

ZAMPA

ou *La Fiancée de Marbre*

Music by Louis-Joseph-Ferdinand Hérold

Libretto by Mélişville[Mélesville]

First Performance: Opéra-Comique, Paris, May 3, 1831

In the first act Camilla, daughter of Count Lugano, expects her bridegroom, Alfonso di Monza, a Sicilian officer, for the wedding ceremony. Dandolo, her servant, who was to fetch the priest, comes back in a fright and with him the notorious pirate captain, Zampa, who has taken her father and her bridegroom captive. He tells Camilla who he is, and forces her to renounce Alfonso and consent to a marriage with himself, threatening to kill the prisoners if she refuses compliance. Then the pirates hold a drinking bout in the Count's house, and Zampa goes so far in his insolence as to put his bridal ring on the finger of a marble statue standing in the room. it represents Alice, formerly Zampa's bride, whose heart was broken by her lover's faithlessness; then the fingers of the statue close over the ring, while the left hand is upraised threateningly. Nevertheless Zampa is resolved to wed Camilla, though Alice appears once more, and even Alfonso, who interferes by revealing Zampa's real name and by imploring his bride to return to him, cannot change the brigand's plans. Zampa and his comrades have received the Viceroy's pardon, purposing to fight against the Turks, and so Camilla dares not provoke the pirate's wrath by retracting her promise. Vainly she implores Zampa to give her father his freedom and to let her enter a convent. Zampa, hoping that she only fears the pirate in him, tells her that he is Count of Monza, and Alfonso, who had already drawn his sword, throws it away, terrified to recognize in the dreaded pirate his own brother, who has by his extravagances once already impoverished him. Zampa sends Alfonso to prison and orders the statue thrown into the sea. Camilla once more begs for mercy, but, seeing that it is likely to avail her nothing, she flies to the Madonna's altar charging him loudly with Alice's death. With scorn and laughter he seizes Camilla, to tear her from the altar, but instead of the living hand of Camilla he feels the icy hand of Alice, who draws him with her into the waves.

Camilla is saved and united to Alfonso, while her delivered father arrives in a boat, and the statue rises again from the waves, to bless the union.