



## **MIKADO – Synopsis**

### **Act 1**

Assuming the disguise of a musician, Nanki-Poo has fled from the court of his father, the Mikado of Japan, to escape marriage with an elderly lady, Katisha. He has then fallen in love with Yum-Yum, but has been prevented from marrying her by her guardian, Ko-Ko, who wishes to marry her himself. Ko-Ko is condemned to death for flirting but avoids the sentence by becoming appointed Lord High Executioner.

Nanki-Poo becomes bent upon suicide because he cannot marry Yum-Yum. When Ko-Ko is ordered by the Mikado to execute someone or lose his position as Lord High Executioner and thus be executed himself, he concedes to Nanki-Poo the right to marry Yum-Yum for a month, if Nanki-Poo will consent to be executed when that month is up. At the end of act one, Katisha unexpectedly arrives looking for Nanki-Poo. She is driven away, but threatens to go to the Mikado.

### **Act 2**

Ko-Ko has discovered a law stating that when a married man is executed his wife must be buried alive. To save Yum-Yum, Nanki-Poo decides to kill himself at once. Ko-Ko hears that the Mikado is at that moment on his way to Titipu. Nanki-Poo again agrees to submit to execution, but Ko-Ko has Pooh-Bah make a false affidavit that Nanki-Poo has been executed, and bids Nanki-Poo and Yum-Yum leave the country.

When the Mikado appears, Ko-Ko produces the false affidavit and describes the execution. However the Mikado has actually come at the prompting of Katisha in search of his lost son. When it is learned that Ko-Ko has supposedly executed the Mikado's son, Ko-Ko and his accomplices are declared guilty of "compassing the death of the Heir Apparent." The only hope for them is to admit their falsehood and produce Nanki-Poo. But Nanki-Poo has already married Yum-Yum and so cannot marry Katisha, who will surely insist on the execution of Nanki-Poo and Yum-Yum. Ko-Ko solves this problem by offering his hand to Katisha; and after he sings her the beautiful ballad "Willow, Tit-Willow" she accepts him.