

Voces Vergilianae ~ Scene II, with references (Libretto © M.D. Usher after Vergil)

Chorus:

Oceanum interea surgens Aurora reliquit (4.129)
et iam prima novo spargebat lumine terras. (4.584)
venatum Aeneas unaque miserrima Dido
in nemus ire parant, ubi primos crastinus ortus
extulerit Titan radiisque retexerit orbem. (4.117-19)

Strophe:

Dido progreditur magna stipante caterva [tandem]
Sidoniam picto chlamydem circumdata limbo
cui pharetra ex auro, crines nodantur in aurum
aurea purpuream subnectit fibula vestem. (4.136-9)

Antistrophe:

ipse iugis Libyae graditur mollique fluentem [Cynthi]
fronde premit crinem fingens atque implicat auro,
tela sonant umeris: haud Phoebo segnior ibat [illo]
Aeneas, tantum egregio decus enitet ore. (4.147-50)

Epode:

ecce ferae saxi deiectae vertice caprae
decurrere iugis; alia de parte patentis
transmittunt cursu campos atque agmina cervi
pulverulenta fuga glomerant montisque relinquunt. (4.152-5)

uritur infelix Dido totaque vagatur
fronde furens, qualis coniecta cerva sagitta . . . (4.68-9) [urbe]

Dido (gazing at Aeneas)

quis novus hic nostris successit sedibus hospes,
quem sese ore ferens, quam forti pectore et armis!
credo equidem, nec vana fides, genus esse deorum. (4.10-12)

Chorus:

. . . quam procul incautam nemora inter Cresia fixit
pastor agens telis liquitque volatile ferrum . . . (4.70-71)

Aeneas (admiring Dido)

duxit longe, donec curvata coirent
inter se capita et manibus iam tangeret aequis,
laeva aciem ferri, dextra nervoque papillam! (11.860-2)

Chorus:

. . . nescius: illa fuga silvas saltusque peragrat
Dictaeos; haeret lateri letalis harundo. (4.72-3)

interea magno misceri murmure caelum
incipit, insequitur commixta grandine nimbus. (4.160-1)
speluncam Dido dux et Troianus eandem
deveniunt. prima et Tellus et pronubia Iuno
dant signum; fulsere ignes et conscius aether
conubiis, summoque ulularunt vertice Nymphae. (4.165-8)

Dido (to Aeneas)

vere tument terrae et genitalia semina poscunt. . .

Aeneas:

pater omnipotens fecundis imbribus aether . . .

Dido:

coniugis in gremium laetae descendit, et omnis . . .

Aeneas:

magnus alit magno commixtus corpore fetus (Georgics 2.324-7)

Chorus:

ille dies primus leti primusque malorum
causa fuit; neque enim specie famave movetur
nec iam furtivum Dido meditatur amorem:
coniugium vocat, hoc praetexit nomine culpam. (4.165-73)

SCENE II ~ English Translation by M. D. Usher

CHORUS:

The next day Dawn arose and left the bed of her lover, Ocean,
to shower the land with new streams of light.
Aeneas and love-lorn Dido venture to the woods
to hunt, as the morning Sun the world wraps in his rays.

'STROPHE'

Dido emerges from the palace, crowded by attendants.
She wears a Sidonian gown with fine embroidered hems;
her quiver is of gold, her tresses tied with golden ribbons,
gold also on the pin that holds her purple shawl.

'ANTISTROPHE'

He too proceeds to the mountainsides of Carthage;
fingering his flowing hair, he weaves a garland of green and gold,
as the clanging weapons on his shoulders sing: as swift as Phoebus,
so moves Aeneas; from his face outstanding beauty shines.

'EPODE'

Look there! Wild boars driven down the ridge,
dart along the slopes—and there! A herd of deer
shoots through the open fields; they fall in flight together,
form a dusty mass, and leave the mountaintops behind.

Unlucky Dido burns with love, and roams through all the forest
raving like a deer shot by an arrow...

DIDO (gazing at Aeneas):

How new—how curious—this guest who has approached my royal throne
his face, his bearings, how strong his chest and arms!
I believe—and my faith is not unfounded—this is a son of the gods.

CHORUS:

...like an unexpecting doe in the forest groves of Crete, that a shepherd
strikes from afar, and drives her off, leaving the winged weapon there...

AENEAS (admiring Dido):

My, how far she drew back that bow: its arching tips touch
one another! How she handles it, so balanced, her left hand on the shaft,
and with her right the string pulled tight against her breast!

CHORUS:

...yet unaware of what he has done: the doe darts through the woods of
Crete
in flight, the lethal barb hanging from her side.

And as they hunt, the sky becomes confused
by a violent storm. Now clouds and claps of thunder give the chase,
drive Dido and the Trojan captain to a solitary cave.
Mother Earth and nuptial Juno give the sign:
lightning-like, the fires flash; Sky himself is witness to
the wedding. Nymphs celebrate the couple from on high.

DIDO (to Aeneas):

The Earth swells with spring, and yearns to be sown with seeds of life . . .

AENEAS:

and father Sky, omnipotent, with fructifying rain...

DIDO:

falls into the lap of his happy spouse, and huge...

AENEAS:

he joins her massive form to his, bringing everything to birth.

CHORUS:

That was the first cause of death and woe, that day.
For Dido starts to move away from petty rumors
and appearances: she no longer thinks of secret love,
but calls this marriage, and with this name conceals her blame.