The Lamp and the Bell

by Edna St. Vincent Millay

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THE LAMP AND THE BELL

A Drama In Five Acts

By Edna St. Vincent Millay

Written on the occasion of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the Founding of the Vassar College Alumnae Association Dedicated to '1917'

Lorenzo, King of Fiori Julia Lovejoy Cuniberti '11 Mario, King of Lagoverde Valerie Knapp '20 Guido, Duke of Versilia, Illegitimate nephew to Lorenzo Louisa Brook Jones '07 Giovanni Katherine Jones '20 Luigi Muriel Izard '17 Anselmo Lucia Cole Waram '01 Raffaele Eleanor Kissan '20 Gentlemen at the court of Lorenzo Fidelio Geneva Harrison '20 Jester at the court of Lorenzo Giuseppe Eleanor Fatman Morgenthau '13 Agent for the Duke's estates Cesco Gertrude Taylow Watkins '07 Horatio Lucille Stimson Harbey '09 Townsmen of Fiori Beppo Marcell Furman Newburg '19 A little boy, son to Guiliana Rigo Ruth Delepenha '17 Louis Emily Gallagher '21 Little boys, sons to Leonora Clerk Lucy Madeira Wing '96 Messenger Esther Saville Davis '06 Octavia, Lorenzo's second wife Montgomery Cooper '09 Beatrice, "Rose-Red," Clifford Sellers '21 Daughter to Lorenzo by a former marriage Bianca, "Snow-White," Lois Duffie '20 Daughter to Octavia by a former marriage Laura Frances Stout Kellman '17 Carlotta Kathleen Millay Young ex-'21 Francesca Dorothy Comstock '19 Viola Lillian White '18 Lilina Caroline Goodrich '16 Lela Sylvia Brockway '20 Arianna Margaret Hughes '18 Claudia Janet Lane '18 Clara Jeanette Baker '18 Lucia Ellen Hasbrouck '15 Ladies at the Court of Lorenzo Grazia Eleanor Ray Broeniman '99 Nurse to Beatrice and Bianca Giulietta, servant to Bianca Virginia Archibold '17 "Little Snow-White" Gretchen Tonks "Little Rose-Red" Joy Macracken '36 Leonora Catherine Barr '20 Giuliana Mabel Hastings Humpstone '94 Clara Olive Remington '19 Giovanitta Caroline Curtis Johnson '83 Anna Frances Haldeman Sidwell '84 Eugenia Helen Hoy Greeley '99 Townsmen of Fiori Eleanora A little girl, daughter to Leonora Gilda Ruth Benedict '20 A little girl,

sister to Beppo Adelina, another little girl Maiserie MacCracken '31 Nurse Edith Ward Pierrot Harlequin Pant Aloon Polichinello Colombine Strolling players Courtiers, Ladies-in-Waiting, Soldiers, Pages, Musicians, Towns-people, Children

PROLOGUE

ACT I

ACT II

ACT III

ACT IV

ACT V

PROLOGUE

[Anselmo and Luigi] ANSELMO. What think you,—lies there any truth in the tale The King will wed again? LUIGI. Why not, Anselmo? A king is no less lonely than a collier When his wife dies, And his young daughter there, For all her being a princess, is no less A motherless child, and cries herself to sleep Night after night, as noisily as any, You may be sure. ANSELMO. A motherless child loves not, They say, the second mother. Though the King May find him comfort in another face,—As it is well he should—the child, I fancy, Is not so lonely as she is distraught With grief for the dead Queen, and will not lightly Be parted from her tears. LUIGI. If tales be true, The woman hath a daughter, near the age Of his, will be a playmate for the Princess. CURTAIN

ACT I

Scene 1 [Scene: A garden of the palace at Fiori; four years later.] [Discovered seated Laura, Francesca and Fidelio, Laura embroidering, Fidelio strumming his flute, Francesca lost in thought.] LAURA. You,—Fool! If there be two chords to your

lute, Give us the other for a time! FRANCESCA. And yet, Laura, I somewhat fancied that soft sound he made. 'Twas all on the same tone,—but 'twas a sweet tone. LAURA. 'Tis like you. As for myself, let music change From time to time, or have done altogether. Sing us the song, Fidelio, that you made Last night,—a song of flowers, and fair skies, And nightingales, and love. FIDELIO. I know the song. It is a song of winter. LAURA. How is that? FIDELIO. Because it is a song of summer set To a sad tune. FRANCESCA. [Sadly] Ah, well,—so that it be not A song of autumn, I can bear to hear it. LAURA. In any case, music. I am in a mood for music. I am in a mood where if something be not done To startle me, I shall confess my sins. [Enter Carlotta.] CARLOTTA. Ha! I will have that woman yet by the hair! LAURA. What woman, pray, Carlotta? CAR. Ho! What woman! Who but that scullery-wench, that onion-monger, That slatternly, pale bakress, that foul witch, The coroneted Fish-Wife of Fiori, Her Majesty, the Queen! FRA. Hush—hush—Carlotta! You could be put to death for less than that! CAR. Not I, my duck. When I am put to death 'Twill be for more! Oh, I will have her yet By the hair! [For the first time noticing Fidelio.] Fidelio, if you breathe one word Of this, I will scratch the Princess into ribbons, Whom you love better than your wit. FID. I' faith, I did but hear you say you are a fish-wife, And all the world knows that. LAU. Fear not, Carlotta, He is as dumb as a prophet. Every second word He utters, eats the one before it. Speak, But softly. CAR. Nay,'tis nothing.—Nay, by my head, It is a townful! 'Tis the way she has Of saying "that should be done like this, and this Like that!" The woman stirs me to that point I feel like a carrot in a stew,—I boil so I bump the kettle on all sides! LAU. My dear, Were you as plump as I you would not dare Become so angry. It would make your stays creak. CAR. Well, I am done. Fidelio, play me a dirge To put me in good spirits. Merry music Is sure to make me sad. [Fidelio plays. Pause.] CAR. 'Tis curious A woman like her should have a child like that— So gentle and so pretty-mannered. Faith,— FID. Hush! Hush! Here come the prettiest pair of birds That ever sat together on a bough so close You could not

see the sky between. How now, Snow-White and Rose-Red! Are you reconciled One to another? [Enter Beatrice and Bianca, with their arms about one another.] BIA. Reconciled, Fidelio? We had not quarrelled! [Laughter from Fidelio and the ladies.] BEA. Do not listen to him, Bianca, 'tis but the jingling of his bells. FIDELIO. Do you make a better jest than that At once, or have the clappers cut from them. FID. Alas, alas,—all the good jests are made. I made them yesterday. CAR. If that be true, You would best become a wise man for a time, My friend,—there are plenty of wise words not yet said! FID. I shall say them all tomorrow. LAU. If you do, You will be stoned to death. FID. Not I. No one Will hear me.—Well, I am off.—I know an old man Who does not know the road runs past his house; And yet his bees make honey. [Exit Fidelio.] CAR. [Looking after him.] 'Tis the one wise fool We have among us. [Enter Grazia.] GRA. Oh, here you are, my ducklings! Always together, like a beggar and a flea! I looked for you at lunch-time; I forget now What for; but then 'twas a matter of more weight Than laying siege to a city,—la, how time Does carry one on! An hour is like an ocean, The way it separates you from yourself!—[To Bianca and Beatrice.] What do you find to talk about all day? BEA. We do not talk all day. CAR. Nay, tis you, Grazia, That talk all day. BEA. We ride, and play at tennis, And row on the lake— GRA. I know who does the rowing! BEA. Nay, not by any means! Bianca rows Nearly as well as I. CAR. And do you ride Nearly as well as she, Bianca? [All smile.] BIA. [Ruefully.] Nay. GRA. 'Tis an unkind question. There be few in Fiori Might answer, "Aye." Her Highness rides like a centaur. BIA. I'd never dare to mount the horse she rides. BEA. What, Harlequin?—La, he's gentle as a kitten! Though he's a little young, 'tis true, not settled yet In his mind. LAU. As to his mind, 'twere a small matter, Were he a bit more settled in his legs! BIA. I'm afraid of horses, anyway, they are so much Bigger than I am. BEA. Oh, Bianca, horses Are just like people! Are you afraid of father?—He is bigger than you. BIA. Nay. But I'd never dare Prod him which way to go! BEA. Oh, la, I would! Father, this ditch! This four-foot wall now, father! And swim

the brook beyond! FRA. And is there naught In which Bianca carries off the trophies? BEA. [Ruefully.] Ay, there is tennis. LAU. She wins from you at tennis? BEA. She flays me, Laura. She drags me at her racket Nine times around the court! CAR. Why, how is that?— She is not quicker. BEA. Nay, but she grows cool Whilst I grow hot, Carlotta, and freezes me Ere I can melt her! FRA. Is it true, Bianca? BIA. 'Tis true I win from her.—Although not always. GRA. What did I come here for?—I must go back To where I started, and think of it again! [Exit Grazia.] CAR. [Calling after her.] Are you sure that you remember where you started? —The woman hath a head like a sieve. LAU. And yet, You may be sure 'tis nothing more than the thimble Of the matter she's forgotten. I never knew her Mislay the thread or the needle of a thing. BIA. We must study now, Beatrice, we really must. We have not opened a book since yesterday. LAU. La, as for me, I have not opened a book Since yesteryear,—I'd rather open a vein! CAR. Lessons,—troth, I remember well those lessons. As for what I learned,—troth, that's a different matter, FRA. 'Tis curious; the things that one remembers Are foolish things. One does not know at all Why one remembers them. There was a blackbird With a broken foot somebody found and tamed And named Euripides!—I can see it now. CAR. Some of the silly rhymes we used to write In the margins of our books, I still remember! LAU. And eating sweets behind the covers of them! FRA. And faces—faces—faces—and a little game We used to play, all marching in a row And singing!—I wish I were a child again. BEA. You are not old, Francesca. You are very young. And very beautiful! FRA. I have been beautiful Too many years to be so very young. CAR. How now, Francesca! Would you have it said You are enamoured of some beardless youth, That so you see the wrinkles suddenly? Have done! Have done! BIA. Where shall we study, Bice? BEA. Indoors. I cannot study out of doors. [Exeunt Beatrice and Bianca.] LAU. I vow I never knew a pair of lovers More constant than those two. CAR. A pair of lovers? Marry, I find your figure lacking force! Since when were lovers true? FRA. Oh, peace, Carlotta! You bear too sharp a weapon against

the world,— A split tongue full of poison, in a head That darts at every heel!—I'm going in. [Exit Francesca.] LAU. You should not say such things when she is with us, Carlotto. CAR. Is the woman in love? LAU. In love! She is so far gone she does not know which way To sail,—all shores are equally out of sight. [Exeunt Laura and Carlotta.] [Music off stage. Enter Fidelio, singing.] FID. "What was I doing when the moon stood above? What did I do? What did I do? I lied to a lady that had given me her love,— I swore to be true! I swore to be true!" [He picks up from the grass a white scarf which Beatrice was wearing, and which slipped from her shoulders unnoticed as she went out.] FID. My mistress! [He thrusts the scarf under his cloak and continues his song, just as Guido enters from another direction.] FID. "And what was I doing when the sun stood above? What did I do? What did I do?—" GUI. By my sacred word, Fidelio, I do not like your song. FID. Faith, and small wonder!—It is a song that sets the evil eye To staring in upon itself. GUI. [Stopping in his walk.] What mean you by that, my throaty friend? FID. I mean to say That, taking it all in all and by and large, You do not care for music. GUI. I do not care For yours, but it is possible Apollo Had a better tenor. I never heard him sing. FID. Nay, and how could you?—He died when you were born! GUI. He died, that is, in giving birth to me? FID. Aye, if you like,—you bear as much resemblance To him as to your mother's husband, surely. GUI. Take care, Fidelio! FID. [Lightly] So! Then it angers you Apollo should be deemed your sire! I told you [Sadly.] You did not care for music! GUI. You are a sly fool, My merry friend. What hide you under the cloak? FID. Why, 'tis a little patch of snow the sun Would lay too hot a hand on. GUI. By my life,— And what are you that you can keep the sun From shining where it will? FID. Why, by your life,— And a foul oath it is!—why, by your life, I am a cloud,—that is an easy riddle.

Scene 2 [Scene: A garden with a fountain, at Fiori. Beatrice and Bianca sitting side by side on a low step. Evening.] BEA. How beautiful it is to sit like this, Snow-White,—to think of much, and to say little. BIA. Ay, it is beautiful. I shall

remember All my life long these evenings that we spent Sitting just here, thinking together. [Pause.] Rose-Red, It is four years today since first we met. Did you know that? BEA. Nay, is it? BIA. Four years today. I liked you from the moment that I saw you, Beatrice! BEA. I you, Bianca. From the very moment! I thought you were the prettiest little girl That I had ever seen. BIA. I was afraid Of you, a little, at first,—you were a Princess, You see. But you explained that being a Princess Was much the same as anything else. 'Twas nice, You said, when people were nice, and when they were not nice 'Twas hateful, just the same as everything else. And then I saw your dolls, and they had noses All scratched, and wigs all matted, just like mine, Which reassured me even more!—I still, though, Think of you as a Princess; the way you do things Is much more wonderful than the way I do them!— The way you speak to the servants, even the way You pick up something that you drop. BEA. You goose! 'Tis not because I'm a princess you feel that way— I've always thought the same thing about you!— The way you draw your gloves on is to me More marvelous than the way the sun comes up! [They both burst out laughing.] BEA. Oh, lud,—how droll we are! BIA. Oh, I shall die Of laughing! Think you anyone else, Rose-Red, Was ever half so silly? BEA. I dare wager There be a thousand, in this realm alone, Some even sillier! BIA. Here comes Fidelio! [Enter Fidelio.] BEA. Fidelio, sing to us,—there is no nightingale Abroad tonight, save you. And the night cries For music! BIA. Sing, Fidelio! FID. I have no thorn To lean my breast on. I've been happy all day, And happiness ever made a crow of me. BEA. Sing, none the less,—unless you have a cold, Which is a singer's only rock of refuge. You have no cold, or you would not be happy. So sing. FID. [Singing.] "Oh, little rose-tree, bloom! Summer is nearly over. The dahlias bleed and the phlox is seed, Nothing's left of the clover, And the path of the poppy no one knows,— I would blossom if I were a rose! Summer for all your guile Will brown in a week to autumn, And launched leaves throw a shadow below Over the brook's clear bottom, And the chariest bud the year can boast Be brought to bloom by the chastening frost! Oh,

little rose-tree, bloom!" [As he finishes the song Fidelio goes out, softly strumming the last chords. Bianca and Beatrice did sit quite still for a moment.] BIA. Do you know what I am thinking, Bice? BEA. You're wondering where we'll be ten years from now, Or something of that nature. BIA. Ay, I was wondering Which would be married first, and go away, And would we still be friends. BEA. Oh, do you doubt it, Snow-White? BIA. Nay, nay,—I doubt it not, my dear,— But I was wondering. I am suddenly sad, I know not why. I do not wish to leave you Ever. BEA. I know. I cannot bear To think of parting. We have been happy these four years Together, have we not? BIA. Oh, Beatrice! [She weeps.] BEA. Nay, do not weep!—Come, you must go to bed. You are tired tonight. We rode too far today. [She draws Bianca's head down to her shoulder.] Oh, you are tired, tired, you are very tired. You must be rocked to sleep, and tucked in bed, And have your eyelids kissed to make you dream Of fairies! Come, dear, come. BIA. Oh, I do love you, Rose-Red! You are so sweet! Oh, I do love you So much!—so much! I never loved anyone The way that I love you! There is nobody In all the world so wonderful as you! [She throws her arms about Beatrice and clings to her.]

Scene 3 [A room in the palace at Fiori. Lorenzo and Beatrice playing chess. Twilight.] LOR. You'll not be able to get out of that, I think, my girl, with both your castles gone. BEA. Be not so sure!—I have a horse still, father, And in a strong position: if I move him here, You lose your bishop; and if you take my bishop, You lose your queen. LOR. True, but with my two rooks Set here, where I can push them back and forth, My king is safe till worms come in and eat him. BEA. What say you then to this?—Will you take this pawn, Or will you not? LOR. [Studying the board.] Od's bones!—where did that come from? [Enter Octavia.] OCT. La, would you lose your eyesight, both of you?— Fumbling about those chessmen in the dark? You, Beatrice, at least, should have more wit! LOR. "At least"—hm!—Did you hear her say, "at least," Bice, my daughter? BEA. Ay. But it is true The twilight comes before one knows it. LOR. Ay. 'Tis true, but unimportant. Nevertheless, I am a tractable old

fellow.—Look you, I will but stay to map the lay of the pieces Upon this bit of letter. 'Tis from a king Who could not tell the bishop from the board,— And yet went blind at forty.—A little chess By twilight, mark you, and all might have been well. [Enter Bianca.] BIA. Oh,—I've been looking everywhere for you? OCT. [Drily.] For me? BIA. Nay, mother,—for Beatrice. Bice, The rose is out at last upon that bush That never blossomed before,—and it is white As linen, just as I said 'twould be! BEA. Why, the bud Was redder than a radish! BIA. Ay, I know. But the blossom's white, pure white. Come out and see! [Politely.] Would you like to see it, mother? OCT. Nay, not now, child. Some other time. BEA. Father, we'll end the game Tomorrow; and do you not be scheming at it All night! LOR. Nay, I will not unfold the chart. BEA. But you remember well enough without; Promise me not to think of it. LOR. I' faith, You are a desperate woman. Ay, I promise. [Exeunt Bianca and Beatrice. Octavia seats herself. Pause.] OCT. I tell you, as I've told you often before, Lorenzo, 'tis not good for two young girls To be so much together! LOR. As you say, Octavia. For myself, I must confess It seems a natural thing, enough, that youth Should seek out youth. And if they are better pleased Talking together than listening to us, I find it not unnatural. What have we To say to children?—They are as different From older folk as fairies are from them. OCT. "Talking together," Lorenzo! What have they To talk about, save things they might much better Leave undiscussed?—you know what I mean,—lovers, And marriage, and all that—if that is all! One never knows—it is impossible To hear what they are saying; they either speak In whispers, or burst out in fits of laughter At some incredible nonsense. There is nothing So silly as young girls at just that age.— At just Bianca's age, that is to say. As for the other,—as for Beatrice, She's older than Bianca, and I'll not have her Putting ideas into my daughter's head! LOR. Fear not, my love. Your daughter's head will doubtless, In its good time, put up its pretty hair, Chatter, fall dumb, go moping in the rain, Be turned by flattery, be bowed with weeping, Grow grey, and shake with palsy over a staff,— All this, my love, as empty of ideas As even the

fondest mother's heart could wish. OCT. You mock me, sir? LOR. I am but musing aloud, As is my fashion.—And indeed, my dear, What is the harm in lovers-and-all-that That virtuous maidens may not pass the time With pretty tales about them?—After all, Were it not for the years of looking forward to it And looking back upon it, love would be Only the commonest bird-song in the hedge,—And men would have more time to think,—and less To think about. OCT. That may be. But young girls Should not be left alone too much together. They grow too much attached. They grow to feel They cannot breathe apart. It is unhealthy. LOR. It may be true. But as for me, whom youth Abandoned long ago, I look on youth As something fresh and sweet, like a young green tree, Though the wind bend it double.—'Tis you, 'tis I, 'Tis middle age the fungus settles on. OCT. Your head is full of images. You have No answers. I shall do as I spoke of doing, And separate them for a little while, Six months, maybe a year. I shall send Bianca Away within a fortnight. That will cure them. I know. I know. Such friendships do not last. CURTAIN

ACT II

Scene 1—Four months later. [Scene: A garden, near the palace at Fiori. The young Duke Guido is discovered standing with one foot resting on a garden-bench, looking off, lost in thought. Enter Giovanni.] GIO. That is a merry face you wear, my Guido! Now that the young King Mario visits the court And walks all morning in the woods with the Princess, Or gives her fencing lessons,—upon my word, You are as gay as a gallows! GUI. She is never Alone with him. Laura—Carlotta—someone Is always there. GIO. Ah—ah—but even so, No matter who is there, I tell you, lovers Are always alone! GUI. Why do you say these things, Giovanni? GIO. Because I love you, you lean wolf, And love to watch you snuff the air. My friend, There was a time I thought it all ambition With you, a secret itching to be king— And not so

secret, either—an open plot To marry a girl who will be Queen some morning. But now at times I wonder. You have a look As of a man that's nightly gnawed by rats, The very visage of a man in love. Is it not so? GUI. I do not know, Giovanni. I know I have a passion in my stomach So bitter I can taste it on my tongue. She hates me. And her hatred draws me to her As the moon draws the tide. GIO. You are like a cat— There never was a woman yet that feared you And shunned you, but you leapt upon her shoulder! Well, I'll be off. The prettiest girl in Fiori,— Unless it be Her Highness, waits for me By a fountain. All day long she sells blue plums, And in the evening what she has left of them She gives to me! You should love simply, Guido, As I do. [Exit Giovanni.] [Guido sits on the bench and drops his head in hand. Enter Francesca.] FRA. [Softly.] Guido! Guido! GUI. Who calls me? FRA. Guido! GUI. Francesca! Why do you follow me here? You know I do not wish to see you! FRA. Do not be angry. 'Tis half a week since you have spoken to me, And over a week since you have so much as laid Your hand upon my arm! And do you think, Loving you as I do, I can do without you, Forever, Guido, and make no sign at all? I know you said you did not wish to see me Ever again,—but it was only a quarrel— And we have quarreled before! GUI. It was not a quarrel. I am tired of you, Francesca. You are too soft. You weep too much. FRA. I do not weep the less For having known you. GUI. So;—it will save you tears, then To know me less. FRA. Oh, Guido, how your face Is changed,—I cannot think those are the eyes That looked into my eyes a month ago! What's come between us? GUI. Nothing has come between us. It is the simple snapping of a string Too often played upon. FRA. Ah!—but I know Who snapped it! It will do you little good To look at her,—she'll never look at you! GUI. Be silent a moment!—Unless you would be silent Longer! FRA. Indeed! I shall speak out my mind! You go beyond yourself! There is proportion Even in a nature like my own, that's twisted From too much clinging to a crooked tree! And this is sure: if you no longer love me, You shall no longer strike me! MARIO. [Off stage.] Beatrice! Wait for me! Wait! BEA. [Off stage.] Not I!

Who does not run? As fast as I run, shall be left behind me! GUI. They are coming here! I do not wish to see them! FRA. Oh, Guido! [She follows him off. Exeunt Guido and Francesca.] [Enter Beatrice, running, followed by Mario.] MAR. Beatrice, you run like a boy! You whistle like a boy! And upon my word, You are the only girl I ever played At jousting with, that did not hold her sword As if it were a needle! Which of us, Think you, when we are married, will be King? BEA. When we are married! Sir, I'll have you know There's an ogre to be tamed, a gem to be pried From out a dragon's forehead, and three riddles To be solved, each tighter than the last, before A Princess may be wed! MAR. Even by a King? BEA. For Kings the rules are sterner!—One more riddle, And a mirror that will show her always young. MAR. And if I do these things, then, will you have me, Rose-Red? BEA. Maybe. And if you do not do them, Maybe. Come—I will race you to the bridge! MAR. [Catching her hand,] Nay, not so fast!—Have you no wish to be Beside me, ever, that you are forever running Ahead? BEA. Indeed, if you would have the truth It has come into my mind more times than once It would be sweet to be beside you often. MAR. Rose-Red! BEA. Come—I will race you to the bridge! [Exeunt Beatrice and Mario.]

Scene 2 [Court-yard of the palace at Fiori. Entire court assembled. A band of strolling players, with a little stage on wheels, are doing a Harlequinade pantomime to amuse the young King Mario, the guest of honor. Beatrice sits beside him. In this scene the two people who are oblivious to the pantomime are Guido and Octavia. Guido is apparently brooding over something. From time to time he looks at Beatrice and Mario. Once, having gazed for some moments at the pair, he looks at Octavia and sees that she, too, is looking at them, which seems to satisfy him. The Queen does not take her eyes from the two during the entire scene. Beatrice and Mario do not conduct themselves precisely as lovers, but they are very gay and happy to be in each other's company, apparently. Lorenzo watches the show with a benign, almost childish interest.] [Pantomime begins.] GIO. You, Pierrot, are you

not a little thick For such a sorrowful fellow? PIERROT. Nay, indeed! Sorrow may come to all. And 'tis amazing How much a man may live through and keep fat. [Pantomime continues] CAR. Ho! Now he stumbles! Look you, Pantaloon, If you were not so learned i' the head You might know better where to put your feet! LAU. [To Carlotta.] 'Tis curious how it addles a man's bones To think too much. CAR. Nay, truth. Wise men were ever Awkward in the legs. [Pantomime continues.] RAFFAELE. Have at him, Polichinello. GIO. Lay on! Lay on! ANS. Leave not a nail of him! GIO. Dog! Would you have him write a book about you? LUIG. Spit him i' the liver! It is his only organ! BEA. [To Mario.] Nay, it is cruel. I cannot look at it. MAR. It is but play. BEA. Ay, but 'tis cruel play. To be so mocked at!—Come, take heart, good Doctor! 'Tis a noisy fellow, but light withal!—Blow at him! GIO. [To Guido.] She has the softest heart that ever I saw In a hard woman. It may be, seeing she has pity For one rogue, she has pity for another! Mark you, my Guido, there is hope yet! GUI. Nay, There's not. I have opened up my mind to her, And she will none of me. GIO. [Jestingly.] That was the last thing You should have done!—Speak,—did she give for answer She loves the King? GUI. Not she. She gave for answer She does not love the Duke. [Pantomime continues.] ANS. [To Colombine.] Ah, pretty lady! CAR. La, she is fickle! How she turns from one face To another face,—and smiles into them all! FRAN. Oh, ay, but' tis the Pierrot that she loves. [Pantomime continues and comes to a close.] [All applaud.] LUIGI. Well done! ANS. Bravo! GIO. A monstrous lively play! BEA. Oh, is it over?—I would it were not over! MAR. And yet it pleased you not! BEA. When it pleased me not, I looked at you. MAR. And when I pleased you not—? BEA. I looked at Harlequin. However, I saw him But fleetingly. Pray, was he dark or fair? LUIGI. Laura! LAU. Who calls? La, it is only Luigi! LUIGI. Laura, there'll be a moon tonight. LAU. I' faith, There was a moon last night. [She sighs.] LUIGI. At ten o'clock, Were I by a certain gate, would you be there? What say you? LAU. Ay,—if weariness overtook me, And I could not get further! CAR. La, 'tis sun-down! [In the meantime the

crowd has been breaking up and dispersing. The curtain falls on the disappearing spectators and on Pierrot and his troupe packing up their wagon to go to the next town.]

Scene 3 [Fiori. A garden with a fountain. Evening.] [Enter Octavia and Ladies.] OCT. It would amuse me if I had a lily To carry in my hand. You there, Carlotta! You have a long arm,—plunge it in the pool And fish me forth a lily! CLAUDIA. Majesty, They close at night. OCT. Well—we will open them. CAR. [Going to pool and scanning it.] Go to—I am not a frog! OCT. What did you say? ARIANNA. She says she sees a frog, Your Majesty. FRAN. [Aside to Carlotta.] You are mad! Can you not keep your tongue in your head? CAR. Ay, I can keep it in my cheek.—There's one. God grant it have an eel at the end of it,— I'll give the dame good measure. [While the ladies are at the pool enter Guido.] GUIDO. Greeting, madam! OCT. Who greets me?—Ah, it is the Duke. Good even, Guido. You seek an audience with me? GUIDO. Nay—nay—but if you send away your women,— We shall be more alone. OCT. [After considering him a moment.] You may leave me now, Laura, Francesca—all of you—and you would best go in At an early hour, instead of walking the gardens All night; I would have you with your wits About you in the morning. LAU. [Aside.] Oh, indeed? You would best go in yourself, lest the dew rust you, You sauce-pan! [Exeunt ladies.] OCT. Now, my good sir,—you may speak. GUI. [As if by way of conversation.] It is a long time, is it not, your daughter Is absent from the court? OCT. Why say you that? GUI. Why but to pass the time, till she returns? OCT. Nay, Guido. That is well enough for some, But not for me. I know the slant of your fancy; 'Tis not in that direction. GUI. Yet me thinks The sooner she is back again at court The happier for us both. OCT. "Us both?" What "both?" GUI. You Madam, and myself. OCT. And why for me? GUI. [Carefully.] Why, are you not her mother? OCT. Hah! [Pause.] Guido, What festers in your mind? Do you speak out now, If you await some aid from me. GUI. Madam, I have but this to say: if I were a woman With a marriageable daughter, and a King

rode by, I'd have her at the window. OCT. So. I thought so. [With an entire change of manner.] Guido, what think you,—does she love the King,— I mean Lorenzo's daughter? GUI. [Between his teeth.] Ay, she loves him. OCT. And loves he her? GUI. Oh, ay. He loves the moon, The wind in the cypress trees, his mother's portrait At seventeen, himself, his future children— He loves her well enough. But had she blue eyes And yellow hair, and were afraid of snakes, He yet might love her more. OCT. You think so, Guido? I am content to learn you of that mind. There had occurred to me—some time ago, In fact—a similar fancy. And already My daughter is well on her way home. [Exeunt Guido and Octavia.] [Music, Enter Beatrice and Fidelio. Fidelio strums his lute softly throughout the next conversation, up to the words "and cease to mock me."] BEA. Fidelio, Were you ever in love? FID. I was never out of it. BEA. But truly? FID. Well. I was only out of it What time it takes a man to right himself And once again lose balance. Ah, indeed, 'Tis good to be in love, I have often noticed, The moment I fall out of love, that moment I catch a cold. BEA. Are you in love, then, now? FID. Ay, to be sure. BEA. Oh! Oh! With whom, Fidelio? Tell me with whom! FID. Why, marry, with yourself,— That are the nearest to me,—and by the same troth, The farthest away. BEA. Go to, Fidelio! I am in earnest, and you trifle with me As if I were a child. FID. Are you not a child, then? BEA. Not any more. FID, How so? BEA. I am in love. FID. Oh—oh—oh, misery, misery, misery, misery! BEA. Why do you say that? FID. Say what? BEA. "Misery, misery." FID. It is a song. BEA. A song? FID. Ay, 'tis a love-song. Oh, misery, misery, misery, misery, oh! BEA. Nay, sweet Fidelio, be not so unkind! I tell you, for the first time in my life I am in love! Do you be mannerly now, And cease to mock me, FID. What would you have me do? BEA. I would have you shake your head, and pat my shoulder, And smile and say, "Godspeed." FID. [Doing so very tenderly.] Godspeed. BEA. [Bursting into tears.] I do not know if I am happy or sad. But I am greatly moved. I would Bianca Were here. I never lacked her near so much As tonight I do, although I lack her always. She is a long time gone.—If I tell

you something, Will you promise not to tell. FID. Nay, I'll not promise, But I'll not tell. BEA. Fidelio, I do love so The King from Lagoverde! I do so love him! FID. Godspeed, Godspeed. BEA. Ay, it is passing strange; Last week I was a child, but now I am not. And I begin my womanhood with weeping; I know not why.—La, what a fool I am! 'Tis over. Sing, Fidelio. FID. Would you a gay song, My Princess? BEA. Ay.—And yet—nay, not so gay. A simple song, such as a country-boy Might sing his country-sweetheart.—Is it the moon Hath struck me, do you think? I swear by the moon I am most melancholy soft, and most Outrageous sentimental! Sing, dear fool. FID. [Singing.] "Butterflies are white and blue In this field we wander through. Suffer me to take your hand. Death comes in a day or two. All the things we ever knew Will be ashes in that hour. Mark the transient butterfly, How he hangs upon the flower. Suffer me to take your hand. Suffer me to cherish you Till the dawn is in the sky. Whether I be false or true, Death comes in a day or two." CURTAIN

ACT III

Scene 1—The following summer, [A field or meadow near Fiori. As the curtain rises voices are heard off-stage singing a bridal song.] SONG: Strew we flowers on their pathway! Bride and bride-groom, go you sweetly. There are roses on your pathway. Bride and bride-groom, go you sweetly. Sweetly live together. [Enter Viola, Lilina, Lela, Arianna and Claudia, laden with garlands, flowering boughs and baskets of flowers. They met Anselmo coming from another direction, also bearing flowers.] VIO. How beautiful, Anselmo! Where did you find them? ANS. Close by the brook. LIL. You gathered all there were? ANS. Not by one hundredth part. LEL. Nay, is it true? We must have more of them! ARI. And are they fragrant As well? ANS. Ay, by my heart, they are so sweet I near to fainted climbing the bank with them. [The ladies cluster about Anselmo and smell the flowers.] LIL. Oh! VIO. Ah! CLA. How drowsily sweet! LEL. Oh, sweet! ARI. What fragrance! [Enter Laura and

Giovanna, followed by Carlotta and Raffaele.] LAU. La, by my lung! I am as out of breath As a babe new-born! Whew! Let me catch the air! [She drops her flowers and seats herself beside them.] CAR. [to the younger ladies and Anselmo, by way of greeting.] How hot the sun is getting. ANS. 'Tis nigh noon, I think. GIO. 'Tis noon. CLA. We must be starting back. LAU. Not till I get my breath. RAF. Come,—I will fan you. [He fans her with a branch,] LAU. Tis good—'tis very good—oh, peace—oh, slumber— Oh, all good things! You are a proper youth. You are a zephyr. I would have you fan me Till you fall dead. CAR. I tell you when it comes To gathering flowers, much is to be said For spreading sheets on the grass,—it gives you less The backache. LAU. Nobly uttered, my sweet bird. GIO. Yet brides must have bouquets. CAR. And sit at home, Nursing complexions, whilst I gather them, LIL. [Running to Carlotta, along, with Lela and Viola, and throwing her arms about her.] Nay, out upon you now, Carlotta! Cease now To grumble so,—'tis such a pretty day! VIO. And weddings mean a ball! LEL. And one may dance all night At weddings! LIL. Till one needs must dance to bed, Because one cannot walk there! GIO. And one eats Such excellent food! ANS. And drinks such excellent wine! CLA. And seldom will you see a bride and bridegroom More beautiful and gracious, or whom garlands Do more become. GIO. 'Tis so,—upon my sword!— Which I neglected to bring with me—'tis so, Upon Anselmo's sword! CAR. Nay, look you, Laura! You must not fall asleep! [to Raffaele] Have done, you devil! Is it a poppy that you have there? [to Laura] Look you, We must be starting back! [Laura rouses, then falls back again.] LAU. Ay, that we must. ARI. Where are the others? ANS. Scattered all about. I will call to them. Hola! You fauns and dryads! Where are you? VOICES. Here! Here! Is it time to go? ANS. Come this way! We are starting back! VOICES. We are coming! We'll come in a moment! I cannot bear to leave This place! GIO. [As they enter] A thousand greetings, Clara! Lucia, a thousand greetings! How now, Luigi! I know you, man, despite this soft disguise! You are no flower-girl! LUI. I am a draught-horse, That's what I am, for four unyielding

women! Were I a flower-girl, I'd sell the lot For a bit of bread and meat—I am so hungry I could eat a butterfly! CAR. What ho. Francesca! I have not seen you since the sun came up! FRA. This is not I,—I shall not be myself Till it goes down! LEL. Oh, la, what lovely lilies! FRA. Be tender with them—I risked my life to get them! LIL. Where were they? FRA. Troth, I do not know. I think They were in a dragon's mouth. LAU. [Suddenly waking] Well, are we going? [All laugh.] LUI. No one is going that cannot go afoot. I have enough to carry! LAU. Nay; take me too! I am a little thing. What does it matter— One flower more? LUI. You are a thousand flowers, Sweet Laura,—you are a meadow full of them— I'll bring a wagon for you. CAR. Come. Come home. [In the meantime the stage has been filling with girls and men bearing flowers, a multitude of people, in groups and couples, humming the song very softly. As Carlotta speaks several more people take up the song, then finally the whole crowd. They move off slowly, singing.] SONG. "Strew we flowers on their pathway," etc.

Scene 2 [Bianca's boudoir in the palace at Fiori. Bianca with a mirror in her hand, having her hair done by a maid. Several maids about, holding perfume-flasks, brushes, and veils, articles of apparel of one sort or another. Beatrice standing beside her, watching.] BIA. Look at me, Rose-Red. Am I pretty enough, Think you, to marry a King? BEA. You are too pretty. There is no justice in it. Marry a cobbler And make a king of him. It is unequal,— Here is one beggarly boy king in his own right, And king by right of you. BIA. Mario is not A beggarly boy! Nay, tell me truly, Beatrice, What do you think of him? BEA. La, by my soul! Have I not told you what I think of him A thousand times? He is graceful enough, I tell you, And hath a well-shaped head. BIA. Nay, is that all? BEA. Nay, hands and feet he hath, like any other. BIA. Oh, out upon you for a surly baggage! Why will you tease me so? You do not like him, I think. BEA. Snow-White! Forgive me! La, indeed, I was but jesting! By my sacred word, These brides are serious folk. BIA. I could not bear To wed a man that was displeasing to you. Loving him as I do, I could not choose

But wed him, if he wished it, but 'twould hurt me To think he did not please you. BEA. Let me, then, Set your sweet heart at rest. You could not find In Christendom a man would please me more. BIA. Then I am happy. BEA. Aye, be happy, child. BIA. Why do you call me child? BEA. Faith, 'tis the season O' the year when I am older than you. Besides A bride is always younger than a spinster. BIA. A spinster! Do you come here to me, Rose-Red, Whilst I pinch you smartly! You, Arianna, push me Her Highness over here, that I may pinch her! [To Loretta.] Nay, is it finished? Aye, 'tis very well. Though not so well, Loretta, as many a day When I was doing nothing!—Nay, my girl, 'Tis well enough. He will take me as I am Or leave me as I was.—You may come back In half an hour, if you are grieved about it, And do it again. But go now,—all of you. I wish to be alone. [To Beatrice.] Not you. [Exeunt all but Bea. and Bia.] Oh, Rose-Red, I trust 'twill not be long before I see you As happy as you see me now! BEA. Indeed, I could not well be happier than I am. You do not know, maybe, how much I love you. BIA. Ah, but I do,—I have a measure for it! BEA. Ay, for today you have. But not for long. They say a bride forgets her friends,—she cleaves so To her new lord. It cannot but be true. You will be gone from me. There will be much To drive me from your mind. BIA. Shall I forget, then, When I am old, I ever was a child? I tell you I shall never think of you Throughout my life, without such tenderness As breaks the heart,—and I shall think of you Whenever I am most happy, whenever I am Most sad, whenever I see a beautiful thing. You are a burning lamp to me, a flame The wind cannot blow out, and I shall hold you High in my hand against whatever darkness. BEA. You are to me a silver bell in a tower. And when it rings I know I am near home. Scene 3 [A room in the palace. Mario alone. Enter Beatrice.] BEA. Mario! I have a message for you!—Nay, You need not hang your head and shun me, Mario, Because you loved me once a little and now Love somebody else much more. The going of love Is no less honest than the coming of it. It is a human thing. MAR. Oh, Beatrice! What can I say to you? BEA. Nay, but indeed. Say nothing. All is said. I need no words To tell me you

have been troubled in your heart, Thinking of me. MAR. What can I say to you! BEA. I tell you, my dear friend, you must forget This thing that makes you sad. I have forgotten, In seeing her so happy, that ever I wished For happiness myself. Indeed, indeed, I am much happier in her happiness Than if it were my own; 'tis doubly dear, I feel it in myself, yet all the time I know it to be hers, and am twice glad. MAR. I could be on my knees to you a lifetime, Nor pay you half the homage is your due. BEA. Pay me no homage, Mario,—but if it be I have your friendship, I shall treasure it. MAR. That you will have always. BEA. Then you will promise me Never to let her know. I never told her How it was with us, or that I cherished you More than another. It was on my tongue to tell her The moment she returned, but she had seen you Already on the bridge as she went by, And had leaned out to look at you, it seems, And you were looking at her,—and the first words She said, after she kissed me, were, "Oh, sister, I have looked at last by daylight on the man I see in my dreams!" MAR. [Tenderly.] Did she say that? BEA. [Drily.] Ay, that Was what she said.—By which I knew, you see, My dream was over,—it could not but be you. So that I said no word, but my quick blood Went suddenly quiet in my veins, and I felt Years older than Bianca. I drew her head Down to my shoulder, that she might not see my face, And she spoke on, and on. You must not tell her, Even when you both are old, and there is nothing To do but to remember. She would be withered With pity for me. She holds me very dear. MAR. I promise it, Rose-Red. And oh, believe me, I said no word to you last year that is not As true today! I hold you still the noblest Of women, and the bravest. I have not changed. Only last year I did not know I could love As I love now. Her gentleness has crept so Into my heart, it never will be out. That she should turn to me and cling to me And let me shelter her, is the great wonder Of the world. You stand alone. You need no shelter, Rose-Red. BEA. It may be so. MAR. Will you forgive me? BEA. I had not thought of that. If it will please you, Ay, surely.—And now, the reason for my coming: I have a message for you, of such vast import She could not trust it to a liv'ried page, Or even a courier.

She bids me tell you She loves you still, although you have been parted Since four o'clock. MAR. [Happily.] Did she say that? BEA. Ay, Mario. I must return to her. It is not long now Till she will leave me. MAR. She will never leave you, She tells me, in her heart. BEA. [Happily.] Did she say that? MAR. Ay, that she did, and I was jealous of you One moment, till I called myself a fool. BEA. Nay, Mario, she does not take from you To give to me; and I am most content She told you that. I will go now. Farewell, Mario! MAR. Nay, we shall meet again, Beatrice!

Scene 4 [The ball-room of the palace at Fiori, raised place in back, surmounted by two big chairs, for Lorenzo and Octavia to sit while the dance goes on. Dais on one side, well down stage, in full sight of the audience, for Mario and Bianca. As the curtain rises the stage is empty except for Fidelio, who sits forlornly on the bottom steps of the raised place in the back of the stage, his lute across his knees, his head bowed upon it. Sound of laughter and conversation, possibly rattling of dishes, off stage, evidently a feast going on.] LAU. [Off stage.] Be still, or I will heave a plate at you! LUIGI. [Off stage.] Nay, gentle Laura, heave not the wedding-crockery, At the wedding-guest! Behold me on my knees To tell the world I love you like a fool! LAU. Get up, you oaf! Or here's a platter of gravy Will add the motley to your folly! LUIGI. Hold her, Some piteous fop, that liketh not to see Fine linen smeared with goose! Oh, gracious Laura, I never have seen a child sucking an orange But I wished an orange, too. This wedding irks me Because 'tis not mine own. Shall we be married Tuesday or Wednesday? LAU. Are you in earnest, Luigi? LUIGI. Ay, that I am, if never I was before. LAU. La, I am lost! I am a married woman! Water!—Nay, wine will do! On Wednesday, then. I'll have it as far off as possible. [Enter from banquet-room Guido, Giovanni and Raffaele.] GIO. Well met, Fidelio! Give us a song! FID. Not I! GUI. Why, is this? You, that are dripping with song Weekdays, are dry of music for a wedding? FID. I have a headache. Go and sit in a tree, And make your own songs. RAF. Nay, Fidelio. String the sweet strings, man! GIO. Strike the pretty strings! GUI. Give us the silver strings! FID. Nay then, I will

that! [He tears the strings off the lute and throws them in Guido's face.] Here be the strings, my merry gentlemen! Do you amuse yourselves with tying knots in them And hanging one another!—I have a headache. [He runs off, sobbing.] RAF. What ails him, think you? GIO. Troth, I have no notion. [Enter Nurse.] GUI. What ho, good Grazia! I hear my uncle Is ill again! GRA. Where heard you that, you raven? GUI. Marry, I forget. Is't true? GRA. It is as false As that you have forgotten where you heard it. Were you the heir to his power, which I bless God You're not!—he'd live to hide the throne from you Full many a long day yet!—Nay, pretty Guido, Your cousin is not yet Queen,—and when she is—Faith, She weareth a wide petticoat,—there'll be Scant room for you beside her! [Exit Nurse across stage] GUI. [To his companions.] None the less I do believe the king is ill. RAF. Who told you? GUI. His wife. She is much exercised about him. GIO. 'Tis like enough. This woman would rather lie Than have her breakfast served to her in bed. [Exeunt Guido, Giovanni and Raffaele.] [Music. Enter Musicians and take place on stage. Enter four pages and take places on either side the door as from the banquet-hall and on either side the throne in the back. Enter King and Queen, that is to say Lorenzo and Octavia, Lorenzo apparently quite well, and seat themselves on throne in back. Enter courtiers and ladies, Carlotta with Anselmo, Laura with Luigi, etc., and stand in little groups about the stage, laughing and talking together. Enter Beatrice alone, her train held by two pages in black. Enter twelve little Cupids, running, and do a short dance in the center of the room, then rush to the empty dais which is awaiting Mario and Bianca, and cluster about it. Enter Bianca and Mario, she in white and silver, with a deep sky blue velvet train six yards long, held up by six silver pages [or Cupids]; he in black and gold, with a purple velvet train of the same length held by six gold pages [or Cupids]. His arm is about her waist, she is leaning back her head against him and looking up into his face. They come in slowly, talking softly together, as utterly oblivious of the court, the pages, the music, everything, as if they were a shepherd and a shepherdess walking through a meadow. They walk slowly

across the stage and seat themselves on the dais. The music changes, strikes up a gay pavane, or the equivalent of the period of the costumes, the ladies and courtiers dance. Guido, Giovanni and Raffaele re-enter just as the music starts and go up to the ladies; Guido goes to Beatrice, and she dances with him. In the midst of the dance Lorenzo slips a little sidewise in his chair, his head drops forward on his chest; he does not move again. Nobody notices for some time. The dance continues, all who are not dancing watching the dancers, save Octavia, who watches with great pride and affection Bianca and Mario, who in turn are looking at one another. Octavia turns finally to speak to Lorenzo, stares at him, touches him, then screams. Beatrice should then be in a conspicuous place in the dance. Music stops in confusion on a dischord, dance breaks up wildly, everybody rushes to throne.]

Scene 5 [The same room later that evening, entirely empty, disordered. Musicians' benches overturned, for example, a couple of instruments left about, garlands trampled on the floor, a wing of one of the Cupids clinging to the dais of Bianca and Mario. Enter Beatrice, weeping, goes to her father's throne and creeps up into it, with her face towards the back of it and clings there, sobbing quietly. Enter Bianca and Mario,] BIA. [Softly.] Ay. She is here. I thought she would be here. There are so many people by his bed Even now, she cannot be alone with him. MAR. Is there no hope? BIA. Nay, there is none. 'Tis over. He was a kind old man. MAR. Come, let us go, And leave her to herself. BIA. Nay, Mario. I must not leave her. She will sit like that All night, unless I bid her come away, And put her into bed. MAR. Will you come to me After she sleeps? BIA. Ay. If she sleeps, MAR. And if not? BIA. I could not leave her. MAR. Bianca, do you love me? BIA. Ay, Mario! MAR. Ah, but not as I love you! BIA. You do not mean that, Mario; you know How much I love you. But I could not be happy Thinking of her awake in the darkness, weeping, And all alone. MAR. Oh, my sweet love. BIA. It may be She will sleep. MAR. I shall be waiting for you. [They embrace.] [Exit Mario. Bianca goes to Beatrice and sits at the foot of the throne, putting her head against Beatrice's feet.] BIA. Sister. [After a

moment Beatrice slowly reaches down her hand, and Bianca takes it.] CURTAIN

ACT IV

Scene 1—Five years later. [A marketplace in Fiori, vegetables, fruits and flowers exposed for sale in little stalls and wagons, crowd of townspeople moving about, talking, laughing, buying. Group of children playing a game in a ring. Supper time.] CHILDREN. One, two, three, The dough is in the oven! One, two, three, The bread is on the board! One, two, three. The dough is in the oven! One, two, three, The bread is on the board! One, two, three, All follow me! EUGENIA. Good-even, Giovanitta. Those are beautiful Onions you have there. GIO. Ay, it has been a good year For onions. EUG. I am taking seven. GIO. Each year, You buy another onion! EUG. Faith, each year I have another mouth to thrust it in! Beautiful carrots, too, you have. GIO. Ay, carrots Are well enough. One cannot complain. 'Tis a good year For carrots. CLARA. 'Tis a good year for many things. Prices are low,—but not too low for profit. GIULIANA. And there are fewer taxes than there once were On things one cannot live without. ANNA. 'Tis a good Queen We have, it must be granted. GIO. Ay, and a wise one. GILDA. And pretty, too. GIULIANA. Ho, ho! When did you see her? GILDA. This morning, mother. I was at the edge of the wood With Beppo, when they rode by to the hunt, Talking together, and laughing. BEPPO. [Calling from across the stage.] And the horses With feet like this! [Arching his hands and feet to represent a horse stepping delicately.] GILDA. And glittering in the sunshine In a thousand places, mother! I wanted to tell you When we returned, but you had gone to the brook With the linen. They were so near us we could hear them Talking. BEPPO. [Coming up.] And hear the horses breathe! ANNA. What said they? GILDA. Well, one of them said—what was the name? BEPPO. Anselmo. GILDA. Oh, ay. She said, "Anselmo, am I getting thinner Do you think? If I be not thinner than I was at starting, I shall descend at once! I like not

this; It chatters my teeth." BEPPO. And then she said— GILDA. What said she? Oh, ay,—about the boat. BEPPO. She said, "Next time I shall go fishing instead of hunting. A boat Hath a more mannerly gait!" GILDA. There was one horse, mother, That was all white! There was not one hair upon him That was not white! GIULIANA. And who was riding that horse? BEPPO. A man. And riding well. GILDA. He was dressed in green, And had a yellow beard. And there was a lady With hair the color of Adelina's, bright Like fire. She was dressed in blue, and was most beautiful. BEPPO. And she was mounted on a dappled mare. GILDA. But, oh, it was the Queen that was more lovely— Than any of the rest! GIO. How did you know, now, It was the Queen? GILDA. Nay, but you could not help But know! She was not laughing like the rest,— Just smiling; and I would not have been afraid To toss a flower to her from the wood, If I had had a flower. BEPPO. You knew her, though, Because she was in scarlet. All the world knows She wears a scarlet mantle! GILDA. Nay, if that were all, It might have been the Pope! BEPPO. I would it had been. I never saw the Pope. GILDA. You never saw The Queen until this morning!—Mother, she rides Clothed like a man, almost! BEPPO. With sword at side! GILDA. And, oh, the sword had a jeweled—what is the name of it? BEPPO. Scabbard, of course! GILDA. A jeweled scabbard, mother! I wish I were a queen. BEPPO. Ho, you would make A proper queen, with that droll nose of yours! GILDA. I know a boy who likes my nose! BEPPO. Ho, ho! He must be a hunch-back! GIULIANA. You must not tease her, Beppo. GILDA. I wish I were queen. If I were a queen, You would not dare to say my nose is droll. BEPPO. It would be, all the same. GIO. You should be content With what you have, not cry to rise beyond it. It is a sin to covet. GIULIANA. Being a queen, My bird, is not all riding to the hunt Of a sunny morning. ANNA. Nay, 'tis riding back At times, of a rainy night, to such a burden Of cares as simple folk have little mind of. GILDA. I'd rather have a queen's cares than my own. BEPPO. Ho, ho! Your cares! What cares have you? GILDA. I have A brother that will be teasing me all times! 'Tis cares

enough for one, I tell you. ADELINA. [Across stage.] Beppo! Come help me fetch the milk! GILDA. Oh, Mister Beppo, Your sweetheart calls you! Run and fetch the milk! LEONORA. [From a house, coming out.] Come in to supper, children! RIGO. Oh, not just yet! ELENORA. Father's not home yet! LEONORA. You need not wait for him. LOUIS. May we come out again? LEONORA. [Joining other women.] Ay, for a time. Till it gets dark. RIGO. [To Louis.] 'Tis dark now, almost. LOUIS. Hush! She does not know it. GIULIANA. 'Tis dark now. LEONORA. Ay, I know. I let them play a little after dark Sometimes, when the weather's fine. I would not have them Afraid of shadows. They think I do not know Darkness from light. ELENORA. There's father now! RIGO. I see him! [Elenora, Louis and Rigo run off the stage and along the path.] LEONORA. He is late home today. I cannot think What may have held him. 'Twill be deep night already In the woods. CESCO. [Off stage, harshly.] Down! Down! Do you run back to your mother! See you not I am in haste?—Hang not upon me! EUG. La! He is in a temper! LEO. I never knew him So out of patience with them. GIU. He is hungry, maybe. LEO. He is often hungry, but I never knew him So out of patience. [The children come running back. To Elenora.] Why do you weep, my heart? LUI. Father is someone else tonight. ELENORA. [Weeping.] He pushed me! [Enter Cesco, with game on his shoulder, or a basket of mushrooms.] SEVERAL WOMEN. Good-even, Cesco. CES. [To Leonora.] Look you, Leonora, Have we a bed fit for a queen to lie in? LEO. Nay, faith! Not we! GIL. She can have my bed, mother. GIN. Ay, true. There is a bed in my house, Cesco. GIO. What will the queen do here? GIU. I would indeed She had let us know that she was coming! CES. The Queen Knew not herself. Nor is she coming of herself. They are bringing her,—on a litter of crossed boughs, GIL. She is not dead? CES. Nay. Wounded in the arm A little, and in a swoon. But the young King Of Lagoverde is no more! WOMEN. How so? CES. I tell you my two eyes have looked this day On a sad and useless thing!—A fine lad, young, And strong, and beautiful as a lad may be, And king of a fair country, thrust from horse By a foul blow, and

sprawled upon the ground,— Legs wide asunder, fist full of brown mud, Hair in his eyes,—most pitiful unkingly! Bring me a mug of wine, good wife! [Leonora goes out.] GIO. You, Gilda! There is a queen you would not be tonight, I'll warrant you,—the Queen of Lagoverde, With her two fatherless babes! EUG. Nay, now, good Cesco, What is this matter? CES. You'll know it quick enough. They will be bringing the queen here ere I have breath To tell you. They are coming by the road, I took the mountain-path, and ran. GIU. I must hasten To put fresh sheets on. [To Gilda.] Look you,—listen well If he should talk, and tell me afterwards. [Exit.] EUG. Here comes Horatio! The boats are in. [Some children rush down to the water-side.] A good day, husband? HOR. Ay, a heavy day. What think you of that?—A big one, eh?—Came in With a school of little fish,—too greedy that time! What happens here?—The air is full of breathing! [The men come up from the boats with children clinging to them. Beppo and Adelina return from another direction with the milk.] LEO. [Somewhat proudly.] Cesco will tell you. CES. In a word 'tis this: Today the Queen of Fiori, Returning from the hunt, is set upon By brigands; where at the King of Lagoverde, Being hunting in that quarter and hearing cries, Comes up to give his aid; in rendering which He gives his life as well, and at this moment, On other men's legs, goes heavily home to supper. The Queen of Fiori, wounded, and in a swoon Only less deep than death itself, comes this way. CROWD. Ay, here they come! [Enter Anselmo.] ANS. Make way, make way, good people— Fall back a little—leave a clear space—give air! [Enter Laura and Francesca, Luigi, several gentlemen, several attendants, four of them bearing a litter on which lies Beatrice, in a scarlet cloak, her hair flowing. Luigi is with Laura, who clings to him. If possible to arrange, several of the party may lead on their horses and lead them off across the stage. The litter is set down stage in full sight of the audience. Beppo comes down stage near it, as does also, from another direction, Gilda. Giuliana returns.] ANS. Who has a bed that we may lay her on? She cannot leave this place tonight. GIU. This way, sir. [The attendants pick up the litter and go

off, the crowd following.] GIL. [Stealing back.] Hist, Beppo! BEPPO. Ay? GIL. Heard you not something fall, When they picked her up again? BEPPO. Ay, that I did. GIL. What was it, think you? [They search.] Nay, 'twas nearer here. BEPPO. I have it.—'Tis her sword! GIL. The Queen's? Ay,—truly. How beautiful! BEPPO. [Slowly and with awe drawing it from its scabbard.] Look,—there is blood on it!

Scene 2 [A room in the palace at Lagoverde. Bianca and her two little daughters discovered at the rise of the curtain, she in a big chair, they at her feet.] BIA. And so the fairy laid a spell on her: Henceforth she should be ugly as a toad. But the good fairy, seeing this was done, And having in no wise power to alter this, Made all toads beautiful. LITTLE ROSE-RED. They are not beautiful Now, mother! LITTLE SNOW-WHITE. That was in another country!— What country, mother? [Bianca, lost in thought, does not answer.] LITTLE ROSE-RED. Where is father, mother?—I have not seen him in so many days! BIA. Father is gone away. LITTLE ROSE-RED. Will he come back? BIA. Nay. He will not come back. But we shall go Where he is. LITTLE SNOW-WHITE. Soon? BIA. God grant it may be soon! Now—-shall we play a game? [Enter Octavia.] OCT. Bianca. BIA. Ay. OCT. It is a folly to remain indoors Like this. You should be out in the sunshine. BIA. Nay. I have no business with the sunshine. OCT. Ah, My daughter, say not so!—The children, then,— They have much need of it, and they have need Of you, at the same time. Take them without. BIA. I do not wish to be in the sunshine. LITTLE SNOW-WHITE. Mother, Come out of doors! OCT. You see, now! BIA. Do you run out, dears, And play at ball. Mother will join you later. LITTLE ROSE-RED. Where is my ball? BIA. Nay, do you not remember? We put it in the ear of the stone griffin, Because he hears too much. LITTLE ROSE-RED. Ay, so we did! LITTLE SNOW-WHITE. Come on, Rose-Red! [Exeunt children.] OCT. It is a curious thing This friend of yours you rate so monstrous high Has not come nigh you in your sore affliction! BIA. I beg you not to speak of that again, Mother. 'Tis the third time today you have said that, Or hinted at it. And I answer always, "There is some

reason for it," as I should answer Though you cried daily till the day of doom, "It is a curious thing!" There is some reason, There is some good reason why she does not come. OCT. Oh, ay, I doubt it not! But there are reasons And reasons! BIA. And what am I to learn from that? OCT. 'Tis scarce by reason of too much love for you She leaves you friendless in your greatest need. BIA. I cannot say. 'Tis one thing or another. You have no words can turn me to believe She has forgotten me, or loves me less. 'Tis a big thing, to leave me thus alone,— And there is some big reason. OCT. Ay. Oh, ay. 'Tis possible she grieves for Mario's death No less than you, BIA. [Simply] Ay, it is possible. I mind she told me on my marriage-day She was as happy as I. OCT. 'Tis a curious thing, When he was here she came to see you often, But now that he is gone comes not at all. BIA. [Simply.] Ay, it is curious. [Catching Octavia's expression.] BIA. Nay, what evil thing Is in your mind, gives you that evil smile? OCT. Only a little thought. BIA. A little thought, I'll warrant you!—You'd have me to believe She loved my husband? OCT. Ay, I know she loved him. BIA. It is a lie! OCT. How dare you say I lie! BIA. Oh, do not be so proud! Let us speak truth At length, a little! We are so garnished up With courtesies, so over-sauced and seasoned, We cannot taste each other! Why do you tell me A thing like that?—-You have no love for me! OCT. [Weeping,] I love you too much—you are the only thing I do love! BIA. Nay, it is not love of me For my own self. Else would you do the thing Would make me happiest. You know how I have loved her, Since we were children. You could not be to me What she was; one forgets too many things. You could not know my thought. I loved you dearly; But you were hard to love; one never knew Whether you would be hot or cold to touch. Whilst she and I,—oh, we were two young trees So nearly of a height we had the same world Ever within our vision!—Yet all these years, Even from the time we first went to Fiori, You have been bearing me your little tales,— "She had done this and that, she was thus and so—", Seeking to stir and poison the clear water Of my deep love for her! And now this thing. Which is not true. But if it had been true, It would not be so out of all

reason cruel As that you should have told me of it now. Nay, do not weep. All day 'tis one of us Making the other weep. We are two strange, Unhappy women. Come, let us be at peace. [Pause. Bianca rises suddenly.] Mother, farewell a little while. I go now To her, seeing that she does not come to me. But not to question her, not to demand, "How comes it this? What can you say to that?" Only to sit beside her, as in the old days, And let her lay her quiet on my heart.

Scene 3 [The garden at Fiori, same as in Act I, Scene 1. Discovered seated on a stone bench in the sunshine, Beatrice, clad in a loose gown, looking very ill. Fidelio sings off stage.] FID. [Singing.] "Let the little birds sing, Let the little lambs play. Spring is here, and so 'tis spring,— But not in the old way. I recall a place Where a plum-tree grew,— There you lifted up your face And blossoms covered you. If the little birds sing, And the little lambs play, Spring is here, and so 'tis spring,— But not in the old way." BEA. It is a pretty song. There be some things That even the tortured heart's profoundest anguish Cannot bring down from their high place. Music Is one of them. [Enter Grazia carrying a bowl.] GRA. Now, will you drink this broth, Or will you not? I swear upon my shroud— And 'tis a solemn oath—I never nursed So vaporous a patient!—Come, my bird! BEA. [Taking the bowl, then setting it down.] Nay, Nurse, I cannot. GRA. Oh, alackaday! What shall I do with you? Come now, and drink me The pretty broth, my dear! BEA. I will drink it later. 'Tis too hot. GRA. Ay, and in a moment 'twill be Too cold! And you'll not drink it! I could cry! [Exit Grazia.] [Enter Fidelio.] BEA. Fidelio, as you love me, do you drink this, And quickly, man! FID. [With grief.] Oh, my dear mistress! BEA. Drink! FID. [Sadly, drinking.] I best would leave a little, else she'll know 'Twas never you. BEA. Ay, so you would. I' faith, It is a knave's trick, but I cannot touch it. Go now, Fidelio, ere she come again. [Exit Fidelio.] [Enter Bianca.] BIA. [Softly.] Rose-Red. [Beatrice looks up and listens, thinking it a dream.] BIA. Rose-Red, dear sister! BEA. [Bowing her head and weeping.] Oh, my heart! BIA. [Coming towards her.] Why do you weep? BEA. [Looking up startled and seeing her, jumping to her feet.]

Oh, no! Oh, God above! Go back! Go back! BIA. [Amazed, quietly.] Beatrice, are you mad? 'Tis I, Bianca. BEA. [More quietly.] Ay, I know 'tis you. And you must go away. BIA. [Breaking down.] You are mad, my dear! BEA. I would I were. For madmen have their moments Of light into the brain.—Hear me. Bianca, You must return at once to Lagoverde, And come to me no more, and think of me No more. BIA. Ay. I will go. But ere I go Tell me you do not love me, 'Tis apparent You do not. I but wish to hear the words. BEA. Nay, that I will not say. It would be well, To say it, and let it be. But I'll not say it, It is not true. BIA. You love me still? BEA. I love you More than all else on earth. But I have wronged you So hugely that I cannot think of it And stand here talking with you—I am ill—[She staggers.] You must pardon me—I have been very ill— BIA. Then it is true? BEA. [With a cry as of relief.] Ay, it is true! Who told you? BIA. My mother told me. I said it was not true. But if 'tis true—I pity you, Rose-Red, I pity him. I pity us all together. BEA. [Feverishly.] Ah, I can see it now!—the quiet road In the deep wood's gathering darkness, the reins loose On the horses' necks, that nodded, nodded, and we Speaking from time to time, and glad to think Of home,—and suddenly out of nowhere,—fury, And faces, and long swords, and a great noise! And even as I reached to draw my sword, The arm that held the scabbard set on fire, As if the sleeve were burning!—and my horse Backing into the trees, my hair caught, twisted, Torn out by the roots! Then from the road behind A second fury! And I turned, confused, Outraged with pain, and thrust,—and it was Mario! BIA. [Wildly.] What are you saying? What are you saying? What is this You are telling me? That it was you? Your hand—? Oh, God have mercy upon me! Let me go! BEA. [Pitifully, reaching out her arms towards her.] Snow-White! Snow-White!—farewell! BIA. [Without turning.] Oh, God have mercy! [Exit Bianca.] [Beatrice falls unconscious to the floor.] CURTAIN

ACT V

Scene 1 [A room in the palace at Fiori. Anselmo and Luigi.] LUIGI. Nay, is that true, Anselmo? ANS. Aye, 'tis true. But no one saw save me, I drew her sword Out of his heart and thrust it in its scabbard, Where she lay senseless. LUI. Oh, unhappy Queen! ANS. Ay, she does not forget. Has it not struck you She rides no more? Her black horse stands in stable, Eating his head off. It is two years now Since she has visited Lagoverde; and the Queen Of Lagoverde comes not nigh this place. LUI. There's not the reason that there was to come Before Octavia's death. ANS. Nay, 'tis not that. LUI. Think you that Beatrice told her? ANS. Ay, I doubt it not. LUI. 'Tis hard. They were close friends. ANS. And since that day her hand upon the scepter Trembles,—and Guido sees. She goes too much Among the people, nursing them. She loves them; Their griefs are hers, their hearts are hers, as well. But Guido has a following in this court That hangs upon his word, and he has taught them Her gentleness is weakness, and her love Faint-hearted womanish whims, till they are eager To pull her down, and see a man in place of her. LUI. Her throne is like a raft upon a sea, That shifts, and rights itself, and may go down At any moment. ANS. The more especially For all these drowning beggars that cling to it, Chattering for help. She will not strike them off. LUI. Unhappy Queen. And there's a storm approaching, If ever I smelled wind. ANS. I fear it Luigi. [Exeunt Anselmo and Luigi. Enter Guido and Francesco.] FRA. How do I know you love her still?—I know, The way you fall a-tapping with your fingers, Or plucking at your eye-brows, if her name Is spoken, or she move across the court. How do I know?—Oh, Guido, have I learned you So little, then, in all these bitter years? I know you very well. GUI. You know too much I'll have an end of this, I tell you! FRA. Ay. You've told me that before.—An end of what? What is this thing you'll put this mighty end to? 'Fore God I would I know. Could I but name it, I might have power to end it then, myself! GUI. I'll have an end of these soft words at twilight, And these bad mornings full of bile! I'll have an end Of all this spying on me! FRA. [Gently.] 'Tis not so. I do not spy upon you. But I see you Bigger than other men, and your least

gesture— A giant moving rocks.—Oh, Guido, tell me You do not love her! Even though I know You lie, I will believe you,—for I must! GUI. [Pause.] Nay, I am done with you. I will tell you nothing. Out of my way!—I have that on my mind Would crush your silly skull like the shell of an egg! Od's body, will you keep your ugly claws From scratching at my sleeve? [He thrusts her roughly aside and rushes out.] FRA. [Creeping away, sobbing.] Oh, God—oh, God— I would whatever it is, that were over. [Exit.] [Enter Fidelio, and crosses the stage, singing.] FID. [Singing.] "Rain comes down And hushes the town. And where is the voice that I heard crying? Snow settles Over the nettles. Where is the voice that I heard crying? Sand at last On the drifting mast. And where is the voice that I heard crying? Earth now On the busy brow. And where is the voice that I heard crying?" [Exit Fidelio.]

Scene 2

[The court-room in the palace at Fiori, extremely crowded with restless and expectant people. The crowd is arranged on both sides of the stage, in such a way that a broad avenue is left in the middle, leading from the footlights to the back of the stage and gradually narrowing to a point at Beatrice's throne. On the extreme right and left of the stage, along the back of the crowd, stands the guard, a large body of armed soldiers, at attention, in double row. On either side the throne stands an armed soldier. As the curtain rises the court is all standing and looking off stage in a certain direction. Enter the Queen, Beatrice, from that direction, walks in, looking straight ahead, goes to the throne and seats herself. The court sits. The clerk begins to read.]

CLERK. The first case to be heard is that of Lisa, A widow with two small children, who resides Near the Duke's wood, and has been caught in the act Of cutting trees there, and hauling them home to burn. BEA. Stand, Lisa. You are a widow, I am told. With two small children. LISA. Ay, your Majesty, Two little boys. BEA. I know another widow, Lisa, With two small children,—but hers are little girls. Have

you been cutting trees on the Duke's land? LISA. No, Majesty. I could not cut a tree. I have no axe. BEA. And are you strong enough To break a tree with your hands? LISA. No, Majesty. BEA. I see. What do you do, then? There must be Some reason for this plaint. LISA. I gather wood That's dead,—dried boughs, and underbrush that's been A long time on the ground, and drag it home. BEA. Have you a wood-pile? LISA. Nay. I gather enough Each day for the day's need. I have no time To gather more. BEA. And does the dry wood burn As well as other wood? LISA. Oh, better! BEA. I see. You would as lief, then, have this wood you gather, This dead wood, as a green tree freshly cut? LISA. Ay, I would liefer have it, Majesty. I need a fire quickly. I have no time To wait for wood to season. BEA. You may sit down, LISA. Is the Duke's agent here? AGENT. Ay, here. BEA. What is it the Duke's custom to have done With this dead wood on his estate? AGENT. He burns it, Your Majesty. BEA. You mean to say, I think, He pays a price to have it gathered and burned. AGENT. Ay, Majesty. BEA. Where is it burned? AGENT. In a clearing. BEA. And what is cooked upon it? AGENT. Nothing is cooked. The Duke is not a gypsy. [With irritation.] [Pause.] [Slight titter in court-room, instantly hushed into profound silence.] BEA. [Evenly.] If he were, He would be shrewder, and not be paying money For what this woman is glad to do for naught. Nothing is cooked, and nobody is warmed,— A most unthrifty fire! Do you bid the Duke, Until he show me sounder cause for plaint, Permit this woman to gather unmolested Dead wood in his forest, and bear it home.—Lisa, Take care you break no half-green boughs.—The next case? CLERK. Is that of Mario, a miller, accused Of stealing grain. A baker, by name Pietro, Brings this complaint against him, MESSENGER. [Rushing in and up to throne.] Majesty, Bianca of Lagoverde lies a-dying, And calls for you! BEA. [Rising.] She calls for me? MESSENGER. Ay, Majesty. [Beatrice stands very still a moment, then turns to the townspeople.] BEA. [Earnestly and rapidly,] You people, do you go now and live kindly Till I return. I may not stay to judge you; Wherefore I set you free. For I would rather A knave should go at large

than that a just man Be punished. If there be a knave among you, Let him live thoughtfully till I return. [She steps down from the throne, and is immediately seized by the arm on either side by the two guards who have been standing beside the throne.] BEA. Why, what is this, Enrico? [Looking up at the soldier on her right.] Nay, it is not Enrico! [Looking to other side.] Nor is it Pablo! How is this? [From each side of the stage one row of the double row of soldiers detaches itself, marches down around the front of the stage and up towards the throne, making an armed alley for the Queen to walk down, and entirely surrounding the crowd.] Nay, all new faces. So! Upon my word, And keep your fingers from me!—I see you there, Angelo! Do not turn your head aside! And you, Filippo!—Is the sick hand better I bound the bandage on?—Is't well enough To draw a sword against me?—Nay, I am sick. I, that have loved you as your mothers love you— And you do this to me! Lead me away. [The two guards lead out the Queen. Nobody else moves. The townspeople cower and stare. The two little pages that bore her train as she entered remain back of the throne, not knowing what to do. As she goes by them, her train dragging on the ground, the two ragged little boys of Lisa, the wood-gatherer, run out from the group of citizens, pick up the ends of her train, and go out, holding it up, one of them with his arm over his eyes.]

Scene 3 [A dungeon. Beatrice alone, sitting on a bench, her head bowed in her hands. Enter Guido] BEA. Guido, is't you! GUI. Ay, it is I, my Queen. You sent for me, am I mistake not? BEA. Ay. Guido, you will not keep me when I tell you Snow-White is dying and calls my name! GUI. I knew that. BEA. You knew that, and you hold me here. Oh, Heaven! What are you? GUI. I am a man. You should have thought Of that before. I could have been your friend If it had pleased you. Failing that, I am Your enemy. I am too aware of you, And have been ever, to hold me in at less. BEA. Guido. I beg of you upon my knees To let me go! GUI. And why should I do that? BEA. For pity's sake! GUI. I do not know the word. BEA. Then for the sake of my sworn hand and seal Upon a paper yielding fair to you This

sovereignty you prize. It is to me Little enough tonight. I give it gladly. GUI. You have no power to give what I have taken Already, and hold upon my hand, Rose-Red, BEA. Oh, do not call me that! Oh, Guido, Guido, I cannot suffer further! Let me go! If only for a moment, let me go! I will return,—I will but take her hand, And come away! I swear it! Let me go! GUI. On one condition only. BEA. Ay! 'Tis granted, Ere it is spoken! GUI. That upon returning You come to me, and give yourself to me, To lie in my arms lovingly. [She is stricken speechless.] You hear? To lie in my arms lovingly. BEA. Oh, God! GUI. It is my only word. BEA. Oh, God! Oh, God! GUI. 'Tis granted? BEA. Nay,—I cannot! I will die Instead. Oh, God, to think that she will lie there And call for me, and I will never come! GUI. Goodnight. [He goes to door.] BEA. [In a quiet voice.] Guido! It shall be as you say. GUI. [Rushing to her.] Ah, Beatrice! BEA. Nay, touch me not yet. I will return. [She laughs like a child.] Why,—'tis a simple matter! I wonder now that even for a moment I held myself so dear! When for her sake All things are little things!—This foolish body, This body is not I! There is no I, Saving the need I have to go to her!

Scene 4 [A room at Lagoverde. Bianca lying in bed, ill to death. The children clinging to the bed, their nurse trying to draw them away, Giulietta a maid, in the background. Possibly other attendants about.] LITTLE ROSE-RED. Tell us a story, mother! NURSE. Come away, now! LITTLE SNOW-WHITE. Tell us a story! BIA. Do you go away with nurse A little while. You will bring them back to me Later? NURSE. [Weeping.] Ay, madam. [She goes out with the children.] BIA. Later—not much later, I think.—Hear you no sound of horses yet, Giulietta, galloping this way? GIU. Nay, not yet. BIA. [To herself.] I will not go until she comes. I will not. Still,—if I should—Giulietta! GIU. [Coming quickly to the bed.] Ay, my mistress! BIA. She will come, I tell you! GIU. Ay, I doubt it not. BIA. Ay, she will come. But if she should come late, And I no longer be here to receive her, Show her all courtesy, I conjure you. She will be weary, and mightily distraught. Make her take wine,—and bring the children to her. And tell her, they are hers now. She is their

mother. [Giulietta starts to go back to the window.] And say to her—wait!—I have a message for her. Say to her this, Giulietta: The foot stumbles, The hand hath its own awkward way; the tongue Moves foolishly in the mouth; but in the heart The truth lies,—and all's well 'twixt her and me. Can you remember that? GIU. Ay, madam, I think so. If not the words, at least the gist of it. BIA. Forget it all, my good child, but forget not: All's well 'twixt her and me. GIU. Nay, that I have. BIA. I will sleep now a little. Do you leave me. But go not far. [She lies still for a moment, then starts up.] I hear the sound of hoof-beats! GIU. Nay, madam. BIA. Ay, I tell you! I can hear them! My face upon the pillow brings my ear Nearer the ground! She is coming! Open the door! [She kneels up in bed and holds out her arms towards the door, maintaining this position till Beatrice comes. Giulietta, weeping, opens the door, and stands in it, shaking her head sadly.] GIU. [Suddenly lifting her head and listening.] Nay, it is so! I hear it now myself! Ay, there's a horse upon the bridge! BIA. She's coming! Stand back! Stand out of the doorway! [Pause.] SERVANT. [Entering.] Majesty, The Queen is here. Ay, ay! Stand out of the doorway! [Pause.] GIU. She is here! She is in the court! She has leapt from horse! Madam, Oh, God be praised! This way! BIA. Sister! [Beatrice enters in her riding clothes, leaps to the bed, Bianca throws her arms about her neck, and dies.] BEA. [After a moment, looking down at her.] Snow-White! Oh, no! Oh, no! Snow-White! [She screams.] Ah-h! Help me! She is dying! [Attendants and nurses rush in, also the children.] LITTLE SNOW-WHITE. Mother, wake up! LITTLE ROSE-RED. Come out of doors! BEA. Take them away. Snow-White! [Leaning over the bed.] NURSE. Nay, it is over, Madam. BEA. Leave me. Leave me alone with her. [Exeunt all but Beatrice. She kneels beside the bed.]

Scene 5 [A room at Lagoverde, The next day. Beatrice alone.] BEA. In sooth, I do not feel the earth so firm Under my feet as yesterday it was. All that I loved are gone to a far land, And left me here alone, save for two children And twenty thousand enemies, and the thing Of horror that's in store for me. Almost I feel my feet

uprooted from the earth, There's such a tugging at me to be gone. Save for your children, [Looking off stage towards Bianca's room.] 'twould be simple enough To lay me down beside you in your bed, And call on Death, who is not yet out of hearing, To take me, too. [Enter Fidelio.] FID. Mistress I have news for you. Guido is dead! BEA. Is dead? FID. Ay, he is dead, Dead of a dagger i' the back,—and dead enough For twenty. Scarce were you gone an hour's time We came upon him cold. And in a pool Nearby, the Lady Francesca floating drowned, Who last was seen a-listening like a ghost At the door of the dungeon, 'Tis a marvelous thing! But that's not all! BEA. Why, what more can there be? FID. Mistress, in the night the people of Fiori Rose like a wind and swept the Duke's men down Like leaves! Your throne is empty,—and awaits you! [Enter Giulietta,] GIU. Madam. BEA. Ay, Giulietta. GIU. Madam, last night, Before you came, she bade me tell you something, And not forget. 'Tis this: That the foot stumbles, The hand doth awkward things, and the foolish tongue Says what it would not say,—but in the heart Truth lies,—and all is well 'twixt her and you. [She starts to go out, and turns back at the door.] She bade me above all things to forget not The last: that all is well 'twixt her and you. [Exit.] BEA. [Slowly and with great content.] She is not gone from me. Oh, there be places Farther away than Death! She is returned From her long silence, and rings out above me Like a silver bell!—Let us go back, Fidelio, And gather up the fallen stones, and build us Another tower.

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