

happy, for as a public carrier he possesses much prestige and he thoroughly enjoys the life. Moreover, is he not the husband of the beautiful Lola? All his simple satisfaction bubbles over in this number, the latter part of which is given over to his joy at returning home for Easter and the welcome that awaits him from his adored one. He has no suspicion that a few hours earlier another man has been likening the lips of the dusky Lola to crimson berries. The chorus joins gaily in his lively music, and afterward disperses, some into the church and the rest about their business. Alfio among them.

The gaiety of Alfio's song gives place to the Easter music, the "Regina Coeli" (Queen of the Heavens), and the "Innegiamo al Signore" (Let us sing before the Lord").

This Easter music is exceptionally rich in melody and harmony. Its tranquil beauty and sanctity of feeling deeply emphasises the part religion plays in the lives of these simple pastoral people. There is splendid breadth and dignity in its familiar tune.

With the departure of Alfio and his admirers Santuzza and Mamma Lucia are left alone again, and Santuzza pours out her sad story into the kindly ears of the sympathetic Lucia. Before Turiddu went away to serve his time in the army it appears he was in love with Lola, who seemed to return his love, but when his time was up and he returned to the village he found Lola married to Alfio. To console him-

self Turiddu made violent love to Santuzza, who yielded to his ardour all too completely. Now it seems Turiddu is again paying court to Lola, who receives him with favour, and Santuzza finds herself doubly disgraced by his desertion. The story of Santuzza is set forth in the "Voi la sapete" (Well, do you know, good Mother).

This is one of the most powerful and beautiful numbers in the opera. Lucia is not wholly surprised but deeply grieved. She looks with foreboding upon the future, and does her best to console the unhappy girl who pleads for her prayers in the "Andante, O Mamma" (Implore your God to save Me).

Lucia tries to comfort her, remaining patient even when the frantic Santuzza threatens vengeance against her son. Then even Santuzza's mood softens as she thinks of the love she has lost. Lucia leaves Santuzza to enter the church, and a moment later Turiddu himself enters. Then follows the duet "Tu qui, Santuzza?" (Thou here, Santuzza?), in which the two quarrel violently.

Santuzza explains that she has come to see his mother, and then confronts him with the fact that he did not go to Francofonte as he was supposed, but instead to Lola. Turiddu accuses her of spying on him and is soon beside himself with anger. Santuzza insists that he has been seen by Alfio, Lola's husband, himself, but Turiddu

refuses to listen, taunts her with jealousy and ingratitude, bidding her to leave him. They are interrupted by the sound of a woman's voice singing from behind the scene as she approaches. It is the unsuspecting Lola on her way to church, expressing

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her love for Turiddu in the lovely "Flor di giaggiolo" (My King of Roses).

She enters and grasps the situation at a glance. The two girls converse with thinly-veiled irony. The embarrassed Turiddu contributes but little. Finally Lola proceeds to church and invites her lover to follow. Santuzza claims him, however, and they continue their former quarrel. This is carried on in one of the loveliest numbers in the entire work, the "Ah, No, Turiddu, rimani!" (No, Turiddu, remain). The melody is tender and pathetic, rising to a great climax as the distraught girl begs Turiddu to return to her. Violently angry, he refuses and hastens into the church in pursuit of Lola. Santuzza yields herself up to despair, but is aroused by the arrival of Alfio. Another dramatic scene ensues, in which Santuzza tells all she knows. At first Alfio finds it hard to believe Lola's guilt. His anger is immediate and passionate—"If thou art lying I will have thy heart's blood," but in the end he is convinced. He breaks out again with sudden fury against Turiddu and Lola, and they go out, leaving the stage empty, while the beautiful "Intermezzo" is played.

The calm serenity of this music and the peaceful scene upon the stage are in sharp contrast with the highly-charged scenes of a moment ago and that which is to come. It provides a moment of relief for the which the audience is thankful and serves to emphasise the devout religious spirit of the Sicilian peasants, despite their hot-blooded conduct in human affairs.

This exquisite interlude with its heavenly melody at the end is doubtless the most familiar single number in the entire work and is complete in itself. Not only is the melody beautiful but the harmony is rich and the orchestral scoring with its fine contrasts of woodwind and strings is a beautiful piece of musical tone painting.

As the strains of the "Intermezzo" dies away the people begin to leave the church, and soon a merry crowd are assembled outside the inn of Mamma Lucia. They sing "A casa, a casa" (Now homeward), a lively chorus which prepares the way for the Brindisi—"Viva, il vino spu meggliante" (This is a lively number, in striking contrast to the prevailing tragic tone of the opera. It has a most fascinating swing and is full of life and colour. It is sung by Turiddu as if he had

not a care in the world, though perhaps his gaiety is a trifle hysterical for the end is already at hand. As the "Brindisi" draws to a close Alfio approaches in time to see Lola drink in response to Turiddu's toast. Watched with tense interest by the assembled crowd, the latter offers Alfio a glass of wine, "Ah, voi tutti salute" (Come Here, Good Friend), sings he.

To the horror of Lola, Alfio scornfully refuses. Turiddu, still in a mood of bravado, pours the wine carelessly on the ground and the peasants, realising the situation, withdraw, leaving the two rivals face to face. A challenge is quickly given and accepted, and the men arrange to meet in the garden. Now follows an affecting scene, in which Turiddu bids farewell to his mother in the "Addio alla madre" (Turiddu's farewell), and the "Mamma quel vino e generoso" (Too much Wine, my Mother)—Turiddu's farewell continued and the finale of the opera.

Without explaining the details Turiddu pretends to have been drinking and declares the wine cup to have passed too frequently among his comrades. He must go away, he says, and he would bid his mother farewell. Lucia is not deceived. His distraught manner, the passionate tenderness of his farewell, tells her more than she can say, and she watches him horror-stricken as he tears himself from her arms and rushes away, first bidding her take care of Santuzza.

There is but little more to tell. Santuzza enters and throws her arms about Lucia. People crowd about them and soon a woman comes running with the cry "Neighbour Turiddu is murdered." Several other women rush in terrified. Santuzza falls screaming and Lucia is supported by other women in a fainting condition. The curtain falls rapidly as the crowd gathers round the unhappy pair, and all is over.

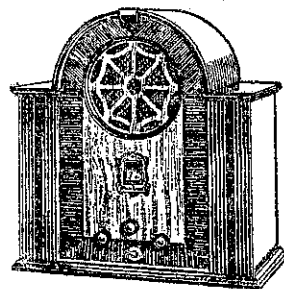
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