

LEHÁR *The Land of Smiles*

Sung in English



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Richard Bonyngne • English Chamber Orchestra

FRANZ LEHÁR

The Land of Smiles
Sung in English

Operetta in Three Acts after Viktor Léon

Original Book and Lyrics by Ludwig Herzer and Fritz Löhner

English Version by Jerry Hadley

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English Chamber Orchestra
Richard Bonyngé, conductor

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Geoffrey Shaw, Chorus Master

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- 1 Overture [8:28]

ACT ONE

- 2 Introduction and Entrance: *Three cheers for Lisa!* [3:12] (Lisa, Chorus)
3 *This isn't the only time* [2:15] (Lisa, Gustl)
4 *I tremble whenever I enter this room* [4:32] (Sou Chong)
5 *Now will you join me in a little cup of tea?* [3:24] (Lisa, Sou Chong)
6 *Before the window of my beloved* [3:38] (Sou Chong)
7 Finale, Act One: *We are alone* [7:49] (Lisa, Sou Chong)

ACT TWO

- 8 Prelude [0:50]
9 Entrance of Sou Chong [2:26]
10 *Ah, who has given us our dream come true?* [4:42] (Lisa, Sou Chong)
11 *In pagodas 'cross the nation* [3:10] (Mi)
12 *"Love" for me, and "Love" for you* [2:52] (Mi, Gustl)
13 *My heart belongs to you!* [3:31] (Sou Chong)
14 *I long for my homeland, so far away* [1:40] (Lisa)
15 Chinese Wedding Procession [3:50]
16 Finale, Act Two: *I forbid you to go!* [8:34] (Lisa, Sou Chong)

ACT THREE

- 17 *Love cannot fail* [3:05] (Lisa, Slave Girls)
18 *Zig, zig, zig!* [2:26] (Mi, Gustl)
19 *It's strange how happiness so quickly fades* [1:44] (Mi)
20 Finale, Act Three: *The sun which shines here* [6:06] (Lisa, Sou Chong, Mi, Gustl)

Franz Lehár was born on April 30, 1870, in the Danube port of Komárom, Hungary — today Komárno in the Slovak Republic. Son of a military bandmaster, he was a highly proficient violinist, whose musical education was a thorough one. At the age of twelve he entered the Prague Conservatory, after which he took a position as theatre violinist before being called up for military service and joining an Austro-Hungarian regimental band. He was a military bandmaster from 1890 until 1902, apart from a period of concentration on composition of his opera *Kukuška*, produced unsuccessfully in Leipzig in 1896. His other compositions during these early years included not only the marches, waltzes, and other dances expected of a military bandmaster, but also symphonic poems and various works for violin and orchestra.

It was his military band appointments that finally brought him to Vienna, which was to remain his base for the rest of his life. In 1902 his waltz *Gold und Silber* ("Gold and Silver") was performed at a Viennese society ball, and that same year he left the army to concentrate on a career as operetta conductor and composer. Fame came with the production in 1905 of *Die lustige Witwe* ("The Merry Widow"), which was to become the most successful operetta of all time and which heralded a new era of popularity for the Viennese operetta. *Der Graf von Luxemburg* ("The Count of Luxembourg," 1909), *Zigeunerliebe* ("Gypsy Love," 1910), and *Eva* (1911) confirmed Lehár's status as the leading Viennese operetta composer of the time.

Never resting on his laurels, Lehár always sought to extend the operetta's range. However, this phase of European operetta was halted by the outbreak of World War I. The destruction of the Austro-Hungarian empire restricted Vienna's artistic influence and forced it to cede to Berlin its position as the center of German-language entertainment. More particularly it largely destroyed the world of Ruritanian aristocracy on which the European operetta had thrived.

Lehár's status as a creator of works of enduring stature was rekindled by his association with the operatic tenor Richard Tauber (1891-1948). Writing for Tauber, Lehár could compose works that satisfied his own artistic ambitions, while Tauber's personal magnetism and the worldwide appeal of the arias that Lehár composed for him meant that Lehár's music once more enjoyed international currency. For Tauber, Lehár composed *Paganini* (1925), *Der Zarewitsch* ("The Czarevitch," 1927), *Friederike* ("Frederica," 1928), *Das Land des Lächelns* ("The Land of Smiles," 1929), and *Schön ist die Welt* ("Fair is the World," 1930), before crowning his career with *Giuditta* (1934), produced at the Vienna State Opera. These represented a unique body of operettas, with vocally demanding tenor roles, intense romantic interplay for the leading couple, and ultimately unrequited love.

By now in his sixties, and with political tensions in Austria heightening, Lehár found little incentive to compose any more, and thereafter concentrated on leaving definitive performance materials of his works for posterity. He died in Bad Ischl on October 24, 1948, at the age of seventy-eight.



The Land of Smiles was not a totally new work, but a revision of *Die gelbe Jacke* ("The Yellow Jacket"), produced at the Theater an der Wien in Vienna on 9 February 1923. The latter had a libretto by Victor Léon (1858-1940), one of Lehár's librettists on *The Merry Widow*, and told of the clash of cultures between Europe and the East. However, the piece had no more than local success. Never one to waste good material, Lehár decided after *Frederica* to have this earlier work adapted as a vehicle for Tauber. The job of adapting the libretto was given not to Léon (who was by then seventy and in retirement) but, with Léon's approval, to the librettists of *Frederica* — Ludwig Herzer

(1872-1939) and Fritz Löhner (1883-1942). The title *The Land of Smiles* selected for the revised version was a reference to the Chinese habit of hiding feelings behind an inscrutable smile.

The Yellow Jacket had not only had its first act set in Vienna, but made substantial concessions to Viennese nostalgia. There was also much other extraneous material, including a topical comedy song in Act Three with a refrain that extolled the delights of going to the cinema to see Charlie Chaplin. All of this extraneous material was removed from the revised version, though the glitter of the Viennese ballroom setting of Act One was intensified by the addition of a glorious new waltz song for the leading lady. More particularly, in keeping with the new Lehár operetta tradition, the leading tenor role was built up, the romantic interest heightened, and the happy ending of the original replaced with Lehár's now traditional unhappy one.

Despite Herzer's and Löhner's extensive rewriting, the broad structure of Victor Léon's original libretto was taken over to the new work. So were several musical numbers, whether with Léon's original text (including *Before the window of my beloved*, whose opening lines are translated from Chinese poetry) or with partly new words. Other numbers were completely new — above all the big tenor aria in Act Two, which was worked up from a few incidental bars in the original. Familiar in translation as "You are my heart's delight" throughout the former British Empire, or *Yours is my heart alone* to Americans, this becomes *My heart belongs to you!* in the new version by Jerry Hadley used for this recording.

The Land of Smiles was first produced at the Metropol-Theater, Berlin, on October 10, 1929, and then in September 1930 was staged at the Budapest Opera House in Hungarian and (again with Tauber) at the Theater an der Wien in Vienna. Tauber also appeared in an English-language version mounted in London in May 1931, while French-language productions followed in Brussels and Paris in 1932. The show finally

reached Broadway in 1946 — again with Tauber. Tauber it was, too, who starred in a prestigious production at the Vienna State Opera in January 1938, conducted by Lehár. In the perception of the public at large Tauber was almost inseparable from the show, and it was his interpretation of the hit song that carried the reputation of the show around the world. That, almost fifty years after the deaths of both Lehár and Tauber, *The Land of Smiles* continues to be one of the most favored operettas for revival speaks volumes not only for the lasting affection for Tauber's interpretation but, more particularly, for the brilliance of Lehár's writing.

Lehár, indeed, was one of the supreme masters of the musical theatre. In an era when operetta composers were increasingly mere tunesmiths who left the technical work of harmonizing and orchestrating their work to specialists, Lehár was almost unique in fully orchestrating his own scores. He brought to operetta an instinctive feel for orchestral color refined not only in orchestral lessons at the Prague Conservatory but by absorbing the orchestral sonorities and harmonies of Jules Massenet, Claude Debussy, and Richard Strauss. No less than in his other works does *The Land of Smiles* offer opportunities to revel in Lehár's sensitive feel for melodic line and his command of orchestral resources. Appropriately for its Viennese setting, the score opens with a typical Lehár waltz song, brilliantly orchestrated with shimmering instrumental decoration that might as readily have been written for *The Merry Widow*. Thereafter the tone of the music moves progressively away from the mood of *The Merry Widow* and becomes ever grimmer.

Of all the numbers in *The Land of Smiles*, by far the best known is *My heart belongs to you! (You are my heart's delight / Yours is my heart alone)*, which is one of the world's favorite heart-throb melodies. Yet the delights of the score go much further than this. Listen particularly to the exquisite shaping and sensuous intertwining of the vocal lines of the duets between the leading couple. In *Now will you join me in a little cup of tea?* the delicately shifting accompaniment heightens the impression of the growing captivation

between Lisa and Sou Chong, while in *Ah, who has given us our dream come true?* the mood is one of joyful passion. Particularly noteworthy is the sensuous effect created by the solo violin in these two duets. Note also the exquisite scoring of the tender orchestral passage before the end of *Now will you join me in a little cup of tea?* and the flute decoration in *Before the window of my beloved*. In the Act One finale the sheer eroticism of Lehár's writing can be felt in the soaring clarinet that follows the words "Though I resist with all my might, the melody remains" as Lisa and Sou Chong first express their feelings for each other. This clarinet interjection is echoed in the Act Two finale when their relationship goes into reverse. Not least the Chinese setting of the second and third acts provides Lehár with the opportunity for national color, capturing Chinese sounds as effectively as he had done the Balkans, Hungary, Spain, Italy, and Russia in earlier works.



Act One of *The Land of Smiles* is set in Vienna, at a reception at the home of Count Lichtenfels. He is giving it in honor of his daughter Lisa to celebrate her victory in a show-jumping contest. ([2] *Introduction and Entrance: Three cheers for Lisa!*) However, she is disenchanted with the empty flirting of such occasions and expresses her desire for true love (*Where, oh where can he be?*). Count Gustl von Pottenstein of the dragoons is her faithful admirer; but Lisa prefers just to remain good friends with him ([3] *This isn't the only time*). A Chinese diplomat, Prince Sou Chong, now arrives, keeping his admiration for Lisa hidden behind a mask of Chinese inscrutability ([4] *I tremble whenever I enter this room*). He has sent Lisa a beautiful statuette, but when they meet the difference in their backgrounds makes for difficulties in communication. He prefers a cup of tea to joining the party ([5] *Now will you join me in a little cup of tea?*), but he captivates the young ladies with his account of how courting takes place in China ([6] *Before the window of my beloved*). By the time he reveals that he has been recalled

to China because of his father's death, Lisa realizes how much he means to her ([7] Finale, Act One: *We are alone*). By the end of the act their feelings for each other are openly expressed.

Act Two takes place in Sou Chong's palace in Beijing ([8] Prelude), where he is being installed in office with the ceremonial yellow jacket ([9] Entrance of Sou Chong). Lisa is now living with him, and they are deeply in love ([10] *Ah, who has given us our dream come true?*). However, the restrictions on her movements compared with the freedom to which she is accustomed are a source of problems. Sou Chong's sister Mi also feels tied by the Chinese idea of womanhood ([11] *In pagodas 'cross the nation*), and when Gustl arrives with a diplomatic party from Vienna she compares notes with him on the subject of love ([12] *"Love" for me, and "Love" for you*). Sou Chong is reminded by his uncle Chang that Chinese custom dictates that he should take four Chinese wives, but Sou Chong declares that Lisa is the only one he loves ([13] *My heart belongs to you!*). By now, however, the sight of Gustl has heightened Lisa's homesickness ([14] *I long for my homeland, so far away*), and she decides to leave when she sees the wedding procession for Sou Chong and the four Chinese wives ([15] Chinese Wedding Procession). However, Sou Chong forbids it ([16] Finale, Act Two: *I forbid you to go!*), changing from the Western idea of a lover to that of an Eastern master.

Act Three takes place a week later, with Lisa in confinement ([17] *Love cannot fail*). Mi and Gustl are now very good friends ([18] *Zig! zig! zig!*), and she is in despair at the thought of losing him through his plan to rescue Lisa and escape with her to Vienna ([19] *It's strange how happiness so quickly fades*). Once again the escape attempt is blocked by Sou Chong. However, Lisa pleads with him ([20] Finale, Act Three: *The sun which shines here*), and finally he relents. He commits Lisa to Gustl's care and hides his own sorrow behind the enigmatic Chinese smile.

— Andrew Lamb

THE LAND OF SMILES

1 Overture

ACT ONE

(Vienna, 1912. An April evening in a salon in the villa of Count Lichtenfels. A celebration honoring his daughter, Lisa, is in progress — earlier that day she won a show-jumping contest.)

2 INTRODUCTION AND ENTRANCE: THREE CHEERS FOR LISA!

CHORUS

Three Cheers for Lisa!
Three Cheers for Lisa!
Hail! Hail! Hail!

LISA

I thank you for that gracious toast,
I thank you one and all!

I had the kind of a day that they told me exists
But a day such as this one I've never known!

I felt so free and alive!
Had my horse sprouted wings at my
moment of triumph, I could have flown!

I had a strange premonition a great adventure
could be in store!
Ah!

CHORUS

What a beautiful girl! Positively disarming,
Delightful and charming!

LISA

What could it be?

Flirting while I'm dancing
With each partner at ev'ry ball!
Partners ever changing,
As I whirl all about the hall!
Flirting's but a notion,
Don't confuse it with devotion!
Only one time in a lifetime
Can we hope for our one true love!

Where, oh where can he be?
Where is the man?
Who can he be?
How I long to feel his warm embrace,
His gentle hand upon my face!
Where, oh where can he be?
One special man, only for me!
All things are possible, so they say!
Maybe love will find me today!

CHORUS and LISA

Where, oh where can he be?
Where is the man?
Who can he be?
All things are possible, so they say!
Oh come my love, come today!

(Lisa's lifelong faithful admirer, Count Gustl von Pottenstein, cannot conceal his jealousy when Lisa is excited to receive the present of a jade Buddha from Prince Sou Chong, a Chinese diplomat. Gustl and Lisa quarrel but when he proposes marriage to her, she refuses him.)

3 THIS ISN'T THE ONLY TIME

LISA

This isn't the only time,
It happens so many times,
To so many people ev'ry day!

When it's clear for both to see
That romance is not to be,
They must part and go their sep'rate ways!

Don't be angry with me,
For you're still my dearest friend!
Disappointed though you may be,
This is all for the best in the end!
Whatsoever will be, you may still rely on me.

GUSTL
Whatsoever fate may decree,
You will always have a friend in me.
This isn't the only time,
It happens so many times,
When a woman's heart is young and free!
Though we go our sep'rate ways,
I shall never cease to pray,
That your love will bloom some day for me!

LISA
Don't be angry with me,
For you're still my dearest friend!
Disappointed though you may be,
This is all for the best in the end!

GUSTL
And whatever may be,
You may still rely on me!
Whatsoever fate may decree,

BOTH
You will always have a friend in me!

LISA
We'll be friends?
Faithful friends?

GUSTL
Faithful friends . . .

(Sou Chong arrives and, while he is waiting to be announced to the party guests, soliloquizes on his hopeless love for Lisa.)

4 I TREMBLE WHENEVER I ENTER THIS ROOM

SOU CHONG
I tremble whenever I enter this room,
Holiest place that I know.
Within these walls lives the one I love,
Radiant light of my soul!
My heart beats so anxiously deep in my breast,
But I must conceal my desire.
I yearn for her touch,
But how could she know
That her glance sets my heart on fire?
In China the fortunes of love are known,
But sorrow and pain must never be shown.

Ever a smile though our sorrow be great!
Ever a smile we submit to our fate!
Torrents of anguish may assail us,
But what we feel inside we hide 'neath a smile.

I wish I could tell her the things that I feel,
How my heart leaps when she's near!
I'm only a source of amusement for her,
Strange must my manner appear!

But still I'm bewitch'd by the power of love,
More potent than opium or wine!
I know very well it never can be,
But in dreams she is ever mine!
She knows not this terrible longing inside!
She knows not the pain I constantly hide!

Ever a smile though our sorrow be great!
Ever a smile we submit to our fate!
Torrents of anguish may assail us,
But what we feel inside we hide 'neath a smile!

Ever a smile we submit to our fate!
Torrents of anguish may assail us,
But what we feel inside we hide 'neath a smile.

*(Lisa temporarily deserts her guests to take tea
with Sou Chong.)*

**5 NOW WILL YOU JOIN ME IN A
LITTLE CUP OF TEA?**

LISA
Now will you join me in a little cup of tea?
Please make yourself at home,
Come sit here next to me . . .

SOU CHONG
I am enchanted by your hospitality!
Far better than champagne this little cup of tea.

LISA
The sweet aromas cast away our care.

SOU CHONG
A Chinese tea, no doubt,
Beyond compare!

LISA
It mingles gently with the evening air . . .

SOU CHONG
And with the sweet perfume of golden hair.

A little cup of tea in pleasant company . . .
It is sublime.

LISA
Tea is wonderfully sublime.

SOU CHONG
Little silver threads of steam

LISA
Little silver threads of steam

SOU CHONG
Curl around us like a dream.

LISA
Curl around us like a dream.
You speak so charmingly,
A man of gallantry.

SOU CHONG
We're here alone . . .

LISA
We're together here alone . . .

SOU CHONG
Like a pair of lovers,
Prince and Fairy Queen.

LISA
Prince and Fairy Queen.

SOU CHONG
We're sipping tea

BOTH
À deux.

SOU CHONG
One needs no wine
When sitting here alone with you,
One is intoxicated by each thing you do.

LISA
Your Highness, judging by your words
I am compelled
To say that flattery with tea
Goes rather well!

SOU CHONG (*holding up a teacup*)
These Chinese teacups cast a magic spell!
One almost smells the blossoms of Peking!

LISA
A more exotic pair has never been!

SOU CHONG
A European girl!

LISA
A Mandarin!

SOU CHONG
A little cup of tea in pleasant company . . .
It is sublime.

LISA
Tea is wonderfully sublime.

SOU CHONG
Little silver threads of steam.

LISA
Little silver threads of steam.

SOU CHONG
Curl around us like a dream.

LISA
Curl around us like a dream.

You speak so charmingly,
A man of gallantry.

SOU CHONG
We're here alone!

LISA
We're together here alone!

SOU CHONG
Like a pair of lovers,
Prince and Fairy Queen,

LISA
Prince and Fairy Queen,

SOU CHONG
We're sipping tea.

BOTH
À deux!

*(The music continues under the following
dialogue.)*

LISA
Another cup, your Highness?

SOU CHONG
Oh yes, thank you.

LISA
You must excuse me for a moment while I see
to my other guests.

SOU CHONG
A moment denied your presence, Countess,
is an eternity.

LISA (*sung*)
You speak so charmingly,
A man of gallantry.

SOU CHONG (*sung*)
We're here alone!

LISA
We're together here alone!

SOU CHONG
Like a pair of lovers,
Prince and Fairy Queen,

LISA
Prince and Fairy Queen

SOU CHONG:
We're sipping tea

BOTH
À deux!

(Lisa's girlfriends are intrigued by the unusual guest and persuade Gusti to introduce them to him. Sou Chong entrances them with his account of Chinese courtship rituals, although it soon becomes clear that he is singing directly to Lisa.)

**6 BEFORE THE WINDOW OF
MY BELOVED**

SOU CHONG
Before the window of my beloved, ah!
I'd lay a crown of apple blossoms
Upon a moonlit April night, ah!
A song born of my longing would I sing her,
My lute would echo all the love I'd bring her
Upon a moonlit April night, ah!

Dreams will come true when I hold you,
You alone, the Goddess I adore!

I lift my eyes to behold you!
Come to me, I fervently implore!
I am yours!
Your loveliness beguiles me so!
Were you mine,
No greater joy on earth I'd know!
Come to me! My world is yours to share!
Where'er your shadow falls
You'll see me kneeling there!

Your lips are soft as apple blossoms, ah!
Gently your golden hair is glist'ning
Upon this moonlit April night, ah!
Your face beams like a rose
When day is dawning!
I stand before you overcome with longing
Upon this moonlit April night!
Here in the moonlight, darling, come to me!

(Sou Chong is informed of his father's death. He must return to China, and goes to tell Lisa of the news in private.)

7 FINALE, ACT ONE: WE ARE ALONE

LISA
We are alone.

SOU CHONG
I fear that the others might not approve.

LISA
I really don't care!

SOU CHONG
Remarkable!

LISA
Why remarkable?
They're boring with all their idle talk!
And this is my last chance to speak with you!

SOU CHONG

Dear Countess,
I've never seen you act this way before!

LISA

Highness, if you would indulge me
I've something to say.

A song seems to haunt me day and night!
It has burned into my brain
Its sweet poetic strains,
Though I resist with all my might
The melody remains!

How it thrills my heart!
From long ago, yet so erotic!
So hauntingly exotic is this song
Which so enthralls me!
Ah. Ah. Ah.

SOU CHONG

I have never heard that melody sung more
beautifully!

LISA

Dearest Prince, you flatter me
With such a compliment as this.

SOU CHONG

No, please . . .
A greater compliment I've still to pay:
You are a dream from an April night!

LISA

You're so unlike us Viennese . . .

SOU CHONG

Please tell me what you mean!
Am I so very strange?

LISA (*struggling with her feelings*)
We live in such very different worlds!

SOU CHONG

Is it my manner?
The way I speak?

LISA

We're as different as day and night.

SOU CHONG

You are right. I am out of place in your world.
The fates have decreed!
There is no place in your world for me!
It is ordained!
It's for the best that at dawn I leave for China,
Far from Vienna I shall go,
Never more to return.
(*turns to go*) I bid you farewell.

LISA (*insinuatingly*)

Have you no trace of regret?
Can you depart and not look back?
There's nothing you leave here?

SOU CHONG

Just this . . . my heart!

LISA (*overcome with emotion*)

Can you so lightly abandon your heart?

SOU CHONG

Ever a smile.
I submit to my fate,
Though I must leave my love behind me.

LISA

But if you really love her,
Why leave her behind?

SOU CHONG

I love her, I swear!

LISA

You love her?
Then take her away!

SOU CHONG

So easy to say,
But how can I know if she loves me as well
When her lips remain sealed?

LISA

Highness, listen to me!
I would follow you to the ends of the earth!

SOU CHONG (*turning to her, overcome*)
To China . . . !

LISA

Were I the one you loved!

SOU CHONG (*with utmost seriousness*)
Are we not from two different worlds?
Can you ignore these oval eyes?

LISA

(*crosses to him, overcome with deep
and strong emotions*)
I look at you and I see only you!

SOU CHONG
(*bowing deeply before her*)
Lisa!

LISA
I'd gladly be yours,
For I love you so!

SOU CHONG
I love you so!

(*Sou Chong embraces Lisa with impetuous
passion. They kiss.*)

SOU CHONG
Before the feet of my beloved, ah!
I'll lay a crown of apple blossoms
Upon a moonlit April night, ah!

A song born of my happiness I'll sing you!
My lute will echo all the love I'll bring you,
Upon a moonlit April night, ah!

BOTH

A song born of my happiness I'll sing you,
My / your lute will echo all the love I'll bring you,
Upon a moonlit April night, ah!

ACT TWO

(*A hall in the palace of Prince Sou Chong,
Peking, two months later.*)

8 PRELUDE

(*Sou Chong is being invested with the
Yellow Jacket; the highest State honor.*)

9 ENTRANCE OF SOU CHONG

(*Sou Chong and Lisa are now living together
and are deeply in love.*)

10 AH, WHO HAS GIVEN US OUR DREAM COME TRUE?

LISA

(*taking out a locket on a chain*)
Sou Chong, this locket is for you.

SOU CHONG
(*taking it and opening the locket*)
It is your portrait!

LISA

Do you like it?

SOU CHONG (*putting it on*)

I shall wear it always . . . next to my heart!
I look at you, and I see only you!
Lotus Blossom!

SOU CHONG

Ah, who has given us our dream come true?
Ecstasies of love fill my heart each time I
look at you!
Heaven's brightest star, floating high in space,
Fell to earth below at our first embrace!

LISA

Ah, who has given us our hearts' desire?
Deep within our souls, who has kindled flames
of passion's fire?

SOU CHONG

Paradise is ours! Given from on high!

BOTH

Perfect harmony, you and I!

LISA

Oh, beloved, could there ever be
One so loved the way that you love me?
With our very first caress we were one,
Our hearts entwined!
Nestled in your fond embrace,
I am yours and you are mine!

SOU CHONG

Oh, beloved, tell me, is it true?
Do you love me the way that I love you?
Darling, ev'ry word you speak
Is the breath of heav'n above!

LISA

Ah, for now and evermore will I say:

SOU CHONG

Ever will I say:

BOTH

You are my love!
Ah, who has given us our dream come true?
Ecstasies of love fill my heart each time I
look at you!

LISA

Heaven's brightest star, floating high in space,

SOU CHONG

Heaven's brightest star, so high in space,

LISA

Fell to earth below

SOU CHONG

Fell to earth below

LISA

At our first embrace!

SOU CHONG

At our first embrace!

BOTH

Ah, who has given us our hearts' desire?
Deep within our souls,
Who has kindled flames of passion's fire?
Paradise is ours!
Given from on high!
Perfect harmony, you and I!

SOU CHONG

Darling, ev'ry word you speak
Is the breath of heav'n above!

LISA

Ah, for now and evermore I will say:

BOTH

You are my love!

(However, the presence of a Westerner at the Chinese Court is creating ripples of discontent, and Lisa is finding the considerable constraints on her freedom difficult to cope with. Sou Chong's sister, Mi, is also aggrieved by the constraints of Chinese womanhood.)

11 IN PAGODAS 'CROSS THE NATION

MI

In pagodas 'cross the nation
Fashion is an irritation,
Covered feet to head with this featherbed!
Gloves and hats are both forbidden,
All appendages are hidden!
Talk of décolletée
Makes the bonzes grey!
Chai, chee, chee, choo, choo!

We've kept our ways sartorial,
Chai, chee, chee, choo, choo!
For centuries immemorial!
If I dare to show an ankle,
Uncle Chang will rant and wrangle!
Dresses must be long!
It's the same old song!
How can men be spurred to action?
What can be the great attraction
When I'm forced to hide
All my charms inside?

I've been trained throughout my life
To be a shy, obedient wife
With lots of little children at my feet!

Knitting, sewing, cooking, cleaning!
Is there some great hidden meaning?
I need more to make my life complete!

Don't they know there's something here inside?
I have feelings far too strong to hide!
All I want is to discover
What it's like to have a lover!
All the rest is nothing but a bore!

(She dances)

Must I always sit at home
To wait on Chinese men who roam
Around the world as freely as they please?
While they're crossing foreign borders,
I stay here and follow orders!
Must I live my life by these decrees!

Don't they know there's something here inside?
I have feelings far too strong to hide!
All I want is to discover
What it's like to have a lover!
All the rest is nothing but a bore!

(Gustl arrives with a diplomatic party from Vienna. He is introduced to Mi and they immediately start flirting with each other.)

12 "LOVE" FOR ME AND "LOVE" FOR YOU

GUSTL

God made us all alike
Back when the world was new.
Flowers bloomed in paradise
For us as well as you.
White and yellow didn't matter then,
As now they do.

MI

But in the course of time the situation changed.

GUSTL

People went their sep'rate ways,
The world was rearranged.

MI

Only if our hearts return to days of yore,
May we mortals enter paradise once more.

GUSTL

"Love" for me and "Love" for you
May have two diff'rent names,
But no matter where you are
The feelings are the same.

MI

Even though we fall in love
A thousand diff'rent ways,

BOTH

However one says, "I love you,"
What more is there to say?

"Love" for me and "Love" for you
May have two diff'rent names,
But no matter where you are
The feelings are the same.
Even though we fall in love
A thousand diff'rent ways,
However one says, "I love you,"
What more is there to say?

GUSTL

The English lover understates the way he feels,
While the German pleads his case with pure
Teutonic zeal!
Frenchmen say "L'amour toujours" with devilish
appeal!

MI

Beneath the moonlight Chinese men sing
serenades.

GUSTL

In Vienna, wine gives life to Cupid's escapades!

MI

Put them all together, look them up and down!
Then when you have finished,
This is what you've found:

BOTH

"Love" for me and "Love" for you
May have two diff'rent names,
But no matter where you are
The feelings are the same.
Even though we fall in love
A thousand diff'rent ways,
However one says, "I love you,"
What more is there to say?

*(Sou Chong is reminded by his Uncle Chang
that Court custom dictates that he should take
four Chinese wives, but Sou Chong declares
that Lisa is the only one he loves.)*

[13] MY HEART BELONGS TO YOU!

SOU CHONG

My heart belongs to you!
I could not live without your love!
So would a blossom fade
Were it denied the sun above!

My songs I sing for you!
My inspiration, each thing that you do!
Upon your lips are those words sublime:
My darling, tell me that your heart is mine!

Throughout each waking hour
You hold me in your power!
You are the breath of my existence!
I kneel and worship from a distance,

You, you alone!
How wondrous fair is your shimmering hair!
Dreamlike and infinite are the depths of your
eyes!
I hear a melody in your voice, in your sighs!

My heart belongs to you!
I could not live without your love!
So would a blossom fade
Were it denied the sun above!

My songs I sing for you!
My inspiration, each thing that you do!
Upon your lips are those words sublime:
My darling, tell me that your heart is mine!

(Gustf tells Lisa about the planned Chinese wedding ceremony. She is appalled and confronts Sou Chong who confirms that it is true, but that there is no cause for alarm - it is only a meaningless ceremony. Desperate, and at last realizing the gulf that divides their two cultures, she sings of her homesickness.)

14 I LONG FOR MY HOMELAND, SO FAR AWAY

LISA
What have I done?
Could I have known what a fool I would be?
There is nothing in China for me!
Only now do I see!

I long for my homeland, so far away,
Her ancient forests call me!
I long to stroll through gardens green
In the city whose charms enthrall me!

A voice deep within seems to beckon me
From over the shimmering sea!
Once more in Vienna let me breathe!
I long once more to be free!

A voice seems to call:
"Oh, why did you go?
Come back home!
Come home!"

15 CHINESE WEDDING PROCESSION

(Kettle drummers lead the procession. Next come the standard bearers carrying golden banners with representations of mythical beasts. Next come the High Priests and their attendants, the latter swinging ropes of burning incense. Flower-strewing slave girls precede four golden rickshaws bedecked with apple blossoms and drawn by coolies. In the rickshaws sit four veiled Chinese women dressed in elegantly embroidered silks. Next come the members of their families and wedding guests. Following them are the members of Sou Chong's family, including Mi, led by Chang and the Mandarins.

Lisa remains pressed against the wall to which she has retreated, motionless. After the procession has passed completely offstage, children appear strewing flowers in the path of the approaching Sou Chong. Several men dressed in royal purple robes precede him, as do attendants carrying long poles decorated with peacock feathers. Chamberlains bear the Golden Mantle before Sou Chong, who appears dressed in a magnificent wedding garment.

Lisa makes an instant decision to return to Vienna, but Sou Chong forbids it.)

16 FINALE, ACT TWO: I FORBID YOU TO GO!

SOU CHONG
I forbid you to go!

LISA
You have no right!

SOU CHONG
I am your Lord!

LISA (*spoken*)
My Lord?

SOU CHONG
In China it is so!

LISA
Then what am I?

SOU CHONG
A thing . . . a worthless thing,
You are my property,
By Chinese law, just a possession!
You must blindly obey me as your master.
This ancient law, given to us by Great
Confucius,
We must heed:
The wife must submit to the husband.
The powers of life and death . . .
(*spoken, as he struggles to master his
conflicting emotions*)
. . . are his to command!

LISA (*bitterly*)
Now I see you for what you really are . . .
and I hate you!

SOU CHONG (*anguished*)
You hate me, yet you chose me for
your husband!
But why? Why, Lotus Blossom?
(*entreating her, exasperated*)
Speak!

LISA (*with bitter irony*)
Oh why, oh why?
I was mistaken.

SOU CHONG (*impassioned*)
Lotus Blossom!
Say that you love me!
(*tries to embrace Lisa*)

LISA (*breaking away*)
No, No!
This outrage I cannot forgive!
Better that you strike me,
Than to pretend you love me!

For all to behold, you disgrace me!
I, who just for you, abandoned my father,
My friends, my homeland!
I left them freely!
I followed you away from Europe
To this foreign shore!
My heart was as glowing as sunshine!

But I was wrong!
Utterly wrong!
Your words of love were lies,
Such sweet deception!
You have entrapped me in a spider's web of
falsehood!
I was the prey, you were the wily hunter!
Your Eastern charm concealed your
heartlessness!

The game is done!
Your evil masquerade is ended!
You can torment me, you can enslave me,
But you cannot command my heart's affection!

So there is hatred now where once was love!
It was a dream!
It was a horrid nightmare!
Nothing but a lie!

SOU CHONG

*(unable to bear anymore, he seizes a mallet
and strikes the gong, at which point the
eunuch and several guards enter)*

Captain of the Guards! The Princess is
forbidden to leave the palace! Should she
escape, you will pay with your lives!

*(Lisa raises herself defiantly and is led offstage.
Sou Chong watches them go and is left alone
on the stage.)*

SOU CHONG

(with an anguished cry)

Oh, gracious gods, what's happening to me?
I must be dreaming this!
It cannot be!

Oh, what have I done?
Oh, what have I done?
Gracious gods, I pray,
Must it end this way?

Must you take my sunshine and joy away?
Must she go from me,
Just a memory?
Must my heart be consumed in misery?

She transfigured my senses
With gentle caresses!
But now I've lost her love!
Lost her love!
Wretched Sou Chong!
Wretched Sou Chong!

*(Sou Chong takes out the locket which Lisa
gave him and looks at it sadly. Then he slowly
crosses to the altar, kneels and places the
locket there as an offering to the mercy of
Buddha. He tries to pray but is overcome with
emotion.)*

My heart I gave to you!
I could not live without your love!
So fades the blossom now
It is denied the sun above!
You were the song that I sang!
It was from you that the melody sprang!
For one brief moment my dreams came true,
But now I'm left with only dreams of you!

ACT THREE

17 LOVE CANNOT FAIL

*(The Pavilion of Womanly Delight. Lisa has
been under confinement here for eight days. It
is midnight. She is seated on the divan, deep in
thought, as slave girls and attendants dance
about her and sing in an effort to assuage her
depression.)*

SLAVE GIRLS

Love cannot fail!
Love will prevail!
Tears will depart!
Over anger and pain
Let your love reign again!
Love conquers all!

Answer its call!
Open your heart!
She will blissfully live
Who forgets and forgives!

LISA
Love was a dream!
I was a fool,
Blind to the truth!
Sweet illusion of love!
The delusion of youth!
When he appeared,
How I rejoiced!
Spring was in bloom!
I cannot understand
How that love was consumed!

SLAVE GIRLS
Lotus blossoms cry
'Neath the evening sky,
When the pale moon hides his kiss!

Lotus blossoms pine
'Til the pale moon shines,
Spreading beams of nature's bliss.

LISA
Like the blossoms pining
For the moon to shine,
I sit alone each night and gaze above,
Because I've no one at my side.
To whisper words of love.

SLAVE GIRLS
No one to sit by your side,
Who will whisper the sweet words of love!

LISA
Ah, love,
Can you banish my anger and pain?
When will you open my heart again?

SLAVE GIRLS
Love cannot fail!
Love will prevail!
Tears will depart!
Over anger and pain
Let your love reign again!

LISA (*for a moment betraying her feelings*)
Love conquers all!
Answer its call . . .
(*Then regaining her control*)
Ah, love!
Yet again will I hope to love!
Ah, love!

SLAVE GIRLS
Love conquers all!
Answer its call!
Open your heart!
She will blissfully live
Who forgets and forgives!

She will blissfully live
Who forgets and forgives,
Who rekindles the joy of love!

(*Gustl, having managed to bribe his way past the guards, comes to rescue Lisa. Mi selflessly offers to help them escape, and Gustl and Mi realize that they are very fond of each other.*)

[18] ZIG, ZIG, ZIG!

MI
Zig, Zig, Zig, Zig, Ih!
Zig, Zig, Zig, Zig, Ih!
Ih! Ih! Ih! Ih!

GUSTL

Zig, Zig, Zig, Zig,
Zig, Zig, Zig, Zig,
Zig, Zig, Zig, Zig,
Zig!

MI

When the flowers bloom in spring,

GUSTL

Zig, Zig, Zig, Zig,

MI

On the Pai-Ho,

GUSTL

Zig, Zig, Zig, Zig,

MI

Little Chinese maidens sing,

GUSTL

Zig, Zig, Zig, Zig,

MI

On the Pai-Ho,

GUSTL

Zig, Zig, Zig, Zig,

MI

Undereath the pale moonlight,

GUSTL

Zig, Zig, Zig, Zig,

MI

On the Pai-Ho,

GUSTL

Zig, Zig, Zig, Zig,

MI

Gathering the flowers bright,

GUSTL

Zig, Zig, Zig, Zig,

MI

In the night!

GUSTL

Zig!

MI

Sweet enchantments lie before us,

Don't you want to go?

Flowering in splendor

All along the Pai-Ho.

I will lead you through the garden,

Don't you want to go?

Lovely maidens dance for hours

On the Pai-Ho!

Won't you come with me

To gather all the pretty flowers?

Zig, Zig, Zig, Zig,

Zig, Zig, Zig, Zig,

Zig, Zig, Zig, Zig!

GUSTL

You are so dear,

You lov'ly girl!

Each time I see you

My senses whirl!

Although you're near,

We're worlds apart,

And yet your beauty has won my heart!

My little china doll,

A sweeter face I've never seen.

My poor heart aches

Each time I think about

What might have been!

Perhaps one day
We'll meet again!
My little darling,
Auf wiederseh'n.

MI

You are so dear,
So handsome, too!
I'm very happy
When I'm with you!
Although you say
We're worlds apart,
You handsome stranger,
You've won my heart!

GUSTL

My little china doll,
A sweeter face I've never seen!
My poor heart aches
Each time I think about
What might have been!
Perhaps one day
We'll meet again!
My little darling,
Auf wiederseh'n!

*(Mi, having helped Lisa and Gustl escape down
a secret passage, is left alone. She mourns her
lost love.)*

**[19] IT'S STRANGE HOW HAPPINESS
SO QUICKLY FADES**

MI

It's strange how happiness
So quickly fades and dies!
As he said, "Auf wiederseh'n"
I looked into his eyes.
All at once I knew deep down,
He really meant, "goodbye!"

I loved that handsome stranger
More than he could know.
I shall always think about him
Ev'rywhere I go.
Nothing seems to matter,
Now that he is gone,
In my heart I'll always hear
His happy song:
"Love" for me, and "Love" for you,
May have two different names,
But no matter where you are,
The feelings are the same.
Even though we fall in love
A thousand different ways,
However one says, "I love you,"
What more is there to say?

*(However, the escape plan goes wrong when
Gustl and Lisa encounter guards blocking the
end of the secret passage. Sou Chong enters
and demands to know what has been going on.
Lisa begs him to let her go.)*

**[20] FINALE, ACT THREE: THE SUN WHICH
SHINES HERE**

LISA

The sun which shines here
Shines also in Western skies!
Then how it warmed me,
Now it is stifling and cold!

I know no other way to tell you:
My heart longs to be free once more!
My homeland is calling to me!

SOU CHONG

(borne on a flood of emotions)
A song born of my happiness I'll sing you!
My lute will echo all the love I'll bring you
Upon a moonlit April . . .

(spoken)

Lisa, we are so much alike, and yet I knew in my heart that I could not keep you here forever. Therefore, I grant you your freedom.

(to Gustl)

My dear Count, I entrust to your care she whom I cherish above all on the earth. Take Lisa home. Be good to her.

GUSTL (*genuinely moved*)

I give you my word, your Highness.

LISA (*embracing Mi one last time*)

Goodbye, Mi . . .

MI

It will be lonely here without you.

(Lisa crosses slowly to the door, turns and her eyes meet Sou Chong's one last time. She begins to speak, but thinks better of it, and turns quickly to exit with Gustl. Sou Chong stands motionless for a moment with his head bowed. His private moment is broken by the sound of Mi weeping uncontrollably. He stretches out his arms to her and she rushes to him.)

SOU CHONG

Little sister, dear,
You must dry your tears,
Though with pain and sorrow you burn.
Look in my eyes!
I shall not cry!
This is the lesson to learn.
Little sister, dear,
You must have no fear.
There are things we can't comprehend!
Silently bear
Pain and despair.
One day your poor heart will mend. . .

MI

But, my brother, are you not sad?

SOU CHONG

I accept what fate ordains:

(spoken) Ever a smile, though our sorrow be great . . .

(*Overcome for a moment, but quickly regaining his composure*)

Torrent of anguish may assail us!

Our hearts may break in two,
But still we must smile!

CURTAIN



NANCY GUSTAFSON, Soprano, *Sonia*

Nancy Gustafson has sung such leading roles as Violetta in *La Traviata*, Eva in *Die Meistersinger*, and Musetta in *La Bohème* in such leading opera houses as those of Vienna, London, Rome, Munich, Paris, San Francisco, and Milan. Among other acclaimed recordings, she has recorded *Das Rheingold* with The Cleveland Orchestra, and Mahler Second with the Israel Philharmonic. Future engagements include *Traviata* and *Peter Grimes* with the Vienna Staatsoper, and *Don Giovanni* in Hamburg.



NAOMI ITAMI, Soprano, *Mascha*

Naomi Itami studied in New York at the Manhattan School of Music and Columbia University, and, in London, at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. Her recent appearances include the role of Zerlina in *Don Giovanni*, under Sir Charles Mackerras at the celebrated re-opening of the Estates Theater in Prague. She has appeared in concert in the U.S., the Far East, and throughout Europe.



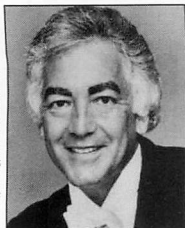
JERRY HADLEY, Tenor, *The Czarevitch*

Jerry Hadley, acclaimed in the great Mozartian roles and those of the French Romantic and Bel Canto eras, as well as for his ventures into Broadway musicals, operetta, and American popular song, performs regularly at Covent Garden, the Metropolitan Opera, Hamburg State Opera, Deutsche Oper Berlin, Lyric Opera of Chicago, San Francisco Opera, and other leading houses, and at all of the major international festivals. He is a three-time Grammy winner and frequent nominee.



LYNTON ATKINSON, Tenor, *Ivan*

Lynton Atkinson created the role of Sir Gawain in Sir Harrison Birtwistle's *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight*. His recent appearances at the Royal Opera House, the Opéra du Rhin, Teatro Regio (*Turin*), the Concertgebouw, and elsewhere include such works as *Turandot*, *Les Contes d'Hoffmann*, *Il Viaggio a Reims*, *Fidelio*, *La Traviata* (in a U.K. tour), *L'Elisir d'amore*, and *Fidelio*.



RICHARD BONYNGE, Conductor

Richard Bonyngé, one of the world's greatest authorities on Bel Canto, studied in Sydney and in London. Since his debut, in 1962, with the Santa Cecilia Orchestra in Rome, he has conducted the world's major opera companies and orchestras, including the Metropolitan Opera in New York, the Royal Opera, Covent Garden, and the opera houses of Paris, Rome, Munich, Hamburg, Madrid, Chicago, San Francisco, Toronto, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Geneva, Barcelona, Buenos Aires, and Monte Carlo.

THE ENGLISH CHAMBER ORCHESTRA

The English Chamber Orchestra, which was formed in 1960 and is London's only full-time chamber orchestra, enjoys an international reputation. It undertakes a busy schedule of recording and concert appearances abroad as well as at home.

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Overseas touring fills approximately three months of the orchestra's schedule each year, and since the orchestra's first tour abroad it has performed in more than 350 foreign cities.

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FRANZ LEHÁR [1870-1948] *The Land of Smiles*

Sung in English

Lisa Nancy Gustafson, soprano

*Prince
Sou Chong* Jerry Hadley, tenor

Mi Naomi Itami, soprano

Gustl Lynton Atkinson, tenor

English Chamber Orchestra
Richard Bonygne, conductor



1 OVERTURE [8:28]

2 - 7 ACT 1 [25:02]

8 - 16 ACT 2 [31:46]

17 - 20 ACT 3 [13:27]

TOTAL PLAYING TIME [78:55]

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