

Highlights from *RAYMOND AND AGNES* (1859)

Music by Edward Loder
 Libretto by Edward Fitzball
 As revised by Nicholas Temperley (1966, 1995)

Judith Howarth (AGNES), Justin Lavender (RAYMOND), Gidon Saks (the BARON),
 Therese Feughan (MADELINA), and Jamie MacDougall (THEODORE)
 The BBC Concert Orchestra, conducted by James Lockhart
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 Re-recorded by Andy Baylor

1 Act 1, Scena (Agnes)

At the convent of St. Agnes in Spain, AGNES is praying for peace of mind after hearing the nuns singing a hymn.

AGNES: Sadly through the morning air
 Peals the organ's solemn sound,
 While the sun, now rising, smiles
 On the dear and hallowed ground.
 As to doubt and apprehension
 My bewildered thoughts give place,
 They with saintly lips are chanting
 Choral prayer and song of grace!

O Agnes, martyr fair,
 Behold me now appealing,
 Hear now my humble pray'r,
 Each inmost thought revealing!
 May my pray'r
 Calm my care,
 These sad doubts repelling,
 Hear! oh hear!
 Lady dear!
 While my cares I'm telling.

O Agnes, martyr fair, [*etc.*]

Bright saint, enthroned above,
 With bounty now receive me!
 This heart hath dared to love;
 If I have erred, forgive me!

[*kneels*]
 O Agnes, martyr fair,
 Behold me lowly kneeling;
 Hear now my humble pray'r,
 Each inmost thought revealing!
 Let thy smile
 Care beguile,
 Ev'ry pang dispelling;
 At thy feet
 I entreat,
 While my beads I'm telling.

[*Enter MADELINA. In spoken dialogue, not recorded here, she reminds AGNES of their happy childhood together. They await their guardian, the BARON OF LINDENBERG, who is coming to take AGNES to Lindenberg in Bavaria as his wife. AGNES confesses that she is most unhappy about this, as she does not love the BARON, and has secretly fallen in love with a Spanish nobleman, Don RAYMOND, who has asked her to marry him. In the middle of their conversation RAYMOND suddenly enters, with his companion THEODORE.*]

2 Recitative and Duet (Agnes, Raymond)

MADELINA: [spoken] Alas! who is here?
 RAYMOND: Agnes!
 AGNES: Oh, terror! [*starts to flee*]
 RAYMOND: Fly not!
 MADELINA: Horror!
 RAYMOND: Nay!
 Fly not, my Agnes: lo! 'tis Raymond!
 AGNES: Raymond! Thus disguised? In this holy place?
 Ah! What wouldst thou?
 RAYMOND: Call thee, Agnes, mine!
 AGNES: Thine?
 RAYMOND: Mine!
 (AGNES: Here at this holy shrine,
 (Here in the sight of Heaven, thine!
 (RAYMOND: Here at this holy shrine,
 (Here in the sight of Heaven, mine!
 AGNES: Alas, my guardian claims my hand!
 RAYMOND: From him, with me, oh fly!
 AGNES: 'Tis vain, so watched by his command!
 RAYMOND: Then he or I must die!
 AGNES: By day and night I'll pray for thee!
 Believe me, though we part,
 Whate'er my fate in life may be,

Thou only hast my heart.
 RAYMOND: From place to place I'll follow thee,
 My star of hope alone;
 Thy faithful shadow will I be
 To fade when thou art gone.
 AGNES: Alas, my guardian claims my hand,
 And though with thee I fain would fly,
 'Tis vain, so watched by his command.
 RAYMOND: Then he or I must die!
 AGNES: Ah yes, forget we ever met,
 A lovelier face, a lighter heart
 May bless and cheer each sad regret;
 But thou and I must part!
 Break, oh break my aching heart,
 We must now for ever part!
 RAYMOND: Ah, ne'er forget that hour we met,
 That hour we plighted heart for heart;
 In life above thou art my love,
 And but in death we'll part.

 BOTH: By day and night I'll pray for thee,
 Whate'er my future fate my be,
 And though they tear us soon apart,
 Thou only hast my heart.

3 Terzetto

[The BARON has arrived at the convent, and the Prioress has brought AGNES to him. RAYMOND, concealed, witnesses the scene. All three characters express their private thoughts.]

BARON: Now in her eyes those trembling tears
 At once my darkest thoughts remove.
 Her blushing cheek such beauty wears,
 But for my crime, I still could love!

 RAYMOND: So on the night flow'r hangs the dew,
 But with the sunlight melts away

 AGNES: He's there! my hopes of joy renew;
 Rapture will all the past repay.

 BARON: She smiles! my hopes of joy renew;
 Rapture will all the past repay.
 Yes, in her eyes those trembling tears [*etc.*]

Which placed a curse upon our family.
 The curse remains until the last of our line
 Shall marry with the last of hers.
 The last of her race was Agnes doomed to be;
 The last of Lindenberg behold in me!

RAYMOND: For mercy's sake some pity show;
 This wild, this dark belief forego!

BARON: My father, on his dying bed,
 Made me vow yon Maid to wed.
 I found her in a lowly cot,
 I watched with care her steps through life;
 Whether I love, or love her not,
 She must become my wife.

RAYMOND: No! I forbid such cruel deed
 Which Heaven's justice would disown.

BARON: And who art *thou*, that I should heed,
 Before my father's last command?

Romance

RAYMOND: While yet in boyhood's rosy morn,
 A Brigand sought our happy home;
 My Mother from these arms was torn,
 My father met an early doom.
 He sank beneath the Murd'rer's steel,
 And left in sorrow, past relief,
 A blighted heart too crushed to feel,
 Alone in life, a child of grief!

BARON (*aside*): With horror and with dread I hear
 This fearful, fearful history!

(*aloud*): And you are of Madrid,
 And this your life's dark mystery?

RAYMOND: But when fair Agnes' smile I met,
 How changed my path of loneliness!
 I felt there was one being yet
 Dear as the dead, to love and bless!
 And when from her dear eyes no more
 Affection's light shall give relief
 Then may the cold earth cover o'er
 A broken heart, a child of grief!

BARON: And of thy Mother hast never heard?

RAYMOND: From that sad hour, alas, no single word.

BARON: Nor of the vile despoiler, who hurried her away?

RAYMOND: 'Twas said, o'er robbers he held sway:
His name: Inigo.

BARON: Inigo?

RAYMOND: Yes, Inigo—
That hated word is graven here [*places hand on heart*]
As with a flaming sword!
By heav'n directed, at the appointed place,
One day, shall I meet the assassin face to face
[*gazing at the BARON*] As *thou* and I meet, face to face!

BARON: Face to face, and then—

RAYMOND: His life would fail to sate revenge
For that fell deed, that deadly wrong,—
That wrong he heaped on me and mine.

BARON: Away! Why fix thy gaze on me?
I ne'er have injured thee!
Away! I'll hear no more,
Or thou for mercy shalt implore.

RAYMOND: Thinkst thou I'll go ere seeing Agnes?
No, proud Baron, no! thee I defy!

BARON: Hence! Begone, or dread my rage!

RAYMOND: Agnes I demand shall be my bride.

BARON: Hence! I swear thou ne'er shall see her more.

RAYMOND: Her to see I'll force each room, each door!

BARON: No! though on thy knees thou shouldst implore!

RAYMOND: Yes! Agnes I will see once more.

BARON [*drawing dagger*]:
One more step but advance,
And this dagger I plunge at once into thy heart.

RAYMOND [*snatching dagger*]:
Lo! vaunting tyrant!
Though thy deadly rage my life would harm,
See how honest courage can thy guilt disarm!
O heav'n, this dagger! [*examines it*] Ah, what word is here?
"Inigo"! speak! speak!

BARON: Quickly from this castle fly
Or thou shalt in its deepest dungeon lie.

RAYMOND: Thou art Inigo! My father's deadly foe!

BARON: Away! Hence!

RAYMOND: Fiend, restore my mother! Or, by the fiercest vengeance,
Thou shalt surely die!

[*They draw swords and begin to fight. The BARON summons his retainers, who rush in followed by AGNES, MADELINA, and THEODORE, and sing the closing chorus, 'Ah! that sword, his fury stay'. The retainers arrest RAYMOND and take him off to a dungeon.*] (The BBC forces did not include a chorus, so this scene is cut short on the recording.)

Act 2, Scene 2

[An hour later, the BARON is discovered alone in his apartment.]

5 Recitative and Scena

BARON: Madrid! oh, Madrid! I see thee once again!
 She whom I tore from out her husband's halls
 Still is before me! Frantic with despair!
 Again that injured Lord beneath my dagger falls!
 I see his wounded breast! his dying glare!
 Memory! oh memory of guilt and pain!

When others at the watchfire slept
 In calm and joyous dreams,
 Pale troubled ghosts around me wept,
 Or woke me with their screams!
 The poorest vassal in my hall
 Might scoff at all my pow'r,
 The pow'r of him whose heart can ne'er recall
 One calm or happy hour.

No cypress o'er my tomb shall wave,
 My mem'ry claim no tear;
 The trav'ler passing by my grave
 Will cross himself with fear.
 Gone for ever hope of bliss
 While this life shall last:
 Ah, what is power, what is wealth?
 Can they dispel the past?

6 Act 2 Finale

[On All-Hallows' Night, the Baron expects St. Agnes to appear as she has in other years. AGNES plans to play a trick on the BARON, disguising herself as the ghost in order to help her escape with RAYMOND. But first she apologizes to the Saint for her audacity.]

AGNES: Saintly Agnes! deign to pardon
 If thy likeness now I wear:
 Help thou thus a captive lover,
 Through my form his life to spare.
 Thus again thy shrine I kindle:
 Lady, 'tis All-Hallows' Night!
 Thou art potent: from this castle
 Oh assist, direct our flight!

[Enter MADELINA and THEODORE

- 7 THEODORE: A ghost?
 MADELINA: Yes!
 THEODORE: No, no!
 MADELINA: Ah, yes!
 THEODORE: They you deceive.
 MADELINA: Me deceive?
 THEODORE: First let us see—
 MADELINA: We shall see.
 THEODORE: —ere we believe.
 At least this sight will cause them here to stay
 While I release my master, and away.
 MADELINA: Yes, yes, but—
 AGNES: Sainly Agnes, deign to pardon—
 MADELINA: Yes, 'tis the Lady Agnes!
 THEODORE: Yes, 'tis the Lady Agnes!
 AGNES: Voices! Ah, most welcome! No delay!
 Quick, to release thy master—hence, away!
 MADELINA: Now release thy master, and away!
 THEODORE: To release my master, and away!
 [THEODORE *exits and returns with* RAYMOND.
 (AGNES: Ah, kind saint, thou'st heard my pray'r,
 (And gently calmed my heart's despair.
 (RAYMOND: Ah, kind fate, attend my pray'r,
 (And aid my arm her hence to bear.
 (MAD., THEO: Ah, kind fate, attend their pray'r,
 (And aid his arm her hence to bear.
 THEODORE: Ah! locked the door, the key not there!
 ALL: Ah, despair!
 AGNES: Ah, that step!
 ALL: Who is here?
 THEODORE: 'Tis the Baron!
 A, M, R: Yes, 'tis he!
 THEODORE: Fearful sight!
 AGNES: Hush! Be still!
 M, R, T: Silence!
 [The BARON *enters, sleep-walking*
 BARON: Stay, Ferdinand!
 RAYMOND: Ah! My father's name! Hour of vengeance!
 AGNES: Hold! his reason fails him.
 RAYMOND: Oh, horror!
 AGNES: See, 'tis madness!
 M, R, T: Oh, horror!

8

Quintet

(A, M, R, T: Lost! and in a dream
 (His eyes on phantoms beam;
 (Behold that look so pale;
 (Dark shadows him assail!
 (BARON: Lost! and in a dream
 (Dark shadows on me gleam.
 (Ah me! That form so pale,
 (Beneath it still I quail.

BARON: Saint, whose shrine I have insulted,
 Hear, ah! hear my contrite pray'r!
 Ah, rejected! oh anguish! oh despair!

A, M, R, T: What anguish! what despair!

BARON : Ah, what see I?
 Is this madness? Can it be
 That she can leave the canvas there;
 And on All-Hallows' Eve
 Walk from this castle forth?
 But, ah! I'll make atonement.
 Ho, Francesco! I'll make atonement!
 Ho, Francesco! Ope the castle door!
 Quick, take the key!

A, M, R, T: Ah, 'tis the key! 'tis the key!

BARON: Yes, here's the key! [*He gives the key to THEODORE.*
 [*The castle clock strikes twelve.*]

(A, M, R, T: Saint, we bless thee, near us(they) still be,
 (Through the wood our(their) footsteps light,
 (While the midnight clock is sounding
 (Guide us(they) safely through this night:
 (While true hearts with love are bounding,
 (Aid, oh aid us(they) in our(their) flight.
 (BARON: Still I see thee, gliding past me,
 (Ghastly spectre pale and white,
 (While the midnight clock is sounding
 (Through these chilling halls tonight:
 (And the shrieks of spirits yelling
 (Freeze the heart's blood with affright!

(THEODORE (*opening the castle door*):
 (Oh thou dear key! Open door be!
 (Pretty moon! oh lend thy light!
 (And while the midnight chimes are pealing
 (Through the forest let's be stealing:

(I'll not spare my steps tonight.

[AGNES, RAYMOND, and THEODORE *escape through the castle door.*]

[*A servant rushes in, shouting 'My Lord! The prisoner has escaped!'*]

BARON (*waking; to MADELINA*):

Ah, traitress, me betraying! You shall die!

No pow'r my vengeance staying!

MADELINA: With dread each nerve is trembling!

Vain is all dissembling!

Ah, mercy!

In mercy spare my life!

[*Exit the BARON.*]

[*kneels*]

O holy Agnes! protect this faithful pair!

Take them beneath thy kind and fost'ring care!

[*Curtain. End of Act 2.*]