

MIRETTE

Opera Comique in Three Acts
written by Michel Carré
composed by André Messager
the English lyrics by Fred. E. Weatherly
the English Dialogue by Harry Greenbank

Characters

Gerard
Bobinet
Picorin
Francal
Baron Van Osborn
Bertuccio
Max
The Burgomaster
Notary
Mirette
Bianca (*daughter of Van Osborn*)
The Marquise

Bohemians, Soldiers, Ladies, and Gentlemen.

ACT I. -- A forest glade in Flanders.

ACT II. -- Hall in the Chateau of the Marquise.

ACT III. -- A village green.

ACT I.

SCENE. -- *A forest glade in Flanders. As the curtain rises GIPSIES are discovered sitting and lying in picturesque attitudes around a large fire, which is lighted in the centre of the stage; some are eating and drinking, others smoking. FRANCAL and an old Gipsy with a grey beard are playing dice on a tree-trunk. PICORIN is going gaily from one person to another, but is watching MIRETTE, who is sitting pensively on the grassy hillock at the foot of a large tree R. BERTUCCIO is just finishing a story he is telling.*

CHORUS.

Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!
A splendid story!
Bravo! Bravo! Bertuccio!
He's the man to tell a story.
Bravo! Bertuccio!
Ah, what wit! Bravo! bravo!
When you've roamed the world like me,
You'll have stories, too, as well,

BERTUCCIO.

Strange adventures you can tell,
Fit for story and for song,
Just to pass the hours along!

PICORIN (*to MIRETTE*). Why this shadow on your brow,
Why so sad and silent now?

MIRETTE (*as if waking from a dream*).

I? . . . 'tis nothing, Picorin.

FRANCAL. 'Tis only that our little Queen,
To dreamland sweet awhile is going!

CHORUS. Tell us, Mirette! Tell us, Mirette!
What, ah! what are you dreaming of?
Is it fame or fortune? Or golden love?
Ever alone you keep apart,
For our songs and dances you have no heart.
Cannot you trust your friends, Mirette?
All our faithful love do you forget?

FRANCAL. Do you not love old Francal still?

PICORIN. Ah! vex her not! She's sad to-night!

FRANCAL. Never fear! I know Mirette,
Her little heart is wise and true.
And yet -- that sad and clouded brow,
Those sweet eyes gazing to the blue,
Hide some deepening sorrow now!
It will not do!

CHORUS. It will not do!

MIRETTE. No, no! my sadness all is gone!
And see -- I'm smiling.

FRANCAL. Well then, to show
'Tis really so,

Sing us the old, old song, you know.

CHORUS. Yes, yes! sing us the song.

FRANCAL. The old refrain, the dear old song,
That cheers us as we rove along,
The song we love, hurrah, hurrah!
The song of old Bohemia!

SONG. -- MIRETTE.

Roaming ever, night and day,
Heav'n for a roof o'erhead.
Luck to guide us on our way,
Only the earth for a bed.
Though so far the bells may ring,
Long our way and slow,
Who cares? Merrily we sing,
Onward as we go.
Where we'll find a bed to-night
Who of us may know?
Who cares? Merrily we sing,
Onward still we go!
Dance along with merry, merry song,
Though the way be dark and long,

Ne'er a resting place have we,
The world is the home of the Zingari!

Rags and tatters we may wear,
Empty our purse may be,
But our hearts are light as air,
Never a care have we!
Though the sun be bright on high,
Though the light be low,
Who cares? Merrily we sing,
Onward as we go!
Though the sun be bright on high,
Though the light be low,
Who cares? Merrily we sing,
Onward still we go!
Dance along with merry, merry song,
Though the way be dark and long,
Ne'er a resting place have we,
The world is the home of the Zingari!

FRANCAL. Bravo, Mirette! Give me a kiss for my trouble.
(*Kisses her.*)

You know how dear you are,
You know you are the star
That lights our way,
And guides us ever!

(*To the rest.*)

Tell me, pray,
Where's Bobinet?

CHORUS. Bobinet? Ha! ha! ha! ha!
Where's Bobinet? Ha! ha!

PICORIN. He went away
At break of day
To look for plunder,
So he said!

FRANCAL. I hope the idiot has not made
Some other blunder!
For, if they track us, 'tis thanks to him,
So we must move, ere day is dim.
Come then, attend, and listen while I tell you
A certain plan of mine. Approach, come near,
Mirette!
Hear what I say.

SONG. -- FRANCAL.

Dost thou remember still the day, pretty Mirette,
The day I found thee lying alone by the way?
All thy tears, all thy fears, I ne'er can forget,
I gave thee my love and my life that day.
Time has flown since then, I trow,
That was sixteen years ago.
Happy years of sunshine, we have parted never,
Thou art ours, and we are thine, from that day for ever!
Guide of our way, by night and day,

Light that we follow now!
Star and Madonna, ever and aye!
'Tis thou, Mirette, 'tis thou!

CHORUS. Guide of our way, by night and day, etc.

FRANCAL. May be thou didst not dream of such a life as ours,
May be thou hadst sweet fancies of what life would
be!

All the way, song and play, no thorn 'mid the flowers,
And never a shadow, a shadow to fall on thee.

Let it pass, thy empty dream,
Things are never all they seem!

Take the shade and sunshine, still there's light above
thee!

Thou art ours, and we are thine, Zingari who love thee!

Guide of our way, by night and day,

Light that we follow now!

Star and Madonna, ever and aye!

'Tis thou, Mirette, 'tis thou!

CHORUS. Guide of our way, by night and day, etc.

MIRETTE. I know my duty, I will obey.

FRANCAL. And, now, let me unfold to thee
The plan of which I've told thee,
Deep in my heart for many a day,
Thou must decide this very night,
To one of us thy troth to plight.

MIRETTE. My troth to plight? What do you say?

FRANCAL. See all of them before you,
You know how they adore you,
They wrangle,
And they jangle,
And fight, and quarrel for you!
So, since you are so sweet
And deep in their affection;
Behold them at your feet,
For you to make selection.

YOUNG MEN (*kneeling*). Ah! let your choice on me be set,

Ah! look at me upon my knee,

Mirette! Mirette!

SONG. -- MIRETTE. (*laughing*).

Ha! ha! it's quite amusing! my laughter pray excuse!
I've seen you but a moment -- how am I to choose?
For when one is with lovers thus -- so very well provided,
Why one's naturally -- rather -- just a little -- undecided!

Then listen to me, one and all,

And pardon my speaking so plainly:

You, sir, are a little too tall;

And you, sir, too short and ungainly.

You're too shy, sir; and you are too bold;

You're too young; you, too old!

Excuse me pray, excuse me pray,

If I refuse when such a choice is provided,
But if the truth I now must say,
I'm undecided, still undecided!
I can't make up my mind, you see;
I really don't know what to do;
But, if I marry, if I marry, if I marry,
But -- if I marry -- why -- it won't be you!

CHORUS. But, if she marries, if she marries, if she marries,
But, if she marries -- why -- it won't be you!

FRANCAL. Come, Mirette, you mustn't be too particular! Most girls would jump at the prospect of a husband, and be content to leave his size and shape to fortune. You're far too pretty and bewitching to remain single any longer. The men will be quarrelling over you, and I don't want any bloodshed. Make up your mind before we start to-night.

MIRETTE. I will do as you wish, Francal.

A loud sneeze is heard from behind the trees.

ALL. Who's that? Why, it's Bobinet!

BOBINET *appears. He is in a pitiable state, his clothes covered with mud, his wet hair clinging to his forehead. Everyone bursts out laughing as he enters.*

CHORUS.

(laughing).

Look! Look! I say,
Here's Bobinet!
Oh! What a sight he is!
Oh! What a fright he is!
What can it be,
Is it a plot?
Into some trouble he's certainly got!
Oh, what an air!
Look at him there!
Oh! what a picture of fright and despair!
Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!
Come tell us pray,
Come, Bobinet,
What is the mischief you've been in to-day?
Come tell us what
Blunder or plot?
For into some trouble you've certainly got!

BOBINET *looks at them with imperturbable gravity, and then, without saying a word, produces a duck from under his coat.*

FRANCAL. A duck! And is that all you've got to show! I suppose you've been swimming after it?

ALL *(laughing).* Ha! ha!

BOBINET. I'm -- just going -- to -- tell you -- atsch!

(Sneezes.) But give me another coat first -- I'm shivering all down my back! Atschi! (Sneezes.) There it is! -- I've got it! Oh! I never swallowed so much water in my life! My nose is full of it -- my eyes are full of it! and all on account of a duck! (Someone hands him a coat.) Much obliged! I shall want a brush and comb -- but to-morrow will do for them! I'm not going into society this evening. Atschi! (Sneezes.) There it is! I've got it -- there's no doubt about that!

FRANCAL.

BOBINET.

But you haven't told us how it happened.
How it happened? Let me warm myself first. (Goes to the fire, reflectively.) How it happened? Well, you know my weakness for roast duck. I daresay it's foolish, but the stuffing is simply irresistible. However, I'll tell you the whole story.

SONG. -- BOBINET and CHORUS.

I know a little farm with stacks and mows,
With ducks, and geese, and pigs, and cows,
And I said to myself as I got to the wall,
"I'll have that duck, whate'er befall!"
So I got to the top,
And down with a flop,
And into the yard, you see;
When bow-wow-wow --
Gr-r-r-row, row,
A dog looked out at me!
But "Dilly, dilly, dilly," said I to the duck,
But she would not come -- not she!
And as I went after the duck,
-- Bad luck,
The dog came after me!
CHORUS. "Dilly, dilly, dilly," said he to the duck,
But she would not come -- not she!
And as he went after the duck,
-- Bad luck,
The dog came --
BOBINET. -- after me!

Then away went the duck, and away went I,
Under the gate, and into the sty;
Till splash! in the pond with a quack she fell,
And splash! in the pond went I as well.
And I don't forget
That the pond was wet, (sneezing)
And it's given me a cold -- atschi!
But I stuck to my duck
With considerable pluck,
And that's how I'm here, you see.
"Dilly, dilly, dilly," it's a very fine duck,
And fine it ought to be!
For though I've all of the duck,
-- Bad luck,

The dog has part of me!
CHORUS. "Dilly, dilly, dilly," it's a very fine duck,
 And fine it ought to be!
 For though he's all of the duck,
 -- Bad luck,
 The dog has --
BOBINET. -- part of me!

BOBINET *sits down.*

FRANCAL. I hope this silly adventure won't lead to the discovery
 of our hiding-place?
PICORIN. Captain, I should like to speak to Mirette.
FRANCAL. Alone?
PICORIN. Alone.
FRANCAL. Are you in love with her, like all the rest?
PICORIN. Perhaps.
FRANCAL. (*to the Gypsies*). Do you hear that, boys? Here's
 Picorin in love with Mirette, and afraid to admit it.
ALL. Picorin -- in love!
FRANCAL. Come, Bobinet, can't we put down *your* name, too?
BOBINET (*vacantly*). Put down my name?
FRANCAL. To be married?
BOBINET (*not understanding*). To be married?
FRANCAL. My good Bobinet, you must have left your brains behind
 you -- in the pond! (*All laugh.*)
BOBINET. My brains?
FRANCAL. Now, comrades, we've been idle long enough. It's time
 to get to work again, and let's hope business will be
 better than it was this morning! You, Picorin, can stay
 with Mirette and speak to her -- if you are successful,
 so much the better; and you, Bobinet, mount guard over
 the camp, and mind you keep a sharp look-out. There you
 are! (*Puts a gun into BOBINET's hands.*)

Exeunt all except MIRETTE, BOBINET, and PICORIN.

MIRETTE (*aside*). I must obey my destiny! -- and it is Francal's
 wish!
BOBINET. Picorin?
PICORIN. Well?
BOBINET. Do you observe that they have left us alone?
PICORIN. Yes.
BOBINET. I don't like the look of it.
PICORIN. You great coward! Now listen! I have something to say
 to Mirette -- something which doesn't concern you; so
 kindly mount guard a little farther off -- (*pointing*) --
 -- there -- under the trees.
BOBINET. You don't require my protection?
PICORIN. No, thank you.
BOBINET. But you're not going to leave me alone?
PICORIN (*impatiently*). Oh, run along!

BOBINET *shoulders his gun and goes to back of stage, where he is*

seen pacing to and fro with great deliberation, till at length he halts at the foot of a tree and is only occasionally seen during the following.

MIRETTE. You wanted to speak to me, Picorin?

PICORIN. Yes, Mirette, I -- that is --

MIRETTE. You need not hesitate. I am ready to listen to all you have to say.

PICORIN. No, Mirette, I will not speak to-day. You seem so sad, so unhappy!

MIRETTE. (*with a forced smile*). Why should I be unhappy? I am going to be married; surely there is no cause for unhappiness in that!

PICORIN. You cannot deceive me, Mirette.

MIRETTE. Must I not do as Francal wishes? Is he not my master? He commands me, and my duty is to obey. Why are you here?

PICORIN. I?

MIRETTE. Yes -- you. Why have they left us alone together, except that you may obtain from me the consent which I have not even the right to refuse? You love me, Picorin. Very well -- there is my hand. I will be your wife.

PICORIN. (*sadly*). No!

MIRETTE. You refuse?

PICORIN. Yes, I refuse. Forgive me for my presumption, Mirette. I was mistaken. I had a dream -- a dream so sweet that -- waking -- I believed it true.

MIRETTE. (*looking at him*). A dream, Picorin! What was it?

PICORIN. You'll only laugh at me -- now.

SONG. -- PICORIN.

When all was young, I went a-dreaming,
The days were sweet, and every sky was blue;
You were a child with bright eyes beaming,
And I a boy, a boy with you.
You gazed at me, so tall above you,
I was your sweetheart -- dear, do you forget?
And in my dream you clung to me and asked me if I loved you,
And I -- I was happy *then*, Mirette!

But when, the night is round us falling,
And by your tent my happy watch I keep,
"Good-night!" I hear your sweet voice calling,
For very joy, I weep, I weep.
But when, in all your beauty beaming,
You spurn me, scorn me, and forget,
Then all my heart grows cold, and then I wake from dreaming,
I know -- I know you love me not, Mirette!

MIRETTE. My poor Picorin!

PICORIN. You pity me?
MIRETTE. With all my heart -- but (*sadly*) I do not love you!
PICORIN. Ah!
MIRETTE. Do not be angry with me for speaking so plainly, but your goodness, your sincerity compel me to. I will not be your wife, but no other of your band shall be my husband. I shall never marry a gipsy!
PICORIN. What will Francal say?
MIRETTE. Francal cannot understand what I feel. I know that I was never intended for this wandering life, this life of robbery and bloodshed. It revolts and sickens me, and I shall tell him so!
PICORIN. And if he is angry -- if he threatens you?
MIRETTE. Then I shall run away.
BOBINET (*at the back in a frightened voice*). Who goes there? Help, help!
PICORIN (*turning round*). What's the matter?
BOBINET. It's nobody! It's only a tree! (*Laughs to himself.*)
PICORIN. Idiot!

The sun begins to set. MIRETTE has seated herself R., and hidden her face in her hands.

PICORIN (*returning to MIRETTE*). Mirette -- you are crying!
MIRETTE. It is nothing! It does me good. Leave me for a little while!
PICORIN (*to BOBINET*). The fire's nearly out. Go and pick up a few sticks, Bobinet.
BOBINET. I go? No, thank you! It's getting dark, and I don't want to run against a lot of nasty bogies and hobgoblins. Ugh!
PICORIN. Then stay here, and keep a sharp look-out. I'll go myself.

PICORIN *approaches MIRETTE who has stretched herself on the grassy slope, and is already half asleep. He gazes at her for a moment, then, without saying a word, he takes off his coat, and covers her with it.*

PICORIN (*to BOBINET*). Take care that no harm happens to Mirette!

Exit PICORIN.

BOBINET (*walking up and down with his gun*). Take care that no harm happens to Mirette! How can I prevent it? An unprotected man like me, alone in a forest with a girl asleep -- I don't like the situation at all. Besides, the forest isn't safe. I've been told that it's full of robbers. (*Stops.*) Ah, how stupid of me! We are the robbers, of course! (*Laughs.*) Ha! ha! ha!
ECHO. Ha! ha! ha!
BOBINET (*turning round, frightened*). Eh? Who was that rude person? (*to MIRETTE.*) Did you laugh, mam'zelle? I'm --

(stops.) No -- she's asleep. (*Looks through the trees.*) Who goes there? Your name? No -- it's another tree! I wish the trees wouldn't walk about so -- it *does* make one so nervous! I really don't feel at all well. Perhaps I could keep my spirits up by singing. That's not a bad idea -- I'll try a song.

SONG. -- BOBINET.

Long ago in Alcala,
Ta ra ra, ta ra ra, ra ra, ra ra!
There dwelt a tall Alcade grand,
Who was the terror of the land,
Ta ra ra, ta ra ra, ra ra, ra ra!
(*frightened*). Hola!
(*resuming the song*). He loved a maid of Alcala,
Ta ra ra, ta ra ra, ra ra, ra ra!
For he was fine, and frank, and free,
And she was fair as a maid should be,
Tra la la, tra la la, tra la la!
(*frightened*). Hola! Who goes there?
(*resuming the song gaily*). He was a terrible tall Alcade,
She was a lovely lady,
Alcà -- Alcà -- Alcà -- de -dà!
The lovely lady of Alcala,
Ta ra ra, ra ra, ra ra, ra ra, ra ra, ra ra!
(*walks up and down in great agitation*).
They met one eve in Alcala,
Ta ra ra, ta ra ra, ra ra, ra ra!
He said, "Sweet maiden, come with me!"
But she was coy as a maid should be,
Tra la la, tra la la, tra la la, la la, la!
So they took a boat and went to sea,
Ta ra ra, ta ra ra, ra ra, ra ra!
The boat came back, but ah! not they --
And that's the end of the tale, they say,
Tra la la, tra la la, tra la la, ra ra, ra!
Yes, that's the end of the tall Alcade,
The boat and the sea and the lovely lady.
Alcà -- Alcà -- de -dà --
Tra la la!

Finishes with a dance.

BOBINET. Oh, it's a sad story! And it doesn't seem to have cheered me up in the least. (*Calling.*) Mirette! Mirette! how foolish it is to go on sleeping like that. (*Suddenly.*) What's that? (*Listening.*) Footsteps -- and coming in this direction! What's to be done? I'd better climb a tree. It will be nice and quiet up there amongst the little green leaves -- and so safe! (*Puts down gun and climbs up tree.*) How very annoying! I've left my gun at the bottom. (*Seeing GERARD and MAX.*) Ah!

it's a gendarme! No! It's a gamekeeper, with his master. And my gun is down below!

GERARD *enters, followed by his Gamekeeper, MAX.*

GERARD. Come, Max, we've no time to lose. The hounds have passed the hollow -- they are turning down towards the pond.

MAX. We'd better be turning homewards, sir. Evening is falling, and the forest is not safe.

BOBINET *(aside)*. That's exactly what I said!

MAX. Look, sir, there's been a fire lighted here.

GERARD. And it's only just gone out.

MAX *(seeing BOBINET's gun)*. And here's a gun.

GERARD. A gun?

BOBINET *(aside)*. What an inquisitive person!

MAX. Loaded too! We're on the track, sir. Those rascals who robbed the village yesterday must be here -- in this forest.

GERARD, *who has been looking round the glade, sees MIRETTE asleep, and suppresses an exclamation.*

GERARD. Ah!

MAX *(running to him)*. What is it, sir? Have you caught one of them?

GERARD. See, Max! A pretty little girl fast asleep. Isn't she charming?

MAX. You always were one for admiring the petticoats, sir.

GERARD. Go away, Max! You will frighten her. I'll speak to her.

MAX. She's nothing but a gipsy, sir! Get her to tell you where her companions are hiding; that will be better than filling her head with pretty nonsense. *(Aside.)* I'll go and inform the Burgomaster -- *(to GERARD, confidentially.)* I shouldn't advise you to stay here too long, sir.

GERARD. Nonsense, my good fellow. You don't know what you're talking about.

Exit MAX.

BOBINET *(aside)*. He's walking off with my gun! And I can't get down to warn the others!

GERARD *softly approaches MIRETTE and looks at her.*

DUET. -- GERARD and MIRETTE.

GERARD. She is asleep! ah, how fair is she!
Her little head at rest upon her folded arm.
Whence does she come? Who can she be?
What tender grace! what wondrous charm!
Blow soft, ye breezes, where she lies;
Bend down, ye leaves, and kiss her dreaming;

But see, she opes her lovely eyes,
 And through the woods a light is beaming!
 MIRETTE (*starting*). Ah!
 GERARD. Did I affright thee?
 MIRETTE. Yes.
 GERARD. Forgive me!
 If I had dreamed that thou wouldst fear,
 I had not dared to venture near.
 MIRETTE. It was not thou I thought to see,
 And that is why thy coming frightened me.
 BOBINET (*aside*). I ought to warn him -- where is Picorin?
 GERARD. Roaming on through valley deep,
 On through forest fairy-haunted,
 Here I saw thee soft asleep,
 Here I stopped, as one enchanted!
 MIRETTE. Ah! it were better thou hadst gone
 Without a single thought for me
 Here to live my life alone,
 Breathing out my destiny
 Without a star or hope to cheer.
 GERARD. Who, then, art thou?
 MIRETTE. Why seek to know?
 GERARD. Ah! tell me why so sad?
 Should not thy life be glad?
 What sorrow clouds thy coming years?
 Where is thy home? and who art thou?
 MIRETTE. Ask the darkness above me!
 Child of the homeless night am I;
 Loving none -- and none to love me,
 None to heed as I go by.
 Though my heart may weep for ever,
 I must sing and dance for pay,
 Ever and aye, light and gay
 Dancing for pay -- resting never!
 Under the friendless skies for ever!
 GERARD. How so? . . . for one so sweet as thou,
 The coming years should all be bright!
 MIRETTE. It is too late for gladness now,
 The coming years are dark as night.
 GERARD. But, if so sad thou art,
 What can I do for thee?
 MIRETTE. Nothing! take hence thy gentle heart,
 Pass on, and let me be.
 GERARD. Nay, do not think I can forget thee,
 Or this sweet wood, when far apart,
 This twilight hour, when first I met thee,
 And learnt the secret of thy heart.
 MIRETTE. Bid me good-bye. I must forget thee,
 I cannot follow where thou art;
 It is my fate that I have met thee,
 It is my fate that we must part.

ENSEMBLE.

{ MIRETTE. And if ever in thy dreaming
Thoughts of me should linger yet,
Let them pass like summer gleaming,
I am not worthy one regret!
GERARD. Tho' so brief this summer gleaming,
Though we part I'll not forget,
Still for ever in my dreaming,
Thy sweet face will linger yet!
}

BOBINET (*aside*). How that girl is thawing! She was never as nice as that to me.

PICORIN *re-enters, with a bundle of wood on his shoulders.*

PICORIN. Here you are, Bobinet -- I've brought some wood for the fire.

Seeing GERARD, he stops abruptly, then drops his bundle of wood.

BOBINET (*aside*). I shall never dare to come down again!

GERARD. Who is this fellow?

MIRETTE. It is Picorin -- a friend --

PICORIN, *without saying anything, picks up his coat, which he quietly puts on, then approaches GERARD.*

PICORIN. I don't know who you are, sir, nor why you are here; but our comrades are returning, and Francal, our captain, is not a man to be trifled with. I advise you to leave this place as quickly as possible.

BOBINET (*aside*). He's going to let him escape!

MIRETTE (*to GERARD*). Yes, yes, Picorin is right. Go at once -- at once, I beg of you!

PICORIN (*aside*). How anxious she seems for his safety!

MIRETTE. You have been kind to me -- we may never meet again! Will you not tell me your name?

GERARD. Gerard. And yours -- ?

MIRETTE. Mirette. Good-bye!

GERARD. And have you no wish to leave your companions? No desire to lead a different life?

MIRETTE (*after a few moments' hesitation*). No. I must not!

PICORIN (*sternly to GERARD*). Go! or I will answer for nothing -- not even for myself!

GERARD (*to MIRETTE*). Good-bye, then! (*MIRETTE follows him with her eyes as he goes away. PICORIN watches her.*)

BOBINET (*aside*). Oh, yes -- you can look at him! But the lovely gentleman is not for you!

PICORIN. What's become of Bobinet? (*Noise heard without -- the Gipsies returning.*)

GIPSIES *enter, carrying plunder, with FRANCAL at their head.*

CHORUS.

Oh, we've been up,
And we've been down,
Through the village
And round the town,
And all can say,
At least today,
We've done our peregrinations.
So I trust we've got
A pretty good lot,
A pretty good lot,
Of plunder now,
For that's the point,
As you'll allow,
Of bandits' avocation.

SOLO. -- FRANCAL.

Oh, we've been visiting our friends,
As folks do -- in society;
And of course we know that much depends
On the manners of strict propriety.
To find them at home when we call, no doubt,
Is charming for a variety,
But we much prefer to find them out,
As folks do -- in society.

So now that we've got all we could,
As folks do -- in society,
We've returned to our comfortable wood,
Tra-la-la-la-la-liety!
"Stay at home" is a maxim good, no doubt;
Take this for a slight variety,
Don't be found in, or you'll be found out,
As folks are -- in society.

FRANCAL (*seated on a tree trunk*). Now let's see what we've got.
Pichet -- a couple of fowls, a sack of corn.

PICORIN. Francal!

FRANCAL. Don't interrupt me. Bertuccio -- a sheep! (BERTUCCIO
show the sheep, which he is leading by his waist-belt.)
And what have you got there, Poischiche?

GIPSY. A velvet coat, captain.

FRANCAL (*taking it*). I'm much obliged to you.

GIPSY. And a real lace petticoat for Mam'zelle Mirette.

FRANCAL (*imitating him*). For Mam'zelle Mirette! Oh, these
lovers! Well, Picorin, are you to be the favoured one?

PICORIN. Captain, we have not time to talk of these things when
danger threatens us.

ALL. (*rising and surrounding PICORIN*). Danger?

PICORIN. Bobinet has disappeared.

ALL. Bobinet!

PICORIN. I went to collect a few sticks for the fire, and on
returning found, instead of Bobinet, a huntsman, who

without a doubt had followed our tracks, and who will be able to inform against us.

The GIPSIES murmur. During the foregoing, the fire has been lighted, and the smoke is now rising through the trees.

BOBINET (aside). Oh, bother the smoke! I shall choke in another minute! (Coughs.)

ALL. Listen!

BOBINET (sneezes). Atschi! Now I've done for myself! They'll certainly find me out.

PICORIN. That sound came from that tree.

GIRLS. Why, it's Bobinet!

BOBINET. Of course it is. Can't you leave a respectable person in peace? I didn't come up here to be smoked -- like a herring.

FRANCAL. What are you doing up there? Roosting?

BOBINET. Don't be rude to a gentleman who occupies a more elevated position than you do.

FRANCAL. I assure you it's no laughing matter. Come down.

BOBINET. You won't hurt me?

FRANCAL (significantly). We shall see.

BOBINET. If there's any doubt about it, I'll stay where I am.

FRANCAL (taking a gun). Make haste, or I shall have to hurry you up.

BOBINET. Oh, what an unkind thing to do! I'm coming. (Jumps down.)

FRANCAL. Now, what have you seen? What have you heard? Speak!

BOBINET. Must I tell you everything?

ALL. Yes, yes!

MIRETTE (aside). What does he know?

BOBINET. I saw the same gentleman that Picorin has just alluded to. He stayed here quite a long time, and kept on throwing sidelong glances at Mirette. Then he made eyes at her, and first of all she looked down at her shoes -- like that; and then she looked at him -- like that.

FRANCAL. Mirette! who was this man?

MIRETTE. I do not know him. (Murmurs.)

FRANCAL. Speak! His name!

MIRETTE. He told me that he was called Gerard. That is all I know of him.

PICORIN. It's true, captain, I was there. But let us be off -- we have no time to lose!

BERTUCCIO (his ear to the ground). Too late!

ALL (speaking low). What is it?

BERTUCCIO. The tramp of soldiers!

ALL. Soldiers!

FRANCAL. Put out the lights!

The fire and the torches are extinguished. All is dark, and there is complete silence. The steps of Soldiers are heard approaching.

FRANCAL (in a whisper). It's all right. They will pass without seeing us.

Just as the Soldiers, led by MAX and the BURGOMASTER, appear at the back, the moon emerges from a cloud and the whole scene is lighted up.

BOBINET. Caught!

FRANCAL. Heaven is against us!

FINALE OF ACT I.

BURGOMASTER. Good evening, gentlemen!
Ahem! Ladies and gentlemen!
BOBINET. How polite! All is right.
BURGOMASTER. I fear I disarrange you.
BOBINET. No, not at all.
BURGOMASTER. Who's this?
CHORUS. Why, Bobinet! 'tis Bobinet! 'tis Bobinet!
BURGOMASTER. Well, Bobinet, get away!
(to the rest). Now then, your names,
And each one's occupation!
BOBINET. I'll give the information.
This, sir, is Francal,
The leader of our company.
BURGOMASTER. I understand, the leader of your band.
SOLDIERS. Ha! ha! ha! ha! I see! I see!
The leader of your company.
BOBINET. Leave it to me. I'll settle it, you'll see.
Strolling players, sir, are we, and most of us are clever.
Can sing, and dance, and make you verses.
BURGOMASTER. And pick what you can from people's purses.
BOBINET. Oh, no, sir -- never!
BURGOMASTER. Too clever. Arrest them!
BOBINET. Touch me if you dare!
BURGOMASTER. Arrest him! Arrest them all!

Struggle. Gipsies overpowered.

MAX (to MIRETTE). You need not fear,
My pretty dear,
Your case is clear.
FRANCAL. Her case is clear,
She has betrayed us!
GIPSIES. Traitress! spy! she has betrayed us.
MIRETTE. It is a lie!
At heart I am not one of you;
I hate your life and all you do --
But yet you have been good to me.
(turning to FRANCAL.) Have cherished me so tenderly,
I'd not betray you, friends,
Not if my life depend on such an infamy.
GERARD. 'Tis true, sir, as you know.
She's not to blame. She was with me,
And I demand her liberty.
MIRETTE. Thanks, thanks! it cannot be,

I was with them, with them I go.
 It is my destiny.
 GERARD. It shall not be!
 (to BURGOMASTER). She's not to blame, you know.
 BURGOMASTER. The girl may go.
 CHORUS. Free! Mirette is free!
 Traitress, spy!
 GERARD. Fear not! I will provide for thee.
 Max, take her home; tell the Marquise I sent her.
 (to PICORIN). What dost thou want?
 PICORIN. To follow her. I love her so;
 Where she goes, let me go too.
 Let me follow her for aye,
 Like a dog his master's way.
 Tend her, serve her, do her will,
 Let me only follow still.
 Watch her, guard her night and day,
 Let me follow her for aye.
 MIRETTE. Yes, let him come; he is my faithful friend.
 PICORIN. Yes, till the end!
 GERARD (to BURGOMASTER). Let him go free!
 BURGOMASTER. Well, as you will. Thou'rt free.
 FRANCAL (to MIRETTE). I'll find thee, dear, some day.
 MIRETTE (*aside, half dreaming*). Some day! Who knows?
 BOBINET. Well, I declare! What can it be?
 Mirette and Picorin, both of them free!
 Pray what is then to become of me?
 BURGOMASTER. Come, then. Quick march!
 SOLDIERS. Come along, come along, quick march!
 GIPSIES. Come along then, so let it be.
 MIRETTE (to FRANCAL, *half dreaming*).
 Good-bye! Some day! Who knows?
 CHORUS. Follow then, with laugh and song,
 Though the way be dark and long,
 Fettered or free, what care we?
 Hurrah for the life of the Zingari!
 Forward then with merry, merry song,
 Though the way be dark and long,
 Ne'er a resting place have we,
 The world's the home of the Zingari!

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

SCENE. -- *Large Hall in the Chateau of the Marquise, brilliantly lighted; a gallery at the back opening on the gardens. To the left large glass doors leading to the banqueting room. On the rising of the curtain the MARQUISE is discovered seated in a high armchair with armorial hangings. She looks very happy and smiling, and is listening to MIRETTE, who is kneeling at her feet on a velvet cushion, and reading to her an old love story from an*

antique volume.

OLD BALLAD. -- MIRETTE.

So forward through the fading light,
Her faithless lover rode away,
Forgetting her he wooed last night,
And all the vows of yesterday.
"Ah stay!" she loves thee so, Sir Knight.
But ever still he rode away.

And all the birds were mute o'erhead,
And all the stars grew dark in Heav'n,
Just for a word that was not said,
Just for a kiss that was not given!

And broken-hearted at the door,
The little maiden pined away,
Remembering all the love he swore,
The golden dreams of yesterday!
"Come back! she loves thee evermore!
Come back, Sir Knight, come back and stay!"

And then, ah! then, the word was said,
And then, ah! then, the kiss was given;
And all the birds sang o'erhead,
And earth was heaven.

MARQ. Well, Mirette, it is a month to-day since you first came to the Chateau. Do you regret having abandoned your wild, gipsy life?

MIRETTE. That would be ungrateful, after all your goodness to me.

MARQ. Prettily spoken, my dear, but not entirely convincing. Now suppose I were to guess that you had left some friend behind you -- some lover, perhaps. Should I be very far wrong?

MIRETTE (*softly*). Some lover!

MARQ (*aside*). I'll put her to the test. (*Aloud.*) Perhaps you have been building castles in the air, like the shepherdesses in the old legend. A handsome prince chanced to pass by. Like a true gallant, he murmured some sweet nonsense in their pretty ears, and they believed that he was in earnest! I dare say the lady of your song, who was deserted by a knight, was only a shepherdess.

MIRETTE. If he had not come back, she would have died!

MARQ. Then she would have done a very silly thing! Now, look at me -- I was an extremely pretty girl once upon a time. You smile! I assure you that I was! One day a king, a young king, told me that he loved me. I will not mention his name, because he has a large family now, and it would not be discreet. I believed the delicious nonsense that he breathed in my ear. I

blushed -- I palpitated; and for two whole days and nights -- ah, what nights! -- I dreamed that I was a queen. The end of it all was that I married a marquis -- an *old* marquis! And I'm not dead yet!

MIRETTE. You are very kind to me, Madame; but I have been so unhappy that sometimes -- (*she stops*). However, all that is finished. (*She rises, shuts her book, and lays it on the table.*)

MARQ (*aside*). She loves Gerard. And I fear that he -- but we must put a stop to that.

Enter GERARD in hunting costume.

MARQ. Ah, here is Gerard!

GERARD. Good afternoon, aunt. (*Embraces her.*)

MARQ. Why, you've only just come in from riding! Go and change your clothes at once! Surely you haven't forgotten that this evening you are to celebrate your betrothal?

MIRETTE (*aside*). Ah!

MARQ. The Baron van Osborn, your future father-in-law, and one of my old admirers, will be here directly with your charming *fiancée*, Bianca.

GERARD. Yes -- I know.

MARQ. You don't seem excited about it! Good gracious! In my time lovers were made of more inflammable stuff! Besides, Bianca is clever, rich, and pretty.

GERARD. Yes, Aunt!

MARQ (*imitating him*). Yes, Aunt! Upon my word, you puzzle me! You are like Mirette. I don't know what's come to her.

MIRETTE (*with an effort*). Ah, Madame, I -- I am glad to hear of the happiness in store for Monsieur Gerard.

MARQ. Of course!

GERARD (*coldly*). You know that I am fond of Bianca. This marriage is your wish, and I obey you; but you must give me time to get accustomed to the idea.

MARQ (*rising*). You are a fool, Gerard! I know what is best for your happiness, and I shall act accordingly. (*Rings bell. Servant enters. Aside to him.*) Have you done as I told you?

SERVANT. Francal and the Gipsies were set at liberty this morning.

MARQ. Good! Mirette, follow me!

Exit MARQUISE, followed by MIRETTE.

GERARD. Mademoiselle Bianca van Osborn will be here directly! I shall see her; I shall speak to her; I suppose I shall have to tell her that I love her, as they expect her to become my wife! And yet, if truth be told, it is not the thought of Bianca that sets my heart beating so!

SONG. -- GERARD.

If love were calculation,
And men were only wise,
They'd think of rank and station,
And not of Beauty's eyes.
True hearts might go unheeded,
Sweet lips might smile for nought,
If rank were all men needed,
And wealth were all they sought.

But ah! what of wealth or of station?
What, all the world's wisdom and lore!
If love were but cold calculation,
And hearts had no hearts to adore!

But oh! if love were given,
Unfettered, pure, and free,
It makes of earth a Heaven,
Whate'er its rank may be.
It trusts -- through every season,
It lets the world go by,
It loves and asks no reason,
It loves and knows not why.

Then let us be sages hereafter,
To-morrow be wise as we may,
While life has its folly and laughter,
The heart has its love for to-day!

MIRETTE *passes under the gallery.*

GERARD (*seeing her*). Mirette! (MIRETTE *turns round and stops.*)
Why do you avoid me, Mirette? Since you have been here
I have scarcely been able to catch a glimpse of you. I
wanted to speak to you, for I had so much to tell you.

MIRETTE. Oh, Monsieur Gerard, you must not talk to me like this
at the very moment when you are expecting your *fiancée*!

GERARD. This marriage is my aunt's wish; but I shall meet
Bianca with a heavy heart, for another has taken her
place in my affections -- another holds all my
happiness in her hands -- and *you* Mirette, *you* are that
other!

DUET. -- MIRETTE *and* GERARD.

GERARD. Hast thou forgot the hour we met,
The forest deep, the magic skies,
And how I found you there, Mirette,
And looked into thy opening eyes.

MIRETTE. Ah! speak no more of how we met,
Of forest deep, of magic skies,
That hour, that night, we must forget,
It is the time for our good-byes.

GERARD. Ah! say not so! It shall not be,
I cannot live from thee apart,

For since that hour I swear to thee,
 Thou art the mistress of my heart.

MIRETTE. Why tell me that? It is too late,
 Take back, take back, thy foolish vow;
 Thou art too noble and too great
 I am not fit for such as thou.

GERARD. Thou art my star, thou art my fate,
 The idol of my every vow,
 And all the world of rich and great
 Has nought so beautiful as thou.

MIRETTE. Ah! say not so! Good-bye! Forget!
 A nameless girl is not for thee.

GERARD. What matters name? Thou art Mirette,
 And that is all the world to me!

MIRETTE. No -- let me go! I must forget
 The dream of what can never be;
 Thou hast another -- not Mirette!
 Thou art another's -- not for me!

GERARD. I have no love but thou, Mirette;
 I love but thee! I love but thee!

MIRETTE (*aside*). He loves me! loves me! can it be?

GERARD. Speak, dearest, speak! why timid be?

MIRETTE. Thou art too high, too great for me!

ENSEMBLE.

{ GERARD. Ah! dearest, turn thine eyes to me,
 { And tell me if thou lovest me.
 { MIRETTE. Ah! look into mine eyes and see,
 { I love but thee! I love but thee!

BOTH. As the earth looks up to Heav'n,
 As the river flows to sea,
 So my heart to thine is given,
 All my life, my love to thee.

At the end of duet GERARD takes MIRETTE in his arms. They separate on hearing a step approaching under the gallery. The MARQUISE enters, followed by a SERVANT, to whom she is giving orders.

MARQUISE (*to the SERVANT, indicating the banqueting room L.*).
 You understand -- do you not? I wish everything
 arranged in that room. (*She sees GERARD and MIRETTE --*
aside.) Together! (*She comes down between them. To*
 GERARD.) Not ready yet?

MIRETTE (*aside*). The Marquise!

MARQUISE (*turning to MIRETTE*). My nephew's fiancée, Mademoiselle
 Bianca van Osborn, is expected every minute. I am
 giving an entertainment in her honour, and I wish you
 to take part in it, Mirette. Go and put on one of your
 gipsy dresses -- the smartest you can find.

MIRETTE. Oh! madame.

GERARD (*aside*). What's in the wind now?

MARQ. It is my wish! And you, Gerard, go and get ready --

there is only just time.

Exeunt MIRETTE and GERARD at opposite sides.

MARQ. So this is the result of the kindness which I was foolish enough to show to this little gipsy baggage. She has turned the head of that pretty nephew of mine. Happily it is not too late to put a stop to such folly. *(Servant enters.)* What is it?

SERVANT. A man wishes to speak with you, Madame.

MARQ. It is he. Show him in.

Enter BOBINET bowing very extravagantly.

BOBINET. Madame, I have the honour to lay at your feet the best respects of your most obedient servant!

MARQUISE *(aside)*. The rascal know how to behave himself.

BOBINET *(aside)*. What a splendid woman! *(He seats himself in an armchair.)*

MARQ. You are Monsieur ----- ?

BOBINET. Celestin Bobinet, poet, musician and dancer; leading comedian of the celebrated Francal's famous company.

MARQ. He has sent you here?

BOBINET. I have just left him -- in a pitiable state, Madame -- a really pitiable state. Justice as usual declines to show us any consideration whatever. You know the sort of straw they put down in cells, nasty damp stuff -- but perhaps Madame has never tried it? Ah, well; the prison is very unhealthy, and we have spent a most unpleasant month there.

MARQ. I interceded for you.

BOBINET. And obtained our release? I can see Madame has a large and overflowing heart. And what is Madame's pleasure?

MARQ. This evening the marriage contract between my nephew and Mademoiselle Bianca van Osborn is to be signed.

BOBINET *(interrupting her)*. And you wish to invite us?

(Warmly.) My dear Madame, we shall be delighted!

MARQ. If I invite you, it will be to amuse our friends.

BOBINET. Quite so. *(Aside.)* An entertainment on the cheap!

MARQ. But I should like to have some idea of what you propose doing.

BOBINET. You want to know what our programme will be? Here is one of our last performances -- given before Royalty. It ought to have been printed on white satin, but the Chancellor of the Exchequer didn't see his way to including the additional expense in the estimates.

DUET. -- MARQUISE and BOBINET.

MARQUISE. Now for the programme --

BOBINET. The programme will begin

With a roll and a delicate rum-ti-tum.

MARQUISE. A delicate rum-ti-tum!

BOBINET. Performed by Francal on the drum!

MARQUISE. On the drum!

BOBINET. Few are his equal on the drum!

MARQUISE. Well, then, what next will come?

BOBINET. Next turn, Bertuccio!

MARQUISE. Who is he?

BOBINET. The only strong man.

MARQUISE. That can't be.

BOBINET. There are so many.

BOBINET. Oh, no! no!

BOBINET. There's only one Bertuccio!

BOBINET. He can hold, when hung,

BOBINET. An ox, or elephant, on his tongue

MARQUISE. They always do

BOBINET (*pointedly*). Or anyone else who'll oblige.

MARQUISE (*declining the suggestion*). No! no!

BOBINET. Well, he draws the line, sometimes, I know!

BOBINET. Next turn -- the *fin de siècle* fleas,

BOBINET. Who can dance a *pas*,

BOBINET. With a gay tra-là,

BOBINET. Or a serpentine dance on a lady's ankles,

BOBINET. And the Serpent Man, and the Siamese Twins,

BOBINET. And the bearded lady who lives on pins.

MARQUISE. But is that all?

BOBINET. The next turn's the better; you will see,

BOBINET. The songs and dances of the Zingari.

BOBINET. And better yet,

BOBINET. The star of the troupe,

BOBINET. Mirette!

MARQUISE. Of course, Mirette must sing and dance,

MARQUISE. But tell me, pray,

MARQUISE. Is nothing done by Bobinet?

BOBINET. Bobinet?

MARQUISE. The celebrated Bobinet!

BOBINET. I close the programme with a dance.

MARQUISE. You dance?

BOBINET. Can't you see

BOBINET. At a glance

BOBINET. I dance!

BOBINET. Yes, yes --

BOBINET. See me dance

BOBINET. The gay cha-hut,

BOBINET. Serpentine glance

BOBINET. And butterfly toe.

BOBINET. Whirling --

BOBINET. Twirling,

BOBINET. Round I go,

BOBINET. Tee-to-tum,

BOBINET. With my tum-ti-toe!

BOBINET. See me dance!

BOBINET. Isn't it fine?

BOBINET. Did you ever see

BOBINET. In Spain or France

BOBINET. Such a style as mine?

BOBINET. So particular

Perpendicular,
Up to date
And superfine!

ENSEMBLE.

MARQUISE.	BOBINET.
See him dance	See me dance
The gay cha-hut!	The gay cha-hut!
Serpentine glance,	Serpentine glance,
And butterfly too!	And butterfly too!
Isn't it grand?	Isn't it grand?
Isn't it great?	Isn't it great?
And especially too	And especially too
It's up to date!	It's up to date!

PAS DE DEUX.

BOBINET. I will not conceal from you, Madame, the fact that these exertions have made me feel unusually hungry; and I cannot help thinking that if I were allowed to attack a ham, in company with a large loaf and some flagons of old wine, I should be in a position this evening to give an exhibition of my talents on a scale never before attempted.

MARQ. Your wishes are commands!

BOBINET (*aside*). She's a splendid woman!

The MARQUISE rings. Enter PICORIN.

MARQ. Picorin, bring Monsieur Bobinet a bottle of Johannisberg -- and a ham.

PICORIN (*surprised*). Bobinet!

BOBINET. Picorin! (*They look at each other.*) So you've put on livery! (*Contemptuously.*)

MARQ (*to* PICORIN). Did you hear?

BOBINET. A bottle of Johannisberg and a ham! Make haste!

PICORIN (*aside, as he exits*). What does this mean?

BOBINET. Within an hour, Madame, Francal and his company will arrive at the Chateau.

MARQ. I will give orders for them to be admitted.

BOBINET. And if you will spare them a few sandwiches and a jug of water, it would refresh them wonderfully. (*Aside.*) I mustn't be selfish.

MARQ. Good-bye for the present, Mr. Bobinet. (*Exit.*)

BOBINET. Good-bye for the present, Madame! (*Aside.*) Oh, she's a splendid woman! And so well preserved! The prison was not all that I could wish, but this Chateau appears to be an extremely comfortable place. Francal is waiting for me. He will not come until I bring him word. Never mind! I shall have time to eat a morsel.

PICORIN enters, with two servants, who lay the table.

BOBINET. Well done, Picorin. You are major-domo here, I suppose?

Upon my word, you're getting fat! (PICORIN *is silent.*)
 He won't answer me. Picorin is touchy! (*The ham is brought in.*) And is all that for me? (*He walks round the table.*) Oh, what an exquisite perfume lingers round that ham! And what plump and chubby bottles!

PICORIN (*aside*). I wonder what brought him here. (*Aloud.*) Dinner is ready, monsieur.

BOBINET (*aside*). Monsieur! He is alluding to me! (*Aloud.*) Thank you, Picorin. (*Seats himself.*) Then you are going to wait on me. That's very nice of you.

PICORIN (*filling BOBINET's glass*). Johannisberg, '54.

BOBINET. Will you kindly say that again?

PICORIN (*coldly*). Johannisberg, '54.

BOBINET. '54 -- (*sips it*) -- you're sure it's '54. I know something about wine. The vintage they supplied us with at the prison gave me a touch of the gout. It was too full-bodied; but this -- hum! (*Drinks.*) I will have another glass. Thank you! The ham ought to give it flavour. (*Eats with his mouth full.*) Sit down, Picorin, and have a glass with me.

PICORIN. I don't know whether I ought to --

BOBINET. Pooh! there's nobody looking!

SONG. -- BOBINET.

When Noah went aboard the Ark,
 Tiquetin, tin, tin, tin;
 He was a thirsty patriarch,
 Tiquetin, tin, tin, tin.
 But when the ark began to roll,
 And the sea to heave and roar;
 He felt very ill, as captains will,
 If they've never been to sea before.

But when his pain had all passed by,
 Tiquetin, tin, tin, tin;
 Said Noah, "I am getting dry,"
 Tiquetin, tin, tin, tin.
 So when they came to the good Rhineland
 He couldn't hold out any more;
 "Water," he said, "don't agree with me,
 Let's see what they sell on shore."

So he took a boat and rowed ashore,
 Tiquetin, tin, tin, tin,
 And bought him a bottle, "'54,"
 Tiquetin, tin, tin, tin.
 And down he sat and drank his wine,
 And did like other men,
 "Water," said he, "don't agree with me,"
 And he's never drunk a drop since then.

BOBINET (*drinking*). You say this is '52?

PICORIN (*drinking*). Well, one can hardly judge at the first

glass.

BOBINET. That's true. (*He eats.*) The ham's a trifle salt.

PICORIN. (*filling BOBINET's glass*). It makes you thirsty?

BOBINET. And when the wine is good -- eh? (*Drinks.*) How quickly the delightful '52 gets into one's head! You're sure it is '52? Perhaps it's '53.

PICORIN. Oh, the Marquise has a wonderful cellar!

BOBINET. She's a splendid woman! (*The wine gradually begins to affect him.*) Poor Marquise!

PICORIN. Why poor Marquise?

BOBINET. She is furious -- because -- her -- nephew -- is crazy over Mirette. You know Mirette. But that doesn't concern you.

PICORIN. No. Have another glass?

BOBINET. Thank you. (*Drinks.*) It doesn't concern you, but I'm going to tell you, all the same. Well, she has had an idea. We are coming to her party this evening -- you understand --

PICORIN. Francal, and the others?

BOBINET. Yes -- all of them. And as soon as we arrive -- you're quite sure you understand me?

PICORIN. Yes -- yes! Have another glass?

BOBINET. Thank you. (*Drinks.*) As soon as we arrive, she will send for Mirette; she will make her dance before everybody, and -- hey, presto! -- there is an end of Monsieur Gerard's infatuation!

PICORIN. (*aside*). Poor Mirette!

BOBINET. Of course I am telling you this in confidence.

PICORIN. Naturally!

BOBINET. But Francal has his plans as well as the Marquise, and if Mirette will not return to her old comrades, then -- to-night -- after the fête -- we are going to carry her off.

PICORIN. (*rising*). To carry off Mirette? But how?

BOBINET. Francal will have horses ready, at the gate -- ah! I can't talk any more! (*Falls asleep with his head on the table.*)

PICORIN. He asks me if I understand -- but I understand only too well. Poor Mirette! The Marquise has discovered her love for Gerard, and has contrived this plan for separating them. But it will be better for Mirette to return with Francal than to submit to this humiliation. I will save her in spite of herself! (*Shakes BOBINET.*) Bobinet! Bobinet!

BOBINET. It's that idiot of a gaoler again. Let me sleep, you block-head!

PICORIN. No -- no! It is I -- Picorin! Where is Francal waiting for you?

BOBINET. (*trying to pull himself together*). Francal? In the forest --

PICORIN. Very well. You must run and warn him at once. (*BOBINET falls asleep again.*) I filled his glass too often, I'm afraid. He doesn't hear me. I must write -- that will do just as well. (*Writing.*) "Come at once, and have the

horses ready. Mirette consents. Picorin." There, Bobinet! The Marquise's orders!

BOBINET. The Marquise?

PICORIN. This letter must be taken to Francal immediately.

BOBINET (*getting up*). To Francal? The Marquise -- (*takes the paper and then goes up humming, "Sans fatigue, sans arret," but nearly falls down in trying to walk.*) It is the Johannisberg! (*Looking at the paper.*) What's this?

PICORIN. For Francal -- from the Marquise.

BOBINET. Oh, of course. I've got such a headache. (*Exit.*)

PICORIN. The fresh air will soon bring him to his senses. (*Looking out.*) There he goes! Now to warn Mirette. We must try to make our escape before the entertainment, so that the Marquise may not be able to carry out her plan -- and so Gerard may not see Mirette again! (*Stops.*) Am I acting for the best? Is it not rather for my own sake? But no! (*Sadly.*) She has said that she does not love me! Ah! here comes the Marquise and her guests. I will go and find Mirette.

Exit just as the MARQUISE enters with BIANCA and the BARON.

BIANCA (*very gaily*). Oh, we've had a delightful journey! The country is looking charming. It makes one wish that it were always spring time.

BARON. Ah, Marquise, it always *is* spring time in the radiance of your bright eyes!

MARQUISE (*smiling*). I perceive that winter has not yet snowed up the Baron's heart.

BARON. If it had, the snowdrifts would melt in the sunshine of your presence, Marquise.

BIANCA (*at back*). Here is Gerard.

MARQUISE (*aside*). I do hope he'll behave himself. (*Enter GERARD.*) Come, Gerard -- you have kept us waiting.

GERARD. A thousand pardons, my dear Baron! (*Shakes hands.*) Ah, Bianca! (*Bowing to her.*)

BIANCA (*holding out her hand to him, frankly*). How do you do, Gerard?

MARQ. Give me your arm, Baron. I know these young people have a thousand and one things to say to each other, so we had better leave them together.

BARON (*going*). Then this marriage pleases you?

MARQ. Very much.

BARON. Gerard's manner strikes me as being rather cold.

MARQ. Do you think so? It is only your fancy, Baron.

Exeunt MARQUISE and BARON.

BIANCA. How ceremonious we are! That's my father's way. But there's no need for anything of the sort between you and me -- (*coily*) especially now -- is there?

GERARD. Certainly not.

BIANCA. How pretty it is all around, the lovely park, the fine old trees. Shall we live here, Gerard?

GERARD. We? Oh, yes, I suppose so.
BIANCA. What's the matter with you, to-day? Does papa annoy you with his little ways? If he does, I'll scold him. But if you don't talk to me, I shall begin to be afraid of you -- *I* -- afraid of you.
GERARD. Forgive me!
BIANCA. Of course I will. But you mustn't be angry with me if I chatter, because I'm *so* happy, *so* happy!

SONG. -- BIANCA.

But yesterday in convent gray,
By gloomy walls enfolded,
I was at lessons all the day,
And sometimes -- often -- scolded.
'Twas Ave! Ave! noon and night,
For ever and for ever!
The only man we saw was white,
And as for dancing -- never!

To-day the sky is bright on high,
To-day the world uncloses,
I see unfold its gates of gold,
And all the way is roses!
To-day! to-day, my dream comes true!
And all through you!

But yesterday in convent gray,
I studied willy-nilly,
I always did what I was bid,
I was a school-girl silly;
And if at night we soared away,
In golden dreams ecstatic,
The Sisters brought us back next day
To sums and scales chromatic.

To-day, good-bye to lessons dry!
I hear my bride-bells ringing,
"Thou art a woman now," they cry,
And love is all they're singing!
To-day! to-day, my dreams come true!
And all through you!

GERARD (*aside*) How happy she is!
BIANCA. You haven't much to say for yourself.
GERARD. I was listening to you, Bianca.
BIANCA. You might do something more than listen to me. Are you not my *fiancé*? Am I not to be your wife?
GERARD. My wife? Certainly.
BIANCA. Really, Gerard, I can't make you out at all! This is hardly the sort of welcome I expected.
GERARD. You must excuse me, Bianca, I lead such a lonely life here. We see so little of the world that I am awkward and clumsy without meaning to be.

BIANCA (*a little disturbed*). Yes, I daresay that accounts for it. (*Aside.*) Suppose he should not love me? (*Silence.*)
GERARD. You are vexed with me?
BIANCA. Not vexed, Gerard, only a little grieved.

Enter the MARQUISE.

MARQ. Well, you lovers, have you come to an understanding?
 (*Silence.*) Why are you silent? What does it mean?
BIANCA. Ask Gerard, Madame! Perhaps he will confide to you what he has not ventured to say to me.
MARQ. Gerard --
GERARD. I ask your pardon, aunt, and yours also, Bianca; but I cannot explain myself now. I know that my behaviour must seem strange to you, and with your permission I will retire. (*Exit.*)
MARQ. My dear, he's mad!
BIANCA. No, Madame. He does not love me.
MARQ. Ah! you don't know him, little one. He's a bear, and you must learn to tame him.
BIANCA. There is nothing I should like better.
MARQ. They didn't teach you much at the convent, evidently.
BIANCA (*laughing*). Not very much!
MARQ. Ah! my child, you don't know men as well as I do.

SONG. -- MARQUISE.

Life is a fairyland, with wonders hung,
You cannot understand, you are too young,
One day you'll realize all we know now,
Life's empty fantasies, love's idle vow.
 But let it be!
 Ah, never cry!
 You will grow wiser, dear,
 As time goes by!

You'll learn that time has wings, heeds not your call,
Life's full of crooked things, man worst of all.
Give him love fond and true, he'll cast it down,
Weep and he'll laugh at you, laugh and he'll frown.
 But weep no more,
 Laugh light instead,
 He is not worth the tears
 He makes you shed.

But if his heart one day seeks pastures new,
What are you to say? what can you do?
Be neither coy nor bold, close fast your door,
And, when he finds you cold, he'll love you the more.
 Bid him depart,
 Leave him to burn:
 And if he's worth your love
 He'll soon return!

Enter the BARON, followed by PICORIN.

BARON. Marquise! your guests have arrived!

PICORIN (*aside*). And I cannot find Mirette to warn her!

Enter the Guests and GERARD.

CHORUS OF GUESTS.

Obedient to your kind command,
Your courteous invitations;
We come to give with heart and hand
Our true congratulations!
Long life, O happy pair,
Long life, and free from care!
With hearts of love your days we bless,
And wish you joy and happiness.
May Heav'n befriend you,
Love attend you,
And all your days be happiness!

TENORS. Shine on her, golden sun,
Fall on her, roses,
Till all her life is done,
Till twilight closes.

2ND SOPRANOS. Bloom for him, flowers of earth,
Bless him for ever,
Crown all his days with mirth,
All his endeavour.

1ST SOPRANOS. Then in your twilight hours,
In dark December,
All your sweet summer flowers
Ye shall remember.

BASSES. So till the evenfall,
Till your life closes,
Love shall be gladness all,
One path of roses.

ALL. Joy! Joy!
Gladness be yours!
Love that endures!
Obedient to your kind command,
Your courteous invitations,
We come to give with heart and hand
Our true congratulations!
Long life to you, O happy pair,
We sing to you, we sing to you,
Warm hearts of love and hopeful prayer
We bring to you, we bring to you;
May all your day
Be blithe and gay,
With roses, roses all the way!

MEN (*to GERARD*). Our best congratulations!

LADIES (*to MARQUISE*). But where's the bride?
MARQUISE (*presenting BIANCA*). Permit me --

CHORUS. How sweet and fair!
Happy husband! Happy pair!
Joy attend them,
Love befriend them,
All their days and everywhere!

GERARD (*aside to MARQUISE*). A moment, pray,
I have a word to say.
MARQUISE. Not now. Go to your bride, whose heart
You have so wounded!
GERARD (*to MARQUISE*). Only one word. (*MARQUISE moves away.*)
BIANCA (*to GERARD*). Still lost in dreams?
GERARD. Forgive me, pray!
(*aside*). I must be bright and gay;
And yet my heart is sad -- ah, well-a-day!

Dance stops. Voices are heard without.

CHORUS. What sounds are those so bright and gay?
MARQUISE. 'Tis the merry gipsy band,
Come to-night at my command;
Come to dance and sing for you,
Song and dance of gipsy-land.

GIPSIES (*entering*). We are your servants, lady fair!
Come to-night at your command;
Here to show the best we know,
Song and dance of gipsy-land.

MARQUISE. 'Tis well. But stay! -- ere ye begin,
Where is Mirette? (*To a servant.*) Bid her come in!
GERARD (*aside to MARQUISE*). What do you mean?
ALL. Mirette! Mirette!
GERARD (*aside to MARQUISE*). Why bring her here?
ALL. Mirette!
FRANCAL (*to GIPSIES*). Mirette, the faithless, here!
She'll despise us. That is clear!

MIRETTE *appears*.

MIRETTE. What! Francal here, and my old friends!
GIPSIES. How fine she's grown!
MIRETTE (*aside*). Alas! what shall I do?
MARQUISE (*to GUESTS*). My friends, let me present to you
This gipsy girl, brought up among these gipsies here.
My nephew Gerard, passing through the woods,
Found her one day, a waif, a stray,
And rescued her from prison.
ALL. From prison?
MARQUISE. A gipsy's proper home, they say.
ALL. Ha! ha!

GERARD (*advancing*). It is not true.
Mirette had ne'er deserved that fate.
Mirette is innocent of wrong.

MIRETTE (*aside to GERARD*). Thanks for thy word!

BIANCA (*aside*). How he defends her!

MARQUISE. No matter! She will dance to-night,
And sing for your a gipsy song.

ALL. Bravo! Bravo!

MARQUISE. The dancing girl must earn her pay.

GERARD (*aside to MARQUISE*). Why are you so unkind?

MARQUISE (*aside to him*). Hold your tongue!

FRANCAL. She does not speak!

MARQUISE (*to MIRETTE*). Well, girl, do you forget your friends?

MIRETTE. Your kindness, lady, makes me forget the past,
Forgive me. Let me make amends!

(*aside*). She wants to humble me before the man I love,
But no! I will not weep! Not yet, not yet!
I can but struggle and forget!

ALL. Come then, Mirette,
Sing to us, dance to us. Come then, Mirette!

MIRETTE (*to GIPSIES*). Come then, my friends in days of old,
When we were ragged, hungry, cold,
We used to sing a merry lay
Then why not sing it to-day,
When all is happy, (*sobbing*) bright and gay?

ALL. Bravo! Bravo! Sing on Mirette!

MIRETTE *sings, and the Gipsies accompany her.*

MIRETTE. Who is like the Zingara,
Singing, dancing, to and fro?
She can love like heaven above,
She can hate like hell below.

ALL. Tra la la, la la, la la.

MIRETTE. Who is like the Zingara?
Take her heart, she gives it thee,
Kiss her lips that wait thee there;
But if thou a traitor be,
Beware!
Take care!

ALL. But if thou a traitor be,
Beware!
Take care!

MIRETTE (*with a forced laugh*). Ha, ha! Ha, ha!
Sing care away,
While the sky is bright,
And gay.
Leave your sorrow
For to-morrow
Love is king of all
To-day!

ALL. Love is king to-day!

MIRETTE. Who is like the Zingara?

Laughing, loving until death,
Though her love a phantom prove,
Though her joy a fleeting breath.
ALL. Tra la la, la la, la la.
Who is like the Zingara?
MIRETTE. Give her but the wild delight,
One sweet hour of love to share,
Then, ah, let her die to-night!
Who'll care?
Who'll care?
ALL. Let the gipsy die to-night,
Who'll care?
Who'll care?
MIRETTE (*with a forced laugh*). Ha, ha! Ha, ha!
Sing care away, etc.
ALL. Love is king to-day!
ALL. Bravo! bravo!

All marvel at the talent of the little Gipsy. GERARD keeps his eyes fixed on MIRETTE. BIANCA watches GERARD, whilst the MARQUISE observes them all.

DANCE.

MIRETTE dances, surrounded by the other Gipsies. The dance becomes general. BOBINET dancing by MIRETTE gains much attention.

GIPSIES. Bravo, Bobinet!

The effort has been too great for MIRETTE; she is overcome with grief.

MIRETTE (*her hand to her head*). Ah! (*She stops dancing and falls, half fainting, into the arms of BOBINET and FRANCAL, who have hastened forward.*)
GERARD (*making a movement towards her*). Mirette!
BIANCA (*aside*). It is she whom he loves!
MARQUISE (*stopping GERARD*). Gerard, give your arm to Bianca. I think supper is ready.

GERARD, obliged to restrain himself before the assembled guests, approaches BIANCA and offers her his arm. MIRETTE has been placed in a chair and is weeping silently.

MARQUISE (*to the Gipsies*). You can retire.
FRANCAL (*aside to BOBINET*). Don't forget the signal!
BOBINET. At this window -- the crowing of a cock -- all right!

The Gipsies exeunt.

MARQ. Your arm, Baron. We will go in to supper. (*The doors are thrown open.*) See that she has everything she

wants, Picorin. (*To GERARD and BIANCA.*) Come along, you lovers! Really, Baron -- people will be saying that we are the engaged couple!

BIANCA (*aside, looking at MIRETTE*). Poor girl!

Exeunt all except MIRETTE, PICORIN, and BOBINET.

PICORIN (*to MIRETTE*). Are you better?

MIRETTE (*letting herself fall into PICORIN's arms*). Oh, Picorin, I'm so unhappy. I have had a beautiful dream, but it was a dream that could never come true. Gerard is not to blame, and the Marquise is right.

BOBINET. The Marquise is a splendid woman!

MIRETTE. The fault was mine alone! When I realized that I loved him, I ought to have run away from here. We must leave this place at once.

BOBINET. Good!

A VOICE (*heard off L.*). The health of the fiancés! (*Laughter heard off.*)

MIRETTE. How merry they are! Poor Mirette is forgotten already. May happiness attend them. Come, let us go!

PICORIN. Now that your decision is taken, I will tell you all. Francal is waiting at the gates of the Chateau with saddled horses, and --

MIRETTE. Return to the gipsies. Never!

BOBINET. I call that very rude. We love you, Mirette -- why not come back to us? Ours is the true life -- so careless, so independent, so particularly free-and-easy! You have only to say the word -- the horses are ready.

PICORIN (*aside to MIRETTE*). Will you trust yourself to me? (*Aloud.*) Yes, you are right, Bobinet. Give the signal. (*BOBINET goes to back of stage.*)

MIRETTE (*beseechingly*). Picorin!

PICORIN. Not a word! Once in the saddle, we will find means of escaping.

BOBINET (*at back*). Cock-a-doodle-do!

A VOICE (*in the distance*). Cock-a-doodle-do!

MIRETTE. Good-bye, Gerard, and may you be happy!

PICORIN. Suppose they should attempt a pursuit?

BOBINET. Leave me to look after that.

PICORIN and MIRETTE exeunt. BOBINET goes to the window. The NOTARY appears under the gallery.

BOBINET. Only just in time.

NOTARY (*calling*). Pitois! Pitois! What on earth has become of him?

BOBINET. It is the Notary.

NOTARY (*seeing BOBINET*). Excuse me, sir, but this is where I am wanted to read a contract, is it not?

BOBINET. Yes -- you're all right.

NOTARY. I am so short-sighted. I told my clerk to meet me here, but I don't see him anywhere.

BOBINET (*aside*). A capital idea! He is short-sighted, and he'll

never notice it! (*Goes up stage, pulls his hat over his eyes, and alters his voice.*)
NOTARY (*calling*). Pitois! Pitois!
BOBINET (*coming forward*). Here I am!
NOTARY. Ah! that's very fortunate! (*Gives him his papers just as the doors open and the Guests appear.*)
BOBINET (*aside*). And now to play my unaccustomed part!

Re-enter MARQUISE, BARON, GERARD, BIANCA, and all the Guests.

FINALE OF ACT II.

CHORUS. Take your places all. Come in,
Time for the business to begin.
Silence! Silence! Now present
The Matrimonial Document.
Silence, silence, silence, pray!
Where's the Notary? He comes this way.

All take their places, NOTARY and BOBINET as his clerk, C.

NOTARY. I am the Notary
BOBINET. I'm the clerk.
NOTARY. Most illustrious.
BOBINET. Legal spark.
NOTARY. Paper, pens and ink.
BOBINET. We bring.
NOTARY. Ready to draw up --
BOBINET. Anything.
MARQUISE. Read the contract.
ALL. Silence, pray;
NOTARY (*to GERARD and BIANCA*). Approach!
BOBINET. Approach!
NOTARY. Ye happy pair!
BOBINET. Happy pair!
NOTARY. Your consent you must declare.
BOBINET. Declare!
NOTARY. And lest aught should shake,
BOBINET. Or shiver it.
NOTARY (*pointing to deed*). Sign it! Seal it!
BOBINET. And deliver it!
ALL. And lest aught should shake, or shiver it.
Sign it, seal it, and deliver it!
BOBINET. Come then, Mam'zelle! (*BIANCA signs.*)
And now the bridegroom. (*GERARD takes the pen.*)
MARQUISE (*aside*). At last!
ALL. Sign it, seal it, and deliver it!

Just as the NOTARY hands the pen to GERARD, MIRETTE's voice is heard singing in the distance.

MIRETTE. Guide of the way, by night and day, etc.
GERARD (*stopping*). Her voice!

GIPSIES *are heard in the distance singing softly.*

GIPSIES. Guide of the way, by night and day, etc.
NOTARY. Come, Monsieur -- sign!
GERARD. No, I cannot, I cannot!

He throws down the pen and rushes madly from the Hall.

CHORUS.

CURTAIN.

ACT III.

SCENE. -- *A village green; the village fête is being held. People coming and going. Booths are erected on all sides. Peasants in holiday dresses. Pedlars selling all sorts of thins. Various sports, village dances. Men drinking before a cabaret. The bells ringing.*

CHORUS.

Oh! the light of the golden weather,
Oh, the clang of the merry chime,
Dance away, girls, all together,
Oh, 'tis a happy time.
Flounces glancing,
Bright eyes dancing
To the clang of the merry chime,
Faster, faster,
Love is master,
Pays our wages with a kiss.
Dance away then, all together,
Where's there ever
A joy like this?

MEN (*drinking*). Then lift your glass and clink away,
Pour out the wine and drink away,
For us they dance,
Their bright eyes glance,
Then here's their health and drink away!

ENSEMBLE.

PEDLARS	GIRLS.
(<i>offering their goods to the young girls</i>).	
Come, buy my jewels,	Come, show your jewels
Buy my laces,	Show your laces,
Pretty things for	Pretty things to
Pretty faces.	Suit our faces.
Feathers, slippers, Feathers, slippers,	
Fans and gloves,	Fans and gloves,
Meant for you,	Oh, what beauties,
My pretty loves.	Oh, what loves!
Good and cheap,	Take the money,

And useful, too, Take it, do,
Come and buy If you cheat us
They're all for you. Woe to you!

CHORUS. Oh! the light of the golden weather,
 To the clang of the merry chime,
Dance away, girls, all together,
 Oh, 'tis a happy time!

PICORIN and MIRETTE, whose booth stands at the side on the right,
come gaily down and are surrounded by the crowd.

MIRETTE and PICORIN.

Walk up, walk up, and see the show,
Walk up, my lads and lasses,
The cheapest, finest show you know,
A show that all surpasses.
Walk up, walk up, 'twill make you mirth,
For 'tis the greatest show on earth!

PICORIN. A very famous juggler I,
 Hey presto jerry jorum.
I smash your watches, make them fly,
 And in a trice restore 'em!

MIRETTE. And I can tell your fortunes well,
 Your future, past and present;
Which lover true will be to you,
 And which will prove unpleasant.

PICORIN. I've made the Shah of Persia smile!

MIRETTE. The Sultan loves me dearly!

PICORIN. I've kissed the Queen of Scilly Isle!

MIRETTE. What! what!

PICORIN. Well -- very nearly!

ALL. Walk up, walk up, and see the show,
The cheapest, finest show you know,
Walk up, walk up, 'twill make you mirth,
For 'tis the finest show on earth!

PICORIN (*volubly*). Now, ladies and gentlemen, watch me
carefully -- there is no deception! I have nothing up
my sleeve, or concealed about my person, but simply by
my skill and dexterity I shall endeavour to astonish
those who are good enough to honour me with their
attention for a few minutes. Don't be shy, ladies and
gentlemen! Come nearer, there's no extra charge!

*The crowd gather round him, he stands before a little table and
does a few conjuring tricks.*

MIRETTE (*to a young girl who holds out her hand to be
examined*). A cross upon Jupiter! You will make a love-
match. (*To another girl.*) Do not marry the man to whom
you have given your heart; he will deceive you! (*To a
stout man.*) Beware of the dark lady who meets you every
evening behind the third pillar on the left in the

church of ----
THE STOUT MAN (very red). All right. (*Every one laughs.*)
BOBINET (*heard off L.*) Special edition! Horrible murder!
Special!
ALL. Listen!

BOBINET *appears at back selling newspapers.*

BOBINET. Special edition! All the winners!
ALL. Oh! let's go and see. (*They go up stage and crowd round BOBINET.*)
PICORIN (*calling out*). Walk up, ladies and gentlemen, walk up!
There's no extra charge! (*He stops.*) Ah, well! They
won't listen to me any longer.

BOBINET *comes down stage, followed by Crowd.*

TOPICAL SONG. -- BOBINET.

Here's the news of the day for a sou!
It's exceedingly cheap for the money;
Some shocking sensations,
And fresh revelations,
With much that's instructive and funny.
There's an Anarchist outrage or two;
A murder, and railway collision;
The Stock Exchange prices;
A Cabinet crisis --
Expected defeat on division.
Oh, if any one cares
For his stocks and his shares,
And their present or future position,
The day's fluctuations
And latest quotations,
Are all in my Special Edition!

Here's the foreign intelligence, too!
With the end of a year lean and *thin* come,
An additional penny,
On seven too many,
Is taxed off the Britisher's income;
While a force from the land of the Zulu
The shores of Great Britain encamped on,
With hardihood vexing,
Are bent on annexing
The members and town of Northampton.
If you're anxious for to know
How opinions go
With regard to the Peers' abolition,
And their mending or ending,
You'll find it by spending
A sou on my Special Edition!

THE CROWD. Bravo! Bravo!

Money is thrown into BOBINET's hat.

PICORIN *(aside)*. Surely I know that face!

The Crowd gradually disperses. BOBINET goes up stage.

BOBINET *(aside)*. It is they, right enough! I'll come back again
 (Aloud.) Special edition! Special!

He goes off, still calling out, his voice dying away in the distance. PICORIN has been carrying back to the booth all the articles he and MIRETTE have been using while amusing the crowd. MIRETTE counts their takings.

MIRETTE. Look, Picorin! Eight and a half francs! Why, it's a fortune! We shall be rich for a whole week!

PICORIN. Ah, Mirette, how glad I am to see you smile again!

MIRETTE. I've been a different creature for the last three weeks -- I had a foolish dream; but I have come to my senses again. Now, go into the village to buy something for our breakfast -- *(earnestly)* and try to bring me some news.

PICORIN. I'll try, Mirette. *(Aside.)* She is deceiving me, or else she is deceiving herself. She has not forgotten him.

Exit PICORIN. BOBINET re-appears at back with BIANCA, to whom he points out MIRETTE and PICORIN, then he gives her a sign and leads her L. behind a booth, where she conceals herself.

BOBINET *(aside)*. I must speak to Mirette first!

MIRETTE *(aside)*. How I long for news of Gerard!

BOBINET. Mirette!

MIRETTE *(nervously)*. Who called me?

BOBINET. I did. Don't you recognize me?

MIRETTE *(looking at him)*. Bobinet!

BOBINET. At your service!

MIRETTE. I can hardly believe my eyes. Bobinet must be a human chameleon who transforms himself at will. Did Francal send you?

BOBINET. Francal? I don't even know where he is! Oh, no! Not Francal. Someone else.

MIRETTE. Who?

BOBINET. A woman.

MIRETTE. A woman! And what woman concerns herself with a gipsy -- a fortune-teller -- like Mirette?

BIANCA *(coming forward)*. I do, Mademoiselle.

MIRETTE. Bianca!

BIANCA. Now, Bobinet, leave us together, but keep watch.

Exit BOBINET.

MIRETTE *(after a pause)*. What can I do for you, Mademoiselle?

BIANCA. Ah, Mirette, I know that the sight of me must recall unhappy memories, and I reproach myself for not having spoken to you when we first met; but through you, I have been in great trouble.
 MIRETTE. Your trouble is over, you are happy now.
 BIANCA. Happy!
 MIRETTE. I stood in your way, and I knew I had no right to. I left the Chateau, and to-day you are Gerard's wife!
 BIANCA. (*surprised*). Gerard's wife? Then you do not know?
 MIRETTE. What do you mean?
 BIANCA. After you had gone, Gerard, in despair at your flight, refused to sign the contract.
 MIRETTE. Gerard -- refused!
 BIANCA. You can imagine the scene there was! The Marquise ill -- my father furious -- I in tears -- the guests leaving in haste -- everything in confusion -- and Gerard shut in his room, and refusing to see any one.
 MIRETTE. Poor Bianca!
 BIANCA. Since then he has been searching everywhere for you, and I know that if he learns you are at this fair, he will come here at once in hope of seeing you.
 MIRETTE. And what is it you wish me to do?
 BIANCA. (*after hesitating a moment*). Mirette, I am going to ask you something, and it will depend upon your answer whether I leave this place with my heart full of hope, or of despair!
 MIRETTE. Tell me what it is?

DUET. -- BIANCA and MIRETTE.

BIANCA. That night! that night you went away,
 In silence and disdain;
 I hoped your love for him was o'er,
 And now I plead with you to-day,
 Ah, tell him if you love no more,
 Maybe he'll come to me again!
 MIRETTE (*aside*). She loves him more than I --
 BIANCA. Ah, hear me, ere the day is cast.
 You hold my gladness and my pain,
 He is my first love and my last,
 I shall not love again.
 Scorn me -- hate me -- if you will,
 But tell me, do you love him still?
 MIRETTE (*hesitating*). No, no! that folly's past,
 I do not love him -- no!
 BIANCA. And yet your eyes are wet,
 You love him still, Mirette.
 MIRETTE. I love him not.
 BIANCA. Ah! if you love him call him back
 And make him happy evermore.
 MIRETTE. 'Twas but a dream.
 BIANCA. A dream?
 MIRETTE. Yes, yes -- a dream for him . . . and me!
 He loves you still!

BIANCA. He loves me still!
MIRETTE. And you his bride will be,
For I -- will tell him.
BIANCA (*joyously*). You will do this -- for me?
MIRETTE. Yes, yes, why not? I love him now no more!
He loves you still!

ENSEMBLE.
{ BIANCA. All is happy, all is gay,
Sorrow past, weeping done,
All the darkness gone away,
Like a mist before the sun.
Tender heart, so good to me,
Uncomplaining and forgiving,
Thou hast given all to me,
All that makes my life worth living!
MIRETTE. All is happy, all is gay,
All the dream is past and done,
All the folly flown away,
Like a mist before the sun.
Take the joy, and happy be,
Go to him with heart forgiving,
Thus I give him back to thee,
All that makes my life worth living!

BOBINET *runs on.*

BOBINET. Quick! quick! get out of the way at once! I've just
seen the Marquise and Monsieur Gerard turning the
corner of the road. They are coming in this direction!
MIRETTE. I will not see him again! (*To BIANCA.*) Come in here,
Mademoiselle, and trust me!
BIANCA (*with a look of gratitude*). Thank you!

MIRETTE *makes BIANCA enter the booth, and then follows her in.*
Noise outside.

THE CROWD. Hurrah! Hurrah!
BOBINET. What is the matter now?

*Entrance of the procession of young men who are going to compete
in the sack races, and the archery and cross-bow contests. The
crowd enters in front of them, shouting and waving hats. The
prizes -- silver spoons, forks, and coffee-pots -- are attached
to shields and carried in triumph by men dressed like church-
beadles. Grand march.*

KERMASSE. -- CHORUS.

Come, march along, and make a din,
Why should we glum and silent be,
The fun is going to begin,
Then march along in company!
Come, march along then, girls and boys,
Come, men and matrons, all in glee,

There's nothing half so nice as noise,
Then shout hurrah, in company.
Hurrah, hurrah!
For the show and dances,
Fights and prizes,
Lotteries, chances,
Flowers and kisses,
Loves and glances,
Did ever you know such a show as this is?
Come, march along, and make a din,
Why should we glum and silent be,
The fun is going to begin,
Then shout hurrah, in company!

BOBINET. Why shouldn't I try my luck too? I'll go and see if I
can win a coffee-pot. (*Exit.*)

Everyone follows the procession. Several persons, among whom is the BARON VAN OSBORN, cross the green and meet the MARQUISE and GERARD, who enter L. The MARQUISE and the BARON exchange very formal bows, and the BARON walks on stiffly.

MARQUISE (to GERARD). You see what you expose me to, Gerard! The Baron scarcely deigns to notice me.

GERARD. The Baron is nothing to us!

MARQ. Nothing to you, perhaps, but to me -- a great deal. You are behaving shamefully towards him and his daughter.

GERARD. My dear Aunt ----

SONG. -- MARQUISE.

So the past is dead in your fickle heart,
You have broken your empty vow,
And without a tear or care you part
From her who was yours but now.
Man's love! man's heart! 'tis ever, they say,
Ever the old refrain,
The true love flung like flower away,
For the love that soon will wane.

Ah! by the heart that lives for you,
For the sake of the happy days,
Forget the gleam of the light untrue,
And the phantom that mocks your gaze.
Ah! be not blind! once more be true,
True to the past again,
For the silent love that waits for you
Is a love that will not wane!

MARQ. For the future I shall cease to trouble myself about your affairs. I shall disinherit you, and you may starve in a garret with any ballet-dancer you choose to marry! Probably you'll end by appearing in public, on some fête day like this, in pink tights and a tinsel

crown, like a pantomime king! (*Exit.*)
GERARD (*to MARQUISE*). Many thanks! (*Alone.*) If she is here I
 must find her. (*Exit.*)

PICORIN *enters, carrying the basket with provisions for breakfast, and begins to lay the things on a little table.*

PICORIN. There is no time to lose. I fancy I caught a glimpse of
 Monsieur Gerard just now. No doubt he is seeking for
 Mirette. Ah! he loves her still! And she -- has she
 really forgotten him? What have I to hope for in
 remaining near her? She will never love me! It is
 better to part! But how shall I tell her?

Enter MIRETTE from the booth.

MIRETTE. Well, Picorin, are you busy with your dreams, instead
 of thinking about breakfast?

PICORIN. I was waiting for you, Mirette.

 DUET. -- MIRETTE and PICORIN.

MIRETTE. What! breakfast really ready, sir?
 Sit down, then -- let's begin;
 You are a splendid manager,
 My dearest Picorin.
PICORIN. Mirette, you are too kind to me,
 You know 'tis all for you.
MIRETTE (*aside*). Dear fellow, how he looks at me!
 I'm sure his love is true.
(*Aloud, gaily*). But, come along! See, there's the wine,
 And here's your chair,
 And here (*placing hers beside him*) is mine.

They seat themselves at table.

PICORIN (*aside*). How shall I tell her? Can I dare?
MIRETTE (*aside*). He's not so ugly, I declare.
 He really is --
PICORIN (*offering her a dish*). -- A little cheese.
MIRETTE (*aside*). -- So fond of me.
PICORIN (*offering wine*). Some Burgundy?
MIRETTE (*aside*). I almost think I will --
(*Aloud*). Yes, please.
 Oh, how delightful 'tis to dine.
PICORIN. And all alone together.
MIRETTE (*turning the conversation*).
 What very -- very -- (*tasting*) -- splendid wine!
PICORIN (*at a loss*). What lovely weather!
MIRETTE (*stopping suddenly*). You are not eating, Picorin.
PICORIN. I am not hungry!
MIRETTE. Why?
 What makes you sad?
PICORIN. Because, dear, we must say good-bye.

MIRETTE. Must say good-bye? But why?
PICORIN. Because we're children now no more,
All that is o'er.
You are grown up -- almost a woman,
And well, the world, Mirette, is human.
And so the carping world will chide
If we are always side by side.
MIRETTE (*aside*). What does he mean?
PICORIN. Unless -- we could -- be something more.
MIRETTE (*aside*). I never thought. (*Aloud.*) What will you do?
PICORIN. Leave you.
MIRETTE. Where will you go? And what of me?
PICORIN. You will go where swallows fly,
To some happy land afar --
I -- where all the hapless are.
MIRETTE (*aside*). He lets me go without a sigh.
PICORIN (*aside*). And is it thus we say good-bye?

ENSEMBLE.

MIRETTE (<i>aside</i>).	PICORIN (<i>aside</i>).
Oh! if he would but dare	Oh! if I did but dare
To tell me all his heart,	To tell her all my heart,
But no! But no!	But no! But no!
He lets me go	She lets me go
Without a sigh,	Without a sigh,
Or one good-bye;	Or one good-bye;
Alas! we part.	Alas! we part.

They finish the meal in silence.

MIRETTE. When do you go, Picorin?
PICORIN. To-night.
MIRETTE. I want you to do me a service first.
PICORIN. A service?
MIRETTE. It is a delicate thing to ask you -- but I have
promised Bianca. Gerard is coming here, and --
(*hesitates.*)
PICORIN. And what?
MIRETTE. Well, in order to turn his affections from me, you must
-- oh, Picorin, you should not find it difficult, for I
think you were fond of me not very long ago?
PICORIN. But what must I do?
MIRETTE. You must pretend to make love to me -- before him.
PICORIN. To make love to you -- Mirette!
MIRETTE. What I ask you to do is not so very difficult -- is it?
Perhaps you will earn a kiss for your trouble.
PICORIN. A kiss!
MIRETTE. I do not know -- I say, perhaps. It will be our parting
kiss, will it not? You have quite decided to go?
PICORIN. Yes, quite decided.
MIRETTE. Then you will do what I ask?
PICORIN. If it will make you happy, yes, Mirette.
MIRETTE. Only just in time. Here is Gerard. Now, go down on your
knees; there, close to me.

PICORIN. You wish it?
MIRETTE. Yes, quick.

MIRETTE *is seated at the table. PICORIN drops on his knees beside her, just as GERARD enters at back.*

GERARD *(aside)*. It is she!
MIRETTE. Yes, Picorin, I love you, and I have never loved any one but you. For one moment I forgot myself, but I quickly realized my folly, and I have come back to you, to be your wife -- your wife, Picorin!
PICORIN *(aside)*. If only she were in earnest.
MIRETTE *(aside to PICORIN)*. Now get up and embrace me!

PICORIN *takes her in his arms and kisses her, then lets her go, overcome with emotion.*

PICORIN *(seeing GERARD)*. Ah! we are not alone!
GERARD *(coldly)*. I beg your pardon.
MIRETTE *(playfully)*. Why, it is Monsieur Gerard! I did not know you again. So you've heard the pretty vows that Picorin and I have been exchanging under the blue heavens? That's our gay gipsy fashion, you know! *(Laughing.)* Ha! ha! When I think of it! How foolish we were! I dreamt of being your wife! Can't you see me -- in a dress with a long train -- amongst all your fine friends? How ridiculous I should have looked! Ah, no -- *(pointing to the booth.)* -- there is my home, and here -- *(indicating PICORIN)* -- is my husband! Good-bye, Monsieur Gerard. No ill will, I hope. *(Ascending the steps of the booth -- aside.)* Poor fellow! I have done more than I promised. *(Looking at him.)* Did I really love him?

MIRETTE *enters the booth, followed by PICORIN.*

AIR. -- GERARD *(alone)*.

Yes, it is past! the dream is done.
I am awake! Once more I see!
'Twas but a phantom lured me on,
A mocking voice that called to me.

While he is singing BIANCA comes out of the booth, descends the steps, and stands on the stage without being seen by him. At the end of the song he thrown himself into a chair L., and BIANCA comes noiselessly behind him.

I though it love as true as gold,
I lived within its tempting gleam,
But now I know, the truth is told!
'Twas but a shadow and a dream!

Yes, it is passed, the madness o'er,

The veil is lifted from mine eyes,
My wayward heart turns back once more
To where its only gladness lies.

BIANCA *comes noiselessly behind GERARD.*

DUET. -- BIANCA and GERARD.

BIANCA (*softly*). Does he remember the words he has spoken?

GERARD (*without turning*). That voice!

BIANCA (*comes in front of him*).

And her tears and your own cruel part?

Do you remember the vows you have broken,

And the poor, silly girl who gave you her heart?

Happily, faithfully, never deceiving you.

GERARD (*looking up*). Yes, yes, I know it -- as long as I live,

But, bless my heart, Bianca, I pray to you,

Look in mine eyes, and bid me to live.

See how I kneel to you, hear what I say to you,

I am not worthy, but only forgive!

BIANCA. Yes, I forgive you. (*She turns to go.*)

GERARD. Then why are you leaving me? Is that forgiveness?

BIANCA. Why should I stay? I have forgiven you.

GERARD. Hear me, Bianca, the mad dream is over!

ENSEMBLE.

{	BIANCA.	Ah! Gerard, tell me -- say if you love me, Not with a love that will change with the day, But pure as the light in the Heaven above me, Love me like that, or send me away!
{	GERARD.	Dearest, I love you, I only can love you, All the wild fancy has faded away, As the earth looketh up to the Heaven above you, So do I love you, and love you for aye!
}		

She lets her head fall on his shoulder. He kisses her on the forehead. MIRETTE enters.

MIRETTE (*gaily*). Ah, Monsieur Gerard, so it's your turn now.

BIANCA (*aside to MIRETTE*). I owe my happiness to you!

GERARD (*to MIRETTE*). Stay, Mirette! I think I understand --

MIRETTE. Nothing at all! Give me your hand, and don't ask any questions.

Enter the MARQUISE and the BARON.

BIANCA (*throwing herself into the MARQUISE's arms*). Oh, Madame, I am so happy!

MARQ. Then it is all right. What did I tell you, Baron?

BARON. Are we to begin all over again?

GERARD (*smiling*). We have begun already.

BARON. I must send for another Notary.

MARQ. And when is your wedding to take place, Mirette?

PICORIN *has reappeared at the steps of the booth -- a bundle and a stick in his hand.*

GERARD. Very soon indeed, I fancy; for just now I assisted at a scene --

MIRETTE (*who has caught sight of PICORIN*). A scene that was really too ridiculous, Madame! I have a lover who is so shy that I was obliged to ask him to marry me!

PICORIN (*aside*). What do I hear?

MIRETTE. And what do you think he did?

MARQ. I suppose he threw himself at your feet.

MIRETTE. He didn't want to believe me! I insisted -- I even went so far as to kiss him. Then he got up with a gloomy look, and went indoors, and -- see! there he is, with his bundle! I declare he's going to run away to save himself from marrying me!

PICORIN (*throwing away his bundle and running to MIRETTE, whose hands he kisses*). Ah, Mirette! Mirette! How blind I have been! (*Shouts heard outside.*)

THE CROWD. Hurrah! hurrah!

GERARD (*at back*). It is Bobinet! They are carrying him here in triumph!

Re-entrance of the procession. Four young men carry BOBINET on their shoulders. He is crowned with roses and loaded with prizes.

ALL. Long live Bobinet!

BOBINET. I have won six coffee-pots! (*Jumps down.*) Everybody friends again? Then I think you'll agree that Bobinet is to thank for it, eh?

ALL. Long live Bobinet!

BOBINET. You'll invite me to the wedding, won't you? There will be plenty to eat, and I hope to empty several glasses of Johannisberg '54.

MARQ. Fifty-three!

BOBINET. I was right. And the next day the papers will be full of it. (*In his disguised voice.*) Special edition! Full account of the wedding! Special?

FINALE OF ACT III. -- BOBINET.

When the gay ring-a-ding of the bells,
Through the country is merrily spreading,
You'll buy for a copper,
A perfectly proper
And special account of the wedding;
You'll find that the article tells,
(For the sake of the folks who adore 'em)
Of the trousseau -- the flowers,
The presents in showers --
The dresses -- and people who wore 'em.
And I'll venture to hint,
If your name is in print,
As a guest of important position --

That, for sending to dozens
Of envious cousins,
You'll buy up that special edition.

CHORUS.

CURTAIN.