

**BOCCACE(
BOCCACCIO), A COMIC
OPERA, IN THREE ACTS**

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Boccace(boccaccio), a comic opera, in three acts by A. Duru & H. Chivot

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A. DURU & H. CHIVOT

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BOCCACCIO), A COMIC
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BOCCACE

(BOCCACCIO).

A COMIC OPERA,

IN THREE ACTS.

FRENCH WORDS BY

H. CHIVOT AND A. DURU.

LITERALLY RENDERED INTO ENGLISH BY

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MUSIC BY

FRANZ DE SUPPÉ.

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BOCCACE.

(BOCCACCIO.)

Persons represented :

JEAN BOCCACE.
PRINCE ORLANDO.
PANDOLFO, gardener.
TROMBOLI, cooper.
QUIQUIBIO, barber.
LELIO, friend of Boccace.
BEPPLO, pedlar.
The UNKNOWN.
CECCO, old beggar.
A CITIZEN.
BEATRICE, adopted daughter of Pandolfo.
FRISCA, wife of Tromboli.
PERONELLE, wife of Pandolfo.
ZANETTA, wife of Quiquibio.
GIOTTO.
FREDERICO.
TOFANO.
RAPHAËLE.

Students, Citizens, Lords and Ladies of the Court, Maids of Honor, Pages, Valets, &c. &c.

The Scene takes place in Florence, about 1340.

ACT I.

THE Theatre represents a public square before the church of Sancta Maria Novella at Florence; to the left, the portal of the church; at the entrance, a font; to the right, the house of the barber Quiquibio, over the door his sign, passable terrace, window on the ground floor, facing the public road. Under this window, a stone bench. All the houses are decorated with flowers, lanterns, hangings and flags in honour of St. John.

SCENE I.—*Cecco*, several beggars, then *Lelio*, Citizens, then the Students. When the curtain rises the beggars are standing by the church.

INTRODUCTION.

Chorus of Beggars. For Florence be this a joyous day : To-day is the festival of St. John.

Cecco. Each one prepare His petition, Each one watch His patron : We must have his money ! (placing the beggars), Thou, act the cripple well, Thou, my child, put on a hypocritical air, And thou, wife, take thy baby, For, I see down below, A crowd of citizens !

Lelio (entering with mystery, and looking at the barber's house). Zanetta, I suppose, Should await me in her dwelling, Her husband, charming affair, Is absent from this country ! (taking a key from his pocket) This key, which I make use of, Will open Paradise to me ! (he walks towards Quiquibio's house).

Chorus. (Behind the scene) Tra la la la !

Lelio. I must enter quickly, Now is the moment. (He insinuates himself into the house).

Cecco (to the Beggars). Run immediately, Attack the patrons ! (Entrance of a crowd of Citizens in Sunday attire and carrying flowers).

Chorus. St. John, our dear patron, On this great festival day, May each of us prepare To glorify thy-holy name ! Oila ! Oila ! St. John, our protector, We would do thee honour, Receive with these flowers, The homage of our hearts. Oila, Oila !

Cecco and the *Beggars.* Mercy on us, pity, We die of hunger !

The Crowd. When here, everything enchants us, Be there no weeping complaints, For here are coming towards us, Our young and frolicsome students. (Entrance of young students, their hands full of bouquets of roses).

The Students. Deuce take the Class, We can dispense with it, This enchanting day ! Our heart gives itself up, To the pleasure That liberty gives. Delightful youthful beauties, Come to us, All these flowers so brilliant Are for you ! Yes, these roses are for you !

SCENE II.—The same, a pedlar pushing before him a small truck full of books.

The Pedlar. See, my dears, These new pamphlets ! Buy this one !

The Crowd. Here ! here !

The Pedlar. The little book-seller Has things to satisfy you. (To the students, showing them a pamphlet.) For you, my boys, Joyous cronies, I have the songs Of the gay troubadours ! Who wishes for the volume of songs ?

The Crowd. Let us buy these songs !

The Pedlar (to the citizens, showing them a pamphlet.) For the citizens, very sceptical people, I have some political satires ! Who wants my Juvenal ?

The Crowd. Let us buy it, it is a fete.

The Pedlar (showing another pamphlet. This is the work of a poet, Everyone buys it of me; It is a new volume, A tale by Boccacio!

The Women. That is an amusing story-teller!

The Men. It is a rogue, an imposter!

The Pedlar. In this book, my author Says that a woman with any heart Ought to have, one year with another, One lover, at the least!

The Men. It is a horror!

The Pedlar. A horror! not at all, One only, that is not much!

The Women and Students. Bravo! Boccace is right!

The Men. Boccace is a blackguard, A writer without decency, Fear all of our fury!

The Women. Thou art threatened, But whatever they do, Oh! dear Boccace, Be very firm.

The Students. There, they are quarrelling, My faith, it is very amusing (The women and their husbands threaten each other and clench their fists. The pedlar runs away with his cart).

The Men. Hold your tongues!

The Women. Horrid Wolves!

The Men. Take care of our blows.

The Women. Take care of yourselves!

(Together) *The Men.* Now, hold your tongues, And fear, Conduct yourselves very quietly, Or fear our blows!

The Women. Oh, horrid wolves! Jealous husbands, Be more gentle, Or take care of yourselves.

The Students. No more anger, And no blows, Like good husbands and wives, Embrace! Now then, make peace, and no disputes, Embrace and no more strife.

The Pedlar (from without). See, my dears, The new pamphlets.

(Together.) *The Men.* Let us attack the pedlar, And burn the works of the tale-teller.

The Women. Let the pedlar alone, and the work of the gay tale-teller.

The Students. Let the pedlar alone And the work of the gay tale-teller. (All go out. Cecco remains last and is going to follow the others, when Pandolfo and Tromboli enter).

SCENE III.—*Cecco, Pandolfo, Tromboli.*

Pandolfo. What an uproar! what a tumult!

Cecco (crying). To the water! to the water!

Pandolfo (to Cecco). What, to the water, What is it then?

Cecco. It is a pedlar who has the audacity to sell in the public street works of Boccace.

Pandolfo and Tromboli. Of Boccace?

Cecio. And the husbands of the town owe him a grudge . . . I must go and see how he will get out of it. (He goes out.)

SCENE IV.—*Pandolfo, Tromboli, then Quiquibio.*

Pandolfo. Very well! The husbands are right! If they throw this pedlar with all his merchandise into the water it will be a good thing! (To Tromboli.) Is it not true, comrade Tromboli?

Tromboli. I am quite of your opinion, comrade Pandolfo: this Boccace is a rogue . . .

Pandolfo. And when one thinks that he has all the women on his side!

Tromboli. Zounds! it is very bad . . . he laughs at us, the husbands.

Pandolfo. Upon my life, comrade Tromboli, as true as my name is Pandolfo, and I am gardener by trade, if I had him in my hands I would wring his neck like a fowl.

Tromboli. And I, comrade Pandolfo, as true as my name is Tromboli, and I am cooper by trade, I swear that I would help you in this work.

Pandolfo. And he would only have what he deserves. Talking of this Boccace, you know what they say?

Tromboli. What they say?

Pandolfo. They maintain that he has left Rome for a week past, and that he is here, at Florence.

Tromboli. Here, not possible? Within our walls?

Pandolfo. My God, yes . . . and it appears that he has already signalized his presence by his usual pranks. They speak on all sides of women seduced, husbands deceived, nocturnal adventures . . .

Tromboli. Ah! the scoundrel! They will not rid us, then, of this rascal! (He flourishes his stick with fury.) (Quiquibio, entering by the back, in travelling costume, a portmanteau in one hand, an umbrella in the other, receives the blow from Tromboli's cane.) Aie! Ah! how stupid!

Pandolfo. Our comrade Quiquibio!

Tromboli. The most illustrious barber in Florence! A thousand pardons, my comrade, I did not know you were there. Whence do you come then thus?

Quiquibio. From a little journey into Sicily . . . money matters . . . and I am not sorry to be back again. (Pointing to the house on the right.) I have left alone at home my chaste and loving wife, (Sending a kiss to the right.) my charming Zanetta. (To the two men.) She does not expect me for some days, so I shall surprise her very agreeably.

Tromboli. I believe it!

Pandolfo. But how is it that you are returning earlier?

Quiquibio (with pride, drawing himself up). Ah! my friends, a great honor of which I have been the recipient. Instead of taking the coach, like ordinary mortals, I have been admitted to join the suite of the Prince of Palermo, and I have travelled . . .

Tromboli (surprised.) In his carriage?

Quiquibio. No, in the luggage van.

Pandolfo. What does he want at Florence, the Prince of Palermo?

Quiquibio (mysteriously). I will whisper it to you . . . he comes to take a wife.

Tromboli and Pandolfo. Bah!

Quiquibio. Hush! (softly.) There is a question if he will marry the daughter of our grand duke.

Pandolfo. What stuff are you telling us? *Quiquibio!* . . . are you going crazy? You know quite well that the grand duke has no children.

Quiquibio. Ostensibly, yes, but I tell you in confidence, it appears that our grand duke . . . you will be discreet, will you not? It appears that our grand duke has sown his wild oats in his time . . . so . . .

Pandolfo. I see! A natural daughter?

Quiquibio. Precisely, and that till now he has not been able to acknowledge her, because there was an obstacle, a husband . . . who has just disappeared, in short, well, an adventure à la Boccace.

Pandolfo. Boccace! Well, we were speaking of him, just now, he is in Florence . . .

Quiquibio. The little demon! Now then, husbands, take care! We shall see some fine . . . as for me, I am quite tranquil.

Tromboli. I also.

Pandolfo. And I too . . . My dear wife, my good Péronelle has eyes for me alone.

Tromboli. My little Fresca, my little pretty girl, loves me to adoration.

Pandolfo. That is why she corrects you so well then. They say, comrade that you like to bend your elbow, and that when you return a little fuddled Madame administers to you some good blows with sticks . . .

Tromboli (cries.) That is not true! I am master at home.

Quiquibio. Yes, yes, calm yourself . . . we are masters, and our wives are faithful to us . . . For my part, I fear absolutely nothing. My adorable Zanetta is a dragon of virtue. (Sending a kiss to the right.) Dear beauty, tender love! (Turning towards the house.) She is there, sad and solitary, she is thinking of me, she waits for me, she longs for me . . .