

WOLF TRAP OPERA

TOSCA: THE STORY

Act I

Cesare Angelotti, an escaped political prisoner, takes refuge inside a church, where he is harbored by the painter **Mario Cavaradossi**, a revolutionary sympathizer.

The celebrated singer **Floria Tosca** is Cavaradossi's lover, and when she arrives at the church, she believes she has heard him with another woman. Her jealousy is fueled by her resemblance to the woman in Cavaradossi's portrait.

A cannon signals that Angelotti's escape has been discovered, and he and the painter flee to Cavaradossi's home.

As the clerics and choir are preparing a *Te Deum* to celebrate Napoleon's recent defeat, they are silenced by the arrival of **Baron Scarpia**, chief of police. Scarpia is searching for Angelotti, and he suspects Cavaradossi is involved. Scarpia uses Tosca's jealousy to trick her into leading his men to Cavaradossi's home.

Act II

Scarpia anticipates the pleasure of having Tosca in his power, and he learns that although Angelotti is still at large, Cavaradossi has been arrested.

The painter is brought in and interrogated. Scarpia sends for Tosca, and when she arrives, she hears Cavaradossi being tortured. Hearing his cries, Tosca reveals Angelotti's hiding place.

Word arrives that Napoleon has won the battle, a defeat for Scarpia's side. Cavaradossi's reaction to this news angers Scarpia, and he orders the painter's execution.

Alone with Scarpia, Tosca begs him to spare her lover. He says he would let Cavaradossi go free if she would submit to him, and she agrees. Scarpia orders that the execution be faked and prepares papers that will guarantee safe passage to the couple. But as he approaches to embrace her, she exacts revenge.

Act III

At dawn, Cavaradossi awaits execution. Tosca arrives and tells him about the mock execution, and they imagine their future freedom.

The firing squad shoots, and Cavaradossi falls. Tosca at first believes that he has played along with the pretense but soon realizes that Scarpia has had the final betrayal.