

Baron Zeta, Pontevedrian envoy in Paris, decides to host a party at the Pontevedrian embassy. As wealthy widow Hanna visits Paris for the party, Baron focuses on preventing her from marrying a foreigner, who has the ability to take her money outside of the country. At the party, Hanna encounters former lover count Danilovich, whom she once wished to marry, but was prevented by his uncle.

Danilovich now scorns Hanna due to their past, and pretends not to care about her.

Baron urges Danilovich to marry Hanna in order keep her money safe, while another guest, Camille, engages in a mild flirtation with Baron's wife, Valencienne. In a huge mix of relationships, Baron and Danilovich decide to meet in the summerhouse the same time Camille and Valencienne arrive... All arriving simultaneously, Hanna is able to take Valencienne's place before being seen by Baron. Resolving the huge mixup, Camille declares his love for Hanna, resulting in a jealous fit by Danilovich.

Out of patriotic duty, Danilovich forbids the marriage, but soon finds that it was all a jest.

He admits his love for her and accepts her wealth gracefully as Baron forgives his wife, saluting to all women and their unpredictable ways.