„Balladina”

Akt trzeci

Scena trzecia

HERMIT: One kind after another

Of beggars this poor world has. Earth – mad mother

Of madmen. – What’s all this now?

*Balladina runs quickly in.*

Who are you?

BALLADINA: The lady from the castle.

HERMIT: Why are you here?

BALLADINA: I’ve heard that you know herbs, and what to do

To heal a wound.

HERMIT: You look well. Show me where

You’re hurt.

BALLADINA: Old man!

HERMIT: A doctor has to see…

BALLADINA: But do you swear you’ll cure me?

HERMIT: Show it to me!

BALLADINA: It’s on my forehead. See? What can you say?

HERMIT: It’s like a moon ringed by a dark red cloud.

Your wound is livid – it’s the shade of blood.

Tell me: what awful guilt made it this way?

BALLADINA: No guilt at all.

HERMIT: Before the herbs can work

A doctor has to know.

BALLADINA: I got this mark

From a red raspberry.

HERMIT: And when was this?

Tell me now.

BALLADINA: Yesterday.

HERMIT: In the morning?

BALLADINA: Yes.

HERMIT: Let me feel your heartbeat with my hand.

- Perhaps those berries that you mentioned grew

Beneath the willow? Speak up – I demand

You tell the truth as if at your confession.

Was that red berry white before? Were you,

Perhaps, the one who made it red that day?

Touch to your heart the berry that caused your leison.

*He pushes her away furiously.*

Oh, you will suffer! Your heart gave you away!

BALLADINA: Old man…

HERMIT: You killed your sister!

BALLADINA: No…not so –

Here’s gold – I’ll bring you three Times more as well.

HERMIT: What’s all this money meant for?

BALLADINA: I don’t know…

HERMIT: That wound must scorch you like the flames of hell.

BALLADINA: It does…

HERMIT: And did you sleep last night at all?

BALLADINA: I did.

HERMIT: Despite the wound?

BALLADINA: I have confessed,

Ols man, to nothing.

HERMIT: Nothing? Oh, you’re cursed!

So what’s the money for?

BALLADINA: Your medicine.

HERMIT: I hope your wound rots, till death’s shadows fall

Over your face; my herbs will take no pain

Away from hell.

BALLADINA: You’ll suffer old man!

HERMIT: So you would threaten me, when I’m the one

Who’ll find a cure for you? I’m bringing in

Hell’s powers to wipe the mark from off your skin.

Would you prefer it if I woke your sister?

BALLADINA: You’d do that?

HERMIT: Let one sister call another!

The dead one will rise up and wipe away

Your wound. Do you want that?

BALLADINA: If I’d three other

White faces, and on each a darker blister,

I’d rather take tchem to God’s judgement day

Than…

HERMIT: Silence murderer! Now we have seen

Deep in each other’s souls; may a foul blight

Breed swarms of stinging insects in your brain,

And serpents in your conscience; may they bite

Till you are dead inside, while signs of rot

Cover your skin, transforming you into

A living corpse. Go now! You have to wait

To see what God’s great justice holds for you.

And when God’s preordained some dire event

Its consummation may be imminent.

He may deprive you of your daily bread,

Tangle your hair in knots, then with no warning,

Before you can confess, he’ll strike you dead

With lightning bolts. You’ll see – tomorrow morning

On the castle walls God’s hand will leave a sign.

You’re like an evil worm; you have a stain

Inscribed upon your heart that’s worse by far

Than that upon your forehead. – Are you dead?

What;s wrong with you? Woman, wake up – come on!

Listen to me.

BALLADINA (*as if waking from a dream*): What’s that? Aha – you said

My sister will wake up? Then I prefer

To die. What are you mad about, old man?

You’ll suffer!

*She runs off.*

HERMIT (*alone*): In the sad silence of the woods

Crime’s like a woodpecker heard hammering

On a dead tree; while knife-cuts dully ring

Like headsman’s bloody axes chopping heads

Upon the stump. God hears, and lock sit all

Inside the fearful trumpet that will call

And summon people to His day of judgement.

*Laughter is heard in the wood.*

Spirits! The woods are full of laughing devils!

The lake-witch and her retinue of imps

Are scoffing at the mournful oaks, and mocking

The tearful birches.

*The sounds of the hunt and the yapping of dogs is heard.*

There goes the dead hunter,

Whose spectra dogs run down a ghostly aurochs

Unsighted by the lightning of a strom.

I’ll go and bless the hunt, to make it vanish

Forever; though it isn’t ever wise

To turs one’s devilish neighbors into foes.

*The sound of underground bel lis heard.*

What now? The towns submerged so long ago

Are calling form the lake, asking for mercy

From God, their towers weeping… Maybe some cross

From one of Sodom’s steeples can be seen

Among the lilies on the water there?

No – I can’t stop myself – I have to go

And bless the city thay was damned; perhaps

An old man’sprayer will let it sleep in peace

Beneath the waves, just like the man condemned

For whom a little child has said a prayer.