

Donizetti
Rosmonda d'Inghilterra

ORC13

*Opera
Rara*

in association with

PETER MOORES FOUNDATION

Box cover: *Queen Eleanor and the Fair Rosamund*
by Evelyn de Morgan (1855-1919)

Booklet cover: *Fair Rosamund* by John William Waterhouse

Opposite: Gaetano Donizetti

CD Faces: Fanny Tacchinardi-Persiani (CD1)
and Gilbert-Louis Duprez (CD2). Opera Rara Archive

Gaetano Donizetti
ROSMONDA D'INGHILTERRA

Tragedia lirica in two acts

Libretto by Felice Romani

First performance: 27 February 1834

Teatro della Pergola, Florence

Enrico II, *King of England*.....Bruce Ford
Leonora di Guienna, *wife of Enrico II*.....Nelly Miricioiu
Rosmonda, *Enrico's mistress and daughter of Clifford*.....Renée Fleming
Gualtiero Clifford, *former tutor of the king*.....Alastair Miles
Arturo, *Enrico's young page*.....Diana Montague

Geoffrey Mitchell Choir

Officials, councillors, courtiers, pages, soldiers, tenants of Woodstock

Philharmonia Orchestra
Christopher Warren-Green, leader

David Parry, conductor

Producer and Artistic Director: Patric Schmid
Opera Rara Managing Director: Stephen Revell

Music copyist: Robert Roberts

Assistant conductor: Nicholas Kok
Répétiteur: Jean Mallandaine
Italian coach: Gabriella Ezra

Notes and English libretto: Jeremy Commons

Recording engineer: Bob Auger

Recorded at Henry Wood Hall, London
July 1994

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FANNY TACCHINARDI-PERSIANI
Creator of the role of Rosmonda
at the Teatro della Pergola,
Florence 27 February 1834



	Duration	Page
ACT ONE		
[1] Overture	6'53	81
[2] 'Non udiste? un suon di tube' – Chorus	3'00	81
Aria – Leonora		
[3] 'Dove t'inoltri?'	3'01	82
[4] 'Ti vedrò, donzella audace'	2'33	85
[5] 'Amor, che tutti accende' – Chorus	1'43	87
Aria – Enrico		
[6] 'Dopo i lauri di vittoria'	2'56	87
[7] 'Potessi vivere com'io vorrei'	4'24	88
Duet – Enrico and Clifford		
[8] 'Chi veggio? Tu Clifford?'	3'09	89
[9] 'Tu non conosci il merto'	4'37	93
[10] 'Va: tu primier dimentico'	2'14	96
Aria – Rosmonda		
[11] 'Volgon tre lune'	4'40	97
[12] 'Perchè non ho del vento'	6'56	98
[13] 'Torna, torna, o caro oggetto'	3'18	100
Duet – Rosmonda and Clifford		
[14] 'T'appressa, Arturo'	3'32	102
[15] 'Deh! t'arrestal!'	6'03	105
[16] 'Vieni meco, ed un ritiro'	3'28	108
Finale Primo		
[17] 'E' desso'	4'48	110

	Duration	Page
[18] 'E' dessa: alfin la perfida'	3'50	114
[19] 'Tace ognun!'	6'20	115

CD 2
72'17
ACT TWO

[1] 'Udimmo, o Re' – Chorus Duet – Leonora and Enrico	3'34	120
[2] 'Quanto dal vostro zelo'	4'12	121
[3] 'Mi splendeva un serto'	3'35	123
[4] 'Caro, sebben colpevole'	5'38	124
[5] 'Tu sei mio' Aria – Arturo	2'44	125
[6] 'Che pensi Arturo?'	1'52	126
[7] 'Io non ti posso offrir'	2'10	126
[8] 'Ritorna a splendere' Aria – Rosmonda	2'44	127
[9] 'Ma il tempo vola'	3'27	127
[10] 'Io fuggirò quel perfido'	6'14	131
[11] 'Senza pace, e senza speme' Duet – Rosmonda and Enrico	3'33	133
[12] 'Giurato è il sacrificio'	4'46	134
[13] 'Giurasti un dì... rammentalo'	5'17	137
[14] 'Concedo un breve istante'	4'02	138
[15] 'Ecco gli antichi platanì' – Chorus	3'40	139

	Duration	Page
Duet – Rosmonda and Leonora		
[16] ‘Primiera io giungo’	2’16	140
[17] ‘Sì, son io’	2’54	141
[18] ‘Tu morrai – tu m’hai costretta’	3’19	143
Finale Secondo		
[19] ‘Sorgi, e vieni’	1’53	144
[20] ‘Tu! Spergiuro, disumano’	4’17	146



FELICE ROMANI
(Librettist)
1788-1865

ROSMONDA D'INGHILTERRA

HISTORY OR LEGEND? The story of Fair Rosamond belongs to that misty area that lies between the two. Rosamond Clifford was undoubtedly a historical figure: the daughter, we are told, of Sir Thomas Clifford, a Berkshire knight, or of Walter de Clifford, a Herefordshire baron. And it is equally true that Henry II, estranged from his wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, openly acknowledged his love for her. But at this point history and legend diverge. History relates that Rosamond retired to a Benedictine convent at Godstow, outside Oxford, and died there some 20 years later, in 1176 or 1177. Legend, on the other hand, embroiders a more romantic tale. Henry, according to popular tradition, lodged her in a bower or tower, constructed in the midst of a protective maze in Woodstock Park. This maze was so intricate in its plan and construction that it was virtually impossible to find the way in without the guidance of a secret thread. King Henry, of course, possessed the secret; but unfortunately it was also discovered by a jealous Queen Eleanor who, penetrating the leafy recesses of the retreat, appeared before her victim with a dagger in one hand and a bowl of poison in the other. A terrified Rosamond was forced to choose between one mode of death and the other...

For many years the exact source of the operatic libretto remained a mystery; it was even surmised that Felice Romani, who was widely read and is said to have spoken English, may have discovered it while reading histories of England. In 1988, however, Alexander Weathersson, in an article entitled 'English legend, French play, two Italian composers', published in the

Donizetti Society Journal 6, pinpointed the source as *Rosemonde* (1826), a tragedy written by a French soldier – later the librarian of the royal château of St Cloud – Emile Boissnormand de Bonnechose (1801-1875). An anti-English play which deliberately exploited historical incidents of which England had little reason to be proud, it ends with a double murder: Eléonore de Guyenne (as Eleanor of Aquitaine is here styled) stabs Rosemonde, while Henri slays Clifford, her father. Rosemonde, we may note, is not given any choice in the manner of her death: in this play and in the several operas which were eventually based upon it, she is simply stabbed to death.

As Alexander Weatherston explained, Romani's adaptation of Bonnechose's play for the operatic stage 'both enhanced and diminished' its source. Inevitably there were changes, for Italian opera had its own conventions and requirements. Psychological complexities in the characterisation were simplified, and intricacies of incident and action pruned. Anyone who reads Bonnechose's play may well find the operatic libretto bare and simplistic by comparison, but we should also recognise, one or two passages of conventional platitude notwithstanding, the clarity with which the characters are drawn, and the trenchancy with which they express their heightened passions, their desires and their perplexities.

Romani's libretto was not, however, written in the first instance for Donizetti. The original commission was for the Teatro la Fenice in Venice in the carnival of 1828-1829, and the composer, recently returned to Italy after three years spent in Portugal and three more in London, was Carlo Coccia.

His opera, *Rosmonda*, first performed on 27 February 1829, was not a success, though the reasons for its failure remain one of the intriguing mysteries of operatic history of the time. The superiority of the libretto to most texts that were then being set was widely recognised. As the *Gazzetta Privilegiata di Venezia* put it: ‘If [ever] there was an occasion on which flashes and flames of genius should have issued from [the composer’s] mind, this ought to have been it, for the poet offered him a libretto the like of which has not been read for many years. Good and natural conduct of the drama, varied and diverse situations, variety of events and passions; storms, woods, solitudes, castles, romances, festivities, merry-makings, betrayals; hate, love, jealousies, misfortunes – all was calculated by the poet to kindle the imagination and touch the hearts of the audience.’

The quality of Coccia’s music also seemed at odds with the outcome. As a correspondent of the Milanese journal *I Teatri* wrote: ‘One does not know how to account for the scant success of this opera, since well conducted and effective pieces are to be found in many places.’ For confirmation that the score contained outstanding items, we would recommend readers to listen to Rosmonda’s romanza, ‘Perchè non ho del vento?’, interpreted by Yvonne Kenny and Diana Montague and included on Opera Rara’s *A Hundred Years of Italian Opera 1820-1830* (ORCH 104).

The explanation most probably lay in the performance itself: in the manner in which the singers acquitted themselves. On paper it seemed a strong cast – Giuditta Grisi as Rosmonda, Clorinda Corradi Pantanelli as Leonora, Giovanni Battista Verger as Enrico, Carlo Ottolini Porto as Clifford, and



CARLO COCCIA

Romani's libretto to Coccia's
opera *Rosmonda*, first performed
27 February 1829, was later to
be used by Donizetti for his
Rosmonda d'Inghilterra

Marietta Brambilla as Arturo. Yet it is clear that, at the first performance anyway, something was seriously amiss. To quote the correspondent of *I Teatri* once more: 'It is not known why *Verger*, who generally sings with zeal and earns applause, should have performed, as it were, like a man fallen ill. And indeed one really would have believed him ill, had he not fully demonstrated all his vocal powers in the Act II duet with Grisi, at which point the public honoured him, and his valient companion and the worthy composer of the music, with the most lively applause.'

The cloud that hung over much of *Verger's* performance would seem to have been contagious. The *Gazzetta Privilegiata di Venezia* went so far as to say: 'The new score exercised a sinister power over the singers, and, as it were, tarred their wings... Only Corradi maintained her stature, and even drew some advantage from the music, so that one may describe her, in the words of the libretto, as the queen of the stage.'

Whatever the truth of the matter, Coccia's *Rosmonda* did not hold the stage in Venice, and was never produced elsewhere. Following the carnival of 1829 it was, to all intents, a dead letter.

The praise that had been lavished upon the libretto was not forgotten, however, so that it is not surprising that, only two years later, in Milan in 1831, a promising young composer named Luigi Majocchi, from Codogno in Lombardy, should have produced a new setting, again under the title *Rosmonda*; and that in 1833 Donizetti, seeking a text for the Teatro della

Pergola in Florence, should have chosen to set it yet again. We must, though, ask ourselves why a composer as prominent as Donizetti should have decided to set this old libretto rather than a new one.

The answer to this question is not hard to find. Reduced to its simplest terms, it is that Felice Romani, though by far the most accomplished librettist of his age, was a most unreliable and exasperating collaborator. Overworked, thin-skinned, short-tempered and self-opinionated, he would seem at one time or another to have had all the composers with whom he worked writhing in anxiety and uncertainty. They would see precious time slipping away; deadlines, even those stipulated in contracts, would come and go. Libretti were nearly always delivered late, sometimes not at all.

But the origins of *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* were even stormier than this suggests, for Donizetti's relations with Alessandro Lanari, the impresario who commissioned the work, were also fraught and unhappy at this time. There had been friction between them over the hasty composition and late production of *Parisina* (Teatro della Pergola, Florence, 17 March 1833), though both composer and impresario were equally victims of typical tardiness on Romani's part. Donizetti also bore a grudge since, when Lanari had been approached by the directors of the Théâtre-Italian in Paris, who wished to present *Parisina* there, he had demanded such an exorbitant price that negotiations had fallen through.

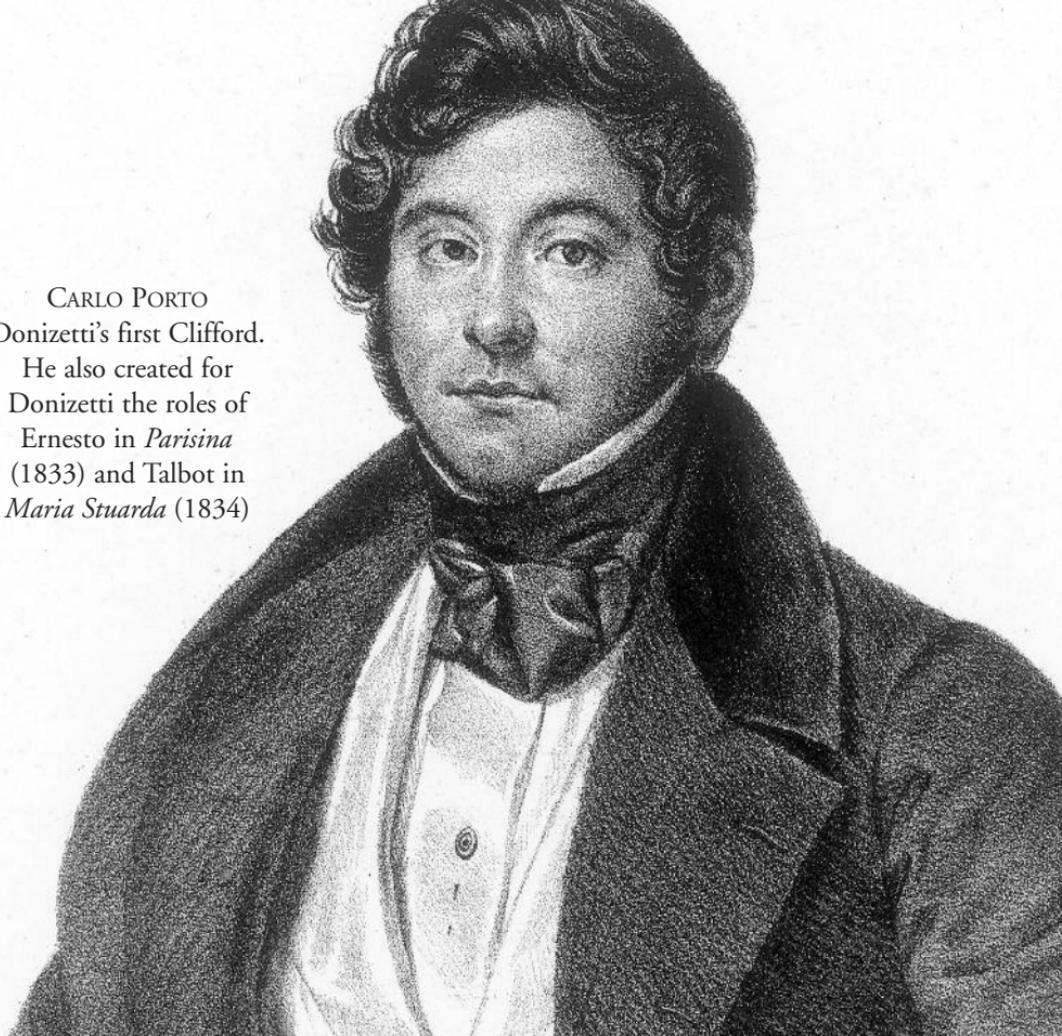


GILBERT-LOUIS DUPREZ
Donizetti's first Enrico.
He created the leading
roles in Donizetti's
Les martyrs (1840),
La favorite (1840) and
Dom Sébastien (1843)

The agreement between Donizetti and Lanari for the opera that was eventually to become *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* had initially been for the carnival of 1834, but the above-mentioned difficulties resulted in a series of testy, even acrimonious, exchanges which saw the contract first broken off, then reinstated, and eventually postponed two to three months to the later Lenten season. Released from his obligations to Lanari for carnival, Donizetti signed a contract with La Scala which resulted in the composition and production of *Lucrezia Borgia* (26 December 1833). This opera, too, is relevant to our discussion, for it was also composed to a Romani libretto. It was, however, the last new Romani text that Donizetti was destined ever to receive. Though he was to negotiate on later occasions, Romani never obliged. Instead, the composer would find himself, as in the case of the present opera, having to settle for old texts, already set by others, or having to turn at the eleventh hour to other, less accomplished poets.

But as yet he could have had no idea that Romani was to prove so intractable. Matters, if anything, looked promising, and even his exasperation with Lanari, as its height in the first days of August 1833, was mollified when he learned, probably from his publisher Giovanni Ricordi, that the impresario was doing his best to elicit a new libretto from Romani for him. From the middle of August his letters are consequently more conciliatory, and turn from the question of the libretto to that of the singers. He asks for the baritone Domenico Cosselli, already his first Azzo in *Parisina*, and later his first Enrico in *Lucia di Lammermoor* (Teatro S. Carlo, Naples, 26 September 1835); otherwise he would prefer to write a semiserious opera, and employ

CARLO PORTO
Donizetti's first Clifford.
He also created for
Donizetti the roles of
Ernesto in *Parisina*
(1833) and Talbot in
Maria Stuarda (1834)



the veteran comic bass, Giuseppe Frezzolini (his first *Dulcamara* in *L'elisir d'amore*, Teatro della Canobbiana, Milan, 12 May 1832).

By the end of October we find him raising the question of a prima donna. Various names are mentioned: Luigia Boccabadati ('but she is four to five months pregnant'), Fanny Tacchinardi-Persiani ('but she is on the cold side, on the cold side, very precise though, and perfectly in tune'), Diomilla Santina Ferlotti ('they say she was due to make a comeback, but at the dress rehearsal her voice went down in pitch again'), and Teresa Melas ('who is not bad, you know'). As his leading man he hoped to have the French tenor Gilbert-Louis Duprez, who had just created the part of Ugo in *Parisina* and who before long was to be his first Edgardo in *Lucia*; and as his 'seconda donna' Duprez's wife, Alexandrine Duperron Duprez.

The interesting point here is to note how fluid the whole situation was. A tragedia lirica or an opera semiseria? A whole list of singers whose talents and availability were under consideration... Yet was it not a little late for such exploratory casting of the net? Already it was mid-November, and the opera was due for production in the Lenten season of 1834. Nowadays if any composer found himself in such a situation he would be beside himself with anxiety. Yet in Italy in the first half of last century we must realise that tight schedules and hasty composition were the rule rather than the exception: Donizetti, long accustomed to working under such conditions, would have told himself philosophically that there was still ample time – generous time – in which to compose an opera.

ADELINA SPECH-SALVI
She was to have made
her debut in the role
of Leonora in the
Naples premiere,
which never took place.



The other point we may note – since she was the singer who was eventually to create the part of Rosmonda – is his opinion of Fanny Tacchinardi-Persiani as being: ‘freddina, freddina’ – ‘on the cold side, on the cold side’. Given the later reputation of this soprano, and the fact that within two years she was to be his first Lucia, this less-than-enthusiastic assessment may seem a little strange. We should realise, however, that, still aged only 21, Fanny, the daughter of the tenor Nicola Tacchinardi and the wife of the composer Giuseppe Persiani, had made her debut only a little over a year earlier, in July 1832 in Livorno. Her musicianship – the accuracy and secure sense of pitch that Donizetti noted – were already resulting in a meteoric career, yet she was scarcely yet an experienced singer. It must also be acknowledged that a certain coldness of stage personality remained with her throughout her career. As Henry Chorley unkindly put it: ‘She was not precisely insignificant to see, so much as pale, plain and anxious. She gave the impression of one who had left sorrow and sickness at home.’ Her growing reputation was, therefore, built squarely upon her voice and technique: upon her tonal quality and her dazzling agility and precision. As Théophile Gautier wrote: ‘[Her voice] has a surprising range, sweetness and resonance; it is one of the most marvellous that it has ever been given to the *dilettanti* to hear’.

At what precise date it was decided to reset the libretto of Coccia’s *Rosmonda* is not clear, but by 20 November, even if still only a second choice, the composer was at least mentioning it as a distinct possibility. At this point he was still hoping for a new libretto – on the medieval Florentine story of Buondelmonte, ironically the same subject he was soon to be forced to accept



CAROLINA UNGHER

She was to have headed the cast
in a proposed performance,
at the Venice Carnival, of
Elenora di Gujenna, subsequently
renamed *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*,
but this was never to take place.

in Naples as an eleventh-hour replacement for a prohibited *Maria Stuarda* – but, if that should not be forthcoming, he falls back on *Rosmonda* as an alternative. We can only assume that Romani, in refusing to write on Buondelmonte, protested that he had his hands full preparing the text for *Lucrezia Borgia*, and could not manage two libretti at once.

He did, however, agree to revise *Rosmonda*, and the Museo Donizettiano of Bergamo preserves an intriguing undated note – which has been attributed to the last days of 1833 or the first of 1834 – in which the composer lists the changes he believes desirable:

Omit Arturo entirely.
Enlarge *Rosmonda*, and give her
a cavatina not interrupted by anyone.
End the opera with the tenor's aria.
The terzetto of Act I between *Rosmonda*,
Clifford and Arturo to become a duet.
Do not short-change *Rosmonda* in the Finale,
or at least in the stretta.
The Introduction shorter if possible
And whatever else it may please
Friend Romani to add or omit.

A fascinating – and even a confusing – fragment, since never at any stage, either for Florence or when he subsequently came to revise the score in

Naples, did Donizetti succeed in gaining all these changes. Though the Act I terzetto did indeed become a duet through the silencing at this point of Arturo, the page was never to disappear completely from the opera. Rosmonda, moreover, was certainly not given 'a cavatina not interrupted by anyone': Arturo's participation therein may have been reduced, but he still added his mite. And never at any stage did the opera end with an aria for the tenor.

Donizetti did, on the other hand, succeed in having Rosmonda's participation in the First Finale enlarged. Whereas in Coccia's opera she has no words in the stretta, in Donizetti's she rides the ensemble, as we should expect, with Leonora and Enrico.

Most important of all, however, the Introduction to Act I was not only shortened, but completely rewritten and given a new setting. In Coccia's opera, the curtain had risen on a forest in the vicinity of Woodstock Castle. A violent storm had been shown interrupting and dispersing a great hunt. Various huntsmen made their appearance, dismayed and confused since they had lost track of their mistress, the Queen, as she pursued a wounded stag. Forming into groups, they dispersed in search of her. And then, as the storm subsided, Leonora entered alone to sing her cavatina, revealing her mistrust of the King and her jealousy of her suspected rival.

As she finished the slow movement of her aria, her followers returned. Finding her, they informed her of her proximity to Woodstock, where the



EUGENIA TADOLINI
One of the proposed
singers for the Venice
production which
never took place.

King, just returned from Ireland, was momentarily expected. This information precipitated her cabaletta, as she anticipated the possibility of actually discovering and confronting her rival.

A delegation then arrived from Norfolk, governor of the castle, inviting her to join the festive welcome prepared for the King. She accepted, but having perceived Arturo, the King's page, in the party, held him back to interrogate him in recitative and duet for information regarding Rosmonda.

Colourful though this may have been, the totally different conception that Romani now came up with for Donizetti is far more economical. The curtain now rises upon Woodstock Park with a view of the Castle in the background. The local tenantry hear the trumpets announcing the King's return and race off to greet him, leaving the stage empty for the entrance of Leonora and Arturo. And whereas in Coccia the following exposition required a cavatina followed by a duet, here the two are telescoped: Leonora questions Arturo in recitative and then sings a cavatina, to which he adds his *perichini* or intermittent contributions. The hunt and the storm may be lost, but the essential drama of the Queen's jealousy is launched with greater immediacy.

As will be clear from all that has been said, the negotiations and deliberations leading to the composition of this opera may, up to this point, be traced in considerable detail in the letters Donizetti wrote to Lanari. On 17 January 1834, however, these letters temporarily cease. Very soon after 20 January, Donizetti must have arrived in Florence, and there, in daily contact

with his impresario, he had no further need to communicate with him on paper. The correspondence does not resume until mid-April, by which time the opera has been produced, and composer and impresario have once more gone their separate ways.

We know nothing, therefore, of how the final casting was arrived at, or of how the opera seemed to shape up during rehearsals. Suffice it to say that Fanny Tacchinardi-Persiani was engaged to sing Rosmonda, that Duprez was duly contracted as Enrico, and that Anna Del Sere¹, rather than Alexandrine Duprez, was cast as Leonora. The eventual Clifford was Carlo Ottolini Porto, rather than Domenico Cosselli, and the cast was completed by the contralto Giuseppina Merola as Arturo.

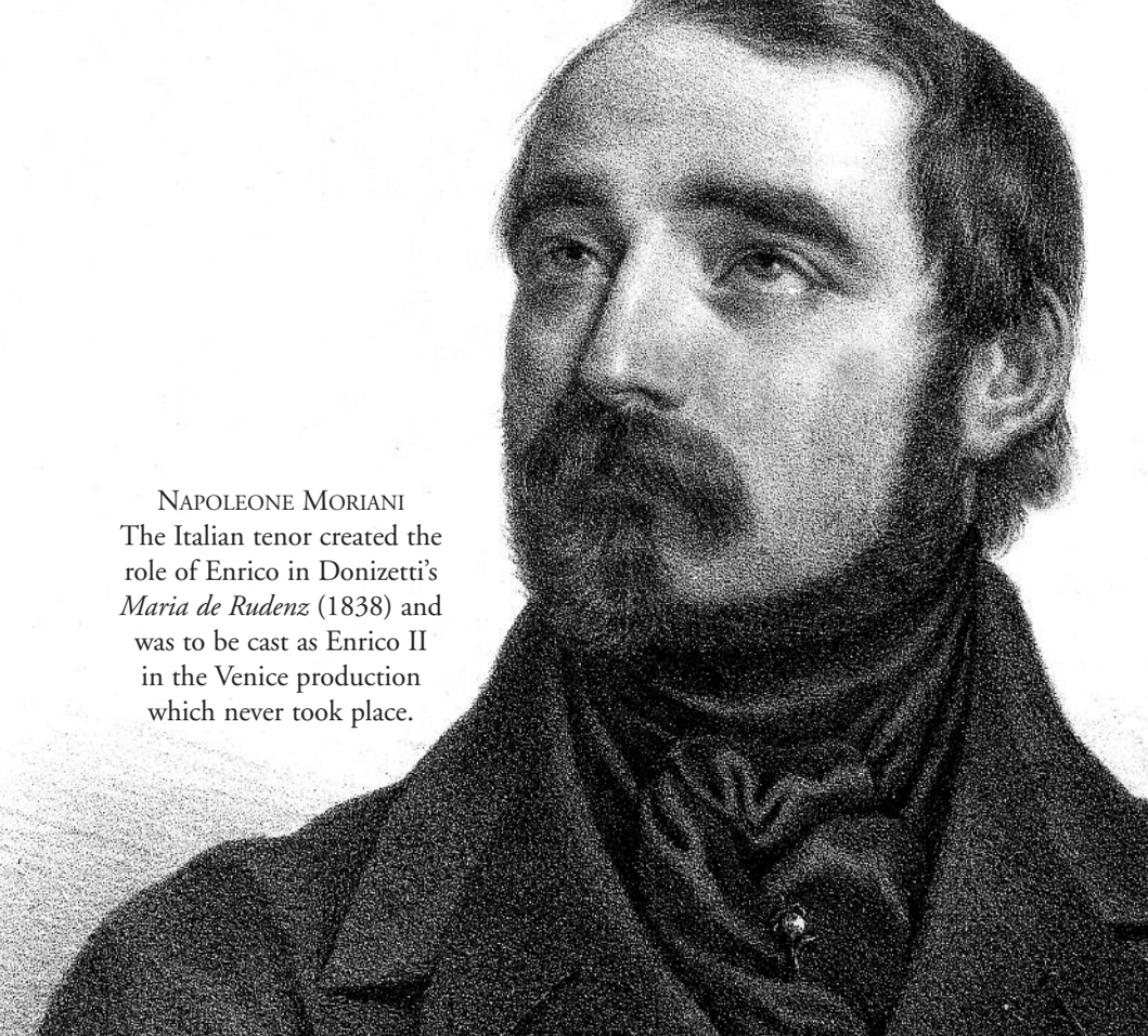
Of these, the first to invite any writer's comment is probably the least-known, Giuseppina Merola, for, though she remains a shadowy figure, she has one sure, if dubious, claim to fame: it would seem that at the time of Donizetti's previous visit to Florence, to compose and produce *Parisina* in March 1833, he – in the words of William Ashbrook – ‘passed his idle hours’ with her. The evidence of this affair is contained in a letter which Lanari wrote to Romani on 1 August 1833. Anticipating the opera which he hoped Romani and Donizetti would compose for him in 1834, he said: ‘If you should need a *musichetto*, I could give you La Merola, who has a beautiful figure, is pretty and able, and with whom Donizetti cuckolded me; using her,

¹ The name also appears as Delsere and Del Serre.

you would do Donizetti a service.’ Quoted by Jarro (Giulio Piccini) in his *Memorie d'un impresario fiorentino* (Florence, 1892) and repeated by Alberto Cametti in *Donizetti a Roma* (Rome, 1907), the story has since been retold many times. The only occasion on which Donizetti, at this time of course a married man, is known to have entered into a liaison with a singer, it is certainly typical of the general theatrical mores of the time; whether or not it should be regarded as typical of Donizetti's own conduct is a question less easily answered.

Of the other singers mentioned, a certain notoriety also attaches to Anna Del Sere. Following the production of *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*, she was engaged to create the part of Elisabetta in *Maria Stuarda* in Naples. This production, as is well known, was never mounted, since the King of Naples, Ferdinand II, intervened in person and prohibited it. Before he did so, however, Anna Del Sere had already brought herself to public attention. Unable to conceal or control her jealousy of Giuseppina Ronzi de Begnis, the prima donna cast as Maria Stuarda, she had physically come to blows with her during rehearsals. If Del Sere, as would seem to be the case, provoked the scuffle, it was Ronzi de Begnis who had the better of it. Del Sere, if we may believe the somewhat confused press report of the time, was carried home to bed, where she languished for more than a fortnight.

Leaving scandal and gossip aside, perhaps the strongest and most interesting member of the cast after Fanny Tacchinardi-Persiani and Duprez was the Clifford, Carlo Ottolini Porto. He was, moreover, the only member of the cast who had also sung in Coccia's *Rosmonda* in Venice in 1829.



NAPOLEONE MORIANI

The Italian tenor created the role of Enrico in Donizetti's *Maria de Rudenz* (1838) and was to be cast as Enrico II in the Venice production which never took place.

Although we have no accounts of the rehearsals, one unexpected ray of light is thrown upon them by a particularly important piece of textual evidence. In the libretto that was printed for the premiere, Rosmonda in the second scene – the second tableau – of Act II sings her aria, ‘Io fuggirò quel perfido’². When she reaches the cabaletta, the words printed in the body of the text begin:

Lasciate che in lagrime	[Let my heart drown itself
Si strugge il mio core...	In tears...]

While a footnote adds ‘verses that are substituted for those of Rosmonda’:

Senza pace, e senza speme	[Bereft of peace, bereft of hope,
Con un cor che troppo	With a heart too alive to
sente...	sorrow...]

The only explanation that can be brought to this is that the original cabaletta, ‘Lasciate che in lagrime’, failed to please and was discarded during rehearsals, to be replaced at a very late hour – after the text had been set up for printing – by the new cabaletta, ‘Senza pace, e senza speme’. This hypothesis is confirmed by reference to Donizetti’s manuscript of the opera, preserved at the Naples Conservatorium of Music, S. Pietro a Majella. There,

² This aria was published by Latte in Paris as ‘Fia che m’asconda agli uomini’ and as a result is often referred to by this title. The nomenclature is, however, a little odd, since the aria actually begins two lines earlier in the text, at ‘Io fuggirò quel perfido’. It appeared under this more correct name when printed by Girard in Naples and by the Stamperia di musica l’Euterpe Ticinese in Pavia.

on paper that is distinguishable from the rest of the score, we find ‘Senza pace, senza speme’. ‘Lasciate che in lagrime’ has clearly been excised and destroyed – except for the tempo di mezzo or bridge-passage for Arturo and Clifford which linked the two verses: that is retained, though with considerable changes – corrections and cancellations – to adapt it to its new context.

Rosmonda d’Inghilterra was given its first performance at the Teatro della Pergola in Florence on 27 February 1834. It was well received, even if it did not carry its audience by storm. Strangely enough, no review appeared in the official *Gazzetta di Firenze*, though at least one Florentine newspaper, the *Giornale di Commercio*, briefly noticed it. Accounts also appeared further afield in such journals as *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* (Milan), *Il Censore universale dei Teatri* (Milan), *Il Raccoglitore* (Naples) and *L’Omnibus* (Naples).

The brief notice in the *Giornale di Commercio* read:

Rosmunda [sic] or *Eleonora di Gujenna* pleased very much on the first night and the public gave evident signs of approval to our esteemed Donizetti with repeated applause and calls upon the stage. The first act is infinitely preferable to the second. The arias and duets are beautiful, as, too, is the finale of the first act. This score lacks a concerted piece, with the result that it is somewhat monotonous with a continual succession of cavatinas and duets, duets and cavatinas. In the overture, on the other hand, the composer has surpassed himself.

This is a notice that raises as many questions and problems as it answers, and we shall return to it when we examine the text of the opera more closely.

Il Censore universale dei Teatri, describing the reception as ‘a decorous success’, confirmed all the points already made in the *Giornale di Commercio*, but particularly noted the decreasing impact upon the audience that resulted from the alleged inferiority of the second act. Each of the singers, on the other hand, was warmly praised. Fanny Tacchinardi-Persiani was commended for her ‘most rare talent’ and her ability to convey ‘all the emotions, all the sentiments that she wishes to express’. Anna Del Sere also distinguished herself, not least for ‘the opposition of character’ she offered to Tacchinardi-Persiani, and the public was reported to have accorded her, too, a warm reception. Duprez is said to have performed so well that he appeared ‘a completely new artist’, and Giuseppina Merola, we are told, sustained her part excellently. But perhaps the most interesting comment was reserved for the interpreter of Clifford:

The noble abilities of Porto, a bass who was impressive even before this, are increasingly to be prized. He has in his profession become a professor, a professor who possesses dramatic and musical skill in equal measure. Florence, which saw him grow to such eminence, finds him even greater now, following his return from Rome.

The ‘magical scenes’ of Signor Gianni, the designer, were also warmly praised, and the distinguished overall manner in which Lanari had chosen to present the work.

Other accounts are less noteworthy. *Il Barbiere di Siviglia* praised both opera and performance without entering into great detail, while *L'Omnibus* merely paraphrased the *Giornale di Commercio*. *Il Raccoglitore*, on the other hand, perhaps the least complimentary account of all, if only for that reason deserves to be quoted:

La *Rosmunda* [sic], with music by maestro Donizzetti [sic], did not displease. Various pieces were applauded on the first evenings; but many others abound in reminiscences. We hope that as the performances continue it may be possible to appreciate this music better, for, if it is not destined to enjoy the fortune of *Anna Bolena*, it is certainly not to be likened to the work which was most recently written by the same maestro for Milan³. The fault of this famed composer is that of priding himself in revealing that he employs little time in writing an opera. If his merit were not known, it would be possible to describe his operas as *produzioni da baule*⁴. In the meantime he was called upon the stage several times in company with his principal artists.

Like so many of Donizetti's operas, *Rosmonda* was heard with increasing approval on the evenings that followed its premiere. Even if Donizetti is believed to have left Florence after the third performance, he was able to write

³ *Lucrezia Borgia*, which had been coldly received during its first season at La Scala in the carnival of 1833-1834

⁴ Literally: 'productions out of the suitcase', or operas cobbled together out of familiar ideas or items drawn from earlier work.

to his publisher, Giovanni Ricordi, in a letter of 8 March 1834, that ‘Rosmonda pleased more and more’.

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Unlike most of the operas of Donizetti’s maturity, *Rosmonda d’Inghilterra* did not go the rounds of the Italian theatres, and was never, during the 19th century, seen outside Italy. Biographers have tended to assume that it was a weakness in the work itself which was responsible, though it is just as possible that Donizetti, disillusioned and dissatisfied with its ‘decorous’ – its lukewarm – success, decided to withdraw it from performance until such time as he had been able to revise it.

Precisely when he finally decided upon such a revision remains uncertain, but we do know when he finally carried it out: in the middle of 1837. For on 8 June 1837 we find him writing to Lanari from Naples: ‘As for *Rosmunda* [sic], I am working at it.’ And three weeks later, on 27 June, the impresario of the Royal Theatres of Naples, Domenico Barbaja, submitted the libretto to the Prince of Ruffano, then the Superintendent of Theatres and Spectacles, for onward transmission to the censors. The opera, he said, was intended for the debut of Signora Adelina Spech-Salvi, the wife of the tenor Lorenzo Salvi.

This revision, it has generally been assumed, coincided with Lanari’s sale of his rights in the opera to the Neapolitan publisher and friend of Donizetti, Guglielmo Cottrau. William Ashbrook, for example, in his *Donizetti* (1965),

wrote that the revision was carried out 'at the urging of Cottrau's publishing firm who had bought the rights to the score'. Such a sale would indeed explain the subsequent publishing of substantial sections of the score by Giuseppe Girard, Cottrau's colleague and associate in Naples. And yet the matter does not seem to have been as simple or as clear-cut as this. Lanari more probably sold a share in the score rather than his entire rights. Only by making this suggestion can we explain a statement which he made to Donizetti in a letter of 31 May 1837 to the effect that he has 'already authorised Cottrau to lower a little my demand for 400 ducats' hiring fee'; and his further assurance, on 25 September 1837, that when Donizetti is next in Venice 'we will settle our accounts together for what you have done in *Eleonora*'. We must conclude that, though Lanari allowed Cottrau and Girard to buy their way in as partners, he retained the controlling interest in the score himself.

But let us return to Barbaja's submission of the libretto to the scrutiny of the Neapolitan censors. His letter of 27 June, with which he forwarded the text, is still to be found among the papers of the Superintendency of Theatres and Spectacles in the State Archives of Naples, and the reaction of any researcher upon seeing it is an eager expectation that he is also about to find the Superintendent's reply. But at this point the trail goes dead. The papers of the Superintendency are formidable in number, and to locate any specific document is often like seeking a needle in the proverbial haystack. So far, at least, no reply from the Prince of Ruffano has come to light. We do not know, therefore, whether the libretto was approved or not.

The year 1837 was, in any case, a disturbed time in Naples. An epidemic of cholera had broken out in April, and by the end of June had reached disastrous proportions. More than 500 new cases were reported each day; the daily death-toll exceeded 300. While the theatres do not appear to have been officially closed, their activities were certainly disrupted. In the midst of this national catastrophe, moreover, Donizetti's own household was visited by tragedy. On 13 June his wife, Virginia, gave birth to her third, short-lived, child. Only a month later she caught measles and, unwisely allowed to take a bath, died on 30 July. Donizetti, as anyone who has read his letters and the biographies that have been based upon them will know, never recovered from the blow.

We are faced, therefore, with a picture of a city in disarray and a bereaved composer in a state of inconsolable grief. Under such circumstances – and in the absence of any specific evidence – who is to say exactly why *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*, or, as it was now renamed, *Eleonora di Guienna*, never reached the Neapolitan stage? Did it run foul of the censors? Did the confusion that prevailed in the theatre prevent its production? Or did Donizetti himself, unable to face returning to the theatre so soon after Virginia's death, decide to withdraw it? All we can say for certain is that, despite the ill-informed assertions of numerous early biographers to the contrary, no Neapolitan production ever took place.

And the subsequent history of the opera? There is, unfortunately, very little subsequent history to report: indeed, the very absence of an extensive stage-history of further productions constitutes one of the most inexplicable aspects

of this opera. Lanari, who, as we have seen, acknowledged his responsibility to pay Donizetti for his labour in revising it, clearly did not believe that it was a spent work that had run its course. Indeed, in his already-quoted letter of 25 September 1837 he asked the composer to bring the revised score with him to Venice – where *Maria de Rudenz* was due for production in the following carnival. His reason is explicit: besides mounting the premiere of *Maria de Rudenz*, he hopes that it may also be possible to give the first performance of the revised *Eleonora di Guienna*, with a cast headed by Carolina Ungher, Eugenia Tadolini, Napoleone Moriani and Ignazio Marini. Unfortunately, this star-studded performance never took place, or the subsequent history of the opera might have been very different.

Only one 19th-century revival has, in fact, ever been traced: a production at the Teatro Rossini in Livorno at the end of October 1845. A young singer named Elisa Mascarich, commended in the contemporary journal *La Fama* for her beautiful voice, her remarkable agility and her good method, scored a distinct success as Rosmonda; but Angiolina Masenza, singing opposite her as Leonora, ‘could not distinguish herself in like manner in this opera, since her part was of little depth’. The tenor Caggiati sang Enrico, the baritone Della Santa Clifford, and a contralto named Salandri Arturo. A number of items were warmly received, particularly the cavatinas of Enrico and Rosmonda and the finale of Act I (‘a truly masterly piece’), and in Act II the duet for Enrico and Leonora, Rosmonda’s aria, and her duet with Enrico. Despite this at least partial success, another journal of the day, *Il Pirata*, could report that ‘the music appears to have left much to be desired where originality was concerned’.

In our own century, *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* was revived by Opera Rara in two concert performances, given at the Queen Elizabeth Hall in London on 11 October 1975 and at the Whitla Hall in Belfast, as part of the Queen's University Festival, on 22 November 1975. Rosmonda was to have been sung by Janet Price, but, taken ill at the last moment, she was replaced in both performances by Yvonne Kenny. Ludmilla Andrew sang opposite her as Leonora, while Richard Greager sang Enrico, Christian du Plessis Clifford, and Enid Hartle Arturo. The Opera Rara and Northern Ireland Opera Trust Choruses and the Ulster Orchestra were conducted by Alun Francis. Both performances were warmly received by near-capacity audiences, and the courage and flair with which Yvonne Kenny tackled the part of Rosmonda at such short notice earned her a standing ovation in London and glowing reviews both there and in Belfast.

Though the opera as a whole disappeared almost immediately after its premiere, not all of its music shared the same fate. Fanny Tacchinardi-Persiani became so enamoured of her *aria di sortita*, 'Perchè non ho del vento?', that, at least as early as May 1837, she introduced it into *Lucia di Lammermoor* to replace 'Regnava nel silenzio'. A soprano with dazzling agility and a taste for rapid arpeggio and passage-work, we may imagine that the cabaletta, 'Torna, ah! torna, o caro oggetto', particularly appealed to her. Less distinctive but more showy than its equivalent in *Lucia*, 'Quando rapita in estasi', it would have displayed her prowess to marked advantage. That Donizetti not only knew of the substitution but approved of it, we know from the fact that, in Paris in 1839, when he played an active part in preparing *Lucie de*

Lammermoor, the French version of *Lucia*, he sanctioned both the introduction of the aria and its publication in place of 'Regnava nel silenzio'. Whereas 'Regnava nel silenzio' therefore stands as an essential part of *Lucia*, 'Perchè non ho del vento?' replaces it as an equally integral part of *Lucie*.

If Donizetti's opera, considered as a valid and viable stage-piece, was soon forgotten, its libretto was not. Indeed, just as Donizetti, already in the wake of Luigi Majocchi, had reset Romani's text after Coccia's opera had disappeared, so other composers continued to set the text when Donizetti's version failed to hold the boards. The process began, indeed, with almost indecent haste. As early as 1835 a composer by the name of Antonio Belisario produced a setting as *Rosmonda* in Rovigo. A further version, by Pietro Tonassi and Pietro Collava, was given in Venice in 1839 under the title *Il Castello di Woodstock*; while the German composer Otto Nicolai, who composed some four Italian operas, confronted the Italian public for the first time in 1839 in Trieste with a version entitled *Enrico Secondo*.

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In the catalogue of Donizetti's works which Guido Zavadini included in his great 1948 edition of the composer's letters, *Donizetti: Vita – Musiche – Epistolario*, we are told that 'it is not known where the orchestral score [of *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra*] is to be found'. As a result, for many years Donizetti's manuscript was believed lost. Yet this was not, in fact, so. First of all I (in the *Gazzetta Musicale di Napoli*, Anno IV, Nn. 3-5, March-May 1958; and in

Opera, June 1959), then William Ashbrook (in his 1965 *Donizetti*), and finally Patric Schmid and Don White (in the programme of Opera Rara's concert revival of the opera at the Queen Elizabeth Hall, London, on 11 October 1975), pointed out that the composer's manuscript still exists, correctly catalogued, in the library of S. Pietro a Majella in Naples.

It is a curious document. Like so many of Donizetti's autographs, it is filled with cancellations and corrections, but, unlike the composer's other scores, it has been subjected to a tidying-up process: someone, whether Donizetti or not is not clear, has pasted patches of blue paper over many of the cancellations. Some of these patches can be lifted to reveal what lies beneath; others cannot. While the full score exists, therefore, it is impossible to arrive at a complete and accurate picture of its tantalising textual complexities.

Nor is it certain when this tidying-up process took place. It is tempting to suggest that it represents the composer's revision of 1837, but the actual changes may, in some or many instances, date from much earlier – from the initial composition of the opera. By the same token, the actual application of the patches may date from much later: they may have been pasted in by other hands long after the composer had carried out his 1837 revision.

Since the 1837 revision was never performed, it is not, we contend, possible to be absolutely certain of its text. Of one or two points we can, nevertheless, be confident. Whereas, for example, the opera originally ended with the death of Rosmonda, the revision added an *aria finale* – a final cabaletta – for

Leonora. Leonora's *aria di sortita* was also given a new cabaletta, and it is possible that a new overture was also written at this time. But by and large the autograph containing revisions and alterations which probably date from several periods, is not our best guide to this revision. Rather we should look, though still, we believe, with a degree of reserve, to the three incomplete scores that eventually found their way into print: to the 12 numbers which Girard in Naples (in association with Scipione de Rossi in Rome) printed in vocal score in 1838, under the title *Leonora di Guienna*⁵; to the 11 numbers which appeared in similar form in Paris, published by Bernard Latte (in association with Girard in Naples) under the title *Eleonora di Guienna*⁶; and to the 12 (confusingly numbered) items which the Pavia-based printing house, the Stamperia di musica l'Euterpe Ticinese, published (in association with Lucca in Milan and Girard in Naples) from its printing house in Chiasso under the title *Eleonora di Guienna*. These published pieces consist of the overture and all the arias and duets from the opera: they include only selected recitatives, and exclude all the choruses and the First Finale.

To complete this account of published items, we should add that at an earlier period, following the Florentine premiere of 1834, three items were

⁵ The title-page lists all 20 items – the entire contents – of the opera, but assigns plate numbers to only 12 of them. We assume, therefore, that only these latter were actually published.

⁶ This score lists only the items actually printed. It is interesting, however, to note that the title page describes the opera as 'Représenté à Naples'. We must assume that Latte was either misinformed, or engraved his title page at a stage when a production in Naples was still expected.

published by Ricordi in Milan, two of them in both vocal score and solo piano score, making a collection of five pieces in all.

No complete vocal score of the opera has ever been published.

With these remarks in mind, it is time to make a number of comments on the text of the opera. For the sake of clarity we arrange these, not under 'An examination of the autograph' and 'An examination of the published pieces', but under the items themselves in the order they occur in the opera. We confine these remarks, moreover, to six items which reveal textual changes of major importance.

(1) The Overture. A mystery surrounds the exact identity of the overture which was performed when the opera was first given in Florence – the overture in which the *Giornale di Commercio* declared that Donizetti surpassed himself. For in the same letter of 8 March to Ricordi in which the composer declared that '*Rosmonda* pleased more and more', he added, cryptically: 'The Overture which caused such a stir... *You know it...* (that between ourselves).' It would not, therefore, seem to have been a new overture, but rather one borrowed from some earlier work. In preparing this recording we have consulted as many of the published items from this opera as possible, but have not succeeded in finding the three items published by Ricordi. If ever we are fortunate enough to see them, this mystery of the identity of the original overture could well be resolved, for the overture was, by fortunate chance, one of the three numbers Ricordi chose to print.

At a later date, possibly at the time of the 1837 revision, a new overture was composed: the overture which is to be found in the autograph and which was published in a two-handed piano version by the Stamperia di musica l'Euterpe Ticinese and in a four-handed version by Girard and Latte.

(2) In the Introduzione to Act I: Leonora's cabaletta. Both Donizetti's autograph and the Florence libretto contain the cabaletta, 'Fè mi serba, mi seconda'. There are signs of slight revision, but no major changes. The difficulty arises when we discover that both Girard and Latte print a different cabaletta, 'Ti vedrò, donzella audace'. Clearly a later substitution, this latter almost certainly dates from Donizetti's revision of 1837. (Yet, if so, and if the autograph, as generally assumed, reflects this revision, why does it not appear here? The fact that it does not calls into serious question, we believe, the assumption that the autograph represents this revision.)

When it comes to a consideration of the quality of the music itself, there is no question of which is the better piece: 'Fè mi serba, mi seconda' is conventional and predictable by comparison with the more varied and interesting 'Ti vedrò, donzella audace', one of the *moderato* cabalettas which Donizetti made his speciality. This latter, for this reason, has been chosen for inclusion in the present recording.

There is, however, a further problem. 'Ti vedrò, donzella audace' exists only in the published vocal excerpts with piano accompaniment. As far as we are aware, no orchestral version survives. For Opera Rara's 1975 concert

performances, it was orchestrated by Robert Roberts (except for the *tempo di mezzo*: since this is the same as in ‘Fè mi serba, mi seconda’, it was possible to switch to Donizetti’s own orchestrations for this section). It is Robert Roberts’ orchestration which will be heard on this recording.

(3) Act I, Scene 2: Rosmonda’s cavatina, ‘Perchè non ho del vento?’. When he first composed this cavatina, in Florence in 1834, Donizetti did not allow Arturo as great a participation as he had enjoyed in Coccia’s opera, but nevertheless – despite the suggestion to Romani that he should be eliminated altogether – retained him and still allowed him a fairly generous degree of participation. It is in this form that Girard, Latte and the Stamperia di musica l’Euterpe Ticinese all print the cavatina, which suggests that Arturo still played his part in it even after the revision of 1837. The autograph, on the other hand, represents the further revision of the item that took place when it was decided to introduce it into *Lucia di Lammermoor* (the slightly modified words to which it is sung there have been written in red pencil). And in this final revision Arturo does *not* take part. We conclude, therefore, that as long as the item remained part of *Rosmonda d’Inghilterra*, Arturo participated; since there was no equivalent character in *Lucia*, he was necessarily excised when the aria was introduced into that opera.

(4) Act I: the First Finale. This is one of the most heavily and rigorously revised portions of Donizetti’s autograph. Whoever it was who pasted in the notorious blue paper patches has effectively halved the length of the *concertato* or slow section, with the result that what began as an impressively large-scale

expansive movement has ended up so distinctly disappointing and perfunctory in length that Girard, in listing it but apparently not printing it, called it a 'Quintettino'. In a score that conspicuously lacks ensembles, it is difficult to see why this, the only example, should have been so severely pruned and mutilated in this way, particularly since, assuming that it was performed in its complete form at the Florence premiere, we know from the reviews that it made a good impression. When Opera Rara performed the opera in concert in 1975, it understandably restored this concertato to its original proportions, and it is in this larger, and we believe infinitely preferable, form that it is now recorded here.⁷

(5) Act II, Scene 2: the cabaletta to Rosmonda's aria, 'Io fuggirò quel perfido'. We have already presented the evidence that suggests that the original cabaletta, 'Lasciate che in lagrime', was replaced during the Florence rehearsals by 'Senza pace, e senza speme'. The autograph, as already explained, contains 'Senza pace, e senza speme', but clearly as a revision. It also occurs in Girard, Latte and the Euterpe Ticinese items. As far as we are aware, the music of 'Lasciate che in lagrime' has been irretrievably lost.

(6) Act II: the ending of the opera. As originally performed in Florence, the opera ended with the death of Rosmonda and a final cry from Leonora:

⁷ The raising of blue paper patches has also, we may mention at this point, allowed the recovery of significant passages in the Act I duet for Rosmonda and Clifford, and in the Act II duettino for Rosmonda and Leonora.

Sono alfine vendicata...
Trema, Enrico! Io regno
ancor.

At last I am revenged...
Tremble, Enrico! I reign
Still.

Almost certainly as part of his 1837 revision, Donizetti added a cabaletta for Leonora, 'Tu spergiuro'. It is to be found in the autograph, but in a scribal hand, not the composer's. It was also printed by Girard and Latte, and in the Euterpe Ticinese score.

If the above assumptions are correct, the major additions made during the revision can have amounted, notwithstanding the amount of ink that later writers have spilt over them, to no more than three: a new overture, a new cabaletta for Leonora's *aria di sortita*, and a cabaletta for her at the end of the opera.

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Before we leave this consideration of the text, there is one other point of interest which should be noted. Generally when one examines a less well-known Donizetti opera, one expects to find a number of self-borrowings: places where he has returned to earlier scores, and reproduced or reworked ideas used on previous occasions. Here, surprisingly, we have been unable to find any: the 'reminiscences' noted by the critic of *Il Raccoglitore* in 1834 would seem to have been stylistic similarities rather than actual quotations.

When, moreover, an opera failed to hold the stage, one frequently finds Donizetti resorting to it thereafter as a mine from which to draw items or ideas for later works. Yet once again *Rosmonda d'Inghilterra* would seem an exception. The only instance we have noticed of an item being reused is 'Caro, sebben colpevole', the *largo* section of the Act II duet for Leonora and Enrico, which was later rethought and transformed to become 'Da tutti abbandonata', the duet composed for *Buondelmonte* and subsequently introduced into the score of *Maria Stuarda* for its 1835 premiere. Though the melody nowhere remains the same, the 'cut' of each phrase is recognisably similar, and the progression – the order in which the various melodies are used – also parallels the earlier example in *Rosmonda*.

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Let us return to the 1834 review in the *Giornale di Commercio*, and the statement that 'This score lacks a concerted piece⁸, as a result of which it is somewhat monotonous with a continual succession of cavatinas and duets, duets and cavatinas'. This judgement, with which, however unwillingly, we must concur, is very much the result of the manner in which Donizetti chose to treat the *travesti* role of Arturo. William Ashbrook, basing his comment no doubt upon Lanari's letter of 1 August 1833 to Romani, already quoted, in which the impresario suggests that Romani would be doing Donizetti a service if he were to expand Arturo's part, states in *Donizetti and his Operas*

⁸ Apart, that is to say, from the First Finale.

(1982) that Romani's revision of the libretto shows a 'plumping up' of the *musichetto* role of Arturo for Giuseppina Merola. This is not a statement with which we can agree. Indeed, if we compare the original version of the libretto set by Coccia with the revised version set by Donizetti, we shall find the opposite: a whittling away, a deliberate pruning, of Arturo's role.

In Coccia's opera, Arturo plays a conspicuous part. In Act I he sings a duet with Leonora in the Introduzione; in the second scene he makes a large contribution to Rosmonda's cavatina, and then joins her and Clifford in a trio; and he also takes part in the Finale. In Act II he has his solo aria, 'Io non ti posso offrir'; he joins Rosmonda and Leonora in a trio; and he is present in, even if he does not greatly contribute to, the final death scene.

Now note what happens in Donizetti's opera. The shortening of the Introduzione deprives him of his duet with Leonora, though he still contributes fairly extensive *pertichini* to her cavatina. In the second scene he similarly contributes to Rosmonda's cavatina, but loses his trio with her and Clifford, since this is now reduced to a duet. He retains his small part in the first finale. In Act II he still has his solo aria, but loses his trio with Rosmonda and Leonora. He and Clifford are on stage for Rosmonda's aria, but take part only in the *tempo di mezzo*; and he is again on stage, though not in any prominent degree, in the final scene.

A ‘plumping up’ of the part of Arturo? It is patently obvious that the only concession Donizetti made to Giuseppina Merola was to allow her to retain her short solo aria. Apart from this, he has reduced Arturo to comprimario status, insignificant when compared with Orsini in *Lucrezia Borgia*, Pierrotto in *Linda di Chamounix*, or Armando di Gondì in the French version of *Maria di Rohan*.

It was, in fact, Donizetti’s determination *not* to allow Arturo to assume any great importance in this opera that resulted in the ‘continual succession of cavatinas and duets’ noted by the *Giornale di Commercio*. And it is not simply a case of two trios having been lost, one excised and the other reduced to a duet: potentially a *third* trio has been suppressed, too, for Rosmonda’s ‘Io fuggirò quel perfido’, effective and acceptable though it is as a solo aria, would have made even better dramatic sense, since three characters are on stage, had it been cast as an ensemble for all three.

And Act II? Is it inferior to Act I, as the critic of the *Giornale di Commercio* believed? It begins excellently, with a fine duet for Leonora and Enrico. While all the movements of this duet are effective, we would particularly draw attention to the slow section ‘Caro, sebben colpevole’. A meltingly lyrical 6/8 *larghetto*, it is, as already mentioned, very much a forerunner of ‘Da tutti abbandonata’, the duet that Donizetti composed for *Buondelmonte* and introduced into the score of *Maria Stuarda* for its 1835 Milan premiere.

Arturo's aria is by no means ineffective: the cabaletta, in particular, is a striking showpiece for an agile Rossinian contralto. And Rosmonda's aria which follows invites a similar reaction. A suitable display-piece for Fanny Tacchinardi-Persiani, the sustained lyrical line of the *largo* is frequently embroidered with florid divisions and decorations, while the cabaletta, though it may look obvious on paper, is one of those typical Donizetti cabalettas which come to life in performance, particularly with a second verse varied and decorated at the singer's pleasure.

The difficulty – and we must acknowledge that a difficulty does arise at this point – stems from the form the music takes rather than in the actual quality of the writing. We have reached the three-quarter-way point of the opera, a point for which the accepted dramatic structure of the day prescribed no particular item or form of item. Yet it was a danger point – a stage at which any opera ran the risk of sagging interest – and examination of other scores of the period shows that those which succeeded best inserted, at this moment, either some *gran scena* of heightened melodic and emotional as well as bravura interest – a mad scene, for example – or a large-scale ensemble of similarly heightened dramatic content. In the libretto Romani first wrote for Coccia, it was Leonora rather than Clifford who appeared at this point, giving rise to a trio for three women's voices sung by Leonora, Rosmonda and Arturo. In this trio Leonora proposed that Rosmonda should go into exile in Aquitaine, and there marry Arturo; and Rosmonda agreed. In terms of variety of form, therefore, Coccia's opera was eminently satisfactory. Dramatically, on the

other hand, it was less pleasing, for by bringing Leonora and Rosmonda together at this point it anticipated their more important, and indeed essential, confrontation at the end of the opera. The two have already met in the Finale of Act I, and it remains for the culminating scene of Act II to show their ultimate clash: the murder of one by the other. But this, surely, is enough. To bring them together *twice* in the course of Act II was to risk piling Ossa upon Pelion. Whether it was Romani who had second thoughts or whether the credit should go to Donizetti is not clear, but the dramatic instinct of one or the other, perhaps of both, was right: to allow Leonora and Rosmonda but one encounter in Act II, to heighten its impact by holding it back as long as possible, and to make it the climax of the opera.

In revising his libretto for Donizetti, Romani therefore suppressed the trio in which, earlier in the act, he had already brought Leonora and Rosmonda together. In its place he would, however, still appear to have visualised a trio, for now, instead of Leonora, he introduces Clifford. Clifford, Rosmonda and Arturo are thus all on stage together. Almost certainly it was Donizetti himself (concerned here as elsewhere to contain and curtail the role of Arturo) who preferred and demanded a solo aria for Rosmonda, allowing Clifford and Arturo to contribute only *pertichini* in the *tempo di mezzo*. And it is here, in this decision to write an aria rather than a trio, that we find ourselves querying his dramatic judgement. Brilliant as Rosmonda's aria may be, the absence of a trio is to be regretted.

This is, we would contend, the only blemish that mars Act II. And if our disappointment is understandable, it is also soon forgotten. For recovery, if ‘recovery’ is not too strong a word for a blemish which is primarily one of form rather than of musical content, is immediate in the following duet for Rosmonda and Enrico, particularly in its eloquent central section.

The dramatic tension reaches its culmination in the ensuing duettino, the confrontation between Rosmonda and Leonora for which we have been waiting so long. It is an encounter that is essential to the whole balanced, symmetrical conception of the opera – essential to a work which deals with the rivalry of the two women in Enrico’s life. As the opera was first written, we may note, it was given pride of place, for it was the last item in the score.

This duettino certainly gave the opera a dramatic ending, but also, we may note, an abrupt one, for it has no cabaletta. The murder takes place in a passage that the ear identifies as a *tempo di mezzo*. And it was doubtless to fill out the formal pattern – and to supply the prima donna interpreting the part of Leonora with a last showpiece – that the final solo cabaletta, ‘Tu! Spergiuro’, was added in 1837. This item has not always received a good press. One scholar we have quoted in the course of this article describes it as ‘dramatically superfluous’, another as ‘earthbound’. Ever ready to raise a banner in a worthy cause, we must, on the contrary, declare it in our opinion one of the finest of the composer’s final arias: a *moderato* cabaletta which, the very opposite of an outburst of jubilation, expresses defiance, resentment, and

an accomplishment of revenge which is closer to despair than to exultation. Essentially an expression of reproach, ‘Tu! Spergiuoro’ ranks, we believe, besides Parisina’s ‘Ugo è spento!’ and Lucrezia Borgia’s ‘Era desso il figlio mio’.

Let us bear in mind the absence of a trio in Act II, and also imagine the act without this final cabaletta. Now let us add the very real possibility that at the first performance, after concentrated and strenuous rehearsals, Act II received a less than fresh and exuberant performance... Surely we need look no further for an explanation of why the first Florentine audiences found this second act inferior to the first. Yet even as we concede that such a judgement may have been justified in terms of the text and performance the first Florentines actually saw, we must contend – and maintain with all possible vehemence – that it is no longer valid in terms of the score Donizetti finally left: the score that has been recorded here. As the opera now stands, there is no deterioration of quality in the second act, no sense of falling away, but rather a finely controlled growth to a gripping climax and catastrophe.

* * * *

The fact that we go out of our way to vindicate Act II in this way should not be taken as implying any lack of esteem for Act I. Here, too, we have the fluent and spontaneous Donizetti of the 1830s writing a work which we believe deserves the same respect we nowadays accord the operas that preceded and followed it. It has many features of interest, but we would draw attention to but one: the composer’s manifest concern with the way he

articulates his work – with the way he links items together – with the way he carries the action forward. Look, as an example of this concern, at the attractive and unusual instrumental coda written to accompany the chorus's leaving the stage at the end of their first item. Look at the comparable and equally attractive coda at the end of Enrico's aria. Look, moreover, at the way the opening chorus is repeated after Leonora's aria: such a repetition is a way of binding the opening items together into a strong and substantial 'introduzione', a technique which had been developed in *opera buffa* in the earlier years of the century and subsequently carried across into *opera seria*. From the moment the curtain rises there is no pause in the onward progression, no halt to draw breath until the recitative preceding the duet for Enrico and Clifford. Donizetti may indeed have composed his operas on a general pattern of 'recitative and aria', that is to say of recitative followed by end-stopped item, but here is all the evidence we shall ever need to show that he did not accept the form uncritically, and that he was, in fact, deeply committed to ensuring that his operas moved forward with a natural fluidity, and with a sense of growing dramatic shape.

We may note similar features towards the end of the act, too. Just as there was no formal ending to Leonora's aria, but rather a short transitional passage to lead us into the reprise of the opening chorus, so there is no formal close to the duet for Rosmonda and Clifford. Instead, an off-stage cry from Enrico is superimposed over the final chords, and we are swept forward into the Finale. The final 'period' of the act comprises not merely the Finale, therefore, but the preceding duet as well. It is a period which begins with the

central larghetto section of the duet – surely as beautiful and as sensitive a movement as Donizetti ever wrote – and moves, step by step, in an advancing and unhalting flow of inspiration, towards the veritable volcano of hectic and heightened excitement that erupts upon us in the final stages of the finale. Indeed, it is possible to see this first act in terms of two massive blocks of concentrated and complex construction. The first is the introduction; the second the finale. And between the two, as the still eye, if we may be permitted to mix metaphors, at the centre of the hurricane, we have Rosmonda's lyrical *aria di sortita*, 'Perchè non ho del vento?'

* * * *

In the course of this study we have encountered several adverse judgements of this opera, and, disconcertingly, we have not finished with them yet. There is still another which must be considered: a statement said to emanate from Donizetti himself which links *Rosmonda* with two of the least fortunate operas in his canon of works. When *Gianni di Parigi* was unsuccessfully produced at La Scala, Milan, on 10 September 1839, without Donizetti's knowledge, permission or presence, the critic of the Bolognese journal *La Farfalla*, seeking to account for its failure, reported an observation made to him by a friend of the composer. Donizetti, this unnamed friend contended, frequently remarked: 'Perform all my operas – but not *Francesca di Foix*, a [sic], and *Gianni di Parigi*.'

If this remark is genuine – and we see no good reason to doubt its authenticity – it is easy enough to account for the composer’s reservations concerning *Francesca di Foix* and *Gianni di Parigi*: the first is a slight work, even if intriguing and unusual in its subject matter, an ‘ugly duckling’ in the Donizetti canon; while the second was not produced until eight years after its composition, by which time it was stylistically something of an anachronism. But *Rosmonda d’Inghilterra* was neither slight nor dated; it is a work which, *prima facie*, should be as important as any of the others Donizetti composed in the mid-1830s: *Parisina*, *Lucrezia Borgia*, *Maria Stuarda* or *Lucia di Lammermoor*. What was it, then, that caused him to turn against it? Was it an acknowledgement that, with the part of Arturo reduced in importance and the fabric of the work reduced to ‘a succession of cavatinas and duets’, it was flawed in form, perhaps irretrievably? Or was it just the opposite: a belief that he should have had the courage of his convictions, and persuaded Romani to revise the text even more radically? Or was it that, its 1837 revision too painfully associated with the death of Virginia, a grieving composer preferred, as a private and symbolic gesture, to lock it firmly and forever away? There are many questions which one would wish to ask Donizetti if ever one should be fortunate enough to meet him in an afterlife, and this is one of them!

This account of *Rosmonda d’Inghilterra* began in the misty realm that lies between history and myth. Let us bring it full circle – back to the land of legend – by ending with a thoroughly apocryphal but delightful anecdote regarding the circumstances under which the music was composed. One of Donizetti’s early biographers, Edoardo Clemente Verzino, tells us in *Le Opere*

di Gaetano Donizetti: Contributo alla loro Storia (Bergamo, 1897) that an unnamed French journal published the following account, which was subsequently reprinted in the *Gazzetta Privilegiata di Milano* on 3 November 1838:

Donizetti, gifted, as everyone knows, with a surprising facility for composition, fell in one night, near Monterosi, with four bandits, who recognised him and obliged him, with a blunderbuss at his chest, to compose an opera in their cavern, and to write it in its entirety before sunrise. Donizetti bowed to the brigands' wishes and the task was successfully completed by dawn. This opera was *Rosmunda* [sic], which in due course was performed in Florence by Duprez and Persiani...

Verzino, well aware of the extravagance of the anecdote, notes that the witty French journalist had omitted one essential detail: the presence among the brigands of Felice Romani. Without a poet to supply a text, how could Donizetti possibly have composed the score which those music-loving bandits required of him?

Patently spurious though this story is, it provides a suitably romantic introduction to the opera. It paints a picture worthy of the chiaroscuro treatment of a Salvator Rosa, and we therefore leave the reader to contemplate the vivid scene it conjures up of the composer seated before a blazing camp-

fire in a mountain cavern, surrounded by bearded cut-throats, sitting cross-legged with muskets upon their knees, his imagination in a fine frenzy flowing, and the pages of manuscript paper moment by moment accumulating at his feet: betrayals, hate, love, jealousies, misfortunes – all calculated by the poet to kindle the imagination and touch the hearts of the audience.’

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THE STORY

ACT ONE

SCENE 1

In the park of Woodstock Castle, tenantry and farming-folk gather to acclaim Enrico (King Henry II) upon his return from his wars in Ireland. As they hasten away to greet him, Leonora (Queen Eleanor) appears, followed by the King's page, Arturo. We learn that Arturo was once, as a young orphan, taken under Leonora's protection, and consequently feels deeply indebted to her. As a result of these feelings he has allowed her to prise a momentous secret from him: that Enrico has a mistress, and that upon his departure for Ireland he lodged her in a tower here at Woodstock and left him – Arturo – to watch over her. The secret of her identity is so closely guarded that even Arturo does not know her name. Leonora is not slow to perceive that the page has fallen in love with his charge: she encourages him by suggesting that she will help him win her for himself, but at the same time she clearly seethes to be revenged upon her rival.

Leonora and Arturo retire as the country-folk return, strewing flowers in Enrico's path. The King is delighted to lay down his arms and looks forward to returning to the joys of love. Before he can depart, however, he is accosted by his elderly tutor, Clifford. It is a particularly unwelcome and embarrassing encounter, since his mistress is none other than Clifford's daughter, Rosmonda. Clifford, for his part, is totally unaware that his daughter has fallen from grace: he has been absent on a diplomatic mission in France, and believes that she is at home awaiting his return. He has, however, heard

rumours that the King has deserted Leonora and taken a mistress, and in his capacity as the King's mentor he takes it upon himself to rebuke him. He demands to see the unfortunate woman, whoever she may be, in order that he may try to lead her back to virtue. Enrico agrees to allow him to see her, though he urges him to be guided by compassion, and assures him that, once he knows her identity, he will be only too pleased to see her mount the throne of England.

SCENE 2

Rosmonda is alone in her tower. It is three months since her lover, whom she knows only as 'Edegardo', went away, leaving her in Arturo's care. Absence has clearly made the heart grow fonder: she has been missing Edegardo's company most sorely. But it has also had a contrary effect, for it has given her time to appreciate the enormity of her conduct. Consequently she is now torn between love and remorse. As she accompanies herself upon her harp, and sings of her sorrows, Arturo from the gardens beneath echoes her song in sympathy.

Arturo brings news of her lover's return, but adds that certain 'concerns of the King' keep him from her yet a while. In the meantime, permission has been given for an elderly knight to wait upon her. Rosmonda is horrified to hear that her visitor is none other than Clifford, and she confesses her identity to Arturo. But she has no time to escape: taken by surprise and utterly unprepared she finds herself alone with her father. For a moment Clifford fails to recognise her, but then, the full situation dawning upon him, he bitterly reproaches her, and is only prevented from cursing her by her distress and

evident remorse. Now Rosmonda learns her lover's identity for the first time, and when Enrico himself is heard, calling to her from without, she faints.

Enrico is distressed to see her plight, and all the more so since, as she recovers consciousness, she bids him quit her sight and return to Leonora. At this point Leonora also appears, accompanied by the whole court. She feigns surprise, asking why she should find everyone so obviously embarrassed: the King looking angrily upon her, Clifford disturbed, and a maiden in tears. Clifford presents his daughter, and beseeches the Queen to take her under her protection. Leonora agrees to do so, but Enrico, suspecting her malignant intentions, intervenes and, informing her that her reign is over, bids her be gone. The act ends in general and hostile confrontation.

ACT TWO

SCENE 1

The great hall of Woodstock Castle. Enrico's councillors reluctantly agree that, if his marriage is so irksome to him, he should repudiate Leonora. He replies that she is more dangerous to him in England than in her own Aquitaine, and orders that she should be sent back to France the next day.

Leonora herself, however, is determined not to be disposed of so easily. As the councillors retire, she waylays Enrico and tries, first by reasoned argument, reminding him of the aid she gave him in gaining the throne, and then by seeking to reawaken his love, to win her way back into his affections. He remains impervious to her wiles, and their encounter ends in fresh threats and recriminations.

SCENE 2

A gallery in Rosmonda's tower. Arturo, alone, expresses his love for Rosmonda, but fears that, since he is a mere page, his suit is no match for that of the King. He regrets that he has allowed himself to become a tool of the Queen, but sees no help for it: he is too deeply indebted to her and too involved to have second thoughts now.

Hearing a knocking at a secret door and believing it to be the Queen, he goes to open it. To his surprise he finds that it is Clifford, who, imprisoned by Enrico but released by Leonora, has come to tell Rosmonda that she must leave England at once – within the hour: it is his wish that Arturo should escort her to Aquitaine and there marry her. The proposal surprises Arturo quite as much as it does Rosmonda. Though Rosmonda agrees to leave Enrico, she at first pleads against any alternative marriage; but then, urged by both Clifford and Arturo, she eventually capitulates and agrees to all her father's wishes.

Left alone, she is found by Enrico. He attempts to win her over by informing her that the primates of England have agreed to their marriage. The whole kingdom, he assures her, will welcome her as queen. But she remains adamant, insisting that she can never be queen: he is already married to Leonora, and she has now sworn to leave him forever. As the hour strikes, she tears herself away from him.

SCENE 3

A remote part of the gardens of Woodstock, where Rosmonda has agreed to meet Arturo in order that they may set off together for Aquitaine. Leonora's

followers are on the watch to see whether she will keep her appointment, and retire into the shadows as she does so.

Rosmonda is surprised to find that she is the first to arrive, and wonders what can have detained Arturo. She hears someone approaching, but, far from being the page, it proves to be the Queen. Leonora accuses her of revealing her planned flight to the King – why else should there be so many guards patrolling the gardens? – and draws and brandishes a dagger. Rosmonda protests her innocence, insisting that she is here only in fulfilment of her father's wishes that she should quit England forever. Leonora appears to be almost convinced, but at this unlucky moment her followers return, informing her that an armed Enrico and his henchmen are approaching. In panic and despair she again raises the dagger, and this time the blow descends and finds its mark: as Enrico and Clifford arrive, it is only to have Rosmonda fall dying into their arms.

A distraught and anguished Leonora now rounds upon Enrico, reproaching him for goading her to such an extremity of violence: it is he, she insists, who is ultimately to blame, though both of them must expect to be pursued by Heaven's vengeance.

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ARGUMENT

ACTE I

SCÈNE 1

Dans le parc du château de Woodstock, métayers et paysans se rassemblent pour aller acclamer Enrico (le roi Henri II) de retour des guerres d'Irlande. Tandis qu'ils s'éloignent, Leonora (la reine Eléonor) apparaît, suivie d'Arturo, page du roi. On apprend que Leonora a pris Arturo sous sa protection alors qu'il n'était qu'un jeune orphelin, et qu'il lui en est resté profondément reconnaissant. C'est pourquoi elle a réussi à lui arracher un important secret : Enrico a une maîtresse, qu'il a installée dans une tour du château de Woodstock sous la garde d'Arturo, à son départ pour l'Irlande. Le secret de l'identité de la jeune femme est si bien gardé que personne, pas même Arturo, ne connaît son nom. Leonora ne tarde pas à s'apercevoir que le page est amoureux de sa protégée : elle encourage ses sentiments en lui laissant entendre qu'elle l'aidera à faire la conquête de sa rivale tout en brûlant de se venger d'elle.

Leonora et Arturo se retirent alors que réapparaissent les paysans, occupés à jeter des fleurs sur le chemin du roi. Heureux d'avoir déposé les armes, le roi est impatient de retrouver sa bien-aimée. Au moment où il s'apprête à le faire, il est abordé par son ancien précepteur, Clifford. La rencontre est particulièrement inopportune et embarrassante : la maîtresse du roi n'est, en effet, nulle autre que la fille de Clifford, Rosmonda. Clifford ignore tout pourtant de la disgrâce de sa fille : de retour d'une mission diplomatique en France, il croit que celle-ci est chez lui à l'attendre. Ayant toutefois entendu

dire que le roi a déserté Leonora et pris une maîtresse, il prend la liberté, en sa capacité de mentor, de lui en faire reproche. Il exige de parler avec la malheureuse, qui qu'elle soit, afin de la remettre sur le droit chemin. Enrico accepte, mais lui demande de faire preuve de compassion en l'assurant que lorsqu'il connaîtra l'identité de la jeune femme, il ne pourra que se réjouir de la voir monter sur le trône d'Angleterre.

SCÈNE 2

Rosmonda est seule dans sa tour. Il y a trois mois que son amant, qu'elle connaît seulement sous le nom d'« Edegardo », est parti en la confiant aux bons soins d'Arturo. L'absence n'a manifestement fait que renforcer son amour et « Edegardo » lui a cruellement manqué. En même temps, cette absence lui a permis à loisir de mesurer l'énormité de sa conduite. Aussi est-elle tiraillée entre l'amour et le remords. Elle chante sa peine en s'accompagnant à la harpe tandis qu'Arturo, depuis les jardins, se fait l'écho de sa douleur.

Arturo lui annonce le retour de son amant en ajoutant que certains « soucis d'État » l'empêchent encore de venir la rejoindre. En attendant, il a autorisé un vieux chevalier à venir lui rendre visite. Horrifiée d'apprendre que son visiteur n'est nul autre que Clifford, Rosmonda révèle son identité à Arturo. Mais il est trop tard pour s'enfuir : stupéfaite et prise au dépourvu, elle se retrouve seule devant son père. Clifford ne la reconnaît pas immédiatement, puis, prenant pleinement conscience de la situation, lui adresse des reproches amers. Seuls son désarroi et ses remords manifestes empêchent le père de maudire sa fille. Rosmonda apprend alors pour la première fois l'identité de son amant et, entendant Enrico lui-même l'appeler de l'extérieur, s'évanouit.

Enrico est d'autant plus bouleversé de la trouver dans cet état que reprenant connaissance, elle lui enjoint de s'ôter de sa vue et de retourner à Leonora. À ce moment-là, Leonora apparaît à son tour, suivie de toute la cour. Elle feint la surprise et s'étonne de l'embarras manifeste de tous : le roi lui lance des regards furieux, Clifford est désarmé et la jeune femme en pleurs. Clifford présente sa fille à la reine et la supplie de la prendre sous sa protection. Leonora accepte tandis qu'Enrico, la soupçonnant de mauvaises intentions, lui déclare qu'elle n'est plus reine et la somme de partir. L'acte s'achève dans l'hostilité et la confrontation générales.

ACTE II

SCÈNE 1

La grande salle du château de Woodstock. Les conseillers d'Enrico accèdent à regret à sa demande : si son mariage lui est si pénible, qu'il répudie Leonora. Le roi déclare qu'elle représente un plus grand danger pour lui en restant en Angleterre qu'en retournant en Aquitaine et ordonne son départ pour la France dès le lendemain.

Cependant Leonora est résolue à empêcher qu'on se débarrasse d'elle aussi facilement. Tandis que les conseillers se retirent, elle arrête Enrico et essaye, d'abord en raisonnant avec lui, ensuite en lui rappelant qu'elle l'a aidé à accéder au trône, puis en essayant de ranimer son amour, de le reconquérir. Ses ruses le laissent insensible et leur rencontre s'achève sur de nouvelles menaces et récriminations.

SCÈNE 2

Une galerie dans la tour de Rosmonda. Arturo, seul, chante son amour pour Rosmonda ; il craint, pauvre page, de ne pouvoir rivaliser avec le roi. Il regrette d'avoir permis à la Reine se servir de lui, mais ne sait comment lui résister : il lui doit trop et se sent trop impliqué maintenant pour reculer.

Quelqu'un frappe. Croyant que c'est la reine, Arturo va ouvrir une porte secrète. À sa surprise, il constate que c'est Clifford. Emprisonné par Enrico mais libéré par Leonora, celui-ci est venu dire à Rosmonda de quitter l'Angleterre sans plus attendre – dans l'heure qui vient : il souhaite qu'Arturo l'accompagne jusqu'en Aquitaine et l'épouse à leur arrivée. Sa proposition surprend Arturo autant que Rosmonda. Rosmonda accepte de quitter Enrico, mais s'oppose d'abord à ce projet de mariage ; puis, sur les instances de Clifford et Arturo, finit par céder à toutes les volontés de son père.

Rosmonda reste seule. Enrico vient la voir et tente de la reconquérir en lui déclarant que les primats d'Angleterre acceptent leur union. Le royaume entier, lui dit-il, l'acceptera volontiers comme souveraine. Désormais inflexible, elle lui répète qu'elle ne pourra jamais être reine, qu'il est déjà marié à Leonora et qu'elle a juré de le quitter pour toujours. Entendant l'heure sonner, elle s'arrache à lui.

SCÈNE 3

Un coin discret des jardins de Woodstock où Rosmonda s'est engagée à retrouver Arturo pour qu'ils puissent rejoindre ensemble l'Aquitaine. Les partisans de Leonora l'ont suivie pour vérifier qu'elle serait au rendez-vous. Ils se retirent dans l'ombre quand elle apparaît.

Surprise de découvrir qu'elle est première au rendez-vous, Rosmonda se demande ce qui a pu retenir Arturo. Elle entend quelqu'un s'approcher mais s'aperçoit que ce n'est pas le page, mais au contraire la reine. Leonora l'accuse d'avoir révélé son projet de fuite au roi – sinon pourquoi y aurait-il tant de sentinelles dans les jardins ? – et brandit un poignard en la menaçant. Rosmonda proteste de son innocence, en répétant qu'elle n'est ici qu'à la demande de son père qui insiste pour qu'elle quitte à jamais l'Angleterre. Leonora semble presque convaincue. À cet instant précis malheureusement, ses partisans viennent la prévenir qu'Enrico et ses hommes approchent les armes à la main. Dans l'affolement et le désarroi, Leonora lève à nouveau son poignard qui, cette fois, s'abat sans faillir sur sa victime. Enrico et Clifford arrivent trop tard : Rosmonda, mourante, s'effondre dans leurs bras.

Éperdue et bouleversée, Leonora se retourne maintenant contre Enrico en lui reprochant de l'avoir conduite à cette extrémité : c'est lui, dit-elle, qui est finalement à blâmer, bien qu'ils doivent l'un et l'autre s'attendre à être poursuivis par les foudres du Ciel.

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DIE HANDLUNG

1. AKT

1. SZENE

Im Park von Woodstock Castle finden sich Pächter und Bauern ein, um Enrico (König Heinrich II.) bei seiner Rückkehr aus den Kriegen in Irland festlich zu empfangen. Als sie ihm entgegenzueilen, tritt Leonora (Königin Eleonore) auf, gefolgt von Arturo, dem Pagen des Königs. Wir erfahren, dass Leonora ihn als jungen Waisen in ihre Obhut nahm, weswegen er sich ihr tief verpflichtet fühlt. Nur deshalb ließ er sich von ihr ein großes Geheimnis entlocken, nämlich, dass Enrico eine Geliebte hat, die er bei seinem Aufbruch nach Irland in einem Turm hier in Woodstock unter seiner, Arturos, Aufsicht zurückließ. Ihre Identität wird allerdings so strikt gewahrt, dass nicht einmal der Page ihren Namen kennt. Leonora wird bald klar, dass der junge Mann sich in die Unbekannte verliebt hat, ermutigt ihn in seinem Werben und verspricht, ihm zu helfen, die Geheimnisvolle für sich zu gewinnen. Gleichzeitig ist sie von Rachegehrn an ihrer Nebenbuhlerin zerrissen.

Leonora und Arturo ziehen sich zurück, während das Landvolk wiederkehrt und den Weg des Königs mit Blumen bestreut. Enrico ist voll Freude, die Waffen ablegen zu können, und kann es kaum erwarten, zu den Vergnügungen der Liebe zurückzukehren. Doch bevor er zum Turm gehen kann, tritt ihm sein älterer Mentor Clifford in den Weg. Diese Begegnung kommt Enrico ausgesprochen unangelegen und ist ihm auch peinlich, denn seine Geliebte ist keine andere als Cliffords Tochter Rosmonda. Clifford seinerseits weiß nicht, dass seine Tochter auf Irrwege geraten ist, denn er war auf diplomatischer Mission in Frankreich und geht davon aus, dass sie ihn zu

Hause erwartet. Allerdings ist ihm zu Ohren gekommen, dass der König Leonora verlassen und sich eine Geliebte genommen hat, und in seiner Eigenschaft als geistiger Ziehvater des Königs erachtet er es als seine Pflicht, ihn zur Ordnung zu rufen. Er verlangt, die unglückselige Frau zu sehen, wer immer sie sein möge, damit er sie auf den Pfad der Tugend zurückführen könne. Enrico willigt in sein Ansinnen ein, bittet ihn aber, sich von Mitgefühl leiten zu lassen, und versichert ihm, dass er, sobald er ihre Identität kennt, hoch erfreut sein werde, sie auf dem Thron Englands zu sehen.

2. SZENE

Rosmonda ist allein in ihrem Turm. Drei Monate sind vergangen, seit ihr Geliebter – den sie lediglich als „Edegardo“ kennt – fortgegangen ist und sie in Arturos Obhut zurückließ. Ihre Liebe ist mit der Entfernung zweifellos gewachsen, Edegardo fehlt ihr schmerzlich. Andererseits ist ihr in der langen Zeit auch bewusst geworden, welche Sünde sie begangen hat. So ist sie jetzt hin und her gerissen zwischen Liebe und Reue. Zur Begleitung ihrer Harfe singt sie von ihrem Kummer, Arturo stimmt unten im Garten mitfühlend in ihr Lied ein.

Dann berichtet der Page ihr von der Rückkehr ihres Geliebten, erklärt aber, dass „Belange des Königs“ ihn noch ein wenig von ihr fernhielten. Allerdings habe ein älterer Ritter Erlaubnis erhalten, sie aufzusuchen. Entsetzt erfährt Rosmonda, dass es sich bei ihrem Besucher um ihren eigenen Vater handelt, und klärt Arturo über ihre Identität auf. Zur Flucht bleibt keine Zeit mehr, überrascht und ohne jede Vorbereitung findet sie sich allein in der Gesellschaft ihres Vaters wieder. Im ersten Moment erkennt Clifford sie nicht, doch als er allmählich die Wahrheit zu begreifen beginnt, macht er ihr bittere

Vorwürfe, und nur ihr Elend und ihre offensichtliche Reue halten ihn davon ab, sie zu verfluchen. Nun erst erfährt Rosmonda, wer ihr Geliebter in Wirklichkeit ist, und als aus dem Garten Enricos Stimme erschallt, der nach ihr ruft, sinkt sie in Ohnmacht.

Enrico ist von ihrem Leid bekümmert, umso mehr, da sie, als sie wieder zu Bewusstsein kommt, ihn abweist und zu Leonora zurückschickt. In diesem Augenblick erscheint Leonora mit dem ganzen Hof. In gespielter Überraschung erkundigt sie sich, weshalb alle Anwesenden so aufgewühlt seien: Der König sehe sie zornig an, Clifford sei bestürzt, eine junge Frau sei in Tränen aufgelöst. Clifford stellt ihr seine Tochter vor und bittet sie, Rosmonda unter ihre Fittiche zu nehmen, ein Wunsch, den die Königin ihm gerne erfüllt. Doch Enrico vermutet, dass sie Böses im Schilde führt, tritt dazwischen und verkündet, ihre Herrschaft sei vorüber, sie müsse gehen. Der Akt endet in allgemeiner Feindseligkeit.

2. AKT

1. SZENE

Der große Saal in Woodstock Castle. Widerstrebend stimmen Enricos Berater überein, dass der König Leonora verstoßen solle, wenn ihm seine Ehe tatsächlich derart großen Verdross bereite. Er erklärt, dass sie in England eine größere Gefahr für ihn darstelle als in ihrer Heimat Aquitanien, und ordnet an, sie solle am nächsten Tag nach Frankreich zurückgeschickt werden.

Leonora hingegen ist entschlossen, sich nicht so leicht entfernen zu lassen. Nachdem sich die Berater zurückgezogen haben, fängt sie Enrico ab und versucht, an ihre einstige Zuneigung anzuknüpfen. Zuerst appelliert sie mit Vernunft an ihn und erinnert ihn an die Hilfe, die sie ihm gab, den Thron zu

besteigen, dann versucht sie, seine Liebe neu zu erwecken. Doch er gibt ihren Schmeicheleien nicht nach, und ihre Begegnung endet erneut in Drohungen und Vorwürfen.

2. SZENE

Eine Galerie in Rosmondas Turm. Arturo ist allein und spricht von seiner Liebe zu Rosmonda, obwohl er befürchtet, dass für ihn als bloßen Pagen angesichts der Werbung des Königs keine Hoffnung bestehe. Er bedauert, zum Werkzeug der Königin geworden zu sein, sieht aber keine Möglichkeit, sich ihr jetzt noch zu entziehen; dafür stehe er zu sehr in ihrer Schuld.

Als es an einer Geheimtür klopft, öffnet er sie im Glauben, es sei die Königin. Aber zu seiner Überraschung tritt Clifford ein, der von Enrico gefangen genommen, doch von Leonora wieder freigesetzt wurde und nun gekommen ist, um Rosmonda aufzufordern, England binnen einer Stunde zu verlassen. Es ist sein ausdrücklicher Wunsch, dass Arturo sie nach Aquitanien begleite und sie dort eheliche. Dieser Befehl versetzt Arturo nicht minder in Erstaunen als Rosmonda. Sie erklärt sich zwar bereit, Enrico zu verlassen, will aber zunächst nichts von einer anderen Ehe wissen. Erst als sowohl Clifford als auch Arturo in sie dringen, willigt sie in alle Wünsche ihres Vaters ein.

Als sie wieder allein ist, kommt Enrico zu ihr. Er berichtet ihr, dass die Primasse von England ihrer Hochzeit zugestimmt haben. Das ganze Königin anerkennen. Doch Rosmonda bleibt fest und beteuert, dass sie niemals Königin werden könne: Er sei bereits mit Leonora verheiratet, und sie habe geschworen, ihn für immer zu verlassen. Als die Uhr volle Stunde schlägt, reißt sie sich von ihm los.

3.SZENE

Ein abgelegener Teil in den Gärten von Woodstock. Rosmonda tritt auf, um heir, wie vereinbart, mit Arturo zusammenzutreffen und mit ihm nach Aquitanien aufzubrechen. Leonoras Gefolgsleute halten Wache um sicherzugehen, dass sie Verabredung tatsächlich einhält, und ziehen sich bei Rosmondas Eintreffen in den Schatten zurück.

Die junge Frau ist überrascht, dass sie sich als Erste eingefunden haben sollte, und fragt sich, wodurch Arturo abgehalten worden sein könnte. Da hört sie Schritte näher kommen, doch ist es nicht der Page, der dann vor ihr steht, sondern die Königin. Die beschuldigt sie, dem König von der geplanten Flucht erzählt zu haben – weshalb sollten sonst so viele Wachposten im Garten patrouillieren? – und zieht einen Dolch, mit dem sie drohend ausholt. Rosmonda beteuert ihre Unschuld und versichert, sie sei nur hier, um auf Wunsch ihres Vaters England zu verlassen. Fast scheint Leonora überzeugt, doch in diesem Moment treten ihre Gefolgsleute auf und teilen ihr mit, dass Enrico und seine Paladine bewaffnet im Anzug seien. Panisch und verzweifelt holt sie erneut mit dem Dolch aus, und dieses Mal stößt sie tatsächlich zu. Als Enrico und Clifford erscheinen, fällt Rosmonda ihnen sterbend in die Arme.

Verzweifelt und gequält wendet Leonora sich nun gegen Enrico und wirft ihm vor, sie zu dieser Gräueltat getrieben zu haben: Letztlich sei er es, beharrt sie, der die Schuld trage, doch sie beide würden von der Rache des Himmels heimgesucht werden.

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LA TRAMA

ATTO PRIMO

SCENA 1

Nel parco del castello di Woodstock, fittavoli e contadini si riuniscono per salutare il re Enrico II, di ritorno dalle guerre in Irlanda. Mentre si affrettano per salutarlo, compare la regina Leonora, seguita da Arturo, paggio del re. Veniamo a sapere che Arturo è sotto la protezione di Leonora fin da bambino, quando era rimasto orfano, e di conseguenza si sente profondamente in debito con lei. Proprio per questo si è lasciato sfuggire con lei un segreto molto importante: Enrico ha un'amante e alla sua partenza per l'Irlanda l'ha sistemata in una torre a Woodstock, affidandola alla protezione di Arturo. L'identità della donna è custodita così gelosamente che persino Arturo non ne conosce il nome. Leonora intuisce subito che il paggio se ne è innamorato: lo incoraggia facendogli capire che lei lo aiuterà a conquistarla, ma allo stesso tempo è impaziente di vendicarsi della rivale.

Leonora e Arturo si ritirano mentre ritornano i contadini, che spargono fiori sul cammino di Enrico. Felice di abbandonare le armi, il re prega il momento in cui ritornerà alle gioie dell'amore. Prima che possa allontanarsi, però, gli si avvicina Clifford, suo anziano tutore. Si tratta di un incontro particolarmente sgradito e imbarazzante: l'amante del re è Rosmonda, figlia di Clifford. L'anziano tutore è assolutamente all'oscuro della relazione colpevole di sua figlia: è stato impegnato in una missione diplomatica in Francia, e pensa che Rosmonda sia in casa ad attendere il suo ritorno. Però ha sentito dire che il re ha abbandonato Leonora per farsi un'amante e in qualità di

mentore del Re, si assume la responsabilità di rimproverarlo. Esige di vedere l'infelice donna, chiunque essa sia, per poter provare a riportarla sulla retta via. Enrico accetta, ma lo sollecita a farsi guidare dalla compassione, e gli assicura che, una volta conosciuta l'identità della donna, sarà ben felice di vederla salire sul trono d'Inghilterra.

SCENA 2

Rosmonda è sola nella torre. Sono passati tre mesi da quando il suo innamorato, che lei conosce solo con il nome di 'Edegardo', è partito, lasciandola alle cure di Arturo. L'assenza ha chiaramente alimentato il suo amore: la compagnia di Edegardo le è mancata moltissimo. D'altra parte, però, le ha dato il tempo di rendersi conto dell'enormità della propria condotta, e adesso la donna è combattuta tra l'amore e il rimorso. Mentre si accompagna con l'arpa e canta delle proprie sofferenze, dai giardini sottostanti Arturo risponde sentitamente alla sua canzone.

Arturo le annuncia il ritorno del suo amante, ma aggiunge che alcune "preoccupazioni del Re" lo terranno lontano da lei ancora per un po'. Nel frattempo un anziano cavaliere ha avuto il permesso di servirla. Rosmonda inorridisce quando viene a sapere che il visitatore non è altri che Clifford e rivela la propria identità ad Arturo. Ma non ha il tempo di fuggire: colta di sorpresa e totalmente impreparata, si ritrova sola con il padre. Per un attimo Clifford non la riconosce ma poi, mentre finalmente comincia a spiegarsi l'intera vicenda, la rimprovera aspramente e riesce a trattenersi dal maledirla solo perché la figlia manifesta dolore ed evidente rimorso. A Rosmonda viene rivelata per la prima volta l'identità del suo amante, e quando si Enrico si avvicina e la chiama dall'esterno, sviene.

Enrico è sconvolto nel trovarla in questo stato, soprattutto perché, quando riprende conoscenza, Rosmonda gli ordina di andarsene e tornare da Leonora. A questo punto compare anche Leonora, accompagnata dall'intera corte. Si finge sorpresa e si meraviglia dell'ovvio imbarazzo suscitato dalla sua presenza: il Re la guarda irato, Clifford è turbato e la fanciulla è in lacrime. Clifford presenta la figlia e supplica la Regina di prenderla sotto la sua protezione. Leonora accetta, ma Enrico, sospettoso delle sue vere intenzioni, interviene e, comunicandole che il suo regno è finito, le ordina di andarsene. L'atto si conclude tra l'ostilità generale.

ATTO SECONDO

SCENA 1

Il salone del castello di Woodstock. I consiglieri di Enrico ammettono, contro voglia, che se il matrimonio è diventato un tale peso per il sovrano, non gli resta che ripudiare Leonora. Il re risponde che la donna è più pericolosa per lui in Inghilterra che nel suo paese, l'Aquitania, e ordina che venga inviata nuovamente in Francia il giorno dopo.

Leonora, tuttavia, è decisa a non farsi estromettere con tanta facilità. Mentre i consiglieri si ritirano, si avvicina a Enrico e tenta, prima con un discorso ragionato, di ricordargli l'aiuto che lei gli ha dato per ottenere il trono, poi cerca di riaccendere il suo amore per ritornare nelle sue grazie. Il re però rimane irremovibile e l'incontro termina con nuove minacce e recriminazioni.

SCENA 2

Una galleria nella torre di Rosmonda. Arturo, da solo, esprime il proprio amore per Rosmonda, ma teme di non avere speranze: in fondo è solo un

paggio e non può competere con il suo sovrano. Rimpiange di essersi lasciato manipolare dalla regina, ma non vede alternativa: ha un debito troppo grande nei confronti di lei ed è troppo tardi per i ripensamenti.

Qualcuno bussa a una porta segreta e, pensando che si tratti della Regina, Arturo va ad aprire. Con sorpresa, scopre che si tratta invece di Clifford che, imprigionato da Enrico ma liberato da Leonora, è venuto a ordinare a Rosmonda di lasciare l'Inghilterra entro un'ora: desidera che Arturo la accompagni in Aquitania per sposarla. La proposta sorprende entrambi i giovani. Rosmonda acconsente a di lasciare Enrico, ma inizialmente supplica di non essere costretta a un matrimonio alternativo; sollecitata da Clifford e Arturo, alla fine si lascia convincere e accetta tutti i desideri del padre.

Enrico la trova da sola e cerca di farle cambiare idea, dicendole che i primati di Inghilterra hanno acconsentito alle loro nozze. L'intero regno l'accoglierà come regina. Ma la donna rimane irremovibile: non potrà mai essere regina: Enrico è già sposato con Leonora, e lei ha giurato di lasciarlo per sempre. Al rintocco dell'orologio, si allontana da lui.

SCENA 3

Un angolo isolato del giardino di Woodstock, dove Rosmonda ha accettato di incontrare Arturo per partire insieme con lui per l'Aquitania. I seguaci di Leonora sono di guardia per vedere se la donna si recherà all'appuntamento e si nascondono al suo arrivo.

Rosmonda è sorpresa di scoprire che è la prima all'appuntamento e si chiede cosa possa aver trattenuto Arturo. Si avvicina qualcuno, ma non si tratta del paggio, bensì della regina. Leonora l'accusa di aver svelato i suoi piani di fuga

al re – altrimenti come mai ci sono tante guardie nel giardino? Estrae una spada, minacciosa. Rosmonda protesta la propria innocenza e insiste che si trova qui solo per rispettare i desideri del padre che le ha chiesto di lasciare per sempre l’Inghilterra. Leonora sembra quasi convinta, ma a questo punto ritorna purtroppo la sua scorta e le comunica che Enrico, armato, e i suoi seguaci si avvicinano. Presa dal panico e dalla disperazione, la regina solleva ancora una volta la spada e questa volta colpisce il bersaglio: Enrico e Clifford arrivano troppo tardi e Rosmonda cade moribonda tra le loro braccia.

Sconvolta e addolorata, Leonora adesso accusa Enrico di averla spinta a questa vilienza estrema: è lui, insiste, il vero colpevole, anche se entrambi saranno perseguitati dalla vendetta celeste.

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Traduzione: Emanuela Guastella

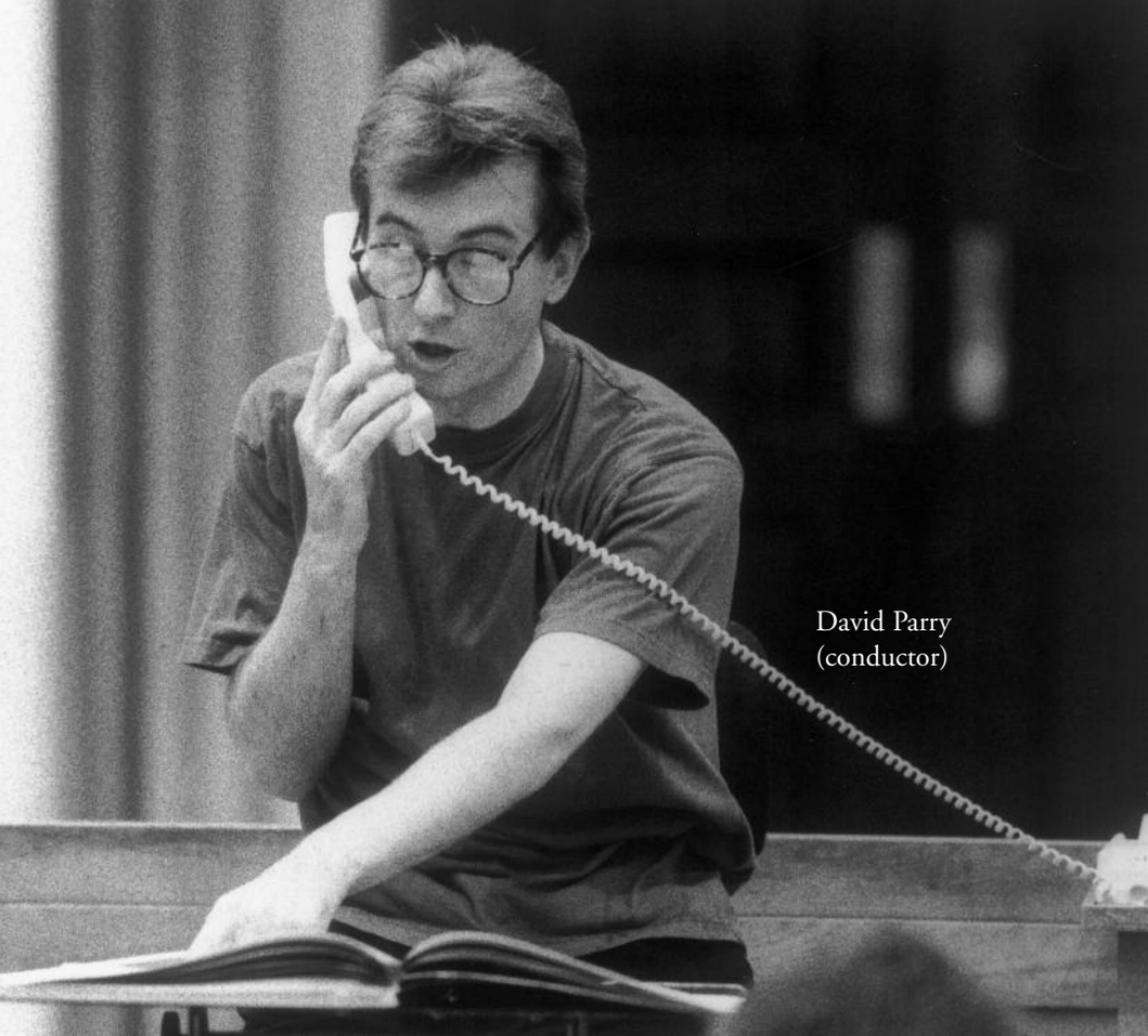
Gaetano Donizetti
ROSMONDA D'INGHILTERRA

Tragedia lirica in two acts
Libretto by Felice Romani
First performance: 27 February 1834
Teatro della Pergola, Florence

ORIGINAL CAST

Enrico II, *King of England*.....Gilbert-Louis Duprez
Leonora di Guienna, *wife of Enrico II*.....Anna Del-Sere
Rosmonda, *Enrico's mistress and*
daughter of Clifford.....Fanny Tacchinardi-Persiani
Gualtiero Clifford, *former tutor of the king*.....Carlo Ottolini-Porto
Arturo, *Enrico's young page*.....Giuseppina Merola

Officials, councillors, courtiers, pages, soldiers, tenants of Woodstock



David Parry
(conductor)

ACT ONE

The action is in England in the castle of Woodstock and in its tower in Woodstock Park. The period is the 12th century.

[1]

SCENE 1

The park of Woodstock Castle. The Castle itself can be seen in the distance among oaks and plane-trees. All around, there are gardens and groves of trees. The sound of trumpets is heard in the distance. The tenants of Woodstock come running from all directions.

[2]

Non udiste? Un suon di tube
Echeggiò di colle in colle.

Polverìo sembante a nube
Via pei campi al ciel si estolle:
Sventolò, brillò da lunge
Il cimier del nostro Re:

Accorriamo: egli è che giunge...
Il Re nostro... Viva il Re.
Giù pe' clivi, per le aiole,

Pei giardin, pei prati aperti
Sì cogliam, spargiam viole

WOMEN

Did you not hear? A sound of trumpets
Came echoing from hill to hill.

MEN

Dust, like a cloud,
Arose from the fields to the sky:
The plumes of the King's crest
Waved and flashed from afar.

ALL

Let us hasten: it is he who is coming...
Our King... Long live the King!
Down upon the slopes, where the
flowers grow,
In the gardens and the open fields,
Yes, let us gather and strew violets,

Ne tessiam ghirlande, e serti...

Ne spargiamo a mani piene
Il sentiero al regio piè.
Accorriamo, ei viene, ei viene...
Viva Enrico! Viva il Re!

Let us weave them into garlands
and wreaths...

Let us scatter them by the handful
Upon the path at the King's feet
Let us hasten, he comes, he comes...
Long live Henry! Long live the King!

The crowd races off to greet the King.

SCENE II

Leonora and Arturo.

[3]

Dove t'inoltri? Dove?

Che paventi?

Ah! Regina!

Che paventi?
Ti difende Leonora.

Ah! m'odi...

Invan sopir tu tenti
Il furor che mi divora.
Io vedrò la mia rivale...
L'infedel sorprenderò.

ARTURO

Where? Where are you venturing?

LEONORA

What are you afraid of?

ARTURO

Ah! My Queen!

LEONORA

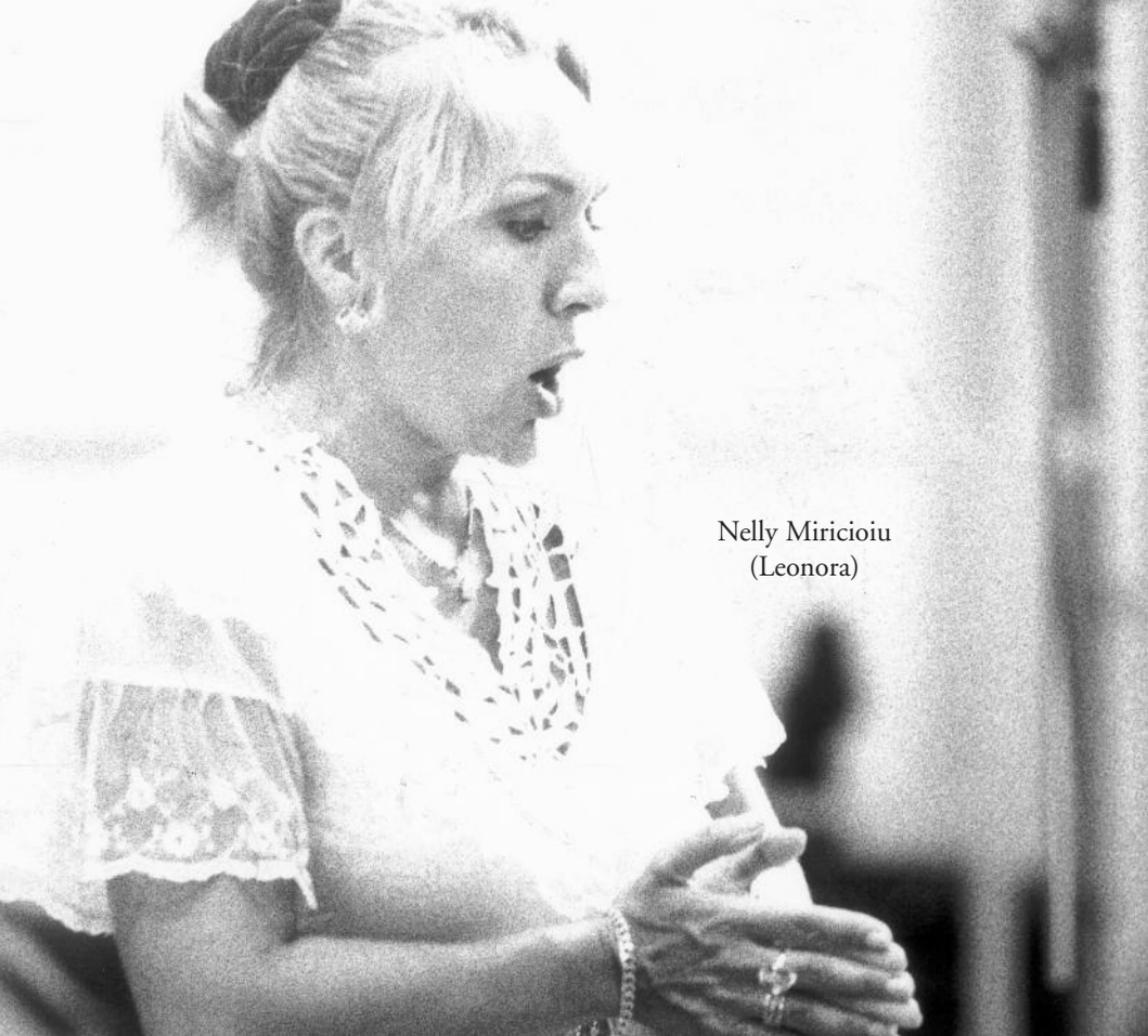
Why do you tremble?
Leonora is here to defend you.

ARTURO

Ah! hear me...

LEONORA

In vain you try to assuage
The fury that devours me.
I shall see my rival...
I shall surprise the faithless woman.



Nelly Miricioiu
(Leonora)

(Ciel! Qual mai poter fatale
Il segreto a me strappò!)

E in oblio così ponesti
Mia pietà, garzone ingrato?

Ah! non è vero... tu m'accogliesti
Orfanello abbandonato;
Io per te...

Per me ti lice
Vagheggiar destin felice,
Posseder un ben che tolto
Senza me ti fora ognor.

Che di' tu?

Ti leggo in volto,
L'ami?...

Io!...

Sì... ti leggo in cor!

Ah! Regina!

ARTURO

(Heavens! Whatever fatal power
Tore the secret from me!)

LEONORA

And have you thus forgotten
My favours, ungrateful boy?

ARTURO

Ah! it is not true... you gathered me up,
An abandoned orphan;
Thanks to you I...

LEONORA

Thanks to me you can contemplate
A happy future,
The possession of a treasure which
Without me would have been denied
you forever.

ARTURO

What are you saying?

LEONORA

I read it in your face:
You love her?...

ARTURO

I!

LEONORA

Yes... I read it in your heart!

ARTURO

Ah! My queen

[4]

Ti vedrò, donzella audace,
Che lo sposo a me contendi;
Più celarti invan pretendi:
T'ho raggiunta, ti vedrò.

Turbatrice di mia pace,
Al mio cor beltà funesta,
A punirti omai s'appresta
Quel furor che mi guidò.

Viva il Re!

Giunge il Re: perduto io sono...
Vieni, vieni...

Venga, venga!

LEONORA

I shall see you, bold maid
You who challenge me for my husband;
In vain you try to hide yourself further:
I have tracked you down, and I shall see
you.

You who disturb my peace,
You whose beauty is fatal to my heart,
The fury that has guided me hither
Now prepares to punish you.

Music and voices are heard approaching.

VOICES

Long live the King!

ARTURO

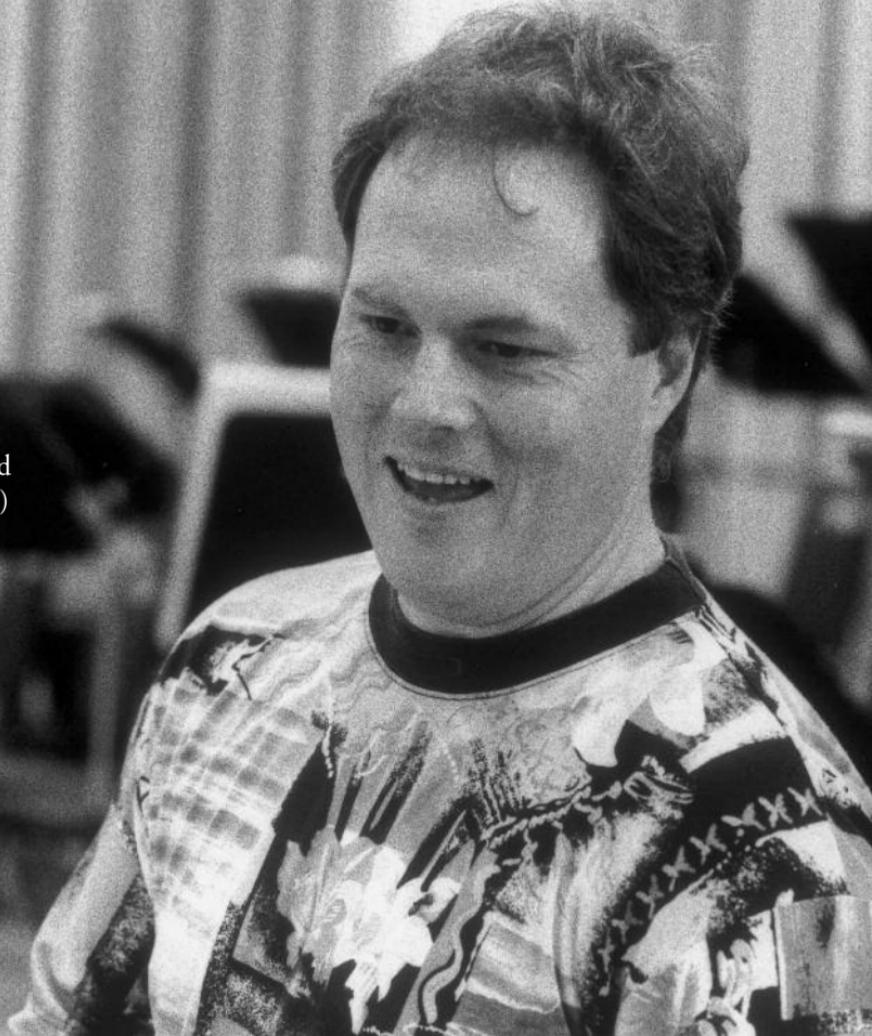
The King approaches: I am lost...
Come, come...

LEONORA

Let him come!

Leonora and Arturo depart.

Bruce Ford
(Enrico II)



SCENE III

The tenants return, carrying garlands and strewing flowers. To an accompaniment of rustic instruments they sing the following chorus.

Then Enrico appears, preceded and followed by a large retinue of officials and guards.

[5]

Amor, che tutti accende
De' tuoi vassalli i cor,
Noi semplici pastor
A te conduce;
A te ghirlande appende,
Non già di gemme, e d'or,
Ma degl'ingenui fior
Che il suol produce.
D'un tuo sorriso almeno
Degnati tu, Signor;
Alla virtude ancor,
Son premio i fiori.
Quando di Londra in seno
Ritorni vincitor,
Londra, per farti onor,
T'offra gli allori.
Viva il Re! Viva il Re!

[6]

Dopo i lauri di vittoria
Son pur dolci i fiori al prode;
Dopo i cantici di lode

TENANTS

Love, that kindles all the hearts
Of your subjects,
Brings us
Simple shepherds, to you;
Our love hangs garlands upon you –
Not garlands of gems and gold,
But of the innocent flowers
That the soil produces.
Deign to look upon our offerings
With a smile, at least, Sire;
Flowers are still
A reward for virtue.
When you return victorious
To London's embrace,
London, to do you honour,
Offers you laurels.
Long live the King!

ENRICO

After the laurels of victory
Flowers, too, are welcome to the warrior;
After the songs of praise,

Caro è l'inno dell'amor.
Il pensier sublimi, o gloria.
Ma l'amor consola il cor.

Non sdegnar de' nostri campi
Sommo Re, l'umil soggiorno;
Anche i campi a te d'intorno
Chiari son del tuo splendor.

[7]

(Potessi vivere
Com'io vorrei,
Lontan dagli uomini
I giorni miei!
Potessi almeno
De' boschi in seno,
O mio bell'idolo,
Fuggir con te!
Che val la gloria
Se tuo non sono,
Ah! più del trono
Sei tu per me.)

With acclamations of 'Viva il Re!', the procession of officials and guards files past and departs. As Enrico is about to go, he encounters Clifford.

The anthem of love is dear, too.
O Glory, you inspire the mind,
But it is love that consoles the heart.

TENANTS

Do not disdain, great King,
To take humble rest in our fields;
Even the fields around you
Are lit up by your splendour.

ENRICO

(Could I but live
My days,
As I would wish,
Far from men!
Could I but
Fly with you,
My fairest treasure,
Deep into the woods!
What value has glory
If I am not yours?
Ah! you, for me,
Are worth more than the throne.)

SCENE IV

Enrico and Clifford.

[8]

Chi veggio? Tu, Clifford?

Compiuto in Francia

Illustre incarco a cui m'esse
un giorno

Il regio tuo favor, in patria io torno.

(Funesto arrivo!)

Ad abbracciar contento

Men già la figlia che di qui non
lunge,

Nel castello natio lasciai partendo;

Ma te qui giunto intendo;

Ed il paterno amore cede al dovere

Di suddito fedele.

(E il caro pegno io gli rapia,
crucele!)

Possa la mia venuta

Util recarti almen! Possa al tuo core

Risparmiare un rimorso!

ENRICO

Whom do I see? You, Clifford?

CLIFFORD

Having completed in France

The illustrious mission for which your
royal favour once

Chose me, I return to my country.

ENRICO

(Ill-timed arrival!)

CLIFFORD

I was on my way happily to embrace

My daughter whom, at my departure,
I left not far from here,

In the castle where she was born,

When I hear that you have arrived here;

And paternal love yields to the duty

Of a loyal subject

ENRICO

(And I stole his dear daughter from him,
cruel wretch that I am!)

CLIFFORD

May my coming at least

Profit you! May it be the means of sparing

Your heart a pang of remorse!



Alastair Miles
(Clifford)

(Oh Ciel!)

Perdona
Al vecchio istitutor de' tuoi prim'anni
Il libero parlar: è voce intorno

Che cieco amore la tua gloria oscura,
Che chiusa in queste mura
Serbi ignota donzella, e che per lei

Poni in non cal di sacro imene i nodi,

Di Leonora i dritti, e gloria, e onore.

Nobil Clifford! Nudo io ti svelo il core.

Amo; né forza umana
Può spegner l'amor mio.

Come? E in tal guisa
A Leonora mancherai di fede?
De' sacri altari al piede
Di', che giurasti tu?

Nol so: m'avvinse

ENRICO

(Oh Heavens!)

CLIFFORD

Forgive
The aged instructor of your youth
If he speaks freely: there are rumours
abroad

That a blind love obscures your glory,
That you keep an unknown maiden
Immured within these walls, and that for
her

You cease to respect the bonds of sacred
marriage,

The rights of Leonora, your glory and your
honour.

ENRICO

Noble Clifford! I reveal my bared heart to
you:

I am in love; and no human force
Can extinguish my love.

CLIFFORD

What? and in this way
Will you betray your faith to Leonora?
At the foot of the sacred altar
Tell me, what did you swear?

ENRICO

I know not: concerns of state



Renée Fleming
(Rosmonda)

Ragion di stato. Mi discioglie adesso
Ragion del cuore.

Oh! A qual trascorri eccesso!
Né vedi l'avvenir? né temi l'ira

Dell'offesa Regina? E andrà sossopra

Tutta quanta Inghilterra? E per chi mai?

Per chi? Rispondi.

Amo, io ti dissi assai.

[9]

Tu non conosci il merto
Dell'adorato oggetto;
Quando ti fia scoperto
No, non parlerai così.
Dirai, virtù, l'affetto
Che l'alma mia rapì.

Qualunque sia l'oggetto
Che te colpevol rende,
Indegno al mio cospetto
È di mirare il dì.
Empia le leggi offende:
Vile l'onor tradì.

Overcame me. Now concerns of the heart
Release me.

CLIFFORD

Oh! What excesses you are running into!
Do you not foresee the future? Do you not
fear the

Wrath of the affronted Queen? And that
all England

Will be turned upside down? And
whoever for?

Who for? Answer me.

ENRICO

I am in love: I have told you enough.

You do not know the merit
Of the woman I adore;

When you have discovered her worth,
No, you will not speak so.

You will call virtue

The love that has swept me away.

CLIFFORD

Whoever the woman may be

Who is responsible for your guilt,

In my eyes she is unworthy

To see the light of day.

In her wickedness she offends the laws:

In her vileness she has betrayed honour.



Nicholas Kok (assistant conductor), Patric Schmid (producer) and David Parry (conductor)

Io la tradiva, io solo,
Che al padre la togliea...

Al padre? e a lui tal duolo

Non risparmiò la rea?

Ah! se sapesti! Io deggio
A questo padre il seggio...
Ed in mercé rapita
Ogni sua gioia io gli ho.

E ancor rimase in vita?...
Né di dolor mancò?...
Ah! pria che sul capo mio
Piombi sì ria sventura!
Ah! tronca i miei giorni, o Dio;
Assai vissuto avrò.

Ah se maggior poss'io
Render la sua sciagura,
Ah! tronca i miei giorni, o Dio;
Assai vissuto avrò.

La sciagurata scoprimi...
Che alla virtù la renda...

ENRICO

It was I who betrayed her, I alone,
Who stole her from her father...

CLIFFORD

From her father? and did not the wicked
creature

Spare him such grief?

ENRICO

Ah! if you but knew! To this father
I owe the throne...
And in gratitude I have stolen
From him his every joy.

CLIFFORD

And could he go on living?...
Did he not die of grief?...
Ah! before such a dire misfortune
May fall upon my head,
Ah! God, cut short my days;
I shall have lived long enough.

ENRICO/CLIFFORD

Ah! if I am capable of increasing
Her misfortune still further
Ah! God, cut short my days;
I shall have lived long enough.

CLIFFORD

Show me the wretched creature...
That I may lead her back to virtue...

N'andrai... ma tu magnanimo

Fia che pietà ti prenda...

Pietà?... non mai... non merita
L'infamia sua pietà.

Ah! Clifford, fia che pietà ti prenda.

[10]

Và: tu primier dimentico
Sarai d'un lieve errore:
Tu la vedrai con giubilo
Sposa del tuo Signor...
E padre a lei, non giudice
Te questo onor farà.

Teco pur io colpevole
Non isperar che sia;
Spinta all'abisso orribile
Ella per me non sia...
La sua virtude a scuotere
Tuonar mia voce udrà.

ENRICO

You will go to her... but, as you are
magnanimous,
See to it that compassion guides you...

CLIFFORD

Compassion?... no, never... her infamy
Does not deserve compassion.

ENRICO

Ah! Clifford, see to it that compassion
guides you.

Go: you will be the first to overlook
A venial error.
You will rejoice to see her
The wife of your King...
And this honour will make you
A father to her rather than a judge.

CLIFFORD

Do not hope that I shall join you
In your guilt;
Let her not be thrust into
The awful abyss through my means...
She will hear my voice thundering
To awaken her virtue.

They depart.

SCENE V

A room in Rosmonda's tower, with large windows through which can be seen the flanks of the castle. Rosmonda is alone.

[11]

ROSMONDA

Volgon tre lune, ah! lassa! e il
di ricorre,
Il fatal dì, che in queste mura io gemo

Di rimorso... d'amor... Oh! tristo
giorno
Le mie lagrime accresce il tuo ritorno!
O padre, o patrii colli,
O mio dolce ritiro, ove tranquilla
E innocente io vivea,
Vi rivedrò più mai misera, e rea?

O Edegardo! Edegardo!
Se non tornassi più!... se i giuramenti

Obliar tu potessi!... Ah, più discaccio
Quest'orrendo pensier, sempre più torna
Alla mente atterrita!...
Vieni, Edegardo mio, vieni, mia vital!...

Three months have passed, ah! woe is me!
and the day comes round
The fatal day since when I groan within
these walls
With remorse, and love... Oh sorry
day!
Your recurrence increases my tears!
O father, O hills of home
O my sweet retreat, where I lived
In innocence and tranquillity,
Shall I, wretched and guilty, ever see you
again?
O Edegardo! Edegardo!
What if you were not to return!... were to
forget
Your vows!... Ah! the more I dismiss
This horrid thought, the more it returns
To my terrified mind!...
Come to me, my Edegardo, come to me,
my life...

She sits and plays a prelude upon her harp; then sings the following:

[12]

Perché non ho del vento
L'infaticabil volo?
Lunge in estraneo suolo,
Ti seguirei, mio ben.
Dove tu sei... sen volino
I miei sospiri almen.

From off-stage the same air is now heard played on a lute.

Rosmonda listens.

Tenero Arturo!
Ei sol m'ascolta, ei solo
In queste a' miei martir mura tacenti

Why do I not have the tireless
Flight of the wind?
Afar upon foreign soil
I would follow you, my love.
Wherever you are... at least
Let my sighs fly to you.

Fond Arturo!
He alone hears me, he alone
Within these walls that are deaf to my
sufferings
Pities me, and echoes my laments.

Mi compiange, e risponde a miei
lamenti.

ARTURO

(off-stage)

Perché non ho del sole
Gli onniveggenti rai?
Sempre dovunque vai
Io ti vedrei, mio ben.
Ah! ove tu sei – ti veggano
I miei sospiri almen.

Why do I not have
The all-seeing rays of the sun?
Wherever you go
I would always see you, my love
Ah! wherever you are – at least
Let my sighs be with you.

(Rosmonda repeats the last two verses; then they continue together.)

ROSMONDA/ARTURO

Invan da te mi parte
Di rio destin tenore:
Varca ogni spazio amore,

In vain the course of adverse fate
Parts me from you:
Love o'erleaps all space,

A black and white photograph of a woman with short, light-colored hair, smiling and looking towards the right. She is wearing a patterned, long-sleeved top over a white collared shirt. The background is a rehearsal room with music stands and sheet music.

Diana Montague
(Arturo)

Teco son io, mio ben.
Lontane ancor s'incontrino
L'anime nostre in Cielo.

“Oh come tosto,
“Il giovine gentil la mesta apprese
“Canzone del dolor! Anch'io l'appresi

“Dell'età sull'aurora,
“Oh! quando fia ch'io [non] la
rammenti ancora?”

[13]

Torna, torna, o caro oggetto
A bear mi d'un tuo sguardo:
Vieni, o tenero Edegardo,
I miei giorni a serenar.
Ch'io riposi sul tuo petto!
Ch'io ti parli ancor d'amore
I rimorsi del mio core
Io potrò dimenticar...

So that I am with you, my love.
Though still far apart, at least
Let our souls be together.

ROSMONDA

“Oh how quickly
“The gentle youth has learned
“The mournful song of grief! I, too,
learned it
“In the first flush of youth.
“Oh! when shall I [no longer] have cause
to remember it?”

Return, return, my dear one,
To make me happy with your glance:
Come, my loving Edegardo,
To make my days serene.
Let me lean upon your chest!
Let me speak to you of love again
I shall be able to forget
My heart's remorse...



Patric Schmid, Renée Fleming
and Bruce Ford

SCENE VI

Arturo and Rosmonda.

Arturo, who has entered a few moments since, and who had stopped at one side, now eagerly comes forward. He tries to conceal his joy.

[14]

T'appressa, Arturo.

Alfin di gioia un raggio
Veggio negli occhi tuoi.

Gioia fugace
Come raggio di sole in ciel piovoso.

Pur lieto, e avventuroso
Giorno è questo per te – (Tu soffri
o core,
Ella gioisca.) Dalla doma Irlanda
Giunge carico d'allori il mio Signore.

Edegardo! Oh contento!

(Oh mio dolore!)

Né a me vien esso?

ROSMONDA

Approach, Arturo.

ARTURO

At last I see a ray of joy
Light up your eyes.

ROSMONDA

A joy is fleeting
As a beam of sunlight in a rainy sky.

ARTURO

And yet this is a happy and fortunate
Day for you – (You suffer, my heart,

But let her rejoice.) From conquered
Ireland, my Lord returns laden with
laurels.

ROSMONDA

Edegardo! Oh happiness!

ARTURO

(Oh my grief!)

ROSMONDA

But does he not come to me?

ARTURO

A te per poco il toglie

A grave concern of the... King's... keeps
him

Grave cura... del Re: da lui spedito
Or mel diceva un messo, ed aggiungeva
Che un vecchio Cavalier libero ingresso
In queste soglie per suo cenno avria.

Briefly from you: a messenger sent by him
Just now told me so, and added
That upon his orders an elderly knight
Should have free access within these walls.

ROSMONDA

Un vecchio Cavalier!... Cielo!...
Che fia?

An elderly knight!... Heavens!... What
may this mean?

ARTURO

Nobile, e umano cor, dal Re diletto,

A noble and kindly heart, beloved by the
King

Caro a tutta Inghilterra... Egli conforto,

Dear to all England... He may be a
comfort,

Sostegno esser ti puote in ogni evento.

A support to you, whatever may occur.

ROSMONDA

Il suo nome?...

His name?...

ARTURO

Clifford.

Clifford.

ROSMONDA

Oh mio spavento!

I am filled with terror!

ARTURO

Tremi? Il conosci tu?

You tremble? Do you know him?

ROSMONDA

Lassa! ei m'è padre...
Rosmonda io son.

Unhappy me! he is my father...
I am Rosmonda.

Rosmonda!

Ahi sciagurata!
Chi m'asconde al suo sdegno?...

Alcun s'appressa:
Ti ritira, infelice.

Ah! non poss'io...
Il tremante mio piede è fitto al suolo.

Eccolo.

SCENE VII

Clifford appears. Rosmonda falls upon a seat, and hides her face in her hands. Arturo goes to meet Clifford, who stops at a distance.

È dessa?

Sì...

Lasciami solo.

Deh! Tu con lei severo

ARTURO

Rosmonda!

ROSMONDA

Ah, wretched that I am!
Who will hide me from his wrath?...

ARTURO

Someone is coming
Withdraw, unhappy girl.

ROSMONDA

Ah! I cannot...
My trembling foot is rooted to the ground.

ARTURO

Here he is.

CLIFFORD

to Arturo
Is that her?

ARTURO

trembling
Yes...

CLIFFORD

Leave me alone with her.

ARTURO

Ah! do not be hard

Non ti mostrar, Signor.

Upon her, Sir.

He leaves.

CLIFFORD

observing Rosmonda from afar

(Piange!... Ah! del tutto
Non è virtude nel suo cor sopita.)

(She weeps!... Ah! virtue is not
Completely extinguished in her heart.)

He approaches.

Donna, a recarti aita
Eccomi a te. Sorgi... chi vedo?

Woman, I come to bring you
Help. Rise... whom do I see?

ROSMONDA

throwing herself at his feet

Un'empia
Che implora il tuo perdono.

A wicked creature
Who implores your pardon.

CLIFFORD

Mia figlia!

My daughter!

ROSMONDA

still at Clifford's feet

Ah padre!

Ah father!

CLIFFORD

Io padre tuo? Nol sono.
[15]

Your father? No more.

ROSMONDA

Deh! t'arresta! Deh! ti degna
Ascoltarmi un solo istante.

Ah! stop! Ah! deign
To hear me a moment only.

CLIFFORD

Odi tu: ti parla, indegna,
Col mio labbro il ciel tonante.

You listen to me: worthless girl,
Thundering Heaven speaks through my
lips.



Renée Fleming and Nelly Miricioiu

Tu macchiato, iniqua figlia,
Hai l'onor di mia famiglia,
Condannato a eterna infamia
Il tuo vecchio genitor.
Va'; la collera superna
Piombi...

Iniquitous daughter, you have stained
The honour of my family
Condemned your old father
To eternal disgrace.
Go; may the wrath of God
Fall...

ROSMONDA

interrupting him with a cry

Ah! no: sei padre ancor.

Ah! no: you are a father still.

CLIFFORD

Era, ah! lasso! Ell'era in pria
De' miei dì consolatrice,
Le virtùdi, oh ciel! m'offria
Dell'estinta genitrice...
Or caduta, profanata,
Più virtù, più onor non ha.
Ah! la madre avventurata!
Tanto obbrobrio almen non sa!

Ah! wretched that I am! she was once
The consolation of my life,
Heavens! she offered me the virtues
Of her dead mother...
Now fallen, polluted,
She has no virtue, no honour, any longer.
Ah! fortunate her mother!
At least she does not know of this disgrace!

ROSMONDA

Ciel! tu piangi? Ah! tu mi svena;

O m'ascondi il tuo dolore...
Il tuo sdegno è minor pena,
Men crudel del tuo dolore.
Ch'io mi strugga in pianto, o padre,
Io per cui più ben non v'ha.
Questa almen m'impetra, o madre,
Questa almen da lui pietà.

Heavens! you weep? Ah! you make my
heart bleed;
O hide your grief from me...
Your anger is a lesser punishment,
Less cruel than your grief.
O father, let me drown myself in tears,
I for whom nothing good is left.
O mother, implore him this at least,
At least this degree of mercy for me.

[16]

Vieni meco, ed un ritiro
Celi al mondo i falli tuoi.

(Me infelice!)

Andiam... Che miro!
Esitare ancor tu puoi?

M'odi!

No!

A me sua fede
Ei promise...

La sua fede? Altrui la diede.

Oh terror!... Saria l'infido?...

Già marito... trema... È il Re.

Ah! che dici? L'infido è il Re?...

Sì!

CLIFFORD

Come with me, and let a convent
Conceal your sins from the world.

ROSMONDA

(Unhappy me!)

CLIFFORD

Let us away... But what do I see?
Can you still hesitate?

ROSMONDA

Hear me!

CLIFFORD

No!

ROSMONDA

He pledged me
His faith...

CLIFFORD

His faith? He gave it to another.

ROSMONDA

O terror!... Could the traitor be?...

CLIFFORD

Already married... tremble... He is the
King.

ROSMONDA

Ah! what are you saying? My betrayer is
the King?...

CLIFFORD

Yes!

Ah! qual velo è a me squarciato!
Quale abisso a me s'addita!
Tu dal Ciel sei vendicato,
Crudelmente io son punita...
Era meglio il cor passarmi,
Che destarmi – a tanto orror.

Piangi meco, o sventurata...
Piangi in sen del genitore.
Tu dal Cielo sei perdonata
Se detesti il traditore:
Tutto, tutto io non perdei –
Se mi sei renduta ancor.

Ah! Rosmonda!
[17]
È desso... è il perfido...
Agli occhi suoi mi cela.

Vieni, fa cor.

“Sostienmi...”
Il giorno a me si vela...

ROSMONDA

Ah! what a veil is torn from my eyes!
What an abyss is pointed out to me!
Heaven has revenged you, father,
And I am cruelly punished...
Better to have run me through the heart,
Than to awaken me to such horror.

CLIFFORD

Weep with me, hapless child...
Weep in the bosom of your father.
You are pardoned by Heaven
If you hold your betrayer in detestation:
All, no! I have not lost all –
If you are given back to me again.

A voice is heard.

ENRICO

from without

Ah! Rosmonda!

ROSMONDA

It is he... it is my betrayer...
Hide me from his eyes.

CLIFFORD

Come, take courage.

ROSMONDA

“Support me...”
The day grows dark around me...

She falls in a swoon.

SCENE VIII

Enrico, Clifford and Rosmonda.

Che veggio?

ENRICO

What do I see?

CLIFFORD

pointing to the unconscious Rosmonda

La tua vittima mira.

Behold your victim.

ENRICO

Clifford! (Che fei?)

Clifford! (What have I done?)

CLIFFORD

Compi l'eccesso; uccidila:
Ella respira ancora.

Complete your outrage: kill her:
She is still breathing.

ENRICO

Rosmonda!

Rosmonda!

ROSMONDA

regaining consciousness

Fuggi, involati,
Sposo di Leonora.

Begone, fly from me,
Husband of Leonora.

ENRICO

Lo fui.

I was her husband.

ROSMONDA

Lo sei, va, barbaro!

You still are. Go, cruel man!

CLIFFORD

Non l'oltraggiar di più.

Offend her no more.

ENRICO

Ah sentimi!

Ah hear me!

È vano.

Ascoltami
Almen, Rosmonda, tu!...

Io ti ascoltai!...

Non piangere,
Solleva in me lo sguardo.
Si appresta Enrico a compiere
I giuri di Edegardo:
Della sua destra il dono
Ei prometteva a te:
La sua corona, e il trono
Ora v'aggiunge il Re.

Non isperar che complice
Di sì gran fallo io sia:

Di Leonora è il soglio;
Sol la sventura è mia.
Aperto più non trovano
Le tue lusinghe il cor.
“Traggimi, ah padre, ah! traggimi
“Lungi dal seduttore.”

CLIFFORD

There's no point.

ENRICO

Rosmonda,
Do you at least hear me!...

ROSMONDA

in tears

I listened to you once before!...

ENRICO

Do not weep,
Lift your eyes to mine.
Enrico hastens to fulfil
The promises of Edegardo:
He promised to give you
His right hand in marriage:
The King now adds to the gift
His crown and the throne.

ROSMONDA

rising

Do not hope that I may be
Your accomplice in such a monstrous
misdeed:
The throne belongs to Leonora
Misfortune is all that is mine.
Your deceits no longer find
Free passage to my heart.
“Take me away, O father, take me away,
“Far from the seducer.”

Or son contento: abbracciami:
Son sciolti i tuoi legami.

Che mai farò?

(Sostienila,
Ciel, che a virtù la chiami.)
Vieni.
“Partiam.”

T’arresta:
Sposa di Enrico è questa:
Né tu, né il mondo intero
A me la toglierà.
Resta.

L’ingiusto impero
Io non ascolto.

Vieni.

Olà!

CLIFFORD

Now I am content: embrace me:
Your bonds are broken.

ENRICO

Whatever shall I do?

CLIFFORD

(Support her, Heaven,
You who recall her to virtue.)
Come.
“Let us depart.”

ENRICO

Stop:
This woman is the wife of Enrico:
Neither you nor the whole world
Will wrest her from me.
Stay.

CLIFFORD

I am deaf
To the wicked command.

to Rosmonda

Come.

ENRICO

calling through the door
Ho there!

SCENE IX

Leonora enters, followed by Arturo, courtiers and guards.

Ciel!

ENRICO

Heavens!

CLIFFORD/ROSMONDA

La Regina!

The Queen!

LEONORA

feigning surprise

Irato,

Do I find the King

Commoso il Re cotanto?

So angry, so moved?

Che fu? Clifford turbato?

What has happened? Clifford disturbed?

Una donzella in pianto?

A maid in tears?

ROSMONDA

(A' sguardi suoi nascondimi,
O Cielo, per pietà.)

(Hide me from her gaze

O Heaven, for pity's sake.)

[18]

LEONORA

(È dessa: alfin la perfida
Ciungo a mirar d'appresso:
Sottrarla a me non possono
Né il Re, né il Cielo istesso.
Già stringe la sua vittima
Il giusto mio furor.)

('Tis she: at last I behold

The perfidious woman at close hand:

Not the King, not Heaven itself

Can deliver her from me.

Already my just fury tightens

Its grip upon its victim.)

(Io fremo. Invan dissimula;
Tenta ingannar me stesso:
L'odio, il livor dell'animo
Ha sulla fronte impresso:

ENRICO

(I quiver with rage. In vain she pretends,

And tries to deceive me:

Hatred and spite of soul

Are imprinted upon her brow:

Già l'innocente vittima
Divora il suo furor.)

(Io tremo. Oh! qual terribile
Sdegno in quel volto espresso!
Un Dio la guida, un vindice

Del mio fatale eccesso.
A' miei rimorsi, ah misera!
Si aggiunge il mio terror.)

(Respiro. Oh ciel benefico!
Scorta qui l'hai tu stesso...
Tu vuoi per lei difendere,
Salvar l'onore oppresso,
Vuoi ravvivar le languide
Speranze del mio cor.)

(Quale, in quei volti taciti,
Quale furor represso!
Nunzia è tal calma orribile
Che la tempesta è presso.
Ciel, tu la sgombra, e dissipa
Finché è sospesa ancor.)

[19]

Tace ognun! Nessun risponde?
Tu, Clifford, favella almeno.

Already her fury
Devours its innocent victim.)

ROSMONDA

(I tremble. Oh! what terrible anger
Is expressed in that face!
A God guides her – a God who seeks
vengeance
For my fatal excess.
To my remorse, wretched that I am!
Is added my terror.)

ARTURO/CLIFFORD

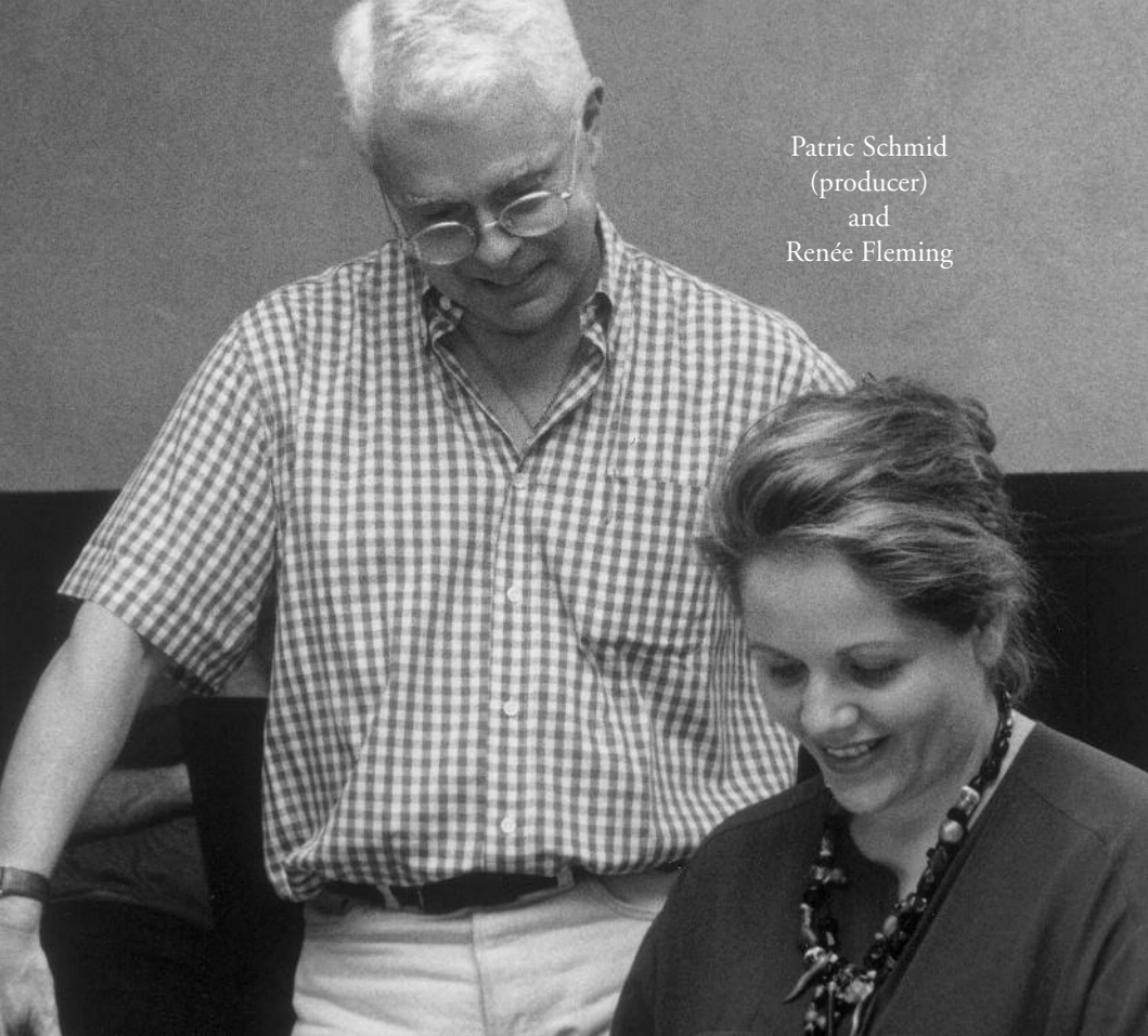
(I breathe again. O beneficent Heaven!
You yourself have guided her here...
Through her you wish to defend
And save oppressed honour,
You wish to give new life
To the wilting hopes of my heart.)

COURTIERS

(What, oh! what repressed fury
Is to be seen in those silent faces!
Such a horrible calm heralds
That the tempest is nigh.
O Heaven, hold it back and dissipate it
Until its fury is spent.)

LEONORA

All are silent! Does no one reply?
You, Clifford, do you speak at least.

A black and white photograph of two people. On the left, a man with short, light-colored hair and glasses is looking down. He is wearing a short-sleeved, button-down shirt with a small checkered pattern and light-colored trousers. On the right, a woman with dark hair pulled back is smiling and looking down. She is wearing a dark-colored top and a necklace with large, dark, irregular beads. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Patric Schmid
(producer)
and
Renée Fleming

La cagion che ci confonde
Tu ben sai, l'intendi appieno.
La mia figlia sventurata,
Salva tu da un seduttore.

Figlia tua? Sì, fia salvata:

T'offro un braccio protettor.

T'allontana. Guai, sì, guai!
Se appressarti ardisci a lei.
Mì sei nota.

E noto assai,
Traditor, tu pur mi sei,
Ma paventa...

Leonora!

La rival paventi ancora.
L'ardir mio non è smarrito.

Leonora!

Io regno ancor.

CLIFFORD

You well know the reason that
Confounds us: you appreciate it fully.
Be you the one to save my unfortunate
Daughter from a seducer.

LEONORA

Your daughter? Yes, she will be saved:
to Rosmonda

I offer you my protective arm.
She takes several steps towards her.

ENRICO

Stand back! Beware, yes, woe unto you!
If you dare to approach her.
I know you.

LEONORA

no longer able to restrain herself

And you, too, traitor
Are well known to me.
But tremble...

ENRICO

Leonora!

LEONORA

Let my rival tremble, too.
My fearlessness remains unquelled.

ENRICO

Leonora!

LEONORA

I still reign as Queen.

Il tuo regno! egli è finito.
Va': l'impone il tuo Signor.

Empio! ed osi?...

Tutto.

Indegno!

Esci, o trema!

Oh! ciel! cessate.
Deh! alla corte, a tutto il regno
Rio spettacolo non date!

Tutto il regno in questo giorno
Un maggiar da me ne avrà.

Tanto scorno...

Tanto oltraggio...

... consumato non sarà.

Tremi ognun che cimentarmi
Osi ancor, ancor si attenti.

ENRICO

Your reign? It is over.
Begone: your King commands you.

LEONORA

Monster! and do you dare?...

ENRICO

I dare all!

LEONORA

Unworthy wretch!

ENRICO

Begone, or tremble!

ROSMONDA/ARTURO/COURTIERS

intervening

Oh Heavens! stop!
Ah! spare the court, spare the whole
Kingdom such a reprehensible spectacle!

ENRICO

I'll subject the whole kingdom this day
To a much greater, much worse spectacle.

CLIFFORD

Such shameful behaviour...

LEONORA

Such outrage...

LEONORA/CLIFFORD

... will not go unchecked.

ENRICO

Let all who still dare... who
Still try to provoke me, tremble.

Ho potuto assai frenarmi;
Le mie smanie or son furenti,
Mille volte sciagurato
Chi prorompere le fa.

Come io sappia vendicarmi,
Traditore, udran le genti:
Sorgeranno all'ire, all'armi,
Regni, popoli, parenti...
Il furor che m'hai destato
L'universo scuoterà.

Ah! s'io deggio udir nomarmi
Rea cagion d'inausti eventi,
Giusto Ciel, non vendicarmi,
Non udire i miei lamenti...
Il dolore a me serbato
Lieve ancora a me sarà.

Deh! si tolga, si risparmi
Scena orribile alle genti!
La pietade vi disarmi
Di due popoli dolenti,
Qual di voi protegga il fato
Sangue a rivi scorrerà.

I have restrained myself long enough;
My passions now rage,
A thousand misfortunes fall upon
Those who make them boil over.

LEONORA

Traitor, the people will hear
How I intend to revenge myself:
Realms, peoples, relatives...
All will rise in anger, take up arms...
The fury which you have aroused in me
Will shake the universe.

ROSMONDA

Ah! if I must hear myself named
The guilty cause of ill-omened events,
Just Heaven, do not revenge me,
Do not listen to my lamentations...
The grief which is in store for me
Will still be light punishment for me.

ARTURO/CLIFFORD/COURTIERS

Ah! spare and preserve the people
From such a horrible scene!
Let compassion for the subjects of
Two grieving realms disarm you;
No matter which of you fate may favour,
Blood will flow in rivers.

ACT TWO

SCENE I

A great hall in the castle leading to the royal apartments. Enrico is seated at a small table with his councillors around him. All are deep in deliberation.

[1]

Udimmo, o Re: qual suddito
 Potria cangiar tua voglia?
 Se grave è tanto e orribile,
 Il nodo tuo, si scioglia.
 Ma, deh! perdona, o Sire,
 Libero e ingenuo dire,
 Talvolta al ben del regno
 Immola il proprio un Re.
 Sai che segrete vivono
 Lunghe discordie, e fiere...
 Sai che a' tuoi danni vegliano
 Le gelosie straniere...
 Che l'Aquitania puote
 Dar Leonora in dote
 Al primo che con l'armi
 La vendichi di te.
 Perdona... o Re.

COUNCILLORS

We have heard you, Sire: what subject
 Could think of changing your wish?
 If your marriage is so irksome and
 Horrible, let it be dissolved.
 But, ah! pardon us, Sire,
 If we speak freely and candidly:
 Sometimes a King sacrifices his
 Personal good to that of the kingdom.
 You are aware that long, fierce
 Discords smoulder in secret...
 You are aware that foreign jealousies
 Watch to encompass your downfall...
 That Leonora is capable of giving
 Aquitaine as a dowry
 To the first who, taking up arms,
 Wreaks her revenge upon you.
 Forgive us... Sire.

All fall silent. The King rises.

[2]

Quanto dal vostro zelo
Suggerito mi vien, tutto già volsi
Meco stesso in pensier. Peggior nemica
Mi è Leonora in Londra

Che in Aquitania sua. Funesta dote
Ella reca ai mariti, e quale ha pondo

Lo scettro di Guienna, è noto al
mondo.

Ite; e il consiglio intero

Oda, e approvi il grand'atto: al dì novello
Fia che rivarchi il mar, non più Regina
L'altra Leonora.

The councillors depart. Enrico becomes aware of the presence of Leonora and tries to slip away.

SCENE II

Leonora and Enrico.

ENRICO

All that zeal has suggested
To me, I have already revolved
In my thoughts myself. Leonora is
A more dangerous enemy to me in
London
Than in her Aquitaine. She brings a
Pernicious dowry to her husbands, and
what weight
The sceptre of Guienna carries, is known
to the world.
Go; and let the full Council hear and
approve

The great resolution: tomorrow at dawn
Let proud Leonora, no longer Queen,
Retrace her path across the sea.

LEONORA

Fermati: il dì novello è lungi ancora.

Stop: tomorrow's dawn is still a long way
off.

ENRICO

È ver... al mio desir
Pigro è il volo del tempo.

That is true... The passing of time
Loiters by comparison with my wishes.

Bruce Ford and Patric Schmid



LEONORA

A che l'affretti?
 Che spero tu ch'ei rechi? –

To what end do you wish to hasten it?
 What do you hope that time may bring
 you? –

Ah! pria ch'ei m'abbia
 Dal tuo fianco a bandir, fia che rovesci
 Da' fondamenti suoi l'isola intera.

Ah! before time can banish me
 From your side, you will have torn this
 Whole island from its foundations.

ENRICO

T'acqueta, omai l'altera
 Favella tua più sbigottir non puote
 Un'alma ch'ha ripresi i dritti suoi.

Silence! No more can your haughty
 Tongue dismay a soul that has
 Reassumed its rights.

LEONORA

Tuoi dritti? E i miei dimenticar tu puoi?
 Duca di Normandia,
 Chi Re ti fece? Chi tesori, ed armi,
 Chi consigli ti diede? Io sola in Londra

Your rights? And can you forget mine?
 Duke of Normandy,
 Who made you King? Who gave you arms
 And treasures? Who gave you good
 counsel?

T'acquistai partigiani, io ti composi

I alone gained you allies in London, I
 reconciled

I discordi voleri, io ti guidai
 Per facil via dell'Inghilterra al soglio.

The discordant factions, I guided you
 By an easy path to the throne of England.

ENRICO

E vi sedette il tuo superbo orgoglio.

And there set up your own o'erweaning
 pride.

Sola regnar volevi,
 Tu sola, in nome mio; ferreo stendesti
 Sulla corte il tuo scettro, e su me
 Stesso:

You wished to reign alone,
 You alone, but in my name; you extended
 Your iron sceptre over the court, and
 over my very self:

Devoto, e a te somnesso
Per appagare ambizion fatale,
Sposo cercavi...

Ambizione! E quale?
[3]

Mi splendeva un serto in fronte
Qual non è quel ch'io ti diedi:
Ebbi Europa, ed Asia ai piedi
Pria che l'Anglia, ed il suo Re.

Sulla Senna, e sull'Oronte
Son pur chiari i vanti tuoi:
Sul Tamigi aver non puoi
Degno luogo accanto a me.

Or m'insulti!... E un dì sapesti
Lusingarmi, o menzognero.

Ne ho rossore.

E tu cogliesti
De' miei falli il frutto intiero.

Ne ho rimorso.

Ah! l'abbi, ingrato,

You sought a devoted husband, one
Subservient to yourself
To gratify your fatal ambition...

LEONORA

Ambition? What ambition?

There shone a circlet on my brow
Brighter than the one I gave you:
I had all Europe and Asia at my feet
Before I stooped to England, and
England's King.

ENRICO

Over the Seine and over the Orontes
Your boasts still hold good:
but over the Thames you can claim
No worthy place at my side.

LEONORA

Now you insult me!... Yet once you knew
How to cajole me, false-tongued man.

ENRICO

I am ashamed of it.

LEONORA

And you gathered the entire
Fruits of my sins.

ENRICO

I feel remorse for it.

LEONORA

Ah! yet you forget, ungrateful wretch,

D'obliar l'amor giurato,
Di sprezzare un cor fedele
Che t'amò di tanto amor.

Tu m'amasti! Tu!!

Crudele!
Io t'amava... e t'amo ancor.
[4]

Caro, sebben colpevole,
Sento che ancor mi sei;
Io non ti posso perdere,
Non so partir da te.
Regna pur solo e libero
Sovra i tuoi stati, e i miei.
Solo il tuo cor desidero;
Tutto è il tuo cor per me.

Tanto dimessa, e supplice,
Tu per amor non sei...
L'ire che in cor ti fremono
Mal tu nascondi a me.
Serba i tuoi stati, e lasciami
Pago regnar sui miei;
Barriera insuperabile
Fra me s'innalza e te.

Dunque immolarmi, o perfido,

The love you swore,
You spurn a faithful heart
That loved you with such zealous love.

ENRICO

You loved me! You!!

LEONORA

Cruel man!
I loved you... and I love you still.

Even though you are guilty, I feel
That you are still dear to me;
I cannot lose you,
I know not how to part from you.
Reign, e'en alone and independent,
Over your states and over mine.
It is only your heart that I wish;
Your heart is everything to me.

ENRICO

It is not as a result of love that
You are so submissive and imploring...
You ill conceal from me
The anger that rages in your heart.
Keep your states, and let me
Reign content over mine;
An insuperable barrier raises itself
Between you and me.

LEONORA

So, perfidious man, you wish now

Ad altra donna or vuoi?
Parla.

Io vo' pace: e sciogliermi
Voglio dai lacci tuoi.
Quel che poi fia, nol chiedere.

Va', traditor; lo so.
Sì, trema... ma ancor qual esule
Varcato il mar non ho.

[5]

Tu sei mio... per sempre mio;
Discacciarmi invan tu brami:
Sono eterni i tuoi legami;
Il destin li fabbricò.
Quel ch'io posso, chi son io
Tu l'udrai dell'ara al piede...
Altre faci, ed altre tede
Di mia man v'accenderò.

Nel tuo core appien vegg'io:
Nuovi orrori invan tu trami;
Son già sciolti i miei legami,
Una furia li spezzò.
Fra i tuoi sdegni, e l'odio mio
Si frapponga il mare in guerra:
Ambidue l'istessa terra
Sostener, nutrir non può.

They are still threatening each other as they depart.

To sacrifice me to another woman?
Speak.

ENRICO

I want peace: and I wish
To release myself from your bonds.
Do not ask what will follow then.

LEONORA

Go, traitor; I know already.
Yes, tremble... for I have not yet
Crossed the sea as an exile.

You are mine... mine for ever,
In vain you try to thrust me from you:
The ties between us are eternal;
It was destiny that fashioned them.
Who I am, and what I am capable of,
You will hear at the foot of the altar...
I shall kindle for you torches and
Brands of a different kind.

ENRICO

I can see deep within your heart:
'Tis in vain you concoct new horrors;
My bonds are already shaken off,
It was a fury that burst them asunder.
Let the stormy sea be placed
Between your anger and my hatred:
The same land cannot support
And nourish the two of us.

SCENE III

A gallery in Rosmonda's tower. The portal of the main entrance is on one side; on the other a staircase leads to Rosmonda's apartments. From the windows behind can be seen the clock of Woodstock Castle. As the action will show, there is also a secret doorway in one wall. Arturo is alone.

[6]

ARTURO

Che pensi Arturo? Tanto spazio
hai percorso

What are you thinking of, Arturo? You
have come

Che arrestarti non puoi: della Regina

So far you cannot stop now: you have
become

Cieco tu sei strumento,

The blind tool of the Queen,

Sia pur qual vuoi il suo segreto intento.

No matter what her secret intent may be.

Pietà ti muova, o Ciel,

Let compassion and my youth move you

La giovinezza mia... sol Leonora

O Heaven... it was Leonora, she alone,

In me destò questa speranza audace

Who kindled in me this rash hope

Ch'esser mi può fatale...

That threatens to prove fatal to me...

Troppo, ah! troppo è possente
il mio rivale.

My rival is too, ah! too powerful.

[7]

Io non ti posso offrir

I cannot offer you

Né gloria né splendor:

Glory or splendour:

Ah! cara, non ho che amor,

Ah! my dear, I have only love,

Non ho che un core.

Only a heart to offer you.

Ma questo cor morir

But this heart would not hesitate

Non sdegherà per te;

To die for you;

Ma lo splendor d'un re

The splendour of a King

Non vale amor.

Is not as valuable as love.

[8]

Ritorna a splendere
Audace speme;
Possente all'anima
Favella ancor.
E contro i palpiti
D'un cor che geme,
Opponi i fervidi desir d'amor.

[9]

Ma il tempo vola. Omai sgombrar
mi è forza
Ogni dubbiezza. Alla Regina avvinto
Troppo son io perché pentirmi
io possa...
Fede, promessa, amor, tutto mel
vieta...
Eccola.

Come back to shine within me,
Audacious hope;
Speak strongly once more
Within my soul.
And to the quakings
Of a groaning heart
Oppose the fervent wishes of love.

But time flies. It behoves me now to sweep
away
All vacillation. I am too deeply
Bound to the Queen to have second
thoughts...
Loyalty, my promise, love... all forbid me
to hesitate...
Here she is.

Hearing a knocking at the secret door, he goes and opens it.

SCENE IV

Clifford and Arturo.

Oh! Ciel!

T'acqueta.

Tu libero, Signor?

ARTURO

Oh Heavens!

CLIFFORD

Be quiet.

ARTURO

You are free, my Lord?

Si. – La Regina

Sciolse i miei lacci, e per l'ascosa via,
Che tu le apristi, me in sua vece invia.

Or di? verrà Rosmonda?

Ella il promise.

Consiglier migliore.
Della Regina istessa
Nel padre avrà.

Taci: alcun giunge.

SCENE V

Rosmonda descends the stairs.

È dessa.

Che veggo? Oh! gioia! Enrico
Teco è placato!
Ah! di'... padre... di'...

Più cortese mano

CLIFFORD

Yes. – The Queen freed me from my
bonds,

And by this secret passage, which you
Made known to her, she sends me in her
stead

Now tell me: will Rosmonda come?

ARTURO

She promised to.

CLIFFORD

A better counsellor.
Than the Queen herself
She will find in her father.

ARTURO

Silence: someone is coming.

CLIFFORD

It is she.

ROSMONDA

What do I see? Oh joy! Enrico
Has relented towards you!
Ah! speak... father... speak...

CLIFFORD

A more gracious hand delivered me from

Al carcer mio mi tolse – alla Regina	My prison – you owe your father's preservation
Tu devi il padre... e in lei salute avrai	To the Queen... and you will find safety with her
Dove tu non ti opponga al suo disegno.	Provided you do not thwart her design.
	ROSMONDA
Parla.	Speak.
	CLIFFORD
Da questo regno	You must depart this realm
Partir tu devi, al primo suon di squilla	At the first stroke of the clock
Che annunzia il dì morente.	That announces the dying day.
	ROSMONDA
Ah!	Ah!
	CLIFFORD
A te fia scorta	Arturo will be your escort
In Aquitania Arturo... ivi... lontana	To Aquitaine... there... far
Da un suolo testimonio del tuo rossore	From a land that has witnessed your shame...
Il giovin generoso	The generous youth
Sposo ti fia.	Will be your husband.
	ROSMONDA
Sposo!...	My husband!...
	ARTURO
(Gran Dio!)	(Good God!)
	CLIFFORD
Sì: sposo.	Yes: your husband.
Tremi?... esitar potresti?...	Do you tremble?... Can you hesitate?

“Misera me!

“Potresti ancor nutrire
“Qualche ria speme!

“Ogni mia speme è morta
“Coll’innocenza mia.

“Il fallo è altrui. Men puro
“Non fece la sventura il tuo bel core,
“Nè men cara mi sei. Beato in terra

“Quant’altri mai mi renderà tua mano.

“Beato! Oh Arturo! ti lusinghi invano.

“Sospiri eterni in dote
“Ti reherci. Veracemente amarmi
“Non potete un nobil cor.

“Rosmonda!

“Oh! come
“Mal tu travisi la colpevol fiamma
“Che ancor t’accende.

ROSMONDA

“Woe is me!

CLIFFORD

“Is it possible that you still nourish
“Some guilty hope?

ROSMONDA

“Every hope I had has died
“With my innocence.

ARTURO

“The fault is another’s. Misfortune
“Has not made your fair heart less pure,
“Nor are you any less dear to me. Your
hand

Will make me more blessed than any man
on earth.

ROSMONDA

“Blessed! Oh Arturo! you deceive yourself
in vain.

“I would bring you eternal sighs
“As my dowry. A noble heart
“Can no longer truly love me.

ARTURO

“Rosmonda!

CLIFFORD

“Oh! how
“Little you are aware of the guilty
“Flame that still burns within you.

Al seduttor serbarti

In guisa tal tu speri? Empia! lo vedo...

Serbarmi a lui?... né lo desio,

né il chiedo.

Io fuggirò quel perfido:

A te lo giuro e al Cielo.

Fia che m'asconda agli uomini

De' penitenti il velo,

M'avvolgerò nel cenere

A piè del sacro altar...

Ma nuovo imen non chiedere,

Io più non posso amar.

E me deserto, e vedovo

Lasciar potresti, o figlia!

Lassa!

Di'. Né vuoi tu chiudere

Al genitor le ciglia?

Cedi.

Do you hope to preserve yourself in such a
fashion

For your seducer? Wicked creature! I see
it...

ROSMONDA

Preserve myself for him?... I neither
desire
nor ask it.

[10]

I shall flee that perfidious man:

I swear it to you and to Heaven.

Only allow a penitent's veil

To conceal me from the gaze of men,

And I shall debase myself in the dust

At the foot of the sacred altar...

But do not ask a new marriage of me:

I can love no more.

CLIFFORD

And could you leave me, daughter
Alone and a widower!

ROSMONDA

Alack!

CLIFFORD

Tell me. And do you not wish

To close your father's eyes?

ARTURO/CLIFFORD

Yield

Il paterno pianto
Forza ti faccia al cor.

Oh! non amor soltanto,
Chiedete a me dolor.

Risolvi...

Oh Dio!

Và, barbara;
A mie catene io riedo.

Padre! deh! padre – ascoltami.

Io più nol sono.

Io cedo.
Lunge mi guidi Arturo, –
M'arrendo al vostro amor.

Oh! gioia!

E il giuri?

Il giuro.

ARTURO

Let your father's tears exert
Their pressure on your heart.

ROSMONDA

Oh! you are not asking only for my love,
You ask also for my eternal grief.

CLIFFORD

Decide...

ROSMONDA

Oh God!

CLIFFORD

Begone, unfeeling girl;
I shall return to my chains.

ROSMONDA

Father, ah! father! Listen to me.

CLIFFORD

as if departing

I am no longer your father.

ROSMONDA

I yield.
Let Arturo take me far away, –
I surrender to your love.

ARTURO

O joy!

CLIFFORD

And you swear it?

ROSMONDA

I swear it.

CLIFFORD/ARTURO

“Ma che? Tu piangi ancor?”

[11]

Senza pace, e senza speme
Con un cor che troppo sente,
Io vedrò l'età ridente
Consumarsi nel dolor;
Come un giorno senza luce
È la vita senza onor.
Ah! per me non v'è più speme,
Non v'è gioia, non v'è amor.

Reprimi le lagrime,
Nascondi il dolore:
“Gioire, non piangere,
“Tu devi per te.”

“But what is this? You are weeping still?”

ROSMONDA⁹

Bereft of peace, bereft of hope,
With a heart too alive to sorrow,
I shall see the flower of my youth
Consume itself in grief;
A life without honour
Is like a day without light.
Ah! for me there is no hope left,
There is no joy, no love.

ARTURO/CLIFFORD

Hold back your tears,
Conceal your grief:
“You must rejoice
“Not weep.”

⁹ As already explained in Jeremy Commons's introduction to the opera, the words of this cabaletta appear in the first libretto as a footnote, glued in after the text had returned from the printer. In the body of the text the words of an earlier – now lost – cabaletta appear:

Lasciate che in lagrime
Si strugga il mio cuore;
Null'altro che piangere
Rimane per me.
Per sempre spariono
La pace, l'onore:
Conforto a quest'anima
Concesso non è.

Let my heart drown itself
In tears;
All that remains for me
Is to weep.
Peace of mind and honour
Have forever disappeared:
No comfort is granted
To this soul of mine.

La pace ricuperi,
Riacquisti l'onor:
"Intiera dei palpiti
"Ottieni mercé."

Clifford departs, accompanied by Arturo. Rosmonda, in tears, collapses upon a stool.

SCENE VI

Rosmonda alone.

[12]

ROSMONDA

Giurato è il sacrificio... O Ciel mi reggi

The sacrifice is sworn... O Heaven, give
me strength

Perch'io lo compia. "E il compirò:
fia tronca

To perform it. "And I shall perform it: in
this way

"Ogni speme così, che ancor potria
"Lusingar l'avvilta anima mia.

"Let every hope be cut away that could
"Still deceive my humbled soul.

She rises

"Rapida inoltra l'ora

"The hour fixed for my departure

"Prefissa al mio partir. Oh sol! Domani

"Rapidly approaches. O sun! Tomorrow

"Il raggio tuo nascente

"Your dawning ray

"Vedrà sul mar le vele

"Will behold upon the sea the sails

"Che me torranno a questo suol crudele."

"That carry me from this cruel land."

Ma qual d'appresso ascolto

But what sound of approaching steps

Di passi calpestio?... Veggasi...

Do I hear?... Let me see... Oh Heaven!

Oh Cielo!

Il Re!... si fugga.

The King!... let me fly.

SCENE VII

Enrico and Rosmonda.

Me tu fuggi!

ENRICO

You flee from me!

(Io gelo.)

ROSMONDA

(I grow cold.)

Rosmonda!

ENRICO

Rosmonda!

(Oh fatal voce!)

ROSMONDA

(Oh fatal voice!)

Edegardo non odi?

ENRICO

Do you not hear your Edegardo?

Ah! mai non fossi

ROSMONDA

Ah! would you had never been

Stato Edegardo tu! Mai non t'avessi

Edegardo! Would that in my retreat

Nel mio ritiro udito! A che mai vieni?

I had never heard you! Why ever are you
come?

Il mio pianto a mirar? Onta mi fora,

To behold my tears? Barbarous man, in
your

Barbaro, innanzi a te versarne ancora.

Presence it would be shameful of me to
shed more.

Più non ne verserai,

ENRICO

You will shed no more, Rosmonda.

Mai più, Rosmonda. Già d'Enrico sposa

Never again will you weep. Already the
primates

T'acclamano i primati, e d'Inghilterra Acclaim you as Henry's bride, and the
wishes of all
Universal desio, ti chiama al trono... England call you to the throne...

ROSMONDA

Al pianto, al pianto condannata io sono. To weep, to weep am I condemned.
Tu stesso al padre or rendimi... Do you yourself restore me to my father...
Consola il veglio afflitto... Bring comfort to the afflicted old man...
Minori il tuo delitto Let this act of compassion
Quest'atto di pietà. Mitigate your crime.

ENRICO

Te vuol rapirmi il barbaro, The barbarous man wishes to tear you from
me,
Te sposa altrui destina; He intends to make you the wife of another;
Quando sarai Regina When you are Queen
Grazia, e favore avrà. He will find grace and favour.

ROSMONDA

Regina! Io?... Nol credere; Queen! I Queen?... Do not believe it;
Mai nol sarò. Never shall I be Queen.

ENRICO

Già il sei. You are already.

ROSMONDA

Ah! sol di te son vittima... Ah! I am nought but your victim...
Ah! fuggi dagli occhi miei. Ah! flee from my sight.
Ch'io più non t'oda... Let me no longer hear you...

ENRICO

"Ingrata!" "Thankless girl!"
Tanto sei tu cambiata! How you have changed!

Sì ria mercé tu dai
All'amor mio fedel?

Il deggio... io lo giurai.

A chi?

Lo giurai all'onore, al Ciel.
[13]

Giurasti un dì... rammentalo...

D'amarmi ognor giurasti;
Presente il Ciel medesimo
Ai giuri tuoi chiamasti:
Speranze, onor, ventura,
Ah! tutto ponevi in me...
Ah! non sarai spergiuira
Non mancherai di fé.

Non io, non io dimentica
Son di que' giuri, il sai:
Quell'Edegardo rendimi
Cui l'onor mio fidai...
Quell'alma onesta e pura,
Ah! quel nobil cor dov'è?
Oh! eterna mia sventura!

Do you give such evil thanks
In exchange for my faithful love?

ROSMONDA

I must... I have sworn it.

ENRICO

To whom?

ROSMONDA

I have sworn it to honour, to Heaven.

ENRICO

There was a day when you swore...
remember it...

When you swore to love me forever,
You called upon Heaven itself
To witness your oaths:
Hopes, honour, future fortune,
Ah! all you placed in me...
Ah! you will not go back on your word,
You will not prove faithless.

ROSMONDA

You know that it is not I, not I
Who am heedless of those oaths:
Give me back that Edegardo
To whom I entrusted my honour...
That honest and pure soul,
Ah! where is that noble heart?
Oh! my eternal misfortune!

Qui non vegg'io che il Re.

Ah!

Qual terror!

Me misera!
L'ora inoltrò!...

Qual'ora? Parla!

L'ora che dee dividerci...
"Lasciami per pietà.

Ingrata! E insisti ancora?

Fino alla morte. – Va'...
[14]

Concedo un breve istante
Al tuo timore insano:
Se puoi scordar l'amante,
Rammenta il tuo Sovrano...
Pensa che sprezzo, e sdegno
Per la tua destra un regno,
Pensa che freno, ed argine
Immenso amor non ha.

Ah! nel mio cor tremante

Here I see but the King.

The hour strikes. Rosmonda starts and lets out a cry.

Ah!

ENRICO

Why so terrified?

ROSMONDA

Unhappy me!
The hour has come...!

ENRICO

What hour? Tell me!

ROSMONDA

The hour that must divide us...
"Leave me for pity's sake.

ENRICO

Ungrateful girl! And do you still insist?

ROSMONDA

Till death. – Go...

ENRICO

I grant a brief moment
To your senseless fear:
If you can forget your lover,
Remember your Sovereign...
Think that I spurn and scorn
A kingdom to gain your hand
Think that a mighty love
Knows neither restraint nor bound.

ROSMONDA

Ah! you hope in vain to see

Pace tu sperì invano...
Me la rapì l'amante,
Darla non può il Sovrano...
Penso che d'Anglia il regno
D'un altro amor fu pegno,
Ah! penso che più colpevole
Il tuo furor ti fa.

Peace within my trembling heart...
My lover stole it from me,
The Sovereign cannot restore it...
I remember that the realm of England
Was the pledge of another love,
Ah! I think that your fury
Makes you more guilty than ever.

Rosmonda flees, and Enrico slowly departs.

SCENE VIII

A solitary part of the gardens of Woodstock: a small grove of plane-trees, and a fountain overshadowed by weeping willows. It is night. Leonora's followers appear cautiously, taking stock of the place as they approach from various directions.

[15]

Ecco gli antichi platani
Levare al ciel la fronte.
Sotto i piangenti salici
Ecco il segreto fonte.
Giungemmo noi solleciti:
Ella non venne ancor.
Presso i vicini portici
Onde al castel si ascende,
Alcun furtivo, e tacito
Vada a spiar se scende:
Se scolta intorno aggirasi
Se desto è alcun rumor.

FOLLOWERS

Here the aged plane-trees
Raise their heads to the sky.
Here beneath the weeping willows
Is the secret fountain.
We have arrived punctually:
She has not yet come.
Beside the nearby arcades
That lead up to the castle,
Let someone go stealthily and silently
To see if she is coming down:
To see if any sentry is about,
If any sound is to be heard.

“Silenzio... Udiamo – È il fremito

“D’aura tra fronda, e fronda...

“Il fonte egli è che mormora

“Franto tra sponda, e sponda...”

Raddensa, o ciel, le tenebre;

Ci arrida il tuo favor.

“Silence... Let us listen – It is the
trembling

“Of the breeze between the leaves...

“It is the fountain that murmurs

“As it splashes between its banks...”

O heaven, deepen the shadows;

Let your favour smile upon us.

They disperse

SCENE IX

Rosmonda alone.

[16]

Primiera io giungo. Chi trattiene
Arturo?

Quale inciampo il ritarda? – Avria
qualcuno

Penetrato il disegno? Ah! il cielo

Che ci sorprenda Enrico!... io tremo...

Io gelo.

“Sediam. Oh! come freddi

“Son questi marmi!... come densa
e cupa

“La notte che mi cinge! Ogni funesto

ROSMONDA

I am the first to arrive. Who has delayed
Arturo?

What unexpected obstacle holds me back?

Can someone have discovered the plan?
Ah! Heaven

Forbid that Enrico should surprise us!...
I tremble...

I feel cold.

She sits beside the fountain.

“Let me sit. Oh! how cold are

“These marble slabs!... how dense and
murky

“The night that surrounds me! Every evil

“Presentimento mio cresce coll’ombra
“Rio presagio di morte il cor
m’ingombra.”

“Presentiment increases with the shadows...
“An ominous feeling approaching death
assails my heart.”

As she hears sounds, she rises in dismay.

Quale indistinto ascolto
Fragor lontano... è il gemito del vento
Fra ramo, e ramo... è il mormorar
dell’onda.

What indistinct and distant sound
Do I hear?... it is the lament of the wind
In the branches... it is the murmur of the
waters.

SCENE X

Leonora and Rosmonda.

(È dessa...)

LEONORA
from a distance
(It is she...)

Ah! chi parlò?...

ROSMONDA
Ah! who spoke?...

Sei tu Rosmonda?
[17]

LEONORA
approaching
Are you Rosmonda?

Sì, son io... qui sola io movo
Palpitante, e sbigottita.

ROSMONDA
trembling
Yes... I am here alone,
Trembling and frightened.

N’hai ben d’onde.

LEONORA
You have good cause.

O ciel! qual nuovo
Sdegno in te?...

Tu m'hai tradita.

Io!!

Sì, tu. Per ogni lato
Accorron guardie... ognun è armato.
Per te sola, o traditrice,
Il disegno è noto al Re.

Ah! noto ad esso!... oh! me infelice!

Ove è il padre? Arturo ov'è?

Forse in ceppi.

Oh! me infelice! In lor difesa
Accorriamo...

Arresta ingrata:
Speri invan che tanta offesa
Io sopporti invendicata:

ROSMONDA

O Heavens! what new anger
Possesses you?...

LEONORA

You have betrayed me.

ROSMONDA

I!!

LEONORA

Yes, you. On all sides guards
Are coming running... all are armed.
Through you alone, traitress,
The King has learned of the plan.

ROSMONDA

Ah! he has learned of it!... Oh! unhappy
me!

Where is my father? Where is Arturo?

LEONORA

Perhaps in chains.

ROSMONDA

as if she would depart

Oh! woe is me! Let us hasten
To their defence...

LEONORA

seizing her by an arm

Stop, ungrateful girl:
In vain you hope that I should stomach
Such an offence unrevenged:

L'onta mia, la mia rovina
Speri invan di consumar.

Oh! pietà, Regina!
Me sì rea, deh! non pensar.

Di te pietà?
[18]

Tu morrai – tu m'hai costretta,
Tu m'hai spinta a colpa orrenda.

Non è più, non è vendetta,
Non è sdegno che m'accenda.
È delirio, è insania estrema
Che il pugnol brandir mi fa.
Trema iniqua, indegna trema!

Niun da me ti salverà.

Ah! lo giuro al Ciel, lo giuro,
Il segreto io non tradia.
Qui prevenni il padre, e Arturo...

Qui piangea... ma pur partia...
Immolava ai dritti tuoi
Gloria, amor, tranquillità.
Se la vita ancor tu vuoi...

In vain you hope to bring about
My shame, my ruin.

ROSMONDA

Oh! have mercy, my Queen!
Ah! do not believe me so guilty!

LEONORA

ironically

I have mercy on you?

You will die – you have forced my hand,
You have pushed me to this horrendous
crime.

It is no longer a wish for revenge,
No longer anger that fires me.
It is madness, it is extreme insanity
That makes me brandish this dagger.
Tremble, wicked girl, unworthy wretch,
tremble!

No one will save you from me.

ROSMONDA

Ah! I swear to Heaven, I swear
I did not betray the secret.
I arrived here before my father, before
Arturo...

I was weeping... yet I was departing...
To your superior rights I was sacrificing
Glory, love, peace of mind.
If you still wish my life...

Pochi giorni... e tua sarà.

A few more days... and it will be yours.

There is a moment's silence. Leonora holds the raised dagger over Rosmonda, who lies prostrate at her feet.

[19]

Sorgi, e vieni, io t'offro ancora

Get up, and come, I still offer you

Un sol mezzo a disarmarmi.

One last way of disarming me.

ROSMONDA

Ah! quale? Favella!

Ah! what way? Tell me!

LEONORA

Un sol mezzo... e...

One sole way... and...

SCENE XI

Leonora's followers; Leonora and Rosmonda.

FOLLOWERS

Leonora!

Leonora!

Enrico accorre in armi.

Enrico approaches... he is armed.

LEONORA

E Clifford?

And Clifford?

FOLLOWERS

In lacci è desso...

He is in fetters.

ROSMONDA

Ciel!

Heavens!

FOLLOWERS

Il disegno appien mancò.

The plan has utterly failed.

LEONORA

Tu mi traggi al nero eccesso,

Unkind destiny, you force me

Sorte avversa, e il compirò.

To black excess: I'll commit the deed.

Oh Ciel! t'imploro.

ROSMONDA

Oh Heavens! I beg you.

Ecco il Re.

FOLLOWERS

Here is the King.

ENRICO

from a distance

Mia Rosmonda!

My Rosmonda!

SCENE XII

Enrico, followed by soldiers and courtiers; Clifford and Arturo, disarmed, and under guard; Leonora and her followers; Rosmonda.

Dov'è dessa?

ENRICO

Where is she?

LEONORA

stabbing Rosmonda

Io te la rendo.

I give her back to you.

ROSMONDA

Ah padre!... io moro.

Ah father!... I am dying.

LEONORA

Ah!

Ah!

CLIFFORD

throwing himself upon Rosmonda

Figlia! Figlia sventurata!

Daughter! Unfortunate daughter!

Sventurato genitor!

Unfortunate father!

ARTURO/LEONORA'S FOLLOWERS/ENRICO'S SOLDIERS/COURTIERS

Ella spira!... Quale orror!

She is dying!... What horror!

“Sono al fine vendicata...
“Trema, Enrico! Io regno ancor.”

Ella è spenta... e da tua mano...

Sì, la mia mano... ma la colpa mia
non è!

[20]

Tu! Spergiuro, disumano,
Mi spingesti al nero eccesso;
Io l'acciaro, tu sei la mano
Che il delitto consumò.
Già d'entrambi ah! l'innocenza
Chiese al Ciel vendetta eterna;
Già d'entrambi la sentenza
Con quel sangue Iddio segnò!

Va, crudele! Tu m'hai spinto...

Sventurato genitor!
Figlia mia!

Tu, crudele, sì la colpa, tu solo...
Tu! Spergiuro, disumano, ecc.

LEONORA

“Finally I am revenged...
“Tremble, Enrico! I reign yet.”

ENRICO

She is dead... and by your hand...

LEONORA

Yes, by my hand... but I am not to blame!

She turns, in tears, to Enrico.

You! perjured, inhuman man,
You forced me to this black excess;
If I am the blade, you are the hand
That committed this crime.
Ah! already her innocence invokes
Heaven's eternal vengeance upon us both;
Already with that blood
God has signed sentence upon us both!

ENRICO

Begone, cruel woman! You have brought
me...

CLIFFORD

Unfortunate father!
My daughter!

LEONORA

You, cruel man, you alone are to blame...
You, perjured, inhuman man, etc.

ALL THE OTHERS

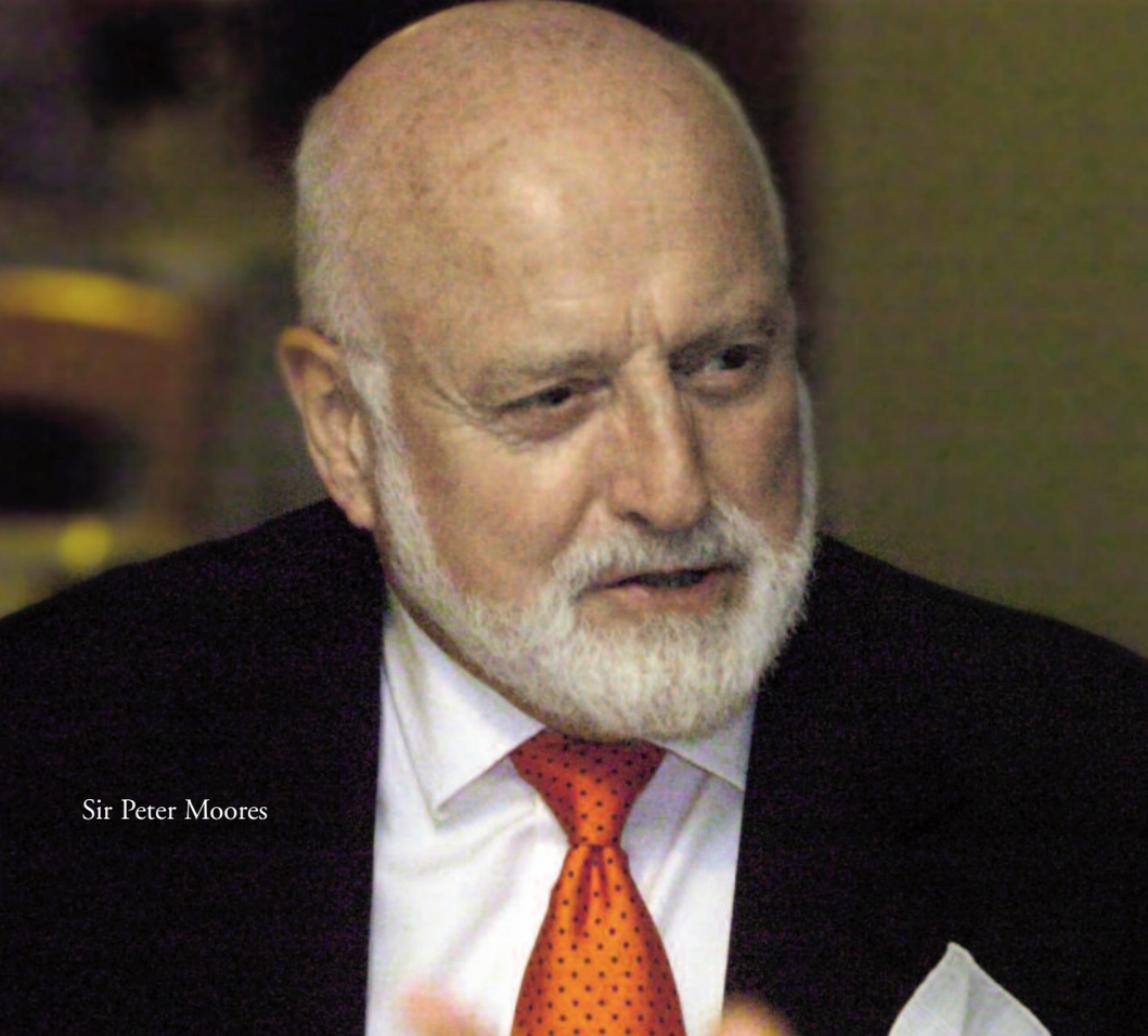
Misera!

Poor woman!

Quale orror! Così amor la vendicò.

What horror! Thus love has avenged her.

END OF OPERA



Sir Peter Moores