

DIDO By Marmontel Music by Piccini

Translated and adapted by Frank J. Morlock

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Etext by Dagny

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CHARACTERS:

DIDO

AENEAS

YARBAS

ELISSA, sister of Dido

PHENICIA, Confidant of Dido

A Confidant of Yarbas

SIX PRIESTS OF PLUTO

A SHADE

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ACT I

A room in the Palace of Dido

The prelude is the uproar of a hunt.

DIDO: Yes, I want to dispel the trouble of my heart;
I want to flee, I want to escape from myself.

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ELISSA, PHENICIA: You are reigning; you love a hero who loves you;
Where's this somber languishing coming from!

DIDO: From the battles that my soul is delivered to
A duty, enemy to my burgeoning flame.
You know in sleep, that the avenger pursues me
And from the breast of death, my spouse reminds me
Of the oath that I took to remain faithful to him.
Sis, I saw him last night.
Never so sad and so harsh,
Did he appear before me.
Perjurer, he said to me, you are breaking your word.
Follow the love that distracts you; he won't be slow
To avenge me on you.

(air)

Vain terrors, somber omens,
Stop troubling my repose.
In favor of a hero, the gods
Owe me a life without clouds.
Heaven did not, without plan,
Land him on these shores.
The winds, the waves, the storms,
Only obeyed Destiny.
Vain terrors, somber omens,
Stop troubling my repose.
I must have days without clouds
For the care I'm taking of a hero.
O you, by whom my heart is charmed,
Pardon a fugitive error.
I wouldn't be so fearful
If you weren't so loving.

(the noise of the hunt starts over again)

We are going to see this charming grotto again
Where Juno received our oaths.
And the most tender Lover
Is going to reassure the most sensitive wife.

(Ascanius and the members of Dido's court in the garb of huntresses enter, bow in hand, quiver over the shoulder.)

CHORUS: The horn calls us to the hunt.
Let's follow the Queen in these woods,
So that she will applaud our audacity,
So that she will preside over our exploits.
She is Diana under arms,
The forests tremble at her voice,
But she gets all her charms from Venus
When she takes off her quiver.
The horn calls us, etc.

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(They dance.)

DIDO: (arming the young Ascanius)

Come, child of gods, worthy son of a hero,
You have his beauty, you will have his courage.
Already you disdain the languors of rest.
O Venus! He's the touching image of your son.

(Ascanius, proud of seeing himself armed by the hand of Dido, expresses his ardor for the hunt by dancing; the Huntresses congratulate him and share his joy.)

AENEAS: (entering) Queen, we must renounce the sports of peace.

A proud enemy is advancing and threatens you.
He is preceded by his Ambassador,
And never did a conqueror dare to announce himself
With more audacity.

DIDO: It's Yarbas. This king, that my pride disdained,
Is coming to avenge himself for my scorn.
It's my hand he's demanding, and it's only at this price
He will permit me to reign in these newborn walls.
Alone, and without defenders, I braved his wrath;
Does he hope that I will fear him?
With an avenger like you!

AENEAS: (air) Reign in peace on this shore

And repose in my word.
I will abase the savage pride
Of the Tyrant who threatens you.
I see dangers to run
But I will deliver myself to them with glee.
Yes, for you it's sweet to live;
For you it's fine to die.

DIDO: (to Guards)

The Ambassador from Yarbas can appear before my eyes.

AENEAS: Here he is.

(Enter Yarbas, Araspe, followers of Yarbas. A march is played at Yarbas' entry. Dido is on her throne, Elissa and Aeneas by her side.)

YARBAS: (to Araspe) Beware of making me known.

(aloud) Dido, I bring you the prayers
Of the King of Numidia and Morocco.
He really wants to press you once more
To form the most pleasant bond with him.
To flatter the pride of a Queen,

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His empire and his hand are prize fine enough.
Think into what misfortune a refusal will drag you,
Think that, at this moment, either love or hate
Light his torch between you.
His subject peoples are coming to pay you homage
With the treasures heaven has placed in his power.

DIDO: These gifts may be the pledge of holy friendship.
From the hand of a great king I can receive them;
If he dares hope for more
Dido doesn't wish to owe him anything.

YARBAS: (to Araspe aside) I love this superb courage.

(The subjects of Yarbass bring their offerings to the foot of Dido's throne.)

ARASPE: (to Yarbass, aside) What disdainful pride.

YARBAS: (aside to Araspe) She's proud, but she's beautiful.
(to Dido) Can I, in the name of my king, speak freely!
When, to be faithful to the ashes of a spouse,
Dido refused new bonds,
Yarbass, in admiration, demanded nothing of her.
But the rumor is spreading that the Trojan chieftain
Is the spouse that she's calling to the throne.
They say she's going to fall in under his rule;
That they are preparing the marriage feast for them.
He won't suffer that a foreign rival
Comes to ravish his conquest from him.
And it's on him especially that he intends to avenge himself.

(Aeneas is going to speak, Dido prevents him.)

DIDO: Subject of Yarbass, now it's for you to hear me.
I've foreseen the danger of his resentment
And I await it without terror.
He has no pretensions to the heart of Dido
And if I've made a choice, nothing can change it.

YARBAS: You are unaware to what rapine
You are going to deliver this shore.

DIDO: I know that a hero is defending me.

YARBAS: You will brave the wrath less
Of a king who is burning to please you
Once you've seen him triumphant.

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DIDO: Let him lose a vain hope.
Faithful to my choice, without retraction,
I see with indifference
Both his love and his wrath.

(air)

Neither lover nor Queen
Intends to bow under his law.
I dispose as sovereign
Both myself and my empire.
The terrible law of war
Doesn't extend over my heart
And the conqueror of the earth
Will not be my conqueror.

(Dido retires with her court. Yarbass retains Aeneas.)

YARBASS: Then it's you that Dido is crowning!

AENEAS: I am unaware of my destiny and Dido's choice;
But she herself here, I intend what she directs.

YARBASS: Do you know that her empire is a gift of my king?

AENEAS: Then let him leave in peace empires that he gives.

YARBASS: Bold! is it thus to the finest blood of the gods !

AENEAS: The blood of gods animates me
And has nothing which astonishes me.
But what do you want with me?

YARBASS: That you leave these climes.

AENEAS: That I leave these climes!
I am remaining here, to await
An enemy worthy of me.
You can announce that to your King.
Let him come speak to me; I am prepared to listen to him.

(Aeneas wishes to leave.)

YARBASS: Stop, and be satisfied: Yarbass is before you.

AENEAS: Then I have nothing more to learn from you
And here Dido alone can give me the law.

DUO

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YARBAS: Too proud for her weakness
And of a choice which injures me,
Do you think I will let you
Be master of her heart!

AENEAS: Dido will be without cease
Mistress of her heart.

TOGETHER: Do you think that I will abase myself
To give you her heart!
To suffer a conqueror!

YARBAS: In my shipwreck, Heaven
Left me my courage
And that's enough for me.

YARBAS: You know my power,
Implore my bounty.

AENEAS: I defend innocence
And I serve beauty.

YARBAS: In a few moments, perhaps
I will make you know
If Heaven made you born
To equal me.

AENEAS: In a few moments, perhaps
I will make you know
If Heaven made me born
To bend my knee before you.

(Exit Aeneas.)

YARBAS: Let's rush to vengeance, Araspe. What outrage
Has fate reserved for me!
A refugee from Asuia, escaped from shipwreck!
And by him Dido's heart is stolen from me!
I've seen her and I ought never to have experienced
This dangerous charm which increases my rage.
I love; another is loved. By an odious rival,
My misfortune, my shame is worked!
He won't enjoy it any further, I attest the gods!

(air)

O Jupiter! o my father
If the affront that I am receiving
Didn't inflame my wrath
Would I be worthy of you!
Your blood obtains nothing on earth
Except inhuman scorn!

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Ah! why haven't I the thunder
That reposes in your hands!

CURTAIN

ACT II

A Public Square where edifices are being raised but are not yet completed; on one side the Vestibule of the Temple of Juno.

AENEAS: In the black chagrin that's devouring me,
Can't you discern what the gods are exacting!
I am dear to Dido, I love her, I adore her,
And despite myself tears are escaping my eyes. **AENEAS:** In a few moments, perhaps
I will make you know
If Heaven made me born
To bend my knee before you.

(Exit Aeneas.)

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Can't you discern what the gods are exacting!

ELISSA: Cruel one! you are meditating funereal farewells.

AENEAS: Elissa, it's too true. But without shame, without crime,
I will submit to my sad fate.

And, at least, in leaving this shore,
I shall have avenged Dido on the tyrant who's oppressing her.

ELISSA: Then you are going to abandon her!

AENEAS: To eternal regrets I am going to condemn myself.

To render victory to our propitious arms,
The Trojans made a sacrifice to their gods.
They saw on the altar that the waning fires,
The sacrifice, uttered lugubrious moans.
And the priest, alarmed regarding Italy.
Folks, he said, it's there that incense must burn.

Break the chain that binds you,
Appease your threatening gods.

(air)

Pity a king, pity a father,
To whom his destiny makes the law.
Do I, alas, do I still belong to myself?
Dido will always be dear to me,
But I am father and I am King!

Fate has promised me Italy.
I owe it to the Trojans, I owe it to my son,
And on these shores, if I forget myself,
All my duties will be betrayed.

Pity a king, etc.
It's up to you to calm and console your Queen.
Tell her that the inflexible rigor of Heaven
Is doing me violence and dragging me away.

ELISSA: Me! How I am pierced to the heart!

No, no! But this king, who adores her,
Demands to see her again; he's coming on her heels.
Stop braving him and, if there's still time,
Don't expose us to his fury, Aeneas.

(aside, leaving)

Of this change he's unaware.
Let's go instruct him and disarm his arm.

AENEAS: (alone) Then he believes I am giving her up to him!
He's going to possess so much allure!

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Yes, more lucky if he possesses her,
Both for her and for me; I wish it, alas,
I wish it! o gods! what torture for my soul!
No, to be jealous of it is no longer permitted me.
I am abandoning her and I am shaking.
Never let love light another flame in her breast!

(air)

No, I'll give back her freedom;
Her heart must no longer be constrained.
Alas! it is not her pride,
It's her love that I must fear.
I've too well deserved
Forgetfulness from this irritated heart
To have the right to complain of it.
No, I'll give her back her freedom.

(Enter Dido.)

DIDO: The empire that the example of a hero has on hearts!
In the midst of dangers what audacity he inspires.
All my people are rushing to march on your heels.
O of a dazzling reign, blissful first fruits!
Aeneas and glory have allures for me
When it is born under your auspices!

AENEAS: Yarbas demands to see you.
Already his pride is moderating.

DIDO: Who can bring him back? And what can his hope be!

AENEAS: Until the last moment an unlucky hope.

DIDO: Who? Me, flatter him! Me suffer
His pretensions; let my love respond to his prayers!
No, were he to have offered me
The throne and scepter of the world.
He's threatened us with a bloody war.
I await it. Your dangers fill me with alarms.
But, those cruel moments passed.
Ah! what charms victory would have for me.
What happiness! these benefits so many times related
By a single day would be completely erased.
I would no longer have over you this painful advantage.
From your hands in my turn I am going to receive all.
My glory, my repose, the safety of Carthage.
It's I who am going to owe you everything.

(air) Ah! how inspired I was

When I received you in my court!
O worthy son of Cythera!
How I render thanks to love.
I vainly saw it, I had trouble believing
What Venus had done for me.
To the misfortunes caused by Helen
It's true that I owe you!
Ah! how inspired I was, etc.

AENEAS: (aside) Alas!

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DIDO: You are sighing! What funereal cloud!

AENEAS: The gods are my witness that absence, time,
Nothing can efface your image from my heart,
That I am burning for you with the most constant passion.

DIDO: I've never doubted such a beautiful flame.

Why assure me of it! Ah! let's leave oaths
To vulgar lovers.

A look, a sigh, it's enough for my soul.

Alas, a more devouring trouble

Today relates to me the misfortune of Pergamus.

I am exposing you, Aeneas, to the greatest peril.

I see it, I shiver over it; the blind fate of arms

Can condemn my eyes to eternal tears.

I intend, if such is my misfortune,

To save my ashes from an unjust reproach

And, without blushing for my sorrow,

To have the right to descend with you into the tomb.

I am assembling my people here, and I intend before you

To dedicate your blessings and my gratitude.

I intend that my avenger, armed with my power,

Bear into combat the name of my spouse.

While the ceremony's being prepared,

Announce to the Trojans the end of their labors.

And return, in this celebration,

To triumph over your rivals.

AENEAS: (aside) I ought not—I cannot—What new tortures!

(Exit Aeneas. Yarbass enters.)

YARBASS: In my heart love has suspended vengeance.

But Dido, blood's going to spill.

For the last time, listen in silence

To what I am coming to reveal to you.

This Trojan, this refugee, Aeneas, is a traitor.

DIDO: Aeneas!

YARBASS: He's exposing you to my resentment.

He appears before your eyes with an intrepid audacity.

He insolently defies me.

Well, completely occupied with his coming flight,

The coward, by flattering your error,

Is going to escape from your chain

And escape from my fury.

DIDO: Get out, Yarbass, go, you will know Aeneas;

You will know if Dido sees herself abandoned.

Today, in this temple, he's pledging his faith to me.

They are lighting the torches of Hymen for us.

Judge if he's preparing to distance himself from me.

YARBASS: In that case, it's I who have been imposed on!

DIDO: You know envy, and deign to hear it!

YARBASS: Everything is laid out for this fatal marriage!

Dido, consider before rushing into it.

DIDO: All my heart rests on the faith of a hero.

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I have nothing to consider.

YARBAS: Then tremble; it is time, my blows are going to burst out.

(air)

I want to see them reduced to ashes,
These walls wherein they've dared to insult me.
From the throne that I must mount
I will force you to descend.
I intend to see them reduced to ashes,
These walls wherein they've dared to insult me.
I intend that wandering on this shore
And not meeting on his steps
Anything but a savage and arid desert
The foreigner asking for Carthage
Shall seek it and not find it.

(He leaves.)

DIDO: (alone) What sarcasm! Aeneas unfaithful and perjured!
It's up to me to expiate this culpable insult.

(Enter Aeneas, Elissa, the Trojans, the court of Dido and the people of Carthage.)

DIDO: Folks, a hero of the blood of the gods
Today embraces my defense.
Without him, this proud tyrant that my grandeur offends
Would extend over you his odious empire
By imposing the law of a second marriage on me.
I see they intend to enslave me.

(Aeneas appears followed by Trojans)

And I am delivering to the hands of Aeneas
The scepter they intend to ravish from me.
To the son of a great goddess
Render a dazzling homage.
To the victory which is awaiting him
Prepare yourself, brave youth.

CHORUS: To the son of a great goddess
We render a dazzling homage.

CHORUS OF WOMEN: To the victory that awaits him,
Prepare yourself, brave youth.

SMALL CHORUS OF MEN: With the noble passion that drives us
Our hero will be content

CHORUS OF TROJANS: (low to Aeneas)

Accomplish the promise of the gods.
You know what destiny awaits us.
Your son claims your tenderness;
See only him at this moment.

DIDO: (aside) What is the trouble that bothers him!
He seems speechless and unsettled.

AENEAS: (aside) Let's hide the trouble that's bothering me.
O gods! If Dido heard them!

LARGE CHORUS OF TYRIANS: To the son of a great goddess
Let's render a dazzling homage,
May he reign and triumph ceaselessly,

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May his glory extend to the heavens.

CHORUS OF TROJANS: (low to Aeneas) Accomplish the promise of the gods.

You know what destiny awaits us.

AENEAS: Queen, and you, Tyrians, cease, cease to believe

That, having deserved my happiness and my glory

To the rank which is offered me, I consent to sit still.

(to Dido and the people)

To serve you, to defend you is my first duty.

The rest is my triumph, it will follow my victory.

DIDO: (aside) God! what am I hearing?

My heart trembles to be enlightened.

(to Aeneas) Where does this change come from

That freezes me with fear?

Come, reassure me, the altar is prepared.

AENEAS: (aside) What will I say to her, alas, o mortal constraint!

DIDO: (to her court and people) Leave us alone.

(All leave except Elissa.)

DIDO: Our marriage has been deferred by you!

AENEAS: To Trojans, to my son, I owe another empire.

DIDO: Misfortune! Get it over with. I can hardly breathe.

AENEAS: Such is the order of the gods! It's up to me to accomplish
This decree, so fatal and so harsh for our hearts.

And I am impious and perjurer,

If rebel against my fate, I delay to fulfill it.

DIDO: So it's true.

AENEAS: Judge the torments I endure.

Sleep hardly weighs on my eyes.

The ghost of a father shocks me,

I hear it, I see it plaintive, threatening,

Urging our funereal farewells.

DIDO: Ah! if the mistake of a dream terrifies a lover,
What hasn't heaven and hell predicted for me!

I've braved all for you; and this is how I am loved.

But what can I say! The gods in their supreme happiness

With mortal amours do they deign to busy themselves!

No, no, you want to escape me,

My only enemy is you yourself.

You are seeking an empire! and don't you have one!

Your people is mine; my subjects are yours.

You speak of oaths! credulous lover! Alas!

Do you have more saints than ours!

AENEAS: (aside) O duty! o tenderness! o painful battles!

TRIO

DIDO: (to Aeneas) You know my heart is sensitive;

If possible, spare me.

Do you want to overwhelm me with sorrow!

AENEAS: (to Heaven) You see her heart is sensitive;

Inflexible heaven, spare her!

Do you want to overwhelm her with sorrow!

TOGETHER: Instead of such peaceful happiness

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Gods! what an abyss of misfortune!

DIDO: You want to flee me!

AENEAS: Ah! what torture!

DIDO: You want to flee me!

AENEAS: Such is my fate.

My heart is not accomplice to it.

DIDO: It's you, cruel man, who wish my death.

Look at me; see your work.

(Elissa sustains her fainting.)

AENEAS: O gods! the pallor of death!

ELISSA: Cruel man! do you have the frightful courage

To see her die in my arms!

AENEAS: And I, would I have the frightful courage

To see her die in my arms!

Great gods! Don't decree that.

(to Dido)

Open your eyes.

DIDO: See your work.

AENEAS: Live.

DIDO: Why should I live, alas!

To see your crime and my outrage!

Let me die in her arms.

ELISSA: Cruel man! do you have the frightful courage

To see her die in my arms!

AENEAS: And I, would I have the frightful courage

To see her die in my arms!

DIDO: Without seeing your crime and my outrage,

Let me die in her arms.

(Reenter the Trojans and Tyrians.)

CHORUS: To arms! The Moors are advancing. Women: Children of god, defend us. Men: Children of god, command us.

ALL: To arms! The Moors are advancing;

Already their rapine has begun. Women: Let them be dispelled before you. Men: Let them be overthrown by our blows.

AENEAS: (to Dido) Calm too lively fears,

This arm is going to fight for you.

To arms!

CHORUS: To arms, to arms! Women: Children of gods, defend us. Men: Children of gods, command us.

DIDO, ELISSA, AENEAS: Gods! just gods! second us.

CURTAIN

ACT III

The peristyle of the palace of Dido; facing the palace the tomb of Sicheus, in the back through the columns the sea can be seen and part of the port of Carthage.

DIDO: No, it's no longer for me, it's for him that I fear.

Elissa, he is sensitive; he will be faithful to me;

Perjury is very vile for such a beautiful soul;

And our hearts are linked by the most holy bonds.

The gods are capable of wanting to ravish him from my tears.

I will kneel to the gods: they will pity two lovers.

Didn't they receive our oaths!

Haven't they felt the alarms of love!

They will be touched by my tears.

And my empire and myself, protected by his arms,

We will forget all our misfortunes.

(air)

Alas! he's risking himself for us.

And it's I who am the cause

Of the dangers he's going to run.

Gods! if the hand of a barbarian!

I'm worrying myself, I'm getting carried away,

I feel myself dying of fright.

Ah! let him live, and may glory

Return him to the prayers of my heart.

I don't want victory,

Just the return of the conqueror.

(sounds of victory)

He's coming back, I hope, and this uproar is announcing it to me.

Elissa! in my favor it's heaven that's pronouncing it.

(Enter Aeneas and his warriors, and the people of Carthage.)

CHORUS (off stage) Victory! They are defeated. The Moor has succumbed.

Numidia has fallen beneath Trojan blows.

(Triumphal march.)

CHORUS: Trojan gods, Carthaginian gods,

Have fought for us.

Love was inflaming courage;

Glory followed virtue.

Long live a hero valiant and wise.

Love inflamed his courage

Glory followed virtue.

(Dance.)

DIDO: Ah! happy day for us! happy day for me!

I owe everything to the hero that I love.

AENEAS: Could I possibly not vanquish as I was fighting today!

I was serving beauty, justice and love.

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(Dance.)

DIDO: (to Aeneas) To complete glory, in the midst of pleasures,
When nothing is lacking to our desires,

Aeneas, ah! with what eyes you see your lover again!

AENEAS: The son of Jupiter fell under my blows.

This god, to avenge him, is separating me from you.

Hardly was his blood smoking on the earth when

Thunder was growling in the plains of the air.

From the high heavens, Mercury himself descended

And told me the supreme decree

That Jupiter prescribed for me.

Dido, this is not an illusion.

DIDO: No, it's an unworthy trick

AENEAS: Ah! believe.

DIDO: Leave me alone, go, leave me alone, I tell you.

You intend to abandon me, you can do it irrevocably.

You think your glory is enslaved in these climes,

You are burning to see Italy.

I won't keep you any longer. What a reward for so much love!

Perfidious! in seeing me so weak, so credulous,

Why didn't you announce to me your funeral plan!

Unworthy of the flame that burns in me,

Why did you yourself ignite it in my breast!

You made me unfaithful to the Manes of a spouse.

You made me wound the jealous pride of twenty kings.

For you alone—but must I recall them to you,

Those blessings, whose forgetting would have been so sweet to me!

AENEAS: (air) Venus knows it, Gods that I witness

If I wish to survive my fate!

The only asylum that remains to me,

My last hope, is death.

(to Dido) I am going, dragging my chain everywhere,

To expose myself to new dangers,

And if I bear your hate,

Nothing more will be lacking to my ills.

DIDO: Cruel man, what have I done, to your gods, to yourself,

To tear asunder a heart that loves you.

Did I burn down the walls that gave you birth!

Did I have a share in Helen's crime!

Did I ignite the hatred of twenty kings in Elide!

My crime, alas! is my love.

(air)

Ah! take pity on my weakness

And of the despair I am in.

Who will console my sorrows

If your cruelty forsakes me!

I will die of it, you cannot doubt it.

And this death will be bloody.

Deign at least, ah! deign to listen

To the last sighs of a lover

That you are going to leave forever.

DIDO By Marmontel Music by Piccini

AENEAS: Why aren't you able to read in this unhappy heart!

DIDO: No, I see it, your heart has no more to tell me.

Well, I am submitting to my harsh fate.

Yes, I feel that a hero owes himself to the world.

Glory, grandeur promised to your nephews,

All impose silence on my profound sorrow.

Fulfill your destiny, I consent to it, I wish it.

But at least wait for a wind to second you.

Under the blow which overwhelms me today,

Against a wrong so great, I need assistance.

Don't leave me without support.

Your invincible heart instructs me in constancy

And I want to learn from it.

AENEAS: Dido, the more I delay, the more the evil increases.

Let's not attract on ourselves the wrath of a god.

DIDO: Hey, what! you refuse to the tears of a lover

A few days that are going to be followed by an eternal farewell!

AENEAS: Leave me with the misfortune that pursues me everywhere.

DIDO: Go, for your vagabond course

Hasten to prepare everything.

Climb up on these walls which are going to separate us.

Go seek Italy, wandering at the whim of the ocean.

That perfidious element will know how to avenge me.

Sad plaything of waves, winds and storms,

Surrounded by reefs, threatened by shipwreck,

You will repent at that fatal moment

For having abandoned this peaceful shore

Where love would have made you such a charming destiny.

You will name Dido, present in your thoughts,

You will shake, ingrate, for having offended her.

You will call her vainly.

AENEAS: Whatever dangers are prepared for me,

By Fate which overwhelms me today,

A heart that is separating from you

Has nothing more to fear from it.

DIDO: Then it's over Aeneas!—O funereal silence!

The unfeeling man!—And Venus gave you birth!

No, from the tigress who suckled you

Your heart absorbed cruelty.

Deliver me from your presence,

Flee. But tremble, cruel man! my shade will pursue you,

At every hour, in all places, were it to the ends of the earth.

Dying, I am delivering you to an eternal war.

And my fury will survive me.

They will be reborn from my ashes,

Avengers thirsty for the blood of your nephews,

Let them bear fire and steel

To the shore you are going to land on.

That's the last of my prayers.

(Dido leaves.)

ACT III

DIDO By Marmontel Music by Piccini

AENEAS: Ah! in the fury that animates her,
How can her heart not exhale all its fire?

(alone)

Inexorable gods! look at your victim
That you are forcing me to sacrifice.
Gods, witness the oaths that I must violate.
Can I obey you! Alas! can I without crime!

(thunder rumbles)

But I implore and you threaten.

(thunder increases, the shade of Anchises appears)

What do I see! The shade of my father!
Let's approach. I am shaking. All my senses are frozen.
Father! Have I deserved the wrath of the gods!

SHADE OF ANCHISES: Heaven commands. Obey.

AENEAS: Alas! I am reducing a Queen to despair,
Whose sovereign bounty
Rescued the dispersed debris of Illium.

SHADE OF ANCHISES: Heaven commands. Obey.

(The shade of Anchises vanishes.)

AENEAS: Let's give in to the power that is dragging me.
Terrible gods, you are forcing me to it.

(Aeneas leaves. Men and women from the palace cross the stage.)

CHORUS: The troubled elements

Are declaring war.
Heaven thunders fearful blows.
Where to flee! The elements are declaring war.
To their very foundations these walls are being shaken

(The chorus withdraws. Enter Dido and Phenicia.)

DIDO: What is heaven announcing with that threatening thunder!
Aeneas! O gods,! What do I see!
He's leaving, he's cleaving the waters!
Tyrians, run, fire his ships!
Impotent despair! Useless and tardy rage!
He's escaping me! He must be enchained on the shore,
Burn his fleet, before it can get away.
Bathe me in the blood of his son—in his blood!
Finally to die avenged, or at least as captive.
Follow him to where destiny condemns him to reign.

(aside)

No more hope. It's time my torment ended.
But to deceive my sister, I must dissimulate.

(to Phenicia)

To plaintive Manes I owe a sacrifice;
I demand to speak to the Priest of Pluto.
Go, my dear Phenicia,
And have him called.

(Phenicia leaves.)

DIDO By Marmontel Music by Piccini

DIDO: (alone) I intend to die, I intend to tear his soul asunder;
To make him witness to my death.
I intend that, as he distances himself from this funereal shore,
The pyre of Dido will be lit by his flame—
Perhaps, he will, at least, feel some remorse.

(Elissa, Phenicia, the Priests of Pluto and other serving women of Dido enter.)

DIDO: Sister, he's gone. O you who condemn me,
Shade of my spouse, cease this murmuring.

(to Priests)

Let them prepare an altar; I intend to appease his Manes.
Let the funeral pyre be erected, and without delay
I will burn the profane spoils of an ingrate on it.
On this pyre, sister, that I intend to light,
We are going to place whatever remains of Trojans
To forever destroy a funereal memory,
And watch it be consumed.

(to her women)

Let them bring to me in this place, all his spoils, his arms.
I want to place them on the pyre with my own hands.

(Phenicia and the other serving women of Dido go to find the spoils and arms of Aeneas.)

DIDO: Sister, kiss me, at last I am going to find rest.
Rest after so many alarms.

ELISSA: Ah! soon you may be able to taste it in my breast!

(The women return, bearing spoils and weapons.)

CHORUS OF PRIESTS: Be appeased, terrible Manes,
Manes, irritated by a hero.
God of forgetfulness, god of repose
Restore peaceful life to Dido.
Spread these poppies over her
Which calm the painful cares of shaking hearts.

(During this chorus Dido, at the back of the stage, receives from the hands of her women the spoils and arms of Aeneas, places them on the pyre and climbs it herself.)

DIDO: You who I've loved, who made me suffer so much.
Alas! what haven't I offered you?
This dazzling empire where destiny calls you!
Pardon my cruel sorrow and
The senseless vows I took.
God! forget them forever.

(Dido strikes herself with Aeneas sword.)

(Elissa and Phenicia climb the pyre and support the dying Dido in their arms.)

CHORUS: O Heaven! o unfortunate Queen!
O day of sorrow and terror!

THE PRIESTS: Inexorable destiny,
How harsh is your decree!

DIDO: Farewell, my dear Aeneas,

DIDO By Marmontel Music by Piccini

My last sigh is for you.

(The priests of Pluto ignite the pyre. The people of Carthage rush in.)

THE PEOPLE: O heaven! O unfortunate Queen!

O day of sorrow and terror!

WOMEN: She saw herself abandoned,

A perfidious traitor betrayed his word!

THE PEOPLE: Hey, what! The tears of such a beautiful Queen

Were unable to touch him!

Let's swear eternal war

Against this criminal race.

Yes, let's swear it on the funeral pyre.

Manes of a creature full of charms.

Dear shade! receive our oaths.

To eternal resentment

We shall here consecrate our arms

(they draw their swords)

Manes of a creature full of charms,

With our regrets and our tears.

Dear shade, receive our oaths.

Yes, To whatever shore which receives you,

Trojans, we are going to seek you out.

To this criminal race

Even unto hell, eternal war!

We swear it on this pyre.

CURTAIN