**Giove in Argo**

**Pastoral melodrama**

Commissioned by His Royal Majesty Augusto II, King of Poland and Elector of Saxony, to be represented with music in the Ridotto Hall in Dresden, autumn 1717

**Plot**

Among the many fables of Jupiter, the most famous is the one of Iside, Daughter of Inaco, king of Arcadia, and the one of Calisto, Daughter of Licaone, tyrant of Arcadia. So based on these two fables, the poet has made a story with a slight but legitimate anachronism:

Inaco, king of Argo, has been murdered by Licaone the Tyrant, in order for the later to usurp the throne. Jupiter is in love with Iside, the daughter of Inaco, who is already promised to Osiris, king of Egypt. Jupiter, disguised as a shepherd, will try to make her fall in love in him, and in the end he earns her favor by promising her to avenge his father and kill Licaone.

In the meantime Calisto, daughter of Licaone is hiding in the forest from the riots of Arcadia against Licaone, and she will join the nymphs of Diana as a follower. Jupiter then sees her and falls in love with her, and tries to earn her affection, and forgetting all about Iside. Osiris, disguised as shepherd too, arrives in Argo to find Licaon, avenge Inaco’s murder and marry Iside.

So hate, love, jealousy and deception are the ingredients of this small Pastoral.

Poetry by Antonio Maria Abbate Luchini. Music by the famous Antonio Lotti from Venice

**CHARACTERS**

Arete: Shepherd, later acknowledged as Jupiter

Iside: Daughter of Inaco, promised to be Osiris’s wife

Erasto: Shepherd, later acknowledged as Osiris, king of Egypt

Calisto: Daughter of Licaone

Diana: Godess of the forest

Licaone: Tyrant from Arcadia, disguised as a shepherd

Vespetta: Servant of Iside

Milo: Servant of Licaone

Cleone: Shepherd (NOT IN THE OPERA)

**First Act**

**Scene I**

*Forest-like place, with huts, streams, and hill vegetation.*

*[Recitativo]*

*Licaone, then Milo*

LICAON: Cowardly Gods, throw away your most fatal rigor, for my intrepid soul doesn’t even know how to be afraid of you.

If I am forced to walk in forest wearing these filthy clothes, as an anonymous vagabond, I shall punish my subjects for the rebellious riots due to the death of my enemy from Argo. And then I will climb to the throne even more fiercely, as I am Licaon, the true king of Arcadia.

MILO: Heavens, help, rescue me from the sharp teeth of a hungry beast, alas my lord have mercy, defend your most faithful servant.

LICAON: You are in my presence now, fear not.

MILO: Ah, my lord, I am not afraid, but I am shaking

LICAON: Listen: Go over those rustic houses, and find out if Calisto, my daughter, is over there, fleeing.

MILO: I go, my lord, for my faith for you never gets tired of obeying you, even when sometimes I am not brave enough to do so. (*Milo leaves)*

*Licaone alone*

LICAON: In the meantime, I will remain hidden in this forest until the time for my plan to come back victorious to the throne is ripe.

*[Aria Licaon]*

A Tempest doesn’t even bother a ship

When a wise man is at the helm,

All the offenses that try to sink it

Only but upset his mind. (Da capo)

**Scene II**

*[Recitativo]*

*Iside, Vespetta*

VESPETTA: Destiny is cruel and barbarous toward you

But death is the worst of all fates

ISIDE: These vile senses [T.N: ideas?] proper of the commoners

cannot reach a great [virtuous] soul.

Alas I am left alone

In the arms of my own sorrows.

VESPETTA: With your continuous laments

You nourish your own pain,

And with pain you grow the misery of your heart.

ISIDE: Within the silence of this dark forest

I crave for the relive

Of nourishing my torments with lamentations

*[Aria Vespetta]*

If you let those gentle eyes

be melted by tears

There will be no person

That suffers for you [T.N: trembles for your love]

So carefully use them

To turn into ashes

All the hearts

That burn for your beauty (*Da Capo)*

**Scene III**

*Recitativo Iside alone*

ISIDE: Alas, in just an instant

without any warning

you can go from an immense joy to an extreme tragedy!

For after losing my father and my crown.

What else can I lose?

Maybe my life? But alas, I hate

my own life. Ah, it seems to me (*she sits on a rock)*

that my feet can’t hold me anymore. A dark veil is coming

to hide the light from my eyes.

Ill-fated Iside! If only I would be killed

by my own pain! But the cruel fate

even denies me the pleasure of dying.

[*Aria Iside]*

Come, come, sweet horror of the living,

Soft veil,

Delightful shadow of death.

Close the languishing lights

of my torments,

And don’t ever haste to open them again. (*Da capo)*

*(She falls sleep)*

**Scene IV**

*Recitativo Arete, Iside*

ARETE: Do I see Iside sweetly sleeping?

Yes, sleep, my beloved,

because a god is watching over you while he pains [*T.N: in between pain of love]*.

Alas, your face would never look like it does

if you would know that Jupiter himself

has come down from the heavens to become your lover.

*Aria Arete*

Love, spread the sweetest drops

of my treasures

in her resting.

Let no painful thought

disturb the calm beauty

of her heart (*Da capo)*

*(Iside wakes up abruptly)*

ISIDE: Oh, help me, I have been betrayed!

ARETE: My beloved, what fatal thought troubles you…

ISIDE: There were in my dreams

Shadows, Ghosts, Horrors

arming themselves, tormenting me.

ARETE: Ah, remove finally the scars of pain

from your face, and finally mercifully

prepare yourself to enjoy my love.

ISIDE: Abandon your intentions and know, Arete:

Nothing else will give me pleasure,

Than the screams of slaughter and vengeance

against the fierce Arcadian,

that has killed my father and stolen his crown.

ARETE: If you promise me your affection

you will have me at once against your tyrant enemy,

for he is hidden in this very forest.

ISIDE: If you shall do as I wish, then

Gratefully I will listen to your affection.

ARETE: I want your love before I give you my present,

and then I will repay your gift with my doing.

ISIDE: And doing so you can fool me, you ungrateful.

ARETE: How could I be unfaithful to you? Do you perhaps think

that I am a worthless shepherd? I have

a noble and generous soul.

ISIDE: Finally, Arete,

You have win my heart over. Yes, I am yours.

My poor heart, all my being

Is burning for you and for your promise.

ARETE: Yes, my dear. This embrace

Is witness of our faith.

ISIDE: Both my love and my anger are delighted.

*Aria Arete and Iside*

ISIDE: If you give me your right hand

ARETE: If you embrace me in your breast

TWO: My fate is depending on that.

ISIDE: I will show you my pain

ARETE: I already am burning with your flames

TWO: While I expect to deal the killing blows[T.N.Vibrating with death blows]

*(Da Capo)*

**Scene V**

*Recitativo Erasto then Arete*

ERASTO: Finally, I arrived here to the goal of my sighs,

that summoned me all the way from Egypt.

And my heart cannot withstand

the sweet tyranny of my great love.

ARETE: (*APART)* (I am here to break down the heart of my adversary)

ERASTO: Gentle Shepherd, you seem to be

The most noble of all who roam this forest,

tell me: Does perhaps Iside, the royal daughter of the king of Argo

hide in between all the nymphs of this lovely forest?

ARETE: (*APART)*(He is Osiris, king of Egypt and fiancé (T.N. Designated husband)

of my beloved Iside. I can recognize him in this beach, disguised as a shepherd.

ERASTO: Please, answer my question!

ARETE: She is here, enjoying these blooming hills,

and she has become the lover of a noble shepherd.

ERASTO: (Gods what do I hear!) So…

ARETE: Why do you seem disturbed? Ah I understand. This is the pain

that follows a fatal blow. But listen:

Appease yourself, for falsely hope to possess the love of the distinguished lady.

And since no harm has yet fallen upon you,

stop following your desperate undertaking.

*Aria Arete*

When the faithful turtledove

changes its nest

he changes forever

his love altogether.

So comfort yourself

by letting another love

to climb up into your heart. (*Da capo)*

**Scene VI**

*Recitative Erasto solo*

ERASTO: What do you mean? And I shall behold how the Royal Princess

is not true to her décor? Wretched me, what will be said

in the heavens after this betrayal?

I am forced, o God, to behold Iside in the arms of another lover,

and to change her joy into my pain.

*Aria Erasto*

To find together the beauty of a face,

And the faithfulness of a heart

Is a rare and precious gift

The more a heart fly happily

The more poison hides behind her promises [T.N. the more poison hides the river]

More fatal poison than the one of hell’s river. *(Da capo)*

**Scene VII**

*Recitativo Iside and Vespetta*

VESPETTA: Am I already seeing the fierce pain fading away from your beautiful face?

ISIDE: A dear promise, captive of my hate, is interrupting my pain.

Oh, shadow of my beloved father, I will finally have the pleasure to offer you

more than my tears, but also the blood of your unworthy murderer.

Ah revenge is the sweetest pleasure after the soul nourishing love.

*Aria Iside*

I will see his blood spilled

And my languishing heart

Will finally rejoice greatly.

I will enjoy watching him

Being punished for his cruelty

In endless suffering.

**END OF FIRST ACT**

**SECOND ACT**

**Scene I**

*Calisto and Diana*

DIANA: Are you Calisto, daughter of the fierce Arcadian?

CALISTO: Oh powerful goddess, I find myself running away from the conspiracy against my

father. I walk among shepherds through the forests, humbly, afraid and secretly.

DIANA: I don’t discard welcoming you as one of my nymph companions.

But first tell me: Has you heart ever been pierced by the arrows of love?

CALISTO: I am so far free from the sights and tears that other suffer. But tell me, if I were

to bow to the joys of love, would that be a crime?

DIANA: Those who have the fortune of following me must be like the fire, turned on

and off by others, but without feeling anything. So if you wish to be welcomed

among my virgins, you must swear to forever banish and flee the flames of Love.

CALISTO: Don’t doubt it. You will see how I care about Love no more. I swear it by your

hand.

DIANA: Be careful, for if your heart would ever break your promise, I will direct all my

fury against you.

*Aria Calisto*

You know that when the nightingale sings

is moaning for the freedom it has lost.

And shows you that the soul still trembles

when it regrets being the prey of love

**Scene II**

*Recitativo Calisto, afterwards Arete*

CALISTO: Oh fortunate fate of the shepherds,

who never get disturbed by a shadow of tragedy

ARETE: (*Apart)*(What rare beauty lays before my eyes, and suddenly pushes

my heart to move the affections?)

Fair lady [TN Bella], if you are seeking where to aim your arrows I offer you my noble heart, since it has already been hurt by your gaze.

**Scene III**

*Recitativo Iside, Calisto, Arete*

CALISTO: You are seeding your amorous words into the sand and spreading them into the wind.

ISIDE: *(To Arete)* Unfaithful, you make me witness your betrayals

ARETE: *(To Iside)* What do you fear? You well know that my affection is only true to who is constant.

ISIDE: Wretched man! Is this what you promised me?

ARETE: The heart is only capable of loving well if it withstands despise.

ISIDE: And is this love?

CALISTO: Gentle nymph, don’t worry, and don’t let your heart’s peace be clouded by jealousy’s shadow. I am not capable of love, since I am a follower of Diana.

ARETE: *(To Calisto)* Ah, gentle eyes, you will not be loathing towards me forever.

*(to Iside)* You don’t yet know how Arete blazes for you.

ISIDE: Leave, you traitor! For I will avenge myself, since I was too foolish to fall for your sights, (I shall not be ashamed, since my pain was too big) and let my heart be inflamed by my love for you.

But I was blind by the view of my revenge, by the wish of appease the memory of my father, Inaco, by spilling the wicked blood of Licaone.

CALISTO: What do I hear? You must know, Arete, that I am Calisto, and that the fierce Licaone is my father.

ARETE: I shall not be cruel to you, if you are merciful to me. Forgive me, my Iside. You are both as charming to my eyes.

*Aria Arete*

I wish I would have

more than one heart

so I could enjoy

the blessing of two faces.

For then Jealousy

would not be able to

create a river of poison. *(Da Capo)*

**Scene IV**

*Iside, Calisto, Vespetta, Erasto*

VESPETTA: Milady, I present you somebody who is looking for you as longing hound. He wears shepherd’s clothes but when you carefully look at his face he has a civilized, noble and gentle aura. *(She leaves)*

ISIDE:What do I see! Oh heavens, he is Osiris disguised. You arrive in a perfect moment; gentle Fate has guided you here to comfort my pains.

ERASTO: Malicious Fate has guided me here to kill me. Yes, I am not here as loving groom, to wed as it was promised by your deceased father. I am here as your unrelenting enemy. You unfaithful woman. I was anonymously wandering this disastrous paths, believing that I was to arrive to your murmuring kisses, when I was struck by the immense pain of seeing you in the arms of another lover.

ISIDE: And you condemn me so quickly, without hearing my defense?

CALISTO: But I heard you myself, full of jealousy, scolding Arete for his unfaithfulness.

Ah, the heart of a princess should be advised by Duty and not by Love

*Aria Calisto*

See how the white lily

disdains the violet

because it grows savage and alone

and it is too proud to kiss her.

But she only marries

the purple rose

because that’s the only way

she can create vermillion. *(Da Capo)*

**Scene V**

*Recitativo Iside, Erasto*

ISIDE: My father killed, my kingdom lost, my rage unavenged,

mocked by a shepherd, laughed at by Calisto, hated by Osiris,

heavens, what else? Am I awake? Am I Iside…?

Alas, I am nothing but a wraith, a Fury from the Cocitus, [N.T. river Styx]

I feel my face turning into a devil’s face [T.N. I feel my right hand shaking my infernal face], and my hair filling itself with birds, snakes and vermin.

ERASTO: Is perhaps her intense pain making her delirious?

ISIDE: But I will become my father, Inaco, the dreaded, I will take his crown and from my head the fatal thunder of his rage will burn everything, and everyone shall fall down to inhabit the deep valleys of Hell.

*Aria Iside*

With the flames and with the struggles

Of a fierce war

I will sow the earth

from the frozen Aquilon [T.N. North glacial wind] to the arid Mauro [T.N. from Mauritania]

And despite Zeus’s wishes

I want to kill Atlas

so that the unjust heavens will fall down [*Da Capo*]

**Scene VI**

*Recitativo Erasto*

ERASTO: This unexpected discovery is calming my anger and feeding my sorrows.

Instead, it seems to me that I hear my heart whispering, telling me with a clear voice:

You condemned her unjustly, she is innocent.

*Aria Erasto*

I feel my heart

Burning out in pity

And no offense

Can contain it.

And it seems that slowly

The previous flame comes back

And restores the old ardour [Da Capo]

**End of Act Two**

**Act III**

Scene I

*Recitativo Licaon, Milo. Afterwards Calisto*

MILO: Oh! Let’s run away fast, Milord, this poisonous air is going to give us a headache! About my secret task, I found out that there is one shepherd, of whom your daughter is madly in love, and that this shepherd has promised to murder you, and then who know what he will do to me.

CALISTO: Beloved father…

LICAON: I finally see you, but I cannot trust you, oh rebel daughter. Is you heart still stubbornly burning for he who wishes my demise?

CALISTO: What are you saying? Such suspicions would offend a daughter in such terrible way. Instead, I was coming to advise you to run away, for I fear you are in such grave danger.

LICAON: Me? Run away from a peasant? I am not so vile! Let them come, hurry, I shall have the pleasure of revenge.

*Aria Licaon*

The wish for dead and struggles

Is fed by offenses

And finds pleasure with blood.

My heart rejoices only about

The celebration of the cruelty

That already boils in my mind.

**Scene II**

*Recitativo Arete, Calisto. Afterwards Iside.*

ARETE: What do you decide, Calisto? Will you love me, or will you see me as your enemy, allied with Iside against your father?

CALISTO: Oh Arete! You set my heart in an arid ground.

ISIDE: Ah, traitors! I finally caught you! Here in front of my fulminant eyes you are displaying your sins.

CALISTO: She arrives here so opportune…

ARETE: She is delirious.

ISIDE: But this dark felony will not go unpunished. In the meantime, I will go to the Dreadful Kingdom [T.N. Hell] to bring the accusation with my tears.

*Aria Iside*

Sighting

Crying

I will scream, that I was betrayed

With no father, with no kingdom

Listen to the menacing Hydra

Inviting you to be judged by Radamanto [T.N. The judge that judged the souls in the Hades]

The defender or my anger.

**Scene III**

*Recitativo Arete, Calisto*

ARETE: So, my charming beloved, do you surrender?

CALISTO: So then I should pay for this crime with giving up my father? And should break the promise that forbid me to love you? Please, I beg you, leave me alone…

ARETE: It is like that. My love thus commands.

*Aria Arete*

From those beautiful eyes

That you shoot your arrows from

I see that there is a Yes coming, and I am comforted.

From your face

That has make my soul love you

There is hope, that happily flies to my heart

**Scena IV**

*Calisto and Diana*

DIANA: Talking to shepherds, speak to them about love, is that how you keep your promise? Is that how you want to wake my anger?

CALISTO: It’s only the love of a daughter towards her defenseless father…

DIANA: Do you believe that I cannot reach the most hidden part of your heart? Through the way of loving your father, your soul has started to love with joy. You missed your duty, and now you are guilty. I retire my trust on you, and in exchange you will suffer my fury.

*Aria Diana*

In the arms of your fears

I leave you, and a few moments

You shall get my cruelty

When you greatly offend a god

You shouldn’t expect to be defended

If your heart is weak

**Scena V**

*Recitativo Calisto*

CALISTO: Will you allow, oh gods, that I will perish despite my faithful service to you, even though I only cared about my father’s trial? Alas, mercy, use your great powers, if you are fair.

*Aria Calisto*

The little Zeffiro

Kisses the frond

The little Ruscieletto

Licks the shore

And Love softly sighs.

And yet, I didn’t love

But only craved

For my father to be safe

**Scena VI**

*Recitativo Erasto Solo*

ERASTO: Agitated and confused I am following the frantic steps of my unfaithful but adored beloved. Love is advising me to take revenge against my rival, Arete, and against the cruel Tyrant of Arcadia. Who knows, perhaps their blood will make Iside change her mind? But I hear shepherds making signals. I will hide here at the gates, and I will hold my arrow in my bow.

*Aria Erasto*

I want to walk a heroe’s path

And bring proof of the betrayal

In order to show my faithfulness

And if I am disdained

Let my beloved see

That I know how to love without hope

**Scena VI**

*Sounds of hunting horns come down from the hills, several shepherds and Diana, followed by Nymphs, among whom Calisto is coming under surveillance and is chained to a tree, and Vespetta.*

DIANA: Nymphs, shepherds, listen to me:

Before you start the hunt I call upon you to make a fair example with fierce slaughter of a daring perjury.

CALISTO: Ah, unfair destiny! Should I die thusly?

VESPETTA: If all of us, women that make Love, should die, we would see corpses all the ` time!

**Scena VII**

*Iside wrestling with a bear, the same, afterwards comes Erasto. Afterwards comes Licaone and Milo.*

ISIDE: In vain, magnificent monster, you threaten me dearing and fierce. I will tear you to pieces with this hand

ERASTO: I’m coming to help the grave danger. Finally the beast is slaughtered with a single strike.

LICAON: I arrive just on time

CALISTO: Ah father

ISIDE: Fall (*Iside, when she sees Licaon, shoots an arrow into his chest)* dead to the ground,you miserable tyrant.

CALISTO: Stop, oh God, what did you do?

LICAON: Ah, my pierced heart is finally bearing the sentence of my crimes (*he falls* *to the ground)*

MILO: Wretched me, what do I see? My salary is dead, and it would be better for me to run away like a deer *(Leaves)*

**Last Scene**

*Arete, the same*

ARETE: So then Diana, what do you try unfairly against Calisto? Recognize in me your powerful father Jupiter. I came here to amuse myself, dressed as a shepherd I roamed this forest. Iside, I fancied courting Calisto. But did not take from her the beautiful candor of her honesty. So appease yourself, Royal Queen. Iside, go back to the love of Osiris, for she is innocent and her pain is so intense that she is losing her mind.

DIANA: I don’t dare opposing to your wishes

ERASTO: Come, my beloved

ISIDE: I am reborn, completely in love with you, as Iside your wife.

CALISTO: So many strange things happen in one single day

ARETE: But in the end, the peace comes back to the hearts, and the Laurel to the head.

***Chorus tutti***

*May the laugh, the joy and happiness*

*Return to the constant faithful souls*

*The stars will not be cruel*

*When Jupiter watches over you from the heavens*

**THE END**