

AZARA

A New Opera in Three Acts

BY

JOHN K. PAINE



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LEIPZIG



BRUSSELS

LONDON

Azara

OPERA BY

JOHN KNOWLES PAINE

SCENES FROM THIS WORK WILL BE SUNG IN

CONCERT FORM

WITH PIANOFORTE ACCOMPANIMENT

AT

Chickering Hall

HUNTINGTON AVENUE

Thursday Evening, May 7th, at Eight P. M.

1903

UNDER THE DIRECTION OF

E. CUTTER, Jr.

SOLO SINGERS

MISS GRACE LOWELL BRADBURY, Soprano

MISS REBECCA W. CUTTER, Soprano

MRS. VINCENT A. LYMAN, Mezzo Soprano

MRS. ALBERT THORNDIKE, Contralto

MR. ERNEST R. LEEMAN, Tenor

MR. DAVID A. TOBEY, Baritone

MR. RALPH E. BROWN, Bass

MR. GEO. A. TYLER, Bass

AND A CHORUS OF 30 VOICES

AZARA

OPERA IN THREE ACTS.

LIBRETTO AND MUSIC

BY

JOHN KNOWLES PAINE

CHARACTERS

RAINULF, <i>King of Provence</i>	Bass
GONTRAN, <i>his son</i>	Tenor
AZARA, <i>ward of Aymar</i>	Soprano
AYMAR, <i>Count, and vassal of Rainulf</i>	Baritone
ODO, <i>Count, and royal page</i>	Mezzo-soprano
MÄLEK, <i>a Saracen chief</i>	Baritone
GARSIE, <i>a shepherdess</i>	Mezzo-soprano
COLAS, <i>a shepherd</i>	Contralto
A HUNTSMAN	Tenor

Knights, Men at Arms, Lords, Ladies, Pages, Guards, Burghers, Maidens, Moorish Minstrels and Dancing Girls, Saracens, Attendants, Trumpeters, etc.

SCENE OF ACTION — *Provence*

- ACT I. Rainulf's Castle — Interior court near the Donjon
ACT II. An open woodland glade by the seaside
ACT III. By the moat of Gontran's Castle

ACT I

SCENE I

RAINULF	.	MR. BROWN
AZARA .	.	MISS CUTTER
ODO .	.	MRS. LYMAN

SCENE II

The same. Knights, Men at Arms, Ladies, Trumpeters, etc.

CHORUS. 'Then, GONTRAN	MR. LEEMAN
AYMAR	MR. TOBEY

ACT II

ORCHESTRAL SCENE

SCENE II

AZARA . .	MISS BRADBURY
GARSIE .	MISS CUTTER
COLAS . .	MRS. THORNDIKE
HUNTSMAN .	MR. LEEMAN
AYMAR .	MR. TOBEY

SCENE IV

AZARA .	MISS CUTTER
MALEK	MR. TOBEY

SCENE V

AZARA .	MISS BRADBURY
GONTRAN	MR. LEEMAN

ACT III

SCENE I

GONTRAN	MR. LEEMAN
AYMAR.	MR. TYLER

SCENE II

ODO

.

MRS. LYMAN

CHORUS

* * * * *

SCENE IV

AZARA	MISS BRADBURY
MALEK MR. TOBEY
GONTRAN MR. LEEMAN
ODO	MRS. THORNDIKE
AYMAR MR. TYLER

ACT I

SCENE I

RAINULF'S CASTLE. INTERIOR COURT NEAR THE
DONJON

On one side a massive castle building, terminating at the back with a partial view of the Donjon tower. Arched entrance at back of stage. On the other side, lower rampart walls, pierced with loopholes, with a glimpse of the sky above. In the foreground, on one side, RAINULF is seated on a dais. Pages, guards, and attendants are grouped about the court, while some are watching on the ramparts.

SARACENS (*behind the curtain*).

Allah — illa — Allah! Death! death!

(*Enter ODO quickly from the postern.*)

RAINULF.

Ho, page! Why comest thou with joyous mien
And radiant face? What marvel hast thou seen
To bid me hope our arms have conquered fate?

ODO (*with deep obeisance*).

O sire! glad tidings from the postern gate!
Near by the barbican the heralds call,
The day is won by our brave sons of Gaul!

RAINULF.

How knowest thou this?

ODO.

I heard our clarions blow
And cries of victory ring out below
Upon the plain.

RAINULF.

Methought no mortal power
 Could stem the tide that rose against this tower,
 And save the honor of your wounded king.
 What promise bright your glorious tidings bring!
 Our cause triumphant over Moslem hate!
 O blessed day for Gaul! O happy fate!

ODO.

'Tis said wild terror seized the flying horde
 When Gontran charged with fury on their lord,
 And struck him down and made the fallen chief
 His prisoner.

RAINULF.

This is beyond belief!

ODO.

His prowess all the world shall know,
 Whose arm hath wrought the Paynim woe.

(Enter AZARA with attendants; she stands apart.)

RAINULF (*musings*).

My wayward son a hero, do I rave?
 Have I misprized this heart of all so brave?
 A prince in battle, though in peace a hind;
 But not alone for war is he designed.
 Ambition rules the mighty of the earth;
 With Spain a marriage-bond shall prove his worth.

RAINULF (he gazes on AZARA with admiration).

To know thee, maiden, is my heart's desire.

AZARA (bowing before the king).

I am Azara, Aymar's ward, O sire!
 On yester-even, when his castle fell,
 He brought me safe to yonder keep.

RAINULF.

'T is well.

My lovely child, draw near! (*Aside.*) Her face divine
Will haunt me evermore. Let him resign
His charge to me. O prize beyond compare!

(*He draws her to him and kisses her on the forehead; she turns away dismayed.*)

AZARA (*aside*).

I fear him! Save me, Gontran, from despair!

RAINULF (*aside*).

A new-born passion sways my longing heart;
Her charms enthrall me with a wondrous spell;
For my delight the maid shall dwell apart.
Against my darling wish who dares rebel?
My vassal from his cherished ward must part.
Though grace and beauty now adorn my throne,
This sweeter rose of love I prize alone.

SCENE II

(*Trumpets in the distance. Enter Ladies with attendants.*)

LADIES, GUARDS, ETC.

Behold, they come! they come!

KNIGHTS, MEN-AT-ARMS (*behind the scenes*).

Triumph! All hail!

(*Trumpeters advance. Enter Knights, etc., marching forward.*)

ALL.

Sing, joyous hearts, with loud acclaim,
And celebrate our well-earned battle-fame!
Let our wondering vassals know
O'erthrown and vanquished lies the foe.
These hoary donjon walls shall ring
With songs of triumph for our king.

RAINULF (*rising*).

Brave knights, defenders of my throne !
 The glories of this day are known ;
 Your swords have conquered peace for all
 Throughout our realm in burg and hall.
 Your valiant deeds for aye shall stand,
 No more shall Malek scourge the land.
 God's curse on Islam's race will fall.

(Knights, Men-at-arms, etc., salute the King. They strike their shields and wave their banners.)

ALL.

Hail, sovran lord ! our arms declare
 True freedom reigns in Provence fair.
 Sing, joyous hearts, our monarch's fame,
 With beacon-fires the heights enflame.
 Flash o'er the land from Alp to sea
 The splendor of our victory !

(Enter GONTRAN, AYMAR, and attendant Knights.)

Hail ! hail ! Our champion comes ! Hail !

(GONTRAN comes forward and salutes the King. The Knights and Men-at-arms strike their shields and wave their banners.)

ALL.

Long live great Gontran, hero-knight !
 God's day-star o'er the path of right,
 Whose splendor makes us strong.
 With glory crowned, our arms declare
 True freedom reigns in Provence fair,
 Blest land of love and song.
 Long live king Rainulf's son ! Gontran, hail !

(The crowd recedes. RAINULF extends his arms to GONTRAN, who kneels before him.)

My son, bend not the knee as one who pleads ;
 Let my embrace reward thy glorious deeds.
 Arise ! my marvel and my pride art thou.

GONTRAN (*rising*).

Nay, father, first fulfill thy solemn vow.

RAINULF.

What vow?

GONTRAN.

Didst thou not swear with upraised hand,
When I against the Moor went out to stand,
If victor I should prove by grace of Heaven,
The guerdon that I prize would then be given?

RAINULF.

Ay! reason guide thy choice with princely pride.

GONTRAN.

The one I fondly love shall be my bride.

(*He goes aside to AZARA and leads her before RAINULF*).

Behold my choice! to her I plight my troth.

RAINULF (*surprised and irritated*).

What madness! Dare not hold me to mine oath.

May God forsake thy fond and faithful sire!

Shall I against thy welfare now conspire?

(*In a calmer mood.*)

With honor crowned, O serve the ends of state;

Let high ambition choose thy royal mate.

Our glorious throne with Aragon unite;

The solemn pact is signed.

GONTRAN (*indignantly*).

God save the right!

(GONTRAN *turns aside to AZARA*. RAINULF *gazes at them with a questioning air.*)

RAINULF (*to AZARA*).

Thou lovest him?

AZARA.

O sire, with all my heart !
Give thy consent ; O doom us not to part !

RAINULF (*aside with jealous feeling*).

My son a rival ! Do I hear aright ?

(To AZARA *passionately*.)

Nay, err not. Live to serve my loving will.

AZARA (*aside, anxiously*).

O God ! his words of passion threaten ill.
Love's sun hath set ; now falls the gloom of night.

GONTRAN (*to RAINULF*).

Canst thou deny thy word in Heaven's sight ?
O father, is all kingly honor dead ?

RAINULF.

Blind passion sways thine erring heart and head.
Forget thy childish folly.

GONTRAN.

Love will prove
More faithful than thy word.

RAINULF.

Prate not of love.

GONTRAN (*deeply moved*).

My love is ardent as the day
Whose sunshine warms the heart of spring.
My love is pure as breath of May,
As songs divine the poets sing.
My love stands firmer than the rock
Whose base upholds yon hoary tower ;
Unmoved it bears the battle-shock,
The arrow-shafts of ruthless power.

Forswear thine oath? My fondest hopes destroy?
 Nay, father, grant my heart's desire!
 May wise consent thy words inspire,
 And strike a deeper chord of joy
 Than ever rang from seraph's lyre.
 O hearken, King! Let not false pride
 And craft of state thy hand misguide,
 Our plighted vows are heard in heaven;
 Shall not thy benison be given?
 O father, heed the voice divine!
 O grant the precious boon be mine!
 Thou knowest well the holy heart,
 That glows with love's undying flame,
 Exalts true pride and kingly fame.

(*Turning toward AZARA.*)

Azara shall be my bride!

AZARA (*turning towards Gontran*).

'Fore heaven thy promised bride!

KNIGHTS (*coming forward*).

Let him who loves an infidel beware!
 Is she a worthy consort for our prince, the heir
 Of this fair realm and Rainulf's crown and sword?

AYMAR (*advancing*).

Azara is no infidel, my lord!
 This homeless princess of the Moslem race
 Was bred a Christian by God's grace;
 In childhood was baptized and blessed,
 When at the altar she confessed.
 Long years ago in sunny Spain
 We fought against the Moslem's reign.
 Amid the storm of carnage wild
 There sleeping lay a tender child.

A wounded chieftain held her fast;
 He gazed in anguish as I passed.
 I bent beside him in the dust;
 He dying said: "The princess be thy trust."
 My days the gentle maid e'er blest
 With innocence so sweet
 That every golden year possessed
 A gladness more complete.
 O sunbeam of the battle morn!
 God sent thy radiant light
 To bless my home with joy new-born,
 And beauty ever bright!

(Turning to the knights.)

Shall cruel scorn assail mine ears? forsooth!
 Of royal blood is she! God knows the truth!

KNIGHTS, LADIES, ETC.

His ward of royal birth, how wondrous strange!

RAINULF (*to* AYMAR).

An idle tale; let not thy fancy range
 Beyond thy bounden place. As vassal, dare
 Not set thy mark so near our throne. Beware!

(To GONTRAN).

Go, prince, and cast her image from thy heart;
 This day for Aragon thou must depart.

GONTRAN.

No! never to injustice will I bow.
 Let regal pride be broken ere my vow.

AZARA (*kneeling before Rainulf*).

Have mercy, sire! Here at thy feet I fall,
 O rob me not of love, of life, of all!

RAINULF (*raising her tenderly*).

Nay, foolish child, be calm, I pray !
 My fondest hopes wilt thou betray ?
 Whate'er thy sovran craves, deny him not.
 All shall be thine ; a happier lot
 Than e'er befell a queen. O turn to me !
 My joys shall be thy destiny.
 It is ordained thou must forget my son.

AZARA.

My heart is torn ! Forget my love ! 'The one
 More precious far than life and all
 The world ? Thy cruel words recall !
 I pray thee, my sovran ! by thy royal name,
 O do not turn my heart to shame !
 True love dreams not of worldly fame ;
 'T is nobler far than pride of birth
 That rules the kingdoms of the earth.
 Fain would I shun the dazzling throne,
 To live for Gontran's love alone.

(*Turning to GONTRAN*).

Beloved ! though Fate's iron hand
 Divides our lives, our love shall stand
 Unchanged beyond the bourne of time.
 Above the storm-clouds are the heights sublime
 Where love immortal dwells in paradise.
 To part, — to die, no more with mortal eyes
 Behold the sunshine of my lover's face, —
 O gloomy day ! the darkness falls apace.
 Farewell, farewell ! Though we must part,
 Undying, faithful thoughts of thee,
 Dear love ! a heavenly balm shall be,
 To soothe the anguish of my broken heart.

GONTRAN* (*to AZARA, aside, seeking to calm her*).

Darling! O rise above the dark despair
That clouds the morning of a life so fair.
Far from the storm, to love's fair haven fly
With me. On my strong arm rely,
The dangers of our flight to shun.
Thou shalt be mine, our lives are one.

AZARA (*to GONTRAN*).*

I will be calm; no more shall dark despair
O'ercloud the morning of a day so fair.
Whate'er betide, my hero, thou art nigh;
My hopes on thy strong arm rely.
The warp and woof of fate is spun,
For I am thine, our lives are one.

ODO (*aside*).*

God's benison shall ever rest
On lovers tried by sorrow's test.
O precious boon without alloy,
Filling the soul with holy joy!

RAINULF (*aside*).*

My heart's desire to him shall ne'er be known;
Azara shall be mine, and mine alone.
When they are parted, time will prove
The potency of my fond love.
This burning passion sways my soul
Beyond all reason, all control.

GONTRAN, AZARA.*

What bliss to call thee mine
For evermore!

* The lines on the pages marked with a * are concerted.

What joy to hear thy words
 Of heavenly lore,
 Pure as the source divine
 All hearts adore !

GONTRAN, AZARA, ODO.*

O'er field and forest far,
 When dies the night,
 The glowing morning star
 Shall speed our flight ;
 God's harbinger of days
 Of pure delight.

RAINULF (*aside*).*

Rest in my loving arms,
 O houri bright !
 Thy wondrous charms
 Shall be my long delight.

GONTRAN, AZARA, ODO.*

Blest spirit, Love divine !
 Forever may
 Our hearts avow thy wise
 And holy sway !
 Thy beauty gilds the skies
 Before our way,
 Revealed to wistful eyes
 With promise bright ;
 God's harbinger of days
 Of pure delight.

* Concerted.

RAINULF.*

Blest Eros, Love divine !
 To thee I pray,
 Whose beauty gilds the skies
 Of roseate day,
 Rule o'er her heart with wise
 And potent sway.
 Lead captive to mine arms
 This houri bright,
 Whose wondrous charms
 Shall be my long delight.

* * * * *

ACT II

An open woodland glade by the seaside. Cloudy moonlight. At the back of the stage the border of the sea (made practicable for passing galleys). On one side the edge of the forest, with a winding path, leading to a distant shrine, partly visible. On the other side a cliff, partly hidden in the foreground by wild vines, forming a natural arbor over a mossy bank, on which AZARA lies asleep. AYMAR is watching over her at a short distance.

ORCHESTRAL SCENE

(Played by the Composer.)

Clouds roll away; clear moonlight. Soft lapping of the waves on the shore; mysterious forest sounds; wood-nymphs appear and flit about in the moonbeams, and hover around the sleeping AZARA; they vanish. Clouds; darkness before dawn. A faint glimmer of morning light; it grows lighter; glowing light over sea and sky. Sunrise. Full daylight. Far-off echo of horns.

* Concerted.

GARSIE, COLAS AND HUNTSMAN (*behind the scenes answering each other*).

Hola! hola! hey, hey! hola, hola!

(*They enter gaily, GARSIE discovers AZARA asleep, and points her out to his companions.*)

SCENE II

GARSIE (*pointing to AZARA*).

Look there! behold yon sleeping damosel!

COLAS.

Who may this be?

GARSIE.

Ah! who can tell!

HUNTSMAN.

Perchance a wood-nymph or a sprite,
Who haunts this sylvan glade by night.

GARSIE.

Whoe'er the stranger be, her face
Is like an angel's, full of grace
Divine.

(*AZARA starts in her sleep.*)

COLAS.

But soft! she moves apace.

AZARA (*starting up, troubled and bewildered*).

Ah me! O world of misery and grief!
Where shall the homeless wanderer find relief?
Alas! on earth there is no rest, no peace;
Through heaven's shining gate I seek release.
O death! beyond thy gloomy vale of night

My soul shall rise to see God's glorious light,
That turns to gold the clouds of black despair.
Where am I? Who are ye who watch me there?

(She draws back on seeing the shepherds. They remove their hats; GARSIE approaches her.)

GARSIE.

We follow flocks o'er field and fell;
Let honest shepherds wish thee well.
My gentle lady, may the morrow
Bring light to banish all thy sorrow!

HUNTSMAN *(coming forward)*.

A gallant huntsman's prayer shall be,
God's blessing ever rest on thee.

SHEPHERDS AND HUNTSMAN.

My gentle lady, may the morrow
Bring light to banish all thy sorrow!

AZARA *(reassured)*.

Your looks so honest, words so kind,
Can leave no lurking doubts behind.
My secret guard, nor give it breath,—
I am Azara, doomed to death;
The victim of our cruel lord.
O know ye not his name abhorred?
Who dares befriend the fugitive?

SHEPHERDS AND HUNTSMAN.

I swear my lips shall ne'er betray thee,
E'en though the tyrant's hand should slay me.

AZARA.

Vain are all words. Why should I live
With Gontran dead? O fearful thought!
All hope has vanished, all is naught.

Lost! Lost! by ruthless power slain,
 Ne'er shall I see his face again.
 O holy Virgin, hearken to my cry,
 And let me broken-hearted die!

(She sinks down on the bank. AYMAR rises and comes forward.)

SHEPHERDS AND HUNTSMAN.

Fair lady! Gontran is not dead;
 Now, by my faith, it cannot be!
 This very hour he spake to me.

(AZARA rises.)

AYMAR.

What do ye mean? The dead speak not.
 Whence come these men? Is this a plot?
 Weigh well your words, I'll prove them false or fair.

SHEPHERDS AND HUNTSMAN.

My lord, we saw the prince this morn I swear!

AYMAR.

Some woodland sprite misled your eyes 't is plain.
 Our prince by Rainulf's men was slain
 Near by the castle yesternight;
 Struck down before my very sight,
 When he came forth with flashing sword
 To save the honor of my ward.

GARSIE.

O noble sir! be not misled
 By grief. 'T is true what we have said,
 That Gontran lives;

SHEPHERDS AND HUNTSMAN.

He was but stunned, I trow.

HUNTSMAN.

If on one's pate each curséd blow
 Were mortal, surely I had died.
 A hundred deaths ere now. If I have lied
 To you, such be my fate.

GARSIE AND COLAS.

And this be mine!

AYMAR AND AZARA.

He lives! He lives! O word divine!
 You saw him? Swear 't is true!

SHEPHERDS AND HUNTSMAN.

By yonder shrine!

AZARA.

What rapturous joy your blest assurance gives!
 How leaps my throbbing heart to know he lives!
 On Hope's undaunted wings upborne
 O fly to my true knight forlorn,
 Who wanders blindly in the forest dim,
 And mourns the loved one torn from him.
 Yet thro' the clouds Love's flaming star
 Shall light the darkling way afar.

AYMAR, SHEPHERDS, AND HUNTSMAN.

What rapturous joy this blest assurance gives!
 Take heart, my lady! Gontran surely lives.
 On Hope's undaunted wings upborne,
 O fly to her true knight forlorn,
 Who wanders blindly in the forest dim,
 And mourns the loved one torn from him.
 Yet thro' the clouds Love's flaming star
 Shall light the darkling wood afar.

SHEPHERDS AND HUNTSMAN.

Lead on, brave lord !

AYMAR.

My lady, here abide !

Erelong I'll bring thy lover to thy side.

AZARA, AYMAR, SHEPHERDS, AND HUNTSMAN.

Grant us, O heavenly power,

Thy help this fateful hour,

To serve love's holy cause whate'er betide !

AZARA.

Away, and search the dark wood far and wide !

(Concert ending.)

(Exeunt quickly AYMAR, shepherds and huntsman. AZARA stands and listens. Horns in the distance. AYMAR, shepherds and huntsman behind the scenes. Hola ! hola ! hola !)

SCENE III

(AZARA seats herself on the bank and listens to the murmur of the forest and sea.)

* * * * *

(AZARA goes slowly and pensively into the forest. Before she disappears MALECK enters. He stands and gazes at her. Exit AZARA.)

SCENE IV

MALEK.

O vision wondrous fair !
 Why art thou dreaming there,
 Embowered like a hidden rose
 Amid the waving green ?

Who art thou, lovely queen?
 This mystery I would fain disclose.
 Where have I seen thy face,
 Born of the Moslem race?
 The truth now flashes on my mind!

*(He takes a portrait from his breast, and gazes at it and then at
 AZARA beyond the scenes.)*

A marvel I behold!
 Within this shrine of gold
 Her very counterpart I find.
 The mother's beauteous face and hair
 Are mirrored in her daughter there.
 Long have I sought her child,
 Lost mid the storm of battle wild.
 Behold! she is yon wondrous maid.
 O princess, loveliness divine!
 To rule thy fate be my design,
 With this true portrait's potent aid.

*(MALEK retires as AZARA enters, lost in pensive thought. As she
 advances he suddenly appears before her.)*

AZARA *(starting back.)*

O heaven save me, I am lost!

(She turns away; MALEK seeks to reassure her.)

MALEK.

Fear not
 Thy friend who comes to share thy lot.

AZARA.

Unknown, unsought?

MALEK.

Thee well I know.

(She turns away.)

Azara, hear me! do not go,

For I bring comfort and relief.
Behold the Caliph's trusty chief!
For I am Malek.

AZARA (*shrinking from him*).

Malek?

MALEK.

Aye, 't is he
From Murcia sent in search of thee,
To guide thee homeward ere thy father dies.

AZARA.

What proof he lives? thy tale my heart denies

MALEK.

He lives with bitter trials crossed;
His consort dead, his daughter lost.

(*with sudden decision*.)

Thou art the Caliph's child I swear!
Behold this face, the proof is there!

(*He hands AZARA the portrait; she gazes at it with emotion.*)

AZARA.

My mother's soul dwells in these eyes, that beam
With tender love. As in a dream
I see my childhood's home again:
The harem walls — the snowy peaks of Spain —
The fountain's flash — the flowers wild —
A mother's arms around her happy child.
Alas! she died?

MALEK.

Of grief, when from her side
She lost thee in the bloody tide
That swept with fury thro' the hall,
When our Alcazar yielded to the Gaul.

(AZARA *bends over the portrait pensively.*)

MALEK (*passionately*).

O dearest princess, come with me !
 To find thy home beyond the sea.
 Here all thy tender ties are broken ;
 Thou art an outcast, all forsaken ;
 Thy choice must now be taken ;
 Rainulf's stern voice has spoken ;
 To linger here is death.

O leave this hateful land !

O dearest princess, come with me,
 Where all thy kindred yearn for thee !
 To Murcia's throne bring joy again,
 Proud heiress of our land !
 My bark is near at hand,
 Come back with me to happy Spain ;
 O dearest princess, come !
 To linger here is death.

AZARA.

Go, leave me to my fate !
 With calmness I will wait
 For him, whose saving hand shall prove
 My prayer is heard in heaven.
 All ties of blood are riven,
 My only home is Gontran's love.

MALEK.

Thy lovelorn Nazarene
 Shall nevermore be seen.
 He cometh not ; wait not for him.
 If Gontran thou wouldst wed,
 And share his nuptial bed,
 Go, join him in his dungeon grim !

AZARA.

O heartless Moor! By yonder path
He soon will come. Beware his wrath!

MALEK.

Ere now the guards have found the clue
And seized him.

AZARA (*anxiously*).

O Christ, should this be true!

MALEK (*passionately*).

Hear me! forget the past, and come with me!
Thine ardent lover I will be.
To call thee mine my heart is yearning;
With passion's fever I am burning.
Thy foolish vows forswear,
This Christian's love will bring despair.

AZARA.

Caitiff! Is this thy heart's reward?
Who gave thee back thy sword
And set thee free? Thy friend betray?
Ungrateful and unkind,
Dire madness clouds thy mind.
Traitor, begone! away!

(MALEK goes aside, lost in thought. AZARA looks around for help.)

MALEK.

I am torn with doubt and rue;
He spared my life, 't is true.
Shall love or honor rule the day?

(With sudden resolution.)

Though honor calls, love I obey!

(He gazes fondly at AZARA, and then runs and falls at her feet.)

Mine idol, at thy feet I fall !
 Thou art my joy, my life, my all !
 Destruction I will brave
 To be thy fond, adoring slave.

(He rises).

I will abjure my king,
 My faith ; all, everything,
 For burning love of thee.
 Azara, fly with me
 To some far distant shore,
 And dwell in bliss forevermore !

AZARA.

I spurn thy passion, infamous and base !
 Begone, betrayer of thy hapless race !

(MALEK seizes her by the arm, and drags her along, struggling desperately. She breaks away from him and runs quickly to the back of the stage. She draws a dagger from her dress and aims it at her breast.)

Madman, stand back ! one step and I
 Will end my misery, and die !

(MALEK, hesitates, then turns around with a startled look towards the forest.)

MALEK.

Hark ! some one comes, I must away !
 O spite ! My love brooks not delay.

(Exit MALEK, quickly. Enter GONTRAN from the forest.)

SCENE V.

GONTRAN *(standing with outstretched arms).*

Azara, I come !

AZARA *(turning with astonishment and dropping her dagger).*

Beloved !

GONTRAN.

Found at last !

(AZARA, with a bewildered air, goes forward to meet him ; she totters and falls at his feet in a swoon. He lifts her up ; she revives.)

O joy, she breathes again ! the danger's past !

AZARA (*agitated*).

O Gontran, help ! The Moor, the Moor ! beware !

GONTRAN.

No one is here.

(He draws his sword and goes quickly and peers around.)

AZARA.

'T was Malek !

GONTRAN (*peering around again*).

Malek ! where ?

AZARA (*relieved*).

Thank God ! the monster's fled.

GONTRAN.

Traitor ! beware !

(*Drawing her to him.*)

O darling ! forget the bitter past,
 For heavenly peace is thine at last.
 As thro' the wild I strayed,
 An angel came to guide
 My steps, and shield my exiled maid
 From harm, whate'er betide.

AZARA.

With ecstasy my heart will break ;
 Now let me happy die.

GONTRAN.

Nay, live for thine adorer's sake ;
 My darling hopes wilt thou deny ?

AZARA (*musings, as in a dream*).

Here in the golden gleam,
 By the waters' flashing stream,
 I gaze on thee with ravished sight.
 Am I deceived? am I awake?
 O do not vanish like a dream
 Of heaven, lest erring eyes mistake
 Love's shadow for the living light.

GONTRAN.

Dream evermore, 't is not in vain ;
 I hold thee in my arms again,
 Behold thy face, divinely fair,
 No longer clouded o'er with care.
 Beyond these fringed lids I gaze
 Into thy soul, whose glowing rays
 Are beaming from thy tender eyes
 A look of love that never dies.

BOTH.

Blest spirit, Love divine !
 To thee we pray,
 Whose beauty gilds the skies
 Of roseate day.
 Rule o'er our lives with wise
 And gentle sway.
 O holy flame ! be thou
 Our steadfast light,
 Lest happiness so rare
 Should take its flight,
 And doom us to despair
 In darkest night.

(AZARA shows agitation ; he seeks to calm her.)

GONTRAN.

Fear naught, while heaven guards,
 With watchful eye,
 O'er glade and hallowed bower
 Where dreamers lie.

AZARA.

Black clouds of hate may lower,
 O let us fly!

GONTRAN.

The tyrant's angry frown
 Shall harm thee not.

AZARA.

I tremble for thy life,
 Beware his plot!

GONTRAN.

Beyond the deadly strife
 A happier lot
 Be ours far o'er the sea.

BOTH.

The murmuring deep
 Shall lull thy soul to rest.
 Sad memories sleep
 On Ocean's breathing breast.
 My heart shall leap
 To leave this friendless land,
 Where naught but wrong
 And hate abide.

GONTRAN (*looking towards the sea, and pointing excitedly*).

Lo! See yon distant sail!
 O'er pathway wide,

Borne on the gentle gale
 And favoring tide
 It comes within our call. O joy !
 (*A sail appears in the distance and passes by.*)

BOTH.

Blow, kindly blow, thou soft, fair wind,
 And waft yon white wings here to find
 True lovers waiting, sad and lorn.
 Brave bark ! she nears the bay !
 O bear our hopeful hearts to-day
 Far o'er the ocean's trackless way,
 To joy and life new born !

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ACT III.

(*A Year Later.*)

By the moat of GONTRAN's castle. One side of the stage, the castle-walls. Part of the back of the stage, arched tower-entrance and drawbridge, (practicable) with the banks of the moat; beyond, the country and distant line of the sea, as viewed from a height, with a glimpse of the distant walls and towers of the burg. On the other side of the stage a knoll with trees. GONTRAN is seated; AYMAR is standing by his side.

* * * * *

GONTRAN.

O Hope divine !
 Shine on my path, thou rising star !
 Swift be my flight to him afar,
 Whose harem walls my love enshrine !

AYMAR.

Shine on his path, thou rising star !
 Guide him to find love's holy shrine !

BOTH.

No longer shall my heart repine,
 Nor doubt the blessings time may bring;
 For I will share this day all.
 Let joyance reign in burg and hall!
 Blow, trumpets, blow!

SCENE II

Trumpeters appear on the ramparts and blow a signal. Enter Odo, lords, ladies, pages, etc., from the castle, by the draw-bridge. They salute GONTRAN, who seats himself while they group themselves around him.

ALL.

Long live the king! Hail, sovran lord!
 Pride of our land, by all adored!
 Thy glory crowns the joys of May.
 God grant our hopes this festal day
 Forerun the blessings time shall bring.
 Hail, sovran lord! Long live the king!

Enter burghers in holiday dress, and maidens adorned with flowers; then Moorish dancing-girls.

(Ballet — Three Moorish Dances.)

The Moorish dancing-girls with the burghers and maidens exeunt, while the lords and ladies retire and converse in groups among themselves.

SCENE IV

(Enter MALEK disguised as a minstrel.)

MALEK *(aside)*.

Alas! my quest is all in vain.
 When shall I find again
 The loved one I have lost?
 The ever rising tide

Of passion long denied
 Is surging in my breast.
 My soul is tempest tost.
 O God! there is no peace, no rest.

(Enter AZARA, disguised as a Spanish troubadour, and carrying a lute. MALEK observes her with a furtive, inquiring look. He starts back with surprise.)

A troubadour! that face I know.
 O joy! Azara! It is thou!

(He gazes at her with glowing looks.)

O wondrous bard! thy presence bright
 Enthralls my soul with rapt delight.
 E'en as a miser, my fond eyes
 Gloat o'er thy charms, Love's golden prize,—
 Charms so precious in my ravished sight!
 O priceless jewel of my heart!
 What happy stroke of art
 That in dark magic lies,
 Can subtle craft devise
 To snatch thee from my rival's hand
 And fly to Moorish land?
 May Allah turn Azara's face
 To her adorer and her race.
 My burning heart canst thou withstand?
 Darling! O yield to love's control!
 Azara, come! my longing arms shall be thy goal.

(MALEK goes aside meditatively.)

AZARA *(aside.)*

With mingled joy and fear,
 How shall I dare appear
 Before the king, and play my part,—
 Now face to face and heart to heart?
 I thrill with wild emotion!

O fateful trial of devotion !
 God strengthen me to prove
 The faithfulness of love.

(She turns and observes MALEK looking at her ; she shrinks from him.)

Who is yon strange trouvère
 Who eyes me with a restless air ?
 Dark treachery I trace
 Upon his cruel face.
 Why does he turn aside
 And clutch the dagger at his side ?
 Why does he glare upon the king
 With tigerish eyes as if to spring ?
 I tremble with alarm,
 The Moor will do him harm.
 To save him I will die !
 O heaven, hear my cry !

MALEK *(aside, glancing at GONTRAN).*

My blade is sharp with hate
 For him who rules my fate.
 'T were better she should die
 Than in his arms to lie.
 Detested king ! beware !
 For by my faith, I swear
 Revenge ! Allah — illa — Allah !
 O Allah, hear my cry !

(AZARA turns towards the throng of knights and ladies, while MALEK disappears in the crowd.)

KNIGHTS, LADIES, ETC. *(noticing AZARA).*

Behold yon troubadour ! Who is this Don ?
 His garb is Spanish ; aye, of Aragon.

GONTRAN (*to* AYMAR).

How comely is this bard. Bid him to sing.

AYMAR (*approaches* AZARA).

Be welcome to our court this festal day,
 Thy homage be the poet's ardent lay.
 O noble master of the *gai saber*!
 With melody enchant the listening air,
 And win the laurel from these ladies fair!

(AZARA *approaches* GONTRAN *with obeisance*. *The courtiers group themselves around her at a distance*. *She preludes on the lute*.)

AZARA.

Exalted by thy presence, Sire,
 And charmed by beauty's magic spell,
 What soulful bard would not aspire
 His true romance of love to tell?
 There lived in Gaul a mighty lord
 Who false and recreant proved; for toward
 His son's betrothed his burning heart
 Was drawn by passion's wily art.
 To shun the jealous father's hand
 The lovers sought to flee the land.
 At morn beside the sea they met,
 But by the Paynim were beset,
 And while her lover stood at bay,
 They stole the fainting girl away.
 Quickly the bark was rowed from shore;
 Alas, she saw his face no more!

MALEK (*with agitation*).

The fatal truth my rival soon will know!
 Ill-starred one! trembling on the brink of woe!

AZARA.

As on to Spain the galley sped,
 The amorous chief his captive sought.
 "I am thy loving slave," he said.
 "To spurn thy love, false hearted Moor,
 E'en bitter death will I endure!"
 Then he dissembled till he brought
 Her to the king, her sire, and thought
 To gain her hand as his reward,
 Who served the Caliph with his sword.
 "Betrayed! dare not violate
 My plighted troth," she cried, "lest hate
 And loathing curse thy nuptial day."

(She pauses, overcome with emotion).

MALEK (*aside*).

False bard, beware! these words shall be thy last!
 Despair has steeled my heart; the die is cast!

AZARA.

God's light upon her pathway shone,
 When she escaped to Aragon.
 Disguised in garb of troubadour,
 The outcast shunned the desperate Moor.
 Yet though he dogged her footsteps still,
 Thro' every danger, every ill,
 Undying hope sustained her soul,
 That she would reach her sacred goal
 And rest in loving arms at last,
 No more to weep in bitter dole.
 O Gontran! the agony is past!

(She throws off her mantle and disguise.)

MALEK.

Betrayed by thee, then die!

(He darts forward and tries to stab AZARA, but GONTRAN seizes him by the arm; they struggle desperately.)

GONTRAN.

Hold, wretch! hell-hound!

GONTRAN *wrenches his arm so that the dagger falls to the ground, and hurls him backwards.*)

AZARA.

Merciful God, the Moor!

(Guards advance to seize MALEK.)

GONTRAN.

Leave him unbound!

(MALEK, with gestures of despair and agony, staggers forward.)

MALEK.

Death! I am lost! O cruel destiny!

What have I done? How could I strike at thee,

Mine idol?

(He turns with deep sorrow towards AZARA and falls at her feet.)

Though abhorred, accurst am I,

Thy slave — the love-crazed Moor — knows how to die!

(He rises and draws a concealed dagger and stabs himself. He falls heavily to the ground and dies. Guards bear the body out of sight.)

GONTRAN *(drawing AZARA to his arms.)*

Azara! forever mine!

AZARA.

O Gontran! forever thine!

BOTH.

O joy ineffable, divine!

My life, my destiny thou art;

O holy union — heart to heart!

AYMAR, ODO.

O joy divine !
All hail, O love-crowned king !
Loud praises sing !
Forever thine !
Heart to heart — O joy divine !

ALL.

All hail ! rejoice ! O love-crowned king !
O radiant bride ! Loud praises sing !
God save our royal pair !
Long may ye reign o'er Provence fair,
Blest land of love and song !

(Curtain.)