

THE CONTRABANDISTA

or

THE LAW OF THE LADRONES

Comic Opera in Two Acts

First performed at St. George's Opera House, 18 December, 1867.

Libretto by F. C. BURNAND

Music by ARTHUR S. SULLIVAN

Cast: (in order of appearance)

SANCHO **the Lion**

JOSÉ **the Wolf**

INEZ DI ROXAS

RITA

VASQUEZ

MR. GRIGG

OFFICER

ACT I

SCENE: *In Spain. A mountainous region in the wildest part of the country between Compostello and Seville. A small hut at back, with curtain hanging before it.*

(SANCHO discovered watching, R. JOSÉ the same, L. Ladrones in various attitudes, L. and R., watching, partially hidden by rocks.)

DUET AND CHORUS

SANCHO: Hush!
 JOSÉ: Hush!
 SANCHO: Hush!
 JOSÉ: Hush!
 SANCHO: Not a step, not a sound
 Can I hear, far or near,
 With my ear to the ground;
 JOSÉ: If you'd listen and not talk,
 We might hear a stranger walk.
 SANCHO: Take my orders, Sir, from you?
 Ridiculous! Pooh! Pooh!
 JOSÉ: Oh, this wretch I'd like to crush!
 SANCHO: Trusty knife, take his life!
 BOTH: Now one blow! (*They approach each other, creeping backwards, so that when either turns, he only sees his comrade's back, and this he's still in watching attitude. When they meet, they hide their stilettos from one another, and sing — L. and R. apart.*)
 BOTH: (*aside.*) Bah! My rage I can't conceal,
 Crunch him, scrunch him with my heel!
 LADRONES: Hush! Hush! Tush! Tush!
 BOTH: Sharpen, whet the gleaming steel!
 No, my vengeance he shall feel!
 LADRONES: To the queen we will appeal!

(*Gentlemen advance down, four right and four left. At the sound of the loaded pistol all the gentlemen turn with back to audience. Four Ladrones seize SANCHO, R.H. Four Ladrones seize JOSÉ, L.H., as they are pretending to rush one another, but by going forward, carefully avoiding the slightest chance of meeting. Suddenly, upon a projecting rock, L. appears INEZ DI ROXAS. At her appearance, they sheath their stilettos; and the Ladrones, after saluting her, return to their positions, and then gradually disappear.*)

INEZ: Sancho, surnamed Lion; José, surnamed Wolf: is it thus you disturb the repose of your Queen, Inez di Roxas? (*Looking at Ladrones.*) I have not reviewed the band this morning. (*Exit Chorus gradually and sulkily, R. and L.*) Hum! (*to one Ladrone with a very tall hat.*) Get thee a shorter hat, man; it can be seen above the rocks. (*He grumbles.*) Murmur! and we will shorten you by a head.

LADRONE: Inez di Roxas forgets she is only Queen by courtesy. We've no chief yet. (*Growl from SANCHO and JOSÉ.*)

INEZ: True. Your pardon, friend. Retain your hat till happier times.

LADRONE: Happier times! (*laugh from SANCHO and JOSÉ.*) The band won't hold out much longer. 'Tis three weeks since we lost your husband, our Captain, and you became a widow; and we've got no one to lead us to glory and plunder. (*Goes up sulkily and sits, R.*)

INEZ: (*C.*) So, José, the band have not yet chosen you for their Captain. (*to JOSÉ, L.H.*)

SANCHO: (*seated, R.H.*) You! Humph!

JOSÉ: (*observing SANCHO*) The sound of "Captain" doesn't seem very pleasant to my rival's ears. However, that difficulty is settled, according to the law of the Ladrones.

INEZ: How so?

JOSÉ: Our Captain —

INEZ: My husband!

JOSÉ: Died.

INEZ: Shot.

JOSÉ: The same thing. And according to the law of the Ladrones, whoever should be chosen by the band as *their Captain* should be *your husband*.

SANCHO: Aha!

JOSÉ: The band were called upon to select.

INEZ: Well?

JOSÉ: Well! *Six* voted for me, "The Wolf."

SANCHO: And half-a-dozen for me, "The Lion."

INEZ: And that's what you call settling the difficulty.

JOSÉ: The same case happened before, and established a precedent. The office of Captain was held in abeyance until chance led some stranger in the way, who has to be invested with the dignity.

INEZ: Did a stranger come?

JOSÉ: Well! (*SANCHO advances down, R.*)

SANCHO: He did. Accepted the position of honour, and became our bravest leader — your late husband, Ferdinand di Roxas.

JOSÉ: And the precedent, once established became the law of the Ladrones.

INEZ: Then, if even a foreigner appears amongst us?

JOSÉ: He must become our Captain —

SANCHO: Or — (*draws dagger.*)

INEZ: And I must become his wife.

JOSÉ: Such is the law of the Ladrones. (*Tenderly.*) Had it fallen to my lot —

SANCHO: (*savagely interrupting*) But — such is the law of the Ladrones!

SONG

INEZ: Let others seek the peaceful plain,
 Amid the mountains let me reign:
 Be mine the rugged crest,
 Be mine the eagle's nest,
 High in the ancient hills of Spain,

Be mine the man who bears the knife,
 Who for my smile would risk his life:
 I'll take his manly hand
 And by his side I'll stand,

For I will be to him a loving wife.

JOSÉ: We have been watching for five days, and seen no one, not even a person with a ransom for the girl, Rita, our latest captive.

INEZ: Ha! I had forgotten her. Summon her.

JOSÉ: (*C. to hut*) Female prisoner, come forth.

SANCHO: (*R. of hut*) Contemptible captive, appear. (*Enter RITA from hut, and down R.S.*)

RITA: Why am I so called?

INEZ: My husband brought you here a captive.

RITA: He had some quarrel with Vasquez.

INEZ: The Count Vasquez, I know, to whom you were to be married.

RITA: Whom I love dearly. What have I done? Why was I, on the eve of our wedding, while wandering some distance from home to meet him, seized by some of your band, who, stifling my cries, bore me hither?

INEZ: 'Twas the revenge of Ferdinand di Roxas.

RITA: Oh, give me back to my friends, and sacred will I keep the secret of these hills.

INEZ: No. My husband's revenge I must complete. We know that within three days of thy capture he fought and fell by the hand of your lover.

RITA: Vasquez! Was he wounded?

INEZ: He lives. But let our band gain such another leader as my Ferdinand, and the day of the Count Vasquez are numbered.

JOSÉ: The days of the Count Vasquez — -

SANCHO: Are numbered. (*JOSÉ goes up on to rock.*) Such is the law of the Ladrones. (*Sheepbells heard, and a Shepherd's pipe.*)

INEZ: Who goes there?

JOSÉ: A goatherd and his boy, on their way home.

INEZ: Bring them hither. (*SANCHO goes up rock and stands at back, L.H., as if looking down below.*)

SANCHO: Ho! Shepherd. This way. We would speck with ye. (*Presents pistol.*)

INEZ: Listen, girl. The band need money more than thy life. (*Enter SHEPHERD and BOY.*) I have fixed the sum, which thy rich friends who dwell in the city yonder will gladly pay for thy delivery. (*Goes from C. to L.*)

RITA: How can I reach them?

INEZ: By a trusty messenger — this boy. Take off that ring, 'twill be a token.

RITA: (*writing on a small ivory tablet*) Take this to note to my Vasquez, and this ring take to my friends.

INEZ: And say, unless the ransom's in our hands before the morning sun shall warm the plain, their Rita dies; quickly or by torture. This tell Count Vasquez; say you have it from the chieftain's wife, made widow by his hand.

JOSÉ: (*Stopping the OLD MAN, who is following the BOY up the platform, and exit BOY.*) We'd better keep old Goatskin as security. He'll guard the girl while we are on the watch.

INEZ: Go, boy, and do our bidding. (*The SHEPHERD kisses the lad, who is rudely pushed down the platform at back, L.H., by JOSÉ, and disappears.*) Hast seen a stranger on your road today?

SHEPHERD: One, Madame, and him a foreigner, I fancy. He's lost his way and can't be very far from this.

JOSÉ: Ha!

SANCHO: Ha!

INEZ: Silence! This may be the leader sent by fate. Show us the path, old man, by which he is likely to approach; there we will place our spies, and you will return to guard our captive, for whom you must answer with your life. Come!

QUINTET.

All: Hand of fate! We wait thy token.
Voice of fate! When shall the word be spoken?
Hither lead upon the mountain way
The man whom we are fated to obey.

RITA: Fate, kind fate! In hope I wait some token!
Fate, kind fate! When shall the word be spoken?
Speed, speed my ring upon its homeward way,
Fate! Ah kind, fate! For liberty I pray.

SHEPHERD: An hour ago, among the hills below,
I came across a strange and foreign face,
He bore a load, he'd lost his road;
And even now is wand'ring t'wards this place.

JOSÉ: Had he a pack upon his back
And bags of money in his hand?

SANCHO: It matters not what he had got,
We'll make him Captain of our band!

ALL: Whoe'er is there we swear we'll (they'll) take him,
And make him Captain of our (their) band!

(They all retire cautiously up platform rocks, L. and disappear. When INEZ, SANCHO, JOSÉ, and the OLD SHEPHERD have disappeared, and RITA is just retiring within the hut, the sheep bells and pipe are faintly heard, as if far lower down the mountain than before.)

SONG

RITA: The tinkling sheepbell knells the parting day,
The flocks collect from meadow, hill, and moor,
The happy goatherd homeward takes his way,
His wife and children wait him at the door,
To me the bells send up no cheering tone,
Only the night wind sighs alone.

Tinkle the bells upon the mountain steeps,
Fainter and fainter down the narrow ways,
Now in his cot, the shepherd, ere he sleeps,
Joins with his lov'd ones, in the their hymn of praise.

To me the bells send up no cheering tone,
Only the night wind sighs alone.

(She goes up to the hut, R. at back, enter the OLD SHEPHERD, L. 2 E.)

SHEPHERD: Rita!

RITA: Who calls me?

SHEPHERD: A friend.

RITA: The old shepherd left here to prevent my escape! Tell me, will your boy reach Compostello before nightfall?

SHEPHERD: Their way is difficult (*C. to R.*) but I can trust Juan.

DUET

SHEPHERD: A guard by day, a guide by night
Upon the mountain wild,
The sacred sign protects the way,
And saints watch over the child.

RITA: Oh! Tell me, will he see my love?

SHEPHERD: Thy lover he will not see,
Place all thy trust in heav'n above
Pray heaven set thee free!

RITA: I'll place my trust in heav'n above,
Pray heaven set me free!

(The SHEPHERD goes up and disappears within hut. RITA continues, without noticing that he has left her.)

I only beg one grace, once more to see his face:
If never more, why then, be death my choice!

VASQUEZ (*within hut*) Rita!

RITA: My name!

VASQUEZ Dear Rita!

RITA: 'Tis his voice!
I cannot see, I hope,
I faint with fear.
Vasquez!

VASQUEZ I am here!

BOTH: My love, again to see thee
Dispels the falling tear,
He comes to free me (yes, I am here to free thee)
Ah, why then should I fear? (Then banish all thy fear.)

RITA: A prison with you is no prison for me,

VASQUEZ For the moments too fleet,
That are shared love with thee!

BOTH: When the sun brightly rises o'er hill, dale, and lea,
There's hope in the morrow, yes, then we'll be free!

(Exeunt RITA and VASQUEZ, R.H. MUSIC. Enter, down the rocks, awkwardly, MR. GRIGG. He is dressed in a tourist's suit and carries a camera.)

SONG

GRIGG: From rock to rock with many a shock
And bump, and thump, and terrible knock,
I fall, and not a soul is near,
The trav'ler's lonely path to cheer.
Oh! Why did I set out to roam,
And dare the sea's unpleasant foam?
Slipping, tripping, air so nipping,
Up in the hills away from home.

The love of arts in foreign parts
Has taken me all the way to Spain:
Fumble, stumble, grumble, tumble,
Up the middle and down again.
This camera too, to take a view,
I never did such a nuisance know.
If by shock awry, knock'd like crockery, on the rockery,
Smash it will go.

I say to myself, my dear friend Grigg,
If safe I return I'd rather dig
Than follow the arts in foreign parts.

But I'll take to a farm, with horse and carts
With my spouse, and my cows, and my little pigs,
And rear up my lot of little Griggs,
Who'll lead us a life with their nursery rigs,
Little Griggs, and little pigs,
My spouse, my cows, my sows, Ha! Ha!

GRIGG: Here's a pretty situation for the father of a family. There's only one thing clear,

which is, that I've lost my way, which isn't at all clear. I told my wife I was going to pursue art in sunny Spain. Pursue Art! I've had a regular steeplechase after it. I set out from Compostello this morning, intending to return to Compostello this evening; but it seems to me that Compostello's gone away on its own account. I was told I should get such a view on the mountains. Well, I have got such a view from the mountains, that, beyond giving myself several sittings as I came along the rocks, I don't think I've gained very much by the excursion. However, I'll have one more attempt, and if I fail — I fail — and get back again as quickly as I can, that is *if I can*, to Compostello (*carrying camera*). I'm composing a poem on Compostello, to be published with photographic illustrations:

On Compostello!
Where the bulls bellow,
In sunlight yellow,
Looking so mellow,
How can a fellow —
How can a —

Ahem! “to be continued in our next.” Vide Unpublished Works of Mr. Adolphus Cimabue Grigg. (*Disappears under the camera cloth*).

TRIO

SANCHO: (*over music, R.H., popping up*) José!

JOSÉ: (*same, L.H.*) Sancho!

BOTH: (*Whistle.*)

GRIGG: Hullo! What's that? 'Twasn't a cat!

Something I heard like a bird! (*Listens.*)

No! No! (*Puts head under curtain again — SANCHO and JOSÉ repeat above lines and whistle; GRIGG looks out of camera again.*)

'Tis a pee-wit gone in a fit,

Oh, this is very absurd!

I think that the lens I can clearly direct,

And at last I have got quite a charming effect.

Ah, now to arrange it. A capital plan.

I've sighted a rock. (*Sees SANCHO over the camera.*)

No, 'tis a man!

SANCHO: Ha! Ha! You have hit on a capital plan! I'm a man!

GRIGG: (*Sees JOSÉ.*) And another!

JOSÉ: Another young man. Well!

SANCHO: Well!

GRIGG: Quite well, thank you!

JOSÉ: Nay, your hand.

SANCHO: Your hand.

GRIGG: Good morning! I can't stay.

JOSÉ: You must.

GRIGG: I must! You're fond of jokes.

JOSÉ: Remain.

SANCHO: Explain.

GRIGG: What horrid looking folks!

JOSÉ: I'm called the Wolf!

GRIGG: Indeed! (*aside.*) a grasp of iron--
(*aloud.*) They shouldn't call you that.

SANCHO: And I the Lion!

BOTH: We're members of a robber band,
We offer you, as Captain, the command.

GRIGG: Upon my word, I do not understand,
In fact I'd rather not.

BOTH: Our Captain you must be!
Refuse! Then choose, be Captain or be shot!

GRIGG: What?

BOTH: Shot!

GRIGG: Not — (*imitating grin.*)

BOTH: Shot!

GRIGG: What?

BOTH: Shot!

GRIGG: For what?

BOTH: Yes, shot!

GRIGG: Well, agreed!

BOTH: 'Tis agreed!
Dance the bolero! Dance the bolero!

GRIGG: Mad! 'Tis my belief.

BOTH: Wild tarantellas will welcome our chief.
Dance the bolero!

GRIGG: Why the bolero?

BOTH: Bolero! Bolero! The robber's pet
We'll dance to the pipe and the gay castanet.

GRIGG: Bolero! Bolero! A dreadful set!
I wish that I'd never these gentlemen met.

ALL: Bolero! Bolero! (*etc.*)

SANCHO: Your hand.

JOSÉ: Your hand.

GRIGG: I can't do it any more, I'm tired.

SANCHO: Noble stranger, you are our captain, and now I'll to the barrel. And fire then the joyful intelligence, ha! ha!

(*Exit, L.H.*)

GRIGG: (*to JOSÉ*) Do his friends allow him to go about without a keeper?

JOSÉ: Captain! (*aside*) Now to tell him about Inez. (*aloud*) You *are* our captain, unanimously elected.

GRIGG: But I unanimously decline.

JOSÉ: You cannot! or else — (*threatens*).

GRIGG: If you put it in that light, I accept.

JOSÉ: There's a greater honour in store for you.

GRIGG: You don't say so? (*JOSÉ threatens.*) I beg your pardon, of course you *do* say so. What is it?

JOSÉ: We are going to marry you.

GRIGG: Who to, both of you?

JOSÉ: The new captain marries the late captain's widow. 'Tis the law of the Ladrones.

GRIGG: But I'm not a Ladrone.

JOSÉ: Ha! (*threatens*).

GRIGG: I forget, yes I am. But I don't want to marry her.

JOSÉ: You — you understand. Pop. Behold your Queen, your wife, approaches.

GRIGG: (*aside*) My wife? What'll Mrs. Grigg say? If I don't marry her I shall be shot. That's the law of the Ladrones. If I do, when I get back again I shall be had for biggamy — I mean bigamy — that's the law of England. Oh Law!

(*Enter INEZ, L. 2 E. SANCHO and Band, they salute.*)

GRIGG: (*to them*) How d'ya do? I hope you're all quite well. (*aside*) What a set of blackguards!

INEZ: (*contemptuously regarding GRIGG.*) Is that he?

JOSÉ: (*aside to her*) It is. But I have a plan for your private ear. — Wait. (*aloud*) Behold! your bride.

GRIGG: (*aside.*) What a ferocious looking female.

JOSÉ: Say something tender to her.

GRIGG: I will. (*to INEZ*) Fine day for walking?

INEZ: Bah! (*puts hand on dagger accidentally.*)

GRIGG: Quite so. (*aside*) What a happy man the late captain must have been.

SANCHO: This evening we celebrate the betrothal. (*Cheers.*)

ALL: 'Tis the law of the Ladrones.

JOSÉ: But four days must elapse before the nuptials can take place.

GRIGG: Hooray! I beg your pardon. I mean — I was only expressing my delight at the prospect.

INEZ: You must instantly put on the late captain's uniform.

GRIGG: Yes. But that won't make 'em fit me.

JOSÉ: (*to INEZ aside*) You know how tenderly I love you? Celebrate the betrothal now: tomorrow I will rid you of Sancho and the stranger.

INEZ: (*aside*) My hand. (*Aloud*) Summon our womenkind to witness the installation of our new captain and our own betrothal (*to VASQUEZ, who, disguised as a shepherd, appears at door of hut, R. H.*) You, Shepherd, can be present with your prisoner. (*enter RITA*) Now let the ancient rites of the Ladrones commence.

(*Enter Spanish girls of the Ladrones tribe. INEZ on seat in front of hut, R. 2 E; on either side of her SANCHO and JOSÉ, with daggers drawn, guarding GRIGG, who sits at her feet wretchedly. L. H. VASQUEZ and RITA.*)

DANCE

(*after Dance, INEZ descends to L. C. SANCHO and JOSÉ bring GRIGG, R.C., the rest surrounding.*)

FINALE

INEZ: (*to RITA*) Slave, take my robe.

VASQUEZ (*aside to RITA*) Obey her, 'Tis our plan (*RITA receives shawl from INEZ*).

GRIGG: I am the most unfortunate young man.

INEZ: The sacred hat which all Ladrones know,
Bring forth, it on our chief we now bestow.

(*JOSÉ brings forth a very old and big Robber's Hat, shabbily and tawdrily decorated. It is brought solemnly forward. All kneel, except INEZ and GRIGG. SANCHO places a mat for him.*)

HYMN OF THE CORONATION HAT

LADRONES: Hail to the ancient hat!

'Neath this our chiefs have sat,
Kneel down upon the mat.
Hail! Hail! Ladrones.
Take it, o martial spouse!
Press it upon his brows;
May it his zeal arouse.
Viva Ladrones.

GRIGG: Of this old hat, so old and worn
The royalty I doubt;
Its regal mark, my friends, is gone,
Behold, its crown is out!

LADRONES: None but the chief e'er saw
That the hat had a flaw,
Wear it! It is the Law of the Ladrones.
With sword and pistol now your chief surround.
He's found and crown'd!

GRIGG: I say to myself, my dear friend Grigg,
If safe I return I'd rather dig:
Than follow the arts in foreign parts.
Happy again, away from Spain.

INEZ: (*aside to JOSÉ*) Do you think that he can
For our plan be the man,
For if not, tell me what you have got for a plan?

JOSÉ: (*aside to INEZ*) I've made a vow, which I'll not repeat now,
You're aware when I swear, I do make such a row,
And to swear isn't right, for a robber's polite.
Let the day pass away and be happy tonight.

BOTH: Ha! Ha! Ha! Ha!

LADRONES: So care now departs from the robbers' hearts,
And we'll plunder the man coming home from the marts;
And we'll feast on the grape and the little figs,
And caper and dance to the tune of giques.

RITA: Yes, I am content to be free,
Or a captive, if with thee.
Tomorrow shall set me free.

VASQUEZ Fear-a-bout,
On the ground about,
All this sound about nothing at all!

GRIGG & CHORUS: My (his) spouse, my (his) cows (vows), my sows (our rows),

Ha! Ha!

(A sword is placed in GRIGG'S right hand, and a pistol in his left, he kneeling C. They place the hat over his head; it almost extinguishes him. The Ladrones raise their swords aloft. The girls stand in attitudes with tambourines. RITA and VASQUEZ apart. SANCHO and JOSÉ cross swords over GRIGG'S hat, standing on either side of him, and INEZ places her dagger above the swords. TABLEAU: End of Act. Sunset effect.)

ACT II

Same scene. Dawn. Mists clearing away from the valley beneath, and the sunlight breaking through. Music then VASQUEZ heard singing.

SONG

VASQUEZ Wake, gentle maiden, see the light of day
 Boldly from the mountain drives the shade away;
 Maiden, wake, Maiden, wake.
 See the mists of morning routed by the day,
 Haste away, Haste away!

 Wake, gentle maiden, bid the shadows flee,
 Brighter than the sunlight is thy smile to me;
 Maiden, wake, Maiden, wake.
 Sweet, thy smile is sunlight chasing night away;
 Wake, 'tis day; Wake, 'tis day!

(He is heard as if descending the mountains. RITA enters from the rocks.)

RITA: 'Twas Vasquez. He has been watching through the night, and now goes to meet Juan on the road. The robbers are all sleeping; surely there ought to be now some chance of escape. *(Enter SANCHO, L. H., yawning.)*

SANCHO: Hallo' young woman. You haven't got very long to live it may be; but that's no reason you should rob us of our amusements by throwing yourself over the rocks.

RITA: Has your chief received no message from my friends?

SANCHO: Not a scrap. The Queen has fixed your ransom at 2000 piastres; that's the price your friends will have to pay for the pleasure of seeing you again. *(Yawns.)* I'm very tired after last night's festivities. I'm on duty now, my pretty lamb, instead of the old shepherd. So in with thee, unless you're stopping out here on purpose to give me a kiss. *(He approaches her. She retreats into the hut.)* Ha' perhaps she objects to my moustachios. *(Yawns.)* Well, as I am to keep guard, I can do it as well lying down as standing, and I can shake off that last bottle with a quiet doze. Here's the old shepherd's covering; that'll do. Very thoughtful of him to leave it. *(Lies down before the door of the hut, after entirely covering himself in a shaggy skin. Music. Enter, cautiously, JOSÉ and INEZ, L.H.)*

JOSÉ: All's quiet.

INEZ: What's that? *(pointing to SANCHO.)*

JOSÉ: The old shepherd, fast asleep.

INEZ: Now. Speak. What's to be done?

JOSÉ: This Englishman is a pretty captain for our band!

INEZ: A fitting partner for me — me, the wife of the bold Ferdinand di Roxas!

JOSÉ: Sweetest daughter of the Ladrones, I have an idea.

INEZ: Stolen?

JOSÉ: No, my own. Pride of the mountains, listen!

INEZ: Proceed.

JOSÉ: Lambkin of the valley, we must get rid of two people. The Wolf has laid a trap for the Lion. (SANCHO *puts his head out of the skin and appears listening.*)

INEZ: You mean — (*putting her hand on dagger.*)

JOSÉ: I do. You anticipate my original idea.

INEZ: 'Tis for great minds to leap together.

JOSÉ: And we will leap together. Dove — like creature, the Lion must die!

INEZ: But the stranger — the chief —

JOSÉ: For him — but first let me be assured that you smile upon my suit.

INEZ: (*sternly*) I do.

JOSÉ: (*rapturously*) She does! Angelic being! When the stranger is trying to win your affections, struck as he must be by your melting eye, persuade him that Sancho's assassination is necessary to your happiness; the stranger will assassinate Sancho, and then the band, in justice to a comrade, will assassinate the stranger. So we get rid of both. (SANCHO *has left his skin, and threateningly goes R. H. into cave.*) Then I shall be the captain, and you my wife and queen.

DUET

INEZ: Let Hildalgos be proud of their breed,
And strut in the streets of Madrid:
The Ladrones who happy live lead
Were kings long before the great Cid:
But the gay Ladrone was hurl'd from his throne,
And the dust of the earth he bit:
Till the luck comes round no Ladrone will be found
As a monarch of Spain to sit.
Round, around round, we will dance on the ground,
Dance to the click of the castanet.

JOSÉ: Round, around round, till the luck comes around,
Why should we sorrow or fret? (*etc.*)

Let senoras flash brilliant eyes
On the bold matador in the ring:
Of fans and snivelling sighs,
Let poets, well paid for it, sing:
But the gay Ladrone loves her alone,
Who for desperate deeds is fit:
When luck comes round, she's the one to be found,
On the throne of the king to sit.

BOTH: Round, around round (*etc.*) (*Exit separately; enter RITA, cautiously, R.*)

RITA: The time is flying fast, and neither Vasquez nor Juan returned. Should the band have discovered his disguise then Heaven give us hope. *(She sings)*

SONG

He will return, return to set me free,
Or fall in hope my liberty to gain;
Ere that, let me the willing victim be,
To die for him, ah! happy lot for me!
If for my dearest love, I may be slain!
And in the light of Heaven above, my love we'll meet again.

He will return, not Heaven itself more true
Than is my love, to aid me he will fly.
Parted from him life wears a somber hue,
My only love, e'en in the moments few,
My latest prayer to Heaven be to die!
And in the light of Heaven above, my love we'll meet again.

(She exits. SANCHO crawls in, and, seeing somebody approach, hides as before in the skin. Enter, L. H., GRIGG in the costume of the late Captain of the Ladrones. He has a sword at his side, and large pistols in his belt. He has great difficulty in keeping the sacred hat on his head.)

GRIGG: Here's a pretty figure for a waxwork. I don't think much of the late Captain's taste in dress. He must have been seven feet high if he was an inch. This confounded hat is a perfect extinguisher. It's the law of the Ladrones to wear it, and it's the law of the Ladrones to shoot you if you don't. I've caught a considerable cold in the mountains; and I don't think they've aired this gentleman's clothes. *(Sneezes and his hat drops off.)* I can't pick it up, because of my pistols. *(The pistols in his belt fall.)* Ah! that's a relief. I detest firearms. Let me see *(sits on rock)* — in three days time I've got to marry that cut — throat in petticoats. Very good, or rather very bad — that's the law of the Ladrones, which seems admirably adapted to the commission of all sorts of villany. *(SANCHO crawls nearer to GRIGG.)* I wish I could get home again out of the clutches of that infernal José the Wolf, and — *(during this, SANCHO, concealed in the skin, has crawled up to him.)* Hullo! here's a wild beast. Ah! Here! Hi!

SANCHO: Hsssssssh.

GRIGG: It's a goose *(about to call)*. Hi! here's a —

SANCHO: *(presenting pistol)* Silence!

GRIGG: Not another word. *(aside)* It's "the Lion".

SANCHO: *(advancing with GRIGG)* There's a plot against you and me.

GRIGG: Is there? What do you think we'd better do?

SANCHO: I know.

GRIGG: Yes?

SANCHO: Hsssssh!

GRIGG: *(aside)* He's a perfect hurricane!

SANCHO: They come. Breathe a word of my concealment here and you perish. The

conspirators against your life and dignity are here. (*He retires into concealment.*)

GRIGG: If she'd confine themselves to conspiring against my dignity, I should be the last person to offer an objection. But when it comes to conspiring against a fellow's life — why — (*Enter INEZ, followed by JOSÉ.*)

TRIO

INEZ: Silence!

JOSÉ: Silence!

GRIGG: Silence!

BOTH: Silence!

GRIGG: May I ask what you mean?

INEZ: Silence!

JOSÉ: Silence!

GRIGG: Silence!

BOTH: Silence!

JOSÉ: Listen, Chieftain, to the Queen!

INEZ: You wear the Captain's hat,

GRIGG: I do.

JOSÉ: You do.

INEZ: The Captain's sword and pistols.

GRIGG: True.

JOSÉ: The Captain's coat and trousers, too,

You've stepped into the Captain's shoes.

GRIGG: And let me stop you for a bit,

But to complain that they don't fit.

Were this suit from the tailor's shears,

Had Grigg appeared as Grigg appears,

No coin from me should grace his till,

Unpaid should be that tailor's bill.

INEZ & JOSÉ: (*As GRIGG repeats his verse*)

Wear this suit from the robber's shears!

Our chief appears as he appear'd,

The hero see, his place to fill;

For him will we Plot! Rob! And Kill!

INEZ: Would he were here!

GRIGG: My tailor?

INEZ: No, sir; he who was my spouse.

GRIGG: I perfectly agree.

INEZ: But to the point; you've got a pair of hands!

GRIGG: What can I do? Your wishes are commands.

(*Aside*) I think it quite as well to be polite,

Though of my beating heart I hear the thud.

(Aloud) If I can do anything for you, name it,

INEZ: I want —

JOSÉ: We want —

GRIGG: What?

BOTH: Blood!

JOSÉ: Who'd to be robber-chief aspire,
Of that man we all require
Deeds of daring, words of fire!
Drink! Drink! Drink!

INEZ: Who would press me to his side,
Call the robber-queen his bride,
Deeds of blood must be his pride!
Drink! Drink! Drink!

GRIGG: See my mother and my sire,
What they of your son require;
I from deeds and words of fire
Shrink! Shrink! Shrink!

INEZ: Then you consent?

GRIGG: Well, I don't precisely understand.

INEZ: Listen. Before marrying, the bridegroom elect has to give a present to the bride.

GRIGG: Of course, the ring. I'll go and get it.

JOSÉ: No, you won't.

GRIGG: Yes, I will. (JOSÉ stops him.)

INEZ: No. The present I require is Sancho's head.

GRIGG: He wouldn't give it to me.

INEZ & JOSÉ: (*threatening*) You refuse!

GRIGG: No, not in the least. But really I've got such a slight acquaintance with the gentleman. You know him better than I do, ask him yourself.

JOSÉ: Absurd!

GRIGG: So it is! You're a very sensible person, so we won't say any more on that head.

INEZ: The bridegroom elect must not refuse the request of his betrothed.

JOSÉ: 'Tis the Law of the Ladrones.

GRIGG: Ah! That settles the question.

INEZ: Drink! 'Twill inspire you. To aid you in the daring deed, take these (*pistols*) and these (*daggers*).

JOSÉ: And these (*knives*).

INEZ: Now he cannot escape you. The victim will soon be here. Do your duty. And remember —

JOSÉ: 'Tis the Law of the Ladrones.

ENSEMBLE

ALL: Drink! Drink! Drink! (*etc.*)

(Exeunt JOSÉ, R. INEZ, L. SANCHO again hides. GRIGG remains with all the weapons about him and in his hands, utterly helpless.)

GRIGG: I say — I — Here's a situation for a family man! I'll get rid of these weapons as quickly as possible. (*Stoops down and drops the weapons gradually*). Confound the hat (*as he gets in a sitting position, the hat falls over his eyes*).

SANCHO: (*approaching cautiously*) He sleeps (*removes weapons*).

GRIGG: (*lifting hat up*) Thank you. Hallo! It's the Lion!

SANCHO: It is. You are in my power. Don't speak above a whisper.

GRIGG: (*trying*) Very well. Will that do?

SANCHO: Yes.

GRIGG: (*whispers, and SANCHO exclaims, "What?"*)

SANCHO: I've overheard all. I'm about to quit the band forever.

GRIGG: Take me with you.

SANCHO: Impossible. You were to have killed me, and your death was to have followed mine. Now I'm supposed by this time to be a dead man.

GRIGG: I'll be another dead man, and go with you.

SANCHO: It would create suspicion.

GRIGG: No, it wouldn't.

SANCHO: I go to alarm the soldiery (*crosses to R.*).

GRIGG: Don't alarm them, as they won't come.

SANCHO: One word before I go. You drank the Queen's flask. Your doom may already be sealed. Poison. (*Exit by back.*)

GRIGG: Here — Explain — You don't mean . . . He points a pistol at me. They are so careless about firearms. Poison! She couldn't have done it. Judging from what I've seen of her, she could have done it. Oh, but she wouldn't . . . on another consideration I'm not sure of that. She never tasted it herself. It had a nasty taste. I feel sort of a . . . yes, a faintness is coming over me — I'll denounce her to the band . . . help! (*Enter JOSÉ, R. H., INEZ L. H., and Ladrones, L. and R.*).

JOSÉ: What's the matter?

GRIGG: Can *you* ask? Gentlemen, if I may be permitted to call you so, listen to your Captain's dying words. She poisoned me!

LADRONES: Who?

GRIGG: She. The Queen. Also the Wolf. They've done it.

JOSÉ: What d'ye mean?

GRIGG: 'Tis in that flask, see how she stands aloof.

LADRONES: Poisoned the Captain! (*drawing daggers*).

INEZ: Poison! See the proof! (*drinks from flask*).

GRIGG: Then I was wrong. I feel of course I am. Upon my word I beg your pardon, ma'am.

JOSÉ: No! No! about your Queen he has told lies.

LADRONES: He has! He has!

JOSÉ: What then?

ALL: The Captain dies!

GRIGG: No. 'Twas that Sancho put it in my head.

INEZ: (*folds arms and crosses to back of audience*) And where is he?

JOSÉ: Where's Sancho?

ALL: Sancho!

GRIGG: Fled!

JOSÉ: You let him go, your comrades to betray.

GRIGG: I tried to stop him but he wouldn't stay.

SONG

I fired each barrel; bang! bang! he fell, whop!
He begg'd and he pray' d me that I would stop;
I took him, I shook him, with such strong vigour,
That helpless he was as a dummy figure.

I fired my pistols, pop! pop! and my gun!
I broke all my weapons excepting one;
We wrestled, we struggled, I made him stagger,
Then ran him through twice with my sword and my dagger.

JOSÉ: And where's the dagger that our Captain plied?

GRIGG: (*puzzled*) He took it with him, sticking in his side.

JOSÉ: (*C.*) Sancho has gone to betray the band.

GRIGG: He has. Pursue him to the left. (*aside*) And I'll go to the right.

JOSÉ: No. Sooner than fall into the hands of the soldiers, there's the train —

GRIGG: Where? I'll take a ticket immediately.

JOSÉ: The train of gunpowder —

GRIGG: Good gracious! (*falls against tall Ladrona, R.*)

JOSÉ: Which our late Captain laid in case of a surprise. To yonder cave we will retire,
apply a slow match —

GRIGG: The slower the better.

JOSÉ: And all perish together.

INEZ: Together.

ALL: 'Tis the law of the Ladrones! (*All raise arms.*)

(*Movement towards the Cavern. Enter from Cavern, R. H., RITA.*)

RITA: (*innocently*) What's going on?

JOSÉ: Seize her. (*INEZ left.*) Comrades, the treachery of Sancho is a punishment deserved
by us, because we have not avenged the fate of Ferdinand di Roxas. There stands our victim.

FINALE

RITA: Have pity, sir! To you I fly for aid.

GRIGG: (*half-crying*) I cannot help you, miss, I am afraid.

RITA: Mercy! Mercy! Help will soon be here.

LADRONES: What does she say?

GRIGG: An Englishman, my dear, must for a female in distress be bold. These pistols. (GRIGG pulls out pistol and crosses to C. RITA breaks away and rushes to GRIGG.) Now, come on! (She clings to him on C. He, with two pistols, melodramatically presented R. and L. The band flourish their daggers. JOSÉ presents pistol.)

ALL: Down with them! (Enter at back VASQUEZ, in military dress, and a SPANISH OFFICER. Soldiers appear on the rocks suddenly, pointing their guns at the Ladrones. SANCHO brought up by two soldiers.)

VASQUEZ Hold! (RITA clings to him, and he levels a pistol at GRIGG; so also does the SPANISH OFFICER. GRIGG is now between two fires.)

OFFICER: Resistance is no use.

GRIGG: You've no excuse, you hear. Resistance isn't any use!

JOSÉ & SANCHO: Desert your captain?

ALL: Never!

JOSÉ & SANCHO: Then make one strong endeavour, Present!

OFFICER: I hold in my hand a pardon for all in this robber band!

(All lay down arms.)

GRIGG: Your pardon is signed, now isn't that kind?
Enough to send a man out of his mind.

OFFICER: The pardon's for all, says the officer prim,
Except for the Captain, we don't pardon him;
Seize him! Quick, seize him!

GRIGG: Absurd! I'm not the Captain!

INEZ, JOSÉ & SANCHO: He's Captain!

OFFICER: Then let him be shot!

GRIGG: (To Ladrones) You won't desert your Captain
When he speaks in such imploring tones? (They turn away.)
(Aside) A lot of sneaks.

OFFICER: Ah! Wretched man, don't aggravate your crimes.

GRIGG: Sir, I shall send a letter to the Times.

VASQUEZ Stop, Sergeant, stop:
This gentleman's known to me.
I'll speak for him; he's no Ladrone.

GRIGG: Thanks, noble Captain of the Spanish guard!
If you come to London, there's my card.
Ladrones, farewell! (To JOSÉ) Goodbye you ugly fellow!
Now take me back again to Compostello.

VASQUEZ (To Ladrones) Join the soldiers!

LADRONES: There's my fist; We'll enlist! We'll all enlist!

RITA: I'm free! I'm free! Now sorrow and care,
Rejoicing, I banish, I'm free as the air!
[i.e., the air to which these words are set]

VASQUEZ You're mine! You're mine! You cannot be free!
For the fetters of Hymen I'll rivet on thee!

ALL: We'll dance

End of the Opera.