**Act One**

Enemies have invaded the partisan fighter Banuta’s land. The elderly prince Daumants saves her from death and disgrace. Having brought Banuta to his Romuva castle on Tallinn Street to marry her, Daumants sees visions that forebode of evil: ravens! Ravens! Ravens!...

Banuta and the wedding guests are sent to sleep. Daumants remembers a girl named Jargala, whom he once raped and killed in a forest. Meanwhile, Jargala's brother Vizuts has sneaked in, seeking revenge. Daumants must die!

**Act Two**

Lithuania and Banuta mourn the strangled Daumants. King Valgudis has lost his mind in grief and is singing a song about a cat. But who is to blame for Daumants’ death?

Zvalgo offers to burn the sorcerer, because she talked about ravens at the wedding. The sorcerer says that the stranger Banuta is guilty. She must be burned alive!

The sudden fall of a decorative wreath is a sign that Banuta will not be burned alive. But she must swear not to love anyone else until she finds and kills Daumants’ murderer. What bloodthirsty lads these Romuva people are!

**Act Three**

Celebration of the Midsummer night. The night of lust and passion. Priests Vaidelotes envision the abundance of “fern flowers” this night. Only for Banuta is love forbidden.

Vizuts places his midsummer cheese on the altar of Ligo, the god of love. (This altar serves as a kind of Tinder for ancient Balts.) Banuta fancies that cheese.

The priest releases Banuta from the oath this midsummer night. It will regain its hold over her at midnight. Until then Banuta is allowed to succumb to the pleasures of love.

**Act Four**

Next to Vizuts, Baņuta dreams about the ecstasy of love and mutual happiness. However love cannot be eternal. Vizuts does not understand Banuta's oath.

In between, they take a short gondola ride in the homeland of opera, Italy.

Banuta has a vision of the terror of war. Daumants saved her as a bison that time! Now Vizuts understands the meaning of Banuta's oath… The end is inevitable.

**Banuta’s Midsummer Night’s Dream**

**First Ending: 1920**

Latvia has been founded, but the aesthetic clichés of the 19th century still prevail: the main characters must die at the end of an opera.

**Second Ending: 1941**

The Soviet Union has occupied Latvia, and the authors are ordered to write a happy ending for this opera. The first deportations take place four days after the premiere of this new production.

Banuta appeals to the people and demands the repeal of the old laws.

**Third Ending: Nowadays**

Banuta gets on the road and considers infiltrating the Berlin-based music theatre collective *Hauen und Stechen*.