Watchful and wicked,
forgetting nothing, and forgiving less!

CHORUS
There’s a story that’s told, taken its hold,
dark and controlled, that she had
hunted her kill, tortured until,
secrets were spilled, and rumors
spread of her deeds, bloody indeed,
it was decreed she would be
taken to trial, sentenced to die,
Buried alive, locked up inside
her private chambers in Čachtice!

(If I only had learned!)

Her private chambers in Čachtice!

(What I’d give to return!)

Her private chambers in Čachtice!

Scene ii

“I’M ALONE”

ANTAL
When Count Nadasdy died, as the Ottomans ravished the land
there was talk in the town of the woman he left in command.
And although I’d not met her yet, I’d like to bet
that she weathered the changes in stride,
At least, that’s what her demeanor implied.

Lady Bathory’s private chambers in Čachtice. LADY
BATHORY has just awoken from a restless sleep. She
summons her two HANDMAIDS (20s), who begin setting out
the dressing clothes while LADY BATHORY compares
earrings to her reflection in the mirror.

HANDMAIDEN: Good afternoon, Lady.

LADY BATHORY: I was having the strangest dream. I thought I saw a man
at the window, staring at me while I slept. (The Handmaiden offers
Lady Bathory a mirror as Lady Bathory sits down to her dressing table)
Enough of that.

HANDMAIDEN: Your husband?

HANDMAID: That sounds dreadful.

LADY BATHORY: No, not like that. (Beat) Well?

HANDMAID: Yes, my Lady.

LADY BATHORY yawns loudly.

HANDMAID: What was that?

LADY BATHORY: Nothing.

LADY BATHORY
The walls are bare
and there’s a spot on the floor.
And I don’t care, only that it’s there,
and I didn’t notice before.
All the little things that irritate you when your husband
isn’t living anymore!
I’m alone!

LADY BATHORY: OUCH! (LADY BATHORY slaps the back of the handmaid’s head)

HANDMAID: Sorry ma'am, the needle slipped...

The halls are dim.
Haven’t seen a friendly face in weeks.
And with him, though he could be grim,
there were always dinners at least!
Oh, how quick and prettily a petty lot will leave you
when your husband is diseased!
I’m alone!

HANDMAID: Just a moment, there’s something wrong with the fit...

HANDMAIDS whistle a duet with LADY BATHORY.

Not to mention the war I’ve subjected my subjects to
and what I’ve demanded!
Not to mention the stories they’ll tell of me
and of what I’ve commanded!
Not to mention the feeling of freedom I have, and the fact that I
never had planned it!
I’m alone!
LADY BATHORY leaves the stool, frustrating the HANDMAID’s measurements. The HANDMAID reluctantly follows LADY BATHORY to the vanity.

LADY BATHORY

Would he mind, if I’m not so very grieved?
It’s not kind, to be left behind, and be not a little relieved.
Oh, how sweet and leisurely an afternoon can be when one is suddenly bereaved!
I’m alone!

And it’s strange, falling in and out of a routine.
For a change, nothing to arrange, no place that I ought to have been. MOTHER MARY.

Oh, it’s unbecoming whistling and humming when your husbands nowhere to be seen!
I’m alone!

And whatever decisions I’m making, at least I’m the one to decide!
And whatever authority I’ve taken
I don’t have to parcel and divide!
If they ask me, I’ll say I’m in mourning, but sadness is far from the reason I cried!
I’m alone!

HANDMAIDENS

Fa, la, la, la, la, la–
One inch off the sleeve.

Fa, la, la, la–
(Of course, she’ll have everything we do redone!)

Fa, la, la, la, la–
Just another pin, m’am.

Fa, la, la, la–
(I’m wishing it was her mouth we’d sewn)
LADY BATHORY
The walls are bare
and there’s a spot on the floor.
And I don’t care, only that it’s
there,
and I didn’t notice before.
All the little things when he’s
gone.

The halls are dim.
Haven’t seen a friendly face in
weeks.
And with him, though he could be grim,
there were always dinners at least!
Oh, how quick friends leave when
it’s said and done.

And whatever decisions I’m making, at least I’m the one to
decide!
And whatever authority I’ve taken
I don’t have to parcel and divide!
There’s a terrible joy that I
can’t keep inside!

I’m alone! I’m alone! I’m alone, I’m alone, I’m alone, I’m alone, I’m alone!

“Passing Music A”

Scene iii
ANTAL: The royal court of His Highness King Matthias of the Habsburg Empire. And my father, his right-hand man. Where Lady Bathory arrived to reclaim the money she had leant to the crown for her own. Not knowing my father, or the king, as I do. Not knowing the danger she was walking into.

ANTAL
When hunting a bear
you don’t set a trap.