

ACT V

FIRST TABLEAU

[The chapel at the Castel Sant'Angelo for those condemned to death. Upstage, a window with a grille. Stage left, a retable. On stage right, a door. Bench upstage.]

First Scene

MARIO, SPOLETTA, A JAILER, AN AIDE, A SERGEANT, TWO CARABINIERI

Sp, enters and approaches Mario who is wrapped up in his coat and sleeping on the bench. He rouses him gently: Cavaliere!...Cavaliere!...

M, waking up with a start: Huh?...What is it?...Ah, it is you, Captain...I was sleeping so well: has the moment arrived?...And aren't you waking me from such a good sleep to take me to another, deeper one?...

Sp, pointing to the door, which is ajar: No, sir, it is someone who would like...

M: Oh, if it is another of those Whitefriars who wish, above all, for me to beg God's forgiveness for having tried to save Angelotti, I emphatically refuse to see him. I beg you, Captain, spare me their useless entreaties and their lugubrious chanting. Death is bad enough by itself without making it even sadder with such ceremonies.

[He lies down again to go back to sleep.]

Sp: The Whitefriars have gone, sir, on His Excellency's order, and you shall know why very soon. It is not them, but someone it will no doubt be much more pleasurable to see.

M, quickly, sitting up: Floria?

Sp: Yes, sir!

M, turning toward the door: Oh, let her in...Where is she?...Floria!...My darling...My love!...Come to me...come quickly!

[At Spoletta's signal, the jailer opens the door for Floria.]

Scene II

THE SAME, FLORIA

F, running to him and, kneeling, taking him in her arms: Have you forgiven me?

M: Oh, my soul's love! It is you who must forgive my anger, so unjust and so ungrateful, which I regret. And now that we must say "adieu"...

F, quietly in his ear, after looking at the people who, on silent orders from Spoletta are going to the door: No!...No!...Not "adieu"!...

M: How is that?

F: Be silent! Wait...Wait for them to leave. [When she brings her face closer to Mario's, she barely brushes his brow, and he cannot help wincing a bit. Quickly] Are you in pain?...

M, taking her hand, which he brings to his lips: A little, yes.

F: Ah, my love, I will be able to care for you, heal you...In a few moments, we will be far from this horrible city, and far from any danger! [All are gone except Spoletta.] I have your pardon!

M: My pardon?

F: Complete!...

M: From Scarpia?

F: From Scarpia! Isn't it true, captain, isn't it true that he has been saved?

Sp: His Excellency, sir, did indeed give me orders that confirm all that Madame is saying.

F: You see!...

M, to Spoletta: And what were the orders?

F: They will pretend to shoot you, for appearances' sake, you see. But the rifles will be loaded with blanks, just blanks, and, as an extra precaution, this captain will load the rifles himself. Isn't that so, Captain? Tell him; tell him yourself, it doesn't look like he believes me.

Sp: Loaded by my own hand, sir. That is His Excellency's explicit order...

F: You see! The captain told you! Then, they will lead you onto the platform, without witnesses...the soldiers will fire...you will fall as if you had been killed. The captain will

dismiss his men; the doors of the Castel will be open to us; we will get in my carriage and leave together to go wherever we wish...free, free!...What happiness!

M: Is this possible?

F: Look, the safe-conduct pass. [She gives it to him.] that will get us out of the Castel, the city, and which assures us passage all the way to the border.

M: For you?

F: And for you! Read it: the Signora Tosca and the Cavaliere who accompanies her.

M: Indeed. And signed by Scarpia?

F: You can see it there!

Sp: And if you can believe me, sir, it would be in your interest not to wait until it gets too light. The sooner we act, the better it will be.

F, quickly: Ah, that's true! Quick, quick, captain, right away!

S, to Mario: My men are already on the platform. I put the rifles in a secure place. I will go make sure that the square is deserted and I will come back to get you.

F: Yes, yes, that's right, Captain, go quickly!...Ah, I am so grateful to you!

[Spoletta exits.]

### Scene III

FLORIA, MARIO

M, as soon as Spoletta is gone, he grabs Tosca's hand violently: Wretch! What price did you pay for my salvation?

F: One thrust of a knife!

M: You killed him?

F: Ah, did I kill him! [With a savage joy.] Oh, yes, I really killed him!

M: And you are here? But they will discover his death, you are lost.

F: No, my Mario, no, I am not lost. He gave the order right in front of me to leave him alone and let him rest...He is resting now!...Since he was up all night, no one will be surprised if he sleeps until noon or one o'clock. So we have six or seven hours ahead of us, four at worst. And, in four hours, we will be in Civitavecchia where we will find a ship leaving, or a boat or anything that floats...By the time they have discovered the body, we will be away, far away, free from harm, on the open sea!...

M: Oh, brave woman. You are a real Roman...A true Roman woman of olden times!

#### Scene IV

THE SAME, SPOLETTA, SOLDIERS, upstage, in the vestibule.

Sp, entering: Are you ready, sir?

F, joyously: Yes, captain. Yes!...[She sees the soldiers and changes her tone.] Yes, we are ready. [In a low voice to Spoletta, while embracing Mario tightly to make the soldiers who are watching believe they are saying their last good-byes.] I can't go with you?

Sp, quietly: Oh! no, Madame. It would be better not to show yourself; do not come there until after the shots are fired.

F, likewise: The platform is on this side, isn't it?

Sp, likewise: On this side! Twenty steps up.

F, likewise: Good! Don't make me wait too long.

Sp, likewise: It is a matter of five minutes at most!...[Aloud to Mario.] Let us go, sir.

F, in Mario's arms: Play your part well...fall down when they shoot...And really act dead.

M: Don't worry.

F: Go, go quickly!...There will be time enough for kisses en route!...

S, to the soldiers: Present arms.

[They leave with Mario. Everyone disappears.]

#### Scene V

FLORIA, alone

F, after a moment's silence: Surely, with the post horses we will find on the way, we can be at Civitavecchia in four hours!... Oh, God! when I see the Italian coast fading away in the distance! What a deliverance that will be!...[Silence.] Ah, I hear them marching up there, on the platform...They are stopping...Now is the time...Provided that now they don't think of waking up the other one for some business or other!...[Silence] So, what are they waiting for?...It should be over already...A delay could ruin everything!...And even worse, this waiting is hateful!...It's breaking my heart...Even though I know it's just an act...the thought of them shooting at him!...Oh, my God! Hurry up, hurry up! Get it over with!... [Gun shots. She gives an involuntary cry of fright.] Ah!...I'll go mad...It is over!...Now we go...Ah, I forgot his coat!

[She takes the coat and leaves quickly by stage right.]

## SECOND TABLEAU

[The platform of the Castel Sant'Angelo. Upstage, the parapet and cannons, and, in perspective, the city, between the Coliseum and the dome of St. Peter's, illuminated by the rising sun. Downstage left, a large wall rising up to the friezes. Stage right, a large watchtower to which is attached a stairway allowing access from the first floor. Upstage, a walkway connects the watchtower and the parapet. It is almost dawn as the curtain rises, and the stage becomes lighter and lighter as the scene progresses.]

### Single scene

SPOLETTA, MARIO, SOLDIERS, FLORIA

[Mario is stretched out, immobile, stage left, in front of the large wall. The soldiers are on stage right, upstage, between the parapet and the watchtower. Spoletta is leaning over Mario, whose head is turned towards the wall. A sergeant with a lantern in his hand, is waiting.]

Sp, after some time, getting up, to the soldiers: It is unnecessary...You can go in.

[The sergeant goes back upstage and exits with the men by the stage left side.]

F, appears on the threshold of the watchtower, the coat over her arm: This is it...This is the platform!...[Seeing him.] Ah, it is you, captain...have your men gone?

Sp: Just now.

F: Where is he?

Sp: There.

F: Oh, good! See if the coast is clear!...[Spoletta leaves stage right. She goes to Mario.] It's me...Don't budge!...A soldier is passing by...Wait!...[She follows the soldier with her eyes.] Good!...He is going away... [She comes forward. The sergeant enters followed by two soldiers carrying a stretcher and two others with lanterns. Quickly.] Don't move yet...here are some lights!...Ah, my God!...What happened to the captain? [To the soldiers who have stopped in the middle.] Where are you going?...What do you want?

The Sergeant: To take the body away.

F, alarmed, barring their way: You cannot take him! He is mine!...Scarpia gave him to me!...Didn't the captain say anything to you about it?...

The Sergeant: Nothing!

F: Call for him...Find him... He must be over on this side. [She points to stage right, then speaking to Mario, but with her eyes still on the soldiers.] Stay still...They can see you. Wait until they have turned the corner...There...good, they are leaving...one more...now...good...Here is your coat. [She tosses it to him, watching stage right.] Put it on and get up!...Quickly now!...Quick!...Quick! [She turns and sees him immobile.] Get up now!...Don't you hear me?... Mario!... Mario!... [Frightened, she runs to him.] Has he fainted?... Mario?... [She turns the body over quickly, exposing Mario's bloodless face; his arm falls to the ground with a dull thud.] Blood!...He's dead!...My Mario!...Killed!...Killed!...They have killed him!... [Spoletta reappears with Schiarrone, the sergeant and the soldiers. She rushes towards him.] Assassin!... Assassin who was supposed to save him!

Sp: To make you believe that and to shoot him, like Palmieri: That was the master's order!...

F: Ah, the tiger!...And I cannot even kill him again! [Everyone reacts.]

Sp, Sch, and an officer: Kill him?

F: Yes, I killed him, your Scarpia!...Killed him, killed him, do you hear? Stabbed him in the heart, and would like to plunge it in again and twist it!...Ah, you shoot...Me, I slaughter with a knife! [Two men, at a gesture from Spoletta rush forward from stage right.] Yes, go...go see what I did to that monster...whose corpse still kills...

[She kneels beside Mario and holds him in an embrace.]

Sch, wanting to rush to Floria: Miserable woman!...

Sp, stopping him: Hey, don't you see that her grief is upsetting her mind, and that she is telling us her dreams!

Sch: And what if she really killed him?

Sp: She will pay with her life, which would be too little.

F, getting up: Take my life then!...I don't want the horror of seeing you anymore, bandits who do such things...the rotten people who accept them,...the sordid sun that shines down on them!...

[Confused voices. Cries outside. Drum rolls.]

Sp, quickly: Well?

An officer: It's true!

All: Oh!

Sp: Wounded?

The Officer: Dead!

[Cries of anger.]

Sp, to Floria who during this time has gone to the parapet: Ah, demon...I will send you to meet your lover!

F, standing on the parapet: I am going, swine!

[She throws herself into space. Spoletta, Schiarrone and all the soldiers, rush toward the parapet.]

-CURTAIN-

## Notes