

“E lucevan le stelle”- (And the stars shone so brightly) TOSCA Act III; music by Puccini; libretto by Giacosa and Illica; 1900

SYNOPSIS: Mario Cavaradossi, Tosca’s lover, is about to be executed; while he awaits death, he recalls the passion he shared with his beloved Tosca, bitterly regretting its loss.

CAVARADOSSI

E lucevan le stelle

E olezzava la terra,

Stridea l’uscio dell’orto...

E un passo sfiorava la rena...

Entrava ella, fragrante.

And the stars shone so brightly...

and the earth smelled of perfume...

Creaking, the garden gate opened...

and a light footstep ran up the pathway...

She came in, bathed in fragrance...

Mi cadea fra le braccia....

And my waiting arms embraced her...

Oh! dolci baci, o languide carezze,  
mentr’io, fremente, le belle forme  
disclogliea dai veli!

Svani per sempre

Il sogno mio d’amore...

L’ora è fuggita

e muoio disperato!

E muoio disperato...

E non ho amato mai

tanto la vita,

tanto la vita!

Oh, kisses divine, languorous caresses,  
While I, impatient, set free that lovely form  
from its veils and its covers,

Now vanished forever,

my dream of loving.....

The past is over;

I die in desperation!

I die in desperation!...

And never have I

cherished life so dearly,

loved life so dearly!...

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