

GIAN-CARLO MENOTTI

THE OLD MAID AND THE THIEF

CHARACTERS

MISS TODD Contralto
LAETITIA Soprano
MISS PINKERTON Soprano
BOB Baritone

The Action Takes Place in a Small Town. Somewhere in the
United States.

Time: The Present.

"The Old Maid and the Thief" was originally conceived as a
Radio-Opera and Broadcast as World Premiere by the National
Broadcasting Company, April 22, 1939.

First stage performance by the Philadelphia Opera Company,
February 11, 1941

THE OLD MAID AND THE THIEF

ANNOUNCEMENTS BEFORE EACH SCENE (For Radio presentation only)

Announcer:

SCENE 1

It is late afternoon in Miss Todd's parlor. A visitor is just arriving.

SCENE 2

The next morning Laetitia is busy with her pots and pans when Miss Todd comes into the kitchen.

SCENE 3

Bob's breakfast is ready and Laetitia proudly carries the heaping tray into the guest room where Bob lies drowsily in bed.

SCENE 4

A few minutes later Miss Todd ventures out of the house, to do some marketing. Down the block whom does she see approaching, but her friend, Miss Pinkerton.

SCENE 5

Miss Todd can't hurry home quickly enough, for the similarity of Bob's appearance and the description Miss Pinkerton gave of the escaped criminal has given her plenty of cause for alarm. Into the front door she flies and into the parlor where Laetitia is dusting.

SCENE 6

The days pass by. Bob remains a guest in Miss Todd's house. A week later we find Laetitia in the kitchen taking pains mending and then pressing a pair of well-worn trousers, Bob's, of course!

SCENE 7

A little later in the day Miss Todd is sitting on her front porch when Miss Pinkerton rushes up the steps in breathless excitement.

SCENE 8 and 9

A few days go by. Miss Todd is sitting in her parlor. Laetitia is in the kitchen getting ready to go upstairs with the customary morning tray, so that Bob can have his breakfast in bed as usual. Meanwhile Bob, up in his room, prompted by a desire to take to the road again is secretly making a bundle of his clothes.

SCENE 10

Two o'clock in the morning. The village is sleeping quietly. In front of the liquor store all is deserted, but down the block two stealthy figures are approaching.

SCENE 11

The next morning Miss Todd is in her parlor when the door burst open.

SCENE 12 and 13

Hurry, Miss Todd! Hurry, Laetitia! There is no time to lose! Out of the parlor, up the stairs to Bob's room. But they find the door closed.

SCENE 14

A few minutes later Miss Todd returns to her house . . . and this, ladies and gentlemen, is the final scene.

THE OLD MAID AND THE THIEF

Overture

Text and Music by
GIAN CARLO MENOTTI

Presto, con brio (♩ = 176)

ff secco

1

2

pp con grazia

p molto espr.

(N.B. The opera must be staged in such a way that no curtain or pause is required between one scene and the next)

SCENE I.- In Miss Todd's Parlor
(Late Afternoon)

Allegro

(The door bell rings)

PIANO *mf*

1