

“Cortigiani, vil razza dannata,” (Courtiers, vile race of the damned) RIGOLETTO, Act II, music by Giuseppe Verdi, libretto by Francesco Maria Piave, 1851, based on the play, *Le roi s’amuse*, by Victor Hugo.

SYNOPSIS: Rigoletto, deformed jester at the court of the dissolute Duke of Mantua, has a beloved daughter, Gilda, who has been kidnapped by the Duke’s henchmen and seduced by him. Rigoletto finds out about the heinous act and comes to rescue Gilda. In this scene, he confronts the smug courtiers.

RIGOLETTO

Cortigiani, vil razza dannata, per qual prezzo vendeste il mio bene? A voi nulla per l’oro sconviene, la mia figlia è impagabil tesoro. La rendete..o, se pur disarmata questa man per voi for a cruenta, Nulla in terra più l’uomo paventa Se sei figli diffende l’onore. *Quella porta, *assassini,* m’aprite.* (<i>He struggles in vain to get to the door of the room in which Gilda is being held.</i>) Ah! voi tutti a me contro venite! (<i>He weeps.</i>) Ah! Ebben io piango...Marullo, signore, Tu ch’hai l’alma gentile come il core, Dimmi tu, dove l’hanno nascosta? *E là?...Non è vero?...*...Tu taci..Ohime! (<i>He weeps again.</i>) Miei signori...perdono, pietate... Al vegliardo la figlia ridate... Ridonarla a voi nulla ora costa, a voi nulla ora costa. Tutto al mondo è tal figlia per me. Signori, perdon, perdono, perdon. Pietà, ridate a me la figlia. Tutto al mondo è tal figlia per me. Ridate a me la figlia... Tutto al mondo per me, per me. *Pietà signori, pietà.* (*= repeat)	Hear, you courtiers, vile race of the damned, for how much did you sell my dear one? For you, nothing is too precious for gold. She’s my daughter, my priceless treasure. Give her back,,, or though I’ve come unarmed, with this hand, I will fight you to death. Nothing on earth can frighten a father if he’s fighting to defend his child’s name. You assassins, unlock that door for me. Ah! I see that you all are against me! Yes, I’m weeping...Marullo, kind noble, you, who have a gentle soul and good heart, tell me, please, where did the villains hide her? In there?... She isn’t ?...You’re silent...Alas! All you good nobles...forgive me...have pity... Let my daughter come back to her father to return her will cost you all nothing, It will cost you all nothing. That daughter is all the world to me. Good nobles, I pray, forgive me, I pray. Have pity, give me back my daughter. That daughter is all the world to me. Give me back my daughter, all the world to me, to me. Have pity, good nobles, I pray.
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--From “Great Opera Scenes,” a course for Osher Lifelong Learners Institute (OLLI) at UC Santa Cruz, © 2017