi spiccio.)

(What a predicament this is!
I don't know if I'll get out of it alive.)

BELLAPUNTA

Dunque?

Well?

MICHELE

E così?

Well what?

BELLAPUNTA

Mi grazia?

Beg pardon?

MICHELE

E che? le pare?
 (Mi convien dir così...) quando al Signore
 Sono d'aggradimento; è sì galante...
 (Ah Isaura! Isaura!)

What? Don't you think so?
 (It suits me to speak like this...) When
 I agree
 With your lordship, I'm just being
 polite...
 (Ah, Isaura! Isaura!)

BELLAPUNTA

Andiam?

Shall we go?

MICHELE

Vengo all'istante.

I'll come at once.

(They leave.)

SCENE X

A dense forest. At the back is a rocky mountainside with a rushing torrent, over which a fallen tree serves as a bridge. On the left is a cottage hidden among the trees. In the centre of the forest is a large campfire, around which are seated many armed Scottish Highlanders; some women, among them Gertrude, are busy tending boiling kettles. Cannon-fire can be heard from time to time in the distance.

[4]

GERTRUDE

E Carlo ancor non torna?
 Alcun nel campo
 L'avesse mai scoperto...

Hasn't Carlo returned yet?
 Someone
 From the camp should have seen him
 by now...
 Perhaps he's fallen into the Queen's
 hands...

Fosse caduto alla Regina in mano...

ONE OF THE CHORUS

Il nostro capitano,
 Tuo marito, o Gertrude, è troppo astuto
 Per lasciarsi pigliar come un babbione.

Our captain,
 Your husband, Gertrude, is too
 cunning
 To let himself be captured like a
 simpleton.

GERTRUDE

Sì, ma dovrebbe esser tornato a noi.

Yes, but he should have returned by
 now.

ANOTHER OF THE CHORUS

Carlo sa quel che fa.

Carlo knows what he's doing.

SCENE XI

CARLO

(entering)

Carlo è con voi.

Carlo is with you.

ALL

Benvenuto.

Welcome.

CARLO

Tacete.

Be quiet.

(to the women)

Ritiratevi voi.

Leave.

(to Gertrude, who is about to speak.)

Parti, e sta zitta.

Go, and keep quiet.

(The women disperse.)

Margherita è sconfitta.
 Gloucester corre dietro ai fuggitivi.
 Smarriti questi, e privi

Margherita has been defeated.
 Gloucester is pursuing the fugitives.
 Lost and deprived of any other

D'ogni altro scampo, a ricercar verranno
Asilo alla foresta.
Nuovi nemici troveranno in questa.

ALL

Bene, bene.

CARLO

Seguitemi. Pugniamo,
Saccheggiam, se vinciamo,
Ma nessun si assassini.

Follow me. We're going to fight,
And if we win, we'll plunder,
But we're not going to murder
anyone.

A HIGHLANDER

A meno che...

At least let...

CARLO

(imperiously)

Giammai.

Never.

ANOTHER HIGHLANDER

Va là, che baderemo a te.

All right, we'll do as you say.

(A voice is heard singing in the distance.)

CARLO

Zitto, qualcun si avanza.

Hush, someone's approaching.

A HIGHLANDER

Sarà qualche poltrone.

It must be some fool.

They conceal themselves behind trees and rocks. Michele enters singing, but looking around warily out of fear.

SCENE XII

MICHELE

Ho un bel cantare,
La mia paura non mi vuol lasciare.
Oh! a proposito molto ecco del foco,
Scaldiamoci un tantin... sento le membra
Intirizzate, assiderate tutte.

I'm singing loudly
Because my fear won't leave me.
Oh, how convenient, here's a fire,
I'll warm myself a little... all my limbs
Are numb with cold, thoroughly
frozen.

Povero Gamautte!
Pensar d'essere eroe mai più non dei,

Poor Gamautte!
Don't ever dream of being a hero
again,

Ami troppo la pelle...

You love your skin too much...

(The Highlanders come out of hiding and seize him from behind.)

MICHELE

Ahi! ah!

Ow! Ow!

CARLO

(sharply)

Chi sei?

Who are you?

MICHELE

(trembling)

Sono un Inglese.

I'm an Englishman.

CARLO

Inglese!

Englishman!

MICHELE

No... Francese son io.

No... I'm a Frenchman.

Forse al servizio
Di Margherita sei?

CARLO

Perhaps you're in
Margherita's service?

No... (Per salvarmi
Di qual nazione dovrò mai chiamarmi?)

MICHELE

No... (What nationality
Should I say I am in order to save
myself?)

(The Highlanders take his knapsack from him.)

Cos' hai qui dentro?

CARLO

What do you have in here?

Impiastri,
Fasce, ferri, rasoi,
Un'ambulante farmacia.

MICHELE

Poultices,
Bandages, instruments, razors,
A portable pharmacy.

Speciale dunque tu sei.

CARLO

So, you're an apothecary.

Un po' di tutto io sono;
Son barbiere, cerusico eccellente...
Medico consolente ed esercente.

MICHELE

I'm a little bit of everything;
A barber, an excellent surgeon...
A consulting and practising
physician.

Basta così... vien qua... ci servirai.
Nostro dottor sarai, forse fra poco
Avrem di te bisogno...
Presto vieni con noi...

CARLO

Enough... come here... you'll serve us.
You'll be our doctor, perhaps
We'll need you soon...
Come with us at once...

(Che ceffi brutti!)
Grazie, signori. (Io vo' storpiarli tutti.)

MICHELE

(What nasty characters!)
Yes, gentlemen. (I'd like to strangle
them all.)

They leave.

Isaura appears among the rocks on the mountainside, singing as she descends.

SCENE XIII

[5]

Fra quest'ombre, e queste rupi
Cerco invan la via smarrita,
E d'un raggio non mi aita
Astro amico in tanto orror.
Ogni ramo che si scuote,
Ogni gemito del vento,
Mi ricolma di spavento
E gelar mi fanno il cor...

ISAURA

In vain I search for the path I lost
In this darkness amid these rocks,
And no light from a friendly star
To help me in such horror.
Every branch that moves,
Every sigh of the wind
Fills me with terror
And causes my heart to freeze...

(She disappears among the trees. Lavarenne enters from the opposite side of the forest.)

Dove sono? In qual m'aggira
Selva oscura il fato avverso?
Dell'esercito disperso
Un guerrier con me non ho.
Ah! potessi almen la traccia
Discoprir di Margherita!
Per salvar sì cara vita

LAVARENNE

Where am I? Into what dark forest
Has adverse fate led me?
I have not a single soldier
With me from the scattered troops.
Ah, if only I could discover
A trace of Margherita's footsteps!
To save so dear a life



Volentier la mia darò.

(He goes off in the opposite direction. Michele enters from another part of the forest.)

Segui, oh notte benedetta,
Segui a rendermi servizio,
Con prudenza, con giudizio
Io cavarmela potrò.
Ah! se salvo la mia pelle,
S'esco fuor da tanto rischio,
Più di donne non mi mischio,

Nè guerrier mai più sarò,
No, no, no, no, no,
Guerrier mai più sarò.

(He starts to leave; at this moment Isaura returns from one side and Lavarenne from the other.)

Ahi!

Chi è là?

Misericordia!

Ferma!

I'd gladly give my own.

MICHELE

Continue, blessed night,
Continue to render me service;
With caution and common sense
I'll be able to find my way out of it.
Ah, if I save my hide,
If I escape from all this danger,
I'll never meddle with women any
more,

Nor will I ever be a soldier again,
No, no, no, no, no,
I'll never be a soldier again.

MICHELE

(bumping into Isaura)

Ah!

ISAURA

Who's there?

MICHELE

Have mercy!

LAVARENNE

Halt!

Piano... amici eroi!

Tu Michele!

Eugenio!

Voi!

Zitto, zitto, zitto in carità.
Questo bosco... se sapeste...
Queste rupi se vedeste...
Ci son certi scellerati...
Da Gloucester stipendiati...
Se vi veggono d'intorno
Siamo concì come va.

(The repeated sound of a horn is heard.)

Qual fragor!

Sono qua!
De' ladri il corno!

Sono qua.

Ah! son qua!

MICHELE
Quiet... heroic friends!

LAVARENNE
(recognising him)
You, Michele!

MICHELE
(to Isaura)
Eugene!

ISAURA
You!

MICHELE
Hush, hush, hush, for goodness sake.
This forest... if you knew...
These rocks, if you saw...
There are certain ruffians...
Hired by Gloucester...
If they should come upon us
We'll be beaten for sure.

ISAURA and LAVARENNE
What noise is that?

MICHELE
They're here!
The horn call of the bandits!

ISAURA and LAVARENNE
They're here!

MICHELE
Ah, they're here!



(The sound of a horn and then its echo.)

ALL THREE

Siam perduti!

We're doomed!

(The horn and its echo are heard again.)

Sono qua!

They're here!

(During the silence they try to determine which direction the sound of the horn is coming from.)

ALL THREE

(in hushed voices)

Ascoltiamo... d'onde viene
De' lor passi il calpestio?
Ascoltiamo, ascoltiamo...

Let's listen... where's the sound
Of their footsteps coming from?
Let's listen, let's listen...

(Silence.)

Tutto intorno in ogni dove
Suona incerto mormorio...
Ascoltiamo, ascoltiamo...

Confused sounds are coming
From every direction...
Let's listen, let's listen...

(Silence.)

Fischia il vento tra le fronde,

The wind is whistling in the
branches,

Nei dirupi frangon l'onde...
D'ogni rocca, d'ogni speco
Si prolunga incerta un eco,
Che sentir dei passi loro
Suon distinto non si fa.
Fischia il vento tra le fronde, *ecc.*

Water is rushing in the ravine...
An indistinct echo resounds
From every rock and cavern,
So that we cannot hear
A clear indication of their footsteps.
The wind is whistling in the
branches, *etc.*

Tu ne addita, o ciel, che imploro
Un sentiero per pietà!...

O Heaven, I implore you, show us
A path, for pity's sake!...

(The sound of a horn and then its echo.)

Ciel! pietà!...

O Heaven! Have mercy!...

They withdraw. The Highlanders appear.

SCENE XIV

THE HIGHLANDERS

(softly)

Zitto, zitto... la Regina
Sola, errante s'avvicina.
Appiattati fra quei sassi
Aspettiam, che quindi passi...
L'assaltiamo, la spogliamo,
Nel torrente la gittiamo...

Hush, hush... the Queen
Is wandering alone nearby.
We'll wait, hidden among
Those rocks, until she passes by...
Then we'll attack her, we'll rob her,
We'll throw her into the river...

(with savage joy)

E' lontano il Capitano,
Impedirlo nol potrà...
Che bel colpo che sarà,
Nascondiamoci pian piano;
Che bel colpo che sarà...
Zitto, zitto... la Regina, *ecc.*

Our captain is nowhere around,
So he won't be able to stop us...
What a stroke of luck it will be,
Let's conceal ourselves quietly;
What a stroke of luck it will be...
Hush, hush... the Queen, *etc.*

They hide among the rocks. Margherita appears on the mountain slope, holding her son in her arms; she pauses by the bank of the river.

SCENE XV

[6]

Ciel m'assisti... stanca, oppressa

Dove andrò?

MARGHERITA

Heaven help me... exhausted,
overwhelmed,

Where can I go?

THE HIGHLANDERS

(from various sides)

Zitti, zitti... attenti... essa scende... buono... Hush, hush... be careful... she's
coming... good...

MARGHERITA

Ciel, sostieni un sol' istante
Le mie forze in tal periglio,
Fa che il misero mio figlio
Possa in salvo almen guidar.
Ma vacilla il piè tremante,
Ma lontano è ancora il dì...
Affannosa, palpitante,
Io dovrò perir così?

O Heaven, sustain my strength
In this danger just a little longer,
At least let me lead
My poor son to safety.
But my trembling feet hesitate,
And the dawn is still far off...
Exhausted, frightened,
Must I then die this way?

(The Highlanders suddenly surround the Queen.)

THE HIGHLANDERS

(menacingly)

Sì!

Yes!

MARGHERITA

(startled, becoming aware of the Highlanders)

Ah! quai voci!

Ah, those voices!

THE HIGHLANDERS

Si circondi!...

Surround her!

Annick Massis with David Parry



Son perduta! I'm doomed!

THE HIGHLANDERS Seize her, surround her, seize her!

Si strascini, si circondi, si strascini!

MARGHERITA Who will help me?

Chi mi aiuta?

THE HIGHLANDERS Seize her!

Si strascini!

MARGHERITA Inhuman wretches!

Disumani!

THE HIGHLANDERS Let's throw her into the river!

Nel torrente la gittiamo!

MARGHERITA I'm doomed!... Who will help me?

Son perduta!... Chi m'aiuta?

Lavarenne, Isaura and Michele rush to help.

SCENE XVI

Arrestate... Stop!...

THE HIGHLANDERS All of them will die!...

Peran tutti!...

LAVARENNE and MICHELE Stand back, stand back!

Indietro, indietro!

THE HIGHLANDERS All of them will die!...

Peran tutti!...

CARLO
(entering hastily)

Che si fa?... Che si fa?... What are you doing?... What are you doing?...

(The Highlanders stop at the sound of Carlo's voice; Margherita runs to him and, holding out her son to him, cries out:)

MARGHERITA

Salva, amico, la Regina, O friend, save the Queen,
Il Rè salva per pietà. Save the King, in the name of mercy!

(A moment of silence. Everyone fixes their gaze on Carlo; the Highlanders, on one side, seem to urge him to recall his order to kill the Queen; the characters on the other side try to guess Carlo's decision in his facial expressions; he himself stands motionless in the centre of the scene.)

[7]

ISAURA Oh, cruel ordeal!

Crudel cimento!

MARGHERITA, LAVARENNE, ISAURA I'm frozen with fear!

Io gelo!

CARLO Ah, what anguish!

Ah! pena!

MARGHERITA He's confused...

Egli è perplesso...

ISAURA, LAVARENNE, MARGHERITA, CARLO What a moment!

Che istante!

LAVARENNE, MARGHERITA, ISAURA O Heaven, cause his heart
To show us mercy!

Fa che quell'alma, oh! cielo,
Sia di pietà capace!



Ah! pena!
Qual contrasto ho in seno!

(Che brutto muso!...
Ei freme... i baffi arriccia.
Tutti quanti insieme
Ora ci abbranca.
Sento il coltello orribile
Già trappassarmi il sen!...)

(Essa in mia mano!
Io vendicarmi!
Ah! qual contrasto orribile
Provo d'affetti in seno!
Qual forza che l'ire mie raffrena!
Ah! quale contrasto
Provo d'affetti in sen!...)

Crudel momento!... io gelo!

Egli è perplesso... oh istante!
Fa che quell'alma, oh cielo,
Sia di pietà capace...
Oh ciel, pietà!

Oh! ciel, rimovi il colpo!

CARLO

Ah, what anguish!
What conflicting emotions in my
heart!

MICHELE

(What an ugly face!...
He trembles... twirls his moustache.
Now he's going
To seize all of us.
I can already feel the horrible knife
Penetrating my heart!...)

CARLO

(She's in my hands!
I can avenge myself!
What horrible conflicting
Emotion I feel in my heart!
What force is restraining my fury!
Ah, what conflicting
Sentiments I feel in my heart!...)

MARGHERITA

What a cruel moment!... I'm frozen
with fear!
He's confused... What a moment!
O Heaven, cause his heart
To show us mercy...
O Heaven, have mercy!

ISAURA

O Heaven, divert the blow!

Oh cielo, fa che quest'alma
Sia di pietà capace!
Ciel, del caro sposo pietà!

Crudel cemento!... io gelo!

Egli è perplesso... ah! istante!
Fa che quell'alma
Sia di pietà capace...
Rimovi, oh! ciel, il tuo rigori!
[8]

Fissami gli occhi in fronte,
Guardami ben, oh Margherita.

E chi sei tu?

Belmonte.

Dio! più non spero aita.

Sì, riconosci Belmonte!

Dio! più non spero aiuto.

Non era in me delitto...
E fui da te proscritto.

O Heaven, cause his heart
To show us mercy!
Heaven, have mercy on my beloved
husband!

LAVARENNE

What a cruel ordeal!... I'm frozen
with fear!
He's confused... What a moment!
Cause his heart
To show us mercy...
O Heaven, end Thy harshness!

CARLO

(to Margherita with ferocity)

Fix your eyes on my face,
Look carefully at me, Margherita.

MARGHERITA

And who are you?

CARLO

Belmonte.

MARGHERITA

God! All my hope is gone.

CARLO

Yes, recognise Belmonte!

MARGHERITA

God! All my hope is gone.

CARLO

I committed no crime...
Yet you had me banished.

Ti odiai, bramai vendetta...
Farla il destin mi diè,
Sì, farla il destin mi diè!

Ma sventurata sei,
Io scordo i torti miei...

Io mi ti prostro ai piedi,
Giuro morir per te.
Benigna tu concedi
Grazia e perdono a me.

Oh! gioia!

(Oh! mio stupore!)

Oh nobil core!

Sorgi e difendi i giorni
Del figlio del tuo Rè.

Cadete, o miserabili,
Della Regina al piede
Ad implorar mercede
Ed a giurarle fè.

I hated you, I longed for vengeance...
Fate now gives me the chance to do it,
Yes, Fate now gives me the chance to
do it!

But you're suffering,
I'll overlook my past injustices...

(He kneels in front of Margherita)

I prostrate myself at your feet,
I swear to die for you.
Grant me mercy and forgiveness
Out of kindness.

LAVARENNE and MICHELE

Oh, joy!

MARGHERITA and ISAURA

(I'm astonished!)

MARGHERITA, ISAURA, LAVARENNE, MICHELE

Oh, noble heart!

MARGHERITA

Rise and defend the life
Of your King's son.

CARLO

(to the Highlanders)

Fall at the feet
Of your Queen, you wretches,
To beg for mercy
And swear loyalty to her.

CHORUS*(intimidated, they kneel)*

Oh! Regina, perdonateci,
Noi vi chiediam mercè.

Forgive us, O Queen,
We beg you for mercy.

MARGHERITA and LAVARENNE

(Cielo, accetto i difensori,
Che tu mi offri in tal cimento;
Nuova speme in cor mi sento,
Che mi rende il mio valor...)

(O Heaven, I accept the defenders
That You offer me at this crucial time;
In my heart I feel new hope
Restoring my courage...)

ISAURA

(Ciel, che in sen dei malfattori
Spirto accendi generoso,
Deh! tu pure, o ciel pietoso,
A noi splendi protettor...)

(Heaven, You who have ignited
A generous spirit in the evildoers,
O merciful Heaven, You still
Shine as our protector...)

CARLO

Spera, o cor; può mille errori
Cancellar il pentimento,
Io cadrò trafitto,
Ma onorato ancor.

Have hope, O heart; repentance can
Erase a thousand wrongs,
I may fall and die,
But with honour restored.

MICHELE

(Bando, bando miei timori,
Siamo fuor d'un brutto passo;
Un coraggio da gradasso
Mi comincia a entrare in cor...)

(Away, away with all my fears,
I've escaped from a nasty scrape;
A boastful courage
Begins to fill my heart...)

CHORUS

Oh! Regina, perdonateci,
Noi vi chiediam mercè.

Forgive us, O Queen,
We beg you for mercy.

*(The sound of a trumpet is heard in the distance.)***THE HIGHLANDERS***(in a low voice)*

Ma qual tromba eccheggia intorno?

What trumpet is echoing through the
forest?

Calpestio vicin s'ascolta.

We can hear footsteps nearby.

MICHELE

O periglio!... Gente arriva.

There's danger!... People are coming.

*(Everyone stirs. A detachment of French soldiers appears, commanded by Bellapunta.**Everyone goes to greet them.)***THE HIGHLANDERS**

Son gli amici!

It's our friends!

EVERYONE

Oh! gioia!

Oh, joy!

BELLAPUNTA

Voi Regina!... Duca voi!
In qual rischio vi ritrovo!
La foresta è circondata
Dal crudele vincitor.

You, Queen!... Duke, you!
You're in great danger!
The forest is surrounded
By the merciless conqueror.

THE HIGHLANDERS

Giusto ciel!

Good heavens!

MICHELE

La pelle è andata.

There goes my hide.

CARLO

Ne poss'io salvarvi ancor.

I can still save you.

MICHELE

Come?

How?

Io vi posso ancor salvar.
Udite: Per sentiero
Che al nemico è forse ascoso
Scorgeranvi le mie schiere
Oltre il bosco periglioso,
Quindi al campo andar potrete

Degli amici, che attendete,
Travestita la Regina
Da scozzese contadina...
Nel mio tetto resterà.
Ivi ascosa insiem col figlio
A partir con men periglio
Miglior tempo attenderà...

Ah! io abbandonar la mia Regina?...
No, non fia mai, no, morir qui voglio.

(The noise is heard closer.)

Il nemico si avvicina!...
Sì, il nemico si avvicina!

Vanne, vanne, e fa d'unirti al campo

Del fedele Somerset.

CARLO

I can still save you.
Listen: My band of men
Will lure the enemy
Over a secret path and lead them
Away from the dangerous forest;
Then you can make your way to the
camp
Of our friends, who are awaiting us;
The Queen, disguised
As a Scottish peasant woman...
Will stay in my cottage.
Hidden there with her son,
She can wait for a favourable moment
To depart with less danger...

LAVARENNE

Ah, I... desert my Queen?...
No, never, no, I'd sooner die.

THE HIGHLANDERS

The enemy is approaching!...
Yes, the enemy is approaching!

MARGHERITA

(resolutely to Lavarenne)

Go, go, and make your way to the
camp
Of loyal Somerset.



Che brutto imbroglio!...
Ah, che brutto, brutto imbroglio!

MICHELE

What a horrible predicament!...
Ah, what a horrible, horrible
predicament!

LAVARENNE

Ubbidir mi è forza al cenno,
Mi è forza d'ubbidir!

I'm forced to obey her command,
I'm forced to obey!

(to Carlo)

Il destino d'un regno intiero,
Uom pietoso, affido a te.

Generous man, I entrust to you
The fate of an entire kingdom.

CARLO

Non temete, io tutto spero,
A lei sacra è la mia fè.

Don't worry, I'm very hopeful,
My loyalty to her is sacred.

*(Carlo, the Highland women, and Margherita with little Edoardo are
grouped on one side. On the other side are Lavarenne, Isaura, Michele,
the Highland men, and the French soldiers.)*

[9]

EVERYONE

Ma più d'appresso squilla la tromba;
Al suon de' timpani il ciel rimbomba...

Trumpets are blaring ever closer;
The sky is thundering with the sound
of drums...

Convien dividersi, convien partire,
Tempo è d'oprare, tempo è d'ardir.
Ah! sì, al dì serbiamoci della vendetta,

We must separate, we must depart,
It's time to act, it's time to dare.
We must save ourselves for the day of
vengeance,

Che contro i perfidi fremente aspetta
D'un Rè tradito la maestà.
Sì, più terribile delle tempeste

When the majesty of a betrayed king
Will strike the frightened traitors.
Yes, more dreadful than a hurricane,

L'inesorabile sdegno celeste
Sopra i colpevoli la scaglierà!...

The inexorable wrath of heaven
Will crash down upon the
criminals!...

MARGHERITA

Il ciel, che premia le belle imprese,

May Heaven, which rewards bold
undertakings,

Del suo favore vi fia cortese
Sì cara vita difenderà.

Favour you with its blessing,
And protect your precious life.

THE HIGHLANDERS

Il cielo ti difenderà!

Heaven will protect you!

LAVARENNE, MARGHERITA, ISAURA

Il ciel, che premia le belle imprese,

May Heaven, which rewards bold
undertakings,

Sì cara vita difenderà.

Protect your precious life.

CARLO and THE HIGHLANDERS

Sì cara vita difenda, oh ciel!

O Heaven, protect their precious
lives!

EVERYONE

Al dì serbiamoci della vendetta, ecc.

We must save ourselves for the day,
etc.

End of the First Act



ACT TWO

SCENE I

A countryside like that in the first act. It is just before dawn. French troops are seen crossing the mountains; a detachment comes down to the plain, then Gloucester arrives with another detachment.

CHORUS

Voliamo amici
L'oltraggio a vendicar,
Piena vittoria
Dobbiamo riportar.
E mentre all'aura eccheggiano
Di gioia i loro accenti,
Noi sopirem lor giubilo
Co' bellici concenti.

Friends, let's hasten
To avenge the outrage,
We shall return
Completely victorious.
And though their shouts
Of joy may echo on the breeze,
We'll smother their jubilation
With bellicose harmonies.

(The soldiers disperse.)

GLOUCESTER

Pien di soldati è il bosco, e d'armi
ingrombro
E' qualunque sentier; eppur la traccia
Discoprir non poss'io de' fuggitivi.
Dunque così mi privi
Empio destin della più nobil gloria

Ch'io m'aspettava da sì gran vittoria?...

The woods are filled with soldiers,
every path
Is blocked by troops, and yet I cannot
Discover any trace of the fugitives.
Will cruel fate
Thus deprive me of the splendid
glory
That I had expected from so great a
victory?...

Margherita mi sfugge... Ah! non a lungo

Mi sfuggirà! Strugga vorace fiamma

Questa gran selva, e nell'incendio avvolta

Quella donna fatal cada sepolta.

Margaret still eludes me... Ah, but she
won't

Elude me for long! A devouring fire
will soon

Consume this great forest, and that
wicked woman

Will die in it, trapped by the
enveloping flames.

Carlo enters with some soldiers.

SCENE II

GLOUCESTER

Carlo, io ti vedo alfin... per questa
immensa
Intricata foresta
Finor ti ricercai: nè alcun de' tuoi

Mi fu data incontrar.

Carlo, you're here at last... I
searched in vain
For you throughout this immense
Entangled forest; nor did I come
across
Any of your men.

CARLO

Corsi finora
Di fuggitivi in traccia. Ove si parte
In più sentieri il bosco, i miei finora

Tenni in aguato, e niun fu preso ancora.

Till now I've been running
In pursuit of the fugitives. I placed
My men in ambush on every twisting
path
Of the forest, but they caught no one.

GLOUCESTER

Iniqua sorte!

Wretched luck!

CARLO

(aside)

(Oh! se potessi mai
Ingannarlo per poco...) Io de' sentieri

Più pratico di voi segreta via

Testè scopersi d'armi ingombra e piena,

Per cui credo scampati i fuggitivi.

GLOCESTER

Ma la Regina ancor nascosta è quivi.
N'ebbi certo l'avviso, e cenno io diedi

D'arder la selva, e lo sarà fra poco.

Or tu per ogni loco
Spargi i tuoi montanari, ed alta attendi

Ricompensa da me, se in mio potere
La Regina tu dai.

CARLO

In me fidate.

GLOCESTER

Ti conosco assai.

He leaves with the soldiers.

(Oh, if only I can
Deceive him for a while...) More
familiar

Than you with the pathways, I just
discovered

A secret route covered with discarded
weapons,

I think the fugitives escaped over it.

But the Queen is still hiding in there.
I have a reliable report; I gave an
order

To burn down the forest, it will soon
begin.

Now, scatter
Your Highlanders everywhere; you
may expect

A rich reward from me if you deliver
The Queen into my hands.

You can rely on me.

I know you well.

SCENE III

CARLO

(alone)

Grazie, amica fortuna,
Che il pensier m'inspirasti
Di condur la Regina
Oltre la selva, nel vicin villaggio...

A lei tosto si voli,
Si diffenda, si regga, e si consoli.

Thank you, friendly Fortune,
For inspiring me with the idea
Of escorting the Queen
Out of the forest and into the nearby
village...

I must hasten to her at once,
To defend her, support her, and
comfort her.

(He leaves.)

SCENE IV

A small village at the foot of a mountain and near the forest occupied by Gloucester; some cottages scattered here and there. It is broad daylight. The Highland men and women enter with their rustic implements.

[10]

Che bell'alba! che bel giorno!...

Come splende il ciel sereno!...
Ogni cosa è lieta intorno:
Scherza l'aura ai fiori in seno...
Gli agnellotti van saltando,
Gorgheggiando qua e là...
E' ben sciocco... il cittadino
Rinserrato in quattro mura...

CHORUS

What a lovely morning! What a
pretty day!...
How bright the serene sky is!...
Everything in nature is cheerful:
A breeze caresses the flowers...
Little lambs are skipping about,
Bleating here and there...
Foolish is the villager
Locked inside his house...

Che d'un limpido mattino

Mai non esce all'aria pura –
Quando il sole avviva il mondo
Cosa diamine mai fa
Cosa fa?... cosa fa?

D'un'oscura alcova al fondo
Sbadigliando se ne sta,
Sbadigliando se ne va...

Ha, ha, ha, sbadigliando sta,
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!
Noi sorgiamo al dì nascente
Freschi, sani e vigorosi;
Passeggiamo allegramente
Per vallette e boschi ameni,
Il soave odor de' fiori
Respirando in libertà.
Poi ciascun a suoi lavori
Vispo e gaio se ne va...

(The peasants pick up their implements and leave singing.)

Che bell'alba! che bel giorno!

Come splende il ciel sereno!
Scherza l'aura ai fiori in seno...

Gorgheggiando e saltando...

He who won't come out into the fresh
air

Of a bright morning –
When the sun reawakens the world,
what the devil will he do?
What will he do?... What will he do?

(laughing)

He gets up yawning
In a dark corner of his hut,
And goes around yawning all day...

(laughing)

Ha, ha, ha, yawning all day,
Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha!
We awaken with the rising sun,
Refreshed and healthy and vigorous;
We walk briskly
Through valleys and shady woods,
Inhaling deeply
The sweet fragrance of the flowers.
Then each of us goes off
To his labours, quickly and gaily...

What a lovely morning! What a
pretty day!

How bright the serene sky is!
A breeze caresses the flowers...

(from a distance)

Skipping about and bleating...

(from far away)

Van qua e là, qua e là...

Here and there, here and there...
Margherita, dressed as a Highland woman, comes out of a cottage.

SCENE V

[11]

MARGHERITA

Dolci alberghi di pace, ameni campi,
che ad oppresa Regina
Fido asilo porgete. Oh! qual da voi

Spira consolatrice aura tranquilla
Che addormenta il dolor dei mali miei!
Oh! come volentieri io qua vivrei!
Ma questo ancor negato
Mi fia dal Ciel! Non son felice io tanto:
La vita ho da condur fra il duolo e il pianto!

[12]

Che mai giova il serto? il trono
Che giova se tormenti ha sol per me?

La grandezza è inutil dono
Se contento il cor non è.
Bella calma ch'io provai
Nella prima gioventù,
Per un soglio ti cambiai
Nè a brillar ritorni più.

Sweet havens of peace, fair meadows
that to an afflicted Queen
offer safe refuge. Oh, what a tranquil
aura

wafts consolingly from you,
putting my troubles to rest!
Oh, how willingly would I live here!
But this too is denied me
by Heaven! I have little joy:
I must live my life midst pain and tears.

What good is a crown? What good
a throne if it bring me nothing but
torment?

High rank is a useless gift
if the heart is not content.
Sweet tranquillity that was mine
in early childhood,
I exchanged you for a throne
and you will never shed your light on
me again.



La grandezza è inutil dono
Se contento il cor non è.

(The chorus of Highlanders enters.)

CHORUS OF HIGHLANDERS

Un soldato! un nemico!

High rank is a useless gift
if the heart is not content.

A soldier! One of the enemy!

MARGHERITA

Oh dio! che mai sento!
Un nemico? il figlio mio!

Oh God! I can't believe it!
One of the enemy? My son!

CHORUS OF HIGHLANDERS

Un nemico!

One of the enemy!

MARGHERITA

Oh dio! che sento! Oh figlio mio!
Deh! tu il salva, oh sommo Dio!
Di lui senti, oh ciel, pietà!

Oh God! Oh no! My son!
Ah, save him, almighty God!
Have pity on him, O Heaven

CHORUS OF HIGHLANDERS

Presto, Regina, ah presto andiamo!

Quickly, Majesty, we must leave at
once!

Corretevi a salvar!

Make haste to save yourself!

MARGHERITA

Sì, verrò: spietate stelle!
Per me avverse ognor sarete?
Né un istante cesserete
Dal funesto scintillar?

Yes, I shall come. Cruel stars!
Will you always be against me?
Not for one moment will you cease
your baleful glittering?

[13]

Incerto palpito
Il cor m'assale;
Smania più barbaro,

My heart is assailed
by weakness.
Has a crueller frenzy,

Contrasto eguale,
Chi mai nell' anima
Chi mai provò?
Fia pago il barbaro
Destin tiranno;
Già l'alma m'agita
Un duol si fiero,
Che appena reggere
Mio cor si può.
No, no, no, no
Mio cor non può!
Incerto palpito
Il cor m'assale, ecc.

CHORUS OF HIGHLANDERS

Vi celate... il figlio vostro
Diffensori in noi trovò.

MARGHERITA

... Chi mai provò?

Contrasto eguale
Chi mai nell'anima provo?

CHORUS OF HIGHLANDERS

Vi celate... il figlio vostro
Diffensori in noi trovò.

Margherita re-enters the cottage from which she emerged. Carlo and Michele appear on the scene.

so dreadful a conflict,
ever afflicted
another soul?
Fate, the cruel tyrant,
must be satisfied.
My very core is shaken
by such grief
that my heart
can scarce bear it.
No, no, no, no,
my heart cannot bear it!
My heart is assailed
by weakness. etc.

Go into hiding... Your son
has us to defend him.

... Has another soul ever been so
afflicted?

Has so dreadful a conflict
ever afflicted another soul?

Go into hiding... Your son
has us to defend him.

SCENE VI

[14]

CARLO

(to the Highlanders)

Ritiratevi, amici, ognun di voi
Torni a' lavori suoi
Senza mostrar sospetto.

Withdraw, friends; each of you
Return to your labours
And don't look suspicious.

(The Highlanders leave.)

E noi Michele,
Molto non ci scostiamo; in un momento

And we, Michele,
Shall remain close by, so we can
hasten back

Accorrere potremo ad ogni evento.

In an instant should anything
happen.

Eccolo.

Here he comes.

MICHELE

Ahimè!

Alas!

(Isaura enters enveloped in a large cape.)

ISAURA

(Son dessi;
No, non m'inganno.) Amici miei...

(It's them;
No, I'm not mistaken.) My friends...

(She reveals herself.)

CARLO

Che vedo?...

Who's this I see?...

MICHELE

Poffar bacco! voi qua... vèh!...
appena il credo...

By Jove! You here... I can hardly
believe it.

La Regina dov'è?...

Si è ritirata
Incerta e spaventata.

A lei si corra
Con la grata novella...

Ah! sì. Più grata
Non può giungerne a lei del vostro arrivo

Se di qualche speranza
Venite apportator.

Non ci inganniamo.
Diamine, non siam ciechi.

SCENE VII

Regina!

Eugenio! Oh gioia! Ebben che rechi?

ISAURA
Where's the Queen?...

CARLO
She has retired,
Disturbed and frightened.

MICHELE
I'll run to her
With the happy news...
(He runs to the cottage.)

CARLO
Ah, yes. Nothing could be
More pleasing to her than your
arrival,
Unless you're bringing
Some new hope with you.

MICHELE
(off-stage)
It's not a trick.
The deuce, we're not blind.
He emerges with Margherita.

ISAURA
My Queen!

MARGHERITA
Eugene! Oh, joy! What news do you
have?



ISAURA

Nel campo amico è il Duca, e dello sparso
 Esercito gli avanzi ha già raccolto,
 E tutto stabilito, onde il superbo
 Gloucester assalir. Appena il vidi
 Fuor di periglio, di voi mossi in traccia;
 E coperto col manto
 D'un estinto nemico
 Nel periglioso bosco errai di nuovo;
 E contento son io perchè vi trovo.

The Duke is in a friendly camp; he
 has already
 Formed an army out of the scattered
 troops;
 All is in readiness to attack
 Arrogant Gloucester. Hardly did I see
 him
 Out of danger, when I came in search
 of you;
 Covering myself with the cloak
 Of a dead enemy,
 I wandered back through the perilous
 forest;
 I'm delighted that I've found you
 again.

MICHELE

Allegri dunque, allegri. Or Carlo mio
 Possiam senza timore ed apprensione
 Pensare a preparar la colazione.

Rejoice then, rejoice. Now, dear
 Carlo,
 We can think about preparing lunch
 Without fear and apprehension.

He leaves with Carlo

SCENE VIII

MARGHERITA

Tu per la mia salvezza
 Di morte e prigionia non hai spavento?...

In coming here to rescue me,
 Weren't you afraid of death and
 imprisonment?...

ISAURA

Mi restava a compir un giuramento.
 Ieri pria della pugna alla mia fede
 Commise il Duca un foglio; e in
 vostra mano
 Consegnarlo m'ingiunse
 Qualunque della pugna era l'evento.

I had to fulfill a promise I made.
 Before the battle yesterday, the Duke
 Entrusted a letter to my care; he
 ordered me
 To deliver it into your hands
 Whatever the outcome of the battle
 might be.

MARGHERITA

Un foglio!
 A letter!

ISAURA*(handing it to her)*

Eccolo.
 Here it is.

MARGHERITA

(Oh ciel! tremar mi sento!)
 (after glancing at the letter a few seconds)
 (Egli esser mio non può?... cielo,
 che ascolto?...) (Oh, heavens! I'm trembling!)
 (He cannot be mine?... What's this I
 read?...) (She reads)

"Sposo d'Isaura sono, e non m'è dato
 Poterla amar..." "I'm Isaura's husband, and I'm not
 able
 To love her..."

ISAURA

Povera Isaura!
 Poor Isaura!

MARGHERITA

Or dimmi...
 Onde per lei tanta pietà?... Now, tell me...
 Why so much pity for her?...

Seguite.

ISAURA

Read on.

MARGHERITA

(reading)

“Ed a cercar la morte
Lunge da voi ne andrò.” Non ho più speme.
To seek death.” All my hope is gone.

ISAURA

Son io di voi più sventurata assai,
Che non vedrò più mai
Il mio sposo, il mio bene, il mio diletto.
I'm even more wretched than you,
For I shall never again see
My husband, my beloved, my
darling.

MARGHERITA

Isaura tu?... che scopro!...
You're Isaura?... What's this I learn!...

ISAURA

Oh ciel! che ho detto?
Heavens! What did I say?

MARGHERITA

Misera donna! Or vien... vieni al mio seno,
Siamo infelici entrambe,
E dell'avversa sorte
Trionfar possiam... Ti renderò al consorte...
Poor woman! Now come... come to
my heart,
We are both unhappy,
But we can triumph over
Adverse fate... I restore your husband
to you...

Ma vanne, oh ciel! lo scorta,
L'assisti, il reggi, lo difendi... Isaura,
But, oh heavens, go, find him,
Help him, support him, defend
him... Isaura,

Se tardi ancor la meditata impresa
Compier potrebbe. Della pugna l'ora
If you delay, he might carry out
What he has planned. The hour of
battle

Quasi vicina è già. Nel suo pensiero
Se fermo egli è... fra gl'inimici brandi...

Is almost here. If he's determined
In his intention... among the enemy
swords...

ISAURA

Basta, Regina... io vado... in cor sculpita
Mi fia vostra bontà...
Enough, my Queen... I'm going... I'll
never
Forget your kindness...

MARGHERITA

Vanne, t'affretta,
Impaziente attenderò novella
Di te, di lui.
Go, hurry,
I'll anxiously await news
Of you, of him.

ISAURA

Non paventate... addio.
Don't be afraid... farewell.

(She leaves.)

MARGHERITA

Nel suo corso la reggi, o sommo Iddio!...
Almighty God, sustain her on her
course!...

She re-enters the cottage.

CD 3

53'40

SCENE IX

The interior of a tent, as in Scene Two of the First Act.

[1]

LAVARENNE

Finchè della tenzon l'ora s'appressa
Solo restar qui vo'...
I wish to remain here alone
Until the hour of combat arrives...

Ma se il nemico
Sortisse all'improvviso... allor...

Dal campo
Non son molto discosto;
Se alcun sinistro evento
Insorgesse per noi... sia di te cura
Darmene cenno.

Intesi.

Or va... mi lascia
Col mio duol, vo' restar colla mia ambascia. *(Bellapunta leaves.)*

[2]

Ah! sì. Pur troppo, io sono il più infelice

Che sulla terra esista!
Son gravi troppo i miei tormenti acerbi;
Il fatale amor mio non ha più freno,
E insopportabil signoreggia in seno.
Isaura!... Margherita!...
Cari e insiem funesti
Di tenerezza oggetti... Ahi duro stato!

BELLAPUNTA

But if the enemy
Should suddenly appear... then...

LAVARENNE

I'm not very far
From the battlefield;
If any untoward event
Should arise... it will be your duty
To give me a signal.

BELLAPUNTA

I understand.

LAVARENNE

Now go... leave me to my grief,
I want to be alone with my suffering.

LAVARENNE
(after a brief pause)

Ah, yes. Indeed, I'm the unhappiest
man

On the face of the earth!
My bitter agony is too much to bear;
My disastrous love knows no bounds,
And unbearably dominates my breast.
Isaura!... Margherita!...
Dear and yet distressing
Objects of affection... Oh, cruel
situation!



Colin Lee (Bellapunta)

Amarle entrambe, e non poter mio core

Seguir suoi moti... Ho già deciso.
Elle ch'accolse i giuramenti miei,
Ella abbia la mia fede.
A superar me stesso onor m'insegna

Gl'istessi affetti miei sian di me degni.

[3]

Tu, che le vie segrete
Di questo cor pur tieni,
Amor! desiata quiete
Ti piaccia in me versar...
Spirto infedel, che strugge
Entro mio sen spietato,
Per te già si distrugge:
E' questo core cangiato
Col suo furor,
Col suo dolor
M'è dato sol
A delirar!...
Lo vedi, Isaura amata?...
Amor mi calma appena:

[4]

D'un tal piacer la piena
Frenar non posso in sen.
Se tu mi reggi, amore,

My heart loves both of them, and
cannot trust

Its feelings... I've made up my mind!
She who received my loving vows
Will have my everlasting faith.
May honour teach me to conquer
myself,
May my own sentiments be worthy
of me.

You who still control
The secret ways of my heart,
O love, please grant me
The tranquillity I crave...
O unfaithful spirit that rages
Mercilessly within my breast,
My heart has changed,
It pines away because of you.
With its fury,
With its pain,
All I can do
Is rave!...
Do you see, beloved Isaura?...
Love already calms me;

I cannot restrain the flood
Of so much joy in my breast.
O love, if you govern me

Sarò felice appien...
Sarò felice ancor!...

SCENE X

Interior of a cottage; the main entrance is at the back; on one side is a door which leads to another. Michele, in an apron, is setting a rustic table.

[5]

Eccomi di chirurgo e di dottore
Cucinier diventato, e credenziere;
Anche questo mestiere
Mancava a mia virtù. Se torno in Francia

Ne ho da contar di belle in verità!

Che mai dirà di me la facoltà!
Eh! dica quel che vuole... Achille ancor

Figliolo d'una dea
Squoiava i capri e li arrostita sul fuoco,

E può bene un dottor divenir cuoco.

Qua la Regina... E se vi fosse Isaura

Qua la porrei; ma l'è venuto in testa

I shall be completely happy...
I shall be happy again!...

He leaves.

MICHELE

Here I am, from a surgeon and doctor
Turned into a cook and butler;
Even this profession was in need
Of my skills. When I return to France
I can

Count it among my finest
accomplishments!
Whatever will the faculty say of me?
Well, let them say what they will... If
Achilles,

The son of a goddess,
Skinned goats and roasted them over
a fire,
Then surely a doctor can become a
cook.

The Queen sits here... And if Isaura
were with us
I'd seat her here; but she took it into
her head



Di andar alla battaglia
Al fianco del suo Duca... poveretta!...

Davver mi fa pietà: quella ragazza,
Scometto, che d'amor diventa pazza.
Carlo il porremo qua,
Là nel mezzo starà
Michele con due bottiglie tanto fatte...

Ma chi diavolo batte?
Carlo, Carlo han battuto.

Chi è là?...

Soldati.

Ahimè! tutto è perduto...
Si avverta la Regina.

Olà cospetto,
Gitto a terra la porta.

Un momento... son qua... (Sian maledetti.

To run to the battlefield
To be at the side of her Duke... poor
thing!

I truly pity her; I suppose
The girl has been driven mad by love.
We'll place Carlo here,
And there, in the centre, will be
Michele with two bottles close at
hand...

(Knocking is heard.)

Who the devil is knocking?
Carlo, Carlo, someone knocked.

CARLO

(entering from the side room)

Who's there?...

GLOCESTER

(from outside)

Soldiers.

CARLO

Alas, all is lost!...
I must warn the Queen.

(He runs into the other room.)

GLOCESTER

Ho there, the Deuce,
Must I break down the door!

MICHELE

Just a minute... I'm coming... (Curse
them!

Son capaci davvero di spezzarla!)

They're really going to break down
the door!)

CARLO

(locking the side room with a key)

Open it.

Apri.

(Michele opens the door and Gloucester enters.)

GLOCESTER

How dare you!

Audace!

CARLO

Sire.

Signor.

GLOCESTER

What! You, Carlo?

Come! Tu Carlo?

CARLO

Yes, Your Highness...

Sì, Altezza...

(He brings a stool forward.)

Have a seat...

Accomodatevi...

(to Michele, in a low voice)

(It's Gloucester. Take care.)

(E' Gloucester. Ardir.)

GLOCESTER

(aside)

*(I must conceal
My suspicions for now.)* How come I
find you

(Il mio sospetto
Si nasconda per or.) Com'io ti trovo,

In this cottage, Carlo?

Carlo, in questa capanna?

CARLO

I came here to warn
My old friend

Il mio compare
Qua venni ad avvisare,



Pauls Putniņš (Gloucester)

Che in queste vicinanze
Si asconde Margherita, ond'ei non dia

Asilo a chicchessia.

Corpo di bacco,
Che si presenti un poco.
Io vi so dir ch'ha da veder bel gioco.

Bravo, bravo, compare.

Ottimamente.

Eh! niente, Altezza, niente,

Io faccio il mio dover.

Odi tu dunque
Margherita, o buon uomo?...

Odiarla! no.
Cioè... così... dirò...
Non mi ha fatto alcun male,
Ed io sto neutrale. Io vorrei solo,
Che ella fosse lontana mille miglia.

That Margherita is hiding
In the vicinity, and that he shouldn't
give
Shelter to anyone.

MICHELE

By Jove,
Just let her show herself.
I'd tell you in an instant that
I saw her.

CARLO

Fine, fine, my friend.

GLOCESTER

Excellent!

MICHELE

Oh, it's nothing, Your Highness,
nothing,
I'm just doing my duty.

GLOCESTER

So, you hate
Margherita, my good man?...

MICHELE

(*embarrassed*)

Hate her? No.
That is... it's just... I mean...
She hasn't done me any harm,
So I'm neutral. I only wish
That she were a thousand miles away.

Lontana! che mai dici?...

Intendo dire
Che allor... capite ben...

Che questa guerra
Si vedrebbe un volta terminare.
Compar, non è così?...

Così, compare!...

[6]

Pensa e guarda, amico, all'erta!
Qua lo guida alcun progetto.

Di scaltrezza e d'ardimento
Or bisogna il petto armar...

Quel parlar, quell'aria incerta
Tutto in lor mi dà sospetto.

Ma per giunger all'intento
Giova ancor il simular...

Pensa e guarda, amico, all'erta! *ecc.*

GLOCESTER

Away! What are you saying?...

MICHELE

I mean to say
That then... you know...

CARLO

(*interrupting him*)

That this war
Would come to a quick end.
Isn't that right, old friend?...

MICHELE

Quite so, my friend!...

CARLO

Think and take care, friend, be alert!
Some other reason has brought him
here.

We must now arm ourselves
With cunning and with boldness...

GLOCESTER

Those words, that nervous behaviour,
Everything about them arouses my
suspicion.

But to attain my objective
I'll have to pretend a while longer...

CARLO

Think and take care. Friend, be alert!
etc.

Pensa e guarda, amico, all'erta!
Qua lo guida alcun progetto.

Di scaltrezza e d'ardimento
Or bisogna il petto armar.

Pensa e guarda, amico, all'erta! *ecc.*

Quel parlar, quell'aria incerta, *ecc.*

Galantuomo!

A me?... (Coraggio...)

Sei Scozzese?...

Arciscozzese...

Tale accento ha il tuo linguaggio,
Che non sembra del paese.

Vi dirò...

MICHELE

Think and take care. Friend, be alert!
Some other reason has brought him
here.

We must now arm ourselves
With cunning and with boldness.

CARLO

Think and take care, friend, be alert!
etc.

GLOCESTER

Those words, that nervous behaviour,
etc.

GLOCESTER

(to Michele)

My good sir!

MICHELE

Who, me?... (Courage...)

GLOCESTER

Are you Scots?...

MICHELE

Ultra-Scots...

GLOCESTER

Your language has an accent
That doesn't seem to come from this
region.

MICHELE

Let me explain...



(Gran Dio! lo ispira.)

Mesce accento ogn'uom che gira.

E girasti?...

Mezzo mondo.

E facesti?...

(Or mi confondo.)

Parla via... non vergognarti.

Praticate ho tutte l'arti
Per poter almen con una
Qualche cosa guadagnar...
Ma la chioma di Fortuna
E' difficile a pigliar...
Fui soldato, marinaio,
Ciarlatan, barbier, speciale,
Io correa dietro al danaro,
E il danaro dietro a me.

CARLO
(*aside*)

(O God, inspire him!)

MICHELE

Every man who travels picks up
accents.

GLOCESTER

So, you've travelled?...

MICHELE

Over half the world.

GLOCESTER

Doing what?...

MICHELE

(*aside*)

(Now I'm at a loss.)

CARLO

(*encouraging him*)

Speak up boldly... don't be timid.

MICHELE

I've worked at all occupations,
Trying to earn a living
With at least one of them...
But Fortune's forelock
Is difficult to grasp...
I was a soldier, a sailor,
A charlatan, a barber, an apothecary;
I chased after money,
And money after me.

Sol propizio intante mie
Faticose traversie
Io trovai nel mio cammino
Dolce amore, e dolce vino,
Che m'han dato all'occasione
Un coraggio da leone,
E talvolta m'ho stimato
Fortunato al par d'un re.

(*He picks up the bottle of wine.*)

Ecco qua la cara fiasca;
Quel che vuol succeda e nasca,

E alla buona un bicchierino
Ne berremo tutti e tre.

GLOCESTER and CARLO

(*each aside*)

E' ben furbo il malandrino...

That rascal's truly clever...

(*to Michele*)

Bravo, bravo per mia fè.

Excellent, excellent, upon my word.

MICHELE and CARLO

Pensa e guarda, amico, all'erta, *ecc.*

Think and take care. Friend, be alert,
etc.

GLOCESTER

Quel parlar, quell'aria incerta, *ecc.*

Those words, that nervous behaviour,
etc.

MICHELE

(*to Gloucester*)

Ne berrem!

Let's have a drink!

Tutti tre?
 Tutti tre! tutti tre!...

Hai tu moglie?...

Per disgrazia...

Hai figlioli?...

Per disgrazia...

Vuò vederli...

Come! Altezza!

Quà li guida...

Oh! qual periglio!

Va, ripeto...

Qual periglio!

CARLO
 All three of us?

MICHELE, GLOCESTER, CARLO
 All three! All three!...

GLOCESTER
(to Michele)
 Do you have a wife?...

MICHELE
 Unfortunately...

GLOCESTER
 Do you have children?...

MICHELE
 Unfortunately...

GLOCESTER
 I want to see them...

MICHELE
(frightened)
 What, Your Highness?

GLOCESTER
 Bring them here...

MICHELE
(aside)
 Oh, what danger!

GLOCESTER
 Go, I say...

MICHELE
 What danger!

CARLO
(to Michele, jokingly)
 Ma via, compare, via, compare,
 Il geloso non mi fare...

Tale, Altezza, è il suo difetto...

Va tu là, io resto quà...

GLOCESTER
(aside)
 Se verace è il mio sospetto,
 S'ella è ascosa in questo tetto,
 Più sottrarsi al mio furore
 La superba non potrà,
 No, no, no, la superba non potrà.

CARLO and MICHELE
(aside)
 Che ti colga la saetta!
 Il briccon ancor sospetta;
 Sudo e tremo, e sento il cor

Che star fermo più non sa.

Pensa e guarda, amico, all'erta, ecc.

CARLO
 Oh, come now, old friend,
 Don't act the jealous husband with
 me...

(to Gloucester)
 That's one of his faults, Your
 Highness...

(to Michele)
 You go get them, I'll stay here...

(Carlo pushes Michele towards the side door.)

GLOCESTER
(aside)
 If my suspicion is correct,
 If she's hidden in this house,
 The proud woman will no longer
 Be able to escape my fury,
 No, no, no, she won't escape my fury.

CARLO and MICHELE
(aside)
 May a thunderbolt strike him dead!
 The knave is still suspicious;
 I'm sweating and trembling, and my
 heart
 Feels as if it's about to burst.

Think and take care, friend, be alert,
 etc.

Quel parlare mi da sospetto,
Ma per giunger all'intento
Giova ancor il simular...

Michele enters the other room and returns with Margherita and little Edoardo.

SCENE XI

[7]
Ecco, Altezza, a voi davanti
La comare e il fanciullino.

T'avvicina... (Quai sembiantil!)

(Ah! l'indegno! qual cimento!)

Dunque è questo il fanciullino?
Sembra nato cittadino...

D'un signor ha proprio il tratto,

Mi somiglia, è il mio ritratto.

L'amo tanto il briconcello,
E' sì vispo e buffoncello...
Ma che fate? non bevete?

GLOCESTER

Their words make me suspicious,
But to attain my objective
I'll have to pretend a while longer...

CARLO

Here before you, Your Highness,
Are his wife and his little son.

GLOCESTER

Step forward... (Those features!)

MARGHERITA

(aside, fuming with rage)

(Ah, the vile wretch! What an ordeal!)

GLOCESTER

So, this is your little boy?
He doesn't seem to be a peasant...

MICHELE

He has a gentleman's perfect
manners,
He looks like me, he's my spitting
image.

(He takes the boy by the arm.)

I adore the little rascal,
He's so lively and full of fun...
But what's wrong? Aren't you
drinking?



Ma versate, il Duca ha sete;

Via, compare, moglie mia,
Prendi il figlio e porta via;
Io frattanto da coppiere
A sua Altezza servirò.

(Margherita turns to go.)

GLOCESTER

No, restate; da sì bella
E cortese villanella
Un bicchier più caro avrò.

Pour some wine, the Duke must be
thirsty;
Come, old friend, dear wife,
Pick up the boy and take him away;
Meanwhile, I'll serve
Your Highness as wine steward.

No, stay; I prefer a glass
Poured by this pretty
And charming country lass.

MARGHERITA

La mia pena, il mio spavento
Più reprimere non so...

I don't know how to conceal
My anguish and terror any longer...

CARLO and MICHELE

(aside)

*(Va crescendo la procella.
La mia pena, il mio spavento
Più reprimere non so...)*

*(The danger is mounting.
I don't know how to conceal
My anguish and terror any longer...)*

GLOCESTER

(aside)

*(Treman tutti!... Sì! è quella.
Quel pallor, quel turbamento
Abbastanza la svelò...)*

*(They're all trembling... Yes! It's she!
That pallor, that nervousness
Has betrayed her completely...)*

(Margherita offers a glass to Gloucester and the others.)

ALL

Su, beviamo!...

Come, let's drink!...

GLOCESTER

Alla vittoria,
Che mi diede il giusto fato.

To the victory
That kind fate gave me.

(He drinks.)

CARLO and MICHELE

(hesitantly)

Viva!

Hurrah!

(They drink.)

GLOCESTER

(observing Margherita)

Alla mia gloria, a' miei dritti.

To my glory, to my rights.

(He drinks.)

CARLO and MICHELE

(hesitantly)

Viva!

Hurrah!

(They drink.)

GLOCESTER

(more forcefully)

Cada e mora, Margherita!...

May Margherita fall and die!...

(Silence.)

E che? tacete?

What's this? Nothing to say?

CARLO and MICHELE

(terrified)

Mora!

May she die!

MARGHERITA

(forcefully)

Il vile, il vile, il traditor.

(Margherita takes the glass in her hand and throws it to the crowd)

GLOCESTER

Scellerati, quanti siete,
Vi ha scoperti il mio furor.
Ti conosco, oh Margherita,
In mia mano è la tua vita!
Guardie, olà, costor serbate!

The wretch, the wretch, the traitor!
Scoundrels that you are,
My fury has exposed you!
I recognise you, Margherita,
Your life is in my hands!
Ho there, guards, arrest them!

(He seizes little Edoardo.)

MARGHERITA, CARLO, MICHELE

Ah! signor, pietà, fermate!...

GLOCESTER

No, felloni, voi morrete!...

The guards surround Margherita; Gloucester turns to go. Lavarenne enters suddenly with a troop of French soldiers and Isaura.

Ah, sire, mercy, stop!...

No, criminals, you shall die!...

SCENE XII

LAVARENNE

(stopping Gloucester)

Ferma il passo!

MARGHERITA, CARLO, MICHELE

Ciel! chi vedo?

LAVARENNE

Salvi siete;
Me vedete... vincitor.

Not another step!

Heavens! Who's this I see?

You're saved;
You see me... victorious.

MARGHERITA, CARLO, MICHELE

Ah contento!

Ah, happy outcome!

LAVARENNE

(to the French soldiers)

Si disarmi.

Disarm them.

GLOCESTER

(threatening the boy)

Niun si mova ad arrestarmi,
O a costui traffigo il cor.

No one make a move to stop me,
Or I'll stab the child through the
heart!

MARGHERITA, LAVARENNE, CARLO, MICHELE

Ciel!

Heavens!

MICHELE

(aside)

Ei coll'armi, io col giudizio
Vuò far prove di valor.

He with a weapon, I with prudence
Will put valour to the test.

(He leaves unobserved.)

[8]

Oh rabbia! oh furore!
Non posso svenarlo?
Se movo, se parlo,
Il figlio cadrà...

LAVARENNE

Oh, rage! Oh, fury!
Can't I kill him?
If I move, if I speak,
The boy will die...

ISAURA

Oh Cielo clemente,
Sua sorte tu vedi;
A loro concedi
Soccorso, pietà...

O merciful Heaven,
You see her state;
Grant them
Thy help, Thy pity...

Qual gelo nel core,
Qual velo sul ciglio?
Oh Cielo, consiglio,
Soccorso, pietà...

Lo sdegno m'accende...
Non curo mia vita,
Ma l'empio cadrà...

Son vinto? furore!
Ch'io ceda? Giammai!
Se un passo fai,
Più figlio non hai...

Il passo sgombrate...

Deh! senti...

Tremate!

Codardo!

Tuo sdegno disprezzo...

Oh! rabbia! oh! furore!

MARGHERITA

What ice fills my heart,
What veil covers my eyes?
O Heaven, Thy guidance,
Thy help, Thy mercy!...

CARLO

His contempt enrages me...
If it costs me my life,
The wretch will die...

GLOCESTER

I vanquished? Oh, fury!
I surrender? Never!
If you take one step
Your son will die!...

GLOCESTER

Get out of my way...

MARGHERITA

Ah, listen...

GLOCESTER

Tremble!

LAVARENNE

Coward!

GLOCESTER

I loathe your contempt...

ALL

(on the verge of attacking him)

Oh, rage! Oh, fury!



Maria Cleva (Italian coach)
with Alastair Miles and Bruce Ford

GLOCESTER

(about to leave with Edoardo)

Tremate! Scostatevi omai!

Tremble! Stand back, I say!

Michele enters with some Highlanders.

SCENE XIII

THE HIGHLANDERS

(suddenly seizing him)

T'arresta; ove vai?

Halt... where are you going?

MICHELE and CARLO

Seize the scoundrel!

Addosso al furfante.

On the ground, knave!

A terra, birbante!

THE HIGHLANDERS

Victory!

Vittoria!

(Glocester, disarmed, is surrounded by the French soldiers.)

GLOCESTER

Empia sorte, m'hai lasciato,
M'hai tradito in un momento.

Merciless fate, you've forsaken me,
You've betrayed me in an instant.

[9] **MARGHERITA, ISAURA, LAVARENNE, CARLO, MICHELE**
Piomba il fulmine del cielo
Sul tuo capo, scellerato!

May Heaven's thunderbolt
Fall upon your head, wretch!

GLOCESTER

Per cotanto avvillimento
Più costanza in cor non ho.

My heart has lost its resolve
In the face of such humiliation.

CHORUS

Piomba il fulmine del cielo
Sul tuo capo, scellerato!

May Heaven's thunderbolt
Fall upon your head, wretch!



MARGHERITA, ISAURA, LAVARENNE, CARLO, MICHELE

Il delitto è vendicato,
E l'innocenza il ciel premiò.

The crime has been avenged,
And Heaven has rewarded innocence.

GLOCESTER

Empia sorte, m'hai lasciato,
M'hai tradito in un momento.

Merciless fate, you've forsaken me,
You've betrayed me in an instant.

CHORUS

Piomba il fulmine del cielo
Sul tuo capo, scellerato!

May Heaven's thunderbolt
Fall upon your head, wretch!

MARGHERITA, ISAURA, LAVARENNE, CARLO

Il piacer che in petto io sento,
Giusto ciel, spiegar non so.
Mille giorni di tormento
Un momento consolò.

Virtuous Heaven, I cannot describe
The joy that I feel in my breast!
A single moment has consoled
A thousand days of torment.

MICHELE

(to Gloucester)

A tirar de' calci al vento,
Scellerato, io ti vedrò.

Scoundrel, I'll enjoy watching you
Dangle from the end of a rope.

GLOCESTER

Il furor che in petto io sento,
Empio ciel, spiegar non so.

Ruthless Heaven, I cannot describe
The fury that I feel in my breast.

CHORUS

Più non giova l'ardimento,
La tua colpa il ciel stancò.

Your boldness will not avail you,
Your crime has exhausted God's
patience.

MARGHERITA, ISAURA, LAVARENNE, CARLO, MICHELE, CORO

Il delitto è vendicato,

The crime has been avenged,

E l'innocenza il ciel premiò...

And Heaven has rewarded
innocence...

GLOCESTER

Per cotanto avvillimento
Più costanza in cor non ho...

My heart has lost its resolve
In the face of such humiliation...

(Everyone leaves.)

SCENE XIV

A village, as before. Bellapunta and several officers.

[10]

BELLAPUNTA

(to the officers)

Bravi, bravi, amiconi! ah! che sveltezza!

Well done, indeed, my friends! And
how swiftly!

Che ardir! che colpo! che coraggio! evviva!

What daring! What a blow! What
courage! Hurrah!

Se abbiamo avuto core
Di vincer con ardor questa battaglia,
Siamo gente d'onor, gente di vaglia.

Because we had the heart
To win this battle with such boldness,
We're men of honour, men of
distinction.

A proposito... dite?
Vedeste voi con che coraggio in campo

Speaking of which... tell me...
Did you see, on the battlefield, how
courageously

Pugnò quel giovinetto,
Che la nostra Regina
Ammise fra di noi ieri mattina?

That young man fought,
The one our Queen
Admitted to our ranks yesterday
morning?

Ei difese la vita
Al nostro bravo Duca... Oh in un momento
A raggiunger n'andiamo il reggimento.
They leave. Isaura and Michele enter.

He protected the life
Of our brave Duke... Well, we'll be
going
To rejoin our regiment in a moment.

SCENE XV

MICHELE

Che diamine, signora? Eh via, coraggio,
Ora che siamo al meglio,
Mesta dovrò vedervi e pensierosa?
Lasciate tutto andar, già siete sposa.

What the Deuce, madame? Come
on, take heart,
Why do I still see you sad and
pensive,
Now that all has turned out for the
best?
Don't worry about a thing, you're his
wife.

ISAURA

No, amico, io non lo spero,
Egli ama la Regina, ed essa...

No, my friend, my hopes are dashed,
He loves the Queen, and she...

MICHELE

Ed essa
Sapendo il vostro affare,
Se avete senno in testa... Oh! in confidenza
Lo cede tutto a voi, ella sta senza.

And she,
Learning of your relationship...
If you had any sense... Oh, I promise,
He'll yield to you completely and
forget her.

ISAURA

Non lo credere, no, troppo io conosco

I don't believe it, no, too well I know

La possanza d'amor. So ch'egli l'ama;
Ei figlio e trono conservolle.

The power of love. I know that he
loves her,
That he'll protect her son and the
throne.

MICHELE

Insomma
Adesso per provarvi, e farvi mostra

In short,
To prove to you and demonstrate at
last

Di mio senno e virtù, vado a sentire,
Procurerò scoprire, e s'ei resiste,

My wisdom and ability, I'll endeavour
To learn the truth from him, and if he
refuses,

Le spiego il vostro amor, la vostra fede,

I'll point out to him your love, your
faithfulness;

Lasciate far a me, già son sicuro
Che tosto cede. Eh, eh! Se cederà!

Leave it to me, I'm absolutely sure
That he'll soon yield... that is, if he
yields.

Ma non piangete più per carità.

Just don't cry any more for pity's sake!

He leaves.

SCENE XVI

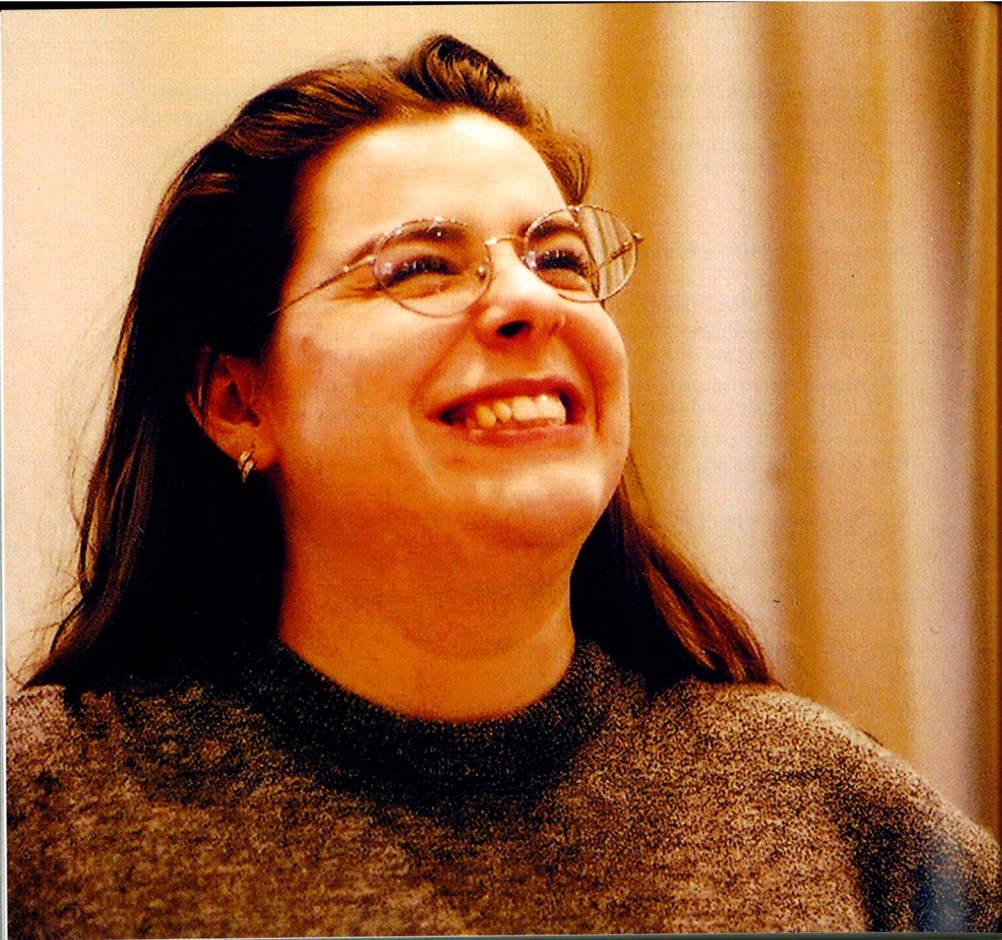
[11]

ISAURA

(alone)

O ciel! qual mai contrasto
Io provo nel mio sen. Sperar vorrei...
Ma dal mio cor la speme,
Oh Dio! già s'involò... Forse il mio Duca

O heaven! What confusing turmoil
I feel in my breast. I want to hope...
But all hope, O God,
Has fled my heart... Perhaps my
Duke



Scoprì della Regina
L'arcana fatale, che guidar mi deve

O a piena gioia in braccio,
O infelice per sempre... Io tutta agghiaccio!

E s'egli più non m'ama?...
S'ei dimentico, oh Ciel! dell'amor mio,

Me lasciasse al dolor?... Crudele istante!

Quando mai fine avran pene cotante?...
Tù squarcia il denso velo,
E del mio duol abbi pietade, o cielo!

[12]

Mio pianto rasciuga,
Mio duolo raffrena,
Tù ammorza la pena
D'un misero cor...
Ti chiedo lo sposo
Quell'alma che adoro,
Perchè il mio tesoro
Negar vuoi tu a me?
Perchè negar, perchè?
Lo chiede quest'alma,
Lo brama il mio cor...

Has learned from the Queen
The deadly secret which could bring
me

Either utter joy in his arms
Or eternal unhappiness... I'm frozen
with fear!

And if he no longer loves me?...
O heavens, if he doesn't care about
my love,

Will he abandon me to sorrow?...
Cruel moment!

When will my torment ever cease?...
Rend the thick veil of doubt
And take pity on my suffering,
O Heaven!

Dry my tears,
End my grief,
Relieve the pain
Of an unhappy heart...
I beg you, O husband,
O soul that I adore,
Why, my beloved,
Do you still refuse me?...
Why do you refuse, why?
My soul implores you,
My heart longs for you...

Viva viva Isaura!

Oh ciel! che sento?

E' pentito... a voi sen riede
Col suo amor, colla sua fede...
Era ancora titubante...
Gl'ie ne ho dette tante tante tante...

Che lo indussi a ritornar.

(Margherita, Lavarenne, Carlo, Bellapunta and a large contingent of soldiers enter.)

Isaura amata,
Il tuo Duca a te ritorno.

La mia gioia a voi si dè.

Condona il fallo mio...
A' piedi tuoi.

Deh sorgi, vieni al mio sen...
D'avverso fato or posso
Sfidar tutto il rigor,

CHORUS

(off-stage)

Hurrah! Hurrah for Isaura!

ISAURA

Heavens, what's this I hear?

MICHELE

(rushing in)

He's repentant... he's returning to you
With his love, with his faithfulness...
He was still hesitant...
But when I explained everything to
him...

He was persuaded to return.

MARGHERITA

Beloved Isaura,
I'm returning your Duke to you.

ISAURA

I owe my joy to you.

LAVARENNE

Forgive my mistake...
I'm at your feet.

ISAURA

Ah, rise, come to my heart...
Now I can face all the severity
Of adverse fate,



Se ti ritorna un nume
Al mio costante amor...

Ti stringo al sen, Isaura;
Duca, la man ti stendo;
Carlo all'onor io rendo;
Michele avrà mercè.

Regina, un cor più nobile
Del vostro non si dà...

[13]

Ah! sposo adorabile,
Tenero oggetto,
Che tanto all'anima
Mi desta affetto,
Deh! concedetemi
Di respirar...

Al cielo ascendano
Tuoi cari accenti,
E delle vostr' anime
Premii la fè.

Si può resistere
A mille pene,
Ma tanto giubilo,
Ma tanto bene,

Because God has restored you
To my enduring love...

MARGHERITA

I press you to my heart, Isaura;
Duke, I extend my hand to you;
I restore full honour to Carlo;
Michele has my gratitude.

CHORUS

O Queen, there is no heart
More noble than yours.

ISAURA

Oh, dear husband,
Beloved object,
You've awakened so much
Affection in my soul,
Ah, at last let me
Catch my breath...

CHORUS

May your sweet words
Ascend to heaven,
And may loyalty reward
Your souls.

ISAURA

I was able to withstand
A thousand agonies,
But it's impossible
To endure

Non è possibile
Di sopportar...

Al cielo ascendano
Tuoi cari accenti,
E delle vostr' anime
Premii la fè.

Oh, sposo adorabile,
Tenero oggetto, *ecc.*

Gloria, ed amor...

Si può resistere

Tutto un tal giorno...

A mille pene,

Raccoglie in se.

A mille pene,
Ma tanto giubilo,
Ma tanto bene, *ecc*

Il cielo premij la fe
Gloria, fortuna, onor
Tutto un tal giorno, *ecc*

So much happiness,
So much bliss...

CHORUS

May your sweet words
Ascend to heaven,
And may loyalty reward
Your souls.

ISAURA

Oh, dear husband,
Beloved object, *etc.*

CHORUS

Glory and love...

ISAURA

I was able to withstand

CHORUS

...come together

ISAURA

A thousand agonies,

CHORUS

...throughout the day

ISAURA

A thousand agonies,
But it's impossible
To endure, *etc*

CHORUS

Heaven rewarded our faith
with glory, good fortune and honour
throughout the day, *etc.*

Al cielo ascendano
Tuoï cari accenti

Si può resistere
A mille pene, *ecc*

May your dear voice
be heard in heaven.

ISAURA

One can stand firm
against a thousand troubles, *etc.*

END OF THE OPERA



APPENDIX

Revised version of Margherita's aria in Act II

[14]

MARGHERITA

Dolce albergo di pace, ombrose piante,
Un infelice amante
Tra voi cerca riposo... Ah! qual fra voi

Spira consolatrice aura tranquilla
Che soave da calma al mio dolore!...

Ah! qui mi sento felice in sen ancor,

Ma tanto mio contento tutto sparì...

Svanito è il caro incanto,

O shady trees, sweet shelter of peace,
An unhappy lover
Is seeking refuge among you... Ah,
the comforting,
Tranquil breeze that you exhale
Brings a calming relief to my
suffering!...

Ah, here my heart feels happy again,
even if

Most of my contentment has utterly
vanished...

Gone is the blissful illusion,



E a me non resta più che duol e pianto!

[15]

Perchè mai sedurmi amore,
Perchè, perchè, perchè?
Ah, sperava gioie il core
Ma la sorte lo tradì!
Bella calma ch'io provai
D'innocenza nei bei dì
A me più non tornerai,
No, no, no, no, no, non tornerai!
Il piacer per me finì,
Ah, sperava gioie il core
Ma la sorte lo tradì!...

(The chorus of Highlanders enters.)

CHORUS OF HIGHLANDERS

Ah t'affretta! ah t'affretta!
Appar da lunge un soldato,
E' un nemico.

MARGHERITA

Che mai dite?... me infelice!
Oh sciagura!... il figlio mio!
Tu lo salva, ah! giusto Dio!
Di lui senti, o ciel! pietà!...

CHORUS OF HIGHLANDERS

Presto! andiamo!
Potrai forse il tuo figlio salvare!

And all that remains for me is sorrow
and weeping!

Why did you seduce me, love,
Why, why, why?
Ah, my heart expected happiness,
But Fate betrayed it!
The blissful calm that I felt
In the sunny days of innocence
Will never return to me again,
No, no, no, no, no, will never return!
My delight has ended,
Ah, my heart expected happiness,
But Fate betrayed it!...

Ah, hurry, make haste!
A soldier is approaching from afar,
It's the enemy.

What did you say?... Wretched me!
Oh, misfortune!... My son!
Ah, merciful God, save him!
Take pity on him!, O Heaven!...

Quickly! Let's go!
Perhaps you'll be able to save your
son!

T'affretta! andiamo! andiamo!
T'affretta! il figlio a salvar!
Potrai forse il figlio ancor salvar!

[16]

Incerto palpito
Il cor m'assale;
Smania più barbara,
Tormento eguale,
Qual madre misera
Finor provò?
Fia pago il perfido
Destin tiranno;
Già l'alma m'agita
Un tanto affanno
Che appena reggere
Il cor vi può,
No, no, no, no, il cor non può!...
Incerto palpito
Il cor m'assale;
Stato più barbaro,
Contrasto eguale,
Qual madre misera
Finor provò?

Deh! ti calma!... il figlio amato
Difensori in noi trovò
Sì, difensori in noi trovò!

MARGHERITA

Hurry! Let's go! Let's go!
Hurry! Save your son!
Perhaps you may yet save your son!

An anxious throbbing
Assails my heart;
What unhappy mother
Ever before suffered
More barbarous anguish
Or greater torment?
Cruel, ruthless Fate
Demands satisfaction;
My soul is racked
By such violent pain
That my heart
Can barely stand it,
No, no, no, no, can barely stand it!...
An anxious throbbing
Assails my heart;
What unhappy mother
Ever before suffered
A more painful ordeal
Or greater despair?

CHORUS OF HIGHLANDERS

Ah, calm yourself!... Your beloved son
Has found defenders in us,
Yes, found defenders in us!

MARGHERITA

Chi mai provò? chi mai provò?

Who ever suffered? Who ever
suffered?

Contrasto eguale

Who ever suffered

Chi mai nell'anima provò?

Greater anguish in their soul?

CHORUS OF HIGHLANDERS

Deh! ti calma!... il figlio amato

Ah, calm yourself!... Perhaps Heaven

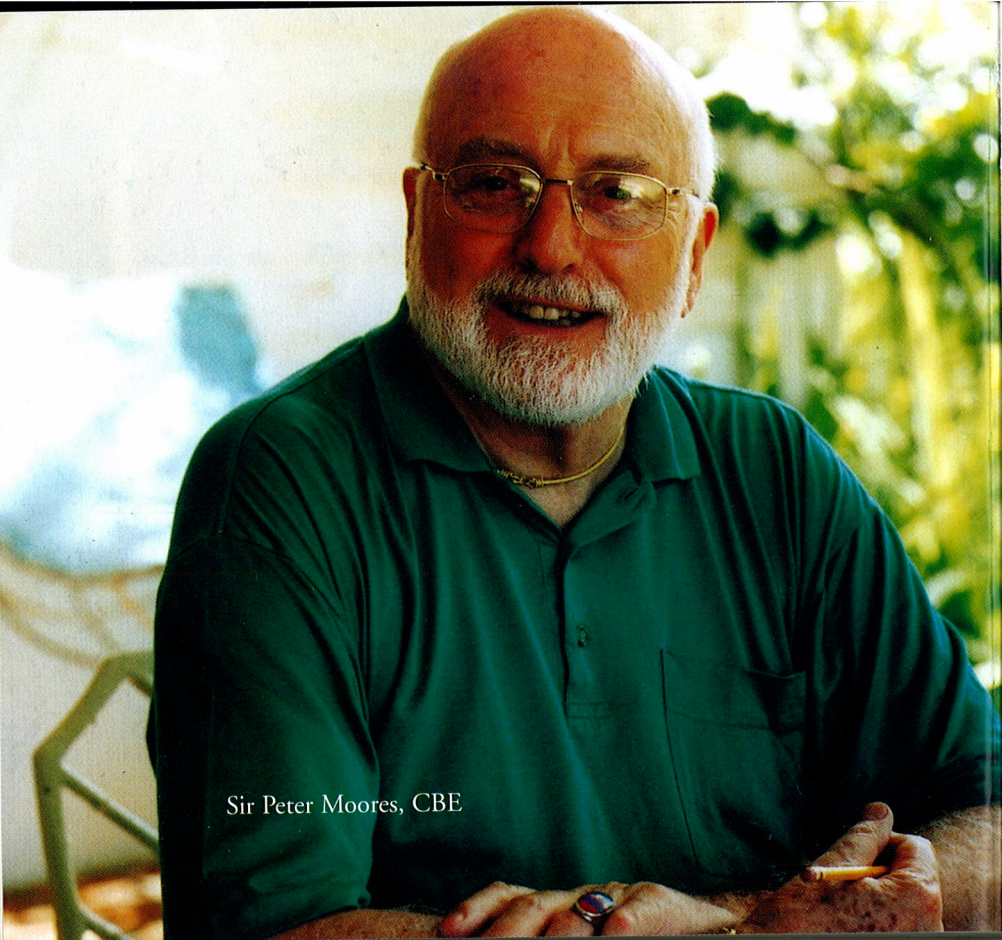
Forse il cielo ti salvò!

Has saved your beloved son for you!

English translation © Richard Arsenty, 1999

David Parry





Sir Peter Moores, CBE

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