

Die Fledermaus

Synopsis

ACT I. Through the windows of the home of Gabriel von Eisenstein, a tenor voice is heard ("Täubchen, das entflattert ist"). Eisenstein's wife, Rosalinde, is the object of the serenade. Her maid, Adele, comes into the salon, reading a letter from her sister, inviting her to a party at the home of Prince Orlofsky. When Rosalinde appears, Adele invents a sick aunt and asks for the evening off. Rosalinde says no: her husband is due to start a brief stay in jail for fighting with a policeman and she doesn't want to be alone (duet: "Ach, ich darf nicht hin zu dir!"). Having recognized the voice of Alfred, who once courted her at a spa in Bohemia, Rosalinde is startled at his entering her home, now that she is married. She sends him off. Eisenstein arrives with his lawyer, Dr. Blind, whose bungling has earned his client a longer jail sentence. Blind leaves. Dr. Falke, a friend of Eisenstein's, arrives and, while Rosalinde is out of the room, invites Eisenstein to Orlofsky's party -- he can begin his jail term the next morning. Falke suggests he bring along his repeater stopwatch, which charms all the ladies ("Komm mit mir zum Souper"). Rosalinde returns, mystified that her husband seems cheerful and prefers to go to prison in formal dress. Meanwhile, she tells Adele to take the evening off after all, then bids Eisenstein a sorrowful farewell. No sooner is she alone than Alfred returns, sees the table set for two and opens the wine with another song ("Trinke, Liebchen, trinke schnell"). Their tête-à-tête is interrupted by the jail warden, Frank. Rosalinde pretends Alfred is her husband, leaving him no choice but to go with the warden.

ACT II. At Prince Orlofsky's villa, Adele, meeting her sister Ida, is surprised to learn that Ida did not send the invitation. Orlofsky enters, bored, hoping to be amused by a prank, "The Bat's Revenge," that Falke is planning. It was Falke who wrote to Adele, and he introduces her as the actress "Mlle. Olga." A "Marquis Renard," who turns out to be Eisenstein, is announced, and Orlofsky explains that he will not tolerate boredom from his guests and expects them to match him drink for drink ("Ich lade gern mir Gäste ein"). His motto is "Chacun à son goût," and he too does exactly as he pleases. Eisenstein recognizes Adele in his wife's evening gown, and she challenges his own alias ("Mein Herr Marquis"). Frank, the prison warden, arrives under the alias "Chevalier Chagrin," thickening Falke's plot. Now Rosalinde, also summoned by Falke, appears, masked as a Hungarian countess. When she sees her husband flirting with her maid, she nearly drops her disguise. Falke introduces her to "Renard," who lures her with his famous repeater watch (duet: "Dieser Anstand, so manierlich"). Asking him to take her pulse, she pockets the watch, then -- to show she is Hungarian -- launches into a czardas ("Die Klänge meiner Heimat!"). Falke tells the guests the story of his adventure as Die Fledermaus, "The Bat": three years ago, when he and the "Marquis" shared a bachelor existence, they went to a costume ball, after which the latter abandoned him, still wearing his bat costume, in the middle of a park. He was awakened the next morning by passersby who laughingly christened him "Dr. Bat." Orlofsky proposes a toast to champagne, the king of wines ("Im Feuerstrom der Reben"). As Eisenstein tipsily befriends Frank, Falke urges everyone to address one another with the familiar "du" and share a spirit of affection. Eisenstein tries to unmask the countess, but when the clock strikes six, he must hurry to jail.

ACT III. In jail, Alfred persists in singing, to the annoyance of the tipsy jailer, Frosch. Frank arrives, none too steady himself, and is soon asleep over a newspaper. He is awakened by Frosch, who ushers in two unexpected callers, Ida and Adele. Reminding Frank of his earlier attentions, Adele says she would like his help to go onstage and proceeds to show off her Thespian skills ("Spiel' ich die Unschuld vom Lande"). When "Marquis Renard" is announced, Frank shows the girls to a waiting room. Eisenstein appears, and the men admit their identity. When Rosalinde is announced, Frank excuses himself, and the real Eisenstein greets his lawyer, Blind, with whom he hastily changes clothes. Blind has been summoned by Alfred, who comes out of the cell to meet him but finds Eisenstein instead, disguised as the lawyer. Rosalinde enters, not recognizing her husband and wondering what sort of explanation to make so as not to compromise herself. Learning of Alfred's supper with his wife the evening before, Eisenstein is outraged. Rosalinde retorts that her husband was out on the town himself ("Es scheint mir fast, als empfinden Sie"). Eisenstein sheds his disguise ("Ja, ich bin's, den ihr betrogen"). When she produces the watch, however, he realizes she was the "Hungarian countess." Checkmated, he looks up to see Falke arriving with other guests from the party, hailing "The Bat's Revenge" (ensemble: "So rächt sich die Fledermaus!"). Eisenstein now believes his wife's tête-à-tête with Alfred was part of the prank, so he can forgive her, asking her forgiveness as well. Orlofsky declares he will underwrite Adele's career, and everyone repeats the joyous toast to King Champagne.

Courtesy of [Opera News](#)

*** NO TRANSLATED SYNOPSIS