

LA BOHÈME – FULL STORY SYNOPSIS

ACT I

It is Christmas Eve in Paris, and the artist **Marcello** and the poet **Rodolfo** try to keep warm. Their roommates—the philosopher **Colline** and the musician **Schaunard**—return home with food, fuel, and money for a night out. They are interrupted by their landlord **Benoit**, but they distract him successfully from his purpose of collecting their rent.

Rodolfo stays behind to work as his friends head out to Café Momus. He is interrupted by a visit from their neighbor **Mimi**, who becomes faint. As Rodolfo looks after her, they tell each other their stories and realizing that they are falling in love.

ACT II

Rodolfo and Mimi have joined his friends at the café, which is brimming with Christmas Eve excitement. Marcello's former girlfriend Musetta arrives with Alcindoro, a wealthy older man, and Marcello is furious. Musetta teases him mercilessly, then finally sends Alcindoro off on a silly errand and falls into Marcello's arms.

ACT III

It is February on the outskirts of Paris, and Mimi is searching for Musetta and Marcello. She confides in Marcello, telling him of Rodolfo's extreme jealousy, which has led to their separation. Rodolfo appears, and Mimi hides from the two men. Unaware that she is listening, Rodolfo tells Marcello the real reason for the separation: he knows that Mimi is ill, and he believes her only chance of recovery is to escape the harsh conditions of their life of poverty. Mimi comes forward to say goodbye to Rodolfo, but he convinces her to stay with him until springtime. Their tender conversation is accompanied by the sparring of Musetta and Marcello.

ACT IV

Months later, both Marcello and Rodolfo are lonely. Colline and Schaunard join them, and the mood lightens. Suddenly, Musetta bursts in with Mimi, who is near death and has asked to see Rodolfo. They all do what they can to help Mimi, deciding to sell possessions to get her some warm clothes and medical care. Rodolfo and Mimi are left alone, and they reminisce before she falls quiet.