

# LA BOHÈME

BY

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## FIRST ACT

### IN THE ATTIC

Spacious window from which one sees an expanse of snow-clad roofs, on left a fireplace. A table, a small cupboard, a little book-case, four chairs, a picture easel, a bed; a few books, many packs of cards, two candlesticks. Door in the middle; another on left.

(Curtain rises quickly. Rudolph and Marcel. Rudolph looks pensively out of the window, Marcel works at his painting "The Passage of the Red Sea" with hands nipped with

♩ = 108  
Allegro vivace

*ff ruidoso*

cold, and warms them by blowing on them from time to time, often changing position, on account of

the frost.)

*p*

MARCEL (seated, continuing to paint)

*a piacere*

*a Tempo*

This Red Sea Pas - sage feel - eth damp and chill to me.

*Que - sto Mar Ros - so mi ammol - li - sce e as - si - de - ra*

*a Tempo*

*col canto*

1

*ff*

MARCEL

As if a - down my back a  
*co - me se ad - dos - so mi pio -*

MARCEL

(goes a little way back from the easel to look at the picture)

stream were flowing.  
-ves se in stil-le.

MARCEL

*rall.*

*a Tempo*

(turns to his work)

But, in re - venge a Pharaoh will I drown.....  
Per ven - di - car - mi af - fo - go un Fa - ra - on!.....

*col canto* *p* *a Tempo*

RUDOLPH

(looking at Marcel)

MARCEL

(to Rudolph)

La - zi - ly  
Nei cie - li

And you?  
Che fai?

6 RUDOLPH *Lo stesso movimento*

ris - ing, See, how the smoke from thou - sands of chim - neys floats  
*bi - gi guardo fu - mar dai mil - le co - mi - gnoli Pa -*  
*Lo stesso movimento*

RUDOLPH

(pointing to the fireless stove)

up - ward..... And yet that stove of ours..... No  
*ri - gi,..... e pen - so a quel pol - tro - ne d'un*

RUDOLPH

fu - el seems to need, the i - dle ras - cal!..... Content to  
*vec - chio ca - mi - net - to ingan - na - to - re..... che vi - vein*

RUDOLPH *poco rit.*

*a Tempo*

live in ease, just like..... a lord!  
*o - zio co - me un gran..... si - gnor!*

*a Tempo*

MARCEL

'Tis a ve\_ry long time since we paid his law\_ful  
 Le sue ren-di-te o - ne - ste da un pez - zo non ri -

2

RUDOLPH

Of what use are the for - ests, all white under the snow?.....  
 Quelle sciocche fo - re - ste che fun sot.to la ne - ve?

MARCEL

wa - ges. Now,  
 - ce - ve. Ro -

MARCEL

Lo stesso movimento *poco rit.*

Ru - dolph, let me tell you a fact that o - ver -  
 - dol - fo, io vo - glio dir - - ti un mio pen - sier pro -

Lo stesso movimento

*p* *f* *col canto*

RUDOLPH

(approaching Marcel) *a Tempo*

MARCEL

*a piacere* And I, Mar -  
 (blowing on his fingers) Ed io, Mar -

- comes me: I'm sim - ply frozen.  
 - fon - do: Ho un fred - do ca - ne.

*a Tempo* *ff* *col canto*

## RUDOLPH

-cel, to be quite candid                      I've no faith in the sweat of my brow.  
 -cel, non ti na\_scondo                      che non cre\_do al su\_dor del\_la fron\_te.

3

*ff*

## MARCEL

All my fingers are  
 Ho ghia - cia - te le

*p staccatissimo*

## MARCEL

fro - - zen                      Just as if they'd been touch\_ing that  
 di - - ta...                      quasi an\_cor le te\_nes\_si im\_mol.

*ff*                      *p stacc.*

## MARCEL

ice\_berg,                      Touching that block of mar - - ble, the heart of  
 -la\_te                      giù in quella gran ghiac\_cia - - ia che il cuo\_re

*cres. e string.*

*sempre in tempo*

Ah! love's..... a stove con -  
*L'a - mor..... è un ca - mi -*  
 (heaves a long sigh, laying aside his palette and brushes, and ceases painting)

false Mu - set - ta!  
*di Mu - set - ta!*

RUDOLPH

-sum ing a deal of fu - el Where the  
*-net - to che sciu - pa trop - po... do - ve*

Too quickly!  
*...e in fret - ta!*

RUDOLPH

man does the bur - ning  
*l'uo - mo è fa - sci - na*

*p* and the wo - man the light - ing:  
*e la donna è l'a - la - re...*

RUDOLPH *rapido*

*pp* As the one becomes ashes.  
*l'u - no brucia in un soffio...*

The oth - er stands and watch -  
*e l'al - tro sta a guar - da -*

RUDOLPH

Musical staff for Rudolph, treble clef, showing a melodic line with notes and rests.

MARCEL a Tempo

Mean while, in here we're fro - zen  
 Main - tan - to qui si ge - la...

Musical staff for Marcel, bass clef, with lyrics: -es -re. And we're e si

Piano accompaniment for the first system, showing chords and bass lines.

RUDOLPH

Musical staff for Rudolph, treble clef, with lyrics: The Fire must be lighted:

Musical staff for Marcel, bass clef, with lyrics: dy - ing of hung - er! I A  
 muo - re d' i - ne - dia!

Piano accompaniment for the second system, with the instruction (VUOTA) in the middle.

(seizing a chair and about to break it up.) (Rudolph energetically resists Marcel's project)

Musical staff for Marcel, bass clef, with lyrics: have it! This crazy chair shall save us.  
 -spet - ta... sa - cri - fi - chiam la se - dia!

Piano accompaniment for the third system, with the instruction (VUOTA) and a 4-measure rest box.

RUDOLPH (joyous at an idea which has seized him)

(Runs to the table and from below he lifts a bulky manuscript)

Musical staff for Rudolph and Marcel, showing their respective parts with lyrics: Eu - re - ka! Yes! Eu - re - ka! Si!

Musical staff for Marcel, bass clef, with lyrics: You've found it? Tro - va - sti?

Piano accompaniment for the fourth system, with the instruction (VUOTA) at the end.



A Tempo come prima

When gen - ius is rous - ed, i -  
 A - gus - za l'in - ge - gno. L'i -

*p*

RUDOLPH

flash - - es

*Opp.*

- deas come fast and fur - ious..... No;  
 - de - a vam - pi in fiam - ma..... (pointing to his picture) No.

MARCEL

Let's burn the Red Sea!.....  
 Bru.ciamo il Mar Ros - so?

*espressivo*

RUDOLPH

think what a stench'twould oc - cas - ion! But my  
 Puz - za la te - la di - pin - ta. Il mio

RUDOLPH

*rit.*

dra - ma..... my beauti - ful dra - ma shall give..... us  
 dram - ma,..... l'arden.te mio dram - ma ci scal - - us

*m. d.* *rit.* *col canto*

RUDOLPH *a Tempo*

warmth. No, the  
*- di.* *No, in*

MARCEL (with comic terror)

Do you mean to read it. 'Twill chill us.  
*Vuoi leggerlo for - se? Mi ge - li.*

*a Tempo*

RUDOLPH

*string.*

paper in flame shall be burn - ing, the soul to its heaven re - turn - ing; great  
*ce - ner la car - ta si sfal - di e l'estro ri - voli a'suoi cie - li. Al*

RUDOLPH (with importance) *a piacere*

*a Tempo*

*a piacere*

loss, but the world yet must bear it when Rome is in  
*se - col gran dan - no mi - nac - cia,...* *è Roma in pe -*

*a Tempo*

RUDOLPH

(gives Marcel a portion of the manuscript)

peril!  
-riglio!

Well, here is the  
A te l'at-to

(with exaggeration)

MARCEL

Great soul!  
Gran cor!

5 a Tempo

*fp* *dolcissimo*

RUDOLPH

first act.  
pri - mo.

Tear it.  
Straccia.

MARCEL

Good!  
Qua.

And  
Ac.

*p*

MARCEL (Rudolph strikes a flint on steel, lights a candle and goes to the stove with Marcel; together they

light it.  
-cen-di.

*f*

set fire to a part of the manuscript thrown into the fireplace, then both draw up their chairs and sit down, delightedly warming themselves.)

**RUDOLPH**

**MARCEL**

How joyous the rays!  
Che lie - to ba - glior!

How cheerful the  
Che lie - to ba -

**MARCEL**

(The door at the back opens violently and Colline enters woking frozen, stamping his feet and throwing angrily on the table a bundle of books)

blaze!  
glor!

**6**

*ff un po' sostenuto*

*a Tempo*

**COLLINE** tied up in a handkerchief.)

Surely miracles  
Già dell'Apoca-

**COLLINE**

A-po-calyp-tic are dawning!  
-lisse appa-ri-scono i se-gni.

For,  
In