

# ***Un giorno di regno***

**Music by Giuseppe Verdi | Libretto by Felice Romani**

## **Opera McGill 2021 Production Viewing Guide**

**Conductor: Zach Salsburg-Frank | Stage Director: Sawyer Craig**

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## Link to Libretto

Italian: <https://www.opera-arias.com/verdi/un-giorno-di-regno/libretto/>

English: <https://www.opera-arias.com/verdi/un-giorno-di-regno/libretto/english/>

## Character List

**Cavaliere di Belfiore** - French officer, disguised as the King of Poland

**Barone di Kelbar** - nobleman and social climber, Giulietta's father

**La Marchesa del Poggio** - young widow, Kelbar's niece, engaged to marry "Ivrea" but in love with the Cavaliere

**Giulietta di Kelbar** - betrothed against her wishes to La Rocca, in love with Edoardo

**Edoardo di Sanval** - young official, La Rocca's nephew, in love with Giulietta

**La Rocca/Tesoriere** - Treasurer to the estates of Brittany

**Count Ivrea** - Commandant of Brest, engaged to marry the Marchesa

**Delmonte** - esquire to the fake King

**Chorus** - servants, friends, etc.

# Act 1

## Overture

### *Musical elements*

- ◇ Listen for each mood that the piano creates throughout the overture

## **Duetto - Barone, Tesoriere**

### *Synopsis*

The Tesoriere and Barone di Kelbar congratulate each other. Not only is the Tesoriere marrying Kelbar's daughter Giulietta, but the King of Poland himself is visiting the estate to witness the festivities.

### *Musical elements*

- ◇ Excessive excitement and flattery between the two men: "Bravo genero", "Gran suocero", "matrimonio"

## **Scena e Cavatina - Delmonte, Cavaliere (Tesoriere and Barone in background)**

### *Synopsis*

Delmonte announces that the King is about to join them. Belfiore arrives, in disguise as the King, and sings about how his fortunes have changed: the man formerly known as the most dissipated officer in the entire regiment, is now playing the part of philosopher and King.

### *Musical elements*

- ◇ Listen for how the short notes (eighth and sixteenth notes) in the piano interact with the lyrical line of the Cavaliere

## **Seguito e stretta dell'introduzione - Cavaliere, Tesoriere, Barone, Chorus**

### *Synopsis*

Belfiore, still impersonating the king, assures the men that they should treat him as an ordinary citizen, as he'll have to deal with the duties of the crown all too soon. Kelbar and the Tesoriere marvel at their good fortune.

## *Musical elements*

- ◇ Marvel and excitement from the chorus.

## **Recitativo, Scena e Duetto - Cavaliere, Barone, Edoardo**

### *Synopsis*

Kelbar mentions in passing that it will be a double wedding. When Belfiore asks who the other bride is, he is shocked to find out that it is none other than his old flame, the Marchesa del Poggio. He manages to keep his composure, and immediately writes to the real king of Poland, hoping that he may be released from his promise so he can stop the Marchesa from marrying Ivrea.

Just as he finishes the letter, he is accosted by Edoardo di Sanval. Edoardo, heartbroken, begs the “King” to take him with him to Poland, so he can spend his ‘useless’ life as a soldier. Belfiore seemingly grants this wish, but knowing he can’t actually take Edoardo to Poland, resolves to find another way to solve Edoardo’s problem.

## *Musical elements*

- ◇ Listen for the militaristic rhythms in the beginning of the duet followed by a beautiful tenor melody

## **Scena e Cavatina - Marchesa**

### *Synopsis*

The Marchesa del Poggio arrives and explains she does not intend to get married. It is instead a ploy designed to save her cousin from having to marry the Tesoriere. She sympathizes with her cousin’s situation, explaining that she herself is still in love with the Cavaliere di Belfiore, despite his habit of running off without explanation. She leaves, resolving to make her presence known at a more opportune moment.

## *Musical elements*

- ◇ Anguish and pain in the slow (*andante*) melody
- ◇ Listen for how the Marchesa uses the faster tempo (*allegro*) to show her change in character and despair

## **Cavatina - Giulietta, Chorus**

### *Synopsis*

The chorus resumes preparations for the weddings, much to Giulietta's dismay. She laments her fate, calling for Edoardo, and is comforted by the staff. She explains that she does not want to marry La Rocca.

### *Musical elements*

- ◇ “Vieni Edoardo amato, o moriro d’amor!” (Come, beloved Edoardo, or I shall die of love!)
  - ◇ Listen for how the tempo (*andantino*) and interaction between the voice and piano create a sense of suffering in slow section
- ◇ Listen for the accented notes in the faster section (*allegretto*), what makes these accents show Giulietta's contempt for the Count?

## **Recitativo e Sestetto - Barone, Giulietta, Tesoriere, Cavaliere, Edoardo, Barone**

### *Synopsis*

The Barone di Kelbar and La Rocca enter and greet Giulietta. They are interrupted by Belfiore, entering with a plan and Edoardo in tow. Appealing to the two older men's egos, he asks them for military advice, a trick designed to give the young lovers the opportunity to talk. However, La Rocca finds it hard to focus, as he becomes increasingly suspicious that something may be afoot between Giulietta and Edoardo. Finally, a servant interrupts the group, announcing the Marchesa's arrival. Belfiore is unable to escape before she enters, and the Marchesa is shocked to find that the “King of Poland” so closely resembles her ex-lover, Belfiore! Chaos ensues.

### *Musical elements*

- ◇ Listen to the interaction between the beautiful melodic lines sung by Giulietta and Edoardo and the rhythmic lines sung by the Cavaliere, Tesoriere, and Barone
- ◇ Try to figure out which lines are heard by all of the characters on stage and which ones are only heard by the audience

## **Recitativo e Terzetto - Giulietta, Edoardo, Marchesa**

### *Synopsis*

Left alone, Giulietta and Edoardo beg the dismayed Marchesa for her help. She struggles to focus on their problem, but finally resolves to help the young couple, and the three join forces to fight in the name of love.

### *Musical elements*

- ◇ Our favorite interaction! Melodic lines (Edoardo and Giulietta) vs. rhythmic lines (Marchesa)
- ◇ At the end of the trio, how do the characters express their infatuation and love for each other? (hint: speed and accentuation)

## **Recitativo e Duetto Buffo - Cavaliere, Tesoriere**

### *Synopsis*

Belfiore, as the king, offers the Tesoriere La Rocca a cushy position in the Polish Court. However, there is one stipulation: he must forsake Giulietta and instead marry the Princess Ineska. The two agree, leaving the Tesoriere alone to muse on how his dear friend the Barone di Kelbar will take the news. As luck would have it, Kelbar enters with the wedding contract all drawn up for La Rocca to look over. La Rocca struggles to explain himself but finally spits it out: he must refuse to marry Giulietta. The Barone takes this news... rather badly.

### *Musical elements*

- ◇ How does the argument escalate musically throughout the duet?

## **Finale Primo - Barone, Tesoriere, Marchesa, Giulietta, Edoardo, Cavaliere, Chorus**

### *Synopsis*

The Barone di Kelbar, enraged, threatens La Rocca's life. The ruckus attracts the notice of the rest of the company, who attempt to resolve their dispute. Finally, the cavaliere di Belfiore enters, still as the "King", and, after some difficulty, manages to convince/embarrass/intimidate the two older men into making a fragile peace.

### *Musical elements*

- ◇ Listen for how the piano reacts to longer notes from singers
- ◇ Beautiful melodic lines from Marchesa, Giulietta, Edoardo vs. rhythmic lines from Tesoriere, Barone, Cavaliere, Chorus
- ◇ At the end of the Finale, listen for music from the overture as it returns in the piano and voices

## **Act 2**

### **Coro ed Aria - Edoardo, Chorus**

#### *Synopsis*

Edoardo has been celebrating his reversal of fortune. He explains his incredible change of fate to his friends among the staff, delighted that not only will he now be able to marry his beloved Giulietta, but he's now squire to a King.

### *Musical elements*

- ◇ How does Edoardo's intoxication find its way into the music?

### **Recitativo e Duetto - Cavaliere, Giulietta, Cavaliere, Edoardo, Tesoriere**

#### *Synopsis*

The "King" enters, looking for his squire, accompanied by Giulietta and La Rocca. Realizing that the Baron di Kelbar is marrying Giulietta off for La Rocca's fortune, Belfiore sneakily convinces the Tesoriere to gift Edoardo a castle and income. The Tesoriere, unable to refuse the "King" agrees, but stays behind lamenting his loss. He is happened across by Kelbar, who wastes no time challenging the Tesoriere to a duel. After exchanging insults, the two men argue again, this time over dual methodology. The Tesoriere advocates for sitting astride a barrel of gunpowder (it's over faster), while the more traditional Kelbar would prefer to die by the sword.

### *Musical elements*

- ◇ Listen for all of the weapons the Tesoriere wants to fight with and his sound effects "cannone", "bum!", "barili", "micce"

## **Duetto - Marchesa, Cavaliere**

### *Synopsis*

The Marchesa enters, planning to convince the “King” to reveal his true identity and confess. Meanwhile, Belfiore happens upon her and decides to approach her, despite knowing he cannot drop his disguise yet. Frustrated by his refusal to admit the truth they both know; the Marchesa says that she no longer wants the Cavalier di Belfiore for a husband. Both convinced they have the upper hand in this battle of wits, they are briefly interrupted by the Barone, who enters with news.

### *Musical elements*

- ◇ The flirtatious nature of the music and how the excitement between the Marchesa and Cavaliere grows throughout the duet.

## **Recitativo, Scena ed Aria - Barone, Marchesa, Cavaliere, Chorus**

### *Synopsis*

The Barone di Kelbar informs the Marchesa that her betrothed, the Conte Ivrea, will arrive shortly. Incensed, the Marchesa proclaims that she is grateful to marry Ivrea. The “King” begs to differ and swears that she’ll see the Cavaliere step up to fight for her. Unimpressed, the Marchesa asks the “King” where the Cavaliere is, then? What does he hope to achieve by keeping her in the dark? Questions that he cannot answer without dropping his disguise. She asks the “King” why he’s so silent, and he responds that he does not know what to say. Finally, she plays her final card, resolving to marry Ivrea after all and forget the faithless Belfiore. Belfiore himself is left heartbroken, scrambling to find some way to stop this wedding without breaking his vow to the real King of Poland.

### *Musical elements*

- ◇ Listen for how the frustration from the Marchesa influences her ornamentation of the melody
- ◇ How does the music change when the Cavaliere sings?

## **Scena e Duetto - Giulietta, Edoardo**

### *Synopsis*

Giulietta, now blissfully happy, comes across Edoardo, who informs her that they must part. The King has just ordered him to pack; they leave for the Polish Court early the very next day. Giulietta refuses to entertain this idea. Edoardo protests that he must go, for honor’s sake. Giulietta plans to intercede on their behalf with the King, and the two reconcile, putting their hope in love.

### *Musical elements*

- ◇ Usually Giulietta and Edoardo sing beautiful, lyrical lines; listen for how the music is different during this argument
- ◇ “Vedremo poi” (he will listen to me)
  - Listen to the injections of pleading from Giulietta at the end of the duet

## **Recitativo e Settimino - Barone, Marchesa, Conte, Cavaliere, Giulietta, Edoardo, Tesoriere**

### *Synopsis*

The long awaited “Conte di Ivrea” finally arrives, accompanied by the Marchesa and the Barone di Kelbar. The Barone explains that the Marchesa is finally ready to move on from her relationship with the Cavaliere and get hitched, but the Marchesa stipulates that this is only true if the Cavaliere doesn’t return to her within the hour. In that very moment, the “King” enters, with a new plan to stop the impending nuptials. He claims the Polish Court has requested that Conte accompany him and his retinue on a secret mission, which they must leave for at once. This news sends the whole company into a reverie as they each come to terms with this news and its implications.

### *Musical elements*

- ◇ Dynamic contrast (*piano* vs. *forte*)
- ◇ Listen for how the tempo (*largo*) of the septet embodies the frustration from the Marchesa and Cavaliere

## **Finale Secondo - Delmonte, Cavaliere, Giulietta, Edoardo, Barone, Marchesa, Tesoriere, Conte, Chorus**

### *Synopsis*

Just as it seems that both weddings are well and truly cancelled, a missive arrives from the Polish Court. The “King” reads it and insists that Edoardo and Giulietta must have the Barone’s permission to marry. That achieved, the “King” reveals his true identity: he is, of course, the Cavaliere di Belfiore. Everyone (except the Marchesa) is shocked, but accepts this happy outcome, and it seems a double wedding is in order after all, with much rejoicing.

### *Musical elements*

- ◇ Overture music is back! Ending both acts of the opera with parts of the overture.