

## SCENE 1

*The stage is set in a Phrygian village where Philemon's hut stands. Fields and vineyards complete the view. As the curtain goes up a terrible storm is raging; from all directions peasants come running, among whom are Philemon and Baucis and this opening chorus follows:*

Borne in the clouds high above, Jove's terrible thunder chariot rolls and it threatens the sinning world with destruction.

Quick flashes of lightening from the seat of the thunderer hurtle down and smashing blows shatter the oak trees and hurl the traveller into the grave.

Borne in the clouds high above, Jove's terrible thunder chariot rolls and it threatens the sinning world with destruction.

PHILEMON  
Ye gods, show mercy!

BAUCIS  
For Zeus, we are helpless.  
Will you? See we are ready.

CHORUS  
Your aims are blessed to us; these heavy blows are turning to rainfall and we can see the gleaming heavenly firmament

## SCENE 2

*Jupiter and Mercury appear as wayfarers*

JUPITER  
The abominations I saw in Phrygian towns were terrible, unbelievably bad: punishment was close, the ray of vengeance already primed; it would have consumed them, if the innocent had not turned the curse to mercy.

MERCURY  
What arrogant people. A wretched couple, your poor fool, alone diverted the ray from the thunder god. This is how Jupiter punishes, he wipes out crime only through bitter vengeance.

JUPITER  
Come, let us seek shelter this night from this couple.  
Come.

MERCURY  
Here, where this very year your lightening struck dead the beloved son of the good old man.

JUPITER  
Perhaps this day will be the last of his laments.  
*Exeunt*

## SCENE 3

*The stage is set in Philemon's hut with two funeral urns. Philemon and Baucis*

BAUCIS  
Philemon, what a comfort, what certain happiness, with every evening, with every moment, the boundary of our sorrow, the harbour comes near wherein our lovely couple are safely sound.

PHILEMON  
Yes Baucis, this comfort, this only sweetness, my sorrow, o come, come soon day of happiness. Ye gods, just let that day overtake us at the same time.

BAUCIS  
Of course my friend, It cannot tarry much longer.  
Someone is at the door.

PHILEMON(going to the door)  
If only it were someone to lead us out of this world.

## SCENE 4

*Previous characters, Jupiter and Mercury.*

JUPITER  
Two pilgrims, suddenly overcome by night and hunger crave, poor old man, for a few hours of hospitality, which we have not found in any other house.

PHILEMON  
My heart goes out to you. Come friends, come in.

BAUCIS  
Here friends, sit down. You must be tired.

MERCURY  
Are you quite alone under this thatched roof?  
Has heaven not favoured you with a child?

BAUCIS  
We were indeed blessed with the best of sons. Alas!

PHILEMON  
He became worthy of heaven too early for us. How many tears have fallen on this urn!  
There, he and his wife were brought together.

BAUCIS  
Whilst Philemon tells you their sad tale, which daily torments our hearts, I will take care of your food and comfort.  
*exit*

## SCENE 5

JUPITER  
The advice of the gods is always holy, often hidden. And our lives are a testing time.

MERCURY  
Well then good old man, tell us your sorrowful tale.

**Aria**

PHILEMON

After more than twenty years of marriage,  
we were only lacking one thing, this was a son. Daily we  
went from our hut to Olympia to make our ardent request.  
Blessed were the fruits of our prayers Our devout pleading  
was heard Yes, beyond our heart's desire.  
In a short time we had our share.  
This son, the flower of youth,  
loved a maiden full of virtue.  
Their love received our blessing.

For five summers the power of their  
reciprocal desires, the virtue of higher charm, the gentle  
glow of love, and the first of May was named by us for the  
beloved couple to celebrate their happiness, Ye gods, ah,  
forgive the tears of my heart.

JUPITER

My friend, you feel a virtuous pain and you deserve better.

MERCURY

O tell us what sort of death united the virtuous pair.

**Aria**

PHILEMON

The day to bring all happiness,  
to embrace them in the highest joy,  
already long awaited...was their, o joyous time! We saw the  
worthy couple crowned with garlands. A whole crowd of  
friends called in on us. What they desired is nigh, o joyous  
time! Quickly the most beautiful night grew overcast. Fire  
fell, thunder burst, there came, there came a ray of light, a  
ray of light o terrible time! This bridal pair, our greatest  
joy, were seen with lifeless breast.  
Nothing could equal our pain, o tragic time!

JUPITER

My heart swells with tender pity.

PHILEMON

They held each other, lifeless in each other's arms. We  
sank down with them, down in the night of death. Alone,  
they were dead and we are awake, to be gradually  
destroyed through constant grief.

MERCURY

Such a noble couple deserve your tears.

JUPITER

And, Elysium.

**SCENE 6**

*Baucis and others*

BAUCIS

Now, dear friends, come,  
a warm herbal bath is in the room,  
which will refresh your tired feet.  
We, in the meantime, will set the little table.  
Some sweet milk, a dish of fresh fruit and soft barley

bread. I have nothing else friends.

I begged the neighbour to lend me a little wine, but she  
refused. Perhaps I'll get some tomorrow.

JUPITER

Heaven bless you!

**SCENE 7**

*Philemon and Baucis*

BAUCIS

His blessing melts my heart.

PHILEMON

Ah Baucis, is it not a truly sharp pain,  
out of one's own wretchedness,  
not to be able to provide everything we can  
for the refreshment of the hungry.

BAUCIS

My friend, we have lived a long time in this small hut. And  
I feel today, not for the first time, that we do not have  
everything.

**Aria**

BAUCIS

Today I find poverty so hard, and this small hut so empty,  
because I can't help anyone.  
You, the highest of the land, you can be like the gods.  
Only look after the poor, look after the poor.

PHILEMON

Have you then nothing to give the travellers?

BAUCIS

The young hen has been missing for three days, and, as  
you know, only the goose remains, which I wanted to  
slaughter for the children's wedding. And now we ought to  
sacrifice it to Zeus.

PHILEMON

Come Baucis, this must be food for the pilgrims. And  
through them you will sacrifice it to Zeus. Our little cow  
will give birth in a few days, and I will take the calf to the  
temple.

BAUCIS

O truly, you are right. I agree with you.  
Go and wait here for the good guests

**SCENE 8**

PHILEMON

Ye gods know that I desire nothing more,  
than that which your hand gave us with pure grace. Yet I,  
an old grey man in my last days, may venture one last bold  
wish - so I wish - forgive the boldness - just one short year  
in this mortality, to do good, to give pleasure, and the  
power to turn poverty into blessing.

**SCENE 9**

JUPITER

O virtuous old man! How pleased we are that this place of unrighteousness, can still shelter in its bosom such a noble pair, who do honour to humanity.

PHILEMON

Ah friend, your praise is a real burden for me.

MERCURY

The gods, whom you have refreshed through us, wish to heap blessings on you, old man.

BAUCIS

Philemon, please help me to catch the frightened goose.

**SCENE 10**

JUPITER

The innocence which abides here, removes from this community the ray of vengeance, which had already departed from my judicial hand, to bury the sinner under the horror and rubble, who had hard-heartedly shut their doors against me. So this godly couple deserve the highest reward.

MERCURY

O Zeus, in this world no throne can repay them. Even in purple, it would be seen to be mourning clothes and the crown they would use to decorate the children's funeral urn.

JUPITER

Virtue, whose glow a humble roof conceals, deserves a miracle that reveals it to the world. I will give the poor couple more than a throne.  
*He turns to the two urns*  
Aret! Narcissa! Come back to this life!

**SCENE 11**

*At Jupiter's call the funeral urns turn into rose arbours. Inside them Aret and Narcissa are sitting. For a while they do not move and then they gradually come to life.*

ARET

Where am I?

NARCISSA

What a dream!

ARET

Ye gods speak to me!

NARCISSA

Whom do I hear? Ah Aret!  
Beloved-are you here?

ARET

O heavens! Sweet bride-let me embrace you!

JUPITER(to Mercury)

Come son-we must leave them to themselves. *exeunt*

**SCENE 12**

*Aret and Narcissa*

NARCISSA

How frail and feeble is my spirit!  
Aret lures it back into the house of darkness.

ARET

Ye gods-am I now awake? How can I explain the dream which I cannot bear to think about?

**Aria**

ARET

When in the broad firmament, only the smallest sunray burns, yet it is still a miracle.  
Myriads of the sun's gleam in the ether's eternal boundaries, to be worshipped, not just to behold.

NARCISSA

I am astonished! Were you also in the enchanted dream which delighted my liberated spirit in the next world? The strong Minos read the diary of our youth and gave us full grace on the evidence of our earlier virtue. Go, he said, love each other now in a better world. The gods open the Elysian fields to you.

ARET

O wonder, my mind will never reach you. Is it possible? Can a dream be the same for someone else?

**Duet**

ARET

The slumber which seemed so sweet has now vanished. I see it without grief.  
Wherever you are Narcissa, there must my happiness bloom.

NARCISSA

With my heart filled with joy Aret, I gaze at you, sorrow and pain flee from you.  
Aret, you are my greatest delight.  
We will never be separated by destiny's mighty word.

NARCISSA

I want nothing unless I can share it with you.

ARET

I wish for nothing but to know you are happy.

NARCISSA and ARET

And we are so much to be envied for this wish has been granted.

**SCENE 13**

BAUCIS(whilst entering)

Forgive me friends that...

ARET(running towards her with open arms)

Oh mother!

NACISSA  
What a joy!

BAUCIS  
What do I see? Gods! Ah!  
*she falls unconscious into Aret's arms*

ARET  
Help, everlasting providence!  
Help, Narcissa, she is dying!

NACISSA  
Ye gods, stand by us!

**SCENE 14**

PHILEMON  
What cries of anxiety do I hear with my weak ear?

ARET  
Father!

PHILEMON  
Heavens above! *He shrinks back*

NACISSA  
How is it that you tremble before us?

PHILEMON  
By the power of Koyzts, what are you showing me?

ARET  
Ah, our mother is dying, father and you are fleeing.

PHILEMON(timorously)  
(crying)Your dear shadows are blessed a thousand times!

NACISSA  
How? Who?

BAUCIS(getting up)  
Where am I?

ARET  
Here, resting on your children's hearts.

PHILEMON  
Gods, how can you joke with us so cruelly?

ARET  
How confusing!

PHILEMON  
Do you not know the fate with which you met which  
threw you into the darkest death?  
Come now, do you not know, that already thirty days ago,  
a dreadful thunderbolt struck you in the grove. We have  
still been crying over your grave every night, which united  
our weak hands over this funeral urn.

ARET  
What are you saying?

NACISSA  
Heavens!

PHILEMON(seeing the remnants of the urns)  
How, where did you come from?  
Gods, my doubts have been quite taken away. You have  
given a merciful ear to our grief and have given us these  
children as a gift once more.

ARET  
A wonderful felling is going through my whole body.

NACISSA  
A second thunderbolt shoots through my heart.

ARET  
Disaster! Do not discover my stupid thoughts. Was our  
happiness then not an empty delusion?

NACISSA  
Is it possible that the time, which we share for so many  
years on this earth, can fly by so quickly?

PHILEMON  
You children, come to life again!  
Now feel our hearts after nameless pain  
as well as nameless pleasure.

BAUCIS  
Instead of by death our suffering is ended by a miracle.

PHILEMON  
O Father of Fate, you Creator of Joy!  
How do we, poor dying mortals, deserve so much  
warmheartedness?

**SCENE 15** *preceded by thunder, Jupiter and Mercury appear on  
a glistening cloud*

JUPITER  
Through your honesty...

OTHERS(falling straight down on their knees)  
Gods!

JUPITER  
Take hold of yourselves! Get up from the ground!  
Whoever reads your hearts, despises your gestures.

MERCURY  
You should know, gentle couple,  
that Zeus was your unknown guest together with his son.  
PHILEMON(trembling)  
What can I...

JUPITER  
Do not tremble!  
Innocent people should not tremble.  
I also appeared to you in a thunderstorm.

BAUCIS

Ah, who is it that made us worthy of the greatest honour, which happened upon this hut today from the heavens?

JUPITER

All of you.

ARET

Blessing after blessing!

NARCISSA

Delight after delight!

MERCURY

It is the pleasure of the gods to make humans happy.

JUPITER

We have already often visited in the middle of the night, the homes of the honest in disguise.

PHILEMON

What can the thanks of the poor give you as a sacrifice, that would be worthy of you?

JUPITER

A virtuous life.

Now Olympus calls me back home.

Come, what is still lacking to your happiness?

Should I shower you in a mountain of gold?

Should I honour you with a throne over half the world?

PHILEMON

Is to have been Jove's host not already the highest honour?

BAUCIS(indicating the young couple)

Sir, here is our gold and our principedom.

PHILEMON

Meanwhile, for this short life, a warm, sweet wish does arise in my heart.

JUPITER

Speak!

PHILEMON

This hut, Sir, to which this night you brought the joy of Olympus; please consecrate it as your temple, and give us the proud honour of priesthood.

JUPITER

Your wish, o happy old man, is worthy of your virtue, and rings through Jove's heart. It must be listened to.

*At Jupiter's call, Philemon's hut is turned into a magnificent temple amidst lightning and thunder, Jupiter's column beams out in the middle of it. Philemon and Baucis's clothes change into priests' habits and several of the priests and priestesses, consecrated by Jupiter come forth*

PHILEMON

Almighty God!

BAUCIS

My heart is filled with holy dread.

ARET

Where are we?

NARCISSA

Great day, what are you letting me see?

## SCENE 16

*A chorus of neighbours who were lured by the thunder, gather on stage and are trembling, retreating with looks of fear and horror.*

JUPITER

Yes, be amazed sinful people, tremble before this guest, to whom you have denied your bread for a night. Here this couple, whom you have mocked, consecrated me their home, and their goodness freed you from evil. Come, now accompany my gentle couple, in a celebratory chorus to the new bridal altar! Their fate teaches you to seize the great truth, that we do not leave honesty unrewarded.

*To the sound of triumphal music, which supports the song of the chorus, Jupiter and Mercury go up slowly to the sky*

CHORUS

Triumph of the god of gods!

Sing praises, human race to the wonderful Saviour, the Avenger, who avenges himself through grace.

PHILEMON

He looks with friendly compassion over the obscure roof of the poor and greets him with blessings.

He grasps the sinner who turns away from him with both hands and guides him to the path of virtue.

ARET

One day heaven awoke in my breast.

NARCISSA

And heavenly joy filled my hot spirit.

ARET and NARCISSA

O bliss, who can fathom you?

And shall Philemon today wed us at this altar?

Ye gods, is it true?

CHORUS

Venerable couple and you worthy pair, we learn from you a joy which our souls know not.

NARCISSA, BAUCIS, ARET and PHILEMON

Virtue, how you can delight!

Virtue how you can bring happiness!

CHORUS

You are the best part of every moment, the best fortune, a certain comfort, and soothing in sorrow.

**PHILEMON**

What stirs in my heart?  
 A heat, as never felt before,  
 enflames me with prophetic rage.  
 I see my future open before me.  
 A part of the after world is showing itself here. Happy  
 people, worthy princes,  
 from whom the face of godly mildness shines. Where  
 gentleness and human love are visibly reflected.  
 Not heroes who thirst greedily after blood,  
 only heroes after the protection of their kingdom.  
 Who is this sovereign who bows to the prince's head?  
 You glory and flowing, passing time!  
 Your sceptre leaves an overflow,  
 a healthy blessing springs forth,  
 and is called siblinged, kissing happiness, religion and  
 peace.

**CHORUS**

Firstly the people are enviable,  
 to have been gifted by such a sovereign.  
 Yet can this kingdom stand,  
 that you already see now in your mind?  
 Perhaps it is only true in image  
 and cannot be created in reality?

**PHILEMON(kneeling)**

Almighty Caution, can it happen that we see a certain sign?  
 Reality, which I have already seen can come into being at  
 such a time.

*Suddenly amidst drum and trumpet rolls, Jupiter's column  
 disappears. In it's place appears an immense and splendid coat of  
 arms of the serene arch house .Glory, Mercy, Justice and Courage  
 surround it and stop. All fall to their knees and sing.*

**CHORUS**

We were given a sign from the heavens,  
 to lift the figure of godly grace.

*Fame flies in and blows on her trumpet. At the same time she crowns  
 the coat of arms with a crown of palm leaves, bay leaves and olive  
 branches. Divine Caution protects it with a steel shield and Time  
 surrounds it.*

**FAME**

Destroy forever all enemy power!

**CAUTION**

My shield guarantees secure protection.

**TIME**

I deliver you Eternity.

**FAME,CAUTION and TIME**

Embossed in a diamond necklace,  
 the world should have you as an example.

*Jupiter's priests and priestesses disappear. In their place comes the  
 Hungarian nation in their formal dress accompanied by Patriotism,  
 Obedience, Enthusiasm and Truth who fall on their knees in  
 adoration of the imperial coat of arms.*

*They sing*

We praise the Monarch with divine gazes,  
 to please both the demands of the princes and of the  
 peasants.

**ENTHUSIASM**

I am Enthusiasm.

**PATRIOTISM**

I am Patriotism.

**OBEDIENCE**

I am Obedience.

**TRUTH**

I am the Truth

**ENTHUSIASM, PATRIOTISM,OBEDIENCE and  
 TRUTH**

Filled with enthusiasm from similar desire,  
 we speak happily.

**CHORUS OF DUTIES**

We praise the Monarch with divine gazes,  
 to please both the demands of the princes and of the  
 peasants.

**PHILEMON**

Hang a new image before my spirited eye.  
 You are, it appears, loved and filled with joy.  
 I see this temple fade.

**SCENE 18**

*Jupiter's temple disappears and the stage stands as the illuminated  
 area of the prince's gardens at Esterháza.*

**PHILEMON**

O what a charming kingdom of happiness showed itself to  
 me.  
 There, one will find the goddess who makes more than a  
 kingdom happy on her throne of mercy.

*At this point the neighbours are also transformed into Hungarians  
 and begin singing the final chorus.*

**FINAL CHORUS**

Away with images of shadows!,  
 which the poets mysteriously describe.  
 Even reality seems weak.  
 In each happily lived day ,  
 our hearts strike days of earthly salvation.

*During this chorus Joy grasps the Imperial arms with one hand while  
 dispensing gifts to the Hungarian nation from overflowing cornucopia.*

THE END