

CHIARA AND SERAFINA

or

THE PIRATE

A semi-serious melodrama in two acts by Felice Romani.
1822

Translated into English by Paul Archer.
2012

CHIARA, soprano
SERAFINA, mezzosoprano
DON RAMIRO, son of the mayor of Minorca,
intended husband of Serafina, tenor
PICARO, former servant of Don Fernando, now a pirate, bass
LISETTA, daughter of Sancho and Agnese, soprano
AGNESE, caretaker in the castle of Belmonte, soprano
DON MESCHINO, wealthy man in the village of Belmonte,
and foolishly in love with Lisetta, no singing role
DON FERNANDO, guardian of Serafina,
false friend of Don Alvaro, wealthy gentleman from Menorca, tenor
DON ALVARO, captain of a naval vessel, back from being held captive
in Algiers, the father of Serafina and Chiara, no singing role
GENNARO, pirate chief, no singing role
SPALATRO, pirate captain
CHORUS and extras: pirates, fishermen and women, villagers, guards

The action takes place on the island of Majorca, in the old castle of Belmonte,
and in the country house of Don Fernando.

ACT ONE

*A seashore covered with Moorish ruins,
a rustic hut is located on the right
from where a path leads down to the harbour.*

*Scattered around are arches, broken columns,
and the remains of various monuments,
among them grow trees, wild flowers and weeds.*

*On the left is an ancient sarcophagus;
at the back rocks rise out of the sea,
and to one side, nearer to the shore, there is a steep cliff.*

It's daybreak.

Scene One

The shore is full of fishermen and women. They carry lobster pots and fishing nets, and are heading down to launch their boats. Everything is movement.

FISHERWOMEN

The dawn is already breaking across the sky,
the waves are calm and the winds blow softly;
the nets and pots are ready to throw into the sea.

FISHERMEN

What a great day to be fishing ...
To be fishing out on the sea!

WOMEN

The calm sea spread all around
with every sort of fish abounds
for the wedding feast of the dear
and lovely Serafina.

MEN

What a great day to be fishing ...
What great fishing there will be!

Agnese enters.

AGNESE

Ah! If this was going on in the land
of that good man, my husband,
he would be frankly amazed
how seriously you are treating this.

CHORUS

Why on earth is that, Agnese?

AGNESE

I'd tell you, but ...

She puts her her finger to her lips, don't tell anyone.

CHORUS

As if we didn't know already.

AGNESE

My dearest Sancho told me:
the guardian of Serafina
has seized upon the chance
to bring ruin to her father
by wanting to marry her
and eat up her inheritance ...

CHORUS

That's just a rumour: he's promised
her to the son of the mayor.

*Agnese wants to continue, but hears
Lisetta and Meschino shouting from off stage.*

MESCHINO

For pity's sake! Show some heart!

LISETTA

You jackass! Baboon!

AGNESE

Here's Lisetta in one of her moods ...

CHORUS

With that ox Meschino.

ALL

Well, let's wait a moment
so we can laugh at them.

Scene Two

*Lisetta enters, followed by Meschino.
He is dressed as a fisherman in a ridiculous fashion,
he carries a huge lobsterpot under one arm, under the other a large basket.*

MESCHINO

This pot and basket that I carry
is because she wants to change me,
but she doesn't even care for me!
She calls me a stupid donkey!
Humbly, Agnese, I implore you.
It's shameful what she makes me do.

LISETTA

Oh! look at this thing of beauty
that follows me everywhere I go!
All over town and across the bay
everyone's laughing at me I know.
Dearest mother, I implore you
to free me from this insufferable fool.

AGNES

Lisetta, show some more respect ...

MESCHINO

Yes, to your future husband.

LISETTA
(interrupting)
Oh! there's still time.

MESCHINO
But sooner or later...

LISETTA
Much later, I can promise you that.

MESCHINO
Oh, no! It'll be soon, oh my Lisetta.

LISETTA
Not so fast. Lisetta says later.

MESCHINO
Don't waste your chance,
I'm in the prime of my life.

LISETTA
No, I don't want you.
I'll tell you straight:
an old man like you
will only irritate.
Turn into a young man
well then ... I might.

MESCHINO
Ah! You're wrong, my little Venus,
look more closely;
I am alive and keen as
mustard, I'm hot, on fire ...
All over the island
there's no-one to match me.

CHORUS
Hah! Hah! What a laugh!

AGNES
Don't push him ...

MESCHINO
Silence, the lot of you!
I've had enough of your insolence!
Lisetta, marry me please,
or I'll die. I'm on my knees.

*During this scene the sky has become overcast, a storm is brewing.
A clap of thunder interrupts them.*

MESCHINO

Jesus! What was that?

LISETTA

Looks like a storm's on its way.

AGNESE and CHORUS

The sea is wild and frenzied, a gale is blowing hard.

Now there is panic along the shoreline. Everyone running here and there.

ALL TOGETHER

Back to the shore, row to the beach,
gather in the nets, tie up the boats;
a big storm
is coming in.

A great storm sweeps in.

Listen to that thunder! Feel that wind!
Hail is falling and rain is lashing down,
run for shelter or we're going to drown.

Exeunt.

Scene Three

*The storm builds, the ships out at sea are in danger.
One of them passes near the shore, tossed by the waves.
It is driven onto the rocks and sinks.*

Gradually the storm subsides.

*Don Alvaro appears over the cliff and with him Chiara:
their clothes are wet and torn and show all the signs of having been through a
shipwreck. Once on top of the cliff, they kneel down and hold their hands in prayer.*

Chiara gets to her feet.

CHIARA

Thank you o gracious heaven! We are saved,
saved by your mercy.

ALVARO

Help me up, daughter ...

I can't move so well
and I'm frozen to the bone.

They stagger down slowly.

CHIARA

Bear it a little further.
Once we're on solid ground, that's not so bad,
we two castaways will be found and saved.

*They enter the main stage.
Alvaro sits down, helped by Chiara.*

ALVARO

Oh! God! I've lost those documents
that prove my innocence,
without them I'm still under a death sentence.

CHIARA

Don't give up. Our luck will change.

They get to their feet again.

CHIARA

(tenderly)

Think of these shores
as where you will be saved
and where you will deliver
me to a better future.
Meanwhile, I'll go on my own
to search out
my long-lost sister,
and bring her to you.

ALVARO

O Chiara! It won't be easy.

CHIARA

It will be! Why shouldn't it?
I don't care about the danger.
I don't fear hard work;
I'll be anonymous, a beggar,
I won't come to any harm.
Rest here safely
and trust your Chiara.
If the heavens guide me,
I will return.

ALVARO

Where are we actually? There's no-one here.

There's not a house in sight.

(Some fishermen come towards them)

CHIARA

Be brave, father...

I see some people approaching:

I can find out where we are.

Scene Four

Meschino can be heard off stage.

MESCHINO

Hurry up you idiots ... Hey, Agnese!

*He enters the stage and comes across Chiara and Alvaro.
He gives out a loud scream.*

MESCHINO

Have mercy on me! Help!

Agnese runs on, followed by Lisetta and some fishermen.

AGNES

What's up now?

LISETTA

What's happening?

MESCHINO

Get back, get back:
we'll all be killed.

CHIARA

Wait, don't be scared of us:
We're two poor wretches
shipwrecked on these shores.

MESCHINO

(aside)

Oh no! ... they're pirates.

LISETTA

Don't be so mean! They need our help!

CHIARA

We beg you to give us shelter for the night.

LISETTA
We'd be glad to ...
That's right, isn't it mother?

MESCHINO
We must find out first who they are.

LISETTA
Why? It's none of your business.

CHIARA
We are from Cadiz,
sailors by profession, father and... son ...

ALVARO
We have lost everything at sea.

MESCHINO
I am hardly reassured.

LISETTA
You fool!

MESCHINO
You watch your mouth.
You've fallen for the pretty sailorboy, is that it, eh?

LISETTA
We have never denied
hospitality to travelers.

ALVARO
I'm much obliged to you.

MESCHINO
But ..

AGNES
Shut up you!
Now, come to Belmonte.

ALVARO
(aside)
Belmonte!

CHIARA
(aside)
Shush!

LISETTA

You've arrived here
on a day of celebration: the richest
man in Mallorca, Don Fernando,
is marrying his ward, and we are bringing
fish for the party at his castle
two miles from here.

ALVARO

(aside)
What's that I hear?

CHIARA

(aside)
Don't show them who you are.

ALVARO

(aside)
I can't help it. My heart's beating so much it'll give me away.

CHIARA

I'd like to go with you, if you'll allow.
You, father, you may wish to rest here for a while.

AGNESE

Come with me to Belmonte,
O good old man, come on.

LISETTA

Let's go, let's go.

MESCHINO

(aside)
What fine friends we've made today!

Exeunt.

Scene Five

*Some pirates peer out warily from the rocks,
seeing the deserted shore they beckon to their shipmates
who carry their baggage onto the stage,
and finally comes Picaro with a small chest under his arm.*

CHORUS

Curse the storm
that landed us here!
If our hide-out
has been found out
it's for sure we're

in great danger ...
Hush ... Let's see ...
Let's take a look here ...

*They approach the sarcophagus and take away the stone
that covers the entry to their hide-out.*

CHORUS

Hooray! Hurrah ... no-one's been here.
it's just the same as when we left,
not even the devil could dream
what can be found underground,
under such an ancient thing ...
Cheerfully, let's go, happily let's climb in ...
Not even the devil himself will find us.

They climb down underground, carrying their baggage.

PICARO

I have to say there's not much profit
in the profession of a pirate:
always tossed about by waves at sea,
with the risk of fire and catastrophe
and terrible storms and people shooting
and all for what ... you know what I mean ...
I'm thinking ... trying to imagine
a harmless occupation.
Take a loan shark, for example,
he borrows one, and takes a million,
he changes an ounce into a bushel,
and turns copper into silver bullion ...
Or the gambling man's graceful leisure
with just two fingers he finds treasure;
or those fishermen who pick up shells
from riverbeds and find double pearls ...
And the tailors and the shoemakers,
they may dress in the regalia of pirates
but none of them would ever be seen
standing next to one... you know what I mean.
Oh! To get tons of gold is my ambition
in a harmless occupation.
(cheerfully)
Yes, it's true that in this world,
that is so wide and so round
the great art of the most learned
is never having to work and earn it,
to know how to skin the gullible
and not to make them squeal.
A gentleman in conclusion ...
a gentleman is ... one who seems one.

And the moral of the tale
is to keep safe this little chest
that I found on the beach.
What the devil's in it? It seems very light.
Wait! Some people are coming ...
I'd better get out of here.

He retreats to the side of the stage.

Scene Six

Don Fernando enters.

FERNANDO

(aside)

Who's this here?
Some stranger.

PICARO

(aside)

Oh, no! ... It's him ...

FERNANDO

(aside)

I've seen him somewhere ...
If I'm not mistaken: it's that pesky little ruffian ...

PICARO

(aside)

He's recognised me.

FERNANDO

Picaro!

PICARO

What! Who's that? Why, it's Don Fernando!

FERNANDO

What are you doing here!

PICARO

I've been thrown up by a storm at sea,
shipwrecked and helpless onto my home shore.
After fifteen years of danger and difficulty
I've come back, as poor as I was before.

FERNANDO

What've you been doing all this time?

PICARO

I've been a sailor.

Ah! But I've never, my good master,
never forgotten you!

FERNANDO

(aside)

He could serve my purpose.

(to Picaro)

If you want to earn some cash,

I could make you a rich man.

PICARO

A rich man! That would be heaven!

FERNANDO

Now shut up and listen.

You know what happened in Barbary,

Don Alvaro being captured with Chiara,

his eldest daughter, and our king in his anger,

sentenced him to death

or end his days in exile.

PICARO

I heard that you

set a thousand dogs onto him

and caused his downfall.

FERNANDO

I took on the role of guardian to Serafina.

PICARO

The younger daughter!

FERNANDO

Yeah. She's grown up to be

beautiful, a nice piece ...

PICARO

And rich too.

She's a good catch for you!

FERNANDO

She is and to pull her in, I need your help.

Otherwise she'll marry today the son

of the mayor; I'm keeping my intentions secret,

but I have the power to prevent the marriage.

PICARO

This all sounds very serious ...

How can I be of assistance?

FERNANDO
Spread the word around that
Don Alvaro is alive ...

PICARO
Got it. You want dad
resurrected from the dead.

FERNANDO
And you will be him.

PICARO
Well! That would be some comeback.
But I ...

FERNANDO
I'll give you a thousand pieces of gold.

PICARO
A thousand pieces of gold! ... Not bad!

FERNANDO
You've decided then ...

PICARO
I'm your man.

FERNANDO
Sure?

PICARO
Promise.

FERNANDO
Then come with me. I'll give you your instructions.
I trust you'll follow them to the letter.

PICARO
One thousand pieces of gold is a good start, in fact it couldn't be better ...

Exeunt.

Scene Seven

*The scene shifts to the gardens of Don Fernando's country house.
Hedges surround a garden with a summerhouse.
Downstage a gate leads to the countryside.*

Ramiro and Serafina enter.

SERAFINA

How sweetly the soft and gentle breeze
wafts its way from flower to flower!
Darling! it seems
like a sigh of love.

RAMIRO

How shines so calm and crystal clear
the splendor of the sky above!
Darling! it seems
like the smile of love.

RAMIRO and SERAFINA

And so our sweetest dreams and hopes
are full of love and apprehension
as we await that moment,
when we will be as one.

SERAFINA

Forever with you! ... Oh, I can't wait!

RAMIRO

Forever with me! ... We mustn't wait!

SERAFINA and RAMIRO

You're my hero, all pain and woe
will be banished from tomorrow
and our lives will henceforth seem
to be burnished gold in a glowing dream.

Scene Eight

*Don Fernando and his followers enter.
Fernando is agitated...*

FERNANDO

I can't believe what's happened! ...

SERAFINA

What is it, sir?

FERNANDO

Ah, Serafina!
A surprise ... a very pleasant surprise ...
the gods have heaped happiness on you today.

SERAFINA

A surprise? What is it? Tell me.

FERNANDO

You are no longer an orphan.

RAMIRO

What?!

SERAFINA

My father! You mean, he's alive? ...

FERNANDO

And you will shortly see him.

SERAFINA

Oh, this is amazing! Can it be true?

FERNANDO

He was given his freedom at last
by the barbarians in Algiers.

SERAFINA

Oh, thanks be to god.

FERNANDO

He arrived in Majorca this morning.

SERAFINA

I must go to him now, straightaway.

RAMIRO

I would like to meet him too. Let's go!

FERNANDO

(calling)

Come out now, my friend.

*Picaro enters dressed as a sea captain.
He holds out his arms to Serafina...*

PICARO

O my daughter!

SERAFINA

O my father!

They embrace.

PICARO

O I'm too happy for words!

SERAFINA

So am I!

FERNANDO
(aside)
Bravo the rascal!

PICARO
(aside)
Mmm, she is rather nice ...!

RAMIRO
Kind sir, grant that I too may embrace you.

FERNANDO
(to Picaro)
My friend, this is the young man
who I've arranged to be husband
to your daughter.

Ramiro embraces Picaro.

PICARO
My new son embraces me!

FERNANDO
(aside)
It's a miracle.

Scene Nine

*We hear guitar music starting to play. Chiara appears
at the gate at the end of the garden.*

PICARO
Ah music! What better than a tune
to bless our good fortune.

FERNANDO
It's a sailor, over there by the gate.

He points to Chiara.

RAMIRO
Begging for us to help him.

SERAFINA
Come in, please, come in.

*Chiara enters playing the guitar.
She comes close to them and stops.*

She takes a note from her pocket and hands it to Ramiro.

RAMIRO

(reading)

"Kind soul, show your compassion
to this poor orphan boy who has escaped from prison
in Algiers and lacks the powers of speech."

SERAFINA

Now I have my father back again,
I'll make sure
this orphan boy doesn't beg in vain.

RAMIRO

Well said, Serafina!

CHIARA

(aside, gleefully)

Oh, yes!

SERAFINA

I will go around on your behalf,
poor thing, and collect the money for you myself.

Everyone gets out their moneybags and gives money to Serafina.

PICARO

(to Serafina)

Well done, my dear child!
I admire your warm heart.

CHIARA

(aside)

Who's this man talking to her
like her father?

SERAFINA

(to Chiara)

Here, take this,
and be comforted.
I wish you happiness.

*Chiara kisses the hand of Serafina, starts to go out
but comes back, and kissing her hand again
makes gestures expressive of sorrow.*

SERAFINA

Are you crying? You don't want to go?
Have you nowhere to go?

Chiara gestures 'no'.

SERAFINA

Oh! Father!

What if he could stay with us.

FERNANDO

(softly to Picaro)

He's a mute, but if he stays with them: we could turn this to our advantage.

PICARO

I shall grant your wish, my daughter.

Chiara expresses her pleasure with gestures.

CHIARA

(aside)

Now, god willing, to my purpose.

FERNANDO

(to Chiara)

Come with me now to the castle.

PICARO

(to Ramiro)

My dear son,

you must forgive me for being tired by all the excitement.

We'll meet again soon.

RAMIRO

Goodbye, sir.

PICARO

(to Serafina)

May I have a word, my dear, with you alone.

Chiara takes the chance to approach Ramiro.

CHIARA

(whispers)

Watch out. You've been tricked. I'll tell you more later.

RAMIRO

(surprised)

Good God! What?!

CHIARA

(whispers)

Now go and don't say a word.

*Ramiro leaves by the gate.
Fernando and Chiara exit in another direction.*

Scene Ten

Picaro and Serafina.

PICARO
So now it's just us.

SERAFINA
And so ...

PICARO
Give me a hug, my daughter,
for I have to say farewell to you.

SERAFINA
Heavens! What do you mean?

PICARO
I have to leave now.
I can't stay longer,
Oh my daughter,
there is still a price
on my head.
If I stay a moment
longer, I could be killed.

SERAFINA
O father, don't worry,
my fiance will help you,
he can tell his father, the Mayor,
about the danger you're in ...
he has a heart of gold
and he'd come to your rescue.

PICARO
No! There's no chance of that!
He'd have to do his duty.

SERAFINA
Ah, I see, yes you're right. So what can you do?

PICARO
I have to leave you ... to escape from here ...

SERAFINA
To leave! ...

PICARO
Yes! I must be gone.

SERAFINA
I couldn't face it...

PICARO
(aside)
The trap is sprung.

SERAFINA
To lose you again!

PICARO
(cheerful and urbane)
Well! It won't be as bad as that ...

Serafina hugs him.

SERAFINA
No it won't: wherever you go
(with great feeling)
I will follow you.

PICARO
Thank you! ...

He starts to kiss her.

PICARO
(aside)
I'm forgetting I'm supposed to be her father.

Serafina moves away.

SERAFINA
Ah! forgive me, my dearest,
if I leave you for a while ...
I feel, oh God! that nature
demands this of a daughter.
But constant and loyal
I'll save myself for you.

Picaro watches her.

PICARO
What a tempting morsel saving herself for me,
turning her back on everyone-else!
I'm a pirate, so let's act like one!

I'm not going to play the sucker by god.
If you want me to be a scoundrel,
Don Fernando, I'm going to make the most of it.

Picaro moves towards Serafina.

PICARO

Give us a hug
my lovely ... daughter ...
your love is so tender
and so comforting ...
We shall go and beg
the king for my pardon.

SERAFINA

And I'll add all my tears
to your humble pleas:
if it's true that God yields
to the weeping of the wretched,
then his majesty
must pardon you.

PICARO and SERAFINA

And so we will return
relieved and happy
joyful and smiling
for the wedding ceremony...

SERAFINA

(aside)
O love that arms me
with such bravery,
keep in my heart
my hope and fidelity.

PICARO

(aside)
If I can collect
such a precious gem
a more happy pirate,
by god, there's never been.

Exeunt.

Scene Eleven

Chiara enters on her own.

CHIARA

She's never left alone for a second,

so how can I see her? ... Ah! Fortune
that has guided me within these walls,
oh! when the big moment comes
do not abandon me ... let me reveal their deception.
Here comes someone. I'll hide and watch them ...

She retires to the sidelines.

Fernando and Picaro come in from opposite sides.

FERNANDO

(to Picaro)

Well?

PICARO

(laughing)

She's onboard.

My obedient daughter

is willing to leave with me.

FERNANDO

Perfect.

The carriage is ready, and a faithful servant
will guide you to Belmonte Castle.

There you can rest over night, and the next day
board the ship I've arranged for you ...

Go to Cadiz and wait for me there.

CHIARA

(aside)

What treachery!

FERNANDO

In these papers here you'll find

instructions of what to do

in the case of danger,

where to find a safe hiding place.

PICARO

Good ... now, have you forgotten
the most important thing?

FERNANDO

Here's your bag of gold.

Picaro grabs it.

PICARO

Marvellous! Now let's get out of here,
before that Don Ramiro catches us together.

Exeunt.

CHIARA

He's trapped her ... Oh! What a ghastly conspiracy!

She exits through the gate.

Scene Twelve

The great hall in Belmonte Castle.

To one side there is a large square pedestal surmounted by a statue of a victorious warrior with a defeated African at his foot.

The two side doors are shut; straight ahead the main door is half-open. The scene is dark.

We hear a noise coming from underground.

A trapdoor in the pedestal opens and Spalatro cautiously emerges, followed by five or six pirates with lanterns.

SPALATRO

Softly, softly ... easy does it ...
Here you carry this lantern.
It's good to know we can get into
the castle through its cisterna ...
If the castle is deserted,
good for us, it will serve us well.

ALL

Let's check out each side,
spread out.

They explore the room.

Scene Thirteen

Meschino can be heard off-stage.

MESCHINO

Where are you?! Lisetta!

SPALATRO

People's coming.

They retreat to the back of the room, hide themselves out of sight.

Meschino enters slowly, carrying a lighted candelabra .

MESCHINO

Hey, Lisetta! I say ... ah! ah! The foxy minx
has led me a right old dance,
upstairs, downstairs, and still can't be found.
Even in the room for the wedding party!
Ugh! What a terrible place!
Ugh! The walls all smoky and old!

SPALATRO

(aside)

Damn it!

MESCHINO

Eh! What was that? My old ears. I bet Lisetta
is laughing at me from some nook and cranny
waiting to catch me when I'm fri fri ... frightened!
Well, if the little rascal's here, she'll hear me singing.

He puts down the candlebra and sings fearfully.

MESCHINO

(sings)

My grandmama said to me
there's a goblin who comes out
from the end of the bed at night
and is forever up to trickery.
La ra - la ra -
I'm telling you what is true.
The goblin, O Lisa dear,
is in your eyes and this heart of mine.
It starts a fire, a tingle up the spine,
we'll never understand it I fear.
La ra - la ra -
The goblin is a beautiful woman...

Spalatro and the pirates make a move:

Meschino stops in mid-flow.

MESCHINO

This time I'm not mistaken.

PIRATES

Get him.

They snuff out Meschino's candlebra.

MESCHINO

The light's gone out.
Ow!

They grab hold of him. He collapses to his knees, presses his face to the floor.

PIRATES
Shut up or you're a dead man.

*Taking advantage of his terror,
they make a quick exit.*

MESCHINO
Ow! Help me! ... Someone help me!

Scene Fourteen

*Once the pirates have gone, we hear the continuing shouts of Meschino
– and then the answering calls of Agnese, Lisetta, Alvaro and villagers.*

ALL
Who's that? Who's there? ...

They enter with torches.

ALL
Ah, it's Don Meschino!
We've rescued the silly ass.

MESCHINO
Have mercy on me ... good Turkish sirs ...

ALL
Turks! You think we're Turks! ...
(laughing loudly)
Hah! hah! hah!

MESCHINO
Yes, my lords, yes, my lords,
I saw them, I touched them:
all twenty of them, all black
and big and big ...
But I stood up, fought them ...
they showed me some respect.
(laughter)
You laugh at me! ... you rotters.
Well, I have better things to do.
My Lisetta, believe me,
don't stay here on your own!
There are Turks, pirates

out to kidnap you,
and I won't always be there,
poor thing, to come to your defence.
If they take you off to Turkey
I won't be able to marry you.

ALL
You fool! You dunderhead! Be off with you ...
Your fear has blinded your old eyes.

Meschino exits.

Scene Fifteen

Continuing... with Agnese, Lisetta, Alvaro, villagers.

AGNESE
That's enough. We shouldn't mock
his foolishness anymore ...

LISETTA
Turks, pirates,
his mind's been full of them ever since he first
heard the story about Don Alvaro.

ALVARO
About Don Alvaro!

LISETTA
Yes, he's famous throughout the island.
He was the one to free Belmonte
from the Barbary pirates: this statue
of him, it was put up in his honour.

She points to the statue.

ALVARO
(aside)
Oh! what I once was!
Oh! what memories I have!

LISETTA
We celebrate his memory every year.
But you seem misty-eyed ... did you
know the great man?

ALVARO
I was ...
very close to him.

AGNESE

In that case, you'll be glad to hear
a song written in his honour. Sing it for us, Lisetta.

LISETTA

I'd be delighted to, if you'd like to hear it.

ALVARO

O it will touch my heart! I cannot tell you how much.

All gather around Lisetta.

LISETTA

The castle of Belmonte
was defenceless to attack.
One fine day pirates came
and the castle they did sack ...
But this cruel and evil wrong
would be punished ere long ...
by Don Alvaro, the brave,
the inhabitants would be saved.

CHORUS

By Don Alvaro, the brave,
the inhabitants would be saved.

LISETTA

Under cover of dark night
with a group of friendly allies
he scaled the castle walls,
and massacred the enemies ...
The whole island honors
him as our brave defender;
and Belmonte is enraptured
by its noble benefactor.

CHORUS

And Belmonte is enraptured
by its noble benefactor.

*Alvaro shows himself to be deeply moved by the song.
Just before the third verse begins, they hear knocking at the main door.
All turn towards the door...*

AGNESE

The pirates were defeated.

ALVARO

And so perhaps King Carlos

at last returns from Palma.

LIVETTA

Yes and I'll scold him
for giving so little thought to us.

Meschino enters through the main door.

MESCHINO

Agnese ... a carriage has been sent
with a document.

AGNESE and LIVETTA

You silly ass!

MESCHINO

Come and look.

The Chorus returns.

CHORUS

(aside)

You silly ass!

(aloud)

It's a stranger
with a letter
from Palma.

Scene Sixteen

Picaro enters with a letter. Serafina follows, her face covered by a long veil.

PICARO

(aside)

There's so many people!

SERAFINA

(aside)

I'm nervous.

CHORUS

Come forward and let us see: give the letter to Agnese.

PICARO

Don Fernando has sent me.

ALVARO

(aside)

Don Fernando!

ALL

What can it be?

Agnese takes the letter. Meschino and Chiara read over her shoulder.

From time to time they glance up at Picaro and Serafina.

Don Alvaro is on the sidelines watching.

All eyes are on the strangers:

Picaro and Serafina whisper to each other.

PICARO and SERAFINA

(whispering)

This is what I feared! All the village are here.

ALVARO

(aside)

Why are these two so mysterious,
why should she hide her face?

MESCHINO, LISETTA and CHIARA

(reading and exclaiming)

A secret! ... most urgent ...

A problem ... and a gentleman ...

PICARO and SERAFINA

(whispering)

I'm anxious
they'll be suspicious.

ALVARO

I feel such words pressing on my chest
that I cannot express.

MESCHINO, AGNESE and LISETTA

(reading)

Ah! It says we must be cautious
and not tell a soul.

Agnese, bowing her head, goes towards Picaro and Serafina.

AGNESE

My lord and master, Don Fernando ...

Meschino pulls her back.

MESCHINO

Let me speak to our guests ... I'm better at this ...

(to Picaro and Serafina)

This letter obliges us
to stand ready ... to honour your every wish ...
um, er, um, to accommodate you ...

and wait on you ... hand and foot ...
and provide it all 'on the house'
without looking for any thanks.
In short, Agnese, without more ado
get their rooms ready and prepare them some food.

CHORUS
(laughing)
Bravo! Bravo!

MESCHINO
(clapping)
Not bad, eh?

PICARO
I am most grateful for your enthusiasm.

LISSETTA
(to Serafina)
Madam, your veil, it must be getting in your way,
allow me ...

SERAFINA
It doesn't worry me at all..

Meschino steps in. He tries to take off her veil.

MESCHINO
But still, allow me, madam ...

PICARO
No. .. that's really not necessary.
(aside)
Damn him!

Picaro pushes him aside.

MESCHINO
(to Lisetta)
She must be ugly as sin
if he wants her face hidden.

ALVARO
(mutters)
Show them some respect!

SERAFINA
(softly to Picaro)
I'm scared!

PICARO

(softly)

For pity's sake, don't let them see who you are.

(to all)

Good Agnese ... my daughter
isn't feeling so well, she's rather tired.

MESCHINO

She must be.

PICARO

Get rid of everyone, be discreet
and rustle us up something to eat.

MESCHINO

Meaning?

CHORUS

We all know what he means.

MESCHINO

We have to say our goodbyes and leave.

ALL

Good night everyone, have a good sleep.

MESCHINO

Agnese, we must stay on the alert.

MESCHINO, ALVARO, LISETTA and AGNESE

What they want to keep out of sight
will give us much to think about all night.

PICARO and SERAFINA

We haven't been found out, we can begin to breathe again.

ALL

Tomorrow we will come back
to pay our respects.

PICARO and SERAFINA

Thank you, thank you: tomorrow then.

(to each other)

They don't give up easily!

ALL

Good night, sleep well.

*Meschino, Lisetta and the villagers leave
by the main door. Agnese accompanies Serafina*

*and Picaro to the right – she gives Picaro
a lantern and they leave by the main door.
Alvaro slowly leaves down to the left.*

It is dark night.

Scene Seventeen

Chiara rushes in.

CHIARA

Here at last ... my father!
And safe and sound.
And now, oh heaven, to get going
to confound the traitor,
save the sister dressed as a nun
and unveil the father.

She rushes out the way Alvaro went.

Scene Eighteen

Picaro sneaks in carrying a lantern.

PICARO

At last the room's clear.
I'm out of danger.
So let's investigate,
look for that secret hiding place,
Don Fernando's instructions
will tell me what to do.
(reading)
"In case of danger ... in the great hall ...
there's a statue... and in its pedestal
a trap-door ... leading to an old
cisterna known only to me."
This must be the statue ...
The pedestal

*He goes behind the statue, and finds the trapdoor.
Meanwhile Chiara enters with Don Alvaro.*

CHIARA

Come with me. You'll see how deep the treachery goes.

ALVARO

O Chiara. I'm not sure about this.

CHIARA

Stay calm.
No-one believes you are alive.

Picaro comes back, and stops, surprised.

PICARO
(aside)
What the ...?

ALVARO
And Don Ramiro?

CHIARA
He only knows of my name.

PICARO
(aside)
What do I do now?

ALVARO
Then I can breathe easily.

CHIARA
And soon he'll be here.

CHIARA and ALVARO
At last a ray of joy
the promise of blue sky:
filling (your / my) daughters'
hearts with happiness.

PICARO
I have to be brave
or I'm done for ...
Let's go for it.

*He advances resolutely.
They exclaim, alarmed at seeing him.*

CHIARA and ALVARO
Ah!

PICARO
Quiet ... I know everything.

CHIARA
You dirty scoundrel!

PICARO
(humbly)

I know, but don't be scared of me ...
I was bribed, and it's true, I hurt you;
and I'm very sorry about that.

CHIARA
You, sorry!

ALVARO
You're a rogue, an impostor!

PICARO
Listen to me, sir;
if you can find it in your heart to forgive me
I will tell you a secret that's been hidden from you:
your sentence of death
has been revoked.

CHIARA and ALVARO
What did you say?
What! When?

PICARO
I know precisely where the decree is being held.

CHIARA
Who's got it?

PICARO
Don Fernando ...
But the old rascal keeps it as a secret.

CHIARA and ALVARO
What do we have to do to get hold of it?

PICARO
You can threaten and shout all you want
but it's only being cunning will get you anywhere.
(conspiratorially)
That Don Ramiro ...
(to Alvaro)
you seek him out
and get him to come to me alone ...
If we're going to succeed in this,
we're going to have to use all the tricks in the book ...
(to Chiara)
You, lady, I'll take you
to Serafina in secret.

CHIARA and ALVARO
If you fail us, if you betray us,

woe betide you, you should worry,
you'll be done for, you'll be dead,
we'll discover your treachery.

(aside)

Trusting him is not so bad:
after all, he can't go anywhere.

PICARO

Do not fear that I'll deceive you:
I hate myself for what I've done:
I could kill that Don Fernando
that made me spin the lies I've spun ...

(aside)

I can always go back
to being a pirate.

Alvaro hurries out the main door.

Scene Nineteen

Picaro and Chiara.

PICARO

Come with me, over here ...

*As Chiara passes the door to a room on the left,
Picaro gives her a shove and pushes her inside.*

PICARO

And there you go.
Now we'll shut the door.

He locks the door. Then a small window opens.

CHIARA

(shouts from inside)

Help! Help me! Oh! I'm so angry with you!

PICARO

I'm not hanging around: I'm off.

CHORUS

(off stage)

Don Alvaro.

Serafina enters.

SERAFINA

Is anyone here?

PICARO
Looking for me?

SERAFINA
Oh, my god, it's you!

PICARO
Now be a brave little girl and come with me.

VOICES OFFSTAGE
Guards ... to the rescue ... stand back!

SERAFINA
Your behaviour appalls me.

PICARO
No, no, there's a secret hiding place,
we'll find it here...

*There's hammering on the front door.
Chiara strains to hear it.
Picaro opens the trap door and grabs Serafina's hand.*

VOICES OFFSTAGE
There's the impostor! ...
Stop where you are... get down ... face on the floor ...

SERAFINA
O my father, heaven help you
and save you.

PICARO
Come on ... be brave ... let's go ...
No-one will find us.

Picaro bundles Serafina through the trap-door, they drop out of sight.

*The front door opens, and Alvaro, Ramiro, Meschino, Agnes,
Lisetta, and the villagers rush in.*

Alvaro sees Chiara. He releases her.

Scene Twenty

CHIARA
Father!

ALVARO
My daughter!

RAMIRO
Where's that wretch gone?

CHIARA
He's betrayed us.

ALVARO and RAMIRO
He's against us!

CHIARA
He is beneath our contempt.

ALL
Break down the door!

They break down to the door to the room on the right; and find that it's empty.

ALL
Serafina! ... Serafina!
Ah, the poor girl! She's not here.

CHIARA
She's run away ... she has betrayed us.

ALVARO
Oh! This is a disaster!

RAMIRO
Oh! This is a nightmare!

MESCHINO
If if he can't fly through the air
he'll be found in the castle.

CHIARA, ALVARO and RAMIRO
Ah! We will search, we will find him,
we will be his judge and jury,
he cannot hide from retribution
or shield himself from our fury.
With his blood, with his life,
he will pay for his treachery..
If I kidnapped a (sister / daughter / fiancée)
the grievous pain would kill me.

MESCHINO
Right then, men ... this calls for action ...
Let's go forward to the fray ...
The rascal will give us good sport,
and get what he deserves today.

Speeding through the streets so fast
my wrath will catch up with him at last.
Come on, my legs, give me height,
carry me onwards to the fight.

AGNES, LISETTA and CHORUS
Yes, let us search everywhere
top to bottom and upside down,
we'll smoke him out of his lair,
the evil felon will be found,
in each street, behind each doorway
nothing will get in our way.
With his blood, with his life,
he will pay for his treachery.

ACT TWO

*The interior of an old cisterna. At the back, on one side is a closed door,
on the other side is an opening where a spiral staircase
leads up to passages higher up in the castle
and the trapdoor in the statue where Picaro went into hiding with Serafina.
Here and there are various ruins, arches, and hiding places.*

It is night.

Scene I

*Groups of pirates are scattered around, sleeping.
Spalatro runs in. Goes to Gennaro.*

SPALATRO
(low whisper)
Captain! ...

ALL
(waking up)
What's happening?

SPALATRO
Listen ...
we are about to come under attack ...
the castle ruins are all occupied,
they've closed the steps leading to the sea.

ALL
Aah...

GENNARO
Quiet! ... someone has betrayed us ...
Maybe Picaro ... yeah, it would be him ...

I've not seen him since this morning, the wily bastard ...
Our hide-out is no longer safe.

ALL

He didn't give a fig for us, the traitor.

GENNARO

This refuge is of great use,
we must defend it at all cost.

ALL

Come on, let's go, let's run
to the entry to keep it open,
if the tunnel is blocked
then we'll have to sieze the castle.
This refuge is of great use,
we must defend it at all cost.

The pirates run off into the ruins to the right.

Scene II

Spalatro and Gennaro.

GENNARO

Spalatro, stay close: if it looks like we'll have to surrender,
we'll escape by the secret stairs that go up into the castle.
We won't find no enemies up there,
they're all investigating down below.

They hear a gunshot.

SPALATRO

A shot!

Meschino enters.

MESCHINO

Help me!

PIRATES

Stop right there.

The pirates grab him.

MESCHINO

Oh, what a shock!

GENNARO

Who are you? How did you get in here?

MESCHINO

I am ... Hey, easy does it...
you're choking my throat... my voice ...
let me speak, please ... I am ... gentlemen ...
I am nephew of my uncle the magistrate,
but love has turned me into a humble fisherman.

GENNARO

Hah! You're the nephew
of your uncle the magistrate ... is that so?
You rascal, you've been sent to spy on us!

SPALATRO

You're leading the advance guard.

MESCHINO

No, gentlemen, I don't hold such a position.
It's not because of you, any of you, that all the village
is out in force. They are trying to find
a certain Don Fernando
and a young girl who's been kidnapped.
I am merely united with them in sympathy.

*While the pirates are busy around Meschino
Chiara enters inconspicuously, and seeing the
danger dashes across the scene, and disappears
into the dungeon's winding passages.*

GENNARO

And you had the courage to enter this place?

MESCHINO

I had not thought to find so noble a company ...
It was Chiara and ... my bride-to-be ... who were the first to go in.
They saw the door to a sarcophagus lying open,
and suspecting the kidnapper might have hidden there ...
they prevailed upon me to come in with them.

SPALATRO

Where are they now?

MESCHINO

Truth to tell, in the dark
among the labyrinths I lost them,
and I was searching around,
when these men accosted me.

GENNARO

Spalatro, run at once

to track down these inquisitive people,
and guard every passage.
He stays here, until we're sure of all the facts.
If he causes trouble, kill him ... Friends, go.

All the pirates leave.

Scene III

*The scene is very dark.
A single lantern hangs from a nail in the stone wall.*

MESCHINO

What a night! ... I've had enough.
I'll never get out of here.

Chiara is at the back, unseen by him.

CHIARA

They've gone ...
Now to find a way out.

MESCHINO

I never doubted they were pirates.

CHIARA

I hear a voice...

MESCHINO

I hear footsteps.

CHIARA

Don Meschino!

MESCHINO

What! It's you!

CHIARA

Shush, it's me.

MESCHINO

Ah, madam! We've had it!
This is a den of pirates.
We're good and buried
before we go to our graves.

CHIARA

If Lisetta managed to get away
without being seen by the pirates,

we should be able to follow the same
escape route she found.

MESCHINO

Ah, if only! But the villains
are up here, down there, all around.

CLEAR

Don't worry, let's give it a try,
we'll force our way out.

MESCHINO

Us!

CHIARA

Yes, us.

MESCHINO

Come on, you're joking!
We'll get shot to pieces.

CHIARA

If you have doubts, if you're scared,
then stay here: I will go on my own.

MESCHINO

Ah! Wait a moment.

CHIARA

Come on then.

MESCHINO

Slow down for me.

CHIARA

Ow! Watch where you're going.
O God, show me the way out.
By the goodness of your grace
get me out of this terrible place.

MESCHINO

If I stay here, my future will be dire...
But if I manage to get out ... oh cruel irony!
There's the frying pan ... here's the fire.
Either way it's not going to turn out well for me.

CHIARA

Well then, give up if that's what you want.

MESCHINO

No, by golly! I've decided...

CHIARA
Watch out!

MESCHINO
I am resolute.

CHIARA
Stay close to me.

MESCHINO
(aside)
Oh my legs.

CHIARA
Fortune favours the brave.
We'll find the way out.

MESCHINO
Ah! If we reach safety, it'll be a miracle, I'd be amazed.
(aside)
I fear I'm going to be stuck underground for the rest of my days.

Scene IV

*Picaro and Serafina come down the stairway
that leads to the floor of the cisterna.*

SERAFINA
Where are you taking me? Not down more
of these endless dark passages.

PICARO
Come on down. Looks like we're in a more spacious area.
Don't be scared ...
(aside)
Only kidding.
(aloud)
Now where are we? ...
(in a low voice)
Well, well ...

SERAFINA
What is it? I'm lost! ...

PICARO
Now ... let me think ... take stock ...
(aside)
Ah! My old shipmates, this must be their hide-out ...

If they hadn't left it, I'd be in trouble and no mistake ...
but getting out isn't going to be a piece of cake ...

SERAFINA
Well ... Father?

PICARO
Well, my daughter ... I can't seem to find ...
how we might get out of here.

SERAFINA
That's terrible! ...

PICARO
Maybe that passage there could lead us out ...
I'd better take a look ...
Stay calm ... wait here for me...

SERAFINA
Oh! heavens! You want
me to stay here alone?

PICARO
Just for a moment or two
until I come up with something ... I can't see ...
where this passage leads ...
(aside)
Have the pirates gone?!
(to Serafina)
Don't be scared.

He disappears to the left.

Scene V

Serafina alone.

SERAFINA
What a horrendous place to end up in!
So dark and dismal! ... and what will happen
if my father can't find the way out,
what will we do then? O you, who must
be starting to doubt my fidelity, oh ...
My dear fiancé! ... when will I see you again?
Among this darkness and in this horror,
I call out to you, my dear beloved one.
But, oh woe is me! For you cannot hear
my sighs of love, they're left to wander
bewildered, lonely, to die heard by none,
among this darkness and in this horror.

She hears a noise from below.

SERAFINA

God! ... What was that noise?

VOICES OFF-STAGE

Come on, quick now.

SERAFINA

Oh, no! All is lost!

My father's been captured.

Scene VI

The cisterna is lit up by lanterns as Gennaro and Spalatro enter followed by pirates dragging in Chiara, Don Meschino and Lisetta.

GENNARO

Don't try to get away, or else.

What's this! ... Another woman? ...

SERAFINA

Father! ... Where are you?!

Genaro grabs Serafina by the arm.

GENNARO

Come here, young miss.

Picaro comes out of the darkness.

PICARO

(aside)

So they're back.

Chiara sees Serafina.

CHIARA

Serafina!

LISETTA

She's fallen into the hands of the devil himself!

MESCHINO

Oh! this beggars belief.

CHIARA

Let me go, you cruel beast... O my sister!

SERAFINA

Who, me ... you! ... What do mean? ... Ow!
Who are these people?

CHIARA

They are pirates, and they'll hand over to you
a traitor - that worthless scoundrel who's with you,
he's not your real father.

SERAFINA

What! He lied to me!

CHIARA

Picaro is his name.

PIRATES

Picaro!

PICARO

(aside)

How dare you!

I'll have done a few good things before I die.

GENNARO

(threatening)

Where is he?

Picaro appears.

PICARO

Here he is, and he's brought you a thousand pieces of gold.

He throws down the bag that Fernando gave him.

GENNARO

A thousand pieces!

PICARO

Take them, and admire them ...

but treat them with respect ... his lordship

(importantly)

entrusted them to me ...

I'll tell you why ... suffice to say,

I've found a little gold mine.

PIRATES

Bravo! Picaro, bravo!

SERAFINA

Ugh! You scoundrel!

I was nothing but your prey! ... Oh, my God!
I was your slave! Oh! You foul...!
You are so utterly wicked,
I want nothing more to do with you.

SPALATRO and GENNARO
Don't pay any attention to her anger.

PICARO and PIRATES
It'll pass ... she'll get used to it.

SERAFINA, CHIARA, LISETTA and MESCHINO
Oh heavens, why is there lightning in the sky
if not to strike down traitors and make them die?

GENNARO
Hey! This is our patch, not your town,
we're the ones to decide what goes down.

The pirates separate Serafina from Chiara.

SERAFINA and CHIARA
Ah! Cruel and heartless beasts ... leave us together at least ...

PICARO
(pointing to Lisetta)
She comes with me.

MESCHINO
Good night, my Lisetta.

PIRATES
Separate them.

The pirates push Chiara and Meschino aside.

SERAFINA, CHIARA, MESCHINO and LISETTA
Oh, have pity on us!

Picaro seizes the moment and approaches Serafina.

PICARO
Keep quiet ... pretend ... be patient ...
You will all have your freedom.

Serafina gasps in surprise. Picaro motions her to be silent.

SERAFINA
(aside)
Merciful heavens above! ... How can this be true!

Not knowing what to think, not daring to speak ...
How can I trust in a traitor, what havoc he wreaks!
Ah! My poor heart, I can feel it break in two!

PIRATES

Come on, hurry up and say your goodbyes.

SERAFINA, MESCHINO, LISETTA and CHIARA
Goodbye then.

PICARO

(softly to Serafina)

Be of good heart, you will be saved.

SERAFINA

(comforted)

We must trust with all our hearts
that we'll be happy again some day.

SERAFINA, MESCHINO, LISETTA and CHIARA

Ah! My poor heart, I can feel it break in two!

*Serafina and Lisetta are bundled by the pirates to the back,
and locked away there.*

Scene VII

*Picaro, Gennaro, Spalatro and the pirates remain.
Chiara and Meschino stand to one side, dejected.*

GENNARO

Well done, Picaro!

That's not bad booty!

SPALATRO

Fortune favours the wicked.

PICARO

I am flattered.

CHIARA

(aside)

You villains!

MESCHINO

(to Chiara)

For heaven's sake, be quiet, or we're done for.

GENNARO

(to Picaro)
In proof of your faith, you shared your spoils with us.
Therefore fairness demands we give you part of our plunder.

He picks up the small chest that Picaro had in the first act.

SPALATRO
(laughing)
That's a mightily impressive gift, Captain!

GENNARO
Here take it, Picaro.

PICARO
Ah! Hah! You can't give it to me -
the box is already mine,
I found it this morning
on the beach by the sea.

CHIARA
(to herself)
Oh god! Those are my father's papers.

Picaro lifts the lid, reads the papers inside.

PICARO
Algiers ... etcetera, etcetera ...
and what's this! ... A letter ...
proving the innocence ...
(loudly to Chiara as she draws near)
of Don Alvaro ...
Aah! See how this lad
advances towards me,
and stares at these papers
with longing and love,
like he was the son of an attorney!
Well, I'll show him
(with a jocular air)
how generous and gracious I can be ...
Take them my boy, they're yours ...

CHIARA
Oh! what joy!

GENNARO
Well, he seems inordinately grateful.
Anyway, no more larking around,
we've got to think about leaving ...
The sea is calm, the night is dark,
let's see if we can fight our way out.

MESCHINO

No need to be on your guard ...
No one knows you're here ...
It's him they're looking for ...
(pointing at Picaro)
You can leave in a trice,
and let us all go quietly home,
that's my considered advice.

GENNARO

You're a wise counsellor, aren't you!
Well, I don't share your optimism.
While we're checking out the lie of the land,
Picaro, guard our captives in this prison.

PICARO

Sure I will. Off you go then ... They are in good hands.
(softly to Chiara)
Be brave!

CHIARA

(to herself)
I'm lost for words!

MESCHINO

(muttering)
Barbarians!

Gennaro, Spalatro and the pirates go off.

Scene VIII

*Picaro goes to the back listening to make sure the pirates have gone.
Gradually the sound of their footsteps fades away.*

MESCHINO

Well, Chiara?! ... I have to say, this time
we're well and truly trapped here.

CHIARA

I'm so mixed up in my mind,
I don't know if I should feel hope or fear.

PICARO

(to himself)
No-one must hear me, or see me,
for my plan to succeed.

MESCHINO

If it wasn't that I was so scared,
I'd be more sure of staying alive.

CHIARA

I'm ready for whatever happens,
I won't lose hope that we'll survive.

PICARO

(to himself)

If I succeed with this plan,
I'll go back to being an honest man.

*Picaro makes sure the pirates are gone,
then runs guardedly to Chiara and Meschino.*

PICARO

Listen.

MESCHINO

Okay! Okay! We're not going anywhere.

CHIARA

What do you want us to do?

PICARO

Don't be frightened.
I want to free you, save you ...

CHIARA and MESCHINO

You! ... I don't think so!

PICARO

Wait!

*Picaro goes to unlock the door to the room where
Serafina and Lisetta are being held..*

MESCHINO

He really means it.

CHIARA

Oh, heavens! What next?

Scene IX

*Picaro frees Serafina and Lisetta
and leads them over to the others.*

CHIARA

My sister!

SERAFINA
Oh Chiara!

CHIARA, SERAFINA, LISETTA and MESCHINO
It's so wonderful to be free!
Then seeing you! ... What a joyous day!

PICARO
Hang on a moment, don't get carried away,
let's think first ... we've still got work to do.

They gather round Picaro, listening.

PICARO
Through long pathways, that only I know,
I guided Serafina to this place;
but the way is dark and hard to follow
and I closed the entry door on us.
I will try every means I can
to force the door and break it down.
(to Meschino)
In the meantime you stand guard
and listen out with all your ears
for the smallest noise, the slightest sound.
(to Chiara)
If anything happens, or goes wrong,
call me right away, and I'll get back here
to you as fast as I can run.
Understand?

CHIARA, SERAFINA and LISETTA
Perfectly.

MESCHINO
Over there I'll go, tip toe, tip toe.

CHIARA, SERAFINA, LISETTA, MESCHINO and PICARO
We must get going ... can't wait any longer ...
Our eyes open to any danger...
Any hesitation, any carelessness
could reveal us, could betray us.

*Meschino continues further into the dark passages..
Picaro goes up the stairway.*

Scene X

Chiara, Serafina and Lisetta.

SERAFINA, CHIARA and LISETTA

I'm trembling, bewildered,
lost in hope and fearful dread,
this thumping I can hear
is the beat-beat of my heart.

They hear Picaro breaking down the door up above.

SERAFINA

Listen to that ...

LISETTA

He's up there.

CHIARA

He's at the door.

SERAFINA

It's resisting ...

LISETTA

Unyielding ...

CHIARA

Come on!

LISETTA

What a nightmare!
I'm trembling, bewildered,
lost in hope and fearful dread,
this thumping I can hear
is the beat-beat of my heart.

Scene XI

Picaro runs down the stairway.

CHIARA

Be quiet! He's coming down.

LISETTA

Only he's not alone.

SERAFINA

Who's with him?

Picaro is followed by Ramiro and the guards...

PICARO and RAMIRO

(from the stairs)
Don't be afraid.

CHIARA, LISETTA and SERAFINA
Don Ramiro!

Meschino comes back in.

MESCHINO
I heard some shouts! ... What is it?

Lisetta points to Picaro and Ramiro descending the stairs.

LISETTA
Look.

MESCHINO
Hurrah! Hooray!

SERAFINA, CHIARA, and RAMIRO
(My fiancée / My fiancé!) Chiara!

MESCHINO
We're saved.

RAMIRO
Ah! My love, I did not believe
I would ever see you again.
I rejoice you are relieved
of your suffering and pain.
Now I'll never let you be
taken away again from me.

CHIARA, LISETTA and SERAFINA
Oh! joy! Oh! How wonderful!

MESCHINO
(hugs Picaro)
Bravo my little pirate!

CHIARA, LISETTA, RAMIRO and SERAFINA
(to Picaro)
Ah, yes! You are the cause
of all our happiness ...

PICARO
And how will I be compensated
for all the trouble I went to?

They all surround Picaro and embrace him.

RAMIRO, CHIARA, SERAFINA and LISETTA
You have made the sky so calm and blue,
it's changed completely thanks to you.
Your good work and good will have erased
all the errors of your ways.

PICARO
Since I was allowed by fate
to bring a father to his family,
if you turn into love your hate,
that will be reward enough for me.

MESCHINO
There are otherwise decent men
who don't have such a good heart.
I'll ask my uncle the magistrate
to grant you a full pardon.

*Meschino, Serafina, Chiara and Lisetta swiftly leave
by the stairway at the back of the cisterna.
Picaro and Ramiro remain with the guards.*

Scene XII

Picaro, Ramiro and the guards.

RAMIRO
Picaro, shall we drive out what's left of the pirates?

PICARO
They'll be back soon to pick up their treasure
and then board their ships to go where the sea gives them safety.
It's best to wait for them here, and make a surprise attack.

RAMIRO
We'd better guard the way in.

PICARO
I can hear the sound of footsteps:
let's scatter out and take cover.

RAMIRO
Don't make any noise. Be strong.

PICARO
Come on.

*As soon as they've gone, we start to hear
the sounds of battle and gunfire.*

The scene now changes to the shoreline, as in the first act.

Scene XIII

*Gunfire from around the rocks and ruins.
Villagers, armed with weapons, run towards the sea.*

Gradually the sound fades...

The fishermen and women enter, happy and joyful.

CHORUS

We have won, we have won! ...
The battle is over and done! ...
Those bad and fearful demons...
We've captured every one...
They've thrown down their weapons ...
They're bound in chains ...
And at last this fair island
is safe from harm again.

Scene XIV

*Ramiro enters leading the guards;
Meschino rushes in after him;
then come Serafina, Lisetta, Alvaro and the others.*

MESCHINO

Don Ramiro ... you must act quickly ... we're
not out of trouble yet ... Chiara
has vanished into thin air.

RAMIRO

What?! ..
When I met the pirates
and fought them to the harbour,
I left her beside Serafina ...

MESCHINO

She was there ... but in the confusion and commotion
she just disappeared ... maybe she got killed in the battle,
or she's in the hands of the pirates.

RAMIRO

But that's terrible!
What happened, Serafina?

SERAFINA

I don't know ... no-one's see her...
and there's no trace of her footsteps.

ALVARO
O Chiara, where are you?

Scene XV

Chiara and Picaro appear from behind the sarcophagus.

CHIARA
Your Chiara's here.

ALVARO
My daughter!

SERAFINA
My sister!

RAMIRO
Thank God, what a relief!

MESCHINO
You went back into the pirate's den?

CHIARA
(to Alvaro)
I had to, I had to get the proof of your innocence.
So I went back with Picaro into those horrid dungeons.
Fortune favoured me so I could bring it back for you.
Take it, father; your great name will be cleared at last.
You can lead an honourable and happy life in your land again.
And on your vile slanderer let vengeance fall ...

ALVARO and SERAFINA
Nothing could please us more!

RAMIRO
O what a noble heart!

MESCHINO, LISETTA and CHORUS
And what a vile devil.

ALVARO
Don Fernando ...

RAMIRO
The traitor
has already been caught.

ALL
He shall die.

CHIARA
(to Picaro)
And you that now to honour's path
have once more turned your way,
do not have concern for yourself
on such a bright and joyful day.

ALL with CHIARA
Your good heart we all bless
and fill with our forgiveness.

PICARO
For that I thank you heartily
and swear eternal loyalty.

CHIARA
No more in danger
and no more of fear;
for now we can breathe
freely once more;
free from all woe and pain
let us now have joy again.

ALL with CHIARA
My wishes are granted,
everything's been put right,
at last the peaceful sky shines clear and bright.

CHORUS
Free from all woe and pain
let us now have joy again.

THE END

English translation © Paul Archer, 2012. All rights reserved.

Paul Archer
Cami de Can Gabriel 9, Sóller, Mallorca
paul@paularcher.net