

“Tanto amore segreto,” (So strong is my secret love), Act III, TURANDOT, music by Giacomo Puccini; libretto by Giuseppe Adami and Renato Simoni. The score was completed by Franco Alfano, after Puccini’s death; 1926.

SYNOPSIS; Liù, a servant who is secretly in love with her master, Prince Calaf, is threatened with horrible torture if she does not reveal his name. Liù courageously refuses to do so and explains to Turandot, whom Calaf loves, what power her passion for the Prince has given her.

LIÙ

Tanto amore segreto, e inconfessato,
lo grande così che questi strazi
son dolcezze per me
perchè ne faccio dono
al mio signore ...
Perchè, tacendo, io gli do,
gli do il tuo amore ...
Te gli do, Principessa,
e perdo tutto! E perdo tutto!
Persino l’impossibile speranza!
Legatemi! Straziatemi!
Tormenti e spasimi date a me,
ah! come offerta suprema
del mio amor.

So strong is my secret and undeclared love,
so great, that these tortures
are something sweet to me
because I give them as gifts
to my lord and master...
Because, by my silence, I give him,
I give him your love...
I give him to you, oh, Princess,
and I lose ev’rything! I lose ev’rything!
I lose even impossible hoping!
So tie me up! And torture me!
Begin the tormenting, give me pain,
ah! as the greatest offering
of my deep love.

--From “Puccini and Verdi,” a course for the Osher Lifelong Learners Institute at UC Santa Cruz, © 2012