AMADEUS

Written by

Peter Shaffer

1

INT. STAIRCASE OUTSIDE OLD SALIERI'S SALON - NIGHT - 1823 1

Total darkness. We hear an old man's voice, distinct and in distress. It is OLD SALIERI. He uses a mixture of English and occasionally Italian.

OLD SALIERI

Mozart! Mozart! Mozart. Forgive me!

Forgive your assassin! Mozart!

A faint light illuminates the screen. Flickeringly, we see an eighteenth century balustrade and a flight of stone stairs. We are looking down into the wall of the staircase from the point of view of the landing. Up the stair is coming a branched candlestick held by Salieri's VALET. By his side is Salieri's COOK, bearing a large dish of sugared cakes and biscuits. Both men are desperately worried: the Valet is thin and middle-aged; the Cook, plump and Italian. It is very cold. They wear shawls over their night-dresses and clogs on their feet. They wheeze as they climb. The candles throw their shadows up onto the peeling walls of the house, which is evidently an old one and in bad decay. A cat scuttles swiftly between their bare legs, as they reach the salon door.

The Valet tries the handle. It is locked. Behind it the voice goes on, rising in volume.

OLD SALIERI (CONT’D)

Show some mercy! I beg you. I beg

you! Show mercy to a guilty man!

The Valet knocks gently on the door. The voice stops.

VALET

Open the door, Signore! Please! Be

good now! We've brought you

something special. Something you're

going to love.

Silence.

VALET (CONT’D)

Signore Salieri! Open the door.

Come now. Be good!

The voice of Old Salieri continues again, further off now, and louder. We hear a noise as if a window is being opened.

OLD SALIERI

Mozart! Mozart! I confess it!

Listen! I confess!

2.

The two servants look at each other in alarm. Then the Valet hands the candlestick to the Cook and takes a sugared cake from the dish, scrambling as quickly as he can back down the stairs.

2

EXT. THE STREET OUTSIDE SALIERI'S HOUSE - VIENNA - NIGHT

2

The street is filled with people: ten cabs with drivers, five children, fifteen adults, two doormen, fifteen dancing couples and a sled and three dogs. It is a windy night. Snow is falling and whirling about. People are passing on foot, holding their cloaks tightly around them. Some of them are revelers in fancy dress: they wear masks on their faces or hanging around their necks, as if returning from parties. Now they are glancing up at the facade of the old house. The window above the street is open and Old Salieri stands there calling to the sky: a sharp-featured, white-haired Italian over seventy years old, wearing a stained dressing gown.

OLD SALIERI

Mozart! Mozart! I cannot bear it

any longer! I confess! I confess

what I did! I'm guilty! I killed

you! Sir I confess! I killed you!

The door of the house bursts open. The Valet hobbles out, holding the sugared cake. The wind catches at his shawl.

OLD SALIERI (CONT’D)

Mozart, perdonami! Forgive your

assassin! Piet! Piet! Forgive your

assassin! Forgive me! Forgive!

Forgive!

VALET

(looking up to the

window)

That's all right, Signore! He heard

you! He forgave you! He wants you

to go inside now and shut the

window!

Old Salieri stares down at him. Some of the passersby have now stopped and are watching this spectacle.

VALET (CONT’D)

Come on, Signore! Look what I have

for you! I can't give it to you

from down here, can I?

Old Salieri looks at him in contempt. Then he turns away back into the room, shutting the window with a bang. Through the glass, the old man stares down at the group of onlookers in the street. They stare back at him in confusion.

3.

BYSTANDER

Who is that?

VALET

No one, sir. He'll be all right.

Poor man. He's a little unhappy,

you know.

He makes a sign indicating 'crazy,' and goes back inside the house. The onlookers keep staring.

CUT TO:

3

INT. LANDING OUTSIDE OLD SALIERI'S SALON - NIGHT

3

The Cook is standing holding the candlestick in one hand, the dish of cakes in the other. The Valet arrives, panting.

VALET

Did he open?

The Cook, scared, shakes his head: no. The Valet again knocks on the door.

VALET (CONT’D)

Here I am, Signore. Now open the

door.

He eats the sugared cake in his hand, elaborately and noisily.

VALET (CONT’D)

Mmmm - this is good! This is the

most delicious thing I ever ate,

believe me! Signore, you don't know

what you're missing! Mmmm!

We hear a thump from inside the bedroom.

VALET (CONT’D)

Now that's enough, Signore! Open!

We hear a terrible, throaty groaning.

VALET (CONT’D)

If you don't open this door, we're

going to eat everything. There'll

be nothing left for you. And I'm

not going to bring you anything

more.

He looks down. From under the door we see a trickle of blood flowing. In horror, the two men stare at it. The dish of cakes falls from the Cook's hand and shatters.

4.

1. e sets the candlestick down on the floor. Both servants run at the door frantically - once, twice, three times - and the frail lock gives. The door flies open.
2. mmediately, the stormy, frenzied opening of Mozart's Symphony No. 25 (the Little G Minor) begins. We see what the servants see.

4

INT. OLD SALIERI'S SALON - NIGHT

4

Old Salieri lies on the floor in a pool of blood, an open razor in his hand. He has cut his throat but is still alive. He gestures at them. They run to him. Barely, we glimpse the room - an old chair, old tables piled with books, a forte- piano, a chamber-pot on the floor - as the Valet and the Cook struggle to lift their old Master, and bind his bleeding throat with a napkin.

INT. BALLROOM - NIGHT

Twenty-five dancing couples, fifty guests, ten servants, full orchestra.

As the music slows a little, we see a Masquerade Ball in progress. A crowded room of dancers is executing the slow portion of a dance fashionable in the early 1820's.

EXT. STREET OUTSIDE SALIERI'S HOUSE - NIGHT

As the fast music returns, we see Old Salieri being carried out of his house on a stretcher by two attendants, and placed in a horse-drawn wagon under the supervision of a middle- aged doctor in a tall hat. This is DOCTOR GULDEN. He gets in beside his patient. The driver whips up the horse, and the wagon dashes off through the still-falling snow.

MONTAGE:

EXT. FOUR STREETS OF VIENNA AND

INT. THE WAGON - NIGHT

The wagon is galloping through the snowy streets of the city. Inside the conveyance we see Old Salieri wrapped in blankets, half-conscious, being held by the hospital attendants. Doctor Gulden stares at him grimly. The wagon arrives outside the General Hospital of Vienna.

CUT TO:

5.

9

INT. A HOSPITAL CORRIDOR - LATE AFTERNOON

9

A wide, white-washed corridor. Doctor Gulden is walking down it with a priest, a man of about forty, concerned, but somewhat self-important. This is Father VOGLER, Chaplain at the hospital. In the corridor as they walk, we note several patients -- some of them visibly disturbed mentally. All patients wear white linen smocks. Doctor Gulden wears a dark frock-coat; Vogler, a cassock.

DOCTOR GULDEN

He's going to live. It's much

harder to cut your throat than most

people imagine.

They stop outside a door.

DOCTOR GULDEN (CONT’D)

Here we are. Do you wish me to come

in with you?

VOGLER

No, Doctor. Thank you.

Vogler nods and opens the door.

10

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON

10

A bare room - one of the best available in the General Hospital. It contains a bed, a table with candles, chairs, a small forte-piano of the early nineteenth century. As Vogler enters, Old Salieri is sitting in a wheel-chair, looking out the window. His back is to us. The priest closes the door quietly behind him.

VOGLER

Herr Salieri?

Old Salieri turns around to look at him. We see that his throat is bandaged expertly. He wears hospital garb, and over it the Civilian Medal and Chain with which we will later see the EMPEROR invest him.

OLD SALIERI

What do you want?

VOGLER

I am Father Vogler. I am a Chaplain

here. I thought you might like to

talk to someone.

OLD SALIERI

About what?

6.

VOGLER

You tried to take your life. You do remember that, don't you?

So?

OLD SALIERI

VOGLER

In the sight of God that is a sin.

OLD SALIERI

What do you want?

VOGLER

Do you understand that you have sinned? Gravely.

OLD SALIERI

Leave me alone.

VOGLER

I cannot leave alone a soul in pain.

OLD SALIERI

Do you know who I am? You never heard of me, did you?

VOGLER

That makes no difference. All men are equal in God's eyes.

Are they?

OLD SALIERI

VOGLER

Offer me your confession. I can offer you God's forgiveness.

OLD SALIERI

I do not seek forgiveness.

VOGLER

My son, there is something dreadful on your soul. Unburden it to me. I'm here only for you. Please talk to me.

OLD SALIERI

How well are you trained in music?

VOGLER

I know a little. I studied it in my youth.

7.

Where?

OLD SALIERI

VOGLER

Here in Vienna.

OLD SALIERI

Then you must know this.

He propels his wheelchair to the forte-piano, and plays an unrecognizable melody.

VOGLER

I can't say I do. What is it?

OLD SALIERI

I'm surprised you don't know. It

was a very popular tune in its day.

I wrote it. How about this?

He plays another tune.

OLD SALIERI (CONT’D)

This one brought down the house

when we played it first.

He plays it with growing enthusiasm.

CUT TO:

11

INT. THE STAGE OF AN OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT - 1780'S

11

12

We see the pretty soprano KATHERINA CAVALIERI, now about twenty-four, dressed in an elaborate mythological Persian costume, singing on stage. She's near the end of a very florid aria by Salieri. The audience applauds wildly.

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON - 1823 12

OLD SALIERI

(taking his hands off the

keys)

Well?

VOGLER

I regret it is not too familiar.

OLD SALIERI

Can you recall no melody of mine? I

was the most famous composer in

Europe when you were still a boy. I

wrote forty operas alone. What

about this little thing?

8.

Slyly he plays the opening measure of Mozart's Eine Kleine Nachtmusik. The priest nods, smiling suddenly, and hums a little with the music.

VOGLER

Oh, I know that! That's charming!

I didn't know you wrote that.

OLD SALIERI

I didn't. That was Mozart. Wolfgang

Amadeus Mozart. You know who that

is?

VOGLER

Of course. The man you accuse

yourself of killing.

OLD SALIERI

Ah - you've heard that?

VOGLER

All Vienna has heard that.

OLD SALIERI

( eagerly)

And do they believe it?

VOGLER

Is it true?

OLD SALIERI

Do you believe it?

Should I?

VOGLER

A very long pause. Salieri stares above the priest, seemingly lost in his own private world.

VOGLER (CONT’D)

1. or God's sake, my son, if you have anything to confess, do it now!
2. ive yourself some peace!

A further pause.

VOGLER (CONT’D)

Do you hear me?

OLD SALIERI

He was murdered, Father! Mozart!

Cruelly murdered.

Pause.

13

9.

VOGLER

(almost whispering)

Yes? Did you do it?

Suddenly Old Salieri turns to him, a look of extreme innocence.

OLD SALIERI

He was my idol! I can't remember a

time when I didn't know his name!

When I was only fourteen he was

already famous. Even in Legnago -

the tiniest town in Italy - I knew

of him.

CUT TO:

EXT. A SMALL TOWN SQUARE IN LOMBARDY, ITALY - DAY - 1780'S13

There are twelve children and twenty adults in the square. We see the fourteen-year-old Salieri blindfolded, playing a game of Blindman's Bluff with other Italian children, running about in the bright sunshine and laughing.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

I was still playing childish games

when he was playing music for kings

and emperors. Even the Pope in

Rome!

CUT TO:

14

INT. A SALON IN THE VATICAN - DAY - 1780'S

14

We see the six-year-old MOZART, also blindfolded, seated in a gilded chair on a pile of books, playing the harpsichord for the POPE and a suite of CARDINALS and other churchmen. Beside the little boy stands LEOPOLD, his father, smirking with pride.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

I admit I was jealous when I heard

the tales they told about him. Not

of the brilliant little prodigy

himself, but of his father, who had

taught him everything.

The piece finishes. Leopold lowers the lid of the harpsichord and lifts up his little son to stand on it. Mozart removes the blindfold to show a pale little face with staring eyes. Both father and son bow. A Papal Chamberlain presents Leopold with a gold snuff box whilst the cardinals decorously applaud. Over this scene Old Salieri speaks.

10.

15

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

My father did not care for music.

He wanted me only to be a merchant,

like himself. As anonymous as he

was. When I told how I wished I

could be like Mozart, he would say,

Why? Do you want to be a trained

monkey? Would you like me to drag

you around Europe doing tricks like

a circus freak? How could I tell

him what music meant to me?

CUT TO:

EXT. A COUNTRY CHURCH IN NORTH ITALY - DAY - 1780'S

15

Serene music of the Italian Baroque - Pergolesi's Stabat Mater - sung by a choir of boys with organ accompaniment. We see the outside of the 17th-century church sitting in the wide landscape of Lombardy: sunlit fields, a dusty, white road, poplar trees.

16

INT. THE CHURCH AT LEGNAGO - DAY - 1780'S

16

The music continues and swells. We see the twelve-year-old Salieri seated between his plump and placid parents in the congregation, listening in rapture. His father is a heavy- looking, self-approving man, obviously indifferent to the music. A large and austere Christ on the cross hangs over the altar. Candles burn below his image.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

Even then a spray of sounded notes

could make me dizzy, almost to

falling.

The boy falls forward on his knees. So do his parents and the other members of the congregation. He stares up at Christ who stares back at him.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

Whilst my father prayed earnestly

to God to protect commerce, I would

offer up secretly the proudest

prayer a boy could think of. Lord,

make me a great composer! Let me

celebrate your glory through music -

and be celebrated myself! Make me

famous through the world, dear God!

Make me immortal! After I die let

people speak my name forever with

love for what I wrote!

(MORE)

11.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.) (CONT'D)

In return I vow I will give you my

chastity - my industry, my deepest

humility, every hour of my life.

And I will help my fellow man all I

can. Amen and amen!

The music swells to a crescendo. The candles flare. We see the Christ through the flames looking at the boy benignly.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

And do you know what happened? A

miracle!

17

INT. DINING ROOM IN THE SALIERI HOUSE - DAY - 1780'S

17

18

CU, a large cooked fish on a thick china plate. Camera pulls back to show the Salieri family at dinner. Father Salieri sits at the head of the table, a napkin tucked into his chin. Mother Salieri is serving the fish into portions and handing them round. Two maiden aunts are in attendance, wearing black, and of course the young boy. Father Salieri receives his plate of fish and starts to eat greedily. Suddenly there is a gasp - he starts to choke violently on a fish bone. All the women get up and crowd around him, thumping and pummeling him, but it is in vain. Father Salieri collapses.

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON - 1823 18

OLD SALIERI

Suddenly he was dead. Just like

that! And my life changed forever.

My mother said, Go. Study music if

you really want to. Off with you!

And off I went as quick as I could

and never saw Italy again. Of

course, I knew God had arranged it

all; that was obvious. One moment I

was a frustrated boy in an obscure

little town. The next I was here,

in Vienna, city of musicians,

sixteen years old and studying

under Gluck! Gluck, Father. Do you

know who he was? The greatest

composer of his time. And he loved

me! That was the wonder. He taught

me everything he knew. And when I

was ready, introduced me personally

to the Emperor! Emperor Joseph -

the musical king! Within a few

years I was his court composer.

Wasn't that incredible? Imperial

Composer to His Majesty!

(MORE)

12.

OLD SALIERI (CONT'D)

Actually the man had no ear at all,

but what did it matter? He adored

my music, that was enough. Night

after night I sat right next to the

Emperor of Austria, playing duets

with him, correcting the royal

sight-reading. Tell me, if you had

been me, wouldn't you have thought

God had accepted your vow? And

believe me, I honoured it. I was a

model of virtue. I kept my hands

off women, worked hours every day

teaching students, many of them for

free, sitting on endless committees

to help poor musicians - work and

work and work, that was all my

life. And it was wonderful!

Everybody liked me. I liked myself.

I was the most successful musician

in Vienna. And the happiest. Till

he came. Mozart.

CUT TO:

INT. THE ARCHBISHOP OF SALZBURG'S RESIDENCE - VIENNA - DAY19-

20

A grand room crowded with guests. A small group of Gypsy musicians is playing in the background. Thirteen members of the Archbishop's orchestra - all wind players, complete with wind instruments: elaborate-looking bassoons, basset horns, etc. and wearing their employer's livery - are laying out music on stands at one end of the room. At the other end is a large gilded chair, bearing the arms of the ARCHBISHOP OF SALZBURG. A throng of people is standing, talking, and preparing to sit upon the rows of waiting chairs to hear a concert.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

One day he came to Vienna to play

some of his music at the residence

of his employer, the Prince-

Archbishop of Salzburg. Eagerly I

went there to seek him out. That

night changed my life.

We see Salieri, age thirty-one, a neat, carefully turned-cut man in decent black clothes and clean white linen, walking through the crowd of guests. We follow him.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

As I went through the salon, I

played a game with myself.

(MORE)

13.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.) (CONT'D)

This man had written his first

concerto at the age of four; his

first symphony at seven; a full-

scale opera at twelve. Did it show?

Is talent like that written on the

face?

We see shots of assorted young men staring back at Salieri as he moves through the crowd.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

Which one of them could he be?

Some of the men recognize Salieri and bow respectfully. Then suddenly a servant bearing a large tray of cakes and pastries stalks past. Instantly riveted by the sight of such delights, Salieri follows him out of the Grand Salon.

INT. A PALACE CORRIDOR - DAY - 1780'S

The servant marches along bearing his tray of pastries aloft. Salieri follows him.

The servant turns into:

INT. BUFFET ROOM IN THE PALACE - DAY - 1780'S

Salieri's POV: several tables, dressed to the floor with cloths are loaded with many plates of confectionery. It is, in fact, Salieri's idea of paradise! The servant puts his tray down on one of the tables and withdraws from the room.

23

INT. A PALACE CORRIDOR - DAY - 1780'S

23

Salieri turns away so as not to be noticed by the servant. As soon as the man disappears, Salieri sneaks into the buffet room.

24

INT. BUFFET ROOM IN THE PALACE - DAY - 1780'S

24

Salieri enters the room and looks about him cautiously. He is salivating with anticipation as he stares at the feast of sweet things. His attention is attracted in particular by a huge pile of dark chocolate balls arranged in the shape of a pineapple. He reaches out a hand to steal one of the balls, but at the same moment he hears giggling coming toward him. He ducks down behind the pastry table.

A girl - CONSTANZE - rushes into the room. She runs straight across it and hides herself behind one of the tables.

After a beat of total silence, MOZART runs into the room, stops, and looks around.

14.

He is age twenty-six, wearing a fine wig and a brilliant coat with the insignia of the Archbishop of Salzburg upon it. He is puzzled; Constanze has disappeared.

Baffled, he turns and is about to leave the room, when Constanze suddenly squeaks from under the cloth like a tiny mouse. Instantly Mozart drops to all fours and starts crawling across the floor, meowing and hissing like a naughty cat. Watched by an astonished Salieri, Mozart disappears under the cloth and obviously pounces upon Constanze. We hear a high-pitched giggle, which is going to characterize Mozart throughout the film.

CUT TO:

25

INT. PALACE GRAND SALON - DAY - 1780'S

25

The throng is mostly seated. The musicians are in their places, holding their various exotic-looking wind instruments; the candles are all lit. A Majordomo appears and bangs his staff on the floor for attention. Immediately COLLOREDO, Prince-Archbishop of Salzburg enters. He is a small self- important figure of fifty in a wig, surmounted by a scarlet skullcap. He is followed by his Chamberlain, the Count ARCO. Everyone stands. The Archbishop goes to his throne and sits. His guests sit also. Arco gives the signal to start the music. Nothing happens. Instead, a wind musician gets up, approaches the Chamberlain and whispers in his ear. Arco in turn whispers to the Archbishop.

ARCO

Mozart is not here.

COLLOREDO

Where is he?

ARCO

They're looking for him, Your

Grace.

INT. A PALACE CORRIDOR - DAY - 1780'S

Three servants are opening doors and looking into rooms going off the corridor.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE GRAND SALON - DAY - 1780'S

The guests are turning around and looking at the Archbishop. The musicians are watching. There is puzzlement and a murmur of comment. The Archbishop tightens his lip.

28

COLLOREDO

(to Arco)

We'll start without him.

INT. PALACE BUFFET ROOM - DAY - 1780'S

15.

28

Mozart is on his knees before the tablecloth, which reaches to the floor. Under it is Constanze. We hear her giggling as he talks.

MOZART

Miaouw! Miaouw! Mouse-wouse? It's

Puss-wuss, fangs-wangs. Paws-claws.

Pounce-bounce!

He grabs her ankle. She screams. He pulls her out by her leg.

CONSTANZE

1. top it. Stop it!
2. hey roll on the floor. He tickles her.

Stop it!

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

MOZART

I am! I am! I'm stopping it - slowly. You see! Look, I've stopped. Now we are going back.

He tries to drag her back under the table.

CONSTANZE

No! No! No!

MOZART

Yes! Back! Back! Listen - don't you know where you are?

Where?

CONSTANZE

MOZART

We are in the Residence of the Fartsbishop of Salzburg.

CONSTANZE

Fartsbishop!

She laughs delightedly, then addresses an imaginary Archbishop.

16.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

Your Grace, I've got something to tell you. I want to complain about this man.

MOZART

Go ahead, tell him. Tell them all. They won't understand you anyway.

Why not?

CONSTANZE

MOZART

Because here everything goes

backwards. People walk backwards,

dance backwards, sing backwards,

and talk backwards.

CONSTANZE

That's stupid.

MOZART

Why? People fart backwards.

CONSTANZE

Do you think that's funny?

MOZART

Yes, I think it's brilliant. You've been doing it for years.

He gives a high pitched giggle.

CONSTANZE

Oh, ha, ha, ha.

MOZART

Sra-I'm-sick! Sra-I'm sick!

CONSTANZE

Yes, you are. You're very sick.

MOZART

No, no. Say it backwards, shit-wit. Sra-I'm-sick Say it backwards!

CONSTANZE

(working it out) Sra-I'm-sick. Sick - kiss I'm - my Kiss my! Sra-I'm-sick - Kiss my arse!

MOZART

Em iram! Em iram!

17.

CONSTANZE

No, I'm not playing this game.

MOZART

No, this is serious. Say it backwards.

No!

CONSTANZE

MOZART

Just say it - you'll see. It's very serious. Em iram! Em iram!

CONSTANZE

Iram - marry Em - marry me! No, no!

You're a fiend. I'm not going to

marry a fiend. A dirty fiend at

that.

MOZART

Ui-vol-i-tub!

CONSTANZE

Tub - but i-tub - but I vol - love

but I love ui - You. I love you!

The mood becomes suddenly softer. She kisses him. They embrace. Then he spoils it.

MOZART

Tish-I'm tee. What's that?

What?

CONSTANZE

MOZART

Tish-I'm-tee.

Eat

Yes.

CONSTANZE

MOZART

CONSTANZE

Eat my - ah!

Shocked, she strikes at him. At the same moment the music starts in the salon next door. We hear the opening of the Serenade for Thirteen Wind Instruments, K.

18.

29

MOZART

My music! They've started! They've

started without me!

He leaps up, disheveled and rumpled and runs out of the room. Salieri watches in amazement and disgust.

CUT TO:

INT. PALACE CORRIDOR - DAY - 1780'S

29

The music is louder. Mozart hastens towards the Grand Salon away from the buffet room, adjusting his dress as he goes.

30

INT. GRAND SALON - DAY - 1780'S

30

The opening of the Serenade is being tentatively conducted by the leader of the wind-musicians. Guests turn around as Mozart appears - bowing to the Archbishop - and walks with an attempt at dignity to the dais where the wind band is playing. The leader yields his place to the composer and Mozart smoothly takes over conducting.

Constanze, deeply embarrassed, sneaks into the room and seats herself at the back.

31

INT. PALACE BUFFET ROOM - DAY - 1780'S

31

The music fades down. Salieri stands shocked from his inadvertent eavesdropping. After a second he moves almost in a trance toward the door; the music dissolves.

32

INT. GRAND SALON - DAY - 1780'S

32

Mozart is conducting the Adagio from his Serenade (K. 361), guiding the thirteen wind instrumentalists. The squeezebox opening of the movement begins. Salieri appears at the door at the back of the salon. He stares in disbelief at Mozart.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

So that was he! That giggling,

dirty- minded creature I'd just

seen crawling on the floor. Mozart.

The phenomenon whose legend had

haunted my youth. Impossible.

The music swells up and Salieri listens to it with eyes closed - amazed, transported - suddenly engulfed by the sound. Finally it fades down and away and changes into applause. Salieri opens his eyes.

The audience is clearly delighted. Mozart bows to them, also delighted.

19.

Colloredo rises abruptly, and without looking at Mozart or applauding and leaves the Salon. Count Arco approaches the composer. Mozart turns to him, radiant.

ARCO

Follow me, please. The Archbishop

would like a word.

33

MOZART

Certainly!

He follows Arco out of the room, through a throng of admirers.

INT. ANOTHER PALACE CORRIDOR - DAY - 1780'S

33

Mozart and Arco walk side by side. They pass Salieri who is staring at Mozart in fascination. As they disappear, he steals toward the music stands, unable to help himself.

MOZART

Well, I think that went off

remarkably well, don't you?

Indeed.

ARCO

MOZART

These Viennese certainly know good

music when they hear it.

ARCO

His Grace is very angry with you.

MOZART

What do you mean?

They arrive at the door of Colloredo's private apartment.

ARCO

You are to come in here and ask his

pardon.

Arco opens the door.

34

INT. ARCHBISHOP'S PRIVATE ROOM - DAY - 1780'S

34

The Archbishop is sitting, chatting to quests. Among them are several ladies. Arco approaches him obsequiously.

ARCO

Your Grace.

20.

COLLOREDO

Ah, Mozart. Why?

MOZART

Why what, sir?

COLLOREDO

Why do I have to be humiliated in

front of my guests by one of my own

servants?

MOZART

Humiliated?

COLLOREDO

How much provocation am I to endure

from you? The more license I allow

you, the more you take.

The company watches this scene, deeply interested.

MOZART

If His Grace is not satisfied with

me, he can dismiss me.

COLLOREDO

I wish you to return immediately to

Salzburg. Your father is waiting

for you there patiently. I will

speak to you further when I come.

MOZART

No, Your Grace! I mean with all

humility, no. I would rather you

dismissed me. It's obvious I don't

satisfy.

COLLOREDO

Then try harder, Mozart. I have no

intention of dismissing you. You

will remain in my service and learn

your place. Go now.

He extends his hand to be kissed. Mozart does it with a furious grace, then leaves the room. As he opens the door we see:

35 INT. PALACE CORRIDOR - DAY - 1780'S 35

A group of people who have attended the concert, among them Constanze, are standing outside the private apartment. At sight of the composer they break into sustained applause. Mozart is suddenly delighted. He throws the door wide open

21.

so that the guests can see into the private apartment where the Archbishop sits - and he can see them. Colloredo is clearly discomfited by this reception of his employee. He smiles and bows uneasily, as they include him in the small ovation.

Mozart stands in the corridor, out of the Archbishop's line of sight, bowing and giggling, and encouraging the applause for the Archbishop with conducting gestures. Suddenly irritated, Colloredo signs to Arco, who steps forward and shuts the door, ending the applause.

36

INT. PALACE GRAND SALON - DAY - 1780'S

36

Salieri, in this vast room, is standing and looking at the full score of the Serenade. He turns the pages back to the slow movement. Instantly, we again hear its lyrical strains.

CU, Salieri, reading the score of the Adagio in helpless fascination. The music is played against his description of it.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

Extraordinary! On the page it

looked nothing. The beginning

simple, almost comic. Just a pulse -

bassoons and basset horns - like a

rusty squeezebox. Then suddenly -

high above it - an oboe, a single

note, hanging there unwavering,

till a clarinet took over and

sweetened it into a phrase of such

delight! This was no composition by

a performing monkey! This was a

music I'd never heard. Filled with

such longing, such unfulfillable

longing, it had me trembling. It

seemed to me that I was hearing a

voice of God.

Suddenly the music snaps off. Mozart stands before him as he lays down the score.

Excuse me!

MOZART

He takes the score, bows, and struts briskly out of the room. Salieri stares uncomprehendingly after the jaunty little figure.

But why?

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - 1823

OLD SALIERI

Why? Would God choose an obscene child to be His instrument? It was not to be believed! This piece had to be an accident. It had to be!

INT. PALACE DINING ROOM - DAY - 1780'S

22.

At the table sits the EMPEROR JOSEPH II, eating his frugal dinner and sipping goat's milk. He is an intelligent, dapper man of forty, wearing a military uniform. Around him but standing, are his Chamberlain, JOHANN VON STRACK: stiff and highly correct. COUNT ORSINI-ROSENBERG: a corpulent man of sixty, highly conscious of his position as Director of the Opera. BARON VON SWIETEN, the Imperial Librarian: a grave but kindly and educated man in his mid-fifties. FIRST KAPELLMEISTER GIUSEPPE BONNO: very Italian, cringing and time-serving, aged about seventy. And Salieri, wearing decorous black, as usual.

At a side-table, two Imperial secretaries, using quill pens and inkstands, write down everything of importance that is said.

JOSEPH

How good is he, this Mozart?

VON SWIETEN

He's remarkable, Majesty. I heard

an extraordinary serious opera of

his last month. Idomeneo, King of

Crete.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

That? A most tiresome piece. I

heard it, too.

Tiresome?

VON SWIETEN

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

A young man trying to impress beyond his abilities. Too much spice. Too many notes.

VON SWIETEN

Majesty, I thought it the most promising work I've heard in years.

JOSEPH

Ah-ha. Well then, we should make some effort to acquire him.

(MORE)

23.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

We could use a good German composer in Vienna, surely?

VON STRACK

I agree, Majesty, but I'm afraid it's not possible. The young man is still in the pay of the Archbishop.

JOSEPH

Very small pay, I imagine. I'm sure he could be tempted with the right offer. Say, an opera in German for our National Theatre.

VON SWIETEN

Excellent, sire!

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

But not German, I beg your Majesty! Italian is the proper language for opera. All educated people agree on that.

JOSEPH

Ah-ha. What do you say, Chamberlain?

VON STRACK

In my opinion, it is time we had a piece in our own language, sir. Plain German. For plain people.

He looks defiantly at Orsini-Rosenberg.

JOSEPH

Ah-ha. Kapellmeister?

BONNO

(Italian accent)

Majesty, I must agree with Herr Dirretore. Opera is an Italian art, solamente. German is - scusate - too bruta for singing, too rough.

JOSEPH

Ah-ha. Court Composer, what do you say?

SALIERI

I think it is an interesting notion to keep Mozart in Vienna, Majesty. It should really infuriate the Archbishop beyond measure - if that is your Majesty's intention.

39

JOSEPH

You are cattivo, Court Composer. (briskly, to Von Strack)

I want to meet this young man.

Chamberlain, arrange a pleasant

welcome for him.

VON STRACK

Yes, sir.

JOSEPH

Well. There it is.

INT. BEDROOM IN SALIERI'S APARTMENT - DAY - 1780'S

24.

39

A somber room which serves both as a bedroom and a study. We see a four-poster bed. Also, a marble mantelpiece above which hangs a handsome cross in olivewood, bearing the figure of a severe Christ. Opposite this image sits Salieri at his desk, on which stands a pile of music paper, quill pens and ink. On one side of him is an open forte-piano on which he occasionally tries notes from the march he is composing, with some difficulty. He scratches notes out with his quill, and ruffles his hair - which we see without a powdered wig. There is a knock at the door.

Si.

SALIERI

A servant admits LORL, a young lower-class girl, who appears carrying a basket in which is a box covered with a napkin. She has just come from the baker's shop.

SALIERI (CONT’D)

Ah! Here she comes. Fraulein Lorl,

good morning.

LORL

Good morning, sir.

SALIERI

What have you got for me today? Let

me see.

Greedily he unwraps the napkin and lifts the lid on the box.

SALIERI (CONT’D)

Ah-ha! Siena macaroons - my

favourites. Give my best thanks to

the baker.

LORL

I will, sir.

25.

He takes a biscuit and eats.

SALIERI

Thank you. Are you well today,

Fraulein Lorl?

LORL

Yes, thank you, sir.

SALIERI

Bene! Bene!

She gives a little curtsey, flattered and giggling and is shown out. Salieri turns back to his work, chewing. He plays through a complete line of the march. He smiles, pleased with the result.

SALIERI (CONT’D)

1. razie, Signore.
2. e inclines his head to the Christ above the fireplace, and starts to play the whole march, including the phrase which pleased him.

40

INT. A WIGMAKER'S SHOP - VIENNA - DAY - 1780'S

40

The march continues on the forte-piano as we see Mozart, seated in front of a mirror, wearing an extravagant wig. On either side of him stands a SALESMAN, one of them holding another wig, equally extravagant. Mozart takes off the first wig, to reveal his own blonde hair, of which he is extremely proud, and hands it back.

MOZART

And the other one?

The Salesman puts the second wig on his head. Mozart pulls a face of doubt in the mirror.

MOZART (CONT’D)

And the other one?

He takes it off and the other Salesman replaces it with the first wig on his head.

MOZART (CONT’D)

Oh, they're both so beautiful, I

can't decide. Why don't I have two

heads?

He giggles. The music stops.

41

INT. GRAND SALON - THE ROYAL PALACE - DAY - 1780'S

26.

41

A door opens. We glimpse in the next room the Emperor Joseph bidding goodbye to a group of military officers standing around a table.

JOSEPH

1. ood, good, good.
2. e turns and comes into the salon, where another group awaits him. It consists of Von Strack, Orsini-Rosenberg, Bonno, Von Swieten and Salieri. The room contains several gilded chairs dotted about, and a forte-piano.

JOSEPH (CONT’D)

Good morning, gentlemen.

All bow and say, Good morning, Your Majesty!

JOSEPH (CONT’D)

(to Von Strack)

Well, what do you have for me

today?

VON STRACK

Your Majesty, Herr Mozart -

JOSEPH

Yes, what about him?

He's here.

VON STRACK

JOSEPH

Ah-ha. Well. There it is. Good.

SALIERI

Majesty, I hope you won't think it improper, but I have written a little March of Welcome in his honour.

He produces a paper.

JOSEPH

What a charming idea. May I see?

SALIERI

(handing it over)

It's just a trifle, of course.

JOSEPH

May I try it?

27.

Majesty.

SALIERI

The Emperor goes to the instrument, sits and plays the first bars of it. Quite well.

JOSEPH

Delightful, Court Composer. Would

you permit me to play it as he

comes in?

SALIERI

You do me too much honour, Sire.

JOSEPH

Let's have some fun.

(to the waiting

Majordomo)

Bring in Herr Mozart, please. But

slowly, slowly. I need a minute to

practice.

The Majordomo bows and goes. The Emperor addresses himself to the march. He plays a wrong note.

SALIERI

A-flat, Majesty.

42

JOSEPH

Ah-ha!

INT. PALACE CORRIDOR - VIENNA - DAY - 1780'S

42

Taking his instructions literally, the Majordomo is marching very slowly toward the salon door. He is followed by a bewildered Mozart, dressed very stylishly and wearing one of the wigs from the perruqier.

43

INT. ROYAL PALACE GRAND SALON - DAY - 1780'S Joseph finishes the march. The door opens.

MAJORDOMO

Herr Mozart.

43

Mozart comes in eagerly. Immediately the march begins, played by His Majesty. All the courtiers stand, listening with admiration. Joseph plays well, but applies himself fiercely to the manuscript. Mozart, still bewildered, regards the scene, but does not seem to pay attention to the music itself. It finishes and all clap obsequiously.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Bravo, Your Majesty!

28.

VON STRACK

Well done, Sire!

The Emperor rises, pleased with himself. He snatches the manuscript off the stand and holds it in his hand for the rest of the scene.

JOSEPH

Gentlemen, gentlemen, a little less

enthusiasm, I beg you. Ah, Mozart.

He extends his hand. Mozart throws himself to his knees, and to Joseph's discomfort kisses the royal hand with fervour.

MOZART

Your Majesty!

JOSEPH

No, no, please! It is not a holy

relic.

(raising Mozart up)

You know we have met already? In

this very room. Perhaps you won't

remember it, you were only six

years old.

(to the others)

He was giving the most brilliant

little concert here. As he got off

the stool, he slipped and fell. My

sister Antoinette helped him up

herself, and do you know what he

did? Jumped straight into her arms

and said, Will you marry me, yes or

no?

Embarrassed, Mozart bursts into a wild giggle. Joseph helps him out.

JOSEPH (CONT’D)

You know all these gentlemen, I'm

sure.

Von Strack and Bonno nod.

JOSEPH (CONT’D)

The Baron Von Swieten.

VON SWIETEN

I'm a great admirer of yours, young

man. Welcome.

MOZART

Oh, thank you.

29.

JOSEPH

The Director of our Opera. Count Orsini-Rosenberg.

MOZART

(bowing excitedly)

Oh sir, yes! The honour is mine. Absolutely.

Orsini-Rosenberg nods without enthusiasm.

JOSEPH

And here is our illustrious Court Composer, Herr Salieri.

SALIERI

(taking his hand)

Finally! Such an immense joy. Diletto straordinario!

MOZART

I know your work well, Signore. Do you know I actually composed some variations on a melody of yours?

Really?

SALIERI

MOZART

Mio caro Adone.

Ah!

SALIERI

MOZART

A funny little tune, but it yielded

some good things.

JOSEPH

And now he has returned the

compliment. Herr Salieri composed

that March of Welcome for you.

MOZART

(speaking expertly)

Really? Oh, grazie, Signore! Sono commosso! E un onore per mo

eccezionale. Compositore brilliante

e famossissimo!

He bows elaborately. Salieri inclines himself, dryly.

SALIERI

My pleasure.

30.

JOSEPH

Well, there it is. Now to business. Young man, we are going to commission an opera from you. What do you say?

Majesty!

MOZART

JOSEPH

(to the courtiers)

Did we vote in the end for German or Italian?

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Well, actually, Sire, if you remember, we did finally incline to Italian.

Did we?

VON STRACK

VON SWIETEN

I don't think it was really decided, Director.

MOZART

Oh, German! German! Please let it be German.

Why so?

JOSEPH

MOZART

Because I've already found the most wonderful libretto!

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Oh? Have I seen it?

MOZART

I - I don't think you have, Herr Director. Not yet. I mean, it's quite n - Of course, I'll show it to you immediately.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

I think you'd better.

JOSEPH

Well, what is it about? Tell us the story.

31.

MOZART

It's actually quite amusing, Majesty. It's set - the whole thing is set in a - in a -

He stops short with a little giggle.

JOSEPH

Yes, where?

MOZART

In a Pasha's Harem, Majesty. A Seraglio.

Ah-ha.

JOSEPH

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

You mean in Turkey?

Exactly.

MOZART

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Then why especially does it have to

be in German?

MOZART

Well not especially. It can be in

Turkish, if you really want. I

don't care.

He giggles again. Orsini-Rosenberg looks at him sourly.

VON SWIETEN

(kindly)

My dear fellow, the language is not

finally the point. Do you really

think that subject is quite

appropriate for a national theatre?

MOZART

Why not? It's charming. I mean, I

don't actually show concubines

exposing their! their! It's not

indecent!

(to Joseph)

It's highly moral, Majesty. It's

full of proper German virtues. I

swear it. Absolutely!

JOSEPH

Well, I'm glad to hear that.

32.

SALIERI

Excuse me, Sire, but what do you

think these could be? Being a

foreigner, I would love to learn.

JOSEPH

Cattivo again, Court Composer.

Well, tell him, Mozart. Name us a

German virtue.

MOZART

Love, Sire!

SALIERI

Ah, love! Well of course in Italy

we know nothing about that.

The Italian faction - Orsini-Rosenberg and Bonno - laugh discreetly.

MOZART

No, I don't think you do. I mean

watching Italian opera, all those

male sopranos screeching. Stupid

fat couples rolling their eyes

about! That's not love - it's just

rubbish.

An embarrassed pause. Bonno giggles in nervous amusement.

MOZART (CONT’D)

Majesty, you choose the language.

It will be my task to set it to the

finest music ever offered a

monarch.

Pause. Joseph is clearly pleased.

JOSEPH

Well, there it is. Let it be

1. erman.
2. e nods - he has wanted this result all the time. He turns and makes for the door. All bow. Then he becomes aware of the manuscript in his hand.

JOSEPH (CONT’D)

Ah, this is yours.

Mozart does not take it.

MOZART

Keep it, Sire, if you want to. It

is already here in my head.

33.

JOSEPH

What? On one hearing only?

MOZART

I think so, Sire, yes.

Pause.

Show me.

JOSEPH

Mozart bows and hands the manuscript back to the Emperor. Then he goes to the forte-piano and seats himself. The others, except for Salieri, gather around the manuscript held by the King. Mozart plays the first half of the march with deadly accuracy.

MOZART

(to Salieri)

The rest is just the same, isn't

it?

He plays the first half again but stops in the middle of a phrase, which he repeats dubiously.

MOZART (CONT’D)

That really doesn't work, does it?

All the courtiers look at Salieri.

MOZART (CONT’D)

Did you try this? Wouldn't it be

just a little more -?

He plays another phrase.

MOZART (CONT’D)

Or this - yes, this! Better.

He plays another phrase. Gradually, he alters the music so that it turns into the celebrated march to be used later in The Marriage of Figaro, Non Piu Andrai. He plays it with increasing abandon and virtuosity. Salieri watches with a fixed smile on his face. The court watches, astonished. He finishes in great glory, takes his hands off the keys with a gesture of triumph - and grins.

44

INT. BEDROOM IN SALIERI'S APARTMENT - DAY - 1780'S

44

We see the olivewood cross. Salieri is sitting at his desk, staring at it.

SALIERI

Grazie, Signore.

34.

There is a knock at the door. He does not hear it, but sits on. Another knock, louder.

45

SALIERI (CONT’D)

Yes?

Lorl comes in.

LORL

Madame Cavalieri is here for her

lesson, sir.

SALIERI

Bene.

He gets up and enters:

INT. MUSIC ROOM IN SALIERI'S APARTMENT - DAY - 1780'S

45

KATHERINA CAVALIERI, a young, high-spirited soprano of twenty is waiting for him, dressed in a fashionable dress and wearing on her head an exotic turban of satin, with a feather. Lorl exits.

CAVALIERI

(curtseying to him)

Maestro.

SALIERI

Good morning.

CAVALIERI

(posing, in her turban)

Well? How do you like it? It's

Turkish. My hairdresser tells me

everything's going to be Turkish

this year!

SALIERI

Really? What else did he tell you

today? Give me some gossip.

CAVALIERI

Well, I heard you met Herr Mozart.

SALIERI

Oh? News travels fast in Vienna.

CAVALIERI

And he's been commissioned to write

an opera. Is it true?

Yes.

SALIERI

35.

CAVALIERI

Is there a part for me?

No.

SALIERI

CAVALIERI

How do you know?

SALIERI

Well even if there is, I don't think you want to get involved with this one.

Why not?

CAVALIERI

SALIERI

Well, do you know where it's set, my dear?

Where?

CAVALIERI

SALIERI

In a harem.

CAVALIERI

What's that?

A brothel.

Oh!

SALIERI

CAVALIERI

SALIERI

A Turkish brothel.

CAVALIERI

Turkish? Oh, if it's Turkish, that's different. I want to be in it.

SALIERI

My dear, it will hardly enhance your reputation to be celebrated throughout Vienna as a singing prostitute for a Turk.

He seats himself at the forte-piano.

36.

CAVALIERI

Oh. Well perhaps you could introduce us anyway.

Perhaps.

SALIERI

He plays a chord. She sings a scale, expertly. He strikes another chord. She starts another scale, then breaks off.

CAVALIERI

What does he look like?

SALIERI

You might be disappointed.

Why?

CAVALIERI

SALIERI

Looks and talent don't always go

together, Katherina.

CAVALIERI

(airily)

Looks don't concern me, Maestro.

Only talent interests a woman of

taste.

He strikes the chord again, firmly. Cavalieri sings her next scale, then another one, and another one, doing her exercises in earnest. As she hits a sustained high note the orchestral accompaniment in the middle of Martern Aller Arten from Il Seraglio comes in underneath and the music changes from exercises to the exceedingly florid aria.

We DISSOLVE on the singer's face, and she is suddenly not merely turbaned, but painted and dressed totally in a Turkish manner, and we are on:

46

INT. OPERA STAGE - VIENNA - 1780'S

46

The heroine of the opera (Cavalieri) is in full cry addressing the Pasha with scorn and defiance.

The house is full. Watching the performance - which is conducted by Mozart from the clavier in the midst of the orchestra - we note Von Strack, Orsini-Rosenberg, Bonno and Von Swieten, all grouped around the Emperor, in a box.

In another box we see an overdressed, middle-aged woman and three girls, one of whom is Constanze. This is the formidable MADAME WEBER and her three daughters, Constanze, JOSEFA and SOPHIE.

37.

All are enraptured by the spectacle and Madame Weber is especially enraptured by being there at all. Not so, Salieri, who sits in another box, coldly watching the stage.

Cavalieri is singing Martern aller Arten from the line Doch du bist entschlossen.

CAVALIERI

Since you are determined, Since you

are determined, Calmly, with no

ferment, Welcome - every pain and

woe. Bind me then - compel me! Bind

me then - compel me! Hurt me. Break

me! Kill me! At last I shall be

freed by death!

After a few moments of this showy aria, with the composer and the singer staring at each other - he conducting elaborately for her benefit, and she following his beat with rapturous eyes - the music fades, and Salieri speaks over it.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

There she was. I had no idea where

they met - or how - yet there she

stood on stage for all to see.

Showing off like the greedy

songbird she was. Ten minutes of

ghastly scales and arpeggios,

whizzing up and down like fireworks

at a fairground.

Music up again for the last 30 bars of the aria.

CAVALIERI

(singing)

Be freed at last by death! Be freed

at last by death! At last I shall

be freed By! Death!

Before the orchestral coda ends, cut to:

47

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - 1823 Through the window we see that night has fallen.

OLD SALIERI

Understand, I was in love with the girl. Or at least in lust. I wasn't a saint. It took me the most tremendous effort to be faithful to my vow. I swear to you I never laid a finger on her.

(MORE)

47

38.

48

OLD SALIERI (CONT'D)

All the same, I couldn't bear to

think of anyone else touching her -

least of all the Creature.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. THE OPERA HOUSE - VIENNA - NIGHT - 1780'S

48

The brilliant Turkish finale of Seraglio bursts over us. All the cast is lined up on stage. Mozart is conducting with happy excitement.

CAST OF SERAGLIO

(singing)

Pasha Selim May he Live forever!

Ever, ever, ever, ever! Honour to

his regal name! Honour to his regal

name! May his noble brow emblazon

1. lory, fortune, joy and fame!
2. onour be to Pasha Selim Honour to

his regal name! Honour to his regal

name!

The curtains fall. Much applause. The Emperor claps vigorously and - following his lead - so do the courtiers. The curtains part. Mozart applauds the singers who applaud him back. He skips up onto the stage amongst them. The curtains fall again as they all bow. In the auditorium, the chandeliers descend, filling it with light.

49

INT. OPERA HOUSE STAGE - VIENNA - NIGHT - 1780'S

49

The curtains are down, and an excited hubbub of singers in costume surround Mozart and Cavalieri, all excited and chattering. Suddenly a hush. The Emperor is seen approaching from the wings, lit by flunkies holding candles. Von Strack, Orsini-Rosenberg and Von Swieten, amongst others, follow him. Also Salieri. The singers line up. Joseph stops at Cavalieri who makes a deep curtsey.

JOSEPH

Bravo, Madame. You are an ornament

to our stage.

Majesty.

CAVALIERI

JOSEPH

(to Salieri)

And to you, Court Composer. Your pupil has done you great credit.

50

INT. BACKSTAGE CORRIDOR - VIENNA - NIGHT - 1780'S

MADAME WEBER

Let us pass, please! Let us pass at once! We're with the Emperor.

FLUNKY

I am sorry, Madame. It is not permitted.

MADAME WEBER

Do you know who I am?

(pointing to Constanze)

This is my daughter. I am Frau

Weber. We are favoured guests!

FLUNKY

I am sorry, Madame, but I have my orders.

MADAME WEBER

Call Herr Mozart! You call Herr

Mozart immediately! This is

insupportable!

CONSTANZE

Mother, please!

MADAME WEBER

Go ahead, Constanze. Just ignore

this fellow.

(pushing her)

Go ahead, dear!

FLUNKY

(barring the way)

I am sorry, Madame, but no! I

cannot let anyone pass.

MADAME WEBER

Young man, I am no stranger to theatres. I'm no stranger to

insolence!

39.

50

51

CUT BACK TO:

INT. OPERA HOUSE STAGE - VIENNA - NIGHT - 1780'S

51

All are applauding Cavalieri. The Emperor turns to Mozart.

JOSEPH

Well, Herr Mozart! A good effort.

Decidedly that.

(MORE)

40.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

An excellent effort! You've shown us something quite new today.

Mozart bows frantically: he is over-excited.

MOZART

It is new, it is, isn't it, Sire?

JOSEPH

Yes, indeed.

MOZART

And German?

JOSEPH

Oh, yes. Absolutely. German.

Unquestionably!

MOZART

So then you like it? You really like it, Your Majesty?

JOSEPH

Of course I do. It's very good. Of course now and then - just now and then - it gets a touch elaborate.

MOZART

What do you mean, Sire?

JOSEPH

Well, I mean occasionally it seems to have, how shall one say?

(he stops in difficulty;

to Orsini- Rosenberg)

How shall one say, Director?

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Too many notes, Your Majesty?

JOSEPH

Exactly. Very well put. Too many notes.

MOZART

I don't understand. There are just as many notes, Majesty, as are required. Neither more nor less.

JOSEPH

My dear fellow, there are in fact only so many notes the ear can hear in the course of an evening.

(MORE)

41.

JOSEPH (CONT'D)

I think I'm right in saying that,

aren't I, Court Composer?

SALIERI

Yes! yes! er, on the whole, yes,

Majesty.

MOZART

(to Salieri)

But this is absurd!

JOSEPH

My dear, young man, don't take it

too hard. Your work is ingenious.

It's quality work. And there are

simply too many notes, that's all.

Cut a few and it will be perfect.

MOZART

Which few did you have in mind,

Majesty?

Pause. General embarrassment.

JOSEPH

Well. There it is.

Into this uncomfortable scene bursts a sudden eruption of noise and Madame Weber floods onto the stage, followed by her daughters. All turn to look at this amazing spectacle.

MADAME WEBER

Wolfi! Wolfi, my dear!

She moves toward Mozart with arms outstretched in an absurd theatrical gesture, then sees the Emperor. She stares at him, mesmerized, her mouth open, unable even to curtsey.

Oh!

MADAME WEBER (CONT’D)

Mozart moves forward quickly.

MOZART

Majesty, this is Madame Weber. She is my landlady.

JOSEPH

Enchanted, Madame.

MADAME WEBER

Oh, Sire! such an honour! And, and, and these are my dear daughters.

(MORE)

42.

MADAME WEBER (CONT'D)

This is Constanze. She is the

fiancee of Herr Mozart.

Constanze curtsies. CU, of Cavalieri, astonished at the news. CU, of Salieri, watching her receive it.

JOSEPH

Really? How delightful. May I ask

when you marry?

MOZART

Well - Well we haven't quite

received my father's consent, Your

Majesty. Not entirely. Not

altogether.

He giggles uncomfortably.

JOSEPH

Excuse me, but how old are you?

MOZART

Twenty-six.

JOSEPH

Well, my advice is to marry this

charming young lady and stay with

us in Vienna.

MADAME WEBER

You see? You see? I've told him

that, Your Majesty, but he won't

listen to me.

Cavalieri is glaring at Mozart. Mozart looks hastily away from her.

MADAME WEBER (CONT’D)

Oh, Your Majesty, you give such

wonderful - such impeccable - such

royal advice. I - I - May I?

She attempts to kiss the royal hand, but faints instead. The Emperor contemplates her prone body and steps back a pace.

JOSEPH

Well. There it is. Strack.

He nods pleasantly to all and leaves the stage, with his Chamberlain. All bow.

Cavalieri turns with a savage look at Mozart and leaves the stage the opposite way, to her dressing room, tossing her plumed head. Salieri watches.

43.

Mozart stays for a second, indecisive whether to follow the soprano or help Madame Weber.

CONSTANZE

(to Mozart)

1. et some water!
2. e hurries away. The daughters gather around Madame Weber.

52

INT. CAVALIERI'S DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT - 1780'S

52

Katherina sits fuming at her mirror. A dresser is taking the pins out of her wig as she stares straight ahead of her. Mozart sticks his head round the door.

MOZART

Katherina! I'll tell you what I'm

going to do. I'm going to write

another aria for you. Something

even more amazing for the second

act. I have to get some water. Her

mother is lying on the stage.

CAVALIERI

Don't bother!

53

MOZART

What?

CAVALIERI

Don't bother.

MOZART

I'll be right back.

He dashes off.

INT. OPERA HOUSE STAGE - VIENNA - NIGHT - 1780'S

53

Constanze and Mozart make their way quickly through a crowd of actors in turbans and caftans, and stagehands carrying bits of the dismantled set of Seraglio. We see all the turmoil of backstage after a performance.

A fireman passes Mozart carrying a small bucket of water. Mozart snatches it from him and pushes his way through the crowd to Madame Weber, who still lies prone on the stage.

Mozart pushes through the crowd surrounding her and throws water on her face. She is instantly revived by the shock. Constanze assists her to rise.

CONSTANZE

Are you all right?

54

Instead of being furious, Madame Weber smiles at them rapturously.

MADAME WEBER

Ah, what an evening! What a wise

man we have for an Emperor. Oh, my children!

(with sudden, hard

briskness)

Now I want you to write your father exactly what His Majesty said.

The activity continues to swirl around them.

MOZART

You should really go home now, Frau

Weber. Your carriage must be

waiting.

MADAME WEBER

But aren't you taking us?

MOZART

I have to talk to the singers.

MADAME WEBER

That's all right; we'll wait for

you. Just don't take all night.

INT. CAVALIERI'S DRESSING ROOM - NIGHT - 1780'S

44.

54

Cavalieri, still in costume, is marching up and down, very agitated.

CAVALIERI

Did you know? Had you heard?

What?

SALIERI

CAVALIERI

The marriage!

SALIERI

Well, what does it matter to you?

CAVALIERI

Nothing! He can marry who he

pleases. I don't give a damn.

She catches him looking at her and tries to compose herself.

CAVALIERI (CONT’D)

How was I? Tell me honestly.

45.

SALIERI

You were sublime.

CAVALIERI

What did you think of the music?

SALIERI

Extremely clever.

CAVALIERI

Meaning you didn't like it.

Mozart comes in unexpectedly.

MOZART

Oh - excuse me!

CAVALIERI

Is her mother still lying on the

floor?

MOZART

No, she's fine.

CAVALIERI

I'm so relieved.

She seats herself at her mirror and removes her wig.

SALIERI

Dear Mozart, my sincere

congratulations.

MOZART

Did you like it, then?

SALIERI

How could I not?

MOZART

It really is the best music one can

hear in Vienna today. Don't you

agree?

CAVALIERI

Is she a good fuck?

What??

MOZART

CAVALIERI

I assume she's the virtuoso in that department.

(MORE)

46.

CAVALIERI (CONT'D)

There can't be any other reason

you'd marry someone like that.

Salieri looks astonished. There is a knock on the door.

Come in!

CAVALIERI (CONT’D)

The door opens. Constanze enters.

CONSTANZE

Excuse me, Wolfi. Mama is not feeling very well. Can we leave now?

Of course.

MOZART

CAVALIERI

No, no, no, no. You can't take him

away now. This is his night. Won't

you introduce us, Wolfgang?

MOZART

Excuse us, Fraulein. Good night,

Signore.

Mozart hurries Constanze out of the door. Cavalieri looks after them as they go, her voice breaking and rising out of control.

CAVALIERI

You really are full of surprises,

aren't you? You are quite

extraordinary, you little shit!

She turns and collapses, crying with rage, into Salieri's arms. We focus on him.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

At that moment I knew beyond any

doubt. He'd had her. The Creature

had had my darling girl.

55

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - 1820'S The old man speaks passionately to the priest.

OLD SALIERI

It was incomprehensible. What was

God up to?

(MORE)

55

47.

56

OLD SALIERI (CONT'D)

Here I was denying all my natural

lust in order to deserve God's gift

and there was Mozart indulging his

in all directions - even though

engaged to be married! - and no

rebuke at all! Was it possible I

was being tested? Was God expecting

me to offer forgiveness in the face

of every offense, no matter how

painful? That was very possible.

All the same, why him? Why use

Mozart to teach me lessons in

humility? My heart was filling up

with such hatred for that little

man. For the first time in my life

I began to know really violent

thoughts. I couldn't stop them.

VOGLER

Did you try?

OLD SALIERI

Every day. Sometimes for hours I

would pray!

INT. SALIERI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAY - 1780'S

The young Salieri is kneeling in desperation before the Cross.

SALIERI

Please! Please! Send him away, back

to Salzburg. For his sake as well

as mine.

CU, Christ staring from the Cross.

CUT BACK TO:

56

INT. AUDIENCE HALL - ARCHBISHOP'S PALACE - SALZBURG - DAY57-

58

We see Leopold kneeling now not to the Cross but to Archbishop Colloredo, sitting impassively on his throne. Count Arco stands beside him. Leopold is a desperate, once- handsome man of sixty, now far too much the subservient courtier.

COLLOREDO

No! I won't have him back.

48.

LEOPOLD

But he needs to be here in Salzburg, Your Grace. He needs me and he needs you. Your protection, your understanding.

Hardly.

COLLOREDO

LEOPOLD

Oh sir, yes! He's about to make the worst mistake of his life. Some little Viennese slut is trying to trick him into marriage. I know my son. He is too simple to see the trap - and there is no one there who really cares for him.

COLLOREDO

I'm not surprised. Money seems to be more important to him than loyalty or friendship. He has sold himself to Vienna. Let Vienna look out for him.

Sir -

LEOPOLD

COLLOREDO

Your son is an unprincipled, spoiled, conceited brat.

LEOPOLD

Yes, sir, that's the truth. But don't blame him. The fault is mine. I was too indulgent with him. But not again. Never again, I promise! I implore you - let me bring him back here. I'll make him give his word to serve you faithfully.

COLLOREDO

And how will you make him keep it?

LEOPOLD

Oh, sir, he's never disobeyed me in anything. Please, Your Grace, give him one more chance.

COLLOREDO

You have leave to try.

49.

LEOPOLD

Oh, Your Grace - I thank Your

Grace! I thank you!

In deepest gratitude he kisses the Archbishop's hand. He motions Leopold to rise. We hear the first dark fortissimo chord which begins the Overture to Don Giovanni: the theme associated with the character of the Commendatore.

LEOPOLD (V.O.)

My dear son.

The second fortissimo chord sounds.

59

INT. A BAROQUE CHURCH - DAY - 1780'S

59

We see a huge CU, of Mozart's head, looking front and down, as if reading his father's letter. We hear Leopold's voice over this image, no longer whining and anxious, but impressive.

LEOPOLD (V.O.)

I write to you with urgent news. I

am coming to Vienna. Take no

further steps toward marriage until

we meet. You are too gullible to

see your own danger. As you honour

the father who has devoted his

entire life to yours, do as I bid,

and await my coming.

I will.

MOZART

The camera pulls back to see that he is in fact kneeling beside Constanze. A PRIEST faces them. Behind them are Madame Weber, Josefa and Sophie Weber, and a very few others. Among them, a merry looking lady in bright clothes: the BARONESS WALDSTADTEN.

PRIEST

And will you, Constanze Weber, take

this man, Wolfgang to be your

lawful husband?

I will.

CONSTANZE

PRIEST

I now pronounce you man and wife.

The opening kyrie of the great Mass in C Minor is heard. Mozart and Constanze kiss. They are in tears.

60

50.

Madame Weber and her daughters look on approvingly. The music swells and continues under the following:

INT. A ROOM IN LEOPOLD'S HOUSE - SALZBURG - NIGHT - 1780'S60

There is a view of a castle in background. Leopold sits alone in his room. He is reading a letter from Wolfgang. At his feet are his trunks, half-packed for the journey he will not now take. We hear Mozart's voice reading the following letter and we see, as the camera roves around the room, mementos of the young prodigy's early life: the little forte- piano made for him; the little violin made for him; an Order presented to him. We see a little starling in a wicker cage. And we see portraits of the boy on the walls, concluding with the familiar family portrait of Wolfgang and his sister Nannerl seated at the keyboard with Leopold standing, and the picture of their mother on the wall behind them.

MOZART (V.O.)

Most beloved father, it is done. Do

not blame me that I did not wait to

see your dear face. I knew you

would have tried to dissuade me

from my truest happiness and I

could not have borne it. Your every

word is precious to me. Remember

how you have always told me Vienna

is the City of Musicians. To

conquer here is to conquer Europe!

With my wife I can do it. I vow I

will become regular in my habits

and productive as never before. She

is wonderful, Papa, and I know that

you will love her. And one day soon

when I am a wealthy man, you will

come and live with us, and we will

be so happy. I long for that day,

best of Papas, and kiss your hand a

hundred thousand times.

The music of the Mass fades as Leopold crumples the letter in his hand.

61

EXT. THE IMPERIAL GARDENS - VIENNA - DAY - 1780'S

61

Salieri stands waiting, hat in hand. Beside him stands a royal servant. Behind him, gardeners are glimpsed tending the shrubs and bushes along a grassy ride. Down this ride are seen cantering two people on horseback: the Emperor Joseph and his niece, the PRINCESS ELIZABETH. They are mounted on glossy horses. The Princess rides side-saddle. Running beside her is a panting groom. The Emperor rides elegantly; his niece, a dumpy little Hapsburg girl of sixteen, like a sack of potatoes.

51.

As they draw level with Salieri they stop, and the groom holds the head of the Princess' horse. Salieri bows respectfully.

JOSEPH

Good morning, Court Composer. This

is my niece, the Princess

Elizabeth.

SALIERI

Your Highness.

Out of breath, the Princess nods nervously.

JOSEPH

She has asked me to advise her on a

suitable musical instructor. I

think I've come up with an

excellent idea.

He smiles at Salieri.

SALIERI

Oh, Your Majesty, it would be such

a tremendous honour!

JOSEPH

I'm thinking about Herr Mozart.

What is your view?

Salieri's face falls, almost imperceptibly.

SALIERI

An interesting idea, Majesty. But -

Yes?

JOSEPH

SALIERI

You already commissioned an opera from Mozart.

JOSEPH

And the result satisfies.

SALIERI

Yes, of course. My concern is to protect you from any suspicion of favouritism.

JOSEPH

Ah-ha. Favouritism. But I so want Mozart.

52.

SALIERI

I'm sure there is a way, Majesty.

Some kind of a little contest. I

could perhaps put together a small

Committee, and I could see to it

naturally that it will select

according to Your Majesty's wishes.

JOSEPH

You please me, Court Composer. A

very clever idea.

SALIERI

(bowing)

Sire.

JOSEPH

Well. There it is.

He rides on. The groom releases her horse's head, and runs on after the Princess.

CUT TO:

62

INT. CHAMBERLAIN VON STRACK'S STUDY - DAY - 1780'S Von Strack sits stiffly behind his gilded desk. Mozart

stands before him, trembling with anger.

MOZART

What is this, Herr Chamberlain?

VON STRACK

What is what?

MOZART

Why do I have to submit samples of

my work to some stupid committee?

Just to teach a sixteen-year-old

girl.

VON STRACK

Because His Majesty wishes it.

MOZART

Is the Emperor angry with me?

VON STRACK

On the contrary.

MOZART

Then why doesn't he simply appoint

me to the post?

62

53.

VON STRACK

Mozart, you are not the only composer in Vienna.

MOZART

No, but I'm the best.

VON STRACK

A little modesty would suit you better.

MOZART

Who is on this committee?

VON STRACK

Kapellmeister Bonno, Count Orsini-

1. osenberg and Court Composer
2. alieri.

MOZART

Naturally, the Italians! Of course! Always the Italians!

Mozart -

VON STRACK

MOZART

They hate my music. It terrifies them. The only sound Italians understand is banality. Tonic and dominant, tonic and dominant, from here to Resurrection!

(singing angrily)

Ba-ba! Ba-ba! Ba-ba! Ba-ba!

Anything else is morbid.

Mozart -

VON STRACK

MOZART

Show them one interesting modulation and they faint. Ohime! Morbidezza! Morbidezza! Italians are musical idiots and you want them to judge my music!

VON STRACK

Look, young man, the issue is simple. If you want this post, you must submit your stuff in the same way as all your colleagues.

63

54.

MOZART

Must I? Well, I won't! I tell you

straight: I will not!

CUT TO:

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - VIENNA - DAY - 1780'S63

The room is very small and untidy. Constanze is marching up and down it, upset. Mozart is lying on the bed.

CONSTANZE

I think you're mad! You're really

mad!

MOZART

Oh, leave me alone.

CONSTANZE

One royal pupil and the whole of

Vienna will come flocking. We'd be

set up for life!

MOZART

They'll come anyway. They love me

here.

CONSTANZE

No, they will not. I know how

things work in this city.

MOZART

Oh yes? You always know everything.

CONSTANZE

Well, I'm not borrowing any more

money from my mother, and that's

that!

MOZART

You borrowed money from your

mother?

Yes!

CONSTANZE

MOZART

Well, don't do that again!

CONSTANZE

How are we going to live, Wolfi? Do you want me to go into the streets and beg?

55.

64

MOZART

Don't be stupid.

CONSTANZE

All they want to see is your work.

What's wrong with that?

MOZART

Shut up! Just shut up! I don't need

them.

CONSTANZE

This isn't pride. It's sheer

stupidity!

She glares at him, almost in tears.

CUT TO:

INT. SALIERI'S MUSIC ROOM - LATE AFTERNOON - 1780'S

64

1. alieri is giving a lesson to a girl student, who is singing the Italian art song, Caro Mio Ben.
2. here is a knock on the door.

65

SALIERI

Yes.

A SERVANT enters.

SERVANT

Excuse me, sir, there is a lady who

insists on talking to you.

SALIERI

Who is she?

SERVANT

She didn't say. But she says it's

urgent.

SALIERI

(to the pupil)

Excuse me, my dear.

Salieri goes into the salon.

CUT TO:

INT. THE SALON - LATE AFTERNOON - 1780'S

Constanze stands, closely veiled, holding a portfolio stuffed with manuscripts.

65

56.

The singing lesson ends, with two chords on the instrument. Salieri enters the salon. Constanze drops him a shy curtsey.

CONSTANZE

Excellency!

SALIERI

Madame. How can I help you?

Shyly, she unveils.

SALIERI (CONT’D)

Frau Mozart?

CONSTANZE

That's right, Your Excellency. I've

come on behalf of my hus band. I'm -

I'm bringing some samples of his

work so he can be considered for

the royal appointment.

SALIERI

How charming. But why did he not

come himself?

CONSTANZE

He's terribly busy, sir.

SALIERI

I understand.

He takes the portfolio and puts it on a table.

SALIERI (CONT’D)

I will look at them, of course, the

moment I can. It will be an honour.

Please give him my warmest.

CONSTANZE

Would it be too much trouble, sir,

to ask you to look at them now?

While I wait.

SALIERI

I'm afraid I'm not at leisure this

very moment. Just leave them with

me. I assure you they will be quite

safe.

CONSTANZE

I - I really cannot do that, Your

Excellency. You see, he doesn't

know I'm here.

57.

Really?

SALIERI

CONSTANZE

My husband is a proud man, sir. He would be furious if he knew I'd come.

SALIERI

Then he didn't send you?

CONSTANZE

No, sir. This is my own idea.

I see.

SALIERI

CONSTANZE

Sir, we really need this job. We're

desperate. My husband spends far

more than he can ever earn. I don't

mean he's lazy - he's not at all -

he works all day long. It's just!

he's not practical. Money simply

slips through his fingers, it's

really ridiculous, Your Excellency.

I know you help musicians. You're

famous for it. Give him just this

one post. We'd be forever indebted!

A short pause.

SALIERI

Let me offer you some refreshment.

Do you know what these are?

He indicates a dish piled high with glazed chestnuts.

SALIERI (CONT’D)

Cappezzoli di Venere. Nipples of

Venus. Roman chestnuts in brandied

sugar. Won't you try one? They're

quite surprising.

He offers her the dish. She takes one and puts it in her mouth. He watches carefully.

CONSTANZE

Oh! They're wonderful.

He takes one himself. We notice on his finger a heavy gold signet-ring.

58.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

Thank you very much, Your Excellency.

SALIERI

Don't keep calling me that. It puts me at such a distance. I was not born a Court Composer, you know. I'm from a small town, just like your husband.

He smiles at her. She takes another chestnut.

SALIERI (CONT’D)

Are you sure you can't leave that music, and come back again? I have other things you might like.

CONSTANZE

That's very tempting, but it's impossible, I'm afraid. Wolfi would be frantic if he found those were missing. You see, they're all originals.

Originals?

Yes.

SALIERI

CONSTANZE

A pause. He puts out his hand and takes up the portfolio from the table. He opens it. He looks at the music. He is puzzled.

SALIERI

These are originals?

CONSTANZE

Yes, sir. He doesn't make copies.

CUT TO:

66

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - 1823 The old man faces the Priest.

OLD SALIERI

Astounding! It was actually beyond belief. These were first and only drafts of music yet they showed no corrections of any kind. Not one. Do you realize what that meant?

66

67

Vogler stares at him.

OLD SALIERI (CONT’D)

He'd simply put down music already finished in his head. Page after page of it, as if he was just taking dictation. And music finished as no music is ever finished.

INT. SALIERI'S SALON - LATE AFTERNOON - 1780'S

59.

67

CU, The manuscript in Mozart's handwriting. The music begins to sound under the following:

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

Displace one note and there would

be diminishment. Displace one

phrase, and the structure would

fall. It was clear to me. That

sound I had heard in the

Archbishop's palace had been no

accident. Here again was the very

voice of God! I was staring through

the cage of those meticulous ink-

strokes at an absolute, inimitable

beauty.

The music swells. What we now hear is an amazing collage of great passages from Mozart's music, ravishing to Salieri and to us. The Court Composer, oblivious to Constanze, who sits happily chewing chestnuts, her mouth covered in sugar, walks around and around his salon, reading the pages and dropping them on the floor when he is done with them. We see his agonized and wondering face: he shudders as if in a rough and tumbling sea; he experiences the point where beauty and great pain coalesce. More pages fall than he can read, scattering across the floor in a white cascade, as he circles the room.

Finally, we hear the tremendous Qui Tollis from the Mass in C Minor. It seems to break over him like a wave and, unable to bear any more of it, he slams the portfolio shut. Instantly, the music breaks off, reverberating in his head. He stands shaking, staring wildly. Constanze gets up, perplexed.

CONSTANZE

Is it no good?

A pause.

SALIERI

It is miraculous.

60.

CONSTANZE

Oh yes. He's really proud of his

work.

Another pause.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

So, will you help him?

Salieri tries to recover himself.

SALIERI

Tomorrow night I dine with the

Emperor. One word from me and the

post is his.

CONSTANZE

Oh, thank you, sir!

Overjoyed, she stops and kisses his hand. He raises her - and then clasps her to him clumsily. She pushes herself away.

SALIERI

Come back tonight.

Tonight?

Alone.

What for?

CONSTANZE

SALIERI

CONSTANZE

SALIERI

Some service deserves service in

return. No?

CONSTANZE

What do you mean?

SALIERI

Isn't it obvious?

They stare at one another: Constanze in total disbelief.

SALIERI (CONT’D)

It's a post all Vienna seeks. If

you want it for your husband, come

tonight.

CONSTANZE

But! I'm a married woman!

61.

SALIERI

Then don't. It's up to you. Not to be vague, that is the price.

He glares at her.

Yes.

SALIERI (CONT’D)

He rings a silver bell for a servant and abruptly leaves the roam. Constanze stares after him, horrified.

The servant enters. Shocked and stunned, Constanze goes down an her knees and starts picking up the music from the floor.

CUT TO:

68

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - 1823 CU, Father Vogler, horrified.

OLD SALIERI

Yes, Father. Yes! So much for my

vow of chastity. What did it

matter? Good, patient, hard- working, chaste - what did it matter? Had goodness made me a good composer? I realized it absolutely then - that moment: goodness is nothing in the furnace of art. And I was nothing to God.

VOGLER

(crying out)

You cannot say that!

OLD SALIERI

No? Was Mozart a good man?

VOGLER

God's ways are not yours. And you are not here to question Him. Offer him the salt of penitence. He will give you back the bread of eternal life. He is all merciful. That is all you need to know.

OLD SALIERI

All I ever wanted was to sing to Him. That's His doing, isn't it? He gave me that longing - then made me mute. Why? Tell me that.

(MORE)

68

62.

69

OLD SALIERI (CONT'D)

If He didn't want me to serve Him

with music, why implant the desire,

like a lust in my body, then deny

me the talent? Go on, tell me!

Speak for Him!

VOGLER

My son, no one can speak for God.

OLD SALIERI

Oh? I thought you did so every day.

So speak now. Answer me!

VOGLER

I do not claim to unravel the

mysteries. I treasure them. As you

should.

OLD SALIERI

(impatiently)

Oh yes, yes, yes, yes, yes! Always

the same stale answers!

(intimately to the

priest)

There is no God of Mercy, Father.

Just a God of torture.

CUT TO:

INT. SALIERI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1780'S Salieri sits at his desk, staring up at the cross.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

Evening came to that room. I sat

there not knowing whether the girl

would return or not. I prayed as

I'd never prayed before.

SALIERI

Dear God, enter me now. Fill me

with one piece of true music. One

piece with your breath in it, so I

know that you love me. Please. Just

one. Show me one sign of your

favour, and I will show mine to

Mozart and his wife. I will get him

the royal position, and if she

comes, I'll receive her with all

respect and send her home in joy.

Enter me! Enter me! Please! Te

imploro.

69

63.

Long, long silence. Salieri stares at the cross. Christ stares back at him impassively. Finally in this silence we hear a faint knocking at the door. Salieri stirs himself. A servant appears.

SERVANT

That lady is back, sir.

SALIERI

1. how her in. Then go to bed.
2. he Servant bows and leaves. We follow him through:

INT. MUSIC ROOM IN SALIERI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - 1780'S The Servant crosses it and enters:

INT. SALON IN SALIERI'S APARTMENT - NIGHT - 1780'S

Constanze is sitting on an upright chair, veiled as before, the portfolio of music on her lap. Through the far door leading from the hall, another servant is peering at her. The first servant joins him and shuts the door on the girl, leaving her alone.

We stay with her. The clock ticks on the mantelpiece. We hear an old carriage pass in the street below. Nervously she lifts her veil and looks about her.

Suddenly Salieri appears from the music room. He is pale and very tight. They regard each other. She smiles and rises to greet him, affecting a relaxed and warm manner, as if to put him at his ease.

CONSTANZE

Well, I'm here. My husband has gone

to a concert. He didn't think I

would enjoy it.

A pause.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

I do apologize for this afternoon.

I behaved like a silly girl. Where

shall we go?

What?

SALIERI

CONSTANZE

Should we stay here? It's a charming room. I love these candlesticks.

(MORE)

64.

CONSTANZE (CONT'D)

Were they here earlier? I didn't

notice them I suppose I was too

nervous.

As she talks, she extinguishes the candles in a pair of Venetian candelabra and subsequently other candles around the room.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

Wolfgang was given some

candlesticks by King George in

England, but they were only wood.

Oh, excuse me. Let's not talk about

him. What do you think of this?

It's real lace. Brussels.

She turns and takes off her shawl.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

Well, it's much too good for every

day. I keep saying to Wolfi, don't

be so extravagant. Presents are

lovely, but we can't afford them.

It doesn't do any good. The more I

tell him, the more he spends. Oh,

excuse me! There I go again.

She picks up the portfolio.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

Do you still want to look at this?

Or don't we need to bother anymore?

I imagine we don't, really.

She looks at him inquiringly, and drops the portfolio on the floor; pages of music pour out of it. Instantly we hear a massive chord, and the great Qui Tollis from the Mass in C Minor fills the room. To its grand and weighty sound, Constanze starts to undress, watched by the horrified Salieri. Between him and her, music is an active presence, hurting and baffling him. He opens his mouth in distress. The music pounds in his head. The candle flickers over her as she removes her clothes and prepares for his embrace. Suddenly he cries out.

SALIERI

1. o! Go! Go!
2. e snatches up the bell and shakes it frantically, not stopping until the two servants we saw earlier appear at the door. The music stops abruptly. They stare at the appalled and frightened Constanze, who is desperately trying to cover her nakedness.

65.

SALIERI (CONT’D)

Show this woman out!

Constanze hurls herself at him.

CONSTANZE

You shit! You shit! You rotten

shit!

He seizes her wrists and thrusts her back. Then he leaves the room quickly, slamming the door behind him. Constanze turns and sees the two servants goggling at her in the room.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

What are you staring at?

Wildly, she picks up the candelabrum and throws it at them. It shatters on the floor.

72

INT. SALIERI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1780'S

72

CU, Salieri standing, his eyes shut, shaking in distress. He opens them and sees Christ across the room, staring at him from the wall.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

From now on, we are enemies, You

and

73

I!

73

CUT TO:

74

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - 1823

74

The old man is reliving the experience. Vogler looks at him, horrified.

OLD SALIERI

Because You will not enter me, with

all my need for you; because You

scorn my attempts at virtue;

because You choose for Your

instrument a boastful, lustful,

smutty infantile boy and give me

for reward only the ability to

recognize the Incarnation; because

You are unjust, unfair, unkind, I

will block You! I swear it! I will

hinder and harm Your creature on

earth as far as I am able. I will

ruin Your Incarnation.

CUT BACK TO:

75

INT. SALIERI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1780'S

66.

75

CU, the fireplace. In it lies the olivewood Christ on the cross, burning.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

What use after all is Man, if not

to teach God His lessons?

The cross flames up and disintegrates. Salieri stares at it.

CUT TO:

76

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - 1780'S

76

The front door bursts open. Mozart stumbles in, followed by EMMANUEL SCHIKANEDER, three young actresses, and another man, all fairly drunk. Schikaneder (who appears everywhere accompanied by young girls) is a large, fleshy, extravagant man of about thirty-five.

MOZART

1. tanzi! Stanzi! Stanzi-Manzi!
2. he others laugh.

77

MOZART (CONT’D)

Sssh!

SCHIKANEDER

(imitating Mozart)

Stanzi-Manzi-Banzi-Wanzi!

MOZART

Sssh! Stay here.

He walks unsteadily to the bedroom door and opens it.

SCHIKANEDER

(to the girls, very

tipsy)

Sssh! You're dishgrashful!

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1780'S

77

Constanze lies in bed, her back turned to her husband, who comes into the room and shuts the door.

MOZART

(playfully)

Stanzi? How's my mouse? Mouse-

wouse? I'm back - puss-wuss is

back!

67.

She turns around abruptly. She looks dreadful; her eyes red with weeping. Mozart is shocked.

Stanzi!

MOZART (CONT’D)

He approaches the bed and sits on it. Immediately she starts crying again, desperately.

MOZART (CONT’D)

What's the matter? What is it?

Stanzi!

He holds her and she clings to him in a fierce embrace, crying a flood of tears.

MOZART (CONT’D)

Stop it now. Stop it. I've brought

some friends to meet you. They're

next door waiting. Do we have

anything to eat? They're all

starving.

CONSTANZE

Tell them to go away. I don't want

to see anybody.

MOZART

What's the matter with you?

CONSTANZE

Tell them to go!

MOZART

Sssh. What is it? Tell me.

No!

Yes!

CONSTANZE

MOZART

CONSTANZE

I love you! I love you!

She starts crying again, throwing her arms around his neck.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

I love you. Please stay with me.

I'm frightened.

78

INT. THE ROYAL PALACE - DINING ROOM - DAY - 1780'S

68.

78

Joseph sits eating. A butler serves him goat's milk to drink. Joseph is holding a memorandum from Salieri in his hand. Salieri stands before him.

JOSEPH

I don't think you understand me,

Court Composer.

SALIERI

Majesty, I did. Believe me, it was

a most agonizing. decision. But

finally, I simply could not

recommend Herr Mozart.

Why not?

JOSEPH

SALIERI

Well, Sire, I made some inquiries in a routine way. I was curious to know why he had so few pupils. It is rather alarming.

Oh?

JOSEPH

With a gesture Joseph dismisses the butler, who bows and leaves the room.

SALIERI

Majesty, I don't like to talk

against a fellow musician.

JOSEPH

Of course not.

SALIERI

I have to tell you, Mozart is not

entirely to be trusted alone with

young ladies.

Really?

JOSEPH

SALIERI

As a matter of fact, one of my own pupils - a very young singer - told me she was - er - well!

Yes?

JOSEPH

79

69.

SALIERI

Molested, Majesty. Twice, in the

course of the same lesson.

A pause.

JOSEPH

Ah-ha. Well. There it is.

INT. SALIERI'S HOUSE - STAIRCASE - VIENNA - DAY - 1780'S 79

Salieri has just returned from the palace and is coming up the staircase. He is met by his servant.

SERVANT

Sir, there is a Herr Mozart waiting

for you in the salon.

Salieri is plainly alarmed.

SALIERI

What does he want?

SERVANT

He didn't say, sir. I told him I

didn't know when you would be back,

but he insisted on waiting.

SALIERI

Come with me. And stay in the room.

He mounts the stairs.

80

INT. SALIERI'S APARTMENT - SALON - DAY - 1780'S

80

Mozart is waiting for Salieri, holding a portfolio. Salieri approaches him nervously. Mozart stands not belligerently, but humbly.

SALIERI

Herr Mozart, what brings you here?

MOZART

Your Excellency, you requested some

specimens of my work. Here they

are. I don't have to tell you how

much I need your help. I truly

appreciate your looking at these. I

have pressures on me - financial

pressures. As you know, I'm a

married man now.

70.

SALIERI

So you are. How is your pretty wife?

MOZART

She is well. She is - well, actually, I'm about to become a father! She only told me last night. You are the first to know.

SALIERI

I'm flattered. And congratulations

to you, of course.

MOZART

So you see, this post is very important to me right now.

Salieri looks at him in distress.

SALIERI

Why didn't you come to me yesterday, Mozart? This is a most painful situation. Yesterday I could have helped you. Today, I can't.

MOZART

Why? Here is the music. It's here. I am submitting it humbly. Isn't that what you wanted?

SALIERI

I have just come from the palace. The post has been filled.

MOZART

Filled? That's impossible! They haven't even seen my work. I need this post. Please, can't you help me? Please!

SALIERI

My dear Mozart, there is no one in the world I would rather help, but now it is too late.

MOZART

Whom did they choose?

SALIERI

Herr Sommer.

71.

MOZART

Sommer? Herr Sommer? But the man's

a fool! He's a total mediocrity.

SALIERI

No, no, no: he has yet to achieve

mediocrity.

MOZART

But I can't lose this post, I

simply can't! Excellency, please.

Let's go to the palace, and you can

explain to the Emperor that Herr

Sommer is an awful choice. He could

actually do musical harm to the

Princess!

SALIERI

An implausible idea. Between you

and me, no one in the world could

do musical harm to the Princess

Elizabeth.

Mozart chuckles delightedly. Salieri offers him a glass of white dessert and a spoon. Mozart takes it absently and goes on talking.

MOZART

Look, I must have pupils. Without

pupils I can't manage.

SALIERI

You don't mean to tell me you are

living in poverty?

MOZART

No, but I'm broke. I'm always

broke. I don't know why.

SALIERI

It has been said, my friend, that

you are inclined to live somewhat

above your means.

MOZART

How can anyone say that? We have no

cook, no maid. We have no footman.

Nothing at all!

SALIERI

How is that possible? You give

concerts, don't you? I hear they

are quite successful.

72.

MOZART

They're stupendously successful. You can't get a seat. The only problem is none will hire me. They all want to hear me play, but they won't let me teach their daughters. As if I was some kind of fiend. I'm not a fiend!

SALIERI

Of course not.

MOZART

Do you have a daughter?

SALIERI

I'm afraid not.

MOZART

Well, could you lend me some money till you have one? Then I'll teach her for free. That's a promise. Oh, I'm sorry. I'm being silly. Papa's right - I should put a padlock on my mouth. Seriously, is there any chance you could manage a loan? Only for six months, eight at most. After that I'll be the richest man in Vienna. I'll pay you back double. Anything. Name your terms. I'm not joking. I'm working on something that's going to explode like a bomb all over Europe!

SALIERI

Ah, how exciting! Tell me more.

MOZART

I'd better not. It's a bit of a secret.

SALIERI

Come, come, Mozart; I'm interested. Truly.

MOZART

Actually, it's a big secret. Oh, this is delicious! What is it?

SALIERI

Cream cheese mixed with granulated sugar and suffused with rum. Crema al Mascarpone.

81

MOZART

Ah. Italian?

SALIERI

Forgive me. We all have patriotic feelings of some kind.

MOZART

Two thousand, two hundred florins

is all I need A hundred? Fifty?

SALIERI

What exactly are you working on?

MOZART

I can't say. Really

SALIERI

I don't think you should become

known in Vienna as a debtor,

Mozart. However, I know a very distinguished gentleman I could recommend to you. And he has a daughter. Will that do?

INT. MICHAEL SCHLUMBERG'S HOUSE - MORNING - 1780'S

73.

81

Hysterical barking and howling. The hall is full of dogs, at least five, all jumping up and dashing about and making a terrific racket. Mozart, dandified in a new coat and a plumed hat for the occasion, has arrived to teach at the house of a prosperous merchant, MICHAEL SCHLUMBERG. Bluff, friendly and coarse-looking, he stands in his hall amidst the leaping and barking animals, greeting Mozart.

SCHLUMBERG

Quiet! Quiet! Quiet! Down there,

damn you.

(to Mozart)

Welcome to you. Pay no attention,

they're impossible. Stop it, you

willful things! Come this way. Just

ignore them. They're perfectly

harmless, just willful. I treat

them just like my own children.

MOZART

And which one of them do you want

me to teach?

SCHLUMBERG

What? Ha-ha! That's funny - I like

it. Which one, eh? You're a funny

fellow.

(MORE)

74.

SCHLUMBERG (CONT'D)

(shouting)

Hannah! Come this way.

He leads Mozart through the throng of dogs into a salon furnished with comfortable middle-class taste.

Hannah!

SCHLUMBERG (CONT’D)

FRAU SCHLUMBERG appears: an anxious woman in middle life.

SCHLUMBERG (CONT’D)

(to Mozart)

You won't be teaching this one

either. She's my wife.

MOZART

(bowing)

Madame.

SCHLUMBERG

This is Herr Mozart, my dear. The

young man Herr Salieri recommended

to teach our Gertrude. Where is

she?

Upstairs.

Gertrude!

FRAU SCHLUMBERG

SCHLUMBERG

FRAU SCHLUMBERG

You can't be Herr Mozart!

MOZART

I'm afraid I am.

SCHLUMBERG

Of course, it's him. Who do you think it is?

FRAU SCHLUMBERG

I've heard about you for ages! I thought you must be an old man.

Gertrude!

SCHLUMBERG

FRAU SCHLUMBERG

It's such an honour for us to have you here, Herr Mozart. And for Gertrude.

75.

SCHLUMBERG

People who know say the girl's got talent. You must judge for yourself. If you think she stinks, say so.

FRAU SCHLUMBERG

Michael, please! I'm sure you will find her most willing, Herr Mozart. She's really very excited. She's been preparing all morning.

Really?

MOZART

FRAU SCHLUMBERG

Ah, now! Here she comes.

GERTRUDE SCHLUMBERG appears in the doorway: an awkward girl of fifteen in her best dress, her hair primped and curled. She is exceedingly nervous.

MOZART

Good morning, Fraulein Schlumberg.

SCHLUMBERG

Strudel, this is Herr Mozart. Say

good morning.

Gertrude giggles instead.

FRAU SCHLUMBERG

(to Mozart)

Perhaps a little refreshment first?

A little coffee, or a little

chocolate?

MOZART

I'd like a little wine, if you have

it.

Wine?

FRAU SCHLUMBERG

SCHLUMBERG

Quite right. He's going to need it. (calling and clapping his

hands)

Klaus! A bottle of wine. Prestissimo! Now let's go to it. I've been waiting all day for this.

He leads the way into:

82

INT. MUSIC ROOM - DAY - 1780'S

76.

82

A forte-piano is open and waiting. All the dogs follow him. After them come Mozart Frau and Fraulein Schlumberg. To Mozart's dismay, husband and wife seat themselves quite formally on a little narrow sofa, side by side.

SCHLUMBERG

(To the dogs)

Now sit down all of you and behave.

Zeman, Mandi, absolutely quiet!

(to a young beagle)

Especially you, Dudelsachs - not

one sound from you.

The dogs settle at their feet. Husband and wife smile encouragingly at each other.

SCHLUMBERG (CONT’D)

Come on, then. Up and at it!

Mozart gestures to the music bench. Reluctantly, the girl sits at the instrument. Mozart sits beside her.

MOZART

Now, please play me something. Just

to give me an idea. Anything will

do.

GERTRUDE

(to parents)

I don't want you to stay.

FRAU SCHLUMBERG

That's all right, dear. Just go

ahead, as if we weren't here.

GERTRUDE

But you are here.

SCHLUMBERG

Never mind, Strudel. It's part of

music, getting used to an audience.

Aren't I right, Herr Mozart?

MOZART

Well, yes! on the whole. I suppose.

(to Gertrude)

How long have you been playing,

Fraulein?

FRAU SCHLUMBERG

Just one year.

77.

MOZART

Who was your teacher?

FRAU SCHLUMBERG

I was. But she quite outgrew the

little I could show her.

MOZART

Thank you, Madame.

(to Gertrude)

Come on now - courage. Play me

something you know.

In response the wretched girl just stares down at the keyboard without playing a note. An awkward pause.

MOZART (CONT’D)

Perhaps it would be better if we

were left alone. I think we're both

a little shy.

Husband and wife look at each other.

SCHLUMBERG

Nonsense. Strudel's not shy. She's

just willful! You give into her

now, you'll be sorry later. Strudel

- play.

Silence. The girl sits unmoving. Schlumberg bellows:

SCHLUMBERG (CONT’D)

I said play!

Michael!

FRAU SCHLUMBERG

MOZART

Perhaps if I were to play a little

first, it might encourage the

Fraulein.

(to the girl)

Why don't you let me try the

instrument? All right?

Suddenly the girl rises. Mozart smiles at the parents. They smile nervously back. Mozart slides along the bench, raises his hands and preludes over the keys. Instantly a dog howls loudly. Startled, Mozart stops. Schlumberg leaps to his feet and goes over to the beagle.

SCHLUMBERG

Stop that, Dudelsachs! Stop it at

once!

(MORE)

78.

SCHLUMBERG (CONT'D)

(to Mozart)

Don't let him disturb you. He'll be

all right. He's just a little

willful too. Please, please - play.

I beg you.

Mozart resumes playing. This time it is a lively piece, perhaps the Presto Finale from the K. 450. The dog howls immediately.

SCHLUMBERG (CONT’D)

Stop it! STOP!

Mozart stops.

SCHLUMBERG (CONT’D)

No, not you. I was talking to the

dog. You keep playing. It's most

important. He always howls when he

hears music. We've got to break

them of the habit. Play, please.

Please!

Amazed, Mozart starts to play the Rondo again. The dog howls louder.

SCHLUMBERG (CONT’D)

That's it. Now keep going, just

keep going.

(to the beagle)

Now you stop that noise,

Dudelsachs, you stop it this

instant! This instant, do you hear

me? Keep going, Herr Mozart, that's

it. Go on, go on!

Mozart plays on. Suddenly the dog falls silent. Schlumberg smiles broadly.

SCHLUMBERG (CONT’D)

Good, good, good! Very good dog!

Very, very good Dudelsachs.

(to his wife, snapping

his fingers)

Quick, quick, dear, bring his

biscuit.

The wife scurries to get a jar of biscuits. A servant brings in an open bottle of wine and a full glass on a tray. He puts it down beside Mozart as Schlumberg addresses the silent dog with deepest affection.

79.

SCHLUMBERG (CONT’D)

Now guess who's going to get a nice

reward? Clever, clever Dudi.

He gives the biscuit to the dog who swallows it greedily. Mozart stops playing and stands up.

SCHLUMBERG (CONT’D)

It's a miracle, Herr Mozart!

MOZART

(barely controlling

himself)

Well, I'm a good teacher. The next

time you wish me to instruct

another of your dogs, please let me

know. Goodbye, Fraulein, goodbye,

Madame! goodbye, Sir!

He bows to them and leaves the room. They look after him in puzzled astonishment.

FRAU SCHLUMBERG

What a strange young man.

SCHLUMBERG

Yes. He is a little strange.

83

EXT. A BUSY STREET IN VIENNA - DAY - 1780'S

83

A cheerful scene. We see Mozart strutting and beaming, making his way through the crowd of porters, carriers and hawkers, sellers of sausages and pastries, vendors of hats and ribbons. Horses and carriage clatter past him. His mood is best expressed by a bubbling version of Non piu Andrai played on the forte-piano.

Still in the same mood, he enters the door of his own house.

84

INT. MOZART'S HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY - 1780'S

84

Suddenly, he stops. He looks up the stairs. The grim opening chords from the Overture to Don Giovanni cut across the march from Figaro. What he sees, looking up the stairs, is a menacing figure in a long, grey cape and dark grey hat, standing on the landing. The light comes from behind the figure so that we see only its silhouette as it unfolds its arms towards Mozart in an alarming gesture of possession. It takes a beat in which the air of sinister mystery is held before Mozart realizes who it is. Then, as the music continues, he hastily sets down the bottle of wine and rushes joyfully up the stairs and hurls himself into the figure's arms.

85

MOZART

Papa! PAPA!

Both men embrace. The music slowly fades. INT. MOZART'S LIVING ROOM - DAY - 1780'S

80.

85

A cramped, low-ceilinged little room which nobody has tidied for ages. We see music lying everywhere. Also there are many empty wine bottles; musical instruments - among them a mandolin, a viola, a forte-piano with the black and white keys reversed - books and abandoned plates of food.

Mozart clasps his father's arms. Leopold is now seen as an aging, travel-stained man in clothes that need repair. His face is lined, and he is obviously not in perfect health.

MOZART

Why are you here?

LEOPOLD

Am I not welcome?

MOZART

Of course, welcome! Welcome ten

thousand times. Papa! my Papa!

He kisses his hands.

LEOPOLD

You're very thin. Does she not feed

you, this wife of yours?

Mozart ducks away and fetches his father's bags from the landing.

MOZART

Feed? Well, of course she feeds me.

She stuffs me like a goose all day

long. She's the best cook in the

world. I mean, since Mama. Just

wait, you'll see.

LEOPOLD

Is she not here?

MOZART

I don't know. Stanzi? Stanzi!

Leopold looks about him at the mess in the room.

LEOPOLD

Do you always live like this?

81.

MOZART

Oh, yes. Oh, I mean no - not

exactly like this. I mean today -

just today, Stanzi - I remember

now. She had to go - yes! She had

to help her mother. Yes, she's like

that. Her mother's a very sweet

woman, you'll see.

He carries the bag across the room and opens the door of the bedroom. Constanze lies in bed. She sits up, startled.

MOZART (CONT’D)

Oh! I didn't know you were home.

Stanzi, this is my father.

Constanze, who looks ill and tired, stares at Leopold. Leopold stares back from the doorway.

MOZART (CONT’D)

We'll wait, we'll wait. Why don't

you get up now, darling?

He closes the door again.

MOZART (CONT’D)

She's very tired, poor creature.

You know me: I'm a real pig. It's

not so easy cleaning up after me.

LEOPOLD

Don't you have a maid?

MOZART

Oh we could, if we wanted to, but

Stanzi won't hear of it. She wants

to do everything herself.

LEOPOLD

How is your financial situation?

MOZART

It couldn't be better.

LEOPOLD

That's not what I hear.

MOZART

What do you mean? It's wonderful.

Really, it's - it's marvelous!

People love me here.

LEOPOLD

They say you're in debt.

82.

MOZART

Who? Who says that? Now that's a malicious lie!

LEOPOLD

How many pupils do you have?

Pupils?

Yes.

Yes.

How many?

MOZART

LEOPOLD

MOZART

LEOPOLD

MOZART

I don't know. It's not important. I mean, I don't want pupils. They get in the way. I've got to have time for composition.

LEOPOLD

Composition doesn't pay. You know that.

MOZART

This one will.

He picks up some pages of manuscript.

LEOPOLD

What's that?

MOZART

Oh, let's not talk about it.

Why not?

LEOPOLD

MOZART

It's a secret.

LEOPOLD

You don't have secrets from me.

MOZART

It's too dangerous, Papa. But they're going to love it. Ah, there she is!

83.

Constanze comes into the room. She is wearing a dressing gown and has made a perfunctory attempt to tidy her hair. We see that she is clearly pregnant.

MOZART (CONT’D)

My Stanzi - look at her! Isn't she

beautiful? Come on now, confess,

Papa. Could you want a prettier

girl for a daughter?

CONSTANZE

Stop it, Wolfi. I look dreadful.

Welcome to our house, Herr Mozart.

MOZART

He's not Herr Mozart. Call him

Papa.

LEOPOLD

I see that you're expecting.

Oh, yes.

CONSTANZE

LEOPOLD

When, may I ask?

CONSTANZE

In three months! Papa.

MOZART

Isn't that marvelous? We're

delighted.

LEOPOLD

Why didn't you mention it in your letters?

MOZART

Didn't I? I thought I did. I'm sure I did.

He gives a little giggle of embarrassment.

CONSTANZE

May I offer you some tea, Herr Mozart?

MOZART

Tea? Who wants tea? Let's go out! This calls for a feast. You don't want tea, Papa. Let's go dancing. Papa loves parties, don't you?

84.

Wolfi!

CONSTANZE

MOZART

What? How can you be so boring?

Tea!

CONSTANZE

Wolfi, I think your father's tired.

I'll cook us something here.

LEOPOLD

Thank you. That'll be fine. Don't

spend any money on me.

MOZART

Why not? Oh, come, Papa! What

better way could I spend it than on

you? My kissable, missable,

suddenly visible Papa!

The jaunty tune of Ich Mochte Wohl Der Kaiser sein (K.539) sounds through all the following. This is an alternate song from Il Seraglio: a very extroverted tune for baritone and orchestra and a prominent part for bass drum. The vocal part should be arranged for trumpet.

EXT. STREET IN VIENNA - DAY - 1780'S

Mozart and Constanze with Leopold between them. We see couples shopping.

INT. A COSTUME SHOP - VIENNA - DAY - 1780'S

This is a shop where one can buy costumes for masquerades. It is filled with extravagant costumes of various kinds. Wolfgang is wearing a costume, a mask pushed up on his forehead; Constanze is wearing a little white velvet mask.

Amidst the merriment, Leopold is helped by two assistants to put on a dark grey cloak and a dark grey tricorne hat, to which is attached a full mask of dark grey. Its mouth is cut into a fixed upward smile.

He turns and looks at his son through this mask.

CUT STRAIGHT

TO:

88

INT. A LARGE PARTY ROOM - VIENNA - NIGHT - 1780'S

88

We are in the full whirl of a Masquerade Ball. Couples are dancing around dressed in fantastic costumes.

85.

The music of Ich Mochte Wohl Der Kaiser sein increases in volume and persists. We see the musicians thumping it out on a balustrade above the dancers. A steer is being roasted. Through the bobbing crowd we see a group, headed by the figure of Bacchus: this is Schikaneder in a Greek costume, wearing vine leaves in his hair. He is accompanied by his usual trio of actresses and three other men. Constanze as Columbine and Mozart as Harlequin are pulling Leopold by the hand of his dark cloak and smiling mask. This whole group threads its way across the crowded room and disappears through a door. As they go, they are watched by Salieri, standing alone in a corner, wearing ordinary evening clothes. He turns away hastily to avoid being seen by them.

As soon as they disappear into the far room, Salieri goes quickly to a lady in the corner who is giving guests domino masks off a tray. He quickly takes a small black mask and puts it on.

CUT TO:

89

INT. A GROTTO ROOM NEXT DOOR - NIGHT - 1780'S

89

A fantastic room designed as a rocky grotto, lit by candles. A forte-piano to one side is being played by Schikaneder: the music of Ich Mochte Wohl Der Kaiser sein cross-fades to another tune. This is Vivat Bacchus from Il Seraglio which

Schikaneder, dressed as Bacchus, is humming as he plays. The music is actually accompanying a game of Forfeits, which has begun. Five couples (the group we have just seen) are dancing in the middle of a ring made by nine chairs. When the music stops they will each have to find a chair, and the one who fails must pay a forfeit.

Constanze is dancing with Leopold; Mozart is dancing with one of the actresses; the two other actresses are dancing with two other gentlemen; and two children dance together - a little boy and a little girl. The scene is watched by a circle of bystanders; among them - from the doorway - is Salieri.

Schikaneder stops playing. Immediately the couples scramble for the chairs. Leopold and Constanze meet on the same chair, bumping and pushing at each other to get sole possession of it. To the amusement of the people around, the chair over- balances and they both end up on the floor. Constanze immediately gets up again, sets the chair on its feet, and tries to pretend she was sitting in it all the time. But Schikaneder calls out from the forte-piano.

SCHIKANEDER

No, no! You both lost. You both

lost. You both have to forfeit.

(MORE)

86.

SCHIKANEDER (CONT'D)

And the penalty is you must

exchange your wigs.

People are delighted by the idea of this penalty. The children jump up and down with excitement. The three actresses immediately surround Leopold, reaching for his hat and mask and wig, whilst he tries to hold on to them. Mozart takes off Constanze's wig - an absurd affair with side- curls. Constanze laughingly surrenders it.

LEOPOLD

No, please! This is ridiculous! No,

please!

Despite his protests an actress takes off his hat, to which the smiling mask is attached, to reveal his outraged face showing a very different expression underneath. Another actress snatches off his wig to reveal very sparse hair on the old man's head. The third actress takes Constanze's wig from Mozart and attempts to put it on his father's head.

LEOPOLD (CONT’D)

No, really!

MOZART

(calling to him)

This is just a game, Papa.

Constanze echoes him with a touch of malice in her voice.

CONSTANZE

This is just a game, Papa!

Laughingly, the bystanders take it up, especially the children.

BYSTANDERS

This is just a game, Papa!

As Leopold glares furiously about him, the actress succeeds in getting Constanze's wig firmly onto his head. Everybody bursts into applause. Delightedly, Constanze puts on Leopold's wig, hat and mask: from the waist up she now looks like a weird parody of Leopold in the smiling grey mask, and he looks like a weird parody of her in the silly feminine wig. Schikaneder starts to play again, and the couples start to dance. Leopold angrily takes off Constanze's wig and leaves the circle; his partner, Constanze, is left alone. Seeing this, Mozart leaves his partner and catches his father entreatingly by the arm.

MOZART

Oh no, Papa, please! Don't spoil

the fun. Come on. Here, take mine.

87.

He takes off his own wig and puts it on Leopold's uncovered head. The effect, if not as ridiculous, is still somewhat bizarre, since Wolfgang favours fairly elaborate wigs. He takes Constanze's wig from his father. As this happens, the music stops again. Mozart gently pushes his father down onto a nearby chair; the others scramble for the other chairs; and he is left as the Odd Man Out. He giggles. Schikaneder calls out to Leopold from the keyboard.

SCHIKANEDER

Herr Mozart, why don't you name

your son's penalty?

Applause.

MOZART

Yes, Papa, name it. Name it. I'll

do anything you say!

LEOPOLD

I want you to come back with me to

Salzburg, my son.

SCHIKANEDER

What did he say? What did he say?

MOZART

Papa, the rule is you can only give

penalties that can be performed in

the room.

LEOPOLD

I'm tired of this game. Please play

without me.

MOZART

But my penalty. I've got to have a

penalty.

All the bystanders are watching.

SCHIKANEDER

I've got a good one. I've got the

perfect one for you. Come over

here.

Mozart runs over to the forte-piano, and Schikaneder surrenders his place at it.

SCHIKANEDER (CONT’D)

Now, I want you to play our tune -

sitting backwards.

Applause.

88.

MOZART

Oh, that's really too easy. Any

child can do that.

Amused sounds of disbelief.

SCHIKANEDER

And a fugue in the manner of

Sebastian Bach.

Renewed applause at this wicked extra penalty. Mozart smiles at Schikaneder - it is the sort of challenge he loves. He defiantly puts on Constanze's wig and seats himself with his back to the keyboard. Before the astonished eyes of the company he proceeds to execute this absurdly difficult task. His right hand plays the bass part, his left hand the treble, and with this added difficulty he improvises a brilliant fugue on the subject of the tune to which they have been dancing.

Attracted by this astonishing feat, the players draw nearer to the instrument. So does Salieri, cautiously, with some of the bystanders. Constanze watches him approach. Only Leopold sits by himself, sulking.

The fugue ends amidst terrific clapping. The guests call out to Mozart.

GUESTS

Another! Do another! Someone else.

MOZART

Give me a name. Who shall I do?

Give me a name.

GUESTS

Gluck! Haydn! Frederic Handel!

CONSTANZE

Salieri! Do Salieri!

SMASH CUT: Salieri's masked face whips around and looks at her.

MOZART

Now that's hard. That's very hard.

For Salieri one has to face the

right way around.

1. iggling, he turns around and sits at the keyboard. Then, watched by a highly amused group, he begins a wicked parody.
2. e furrows his brow in mock concentration and closes his eyes.

89.

Then he begins to play the tune to which they danced, in the most obvious way imaginable, relying heavily on a totally and offensively unimaginative bass of tonic and dominant, endlessly repeated. The music is the very essence of banality. The bystanders rock with laughter. Mozart starts to giggle wildly. Through this excruciating scene, Salieri stares at Constanze, who suddenly turns her head and looks challengingly back at him.

Mozart's parody reaches its coarse climax with him adding a fart noise instead of notes to end cadences. He builds this up, urged on in his clowning by everyone else, until suddenly he stops and cries out. The laughter cuts off. Mozart stands up, clutching his behind as if he has made a mess in his breeches. The momentary hush of alarm is followed by a howl of laughter.

CU, Salieri staring in pain.

90

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - 1823

90

CU, The old man is shaking at the very recollection of his humiliation.

OLD SALIERI

Go on. Mock me. Laugh, laugh!

CUT BACK TO:

INT. GROTTO - NIGHT - 1780'S

A repetition of the shot of Mozart at the forte-piano, wearing Constanze's wig and emitting a shrill giggle.

CUT TO:

INT. SALIERI'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1780'S

Salieri sits at his desk. He holds in his hand the small black party mask and stares in hatred at the place on the wall where the crucifix used to hang. Faintly we see the mark of the cross.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

That was not Mozart laughing,

1. ather. That was God. That was God!
2. od laughing at me through that

obscene giggle. Go on, Signore.

Laugh. Rub my nose in it. Show my

mediocrity for all to see. You

wait! I will laugh at You! Before I

leave this earth, I will laugh at

You! Amen!

93

INT. MOZART'S WORKROOM - DAY - 1780'S

90.

93

It is littered with manuscripts. In the middle stands a billiard table. The beautiful closing ensemble from Act IV of Figaro: Ah, Tutti contenti! Saremo cosi plays in the background. Standing at the billiard table, Mozart is dreamily hearing the music and playing shots on the table.

From time to time he drifts over to a piece of manuscript paper and jots down notes. He is very much in his own world of composition and the billiard balls are an aid to creation. Presently, however, we hear a knocking at the door.

CONSTANZE

(outside the door)

Wolfi! Wolfgang!

The music breaks off.

MOZART

What is it?

He opens the door.

CONSTANZE

There's a young girl to see you.

MOZART

What does she want?

CONSTANZE

I don't know.

MOZART

Well, ask her!

CONSTANZE

She won't talk to me. She says she

has to speak to you.

94

MOZART

Oh, damn!

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAY - 1780'S

94

Mozart comes out. Framed in the doorway from outside stands Lorl, the maid we noticed in Salieri's house. From his bedroom Leopold peeps out to watch. Mozart goes to the girl. Constanze follows.

Yes?

MOZART

91.

LORL

Are you Herr Mozart?

MOZART

That's right.

LORL

My name is Lorl, sir. I'm a maidservant. I was asked to come here and offer my services to you.

What?

MOZART

LORL

They'll be paid for by a great admirer or yours who wishes to remain anon - anonymous.

CONSTANZE

What do you mean? What admirer?

LORL

I can't tell you that, ma'am.

MOZART

Are you saying that someone is paying you to be our maid and doesn't want us to know who he is?

LORL

Yes. I can live in or out just as you wish.

Mozart turns to his father.

MOZART

Papa, is this your idea?

Mine?

LEOPOLD

The old man emerges from his bedroom. His son looks at him delightedly.

MOZART

Are you playing a trick on me?

LEOPOLD

I never saw this girl in my life.

(to Lorl)

Is this a kind of joke?

92.

LORL

Not at all, sir. And I was told to

wait for an answer.

LEOPOLD

Young woman, this won't do at all.

My son can't possibly accept such

an offer, no matter how generous,

unless he knows who is behind it.

LORL

But I really can't tell you, sir.

LEOPOLD

Oh, this is ridiculous.

CONSTANZE

What is ridiculous? Wolfi has many

admirers in Vienna. They love him

here. People send us gifts all the

time.

LEOPOLD

But you can't take her without

reference. It's unheard of!

CONSTANZE

Well, this is none of your

business.

(to Lorl)

Whoever sent you is going to pay,

no?

LORL

That's right, ma'am.

LEOPOLD

So now we are going to let a

perfect stranger into the house?

Constanze looks furiously at him, then at Lorl.

CONSTANZE

Who is we? Who is letting who?

(to Lorl)

Could you please wait outside?

LORL

Yes, ma'am.

Lorl goes outside and closes the door. Constanze turns on Leopold.

93.

CONSTANZE

Look, old man, you stay out of this. We spend a fortune on you, more than we can possibly afford, and all you do is criticize, morning to night. And then you think you can -

Stanzi!

MOZART

CONSTANZE

No, it's right he should hear. I'm sick to death of it. We can't do anything right for you, can we?

LEOPOLD

Never mind. You won't have to do anything for me ever again. I'm leaving!

Papa!

MOZART

LEOPOLD

Don't worry, I'm not staying here to be a burden.

MOZART

No one calls you that.

LEOPOLD

She does. She says I sleep all day.

CONSTANZE

And so you do! The only time you come out is to eat.

LEOPOLD

And what do you expect? Who wants to walk out into a mess like this every day?

CONSTANZE

Oh, now I'm a bad housekeeper!

LEOPOLD

So you are! The place is a pigsty all the time.

CONSTANZE

(to Mozart)

Do you hear him? Do you?

94.

Explosively she opens the door.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

(to Lorl)

When can you start?

LORL

Right away, ma'am.

CONSTANZE

Good! Come in. You'll start with

that room there.

(indicating Leopold's

room)

It's filthy!

She leads the maid into Leopold's room. Mozart steals back into his workroom and gently closes the door. Leopold is left alone.

LEOPOLD

Sorry, sorry! I'm sorry I spoke!

I'm just a provincial from

Salzburg. What do I know about

smart Vienna? Parties all night,

every night. Dancing and drinking

like idiot children!

95

INT. MOZART'S WORKROOM - DAY - 1780'S

95

Mozart stands trying to blot out the noise of his father's shouting from the next room.

LEOPOLD (O.S.)

Dinner at eight! Dinner at ten!

Dinner when anyone feels like it!

If anyone feels like it!

The ensemble of Ah, Tutti contenti! Saremo cosi from Act IV of Figaro resumes, coming to his aid and rising to greet the listener with its serene harmonies. Relieved, Mozart languidly picks up his cue and plays a shot on the billiard table: he is sucked back into his own world of sound.

96

INT. SALIERI'S SALON - NIGHT - 1780'S

96

The music fades. We see Lorl, dressed in a walking cloak, sitting before a desk, talking to someone confidentially.

LORL

They're out every night, sir. Till

all hours.

97

95.

A hand comes into frame offering a plate of sugared biscuits. On its finger we see the gold signet ring belonging to Salieri.

LORL (CONT’D)

(taking one)

Oh, thank you, sir.

SALIERI

Do any pupils come to the house?

LORL

Not that I've seen.

SALIERI

Then how does he pay for all this?

Does he work at all?

LORL

Oh, yes, sir, all day long. He

never leaves the house until

evening. He just sits there,

writing and writing. He doesn't

even eat.

SALIERI

Really? What is it he's writing?

LORL

Oh, I wouldn't know that, sir.

SALIERI

Of course not. You're a good girl.

You're very kind to do this. Next

time you're sure they'll be out of

the house, let me know, will you?

Confused, the girl hesitates. He hands her a pile of coins.

LORL

Oh, thank you, sir!

She accepts them, delighted.

EXT. MOZART'S HOUSE - VIENNA STREET - AFTERNOON - 1780'S 97

The final movement of Mozart's Piano Concerto in E-flat (K. begins. To its lively music, the door of the house bursts open and a grand forte-piano augmented with a pedal is carried out of it by six men, who run off with it down the street. Following them immediately appear Wolfgang, Constanze and Leopold, all three dressed for an occasion. They climb into a waiting carriage which drives off after the forte-piano.

96.

As soon as it goes, Lorl appears in the doorway, peering slyly around to see that they are out of sight. Then she shuts the door and hurries off in the opposite direction.

CUT TO:

98

EXT. AN ORNAMENTAL GARDEN - VIENNA - AFTERNOON - 1780'S

98

An outdoor concert is being given. Mozart is actually playing the final movement of his E-flat concerto with an orchestra. Listening to him is a sizable audience, including the Emperor, flanked by Strack and Von Swieten.

The crowd is in a happy and appreciative mood: it is a delightful open-air scene. We hear the gayest and most complex passage. Leopold and Constanze listen to Mozart, who plays his own work brilliantly. We stay with this scene for a little while and then

CUT TO:

99

EXT. VIENNA STREET - AFTERNOON - 1780'S

99

A carriage clopping through the streets. Lorl is sitting up on the box beside the driver. Inside the vehicle, we glimpse the figure of Salieri.

100

EXT. AN ORNAMENTAL GARDEN - VIENNA - 1780'S

100

We hear more of the concerto. Perhaps the slow interlude in the last movement of K. 482. Mozart is conducting and playing in a reflective mood. Abruptly we

CUT TO:

101

EXT. MOZART' S APARTMENT - AFTERNOON - 1780'S

101

Lorl is opening the door admitting Salieri. They go in. The door shuts.

102

INT. MOZART'S LIVING ROOM - AFTERNOON - 1780'S

The room is considerably tidier as a result of Lorl's ministrations. Salieri stands looking about him with tremendous curiosity.

LORL

I think I've found out about the

money, sir.

SALIERI

Yes what?

102

97.

She opens a drawer in a sideboard. Inside we see one gold snuff box: it is the one we saw Mozart being presented with as a child in the Vatican.

LORL

1. e kept seven snuff boxes in here.
2. could swear they were all gold.

And now look there's only one left.

And inside, sir, look - I counted

them - tickets from the pawnshop.

Six of them.

Salieri turns to look around him.

SALIERI

Where does he work?

LORL

In there, sir.

She points across the room to the workroom. Salieri crosses and goes in alone.

103

INT. MOZART'S WORKROOM - AFTERNOON - 1780'S

103

Salieri enters the private quarters of Amadeus. He is immensely excited. He moves slowly into the 'holy of holies' picking up objects with great reverence - a billiard ball; a discarded wig; a sock; a buckle - then objects more important to him. Standing at Mozart's desk, strewn with manuscripts, he picks up Mozart's pen and strokes the feather. He touches the inkstand. He lays a finger on the candlestick with its half-expired candle. He touches each object as if it were the memento of a beloved. He is in awe. Finally his eye falls on the sheets of music themselves. Stealthily he picks them up.

CU, The pages.

We see words set to music. Against each line of notes is the name of a character: Contessa, Susanna, Cherubino. Then another page - the title page - written in Mozart's hand.

Le Nozze di Figaro Comedia per musica tratta dal Francese in quattro atti.

CU, The word Figaro.

CU, Salieri. He stares amazed.

CUT TO:

104

EXT. ORNAMENTAL GARDEN - VIENNA - AFTERNOON - 1780'S

98.

104

Mozart is playing the cadenza and coda of Piano Concerto (K. He completes the work with a flourish. There is loud applause. The Emperor rises and all follow suit. Mozart comes down to be greeted by him.

JOSEPH

Bravo, Mozart. Most charming. Yes,

indeed. Clever man.

MOZART

Thank you, Sire!

VON SWIETEN

Well done, Mozart. Really quite

fine.

Baron!

MOZART

He sees his wife and father standing by in the crowd. Leopold is signaling insistently.

MOZART (CONT’D)

Majesty, may I ask you to do me the

greatest favour?

JOSEPH

What is it?

MOZART

May I introduce my father? He is on

a short visit here and returning

very soon to Salzburg. He would so

much like to kiss your hand. It

would make his whole stay so

memorable for him.

JOSEPH

Ah! By all means.

Leopold comes forward eagerly and fawningly kisses the royal hand.

LEOPOLD

Your Majesty.

Constanze curtsies.

JOSEPH

Good evening.

(to Leopold)

We have met before, Herr Mozart.

105

LEOPOLD

That's right, Your Majesty. Twenty years ago. No, twenty-two! twenty- three! And I remember word for word what you said to me. You said - you said --

He searches his memory.

JOSEPH

Bravo?

LEOPOLD

No! Yes, 'bravo,' of course 'bravo'! Everybody always says 'bravo' when Wolfi plays. Like the King of England. When we played for the King of England, he got up at the end and said, 'Bravo! Bravo! Bravo!' three times. Three bravo's. And the Pope four! Four bravo's from the Holy Father, and one 'bellissimo.'

All the courtiers around are looking at him.

MOZART

Father -

LEOPOLD

Hush! I'm talking to His Majesty. Your Majesty, I wish to express only one thing - that you who are the Father of us all, could teach our children the gratitude they owe to fathers. It is not for nothing that the Fifth Commandment tells us: 'Honour your Father and Mother, that your days may be long upon the earth.'

JOSEPH

Ah-ha. Well. There it is.

INT. ORSINI-ROSENBERG'S STUDY - DAY - 1780'S

99.

CUT TO:

105

The Director sits at his table with Salieri and Bonno.

SALIERI

I've just learned something that

might be of interest to you, Herr

Director.

100.

Yes?

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

SALIERI

Mozart is writing a new opera. An Italian opera.

Italian?

Aie!

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

BONNO

SALIERI

And that's not all. He has chosen for his subject, Figaro. The Marriage of Figaro.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

You mean that play?

Exactly.

SALIERI

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

He's setting that play to music?

Yes.

SALIERI

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

You must be mad.

BONNO

What is this Marriage of Figaro?

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

It's a French play, Kapellmeister. It has been banned by the Emperor.

Hah!

BONNO

He crosses himself, wide-eyed with alarm.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Are you absolutely sure?

SALIERI

I've seen the manuscript.

Where?

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

101.

SALIERI

Never mind.

CUT TO:

106

INT. CHAMBERLAIN VON STRACK'S STUDY - DAY - 1780'S

VON STRACK

I know we banned this play, but

frankly I can't remember why. Can

you refresh my memory, Herr

Director?

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

For the same reason, Herr

Chamberlain, that it was banned in France.

VON STRACK

Oh yes, yes. And that was?

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Well, the play makes a hero out of

a valet. He outwits his noble

master and exposes him as a lecher.

Do you see the implications? This

would be, in a grander situation,

as if a Chamberlain were to expose

an Emperor.

VON STRACK

Ah.

106

107

INT. THE EMPEROR'S STUDY - DAY - 1780'S

CUT TO:

107

The Emperor stands in the middle of the room in close conversation with Von Strack, Orsini-Rosenberg, Von Swieten, and Bonno. Salieri is not present. A door opens and a lackey announces:

LACKEY

Herr Mozart.

They all turn. Mozart approaches, rather apprehensively, and kisses Joseph's hand.

JOSEPH

1. it down, gentlemen, please.
2. hey all sit, save Mozart. The room suddenly looks like a tribunal. Joseph is in a serious mood.

102.

JOSEPH (CONT’D)

Mozart, are you aware I have declared the French play of Figaro unsuitable for our theatre?

Yes, Sire.

MOZART

JOSEPH

Yet we hear you are making an opera from it. Is this true?

MOZART

Who told you this, Majesty?

JOSEPH

It is not your place to ask questions. Is it true?

MOZART

Well, yes, I admit it is.

JOSEPH

Would you tell me why?

MOZART

Well, Majesty, it is only a comedy.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

What you think, Mozart, is scarcely the point. It is what His Majesty thinks that counts.

MOZART

But, Your Majesty -

JOSEPH

(motioning him to be

silent)

Mozart, I am a tolerant man. I do not censor things lightly. When I do, I have good reason. Figaro is a bad play. It stirs up hatred between the classes. In France it has caused nothing but bitterness. My own dear sister Antoinette writes me that she is beginning to be frightened of her own people. I do not wish to see the same fears starting here.

103.

MOZART

Sire, I swear to Your Majesty,

there's nothing like that in the

story. I have taken out everything

that could give offense. I hate

politics.

JOSEPH

I think you are rather innocent, my

friend. In these dangerous times I

cannot afford to provoke our nobles

or our people simply over a theatre

piece.

The others look at their king solemnly, all save Mozart.

MOZART

But, Majesty, this is just a

frolic. It's a piece about love.

JOSEPH

Ah, love again.

MOZART

But it's new, it's entirely new.

It's so new, people will go mad for

it. For example, I have a scene in

the second act - it starts as a

duet, just a man and wife

quarreling. Suddenly the wife's

scheming little maid comes in

unexpectedly - a very funny

situation. Duet turns into trio.

Then the husband's equally

screaming valet comes in. Trio

turns into quartet. Then a stupid

old gardener - quartet becomes

quintet, and so on. On and on,

sextet, septet, octet! How long do

you think I can sustain that?

JOSEPH

I have no idea.

MOZART

Guess! Guess, Majesty. Imagine the

longest time such a thing could

last, then double it.

JOSEPH

Well, six or seven minutes! maybe

eight!

104.

MOZART

Twenty, sire! How about twenty? Twenty minutes of continuous music. No recitatives.

Mozart -

VON SWIETEN

MOZART

(ignoring him)

Sire, only opera can do this. In a play, if more than one person speaks at the same time, it's just noise. No one can understand a word. But with music, with music you can have twenty individuals all talking at once, and it's not noise - it's a perfect harmony. Isn't that marvelous?

VON SWIETEN

Mozart, music is not the issue here. No one doubts your talent. It is your judgment of literature that's in question. Even with the politics taken out, this thing would still remain a vulgar farce. Why waste your spirit on such rubbish? Surely you can choose more elevated themes?

MOZART

Elevated? What does that mean? Elevated! The only thing a man should elevate is - oh, excuse me. I'm sorry. I'm stupid. But I am fed up to the teeth with elevated things! Old dead legends! How can we go on forever writing about gods and legends?

VON SWIETEN

(aroused)

Because they do. They go on forever - at least what they represent. The eternal in us, not the ephemeral. Opera is here to ennoble us. You and me, just as much as His Majesty.

BONNO

Bello! Bello, Barone. Veramente.

105.

MOZART

Oh, bello, bello, bello! Come on now, be honest. Wouldn't you all rather listen to your hairdressers than Hercules? Or Horatius? Or Orpheus? All those old bores! people so lofty they sound as if they shit marble!

What?

VON SWIETEN

VON STRACK

Govern your tongue, sir! How dare you?

Beat. All look at the Emperor.

MOZART

Forgive me, Majesty. I'm a vulgar man. But I assure you, my music is not.

JOSEPH

You are passionate, Mozart! But you do not persuade.

MOZART

Sire, the whole opera is finished. Do you know how much work went into it?

BONNO

His Majesty has been more than patient, Signore.

MOZART

How can I persuade you if you won't let me show it?

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

That will do, Herr Mozart!

MOZART

Just let me tell you how it begins.

VON STRACK

Herr Mozart -

MOZART

May I just do that, Majesty? Show you how it begins? Just that?

A slight pause. Then Joseph nods.

108

JOSEPH

Please.

Mozart falls on his knees.

MOZART

Look! There's a servant, down on his knees. Do you know why? Not from any oppression. No, he's simply measuring a space. Do you know what for? His bed. His wedding bed to see if it will fit.

He giggles.

INT. OPERA HOUSE - DAY - 1780'S

106.

CUT TO:

108

Mozart sits on stage at a harpsichord rehearsing the singers taking the parts of Figaro and Susanna in the opening bars of the first act of The Marriage of Figaro. We watch Figaro measuring the space for his bed on the floor, singing and Susanna looking on, trying on the Countess' hat.

CUT TO:

109

INT. SALIERI'S SALON - DAY - 1780'S Orsini-Rosenberg and Bonno are sitting with Salieri.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Well, Mozart is already rehearsing.

SALIERI

Incredible.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

The Emperor has given him

permission.

BONNO

Si, si! Veramente.

SALIERI

Well, gentlemen, so be it. In that

case I think we should help Mozart

all we can and do our best to

protect him against the Emperor's

anger.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

What anger?

109

110

SALIERI

About the ballet.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Ballet? What ballet?

SALIERI

Excuse me - didn't His Majesty specifically forbid ballet in his opera?

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Yes, absolutely. Is there a ballet in Figaro?

SALIERI

Yes, in the third act.

INT. THE OPERA HOUSE - DAY - 1780'S

107.

CUT TO:

110

It is a full orchestral rehearsal. Mozart is conducting from the harpsichord with his hands; he does not use a baton. The singers are all in practice clothes, not costumes.

We are in the Act III and we hear the recitativo exchange just before the march begins. Orsini-Rosenberg and Bonno sit watching chairs.

Suddenly the march starts. Peasants and friends start to dance in and at the same moment, Orsini-Rosenberg gets up and comes down to Mozart. He is accompanied by an anxious Bonno.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Mozart! Herr Mozart, may I have a

word with you please. Right away.

MOZART

Certainly, Herr Director.

He signals to the cast to break off.

MOZART (CONT’D)

Five minutes, please!

The company disperses, curious. The musicians look at Orsini- Rosenberg.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Did you not know that His Majesty

has expressly forbidden ballet in

his operas?

108.

MOZART

Yes, but this is not a ballet. This

is a dance at Figaro's wedding.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Exactly. A dance.

MOZART

But surely the Emperor didn't mean

to prohibit dancing when it's part

of the story.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

It is dangerous for you to

interpret His Majesty's edicts.

Give me your score, please.

Mozart hands him the score from which he is conducting.

111

ORSINI-ROSENBERG (CONT’D)

Thank you.

He rips out a page. Bonno watches in terror.

MOZART

What are you doing?

He rips out three more.

MOZART (CONT’D)

What are you doing, Herr Director?

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Taking out what you should never have put in.

He goes on tearing the pages determinedly.

INT. SALIERI'S SALON - DAY - 1780'S

A servant opens the door to announce.

SERVANT

Herr Mozart.

CUT TO:

111

Mozart brushes past him straight towards Salieri, who rises to greet him. The little man is near hysterics.

MOZART

Please! Please. I've no one else to

turn to. Please!

109.

He grabs Salieri.

SALIERI

Wolfgang, what is it? Sta calmo, per favore. What's the matter?

MOZART

It's unbelievable! The Director has actually ripped out a huge section of my music. Pages of it.

SALIERI

Really? Why?

MOZART

I don't know. They say I've got to re-write the opera, but it's perfect as it is. I can't rewrite what's perfect. Can't you talk to him?

SALIERI

Why bother with Orsini-Rosenberg? He's obviously no friend of yours.

MOZART

Oh, I could kill him! I mean really kill him. I actually threw the entire opera on the fire, he made me so angry!

SALIERI

You burned the score?

MOZART

Oh no! My wife took it out in time.

SALIERI

How fortunate.

MOZART

It's not fair that a man like that has power over our work.

SALIERI

But there are those who have power over him. I think I'll take this up with the Emperor.

MOZART

Oh, Excellency, would you?

SALIERI

With all my heart, Mozart.

MOZART

Thank you! Oh, thank you.

He kisses Salieri's hand.

SALIERI

(withdrawing it;

imitating the Emperor)

No, no, no, Herr Mozart, please. It's not a holy relic.

Mozart giggles with relief and gratitude.

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - 1823

OLD SALIERI

I'm sure I don't need to tell you I said nothing whatever to the Emperor. I went to the theatre ready to tell Mozart that His Majesty had flown into a rage when I mentioned the ballet, when suddenly, to my astonishment, in the middle of the third act, the Emperor - who never attended rehearsals - suddenly appeared.

INT. OPERA HOUSE - DAY - 1780'S

110.

In the background the same recitativo before the March. The Emperor steals in surreptitiously with Von Strack, his finger to his lips. He motions everyone not to rise, and slips into a chair behind Salieri, Orsini-Rosenberg and Bonno.

The three conspirators look at each other wide-eyed.

The recitativo summons up the march, but instead there is silence. Mozart lays down his baton. The musicians lay down their instruments. The celebrants of Figaro's wedding come in with a few pitiful dance steps, in procession, only to come presently to a halt, lacking their music. The singers try to go on singing, but they have no cues from their conductor or from the accompaniment. Everyone on stage looks lost, though they attempt to go on with the story for a while. Consternation grows on the faces of the conspirators. Mozart glances back at the group seated in the theatre. Finally, the Emperor speaks, in a whisper.

JOSEPH

What is this? I don't understand.

Is it modern?

111.

BONNO

Majesty, the Herr Director, he has removed a balleto that would have occurred at this place.

Why?

JOSEPH

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

It is your regulation, Sire. No

ballet in your opera.

Mozart strains to hear what they are saying but cannot.

JOSEPH

Do you like this, Salieri?

SALIERI

It is not a question of liking,

Your Majesty. Your own law decrees

it, I'm afraid.

JOSEPH

Well, look at them.

We do look at them. The spectacle on stage has now ground to a complete halt.

JOSEPH (CONT’D)

No, no, no! This is nonsense. Let

me hear the scene with the music.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

But, Sire -

Oblige me.

JOSEPH

Orsini-Rosenberg acknowledges his defeat.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Yes, Majesty.

Orsini-Rosenberg rises and goes down to where Mozart sits anxiously with the musicians, watching his approach.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG (CONT’D)

Can we see the scene with the music

back, please?

MOZART

Oh yes, certainly. Certainly, Herr

Director!

112.

He looks back deliriously at Salieri, trying to indicate his gratitude. Salieri acknowledges with a slight and subtle nod.

Orsini-Rosenberg returns to his king.

MOZART (CONT’D)

Ladies and gentlemen, we're going

from where we stopped. The Count:

Anches so. Right away, please!

The singers scatter offstage to begin the scene again.

JOSEPH

(to Orsini-Rosenberg)

What I hoped by that edict,

Director, was simply to prevent

hours of dancing like in French

opera. There it is endless, as you

know.

ORSINI-ROSENBERG

Quite so, Majesty.

CUT BACK TO Mozart at the forte-piano, raising his hands. The musicians raise their bows. With a flourish the happy composer begins a reprise of the scene which had been cut out. The music of the march begins faintly; the celebrants of Figaro's wedding start to enter as the Count and the Countess sit in their chairs.

In the theatre we see increasing pleasure on the Emperor's face, sullenness and defeat on the courtiers'. Then, suddenly, without interruption, on a crescendo repeat of the march, we

CUT TO:

114

INT. OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT - 1780'S

114

The theatre is brilliantly lit for the first public performance of Figaro. Everybody is there: the Emperor, Von Strack, Bonno Orsini-Rosenberg, Von Swieten, even Madame Weber and her daughters in a box. The musicians all wear imperial livery; the actors on stage are now in costume. Mozart, conducting, wears his Order of the Golden Spur. The company wheels in and around to the music of the restored march, which reaches a triumphant climax.

CUT TO:

115

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - 1823

OLD SALIERI

(to Vogler)

So Figaro was produced in spite of me. And in spite of me, a wonder

was revealed. One of the true wonders of art. The restored third act was bold and brilliant. The fourth was a miracle.

113.

115

The descending scale of strings in the final ensemble (Ah, Tutti contenti. Saremo cosi) fades in.

116

INT. OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT - 1780'S

116

We see the tableau on stage with the Count kneeling to the Countess. All are singing.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

I saw a woman disguised in her

maid's clothes hear her husband

speak the first tender words he has

offered her in years, only because

he thinks she is someone else. I

heard the music of true forgiveness

filling the theatre, conferring on

all who sat there a perfect

absolution. God was singing through

this little man to all the world -

unstoppable - making my defeat more

bitter with each passing bar.

CU, Salieri in his box, tears on his cheeks. He watches the ensemble and we listen to it for a long moment. Finally it fades, but continues underneath the following:

117

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - 1823

OLD SALIERI

And then suddenly - a miracle!

117

118

INT. OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT - 1780'S

CUT BACK TO:

118

The ensemble reaches its climax, and fades away to the very quiet, slow chords immediately preceding the boisterous final chord. Salieri becomes aware that some of the audience are asleep and many mare are apathetic. In the near silence we see the Emperor yawn behind his hand. Those nearby look at him. Orsini-Rosenberg smiles.

CUT BACK TO:

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - 1823

OLD SALIERI

Father, did you know what that meant? With that yawn I saw my defeat turn into a victory. And Mozart was lucky the Emperor only yawned once. Three yawns and the opera would fail the same night; two yawns, within a week at most. With one yawn the composer could still get -

INT. SALIERI'S SALON - DAY - 1780'S

114.

119

CUT TO:

120

Mozart is pacing up and down. Salieri is listening sympathetically.

MOZART

Nine performances! Nine! That's all it's had - and withdrawn.

SALIERI

I know; it's outrageous. Still, if

the public doesn't like one's work

one has to accept the fact

gracefully.

MOZART

But what is it they don't like?

SALIERI

Well, I can speak for the Emperor.

You made too many demands on the

royal ear. The poor man can't

concentrate for more than an hour

and you gave him four.

MOZART

What did you think of it yourself?

Did you like it at all?

SALIERI

I think it's marvelous. Truly.

MOZART

It's the best opera yet written. I

know it! Why didn't they come?

SALIERI

I think you overestimate our dear Viennese, my friend.

(MORE)

121

SALIERI (CONT'D)

Do you know you didn't even give them a good bang at the end of songs so they knew when to clap?

MOZART

I know, I know. Perhaps you should give me some lessons in that.

SALIERI

(fuming)

I wouldn't presume. All the same, if it wouldn't be imposing, I would like you to see my new piece. It would be a tremendous honour for me.

MOZART

Oh no, the honour would be all mine.

SALIERI

(bowing)

Grazie, mio caro, Wolfgang!

MOZART

1. razie, a lei, Signor Antonio!
2. e bows too, giggling.

INT. OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT - 1780'S

115.

CUT TO:

121

A performance of Salieri's grand opera, Axur: King of Ormus. Deafening applause from a crowded house. We see the reception of the aria which we saw Cavalieri singing on the stage near the start of the film. Cavalieri, in a mythological Persian costume, is bowing to the rapturous throng; below her is Salieri. We see the Emperor, Von Strack, Orsini-Rosenberg, Bonno and Von Swieten, all applauding. We hear great cries of 'Salieri! Salieri!' and 'Bravo!' and 'Brava!'

CU, Salieri looking at the crowd with immense pleasure. Then suddenly at:

CU, Mozart standing in a box and clapping wildly. Behind him, seated, are Schikaneder and the three girls we saw before in Mozart's apartment.

CU, Salieri staring fixedly at Mozart, then Mozart still clapping, apparently with tremendous enthusiasm.

122

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

What was this? I never saw him excited before by any music but his own. Could he mean it?

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - 1823

OLD SALIERI

(to Vogler)

Would he actually tell me my music had moved him? Was I really going

to hear that from his own lips? I found myself actually hurrying the tempo of the finale.

116.

122

123

INT. OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT - 1780'S

CUT BACK TO:

123

Salieri conducting the last scene from Axur: King of Ormus. On stage we see a big scene of acclamation: the hero and heroine of the opera accepting the crown amidst the rejoicing of the people. The decor and costumes are mythological Persian. The music is utterly conventional and totally uninventive.

CU, Mozart watching this in his box, with Schikaneder and the three actresses. He passes an open bottle of wine to them. He is evidently a little drunk, but keeps a poker face.

The act comes to an end. Great applause in which Mozart joins in, standing and shouting 'Bravo! Bravo!' Then he leaves the box with Schikaneder and the girls.

124

INT. CORRIDOR OF THE OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT - 1780'S

MOZART

(to Schikaneder)

Well?

SCHIKANEDER

(mock moved)

Sublime! Utterly sublime!

MOZART

That kind of music should be punishable by death.

Schikaneder laughs.

124

CUT TO:

125

INT. STAGE OF THE OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT - 1780'S

117.

125

A crowd of people rings Salieri at a respectful distance. The Emperor is holding out the Civilian Medal and Chain.

JOSEPH

I believe that is the best opera

yet written, my friends. Salieri,

you are the brightest star in the

musical firmament. You do honour to

Vienna and to me.

1. alieri bows his head. Joseph places the chain around his neck. The crowd claps. Salieri makes to kiss his hand, but Joseph restrains him, and passes on. Cavalieri, smiling adoringly, gives him a deep curtsey, and he raises her up.
2. he crowd all flock to Salieri with cries and words of approval. All want to shake his hand. They tug and pat him. But he has eyes for only one man - he looks about him, searching for him and then finds him. Mozart stands there. Eagerly Salieri moves to him.

SALIERI

Mozart. It was good of you to come.

MOZART

How could I not?

SALIERI

Did my work please you?

MOZART

How could it not, Excellency?

Yes?

SALIERI

MOZART

I never knew that music like that was possible.

SALIERI

You flatter me.

MOZART

Oh no! One hears such sounds and what can one say, but - Salieri!

Salieri smiles.

CUT TO:

118.

126

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - 1780'S

126

Explosive laughter as Mozart and Schikaneder enter the apartment, very pleased with themselves and accompanied by the three actresses. The front door opens, very gingerly. Mozart, still rather drunk, sticks his head into the room, anxious not to make a noise. He sees the strangers and breaks into a smile.

MOZART

Oh. Everybody's here! We've got

guests. Good. I've brought some

more.

He opens the door wide to admit Schikaneder and the girls.

MOZART (CONT’D)

We'll have a little party. Come in.

Come in. You know Herr Schikaneder?

(to a girl)

This is! a very nice girl.

CONSTANZE

(standing up)

Wolfi.

MOZART

Yes, my love?

CONSTANZE

These gentlemen are from Salzburg.

MOZART

Salzburg. We were just talking

about Salzburg.

(to the two men,

jubilantly)

If you've come from my friend the

Fartsbishop, you've arrived at just

the right moment. Because I've got

good news for him. I'm done with

Vienna. It's over, finished, done

with! Done with! Done with!

CONSTANZE

Wolfi! Your father is dead.

What?

MOZART

CONSTANZE

Your father is dead.

119.

The first loud chord of the Statue scene from Don Giovanni sounds. Mozart stares.

127

INT. AN OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT - 1780'S

127

The second chord sounds. On stage we see the huge figure of the Commendatore in robes and helmet, extending his arms and pointing in accusation.

128

INT. AN OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT - 1780'S

128

The second chord sounds.

On stage we see a huge nailed fist crash through the wall of a painted dining room set. The giant armoured statue of the COMMENDATORE enters pointing his finger in accusation at Don Giovanni who sits at the supper table, staring - his servant Leporello quaking with fear under the table.

THE COMMENDATORE

(singing)

Don Giovanni!

The figure advances on the libertine. We see Mozart conducting, pale and deeply involved. Music fades down a little.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

So rose the dreadful ghost in his

next and blackest opera. There on

the stage stood the figure of a

dead commander calling out 'Repent!

Repent!'

The music swells. We see Salieri standing alone in the back of a box, unseen, in semi-darkness. We also see that the theatre is only half full. Music fades down.

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

And I knew - only I understood -

that the horrifying apparition was

Leopold, raised from the dead.

Wolfgang had actually summoned up

his own father to accuse his son

before all the world. It was

terrifying and wonderful to watch.

Music swells up again. We watch the scene on stage as the Commendatore addresses Giovanni. Then back to Salieri in the box. Music down again.

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - 1823

OLD SALIERI

Now a madness began in me. The madness of a man splitting in half. Through my influence I saw to it Don Giovanni was played only five times in Vienna. But in secret I went to every one of those five - all alone - unable to help myself, worshipping sound I alone seemed to hear.

INT. AN OPERA HOUSE - NIGHT - 1780'S

OLD SALIERI (V.O.)

And hour after hour, as I stood there, understanding even more clearly how that bitter old man was still possessing his poor son from beyond the grave, I began to see a way - a terrible way - I could finally triumph over God, my torturer.

120.

Music swells. On stage Don Giovanni is seized and gripped by the Statue's icy hand. Flames burst from obviously artificial rocks. Demons appear and drag the libertine down to Hell. The scene ends.

CU, Salieri, staring wide-eyed.

CUT TO:

131

EXT. SCHIKANEDER'S THEATRE - VIENNA - NIGHT - 1780'S

131

We see huge and attractive posters and billboards advertising Schikaneder's troupe. The camera concentrates on the one which reads as follows:

EMMANUEL SCHIKANEDER

Impresario de luxe

PRESENTS

The Celebrated

132

SCHIKANEDER TROUPE OF PLAYERS

IN

An Evening of

PARODY

Music! Mirth! Magic!

132

ALL SONGS AND SPEECHES WRITTEN

BY

EMMANUEL SCHIKANEDER

who personally will appear in every scene!

INT. SCHIKANEDER'S THEATRE - NIGHT - 1780'S

121.

CUT TO:

135

Noise; smoke; the audience is sitting at tables for an evening of vaudeville. Mozart, Constanze and their son Karl, now about two years old, and sitting on his mother's lap, are watching a parody scene by Schikaneder's troupe. They are rowdy, bawdy and silly, incorporating motifs, situations and tunes from Mozart's operas which we have seen and heard. Before them on the table are bottles of wine and beer, plates of sausages, etc.

THE PARODY

On stage we see a set which

parodies the dining room in Don

Giovanni's palace, shown before.

Schikaneder as Don Giovanni is dancing with the three actresses to the minuet from Don Giovanni (end of Act I), played by a quartet of tipsy musicians. Leporello is handing around wine on a tray.

Suddenly there is a tremendous knocking from outside. The music slithers to a stop. All look at each other in panic. Leporello drops his tray with a crash. All go quiet. One more knock is heard. Then all musicians, actresses, Don Giovanni and Leporello make a dash to hide under the table which is far too small to accommodate them all. The table rocks. Schikaneder is pushed out. He is terrified. He shakes elaborately. Three more knocks are heard; louder.

Who is it?

SCHIKANEDER

One more knock.

SCHIKANEDER (CONT’D)

C-c-c-come in!

In the pit a chromatic scale from the Overture to Don Giovanni turns into a anticipatory vamp. This grows more and more menacing until the whole flat representing the wall at the back falls down.

122.

An absurd pantomime horse gallops in. It has a ridiculous expression, and is manned by four men inside. Standing precariously on its back is a dwarf, wearing a miniature version of the armour and helmet worn by the Commendatore. He sings in a high, nasal voice:

COMMENDATORE

(singing)

Don Giovannnnnnnnnni!

He tries to keep his balance as he trots in, but fails. He falls off onto the stage. He beats at the horse, trying to get back on.

COMMENDATORE (CONT’D)

Down! Down!

Bewildered, the horse looks about him, but cannot see his small rider who is below his level of sight.

COMMENDATORE (CONT’D)

I'm here! I'm here!

The horse, amidst laughter from the audience, fails to locate him. Exasperated, the dwarf signals to someone in the wings. A tall man strides out carrying a see-saw; on his shoulders stands another man.

The dwarf stands on the lowered end of the see-saw. There is a drum roll and the man above jumps down onto the raised end and the Commendatore is abruptly catapulted back onto the horse, only backwards so that he is facing away from Don Giovanni. The two men bow to the applauding audience, and retire off-stage.

The Commendatore tries to extend his arms in the proper menacing attitude, and at the same time turn around to face Don Giovanni. This he finds difficult.

COMMENDATORE (CONT’D)

(singing)

Don Giovannnnnnnni!

SCHIKANEDER

Who the devil are you? What do you

want?

COMMENDATORE

(singing)

I've come to dinnnnnner!

123.

SCHIKANEDER

Dinner? How dare you? I am a

nobleman. I only dine with people

of my own height.

COMMENDATORE

Are you drunk? You invited me. And

my horse. Here he is. Ottavio!

The horse takes a bow. The dwarf almost falls off again.

COMMENDATORE (CONT’D)

Whoa! Whoa! Stop it!

The three girls rush to his aid and reach him just in time. They sing in the manner of the Tree Ladies later to be put into The Magic Flute.

FIRST LADY

(running and singing)

Be careful!

SECOND LADY

(running and singing)

Be careful!

THIRD LADY

(running and singing)

Be careful!

ALL THREE TOGETHER

(close harmony)

Hold tight now!

They grab him.

COMMENDATORE

(angry)

Leave me alone! Stop it! I'm a

famous horseman.

OTTAVIO

And I'm a famous horse!

He gives the ladies a radiant smile. The three ladies sing, as before, in close harmony.

FIRST LADY

(singing)

He's adorable!

SECOND LADY

(singing)

Adorable!

124.

THIRD LADY

(singing)

Adorable!

An orchestral chord. The three ladies turn to Ottavio and sing to him.

THREE LADIES

(singing together)

Give me your hoof, my darling, And

I'll give you my heart! Take me to

your stable, And never more we'll

part!

OTTAVIO

(singing: four male

voices)

I'm shy and very bashful. I don't

know what to say.

THREE LADIES

(singing together)

Don't hesitate a second. Just

answer yes and neigh.

Ottavio neighs loudly, and runs at the girls.

COMMENDATORE

(speaking)

Stop it. What are you doing?

Remember who you are! You're a

horse and they are whores.

Boos from the audience.

SCHIKANEDER

(speaking)

This is ridiculous. I won't have

any of it. You're turning my house

into a circus!

A trapeze sails in from above. On it stands a grand soprano wearing an elaborate Turkish costume, like a parody of Cavalieri's in Il Seraglio. She comes in singing a mad coloratura scale in the manner of Martern aller Arten.

SCHIKANEDER (CONT’D)

(speaking)

Shut up. Women, women, women! I'm

sick to death of them.

He marches off stage.

125.

SOPRANO

(singing dramatically)

Dash me! Bash me! Lash me! Flay me! Slay me! At last I will be freed by death!

Shut up.

COMMENDATORE

SOPRANO

(swinging and singing)

Kill me! Kill me! Kill me! Kill me!

At last I shall be freed by death.

At last I shall be freed by dea -

The Commendatore pulls out his sword, reaches up and thrusts her through with it. The soprano collapses on the bar of the trapeze. The audience applauds. At the same moment eight dwarves march in bearing a huge cauldron of steaming water. They sing as they march to the sound of the march that was cut from Act III of Figaro. They are dressed as miniature copies of the chorus in that scene except that they are wearing cooks' hats.

EIGHT DWARVES

(singing)

We're going to make a soprano stew!

We're going to make a soprano stew!

And when you make a soprano stew!

Any stupid soprano will do! Any

stew- stew-stew-stew-stew! Any

stewpid soprano will do!

They set the giant pot down in the middle of the stage. The trapeze with the dead soprano is still swinging above the stage.

We hear the chromatic scale from the Don Giovanni overture again, repeated and repeated, only now fast and tremolando. To this exciting vamp Schikaneder suddenly rides in on a real horse, waving a real sword. With this he cuts the string of the trapeze, and the soprano falls into the pot. A tremendous splash of water. Schikaneder rides out. More applause.

All the dwarves produce long wooden cooking spoons and climb up the sides of the pot. The three girls produce labeled bottles from under their skirts. The first is SALT.

FIRST LADY

(singing)

Behold!

PEPPER

SECOND LADY

(singing)

Behold!

She sneezes.

AND SCHNAPPS

THIRD LADY

(singing)

Behold!

1. he hiccups.
2. hey throw them into the pot.

COMMENDATORE

(speaking to the dwarves)

How long does it take to cook a

soprano?

DWARVES

(all together)

Five hours, five minutes, five

seconds.

COMMENDATORE

(speaking)

I can't wait that long. I'm

starving!

OTTAVIO

(speaking; four voices)

So am I.

Schikaneder marches in as Figaro.

SCHIKANEDER

(singing to the tune of

Non piu ante)

In the pot, I have got a good

dinner. Not a sausage or stew, but

a singer. Not a sausage or stew but

a singer. Is the treat that I'll

eat for my meat!

COMMENDATORE

Oh shut up. I'm sick to death of

that tune.

CU, Mozart laughing delightedly with the audience.

126.

127.

THE THREE GIRLS

(singing again to the

horse)

Give me your hoof, my darling, and

I'll give you my heart.

COMMENDATORE

Shut up. I'm sick of that one too.

All the dwarves climb up the rim of the pot. As they climb, they all hum together the opening of Eine Kleine Nachtmusik.

COMMENDATORE (CONT’D)

And that one, too!

The soprano rises, dripping with water in the middle of the pot.

SOPRANO

(singing)

Oil me! Broil me! Boil me!

All the dwarves beat her back down into the pot with their long wooden spoons.

SOPRANO (CONT’D)

(from inside the pot)

Soil me! Foil me! Spoil me!

HORSE

I can't eat her. Sopranos give me

hiccups. I want some hay!

Hey!

Hey!

Hey!

FIRST LADY

(singing to Schikaneder)

SECOND LADY

(singing to Schikaneder)

THIRD LADY

(singing to Schikaneder)

Hey what?

SCHIKANEDER

ALL THREE LADIES (singing to La oi daram)

Give him some hay, my darling, and I'll give you my heart!

128.

Shut up.

COMMENDATORE

SCHIKANEDER

Leporello! We want some hay -

prestissimo! Leporello - where are

you?

The table is raised in the air by Leporello sitting under it on a bale of hay.

FIRST LADY

(singing to horse)

Behold!

SECOND LADY

(singing to horse)

Behold!

THIRD LADY

(singing to horse)

Behold!

Ottavio the horse gives a piercing neigh and runs down to the hay.

COMMENDATORE

(holding on)

Hey! Hey! Watch out!

The vamp starts again vigorously. The horse's rear-end swings around on a hinge to turn his hind-quarters straight on to the audience. The rest of him stays sideways. His tail springs up in the air to reveal a lace handkerchief modestly hiding his arsehole.

Schikaneder offers him a handful of hay. The horse eats it, and out the other end comes a long Viennese sausage. The audience roars with laughter. Another handful of hay and out of the other end falls a string of sausages. Then a large pie, crust and all. Then a shower of iced cakes!

Suddenly - silence. Schikaneder produces an egg from his pocket. Ottavio the horse rears up in disgust.

COMMENDATORE (CONT’D)

Whoa! Whoa, Ottavio! Whoa!

Leporello pries open the horse's mouth. Schikaneder pops the egg into it. A breathless pause as a drum roll builds the tension, up and up and up, and then suddenly out of the horse's rear-end flies a single white dove.

Wild applause.

129.

It flies into the audience. Immediately all the cast start humming the lyrical finale from Figaro: Tutti Contenti. More and more doves fly out from the wings and fill the theatre. Everybody picks up the sausages and cakes and begins to eat. The end of the sketch is unexpectedly lyrical and magical, and then, suddenly, the tempo changes and the coarse strains of Ich Mochte wohl Der Kaiser take over and the whole company is dancing, frantically. A general dance as the curtain falls.

It rises immediately. The audience - including Mozart - is delighted. They applaud vigorously. Schikaneder takes a bow amongst his troupe. Among much whistling and clapping, he finally jumps off the stage and strides through the audience toward the table where Mozart sits with his family. On stage, a troupe of bag pipers immediately appears to play an old German tune. Some of the audience joins in singing it.

SCHIKANEDER

Well, how do you like that?

Mozart is smiling; he has been amused. Constanze has been less amused and is looking apprehensive.

MOZART

Wonderful!

(indicating his baby son)

He liked the monkey, didn't you?

SCHIKANEDER

Yes, well, it's all good fun.

MOZART

I liked the horse.

Schikaneder sits at the table, and drinks from a bottle of wine.

SCHIKANEDER

Isn't he marvelous? He cost me a

bundle, that horse, but he's worth

it. I tell you, if you'd played Don

Giovanni here it would have been a

great success. I'm not joking.

These people aren't fools. You

could do something marvelous for

them.

MOZART

I'd like to try them someday. I'm

not sure I'd be much good at it.

130.

SCHIKANEDER

'Course you would. You belong here, my boy, not the snobby Court. You could do anything you felt like here - the more fantastic the better! That's what people want, you know: fantasy. You do a big production, fill it with beautiful magic tricks and you'll be absolutely free to do anything you want. Of course, you'd have to put a fire in it, because I've got the best fire machine in the city and a big flood - I can do you the finest water effects you ever saw in your life. Oh, and a few trick animals. You'd have to use those.

Animals?

MOZART

SCHIKANEDER

I tell you I picked up a snake in Dresden last week - twelve foot long - folds up to six inches, just like a paper fan. It's a miracle.

Mozart laughs.

SCHIKANEDER (CONT’D)

I'm serious. You write a proper part for me with a couple of catchy songs, I'll guarantee you'll have a triumph- de-luxe. Mind you, it'll have to be in German.

German!

MOZART

SCHIKANEDER

Of course! What else do you think they speak here?

MOZART

No, no, I love that. I'd want it to be in German. I haven't done anything in German since Seraglio.

SCHIKANEDER

So there you are. What do you say?

CONSTANZE

How much will you pay him?

131.

SCHIKANEDER

Ah. Well. Ah,

(to Mozart)

I see you've got your manager with

you. Well, Madame, how about half

the receipts?

MOZART

Half the receipts! Stanzi!

CONSTANZE

I'm talking about now. How much

will you give him now? Down

payment?

SCHIKANEDER

Down payment? Who do you think I

am? The Emperor? Whoops, I have to

go.

He rises in haste for his next number.

SCHIKANEDER (CONT’D)

Stay where you are. You're going to

like this next one. We'll speak

again. Triumph-de-luxe, my boy!

He winks at Mozart and disappears toward the stage. Mozart looks after him, enchanted.

CONSTANZE

You're not going to do this?

MOZART

Why not? Half the house!

CONSTANZE

When? We need money now. Either he

pays now, or you don't do it.

MOZART

Oh, Stanzi.

CONSTANZE

I don't trust this man. And I

didn't like what he did with your

opera. It was common.

MOZART

(to Karl)

Well, you liked it, didn't you? Monkey-flunki-punki.

138

CONSTANZE

Half the house! You'll never see a penny. I want it here, in my hand.

MOZART

(dirty)

Stanzi-manzi, I'll put it in your hand!

CONSTANZE

Shut up! I'll not let you put anything in my hand until I see some money.

He giggles like a child.

INT. SCHLUMBERG HOUSE - HALLWAY - DAY 1780'S

132.

CUT TO:

138

Dogs are barking wickedly. Michael Schlumberg comes in from his salon. Mozart stands there looking very unwell and bewildered. He is also drunk, but making a careful attempt to keep his composure.

SCHLUMBERG

Herr Mozart. What a surprise. What

can I do for you?

MOZART

Is my pupil still anxious to learn

the art of music?

SCHLUMBERG

Well, your pupil is married and

living in Mannheim, young man.

MOZART

Really? Perhaps your dear wife

might care to profit from my

instruction?

SCHLUMBERG

What is this, Mozart? What's the

matter with you?

MOZART

Well. Since it appears nobody is

eager to hire my services, could

you favour me with a little money

instead?

What for?

SCHLUMBERG

139

MOZART

If a man cannot earn, he must borrow.

SCHLUMBERG

Well, this is hardly the way to go about it.

MOZART

No doubt, sir. But I am endowed with talent, and you with money. If I offer mine, you should offer yours.

Pause.

SCHLUMBERG

I'm sorry. No.

MOZART

Please. I'll give it back, I promise. Please, sir.

SCHLUMBERG

My answer is no, Mozart.

CU, Mozart. His voice becomes mechanical.

MOZART

Please. Please. Please. Please.

Please. Please.

INT. THE IMPERIAL LIBRARY - DAY - 1790'S

133.

CUT TO:

139

Von Swieten and Salieri stand close together. Several scholars and students are examining scrolls and manuscripts at the other end of the room.

VON SWIETEN

(keeping his voice down)

This is embarrassing, you know. You

introduced Mozart to some of my

friends and he's begging from

practically all of them. It has to

stop.

SALIERI

I agree, Baron.

VON SWIETEN

Can't you think of anyone who might

commission some work from him?

(MORE)

134.

VON SWIETEN (CONT'D)

I've done my best. I got him to

arrange some Bach for my Sunday

concerts. He got a fee - what I

could afford. Can't you think of

anyone who might do something for

him?

SALIERI

No, Baron, no. I'm afraid Mozart is

a lost cause. He has managed to

alienate practically the whole of

Vienna. He is constantly drunk. He

never pays his debts. I can't think

of one person to whom I dare

recommend him.

VON SWIETEN

How sad. It's tragic, isn't it?

Such a talent.

SALIERI

Indeed. Just a moment - as a matter

of fact I think I do know someone

who could commission a work from

him. A very appropriate person to

do so. Yes.

The opening measures of the Piano Concerto in D Minor steal in.

CUT TO:

140

INT. THE COSTUME SHOP - VIENNA - DAY - 1790'S

140

This is exactly the same shop which Mozart and Constanze visited with Leopold. Now Salieri's servant stands in it, waiting. We see a few other customers being served by the staff: renting masks, costumes, etc. One of the staff emerges from the back of the shop carrying a large box, which he hands to Salieri's servant. The servant leaves the shop. Through the window we see him hurrying away through the snowy street full of passers-by, carriages, etc.

141

INT. SALIERI'S APARTMENT - DUSK - 1790'S

141

The D Minor Concerto continues. Salieri, alone, eagerly opens the box from the costume shop and takes out the same dark cloak and hat that Leopold wore to the masquerade, only now attached to the hat is a dark mask whose mouth is cut into a frown, not a laugh. It presents a bitter and menacing expression. He puts on the cloak, the hat and the mask and turns his back.

135.

Suddenly we see the assembled and alarming image reflected in a full-length mirror. The music swells darkly.

CUT TO:

142

EXT. A SNOWY STREET IN VIENNA - DUSK - 1790'S

142

As the tutti of the D Minor Concerto continues, we see Salieri, dressed in this menacing costume, dark against the snow, stalking through a street which is otherwise lively with people going to various festivities. Some of them wear frivolous carnival clothes.

143

INT. MOZART'S LIVING ROOM - DUSK - 1790'S

143

Mozart sits writing at a table. He appears now to be really quite sick. His face expresses pain from his stomach cramps. There is a gentle knock at the door. He rises, goes to he door and opens it. Immediately there is a SHOCK CUT:

The dark, frowning mask stares at him and at us. The violent D Minor chord which opens Don Giovanni is heard. Salieri in costume stands in the doorway.

SALIERI

Herr Mozart?

The second chord sounds and fades. Mozart stares in panic.

SALIERI (CONT’D)

I have come to commission work from

you.

What work?

MOZART

SALIERI

A Mass for the dead.

MOZART

What dead? Who is dead?

SALIERI

A man who deserved a Requiem Mass and never got one.

MOZART

Who are you?

SALIERI

I am only a messenger. Do you accept? You will be paid well.

136.

How much?

MOZART

Salieri extends his hand. In it is a bag of money.

SALIERI

Fifty ducats. Another fifty when I

have the Mass. Do you accept?

Almost against his will, Mozart takes the money.

MOZART

How long will you give me?

SALIERI

Work fast. And be sure to tell no

one what you do. You will see me

again soon.

He turns away. Mozart closes the front door. Instantly we hear the opening of the Requiem Mass (also in D Minor). Mozart turns and looks up at the portrait of his father on the wall. The portrait stares back. Constanze opens the door from the bedroom. She sees him staring up.

CONSTANZE

Wolfi? Wolfi!

He looks at her with startled eyes. The music breaks off.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

Who was that?

No one.

MOZART

CONSTANZE

I heard voices.

He gives a strange little giggle.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

What's the matter?

She sees the bag of money.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

What's that? Oh!

(pouncing on it)

Who gave you this? How much is it? Wolfi, who gave you this?

MOZART

I'm not telling you.

144

CONSTANZE

Why not?

MOZART

You'd think I was mad.

He stares at her. She stares at him.

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - NIGHT - 1823

137.

144

Old Salieri is now wildly animated, totally driven by his confession to Vogler.

OLD SALIERI

My plan was so simple, it terrified

me. First I must get the Death Mass

and then achieve the death.

Vogler stares at him in horror.

What?

VOGLER

OLD SALIERI

His funeral - imagine it! The Cathedral, all Vienna sitting there. His coffin, Mozart's little coffin in the middle. And suddenly in that silence, music. A divine music bursts out over them all, a great Mass of Death: Requiem Mass for Wolfgang Mozart, composed by his devoted friend Antonio Salieri. What sublimity! What depth! What passion in the music! Salieri has been touched by God at last. And God, forced to listen. Powerless - powerless to stop it. I at the end, for once, laughing at Him. Do you understand? Do you?

Yes.

VOGLER

OLD SALIERI

The only thing that worried me was the actual killing. How does one do that? How does one kill a man? It's one thing to dream about it. It's very different when you have to do it, with your own hands.

138.

He raises his own hands and stares at them. The raging Dies Irae from Mozart's Requiem Mass bursts upon us.

CUT TO:

145

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - 1790'S

145

Mozart sits working frantically at this demonic music. His whole expression is one of wildness and engulfing fever. He pours wine down his throat, spilling it, and grimaces as it hits his stomach. All around him are manuscripts.

There is a banging at the front door. Mozart does not hear it; the music raves on. Another knocking comes, louder. Constanze appears from the bedroom and stares at her distracted husband. The knocking is repeated again, even more violently and insistently.

CONSTANZE

Wolfi. Wolfi!

He looks at her. The music breaks off. Silence. An enormous bang at the door startles him.

Constanze moves to open it.

MOZART

No. Don't answer it!

Why?

CONSTANZE

Mozart springs up. He is clearly terrified.

MOZART

Tell him I'm not here. Tell him I'm

working on it. Come back later.

He runs out of he room, into his workroom, and shuts he door. Now a little scared herself, Constanze goes to he front door and opens it cautiously. Schikaneder stands there, floridly dressed as usual. Lorl is seen peeking out from the kitchen.

SCHIKANEDER

Am I interrupting something?

CONSTANZE

Not at all.

SCHIKANEDER

(peering into he room)

Where's our friend?

139.

CONSTANZE

He's not in. But he's working on

it. He said to tell you.

SCHIKANEDER

I hope so. I need it immediately.

He pushes her into the room.

SCHIKANEDER (CONT’D)

Is he happy with it?

He sees he manuscript on the table, and goes to it eagerly.

SCHIKANEDER (CONT’D)

Is this it?

He picks up a page without waiting for a reply.

SCHIKANEDER (CONT’D)

What the devil is this? Requiem

Mass? Does he think I'm in the

funeral business?

Mozart opens he workroom door. We see him as Schikaneder sees him: wild-eyed, extremely pale and strange.

MOZART

Leave that alone!

Wolfi!

SCHIKANEDER

MOZART

Put it down!

SCHIKANEDER

What is this?

MOZART

Put it down, I said! It's nothing for you.

SCHIKANEDER

Oh! I'm sorry! I'm sorry! What have you got for me? Is it finished?

What?

MOZART

SCHIKANEDER

What? The vaudeville, what'd you think?

140.

Yes.

MOZART

SCHIKANEDER

Can I see it?

No.

Why not?

MOZART

SCHIKANEDER

MOZART

Because there's nothing to see.

He giggles triumphantly. Schikaneder stares at him.

SCHIKANEDER

Look, I asked you if we could start

rehearsal next week and you said

yes.

MOZART

Well, we can.

SCHIKANEDER

So let me see it. Where is it?

Mozart, with a bright, rather demented smile presents his head to Schikaneder.

MOZART

Here. It's all right here, in my

noodle. The rest is just

scribbling. Scribbling and

bibbling. Bibbling and scribbling.

Would you like a drink?

He giggles. Schikaneder suddenly grabs his lapels.

SCHIKANEDER

Look, you little clown, do you know

how many people I've hired for you?

Do you know how many people are

waiting?

CONSTANZE

Leave him alone!

SCHIKANEDER

I'm paying these people. Do you

realize that?

141.

CONSTANZE

He's doing his best.

SCHIKANEDER

I'm paying people just to wait for

you. It's ridiculous!

CONSTANZE

You know what's ridiculous? Your

libretto, that's what's ridiculous.

Only an idiot would ask Wolfi to

work on that stuff!

SCHIKANEDER

Oh yes? And what's so intelligent

about writing a Requiem?

CONSTANZE

Money! Money!

SCHIKANEDER

You're mad! She's mad, Wolfi.

CONSTANZE

Oh yes, and who are you? He's

worked for Kings. For the Emperor.

(shouting)

Who are you?

Schikaneder suddenly takes Mozart by the arms, and speaks to him with intense appeal.

SCHIKANEDER

Listen, Wolfi. Write it. Please.

Just write it down. On paper. It's

no good to anyone in your head. And

fuck the Death Mass.

146

INT. SALIERI'S SALON - DAY - 1790'S

A frightened and tearful Lorl sits before Salieri.

SALIERI

Now calm yourself. Calm. What's the matter with you?

LORL

I'm leaving. I'm not working there anymore. I'm scared!

SALIERI

Why? What has happened?

146

142.

LORL

You don't know what it's like. Herr Mozart frightens me. He drinks all day, then takes all that medicine and it makes him worse.

SALIERI

What medicine?

LORL

I don't know. He has pains.

Where?

SALIERI

LORL

Here, in his stomach. They bend him

right over.

SALIERI

Is he working?

LORL

I'm frightened, sir. Really! When

he speaks, he doesn't make any

sense. You know he said he saw - he

said he saw his father. And his

father's dead.

SALIERI

Is he working?

LORL

I suppose so. He sits there all he

time, doing some silly opera.

SALIERI

(startled)

Opera? Opera!

LORL

Please don't ask me to go back

again. I'm frightened! I'm very,

very frightened.

SALIERI

(insistently)

Are you sure it's an opera?

The Overture to The Magic Flute begins grandly. To the music of the slow introduction, we see:

143.

147

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - 1790'S

147

The room, lit by a few candles, appears dirty. The camera shows us again Leopold's portrait on the wall, looking down upon a scene of disorder.

Papers litter the table; dirty dishes are piled in the fireplace; on the forte-piano lies Mozart's Masonic apron, woven with symbols. To the more lyrical passage of the introduction, we see Mozart take up a candle and enter:

148

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1790'S

148

We watch him stand beside Constanze, who lies asleep. Mozart now looks very ill; his wife appears worn out. Tenderly he touches her hair. Then he moves to the cot where his son Karl lies asleep and kneels, pulls up the child's little blanket and for a moment lays his own head down beside the boy's. Constanze opens her eyes and stares at him. Mozart rises and returns to:

149

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - 1790'S

149

The Introduction ends and suddenly the brilliant fast fugue begins. Instantly Mozart starts to dance to it, all alone: gleefully, like a child. He looks up at his father's portrait, and makes a silly, rude gesture at it. He is, briefly, an irresponsible and happy boy again.

Then suddenly there is a gentle knocking at the door. The music fades down. Warily, Mozart crosses and opens he door. The familiar dark chords from Don Giovanni cut across the happy music. It ends. Before him stands the masked stranger.

MOZART

I don't have it yet. It's not

finished. I'm sorry, but I need

more time.

SALIERI

Are you neglecting my request?

MOZART

No, no! I promise you, I'll give

you a wonderful piece - the best I

ever can!

He turns and looks. Constanze has come into the living room. Nervously, Mozart indicates her.

MOZART (CONT’D)

This is my wife, Stanzi. I've been

sick, but I'm all right now. Aren't

150

I?

144.

150

CONSTANZE

Oh yes, sir. He's all right. And

he's working on it very hard.

MOZART

Give me two more weeks. Please.

Salieri contemplates them both.

SALIERI

The sooner you finish, the better

your reward. Work!

He turns and goes down the stairs. Mozart shuts the door; he closes his eyes in fear.

CONSTANZE

Wolfi, I think you really are going

mad. You work like a slave for that

idiot actor who won't give you a

penny and here. This is not a

ghost! This is a real man who puts

down real money. Why on earth don't

you finish it?

He will not look at her or reply.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

Give me one reason I can

understand.

MOZART

I can't write it!

Why not?

CONSTANZE

MOZART

It's killing me.

He looks at her suddenly.

CONSTANZE

No, this is really awful. You're drunk, aren't you? Be honest - tell me - you've been drinking. And I'm so stupid I stay here and listen to you!

Suddenly she starts to cry.

145.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

It's not fair! I worry about you

all the time. I try to help you all

I can and you just drink and talk

nonsense and - and frighten me!

It's not fair!

Her tears flow. Mozart looks at her helplessly.

MOZART

Go back to bed.

CONSTANZE

Please! Let me sit here. Let me

stay here with you. I promise I

won't say all word. I'll just be

here, so you know no one's going to

hurt you. Please, please!

She sits down tearfully, staring at him.

We hear the Rex Tremendai Majestatis from the Requiem and see on the wall the portrait of Leopold Mozart looking down. The camera pans slowly downward from it back to the table. Mozart is writing the music. He looks up and sees that Constanze is fast asleep in her chair. Mozart gets up quietly. He puts on his hat and cloak, takes a bottle of wine and tiptoes from the house. Without stopping, the music changes from the heavy Requiem to the light-hearted patter of the Papa-Papa duet from The Magic Flute.

CUT TO:

151

INT. SCHIKANEDER'S SUMMER HOUSE - NIGHT - 1790'S

151

This little wooden structure stands in a courtyard in the tenement by the Weiden. Inside, we see a table, chairs, a forte-piano, bottles and a chaos of papers. Strewn about in the chairs are the three actresses, giggling. Schikaneder and Mozart, both drunk, are singing the duet of the two bird- people. The actor sings Papageno and the composer, in a soprano voice, sings Papagena at the keyboard. Absurdly, they end up rubbing noses and fall on each other's necks.

152

EXT. VIENNA STREET - NIGHT - 1790'S

152

Mozart, drunk and happy, staggers back through the snow. There are a few people about. He goes into his apartment building.

153

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - DAY - 1790'S

153

He comes through he door and stares across the living room at an open bedroom door. Puzzled, he crosses.

146.

The bedroom is also empty. We see Constanze's empty bed; Karl's empty bed; empty closets.

MOZART

Stanzi? Stanzi-marini-bini?

He looks about him, puzzled.

154

INT. FRAU WEBER'S HOUSE - LIVING ROOM - DAY - 1790'S

154

Frau Weber sits grimly talking. Mozart sits also, completely exhausted and passive under the rain of her constant speech.

FRAU WEBER

She's not coming back, you know.

She's gone for good. I did it and

I'm proud of it. 'Leave,' I said.

'Right away! Take he child and go,

just go. Here's the money! Go to

the Spa and get your health back -

that's if you can.' I was shocked.

Shocked to my foundation. Is that

my girl? Can that be my Stanzi? The

happy little moppet I brought up,

that poor trembling thing? Oh, you

monster! No one exists but you, do

they? You and your music! Do you

know how often she's sat in that

very chair, weeping her eyes out of

her head because of you? I warned

her. 'Choose a man, not a baby,' I

said. But would she listen? Who

listens? 'He's just a silly boy,'

she says. Silly, my arse. Selfish -

that's all you are. Selfish!

Selfish, selfish, selfish, selfish,

selfish.

And with a scream Madame Weber's voice turns into the shrill packing coloratura of the second act aria of the Queen of the Night, in The Magic Flute.

DISSOLVE TO:

155

INT. SCHIKANEDER'S THEATRE - NIGHT - 1790'S

155

On stage we see the QUEEN OF THE NIGHT fantastically costumed, furiously urging her daughter to kill Sarastro. As she sings, we see the interior of the theatre, now re- arranged from when we last visited it to watch the Cabaret. An audience of ordinary German citizens stands in the pit area, or sits: they are rapt and excited.

147.

The theatre also possesses boxes; some of these show closed curtains - their inhabitants presumably engaged in private intimacies. In one of them sits Salieri.

QUEEN OF THE NIGHT

(singing furiously)

A hellish wrath within my heart is

seething! Death and destruction

Flame around my throne! If not by

thee Sarastro's light be

extinguished. Then be thou mine own

daughter never more! Rejected be

forever! So sundered be forever All

the bonds of kin and blood! Hear!

Hear! Hear God of Vengeance! Hear

thy Mother's vow!

Thunder and lightning. She disappears amidst tremendous applause from the audience.

CUT TO:

156

EXT. OUTSIDE THE THEATRE - NIGHT - 1790'S

156

On the poster for The Magic Flute, the name Emmanuel Schikaneder should appear very, very large and the name of Mozart quite small:

I. & R. priv. Weiden Theatre The Actors of the Imperial and Royal Privileged Theatre of the Weiden Have the honour to perform

THE MAGIC FLUTE

A Grand Opera in Two Acts By

Emmanuel Schikaneder (The Cast List)

The music is by Herr Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart. Herr Mozart out of respect for a gracious and honourable Public, and from friendship for the author of this piece, will today direct the orchestra in person.

The book of the opera, furnished with two copperplates, of which is engraved Herr Schikaneder in the costume he wears for the role of Papageno, may be had at the box office for kr.

Prices of admission are as usual To begin at 7 o'clock

157 INT. STAGE, AUDITORIUM AND WINGS OF SCHIKANEDER'S THEATRE157-

158

NIGHT -1790'S

148.

158

We CUT TO the scene immediately before Papageno's song, Ein Madchen oder Weibchen. Papageno, played by Schikaneder, dressed in his costume of feathers, is trying to get through a mysterious door. A voice calls from within.

Go back!

Papageno recoils.

VOICE

PAPAGENO

Merciful Gods! If only I knew by which door I came in.

(to audience)

Which was it? Was it this one? Come on, tell me!

Go back!

Papageno recoils.

VOICE

PAPAGENO

Now, I can't go forward and I can't

go back. Oh, this is awful!

1. e weeps extravagantly.
2. n the pit, Mozart indicates to the first violinist to take over as conductor. He slips from his place and goes stealthily backstage. We follow him. Over the scene we hear Papageno being addressed by the First Priest in stern tones.

FIRST PRIEST

(on stage)

Man, thou hast deserved to wander

forever in the darkest chasms of

the earth. The gentle Gods have

remitted thy punishment, but yet

thou shalt never feel the Divine

Content of the consecrated ones.

PAPAGENO

Oh well, I'm not alone in that.

Just give me a decent glass of wine

- that's divine content enough for

me.

Laughter. An enormous goblet of wine appears out of the earth.

149.

We follow Mozart into the wings. Actors and actresses stand around in fantastic costumes. We see a flying chariot and parts of a huge snake lying about. Also the scenery door of a temple with the word 'Wisdom' inscribed on the pediment. Mozart walks to where there stands a keyboard glockenspiel with several manuals, and a musician waiting to play it. Silently Mozart indicates that he wishes to play the instrument himself.

On stage Schikaneder is being addressed haughtily by the First Priest.

FIRST PRIEST

Man, hast thou no other desire on

earth, but just to eat and drink?

PAPAGENO

(Schikaneder)

Well!

Laughter from the audience.

PAPAGENO (CONT’D)

Well, actually I do have a rather

weird feeling in my heart. Perhaps

it's just indigestion. But you

know, I really would like - I

really do want - something even

nicer than food and drink. Now what

on earth could that be?

He stares at the audience and winks at them. They laugh. Now Papageno's aria (Ein Madchen oder Weibchen) begins. It

is interpolated, as he pretends to play his magic bells, with the glockenspiel actually being played off-stage by Mozart. Schikaneder looks into the pit and does not see Mozart conducting. He looks into the wings and realizes the situation with amusement. He sings joyfully and the audience watches entranced.

ANDANTE

A sweetheart or a pretty little

wife is Papageno's wish. A willing,

billing, lovey dovey Would be My

most tasty little dish. Be my most

tasty little dish! Be my most tasty

little dish!

ALLEGRO

Then that would be eating and

drinking I'd live like a Prince

without thinking.

(MORE)

150.

ALLEGRO (CONT'D)

The wisdom of old would be mine - A

woman's much better than wine! Then

that would be eating and drinking!

The wisdom of old would be mine - A

woman's much better than wine.

She's much better than wine! She's

much better than wine!

ANDANTE

(encore, lightly, as

before)

A sweetheart or a pretty little

wife is Papageno's wish. A willing,

billing, lovey dovey Would be My

most tasty little dish.

ALLEGRO

I need to net one birdie only And I

will stop feeling so lonely. But if

she won't fly to my aid, Then into

a ghost I must fade. I need to net

one birdie only But if she won't

fly to my aid, Then into a ghost I

must fade. To a ghost I must fade!

To a ghost I must fade!

ANDANTE

(encore)

A sweetheart or a pretty little

wife is Papageno's wish. A willing,

billing, lovey dovey Would be My

most tasty little dish.

ALLEGRO

At present the girls only peck me.

Their cruelty surely will wreck me.

But one little beak in my own, And

I'll up to heaven be flown! At

present the girls only peck me. But

one little beak in my own, And I'll

up to heaven be flown. Up to heaven

be flown! Up to heaven be flown!

At certain moments we see the stage from Salieri's point of view: Schikaneder singing, then pretending to play; and then we see Mozart playing the glockenspiel with great flourishes in the wings. Then, suddenly, the actor mimes playing, and no sound comes. He mimes again, but still nothing comes. He looks offstage in anxiety; there is evidently some commotion. People are looking down on the floor. The song comes to a near-halt. Schikaneder stares.

151.

Then the comedian signals to the deputy conductor to pick up the song and finish it. At this moment Salieri gets up and hastily leaves his box.

CUT TO:

159

INT. WINGS OF SCHIKANEDER'S THEATRE - NIGHT - 1790'S

159

We see the actress playing Papagena, wearing an old tattered cloak and about to tie a little painted cloth representing a hideous old woman over her face. She is looking worriedly down at Mozart, who is lying unconscious on the floor.

A few people around him are trying to revive him. One has put a wet handkerchief around his temples. Another is holding a small bottle of smelling salts. There are voices saying, 'Doctor! Take him to a dressing room. Someone call a carriage. Take him home.' Etc. Papagena is urged to go on stage by a distracted stage manager. Suddenly we hear the voice of Salieri.

SALIERI

I'll take care of him.

He steps forward.

SALIERI (CONT’D)

I have a carriage. Excuse me.

The actors step back respectfully. He stoops and picks up the frail composer in his arms. Mozart is quite limp and Salieri has to fling his arms around his own neck. All this is watched nervously by Schikaneder on stage whilst performing his scene with Papagena as an ugly old woman.

UGLY OLD WOMAN

Here I am, my angel.

PAPAGENO

(appalled)

What? Who the devil are you?

UGLY OLD WOMAN

I've taken pity on you, my angel. I

heard your wish.

PAPAGENO

Oh. Well, thank you! How wonderful.

Some people get all the luck.

Audience laughter. The actress raises the little painted cloth with the ugly old face on it to show her own pretty young one to the audience. More laughter.

160

UGLY OLD WOMAN

Now you've got to promise me faithfully you'll remain true to me forever. Then you'll see how tenderly your little birdie will love you.

PAPAGENO

(nervous)

I can't wait.

UGLY OLD WOMAN

Well, promise then.

PAPAGENO

What do you mean - now?

UGLY OLD WOMAN

Of course now. Right away, before I get any older.

Laughter.

PAPAGENO

Well, I don't know! I mean you're a delicious, delightful, delectable little bird, but don't you think you might be just a little tough?

UGLY OLD WOMAN

(amorously)

Oh, I'm tender enough for you, my boy. I'm tender enough for you.

Laughter.

EXT. SCHIKANEDER'S THEATRE - NIGHT - 1790'S

152.

160

A waiting sedan chair. Mozart has recovered consciousness, but looks exceedingly ill. Salieri has set him down in the winter's night. Snow is falling.

MOZART

What happened? Is it over?

SALIERI

I'm taking you home. You're not

well.

MOZART

No, no. I have to get back. I have -

He starts to collapse again. Salieri helps him into the sedan. The door is shut.

153.

The chair sets off and Salieri strides beside it, through the mean street. A lantern with a candle swings from the chair.

161

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - 1790'S

161

The door opens. Salieri enters carrying the lantern from the sedan chair. He is followed by Mozart, carried in the arms of one of the porters. The room is now really in complete disarray. The table is piled high with music: the pages of the Requiem lie amongst many empty wine bottles. The porter carries Mozart into

162

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1790'S

162

This room is miserably neglected. The bed is unmade, clothes lie about on the floor. A sock has been stuck into the broken pane of one window.

The porter lays Mozart down on the bed as Salieri lights candles from the lantern to reveal plates of half-eaten food and other signs left by a man whose wife has departed. It is obviously very cold. Another very small bed nearby belongs to the child, Karl.

SALIERI

(handing the porter the

lantern)

Thank you. Go.

The porter leaves the room. Mozart stirs.

MOZART

(vaguely singing)

Papa! Papa!

He opens his eyes and sees Salieri staring down at him. He smiles.

Come now.

SALIERI

He helps him to sit up and takes off his coat and his shoes and puts a coverlet around him.

SALIERI (CONT’D)

Where is your wife?

MOZART

Not here! She's not well, either.

She went to the Spa.

SALIERI

You mean she's not coming back?

154.

MOZART

You're so good to me. Truly. Thank

you.

SALIERI

No, please.

MOZART

I mean to come to my opera. You are

the only colleague who did.

He struggles to loosen his cravat. Salieri does it for him.

SALIERI

I would never miss anything that

you had written. You must know

that.

MOZART

This is only a vaudeville.

SALIERI

Oh no. It is a sublime piece. The

grandest operone. I tell you, you

are the greatest composer known to

me.

MOZART

Do you mean that?

I do.

SALIERI

MOZART

I have bad fancies. I don't sleep well anymore. Then I drink too much, and think stupid things.

SALIERI

Are you ill?

MOZART

The doctor thinks I am. But -

What?

SALIERI

MOZART

I'm too young to be so sick.

There is a violent knocking at the front door. Mozart starts and looks around wildly.

155.

163

SALIERI

Shall I answer it?

MOZART

No! No, it's him!

SALIERI

Who?

MOZART

The man. He's here.

SALIERI

What man?

The knocking increases in loudness, terrifying Mozart.

MOZART

Tell him to go away. Tell him I'm

still working on it. Don't let him

in!

Salieri moves to the door.

MOZART (CONT’D)

Wait! Ask him if he'd give me some

money now. Tell him if he would,

that would help me finish it.

SALIERI

Finish what?

MOZART

He knows. He knows!

Salieri leaves the room.

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - NIGHT - 1790'S

163

Salieri goes to the front door and opens it to reveal Schikaneder, who has obviously come straight from the theatre. He still wears his bird make-up and under his street cloak, his feathered costume is clearly seen. He has with him the three actresses, also looking anxious and also in make-up as the three attendants in The Magic Flute.

SCHIKANEDER

Herr Salieri.

SALIERI

Yes, I am looking after him.

SCHIKANEDER

Can we come in?

156.

SALIERI

Well, he's sleeping now. Better not.

SCHIKANEDER

But he's all right?

SALIERI

Oh, yes. He's just exhausted. He became dizzy, that's all. We should let him rest.

SCHIKANEDER

Well, tell him we were here, won't you?

Of course.

SALIERI

SCHIKANEDER

And say everything went

wonderfully. A triumph-de-luxe - say that! Tell him the audience shouted his name a hundred times.

Bene.

SALIERI

SCHIKANEDER

I'll call tomorrow.

SALIERI

Yes.

(to the actresses)

And congratulations to all of you. It was superb.

ACTRESSES

Thank you! Thank you, Excellency!

Schikaneder produces a bag of money.

SCHIKANEDER

Oh, by the way, give him this. This is his share. That should cheer him up, eh?

SALIERI

Yes, indeed. Goodnight to you all now. It was perfection - truly!

157.

ACTRESSES

(delighted)

Goodnight, Your Excellency.

Goodnight!

They bob and curtsey. Schikaneder stares at Salieri, uneasily, vaguely suspicious. Salieri smiles back at him and shuts the door. He stays for a moment, thinking. He contemplates the money.

164

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1790'S

164

Mozart is sitting up in bed, staring at the door. It opens. Salieri returns. He holds in his hand the bag of money.

MOZART

What happened?

Salieri pours the coins out of the bag onto the coverlet.

SALIERI

He said to give you this. And if

you finish the work by tomorrow

night, he will pay you another

hundred ducats.

Mozart looks at the coins astonished.

MOZART

Another? But that's too soon!

Tomorrow night? It's impossible!

Did he say a hundred?

SALIERI

Yes. Can I - could I help you, in

any way?

MOZART

Would you? Actually, you could.

SALIERI

My dear friend, it would be my

greatest pleasure.

MOZART

But you'd have to swear not to tell

a soul. I'm not allowed.

Of course.

SALIERI

MOZART

You know, it's all here in my head. It's just ready to be set down.

(MORE)

165

MOZART (CONT'D)

But when I'm dizzy like this my

eyes won't focus. I can't write.

SALIERI

Then, let us try together. I'd

regard it as such an honour. Tell

me, what is this work?

MOZART

A Mass. A Mass for the Dead.

INT. A SMALL DANCE HALL - BADEN - NIGHT - 1790'S

158.

CUT TO:

165

Trivial dance music is playing. Constanze is doing a waltz with a young OFFICER in military uniform. At the moment we see her, she stops abruptly, as if in panic.

OFFICER

What is it?

CONSTANZE

I want to go!

Where?

OFFICER

CONSTANZE

I want to go back to Vienna.

Now?

Yes!

Why?

OFFICER

CONSTANZE

OFFICER

CONSTANZE

I feel wrong. I feel wrong being here.

OFFICER

(laying a hand on her

arm)

What are you talking about?

CUT TO:

166

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1790'S

159.

166

Mozart is sitting up in bed, propped against pillows. The coins lie on the coverlet; many candles burn in the necks of bottles. Salieri, without coat or wig, is seated at an improvised worktable. On it are blank sheets of music paper, quills, and ink. Also the score of the Requiem Mass as so far composed. Mozart is bright-eyed with a kind of fever. Salieri is also possessed with an obviously feverish desire to put down the notes as quickly as Mozart can dictate them.

MOZART

Where did I stop?

SALIERI

(consulting the

manuscript)

The end of the Recordare - Statuens

in parte dextra.

MOZART

So now the Confutatis. Confutatis

Maledictis. When the wicked are

confounded. Flammis acribus

addictis. How would you translate

that?

SALIERI

Consigned to flames of woe.

MOZART

Do you believe in it?

What?

SALIERI

MOZART

A fire which never dies. Burning one forever?

Oh, yes.

Strange!

SALIERI

MOZART

SALIERI

Come. Let's begin.

He takes his pen.

SALIERI (CONT’D)

Confutatis Maledictis.

160.

MOZART

We ended in F Major?

Yes.

SALIERI

MOZART

So now - A minor. Suddenly.

Salieri writes the key signature.

The Fire.

What time?

MOZART (CONT’D)

SALIERI

MOZART

Common time.

Salieri writes this, and continues now to write as swiftly and urgently as he can, at Mozart's dictation. He is obviously highly expert at doing this and hardly hesitates. His speed, however, can never be too fast for Mozart's impatient mind.

MOZART (CONT’D)

Start with the voices. Basses

first. Second beat of the first

measure -

167

A.

167

(singing the note) Con-fu-ta-tis. (speaking) Second measure, second beat. (singing) Ma-le-dic-tis. (speaking) G-sharp, of course.

Yes.

SALIERI

MOZART

Third measure, second beat starting on E.

(singing)

Flam-mis a-cri-bus ad-dic-tis.

(speaking)

And fourth measure, fourth beat - D.

(singing)

Ma-le-dic-tis, flam-mis a-cri-bus

ad- dic-tis.

(speaking)

Do you have that?

161.

SALIERI

I think so.

MOZART

Sing it back.

Salieri sings back the first six measures of the bass line. After the first two measures a chorus of basses fades in on the soundtrack and engulfs his voice. They stop.

MOZART (CONT’D)

Good. Now the tenors. Fourth beat

of the first measure - C.

(singing)

Con-fu-ta-tis.

(speaking)

Second measure, fourth beat on D.

(singing)

Ma-le-dic-tis.

(speaking)

All right?

Yes.

SALIERI

MOZART

Fourth measure, second beat - F.

(singing)

Flam-mis a-cri-bus ad-dic-tis, flam-

mis a-cri-bus ad-dic-tis.

His voice is lost on the last words, as tenors engulf it and take over the soundtrack, singing their whole line from the beginning, right to the end of the sixth measure where the basses stopped, but he goes on mouthing the sounds with them. Salieri writes feverishly. We see his pen jotting down the notes as quickly as possible: the ink flicks onto the page. The music stops again.

MOZART (CONT’D)

Now the orchestra. Second bassoon

and bass trombone with the basses.

Identical notes and rhythm.

(He hurriedly hums the

opening notes of the bass

vocal line)

The first bassoon and tenor

trombone -

SALIERI

(labouring to keep up)

Please! Just one moment.

162.

Mozart glares at him, irritated. His hands move impatiently. Salieri scribbles frantically.

MOZART

It couldn't be simpler.

SALIERI

(finishing)

First bassoon and tenor trombone -

what?

MOZART

With the tenors.

SALIERI

Also identical?

MOZART

Exactly. The instruments to go with

the voices. Trumpets and timpani,

tonic and dominant.

He again hums the bass vocal line from the beginning, conducting. On the soundtrack, we hear the second bassoon and bass trombone play it with him and the first bassoon and tenor trombone come in on top, playing the tenor vocal line. We also hear the trumpets and timpani. The sound is bare and grim. It stops at the end of the sixth measure. Salieri stops writing.

SALIERI

And that's all?

MOZART

Oh no. Now for the Fire.

(he smiles)

Strings in unison - ostinato on all

- like this.

He sings the urgent first measure of the ostinato.

MOZART (CONT’D)

(speaking)

Second measure on B.

He sings the second measure of the ostinato.

MOZART (CONT’D)

(speaking)

Do you have me?

SALIERI

I think so.

163.

Show me.

MOZART

Salieri sings the first two measures of the string ostinato.

MOZART (CONT’D)

(excitedly)

Good, good - yes! Put it down. And

the next measures exactly the same,

rising and rising - C to D to E, up

to the dominant chord. Do you see?

As Salieri writes, Mozart sings the ostinato from the beginning, but the unaccompanied strings overwhelm his voice on the soundtrack, playing the first six bars of their agitated accompaniment. They stop.

SALIERI

That's wonderful!

MOZART

Yes, yes - go on. The Voca Me.

Suddenly sotto voce. Write that

down: sotto voce, pianissimo. Voca

me cum benedictis. Call me among

the blessed.

He is now sitting bolt upright, hushed and inspired.

MOZART (CONT’D)

C Major. Sopranos and altos in

thirds. Altos on C. Sopranos above.

(singing the alto part)

Vo-ca, vo-ca me, vo-ca me cum be-ne-

dic-tis.

SALIERI

Sopranos up to F on the second

'Voca'?

MOZART

Yes, and on 'dictis'.

Yes!

SALIERI

He writes feverishly.

MOZART

And underneath, just violins -

arpeggio.

He sings the violin figure under the Voca Me (Bars 7,8,9).

164.

MOZART (CONT’D)

(speaking)

The descending scale in eighth notes, and then back suddenly to the fire again.

He sings the ostinato phrase twice.

MOZART (CONT’D)

(speaking)

And that's it. Do you have it?

SALIERI

You go fast!

MOZART

(urgently)

Do you have it?

Yes.

SALIERI

MOZART

Then let me hear it. All of it. The

whole thing from the beginning -

now!

The entire Confutatis bursts over the room, as Mozart snatches the manuscript pages from Salieri and reads from it, singing. Salieri sits looking on in wondering astonishment. The music continues right through the following scenes, to the end of the movement.

168

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - WINTER NIGHT - 1790'S

168

A carriage is driving fast through the night. Snow lies on the countryside.

169

INT. THE CARRIAGE NIGHT - 1790'S

169

The carriage is filled with passengers. Among them Constanze and Karl, her young son. They are sleepless and sway to the motion of the vehicle.

170

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1790'S

170

Mozart lying in bed exhausted, but still dictating urgently. We do not hear what he is saying to Salieri, who still sits writing assiduously. Mozart is looking very sick: sweat is pouring from his forehead.

171

EXT. A COUNTRY ROAD - WINTER NIGHT - 1790'S

165.

171

The carriage, moving through the night, to the sound of the music.

172

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1790'S

172

Mozart still dictating; Salieri still writing without stop.

173

EXT. VIENNA STREET - DAWN - 1790'S.

173

The carriage has arrived. Constanze and her son alight with other passengers. Postillions attend to the horses. She takes her boy's hand. It is a cold wintry dawn.

The music stutters to a close. End of the Confutatis.

174

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - NIGHT - 1790'S

MOZART

Do you want to rest a bit?

SALIERI

Oh no. I'm not tired at all.

MOZART

We'll stop for just a moment. Then we'll do the Lacrimosa.

SALIERI

I can keep going, I assure you.

Shall we try?

MOZART

Would you stay with me while I

sleep a little?

SALIERI

I'm not leaving you.

MOZART

I am so ashamed.

SALIERI

What for?

MOZART

I was foolish. I thought you did

not care for my work - or me.

Forgive me. Forgive me!

Mozart closes his eyes. Salieri stares at him.

174

175

EXT. VIENNA STREET - WINTRY DAWN - 1790'S

166.

175

Constanze and Karl approach along the cobbled street, hand in hand toward their house. Snow lies in the street.

176

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAWN - 1790'S

176

Mozart lies asleep in the bed, holding the last pages of the manuscript. Salieri lies across from him on Karl's small bed in his shirt sleeves and waistcoat. The child's bed is obviously too small for him and he is forced in to a cramped position.

EXT. MOZART'S APARTMENT HOUSE - DAWN - 1790'S Constanze and Karl arrive at the door. They enter. INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - LIVING ROOM - DAWN - 1790'S

It is as disordered as before, save that the table, previously littered with pages, is now completely bare. Constanze looks at it with surprise and enters the bedroom.

179

INT. MOZART'S APARTMENT - BEDROOM - DAWN - 1790'S

179

Mozart is asleep in the bed. Salieri is dozing on the nearby child's bed. The room is full of the trailing smoke from guttering and guttered candles. Startled by Constanze's entrance and her young son, Salieri scrambles up. As he does so, he attempts to button his waistcoat, but does it ineptly, so that the vestment becomes bunched up, making him look absurd.

CONSTANZE

What are you doing here?

SALIERI

Your husband is ill, ma'am. He took

sick. I brought him home.

Why you?

CONSTANZE

SALIERI

I was at hand.

CONSTANZE

Well, thank you very much. You can go now.

SALIERI

He needs me, ma'am.

167.

CONSTANZE

No, he doesn't. And I don't want

you here. Just go, please.

SALIERI

He asked me to stay.

CONSTANZE

And I'm asking you -

She notices a movement from the bed. Mozart wakes. He sees Constanze and smiles with real joy. Forgetting Salieri, she goes to her husband.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

Wolfi, I'm back. I'm still very

angry with you, but I missed you so

much.

She throws herself on the bed.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

I'll never leave you again. If

you'll just try a little harder to

be nice to me. And I'll try to do

better, too. We must. We must! This

was just silly and stupid.

She hugs her husband desperately. He stares at her with obvious relief, not able to speak. Suddenly she sees the manuscript in his hand.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

What is this?

She looks at it and recognizes it.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

Oh no, not this. Not this, Wolfi!

You're not to work on this ever

again! I've decided.

She takes it from his weak hand. At the same moment Salieri reaches out his hand to take it and add it to the pile on the table.

She stares at him, trying to understand - suspicious and frightened and at the same time unable to make a sound. Mozart makes a convulsive gesture to reclaim the pages. The coins brought by Salieri fall on the floor. Karl runs after them, laughing.

168.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

(to Salieri)

This is not his handwriting.

SALIERI

No. I was assisting him. He asked

me.

CONSTANZE

He's not going to work on this

anymore. It is making him ill.

Please.

She extends her hand for the Requiem, as she stands up. Salieri hesitates.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

(hard)

Please.

With extreme reluctance - it costs him agony to do it - Salieri hands over the score of the Requiem to her.

Thank you.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

She marches with the manuscript over to a large chest in the room, opens it, throws the manuscript inside, shuts the lid, locks it and pockets the key. Involuntarily Salieri stretches out his arms for the lost manuscript.

SALIERI

But - but - but -

She turns and faces him.

CONSTANZE

1. ood night.
2. e stares at her, stunned.

CONSTANZE (CONT’D)

I regret we have no servants to

show you out, Herr Salieri. Respect

my wish and go.

SALIERI

Madame, I will respect his. He

asked me to stay here.

They look at each other in mutual hatred. She turns to the bed. Mozart appears to have gone to sleep again.

169.

CONSTANZE

Wolfi?

(louder)

Wolfi?

She moves to the bed. The child is playing with the coins on the floor. Faintly we hear the start of the Lacrimosa from the Requiem. Salieri watches as she touches her husband's hand. As the music grows, we realize that Mozart is dead.

CU, Constanze staring wide-eyed in dawning apprehension. CU, Salieri also comprehending hat he has been cheated. The music rises.

CU, The child on the floor, playing with the money.

CUT TO:

EXT. STEPHEN'S CATHEDRAL - VIENNA - A RAINY DAY - 1790'S180

The Lacrimosa continues through all of the following: a small group of people emerges from the side door into the raw, wet day, accompanying a cheap wooden coffin. The coffin is borne by a gravedigger and Schikaneder in mourning clothes. They load it onto a cart, drawn by a poor black horse. All the rest are in black, also: Salieri, Von Swieten, Constanze and her son, Karl, Madame Weber and her youngest daughter Sophie, and even Lorl, the maid. It is drizzling. The cart sets off. The group follows.

CUT TO:

EXT. OUTSIDE THE CITY WALLS OF VIENNA - RAINY DAY - 1790'S181

The group has already passed beyond the city limits following the miserable cart. The Lacrimosa accompanies them with its measured thread.

The drizzle of rain has now become heavy. One by one, the group breaks up and shelters under the trees. The cart moves on toward the cemetery, alone, followed by nobody, growing more and more distant. They watch it go.

1. alieri and Von Swieten shake hands mournfully, the water soaking their black tall hats. Schikaneder is in tears. Constanze is near collapse. Salieri moves to assist her, but she turns away from him, seeking the arm of Cavalieri. Madame Weber takes Karl's hand.
2. he music builds to its climax on Dona Eis Pacem! We CUT back to:

182

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING - 1823

170.

182

Morning light fills the room. Old Salieri sits weeping convulsively, as the music stops. Tears stream down his face. Vogler watches him, amazed.

VOGLER

Why? Why? Why? Why add to your

misery by confessing to murder? You

didn't kill him.

I did.

OLD SALIERI

VOGLER

No, you didn't!

OLD SALIERI

I poisoned his life.

VOGLER

But not his body.

OLD SALIERI

What difference does that make?

VOGLER

My son, why should you want all Vienna to believe you a murderer? Is that your penance? Is it?

OLD SALIERI

No, Father. From now on no one will be able to speak of Mozart without thinking of me. Whenever they say Mozart with love, they'll have to say Salieri with loathing. And that's my immortality - at last! Our names will be tied together for eternity - his in fame and mine in infamy. At least it's better than the total oblivion he'd planned for me, your merciful God!

VOGLER

Oh my son, my poor son!

OLD SALIERI

Don't pity me. Pity yourself. You serve a wicked God. He killed Mozart, not I. Took him, snatched him away, without pity.

(MORE)

183

OLD SALIERI (CONT'D)

He destroyed His beloved rather

than let a mediocrity like me get

the smallest share in his glory. He doesn't care. Understand that. God

cares nothing for the man He denies

and nothing either for the man He

uses. He broke Mozart in half when

He'd finished with him, and threw

him away. Like an old, worn out

flute.

EXT. CEMETERY OF ST. MARX - LATE AFTERNOON - 1790'S

171.

183

The rain has eased off. A LOCAL PRIEST with two boy acolytes is standing beside an open communal grave. Mozart's body is lifted out of the cheap pine box in a sack.

We see that the grave contains twenty other such sacks. The gravedigger throws the one containing Mozart amongst the others. An assistant pours quicklime over the whole pile of them. The acolytes swing their censers.

LOCAL PRIEST

The Lord giveth. The Lord taketh

away. Blessed be the name of the

Lord.

CUT BACK TO:

184

INT. OLD SALIERI'S HOSPITAL ROOM - MORNING - 1823

OLD SALIERI

Why did He do it? Why didn't He

kill me? I had no value. What was

the use, keeping me alive for thirty-two years of torture? Thirty- two years of honours and awards.

184

He tears off the Civilian Medal and Chain with which the Emperor invested him and has been wearing the whole time and throws it across the room.

OLD SALIERI (CONT’D)

Being bowed to and saluted, called 'distinguished - distinguished

Salieri' - by men incapable of

distinguishing! Thirty-two years of

meaningless fame to end up alone in

my room, watching myself become

extinct. My music growing fainter,

all the time fainter, until no one

plays it at all. And his growing

louder, filling the world with

wonder.

(MORE)

172.

OLD SALIERI (CONT’D)

And everyone who loves my sacred

art crying, Mozart! Bless you,

Mozart.

The door opens. An attendant comes in, cheerful and hearty.

ATTENDANT

Good morning, Professor! Time for

the water closet. And then we've

got your favourite breakfast for

you - sugar-rolls.

(to Vogler)

He loves those. Fresh sugar-rolls.

Salieri ignores him and stares only at the priest, who stares back.

OLD SALIERI

Goodbye, Father. I'll speak for

you. I speak for all mediocrities

in the world. I am their champion.

I am their patron saint. On their

behalf I deny Him, your God of no

mercy. Your God who tortures men

with longings they can never

fulfill. He may forgive me: I shall

never forgive Him.

He signs to the attendant, who wheels him in his chair out of the room. The priest stares after him.

185

INT. CORRIDOR OF THE HOSPITAL - MORNING

185

The corridor is filled with patients in white linen smocks, all taking their morning exercise walk in the care of nurses and nuns. They form a long, wretched, strange procession - some of them are clearly very disturbed. As Old Salieri is pushed through them in his wheelchair, he lifts his hands to them in benediction.

OLD SALIERI

Mediocrities everywhere, now and to

come: I absolve you all! Amen!

Amen! Amen!

Finally, he turns full-face to the camera and blesses us the audience, making the Sign of the Cross. Underneath we hear, stealing in and growing louder, the tremendous Masonic Funeral Music of Mozart.

173.

On the last four chords, we

FADE OUT:

THE END