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Lucia di Lammermoor



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Donizetti's
Lucia di Lammermoor

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have been intentionally omitted.

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a prelude...
to OPERA CLASSICS LIBRARY's
Lucia di Lammermoor

Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* represents the quintessential flourishing of early nineteenth-century Italian Romanticism and the bel canto school; the soul of the genre was voice and melody, the art form demanding singing with beauty, elegance, flexibility, an assured technique, and vocal pyrotechnics and bravura. But *Lucia di Lammermoor* is also an operatic masterpiece possessing consummate dramatic power and unrivalled musical beauty.

OPERA CLASSICS LIBRARY explores Donizetti's masterpiece in depth. Included in the text is a *Commentary and Analysis* that provides insightful analysis of the drama and its characters, together with the *Principal Characters*, *Brief Synopsis*, and *Story Narrative with Music Highlight Examples*.

The Opera Journeys Publishing staff has newly translated the *Libretto* with specific emphasis on retaining a literal translation, but also with the objective to provide a faithful translation in modern and contemporary English; in this way, the substance of the opera becomes more intelligible. To enhance educational and study objectives, the *Libretto* contains music highlight examples interspersed within the drama's exposition. In addition, the text includes a selected *Discography*, *Videography*, and a *Dictionary of Opera and Musical Terms*.

The opera art form is the sum of many artistic expressions: theatrical drama, music, scenery, poetry, dance, acting and gesture. In opera, it is the composer who is the dramatist, using the emotive power of his music to express intense, human conflicts. Words evoke thought, but music provokes feelings: opera's sublime fusion of words, music, and all the theatrical arts provides powerful theater: an impact on one's sensibilities that can reach into the very depths of the human soul.

Lucia di Lammermoor is a magnificent operatic invention, a towering tribute to the art form as well as to its ingenious composer. Music is the language of passion; Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor* is an opera of consummate passions, elevated to grandeur by the composer's captivating musical invention.

Burton D. Fisher

Editor

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Lucia di Lammermoor

“Lucy of Lammermoor”

Dramma tragico (“Tragic drama”)

Opera in Italian in three acts

Music

by

Gaetano Donizetti

Libretto by Salvatore Cammarano,

after Sir Walter Scott’s novel,

The Bride of Lammermoor (1819)

Premiere: Teatro San Carlo, Naples (1835)

The American premiere of *Lucia di Lammermoor* took place in New Orleans in 1842, presented by a touring company from Havana. It was the second opera performed during the opening season of the Metropolitan Opera in New York on October 24, 1883.

Commentary and Analysis

Gaetano Donizetti was born in Bergamo, Italy, in 1797. Together with his contemporaries, Rossini, Bellini, Mercadante, and Pacini, they dominated Italian opera during the first half of the nineteenth century; they were the vanguard of the Italian bel canto genre, a style literally meaning “beautiful singing,” or “fine singing,” that emphasized vocal virtuosity and clear melodic lines embellished with ample musical ornamentation.

At an early age, despite his family’s ambition for him to pursue a legal career, Donizetti turned to music. His exceptional talents earned him a scholarship to study with one of the leading opera composers of his day, Simon Mayr: Mayr became Donizetti’s mentor and recognized his musical gifts; he trained him diligently in composition, theory, and harmony, and encouraged him to compose operas. Throughout Donizetti’s entire life, he expressed his devotion and appreciation to Mayr, referring to him as his “second father.”

At seventeen, with financial support arranged by Mayr, the budding young opera composer undertook more advanced music studies at the Bologna Conservatory. Four years later, his first opera, *Enrico di Borgogna* (1818), earned appreciable praise for its originality, and served to stimulate him toward opera composition. In the 1830s, after an astonishing series of triumphs, he moved to Paris, then the recognized center of the opera world, where his many successes prompted Berlioz to pen the rather envious quip: “One can no longer speak of the opera houses of Paris but only of the opera houses of M. Donizetti.”

During his lifetime, Donizetti composed an astounding 69 or 72 operas, the actual total depending on the musicological and historical source. Nevertheless, he composed within a brief time-span, dying in 1848 at the age of 51. Like the early deaths of Mozart or Chopin, one wonders what musical treasures would have been created had Donizetti lived longer. Nevertheless, his voluminous output represents a commanding legacy, an undeniable accomplishment that establishes him as one of the foremost composers of nineteenth century opera.

In 1818, when Donizetti began his career, Gioachino Rossini was the icon of Italian opera, his operas the rage of audiences. As such, Rossini became the primary architect and major influence of all contemporary opera: he revitalized, refashioned, and established all the structural guidelines for the opera buffa (comic) and opera seria (serious) styles. To assure success, composers such as Vincenzo Bellini and Gaetano Donizetti obediently conformed to Rossini’s rigid formulae and florid styles until they later developed their own specific musical signatures.

Donizetti possessed unique resources and capabilities, composing prolifically, like Rossini, in both the comic and serious opera genres. He exhibited extraordinary dramatic insight, was a fluent technician, a skillful craftsman, and manifested a fertile melodic inventiveness: his music is noted for its eminent melodic beauty, and simple but adept orchestration. If there is anything that distinguishes Donizetti’s music it is his exquisite vocal lines, a lyricism possessing extraordinary melodic beauty. He insisted, with almost religious conviction, that the one overwhelmingly important ingredient of music was beautiful melody, and ultimately, beautiful melody became the cornerstone of his musical philosophy.

Donizetti’s best comic operas are marked with a dashing spontaneity, verve, and gaiety, all integrated with a masterful mix of tenderness and pathos. His sentimental, syrupy comedy, *L’Elisir d’Amore* (1832), just like Rossini’s *The Barber of Seville* (1816), is considered a classic of the opera buffa genre. Likewise, *La Fille du Régiment* (“The Daughter of the Regiment”) (1840), and *Don Pasquale* (1843) are considered comic masterpieces, the latter, an opera that possesses an almost Mozartian adroitness in its musical characterizations.

Donizetti’s serious or tragic operas have powerful passion and swift dramatic action: *Anna Bolena* (1830); *Lucrezia Borgia* (1833); *Roberto Devereaux* (1837); *La Favorite* (1840),

the latter a grandly elegant work that many consider his finest serious French opera; and *Lucia di Lammermoor* (1835), to many, the archetype of nineteenth century Italian Romantic opera.

Many legends naturally follow a composer with such a prodigious career. It is rumored that Donizetti was a master of musical file maintenance, who supposedly kept a neatly organized index of unused musical material, as well as scraps and brief sketches of pieces that were not fully developed; for Donizetti, it was sacrilege to let an unused note go astray. But within this panorama of voluminous operatic output, there exists an entire range of musical criticism: there are some operas that are considered great, and some bad and even ugly; those considered trite and superficial have long been forgotten.

Donizetti's compositional muse worked swiftly: *L'Elisir d'Amore* apparently premiered two weeks after he received its commission; and in *Lucia di Lammermoor*, Edgardo's final aria, "Tu che a Dio spiegasti d'ali," was admittedly composed in one-half hour during moments of respite when the composer was nursing a headache while playing cards with friends. *Lucia di Lammermoor* was supposedly composed in 36 days.

In sum, Donizetti left a robust legacy of bel canto masterpieces, many of which, after a period of neglect and critical disdain, have reemerged and become prominent fixtures in the repertoires of contemporary major opera companies.

The primary focus of Italian opera, going back to its Camerata foundations in the early seventeenth century, was that the human voice was the noblest and most ideal musical instrument, an instrument capable of expressing the entire range of human emotions and passions, aspirations, yearnings and desires.

Bel canto opera became the materialization of the ideal that the voice was a divine and sacred gift; as such, singing was considered both an art and a science, and bel canto operas were composed first and foremost as showcases for singers to demonstrate feats of vocal virtuosity: as a result, dramatic and theatrical elements generally became secondary considerations, the underlying literary values of the librettos generally insignificant, and the dramas rarely bearing any organic relationship or integration with their underlying music. In bel canto operas, the art of singing and vocal pyrotechnics were the priority, not heightened dramatic human conflicts and tensions.

As such, the dramatic intensity of many bel canto librettos receives minor praise from our modern music-drama centered audiences. In the bel canto tradition, drama and dramatic continuity were generally secondary considerations to the art of singing, the inherent drama of the work created specifically through vocal technique and inflection rather than its underlying text. In retrospect, many of those librettos are viewed today as humdrum and hackneyed, even though extremely talented and original craftsmen wrote many of them.

Bel canto opera's internal structure featured "numbers" or "set pieces" (arias, duets, trios, ensembles) that were integrated with recitative, all composed within existing standard conventions and formulae: cavatinas (a simple or short aria for the principal singer), cabalettas (a brisk last section of an aria or duet, usually with several sections), and strettas (a speeding up of tempo to create a climactic moment). By design, rather than technical limitations, the orchestra in most bel canto operas was reduced to its utmost simplicity, often just an accompanist: melody dominated, and by necessity, the orchestra generally became subdued when the singer was singing, regardless of internal dramatic conflicts.

Because the soul of bel canto opera was voice and melody, the art form demanded singing with beauty, elegance, flexibility, an assured technique, and a certain degree of bravura and vocal acrobatics. Often the designations bel canto and coloratura — and even fioritura — are synonymous terms that are used interchangeably, but primarily they all define an elaborate and brilliant ornamentation of the vocal line. A singer's virtuosity and vocal fireworks became the preeminent features of bel canto, and singers dominated the art form, prompting composers

to become dutifully obliged to cater to their vocal superstars. In effect, singers became the composer's austere clients, so in order to guarantee achieving an immediate success with audiences, composers often wrote their operas for renowned contemporary virtuoso singers, dutifully and conscientiously modifying elements of their music to suit the singer's whims and technical capabilities.

In the bel canto style, dramatic effects are mostly expressed through vocal inflections rather than through harmonic nuance or orchestral commentary: therefore, a singer achieves drama through coloratura passages and dynamics of the vocal line, the passages at times bent, flexed, stretched, speeded up, or slowed down. In general, the intrigue of bel canto opera is dependent upon the singer's ability to deliver vocal fireworks, and when performed with intelligence and virtuosity, bel canto can achieve a profound dramatic poignancy, eloquence, and intense passion.

The inherent freshness of the underlying music of bel canto operas has compelled many opera goers to overlook the occasional weaknesses of their drama and librettos. Historically, many bel canto operas were relegated to opera museums during much of the latter part of the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries. But at the midpoint of the twentieth century, champions of the tradition arose, proving that there was indeed more drama in these works than had ever been suspected. Certainly, bel canto is very much alive in contemporary repertoires, proven by the extraordinary successes of recent superstars of the genre such as Maria Callas, Alfredo Kraus, Marilyn Horne, Joan Sutherland, and currently, Cecilia Bartoli and Jennifer Larmore.

Those great nineteenth-century masters of bel canto, Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti, left a legacy of some 150 operas: the preeminence of their works on our contemporary opera stages remains proof that the bel canto art form is not only captivating, but a classic genre that is capable of continuous rejuvenation.

The Scottish poet and novelist, Sir Walter Scott, 1771 – 1832, was the first to write in captivating detail about the customs and history of his country, then a strange and little known land situated just on the very edge of Europe. During the early nineteenth-century Romantic era, Scott's depiction of turbulent political and social events in sixteenth and seventeenth-century England and Scotland, was being read in translation all over Europe: as an ultimate tribute, many of his works were imitated by such renowned dramatists as Goethe and Schiller.

Scott's novels were vivid in their dialogue, contained an assured narrative flow, and combined rich historical details with a sense of geographical realism. They proved excellent for stage adaptations, because their heroic characters seemed all too realistic, yet their historical time period was set sufficiently far in the past to animate the romantic spirit of the times.

Scott's works inspired over 60 operas, most of which were composed during the early nineteenth century Romantic period: Rossini's *La Donna del Lago* (1819) adapted from *The Lady of the Lake*; *Ivanhoe*, adapted by Marschner, Pacini, Nicolai, and Sullivan; Flotow's *Rob Roy* (1836); Bizet's *The Fair Maid of Perth* (1867); Auber's *Leicester* (1823) based on *Kenilworth*, as well as Donizetti's *Elisabetta al Castello di Kenilworth* (1829), also based on *Kenilworth*.

Scott based his romance, *The Bride of Lammermoor* (1819), on an actual historical event that took place in Scotland in 1669: Janet Dalrymple attacked her bridegroom, David Dunbar, whom her father insisted she marry instead of Dunbar's uncle, Lord Rutherford, to whom she was secretly betrothed. Scott changed the characters' names, shifted the locale, and invented a complex plot that captured the tragic essence of the story.

The heroine of Scott's story is Lucy Ashton, the daughter of the unscrupulous Sir William Ashton, who used legal chicanery to bring about the financial ruin of his ancestral enemy, Lord

Ravenswood. Lucy and the Ravenswoods' son, Edgar, fall in love, vowing their eternal devotion at the Mermaid's Fountain. But while Edgar was away, the Ashton's forced Lucy to marry the dissolute Laird of Bucklaw; on her wedding night, Lucy critically stabbed and wounded her bridegroom. She died the following day. Edgar, on his way to duel Lucy's brother, was lost in the quicksands of Kelpies Flow.

Before Donizetti's treatment of Scott's *The Bride of Lammermoor*, it had become the basis of three earlier Italian operas: Carafa's *Le Nozze di Lammermoor* (1829), Rieschi's *La Fidanzata di Lammermoor* (1831), and Mazzucato's *La Fidanzata di Lammermoor* (1834).

The Neapolitan born Italian librettist and playwright, Salvatore Cammarano (1801-1852) had been moderately successful as a painter and sculptor, but suddenly and inexplicably turned to the theater: he wrote many plays during the 1820s which were all saturated with an unusual blend of comedy and melancholy.

Cammarano eventually became a stage director, integrating his early training in art with his writing talents as a poet: he began as an editor and writer of plot outlines, and then graduated to writing opera librettos. In 1838, he left Naples for Paris and became one of the most esteemed and sought after Italian librettists of his day, eventually writing over 50 librettos for some of the most important composers of the period, who included: Mercadante (nine libretti including *La Vestale* (1840) and *Il Reggente* (1843), and Pacini (six libretti including *Saffo* (1840).

Donizetti insisted that Cammarano write the librettos for *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Roberto Devereaux* (1837), *Poliuto* (1848), *L'Assedio di Calis*, *Maria di Rohan* (first performed in 1943), *Maria de Rudenz* (1838), *Belisario* (1836), and *Pia d'Tolomei* (1848). Cammarano also became Verdi's favorite poet, writing the librettos for *Alzira* (1845), *La Battaglia di Legnano* (1849), *Luisa Miller* (1849), and *Il Trovatore* (1853), the latter uncompleted before his death. The relationship between Verdi and Cammarano vacillated: at times it was tense, and at times it was harmonious. Nevertheless, Cammarano was Verdi's poet of choice for the *King Lear* opera, which remained a dream throughout his entire life but never came to fruition.

Cammarano epitomized the operatic poets of his generation: he was a meticulous craftsman and writer of carefully polished mellifluous verses, possessed a poet's concern for the sonority of his lines, had a highly developed sense of dramatic structure, often relished the opportunity to add variations and obscurities to a story, and was astutely adept at molding his plots for the composer's adaptation into arias and ensembles. He is traditionally faulted for writing stilted and monotonous expressive prose, a result of his penchant for flowery diction that was so typical of the old fashioned "libretto Italiano" tradition of the time: bells were never bells but "sacred bronzes," and midnight was traditionally the "hour of the dead."

Nevertheless, Cammarano left a legacy of great literary achievements in opera history: he was the poet for two of the most popular romantic melodramas of the nineteenth century: Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*, and Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, an operatic immortality none of his contemporaries ever achieved.

Donizetti's music and Cammarano's text unite perfectly to capture the enchantment and dramatic passions unleashed in Scott's *Bride*, dutifully projecting the melancholy of the Scottish ambience, as well as the mysterious and even Gothic atmosphere of the story. Donizetti may have been inspired toward Scott's *Bride* because of his own ancestry: his grandfather, Donald Izett, is reputed to have been a weaver who emigrated to Italy from Perthshire, Scotland.

In adapting Scott's powerful plot, Cammarano trimmed away much of Scott's accessory details in order to maintain its dramatic focus and keep it starkly taut and tense. In his adaptation, the characterization of Lucy is virtually identical to Scott's literary heroine, the quintessential

victim of romantic illusion as she progresses toward psychological destruction; Edgar, who is melancholy and restrained in the novel, bears the typical persona of Romantic bel canto opera heroes, continually erupting into exaggerated and hysterical outbursts of passion. But Cammarano altered the plot to suit his own tragic muse: Arthur is fatally stabbed by Lucy, Lucy dies in the throes of her mental derangement, and Edgar, heartbroken when he learns of Lucy's death, kills himself.

However, librettist and composer made perhaps a most drastic transformation of Scott's drama: Scott's most memorable villainess, the evil genius of the novel, Lucy's mother, Lady Ashton, does not appear in the opera.

In the novel, Lady Ashton is a diabolical character. She is one of the most detestable mother's in all of literature: haughty, ambitious, incessantly dominating, despising of her weak-willed and vacillating husband, intensely hateful of the Ravenswoods, and particularly resentful of Edgar's ancestry, which she perceives as more noble than that of her own husband. She also bears a deep contempt for her daughter, Lucy, whom she considers devoid of social ambition, particularly in her unwillingness to marry the man she has chosen for her.

Scott's literary Lady Ashton is a typical operatic demon, but without a musical leitmotif, certainly a character equal to other cruel and wicked soul-mates from her gender: the Queen of the Night, who tries to force Pamina to murder Sarastro; Elektra's deranged mother, Clytemnestra, and Herodias, Salome's evil mother.

Nevertheless, Cammarano and Donizetti omitted Lady Ashton as a character in their opera. It has been speculated that their reasons were that Italian opera dramatists did not seem eager to portray the "terrible mother." Traditionally, in Italian operas, a mother is the "loving mamma," with perhaps the one notable exception of Bellini's *Norma*, the mother who plans to murder her children, yet in the end becomes humanized and cannot force herself to kill them. Generally, in most Italian operas, there are rare characterizations of cruel and nasty mothers: in Rossini's *Cinderella*, the evil mother is transformed into a stepfather; in *La Gioconda*, the vulnerable and blind mother generates pity; in *Il Trovatore*, Azucena's mother can be viewed as a victim of cruelty, and even generate sympathy; and in *Falstaff*, Nanetta's mother, Alice Ford, is portrayed as more intelligent than her impassioned and avenging husband.

Italian "opera mothers" are rarely diabolical and detestable. Therefore, perhaps respecting the tradition, as well as cultural antipathies, Donizetti and Cammarano omitted the "terrible mother": Lady Ashton is dead when the opera begins, and Cammarano's text even suggests that she was a fine person whose loss Lucy laments with intense grief; in the very opening lines of Act I, the cleric and tutor Raymond begs Henry not to press his sister into marriage because Lucy is a "Dolente vergin, che geme sull'urna recente di cara madre" ("The poor girl is still mourning her beloved mother.")

Nevertheless, Scott's Lady Ashton is a villainess supreme, as the author noted: "Lady Ashton was of a family more distinguished than that of lord, an advantage which she did not fail to use to the uttermost, in maintaining and extending her husband's influence over others, and, unless her husband's influence over others, and, unless she was greatly belied, her own over him. She had been beautiful, and was stately and majestic in her appearance. Endowed by nature with strong powers and violent passion, experience had taught her to employ the one, and to conceal, if not to moderate, the other. She was a severe and strict observer of the external forms, at least, of devotion; her hospitality was splendid, even to ostentation; her address and manners, agreeable to the pattern most valued in Scotland at the period, were grave, dignified, and severely regulated by the rules of etiquette. Her character had always been beyond the breath of slander. And yet, with all these qualities to excite respect, Lady Ashton was seldom mentioned in the terms of love or affection. Interest — the interest of her family, if not her own — seemed obviously the motive of her actions; and where this is the case, the sharp-judging and malignant public are not easily imposed

upon by outward show. It was seen and ascertained that, in her most graceful courtesies and compliments, Lady Ashton no more lost sight of her object than the falcon in his airy wheel turns his quick eyes from his destined quarry; and hence, something of doubt and suspicion qualified the feelings with which her equals received her attentions. With her inferiors these feelings mingled with fear; an impression useful to her purposes, so far as it enforced ready compliance with her requests and implicit obedience to her commands, but detrimental, because it cannot exist with affection or regard.”

Scott continues: “Even her husband, it is said upon whose fortunes her talents and address had produced such emphatic influence, regarded her with respectful awe rather than confiding attachment; and report said, there were times when he considered his grandeur as dearly purchased at the expense of domestic thralldom. Of this, however, much might be suspected, but little should be accurately known: Lady Ashton regarded the honour of her husband as her own, and was well aware how much that would suffer in the public eye should he appear a vassal to his wife. In all her arguments his opinion was quoted as infallible; his taste was appealed to, and his sentiments received, with the air of deference which a dutiful wife might seem to owe to a husband of Sir William Ashton’s rank and character. But there was something under all this which rung false and hollow; and to those who watched this couple with close, and perhaps malicious scrutiny, it seemed evident that, in the haughtiness of a firmer character, higher birth, and more decided views of aggrandizement, this lady looked with some contempt on her husband, and that he regarded her with jealous fear; rather than with love or admiration.”

The diabolic, scheming character of Scott’s Lady Ashton, is represented by Lord Henry Ashton in Donizetti’s opera: not Lucy’s mother, but her brother.

The Bride of Lammermoor story takes place in the late seventeenth century when marriages between heads of states, the nobility, or the landed, represented — among other things — a means to end wars, supply needed financial or political security, and even provide status in society. In either case, the bride or groom was nothing more or less than a chattel who became a victim of a family or ward’s will; and any opposition to that will was futile.

In the Cammarano opera version of Scott’s novel, Lucy’s brother Henry replaces the diabolical Lady Ashton: Henry bears the mantle to achieve the Ashton family’s political objectives, and advocates all the causes originally espoused by Scott’s Lady Ashton. In the opera, Henry is the head of the Ashton family, the replacement of Lady Ashton’s diabolical persona, the substitute for Lucy’s father and mother, and even for her other brother; Sholto is also omitted from the opera.

As Lady Ashton’s alter ego, Henry becomes the evil demon of the story. Yet, Henry’s crisis certainly seems understandable and worthy of sympathy, if not empathy. He anticipates that he will become a fatal victim of the impending change in Scotland’s government when Mary ascends the throne of England, and he is desperate and anxious to escape political disaster and financial ruin. In Act II - Scene 1, he explains his dilemma to Lucy with seeming logic and obvious persuasiveness: “King William is dead. Mary will ascend the throne. The party I followed has fallen from power.” Henry continues: “Only Arthur can rescue me from total ruin.”

Historically, the opera story takes place during the latter part of the seventeenth century, the period immediately preceding the “Glorious Revolution,” or Civil War of 1689: James II succeeded to the throne of England and was resolute to restore Catholicism; he was replaced by the champions of Protestantism, William of Orange and his wife Mary, both of whom ruled jointly from 1689 to 1702. It is Henry Ashton’s mention of the ascendancy of Mary to the throne of England that will affect his political fortunes, and that event becomes the cause célèbre for forcing Lucy into a marriage of expediency with Lord Arthur Bucklaw.

Lucy responds to Henry's demands by advising him that she is pledged to another man. Henry explodes into a rage, and then proceeds to paint a gruesome picture of the consequences that will befall her if she refuses to marry the rich and influential Lord Arthur: all of his explanations are intended to invoke Lucy's guilt and disloyalty; if Lucy betrays him, he will be decapitated by the axe, and she will be haunted for the rest of her life as causing her brother's death.

Several months before, Lucy and Edgar swore eternal faith to each other, "*al cielo innante*" ("before heaven.") They exchanged rings and promised to write to each other while Edgar was overseas on a diplomatic mission to France. Their glorious duet, "*Veranno a te sull'aure*," which concludes the first act, not only invokes their ecstatic rapture with each other, but their joy in anticipating the exchange of love letters while Edgar is away.

However, prior to Lucy's Act II confrontation with Henry, Edgar had been gone for many months, and Lucy received not one single letter from him: Henry intercepted them. Because of Edgar's silence, Lucy is now overcome with doubt, and is therefore vulnerable to Henry's deceit. With the aid of Norman, Henry has not only intercepted Edgar's letters, but he has forged a letter in which Edgar claims that he has abandoned Lucy and is about to marry another. Unaware of Henry's forgery, Lucy concludes that she is the betrayed victim of a faithless lover.

In the following scene, the good minister Raymond fuels Lucy's suspicions. He is unaware that Edgar's letters were intercepted by Henry, but reveals to Lucy that he tried to contact Edgar to enlighten him about Henry's plans for her to marry Lord Arthur Bucklaw. However, Raymond never received an answer from Edgar, unaware that Edgar did not receive his letter because it coincided with his return to Scotland. Raymond decides to support Henry's cause and urges Lucy to perform her duty and make a noble sacrifice for the sake of her brother, her family, as well as the memory of her dead mother; he assures the distraught Lucy that she will be rewarded in Heaven. After Lucy becomes wearied from pressures and doubts, she is finally persuaded to sign the marriage contract with Lord Arthur Bucklaw: Lucy becomes the despairing and agonized victim of Ashton family politics, a doomed woman who can only resolve her dilemma through revenge.

The coup de theater occurs as soon as Lucy signs the marriage contract. To everyone's consternation, a great noise announces the arrival of Edgar, who blatantly forces his way in and interrupts the festivities. Lucy sees the ring on his finger, gazes at her own, and collapses into a dead faint.

The ensuing Sextet, which Puccini concluded was the most magnificent operatic ensemble ever composed, is an introspective tableau expressing individual compassion and self-pity. It begins with a duet: Edgar and Henry, enemies to the core, instead of arguing and preparing to fight (as in Scott's novel), indulge in meditation.

Henry begins: "*Chi raffrena il mio furore?*" ("What restrains my furor that I cannot raise my sword?") Edgar: "*Chi me frena in tal momento?*" ("What restrains me at this moment from venting my fury?") Both men, overcome with rage, are surprised at their inability to act. Henry, who so frantically urged his sister to marry to save his political fortunes, becomes overwhelmed by profound compassion for his sister: "*È il mio sangue! L'ho tradita!*" ("She is my own blood! I have betrayed her!") (Scott's Lady Ashton would have never voiced such sentiments.)

Lucy laments, confused and powerless, while others observe that she seems to be hovering between life and death. As the Sextet builds to its climax, the sensibilities and sensitivities of the characters intensify. The bitter hostility and hatred between Edgar and Henry is rekindled and they are now prepared to resolve their enmity in combat. Blood is spared as they are restrained by the good minister Raymond, who intervenes to invoke the Christian injunction: "He who strikes with the sword, shall perish with the sword!" All obey and sheathe their weapons.

After the Sextet, the action progresses and hastens with sound and fury. Henry finds Edgar's intervention contemptible and audacious. Edgar claims that his right to be present arises from Lucy's vow of fidelity to him. Raymond shows Edgar the marriage contract and invokes ecclesiastic authority: he annuls their vows. Edgar, in shock and disbelief, gives Lucy back her ring and demands the return of his ring.

Edgar demands to know whether Lucy actually signed the marriage contract. Lucy attempts to explain, but Edgar wants no explanation, but only confirmation that it is indeed Lucy's signature on the contract. In despair, Lucy reluctantly admits that the signature is indeed hers. Edgar concludes the devastating truth: Lucy has betrayed their love.

Edgar becomes insane with fury, curses the day he became Lucy's lover, and accuses her of being a typically deceitful and dishonest member of the Ashton clan. He draws his sword and attempts to kill Lucy, her husband Lord Arthur, as well as her brother Henry. Edgar throws down his sword and dares and urges his enemies to kill him. Then, the betrayed lover viciously curses Lucy: the ground on which she treads will be stained with his blood; Lucy will be trampling to the altar over his blood.

The Sextet and its ensuing ensemble capture moments of exploding human passions, the tour-de-force of the entire opera, if not Donizetti's entire canon.

In the bel canto tradition, the heroine's dismay and anxiety are usually expressed through tormented melody accented with brilliant coloratura passages: a moment of delirium intensified by the emotive power of music. These heroines become prisoners of their incomprehensible thoughts, their utterances becoming pathetic, fantastic, and incoherent as they try to escape from their psychological distress. Their dilemmas become resolved through madness, their only means for reconciliation.

In other bel canto masterpieces, Donizetti's *Anna Bolena* (1830), Bellini's *Il Pirata* (1827), *La Sonnambula* (1831) and *I Puritani* (1835), there are scenes portraying forbidden loves, as well as the agonizing memory of lost loves. These inner conflicts lead the heroines into raving delirium, fainting, sleepwalking, and eventually, to an anguished frenzy that transforms them into a state of insanity.

Likewise, in Lucy's Mad Scene, the blood-soaked murderess appears in a state of madness, a moment which provides the soprano with an opportunity to demonstrate her technical prowess: at one time, this scene's inherent requirement for vocal virtuosity was regarded as the sole *raison d'être* for the opera's survival. Nevertheless, the Mad Scene is an extraordinarily profound musicodramatic moment in the opera: it contains outbursts of powerful passions that are expressed with sumptuous yet delicately balanced melodic phrases.

The Mad Scene consists of two major episodes which are joined and overlapped: the choruses before and after Raymond's narrative, and the extended recitative and double aria: "Ardon'gli incensi" ("They're lighting the incense"), and "Spargi d'amaro pianto" ("Spread your bitter tears over my earthly remains"). Lucy continues her recitative while the orchestra introduces the melody of her *larghetto*, the segments succeeding each other seemingly without a sense of disruption.

Lucy's disorientation and loss of mental coherence, suggested by her interchange with the flute, is ingeniously captured by the repetition of melodies heard earlier in the opera: she recalls the music from the Act I duet, "Verranno a te sull'aure," the only melody she seems to be able to keep straight in her confused and disoriented mind.

Lucy hallucinates and becomes incoherent: she fantasizes about the dead girl in the fountain, and envisions that she and Edgar have been reunited, the lovers who were separated in their life on earth but will find eternal bliss in heaven. Lucy cannot reconcile her world, nor can she justify reality, except in the final moments: the ultimate reconciliation of Lucy's confusion becomes death.

The finale scene in the opera, the Tomb Scene, conveys an atmosphere of foreboding, tragic loss, and impending doom. In Scott's novel, Edgar perishes in the quicksands of his native moor while riding on horseback. But *Lucia* is a quintessential Italian opera from the Romantic era: in Donizetti's death-scene, the sad and despairing Edgar stabs himself on the tombs of his ancestors, confident that he is on his way to Heaven to join the woman he loves: in many respects, it is the tenor counterpart to Lucy's Mad Scene.

To some, the Tomb Scene is an anticlimax to Lucy's Mad Scene, the reason the opera house often empties immediately thereafter. But to others, the Tomb Scene represents the high point of the whole score: it indeed contains some of the most beautiful music in the opera.

Lucia di Lammermoor is a grand, tragic opera that is dutifully consistent with the romantic themes and sensibilities of its era; it is arguably Donizetti's best and finest score, and it is considered the archetype of Italian Romantic opera, and consequently, an archetype of Italian bel canto opera.

At its premiere in 1835, it was a huge success, Donizetti commenting to his publisher, Ricordi: "(that) every piece was listened to in religious silence and honored with spontaneous vivas." *Lucia di Lammermoor* remains today Donizetti's most famous and most popular opera. Its first performance in the United States was in New Orleans (1841) in French; in New York in 1843 (in Italian).

If anything, *Lucia di Lammermoor* stands out in Donizetti's oeuvre because of its tautness of construction, the manner in which the music consistently serves the drama, and the sheer prodigality of the composer's musical inventions; it seems that Donizetti was pouring into his score the very soul of Italian bel canto.

The heroine role of Lucy has been central in the repertory of every soprano with the gift for coloratura, or fioritura: Nellie Melba, Luisa Tetrazzini, Amelia Galli-Curci, Lily Pons, Maria Callas, and Joan Sutherland. And thanks to examples set by the judicious interpretations of Maria Callas and Joan Sutherland, its story is recognized as containing profound dramatic substance; it is no longer considered solely a vehicle and war-horse for great virtuoso sopranos.

Donizetti insisted with almost religious conviction that the one overwhelming important ingredient of music must always be beautiful melody. "If you want to find out if a certain piece of music is good, play the melody without the accompaniment." Melody was the cornerstone of Donizetti's musical philosophy, and no matter what criticism befalls his works, he is vindicated by the enduring success of his melodies, particularly in *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

Words provoke thought; music stimulates feeling. The essence of the opera art form is that the emotive power of music intensifies the inherent power of words. In bel canto opera, powerful passions and drama are conveyed through its music, but more particularly, through the artistry of the singing voice. The voice, the noblest and most perfect musical instrument, is capable of expressing the entire range of human emotions and passions: the voice can express the entire spectrum of life, its aspirations, its yearnings, and its desires.

The great American poet, Walt Whitman, believed that music, when expressed through the singer and the orchestra, possesses a cosmic power that is capable of reaching into the inner soul. In one of his poems, *The Mystic Trumpeter*, Whitman wrote a tribute to opera:

*Sing to my soul; renew its languishing faith and hope,
Rouse up my slow belief; give me some vision of the future,
Give me for once its prophecy and joy,
O glad, exulting, culminating song!
A vigor more than earth's is in thy notes.....*

Whitman's homage to opera could well have been directed specifically to Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*: an operatic masterpiece possessing consummate dramatic power and unrivalled musical beauty.

Principal Characters in *Lucia di Lammermoor*

Brief Story Synopsis

Story Narrative with Music Highlight Examples

Principal Characters in Lucia di Lammermoor

Lucia	(Lucy Ashton)	Soprano
Enrico, Lucy's brother	(Lord Henry Ashton)	Baritone
Edgardo, Lucy's lover	(Edgar of Ravenswood)	Tenor
Arturo, Lucy's bridegroom	(Lord Arthur Bucklaw)	Baritone
Raimondo, a Calvinist cleric and Lucy's tutor	(Raymond BideBent)	Bass
Alisa, Lucy's companion	(Alice)	Mezzo-Soprano
Normanno, Caption of Ashton's guard	(Norman)	Tenor

Ladies, knights, retainers and servants, pages, soldiers, and wedding guests

TIME: Late 17th century, during the reign of William and Mary

PLACE: Scotland, the grounds and castles of Ravenswood and Lammermoor

Brief Story Synopsis

In Scotland, at the end of the seventeenth century, Lord Henry Ashton (Enrico) seeks to assure his political stability by arranging a marriage for his sister, Lucy (Lucia), with the influential Lord Arthur Bucklaw (Arturo). Lucy refuses her brother, admitting to him that she has pledged her love to Edgar of Ravenswood (Edgardo), the Ashton's ancestral enemy.

Edgar leaves Scotland on a diplomatic mission to France: Henry intercepts his letters to Lucy, and then presents her with a forged letter revealing that Edgar plans to marry another woman. Devastated and discouraged, Lucy accedes to her brother's demands and agrees to marry Lord Arthur.

Immediately after Lucy and Lord Arthur sign the marriage contract, Edgar suddenly appears; he denounces Lucy as unfaithful, and curses the Ashton family. Henry and Edgar agree to a duel.

After the new bride and groom retire for the night, Lucy becomes insane and murders Arthur. She emerges from the bridal chamber in a state of delirium: she hallucinates and fantasizes that she and her beloved Edgar have finally wed. Afterwards, she collapses and dies.

Edgar learns of Lucy's death. In his grief, he takes his own life, certain that in death, he and Lucy will be united in heaven.

Story Narrative with Music Highlight Examples

For many years, Lord Henry Ashton has been implacable and unrelenting in sustaining the ancient feud against between the Ashton and Ravenswood clans: Henry is obsessed to break their power, seize their ancient castle and lands, and destroy Edgar, the surviving scion of Ravenswood.

Henry anticipates political problems: Mary is about to ascend the throne of England, placing his future stability in danger; his disfavor with the new monarch could lead to his banishment and exile. He is determined to reverse his impending misfortunes by masterminding a marriage between his sister Lucy and Lord Arthur Bucklaw, a man whose influence at Scotland's court will ensure his political security. Henry vows that Lucy must fulfill her duty to family and wed the distinguished and powerful Lord Arthur.

Act I - Scene 1: "The Departure" - The grounds of the Ravenswood Castle.

On the grounds of Ravenswood Castle, Lord Henry Ashton and retainers are hunting. Henry admits his fears of impending ruin and announces his plan to save the Ashton family through an expedient marriage for his sister, Lucy. Raymond Bidebent, a Calvinist cleric and Lucy's tutor, vigorously protests Henry's intentions, complaining that "the poor girl is still mourning her beloved mother. At this time, how can she think of love or marriage?"

Norman, Henry's captain of the guard, sarcastically advises him that Lucy has a lover, a man with whom she has been having a secret rendezvous every day. The man saved her life, killing a wild boar that was threatening to attack her: that man is Henry's his archenemy, Edgar of Ravenswood.

Henry becomes enraged at the news of his sister's love affair, and vows mortal revenge against his hereditary enemy.

"Cruda, funesta smania"

Larghetto

HENRY



Cru - da, fune - sta sma - nia tu m'hai svegliato in pet - to!
What a cruel blow, and what fury this arouses in me!

Raymond's plea for mercy and compassion for Lucy are unheeded by Henry. Huntsmen return to report that Edgar has been seen on the grounds: Henry reiterates his implacable obsession to destroy Edgar and the Ravenswood clan.

*“La pietade in suo favore”***Allegretto moderato****HENRY**

La pie-ta - de in suo fa - vor - re, mi-ti sen-si in - van mi det - ta.
 It's useless to speak to me of compassion.

All depart. Lord Henry Ashton is inflamed and determined to have revenge.

Act I – Scene 2: A park with a fountain at Lammermoor Castle.

It is twilight. Lucy appears at the fountain in anticipation of a rendezvous with Edgar. Her companion, Alice, accompanies her: both express agitation and fear that they will be discovered.

But Alice specifically cautions Lucy that her adventure is imprudent: if her brother Henry discovers her love affair with his enemy, his hostility toward the Ravenswoods will lead to disastrous retribution.

Lucy looks toward the fountain with trepidation. She describes how a Lammermoor ancestor in a jealous rage murdered a Ravenswood; she is frightened because she has recently seen her ghost, and the waters of the fountain turning bloodred.

*“Regnava nel silenzio”***Larghetto****LUCY**

Re-gna-va nel si - len-zi - o al - ta la notte e bru - na.
 Everything was silent. It was late, and the night was dark.

In vain, Alice attempts to dissuade Lucy, urging her to renounce Edgar. But Lucy yearns to meet with Edgar and warn him of her brother's avowed enmity: an imminent danger to his life. Ecstatically, she anticipates the arrival of her lover, the man who has consoled the sorrows that have enveloped her after the death of her mother.

And Lucy has become enraptured by Edgar's impassioned love for her.

*“Quando rapito in estasi”***Moderato****LUCY**

Quando ra - pi - to in e - stasi del più co-cen - te ardo - re,
 I'm caught in the rapture of his burning love.

Edgar arrives. Alice hides nearby, keeping watch.

Edgar regretfully informs Lucy that duty has called him to depart to France on a diplomatic mission; he must leave before dawn. Edgar recounts his vow of vengeance against her family: after all, the Ashton's slew his father and stole his lands. But because of his profound love for Lucy, he has become placated and relented: he has decided to end their family feud, seek peace with Henry, and pledge lasting friendship; with their feud ended, he will ask Henry for Lucy's hand in marriage.

Edgar's intentions unnerve Lucy; she is frightful of her brother's fury and intense enmity; their family feud has been inspired by hatred and has bred cruel injustice, and she fears that Henry cannot be appeased. Lucy dissuades Edgar from approaching Henry and persuades him to keep their love a secret.

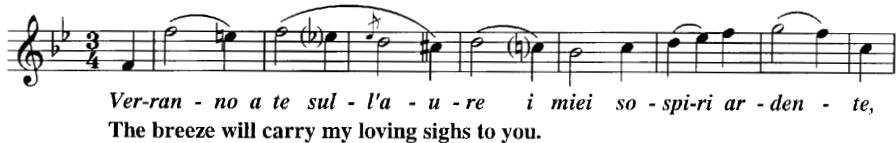
Edgar again reminds Lucy that he swore vengeance on his father's grave, but his anger has become appeased because of their love for each other; his oath remains unfulfilled. After Lucy calms Edgar's anger, he places his ring on her finger, the symbol that from this moment they are betrothed. Enthralled, Lucy gives Edgar her ring in return.

The two lovers, undaunted in their passion for each other, embrace ecstatically, vowing eternal love, and yearning for the day when their family's enmity will end. They bid farewell, Edgar promising that he will write to Lucy daily, and assuring her that the breezes will carry his loving sighs to her from France.

Duet: "Veranno a te sull'aure"

Moderato assai

LUCY and EDGAR



As Edgar departs, the lovers vow their eternal love.

Act II - Scene 1: "The Marriage Contract" - Lord Henry Ashton's apartments in Lammermoor Castle.

Although Henry is undaunted in his determination that Lucy wed Lord Arthur Bucklaw, he suspects and fears that she will oppose it. Henry has conspired with Norman to make Lucy believe that Edgar has abandoned her. Norman has intercepted Edgar's letters from France and forged a letter that states that Edgar has abandoned Lucy for another woman; with Edgar's betrayal, Henry is confident that Lucy will agree to marry Lord Arthur Bucklaw.

Lucy and Henry confront each other. She is extremely agitated, fully aware of her brother's wishes. Henry knows that Lucy grieves because she opposes his marriage plans for her; he tries to convince her that the marriage represents the fulfillment of his wish for her happiness.

Lucy announces that she has pledged her heart, faith and soul to another. Henry immediately shows her a letter: the forged letter in which Edgar states that he has taken another bride. Lucy trembles in disbelief, becoming shocked, brokenhearted and devastated by the news.

“Soffriva nel pianto”

Larghetto
LUCY



Soff - rir - va nel pianto, languì - a nel do - lo - re.
What pain I suffered. What misery I endured.

Henry demands that Lucy reject Edgar, reminding her that Edgar's decision to marry another is proof that he is a faithless and perfidious man: a man who never truly loved her.

In the background, music from the hall signals the beginning of the wedding festivities and the anticipated arrival of Lord Arthur Bucklaw, Lucy's bridegroom. Henry advises Lucy that the hour approaches, admonishing her that it is her solemn duty to save him and their family from ruin: his political situation is perilous, and only an alliance with Arthur Bucklaw can save him; if Lucy betrays him, he will surely be executed, and his blood will be on her hands.

“Se tradirmi tu potrai”

Vivace
HENRY



Se - tra-dir - mi tu po - tra - i, la mia sorte è già com-pi - ta,
If you betray me, my fate is sealed.

After Henry rushes out to greet Lord Arthur, Raymond attempts to console Lucy. He advises her that he managed to have one of her letters delivered to Edgar, but it remains unanswered. He concludes that Edgar's silence implies that he is indeed faithless.

Raymond, a cleric, releases Lucy from her rashly spoken vows to Edgar: he announces that the exchange of their rings was invalid in the eyes of God. Further, he attempts to persuade Lucy that her love for Edgar was merely a fleeting passion, but Lucy is intransigent and adamant, confessing that she still loves Edgar.

Raymond counsels Lucy that yielding to Henry's wish for her to wed Lord Arthur represents her duty to her family, as well as to the memory of her beloved mother: her sacrifice will be duly rewarded in heaven.

“Ah! Cedi, cedi”

Cantabile
RAYMOND



Ah! Ce - di, ce - di, o più scia - gu - re,
Yield, or you'll suffer.

With a heavy heart, Lucy's resistance crumbles and she tearfully yields: she agrees to marry Lord Arthur Bucklaw.

Act II - Scene 2: The Great Hall in Lammermoor Castle.

The wedding festivities are in progress. All praise the joyous day and welcome the groom, Lord Arthur Bucklaw, with wishes of good fortune.

“Per te d’immenso giubilo”

Moderato mosso

CHORUS

Per te d'immenso giu - bi - lo, tut - to s'avviva in - tor - no.
 We're gathered here in great joy.

Smugly, Lord Arthur claims that the fortunes of Lammermoor will soon improve. He seeks his absent bride: Henry advises him that she will soon arrive, but she rejects all thoughts of joy, remaining in sorrow and grief because she still mourns her mother's death. Just as Arthur questions Henry about rumors he has heard about Edgar and Lucy, Lucy suddenly appears, rescuing Henry from answering Arthur.

Lucy is crestfallen and shuddering. Raymond and Alice support her. When she is presented to Lord Arthur, she recoils from him. Aside, the wary Henry warns Lucy that she should not be incautious and recognize the importance of her marriage. Arthur becomes confounded by Lucy's behavior, concluding that she should be joyful on this day. But Lucy continues to weep, hardly able to speak or look at her intended husband.

Henry guides Lucy to a table where she hesitatingly and reluctantly signs the marriage contract. In despair, she comments that she has just inscribed her doom.

Suddenly, there is an uproar as Edgar bursts in on the festivities. Lucy faints and falls; she is revived by Alice and led to a seat. Edgar has returned from France to claim his betrothed, but he becomes devastated and dismayed when he learns that he has arrived to witness Lucy's marriage to another.

In the shock of the moment, Edgar and Henry, bitter enemies, express their conflicting emotions, both unable to understand what restrains their furor; Lucy expresses her desperation and loneliness; Raymond pleads for mercy; Alice prays for pity; and Arthur seeks heavenly guidance.

The Sextet:

Larghetto

EDGAR and HENRY

EDGAR: *Chi mi fre - na in tal mo - me - to?*
 What restrains me at this moment,

HENRY: *Chi raf - fre - na il mio fu - ro - re,*
 What restrains my fury,

Lucy has become distressed and confounded by Edgar's sudden appearance. Raymond becomes emotionally stirred by Lucy's pathetic dilemma, and Henry is humiliated by Edgar's contemptuous intrusion. Henry and Arthur order Edgar to leave, but he is defiant and insists that he has the right to remain and claim Lucy as his bride; she vowed eternal love to him. However, Raymond advises Edgar that his right has been nullified, because Lucy has been promised to another.

Raymond shows Edgar the marriage contract. Edgar becomes appalled. He turns to Lucy and demands to know if it is indeed her signature on the contract. Reluctantly, Lucy responds: "Yes!" Lucy's confession inflames Edgar; he tears off his ring and throws it to the ground. Lucy, scarcely in control of her actions, removes her ring; Edgar maliciously seizes it from her. He curses the moment he fell in love with Lucy, her betrayal of him, and vows that he will be undaunted in seeking revenge against the Ashtons.

Arthur, Henry, and the guests unsheathe their swords and again demand that Edgar leave instantly. But it is Raymond who dissuades their fury by invoking law, respect, and honor: "Chi di ferro altrui ferisce pur di ferro perirà" ("He who lives by the sword, shall perish by the sword.") As Lucy prays for mercy, Edgar throws down his sword and declares that he has no more desire to live, defiantly daring them to strike him.

Lucy collapses. Edgar departs in fury.

Act III - Scene 1: A dilapidated hall in the Ravenswood Castle.

It is night. A storm is raging. Edgar is in deep thought, brokenhearted and overcome with sadness and grief.

Suddenly Henry arrives, gloating that as he speaks Lucy is entering her bridal chamber with Lord Arthur. Edgar responds, expressing his humiliation.

"Qui del padre ancor respira"

Moderato
EDGAR



Qui del pa - dre ancor - ra - spi - ra l'ombra inulta, e par che fre - ma!
Here my father still breathes, his ghost shuddering!

Henry announces that he has come to avenge his family's honor. But Edgar contradicts him, claiming that it is he who has been dishonored and deserves justice; he has been the victim of the Ashton's hatred and persecution.

Henry and Edgar agree to a duel: mortal combat until death that will be fought at dawn in the Ravenswoods' graveyards. Each proclaims that he will be the victor, a triumph in the name of vengeance, justice, and retribution.

Act III – Scene 2: The Great Hall at the Lammermoor Castle.

As wedding guests continue their celebration, Raymond appears and stops their merriment; he is pale and grief-stricken. He shocks the guests by announcing dreadful news: Lucy, distraught and anguished, became insane and killed her husband, Arthur, standing before the corpse, smiling, and holding a bloodstained dagger.

Lucy appears. She wears a white gown that is bloodstained, her hair is disheveled, and she is ashen, bearing a frantic and unearthly stare in her eyes. Lucy has lost all of her senses, her mental derangement suggested by her interchange with the flute. She is delirious and hallucinates, believing that she is about to wed Edgar. She urges him to rest by the fountain and exchange rings as a vow of their eternal love. Then she becomes fearful as she remembers her vision of the ghost arising from the fountain.

Lucy then imagines that she and Edgar have finally arrived at the altar to wed.

Henry returns from his confrontation with Edgar. At first he becomes furious at Lucy, but Raymond pierces his soul by convincing him that his sister has become insane, the victim of his cruelty toward her; Henry becomes contrite as he foresees Lucy's imminent death.

Lucy continues to hallucinate, assuring the imagined Edgar that they will be united in Heaven.

“Spargi d’amaro pianto”**Moderato****LUCY**

The musical score is for a vocal part in 3/4 time, marked Moderato. It consists of two staves. The first staff begins with a treble clef, a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and a 3/4 time signature. The melody starts with a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes A4 and B4, then a quarter rest, and continues with a series of notes and rests. A slur covers the final two notes of the first staff. The second staff continues the melody, starting with a quarter note G4, followed by eighth notes A4 and B4, then a quarter rest, and continues with a series of notes and rests. A slur covers the final two notes of the second staff. The lyrics are written below the notes.

Spar - gi d'a - ma - ro pian - to,
 Spread your bitter tears

il mio ter - re - stre ve - lo,
 over my earthly remains.

Sadly, Henry bids that Alice remove his afflicted sister. Lucy collapses in Alice's arms. Raymond rebukes Norman, the cause of all this bloodshed and horror.

Act III - Scene 3: The Tombs of the Ravenswoods.

It is night. Edgar appears at the tombs of Ravenswood for his duel with Henry. Edgar is unaware of Lucy's death, and broods over her betrayal and marriage to Arthur. He has decided to let Henry kill him in the duel: his passion for Lucy endures, but without her, life is meaningless; death can only reconcile his despair. Edgar bids farewell to life on earth.

“Fra poco a me ricovero darà negletto avello”

Larghetto

EDGAR



Mourners appear, commenting that the day had begun joyfully but ended in sadness. The funeral bells toll, and Raymond announces that Lucy has died.

Edgar feels guilt, believing that he wronged Lucy and caused her death: he begs forgiveness and mercy. But now his thoughts turn to Heaven: Lucy and Edgar were separated on earth, but they will be united in Heaven.

“Tu che a Dio spiegasti”

Moderato

EDGAR



Edgar is resolved to die. He draws his dagger and stabs himself, his final thoughts invoking his beloved Lucy.

Libretto

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Act 1 - Scene 1

THE DEPARTURE

On the grounds of the Ravenswood Castle.

*Norman, the Captain of the Ravenswood Guard, and retainers appear,
all wearing hunting attire.*

Normanno e Coro:

Percorrete le spiagge vicine,
percorriamo della torre le vaste rovine:
cada il velo di sì turpe mistero,
lo domanda, lo impone l'onor.
Splenderà l'esecrabile vero
come lampo fra nubi d'orror!

Norman and Chorus:

Search the nearby beaches,
and let's search the ruins of the old tower:
let's solve this mystery,
because our honor demands it.
Let the awful truth be revealed
like a flash of lightning!

After the retainers depart, Norman approaches Lord Henry Ashton.

Normanno:

Tu sei turbato!

Norman:

You seem troubled!

Enrico:

E n'ho ben donde.
Il sai: del mio destin si ottenebrò la stella.
Intanto Edgardo, quel mortal nemico
di mia prosapia, dalle sue rovine
erge la fronte baldanzosa e ride!
Sola una mano raffermar mi puote
nel vacillante mio poter.
Lucia osa respinger quella mano!
Ah! Suora non m'è colei!

Henry: (disdainfully)

I have reason to be.
My entire future is in danger.
And Edgar, my family's mortal enemy,
mocks me, haughtily sitting
in his crumbling castle and laughing at me!
Only one man
can help me regain power.
But Lucy refuses to marry him.
She's no longer my sister!

Raimondo:

Dolente Vergin, che geme sull'urna recente
di cara madre, al talamo potria
volger lo sguardo?
Ah! Rispettiam quel core che per troppo
dolor non sente amore.

Raymond: (trying to be conciliatory)

The poor girl is still mourning her beloved
mother. At this time, how can she think of
love or marriage?
Let's respect her grief. Her heart is too
burdened with sadness to think of love.

Normanno:

Schivo d'amor!
Lucia d'amore avvampa.

Norman: (ironically)

Don't talk of love!
Lucy is inflamed with love!

Enrico:

Che favelli?

Henry:

What are you saying?

Raimondo:

(Oh detto!)

Normanno:

M'udite. Ella sen gia colà, del parco nel
solingo vial dove la madre giace sepolta.
Impetuoso toro ecco su lor s'avventa,
quando per l'aria rimbombar si sente un
colpo, e al suol repente cade la belva.

Enrico:

E chi vibrò quel colpo?

Normanno:

Tal che il suo nome ricopri d'un velo.

Enrico:

Lucia forse?

Normanno:

L'amò.

Enrico:

Dunque il rivide?

Normanno:

Ogni alba.

Enrico:

E dove?

Normanno:

In quel viale.

Enrico:

Io fremo! Né tu scovristi il seduttore?

Normanno:

Sospetto io n'ho soltanto.

Enrico:

Ah! Parla!

Normanno:

È tuo nemico.

Raimondo:

(Oh ciel!)

Raymond:

(Oh heavens!)

Norman:

Listen to me. She was walking a lonely path
in the park, where her mother is buried.
Suddenly, a wild boar rushed from a thicket
and charged at her. Then a shot rang through
the air, and the beast fell to the ground.

Henry:

Who fired the shot?

Norman:

I shouldn't mention his name.

Henry:

And what did Lucy do?

Norman:

She fell in love with him.

Henry:

Does she meet with him?

Norman:

Every morning.

Henry:

Where?

Norman:

In that alley.

Henry:

I tremble! Do you know the seducer's name?

Norman:

I only have a suspicion.

Henry:

Tell me!

Norman:

He's your enemy.

Raymond:

(Oh heavens!)

Normanno:

Tu lo detesti.

Norman:

You detest him.

Enrico:

Esser potrebbe Edgardo?

Henry:

Could it be Edgar?

Raimondo:

(Ah!)

Raymond:

(Ah!)

Normanno:

Lo dicesti.

Norman:

You named him yourself.

Larghetto**HENRY****Enrico:**

Cruda funesta smania
 tu m'hai svegliato in petto!
 È troppo, è troppo orribile,
 questo fatal sospetto!
 Mi fa gelare e fremere,
 solleva in fronte il crin! Ah!
 Colma di tanto obbrobrio
 chi suora a me nascea!
 Ah! Pria che d'amor sì perfido
 a me svelarti rea,
 se ti colpisse un fulmine,
 fora men rio dolor.

Henry:

What a cruel blow,
 and what fury this arouses in me!
 It is too horrible,
 this dreadful suspicion!
 It turns my heart to ice,
 and incites my anger!
 I renounced him
 the moment he was born!
 If my sister is guilty
 of such a treacherous alliance,
 may a thunderbolt
 strike her down.

Normanno:

(Pietoso al tuo decoro, io fui con te crudel!)

Norman:

(I had to tell you the truth, however cruel it may be!)

Raimondo:(La tua clemenza imploro;
 tu lo smentisci, o ciel!)**Raymond:**(I implore your forgiveness,
 oh heaven, don't let it be so!)**Coro:**

Il tuo dubbio è omai certezza.

Chorus of Huntsmen: (to Norman)

Your worst fears have come true.

Normanno:

Odi tu?

Norman: (to Henry)

Did you hear?

Enrico:

Narrate.

Henry:

Tell me.

Raimondo:

(Oh giorno!)

Raymond:

(Oh, what a day!)

Chorus:

Come vinti da stanchezza,
dopo lungo errare intorno,
noi posammo della torre
nel vestibulo cadente:
ecco tosto lo trascorre
in silenzio un uom pallente.
Come appresso ei n'è venuto
ravvisiam lo sconosciuto:
ei su rapido destriero
s'involò dal nostro sguardo.
Qual s'appella un falconiero
ne apprendeva, qual s'appella.

Chorus:

We were exhausted
after taking so many false turns.
We rested in a courtyard
by the tower ruins.
There, in total silence,
a pale rider appeared.
As he came nearer,
we recognized him:
and he quickly galloped away,
and was out of our sight.
We met a falconer
who told us his name.

Enrico:

E quale?

Henry:

Who is he?

Chorus:

Edgardo.

Chorus:

Edgar.

Enrico:

Egli! Oh rabbia che m'accendi, contenermi
un cuor non può!

Henry:

Him! Fury is inflamed in me, and I can no
longer contain my heart!

Raimondo:

Ah! Non credere, no, no, deh sospendi.
ella. M'odi!

Raymond:

Don't believe it.
Listen to me!

Enrico:

Udir non vo'!

Henry:

I don't want to hear any more!

Allegretto moderato**HENRY**

La pie-ta - de in suo fa - vor - re, mi-ti sen-si in - van mi det - ta.

La pietade in suo favore,
miti sensi invan mi detta.
Sì mi parli di vendetta
solo intenderti potrò.

It's useless
to speak to me of compassion.
I only understand
the language of revenge.

Sciagurati! Il mio furore
già su voi tremendo rugge
l'empia fiamma che vi strugge
io col sangue spegnerò.

Normanno, Coro:

Ti raffrena, al nuovo albore ei da te fuggir
non può.

Raimondo:

(Ah! Qual nube di terrore.)
Questa casa circondò!

Wretches! Let my fury
roar over them like a storm.
I'll extinguish the flames
of their passion with spilled blood.

Norman, Chorus:

Calm your wrath! He cannot escape, and he
will pay with his blood.

Raymond:

(Ah! What a cloud of terror.
It will destroy your house!)

Act I - Scene 2

A park in the Castle gardens at Lammermoor. It is a moonlit evening.

In the background there is a gateway; in the foreground, a fountain.

Lucy Ashton arrives, followed by her companion, Alice.

Both are extremely agitated, looking about as if seeking someone.

When they see the fountain, they turn away from it, as if it harbors some mysterious curse.

Lucia:

Ancor non giunse!

Alisa:

Incauta! A che mi traggi?
Avventurarti, or che il fratel qui venne,
è folle ardir.

Lucia:

Ben parli! Edgardo sappia qual ne circonda
orribile periglio.

Alisa:

Perché d'intorno il ciglio volgi atterrita?

Lucia:

Quella fonte, ah, mai, senza tremar non
veggo.
Ah! Tu lo sai:
un Ravenswood, ardendo di geloso furor,
l'amata donna colà trafisse,
e l'infelice cadde nell'onda,
ed ivi rimanea sepolta.
M'apparve l'ombra sua.

Lucy:

He hasn't arrived yet!

Alice:

Be careful! Where are you taking me?
This adventure is madness, fatal if your
brother should discover us.

Lucy:

I must warn Edgar that he's in terrible
danger.

Alice:

What are you staring at?

Lucy:

That fountain, I tremble whenever I look at
it.
But you understand the reason:
once, long ago, a Ravenswood was
consumed by a jealous fury, and slew an
unfortunate woman right on this spot.
The poor girl fell into the water, and that is
where she is buried. I've seen her ghost.

Alisa:
Che dici!

Alice:
What are you saying!

Lucia:
Ascolta.

Lucy:
Listen.

Larghetto
LUCY



Regnava nel silenzio
alta la notte e bruna,
colpia la fonte un pallido
raggio di tetra luna,
quando sommosso un gemito
fra l'aure udir si fe',
ed ecco su quel margine,
l'ombra mostrarsi a me!

Everything was silent.
It was late, and the night was dark.
A pale ray of moonlight shone down on the
fountain.
Suddenly, I heard a stifled cry,
that seemed to float on the breeze.
And there at the fountain's edge,
her ghost appeared before me!

Qual di chi parla muoversi
il labbro suo vedea,
e con la mano esanime,
chiamarmi a sè pareo;
stette un momento immobile,
poi ratta, dileguò,
e l'onda pria sì limpida
di sangue rosseggiò!

I could see her lips moving.
She tried to summon me
with her lifeless hand.
She stood there
motionless for a moment,
and then she vanished.
And the water, which had been so clear,
became red with blood!

Alisa:
Chiari, oh Dio! Ben chiari e tristi,
nel tuo dir presagi intendo!
Ah Lucia, Lucia desisti da un amor così
tremendo.

Alice:
Oh God! That vision of yours forebodes a
dark future!
Lucy, Lucy, end this disastrous love affair
that could become disastrous.

Lucia:
Egli è luce a' giorni miei,
è conforto al mio penar.

Lucy:
He is the light of my life.
He is the comfort of my pain.

Moderato
LUCY



Quando rapito in estasi
del più cocente ardore,
col favellar del core,
mi giura eterna fè.
Gli affanni miei dimentico,
gioia diviene il pianto,
parmi che a lui d'accanto
si schiuda il ciel per me!

Alisa:

Ah! Giorni d'amaro pianto, s'apprestano
per te!

Egli s'avanza!
La vicina soglia io cauta veglierò.

I'm caught in the rapture
of his burning love.
With all his heart,
he has sworn to be true to me forever.
All my troubles are forgotten.
because my sorrow turns to joy.
When he is near to me,
it is as if heaven opened to me!

Alice:

What bitter days lie ahead for you!

He is coming!
I'll be nearby, keeping watch.

Alice leaves. Edgar arrives.

Edgaro:

Lucia, perdona se ad ora inusitata io vederti
chiedea: ragion possente a ciò mi trasse.
Pria che in ciel biancheggi l'alba novella,
dalle patrie sponde lungi sarò.

Lucia:

Che dici!

Edgaro:

Pe' Franchi lidi amici scioglio le vele:
ivi trattar m'è dato le sorti della Scozia.

Lucia:

E me nel pianto abbandoni così!

Edgaro:

Pria di lasciarti Asthon mi vegga io stenderò
placato a lui la destra, e la tua destra, pegno
fra noi di pace, chiederò.

Lucia:

Che ascolto! Ah! no, rimanga nel silenzio
sepolto per or l'arcano affetto.

Edgaro:

Intendo!

Di mia stirpe il reo persecutore
de' mali miei ancor pago non è!
Mi tolse il padre, ill mio retaggio avito.
Né basta? Che brama ancor quel cor

Edgar:

Lucy, forgive me for calling you here at this
hour, but important duties call me.
Before dawn, in the early morning,
I will be far from our shores.

Lucy:

What are you saying!

Edgar:

I'm sailing to the friendly shores of France
to negotiate Scotland's future.

Lucy:

And you abandon me like this!

Edgar:

Before my departure I'll seek your brother. I'll
give him my hand in friendship, and I'll ask
for your hand as a sign of peace between us.

Lucy:

What am I hearing! No, let's let our love
remain a secret.

Edgar: (*ironically*)

I understand now!

The man who persecuted my clan is not just
content with my misfortune!
He murdered my father and seized my
inheritance.

feroce e rio?
La mia perdita intera? Il sangue mio?
Egli m'odia!

Lucia:
Ah, no!

Edgardo:
Mi abborre!

Lucia:
Calma, oh ciel, quell'ira estrema!

Edgardo:
Fiamma ardente in sen mi corre! M'odi!

Lucia:
Edgardo!

Edgardo:
M'odi, e trema!
Sulla tomba che rinsera il tradito genitore,
al tuo sangue eterna guerra
io giurai nel mio furore:
ma ti vidi in cor mi nacque
altro affetto, e l'ira tacque.
Pur quel voto non è infranto,
io potrei compirlo ancor!

Lucia:
Deh! Ti placa, deh! Ti frena!
Può tradirne un solo accento!
Non ti basta la mia pena?
Vuoi ch'io mora di spavento?
Ceda, ceda ogn'altro affetto,
solo amor t'infiammi il petto;
un più nobile, più santo d'ogni voto
è un puro amor!

Edgardo:
Qui di sposa eterna fede,
qui mi giura, al cielo innante.
Dio ci ascolta, Dio ci vede;
tempio ed ara è un core amante;
al tuo fato unisco il mio:

What more does that vicious criminal want?
My very life? My blood?
He hates me!

Lucy:
No!

Edgar: (*more forcefully*)
He despises me!

Lucy:
Calm your extreme anger!

Edgar:
I'm inflamed with anger! Listen to me!

Lucy:
Edgar!

Edgar:
Hear me, and tremble!
On the grave of my poor, betrayed father,
I swore an oath of eternal revenge against
your family.
Then I saw you, and a new emotion stirred
my heart.
My anger abated. But I have not yet revoked
my vow. I could still carry it out!

Lucy:
Be calm! Restrain yourself!
A single word could give us away!
Isn't my anguish enough?
Do you want me to die of grief?
Put aside your anger and hatred.
Let love alone burn in your heart.
Nothing is more noble or holy than the vow
of pure love!

Edgar: (*with determination*)
Swear eternal loyalty to me as my bride.
Swear it, before Heaven.
God sees and hears us.
Our loving hearts shall be our temple.
And your destiny will be united with mine.

Edgar places his ring on Lucy's finger.

Son tuo sposo.

I am your husband.

Lucia:

E tua son io.

Lucy: (gives her ring to Edgar)

And I am your wife.

Lucia e Edgardo:

Ah! Soltanto il nostro foco spegnerà di morte il gel.

A' miei voti amore invoco, a' miei voto invoco il ciel.

Lucy and Edgar:

Only death will extinguish the flames of our love.

And only death can part us. I invoke heaven to guard us from all danger.

Edgardo:

Separaci omai conviene.

Edgar:

We must part now.

Lucia:

Oh parola a me funesta!
Il mio cor con te ne viene.

Lucy:

What sad words!
My heart will go with you.

Edgardo:

Il mio cor con te qui resta.

Edgar:

And my heart will remain here with you.

Lucia:

Ah! Edgardo! Ah! Edgardo!

Lucy:

Ah! Edgar! Ah! Edgar!

Edgardo:

Separci omai convien.

Edgar:

We will never be parted.

Lucia:

Ah! Talor del tuo pensiero venga un foglio
messaggero,
e la vita fuggitiva di speranze nudrirò.

Lucy:

Let me know you are thinking of me. Send
me your thoughts in a letter.
Hope will become my nourishment in life.

Edgardo:

Io di te memoria viva sempre, or cara,
serberò.

Edgar:

I shall think of you always, my dearest.

Moderato assai**LUCY and EDGAR****Lucia e Edgardo:**

Ah! Veranno a te sull'aure
i miei sospiri ardenti,
udrai nel mar che mormora,
l'eco de' miei lamenti.
Pensando ch'io di gemiti
mi pasco e di dolor,
spargi un'amara lagrima
su questo pegno allor.

Lucy and Edgar:

The breeze will carry
my loving sighs to you.
And my laments will echo
in the murmuring seas.
Think of my pain
and my suffering.
Then shed a tear
on the vow of our love.

Edgardo:
Io parto.

Lucia:
Addio.

Edgardo:
Rammentati, ne stringe il ciel!

Lucia:
Edgardo!

Edgardo:
Addio!

Edgar:
I must leave.

Lucy:
Farewell.

Edgar:
Remember, we are united by Heaven!

Lucy:
Edgar!

Edgar:
Farewell!

Edgar departs. Lucy retires into the Castle.

End of Act I

Act II - Scene 1

“The Marriage Contract”

*The apartments of Lord Henry Ashton in the Lammermoor castle.
Henry is seated beside a table, deep in thought.*

Normanno:

Lucia fra poco a te verrà.

Norman:

Lucy will soon be here.

Enrico:

Tremante l'aspetto.
A festeggiar le nozze illustri,
già nel castello i nobili parenti
giunser di mia famiglia;
in breve Arturo qui volgerà.

Henry:

I'm anxiously waiting for her.
My noble kinsmen
are already here
to celebrate the wedding.
Soon, Arthur will arrive.

E s'ella pertinace osasse d'opporci?

But what if Lucy continues to defy me?

Normanno:

Non temer: la lunga assenza del tuo nemico,
i fogli da noi rapiti, e la bugiarda nuova
ch'egli s'accese d'altra fiamma, in core
di Lucia spegneranno il cieco amore.

Norman:

Do not fear. Your enemy has been gone for a
very long time. We've intercepted all of his
letters to Lucy. We'll make her believe he's
in love with another woman, and rid her of
this blind obsession.

Enrico:

Ella s'avanza!
Il simulato foglio porgimi.

Henry:

She is coming.
Give me the letter you forged.

Norman gives Henry the letter.

Ed esci sulla via che tragge
alla città regina di Scozia,
e qui fra plausi e liete grida conduci Arturo.

Now go to the main road that leads
to Edinburgh.
Escort Arthur here with all due ceremony.

Norman departs.

Lucy appears at the doorway. She hesitates, despondent and in anguish.

Enrico:

Appressati, Lucia.

Henry:

Come here to me, Lucy.

Lucy enters the room. She is extremely nervous and stares fixedly at her brother.

Sperai più lieta in questo dì vederti,
in questo dì, che d'imeneo le faci
s'accendono per te.
Mi guardi, e taci?

Lucia:

Il pallor funesto orrendo,
che ricopre il volto mio,
ti rimprovero tacendo
il mio strazio, il mio dolore.
Perdonare ti possa Iddio
l'inumano tuo rigor!

Enrico:

A ragion mi fe' spietato
quel che t'arse indegno affetto;
ma si taccia del passato;
tuo fratello, sono ancor.
Spenta è l'ira nel mio petto,
spegni tu l'insano amor.

Nobil sposo...

Lucia:

Cessa, cessa!

Enrico:

Come?

Lucia:

Ad altr'uomo giurai la fè.

Enrico:

Nol potevi.

Lucia:

Enrico!

Enrico:

Nol potevi.

Lucia:

Ad altro giurai mia fè.

Enrico:

Basti!

I hoped so see you looking happier today.
After all, the marriage torches are being lit
for you.
Why do you stare at me so silently?

Lucy:

You notice the terrible deathly pallor
that covers my face.
It accuses you as the cause
of my torture and pain.
Only God can forgive you
for your inhuman cruelty to me!

Henry:

I had reason to be angry.
You had an affair with our clan's enemy.
But that is in the past now.
I am still your brother.
I have extinguished my anger.
Now put aside this insane love of yours.

Your noble husband...

Lucy:

No more, no more!

Henry:

Why?

Lucy:

I am pledged to another man.

Henry: (angrily)

You cannot do this.

Lucy:

Henry!

Henry:

You cannot do this.

Lucy:

I am pledged to another man.

Henry: (restraining his anger)

Enough!

Henry gives Lucy the forged letter he received from Norman.

Questo foglio appien ti dice
qual crudel, qual empio amasti.
Leggi!

This letter will prove what a scoundrel you loved.
Read it!

Lucy reads the letter. She becomes terrified, dismayed, and trembles.

Lucia:
Il core mi balzò!

Lucy:
My heart is breaking!

Enrico:
Tu vacilli!

Henry: (*rushing to assist her*)
You are trembling!

Lucia:
Me infelice! Ahi!
La folgore piombò!

Lucy:
What unhappiness!
The thunderbolt has struck!

Larghetto
LUCY



Soffriva nel pianto, languiva nel dolore,
la speme, la vita riposi in un cor,
l'istante di morte è giunto per me!
Ouel core infedele ad altra di diè!

What pain I suffered. What misery I
endured. I trusted my life to his love.
Now the hour of my death has arrived!
The unfaithful man loves another woman.

Enrico:
Un folle ti accese, un perfido amore;
tradisti il tuo sangue per vil seduttore,
ma degna dal cielo ne avesti mercé:
quel core infedele ad altra si diè!

Henry:
It was madness. He was a perfidious lover.
You betrayed your own family for a vile
seducer. Now merciful heaven has rescued
you. That betrayer loves another woman!

Festive music is heard from a hall in the castle.

Lucia:
Che fia?

Lucy:
What is that music?

Enrico:
Suonar di giubbilo, senti la riva.

Henry:
It is the sound of celebration.

Lucia:
Ebbene?

Lucy:
Why?

Enrico:
Giunge il tuo sposo.

Henry:
Your bridegroom has arrived.

Lucia:

Un brivido mi corse per le vene!

Enrico:

A te s'appresta il talamo.

Lucia:

La tomba a me s'appresta!

Enrico:

Ora fatale è questa!

Lucia:

Ho sugli'occhi un vel!

Enrico:

M'odi!

Spento è Guglielmo,

ascendere vedremo il trono Maria.

Prostrata è nella polvere

la parte ch'io seguia.

Lucia:

Ah! Io tremo!

Enrico:

Dal precipizio Arturo può sottrarmi,

sol egli.

Lucia:

Ed io?

Enrico:

Salvarmi devi.

Lucia:

Enrico!

Enrico:

Vieni allo sposo!

Lucia:

Ad altri giurai.

Enrico:

Devi salvarmi. Il devi.

Lucia:

Oh ciel! Oh ciel!

Lucy:

An icy chill overcomes me!

Henry:

The nuptial hour approaches.

Lucy:

Prepare my grave instead!

Henry:

It is the fatal hour!

Lucy:

My sight grows dim!

Henry:

Listen to me!

King William is dead.

Mary will ascend the throne.

The party I followed

has fallen from power.

Lucy:

I am trembling!

Henry:

Only Arthur can rescue me from total ruin.

Lucy:

And what about me?

Henry:

You must save me.

Lucy:

Henry!

Henry:

Go to your bridegroom!

Lucy:

But my oath.

Henry:

You must save me. You must.

Lucy:

Oh heavens!

Vivace
HENRY



Enrico:

Se tradirmi tu potrai,
la mia sorte è già compita;
tu m'involi onore e vita,
tu la scure appresti a me.
Ne' tuoi sogni mi vedrai,
ombra irata e minacciosa!
Quella scure sanguinosa
starà sempre innanzi a te!

Lucia:

Tu che vedi il pianto mio,
tu che leggi in questo core,
se respinto il mio dolore,
come in terra, in ciel non è.
Tu mi togli, eterno Iddio,
questa vita disperata,
io son tanto sventurata,
che la morte è un ben per me!

Henry: (*energetically*)

If you betray me,
my fate is sealed.
You'll rob me of my honor and my life.
You will wield the axe that decapitates me.
And I'll haunt your dreams,
like a furious, threatening ghost!
That bloodstained axe,
will follow you the rest of your life!

Lucy: (*tearfully looking upwards*)

Lord. You see my tears.
You read my heart,
and you reject my pain.
As on earth, heaven does not exist.
Eternal God, take me away,
from this despairing life.
I am so unfortunate,
that death is a better fate for me!

Henry departs, as Lucy sinks into a chair.

*Raymond Bidebent enters; he is a minister and Lucy's tutor.
Lucy anxiously hastens to meet him.*

Lucia:

Ebben?

Lucy:

Is there any news?

Raimondo:

Di tua speranza l'ultimo raggio tramontò!
Credei , al tuo sospetto, che il fratel
chiudesse tutte le strade onde sul franco
suolo, all'uomo che amar giurasti,
non giungesser tue nuove:
io stesso un foglio da te vergato per sicura
mano recar gli feci invano!
Tace mai sempre.
Quel silenzio assai d'infedeltà ti parla!

Raymond:

Your last hope has been crushed.
You suspected that your brother would
stop at nothing to keep your letters from
reaching the man you love in France.
So I gave one of your letters to a trusted
friend to deliver himself,
but it was useless.
There is no word from Edgar,
so his silence must mean that he is unfaithful!

Lucia:

E me consigli?

Lucy:

What is your advice?

Raimondo:

Di piegarti al destino.

Raymond:

Accept your fate.

Lucia:

E il giuramento?

Lucy:

What about my vow to him?

Raimondo:

Tu pur vaneggi!

I nuziali voti che il ministro di Dio non
benedice, nè il ciel, nè il mondo riconosce.**Raymond:**

You're too delirious!

No minister of God blessed that marriage
vow, neither in Heaven, or on earth.**Lucia:**Ah! Cede persuasa la mente, ma sordo alla
ragion resiste il core!**Lucy:**Stop trying to persuade me. My heart resists
reason!**Raimondo:**

Vincerlo è forza.

Raymond:

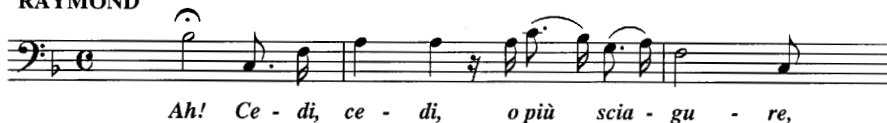
Force yourself to accept your fate.

Lucia:

Oh, sventurato amore!

Lucy:

Oh, what an unfortunate love!

Cantabile**RAYMOND****Raimondo:**Ah! Cedi, cedi, o più sciagure
ti sovrastano, infelice.
Per le tenere mie cure,
per l'estinta genitrice,
il periglio d'un fratello,
deh ti muova, e cangi il cor.
O la madre, nell'avello fremerà,
per te d'orror.**Raymond:**Yield, or you'll suffer
an even worse disaster.
Think of the tender care
I've given you.
Think of your dead mother.
Think of the danger your brother is in.
Relent and change your mind, or your mother
will shudder with horror in her grave.**Lucia:**

Taci, taci!

Lucy:

Quiet!

Raimondo:

No, no, cedi.

Raymond:

No, no, that is enough.

Lucia:

Ah! Ah! Taci.

Lucy:

Quiet.

Raimondo:

La madre, il fratello.

Raymond:

Your mother, your brother.

Lucia:

Ah! VIncesti.
Non son tanto snaturata.

Raimondo:

Oh! Qual gioia in me tu desti!
Oh qual nube hai dissipata!

Al ben de' tuoi qual vittima
offri, Lucia, te stessa;
e tanto sacrificio
scritto nel ciel sarà.
Se la pietà degli uomini
a te non fia concessa,
v'è un Dio, v'è un Dio,
che tergere il pianto tuo saprà.

Lucia:

Guidami tu, tu reggimi,
son fuori di me stessa!
Lungo, crudel supplizio
la vita a me sarà!

Lucy: (*conceding to Raymond*)

You've won.
I'm not that inhuman.

Raymond:

How happy you've made me!
The dark clouds have disappeared!.

You're sacrificing yourself for the good of
your family, Lucy.
And your deed
will be rewarded in Heaven.
Though you have received little mercy
from mankind,
there is a God who will give you comfort
and dry your tears.

Lucy:

Guide me, support me!
I am not in control of myself!
It is a profound sacrifice,
that has overcome my life!

Raymond departs.

Act II - Scene 2

The Great Hall of the Castle

*The hall has been prepared for a reception to honor the arrival of Lord Arthur Bucklaw
and perform the wedding of Lucy to Arthur.*

Moderato mosso

CHORUS



Enrico, Normanno, Coro:

Per te d'immenso giubilo
tutto s'avviva intorno,
per te veggiam rinascere
della speranza il giorno,
qui l'amistà ti guida,
qui ti conduce amore,
tutto ravviva intorno,
qui ti conduce amor,
qual astro in notte infida,
qual riso nel dolor.

Arturo:

Per poco fra le tenebre
sparì la vostra stella:
io la farò risorgere
più fulgida, più bella.
La man mi porgi, Enrico,
ti stringi a questo cor,
a te ne vengo amico,
fratello e difensor.

Don'è Lucia?

Enrico:

Qui giungere or la vedrem.

Se in lei soverchia e la mestizia,
maravigliarti, no, no, non dei.
Dal duolo oppressa e vinta,
piange la madre estinta.

Henry, Norman, Chorus:

We're gathered here in great joy.
Because of you,
our hopes
are renewed.
Here friendships guide us,
here love guides us.
All is bright around us,
and here love guides us.
from that unfaithful night star
that is like a smile of sorrow.

Arthur: (*addressing Henry*)

Your star will rise again
out of the darkest clouds.
I will make it shine again,
more brightly and more beautiful.
Give me your hand, Henry.
I will embrace you with all my heart.
I come to you as a friend,
a brother, and a protector.

Where is Lucy?

Henry:

She'll be here soon.

(*Aside to Arthur*)

Don't be surprised if she seems overcome
by despair.
She is oppressed by grief,
and she is still in mourning for her mother.

Arturo:

M'è noto, sì, sì, m'è noto.

Enrico:

Soverchia e la mestizia, ma piange la madre.

Arturo:

Or solvi un dubbio.
Fama suonò, ch'Edgardo
sovr'essa temerario
alzare osò lo sguardo temerario.

Enrico:

È vero, quel folle ardia, ma...

Arturo:

Ah!

Normanno, Coro:

S'avanza qui Lucia.

Enrico:

Piange la madre estinta.

Arthur:

I understand well.

Henry:

She is overcome with despair,
and mourns for her mother.

Arthur:

Help me resolve a doubt.
I heard rumors about Edgar:
that he dared to court Lucy;
that he dared to look at her recklessly.

Henry:

True, he was wildly in love with her, but..

Arthur:

Ah!

Norman, Chorus:

Lucy is coming.

Henry: (to Arthur)

Remember, she still mourns her mother.

*Lucy enters, accompanied by Raymond and Alice; she is melancholy and despondent.
Henry present Lucy to Arthur; she immediately withdraws from him.*

Enrico:

Ecco il tuo sposo.

Henry: (to Lucy)

Here is your bridegroom.

(Henry whispers to Lucy)

(Incauta! Perder mi vuoi?)

(Be careful! Do you want to destroy me?)

Lucia:

(Gran Dio!)

Lucy:

(Oh, God!)

Arturo:

Ti piaccia i voti accogliere del tenero amor mio.

Arthur: (to Lucy)

Please accept my vow of tender love for you.

Henry interrupts Arthur and proceeds to the table upon which the marriage contract lies.

Enrico:

(Incauta!)
Omai si compia il rito.
T'appressa.

Henry: (aside to Lucy)

(Be careful!)
Now sign the marriage contract.
It is prepared for you.

Lucia:
(Gran Dio!)

Lucy:
(Oh, God!)

Arturo:
Oh dolce invito!

Arthur:
Such a sweet conquest!

*Arthur goes to the table and signs the marriage contract.
Raymond and Alice lead the trembling Lucy to the table.*

Lucia:
(Io vado al sacrificio! Me misera!)

Lucy:
(I'm going to my sacrifice! What misery!)

(La mia condanna ho scritta!)

(Lucy signs the marriage contract)
(I've signed my death warrant!)

Enrico:
(Respiro!)

Henry:
(I can breathe now!)

Lucia:
(Io gelo e ardo!

Lucy:
(I'm freezing and I'm burning!)

*Edgar enters from the door at the back of the hall,
causing an uproar from the wedding guests.*

Tutti:
Qual fragor!
Chi giunge?

All:
What an uproar!
Who has arrived?

Edgardo:
Edgardo!

Edgar: *(in a terrifying voice)*
Edgar!

Tutti:
Edgardo!

All:
Edgar!

Lucia:
Edgardo! Oh fulmine!

Lucy:
Edgar! What a thunderbolt!

Lucy faints and falls to the ground.

Tutti:
Oh terror!

All:
What a horror!

Alice, aided by some ladies, raises Lucy and leads her to a seat.

Alisa:
Edgardo!

Alice:
Edgar!

Raimono e Coro:
Oh terror!

Raymond and Chorus:
What a horror!

Larghetto**EDGAR and HENRY**

EDGAR: *Chi mi fre - na in tal mo - me - to?*
What restrains me at this moment,

HENRY: *Chi raf - fre - na il mio fu - ro - re,*
What restrains my fury,

Enrico:

(Chi raffrena il mio furore,
e la man che al brando corse?
Della misera in favore
nel mio petto un grido sorse!
È il mio sangue! L'ho tradita!
Ella sta fra morte e vita!
Ah! Che spegnere non posso
i rimorso nel mio core!)

Edgardo:

(Chi mi frena in tal momento
chi troncò dell'ire il corso?
Il suo duolo, il suo spavento
son la prova d'un rimorso!
Ma, qual rosa inaridita,
ella sta fra morte e vita!
Io son vinto, son commosso!
T'amo, ingrata, t'amo ancor!)

Lucia:

(Io sperai che a me la vita
tronca avesse il mio spavento,
ma la morte non m'aita,
vivo ancor per mio tormento!
Da' miei lumi cadde il velo,
mi tradì la terra e il cielo!
Vorrei piangere, e non posso,
m'abbandona, il pianto ancor!)

Arturo, Raimondo, Alisa, Normanno, Coro:

(Qual terribile momento!
Più formar non so parole.
Densa nube di spavento
par che copra i rai del sole!
Come rosa, inaridita,
ella sta fra morte e vita!
Chi per lei non è commosso,
ha di tigre in petto il cor.)

Henry: (aside)

(What restrains my furor
that I cannot raise my sword?
A dark misery screams
from the depths of my breast!
She is my own blood! I have betrayed her!
She is poised between life and death!
I cannot extinguish the remorse in my
heart!)

Edgar:

(What restrains me in this moment
from venting my fury?
Her grief and fright
prove that she is guilty!
But that parched rose,
is poised between life and death!
I am defeated, and I am overwhelmed!
I still love you, unfaithful woman!)

Lucy:

(I was hoping my life would end,
and bring an end to my fears.
But death has not come to save me.
I still live and suffer!
Now I realize what has happened.
Both Heaven and earth have betrayed me!
I want to cry but I cannot.
The comfort of tears has been denied to me!)

Arthur, Raymond, Alice, Chorus:

(What a terrible moment!
I cannot find words.
Dense, dark clouds have gathered
and covered the rays of the sun!
Like a parched rose,
she is poised between life and death!
One who is not compassionate to her
has a tiger in his heart.)

Enrico, Arturo, Normanno, Cavalieri:

T'allontana sciagurato
o il tuo sangue fia versato.

Henry, Arthur, Norman, Cavaliers:

Leave, you wretch,
or your blood will be shed.

All rush toward Edgar with their swords brandished.

Edgardo:

Morirò, ma insiem col mio altro sangue
scorrerà.

Edgar: *(drawing his sword)*

I will die, but with my death, other blood
will flow.

Raimondo:

Rispettate in me di Dio la tremenda
maestà.
In suo nome io vel comando,
deponete l'ira e il brando.
Pace, pace, egli abborrisce l'omicida,
e scritto sta:
"Chi di ferro altrui ferisce,
pur di ferro perirà." Pace, pace.

Raymond: *(intervening authoritatively)*

Have respect for God's awesome majesty.
In His name, I order you
to put down your swords.
Peace! Peace! The Lord abhors murder,
and it is written:
"He who lives by the sword
shall die by the sword."
Peace, peace.

All sheathe their swords.

Enrico:

Sconsigliato!
In queste porte chi ti guida?

Henry: *(confronting Edgar)*

You are now discouraged!
What brought you to these portals?

Edgardo:

La mia sorte, il mio dritto.

Edgar: *(haughtily)*

My destiny, and my right.

Enrico:

Sciagurato!

Henry:

Scoundrel!

Edgardo:

Sì; Lucia la sua fede a me giurò!

Edgar:

Yes, Lucy pledged her love to me!

Raimondo:

Ah! Questo amor funesto obblia:
ella ed'altri!

Raymond:

That love is doomed.
She belongs to another.

Edgardo:

D'altri! No.

Edgar:

To another! No.

Raimondo:

Mira.

Raymond:

Look.

*Raymond shows Edgar the marriage contract.
Edgar reads it quickly, and then eyes Lucy furiously.*

Edgardo:

Tremi, ti confondi!
Son tue cifre?
A me rispondi:
Son tue cifre? Rispondi!

Edgar: *(to Lucy)*

You're trembling! You're humiliated!
Is this your writing?
Answer me!
Is this your writing? Answer me!

Lucia:

Sì!

Lucy: *(meekly)*

Yes!

Edgardo:

Riprendi il tuo pegno, infido cor.
Il mio dammi. Lo rendi.

Edgar: *(giving Lucy his ring)*

Take back your ring, unfaithful woman.
Give me mine. Return it.

Lucia:

Almen, Edgardo! Edgardo!.

Lucy:

If only, Edgar! Edgar!

*Lucy, in her anguish, is totally confused.
She takes off her ring, which Edgar brusquely snatches from her.*

Edgardo:

Hai tradito il cielo e amor!

Edgar:

You have betrayed both love and Heaven!

Maledetto sia l'istante
che di te mi rese amante,
stirpe iniqua, abbominata io dovea da te
fuggir!
Ah! Ma di Dio la mano irata
vi disperda.

I curse the moment
I began to love you.
I should have fled from this abominable
family.
But the angry hand of God will disperse
you.

Enrico, Arturo, Normanno, Cavalieri:

Insano ardir!
Esci, fuggi il furor che accende
solo un punto i suoi colpi sospende,
ma fra poco più atroce, più fiero
sul suo capo abborrito cadrà.

Henry, Arthur, Norman, Cavaliers:

Insane passion!
Leave! Flee from the fury
that has now inflamed us.
Soon something monstrous and more fierce
will fall upon your head.

Edgardo:

Trucidatemi, e pronubo al rito sia,
io scempio d'un core tradito.
Del mio sangue coperta la soglia;
dolce vista per l'empia sarà!
Calpestando l'esangue mia spoglia
all'altare più lieta se ne andrà!

Edgar:

Kill me now. My bleeding heart is the
wedding gift from a betrayed fool.
My blood covering the ground
will be a sweet sight for that wicked one!
She will trample on my blood as she walks
the path to the altar!

Lucia:

Dio lo salva, in sì fiero momento,
d'una misera ascolta l'accento.
È la prece d'immenso dolore
che più in terra speranza non ha.
E l'estrema domanda del core,
che sul labbro spirando mi sta!

Lucy:

May God save him!
It is a fierce and stressful moment.
It is the price of immense sorrow
that on earth there is no longer hope.
I am doomed to misery,
but do not refuse my last, dying prayer!

Arturo:

Va col sangue tuo lavata sarà.
Esci, fuggi!
Il furor che m'accende
solo un punto i suoi colpi sospende,
ma fra poco più atroce,
fiero sul tuo capo abborrito cadrà,
la macchia d'oltraggio
sì nero col tuo sangue lavata sarà!

Raimondo, Alisa, Dame:

Infelice! Deh ti salva!
Vivi, forse il tuo duolo fia spento,
tutto è lieve, all'eterna pietà,
infelice, t'invola, t'affretta, i tuoi giorni, il
suo stato rispetta, quante volte ad un solo
tormento, mille gioie apprestate non ha!

Arthur:

Go and your blood will be cleansed.
Leave, flee!
Flee from the fury
that has now inflamed us,
Soon something monstrous and more fierce
will fall upon your head.
It will be the mark of a dark tragedy,
and your blood will be cleansed!

Raymond, Alice, Women:

Unfortunate one! Save yourself!
Live, perhaps your sorrow has ended.
Everything is eased by Heavenly mercy.
flee, hurry, restore your self respect
and rank. How often a single torture is
succeeded by a thousand joys!

End of Act II

Act III - Scene 1

A room in the Tower of Wolf's Crag. It is night, and a storm rages.

Edgar is seated by a table, immersed in thought.

After a few moments, he rises, goes to the window, and stares outside.

Edgardo:

Orrida è questa notte come il destino mio!

Sì, tuona, o cielo imperversate, o fulmini,
sconvolto sia l'ordin di natura e pera il
mondo!

Ma io non mi inganno!

Scalpitare d'appresso odo un destrier!

S'arresta!

Chi mai nella tempesta fra le minacce e
l'ira, chi puote a me venire?

Edgar:

This night is as horrible as my destiny!

(Thunder is heard)

Yes, the roar of raging heaven, and lightning.
The order of nature is overturned, as well as
the light of the world!

But if I am not mistaken!

I hear the sound of a rider!

He is stopping!

Who would come here amidst this
menacing storm?

Lord Henry Ashton enters, and immediately removes his cloak.

Enrico:

Io!

Henry:

Il!

Edgardo:

Quale ardire! Ashton!

Enrico:

Sì.

Edgar:

What boldness! Ashton!

Henry:

Yes.

Edgardo:

Fra queste mura osi offrirti al mio cospetto!

Edgar:

You dare present yourself within these walls!

Enrico:

Io vi sto per tua sciagura.

Henry:

I am here because of your misfortune.

Edgardo:

Per mia?

Edgar:

For mine?

Enrico:

Non venisti nel mio tetto?

Henry:

Didn't you come to my home?

Moderato

EDGAR



Qui del pa - dre ancor-re - spi - ra l'ombra inulta, e par che fre - ma!

Edgardo:

Qui del padre ancor respira,
l'ombra inulta, e par che frema!
Morte ogn'aura a te qui spira!
Il terren per te qui trema!
Nel varcar la soglia orrenda
ben dovresti palpitar,
come un uom che vivo scenda
la sua tomba ad albergar!

Enrico:

Fu condotta la sacro rito quindi al talamo
Lucia.

Edgardo:

(Ei più squarcia il cor ferito!
Oh tormento! Oh gelosia!)

Enrico:

Ella è al talamo.

Edgardo:

(Oh gelosia!) Ebben? Ebben?

Enrico:

Ascolta!
Di letizia il mio soggiorno
e di plausi rimbombava;
ma più forte al cor d'intorno
la vendetta a me parlava!
Qui mi trassi, in mezzo ai venti,
la sua voce udia tuttor;
e il furor degl'elementi
rispondeva al mio furor!

Edgardo:

Da me che brami?

Enrico:

Ascoltami!
Onde punir l'offesa,
de' miei, la spada vindice
pende su te sospesa,
ch'altri ti spenga,
mai, chi dee svenarti il sai!

Edgardo:

So che al paterno cenere giurai strapparti
al core.

Edgar:

Here my father still breathes,
his ghost shuddering!
Death is in the air you breathe!
Here the earth shakes and trembles!
When you crossed the threshold
you were throbbing,
like a man descending
into his final tomb!

Henry: (with savage joy)

It was because of a sacred duty: the nuptial
bed of Lucy.

Edgar:

(Another slice of a wounded heart!
What torment! What jealousy!)

Henry:

She is in her nuptial bed.

Edgar:

(What jealousy!) What more?

Henry:

Listen!
Joy and happiness have been thundering
around me,
and strengthened my heart,
because vengeance speaks to me!
I was drawn here, amidst a storm,
hearing your voice,
and the fury of the elements
increased my own fury!

Edgar: (with haughty impatience)

What do you want from me?

Henry:

Listen to me!
My sword will punish the
wrongs you committed against me.
I challenge you to a duel,
because nothing else can
erase your debauchery!

Edgar:

By the ashes of my father, I will
drain blood from your heart.

Edrico:
Tu!

Edgardo:
Quando?

Enrico:
Al primo sorgere del mattutino albore.

Edgardo:
Ove?

Enrico:
Fra l'urne gelide di Ravenswood.

Edgardo:
Verrò. Sì, verrò, sì, sì!

Enrico:
Ivi a restar preparati.

Edgardo:
Ivi t'ucciderò.

Enrico:
Al primo albore.

Edgardo:
Al primo albore.

Edgardo e Enrico:
Ah! O sole più ratto a sorgere t'appresta,
ti cinga di sangue, ghirlanda funesta,
con quella rischiara l'orribile gara
d'un odio mortale, d'un cieco furore.
Giurai strappar tu cuore!

Enrico:
La spada pende su te.

Edgardo:
Fra l'urne di Ravenswood.

Enrico:
All'albe verro.

Henry:
You!

Edgar: (*with disdain*)
When shall we meet?

Henry:
At early dawn tomorrow.

Edgar:
Where?

Henry:
By the cold tombs of Ravenswood.

Edgar:
Yes, I will be there!

Henry:
Prepare yourself for death.

Edgar:
I will kill you there.

Henry:
At early dawn.

Edgar:
At early dawn.

Edgar and Henry:
Hurry early sun, so I can surround him
with blood and a deadly garland.
I will risk this horrendous duel
of mortal hatred and blind fury.
I swear I will rip out your heart!

Henry:
My sword awaits you.

Edgar:
Among the urns of Ravenswood.

Henry:
At early morning.

Act III - Scene 2

*A Hall at the Castle of Ravenswood. From adjoining rooms,
dance music is heard. Guests are conversing intimately.*

Coro:

D'immenso giubilo
s'innalzi un grido,
di vivo giubbilo
corra di Scozia di lido,
e avverta i perfidi
nostri nemici.

Che più terribili,
che più felici,
ne rende l'aura
d'alto favor;
le stelle ancor!
Che a noi sorridono
le stelle ancor.

Raimondo:

Cessi, ah cessi quel contento!

Coro:

Sei cosperso di pallore!
Ciel! Che rechi?

Raimondo:

Un fiero evento!

Coro:

Tu ne agghiacci di terror!

Raimondo:

Dalle stanze, ove Lucia
Tratta avea col suo consorte,
un lamento, un grido uscì,
come d'uom vicino a morte!

Corsi ratto in quelle mura.
Ahi! Terribile sciagura!
Steso Arturo al suol giaceva,
nuto, freddo, insanguinato!
E Lucia l'acciar stringeva,
che fu già del trucidato!

Chorus:

Shouts of immense joy
have swelled on this happy day.
Buoyant exultation
comes from Scotland's shores.
We have averted the betrayal
of our enemies.

How terrible,
yet how joyful.
The star shines on us,
like the breath
of a Divine gift!
May the stars
always smile upon us.

Raymond:

Stop this celebration!

Chorus:

You seem pale!
Heavens! What has happened?

Raymond:

Something ghastly has happened!

Chorus:

You seem terrified and frightened!

Raymond:

(Calling all to gather around him.)
Lucy had retired to her rooms with her
husband.
I heard a scream; the cry of a man near
death.

I rushed into their chamber.
What a horrible sight!
Arthur lay on the floor, mute, cold, and
covered with blood.
Lucy was still holding the dagger over the
murdered man!

Ella in me le luci affisse:
“Il mio sposo, ov’è?” Mi disse:
e nel volto suo pallente
un sorriso balenò! Infelice!
Della mente la virtude a lei mancò!

Tutti:

Oh! Qual funesto avvenimento!
Tutti ne ingombra cupo spavento!
Notte, ricopri la ria sventura
col tenebroso tuo denso vel.
Ah! Quella destra di sangue impura
l’ira non chiami su noi del ciel.

Raimond:

Ella in me la luci affisse, e lacciar stringeva!

Eccola!

She fixed her eyes on me:
“Where is my bridegroom?” She said.
And a smile flashed over her pale face.
Unfortunate woman!
She had lost her mind!

All:

What dreadful news!
We’re all confounded and frightened!
Let night hide this misfortune
and cover us with its dark veil.
Heaven, do not let her bloodstained hand
bring Your wrath upon us all.

Raymond:

Her eyes were blank, the dagger in her hand!

Here she is!

*Lucy enters. She is wearing a plain white dress; her hair is dishevelled
and she is deathly pale. She is out of her senses and lost all touch with reality.*

Coro:

(Oh giusto cielo! Par dalla tomba uscita!)

Chorus:

Oh Heaven! She looks like she’s risen
from the tomb!)

Lucia:

Il dolce suono mi colpì di sua voce!
Ah! quella voce m’è qui nel cor discesa!
Edgardo! Io ti son resa:
fuggita io son da’ tuoi nemici.

Un gelo mi serpeggia nel sen!
Trema ogni fibra! Vacilla il piè!
Presso la fonte meco t’assidi alquanto!

Ohimè! Sorge il tremendo fantasma e ne
separa!
Ohimè! Ohimè! Edgardo! Edgardo!
Ah! Il fantasma ne separa!
Qui ricovriamo, Edgardo, a piè dell’ara.

Sparsa è di rose! Un’armonia celeste,
di’, non ascolti?
Ah! L’inno suona di nozze!
Il rito per noi, per noi s’appresta!
Oh me felice!
Oh gioia che si sente, e non si dice!

Lucy:

The sweet sound of his voice struck me.
That voice of his pierced my heart.
Edgar! I am yours again.
I have escaped from your enemies.

What an icy chill runs through me!
My whole body is shaking.
Sit with me by the fountain for a while!

That horrible ghost is rising up and driving
us apart!
Alas! Edgar!
The ghost is driving us apart!
Edgar, Let’s find a refuge.

Here’s our wedding altar, scattered with
roses! Do you hear the heavenly music?
It is the sound of our wedding hymn!
This is our marriage ceremony!
Oh, I’m so happy!
What joy I feel!

Ardon gl'incensi.
Splendon le sacre, splendon intorno!
Ecco il ministro!
Porgimi la destra!
Oh lieto giorno!
Alfin son tua, alfin sei mio, a me ti dona
un Dio!.

Normanno, Raimondo, Alisa, Coro:
Abbi in sì crudo stato di lei,
Signore, di lei pietà.

Lucia:
Ogni piacer più grato,
sì, mi fia con te diviso.
Del ciel clemente, un riso
la vita a noi sarà!

Raimondo:
S'avanza Enrico!

Enrico:
Ditemi: vera è l'atroce scena?

Raimondo:
Vera, pur troppo!

Enrico:
Ah! Perfida! Ne avrai condegna pena!

Normanno, Alisa, Coro:
T'arresta!

Raimondo:
Oh ciel!
Non vedi lo stato suo?

Lucia:
Che chiedi?

Enrico:
Oh, qual pallor!
Gran Dio!

Lucia:
Ah, me misera!

They're lighting the incense.
The sacred wedding torches are glowing!
Here is the minister!
Give me your hand!
What a happy day!
At last I am yours, at last you are mine,
Heaven itself has given you to me!

Norman, Raymond, Alice, Chorus:
How horrifying she is.
God, mercy on her.

Lucy:
Every pleasure in life will be greater,
when it is shared with you.
How kind Heaven is, our life together
will be like a smile!

Raymond:
Henry is coming!

Henry: (*rushing in*)
Tell me, is it true Arthur was murdered?

Raymond:
It is very true!

Henry: (*looking toward Lucy*)
Betrayed! You'll pay for this!

Norman, Alice, Chorus:
Contain yourself!

Raymond:
Oh Heaven!
Don't you see her condition?

Lucy:
What do you want?

Henry: (*deliriously*)
How pallid she is!
Great God!

Lucy:
I am so wretched!

Raimondo:

Ha la ragion smarrita.
Tremare, o barbaro,
Tu dei per la sua vita.

Raymond:

She has lost her reason.
Tremble, heartless man.
You are responsible for this.

Lucia:

Non mi guardar sì fiero,
Segnai quel foglio, è vero.
Nell'ira sua terribile
Calpesta, oh Dio, l'anello!
Mi maledice! Ah!
Vittima fui d'un crudel fratello,
ma ognor t'amai, ignora, Edgardo,
sì, ognor t'amai, e t'amo ancor,
Edgardo mio, sì, te lo giuro,
t'amai e t'amo ancor!

Lucy:

Don't look at me so angrily.
I signed that paper, it's true.
He was so infuriated.
He threw down our wedding ring.
And he cursed me.
But I was only the victim of a cruel brother.
I swear I have always loved you, Edgar.
I always loved you, and I still love you.
My Edgar, yes, I swear to you,
I love you and still love you!

Gli Altri:

Pietà di lei, Signor, pietà!

The Others:

Mercy on her!

Lucia:

Chi mi nomasti?
Arturo! Tu nomasti. Arturo!
Ah! Non fuggir! Ah, per pietà, perdon!
Ah! No, non fuggir, Edgardo!

Lucy:

What name did you say?
Arthur? You are Arthur!
Don't leave, Edgar! Forgive me!
No, don't leave, Edgar!

Gli Altri:

Qual notte di terror.

The Others:

What a horrible night!

Moderato**LUCY**

Spar - gi d'a - ma - ro pian - to,
Spread your bitter tears

il mio ter - re - stre ve - lo,
over my earthly remains.

Lucia:

Spargi d'amaro pianto
il mio terrestre velo,
mentre lassù nel cielo
io pregherò per te.
Al giunger tuo soltanto
fia bello il ciel per me!

Lucy:

Spread your bitter tears
over my earthly remains.
In Heaven above,
I'll pray for you.
Only when you join me
will Heaven seem beautiful to me!

Enrico:

Giorni d'amaro pianto serba il rimorso a me.

Raimond e Coro:

Piu raffrenare il pianto possibile non è!

Enrico:

Sì tragga altrove, Alisa.

Uom del Signor, deh! Voi la misera vegliate.

Io più me stesso in me non trovo!

Raimond:

Delator! Gioisci dell'opra tua!

Normanno:

Che parli?

Raimondo:

Sì, dell'incendio che divampa e strugge
questa casa infelice,
hai tu destata la primiera scintilla!

Normanno:

Io non credei...

Raimondo:

Tu del versato sangue, empio,
tu sei la ria cagion!
Quel sangue al ciel t'accusa,
e già la man suprema
segna la tua sentenza!
Or vanne, e trema!

Henry:

It is a day of bitter tears that has made me remorseful.

Raymond and Chorus:

It is impossible for me to restrain my tears!

Henry:

Remove her carefully, Alice.

(to Raymond)

Man of God, look at this misery!

(Alice and ladies lead Lucy away)

I will only have remorse in my life!

Raymond: (to Norman)

Man of blood! Exult in your work!

Norman:

What are you saying?

Raymond:

It was your hand that incited the crime
and created this unhappiness.
You sparked and kindled the flames!

Norman:

I didn't believe...

Raymond:

You are the author of this crime. Traitor!
You are the reason!
For that blood, Heaven accuses you.
And already the hand of God
signs your sentence!
Go from here, and tremble!

Raymond follows Lucy. Norman exits.

Act III - Scene 3

*Outside the Castle of Wolf's crag. In the distance, an illuminated Hall.
It is the Tombs of Ravenswood at night.*

Edgardo:

Tombe degli avi miei, l'ultimo avanzo
d'una stirpe infelice,
Deh! Raccogliete voi.

Cessò dell'ira il breve foco;
sul nemico acciaro abbandonar mi vo'.
Per me la vita è orrendo peso!
L'universo intero è un deserto per me
senza Lucia!

Di faci tutttavia splende il castello!
Ah! Scarsa fu la notte al tripudio!
Ingrata donna!
Mentr'io mi struggo in disperato pianto,
tu ridi, esulti accanto
al felice consorte!
Tu delle gioie in seno, io della morte!

Edgar:

Tomb of my forefathers, receive the last
remains of our unhappy family.
Yes, gather the remains.

This brief, angry struggle will soon end:
I will throw myself upon the enemy's sword.
Life has become a horrible burden for me!
Without Lucy, the entire world seems like a
desert to me!

The castle is still ablaze with torches!
The night is brief for those who celebrate!
Ungrateful woman!
While I am destroyed by despair and
anguish you rejoice by the side of your
happy husband!
You are filled with joy, and I with death!

Larghetto
EDGAR



Fra poco a me ricovero darà negletto avello,
una pietosa lagrima
non scendera su quello!
Fin degli estinti, ah! misero!

Manca il conforto a me.
Tu pur, tu pur dimentica
quel marmo dispregiato:
mai non passarvi, o barbara,
del tuo consorte a lato.

Ah! Rispetta almen le ceneri
di chi moria per te!

Soon I'll find refuge in a forgotten tomb.
No one will ever shed a tear of sorrow upon
it!
In the end only death. Oh what misery!

Even in death, I'll find no comfort!
You, too, you will forget
my marble tomb.
Never come near it, heartless woman,
when your husband is at your side.

At least respect the ashes
of the man who died for you!

Voices are heard in the distance, coming from the Ashton Castle.

Coro:

Oh meschina! Oh fato orrendo!
Più sperar non giova omai!.
Questo dì che sta sorgendo
tramontar tu non vedrai!

Edgardo:

Giusto cielo! Rispondete:
Di chi mai, di chi piangete?

Coro:

Di Lucia.

Edgardo:

Lucia diceste!

Coro:

Sì la misera sen muore.
Fur le nozze a lei funeste,
di ragion la trasse amore,
s'avvicina all'ore estreme,
e te chiede, per te geme.

Edgardo:

Ah! Lucia! Lucia!.

Chorus:

The unhappy woman!. The horrible fate!
There is no hope left!
She has not lived
to see the dawn of a new day.

Edgar:

For Heaven's sake! Tell me.
For whom do you mourn?

Chorus:

For Lucy.

Edgar: *(stricken by terror).*

You said Lucy!

Chorus:

The unfortunate woman died.
The wedding was fatal for her.
Her love for you robbed her of her senses.
Now her final hour approaches,
and she calls for you.

Edgar:

Ah! Lucy! Lucy!

In the distance, the sound of death bells.

Coro:

Rimbomba già la squilla in suon di morte!

Edgardo:

Quel suono al cor mi piomba!
È decisa la mia sorte!
Rivederla ancor vogl'io,
rivederla e poscia.

Coro:

Oh Dio
Qual trasporto, sconsigliato!.
Ah, desisti! Ah, riedi in te!

Chorus:

The death knell is already tolling!

Edgar:

That sound pierces my heart!
It rings for me as well!
I want to see her again,
to see her after her death.

(Rushing off)

Chorus: *(trying to detain him)*

Oh, God!
That procession!
Stop!

Edgar is halted by Raymond.

Raimondo:

Dove corri, sventurato?
Ella in terra più non è.

Raymond:

Where are you going, unhappy man?
She is no longer in this world.

Edgardo:

Lucia!

Edgar:

Lucy!

Raimondo:

Sventurato!

Raymond:

It is unfortunate!

Edgardo:

In terra piu non è? Ella dunque.

Edgar:

Lucy is no longer in this world?

Raimondo:

È in cielo.

Raymond:

She is in Heaven.

Edgardo:

Lucia piu non è!

Edgar:

Lucy is dead!

Coro:

Svenurato!

Chorus:

It is unfortunate!

Moderato**EDGAR****Edgardo:**

Tu che a Dio spiegasti l'ali,
 o bell'alma innamorata,
 ti rivolgi a me placata,
 teco ascenda il tuo fedel.
 Ah! Se l'ira dei mortali
 fece a noi sì cruda guerra,
 se divisi fummo in terra,
 ne congiunga il Nume in ciel!

Edgar:

Now you will unfold your wings before
 God, my beloved angel.
 Lean down to embrace me serenely.
 Your true love will join you.
 We were caught in a fatal hatred
 that became a cruel battle.
 We were kept apart on earth,
 Now may God unite us in Heaven!

Edgar grabs a dagger.

Io ti seguo.

I will follow you.

*All try in vain to disarm him.***Raimondo:**

Forsennato!

Raymond:

You are insane!

Raimond e Coro:

Ah! Che fai!

Raymond and Chorus:

What are you doing!

Edgardo:
Morir voglio.

Edgar:
I want to die.

Raimondo e Coro:
Ritorna in te.

Raymond and Chorus:
Give it to me.

Edgardo:
No, no, no!

Edgar:
No, no, no!

Edgar stabs himself.

Raimondo e Coro:
Ah! Che facesti!

Raymond and Chorus:
What have you done!

Edgardo:
A te vengo, o bell'alma, ti rivolgi, al tuop
fedel.
Ah se l'ira dei mortali si cruda guerra,
bell'alma, ne congiunga il Nume in cielo.

Edgar:
I am joining you, my lovely spirit. Your true
love will join you.
We were caught in a cruel battle,
My beloved, God will unite us in Heaven.

Raimondo e Coro:
Qual orror! Oh Dio perdona.
Pensa al ciel.
Dio, perdona tanto orror.

Raymond and Chorus:
What a horror! God forgive him.
Think of Heaven.
God, forgive this horror.

Edgar dies.

End of Opera

Discography

- 1933 Capsir (Lucy); de Muro Lomanto (Edgar); Molinari (Henry);
Baccaloni (Raymond);
La Scala Chorus and Orchestra; Molajoli (Conductor)
- 1939 Pagliughi (Lucy); Malipiero (Edgar); Manachini (Henry); Neroni (Raymond);
Turin Radio Chorus and Orchestra; Tansini (Conductor)
- 1953 Wilson (Lucy); Poggi (Edgar); Colzani (Henry); Maionica (Raymond);
Milan Chorus and Orchestra; Capuana (Conductor)
- 1954 Pons (Lucy); Tucker (Edgar); Guarrera (Henry); Scott (Raymond);
Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra; Cleva (Conductor)
- 1954 Callas (Lucy); de Stefano (Edgar); Gobbi (Henry); Arié (Raymond);
Florence Festival Chorus and Orchestra; Serafin (Conductor)
- 1955 Callas (Lucy); di Stefano (Edgar); Panerai (Henry); Zaccaria (Raymond);
La Scala Chorus; Berlin RIAS Orchestra; Karajan (Conductor)
- 1957 Ongaro (Lucy); Prandelli (Edgar); Maero (Henry);
La Fenice Chorus and Orchestra; Perlea (Conductor)
- 1958 Peters (Lucy); Peerce (Edgar); Maero (Henry); Tozzi (Raymond);
Rome Opera Chorus and Orchestra; Leinsdorf (Conductor)
- 1958 Rinaldi (Lucy); Tei (Edgar); Picca (Henry); Tatone (Raymond);
Rome Opera Chorus and Orchestra; Paoletti (Conductor)
- 1959 Scotto (Lucy); de Stefano (Edgar); Bastianini (Henry); Vinco (Raymond);
La Scala Chorus and Orchestra; Sanzogno (Conductor)
- 1959 Callas (Lucia); Tagliavini (Edgar); Cappuccilli (Henry); Ladysz (Raymond);
Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra; Serafin (Conductor)
- 1961 Sutherland (Lucy); Cioni (Edgar); Merrill (Henry); Siepi (Raymond);
Santa Cecilia Chorus and Orchestra; Pritchard (Conductor)
- 1966 Moffo (Lucy); Bergonzi (Edgar); Sereni (Henry); Flagello (Raymond);
RCA Italiana Chorus and Orchestra; Prêtre (Conductor)
- 1968 Guglielmi (Lucy); Labò (Edgar); Cappuccilli (Henry); Pagliuca (Raymond);
Czech Singers Chorus/Prague Orchestra; Ziino (Conductor)
- 1970 Sills (Lucy); Bergonzi (Edgar); Cappuccilli (Henry); Diaz (Raymond);
Ambrosian Chorus/London Symphony Orchestra; Schippers (Conductor)

- 1971 Sutherland (Lucy); Pavarotti (Edgar); Milnes (Henry); Ghiaurov (Raymond);
Royal Opera Chorus and Orchestra; Bonyngé (Conductor)
- 1972 Moffo (Lucy); Kozma (Edgar); Fioravanti (Henry); Washington (Raymond);
Rome Radio Chorus and Orchestra; Cillario (Conductor)
- 1976 Caballé (Lucy); Carreras (Edgar); Sardiniero (Henry); Ramey (Raymond);
Ambrosian Singers/New Philharmonia Orchestra; Cobos (Conductor)
- 1983 Gruberova (Lucy); Kraus (Edgar); Bruson (Henry); Lloyd (Raymond);
Ambrosian Singers/Royal Philharmonic Orchestra; Rescigno (Conductor)
- 1988 Gavazzeni (Lucy); Ferrari (Edgar); Carroli (Henry); Rinaudo (Raymond);
Naples Theater Chorus/San Carlo Orchestra; de Bernart (Conductor)
- 1992 Gruberova (Lucy); Shicoff (Edgar)
Ambrosian Singers/London Symphony Orchestra; Piccoli (Conductor)
- 1993 Studer (Lucy); Domingo (Edgar); Pons (Henry); Ramey (Raymond);
Ambrosian Opera Chorus/London Symphony Orchestra;
Marin (Conductor)
- 1998 Rost (Lucy); Ford (Edgar); Michaels-Moore (Henry); Miles (Raymond);
London Voices/Hanover Orchestra; Mackerras (Conductor)
- 2000 Gruberova (Lucy); Dvorsky (Edgar); Manuguerra (Henry);
Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra; Patané (Conductor)
- 2001 Futral (Lucy); Clark (Edgar); Opie (Henry);
Philharmonia; Parry (Conductor)
- 2002 Ciofi (Lucy); Alagna (Edgar); Tézier (Henry);
Opera de Lyon; Pido (Conductor)
- 2003 Bonfadelli (Lucy); Alvarez (Edgar); Frontali (Henry);
Teatro Carlo Felice di Genova; Fournillier (Conductor)

Videography

VAI DVD (1971)

Moffo (Lucy); Kozma (Edgar); Fioravanti (Henry); Washington (Raymond);
Rome Radio Chorus and Orchestra; Cillario (Conductor)

(1982)

Sutherland (Lucy); Kraus (Edgar); Elvira (Henry); Plishka (Raymond);
Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra; Bonyngé (Conductor);
Browning (Video Director)

VIRGIN VHS (1986)

Sutherland (Lucy); Greager (Edgar); Donnelly (Henry); Grant (Raymond);
Chorus of Australian Opera/Elizabeth Sydney Orchestra; Bonyngé (Conductor);
Copley (Director); Butler (Video Director)

Opus Arte (1992)

Devia (Lucy); La Scola (Edgar); Bruson (Henry);
Teatro alla Scala; Ranzani (Conductor)

TDK DVD (2002)

Ciofi (Lucy); Alagna (Edgar); Tézier (Henry);
Opera de Lyon; Pido (Conductor)

TDK DVD (2003)

Bonfadelli (Lucy); Alvarez (Edgar); Frontali (Henry);
Teatro Carlo Felice di Genova; Fournillier (Conductor)

DICTIONARY OF OPERA AND MUSICAL TERMS

Accelerando - Play the music faster, but gradually.

Adagio - At a slow or gliding tempo, not as slow as largo, but not as fast as andante.

Agitato - Restless or agitated.

Allegro - At a brisk or lively tempo, faster than andante but not as fast as presto.

Andante - A moderately slow, easy-going tempo.

Appoggiatura - An extra or embellishing note preceding a main melodic note. Usually written as a note of smaller size, it shares the time value of the main note.

Arabesque - Flourishes or fancy patterns usually applying to vocal virtuosity.

Aria - A solo song usually structured in a formal pattern. Arias generally convey reflective and introspective thoughts rather than descriptive action.

Arietta - A shortened form of aria.

Arioso - A musical passage or composition having a mixture of free recitative and metrical song.

Arpeggio - Producing the tones of a chord in succession rather than simultaneously.

Atonal - Music that is not anchored in traditional musical tonality; it does not use the diatonic scale and has no keynote or tonal center.

Ballad opera - Eighteenth-century English opera consisting of spoken dialogue and music derived from popular ballad and folksong sources. The most famous is *The Beggar's Opera*, which is a satire of the Italian opera seria.

Bar - A vertical line across the stave that divides the music into measures.

Baritone - A male singing voice ranging between bass and tenor.

Baroque - A style of artistic expression prevalent in the 17th century that is marked by the use of complex forms, bold ornamentation, and florid decoration. The Baroque period extends from approximately 1600 to 1750 and includes the works of the original creators of modern opera, the Camerata, as well as the later works by Bach and Handel.

Bass - The lowest male voice, usually divided into categories such as:

Basso buffo - A bass voice that specializes in comic roles: Dr. Bartolo in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*.

Basso cantante - A bass voice that demonstrates melodic singing quality: King Philip in Verdi's *Don Carlos*.

Basso profondo - the deepest, most profound, or most dramatic of bass voices: Sarastro in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

Bel canto - Literally, "beautiful singing." It originated in Italian opera of the 17th and 18th centuries and stressed beautiful tones produced with ease, clarity, purity, and evenness, together with an agile vocal technique and virtuosity. Bel canto flourished in the first half of the 19th century in the works of Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti.

Cabaletta - A lively, concluding portion of an aria or duet. The term is derived from the Italian word "cavallo," or horse: it metaphorically describes a horse galloping to the finish line.

Cadenza - A flourish or brilliant part of an aria (or concerto) commonly inserted just before a finale. It is usually performed without accompaniment.

Camerata - A gathering of Florentine writers and musicians between 1590 and 1600 who attempted to recreate what they believed was the ancient Greek theatrical synthesis of drama, music, and stage spectacle; their experimentation led to the creation of the early structural forms of modern opera.

Cantabile - An indication that the singer should sing sweetly.

Cantata - A choral piece generally containing Scriptural narrative texts: the *St. Matthew Passion* of Bach.

Cantilena - Literally, "little song." A lyrical melody meant to be played or sung "cantabile," or with sweetness and expression.

Canzone - A short, lyrical operatic song usually containing no narrative association with the drama but rather simply reflecting the character's state of mind: Cherubino's "Voi che sapete" in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*.

Castrato - A young male singer who was surgically castrated to retain his treble voice.

Cavatina - A short aria popular in 18th and 19th century opera that usually heralded the entrance of a principal singer.

Classical Period - A period roughly between the Baroque and Romantic periods, the late 18th through the early 19th centuries. Stylistically, the music of the period stresses clarity, precision, and rigid structural forms.

Coda - A trailer added on by the composer after the music's natural conclusion. The coda serves as a formal closing to the piece.

Coloratura - Literally, "colored": it refers to a soprano singing in the bel canto tradition. It is a singing technique that requires great agility, virtuosity, embellishments and ornamentation: The Queen of the Night's aria, "Zum Leiden bin ich auserkoren," from Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

Commedia dell'arte - A popular form of dramatic presentation originating in Renaissance Italy in which highly stylized characters were involved in comic plots involving mistaken identities and misunderstandings. Two of the standard characters were Harlequin and Colombine: The "play within a play" in Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci*.

Comprimario - A singer who performs secondary character roles such as confidantes, servants, and messengers.

Continuo, Basso continuo - A bass part (as for a keyboard or stringed instrument) that was used especially in baroque ensemble music; it consists of an independent succession of bass notes that indicate the required chords and their appropriate harmonies. Also called *figured bass*, *thoroughbass*.

Contralto - The lowest female voice, derived from "contra" against, and "alto" voice; a voice between the tenor and mezzo-soprano.

Countertenor - A high male voice generally singing within the female high soprano ranges.

Counterpoint - The combination of two or more independent melodies into a single harmonic texture in which each retains its linear character. The most sophisticated form of counterpoint is the fugue form, in which from two to six melodies can be used; the voices are combined, each providing a variation on the basic theme but each retaining its relation to the whole.

Crescendo - A gradual increase in the volume of a musical passage.

Da capo - Literally, "from the top"; repeat. Early 17th-century da capo arias were in the form of A B A, with the second A section repeating the first, but with ornamentation.

Deus ex machina - Literally "god out of a machine." A dramatic technique in which a person or thing appears or is introduced suddenly and unexpectedly; it provides a contrived solution to an apparently insoluble dramatic difficulty.

Diatonic - A major or minor musical scale that comprises intervals of five whole steps and two half steps.

Diminuendo - Gradually becoming softer; the opposite of crescendo.

Dissonance - A mingling of discordant sounds that do not harmonize within the diatonic scale.

Diva - Literally, “goddess”; generally the term refers to a leading female opera star who either possesses, or pretends to possess, great rank.

Dominant - The fifth tone of the diatonic scale; in the key of C, the dominant is G.

Dramatic soprano or tenor - A voice that is powerful, possesses endurance, and is generally projected in a declamatory style.

Dramma giocoso - Literally, “amusing (or humorous) drama.” An opera whose story combines both serious and comic elements: Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*.

Falsetto - A lighter or “false” voice; an artificially-produced high singing voice that extends above the range of the full voice.

Fioritura - It., “flowering”; a flowering ornamentation or embellishment of the vocal line within an aria.

Forte, fortissimo - Forte (*f*) means loud; mezzo forte (*mf*) is fairly loud; fortissimo (*ff*) is even louder; additional *fff*’s indicate greater degrees of loudness.

Glissando - Literally, “gliding.” A rapid sliding up or down the scale.

Grand opera - An opera in which there is no spoken dialogue and the entire text is set to music, frequently treating serious and tragic subjects. Grand opera flourished in France in the 19th century (Meyerbeer); the genre is epic in scale and combines spectacle, large choruses, scenery, and huge orchestras.

Heldentenor - A tenor with a powerful dramatic voice who possesses brilliant top notes and vocal stamina. Heldentenors are well suited to heroic (Wagnerian) roles: Lauritz Melchior in Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde*.

Imbroglia - Literally, “intrigue”; an operatic scene portraying chaos and confusion, with appropriate diverse melodies and rhythms.

Largo or larghetto - Largo indicates a very slow tempo, broad and with dignity. Larghetto is at a slightly faster tempo than largo.

Legato - Literally, “tied” or “bound”; successive tones that are connected smoothly. The opposite of legato is staccato (short and plucked tones.)

Leitmotif - Literally, “leading motive.” A musical fragment characterizing a person, thing, feeling, or idea that provides associations when it recurs.

Libretto - Literally, “little book”; the text of an opera.

Lied - A German song; the plural is “lieder.” Originally, a German art song of the late 18th century.

Lyric - A voice that is light and delicate.

Maestro - From the Italian “master”; a term of respect to conductors, composers, directors, and great musicians.

Melodrama - Words spoken over music. Melodrama appears in Beethoven’s *Fidelio* and flourished during the late 19th century in the operas of Massenet (*Manon* and *Werther*).

Mezza voce - Literally, “medium voice”; singing with medium or half volume. It is sometimes intended as a vocal means to intensify emotion.

Mezzo-soprano - A woman’s voice with a range between soprano and contralto.

Obbligato - An accompaniment to a solo or principal melody that is usually played by an important, single instrument.

Octave - A musical interval embracing eight diatonic degrees; from C to C is an octave.

Opera - Literally, “work”; a dramatic or comic play in which music is the primary vehicle that conveys its story.

Opera buffa - Italian comic opera that flourished during the bel canto era. Highlighting the opera buffa genre were buffo characters who were usually basses singing patter songs: Dr. Bartolo in Rossini’s *The Barber of Seville*; Dr. Dulcamara in Donizetti’s *The Elixir of Love*.

Opéra comique - A French opera characterized by spoken dialogue interspersed between the musical numbers, as opposed to grand opera in which there is no spoken dialogue. Opéra comique subjects can be either comic or tragic.

Operetta, or light opera - Operas that contain comic elements and generally a light romantic plot: Strauss’s *Die Fledermaus*, Offenbach’s *La Périchole*, and Lehar’s *The Merry Widow*. In operettas, there is usually much spoken dialogue, dancing, practical jokes, and mistaken identities.

Oratorio - A lengthy choral work, usually of a religious nature and consisting chiefly of recitatives, arias, and choruses, but performed without action or scenery: Handel's *Messiah*.

Ornamentation - Extra embellishing notes—appoggiaturas, trills, roulades, or cadenzas—that enhance a melodic line.

Overture - The orchestral introduction to a musical dramatic work that sometimes incorporates musical themes within the work. Overtures are instrumental pieces that are generally performed independently of their respective operas in concert.

Parlando - Literally, “speaking”; the imitation of speech while singing, or singing that is almost speaking over the music. Parlando sections are usually short and have minimal orchestral accompaniment.

Patter song - A song with words that are rapidly and quickly delivered. Figaro's “Largo al factotum” in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* is a patter song.

Pentatonic - A five-note scale. Pentatonic music is most prevalent in Far Eastern countries.

Piano - A performance indication for soft volume.

Pitch - The property of a musical tone that is determined by the frequency of the waves producing it.

Pizzicato - An indication that notes are to be played by plucking the strings instead of stroking the string with the bow.

Polyphony - Literally, “many voices.” A style of musical composition in which two or more independent melodies are juxtaposed; counterpoint.

Polytonal - Several tonal schemes used simultaneously.

Portamento - A continuous gliding movement from one tone to another through all the intervening pitches.

Prelude - An orchestral introduction to an act or a whole opera that precedes the opening scene.

Presto, prestissimo - Vigorous, and with the utmost speed.

Prima donna - Literally, “first lady.” The female star or principal singer in an opera cast or opera company.

Prologue - A piece sung before the curtain goes up on the opera proper: Tonio's Prologue in Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci*.

Quaver - An eighth note.

Range - The span of tonal pitch of a particular voice: soprano, mezzo-soprano, contralto, tenor, baritone, and bass.

Recitative - A formal device used to advance the plot. It is usually sung in a rhythmically free vocal style that imitates the natural inflections of speech; it conveys the dialogue and narrative in operas and oratorios. *Secco*, or dry, recitative is accompanied by harpsichord and sometimes with other continuo instruments; *accompagnato* indicates that the recitative is accompanied by the orchestra.

Ritornello - A refrain, or short recurrent instrumental passage between elements of a vocal composition.

Romanza - A solo song that is usually sentimental; it is shorter and less complex than an aria and rarely deals with terror, rage, or anger.

Romantic Period - The Romantic period is usually considered to be between the early 19th and early 20th centuries. Romanticists found inspiration in nature and man. Von Weber's *Der Freischütz* and Beethoven's *Fidelio* (1805) are considered the first German Romantic operas; many of Verdi's operas as well as the early operas of Wagner are also considered Romantic operas.

Roulade - A florid, embellished melody sung to one syllable.

Rubato - An expressive technique, literally meaning "robbed"; it is a fluctuation of tempo within a musical phrase, often against a rhythmically steady accompaniment.

Secco - "Dry"; the type of accompaniment for recitative played by the harpsichord and sometimes continuo instruments.

Semitone - A half step, the smallest distance between two notes. In the key of C, the half steps are from E to F and from B to C.

Serial music - Music based on a series of tones in a chosen pattern without regard for traditional tonality.

Sforzando - Sudden loudness and force; it must stand out from the texture and be emphasized by an accent.

Singspiel - Literally, "song drama." Early German style of opera employing spoken dialogue between songs: Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

Soprano - The highest range of the female voice ranging from lyric (light and graceful quality) to dramatic (fuller and heavier in tone).

Sotto voce - Literally, “below the voice”; sung softly between a whisper and a quiet conversational tone.

Soubrette - A soprano who sings supporting roles in comic opera: Adele in Strauss’s *Die Fledermaus*; Despina in Mozart’s *Così fan tutte*.

Spinto - From the Italian “spingere” (to push); a singer with lyric vocal qualities who “pushes” the voice to achieve heavier dramatic qualities.

Sprechstimme - Literally, “speaking voice.” The singer half sings a note and half speaks; the declamation sounds like speaking but the duration of pitch makes it seem almost like singing.

Staccato - Short, clipped, detached, rapid articulation; the opposite of legato.

Stretto - Literally, “narrow.” A concluding passage performed in a quick tempo to create a musical climax.

Strophe - Strophe is a rhythmic system of repeating lines. A musical setting of a strophic text is characterized by the repetition of the same music for all strophes.

Syncopation - A shifting of the beat forward or back from its usual place in the bar; a temporary displacement of the regular metrical accent in music caused typically by stressing the weak beat.

Supernumerary - A “super”; a performer with a non-singing and non-speaking role: “Spear-carrier.”

Symphonic poem - A large orchestral work in one continuous movement, usually narrative or descriptive in character: Franz Liszt’s *Les Preludes*; Richard Strauss’s *Don Juan*, *Till Eulenspiegel*, and *Ein Heldenleben*.

Tempo - The speed at which music is performed.

Tenor - The highest natural male voice.

Tessitura - The usual range of a voice part.

Tonality - The organization of all the tones and harmonies of a piece of music in relation to a tonic (the first tone of its scale).

Tone poem - An orchestral piece with a program.

Tonic - The principal tone of the key in which a piece is written. C is the tonic of C major.

Trill - Two adjacent notes rapidly and repeatedly alternated.

Tutti - All together.

Twelve-tone - The twelve chromatic tones of the octave placed in a chosen fixed order and constituting, with some permitted permutations and derivations, the melodic and harmonic material of a serial musical piece. Each note of the chromatic scale is used as part of the melody before any other note is repeated.

Verismo - Literally “truth”; the artistic use of contemporary everyday material in preference to the heroic or legendary in opera. A movement particularly in Italian opera during the late 19th and early 20th centuries: Mascagni’s *Cavalleria rusticana*.

Vibrato - A “vibration”; a slightly tremulous effect imparted to vocal or instrumental tone to enrich and intensify sound, and add warmth and expressiveness through slight and rapid variations in pitch.

