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"Il Trovatore" Up To Date.

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137 West 41st Street,
New York City. N.Y.

"IL TROVATORE" UP TO DATE.

A BURLESQUE IN ONE SCENE,

BY

ALEXANDER H. LAIDLAW, JR.

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N.Y.

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"IL TROVATORE" UP TO DATE.

by

Alex/ H. Laidlaw, JR/

Characters:

Leonora.
Manrico.

Scene: COURTYARD OF A PRISON. Tower with practicable door and barred window R. Window bars should be either movable or elastic. Wall across stage at back and L/ Gate in rear wall, C.

(Stage discovered empty. Leonora appears outside gate C. attired as a French laundress, and carrying a small basket of clean clothes upon her arm. She peers through the gate enquiringly, then opens it, enters cautiously and closes gate after her.)

Leonora.

Thank heavens, I have reached the Tomus at last! Perhaps I am too late, but, all the same, I'm here. Ye Gods, but what a vacant lot I have been through. (Approaching tower) Manrico must be somewhere in this tower. (Sings the following to the refrain of "Daisy Bell".)

O Manrico, come to the window, do!
I'd near crazy just for a sight of you.

Manrico! Are you still abed? Your Leonora has braved the world and come to save poor little you from the crematory to which the Count has doomed you. That cruel Count, who after all these years has managed at last to jail you shall yet reap a fit reward of fits and see me in <u>your</u> arms instead of his'n. He dogged my footsteps on my journey here and insisted on proposing to me every other step; but even though he waved a love charm at me, it did not do him any good, because I wore that rabbit's foot you gave me,--and consequently, every time he popped, I said him nit.

(SOLO--LEONORA.)

Manrico! Rooky/ dear, where are you? Where can the man have gone? Perhaps I am too late. Woe! Woe! Perhaps they have coaxed him to the crematory already and ignited him. He may be even now reduced to ashes. (Despairingly.)

Manrico.
(Without, R. sings to tune of Soldiers' Chorus from "Faust".)

Odear, I'll never come here any more!
O dear, I'll never come here any more!
O dear, I'll never come here any more!---

Leonora.

Hark from the Tombs that doleful sound! He's still alive! He's still alive! Mabrico!
(Leonora sings the opening measures of Azucena's lullaby from last scene in "Trovatore".)

(During her song, Manrico appears at window R. attired in a convict's striped suit. He has a guitar slung about one shoulder, and a chain attached to one leg with an immense football or balloon at the end of it.)

Manrico.

Ah,--that is my mother's copyrighted song--the one she used to sing when I was young. It must be mother! Mama! Mama! Good morning, mother! Have you used Pyle's Pearline?

Leonora.
(Starting angrily)
No, I prefer Pear's.

Manrico

You always did go in for fruit.
(Leonora turns her face toward Manrico.)
O mother dear, when did you change your face?

Leonora.

Manrico, don't you know me?

Manrico.
Ah, Melba, is it you? I thought I recognized your voice, but it has changed a bit since you began to twitter Wagner. You ought to quit the habit before you burst your throttle.

Leonora
Come down from off your perch a moment, Jean de Reszke. I would have speech with you. (Sings) "O come into the garden, George!"

Manrico.
I'm very sorry, Nora, but convicts are not allowed to run about in the front yard. (Indicates bars) Besides, as you see, I am

debarred from such a feat.

Leonora.
I fear, Manrico, that you are a coward; for 'tis a poor jail that can't be broken with a good strong "pull"/

Manrico
A good strong pull indeed! Perhaps I have one with me. I'll put it to the test.
(He wrenches bars out and throws them to the stage, or stretches them apart, and leaps down to the stage.)

Leonora.
It was a shame for the Count to tear you from your business so hastily last week and break up all your serenading trade. And did your serenading ever amount to much?

Manrico
Can you ask?

Leonora.
Are you a tenor or a liver, Jean de Reszke?

Manrico
And do you love music so much that you care to analyze my voice?

Leonora/
I adore music, excepting when you sing.

Manrico.
Nora, you forget your manners.

Leonora
Perhaps they came out in the wash. And did you find these serenades good pay?

Manrico
The payment varied much, for usually my payment was in kisses from those I serenaded.

Leonora.
That was a mean trick. And yet, 'twas doubtless dark so that the poor things could not see your face. There's that much to their credit. For when is contented in heaven, 'tis folly to do time seeking novelties in the other place.
(Manrico embraces Leonora. Her basket is crushed between them.)

Manrico
But what is this that dares to come between us?
(Leonora withdraws the basket.)
There! That is better. But how did you come here? Young la-

dies are not permitted in the better class of jails. How did you ever manage to slip by Mr. Gerry?

Leonora.
It was hard work, but finally I dodged him--- and kissed the three policemen upon guard.

Manrico
I bet that settled them.

Leonora
It did indeed. 'Twas Paris green I wore upon my lips. They lie outside in paralyzed parallelograms. And then I bribed your laundress to let me take her place and bring you wash to you myself.

Manrico
You have a man's brain, Leonora! Good girl! Where is my wash? I need it much.

Leonora.
First show me the price. She says you are poor pay.

Manrico
First show me the clothes. She is a poorer laundress than I am pay.

Leonora.
Is it so, Manrico? (Hands basket to him.) Then here, poor man, here are your wash. I thought perhaps from some of it we might erect a clothes-horse upon which you might escape.

Manrico
(Examining contents of basket)
One shirt and a half?----Three socks?---Three cuffs?--- Woman, what have you done? You have brought me the wash of xxxxxxx some three-legged freak. Where are my rightful wash?

Leonora.
(Melodramatically)
Have pity, man, have pity! Do you imagine that I would keep anything back from you at such a time as this?

Manrico
Then tell me where that other woman is?

Leonora
I do not know. She went downtown to meet "an elderly, refined gentleman of means. Object matrimony." with whom she had a date.

Manrico

Then all is lost. I wager by this time she's put my surplus raiment up at Simpson's where the three spheres hang. Last night I dreamed I saw two eyes sitting astride a stationary wash-tub. What else could I expect but that my wash was hoodooed.

Leonora.

Have courage, man, and do not grieve. Take comfort in the fact that you have not long to live.

Manrico.

(Indicates basket)

Alas! And must I die in these?

Leonora

I hope that they will try to dye you better looking.

Manrico

It is the other kind of die, my darling!

Leonora

(Fearfully)

The other kind? No--no, Manrico! Why should they wish to kill you? Surely nothing can be gained by slaughtering such a harmless thing as you?

Manrico

Nevertheless, they say they will, and all for mother's sake. You know she nursed the brother of the Count when he and she and it were young. I too was a fair young thing about the selfsame date.

Leonora.

Yes, I have heard you were a tipsy child---I mean a gypsy child.

Manrico

'Tis false! I am a gypsy child no longer. I am the brother of the Count, stolen in infancy.

Leonora.

Stolen in infancy? Was that all you had on?

Manrico

Yes--that is why I could not be identified. My mother burned me by mistake in revenge for some past wrong,---I mean my mother burned her own son instead of me--

Leonora.

(Puzzled)

I don't quite comprehend the drift of your remarks.

Manrico.

I thought that I was plain.

Leonora.
You are. You're almost ugly. But you're a man and therefore anything will go and all will be forgiven. But if what you say is true, then whose child are you? Your mother's or your father's?

Manrico
Must I then draw a map of it?

Leonora
I wish you would, for I am no astrologist.

Manrico
I am my father's child, and brother to the Count. My mother was not in it, but kept my secret dark. I'm saving it to spring in the denouement.

Leonora
Then should the Count die, you will be of some account! Alas! All is indeed over between us; for if you take up with a title, I can't afford to marry you. You'll be far too expensive to keep up.

Manrico
(Nonchalantly)
O I don't know!

Leonora
Ah me! There is so little satisfaction in loving a man who is about to spend the balance of his life in jail and the rest in ashes. You are too young to die, Manrico!

Manrico.
No, Nora, Better far that I should die at once, for don't you know that all the good die young?

Leonora.
Then you'll not die, for you're no earthly good; And therefore I will see what can be done toward saving you. I'll see if I can't bribe them to touch a match to some baldheaded sinner in your place.

Manrico.
Brave girl!

Leonora.
The Count has sworn to win me from you and to that end spent ten cents on a lovecharm that's guaranteed to win whome'er you like. Could I but pinch it from him, with its help I might be able to beg or steal your freedom. I wish you were already in his shoes and just as free.

Manrico.
If I were in His shoes, I never would be free. His shoes are such a size, they'd clog my every step and fix me to the earth forever.

Leonora
Come, let us fly! Have you ever tried to fly?

Manrico.
(Indicates ball and chain)
How can I? Just see how I am tethered!

Leonora.
True--I forgot. Then while I am away, will you pray for my safety?

Manrico.
Pray for your safety? Why? Whose make is it? Is it not strong enough to hold you?

Leonora.
I'm not quite sure. I don't see how you live in such a place without one.

Manrico.
It was hard work till yesterday when they gave me some bicycle wafers that filled my head with wheels and gave me that broken-up bicycle feeling. What more is necessary?

Leonora.
Nothing. Farewell, Manrico!

Manrico.
(Hands Leonora basket)
No, wait a moment. Here! If you meet that laundress, give her this and tell her that I want my own. What's mine is mine. What's hers belongs to who can get it. Farewell until we meet again. (Kisses her) Be careful when you pass the guards.

Leonora.
(Goes toward gate C.)
HM! Shoot the guards! Who fears three paralyzed policemen?

(Exit Leonora with basket C. Manrico attempts to follow her, but she slams the gate in his face)

Manrico.
Come back and save me, Nora! My only hope of freedom lies in you. Perhaps she'll come the quicker if I sing. She loves to stop my voice and hamper me from practicing my theories.

SONG---MANRICO.

Why does she not return? Must I stay here until they place me on the fire and light my pipes? No--no--a burnt child dreads the fire. So do I. (Goes to gate and rattles it.) Locked! Locked! Why didn't she leave the combination open? I'm free---free as a rat in a trap. How can I get away? (Looks out through gate) There's naught in sight except three paralyzed policemen. No, I am wrong, for there goes Mr. Gerry to stop school-children from working at their lessons. I hope he don't catch Nora working for my freedom. (Bell rings R.) There goes the dinner-bell. I'll step within a while. Perhaps my absence may bring on her presence.

(Exit Manrico R. Enter Leonora C. with book)

Leonora.

Where is he? Gone? Surely they can't have cooked him yet, for he was much too fresh to burn in this short time. He's probably at lunch. If so, I hope they'll give him his deserts.

(Manrico begins to sing the "Miserere" off R.)

Ah--he is there!

PRISON DUET FROM "IL TROVATORE".

(After duet, enter Manrico R.)

Manrico.

What, Nora, back again?

Leonora.

Yes, Jean de Reszke, I hastened back for fear I'd miss the rake. I meant to change my gown but changed my mind instead. It was so flurried that it needed changing.

Manrico

And is your new mind well made up?

Leonora.

I think so. Would you like a piece of it?

Manrico

Wait till you have been to lunch. You cannot spare it now. You will need more than you've got to get me off.

Leonora.

You'll be way off before you know it.

Manrico.

And did you see the Count?

Leonora.
I saw the Count, Manrico.

Manrico
What did he say?

Leonora
He said he'd like to have me marry him.

Manrico
I thought so. Who ~~xxxxxx~~ wouldn't?

Leonora
Flatterer! He asked me to become his wife.

Manrico.
What again?

Leonora.
Again? ~~xxxx~~ Why, Manrico, I never married him before.

Manrico.
I meant did he repeat his cruel inquiry?

Leonora
He did.

Manrico.
And how did you insult him in return?

Leonora
I accepted him.

Manrico.
You took him?

Leonora.
Yes, Manrico, I promised to be his to gain your freedom.

Manrico.
And then what happened?

Leonora.
Then I kissed him.

Manrico
You kissed him?

Leonora
Certainly. I kissed him with the kiss of Paris green as I had kissed the others. It was as much my business to kiss him as it was yours to kiss those girls you serenaded.

Manrico.
And did you take him too,--I should say twice?

Leonora.
'Twas not the one I took before and therefore was all right. I gave him the poisoned kiss as well, and he too lies outside in nervous convolutions. That is all.

Manrico.
And are you sure that that is all?

Leonora.
Do you still doubt me? Then begone, false heart! Avaunt unto your funeral pyre!

Manrico
How can I go to any place? There is not even a clothershorse in sight. And that reminds me----where did you leave my watch?

Leonora.
I traded it for this little volume on "How to be happy though married." (Hands book to him)

Manrico
(Examining book)
Hm! (Reads) "How to make home look like the devil with ten yards of calico and three soap-boxes." Such things are cheap at any price.

Leonora
Come, let us fly, Manrico, while yet the coast is clear. The pebbles that lay upon the beach have all been washed away. You are the only turtle in the tank. Three strikes and all is out! You're saved!/You're saved!

Manrico.
(Embracing her)
My life-preserver!

Both.
(Sing following from "The Mikado".)
"If that is so, ding derry down derry,
'Tis evident very our tastes are one.
Away we'll go and merrily marry,
Nor tardily tarry till day is done."

(Both dance off C.)

C U R T A I N .

Apl. - 16 - 1897

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Dear Sir
I herewith send two copies of "Il Trovatore up to date" as required by law, copyright for which was applied for on Mar. 17 - 1897 & certificate is just received.

Yours very truly
Alex. H. Laidlaw. Jr.