

**PAREPA-ROSA, GRAND ENGLISH
OPERA. THE WATER-CARRIER,
(LES DEUX JOURNÉES) LYRIC
DRAMA IN THREE ACTS**

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Parepa-rosa, grand english opera. The Water-carrier, (Les Deux Journées) Lyric Drama in
Three Acts by Cherubini & Arthur Baildon

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CHERUBINI & ARTHUR BAILDON

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OPERA. THE WATER-CARRIER,
(LES DEUX JOURNÉES) LYRIC
DRAMA IN THREE ACTS**

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PAREPA-ROSA
GRAND
ENGLISH OPERA.

THE WATER-CARRIER,

(LES DEUX JOURNÉES.)

LYRIC DRAMA IN THREE ACTS.

COMPOSED BY

CHERUBINI.

TRANSLATED BY

ARTHUR BALDON.

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Characters.

COUNT ARMAND.....
CONSTANCE (his Countess).....
MICHELI (a Savoyard, settled in Paris as a water-carrier).....
DANIEL (his father, old and infirm).....
ANTONIO (son of Micheli, farmer in the village of Gonesse).....
MARCELINA (daughter of Micheli).....
SEMOS (rich farmer of Gonesse).....
ANGELINA (his only child, betrothed to Antonio).....
COMMANDANT } of Italian troops in the pay of Mazarin.....
LIEUTENANT }

Soldiers, Peasants, &c.

The first and second acts take place in Paris; the third in the village of Gonesse.

Time, A. D. 1647.

LES DEUX JOURNÉES.

ACT I.

SCENE I.—*The interior of Micheli's dwelling. On the left is an alcove in which is a bed, closed in by old green curtains, and opposite is the door of entrance. At the back on a chair are some male clothes, and beside it is a crutch. There is also a door at the back leading to an inner room.*

NIGHT.—*Daniel is seated in an old arm chair, beside which is a crutch-handled stick. Antonio and Marcelina are seated by a table, on which a lamp is burning. Marcelina is making boquets of artificial flowers, that are lying in a basket.*

DAN. Well children, have you done those flowers?

MAR. We are getting on, Grandfather. Now, brother, as to-morrow you are going to take me to Gonesse, I hope we shall start at daybreak.

ANT. Oh, as early as ever you please. You know it is two days since I left my Angelina, and if I had not come for you, I should not have remained so long in Paris.

MAR. Well it would have been fine not to have had me at your wedding. Don't you know, sir, I have to present this wreath to the bride? How we shall enjoy ourselves to be sure! I hope there will be lots of dancing.

ANT. Aye, that there will, and singing.

DAN. Singing?—I hope you have not forgotten the song of the Sivoyard?

ANT. Nay, Grandfather, I love it too much ever to forget it.

MAR. You know how Grandfather dotes upon it, so sing it to him now.

ANT. That will I with all my heart.

SONG OF THE SAVOYARD.

Once a poor little Savoyard,
 With cold and want was nearly dying;
 When his infant prayer was heard,
 By a kind stranger his state spying.
 Life came back to the child again,
 Through the kind timely aid then given.
 Blest be that stranger now by Heaven,
 A good deed is ne'er done in vain.

If that good heart should sorrow know,
 Or be exposed to sudden danger;
 Then the Savoyard would show
 His gratitude to that kind stranger,
 Who to safety restored again,
 While to his heart sweet peace is given,
 Then he will learn that blessed by Heaven,
 A good deed is ne'er done in vain.

DAN. Good boy! good boy! you sing the song as if you felt it.

ANT. And I do feel it Grandfather, for I was the poor child mentioned. It happened at Berne, ten years ago. I was then twelve years of age, and had wandered many weary miles that day without earning a sou. Cold and hungry, I was weeping 'neath a hedge, when suddenly a carriage stopped from which a young foreigner descended. Tenderly he lifted me in his arms and took me where all my wants were supplied. Heaven bless him for it! On his departure, he gave me five pieces of silver, one of which I have kept (*draws it, attached to a ribbon, from his breast*). See, here it is—it shall never leave me.

MAR. Did you ever know who the stranger was?

ANT. Never, but from his dress and speech he must have been a Frenchman.

[DANIEL who had come forward during Antonio's song, leaning on his crutch-stick—
 Marcelina now helps back to his chair.]

MAR. Father is late to-day in coming back from his rounds. He promised to come home early and go with me for my passport, without which I cannot leave the town to-morrow.

ANT. (*Seated on the corner of the table.*) You cannot come in without one either, and it must have your full description, without anything being left out.

MAR. What is that for?

[*Settling the flowers in the basket.*]

DAN. To stop those members of the Parliament who are flying from the persecution of Cardinal Mazarin.

ANT. Oh, the injury that man has done to France!

DAN. Lately he issued an edict that would have crushed the poor, but the Parliament, fortunately, would not listen to it. Well, what does his Eminence do? He arrests the principal members, and has even put a price on the head of the boldest and most courageous amongst them.

MAR. It must have been that, brother, we heard in town this morning?

ANT. Yes; crowds were cursing the Cardinal that wished to kill the people's champion, and not only him, but his young wife, as beautiful as she is good—the guardian angel of the poor. If there be not a riot this day I shall be very much surprised.

MAR. I think I hear my father.

[*She runs to the door.*]

ANT. Yes; here he comes.

[*Enter MICH.—He wears a long, round hat, and across his shoulders a broad leather belt, at the bottom of which is an iron hook. As he comes on he puts down two buckets he carries, and takes off the belt.*]

MAR. At last, dear father!

[*MICH. comes forward wiping his forehead.*]

MICH. Ugh!

ANT. Father, you are tired.

MICH. No, my dear boy, not I; quite the contrary. You never hear me complain. (*To DAN, who has got up, leaning on his stick.*) Ha, grandfather! good evening. (*To MAR.*) Is supper ready?

MAR. Yes, father dear, it is ready; but I hoped that before supper you would come with me to the Commissaire to get my passport.

MICH. Is not to-morrow morning soon enough?

ANT. You see that to avoid the heat of the day we wished to start early.

MICH. That you might the earlier be with your betrothed. Ha! ha! Well, it is only natural; but now I cannot go, because—because (*emphatically*) I expect some one here.

MAR. At this time of night?

MICH. (*Laughing and pinching her chin.*) Ha, ha! it would not be too late for you?

DAN. (*Coming forward leaning on his stick.*) The office of the Commissaire is not far off; I will go in your place, Micheli, and present my grand-daughter.

MICH. It will fatigue you too much.

DAN. Nay, the exercise will do me good.

MAR. Won't you take your crutch, grandfather?

[She points to the one at the back.

DAN. I prefer, dear, your arm for my support. (*To ANT.*) Are you coming with us?

ANT. I must get a visé to the passport given to me at Gonesse, or they would stop me as I left the town.

[Exit the three.

MICH. (*Alone.*) They are coming; they had a narrow escape. How he pressed my hand while his wife expressed their gratitude. To be sure, I have got myself into a fine scrape through them and they are not safe yet, nor shall I be till I have got them out of Paris. How is that to be done when every outlet is strictly guarded by Italian troops, devoted to that cursed Cardinal, who let no one pass without close examination? (*Reflects.*) The risk is great, but in the sacred cause of suffering humanity I will dare it.

COUPLET.

Give me thy guidance, bounteous Heaven;

Grant the success from thee I crave;

O, let this joy to me be given,

Two tender, loving hearts to save!

Amidst our joys, alas so fleeting!

There is not one the soul can charm,

Like fond memory repeating:

“The innocent I saved from harm.”

How to act—so fast perils gather—

For my children I ought to live;

For their sake and for my father,

Whose age needs all the care I give.

But pity calls, the hours are fleeting,
 And as these dangers I shall brave,
 Still I'll hear Heaven's voice repeating :
 "Aid thy brother—the innocent save."

My mind is made up, and the only thing now is to make the necessary preparations. I have the whole night to do it and my son to help me; that will suffice with the conscious strength that always springs from a virtuous action. (*Knock.*) Here they are, no doubt; but I won't let them know my plan yet, or they would never let me run the risk; but I'll do it. That I will, on the faith of a water-carrier.

[He opens the door and ARMAND and CONSTANCE enter. ARMAND is disguised as an officer, with two pistols in his belt; CONSTANCE is covered with a large dark silk mantle, hat and feather.

TRIO.

ARM. Our brave preserver here. [Pressing his hand.
 CON. Our lives to you are owing. [Same business.
 BOTH. Ever while through this life going,
 In our hearts' esteem you shall share.
 MICH. 'Twas but my duty I was doing,
 To do that ever is my care.
 ARM. I to you the life owe of Constance.
 CON. And I that of my husband dear.
 MICH. I think I may say, without fear,
 I showed some cunning in this instance.
 BOTH. By fierce soldiers, cruel and rude,
 Our weary slow steps were pursued.
 MICH. From their eyes then I hid the lady,
 With fright was she near dead already,
 Then I clap my hat on your head
 And make you guide my cart instead;
 The furious soldiers then appearing,
 For a water-carrier you take.
 They search all round, in vain rage swearing.
 Ha! ha! a better joke I ne'er did make!
 BOTH. How his goodness is appearing,
 With what courage and what daring!