



*E lucevan le stelle,  
ed olezzava la terra,  
sridea l'uscio dell'orto  
ed un passo sfiorava la rena.  
Entrava ella, fragrante,  
mi cadea fra le braccia . . .*

The stars, the stars were shining,  
The earth, the earth was scented,  
The orchard gate announced her,  
A footstep brushed the pathway,  
All fragrantly she entered  
And fell into my arms . . .

Tosca, Giacomo Puccini's opera, to a libretto by Luigi Illica and Giuseppe Giacosa, Act 3. Tosca's lover, the painter Mario Cavaradossi (tenor), sings it as he waits to be executed. It ends *E non ho amato mai tanto la vita!* ("And I have never so loved life!") and the tune returns *forte* at the opera's last moment as Tosca flings herself from the parapet.