

# MADAME BUTTERFLY

A Play in Two Scenes  
Dramatized from John Luther Long's Story

by  
Pauline Phelps



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CHARACTERS:

ANNOUNCER: May be of either sex, but must have a clear voice and distinct articulation.

JOHN SHARPLESS: The American Consul in Hagashi, Japan. A pleasant faced man in his early thirties.

GUDDO: The Consul's man servant. A middle-aged Japanese, wearing a long, black smock that comes to his ankles, and sandals over bare feet. Changes sandals to clogs in Scene II.

MRS. B. F. PINKERTON: (Adelaide) A very attractive woman in her early twenties, Chic and well-groomed.

MADAME BUTTERFLY: A Japanese girl of seventeen, pretty and innocent looking. On her first appearance she wears a becoming kimono, which may be changed to a gayer one in Scene II, if desired.

YAMADI: A short and fat, elderly Japanese merchant. He wears American clothes, and speaks English without an accent, though somewhat stilted. His manner is oily, and he forces a broad grin at the end of every sentence. Altogether an unprepossessing character.

SUZUKI: Madame Butterfly's handmaid (Japanese). Young and naive.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

Scene One: Office of the American Consul, in Hagashi, Japan. Morning

Scene Two: A room in Madame Butterfly's house, later in the same day.

SCENE ONE

SETTING: A rather bare, unattractive room. Door C. opens into hall and street. Door L. into other quarters. Up R. is a flat-top desk, holding typewriter and a number of legal looking documents. A chair faces desk and two other chairs are near by. At L., below door, is a small table holding a pile of newspapers. Against wall R. is a small bookcase with encyclopedias and other books. Off stage L., should be a Japanese table cloth and napkins and paraphernalia for serving three cups of tea.

ANNOUNCER: (Addressing audience before rise of curtain) Although Madame Butterfly is laid in Hagashi, Japan, Consul Sharpless has chosen for his office, plain American furniture, Hagashi is a harbor city, and the time early spring. Therefore I would like you to imagine the murmur of soft waves from the sea, and the perfume of innumerable cherry blossoms in the air--I thank you. (Bows and exits)

(The curtain rises, disclosing the Consul sitting at his desk thumping typewriter. A knock comes at door C. He stops writing and listens. The knock is repeated.)

CONSUL: (Calls to L.) Gudo?

GUDDO: (Enters from L.) Yassir.

CONSUL: There's someone at the door.

GUDDO: Your Excellency. I haste to open it. (Does so) Enter, Respected Stranger.

ADELAIDE: (Enters C.) From the sign outside, I gather that this is the American Consulate.

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GUDO: Honored Visitor spik truth.

ADEL.: (Walks toward desk. Sharpless rises to greet her) And you, I'm sure, are Mr. Sharpless, the consul?

CONSUL: I'm flattered that you know my name. (To Gudo, who stops to listen) That's all, Gudo.  
(Bowing low, Gudo exits at L. Consul turns again to Adelaide)

CONSUL: Can I assist you in any way?

ADEL.: Perhaps I should introduce myself. I'm Mrs. B.F. Pinkerton.

CONSUL: Not Bill Pinkerton's wife? (As she nods) Well, well. I haven't heard from Bill since the war stopped, and didn't know he was married.

ADEL.: He wasn't until four months ago.

CONSUL: (As they shake hands) Congratulations to both. Bill certainly knew how to pick out a beautiful wife.

ADEL.: In my opinion, he's not too bad looking himself.

CONSUL: Take a chair, and tell me everything. (Both sit) When did you two get in?

ADEL.: We came on the Bon Homme last night.

CONSUL: Where's Bill now?

ADEL.: Putting through a business deal. He's buyer for a curio syndicate in Chicago now, and takes it pretty seriously. That's why I have time to stroll about on my own.

CONSUL: (Claps hands. Gudo enters from L.) Gudo, tea for myself and the lady.

GUDO: It shall be served immediate or sooner. (Exits at L.)

CONSUL: Well, what did you see on your morning walk?

ADEL.: Everything but what I wanted to see most. Mr. Sharpless, do you happen to know how I can get acquainted with a Geisha girl?

CONSUL: Now why should you wish to do that?

ADEL.: To satisfy my curiosity. Bill says any he's met are uninteresting, while others tell me they are the most charming and seductive creatures in the world.

--- END OF FREE PREVIEW ---