

IL TROVATORE

AN OPERA IN FOUR ACTS

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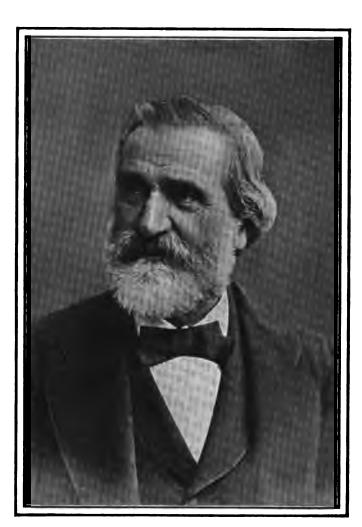
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VERDI'S IL TROVATORE



N March 1, 1836, "El Trovador' a drama in five acts was produced at the theatre Del Principe in Madrid. This theatre, built in 1806, contained twelve hundred spectators. It was described by Richard Ford, in 1847, as "dirty and ill-lighted." The play in prose and verse was characterized by the author, Antonio García Gutiérrez as a "drama caballeresco" (chivalric drama).

Antonio García Gutiérrez was born on July 5, 1812, at Chiclona, thirteen miles from Cadiz, the "landing, not watering place of the Cadiz merchants, who, weary of their sea-prison, come here to enjoy the terra firma, yet, with all its gardens, it is a nasty place and full of foul open drains." Ford, whose "Handbook for Travellers in Spain," is delightful reading after many years, made this additional note about the town: "It is, however, much recommended by the faculty, who prescribe bathing here, ass's milk, and a broth made of a long harmless snake."

Tales of a more or less legendary character are told about the dramatist. Arthur Pougin, as a rule punctiliously accurate, having stated that García Gutiérrez was born in 1815, and "El Trovador" was accepted and put in rehearsal at the theatre in 1832, says that he there drew a number which forced him to become a soldier without delay. Poor, he could not provide a substitute, but the success of the play furnished him the means, and he was enabled to follow the literary career in peace. But he had written comedies and articles for newspapers in Madrid after he had studied Latin, philosophy and medicine. He abandoned medicine for literary work. The romantic school of France influenced him greatly. He translated as well as wrote. In 1844, he went to Cuba where he dwelt for a time, and then to Yucatan. Returning to Spain in 1850, he was busied in the supervision of theatres. He was sent on a mission to England. In 1872, he was appointed director of the archæological museum in Madrid, where he died August 26, 1884. He wrote over sixty plays. The most famous are "El Trovador," "Simon Boccanegra" and "La Venganza Catalena." Regarded as one of the chief dramatists of Spain, he was much less esteemed as a lyric poet.

The success of "El Trovador" was instantaneous and long-continued. Mr. James Fitzmaurice-Kelly speaks of the play as "still reproduced, still read, still praised by critics who enjoy the pleasures of memory and association; but a detached foreigner, although he take his life in his hand when he ventures on the confession, is inclined to associate García Gutiérrez and Hartzenbusch with Sheridan Knowles and Lytton."*

[&]quot;History of Spanish Literature" (London and New York, 1910). For a study of García Gutiérrez's plays see "La Literatura Española El Siglo XIX," by P. Francesco Blanco García (Madrid, 1891).

The cast at the first performance was as follows:

Don Nuño de Artal, Conde de Luna Don J. Romea Don C. Latore Don Manrique Don F. Romea Don Guillén de Sesé Don P. López Don Lope de Urrea Doña C. Rodriguez Doña Leonor de Sesé Doña I. Boldún Doña Jimena Doña B. Lamadrid Azucena Don N. Lombia Guzmán, criado del Conde de Luna Jimeno, idem, id. Don J. Fabiani Ferrando, idem, id. Don J. Guzmán Ruiz, criado de Don Manrique Don G. Monreal N. N. Un Soldado

The scene is Aragon; the time is the fifteenth century. The acts are entitled and the scenes indicated in this manner:

Act I. El Duelo (The Duel): Saragossa. Palace of Aljaferia.† Chamber in the Palace. Leonor, Jimena, Don Guillén.

Act II. EL CONVENTO (The Convent). Chamber of Don Nuño. Convent.

Act III. La Gitana (The Gypsy). Interior of a hut. Azucena sings.—Cell. Leonor, Manrique.

Act IV. LA REVELACIÓN (The Discovery). Soldiers in camp.

Act V. El Suplicio (The Punishment). Near Saragossa. A wall of the Aljaferia Palace. Manrique sings a farewell with the refrain "Ay! Adiós, Leonor."—Chamber of the Conde de Luna.—Prison.

It will be observed that in the drama the Convent Scene precedes that of the gypsy encampment. Don Guillén and Don Lope de Urrea were thrown overboard by Verdi's librettist, who raised Ferrando to the rank of the Count's chief follower.

There is a story that García Gutiérrez fashioned his gypsy woman after Scott's Meg Merriles.

"Rigoletto" had been produced in Venice with great success in 1851. Verdi saw in Paris "La Dame aux Camélias" of the younger Dumas and was moved by it. As the management of the Fenice Theatre in Venice had demanded from him a new opera, Verdi at once chose this subject and entrusted the task of arranging the libretto to his friend Piave, the librettist of "Ernani" (1844); "I due Foscari" (1844); "Macbeth" (1847); "Il Corsaro" (1848); "Stiffelio" (1850); "Rigoletto"

(1844); "Macbeth" (1847); "Il Corsaro" (1848); "Stiffelio" (1850); "Rigoletto" (1851) and in later years "Simon Boccanegra" (1857); "Aroldo" (1857); "La Forza del Destino" (1862). But the labor of turning the Spanish play into a libretto was given to Salvatore Cammarano, who had been associated with Verdi in a complete failure: "Alzira" (Naples, 1845), an opera based on a tragedy by Voltaire, and "La Battaglia di Legnano" (Rome, 1849), which had more political than musical importance. Yet Cammarano, born at Naples on March 19, 1801, was regarded

†Aljaferia was built by the Moor Abu Gi'afar Ahmed, King of Saragossa as a palatial fortress. Ferdinand the Catholic assigned it to the Inquisition. It afterwards became in turn, a barrack, military hospital, and prison. The first gold brought from the New World was employed by Ferdinand in gilding the ceiling of one room, El Salon de Santa Isabel of Hungary.

in his time as the leading librettist of Italy. He had shared glory with popular composers, especially with Donizetti: witness "Belisario," "Roberto Devereux," "Maria di Rohan," "Lúcia di Lammermoor," "Il Poliuto." For Pacini he had written "Saffo;" for Mercadante, "La Vestale." The libretto of "Il Trovatore" was his last. He died on July 17, 1852. Verdi had consulted with him about an opera founded on Shakespeare's "King Lear," a subject that tempted Verdi even in his old age.

Biographers say that Verdi worked at the same time on "Il Trovatore" and "La Traviata"; that with the exception of four months he was idle during the two years after the production of "Rigoletto." But Verdi was thinking of "Il Trovatore" as early as 1851. On April 9th of that year, less than a month after "Rigoletto" was produced, Verdi wrote from Busseto a long letter to Cammarano in which he discussed the men and women of "Il Trovatore," and criticised the scenario.* He spoke of Azucena as a new and strange character, with two passions raging in her breast, maternal love and filial love. In the last act she should not be represented as insane. How could Leonora be made interesting? Verdi's criticisms and suggestions in this letter show his intimate knowledge of the stage, his instinct for dramatic effects. The statement that "Il Trovatore" was hurriedly composed with the inference that it was also written carelessly is unfounded.

Verdi took the score of "Il Trovatore," ready for rehearsal, to Rome on Christmas Day of 1852. "La Traviata" was produced at Venice on March 6, 1853. It failed in a dismal manner. Verdi wrote to Emanuele Muzio: "La Traviata' last evening, fiasco. Am I to blame, or the singers? Time will judge." "Il Trovatore" was at once received enthusiastically. The fame of it spread through Europe. The composer wrote to Ricordi after the first performance that the performance "could have gone worse."

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The first performance of "Il Trovatore" was at the Apollo Theatre, Rome, on January 19, 1853. Biographers and compilers of operatic dictionaries differ concerning the date, the names of the singers, and even the theatre. Thus Mr. Perinello says that the performance was at the Argentina. Dr. Hugo Riemann in his "Opera-Handbuch" gives the erroneous date January 17, thus following the "Dictionnaire des Opéras" by Clément and Larousse, which swarms with mistakes, as in the article "Il Trovatore" where it is gravely stated that the libretto was based on a Spanish drama "Guttierez" by Antonio Garcia, who in turn probably derived it from an old nursery tale. Mr. Perinello says that the name of the first Azucena is Gozzi. The name of the first Manrico is spelled indifferently Boucardé, Baucardé, Beaucardé, Baucardi.

The original cast was as follows:

Leonora, a noble lady at the Court of the Princess of Aragon Soprano Mme. Penco Azucena, a wandering gypsy of Biscay Mezzo-Soprano Mme. Goggi Inez, an attendant on Leonora Soprano Mme. Quadri

^{*}This letter is published in Musica e Musicisti of Milan, February 15, 1904.

Manrico, a young chieftain under the Prince of Biscay, birth unknown, but in reality a brother of the

Count di Luna Tenor

Boucardé

The Count di Luna, a young noble under the Prince of Aragon

Baritone

Bass

Tenor

Guiccardi

Ferrando, a captain of the guard under di Luna

Ruiz, a soldier under Manrico
A messenger

Balderi Bazzoti

A messenger Tenor
An old Gypsy Bass

Jailor, soldiers, nuns, gypsies, attendants.

Angiolini was then the chief conductor at the Apollo.

At the time of the first performance in Rome, the Tiber had overflowed its banks. The streets near the Apollo Theatre were flooded. In spite of the cold, the wet, and the mud, a great crowd waited at the doors of the Apollo from early morning, standing with water above their ankles. And so long afterwards there was excitement over the first performance of "Otello" and "Falstaff" in Milan, where cab drivers and loungers in the cafés read the librettos, published in advance of the performance, and were wildly curious concerning the music. As has already been stated, the success, according to all the biographers of Verdi, who do not hesitate to record his failures, was instantaneous and overwhelming; yet the Roman correspondent of the Revue et Gazette Musicale (Paris) wrote that the enthusiasm was even greater at the second performance; he also wrote, that the "atrocity of the dénouement" injured the musical effect, and there was a lack of pezzi concertati (ensemble numbers). An idea of the prevailing and long-continued enthusiasm aroused by the opera is given by two stories related by Gino Monaldi. The statesman Cavour, like Charles Lamb, had no ear. To him music was only a disagreeable noise. Operatic performances as a rule left him cold or vexed him. But there was one opera that made an indelible impression on him, it was "Il Trovatore" and he loved Verdi for having written it. When he was informed that the political candidacy of Verdi was in reality a republican manifestation and told it was his duty to fight it, he answered: "Nevertheless I cannot declare war against the composer of 'Il Trovatore.'" The other story runs as follows: In the year 1859, the Austrians had crossed the Ticino. Cayour, in his study with the poet, Prati, was silent, darksome, extremely nervous, for he was hourly expecting the desired dispatch which should let him know that the crossing had been effected, that the conditio sine qua non for the intervention of the French had been fulfilled. At last the messenger arrived. The letter was opened, Cavour read and still was silent; but his face lightened and his eyes flashed behind his spectacles. Suddenly he rushed to a window, threw it open and with the voice and attitude of a heroic tenor shouted "Di quella pira." It was the only musical phrase that Cavour knew by heart, the only one that he could sing.

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Act I. The Duel. Scene 1. It is nearly midnight. Ferrando with soldiers and servants are in a vestibule of the Palace of Aljaferia. In the service of the Count di

Luna, they wait his return, for of late it has been his habit to watch beneath Leonora's window. He is jealous of a troubadour who serenades her. To divert the servants Ferrando tells them the grisly story of Garcia, the Count's brother. The old Count di Luna had two young children. One day the nurse of the younger surprised a swarthy hag of a gypsy gazing with evil eyes on the child in its cradle. The gypsy was driven from the palace, although she protested she was there only to cast its horoscope. The child soon sickened and was sore distressed. The sorceress was captured and burnt at the stake. Her daughter, Azucena, escaping and swearing revenge, bore off the boy. No one saw the horrid deed, but one morning the calcined bones of a young child were found. No one could persuade the old Count that his child had perished. On his death bed he commanded his son, the present Count, to seek his brother. The search had so far been in vain. The spirit of the old hag was said to haunt the palace. Ferrando tells this story and the midnight bell strikes terror to his hearers.

Scene 2. The gardens of the palace. It is night. Leonora, who should be in attendance on the queen, tells Inez of an unknown knight who overthrew the nobles in the tournament. She crowned him with the wreath of honor. Civil war broke out and she saw him no more. A troubadour now sings to her. Inez chides her, but Leonora boasts of her love for him. They go into the palace. The Count advances and declares his passion. He is about to go to Leonora when he hears the voice of the serenading troubadour. The moon is clouded, and Leonora descending into the garden, mistakes the Count for her beloved. The troubadour accuses her of treachery. Leonora, recognizing her mistake, assures the troubadour of her devotion. He raises his vizor, and the Count sees Manrico, in the service of Urgel, condemned as an outlaw. The men draw their swords and Leonora faints.

Act II. THE GYPSY. Scene 1. Gypsies are encamped at the foot of a mountain in Biscay. Azucena is seated by the fire; Manrico is lying on a couch by her side. The gypsies sing of women and wine and beat time with their hammers on the anvils. Azucena suddenly sings a wild song of a woman burned at the stake while a cruel crowd exults. She says in low tones to Manrico "Avenge thou me," and after the gypsies have gone away for the day, she tells him the story of her mother's fate and of her proposed vengeance; the child in her arms moved her to pity, but the vision of her mother crying for revenge arose before her, and she threw the child into the flames; alas, it was her own she had sacrificed; the hated one still lives. To Manrico asking, "Am I not your son? Who am I?" Azucena answers hurriedly that she is his mother; that in her madness she had uttered wild and whirring words. He reminds her of her tender care of him. She recalls the day when on the ramparts of Pelilla she saved him left for dead by his comrades; she nursed him back to life. In that fight, for some strange reason unknown to him, he had spared the Count. Azucena begs him if he again meets the Count to strike home and spare not. A messenger enters bearing a letter calling him to defend Castellor by order of the Prince and saying that Leonora, thinking Manrico dead, is about to take the veil. In spite of Azucena's frenzied entreaties Manrico rushes to the rescue.

Scene 2. The cloisters of a convent near Castellor. It is night. The Count, Ferrando and followers, cloaked, are ready to kidnap Leonora. The Count again

declares his consuming passion. He will brook no rival on earth or in heaven. The nuns are heard singing behind the scenes. Leonora enters with her attendants. As the Count is about to seize her, Manrico with armed followers appears. He bears off Leonora.

Act III. The Gypsy's Son. Scene 1. A camp. The Count's tent at the right with a banner floating from the top. The towers of Castellor in the distance. The soldiers sing of war and glory. There is tumult without. The Count inquires into the cause. Ferrando tells him soldiers have surprised a gypsy wandering in the camp. They suspect her of being a spy. She is dragged in, her hands bound, and brought before the Count who questions her. She has no home, for the gypsy is a roamer. "I'm from Biscay." This at once arouses the suspicion of Ferrando. She seeks her son. The Count asks her if she remembers an infant stolen from a noble and carried to the Biscayan mountains fifteen years before: "The stolen one was my brother." Ferrando denounces the frightened woman. Azucena in despair calls for Manrico. The Count's joy is doubled at learning that the murderess is the mother of his rival. She is doomed to the stake.

Scene 2. A hall near the chapel in Castellor. Manrico and Leonora are alone, and in danger. The foe will soon be at the gates. Manrico is sure of victory. The organ sounds in the chapel and calls the lovers to the shrine, there to be united. Ruiz enters hurriedly to tell Manrico that the gypsy woman is sentenced to be burned alive. Manrico, having told Leonora that the gypsy is his mother, summons his followers and rushes out to battle.

Act IV. The Execution. Scene 1. A wing of the palace of Aljaferia. There is a tower on one side. The night is black. Ruiz accompanies Leonora and points out to her the tower in which Manrico is imprisoned. She begs to be left alone. She has a safeguard ever with it—a ring on her hand. Beneath the tower she sighs her love and begs that Manrico may have rest and hope. The death bell tolls, and monks behind the scenes sing a Miserere, interrupted by Leonora's lament and Manrico's farewell to her. There is one way left by which she can save her lover. That he may live she will gladly die. The Count entering, not seeing her, orders Manrico to be beheaded at dawn, the mother to be burned. If he thus exceeds the authority given him by his Prince, it is love for Leonora that impels him. But where is Leonora? No tidings of her have reached him since the capture of Castellor. She throws herself at his feet, begging for mercy. The Count is the more enraged. At last she offers herself as the price of Manrico's liberty. If the Count will lead her to the dungeon that she herself may bear the news, she swears she will be his. Swearing this she takes the poison from the ring. They enter the tower.

Scene 2. A Dungeon. There is a barred window; at the back a door. Azucena is lying on a rough bed. Manrico is seated near her. Azucena feels that death will take her before her foe can wreak his vengeance. Again the vision of her mother's fate rises before her. Manrico begs her to sleep and forget her woes. Between sleeping and waking she sings of their return to the mountains. The door opens and Leonora urges him to escape. A moment and it will be to late. But at what price did she gain his freedom? Manrico denounces her bitterly for having sold herself to the Count, nor will he listen to her protestations. Azucena in a dream sings of the

mountains where there will be no care, no sorrow. Manrico commands Leonora to leave the dungeon before he curses her. The poison is working. Leonora falls and with words of love dies as the Count stands on the threshold. Raging, because he has thus been mocked, he orders the guards to lead Manrico to the scaffold. He drags Azucena to the window.

"He's punished."

"Manrico was thy brother; thou art avenged, O mother."

"And I still live!"

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This libretto at first excited horror, then ridicule. Arthur Pougin, saying that García Gutiérrez was one of the most brilliant and renowned dramatist of Spain, was anxious to believe that his play "El Trovador" was much clearer and more intelligible than the strange libretto derived from it by Cammarano for Verdi's opera. Many have complained that the plot is hopelessly confused, but in the fifties the outcry was against the horrible nature of the subject. When "Il Trovatore" was produced in French at the Paris Opéra, Paul Smith, describing it as an absurd drama full of atrocities, said that, seeing performances of it at the Imperial Italian Theatre, Parisians were not eager to know which child was burned alive, and not understanding Italian, were interested solely in the music; but when they heard the singing in French they at once realized the horror of subject and treatment: "The libretto is the thing that will injure 'Le Trouvère.'" And M. Smith digressed entertainingly on the impossibility of translation in opera; how all rules must be violated because the musical phrase makes imperious demands.

In nearly every city where "Il Trovatore" was heard for the first time there was the same outcry. The Musical World of London (May 12, 19, 1855) said that the subject was too revolting for musical illustration. "The final scene is horrible, without relief and ineffective in the bargain." Chorley, of London, described the story as a "tangled monstrosity." Hanslick, of Vienna, as "hideous and obscure." The Evening Post of New York found the ending equal in horror to anything that could be reasonably hoped for in modern Italian Opera; "the exponent of all that is atrocious and extravagant upon the lyric stage." John S. Dwight who journeyed from Boston to New York for the first performance in the United States wrote at great length.* "The plot is about as far-fetched and full of vicious appetite for horrors as the plot of 'Rigoletto.' Nothing but ginger and red pepper seems to suit the modern Italian appetite." He gave a summary of the libretto. "There is a plot for you! To see and hear all that scenically and musically iliustrated, must it not be almost as good as 'going to a hanging,' if one have a taste for that! The narrative is none of the clearest; through the whirling, smoky atmosphere of so many burnings alive, you discern things with that vagueness that is necessary to enhance the mystery and horror of the story to the pitch required."

The libretto also excited ridicule. The California Pioneer † entitled the opera "The Burnt Child, or the Harmonious Blacksmith." A quotation from "The Opera in Swineville," by Mr. Muller will give an idea of the prevailing tone: "Two bellicose

^{*}Dwight's Journal of Music, May 12, 1855. †Quoted in Dwight's Journal of Music, February 9, 1856.

individuals appear with an extensive plume apiece and most truculent raiment, each of whom reveals to a large and discriminating audience, in the presence of the other, the secret of his love for the prima donna, a practice which in private life would cause some bitterness of feeling, but which upon the stage only tends to additional harmony." Punch devoted a page to an amusing account in verse of the first act.* Henry Morley ("Journal of a London Playgoer") forgot his customary attitude of dignity: "The poor old gypsy may have visited the Count de Luna only for his spoons; at any rate, it was a cruel thing to burn her, and so thought her daughter Azucena, a most sensitive and loving woman. . . . Now there was a certain fair lady of whom nothing is known beyond the fact that she was called Leonora, that she lived in a good house with a great deal of attached garden-ground." Hanslick also had his little joke: "It is well known from treatises on natural history that gypsies are afflicted with an inextinguishable longing to steal little children with birth marks who will be recognized and commandeered by aristocratic parents in the fifth act. 'Il Trovatore,' however, treats this subject in a far more complicated and unintelligible manner. . . . The old Azucena (a translation of the insufferable Fidès into gypsy life) opens on her part the second act with a tale similar to Ferrando's (in a melancholy waltz time) of a burnt and uninsured child, which she had not stolen, while another little child, which she had stolen, was not burnt, or vice versa. Which one of the two knights, the one with the tenor or the one with the baritone voice was the stolen and burnt child, will never be determined." When "H. M. S. Pinafore" was produced, Gilbert was accused of stealing his plot from "Il Trovatore" and modelling Little Buttercup on Azucena.

No doubt the first translation of the libretto into English gave many a confused idea of the original. In the second act when the gypsies leave Azucena and Manrico there is a stage direction ending "giù per la china tratto tratto" (down the declivity gradually). The translator made this astonishing version "they go off to the accompaniment of the China tratto-tratto," a musical instrument not to be found even in the Museum of the Royal Conservatory of Music at Brussels. Clara Louise Kellogg in her anecdotical, amusing, shrewd, but too often bitter and malicious memories, speaks of the wretched translation for singers in English.

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Verdi, however, was satisfied with the libretto. It was a libretto for the people; it was one peculiarly suited to the period and his own nature. He wrote to Luccardi from Busseto, December 14, 1852: "'Il Trovatore' is completely ready. There is not a single note lacking, and I am satisfied with it."

We have seen that the Roman correspondent of a Parisian musical periodical, one of authority, wrote that the opera lacked ensemble numbers.

When the opera was produced in Paris, late in 1854, the critics found that Verdi had gained in effective accentuation, in rhythmic vigor, and in a ferocious impetuosity, but there was not the wealth of melody that enriched his former operas. The chorus of soldiers, the air of Manrico in the third act, and the prison scene were pointed out for special approval. But it was not necessary to sing this music. Strong voices, a fiery disposition, and lungs of leather, only these were required.

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In London the Musical World, reviewing the performance at Convent Garden, admitted that the opera was written with more care than the majority of his works. "The unisons are fewer, and the desire to give a true dramatic interest to the scene is more manifest. On the other hand, which surprised us, the tunes are not so frequent as in his former operas. Much of the music, however, has character." The air of Manrico in the third act—"Ah ben mio" was "worthy of unqualified praise." The writer of an editorial article the next week, probably James William Davison, did not find any transformation of style. The opera was written in contempt of all rules: there was the "same straining of voices, same choruses in unison, same violent contrasts, same poverty of instrumentation." The composer had taken his cue from mobs, and wrote exclusively for them. "Verdi should communicate with Richard Wagner, the other red republican of music, who wants to revolutionize the art after a fashion of his own. Richard would whisper something in his ear by which Joseph (Giuseppe) might benefit. The firm of Wagner and Verdi would then be able to export their musical wares to all parts of the world."

Chorley, no more friendly as a rule towards Verdi than he was towards Schumann, took a more favorable view.* "The mixture of platitude with rugged invention, the struggle to express passion, the attempt at effect—in two important points (the *Miserere* one of these) wholly successful, have been equalled by Signor Verdi in no subsequent opera; nor did he before, nor has he since, been so happy in tenderness, in beauty, in melody. 'Il Balen' has been the ruling London tune for five years, as undeniably as 'Di tanti palpiti' was the tune some forty years ago!—when barrel organs were (and brass bands) as one to ten!" Morley spoke of the "rather effective gypsy chorus," Azucena's "wild Moorish chant"; and had much to say about the genius of Mme. Viardot as Azucena. "The very defects of Verdi's music are wrested to the purpose of the artist and serve to give dramatic color to the fitful spirit of the gypsy. By the omission of a weak scene between the Count and Leonora, the fourth act, as presented now (1855) at Convent Garden, will do more for Verdi's reputation than anything of his that the English public has yet heard."†

Hanslick thought the music was at once the full expression of Verdi's artistic rawness and his intense talent. In the best pages he outstripped in dramatic energy his predecessors Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti, who as musicians were superior to him. The fourth act with the exception of an ugly florid air for Leonora belonged to the best music of the later Italian school.

When "Il Trovatore" was produced in New York the *Tribune*, although the performance was liberally advertised, was silent as far as any review was concerned. The *Evening Post* said that the defects of the libretto were eclipsed by the real beauty of the music and the excellent rendering. The composer aimed at striking effects; he was seeking to intensify the action rather than to give melodious or even natural expression. The writer accused Verdi of repeating himself, because he wrote rapidly

^{*&}quot;Thirty Years' Musical Recollections," published in 1862.

[†]The prevailing opinion for many years in England of Verdi's operas was expressed by George Augustus Sala in "Thrice Round the Block" (London, 1863): "There is lately come to town, at least within these latter years an Italian gentleman, to whose brassy screeds and tinkling cymbalics, it is expected that all habitués of the opera must listen, to the utter exclusion and oblivion of the old musical worthies who delighted the world with their immortal works before Signor Verdi was born." And again: "Those rare old glees which were written by the honest old masters before the Father of Evil had invented Signor Giuseppe (ste) Verdi.

and carelessly, and he suspected from the "mildness of the brass," that the score had been written from some pianoforte arrangement. The Anvil chorus was one of the "most naive and freshest bits of melody," that has yet been heard from Verdi. Mr. Dwight sighed for the mellifluous strains of Bellini, Donizetti, and above all Rossini. To him the music of "Il Trovatore" was never sincere. It was all for "the glory of brass instruments and lungs, and because natural exhibitions of human life and passion could not be deemed effective enough for this modern and advanced age of Art!" Mr Dwight was in an unhappy mood. There was Vestvali on the stage, "young and splendid looking" as Manrico's mother. "We regretted that the clumsy gypsy toggery covered up the large and noble form, which we had heard so much about."

While the critics were thus "discriminative," or lukewarm, or ill at ease, the people everywhere in the earlier years of the opera echoed the lines of Owen Meredith:

Of all the operas that Verdi wrote,
The best to my taste is the Trovatore
And Mario can soothe with a tenor note
The souls in Purgatory.

In Paris after the success at the Italian opera house, "Il Trovatore" shared with "Lucia di Lammermoor" the greatest favor shown towards any opera translated for the Paris Opéra. In all the cities of Europe the popularity was immediate and immense. Even the Rev. J. E. Cox, who found "flimsiness in every act but the last, which is from beginning to end a direct plagiarism of Beethoven"—an astonishing statement even from the Reverend Mr. Cox—admitted in 1872 that "Il Trovatore' has been and still is 'the rage' all over Europe—and has brought more money into theatrical treasuries than any other production of modern times."* Richard Grant White in his "Opera in New York" says that "Il Trovatore" at once became a favorite.† Today its popularity is widespread and great. If it has grown a little less of late years, the almost total disappearance of singers versed in the grand style has much to do with it. The great public was not disconcerted by the libretto. The music delighted and thrilled. Verdi wrote for "the mob," that is for human beings, creatures of flesh and blood.

* * * *

There is no overture. After a few introductory measures, the simple unison for the servants with the still simpler accompaniment creates a mood. Hanslick sneers at Ferrando's recital, "to a mazurka melody," but the tune has character, and when it is sung according to the indications of the composer, it is effective. So is the introduction sung by Ferrando, *Lento*, to the more conventional chorus of servants. Leonora's air, "Tacea la notte," which in these days is usually taken at too fast a pace by sopranos, so that there is no contrast between the first and the second sections, is poetic, singularly beautiful in its pure melodic flow. The florid air that follows "Di tale amor" with its hiccups and clumsy ornamentation is in Verdi's early and worst manner. The simplicity of the Troubadour's Serenade leads tenors to

^{•&}quot; Musical Recollections of the Last Half Century," Vol. II, page 281. (London, 1872.) †The date, April 30, 1855, given by White as that of the first performance in New York is erroneous.

bawl it, to excite applause and at the same time insure correct intonation. The scene, Allegro agitato, between Leonora and the rival lovers, the Count's "Di geloso amor" and the final trio are in a breathless, fiery vein peculiar to Verdi; music, which even when it is indifferently sung, sweeps everything before it, nor does the effect depend at all on the final D-flat above the staff which is sometimes taken by the brazen-lunged.

The second act introduces Azucena, one of the most striking characters on the operatic stage, remarkably portrayed in music by the composer. Chorley, one of the first Englishmen to dilate on national color in music,* wrote: "one of the points of 'Il Trovatore'—which may be found worthy of remembering—after this or the other tune has passed into the limbo of old tunes — is Signor Verdi's essay at vocal Spanish gypsy color. The chorus of waifs and strays opening the second act has an uncouthness,—a bar or two of oriental drawl,—before the Italian anvils begin, which must remind anyone of such real gypsy music, as can be heard and seen in Spain. Thus, also, is the monotonous, inexpressive narration of the gypsy mother, Azucena, to be animated only by her own passion,—all the more truthful (possibly) from its want of character. No melody really exists among these people,—and the wild cries which they give out could not be reduced to notation, were it not for the dance which they accompany. Signor Verdi may have comprehended this—though with insufficient means of expression; at all events, some notion of the kind is to be found in what may be called the characteristic music of 'Il Trovatore.'" Many of us, who do not recognize the Oriental drawl, and are no longer excited by the Anvil chorus, take exceptions to Chorley's description of Azucena's song and narrative as lacking in character. There is a wild if subdued intensity in the song, "Stride la vampa" which is strengthened by the inexorable rhythmic form in which it is cast.

In the story told by her to Manrico, comes the first effective orchestral stroke in the opera. The orchestration of "Il Trovatore" is, on the whole inferior to that of "Rigoletto" and "La Traviata." For purely orchestral effect there is nothing in "Il Trovatore" comparable with the superbly original and dramatic meeting of Rigoletto and Sparafucile; nor is there in "Il Trovatore" the distinction in simplicity to be found often in "La Traviata." Too often in "Il Trovatore" the hearer is reminded of Browning's lines in "Bishop Blougram's Apology":

Like Verdi when at his worst opera's end (The thing they gave at Florence,—what's its name?) While the mad houseful's plaudits near out-bang His orchestra of salt-box, tongs, and bones, He looks through all the roarings and the wreaths Where sits Rossini patient in his stall.

But the ever recurring wailing of the oboe as the Gypsy tells her ghastly story, "Condotta ell'era in ceppi," produces an effect like that of the ascending crescendo of violins in the Nile Scene in "Aida." In each instance the instrumental voice enters into the narration, intensifying the rhetorical effect, without distracting the at-

^{*}See his "National Music of the World" (1880), a collection of lectures delivered in 1862. Here he again speaks of the genuine gypsy drawling in the anvil chorus," and the touch of the right spirit shown by "Signor Verdi, whose use of local material is habitually slight and thrown into the most conventional of forms."

tention from the singer. Manrico's story of the combat, "Mal reggendo," is ordinary stuff. The drama begins again with the counsel of Azucena "Ma nell'alma." Would that contraltos would sing it sotto voce, as Verdi directed! The effect would be the more tigerish. The final duet between Azucena and Manrico is insignificant, vulgar, but there is a fine moment in the immediately preceding measures of Azucena: "No, soffrirlo non poss'io."

The Count's suave and long famous air "Il balen" is now a stumbling-block for many baritones who shine in ultra-modern and realistic operas. His air "Per me ora" is more in the line of tonal portraiture. And it may here be said that of the characters in the opera Azucena stands out the most boldly as drawn and painted by the composer. Next to her stands the Count—and at a distance, Ferrando. Leonora is any prima donna in distress. Manrico is for the most part a walking gentleman compelled to serve a prince. Only twice is he more than an agreeable tenor: once when in woe and anger he thunders out "Di quella pira"; and at the end when he denounces Leonora for her supposed infidelity. The choral measures of the Count's retainers are of sufficiently melodramatic working, although the conventional finale before the song of the nuns is absurd. The song of the nuns, charming in its serenity, is dramatically in contrast with the threats of the Count and the mutterings of his soldiers. Admirable, too, is the entrance of Leonora: "Degg'io volgermi." The measures "E deggio e posso" with those of Troubadour and Count are genuinely effective melodically and dramatically, but the grand finale has the old-fashioned mechanical brilliance that is now hopelessly tarnished.

In Act III, the soldiers chorus is almost as uninteresting as that of the Duke's companions in the third act of "Rigoletto," but in this act Verdi rises, as in the fourth, to a supreme height. The answers of Azucena to the Count beginning "D'una zingara è costume," and the whole of the scene in which she is identified have a dramatic force combined with a direct appeal of melodic beauty that are seldom found in opera. Mark well the simplicity of it all, the thin orchestration, the insistence of the motive for violins as the Count questions, finally the wild cry for Manrico. The air that follows for Azucena "Deh rallentate, o barbari" is of baser metal relieved only a little by the chromatic progression given to Ferrando and the chorus. In this scene, and in the fourth act when Azucena tells of her loved mountains, loved for their wildness and remoteness, Verdi shows the intense passion for native soil that distinguishes the great scene between Amonasro and Aida. We know of nothing that produces a somewhat similar effect on a sensitive hearer except the few measures in which there is talk of the lovers dancing the jota in Massenet's "Navarraise." The grand aria of Manrico, "Ah sì, ben mio," which used to excite enthusiasm when it was sung by Tamberlik, may now be omitted without loss to the opera or the hearer. And what shall be said of "Di quella pira"? When it is sung with full justice to its feverish ferocity by a Tamagno, it is overwhelming, a mad cry for blood and slaughter. When sung by an ordinary tenor, the chief interest of the hearer is in wondering whether the air is transposed and even then whether the singer will take the anticipated "high note" with a chest tone.

If a few pages were torn out, the fourth act would be a masterpiece of dramatic, emotional feeling expressed in haunting melodic form. The opening of the act with

its ritornello of clarinets and bassoons at once foretells the tragedy to come as decisively as the measures of orchestral introduction to the fourth act of "Otello." Leonora's recitative is not characterless, nor is the floridity of the aria "D'amor sull' a li rosee" wholly incompatible with dramatic expression. The "Miserere" has undergone the severe test of sixty years and more. Today it compels admiration; it stirs the soul to its depths. All that we associate with the Italy endowed with fatal beauty is in the song of the Troubadour from the tower. No one is seriously disturbed because the dread effect produced by the trombones is also found in the last scene of "La Traviata," but there is no excuse for the air of Leonora that follows: "Tu vedrai che amore in terra." This air and the duet between Leonora and the Count "Vivra!" show Verdi at his worst. The pages immediately before this duet, with the hurried entreaties and stern refusals of the Count, all set to a galloping headlong accompaniment, are of the old school, but are still theatrical in the better sense of the word. There is nothing in the final scene that one would wish away. Nothing could be added to it in the hope of an additional effect. In his later years Verdi was asked more than once why he would not re-orchestrate his "Rigoletto," "Il Trovatore," "La Traviata." He smiled and made no answer. The melodic and harmonic effects are inseparably connected with the orchestral. The opera must be accepted in bulk, as Hugo accepted Shakespeare, or be wholly rejected. The Prison Scene is remarkable not only for its dramatically emotional qualities, for the wealth of melodic beauty, but for the close association of sheer beauty with dramatic intensity. Take only one instance: Manrico's frenzied denunciation of Leonora "Ha quest' infame l'amor venduto"! Verdi, always singularly effective in the last acts of his chief operas, for this one worked wonders with the simplest means. Here is the proof of proofs that so-called "Italian" melody is not incompatible with genuine and irresistible dramatic expression.

"Il Trovatore," then, like the greater operas by Verdi before "Aida" is a mixture of the beautiful and passionate with the commonplace and the vulgar. Is "vulgar" the word? Was Verdi's purpose, as his enemy Scudo insisted, to excite the hearer as if he were at the stock exchange or at a circus in the old Roman days? One might answer with Giuseppe Revere: "Yes, 'Il Trovatore' is vulgar, as true passion is vulgar when it lays strong hold of one, vulgar as the finest scenes in Shakespeare, from which every artificial refinement is excluded, for the polishing of emphasis would detract from its truthfulness." The words of Bizet might be quoted, although they are extravagant. They were written in 1867, when as Gaston de Betzi, he wrote for the Revue Nationale et Étrangère: "Let us be naive, frank. Let us not demand of a great composer qualities that he lacks; let us try to profit by those he possesses. When a nature that is passionate, violent, even brutal; when a Verdi gives to art a strong and vivid work, made up of gold, mud, gall and blood, let us not go to him and say coldly, 'But, my dear Sir, this lacks taste, it has no distinction.' Distinction! Had Michael Angelo, Homer, Dante, Shakespeare, Beethoven, Cervantes, Rabelais distinction"?

There are pages that are "vulgar" in ears that have forgotten the period in which it was written, the feverish excitement of the Italian people in the years when revo-

lution was in the air, when Verdi's name was a cry for a change in government, for a greater personal liberty. Even in the Fifties, Verdi as a romanticist was nearer the Hugo of "Hernani" and the Dumas of "Antony," than were the French operatic composers contemporary with the two dramatists.

The most absurd charge brought against the Verdi of the Fifties is insincerity. If ever a composer was honest in expression that composer was Verdi. As the man, so the composer. There was no trickery, no dishonesty in his nature. He was as sincere writing the wretched florid aria of Leonora as he was when he put on paper the "Miserere" and the Prison Scene. Had he thrown aside his convictions, had he aped the style of this one or that one, the opera might have had a temporary success: it would today be in the dust-bin of Time.

The inherent strength of "Il Trovatore" is shown by the fact that now, over sixty years from its birth, its popularity does not depend on gorgeous scenery, painstaking mise-en-scène, or extraordinary singers. It was an old reproach against Verdi that his music was ruinous to the voice or in other ways prejudicial to the singer. The reproach has been urged against others from Gluck to Debussy. The charge now seems unwarranted, foolish. That many singers who are famous in the later operas of Puccini are unable to sing "Tacea la notte" or the music of Aida, her lover and her rival is true; but neither can they sing the music of Handel and Mozart, Rossini, Bellini and Donizetti.

Chorley writing his reminiscences of opera and publishing them in 1862, when Verdi in his "Ballo in Maschera" of three years before had shown a change in manner, had the courage to prophesy concerning the fate of "Il Trovatore"; "possibly, too, 'Il Trovatore' has already lost that popularity, in all its fulness, which its music enjoyed for awhile. There is no returning to the work as a whole, for reasons already indicated—the essentially superficial and showy nature of its effects." Has "Il Trovatore" no life today? A glance at the record of performances in the opera houses of the world since 1862, shows the danger, the folly of prophecy. The realistic "Cavalleria Rusticana" is now older and staler than "Il Trovatore" with the "absurd, unintelligible, repulsive" plot, with the music now "vulgar," now "unsingable" and above all "insincere."

There are elemental passions furiously in action on the stage. It matters not whether Manrico is the Count's brother or the son of the gypsy. There are two men fighting for a woman. There is the superb character of Azucena. The music will long work its spell. The pulse of the hearer will quicken with the galloping rhythms. The "Miserere" with the matchless song of the man in the tower, the scene of tenderness, jealousy and horror in the prison, will move and thrill.

Milys Hal

Boston, October, 1916.

FIRST SINGERS AND PERFORMANCES

THE immediate success of "Il Trovatore" was undoubtedly due in part to brilliant singers. There are few tenors today who are equally effective in Manrico's romantic air in the third act and in "Di quella pira," and in these days there are few dramatic sopranos who can sing with abandon the florid airs of Leonora. It is well therefore to speak a few words about the first interpreters of "Il Trovatore" at Rome and New York. The biographical dictionaries, general and musical, are unfortunately incomplete. Many singers famous in their day and generation receive scanty or no attention. Furthermore, information, when it is given, is often confusing or erroneous. Col. T. Allston Brown's "History of the New York Stage," is often untrustworthy in the matter of dates.

At Rome the part of Leonora was taken by Mme. Penco, generally known as Rosina Penco, although on an Italian print of her the Christian name is Amalia. She was born at Naples of Genoese parents, in April, 1830. She began her career at Copenhagen and after a season there and engagements in Sweden, she sang in Berlin (1849), Constantinople (1850-51), and last in Italy. She made her first appearance in Paris at the Théâtre Italien in 1855. For about eighteen years she pleased the Parisians. She is described as radiantly beautiful, "a beauty truly sculptural"; her voice was rich and firm, warm, sympathetic, emotional, as an actress in tragedy, she was passionate and convincing; in comedy, graceful and spontaneously humorous. Verdi wrote from Paris in December, 1853, when he was thinking of a production of "La Traviata," asking whether Mme. de Roisi was a better singer and actress than Mme. Penco. "Has she a soul? Does she leave one cold?" Mme. Penco left the stage in the Seventies and died at the baths of Poertta late in 1894.

Baucardé was of French origin, but he was trained in Italy, and of this the French critics complained when he first sang in Paris. It was said in London when Verdi's "I Lombardi" was revived there for him (1850), that he had been employed in the palace kitchen of the Grand Duke of Tuscany and attracted attention by his skill in cookery. Whether he sang as he cooked is not related, but he was given a sound musical training. Lumley, a manager, also a bit of a critic, described him as he sang in 1850: "with a charmingly sweet, but still robust voice of wonderful extension; with a style wherein the use of the falsetto was at once sparingly and judiciously employed, this young artist won easily upon a public accustomed to give a preference to national gifts over the display of skill. Not that Baucardé was deficient in skill; on the contrary, his 'school' was excellent. As an actor he rose scarcely above mediocrity, but any deficiency in this respect was overlooked in the splendor of his organ." He married Mme. Albertini, the opera singer.

The first performance of "Il Trovatore" in the United States was at the Academy of Music, New York, on May 2, 1855.

LeonoraBina SteffenoneAzucenaFelicita VestvaliInezMme. Avogrado

Manrico Pasquale Brignoli
Count di Luna Alessandrio Amodio

Ferrando Mr. Quinto Old Gypsy Mr. Muller

Max Maretzek conducted

This performance was conspicuous for the care taken in matters of scenery and mise-en-scène.

Bina or Balbina Steffenone* was born at Turin in 1825. Trained as a singer by Bertinotti of Bologna, she made her début in 1842, at Macerata. Having sung in many cities of Italy she went to London for two seasons, then came to America. She met with great success in American cities and in Cuba. Returning to Europe at the end of seven years she sang In Vienna, Paris and Naples. About 1862, she disappeared from the stage. In December, 1896, she died at Naples. European critics say that her voice was beautiful, pure, and of extended compass; that her singing was conspicuous for taste and dramatic intelligence and force. She came to New York with a Havana Company and made her debut as Norma, March 11, 1850. Richard Grant White remembered her "satisfying voice, her admirable style, and her pleasing although notably ample person. It seemed as if she might and should have been a great prima donna; and, always pleasing to the most exacting hearers, at certain moments, on certain nights, she rose to grandeur, and aroused her audiences to enthusiasm. But as time went on she deteriorated rather than improved; and it was said—truly, I believe—that she was addicted to habits of self-indulgence, which in the end are ruinous to a man and are swiftly distructive to a woman." Long ago George William Curtis gossiping in the Easy Chair of Harper's Magazine about old operatic days in New York spoke of Steffenone and told a story of a woman asking her if she were really dissipated. The singer laughed and replied: "Oh, yes, I drink, I smoke, I do everything that is vicious."

Felicita Vestvali, dramatic singer and play-actress, known as "Vestvali the magnificent," was born, according to some, at Stettin in 1829; others say at Warsaw in 1831. Her father had the title of count and the rank of general in the Prussian army. She died at Warsaw, April 3, 1880. In her youth she began as a play-actress in Berlin, but, finding she had an unusual contralto voice, she took singing lessons of Mercadante and Pietro Romani in Italy, and, according to Pougin, made her début at the Scala, Milan, in 1853, as Azucena; but Cambiasi, in his history of that theatre, states that Azucena in 1853 was impersonated by Mistrali. However, as there were twenty-three performances of "Il Trovatore" that season, Pougin's statement may be correct. After singing in London she came to America. She sang in New York for the first time in 1854. In 1859 she impersonated Romeo in Bellini's "Romeo

^{*}The name in this country was usually spelled Steffanone. Max Maretzek in his "Crotchets and Quavers" (New York, 1855), spells it in both ways.

and Juliet" (with a fourth act from Vaccai's "Giuletta e Romeo"), at the Paris Opéra, September 7, 1859. There were eleven performances. She returned to America, and at last abandoned opera for the drama. Thus she was seen in 1864 in "Gamea; or, The Jewish Mother," with songs by Robert Stoepel; as de Lagadaire in "The Duke's Motto"; as Massaroni and di Strozzi in "The Brigands." Rich-- ard Grant White described Vestvali when she appeared as Arsace in "Semiramide" with Grisi and Mario. "On this occasion Signorina Vestvali burst upon the astonished gaze of New York, which, as Arsace, the Assyrian commander-in-chief, she might have expected to take by storm. And rarely, indeed, had a more formidably handsome woman made that attack. Her contralto voice was fresh, full, sympathetic, and of unusual compass, but it had the happiness to dwell in a body of such entire and stately symmetry, and to be aided by a countenance so blooming with healthful beauty, so radiant and so expressive, that her singing could not be judged with exact and impartial justice, until her judges were smitten with blindness. She was the tailest woman that I ever saw upon the stage; I believe the tallest woman I ever encountered; but she was also one of the most beautifully formed. Indeed, as she moved so superbly about as the martial Arsace, her helmed head over-topping that of every woman on the stage, it seemed as if Britomart had stepped out of the pictured pages of the 'Faerie Queen,' or, 'so proud were her looks yet sweet,' as if, Argante-like, we saw the vision of Tasso's Clarinda in her panoply. For, in his own words, as they were translated two hundred and fifty years ago by Fairfax:

> Like her it was in armor and in weed, In stature, beauty, countenance, and face, In looks, in speech, in gesture, and in pace.

"She made, for the moment, a tremendous sensation; but it was soon discovered by her eye-charmed New York audience that this magnificent singing animal was a very incomplete artist; that her voice, although equal in all its registers, had not been sufficiently worked to conceal its breaks, as it passed from one register to another, that her method was imperfect, that her style was always declamatory, and that she frequently sang out of tune. Moreover, magnificent as she was, she was too large. Of all which the consequence was that she soon disappeared from the opera boards of New York, and was no more heard of."

Berlioz wrote to the Princess Sayn-Wittgenstein from Paris, June 20, 1859: "They are going to put Bellini's 'Capuletti' on the stage at the Opéra, with a third act of Vaccai, for a grande gaillarde named Vestvali, who thinks that she looks like a man, and wishes to play Romeo."

Pasquale, or, as he preferred to call himself Pasquilino, Brignoli was born at Naples about 1827. He died in New York on October 30, 1884. He studied the pianoforte and singing at Naples, then at the Paris Conservatory, and in Paris he sang at the Italian Theatre (1850 and later) and at the Paris Opéra (1854). He also sang in Brussels and Berlin. Max Maretzek engaged him for New York where he made his first appearance at the Academy of Music as Edgardo, March 12, 1855. For some years he was a great favorite; "chiefly with very young ladies," as White maliciously observed. "For the temper and the constitution of the New York audiences had

changed; and the young woman of the period had elbowed her way much nearer the front as an arbiter in art and elegance. Her admiration of Brignoli was not greatly to the credit of her taste. He had one of those tenor voices that seem like the bleating of a sheep made musical. His method was perfectly good; but he sang in a very commonplace style, and was as awkward as the man that a child makes by sticking two skewers into a long potato; and he walked the stage hitching forward, first one. side and then the other, much as the child would make his creature walk. But he was a very 'nice' young man, was always ready to sing, and faute de mieux, it became the fashion with very young ladies to like him. But there never was a tenor of any note in New York, whose singing was so utterly without character or significance, and who was so deficient in histrionic ability. His high and long-continued favor is one of those puzzling popular freaks not uncommon in dramatic annals." This is hardly fair, for although Brignoli was a laughably inefficient actor, his voice, even in the later years when he was singing with Emma Abbott in English Opera, had a charming quality. A man of whims and caprices, fastidious in dress, extravagant in money matters, vain as a child, he was a prodigious eater. He composed, and at least one of his orchestral pieces, "The Sailor's Dream" was played in concerts. He married Kate Duckworth, an English contralto, known as Mlle. Morensi. She died. His second wife was Isabella McCullough, an American operatic and concert singer; but the marriage was an unhappy one and the two were divorced. Vanity Fair of November 15, 1862, published an amusing caricature of "Signor Brignoli: who personifies the crescendo, or swell, of song.'

Alessandro Amodio, born at Naples in 1831, died on shipboard of yellow fever, as he was returning from Caracas to New York in June, 1861. At Naples he studied the flute, then singing under Glosa and Biassaccia. Against the wishes of his parents he became an opera singer, making his début at Naples, and singing with great success in other Italian cities. He was first heard in America at New York in the first performance of "Il Trovatore." White described him as follows: "Amodio had one of the most beautiful baritone voices ever heard. It was of almost unexampled richness and sweetness — a large free-flowing voice, and seeming almost as flexible as that of a tenore di grazia. His vocalization was remarkably good, and his style pleasing — a serene, very simple cantabile style. But he had little dramatic power, and his deficiency in this respect was emphasized by the unfitness of his person for the stage. He was fatter than Alboni and no taller. He was Falstaff singing in Italian. When he appeared in a close and antique costume, with a little round hat upon his little head, he looked like a plum-pudding set upon sausages. And yet so beautiful was his voice and so pleasing his style, that he was the favorite baritone in New York for some years."

The cast of the first performance in Paris, Théâtre Italien, December 23, 1854, was as follows:

Leonora Azucena Manrico Mme. Frezzolini Mme. Borghi-Mano Baucardé Count de Luna Ferrando Graziani Gassier

Bonetti conducted

Verdi was in Paris to oversee the production. There were two hundred and seventy-eight performances at this theatre.

The cast of the first performance at the Paris Opéra, with the libretto translated into French by Emilien Pacini, January 12, 1857:

Léonore Azucéna Manrique Le Comte Ferrando Mme. Lautero Mme. Borghi-Mano Gueymard Bonnehée

It is stated in contemporary Parisian musical periodicals that Verdi wrote some ballet music for the third act, "music of mediocre worth"; also an air for Azucena in the same act. At the end of 1912 there had been two hundred and twenty-three performances at this opera house.

First performance in London, Convent Garden, May 10, 1855:

Leonora Azucena Inez Mannica Mme. Jenny Ney Mme. Pauline Viardot Miss Bellini Tamberlik

Manrico Le Comte Ruiz

Graziani Soldi

Costa conducted

First performance at La Scala, Milan, September 15, 1853:

Leonora Azucena Manrico Count di Luna Ferrando Mme. Gariboldi Mme. Mistrali Bettini Gilardoni Nerini

There were twenty-three performances in that fall season.

First performance at Petrograd, December, 1855:

Leonora Azucena Manrico Count di Luna Mme. Bosio Mme. de Méric Tamberlik De Bassini

P. H.

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3.	Solo with Chorus	Soon his days of sorrow ended (Ferrando and Chorus)	12
4.	Scena and Aria	No star shone in the heavenly vault (Leonora)	20
5.	Recitative and Romance	Naught upon earth is left me (Manrico and di Luna)	32
6.	Scena and Trio	Ah, traitress! What accents? (Leonora, Manrico and di Luna)	35
		ACT II	
7	Chorus	See how the darkness of night dissolves (Gypsies)	49
/.	Anvil Chorus	Who cheers the days of the roving	51
Q	Canzone	Fierce flames are soaring (Azucena)	56
	Chorus	Sad is thy morning song (Gypsies)	60
	Recitative and Narrative	In chains to her doom they dragged her (Azucena	O
10.	Recharive and Ivanianive	and Manrico)	63
11	Recitative and Duet	Was I that child then? (Manrico)	73
11.	Recharive and Duct	I assaulted, he feebly defended (Azucena and Manrico	
12	Recitative and Aria	In the light of her sweet glances (di Luna)	88
	Finale: Chorus	Ah! mid the shades of error (Nuns)	103
	Finale (continued)	I turn to Him (Leonora)	109
	Finale (concluded)	Can I believe the vision blest (Leonora)	113
•		ACT III	
16.	Chorus	Now the dice invite our leisure (Soldiers)	131
		Clarions blowing and bugles resounding	135
17.	Recitative and Trio	Within my rival's arms! (di Luna)	141
	m:or	There my days obscurely glided (Azucena)	145
	Trio with Chorus	This Gypsy is the mother then (Count, Ferrando	
10	The facility of A.C.	and Azucena)	151
18.	Recitative and Air	Oh, come, let links eternal bind (Manrico)	161
	Duet	The chapel's mystic harmony (Leonora and Manrico)	
	Song	Tremble, ye tyrants (Manrico)	170
		ACT IV	
19.	Recitative and Aria	Love, fly on rosy pinions (Leonora)	178
	Song	Ah! send thy beams, Aurora (Manrico)	184
	Song	Thee I love with love eternal (Leonora)	191
20.	Recitative and Duet	Here at thy feet in tears I bow (Leonora)	198
		Oh joy! he's saved my beating heart (Leonora)	209
21.	Duet	Yes, I will rest, for my soul is weary (Azucena and	
		Manrico)	214
22.	Recitative and Trio	No word or sign? (Manrico, Leonora and Azucena)	223
23.	Last Scene	Rather a thousand deaths I'd die (Leonora)	232

IL TROVATORE

CHARACTERS OF THE DRAMA

Leonora	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	. Soprano
Azucena	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	Mezzo Soprano
Inez	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	. Soprano
Manrico	. ′	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	. Tenor
Count di I	LUNA		•	•		•	•	•	•	•	. Baritone
Ferrando		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	. Deep Bass
Ruiz	•	•		•	•		•	•	•	•	. Second Tenor
An Old G	YPSY		•	•	•	•	•				Second Baritone

Messenger, a Jailer, Soldiers, Nuns, Gypsies, Attendants, etc.

The scenes are laid alternately in the provinces of Arragon and Biscay, in Northern Spain

The time is the fifteenth century

IL TROVATORE

Act I (The Duel)

Nº 1 INTRODUCTION AND CHORUS

GIUSEPPE VERDI







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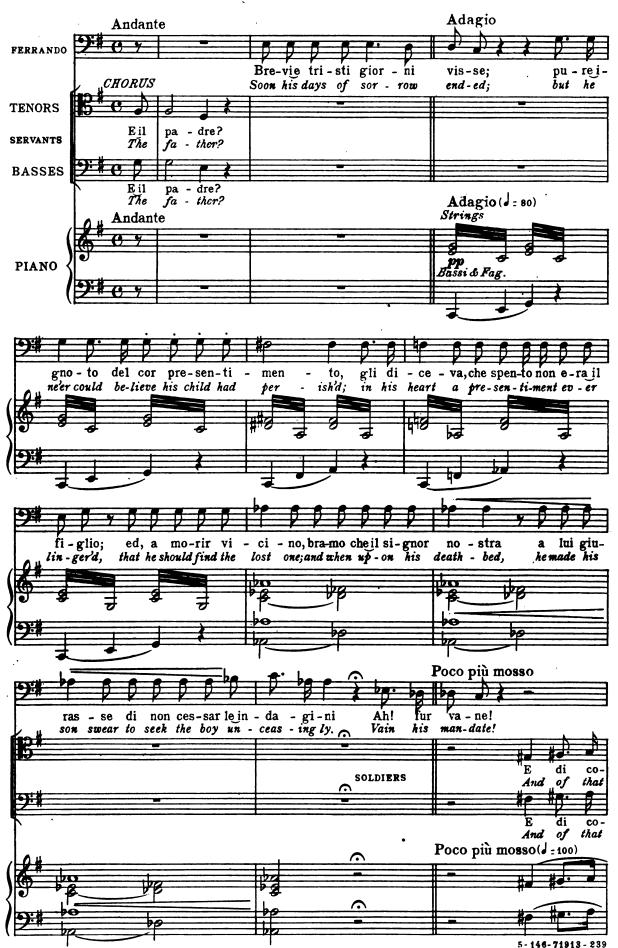
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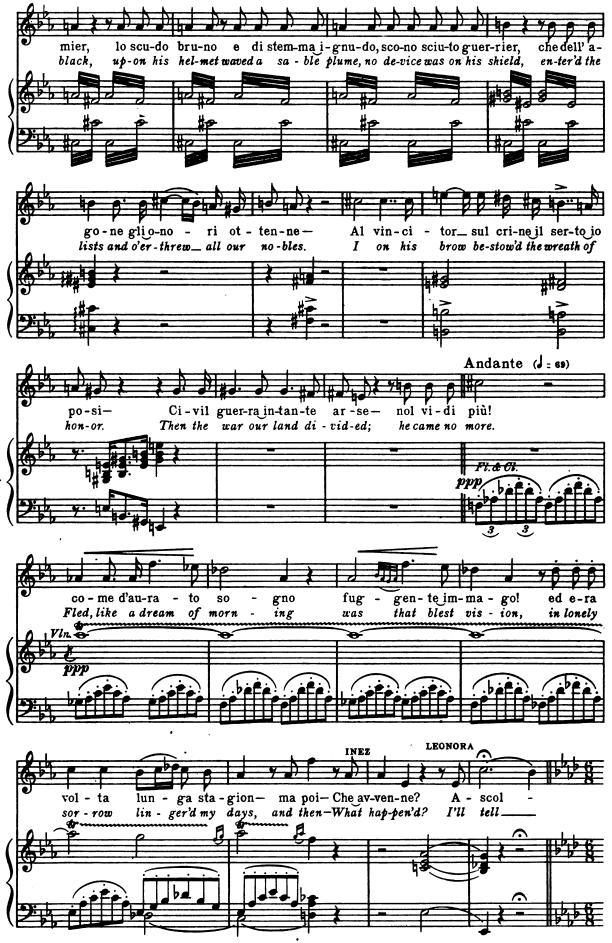






Scene 2. Gardens of the Palace; on the right, a marble staircase. Dense clouds pass over the moon.



























Nº5 MANRICO AND di LUNA

Recitative and Romance



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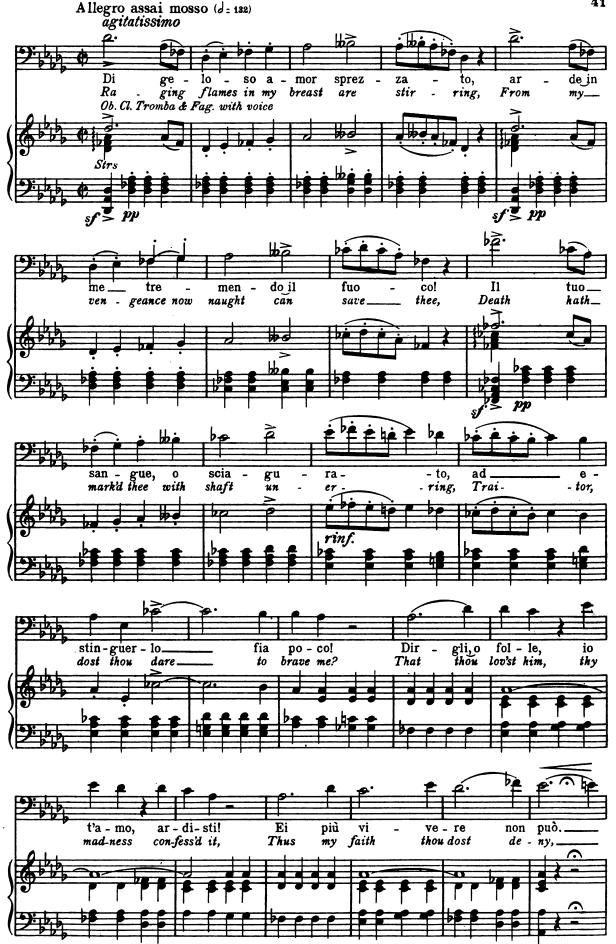


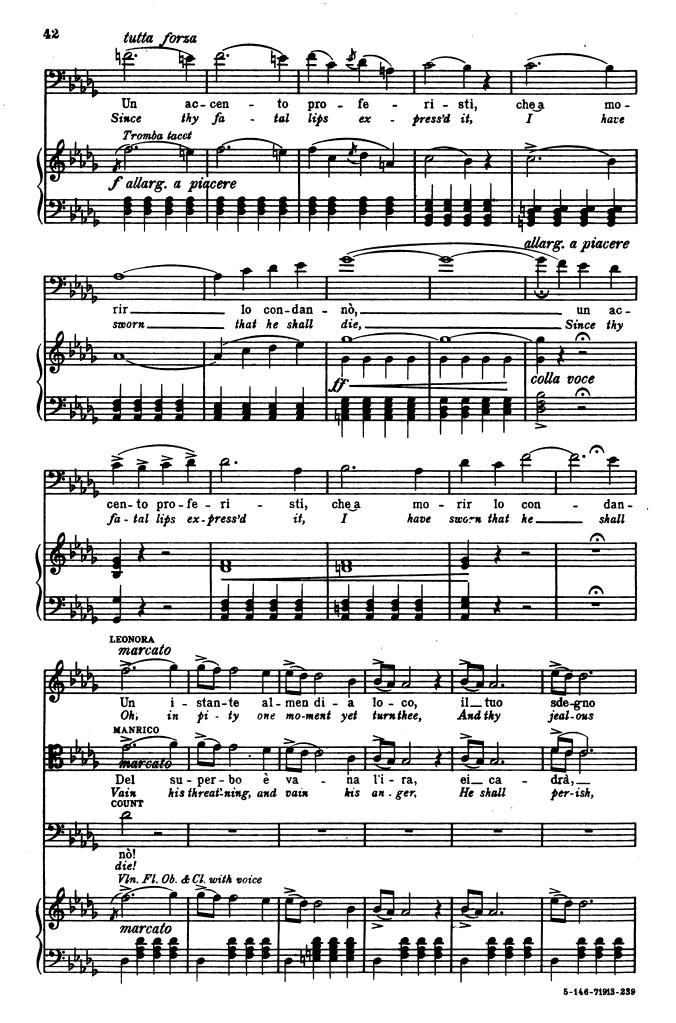


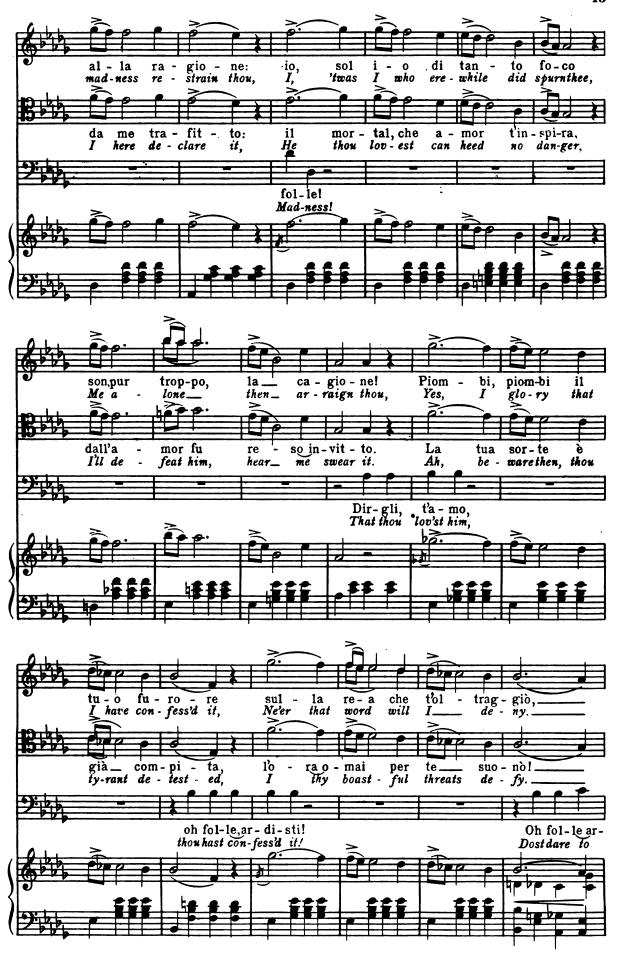




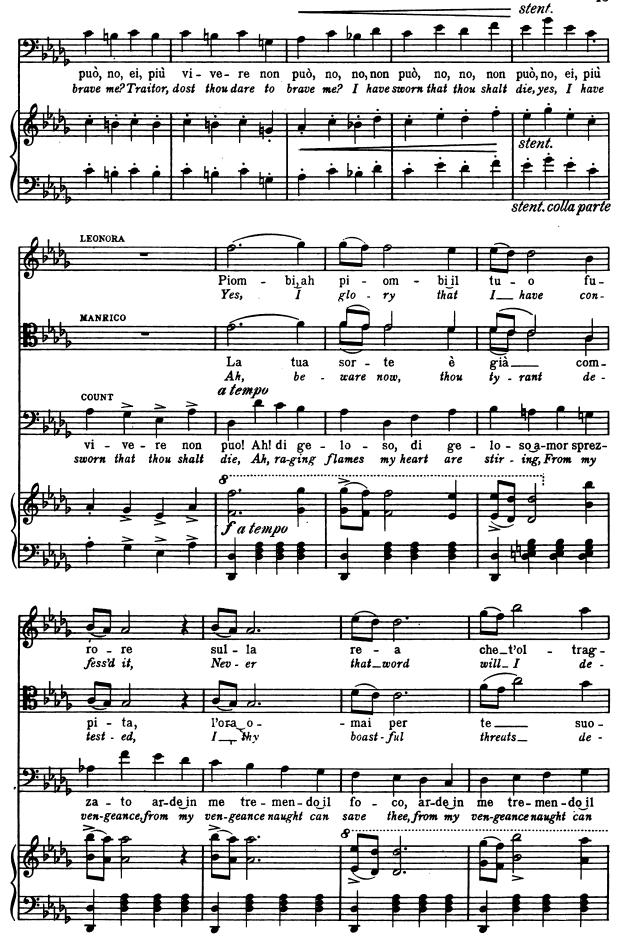




















ACUII (The Gipsy

Scene. A ruined dwelling at the foot of a mountain in Biscay; within, through a wide opening, a fire is seen; day is dawning. Azucena is seated by the fire, Manrico is lying on a low couch at her side, wrapped in his mantle, his helmet at his feet, a sword in his hand, on which he is gazing intently. The gipsies are scattered about the stage.

Nº7-CHORUS OF GIPSIES















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Nº 8 CANZONE

(Azucena)

Azucena sings; the Gipsics gather round her







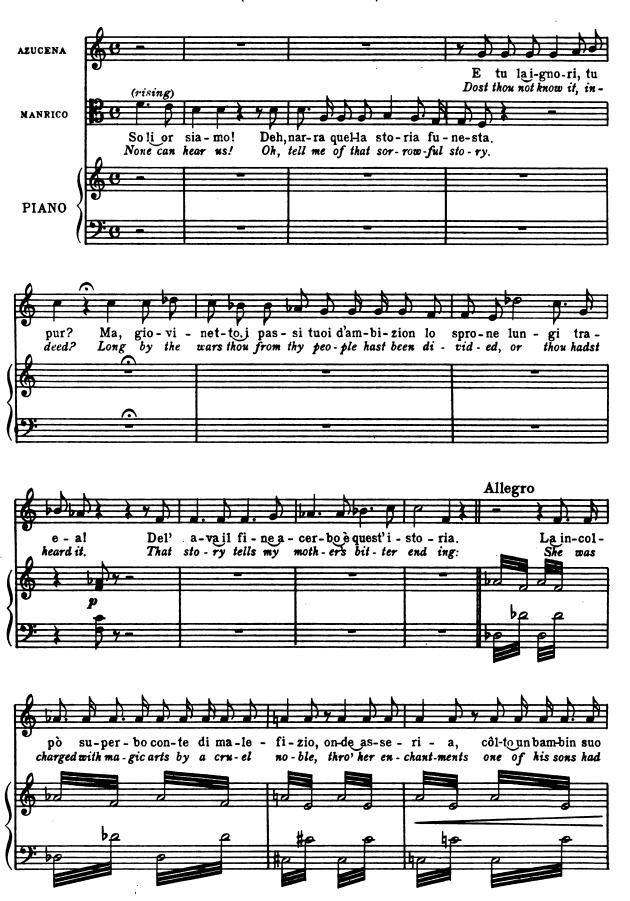








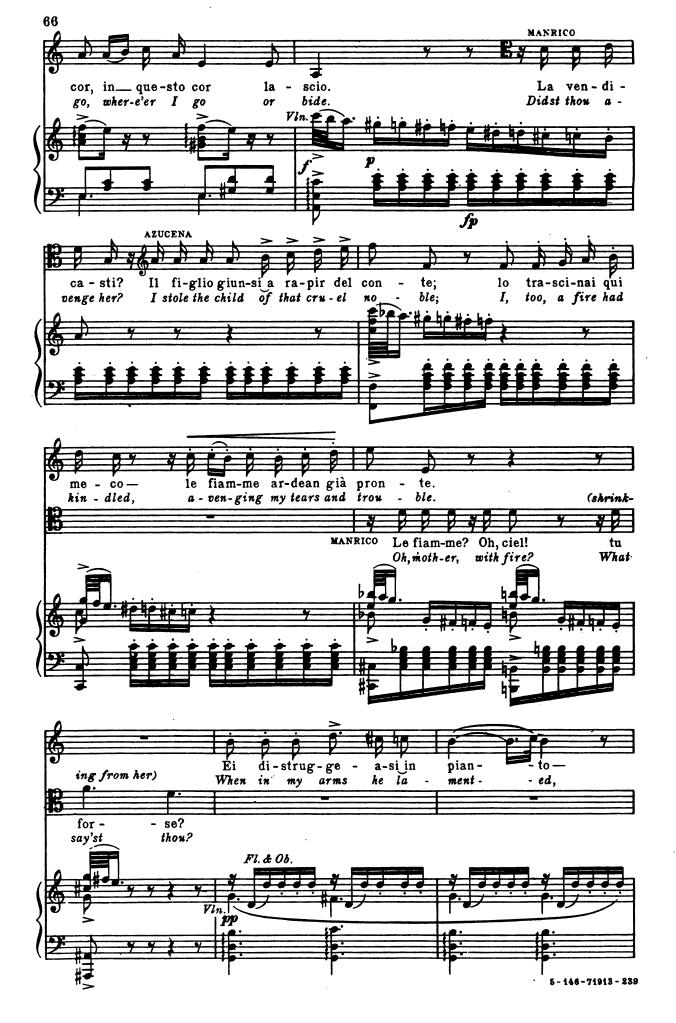
(Azucena and Manrico)











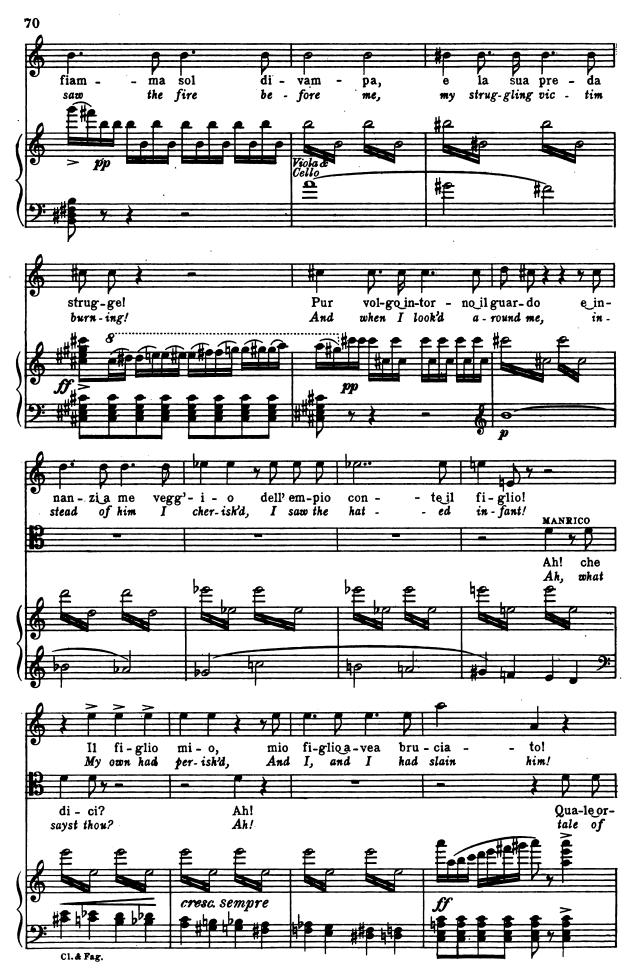








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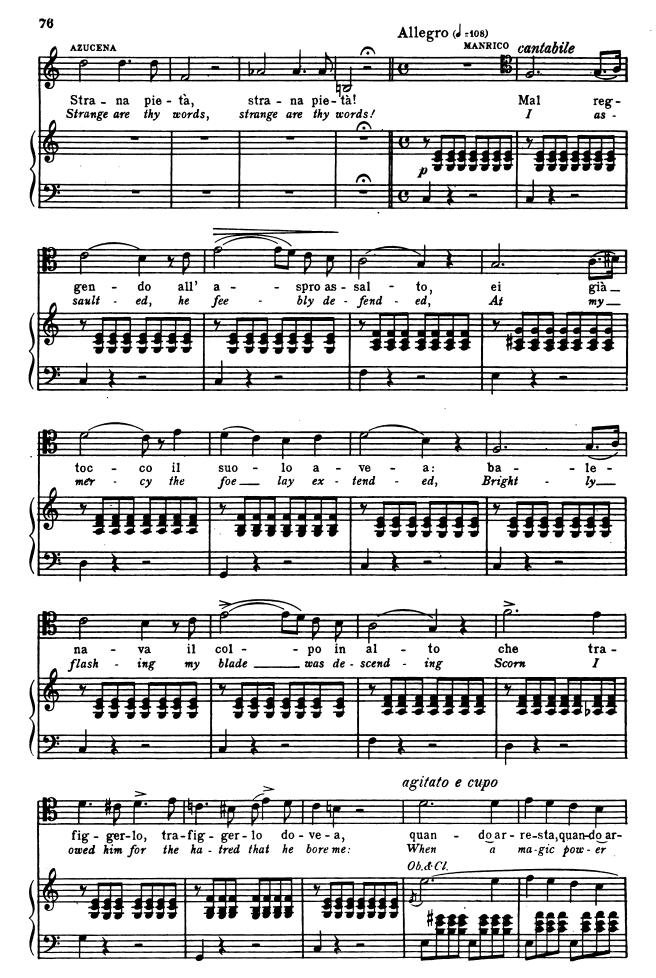






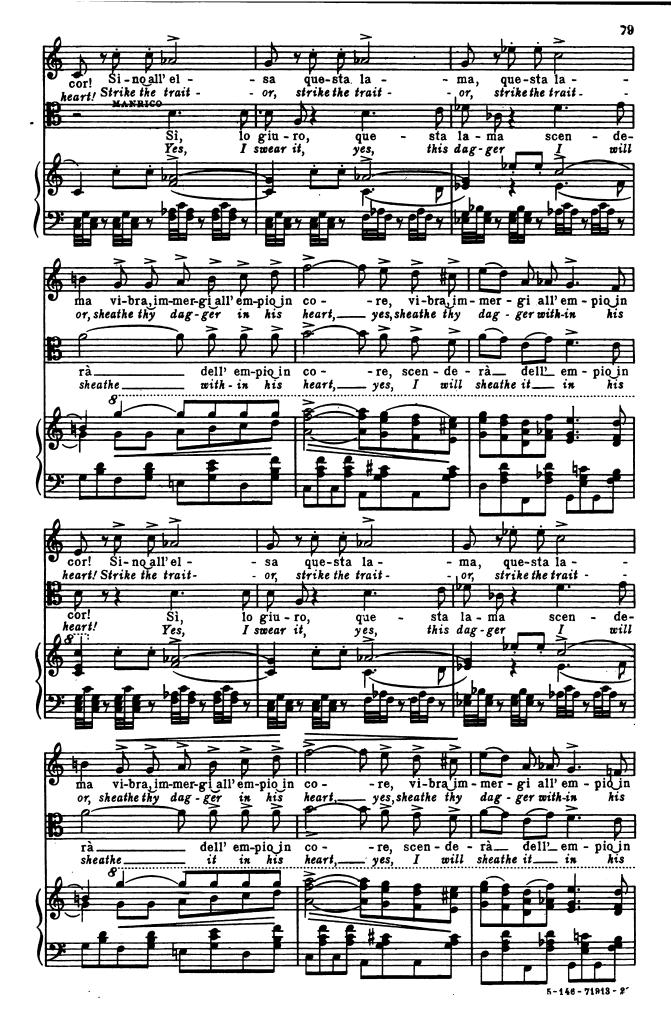






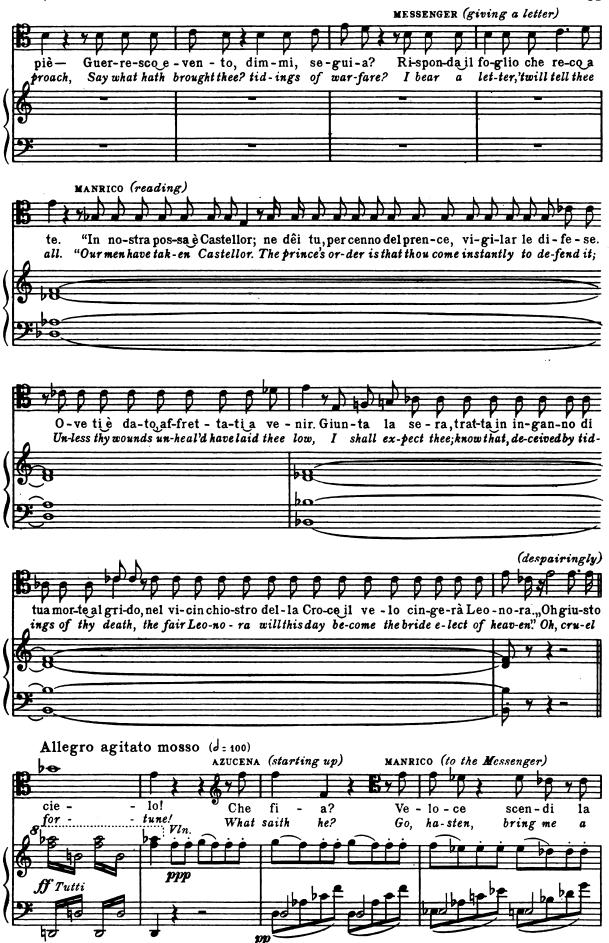








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Nº 12. RECIT. AND ARIA

(Di Luna)

Scene II. Cloisters of a Convent near Castellor. Trees at the back. Night





















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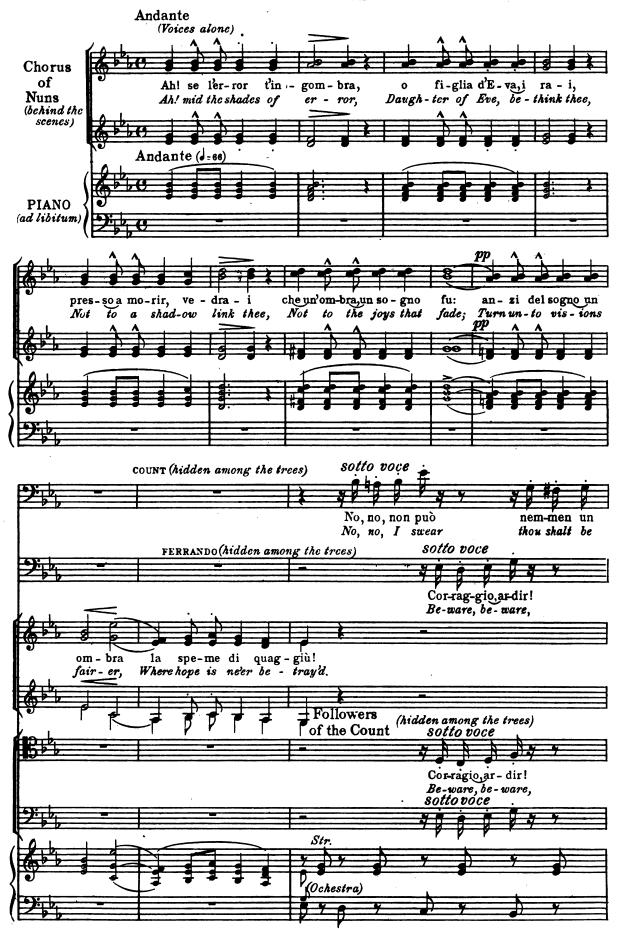




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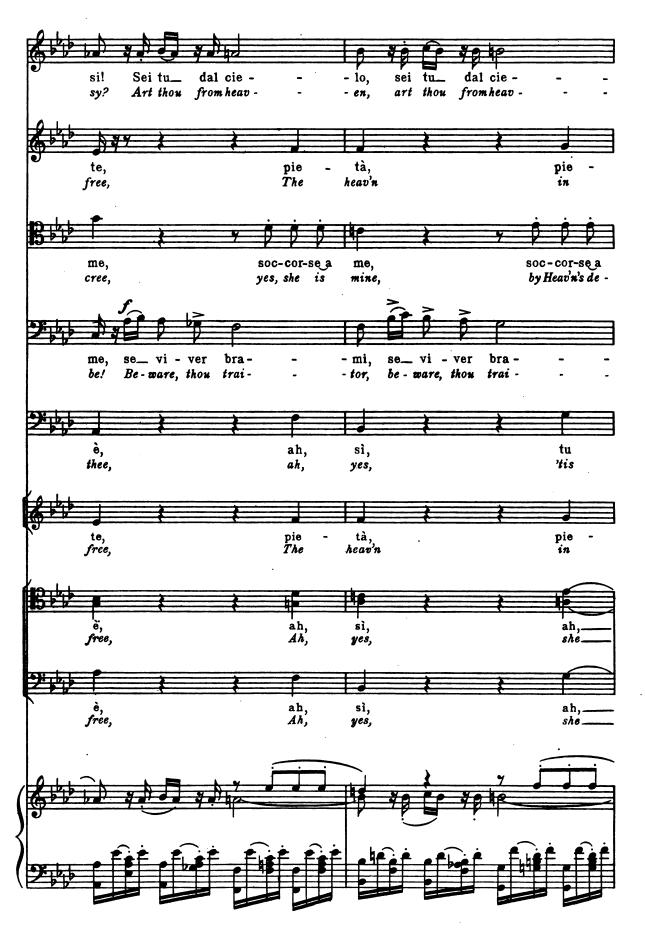


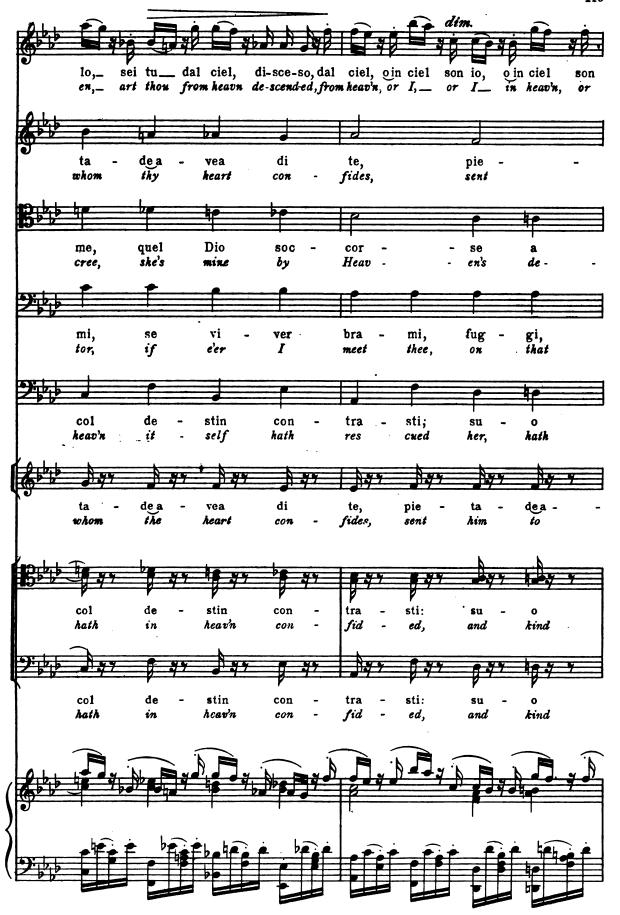




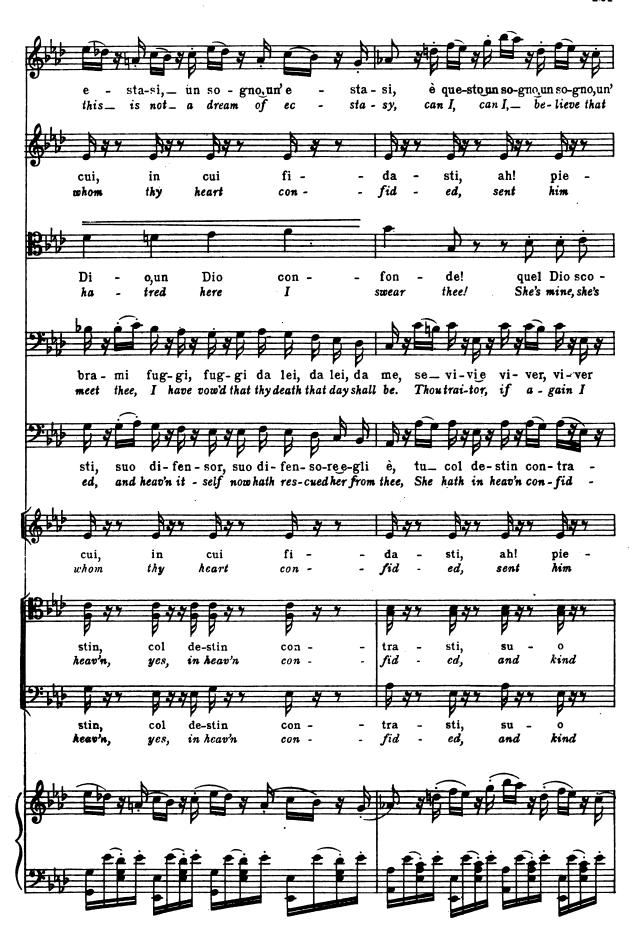




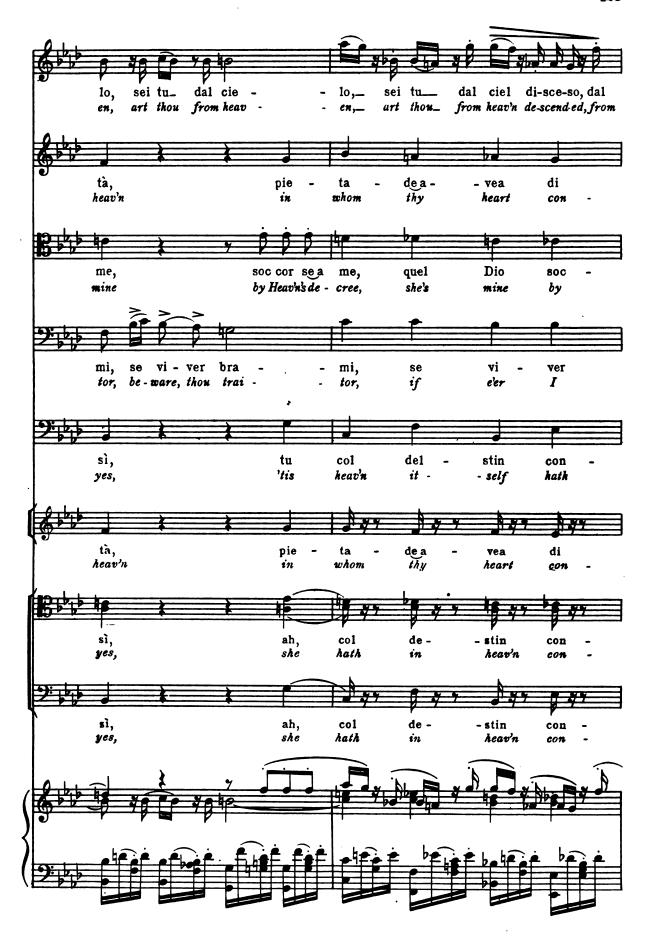






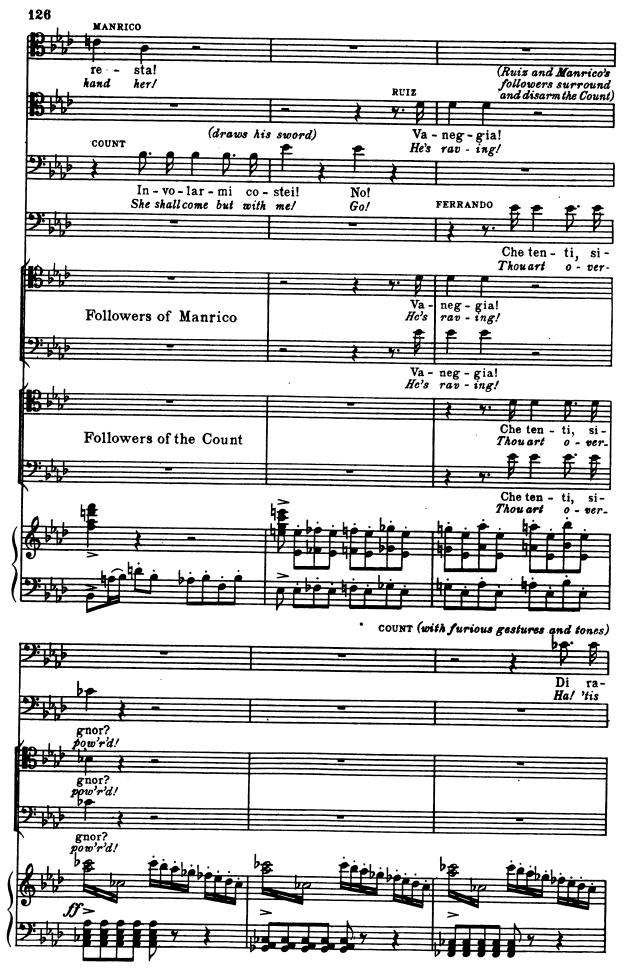


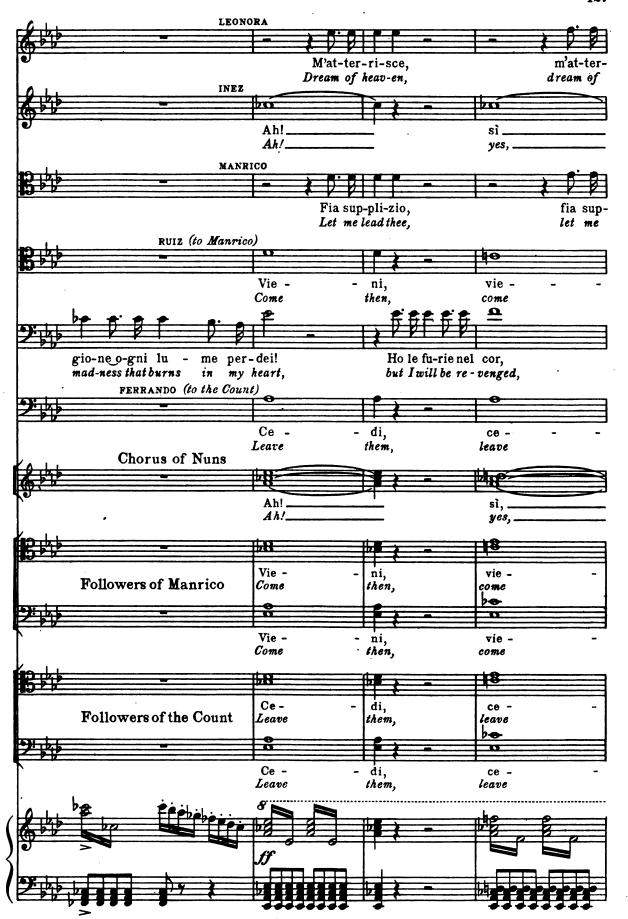


















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Act III (The Gipsy's Son) Nº 16 CHORUS OF SOLDIERS

Scene I. The Camp. At the right the Count's tent, with a banner floating at the top, in token of command. In the distance the towers of Castellor.













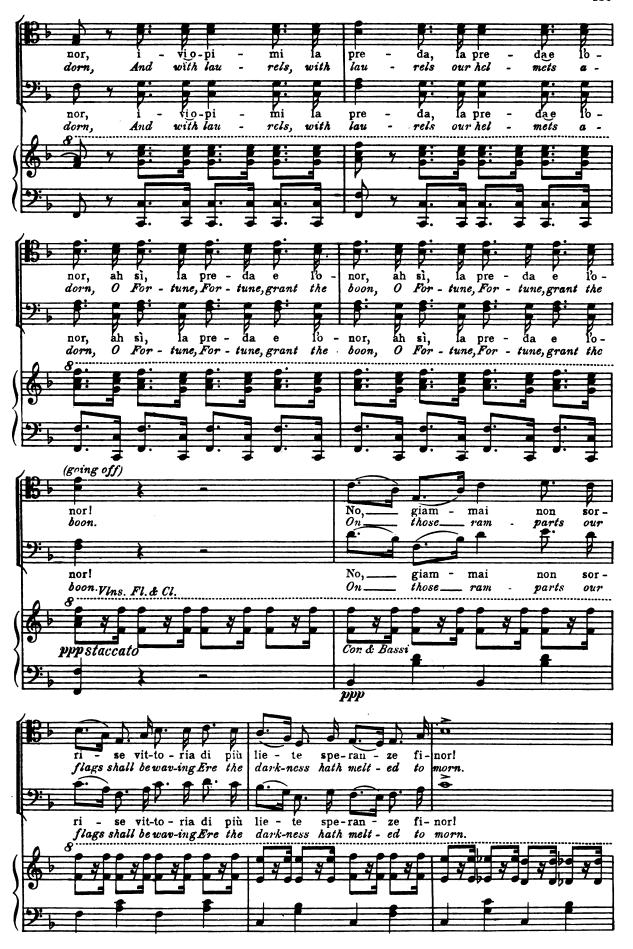


























































off by the Guards, while he enters his tent, followed by Ferrando.





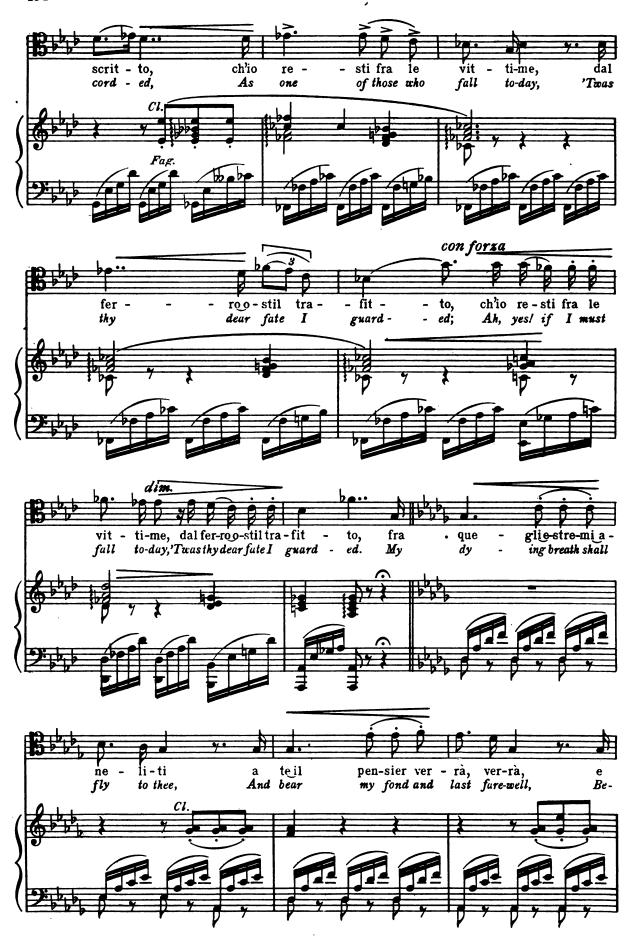
Nº 18_Recitative and Air

Scenc II A hall adjacent to the chapel in Castellor; a balcony at the back.









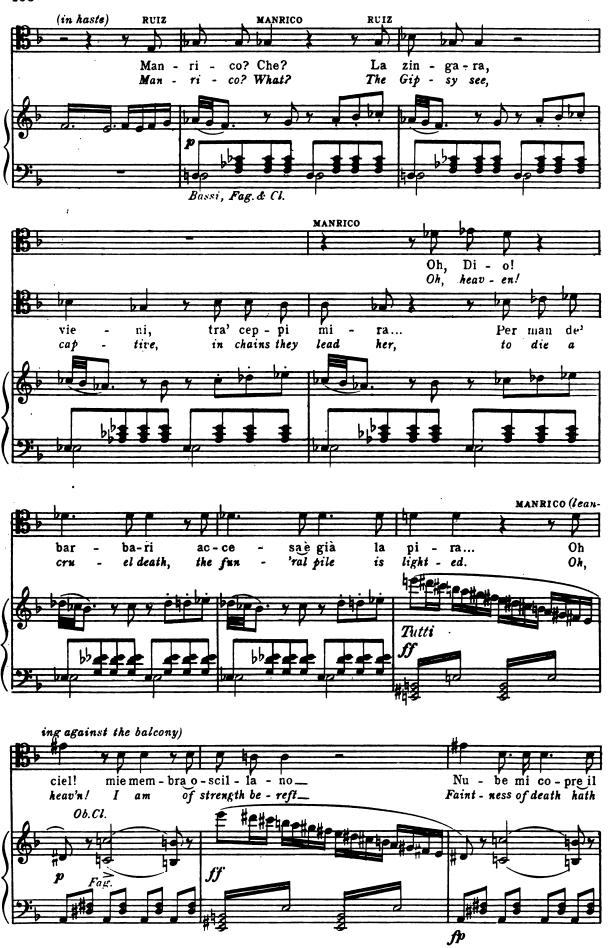


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End of Act III

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Act IV. (The Torture) Nº 19. RECITATIVE AND ARIA

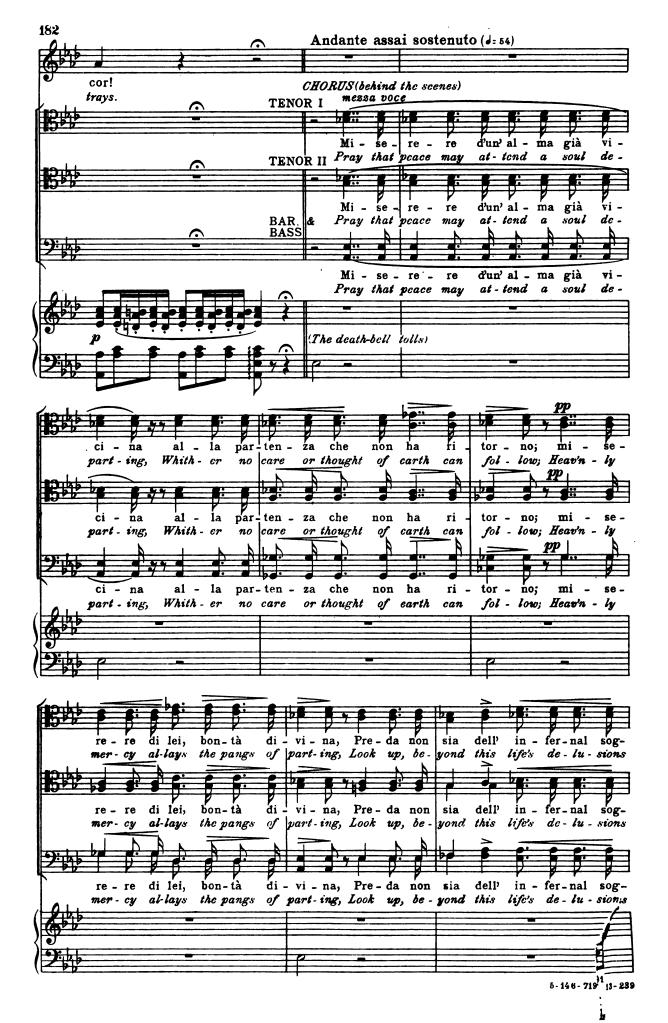
Scene I. A wing of the Palace of Aliaferia; on one side a tower, with casements secured by iron bars. Dark night:



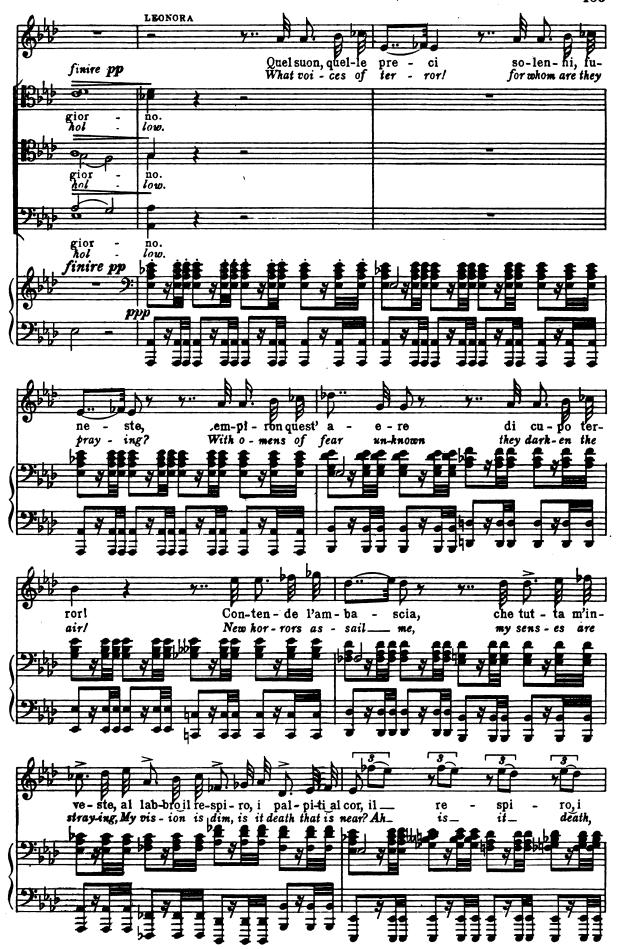








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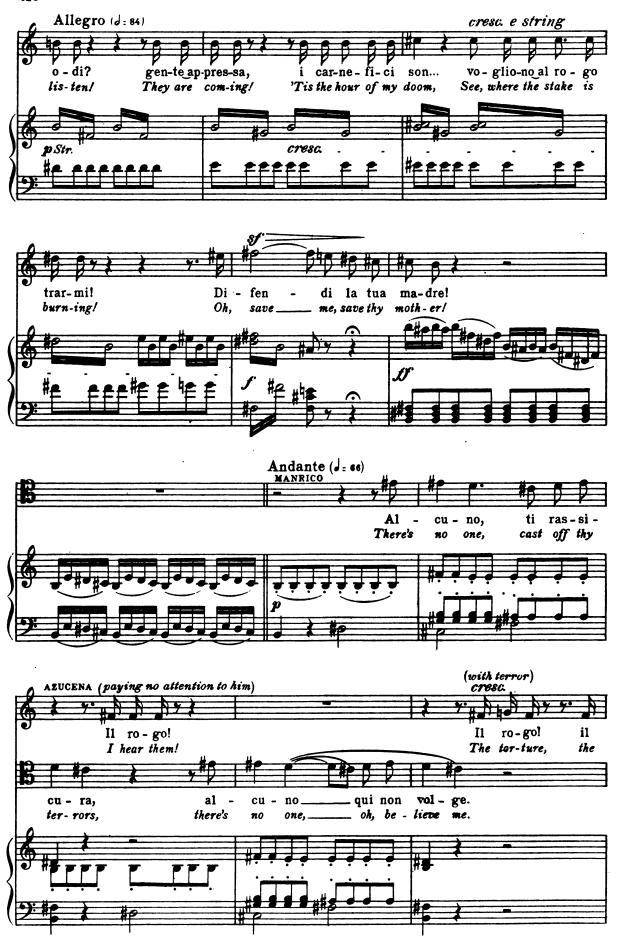
Scene II A gloomy dungeon; in one corner, a barred window; door at back; a dimly burning lamp hangs from the ceiling. Azucena is lying on a rough pallet, Manrico seated near her.



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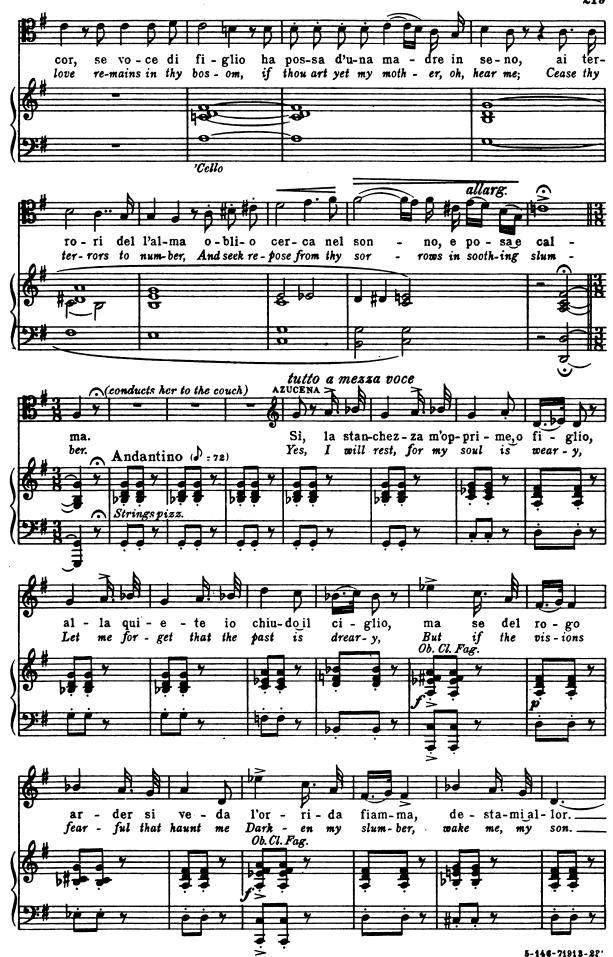
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(The door opens, and Leonora enters)

















