

**IL BARBIERE DI SIVIGLIA OPERA SYNOPSIS**  
Gioachino Rossini, composer; Cesare Sterbini, librettist

**ACT I** *Seville, Spain.*

Count Almaviva, a Spanish nobleman, is in love with Rosina. Hoping to be loved for himself (and not for his money), the count has disguised himself as a poor student named Lindoro to woo her. As the opera begins, “Lindoro” comes to serenade Rosina outside the home of Dr. Bartolo, where Rosina lives under lock and key. Soon, Figaro, the barber who knows all the secrets of the town, arrives. Recognizing Lindoro as Count Almaviva, he tells the count that Bartolo is not actually Rosina’s father, but her guardian. In fact, Bartolo plans to marry her in order to get her fortune. Figaro hatches a plan. He suggests that the count disguise himself again, this time as a soldier, and demand lodging in Dr. Bartolo’s residence. This way, he will be close to Rosina. Almaviva is overjoyed, and Figaro looks forward to a nice cash reward from the count for his help.

Rosina, alone in her room, thinks about the voice she heard serenading her a short while before and admits that she has fallen in love with the singer. Knowing that Dr. Bartolo will never allow her to have contact with the unknown man, she decides to send Lindoro a letter by way of Figaro. Figaro arrives, but before Rosina can speak with him, Bartolo appears with Don Basilio, Rosina’s music teacher. Basilio tells Bartolo that Count Almaviva has been seen in Seville. Bartolo, who knows that Almaviva is in love with Rosina, is furious, and the cunning Basilio suggests that they get rid of the count by spreading wicked rumors about him. Bartolo decides to marry Rosina that very day, and he and Basilio leave to prepare the marriage contract. Figaro, who has overheard the plot, warns Rosina. When Rosina asks Figaro about the handsome young man she saw outside her window, Figaro says that it was the student Lindoro and promises to deliver her letter to him.

Bartolo, deeply suspicious, accuses Rosina of writing a letter to a secret lover. Just at that moment, shouting is heard: Count Almaviva, now disguised as a drunken soldier, has arrived at Bartolo’s home. Bartolo claims that he has official exemption from providing housing to soldiers, and in the commotion Almaviva manages to reveal to Rosina that he is, in fact, Lindoro, and passes her a letter of his own. Bartolo demands that Rosina hand over the note, but she tricks him by giving him her laundry list instead. The argument grows more heated, and Figaro, Don Basilio, and the servant woman Berta burst in, announcing that the shouting can be heard throughout the city. Soldiers arrive to arrest the drunken soldier. When he quietly reveals to them that he is actually the count, the soldiers promptly release him. Everyone except Figaro is amazed by this turn of events, and the main characters all reflect on the chaos and confusion of the day.

**ACT II**

Bartolo is still suspicious, and he suggests that perhaps the drunken soldier was a spy for Count Almaviva. The count returns, this time disguised as Don Alonso, a music teacher and student of Don Basilio, to give Rosina her singing lesson. Basilio, he claims, is ill. Bartolo is skeptical until “Don Alonso” shows him Rosina’s letter to Lindoro, claiming to have found it at Count Almaviva’s lodgings. He says that he will use it to

convince Rosina that Lindoro is merely toying with her on Almaviva's behalf. This convinces Bartolo that "Don Alonso" is indeed a student of the scheming Basilio, and he allows the lesson to go ahead. Bartolo finds the music boring and soon nods off. As he snores, Almaviva (whom Rosina believes to be Lindoro) and Rosina declare their love. Figaro arrives to shave Dr. Bartolo. Bartolo is reluctant to leave Rosina alone with the singing teacher, and he sends Figaro to fetch towels. Figaro, always resourceful, uses the opportunity to steal the key to Rosina's balcony door, then causes a diversion, forcing Bartolo to leave the two young lovers alone. Suddenly, Don Basilio, the true singing teacher, arrives. Figaro, Almaviva, and Rosina bribe him to leave. While Bartolo gets his shave, Almaviva plots with Rosina to meet on her balcony that night so they can elope—but Bartolo overhears them and flies into a rage.

Berta comments on the crazy household. Bartolo summons Basilio, telling him to bring a notary so that Bartolo can marry Rosina right away. Bartolo then shows Rosina the letter she wrote to Lindoro, calling it proof that Lindoro is in league with the count. Heartbroken and convinced that she has been deceived, Rosina agrees to marry Bartolo.

While a thunderstorm rages outside, Figaro and Almaviva climb a ladder to Rosina's balcony. Rosina appears and confronts Lindoro, who finally reveals his true identity. Basilio shows up with the notary, but bribed and threatened, he agrees to be a witness to the marriage of Rosina and Almaviva. Bartolo arrives with soldiers, but it is too late. He accepts that he has been beaten, and Figaro, Rosina, and the count celebrate this happy ending.

*Synopsis courtesy of the Metropolitan Opera.*