

AÏDA

by Giuseppe Verdi

Cast

KING OF EGYPT (bass)
AMNERIS, daughter of the king of Egypt (mezzo-soprano)
AÏDA, an Ethiopian slave (soprano)
RADAMES, captain of the Egyptian guards (tenor)
RAMPHIS, high priest of Isis (bass)
AMONASRO, King of Ethiopia (Aïda's father) (baritone)
a MESSENGER (tenor)
priests, priestesses, ministers, captains, soldiers,
functionaries, slaves, Ethiopian prisoners,
Egyptian people, etc. etc.

Prelude

ACT ONE

SCENE 1

*A Hall in the Palace of the King at
Memphis.*

*Left and right, a colonnade with statues and
flowering shrubs. Rear, a great door beyond
which can be seen the temples and palaces of
Memphis and the Pyramids.*

RAMFIS

Yes, rumor has it that Ethiopia dares
to defy us again and to threaten the Nile
Valley
and Thebes. Soon a messenger
will bring the truth.

RADAMÈS

Have you consulted
holy Isis?

RAMFIS

She has named
the commander-in-chief
of the Egyptian armies.

RADAMÈS

Oh happy man!

RAMFIS

looking intently at Radamès
Youthful and valiant is he.
Now I bear the divine
commands to the King.
Exit.

RADAMÈS

If I were
that warrior! If my dreams
were to come true! A valiant army
led by me... and victory... and the
acclamations
of all Memphis! And to return to you, my
sweet Aida,
crowned with laurels...
to tell you: for you I fought, for you I
conquered!

Heavenly Aida, form divine,
mystical garland of light and flowers,
of my thoughts you are the queen,
you are the light of my life.

I would return to you your lovely sky,
the gentle breezes of your native land;
a royal crown on your brow I would set,
build you a throne next to the sun.

Heavenly Aida, form divine,
mystical gleam of light and flowers, *etc.*

Amneris enters.

AMNERIS
Such unwonted joy
in your gaze! What
noble courage shines in your face!
Oh, how much to be envied
is that woman whose longed-for image
could awaken in you such a flame of
rapture!

RADAMÈS
My heart was reveling
in a propitious dream. Today the goddess
has pronounced the name of the warrior who
will lead
the Egyptian armies in the field...
Oh, if I were
chosen for such an honor!

AMNERIS
Did no other dream,
more gentle... more sweet,
speak to your heart?
In Memphis have you
no desires... no hopes?

RADAMÈS
I? (What a question!
Perhaps... she has discovered
the hidden love that burns in my heart...)

AMNERIS
(Ah, woe, if another love
should burn in his heart!)

RADAMÈS
(The name of her slave
she has read in my thoughts!)

AMNERIS
(Woe if my gaze penetrates
that fatal mystery!
Woe if my gaze penetrates, etc.)

RADAMÈS
(Perhaps she has read my thoughts!)
seeing Aida as she enters
It is she!

AMNERIS
(He is troubled... and how
he looked at her!
Aida!... Could she
perhaps be my rival?)

turning to Aida
Come, my dearest, come hither;
you are neither slave nor servant
here where in sweet enchantment
I called you sister...
You weep? Reveal the secret
of your tears to me.

AIDA
Alas, I hear the dreadful
cry of war raging!
For my unhappy country,
for myself... for you I fear.

AMNERIS
Do you speak the truth?
No graver care disturbs you?
(Tremble, oh wicked slave!)

RADAMÈS
observing Amneris
(In her face flash...)

AMNERIS
(Ah, tremble, wicked slave, tremble!)

RADAMÈS
(...anger and suspicion.)

AMNERIS
(...lest I penetrate the secrets of your heart!)

RADAMÈS

(Woe if our secret love
she should read in our hearts!)

AMNERIS

(Tremble lest I learn the truth
from that weeping and blushing!)

RADAMÈS

(Woe if she should read in our hearts!)

AIDA

(Ah! no, not alone or my country
does my heart weep;
the tears that I weep are tears
of hapless love!)

RADAMÈS

(In her face flash
anger and suspicion.
Woe if our secret love
she should read in our hearts!)

AMNERIS

(Wicked slave, tremble!
lest into your heart I penetrate!
Ah, tremble lest I learn the truth
from that weeping and blushing!)

*The King appears, preceded by his guard
and followed by Ramfis, ministers, priests,
captains and others.*

KING

A high cause brings you together,
oh loyal Egyptians, around your king.
From the Ethiopian borders a messenger
has just arrived. He brings grave news.
Be pleased to hear him...
Let the messenger stand forth!

MESSENGER

The sacred soil of Egypt is invaded
by the barbarous Ethiopians. Our fields
have been laid waste...
the crops burned... and
emboldened by easy victory, the plunderers
are already marching on Thebes.

RADAMÈS, KING, RAMFIS, PRIESTS,
MINISTERS, CAPTAINS

Do they dare so much!

MESSENGER

A warrior indomitable and ferocious,
Amonasro, leads them.

RADAMÈS, KING, RAMFIS, PRIESTS,
MINISTERS, CAPTAINS

The King!

AIDA

(My father!)

MESSENGER

Thebes is already in arms, and from her
hundred gates
will sally forth to meet the barbarous
invader
with war and death.

KING

Ay! Let war and death be our cry!

RAMFIS

War!

RAMFIS, RADAMÈS, PRIESTS,
MINISTERS, CAPTAINS

War! War! Terrible, unrelenting!

KING

approaching Radamès
Revered Isis has already named
the commander-in-chief
of our unvanquished armies:
Radamès!

AIDA, AMNERIS, MINISTERS,
CAPTAINS

Radamès!

RADAMÈS

Ah, thanks be to the gods!
My prayers are answered!

AMNERIS
(He, the leader!)

AIDA
(I tremble!)

MINISTERS, CAPTAINS
Radamès! Radamès! Radamès! Radamès!

KING
Now go to Vulcan's temple,
oh soldier. Your sacred arms
gird on and speed to victory.

Arise! Haste to the sacred banks
of the Nile, Egyptian heroes:
from every heart let the cry burst forth:
war and death, death to the foreigner!

RAMFIS
Glory to the gods! Let everyone remember
it is they who decide the course of events;
in the hands of the gods alone
rest the warrior's fortunes.

Let everyone remember
that in the hands of the gods alone
rest the warrior's fortunes!

MINISTERS, CAPTAINS
Arise! To the sacred banks of the Nile
let a barrier be formed by our breasts;
let there resound but a single cry:
war, war and death to the foreigner!

KING
Arise! Arise! Speed to the sacred
banks of the Nile. Egyptian heroes;
From each heart let the cry resound:
war and death to the foreigner!

AIDA
(For whom shall I weep? For whom shall I
pray?
What power binds me to him!
I must love him, and he is
an enemy, a foreigner!)

RADAMÈS
A holy thrill of glory
fills my whole soul.
Arise! Let us speed to victory!
War and death to the foreigner!

AMNERIS
to Radamès
From my hand, oh commander,
receive the glorious standard;
may it be your guide, your light
on the road to glory!

KING
Arise! Haste to the sacred banks
of the Nile, Egyptian heroes, etc.

RAMFIS, PRIESTS
Glory to the gods! Let everyone remember,
etc.

MINISTERS, CAPTAINS
Arise! To the sacred banks of the Nile
let a barrier be formed by our breasts; etc.

RADAMÈS AND MESSENGER
Arise! Let us speed... arise!
Let us speed to victory!

AMNERIS
... may it be your guide, your light
on the road to glory!

AIDA
(For whom shall I weep? For whom shall I
pray?)

KING AND RAMFIS
War!

PRIESTS, MINISTERS, CAPTAINS
War! War! War!

AIDA
(I must love him, yet I see in him
an enemy, a foreigner!)
Ah! -

ALL THE OTHERS
War, war! Exterminate them!

AMNERIS
to Radamès
Return a conqueror!

ALL
Return a conqueror!

All leave except Aida.

AIDA
Return a conqueror!... And from my lips
came the impious word! Conqueror
of my father... of him who takes up arms
for me... to give me back
a country, a kingdom, and the illustrious
name
which here I am forced to hide. Conqueror
of my brothers... whence I might see him,
stained
with cherished blood, triumph in the
acclamation
of the Egyptian cohorts! And behind his
chariot,
a king... my father... bound in chains!

Oh gods, wipe out
the insane word!
To a father's breast
restore his daughter;
destroy the squadrons
of our oppressor! Ah! -
Wretched one! What did I say...
And my love?
Can I then forget
this ardent love which, like a shaft of
sunlight,
made my lot here happy although I am
captive and a slave?
Shall I call down death
upon Radamès ... upon him whom I love so
much!
Ah! never on earth did
anguish more cruel rend a heart!

The sacred names of father, of lover,
I cannot utter, nor yet recall.
For the one... for the other... confused,
trembling,
I would weep, I would pray.
But my prayer changes to a curse...
For me tears are a crime, sighs a fault...
In dark night my soul is lost,
and in this cruel anguish I would die.

Oh gods, have pity on my suffering!
There is no hope for my sorrow.
Fatal love, terrible love,
break my heart, make me die!
Oh gods, have pity on my suffering! etc.

SCENE 2

*Interior of the Temple of Vulcan
at Memphis.*

*A mysterious light from above illuminates the
scene. There is a long row of columns, which
disappears in the distance. Statues of various
divinities. At mid-scene, on a scaffold
covered with carpets, stands the altar
decorated with sacred emblems. The smoke
of incense rises from censers supported by
golden tripods.*

*Priests and priestesses, Ramfis at the foot of
the altar.*

HIGH PRIESTESS
from within
O mighty, mighty Phtha,
spirit that animates the world, ah!...

HIGH PRIESTESS, PRIESTESSES
from within
... we invoke thee!

RAMFIS, PRIESTS
Thou who from nothing didst fashion
the earth, the sea and the sky,
we invoke thee!

HIGH PRIESTESS
Phtha most high,
universal creator of life, ah!...

HIGH PRIESTESS, PRIESTESSES
... we invoke thee!

RAMFIS, PRIESTS
Divinity who of thy spirit
art son and progenitor,
we invoke thee!

HIGH PRIESTESS
Fire uncreated, eternal,
whence the sun derived its light, ah!...

HIGH PRIESTESS, PRIESTESSES
... we invoke thee!

RAMFIS, PRIESTS
Life of the universe,
myth of eternal love,
we invoke thee!

PRIESTESSES
Phtha most high!

RAMFIS, PRIESTS
We invoke thee!

Sacred Dance of the Priestesses

Radamès enters; he is unarmed. As he approaches the altar, the Priestesses perform the sacred dance. A silver veil is held over Radamès' head.

PRIESTESSES
Phtha most high!

RAMFIS, PRIESTS
We invoke thee!

RAMFIS
to Radamès
Mortal, beloved of the gods, to you is entrusted

the fate of Egypt. Let the sacred sword,
in heaven tempered, in your hand
become for the enemy terror, lightning and death.

PRIESTS
Le the sacred sword
in heaven tempered, etc.

RAMFIS
... lightning and death,
addressing the god
O god, guardian and avenger
of this sacred land,
spread out thy hand
over the soil of Egypt.

RADAMÈS
O god, who dost rule and arbitrate
in every human war,
do thou protect, do thou defend
the sacred soil of Egypt.

PRIESTS
O god, guardian and avenger
of this sacred land, etc.

RAMFIS
O god, guardian and arbiter
of this sacred land, etc.

RADAMÈS
... do thou protect, do thou defend
the sacred soil of Egypt.

While Radamès is being invested with the sacred arms, the priests and priestesses resume the sacred hymn and the mystic dance.

PRIESTESSES
O mighty Phtha,
creator of the world, ah!
O mighty Phtha,
life-giving spirit,
spirit of fertility,
Phtha most high!

RADAMÈS

O mighty Phtha,
spirit of fertility,
thou who from nothing
didst fashion the world,
we invoke thee,
we invoke thee,
O mighty Phtha!

RAMFIS

O mighty Phtha,
spirit of fertility,
thou who from nothing
didst fashion the world,
thou who from nothing didst fashion
the earth, the sea and the sky,
we invoke thee,
we invoke thee,
O mighty Phtha!

PRIESTS

O mighty Phtha,
spirit of fertility,
thou who from nothing didst fashion
the earth, the sea and the sky,
we invoke thee,
we invoke thee,
O mighty Phtha!

ACT TWO

SCENE 1

A room in Amneris's apartment

Slaves are attiring Amneris for the triumphal feast.

SLAVES

Who is it, amidst hymns and praises,
soars to glory
like a mighty god,
with brilliance equal to the sun's?

Come: let flowers intertwined with
laurel shower upon your brow;

let hymns of glory sound forth
with songs of love.

AMNERIS

(Ah, come, my love, transport me,
fill my heart with happiness!)

SLAVES

Where now are the barbarous
hordes of the invader?
Like a mist they vanished
at the warrior's breath.

Come, oh conqueror,
receive the reward for glory;
victory has already smiled on you,
love will smile upon you now.

AMNERIS

(Ah, Come, my love, restore me to life
with a tender word!)

Dance of the Young Moorish Slaves

SLAVES

Come: let flowers intertwined with
laurel shower upon your brow;
let hymns of glory sound forth
with songs of love.

AMNERIS

(Ah, come, my love, transport me!
fill my heart with happiness!)
Silence! Aida comes toward us...
daughter of the vanquished; I respect her
sorrow.

*She motions the slaves to leave. Aida enters
carrying Amneris's crown.*

Seeing her again, hideous
doubt awakes in me...
Let the fatal secret be revealed at last.

to Aida, with feigned tenderness

Fortune was cruel to your people,
poor Aida! The grief
that weighs down your heart I share with

you.
I am your friend...
You shall have everything of me...
You shall live happily!

AIDA
Can I be happy
far from my native land, here where I am
ignorant of the fate of father and brothers?

AMNERIS
How I pity you! Yet earthly ills
have a limit... Time will heal
your heart's deep grief,
and, more than time, a mighty god... love.

AIDA
(Love, love! joy, torment,
sweet rapture, cruel anguish!
In thy pangs I find life;
a smile from thee opens heaven to me!)

AMNERIS
observing Aida intently
(Ah, that pallor... and agitation
reveal the hidden fever of love.
I almost fear to question her.
I share her pangs of terror.)
to Aida
Well, what new fears
assail you now, gentle Aida?
Reveal your secrets to me,
trust in my affection.
Among the warriors who fought
for the downfall of your country,
one, perhaps has aroused
sweet anguish in your heart?

AIDA
What are you saying?

AMNERIS
Fate has not been
cruel to all,
even though on the field of battle
the intrepid leader fell mortally wounded...

AIDA
Oh, what have you said! Alas!

AMNERIS
Yes... Radamès by your people
has been slain...

AIDA
Oh misery!

AMNERIS
And you can weep?

AIDA
I shall weep forever!

AMNERIS
The gods have avenged you.

AIDA
The gods were always
against me.

AMNERIS
Tremble! I have read it in your heart...
you love him.

AIDA
I!

AMNERIS
Do not lie!
One more word and I shall know
the truth. Look me straight in the face...
I deceived you... Radamès lives!

AIDA
Lives!
Ah, thanks be to you, oh gods!

AMNERIS
And you still hope to lie?
Yes, you love him! But I also love him,
do you understand? I, daughter of the
Pharaohs,
am your rival.

AIDA
My rival!
Then so be it... For
I, too, am ...

checking herself

Oh, what have I said? Mercy! Pardon! Ah!

May you have pity on my sorrow!
It is true, I love him passionately.
You are happy, you are powerful,
I live solely for this love!

AMNERIS

Tremble, vile slave! Your heart is breaking;
this love can mean your death.
I am arbiter of your fate,
a fury of hate and vengeance rages in my
heart.

AIDA

You are happy, you are powerful.
I live solely for this love!
May you have pity on my sorrow!

AMNERIS

Tremble, vile slave! Your heart is breaking.
I am arbiter of your fate,
a fury of hate and vengeance rages in my
heart.

CHORUS

heard in the distance

Arise! To the sacred banks of the Nile
let a barrier be formed by our breasts;
let there resound but a single cry:
war and death to the invader!

AMNERIS

At the pageant which is being prepared,
with me, oh slave, you shall be present;
you prostrate in the dust,
I on the throne beside the King.

AIDA

Oh, mercy! What more is left to me?
My life is a desert;
live and reign, your fury
I shall soon placate.
This love which angers you
I will extinguish in the tomb.

AMNERIS

Come, follow me; you will learn
if you can fight against me!

AIDA

Oh, mercy!
This love
I will extinguish in the tomb!
Pity! Pity!

CHORUS

War and death to the invader!

AMNERIS

... and you will learn
if you can fight against me.

CHORUS

War and death to the invader!

Exit Amneris.

AIDA

Gods, have pity on my agony;
hope have I none in my distress.
Gods, have pity on my suffering.
Gods, have pity.

SCENE 2

A gate of the city of Thebes.

*In the foreground, a group of palm trees.
Right, the Temple of Ammon; left, a throne
surmounted by a purple canopy. In the
background, a triumphal arch. The scene is
crowded with people.*

*The King enters, followed by ministers,
priests, captains, slaves carrying fans,
standard-bearers and others. Amneris then
enters, accompanied by Aida and slave girls.
The King takes his Place on the throne;
Amneris takes her place at his left.*

PEOPLE

Glory to Egypt, and to Isis
who protects its sacred soil!
To the King who rules the Delta,
festive hymns let us raise!

Glory! Glory! Glory!
Glory to the King!

WOMEN

Let lotus be entwined with laurel
upon the conquerors' brows!
Let a sweet shower of flowers
veil the arms of war.
Let us dance. Egyptian maidens,
the mystic dances,
as the stars dance
in the sky around the sun!

RAMFIS, PRIESTS

To the supreme arbiters
of victory raise your eyes;
give thanks unto the gods
on this happy day.

PEOPLE

... as the stars dance
in the sky around the sun!
Festive hymns let us raise to the King,
raise to the King.

RAMFIS, PRIESTS

Render thanks unto the gods
this happy day.

March

*The troops, preceded by trumpeters, march
past the King. They are followed by war
chariots, banners, sacred vessels and
images of the gods.*

Ballet

*Dancing girls appear, carrying the spoils of
victory.*

PEOPLE

Come, avenging warrior,
come and rejoice with us;
in the heroes' path
laurels and flowers let us cast!
Glory to the warrior, glory!
Glory to Egypt, glory!

RAMFIS, PRIESTS

To the supreme arbiters
raise your eyes;
render thanks unto the gods
on this happy day.

*Radamès enters under a canopy carried by
twelve officers.*

KING

*who descends from the throne to embrace
Radamès*
Saviour of our country, I salute you.
Come, my daughter with her own hand will
present
to you the triumphal laurel.
*Radamès bows before Amneris, who hands
him the laurel crown.*
Now ask of me
whatever you desire most. Nothing shall be
denied you
on such a day; I swear it
by my crown and by the sacred gods.

RADAMÈS

First permit the prisoners to be
brought before you.

*Ethiopian prisoners are brought in by the
guards. Amonasro comes last, dressed as an
officer.*

RAMFIS, PRIESTS

Thanks be to the gods,
on this happy day.

AIDA

What do I see?... Is it he?... My father!

ALL

Her father!

AMNERIS

In our power!

AIDA

embracing her father
You! A prisoner!

AMONASRO
softly to Aida
 Do not betray me!

KING
to Amonasro
 Come forward...
 So you are...?

AMONASRO
 Her father. I too have fought...
 we were conquered; I sought death in vain.
 This uniform I wear may tell you
 I defended my country and my King;
 fate was against our arms,
 the courage of the valiant was in vain.

At my feet, stretched in the dust,
 lay the King, wounded many times;
 if love of country be a crime
 all of us are guilty, we are ready to die!

turning to the King, in a supplicating voice

But you, oh King, you, oh mighty lord,
 be merciful to these men.
 Today we are struck down by fate,
 but tomorrow fate may strike at you.

AIDA
 But you, oh King, you, oh mighty lord,
 be merciful to these men, etc.

SLAVES, PRISONERS
 Yes, by the gods we are struck down;
 your pity, your mercy we implore.
 Oh, may you never have to suffer
 what we must suffer today!

AMONASRO
 Ah! Tomorrow fate may strike at you.

RAMFIS, PRIESTS
 Crush, oh King, this savage rabble,
 close your heart to their perfidious voices;
 by the gods they were condemned to death,
 now let the will of the gods be done!

AIDA, SLAVES, PRISONERS
 Mercy!

AIDA
 But you, oh King, oh mighty lord,
 to these men your mercy show.

AMNERIS
 (What glances he now casts upon her!
 What a flame blazes in their eyes!)

KING
 Since fate smiles propitiously upon us,
 to these men let us show mercy.

SLAVES, PRISONERS
 Your pity, your mercy, we implore.
 Ah, mercy, mercy!

PEOPLE
 Oh priests, now calm your anger;
 listen to their humble prayer.

RAMFIS, PRIESTS
 To death! To death! To death!
 Oh King, crush this rabble.

AMONASRO
 Today we are struck down by fate,
 but tomorrow fate may strike at you.

RADAMÈS
watching Aida
 The sorrow which speaks in that face
 makes her more lovely in my sight;
 every beloved tear she sheds
 reawakens love in my breast.)

AMNERIS
 (What glances he now casts upon her!
 What a flame blazes in their eyes!
 And I alone, derided, rejected?
 Vengeance cries out within my heart.)

AMONASRO
 Your pity, your mercy we implore, etc.

KING
 Since fate smiles propitiously upon us,

to these men let us show mercy;
mercy is pleasing to the gods
and strengthens the power of the princes.

AIDA

Your pity I implore...
Today we are struck down,
but tomorrow fate may strike at you.

SLAVES, PRISONERS

Mercy, mercy, ah mercy!
Your mercy we implore.
Your pity, your mercy we implore.

PEOPLE

Oh priests, now calm your anger;
listen to the humble prayers of the
vanquished.
Mercy!

RAMFIS, PRIESTS

Let the will of the gods be accomplished!
Crush, oh King, this savage rabble;
by the gods they were condemned to death,
let the will of the gods be done!

AIDA

But you, oh King, oh mighty lord, etc.

RADAMÈS

(The sorrow makes her more lovely, *etc.*)

AMONASRO

But you, oh King, oh mighty lord, *etc.*

KING

Mercy is pleasing to the gods, *etc.*

SLAVES, PRISONERS

Yes, by the gods we are struck down, *etc.*

RAMFIS, PRIESTS

Crush, oh King, this savage rabble, *etc.*

PEOPLE

And you, oh King, so powerful, so strong,
open your heart and let mercy in.

AMNERIS

(And I alone, derided, rejected, *etc.*)

RADAMÈS

Oh King, by the holy gods,
by the splendor of your crown,
you swore to grant my wish.

KING

I swore.

RADAMÈS

Well then, for the Ethiopian prisoners
I ask life and liberty of you.

AMNERIS

(For all!)

PRIESTS

Death to our country's enemies!

PEOPLE

Compassion
for these wretched ones!

RAMFIS

Hear me, oh King. You too,
young hero, wise counsel hear:
They are enemies, and bold they are;
they harbour vengeance in their hearts;
emboldened by pardon
they will hasten to take up arms once more!

RADAMÈS

With Amonasro, their warrior king, dead,
no hope is left to the conquered.

RAMFIS

At least,
as pledge of security and peace,
let Aida and her father stay among us.

KING

To your counsel I yield.
How I will give you a better pledge
of security and peace. Radamès, to you our
country
owes everything. May the hand of Amneris

be your reward. One day over Egypt
with her you shall reign.

AMNERIS

(Now, let the slave come, let her
come and take my love from me... if she
dare!)

KING, PEOPLE

Glory to Egypt, and to Isis
who defends that sacred land,
let lotus be entwined with laurel
upon the conqueror's brow!

SLAVES, PRISONERS

Glory to the merciful Egyptian
who has loosed our chains,
who returns us
to our free, native fields!

RAMFIS, PRIESTS

Let us raise hymns to Isis,
who defends our sacred soil!
Let us pray that the Fates may ever
smile propitiously on our country.

AIDA

(What hope now is left to me?
For him, glory, the throne,
for me, oblivion... the tears
of a hopeless love.)

RADAMÈS

(The wrath of hostile Fate
descends upon my head.
Ah no! The throne of Egypt
is not worth the heart of Aida.)

AMNERIS

(With this unexpected joy
I am intoxicated;
all in one day
my heart's dreams are fulfilled.)

RAMFIS

Let us pray that the Fates may always
smile propitiously on our land.

KING, PEOPLE

Glory... to Isis!

AMONASRO

to Aida

Take heart: await events
more happy for your country;
the dawn of vengeance
is already near for us.

RADAMÈS

(What an unexpected blow
descends upon my head! Ah!
Ah no, the throne of Egypt
is not worth Aida's heart.
... the soil of Egypt
is not worth Aida's heart.
... the kingship of Egypt
is not worth Aida's heart.)

AMNERIS

(All in one day
my heart's joy is fulfilled.
Ah, with this unexpected happiness
I am intoxicated.)

AMONASRO

Take heart: await events
more happy for your country; *etc.*

KING, PEOPLE

Glory to Egypt, and to Isis, *etc.*

RAMFIS, PRIESTS

Let us raise hymns to Isis, *etc.*

AIDA

(For me, oblivion and tears.
Ah! what hope now is left to me?
For him, glory, the throne,
for me, oblivion, the tears
of a hopeless love.)

SLAVES, PRISONERS

Glory to the merciful Egyptian, *etc.*

ACT THREE

On the Banks of the Nile

Granite rocks, with palm trees growing among them. On the summit of the rocks is the Temple of Isis, half hidden by the fronds. It is a starlit night; the moon is shining.

PRIESTESSES, PRIESTS

from within the temple

O thou who art of Osiris
both mother and bride immortal,
goddess who awakest
chaste emotions in the human heart,
grant us thy merciful aid,
O mother of great love.

A boat draws up at the riverbank; Amneris and Ramfis alight, together with a group of heavily veiled women and guards.

RAMFIS

to Amneris

Come to the Temple of Isis;
on the eve of your wedding invoke
the favour of the goddess. Isis reads
in the hearts of mortals; every human secret
is known to her.

AMNERIS

Yes; I will pray that Radamès may give me
his whole heart, as mine is dedicated to him
alone forever.

RAMFIS

Let us go.

You will pray till the break of day; I shall be
with you.

All enter the temple.

PRIESTESSES, PRIESTS

Grant us thy merciful aid,
O mother of great love.

AIDA

approaching cautiously
Radamès is coming here!...

What can he want to say to me?

I tremble... Ah! If you should come,
oh cruel one, to bid me a last farewell,
the dark swirling waters of the Nile
shall be my grave... and bring me peace,
perhaps, and oblivion.

Oh my homeland, I shall never see you
again!

Oh blue skies, oh soft native breezes,
where the light of my youth shone in
tranquility;
oh green hills, perfumed shores,
oh my homeland, I shall never see you
again!

Oh cool valleys, oh blessed, tranquil refuge
which once was promised me by love;
now that the dream of love has faded,
oh my homeland, I shall never see you
again!

Amonasro enters.

Heavens! My father!

AMONASRO

A grave cause
brings me to you, Aida. Nothing escapes my
gaze.

You pine with love for Radamès...
he loves you... you are waiting for him here.
The daughter of the Pharaohs is your rival...
a race accursed, abhorred, fatal to us!

AIDA

And I am in her power!
I, Amonasro's daughter!

AMONASRO

In her power! No!... If you wish it,
you shall conquer your powerful rival,
and country, throne and love, you shall have
them all.

You shall see once more the perfumed
forests,
the cool valleys and our golden temples.

AIDA

Once more I shall see the perfumed forests,
the cool valleys and our golden temples.

AMONASRO

Happy wife to him you love so much,
untold contentment there you will be able to
enjoy.

AIDA

One single day of such sweet enchantment,
one hour, one hour of such a joy and then to
die!

AMONASRO

But remember the Egyptian has cruelly
profaned
our homes, our temples and our altars,
bound the ravished virgins in chains;
murdered mothers, old men, children.

AIDA

Ah! well do I remember those unhappy
days!
I remember the grief in my heart
Oh gods, let the longed-for dawn
of happy days return for us.

AMONASRO

Remember...
Let it not be delayed. Our people are ready
to rise in arms; all is now prepared.
Victory will be ours... It only remains
for me to know what route the enemy will
follow.

AIDA

Who could ever discover it? Who?

AMONASRO

You yourself!

AIDA

I?

AMONASRO

I know you await Radamès here...
He loves you ...

He commands the Egyptians...

You understand? ...

AIDA

Oh horror!

What are you asking? No! No! Never!

AMONASRO

fiercely

Then come, arise,
Egyptian cohorts;
with fire destroy
our cities.
Spread terror,
carnage and death.
There is no obstacle
now to your fury.

AIDA

Ah! Father! Father!...

AMONASRO

You call yourself
my daughter!

AIDA

Pity! Pity!

AMONASRO

Rivers of blood engulf
the cities of the conquered.
Do you see? From the black whirlpools
the dead arise
and point at you, crying:
Through you your homeland perishes!

AIDA

Pity! Pity! Father, have pity!

AMONASRO

A dreadful phantom from among
the shades appears before us.
Tremble! Its fleshless arms...

AIDA

Ah!

AMONASRO

... it has raised above your head...

AIDA
Father!

AMONASRO
... it is your mother...

AIDA
Ah!

AMONASRO
... see her...

AIDA
No!

AMONASRO
... she is cursing you...

AIDA
terrified
Ah no!
Father, have pity! Pity!

AMONASRO
repulsing her
You are not my daughter!
You are a slave of the Pharaohs!

AIDA
Ah! Have mercy, have mercy!
Father, I am not their slave...
Do not curse me... do not revile me:
you will still be able to call me daughter,
I will be worthy of my native land.

AMONASRO
Remember that a people, conquered and
tormented,
through you alone can rise again

AIDA
Oh my country, what you cost me!

AMONASRO
Courage! He is coming from there I shall
hear everything.

He conceals himself among the palm trees.

RADAMÈS
entering
Once more I see you, my sweet Aida...

AIDA
Stop, go away... what can you hope for
still?

RADAMÈS
Love leads me to you.

AIDA
The rites of another love await you.
Husband of Amneris...

RADAMÈS
What are you saying?
You alone, Aida, can I love.
The gods hear me; you shall be mine.

AIDA
Do not stain yourself with a lie!
Brave, I loved you, I would not love you a
liar.

RADAMÈS
Do you doubt my love, Aida?

AIDA
And how
do you hope to escape the charms of
Amneris,
the will of the King, the wishes of your
people,
and the wrath of the priests?

RADAMÈS
Hear me, Aida.

To the fierce call of new war
the land of Ethiopia has awakened once
more;
your people already invade our land.
I shall command the Egyptian armies.
Admire the noise and plaudits of victory.
I shall prostrate myself before the King,
and reveal my heart to him.
You shall be my crowning glory,
we shall live blessed by eternal love.

AIDA

And do you not fear Amneris's
vengeful fury? Her vengeance,
like some dreadful thunderbolt,
will fall on me, my father, and on us all.

RADAMÈS

I will defend you.

AIDA

In vain. You will be powerless!
But... if you love me... there is yet
one other way of escape for us...

RADAMÈS

What is that?

AIDA

Flight...

RADAMÈS

Flight!

AIDA

Let us flee from the harsh passions
of these barren plains;
a new country
will welcome our love.
There, in virgin forests,
perfumed with flowers,
in blissful ecstasy
we shall forget the world.

RADAMÈS

To a strange country
with you must I fly!
Abandon my native land,
and the altars of our gods!
How could we forget the land
where I gathered the first laurels
of glory, and the sky
that first witnessed our love?

AIDA

There, in virgin forests, *etc.*

RADAMÈS

How could we forget the sky
that first witnessed our love?

AIDA

Beneath my sky love will
be granted us more freely;
there in the same temple
we will have the same gods,
Let us flee! Let us flee...

RADAMÈS

Abandon my native land,
the altars of our gods!
How could we forget
the sky that witnessed our love?

RADAMÈS

hesitating
Aida!

AIDA

You do not love me... Go!

RADAMÈS

Not love you!

AIDA

Go!

RADAMÈS

Never did mortal, no, nor god
burn with so great a love as mine.

AIDA

Go... go... Amneris awaits you
at the altar

RADAMÈS

No! Never!

AIDA

Never, you said?
Then let the axe fall
on me and on my father both...

RADAMÈS

Ah no! Let us flee!
Yes: let us flee from these walls,
to the desert together let us flee;
here, naught but ill fortune reigns,
there a paradise of love awaits us.
The limitless desert

shall be our bridal couch,
above us the stars will shine
with a clearer light.

AIDA

In the happy country
of my father's heaven awaits us;
there the breeze is sweetly perfumed,
there the soil is fragrant with flowers.
Cool valleys and green meadows
will be our bridal couch,
above us the stars will shine
with a clearer light.

AIDA AND RADAMÈS

Come with me, together let us flee
from this land of sorrow.
Come with me, I love you, I love you!
Love shall be our guide.

They quickly leave.

AIDA

stopping abruptly

But tell me: by what road
shall we avoid the legions
of the army?

RADAMÈS

The route chosen by our armies
for their march upon the enemy
will be deserted until tomorrow.

AIDA

What route is that?

RADAMÈS

The Napata
gorges...

Amonasro comes forward.

AMONASRO

The Napata gorges!
There my men shall be.

RADAMÈS

Oh! Who is listening to us?

AMONASRO

Aida's father and the King of Ethiopia.

RADAMÈS

You!... Amonasro!... You!... the King?...
Gods, what did I say?
No!... it is not true!... no! ...
It is a dream... a delirium...

AIDA

Ah no! Calm yourself, listen to me...

AMONASRO

Your love for Aida

AIDA

... trust in my love.

AMONASRO

... will raise you to a throne.

RADAMÈS

I am dishonored!
For you I have betrayed my country!

AIDA

Calm yourself!

AMONASRO

No: you are not guilty,
it was the will of fate.

RADAMÈS

I am dishonored!

AIDA

Ah no!

AMONASRO

No!

RADAMÈS

For you I have betrayed my country!

AMONASRO

No: you are not guilty.

AIDA

Calm yourself..

AMONASRO

Come: beyond the Nile await
warriors devoted to us,
there your heart's desire
love will crown.
dragging Radamès with him
Come, come, come!

*Amneris, Ramfis, the priests and guards
come out of the temple.*

AMNERIS

Traitor!

AIDA

My rival!

AMONASRO

threatening Amneris with a dagger
You come to ruin my plans!
Die!...

RADAMÈS

stepping between them
Stop, madman!...

AMONASRO

Oh fury!

RAMFIS

Ho there, guards!

RADAMÈS

to Aida and Amonasro
Quickly! Flee!

AMONASRO

dragging Aida away
Come, my daughter!

RAMFIS

to the guards
Follow them!

RADAMÈS

to Ramfis
Priest, I am your prisoner.

ACT FOUR

SCENE 1

A Hall in the King's Palace

*Left, a great door leading to the
subterranean judgment chamber, right, a
passage leading to Radamès's cell.*

AMNERIS

My hated rival has escaped me...
Radamès awaits the priest's sentence
as a traitor. ? He is no traitor...
Yet he revealed the great secret
of the war... he wanted to flee...
to flee with her... Traitors, all of them!
Death to them! Death!...
Oh, whatever am I saying?
I love him, I love him still... This love
which is destroying my life is hopeless,
insane
Oh, if he could love me!
I would save him. But how?
I'll try! Guards: let Radamès come hither.

Radamès is led in by the guards.

Already the priests, the arbiters
of your fate, are assembling;
but from this horrible charge
you may yet exculpate yourself;
justify yourself, and I will
plead for you before the throne,
and be a messenger
bringing pardon and life to you.

RADAMÈS

Words of excuse the judges
will never hear from me;
in the sight of the gods and of mankind
I feel neither despicable nor guilty.
My unguarded lips uttered
the fatal secret, it is true,
but my intention
and my honor remain unsullied.

AMNERIS

Then clear yourself and save yourself.

RADAMÈS
No.

AMNERIS
You will die.

RADAMÈS
I loathe life;
the fountain of all joy
has run dry;
vanished is every hope;
I wish only to die.

AMNERIS
To die! Oh, you must live!
Yes, for my love you shall live;
for you the terrible anguish
of death have I endured already;
I loved you... I suffered so much...
at night I have lain awake in tears...
and country, throne and life,
all would I give for you.

RADAMÈS
For her I, too, betrayed
my country and my honor...

AMNERIS
No more of her!

RADAMÈS
Dishonor
awaits me and you wish me to live?
You have filled me with wretchedness,
Aida you have taken from me,
perhaps even slain her,
and as a gift you offer me life?

AMNERIS
I, author of her death!
No! Aida lives!

RADAMÈS
She lives!

AMNERIS
In the hopeless exhaustion
of the fleeing hordes
only her father fell.

RADAMÈS
And she?

AMNERIS
She vanished and there has been no more
news of her

RADAMÈS
May the gods lead her safely
to her country's borders,
and never let her know the fate
of him who is about to die for her!

AMNERIS
But, if I save you,
swear to see her no more.

RADAMÈS
I cannot!

AMNERIS
Renounce her
forever and you shall live!

RADAMÈS
I cannot!

AMNERIS
Yet once more:
renounce her.

RADAMÈS
It is useless.

AMNERIS
Do you wish to die, then, madman?

RADAMÈS
I am prepared to die now!

AMNERIS
Who will save you, wretched man,
from the fate that awaits you?
You have changed a matchless
love to hate.
Now my tears will be
avenged by heaven.

RADAMÈS

Death is a supreme joy
If for her I may die:
in suffering the extreme penalty
my heart will know joy unsurpassed:
I fear human wrath no more.
I fear only your pity.

AMNERIS

Ah, who will save you?
Now my tears will be avenged
by heaven.

Radamès is led away by the guards. Amneris falls in desolation into a chair.

AMNERIS

Alas!... I shall surely die.
Oh, who will save him?
And into their power
I myself delivered him! Now, I curse thee,
vile jealousy, that did point
the way to his death and my heart's eternal
grief.

She turns and sees the priests cross the hall and enter the subterranean judgment chamber.

Here are the fatal
and inexorable ministers of death!
Oh, let me not see those white phantoms!
covering her face with her hands
And into their power
I myself delivered him!

RAMFIS, PRIESTS

from the subterranean judgment chamber
Heavenly spirit descend upon us!
Strengthen us in the beams of the light
eternal;
through our lips make known thy justice.

AMNERIS

Gods, have pity on my anguished heart.
He is innocent, save him, oh gods!
Great and desperate is my grief!

Radamès is taken by his guards to the subterranean judgment chamber. Amneris, seeing him, cries out.

RAMFIS, PRIESTS

Heavenly spirit, descend upon us!

AMNERIS

Oh, who will save him?
I shall surely die! Ah me!

RAMFIS

Radamès! Radamès! Radamès! You did
reveal
your country's secrets to the enemy.
Justify yourself!

PRIESTS

Justify yourself!

RAMFIS

He is silent.

RAMFIS, PRIESTS

Traitor!

AMNERIS

Oh mercy! He is innocent, gods, have pity!

RAMFIS

Radamès! Radamès! Radamès! You did
desert
your camp the day preceding the battle.
Justify yourself!

PRIESTS

Justify yourself!

RAMFIS

He is silent.

RAMFIS, PRIESTS

Traitor!

AMNERIS

Ah pity! Oh, save him, gods, have pity!

RAMFIS

Radamès! Radamès! Radamès! You did

violate
your trust and betray your country, king and
honor.
Justify yourself!

PRIESTS
Justify yourself!

RAMFIS
He is silent.

RAMFIS, PRIESTS
Traitor!

AMNERIS
Ah pity! Oh, save him, oh gods, have pity!

RAMFIS, PRIESTS
Radamès, your fate is decided;
you shall die a criminal's death;
beneath the altar of the angry god
you will find a living tomb.

AMNERIS
Alive in the tomb... Oh, the criminals!
They are never sated with blood...
and they call themselves ministers of
heaven!

RAMFIS, PRIESTS
Traitor! Traitor! Traitor!

AMNERIS
assailing the priests as they come up
Oh priests, you have committed a crime!
Wicked tigers, thirsting for blood,
you have outraged both heaven and earth...
you have punished where there is no guilt

RAMFIS
He is a traitor!

PRIESTS
He is a traitor!

RAMFIS, PRIESTS
He shall die!

AMNERIS
to Ramfis
Oh priest, you know this man whom
now you slay was once loved by me.
Along with his blood, the curses of a
broken heart will fall upon your head!

RAMFIS
He is a traitor!

PRIESTS
He is a traitor!

RAMFIS, PRIESTS
He shall die!

AMNERIS
You have outraged both earth and heaven,
you have punished where there is no guilt.
Ah no, he is no traitor. Have mercy!

RAMFIS, PRIESTS
He shall die!
He is a traitor! He shall die!
They go out slowly.
Traitor! Traitor! Traitor!

AMNERIS
Impious body! A curse upon you!
Vengeance will descend from heaven!
Curses on you!

SCENE 2

*The Interior of the Temple of Vulcan
and the Tomb of Radamès.*

*The scene is divided on two levels. Above, the
interior of the temple, resplendent with gold
and light; beneath, the crypt with long rows
of arches disappearing into the darkness.
Colossal statues of Osiris, with hands
crossed, support the pillars of the vault.*

*Radamès is on the stairs by which he has
descended into the crypt. Above, two priests
are placing in position the stone which seals
the entrance.*

RADAMÈS

The fatal stone has closed upon me...
Here is my tomb. The light of day
never again shall I see... Never again shall I
see Aida.

Aida, where are you? May you at least
live happily and never know
my dreadful fate! What cry is that?... A
phantom...

A vision... No! It is a human form.
Heavens! Aida!

AIDA

It is I.

RADAMÈS

You in this tomb!

AIDA

My heart forewarned me of your
condemnation;
into this tomb which was being opened for
you

I made my way by stealth...
and here, far from every human eye,
I wished to die in your arms.

RADAMÈS

Die! So pure and lovely!
To die for love of me...
in the flower of your youth
to fly from life!
Heaven created you for love,
and I am killing you through loving you!
No, you shall not die!
I have loved you too much!
You are too beautiful!

AIDA

in a delirium

Do you see?... Death's radiant angel
hastens toward us,
and carries us to eternal joy
upon his golden wings.
Already I see heaven opening,
there all torment ceases,
there begins the ecstasy
of an immortal love.

PRIESTESSES

in the temple above
O mighty Phtha,
spirit that animates the world...

PRIESTS

in the temple above
Ah!

AIDA

A sad chant!

RADAMÈS

The priests'
festival.

AIDA

Our hymn of death,

RADAMÈS

*trying to move the stone which seals the
crypt*
My strong arms cannot move you, oh fatal
stone!

PRIESTS, PRIESTESSES

... ah, we invoke thee.

AIDA

In vain!... All is finished
on earth for us.

RADAMÈS

It is true! It is true!

He draws nearer to Aida and supports her.

AIDA AND RADAMÈS

Oh earth, farewell; farewell, vale of tears...
dream of joy which in sorrow faded.
For us heaven opens and our wandering
souls
fly to the light of eternal day.

PRIESTS, PRIESTESSES

Mighty Phtha, we invoke thee!

AIDA AND RADAMÈS
 Ah! heaven is opening for us!
 Oh earth, farewell; farewell, vale of tears...

PRIESTS, PRIESTESSES
 Mighty Phtha!

Curtain

AMNERIS
*appears dressed in mourning and throws
 herself down upon the stone which seals the
 crypt*
 Peace I beg...

AIDA AND RADAMÈS
 ... dream of joy which in sorrow fades.

AMNERIS
 ... beloved corpse...

AIDA AND RADAMÈS
 For us heaven opens ...

AMNERIS
 ... may Isis, placated...

AIDA AND RADAMÈS
 ... heaven opens and our wandering souls...

AMNERIS
 Isis, placated, open heaven to you!

AIDA AND RADAMÈS
 ... fly to the light of eternal day

PRIESTS, PRIESTESSES
 We invoke thee...

AIDA AND RADAMÈS
 ... heaven...

PRIESTS, PRIESTESSES
 ... mighty Phtha!

AIDA AND RADAMÈS
 ... heaven opens for us!

Aida sinks into Radamès' arms and dies.

AMNERIS
 Peace I beg,
 ... peace, peace ... peace!