

Bellini: Amina's Aria from La Sonnambula (The Sleepwalker)

In the Swiss countryside, Amina is engaged to Elvino. A mysterious stranger arrives in the town, and turns out to be the long-lost Rodolfo, son of the recently-deceased local count.

Staying at the local inn, run by Lisa, Count Rodolfo meets Amina (the sleepwalker) when she wanders, sleeping, into his room and settles down to sleep. Rodolfo hears others approaching, and wanting to avoid having to explain Amina in his room, climbs out the window. Still, Elvino hears of Amina in Rodolfo's room and jealously breaks off their engagement, taking her engagement ring from her.

Bereft, and exhausted, Amina falls asleep and wanders the countryside. Dreaming, she sings:

Ah, non credea mirart  
si presto estinto, o fiore  
passasti al par d'amore,  
che un giorno sol(o) duro

Oh, I didn't believe to see you  
so quickly extinct, o flowers;  
you have passed away like love  
that one day only lasted.

Potria novel vigore  
il pianto mio recarti  
ma ravvivar l'amore  
il pianto mio, ah no, non puo.

Perhaps new life  
my tears will bring to you  
but to revive love  
my tears, o no, cannot.

Elvino decides to marry Lisa instead - they'd previously been engaged. Strangely, news that Lisa had been in Rodolfo's room (she was the innkeeper, after all!) causes Elvino to decide he'd like to marry Amina after all. He awakens her by putting the ring back on her finger. (This is Opera, otherwise the present author would suggest Amina could be better off with a one-way ticket to someplace else...)

Ah, non giunge uman pensiero  
al contento ond'io son piena:  
a miei sensi io credo appena;  
tu m'affida o mio tesor

O, inconceivable human thought  
a wave of contentment I am full:  
In my feelings I can hardly believe  
you assure me, o my treasure(darling).

Ah, mi abbraccia, e sempre insieme,  
sempre uniti in una speme,  
della terra, in cui viviamo  
ci formiamo un ciel d'amor

O, embrace me, and always together,  
always united in a single hope,  
of the world, we live in  
we will make a heaven of love.  
(Translation: Elise Curran)

Reuben Blundell