
BORGIA INFAMI VOCAL SCORE EXCERPTS

EXCERPT 1 [p 1-5] 1492, The Vatican, Rome.

Vast coronation fresco comes alive as Rodrigo Borgia, having gained vote of Cardinals through blackmail, is crowned POPE ALEXANDER VI. Leading a group of modern American Vatican tourists, MUSEUM GUIDE provides background.

EXCERPT 1-A [p 1-3] Orchestral score, beginning of above scene.

EXCERPT 2 [p 86 – 92] Papal Chambers.

Fanatical pietistic priest SAVONAROLA, in midst of audience with ALEXANDER, whom he accuses of bribery and lechery. Pope feigns remorse, then bursts out in scornful laughter.

EXCERPT 3 [p 104-113] Auto da Fè.

ALEXANDER excommunicates SAVONAROLA, who is tied to stake. SAVONAROLA refuses demands of Pope and Inquisitors that he recant. Stake is set afire. SAVONAROLA exults. But as flames reach him, he shrieks in agony and perishes as offstage chorus shouts lines from Apocalypse in Latin and English.

EXCERPT 4 [p 143-148] Act Two Opening. Ferrara, convent garden.

The historical LUCREZIA, daughter of ALEXANDER and alleged poisoner of clan's enemies, seen at convent in her last days.

Offstage nuns intone Latin chant. LUCREZIA, accompanying herself on vihuela, sings wistful song of love and death in old Spanish. Across the centuries, she is observed by MUSEUM GUIDE, obsessed with her beauty. He joins in her simple but passionate song.

EXCERPT 5 [p 157-168] Act Two, Portion of Sextet

NARCISO, Lucrezia's secret son, is the earlier incarnation of our MUSEUM GUIDE. Like his modern-day alter ego, he is ravished by her beauty and - not knowing she is the lost mother whom he has always sought - feels drawn to her.

Here NARCISO's four Venetian fellow-officer friends – ANDREA, ASCANIO, JEPPO and OLOFERNO, accuse LUCREZIA of having poisoned their kin. LUCREZIA protests she lives only for love of a son who dares not know her identity, while this son, NARCISO, defends her, sings of his mysterious attraction.

POSTSCRIPT

LUCREZIA wreaks vengeance on the four. Arranges feast, has them invited, served poisoned wine. Arriving late, NARCISO – to her horror – partakes of the tainted drink. Panicked, LUCREZIA knocks a second draft from his hand, urging an antidote upon him. There not being enough to save his friends, he spills antidote on ground, sealing his fate.

Having earlier learned, to his shock, that he himself is a hated Borgia, NARCISO assumes LUCREZIA to be a distant relation and deserving of death. As he weakens, his avenging sword falls from his hand. Seeing him dying and the very reason for her life lost, LUCREZIA clutches his sword, stabs herself. "Lucrezia, where is my mother" he gasps. "Here, dying beside you" she responds. They are united in death.

Thus ends the hyper-operatic Hugolean aspect of the opera – this in sharp contrast with historically correct convent scene of Excerpt 4. Throughout our opera, Hugo's melodramatic fictions are shown alternating with the cool truth as related in Klabund... *and that truth is shocking in itself.* - HB
