

THE GOLDEN DRAGON – SYNOPSIS

Introduction

The opera mainly takes place in the tiny kitchen of a Chinese restaurant – The Golden Dragon. The Little One has severe toothache, but cannot go to a dentist because he has no money and no papers. He is looking for his sister. Two Air Stewardesses arrive at the restaurant after a long distance flight and order a meal. The toothache reaches a terrible climax and spills over into the story of the Stewardesses.

The action in the kitchen is played out in short episodes, between which we follow a number of interlocking stories - The Granddaughter, her Grandfather, and her Boyfriend. Hans the shopkeeper next door who orders a takeaway from The Golden Dragon and seizes on a business idea, and The Grandfather and Boyfriend who take up his offer. Meanwhile the story of The Ant and The Cricket is played out.

As the opera concludes The Little One's body is thrown into the river. He sings the story of his journey home to China, then wonders what happened to his sister: Perhaps she is cleaning? Perhaps she is dancing?

Scene by scene Synopsis

- Prologue The singers set the scene: Five Asians working in the kitchen of The Golden Dragon. The Little One has toothache.
- Part I Sc i **The Kitchen of The Golden Dragon Restaurant**
The Little One has toothache. Two Air Stewardesses arrive for a meal
- Sc ii **The Grandfather's Home**
The Granddaughter visits her Grandfather. She has something to tell him. Seeing her, the Grandfather is excited and starts to imagine what he would have if he could have just one wish
- Sc iii **The Kitchen**
The toothache continues. The Little One needs a dentist but he has no money and he has no papers. He is looking for his sister.
- Sc iv **The Tale of The Cricket and The Ant**
The Ant has made provisions for the winter but The Cricket has only sung. When the Cricket comes begging for food, The Ant refuses to help.
- Sc v **The Kitchen**
The toothache is terrible. The Stewardesses order a meal.
- Sc vi **Hans and The Cricket**
Hans, the shopkeeper from next door, orders a takeaway from The Golden Dragon. He sees an opportunity to make the most of the Cricket's vulnerability.
- Sc vii **The Kitchen**
The Little One is forced to drink schnapps as the cooks investigate the tooth.

- Part II Sc viii **The Granddaughter and Her Boyfriend**
She tells her boyfriend she is pregnant. He is enraged.
- Sc ix **The Kitchen**
The cooks prod at The Little One's tooth with a satay stick, then bring out the spanner.
- Sc x **The Ant rents out The Cricket**
The Ant sexually exploits The Cricket, renting her out to the local men who give her scraps of food as payment. She should be grateful she hasn't been sent back home to China.
- Sc xi **The Kitchen**
The tooth is extracted. It flies through the air into a wok and is then flicked into the soup on its way to the Stewardesses.
- Sc xii **The Grandfather's visit to The Cricket**
The Grandfather wants to feel young again. The Cricket does all she can to arouse him, but it's no good. The Grandfather beats the Cricket and tears one of her feelers off.
- Sc xiii **The Restaurant**
Inga the blonde Stewardess remembers seeing a boat packed full of people on the sea below the plane. Strange what you can see 10km up in the sky. They look at the carpet. Eva tries Inga's soup and discovers the bloodied tooth. She is appalled, but Inga is captivated.
- Sc xiv **The Kitchen**
The Little One is bleeding badly.
- Part III Sc xv **A Call from China**
The Young Man tells a story about a Cricket who is waiting for summer to come. As the cooks try to stem the bleeding of the tooth hole, they see The Little One's family talking to him on the phone. They ask if he has found his sister.
- Sc xvi **Hans and the Granddaughter's Boyfriend**
Hans offers The Cricket to The Boyfriend, who beats The Cricket to a pulp.
- Sc xvii **Inga with The Tooth**
Inga cannot decide what to do with the bloodied human tooth.
- Sc xviii **The Little One Dies**
The cooks decide to wrap the body of The Little One in the carpet with the Golden Dragon on it. The Little One has always wanted to take a closer look at it.
- Sc xix **On The Bridge**
The cooks throw the body of The Little One off the bridge and into the water.
- Sc xx **The Trip Home**
The Little One narrates his body's journey home to China. He wonders what ever happened to his sister.
- Sc xxi **Inga on The Bridge**
Inga meets the cooks. She has the tooth and they have just put the Little One's body in the water. They say nothing. Inga tastes the tooth then spits it into the river.