

O Sole Mio

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Thirty minutes. Thirty minutes left before the great Francesco d' Avicoli went on stage. It was a momentous occasion for him. Today, it marks one year since his debut as a tenor. In just one year; despite the criticism, the insults and the occasional shoe thrown at him, Francesco d' Avicoli prevailed.

Many starlets would thank God for their success. However, Francesco knew that the Almighty had nothing to do with his career. It was his talent what led him to where he is today.

If only his brothers and sisters could see him now! They always said he would never achieve anything, and that he was just a pathetic runt. It is true that he was a runt. Back then, Francesco was a very sickly child. But unlike his brothers and sisters, who behaved like headless chickens most of the time, he was disciplined and hardworking. After he gained a little weight, just enough to be considered healthy, Francesco left his pastoral home and went searching for greener pastures.

For years he wandered, trying to find someone to recognize his talent until one year ago his wish was granted. Mr. Henery found him and was delighted with his voice. "I know just the place fer ya. You'll be as happy as a pig in the mud," he had said.

And here he is. A young tenor with a talent that would make Plácido Domingo turn green with envy. José Carreras? Luciano Pavarotti? Amateurs! They were lackluster chicklings compared to him! Francesco was a virtuoso, a divo beyond compare!

Francesco noticed there were twenty minutes left, so he needed to prepare for his performance. He reviewed his repertoire: "O Sole Mio", "Mattinata" and "Nessum Dorma". All beautiful in their own way. However, "O Sole Mio" was his personal favourite. Satisfied with his decision, Francesco began his warm-up routine.

He practised the DO, RE and MI scales to warm up his tongue. Then, he hummed for a few minutes to warm up his vocal cords.

Five minutes left! Better check his appearance before the show. As expected, Francesco looked splendid: the vivid red crown on his head perfectly matched his scarlet tie. His gold and grey morning suit was spotless, and its green-feathered tail had been preened to perfection.

Time was up. Francesco took a deep breath and went on stage. He was standing right in the middle, waiting for his cue. Francesco filled his lungs until his chest puffed. And when he saw the first sunbeam, he clenched the fence with his talons, spread his wings and sang: "cock-a-doodle-doo!"

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