

TOSCA

PUCCINI

English Version by Donald Pippin

ACT ONE

A panic stricken fugitive just escaped from the dread prison of the fortress Sant' Angelo stumbles into the spacious, serenely harmonious interior of the Church of Sant' Andrea della Valle in Rome, seeking refuge and a hiding place. With the police in hot pursuit, few would recognize in this bedraggled derelict figure the former governor of what till recently was the Roman Republic, now converted into a police state by an oppressive occupying power -- a regime highly sensitive to the slightest hint of subversion, and determined to stamp it out, unhampered by delicate definitions as to what does and does not constitute torture.

The state authorities have good reason to feel nervous as they cower under the threat of an over-arching enemy -- Napoleon Bonaparte, who has embarked on an ambitious crusade, if one may use the word, to liberate and democratize the whole of Europe, unleashing in the process a demonic revolutionary force that has struck loathing and terror in the hearts of some, hope and jubilation in the hearts of others.

In short, troubled, turbulent times, a highly charged atmosphere from which few can remain immune -- least of all Cavaradossi, the painter, and Tosca, the singer, both of them artists at the top of their profession. Unlike certain ragged Bohemians struggling for survival in a Parisian garret whom you may have met on a previous occasion, these two have been applauded and rewarded -- a mixed blessing that makes them especially vulnerable to the treacherous political undercurrent. As ardent lovers, they also have their own all too human fallibilities to contend with. Tosca's passionate nature unfortunately is equally susceptible to the passion of jealousy, and Cavaradossi, while not exactly giving her solid grounds for distrust, is nonetheless dangerously appreciative of feminine beauty wherever he finds it. To Tosca's dismay, the portrait of Mary Magdelene that he is currently working on bears a closer resemblance to an unknown blonde blue-eyed beauty than to herself. And she is understandably upset when he responds less than enthusiastically to her proposal of a romantic moonlight rendezvous for that evening at his secluded villa just outside the city -- a reluctance that leads her to a drastic misinterpretation.

Trust Scarpia, the suave but ruthless chief of police, to spot her hidden weakness and make the most of it. After correctly deducing that Cavaradossi has taken the hunted fugitive in hand, providing him with vital aid and perhaps a more permanent sanctuary, Scarpia's present task is to find out where the two of them

are now hiding. He is right in judging that Tosca would burn at the stake before knowingly revealing her lover's whereabouts. But quite possibly she can be tricked into doing just that.

CAST OF CHARACTERS:

Floria Tosca, *an acclaimed singer*
Mario Cavaradossi, *an equally celebrated painter*
Scarpia, *Chief of Police*
Angelotti, *a former governor, now a political prisoner*
A Sacristan
Spoletta and Sciarrone, *two police agents*
Shepherd boy, jailer, executioner, Cardinal, soldiers, citizens, etc.

Scene: The Church of Sant' Andrea della Valle. With scaffolding, an easel supporting a large picture covered by a cloth. On the right, the Attavanti Chapel. Angelotti enters, in prison garb, disheveled, panic-stricken.

ANGELOTTI: Safe! After running,
Stupefied by panic,
Like a rabbit pursued by a pack of hounds.
(*looking around with some relief*) The basin . . . and the pillar . . .
My sister's letter said, "At the foot of the Madonna."
(*after a lengthy search*) The key, hallelujah!
And here the family chapel.

(*He cautiously unlocks the chapel door and slips inside, closing the door behind him. The Sacristan enters, carrying a bundle of paint brushes. He talks loudly as if addressing some unseen person.*)

SACRISTAN: Soak them and soak them!
Filthy as when I started.
Worse than a parish padre's worn out collar.
You there, good morning . . . Huh! No painter?
I could have sworn here I'd find Cavaradossi,
Dabbling as always at the easel.
(*examining the basket*) No. Baffling.
Food still in the basket.
(*He kneels and intones a prayer.*)
Angelus Domini nuntiavit Mariae, etc.

CAVARADOSSI: (*entering*) What's this?

SACRISTAN: Only the Angelus.

(Cavaradossi ascends the dais and uncovers a picture representing Mary Magdalen with large blue eyes and masses of golden hair. The painter gazes upon it in rapt contemplation. The Sacristan catches sight of the uncovered picture and exclaims in great amazement.)

Bless my bottom! I know that lady!

CAVARADOSSI: Do tell.

SACRISTAN: The mystery lady
Who's come here lately for solace and prayer.
So unworldly, so devoted . . .

CAVARADOSSI: *(smiling)* And lovely!
Yet so absorbed in her devotions,
Me she never noticed
While in silence I painted her classic features.

SACRISTAN: *(scandalized)* (Satan, get thee behind him!)

CAVARADOSSI: Hand me the brushes.

(He paints rapidly, then pauses, and takes from his pocket a medallion containing a miniature which he compares with the picture on the easel.)

Contrasting beauties blended,
Each enhancing the other!
My Tosca, all aglow,
Her eyes so bold and splendid!

SACRISTAN: *(grumbling)* (On Satan's daughters
Cast no holy waters.)

CAVARADOSSI: But on the other hand, behold
The fair stranger with hair of gold,
Eyes sky blue and sparkly --
Tosca's darkly smolder.

SACRISTAN: (On Satan's daughters
Cast no holy waters.)

CAVARADOSSI: Art, working wondrous magic,
Reconciles and combines these rival beauties.
Through art I explore and wander,
Yet my heart never wavers.
All my love I save for you,
Tosca, my own!

SACRISTAN: (Two ladies of position
Will clash in diabolic competition
For the role of Madonna.
On Satan's daughters
Cast no holy waters.)

(As Caravadosi continues to paint, the Sacristan continues to mutter.)

(But with the new crop of non-believers,
Intent on undermining law and order,
Hold your tongue and shrug your shoulders.

(indicating Cavaradosi)

He will regret his lechery and laughter
When doomed to burn in hell forever after.
I'll go before I get contaminated.)

(He makes a sign of the cross.)

(to Cav.) You'll excuse me. I'm going.

CAVARADOSSI: Do as you please.

SACRISTAN: Here is your basket . . . You are not eating?

CAVARADOSSI: Not in the mood.

SACRISTAN: *(with a greedy glance at the basket)*

Oh, what a waste!
Leaving, be sure to lock up.

CAVARADOSSI: Go!

SACRISTAN: I'm off! *(He exits.)*

(As Cav. continues working, Angelotti, believing the chapel empty, unlocks the door from the chapel. Cav., hearing the lock creak, turns around.)

CAVARADOSSI: Someone inside there!

(Angelotti, alarmed, is about to take refuge again in the chapel, when he recognizes the painter and utters a half-stifled cry of joy, coming toward him with open arms.)

ANGELOTTI: Friend! Cavaradosi! God's gift from heaven!
Don't you recognize me?
Have arrest and torture made me a different person?

CAVARADOSSI: Angelotti!

The Governor of what once was the Roman Republic!

ANGELOTTI: But now a fugitive from Fort Sant' Angelo.

CAVARADOSSI: I am yours to command!

TOSCA: *(from without)* Mario!

CAVARADOSSI: *(to Ang.)* Lie low for now.
Better not let her see you.
This I can handle in short order.

TOSCA: *(from without)* Mario!

CAVARADOSSI: Yes, my love!

ANGELOTTI: I am hungry, collapsing from exhaustion.

CAVARADOSSI: *(handing him the basket)*
Take this. Help yourself to food and brandy.

ANGELOTTI: Bless you!
(Basket in hand, he disappears into the chapel.)

CAVARADOSSI: Hurry!

TOSCA: Mario! Mario! Mario!

CAVARADOSSI: *(opening the door)* Darling!

(Tosca storms in, looks around suspiciously, warding off Cavaradossi's attempt to embrace her.)

TOSCA: Why lock the door?

CAVARADOSSI: The Sacristan insisted.

TOSCA: I heard you talking . . .

CAVARADOSSI: To you!

TOSCA: No, no! I heard another voice. Where is she?

CAVARADOSSI: Who?

TOSCA: You know who I mean!

I heard the hasty step
And the rustle of her clothing.

CAVARADOSSI: Madness!

TOSCA: You deny it?

CAVARADOSSI: Yes, and I adore you!

TOSCA: *(as he again tries to embrace her)* Not before the holy virgin!

Well . . . Later on.

Let me first offer flowers and a prayer.

(She does so with great devotion.)

I've a plan for tonight.
I'll be performing, but for only an hour.
At the stage door, with carriage, you'll be waiting
To carry me away to your sheltered villa.

CAVARADOSSI: This evening?

TOSCA: There in the moonlight,
How the floral fragrance of the night
Will stir the heart ready for rapture!

CAVARADOSSI: *(absent-mindedly)* Maybe . . .

TOSCA: *(taken aback)* You'd rather not?

CAVARADOSSI: *(with passion)* Lovely!

TOSCA: *(very sweetly)* You sounded bored,
But that was better.



I know a place tucked a-way, deep in sha-dows,
A hiding place only lovers can enter,
Our very own, to all the world unknown --
There you and I shall be alone.

Gazing up, in silent wonder,
Listen! We can hear
In the music of the stars
A clustered chorus calm and clear.

**Come, breathe the scent of summer
That fills the meadows. Befriended
By phantoms of the night, hand in hand we shall wander,**

**As playful breezes render
A caress warm and tender
To palpitating lovers on the verge of surrender.**

**As dormant fields reawaken
And the sea warns of far distant thunder,
Beyond the moon, chaste goddess of desire,
Ah, you vaulted stars, rain down your sparks of ecstasy!
Tosca's heart consume with fire!**

CAVARADOSSI: *(carried away)* Ah! Enraptured,
I surrender to my siren.

TOSCA: O my love! Tosca burns for you alone!

CAVARADOSSI: To your call I succumb.

TOSCA: I adore you!

CAVARADOSSI: Now leave me to my labors.

TOSCA: You dismiss me?

CAVARADOSSI: Duty summons, alas!

TOSCA: I see . . . well, well . . .

(As she starts to leave, she catches sight of the painting, which she finds disturbing.)

And who is the stunning blonde staring down?

CAVARADOSSI: My holy virgin. You like it?

TOSCA: Far too seductive.

CAVARADOSSI: My kindest critic!

TOSCA: Hardly.
Those sky-blue eyes I seem to know from somewhere.

CAVARADOSSI: Blue is not so uncommon.

TOSCA: Where was it? . . . Where was it? . . . Yes, Attavanti!

CAVARADOSSI: Brava!

TOSCA: You saw her, just now in secret! You love her!

CAVARADOSSI: We've never spoken.

TOSCA: Those footsteps . . . the hurried whispers . . .
 Ah! Your love scene I interrupted!

CAVARADOSSI: You're raving.

TOSCA: You have betrayed me.
 (menacingly) For her! For her!

CAVARADOSSI: We're unacquainted -- purely a chance encounter.
 She had come to worship and never even saw me.

TOSCA: Swear it!

CAVARADOSSI: Gladly.

TOSCA: Staring at me, fixated . . .

CAVARADOSSI: A painting!

TOSCA: . . . as if to gloat in triumph.

CAVARADOSSI: More raving!

TOSCA: *(gently reproving him)* Ah, those eyes!

CAVARADOSSI:



That outshines your own eyes of umber?
Deep in their glow I've found
My inspiration, my soul and center --
Eyes that in love are tender,
In wrath a flash of fire.
No other eyes in the world can outshine
Your beautiful dark eyes.

TOSCA: When all is said and done, love,

You do know how to please me.
But . . . change that blue to brown!

CAVARADOSSI: (*tenderly*) Jealous monster!

TOSCA: Yes, I must plead guilty,
Tormenting you so insanely.

CAVARADOSSI: Why be jealous?

TOSCA: Ever certain of your pardon,
I rely upon your kindness,
For you know the pain I endure.

CAVARADOSSI: Dear Tosca, my beloved!
Every mood of yours I relish.
Wrath and jealousy
Are germane to love's allure.

TOSCA: I can plead for pardon,
For you know the pain I endure.
Say again the words I long to hear,
That bring me calm and comfort.

CAVARADOSSI: My life, my uneasy angel!
Yours forever, I implore you:
Cast off the bonds of fear;
I am yours, my love, for life.

TOSCA: (*breaking the mood*) Stop! Is nothing sacred?
My hair you have made a shambles.

CAVARADOSSI: So now back to work.

TOSCA: All right, slave away on the job till this evening.
But you must promise that on no condition --
However dark or fair --
Shall ladies bent on prayer
Be allowed permission.

CAVARADOSSI: My word of honor! Go!

TOSCA: Why do you rush me?

CAVARADOSSI: Still jealous?

TOSCA: No, but kiss me.

CAVARADOSSI: In front of the blessed virgin?

TOSCA: She's understanding . . .
But change that blue to brown! *(She leaves.)*

(Seeing that all is quiet, Cav. goes to the Chapel and beckons for Angelotti to come out, whereupon they shake hands cordially. Cav. is aware that Ang. has overheard his conversation with Tosca.)

CAVARADOSSI: My Tosca's nearly perfect,
But true to her religion,
She conceals nothing from her confessor;
So I stayed mum.
The less she knows the better.

ANGELOTTI: She's gone now?

CAVARADOSSI: Yes. Have you a plan of action?

ANGELOTTI: I've not made up my mind --
To leave the country, or stay a while in hiding.
My sister . . .

CAVARADOSSI: The Attavanti? . . .

ANGELOTTI: Yes . . . She's smuggled in
Some items from her wardrobe.
There . . . under the altar . . .
A fan . . . a bonnet, et cetera.
I'll wait till it's dark,
And slip away in disguise.

CAVARADOSSI: That explains it!
On guard, subdued by caution
As she prayed with such fervor,
The golden, blue-eyed beauty
Conveyed the tell-tale symptoms
Of a secret love affair.
Wrong conclusion!
It was love for a brother.

ANGELOTTI: She'd stop at nothing,
Vowing to save me from that monster Scarpia.

CAVARADOSSI: Scarpia! A tyrant and hypocrite,

Who cloaks the lust of a libertine
In pious posturing and prattle,
And controls for his own cruel purpose
Both hangman and confessor.
My life itself I'd forfeit to help you out!
But to stay here till dark is far too risky.

ANGELOTTI: Go out in broad daylight? . . .

CAVARADOSSI: From the chapel there's a door to the garden.
Follow the long and narrow path
That will lead you to my villa.

ANGELOTTI: I know it . . .

CAVARADOSSI: This key I'll give you.
Later this evening I will join you.
And take with you also
The clothes your sister brought you.

ANGELOTTI: Must I wear them?

CAVARADOSSI: No need to at present
On a path so deserted.

ANGELOTTI: Goodbye, friend.

CAVARADOSSI: If agents come searching,
The garden well is close at hand.
Far down is water,
But closer to the surface
You'll find an empty cistern, secure and roomy,
A hiding place where none would think of looking.

(A cannon shot. They exchange uneasy glances.)

ANGELOTTI: *(sardonically)* Having fun at the fortress.

CAVARADOSSI: Your escape's been discovered,
And Scarpia unleashes his forces.

ANGELOTTI: Goodbye again.

CAVARADOSSI: *(with sudden resolution)* I'll come with you!
We'll stand together.

ANGELOTTI: **People approach.**

CAVARADOSSI: **And we dare them to follow!**

(They exit quickly through the Chapel. The Sacristan breathlessly hurries in.)

SACRISTAN: **Here's my chance for greater glory!
He is gone! How disappointing.
Those who nab a non-believer
Serve less time in purgatory.**

*(Acolytes, penitents, pupils and choristers rush in from all entrances.)
Here they come, the whole shebang! Hurry!*

CHORUS: **Where?**

SACRISTAN: **The vestry, hurry!**

CHORUS: **What has happened?**

SACRISTAN: **You've not heard?**

Bonaparte . . . the marauder . . . Bonaparte . . .

CHORUS: **And what of him?**

SACRISTAN: **Beaten, battered, shorn and shattered,
Hurling down to Beelzebub!**

CHORUS: **Merely rumor and wishful thinking.**

SACRISTAN: **Cross my heart, I swear to heaven.
Rest assured, his ship is sinking.**

CHORUS: **News that calls for celebration!**

SACRISTAN: **Fireworks and torches, the crowd going crazy!
Gala parade to the Palace Farnese
For a cantata composed for the occasion
Featuring Tosca!
Here in the church, sing praise to the Lord!
Be off, get ready, the time is short.
Off, off! There is the door.**

CHORUS: **Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! Extra wages.**

(ignoring the Sacristan who tries to drive them into the vestry)

Te Deum . . . Gloria!
Long live the king!
Father, friend, and fearless warrior,
Toast tonight a man for the ages.

SACRISTAN: Run to get ready.

CHORUS: A night to remember!
Fellow Romans hale and hearty,
Celebrate and join the party.
Long live the king! Long live the king!
Te Deum . . . Gloria!
Join the gala celebra ---

(Scarpia, followed by Spoletta and other police agents, enters abruptly and interrupts the revels.)

SCARPIA: Is this the way you worship?
Come to order!

SACRISTAN: *(abashed and terrified)* Overjoyed, sir. Such a special day . . .

SCARPIA: Get them ready for the *Te Deum*.
(All start to sneak out, including the Sacristan, until Scarpia stops him.)

You stay!

SACRISTAN: As you say, sir.

SCARPIA: *(to Spoletta)* And you, go, search every corner.
Uncover the traitor.

SPOLETTA: Ay, ay, sir.

SCARPIA: *(to other agents)* Watch every exit.
Don't attract attention.
(to the Sacristan) As for you --
Think twice before you answer --
A traitor to his country
Who fled one hour ago from fort Sant' Angelo
Was given shelter here.

SACRISTAN: Misericordia!

SCARPIA: Hiding this moment . . .
The Attavanti Chapel's is where we'll find him.

SCARPIA: Will you get to the point?

SACRISTAN: I left the basket here,
Loaded down with lots of goodies,
The painter's midday meal.

SCARPIA: I assume he ate it.
SACRISTAN: Not in the Chapel!
He had firstly no key,
And secondly no appetite.
He said so himself.
I put it by the easel . . . Cross my heart, sir!
(Libera me Domine!)

SCARPIA: *(to himself)* (It comes together . . .
The meal the Sacristan was craving
Wound up inside Angelotti.)

(Tosca enters, nervously searching for Cavaradossi. Scarpia conceals himself behind a pillar, signaling the Sacristan to stay where he is.)

SCARPIA: Tosca? She mustn't see me.
(If Iago found a handkerchief sufficient,
Surely this pretty fan will do the job for Scarpia.)

TOSCA: Mario? Mario?
SACRISTAN: Looking for Cavaradossi?
I tell you no lie.
The fellow slipped away --
Don't ask me how or why.

TOSCA: *(near tears)* (Does he deceive me? No, no!
His love is faithful and true.
Of this I dare not doubt.)

SCARPIA: *(gently but insinuatingly)* Greatest of singers!
My unworthy hand goes out to yours,
So slender, soft and supple --
No, not to kiss your fingers,
But to bestow a drop of holy water.

TOSCA: How very kind.

SCARPIA: If only the world had more like you!
Inspired by zeal and the fire of heaven,

With your art you convey the holy spirit
To a world gone astray.

TOSCA: You embarrass . . .

SCARPIA: All too rare in an artist . . .
On the stage wildly applauded,
Yet now you come to church only to pray.

TOSCA: As who doesn't?

SCARPIA: (*indicating the portrait*) So unlike the brazen lady of note
Who, posing as the pure and holy Madonna,
Plays the role to entice a lover . . .

TOSCA: You're suggesting? . . .
I dare you to prove it!

SCARPIA: (*displaying the fan*) Is this a painter's tool of choice?

TOSCA: Let me see it! Where'd you find it?

SCARPIA: Where he was working.
Some intruder evidently alarmed the lovebirds,
And taking flight, the female lost some feathers.

TOSCA: Attavanti! Her emblem! They were together!
(I knew without knowing . . .)

SCARPIA: (Now the seed has been planted.)

(*Tosca, in great sorrow, oblivious to where she is and to Scarpia's presence, tries to restrain her tears.*)

TOSCA: (Deluded fool, I came to him believing
A broken date would give him cause for grieving,
To let him know that Tosca, much in sorrow,
Was compelled to postpone it till tomorrow.)

SCARPIA: (So my poison is working.)
How it spreads through her system.)
Dear gentle lady, is something the matter?
From your beclouded eyes there appears
A crystal cascade, a fountain of tears.
What can I do to smooth troubled waters?

TOSCA: Nothing.

SCARPIA: My very life I would give to dry those eyes.

TOSCA: (*absorbed in her own thoughts*) While I'm in tears
He'll be lolling in the moonlight in the arms of another.

SCARPIA: (Sharp are my arrows . . .)

TOSCA: (Where have they gone?
I'll catch the two of them as they frolic.
A grim suspicion --
They're on their way even now to the villa.
I'm betrayed! I'm betrayed,
Our nest defiled by lust and deception.
I'll take them by surprise!)
(*She turns threateningly towards the picture.*)
He'll not be yours this evening. Trust me!

SCARPIA: So hostile?

TOSCA: God will forgive me,
For He knows how I suffer.

(*Scarpia accompanies her to the church door, pretending to reassure her. The church gradually fills with people. He returns to the pillar and beckons for Spoletta.*)

SCARPIA: A carriage . . . Round up your agents.
Hurry . . . Follow, and don't let her see you.
Be careful . . . be cagey . . .

SPOLETTA: And later? . . . Where to find you?

SCARPIA: The Palace Farnese. (*Spoletta leaves.*)

(*smiling sardonically*) Fly, Tosca!
To your heart my arrow's pointed.
Fly, Tosca!
For Scarpia, you soar like the winged falcon
Guiding the ruthless hunters.
Your jealous passion I have put to the purpose.
And beware the snares of Scarpia!
Fly, Tosca!

(*The Cardinal enters and blesses the kneeling throng.*)

CARDINAL: *Adjutorum nostrum in nomine Domini*

Sit nomen Domini benedictum.

THE THRONG:

*Qui fecit coelum et terram
Et nunc et usque insaeculum.*

SCARPIA:

My aim is two-fold:
I'll capture them both.
And no, it's not the rebel
I would call most wanted.

She will come crawling!
I must see that unquenchable fire
Languish for love!
The Goddess bold and proud,
Captured by cunning,
Yielding to my desire.
One mounts the gallows,
And the other falls into my arms.
Tosca, for you, God Almighty I abandon!

THE THRONG:

Te Deum laudamus, etc.

The End of Act One

ACT TWO

The luxurious apartment of Scarpia, chief of police, is situated on an upper floor of the Palace Farnese, where Napoleon's announced defeat is being celebrated with a cantata performed by Tosca that can be partially heard through an open window. A torture chamber for interrogating prisoners is conveniently located in an adjacent room.

Unwittingly, Tosca has indeed led Scarpia's goons to Cavaradossi's country villa, where they found Cavaradossi, but did not find the person they were looking for -- Angelotti, the escapee, who is obviously still lurking somewhere. No matter. Extracting such information is one of the pleasures of the job.

Tosca, forced to witness the torture of her lover, finally breaks down and blurts out the fugitive's whereabouts. In desperation, to save her lover, scheduled to face a firing squad, she even agrees to an infamous bargain with the predatory, cold-blooded Scarpia. But Scarpia's self-congratulation is decidedly premature. By the end of the scene, his bleeding corpse lies on the floor as Tosca stands over him, knife in hand.

Scene: a sumptuous room in the Farnese Palace, Scarpia's apartment, where a table is laid, and a large window overlooks the palace courtyard. It is night.

SCARPIA:

Tosca will steer them.
My hungry bloodhounds in pursuit
Will ferret out the fugitives.
By dawn tomorrow upon the gallows
Angelotti and Mario both
Will dangle side by side.

(He rings for Sciarrone, who appears.)

Is Tosca not here yet?

SCIARRONE:

I've sent an underling to track her down.

SCARPIA:

The window . . .

(Sciarrone obligingly opens it.)

Later and later!
The choir more than ready,
But where is the diva?
And the strumming continues . . .
Go down and wait for Tosca at the entrance.
Let her know I want a word with her
After the performance.
Still better . . . Here's a note you can deliver --

(to himself)

She will be prompt,
Drawn by love for her Mario.
And for that very reason
She will do all that I desire.
Rapture of love is balanced
By a rapid plunge into sorrow.



For a lust-ier flavor, soon-er conquer with ter-ror

Than entice with caresses.

I get no pleasure
From strolling in a garden bathed in moonlight,
Whispering drivel.
And serenades beneath a lady's window
Are not my cup of tea.
Likewise for "Hearts and Flowers"
And the cooing of turtledoves.

Hungry, I see what I want and pursue it.
After gorging, I leave the table --
Time for new diversion.
God created beauty galore
In wine and in women.
I long to taste
All of the fruits of our bountiful Maker.

SCIARRONE: *(entering)* Spoletta's waiting.

SCARPIA: Splendid. Have him enter.

(Sciarrone leaves and returns with Spoletta, then takes his stand near the door.)

SCARPIA: Home is the hunter . . .
What about the quarry?

SPOLETTA: *(exceedingly nervous)* (St. Ignatius preserve me!)
Hot on the trail, we followed the lady,
Reaching an out of the way
Villa surrounded by myrtle.
She goes inside, but stays only a moment.
Light on my toes, I scale the garden wall
Together with my rowdies
And break the door down.

SCARPIA: My valiant Spoletta!

SPOLETTA: Sniffing, I look around, searching . . .
SCARPIA: And . . . Angelotti?

SPOLETTA: No where in sight.

SCARPIA: You bumbling dim-witted moron!
I'll see you strung up, hanging from the gallows!

SPOLETTA: O Lord! The painter was there.

SCARPIA: So what about him?

SPOLETTA: He knows where the criminal's hiding.
Shrugging his shoulders,
He replies with a snigger of scorn and derision.
So I had him arrested.

SCARPIA: Good fellow.

(While a cantata, led by the voice of Tosca, is heard from the rooms below, Scarpia prepares to interview Cavaradossi.)

SPOLETTA: *(pointing to an antechamber)* He's in there.

SCARPIA: Show in the death-defying fool.
I want my strongman as well,
With judge and bailiff.

(Cavaradossi is brought in.)

CAVARADOSSI: Take your hands off!

SCARPIA: *(with elaborate courtesy)* Do come in . . .
A mere routine procedure.

CAVARADOSSI: What about?

SCARPIA: Be seated.

CAVARADOSSI: I'm standing.

SCARPIA: Suit yourself.
I'm told you've information . . .

CAVARADOSSI: Tosca's voice!

SCARPIA: . . . about the arrested man
Who bolted this very day from fort Sant' Angelo.

CAVARADOSSI: I know nothing.

SCARPIA: And yet our sources tell us
He came to you in Sant' Andrea,
Where you gave him food and some clothing . . .

CAVARADOSSI: They're lying!

SCARPIA: Later on, you conveyed him to your secluded villa.

CAVARADOSSI: Prove it! Who says so?

SCARPIA: A trusted, loyal servant . . .

CAVARADOSSI: **An informer! Out for profit!**
 Your expedition came up empty-handed.

SCARPIA: **Proof that he's well-concealed.**

CAVARADOSSI: **A fool's errand foiled.**

SPOLETTA: *(highly offended)* **When we pressed for the truth**
 He laughed in our faces!

CAVARADOSSI: **I'm laughing still. I'm laughing still.**

SCARPIA: *(rising angrily)* **Time for tears, not for mockery!**
 I warn you . . . Stop stalling!
 I want answers! Where's Angelotti?

CAVARADOSSI: **You're asking me?**

SCARPIA: **I'm told for a fact you gave him food.**

CAVARADOSSI: **Never!**

SCARPIA: **And clothing.**

CAVARADOSSI: **Never!**

SCARPIA: **And refuge in your villa**
 Where right now he's hiding.

CAVARADOSSI: **Never, never!**

SCARPIA: **My son, come, come, let's think it over.**
 By obstinate denial you prolong the torture,
 And by confessing
 We can both avoid a ton of grief.
 I'm here to help you:
 Tell me . . . where to find Angelotti.

CAVARADOSSI: **Who can say?**

SCARPIA: **I'll give you one more chance: where is he?**

CAVARADOSSI: **Who knows?**

SPOLETTA: **(This is getting us nowhere.)**

Tosca enters in alarm, rushes up to Cavaradossi and embraces him.

SCARPIA: (So she came . . .)

TOSCA! Mario! In here?

CAVARADOSSI: *(under his breath)* Breathe not a word of what you saw there,
Or I'm done for.

SCARPIA: Mario Caravadossi, the judge is ready
For your deposition.
He signals for Sciarrone to open the door of the torture chamber.
(to Roberti) First the standard procedure.
Later . . . as I signal.

SCARPIA: *(alone with Tosca)*
Come, let us have a friendly conversation.
You appear somewhat uneasy.

TOSCA: *(with pretended calm)* I can't imagine why.

SCARPIA: The fan we found this morning? . . .

TOSCA: A foolish fit of jealousy.

SCARPIA: Your lovely rival you did not find at the villa?

TOSCA: No. No one was with him.

SCARPIA: No one? How you seem so certain?

TOSCA: Jealous eyes are like eagle's.
I know! I know!

SCARPIA: Alone?

TOSCA: Quite alone!

SCARPIA: So defensive!
One might think you were harboring a secret.
(turning towards the entrance of the torture chamber)
Sciarrone, what headway to report?

SCIARRONE: None.

SCARPIA: Press him harder.

TOSCA: No, no!

SCARPIA: It's up to you.
Where is the traitor hiding out?
You know the answer. Say where.

TOSCA: I cannot bear it. Ah, the horror!
Ah, unendurable pain!
He's suffered enough.
I can bear no more.

CAVARADOSSI: *(a loud groan offstage)* Ahime!

TOSCA: *(approaching the door)* Mario . . . allow me to speak.

CAVARADOSSI: No! No!

TOSCA: I implore you! Let me speak out . . .

CAVARADOSSI: Coward! Absurd! What do you know?

SCARPIA: *(Infuriated and fearful that Cavaradossi will bolster Tosca's resolve to remain silent, he shouts to Spoletta.)*
Block all communication!

TOSCA: *(overcome by emotion, to Scarpia)*
Have I ever done you wrong?
Yet I, I am the one that you torture,
For my soul you tear asunder,
Blow by blow, minute by minute.
(Simultaneously, Spoletta is muttering a prayer in Latin.)

CAVARADOSSI: *(another sharp cry of pain)* Ah!

TOSCA: *(in a stifled voice)* The well . . . in the garden . . .

SCARPIA: So there he is hiding?

TOSCA: Yes . . .

SCARPIA: *(turning to the torture chamber)*
Mission accomplished!

SCIARRONE: *(appearing at the door)* He's unconscious.

TOSCA: You assassin! I want to see him.

SCARPIA: *(to Sciarrone)* Go bring me what's left.

(Cavaradossi, unconscious, is brought in and deposited on the sofa. First appalled and horrified, Tosca recovers, and kneels down beside him, lavishing tears and kisses. At a sign from Scarpia, the others hold back.)

CAVARADOSSI: *(coming to)* Floria! . . .

TOSCA: My darling . . .

CAVARADOSSI: My love!

TOSCA: How you have suffered by standing tall!
But God in heaven will hunt him down.

CAVARADOSSI: Tosca . . . Did you tell him?

TOSCA: No, my love.

CAVARADOSSI: Despite all?

TOSCA: Yes!

SCARPIA: *(to Spoletta)* He's hiding in the garden well.
Go find him.

CAVARADOSSI: You've betrayed me!

TOSCA: Mario!

CAVARADOSSI: While I trusted!

TOSCA: Mario!

(Sciarrone enters, greatly perturbed.)

SCIARRONE: Sir, the news is catastrophic!

SCARPIA: Speak, and pull yourself together.

SCIARRONE: On the battlefield, disaster.

SCARPIA: What has happened? When? Where?

SCIARRONE: At Marengo . . .

SCARPIA: Say it,, say it!

SCIARRONE: Bonaparte has won the day.

SCARPIA: We fought? . . .

SCIARRONE: No! We ran for cover.

CAVARADOSSI: (*ecstatically*) Victorious! Victorious!
As the bright bugles sound
Tyrants fall to the ground.
From the oppressed comes the cry,
Long live liberty!

TOSCA: (*in despair*) Mario, hush! Or we both are lost.
For me! Quiet!

CAVARADOSSI: For the pain undergone
I collect my reward.

SCARPIA: You bluster . . . swagger . . . be careful.

CAVARADOSSI: All is over for mighty Scarpia!
The time is up for predators and murderers.

TOSCA: (*to Scarpia*) Pay no attention! He's mad! He's mad!
He's not himself.

SCARPIA: (*to Cav.*) You build a solid case for your execution.
Continue boasting
As you crawl toward the gallows. Go on!
(*to agents*) Take him away to die!

TOSCA: (*to Cav.*) I'll die with you.

SCARPIA: Off to the gallows! Off! Off!

(*Cavaradossi is dragged off.*)

TOSCA: No, no! Ah, Mario! Mario!
I'll die with you!

SCARPIA: (*restraining Tosca*) You'll stay!

TOSCA: You have to save him . . .

SCARPIA:

Not I, but you!
My poor neglected supper's getting colder.
Why so despondent?
Come, you seem quite exhausted.
Sit down with me.
Perhaps together we can find
A way to save your Mario.
Relax . . . Be seated . . . We'll talk it over.
Meanwhile, some sherry . . . a Spanish vintage.
So mellow . . . I recommend it.

Tosca seats herself opposite Scarpia, and stares at him unflinching.

TOSCA: *(with the utmost disdain)* How much?

SCARPIA: How much?

TOSCA: His ransom.

SCARPIA: *(laughing)* Ah, they call me corrupt.
They say I'm for sale.
But to a lady in need, I'd never sell out
For paltry sums of silver.

No, no! From lovely ladies
Who wish to purchase
I ask for more than money.
If I'm to sacrifice my honor and pride
I have to raise the ante
To another kind of repayment.

How long I've watched and waited,
Hoping for a nod from the cold, distant diva.
But a short while ago,
I saw you with eyes newly reawakened,
For your tears were like molten lava
Pouring on me.

Your disdainful look of loathing
Ignited the demons of desire,
As you shielded your lover
With the claws of a tiger.
When you most reviled me,
Then most I felt on fire.
Mine! You are mine! You are mine!

TOSCA: *(in terror, rushing to the window)* Ah! A leap, and all is over.

SCARPIA: On Mario then I'll vent my fury.

TOSCA: So I am forced to make a deal with the devil.

*With the sudden idea of appealing to the Queen, she rushes to the door.
Scarpia guesses her intention, and observes calmly.*

SCARPIA: You hope for help from the Queen?
Go plead with her. Allow me.
But I wouldn't advise it.
Her reprieve will go to a cadaver,
Already cold as ice.
(complacently) Spurn me, despise me . . .

TOSCA: Oh, God!

SCARPIA: *(approaching her)* I love that look of horror.

TOSCA: If you dare even touch me!
Monster, reptile, serpent!
I abhor you, loathe you!

SCARPIA: Amusing!
Love me or loathe me, I hold all the aces.

TOSCA: Monster! Serpent!

SCARPIA: *(trying to grab her)* Tosca, Tosca! Mine! Mine!

TOSCA: Help me! Oh, help me! Oh, help me!

Distant drums are heard, gradually approaching.

SCARPIA: Listen! Distant drums . . . now closer . . .
Leading the long slow march that will end
At the gallows.
His time runs out . . .
You know the all-engulfing chasm
That soon will open.
There . . . the grim scaffold waits for him.
What a loss! Though it's your own fault.
His life dwindles down to an hour.

Broken down by grief, Tosca falls back on the sofa. Scarpia calmly pours out coffee, which he then drinks, his eyes fixed on Tosca.

TOSCA:



Art I've lived for; love I have lived for.

No malice I bear to anyone living.
When none were watching,
Often I've aided the ragged and hungry.
Ever a faithful servant,
My humble vows of devotion
I have offered up to God.
And on his altar I've placed
Flowers from a grateful heart.
When now my hour is darkest,
O why, dear God of Mercy?
O why, dear Lord, do you now turn away?

Jewels of mine have graced Our Lady's mantle.
I've raised my song to sparkling stars
That glorify the heavens.
In my dark hour of need
O why, O why, almighty God?
Dear father, why do you now turn away?

SCARPIA: Your answer!

TOSCA: Must I kneel and beg for mercy?
Humbly, I appeal to a fellow mortal.
Begging . . . pleading . . .
All I ask is a tiny drop of mercy.

SCARPIA: You've conquered my resistance;
I yield to beauty!
Dear me! So much for so little!
His life I'll give you
For one fleeting night of pleasure.

TOSCA: *(rising scornfully)* Go, go! You make me shudder!
Go, go!

(A knock at the door)

SCARPIA: Who's there?

SPOLETTA: (*entering in great agitation*) Sir, we were swindled!
Angelotti killed himself before we got there.

SCARPIA: Well, well! Have the corpse
Strung up on the gallows.
As for the other man?

SPOLETTA: We've got the painter closely guarded,
Ready to carry out orders.

TOSCA: (God, have mercy!)

SCARPIA: (*to Spoletta*) A moment.
(*softly, to Tosca*) I'm waiting . . .

(*With tears of shame, Tosca nods consent.*)
(*to Spoletta*) Patience!

TOSCA: You promise his immediate freedom?

SCARPIA: (*to Tosca*) We want to play it safe.
Reprieve is asking for trouble.
Essential that all believe
The execution's carried out.
This honest man will know what I mean.

TOSCA: Why should I trust you?

SCARPIA: In your presence, here and now,
I'll issue instructions.
(*indicating the door*) Spoletta, close it.
I am changing my orders:
Not hanging, but the firing squad.
Though mind you,
Do it the way that we dealt with Palmieri.

SPOLETTA: An execution . . .

SCARPIA: Using blanks.
Just the same as with Palmieri.
You understand me?

SPOLETTA: I understand you.

SCARPIA: Go!

TOSCA: And I myself want to tell him.

SCARPIA: Of course. That we can manage.
(to Spoletta) On schedule: at four this morning.

SPOLETTA: Right . . . just like Palmieri. *(He leaves.)*

(With Spoletta gone, Scarpia turns passionately to Tosca.)

SCARPIA: Your turn to keep a promise.

TOSCA: Not so hasty . . .
First, sign the necessary form
To let us leave the country at once.

SCARPIA: Don't tell me you are leaving?

TOSCA: Yes. Forever.

SCARPIA: Ah, well. To please a lady.
(He goes to the desk and begins to write.)
By what road will you travel?

TOSCA: By the shortest.

SCARPIA: And then by water?

TOSCA: Yes.

(While he is writing, she approaches the table and with trembling hand lifts a wine glass to her lips. As she does so, she notices a sharp pointed knife lying on the table. While Scarpia is still preoccupied, she cautiously takes the knife and conceals it. He finishes writing the passport, seals it, folds it, and advances toward Tosca with open arms.)

SCARPIA: Tosca, now at last you are mine!
(As he is about to embrace her, she stabs him in the breast.)
You assassin!

TOSCA: Now you know how Tosca kisses.

SCARPIA: I'm bleeding! Dying!
Somebody help me!

TOSCA: Now choke on your own blood.

SCARPIA: Somebody! Somebody!
I'm dying . . . help me. Come help me!

TOSCA: Struck down, and by a woman!
By the person you tortured.

SCARPIA: I'm dying! Help me!

TOSCA: Can you still hear me?
Answer! Look at me.
One last look at Tosca!

SCARPIA: Come help me, I'm dying!

TOSCA: Die gasping and choking.

SCARPIA: . . . Murdered . . .

TOSCA: *(bending over him, with ferocity)* Die in damnation!
Damn you! Damn you! Damn you!
He is dead . . . Now I forgive him.

(Without taking her eyes off the dead body, she goes to the table, dips a napkin in the water jug and washes her fingers, then arranges her hair before the looking glass. Remembering the passport, she looks for it on the desk and not finding it searches elsewhere, finally spotting it in the clenched fingers of Scarpia. She lifts his arm, then lets it fall, stiff and inert, after taking from his hand the passport which she hides in her bosom.)

Before him once the high and mighty trembled.

(Seeing one of the candles on the desk still burning, she lights another candle with it and places one candle to the right of Scarpia's head, the other to the left. Again looking around, she sees a crucifix which she takes down from the wall and places reverently on the breast of the dead body. At the sound of distant drums, she rises and cautiously departs, closing the door after her.)

End of Act Two

ACT THREE

On a platform on the rooftop of the massive Fort Sant' Angelo towering over the city, a firing squad routinely carries out executions in the early hours of the morning, as a shepherd's lonely song is heard in the distance.

Cavaradossi is not yet aware that Tosca has extracted a promise from Scarpia to turn this into a mock execution, using blanks instead of bullets. Nor is he or anyone else aware that Scarpia now lies dead in the Palace Farnese, slain by Tosca's own hand after obtaining the vital safe-passage for herself and her companion -- the document that will enable the two of them to start a new life in a different country. The success of her plan is far from certain. Timing is of the essence. Scarpia's body could be discovered any minute.

Knowing that their ordeal will be brief, that they will then be free, the lovers are exultant. The shots ring out; Cavaradossi falls dead. Scarpia has reneged on his promise. The bullets were real. As soldiers charge in to arrest Tosca for the murder of Scarpia, she foils their cry for vengeance by hurling herself from the rooftop into the void.

Scene: the platform of Castel Sant' Angelo. Though still night, dawn is gradually breaking. Church bells ring out, and from afar is heard the plaintive song of a shepherd.

SHEPHERD:
My sighs outnumber
The swirling leaves in autumn,
Scorned by my darling
Who lies still lost in slumber.
Open your eyes; the morning beckons.
Waken to love, or leave me to die.

(The jailer enters, followed by a squad with sergeant commander, escorting Cavaradossi. The sergeant hands a paper to the jailer, who examines it, opens a ledger and writes, while questioning Cavaradossi.)

JAILER: Mario Cavaradossi?
(As Cavaradossi nods his head, the jailer hands the pen to the sergeant.)
(to sergeant) Sign here.
(The sergeant signs the ledger and leaves. The jailer turns to Cavaradossi.)
You have one hour.
There is a priest standing by in case you want him.

CAVARADOSSI: No. Instead, I must beg of you one final favor.

JAILER: What is it?

CAVARADOSSI: I leave behind me someone I dearly cherish.
Let me write to her a brief parting message.
Nothing is left of my worldly wealth but this little ring.
Give me your word you'll convey to her this everlasting farewell,
And it's yours.

(After momentary hesitation, the jailer accepts the ring and signals Cavaradossi to be seated.)

JAILER: Permission granted.

(Cavaradossi writes a few lines, but soon, overcome by memories of the past, he stops writing.)

CAVARADOSSI:



When the stars lit the heav-ens, when the earth lay in slum-ber,
A rustle in the garden,
And I heard quiet steps coming toward me.

She entered like a goddess,
We embraced in the shadows,
A thousand kisses and prolonged caresses!
My trembling fingers
Removed the attire that veiled her naked splendor.

But now my dream of love is gone forever.
In shock I awaken
To die in desolation,
Despair and desolation,
When I have never had so much to live for,
So much to live for.

(In tears, he covers his face with his hands. Spoletta enters, accompanied by Tosca. After indicating where she will find Cavaradossi, he leaves, not without warning a sentry on duty to keep close watch over the prisoner. Tosca, greatly agitated, sees Cavaradossi weeping. Unable to speak from sheer emotion, she lifts his head with both hands, showing him the safe-conduct which, with surprise and joy, he proceeds to read aloud.)

CAVARADOSSI: Ah! Safe-passage for Floria Tosca ...

TOSCA: *(chiming in)* And her companion who travels with her.
You're free as air!

CAVARADOSSI: Scarpia! . . . Suddenly lenient?
 The first reprieve he's granted.

TOSCA: Also the last.

CAVARADOSSI: What happened?

TOSCA: He demanded my body for yours.
 In vain, I implored, I pleaded.
 In tears, mortally afraid,
I appealed in vain to our father in heaven.
 The monster swaggered and boasted:
 "Close at hand the gallows stand,
 Waiting for your lover."
 The roll of drums grew louder . . .
 He laughed in my face as I struggled,
Trapped, like a wild beast caught in a snare.
 "You're mine now!"
"Yes." What could I do but nod agreement?
 I saw a knife left lying on the table.
 He signed the order that set you free.
 And as the reptile started toward me,
 Into his heart I blindly plunged the blade.

CAVARADOSSI: You? With your own hands you killed him?
 These kind, gentle hands did this for me?

TOSCA: Hands newly stained with the blood of a monster.

CAVARADOSSI: These gentle hands, so delicate and slender!
 These giving hands,
 Made to administer mercy,
To dry the tears of children with touch so tender,
 To pray for shelter in stormy weather.
 These are hands
 Fortified by love and courage,
Where hands of God have placed the sceptre of justice.
 In mortal combat, you brought down the devil
 With gentle hands, so delicate and slender!

TOSCA: Listen . . . We've only minutes.
 In haste, I've gathered gold and some jewels.
 Below a coach is waiting.
 But first -- my dear, you will laugh --
 First they'll proceed with the shooting.

No harm done; it's only make-believe,
A mock execution.
You fall when fired on;
Soldiers leave, job completed.
The ordeal is over; we head for freedom!
Once safely past the border,
We hop on a freighter and sail away.

CAVARADOSSI: All aboard!

TOSCA: All aboard!

CAVARADOSSI: Off to sea!

TOSCA: We will start to live again,
Walk a pathway of roses.
As a painful chapter closes,
Reunited lovers await the sunrise!

CAVARADOSSI: The sting of death could hold for me no terror
Except the fear of losing you forever.
My will to live, my joy and inspiration
Rise out of you, like the phoenix from the fire.
The unfolding universal panorama
I see revealed in the mirror of your eyes,
And all the bountiful beauty in nature
Because of you becomes a burst of color.

TOSCA: The love and steady faith that saw you through
Will guide us on land and sea, wherever we are,
Making the world forever young and lovely,
Then to ascend in death to higher spheres.
Calm and serene, we'll float like clouds over water,
In golden sunset drifting off together,
Drifting off together, drifting off together . . .

(Drawn back to the realities of the situation, Tosca looks around uneasily.)

TOSCA: No one here as yet . . . remember:
The guns go off, and your fall must appear realistic.

CAVARADOSSI: Rest assured.
When they start shooting, I'll go down like a trooper.

TOSCA: Be careful, dear, not to hurt yourself in falling --
A practical science we performers have mastered.

CAVARADOSSI: Speak to me again of your dreams for tomorrow,
The life ahead that waits to be discovered.

TOSCA: Embarking on adventure,
We'll start anew, to share with all the world
The delight and the wonder . . .

BOTH: The miraculous thrill of being alive!
Hand in hand,
Starting all over, off to discover
Broader horizons, bluer skies.
Where stars are beckoning bright,
Straight into the light,
Lifted by love, we soar.

TOSCA: With kisses by the thousand
I'll close your sleepy eyes,
And breathe a thousand loving sighs.

(While the lovers sing ecstatically, the sky brightens, dawn is near. A firing squad of soldiers enters, followed by Spoletta, the sergeant and the jailer.)

JAILER: Time now.

CAVARADOSSI: I'm ready.

TOSCA: *(with suppressed laughter)* (And like a hero . . .
At the first explosion . . . fall!)

CAVARADOSSI: *(also smiling)* (Bang!)

TOSCA: (As precaution, play dead until I call you.)

CAVARADOSSI: (Yes, my darling.)

TOSCA: (And fall like Tosca.)

CAVARADOSSI: (I'll earn a standing ovation.)

TOSCA: (Be serious!)

CAVARADOSSI: *(with a mock frown)* (Like so?)

TOSCA: *(imitating him)* (Like so.)

(Cavaradossi follows the officer to the platform, while Tosca takes a position from which she can observe. Despite herself, as the lugubrious preparations proceed, she becomes increasingly uneasy.)

TOSCA: I don't like this long waiting.
Why the pointless delay?
Already sunrise . . . How I wish it were over!
It's all a game, of course . . .
But every minute seems an hour.

(The firing squad waits for the word of command.)

Ah, they have taken position.
He's never looked so handsome!
(The soldiers fire.) Fall! Bravo!
(Seeing Cavaradossi on the ground, she kisses her hand to him.)
A fine performance!

(After inspecting the body, the soldiers march off. Tosca, watching anxiously, is fearful that Cavaradossi will move or speak prematurely.)

Be still, they may be watching you . . .
They're going off . . . Quiet! Quiet!
Not a move till they go . . .
Not yet, they may be coming back.
(She leans cautiously over the parapet to inspect, then returns to Cavaradossi.)

All is clear. Mario! Mario!
So hurry! Get up! Come, come! Mario! Mario!
(She uncovers his dead body and gives a scream.)

Ah, slaughtered! Slaughtered! Slaughtered!
My Mario . . . dead. Led away, and shot like a dog,
Oh, Mario! Mario!
(Cries are heard from without.)

SCIARRONE: I tell you, he was slain!

SOLDIERS: Scarpia?

SCIARRONE: Scarpia.

TOSCA: Mario . . . How can I live without you? Mario! Mario!

SPOLETTA: Murdered by Tosca!

