**Erminie**

*Comic opera in three acts [originally two acts, three scenes]*

Book and Lyrics by Claxson Bellamy and Harry Paulton

Music by Edward Jakobowski

**CHARACTERS**

MARQUIS DE PONTVERT

EUGÈNE MARCEL, the Marquis’s Secretary

VICOMTE DE BRISSAC

DELAUNAY, a young officer

SERGEANT

DUPOIS, landlord at the Lion d’Or

SIMON, waiter at the Lion d’Or

CHEVALIER DE BRABAZON, Marquis’s guest

RAVANNES )

) two thieves

CADEAUX )

CERISE MARCEL, Erminie’s companion

JAVOTTE, Erminie’s maid

MARIE, peasant girl

PRINCESS DE GRAMPONEUR

ERMINIE DE PONTVERT

Soldiers, peasantry, guests, waiters *et al*

**Overture**

**ACT I**

*Scene: Village of Pontvert en fête; the ends of booths etc. seen right, indicating a village fair; an old-fashioned inn, with sign-board ‘Lion d’Or’. Villagers discovered dancing and merrymaking.*

**No 1 – Introduction, Chorus & Ensemble**

**Chorus**

AROUND IN A WHIRL

WE SKIP, DANCE AND TWIRL;

LET EACH BOY AND GIRL

MAKE MERRY!

OLD MEN IN A STRING

MAY SCORN AT MIRTH’S FLING,

YOUNG MEN IN A RING

MAKE MERRY!

OLD WIVES IN A ROW

MAY FLIRTING FOREGO,

BUT MAIDENS CRY ‘NO!’.

MAKE MERRY!

LET GRIEVING GO BORROW

ITS FARE FROM TO-MORROW;

AWAY WITH ALL SORROW,

MAKE MERRY!

FROM YOUR PATH TROUBLES FLING,

LET US JOIN IN A RING,

LET US DANCE, LET US SING,

MAKE MERRY!

HA! HA! HA! HO! HO! HO!

COME, SPORT WHILE WE MAY,

MAKING MERRY; HA! HA!

MAKING MERRY, HO! HO!

ENJOYING TO-DAY

OUR MIRTH WHILE WE MAY.

**Marie**

*(C. advancing)*

HERE COMES JAVOTTE! HERE COMES JAVOTTE!

OF GOSSIP SHE WILL HAVE A LOT.

**Chorus**

YES, YES! OH, YES! NO DOUBT! NO DOUBT!

SHE’LL QUICKLY TELL US ALL ABOUT

THE CHÂTEAU AND ITS GUESTS, THE FUN,

WHAT’S DOING, AND WHAT’S TO BE DONE.

*(Enter Javotte L. U. E.)*

JAVOTTE! JAVOTTE! YOU WON’T REFUSE

TO TELL US IF YOU’VE ANY NEWS.

YOU WON’T REFUSE! – THE NEWS! THE NEWS!

**Javotte**

IMPATIENT! – LA! DO GIVE ONE BREATH!

DON’T CRUSH AND PESTER ME TO DEATH!

SOME LITTLE MODERATION SHOW.

NOW – TELL ME WHAT YOU WISH TO KNOW.

**Chorus**

THE NEWS! THE NEWS!

YOU CAN’T REFUSE,

YOU MUST HAVE SOME.

**Javotte**

INDEED I’VE NOT!

**Chorus**

OH, WHAT A SHAME!

**Javotte**

EXCEPT –

**Chorus**

WHAT? WHAT?

**Javotte**

EXCEPT THAT SHORTLY HERE YOU’LL SEE

THE MARQUIS, MAM’SELLE ERMINIE,

CHEVALIER DE BRABAZON,.

OF OUR DISTINGUISHED GUESTS – THE ONE

YOU MOST SHOULD SEE,

OF HIGH DEGREE,

A BEAU OF BEAUX

FROM TOP TO TOE.

THEY’RE COMING HERE TO VIEW THE FAIR.

**Chorus**

HOW NICE – OH, HERE’S EXCITEMENT RARE!

COME JOIN THE RING!

COME, DANCE AND SING! etc.

*(Javotte, who goes up, gets down L. among villagers when Simon is on. Simon enters from Inn L., places drinking cups on table. Some of the crowd gather round shouting.)*

**Peasant**

What a time you’ve been with the drinks, Simon!

**Simon**

Don’t you be so impertinent! You’ll have plenty of time before dusk to get drunk in a deliberate, business-like way.

**Peasant**

We must lose no time if we wish to get drunk on this.

**Omnes**

Ha! Ha! That’s true!

**Second Peasant**

We have tasted stronger wine than this.

**Simon**

Master’s a considerate man at fair time. He knows the quantity you’ll take and tries to balance it with the quantity he gives. Ah, Javotte! You here? I was sorry to keep you waiting last night, but I was stopped by a rush of business.

**Marie**

Don’t believe him, Javotte, don’t believe him!

**Javotte**

I shall believe him if I like. I don’t want your advice.

**Omnes**

Bravo, Javotte, bravo!

**Marie**

*(Crossing L.)*

He’s a deceiver, Javotte. You’d better give him up.

**Javotte**

Indeed, perhaps you’d like me to give him up to you!

*(Going up a little R.C.)*

**Simon**

That’s just it. She’s always making eyes at me.

**Marie**

*(Advancing to Simon C.)*

You, you tomtit!

**Javotte**

*(Interposing)*

You dare to put a finger on him!

*(Drum heard.)*

**Marie**

Hark, the mountebanks! The fair’s beginning. Come along!

**No 1a – Exit (Chorus)**

AROUND IN A WHIRL, etc.

*(All exeunt except Simon and Javotte. Enter Dufois from Inn. A few, the swells, go off L.U.E., all the others R. to fair.)*

**Dufois**

Where are they going? What’s the matter? You’re a pretty waiter to allow our customers to walk away like that!

**Simon**

If the wine were better quality they wouldn’t walk away like that. They’d walk away like this….

*(Staggering)*

**Dufois**

What’s the matter with the wine? Are they complaining of its strength?

*(Tastes wine.)*

**Javotte**

*(R.)*

Oh, no, Monsieur Dufois, quite the reverse!

**Dufois**

You idiot! That was the barrel I intended for this evening, when they wouldn’t have known any better.

*(Goes down C.L.)*

**Javotte**

Don’t scold him, Monsieur. He can’t help his natural stupidity.

*(Simon goes up stage, looks off L.U.E.)*

**Dufois**

I’m afraid not, Javotte. When you marry him, you’ll find him an awful fool.

**Javotte**

Yes, I think he’ll make a good husband.

**Dufois**

Well! You’ve a good houseful of visitors, I hear.

**Javotte**

Yes, and besides all those who are staying at the Château we shall have a lot of extra guests to-night at Mam’selle Erminie’s *fête*.

**Dufois**

This is her birthday!

**Javotte**

Yes, and you should see the preparations for the ball.

*(Dancing)*

**Dufois**

Give the old man a chance! And how is it you’re not helping?

**Javotte**

I’ve come to see the fair, and Mam’selle Erminie’s coming with her papa the Marquis and that distinguished aristocrat the Chevalier de Brabazon.

**Dufois**

And Monsieur Eugène? Poor young man! He seems to fret more than ever at his reduced position.

*(Coming down C.)*

**Javotte**

Shall I tell you why, Monsieur? He’s in love with Mam’selle Erminie.

**Dufois**

And what does her papa the Marquis say to it?

**Javotte**

Oh, he doesn’t know. Eugène won’t tell him, but reproaches himself constantly for ingratitude.

**Dufois**

I see what you mean, Javotte. The young gentleman thinks that he makes but a poor return to the Marquis, who has done so much for him and his sister Cerise.

**Simon**

Well, what is there to make a fuss about? The young gent works for what he gets. He don’t eat the bread of idleness.

**Javotte**

No, but you would if you could – and the butter of idleness too! Get to your business!

*(Dufois crosses C., Javotte crosses R.C.)*

**Dufois**

You’re right, Javotte. How long are you going to loiter away your time here?

**Simon**

Ah, master, there’s something about your manner that makes one forget.

*(Getting up)*

**Dufois**

There’ll be something about my manner presently will make you remember! Get to your business! He wants a lot of looking after, Javotte.

**Javotte**

Yes, I shall look after him after a bit.

**Dufois**

After a bit? True! When you’re looking after him you’re not looking after much.

**Simon**

But I want just as much looking after.

**Javotte**

Get before, then!

*(Crosses to Simon. Exit to Inn. Shouts heard.)*

**Dufois**

Ha! Here come the great folks!

*(Goes up looking off L. as Simon and Javotte exeunt to Inn. Omnes enter, followed by Marquis, Cerise and Erminie.)*

**No 2 – Chorus and Concerted Piece**

**Chorus**

VIVE LE MARQUIS! VIVE LE MARQUIS!

WELCOME! WELCOME TO THE FÊTE!

’TIS OF GRACIOUSNESS A MARK WE

THOROUGHLY APPRECIATE.

AT VILLAGE FEAST, HERE MEETING YOU,

WITH DUTEOUS SERVICE GREETING YOU,

WITH CHEERY VOICE REPEATING, YOU

ARE WELCOME TO OUR FÊTE.

**Marquis**

THANKS, DEAR CHILDREN! BLESS YOU, BLESS YOU!

TO RESPOND WOULD BUT DISTRESS YOU.

**Erminie**

THAT IT WOULD. DEAR PAPA, SPARE US!

DON’T SUCH AGONY PREPARE US!

**Cerise**

TRUE, INDEED! EXPERIENCE TEACHES

THERE’S MUCH ANGUISH IN SET SPEECHES.

**Erminie**

MY FATHER’S FEELINGS YOU KNOW WELL.

**Chorus**

WE DO, WE DO, WE DO, MAM’SELLE!

**Erminie**

WELL, AND WHAT’S THE TATTLE?

IS IT CHARACTER OR CATTLE?

WHO IS AILING? WHO IS THRIVING?

HAVE THE BUSY BEES DONE HIVING?

IS THE FODDER CUT AND CARRIED?

WHO IS BURIED? WHO IS MARRIED?

WHAT’S THE LATEST GOSSIP? SAY!

TELL ME, PRAY! COME, TELL ME, PRAY!

**Marie**

AH, MAM’SELLE, YOU’RE QUIZZING EVER,

ALWAYS MERRY, GLOOMY NEVER.

**Omnes**

VIVE MAM’SELLE! VIVE LE MARQUIS, etc.

**Marquis**

Thank you, thank you, friends. Why, where is the Chevalier?

**Erminie**

Good gracious, Papa, I hope you haven’t lost him!

**Cerise**

That would be serious!

*(Marquis goes up.)*

**Erminie**

*(To girls)*

Yes, a real court beau. Such a curio you don’t often see.

**Marquis**

Oh, there you are!

*(Enter Chevalier down L.)*

**Chevalier**

Excuse me, I’ve been admiring the duck-pond. What inveterate bathers those succulent bipeds are!

**Omnes**

Oh!

**Erminie**

Ah, there now! Isn’t he nice?

*(Re-enter Javotte.)*

**Girls**

Oh, yes, Mam’selle.

*(All laugh aside.)*

**Cerise**

Oh, do be careful, or he’ll guess you’re bantering!

**Marquis**

Fine girls, eh, Chevalier?

**Chevalier**

Just as you say. They have a freshness of complexion that compared with that of our Court dames is novel, not to say curious!

**Marquis**

Oh no, Chevalier, this is nature’s coloring. It is the Court dames whose complexions are fresh and curious. They are laid on daily.

**Chevalier**

Just as you say. Fresh-laid daily. How expressive, too, are their eyes.

**Erminie**

Now, girls – I told you not to make eyes at the Chevalier. It’s too bad!

*(Omnes laugh.)*

**Chevalier**

No, no! Don’t check their innocent enjoyment. They are pleased, I am uninjured. Just as you say, there is really such a delightful novelty about this rural rusticity I could positively spend several days here.

**Cerise**

Ah, but what will become of us when you leave?

**Javotte**

*(L.)*

Ah, what indeed?

**Chevalier**

Yes. Poor things, it will be blessed blissfulness to think that here I am always remembered.

**Javotte**

*(L. Crosses to Chevalier.)*

Oh, we shall never forget you, Chevalier. Shall we girls?

**Girls**

Oh, no, never!

**Chevalier**

Do you know, if I could believe it possible, I should almost believe you are quizzing me?

**Erminie**

*(R. Crosses to Chevalier.)*

Quizzing? Oh no, Chevalier! Could we?

**Girls**

Oh, no, Mam’selle!

**Chevalier**

Just as you say. But come! I must see every feature of interest.

**Marie**

Have we not all interesting features?

**Chevalier**

Yes, I should see all the sights since I am amongst you.

**Erminie**

*(C.)*

There are no sights amongst us.

**Omnes**

No! None!

**Chevalier**

Exactly! But the oldest inhabitants, the customary fossil. You, of course, have the customary fossil.

**Javotte**

Oh, yes, we’ve got the fossil.

**Chevalier**

And where is he?

**Erminie**

Oh, he’s not far away. He’s about.

*(Omnes laugh.)*

**Chevalier**

Just as you say.

**Erminie**

I suppose they haven’t a fossil at Court?

**Chevalier**

No, not at present.

**Erminie**

I thought not. If you’d like to take ours home with you….

*(Omnes laugh. Marquis comes down C.)*

**Marquis**

Come, friends, don’t let us keep you from your festivities, and remember you return and drink happiness to my daughter Erminie.

**Omnes**

Hurrah!

*(Cerise and Erminie go up to tree.)*

**No 2a – EXIT (Chorus)**

AT VILLAGE FEAST HERE MEETING YOU, etc.

**Marquis**

I thought it best to send the damsels away, Chevalier. You are but human, you know, and they’ll play sad havoc with your heart.

*(Crosses to L.)*

**Chevalier**

*(Crosses to C.)*

Oh, no, I profess my wild oats are for the most part sown. I am less susceptible than I was. As age advances, our eyes are closed to….

**Cerise**

*(Up C.)*

Quite wrong, Chevalier. You eyes are opened.

**Erminie**

*(Advancing C.)*

Exactly! You see too much. Blind happiness is given only to love that is young and impulsive.

*(R.C. Cerise and Marquis at back corner of Inn)*

**No 3 – Song (Erminie)**

**I**

AH, WHEN LOVE IS YOUNG ALL THE WORLD SEEMS GAY,

TRA, LA, LA, LA, etc.

HE SIPS ITS SWEETS AS HE GOES HIS WAY;

TRA, LA, LA, LA, etc.

HIS HEART IN THE SUNLIGHT OF LOVE ABIDES;

NO PANG, NOT A THOUGHT OF DECEIT;

FOR YOUTH’S ROSY TINT EVERY BLEMISH HIDES,

AND THE DREAM OF YOUNG LOVE IS SWEET,

TRA, LA, LA, LA, etc.

**II**

AH, BUT LOVE HATH SOURED WITH ADVANCING YEARS,

TRA, LA, LA, LA, LA, etc.

HE KNOWS NO JOY FOR HE’S TORN BY FEARS;

TRA, LA, LA, LA, LA, etc.

HIS AIM IS FOIBLES, NOT CHARMS, TO SEEK,

HIS TASTE SO FASTIDIOUS GROWS;

HE DOUBTS AND MISGIVES IF HIS LOVE BUT SPEAK,

AND THE BLISS OF YOUNG LOVE NE’ER KNOWS,

TRA, LA, LA, LA, etc.

*(Cerise and Erminie go up R. C., Chevalier crosses R.C., Marquis L. C. Enter Dufois from Inn.)*

**Dufois**

Welcome, most noble Marquis. This is an honor, a red letter day – worthy of a bottle of the choice old scarlet seal.

*(Enter Eugêne L.U.E., speaks to ladies and advances R.)*

**Marquis**

Very good, Dufois. So be it! So be it! Well, Eugène, what news?

**Eugène**

*(R.)*

There is no sign of the chaise returning. The diligence must be late.

**Marquis**

I am getting most anxious. Dufois, we must await the Vicomte’s arrival here!

**Dufois**

Certainly, my lord. I have some capons now roasting on the spit.

**Marquis**

If he does not come within the hour, I’ll trouble you for something toothsome!

**Dufois**

*(To Marquis)*

Couldn’t I induce you, my lord, to take this opportunity to sign the renewal of my lease?

**Marquis**

Be it so, Dufois. Lead the way, and we’ll crack a bottle of your old scarlet seal in honor of my friend.

*(Dufois exits into Inn.)*

**Chevalier**

*(to Marquis)*

No, no, not at all!

**Marquis**

The Vicomte de Brissac!

*(Cerise, Erminie comes to Eugène.)*

**Chevalier**

Yes, just as you say, who is…, what is… de Brissac, the Vicomte? That is, is he a person of importance?

**Marquis**

*(to Chevalier)*

Oh, the highest, Chevalier. His father is my oldest friend and comrade. We fought our first campaign sharing the same tent together. The Vicomte comes here as the affianced husband of my daughter, Erminie

**Cerise, Eugène & Erminie**

What??!!

**Erminie**

*(Crosses to C.)*

My future husband, Papa? Good gracious, you never even hinted at such an event!

*(Marquis crosses to Erminie C. Eugène crosses to right, Chevalier crosses to L. Cerise R.C.)*

**Marquis**

*(Crosses to Eugénie.)*

Eh? No, I intended it as a pleasant surprise for you. You see I am always thinking of your happiness, you baggage.

*(To Chevalier)*

**Erminie**

Oh, Eugène, see what you’ve done, or rather see what you haven’t done. Why couldn’t you have spoken to Papa before I was consigned to somebody else?

*(Crosses L.)*

**Eugène**

*(R.C.)*

I feared his anger. I had not the presumption to tell him I loved you.

**Erminie**

*(Crosses R.C.)*

You had the presumption to tell me that you loved me, and I could have found it out for myself.

**Cerise**

Don’t reproach him for his boldness, Erminie

**Erminie**

I don’t, my dear. It’s the want of it I complain of.

**Eugène**

*(On rustic seat R.)*

The prize seemed too great, the happiness too much for me.

**Erminie**

*(Crosses L.)*

Oh well, if you think I’m too much for you.

**Cerise**

*(C.)*

Oh, Erminie, do be serious!

**Erminie**

What is the good of it? I’m sure Eugène’s serious enough for both of us. Look at him!

*(Crosses L.)*

I really don’t know which is the most dismal prospect – his face or the thought of this dreadful marriage.

*(Simon enters from Inn.)*

**Simon**

The Marquis is asking for Monsieur Eugène.

**Eugène**

*(Rising)*

I come. Ah, why?

*(Exit Simon.)*

Erminie, is there no hope?

**Erminie**

Of course there is, stupid! Don’t take that despairing face to Papa or he’ll certainly suspect something.

**Cerise**

Stay here, Eugène. Compose yourself. I’ll see what the Marquis wants.

*(Erminie crosses to Cerise.)*

Erminie, give him some word of consolation.

*(Cerise exits to Inn.)*

**Erminie**

Where am I to look for consolation?

*(Crosses to Eugène.)*

Eugène, why are you so downhearted?

**Eugène**

Erminie, do I not love you?

**Erminie**

And is that so unpleasant a feeling?

**Eugène**

It is when I reflect you can never be mine.

**Erminie**

Then don’t, or, if you must, hope for the best and reflect a little sunshine.

*(Erminie crosses to and sits on bench, corner of Inn.)*

**Eugène**

*(C.)*

It seems my lot to live only upon a sad remembrance of the past. Oh, could I but animate my heart with half your faith in the brightness of a brighter future!

**No 4 – Duet ‘Past and Future’ (Erminie & Eugène)**

**I**

**Eugène**

THERE IS A SWEET REMEMBRANCE OF THE PAST,

A TREASURED DREAM, A DREAM I FONDLY STORE,

A MEM’RY THAT WITHIN MY HEART WILL LAST,

TO CHEER AND COMFORT EVER, EVERMORE,

A SOLACE SWEET, A BLESSING STILL,

THE HOPE WHICH TIME CAN NE’ER FULFIL;

THE PAST HAS FONDEST DREAMS THAT LIVE,

WHICH IN THE FUTURE NE’ER CAN BE;

THE PRESENT KNOWS NOT, CANNOT GIVE.

RESTORE THE HAPPY PAST TO ME!

**II**

**Erminie**

OUR DESTINIES THE UNSEEN FUTURE HIDES,

THE COMING GLOOM WE CANNOT, CANNOT SEE,

AND CHEERING HOPE FOR E’ER WITH US ABIDES,

INSTILLING THOUGHTS OF JOYS, OF JOYS TO BE;

THE PAST, THOUGH BLEST, MAY NOT COMPARE

WITH FUTURE TRANSPORTS WE MAY SHARE,

THE FUTURE HATH ITS GOLDEN SHOWERS,

AND STORE OF PLEASING, BRIGHTEST TOYS,

WHICH HOPE DECLARES MAY YET BE OURS,

ECLIPSING PAST AND PRESENT JOYS.

*(Enter Cerise from Inn.)*

**Cerise**

You are wanted, Eugène, to witness the Marquis’s signature.

*(Remains L.C.)*

**Eugène**

Ah, why did I not trust in his generous nature? It is useless to tell him now.

**Erminie**

Quite useless.

**Eugène**

Fool, fool that I was.

*(Exit to Inn.)*

**Erminie**

Cerise, I wish your brother wouldn’t call himself names. It isn’t complimentary to my taste in loving him.

**Cerise**

Not in words. But I knew and placed faith in Ernest.

**Erminie**

I’m glad it wasn’t in jest.

**Cerise**

Ernest de Brissac, a younger brother of this very Vicomte. That was his name.

**Erminie**

Oh, then you are acquainted with my future tyrant.

**Cerise**

*(Crosses R.)*

No, we knew but one of the family. But not a word of this to Eugène. He wishes to avoid all intercourse with the friends of our prosperity.

*(Sits on seat, Erminie at back.)*

**Erminie**

Oh, that dreadful pride! And your sunshine lover fled before the storm-cloud trouble.

**Cerise**

No, he was called home suddenly before our misfortunes came.

**Erminie**

And he never sought you out?

**Cerise**

How could he with the distress that quickly followed? We left the district. You see, Erminie, we each have our secret sorrows.

**Erminie**

Of course, everybody has, and I continue to take comfort in the belief that my neighbor’s trouble is double my own.

**Marquis**

*(Without)*

If you don’t mind, a few minutes will complete our business.

**Erminie**

There’s Papa.

*(Cerise rises.)*

Away with the skeleton, and close the cupboard doors.

*(Both go up R. Javotte and Chevalier enter from Inn.)*

**Javotte**

Mam’selle, you are to take his Excellency the Chevalier through the fair. Your father, the Marquis, will follow

*(Chevalier, who has followed, crosses R. of Javotte.)*

**Erminie**

It’s a great responsibility, Chevalier.

*(Crosses to C.)*

But, if you feel equal to the gabble of the rabble,….

**Chevalier**

I have some trepidation. I have not seen a country fair for years – since I was a boy, in fact.

**Cerise**

Ah, then you wouldn’t remember it.

**Chevalier**

Just as you say. My only recollection is that there was a great deal of noise, of which I was rather afraid.

**Javotte**

*(L.)*

Couldn’t you get them to muffle the drums, Mam’selle?

**Erminie**

*(C.)*

Oh, yes, and beat the gongs piano!

**Chevalier**

*(L.C.)*

A piano gong would indeed be a boon.

**Cerise**

*(R.)*

This way, Chevalier.

**Chevalier**

*(Crosses in front to Cerise.)*

I can’t say that I’m in love with the fair. It is all so plebeian. The girl on stilts is ungraceful and leggy, the fortune-telling pony positively vulgar, and the poker-swallowing is not in good taste, carried to excess.

**Erminie**

Well, there won’t be too much of the living skeleton.

**Cerise**

But there may be of the fat woman.

**Chevalier**

Yes, if it were moderately so, but the fat is generally overdone – dreadfully.

*(Exit R.2.E. with Cerise.)*

**Javotte**

Don’t despond, Mam’selle.

**Erminie**

*(C.)*

No, Javotte, I’ll find forgetfulness in dissipation, seek oblivion with the bearded lady, gain stoicism from the talking fish and philosophy from the learned pig.

*(Exit R.2.E.)*

**Javotte**

*(C.)*

There never was such a lady for spirits. They may talk of her papa’s bravery, but I’d like to see the forlorn hope she wouldn’t leave or the fellow who wouldn’t follow her.

*(Eugène has entered from Inn.)*

**Eugène**

*(C.)*

Alone, Javotte?

**Javotte**

*(R.C.)*

Nearly, Monsieur.

*(To Eugène)*

Only my own thoughts to dispute with.

**Eugène**

Ah, not always the most agreeable companions!

**Javotte**

No, but they’re constant. That’s one recommendation.

**Eugène**

Not if constantly sorrowful.

**Javotte**

Oh, sir, if you but had half Mam’selle Erminie’s confidence. There’s many a slip…, and faint heart….

**Eugène**

I know all you would say, Javotte, but I can see little hope.

**Javotte**

Oh, don’t say that, sir. I’m sure any family might be proud of so sweet a gentleman. You need only speak, you have but to say.

*(Enter Simon.)*

**Simon**

Any orders, please?

**Javotte**

Yes, leave us, waiter, till you’re called for!

*(Crosses to Simon L., Eugène crosses to R.)*

**Eugène**

That’s right, Simon. Take care of your fiancée.

*(Exit R.2.E.)*

**Javotte**

Get in the house and wait until you are called for.

*(Taking Simon by the ear and putting him in the Inn. Enter Marie R.U.E. with flower-girls. Crosses L. from C.)*

**Marie**

*(C )*

Soldiers, soldiers! There are soldiers marching down the road. I saw them from the swing-boats.

*(Exit followed by flower-girls, L.U.E.)*

**Javotte**

Soldiers! Where are they?

*(Runs to back.)*

**Simon**

What is it to you where they are? The soldiers don’t want you.

**Javotte**

*(Runs down)*

I’m not quite so sure of that. There’s one thing certain. You won’t be wanted by the soldiers.

**Simon**

Don’t drive me to desperation, or I’ll join them.

**Javotte**

*(At back)*

They wouldn’t have you. You’re too short!

*(Off L.U.E.)*

**Simon**

*(Runs to back.)*

I won’t be too short, long. I’ll enlist for a drummer.

*(Comes down. Music cue for soldiers’ chorus, the rest of the speech spoken through it.)*

No, it’s better to be in the public line than a private in the line. Glory’s all very well in its way, but its way is a little way out of my way.

*(Exit into Inn. Soldiers’ chorus heard. Enter villagers R. & L., flower-girls et al, soldiers, Sergeant and Delaunay)*

**No 5 – Chorus of Soldiers**

**Soldiers**

ALL FOR GLORY THE SOLDIER’S LIFE;

FROM THE CONFLICT SCORNING E’ER TO FLEE,

THE HERO’S AIM IN FAME IS STRIFE;

IN LOVE, IN WAR THE VICTOR HE.

**Chorus**

ALL FOR GLORY THE SOLDIER’S LIFE, etc.

**Delaunay**

*(L.)*

Don’t mob us, my dears! Till the inner man is refreshed, the outer man is unequal to any effort. Besides, we are travel-stained and not looking our best.

*(Enter Simon from Inn and go down C.)*

**Simon**

A flagon each, Mr. Officer.

*(R. of Delaunay)*

**Delaunay**

A very good guess, waiter. You’re a smart fellow.

*(Slapping him on the back)*

**Simon**

Oh! You’d make any fellow smart!

*(All laugh.)*

**Delaunay**

In what less could we toast such charmers as these?

**Javotte**

*(Crosses to Delaunay.)*

Have you come to stay long, Monsieur Captain?

**Delaunay**

No, my pet. I’m sorry for your sake we have not.

**Simon**

Not so much familiarity! These young ladies – that young lady in particular – object to being petted by strangers.

*(Javotte goes to C.)*

**Delaunay**

I haven’t heard these young ladies – particularly that young lady – say so.

**Marie**

No, and not likely to.

*(Girls laugh.)*

**Omnes**

No, no!

**Delaunay**

Bravely said, little one. Don’t be afraid, waiter. We don’t run away with them. Ladies on the march are against regulations. Beauty and duty don’t step together.

**Simon**

No, but pipe-playing and popinjays do.

**Soldiers**

What?!

*(Making movement towards Simon. Javotte crosses and stands in front of Simon.)*

**Marquis**

*(L. of Delaunay)*

What’s this? What’s this?

**Villagers**

The Marquis!

**Marquis**

Take care, Simon. Never meddle with the military!

**Simon**

I won’t again.

**Marquis**

*(L.C.)*

Well, girls, how many hearts are slain? Are you all conquered by the trappings of glory?

**Delaunay**

*(R.C.)*

No, no, Monsieur le Marquis. We are the vanquished. My whole troop fell victims at once to the optical batteries of the village bells.

**Javotte**

We must do you the justice to say you didn’t wince under fire.

**Girls**

No, no!

**Marquis**

They seemed rather to like it.

**Girls**

Yes, yes!

**Marquis**

Trust them at beauty’s call to surrender. An army would present arms. Come, Simon, a wine cup for every man!

*(Simon exits to Inn.)*

**Soldiers**

Vive le Marquis!

*(Pile arms. Re-enter Simon with wine cups. Each soldier takes one, then falls into place again.)*

**Marquis**

As an old soldier, you must pledge me, Captain. You come opportunely in the midst of our festivities.

**Delaunay**

We’ve little time for enjoyment, Marquis. We are engaged upon an unpleasant duty.

**Marquis**

Duty to a soldier should always be pleasant. His first article should be obedience, his last self-consideration. Take the word of an old campaigner. Discipline is the well-spring of glory.

**No 6 – Martial Song ‘A Soldier’s Life’ (Marquis)**

**I**

DULL IS THE LIFE OF THE SOLDIER IN PEACE,

WITH HATEFUL ROUTINE UNTIL WAR BRINGS RELEASE.

HARSH DISCIPLINE TRAMMELS THE FREEDOM WE KNOW.

WHAT BETTER THAN THAT IN THE FACE OF THE FOE?

THE SOLDIER HAS LEARNT HE MUST BRIDLE HIS WILL,

SUBMIT WITHOUT MURMUR TO RIGOROUS DRILL;

BUT THE SUMMONS TO WAR IS THE SOLDIERS’S REWARD,

JOY TO BRIGHTEN HIS CORSLET, HIS HELMET AND SWORD.

**Chorus**

ALL FOR GLORY, THE SOLDIER’S LIFE,

FROM THE CONFLICT SCORNING E’ER TO FLEE,

THE HERO’S AIM IS FAME IN STRIFE;

IN LOVE, IN WAR THE VICTOR HE.

**II**

GLAD IS THE HEART AT THE STERNEST CAMPAIGN

(FOR WE’VE NOTHING TO LOSE AND WE’VE PLENTY TO GAIN),

TO RUSH MIDST THE STEEL, MIDST THE SMOKE AND THE FLAME,

TO CARVE WITH OUR SABRES A PATHWAY TO FAME.

WE’VE LEARNT TO OBEY, AND UNTIL WE ARE TOLD

WE DREAM NOT OF LEAVING THE POSTS THAT WE HOLD;

WE’D FALL WHERE WE STAND, TILL THE WARNING SOUND COMES

OF RECALL, IN THE MUSIC OF BUGLES AND DRUMS.

**Chorus**

ALL FOR GLORY, etc.

**Omnes**

Hurrah!

*(Soldiers put down cups and retake their guns. Marquis L.C., Delaunay C.)*

**Delaunay**

Don’t be afraid, Marquis. We shall perform the duty allotted us. But when I tell you our mission is thief-hunting, you will understand it is an office repugnant to the feelings of gentlemen.

**Marquis**

True, true, Captain. You are tracking convicts, eh?

**Delaunay**

Two notorious thieves, who have escaped from prison. You’ve seen no suspicious characters, waiter?

**Simon**

*(L.)*

We don’t take in suspicious characters at the Golden Lion.

**Marquis**

*(L.C.)*

They’d scarcely venture into so public a place.

**Simon**

No, not while I’m here!

**Marquis**

*(Crosses to C.)*

If you are going through the fair, I shall have the pleasure.

**Delaunay**

You will honor me, Marquis. Come, men, fall in. Good-bye, pretty ones! Attention! March!

**No 6a – Exit (Chorus)**

ALL FOR GLORY THE SOLDIER’S LIFE, etc.

*(Omnes exeunt R., Javotte kissing her hand to Captain. Simon, jealous, exits to Inn. Javotte follows. Important that no one should go L.U.E., where thieves are coming.)*

**No 7 – Entrance of Ravannes & Cadeaux**

*(Ravannes enters from L.U.E., boldly crosses to L., then down R., watching everybody off.)*

**Ravannes**

Caddy, Caddy, come along Caddy, don’t loiter!

*(Enter Cadeaux L. U. E. carrying umbrella, small bundle and portmanteau, with initials V. de B.)*

**Cadeaux**

Don’t wurrage me, Ravvy. I ain’t equil to it!

**Ravannes**

We’re all right. The valiant sons of Mars have departed. There they go!

*(Crossing, looking off R.)*

**Cadeaux**

Oh, do be careful, Ravvy, they’ll see you! Lord, I may never see Paris. I know they’re arter us!

**Ravannes**

On the contrary, they are before us, and as long as they continue to perambulate in their present direction their chance of catching us will be remarkably remote.

*(Crosses to L.)*

**Cadeaux**

Send they may never look back, and while they go West let us go East. Come on!

**Ravannes**

No, Caddy, we never go East. It’s low fashion. Wealth, rank and beauty all incline to the West. Everything worth having will be West in time.

**Cadeaux**

Well, don’t let us be wasting time. Think of the risk we’re running.

**Ravannes**

Running would indeed be risky. It would only call attention to our flight.

**Cadeaux**

Stopping’s wuss. Send I may never. I got the jumps like blooming a kangaroo. The fair is on, the place is full of people.

**Ravannes**

So much the better for us!

*(Crosses to R.)*

The more there are to suspect, the less suspicion there’ll be. Doubtless there are more suspicious characters.

**Cadeaux**

*(Coming to C.)*

There can’t be more suspicious characters.

**Ravannes**

*(Crosses to Cadeaux, C., threatening.)*

How dare you?

*(Ravannes carries a sword-stick, which he here draws and threatens Cadeaux rather savagely. It should be made strong here, because half-drawing the sword or an indication will often be sufficient afterwards to fright Cadeaux. The business occurs often at the discretion of the actors and is a relief to the business of always kicking Cadeaux, which however is good in its way.)*

**Cadeaux**

*(Down)*

I didn’t, I didn’t. I can prove a halibi.

**Ravannes**

Be dumb, chicken liver! Betray us by your infernal cowardice and I’ll put a full stop to your trembling.

*(Goes up to C.R. Business with sword)*

**Cadeaux**

Don’t! It is my first offence. What a man he is! He wurrages me till I don’t know which end of me’s uppermost. What shall I do with the rag bag?

**Ravannes**

Put it down. Put it down.

**Cadeaux**

Put it down? Put it down for somebody to pick up? What was the good of priggin’ the portmantle for it to be nabbed by somebody else?

*(Puts it on table.)*

**Ravannes**

*(Crosses down R.)*

Why this want of confidence in your fellow-man? Why should you take everyone for a thief?

*(Crosses to table.)*

**Cadeaux**

*(Advancing C.)*

Why should everyone take me for a thief? I didn’t arrange it. Fate muddled it up and purshooted me into the wrong rut. I should ha made a better rabbit than a robber. It warren’s my fault!

**Ravannes**

*(With portmanteau)*

V. de B.! What can be the meaning of V. de B.?

**Cadeaux**

Vide Boolong! Ve’d better bolt!

*(Going up C.)*

**Ravannes**

Come back, I say! Come back, fool! Why are you going?

*(Threatening)*

**Cadeaux**

I warn’t. I can prove a halibi!

**Ravannes**

*(Working at portmanteau)*

It grieved me deeply to have to appropriate the young gentleman’s luggage, but I required a change of linen and he being about my figure….

**Cadeaux**

*(R.C.)*

Anybody’s linen ’ud fit me. I was sorry for the young innocent.

**Ravannes**

My dear Caddy, it’s the confounded authorities at Toulon who are to blame for not supplying us with bullion to defray our exes. It’s all the result of governmental cheeseparing. The executive should have seen that we had means of transport.

**Cadeaux**

Transport? Oh, Ravvy, don’t talk shop!

**Ravannes**

*(Crosses to Cadeaux.)*

Caddy, I’ve a growing conviction….

**Cadeaux**

And several previous convictions.

*(Ravannes laughs, goes back to table.)*

Suppose the young innocent should foller us and blow the gaff? Suppose he should break away?

**Ravannes**

*(C. at table)*

How can he, fool? We tied him and the trees together!

**Cadeaux**

Bark to bark!

**Ravannes**

We took his portmanteau.

**Cadeaux**

And left him the trunk!

**Ravannes**

Like a sailor, lashed firmly to the elm.

**Cadeaux**

No, stranded at the beach!

**Ravannes**

He grew restive and broke away once.

**Cadeaux**

But he was left at the post after all. If he should follow us and break away it would be all over. Oh, Ravvy, let’s do a scarper!

*(Coming R.C.)*

**Ravannes**

*(Threatening)*

Come back, can’t you? Will you dispense with your insufferable slang? Adopt the manners of a gentleman!

**Cadeaux**

*(R.)*

How can I? Who’m I to learn it out of?

**Ravannes**

What did you say? I’ll perforate….

**Cadeaux**

Mercy, Ravvy, it’s my first offence. Let me off light!

**Ravannes**

You cowardly thief!

**Cadeaux**

Stash your patter, pal. Don’t peach on your pardner.

**Ravannes**

Bah! It’s written on your face, jail-bird.

*(Crosses to table.)*

**Cadeaux**

It’s the want of a wash. I’d be a perfect gentleman if I had a wash.

**Ravannes**

*(Opening portmanteau)*

As I thought, linen – spotless – linen, shirts, collars and cuffs.

**Cadeaux**

And cuffs?! Oh Lor’! I’m innocent – and I can prove a halibi!

**Ravannes**

*(Crosses to Cadeaux.)*

Silence, you idiot! Are you a man?

*(Crosses to table. Business with knife)*

**Cadeaux**

*(On knees)*

I dunno. Fate muddled my horridscope. I ought a bin ’atched a dicky-bird. Why warn’t I blessed with the ‘armless wobbling of the nightengel or the hundefiled prattle of the innocent duck?

**Ravannes**

Stop your cackle! I must make a change. We must have a room here!

**Cadeaux**

No! No, let’s be going on again!

*(Going up)*

**Ravannes**

Don’t you be going off again! We rest to-night, start to-morrow!

*(L.C.)*

**Cadeaux**

Start where?

*(Sits beside table. Ravannes promenades in front.)*

**Ravannes**

Where? Where is the home of the confraternity?

**Cadeaux**

In the metrolopus!

**Ravannes**

Where are the police most numerous?

**Cadeaux**

In the basement.

**Ravannes**

Where are they never to be found when wanted?

**Cadeaux**

On their beats! Thank goodness for it!

**Ravannes**

Paris! The home of the industrious! The home of the gamin! The field of the mobsmen, the harvest home of the merry, nimble, light-fingered clyfaker!

**Cadeaux**

Slang, sling it!

**Ravannes**

Yes, Paris, where the clyfaker is but the needle in the bundle of hay, the one drop of scoundrelism in the infinite ocean of rascality.

**Cadeaux**

Don’t mek a noise about it!

**Ravannes**

There, dear Caddy, we will resume once more our philanthropic pursuit of easing suffering humanity of its load of superabundant luxuries.

**No 7a – Thieves’ Duet ‘Downy Jail-Birds of a Feather’ (Ravannes & Cadeaux)**

**I**

**Ravannes**

WE’RE A PHILANTHROPIC COUPLE, BE IT KNOWN,

**Cadeaux**

LIGHT-FINGERED, STICKING TO WHATE’ER WE TOUCH.

**Ravannes**

IN THE INT’REST OF HUMANITY ALONE

**Cadeaux**

OF WEALTH RELIEVING THOSE WHO HAVE TOO MUCH.

**Ravannes**

THE SOUR OLD GENT, WHOSE WORSHIP VILE IS DROSS.

**Cadeaux**

WE HATE TO SEE A WALLOWING IN TIN;

**Ravannes**

IT AIN’T ’COS GAIN TO US, TO HIM IS LOSS.

**Cadeaux**

WE EASES HIM ’COS AVARICE IS SIN.

**Ravannes & Cadeaux**

*(Refrain)*

DOWNY JAIL-BIRDS OF A FEATHER

*(To L.)*

WE ARE SHIFTERS, WE ARE LIFTERS,

*(To R.)*

WORKING SKILFULLY TOGETHER.

THROUGH THE WICKED WORLD WE ROMP

EASING MANY A MORTAL BURDEN,

*(To L.)*

KINDER COVES WE NEVER HEARD OF,

*(To R.)*

BUT A TRUTH YOU’LL TAKE OUR WORD ON,

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME.

**II**

**Ravannes**

WHEN THE MASHER’S ON A SPREE, WE OFTEN PRIG

**Cadeaux**

FROM POCKET EV’RY STIVER – NOTHING LESS;

**Ravannes**

HE WOULD ONLY DRINK AND FIGHT, AND GO THE RIG,

**Cadeaux**

HIS CONSTITUTION RUIN – NOTHING LESS.

**Ravannes**

HIS RINGS, AND THINGS, AND FIN’RY WE EXPECS.

**Cadeaux**

FOR STUCK-UP PRIDE IN SUCH THINGS ISN’T GOOD.

**Ravannes**

AND WHEN HIS WATCH WE CAREFULLY ANNEX,

**Cadeaux**

IT’S ONLY ’COS WE KNOW THE POLICEMAN WOULD.

**Ravannes & Cadeaux**

*(Refrain; business as in chorus of first verse, dance and encores ad lib.)*

DOWNY JAIL-BIRDS, etc.

*(Ravannes gets sword-stick off table.)*

**Ravannes**

House ho! Call about you now! Put on a bold front!

*(Crosses to R. Cadeaux gets bundle and umbrella, crosses to L.)*

**Cadeaux**

*(R.C.)*

How can I put on a bold front with my only dicky at the wash?

**Ravannes**

House ho! House ho!

**Cadeaux**

How so! How so!

**Ravannes**

No waiter to serve! Is this a hostelry or an asylum for imbeciles?

**Cadeaux**

*(Crossing L.)*

No server to wait. Is this a hinn or a hassalum for cripples?

*(Simon enters from Inn, crossing R.C.L. of Ravannes.)*

**Ravannes**

Waiter! Do you wish someone to elope with your furniture?

**Simon**

*(R.C.)*

No fear of that, sir. No thieves here.

**Cadeaux**

*(L.C.)*

That’s all you know!

*(Ravannes kicks Cadeaux behind Simon.)*

**Ravannes**

*(R.)*

There are some questionable characters on the fair-ground.

**Cadeaux**

But there’s no previous conviction agen us.

*(Ravannes threatens.)*

**Simon**

What’s the matter with the gentleman?

**Ravannes**

My friend is timid and retiring. He has been very delicately reared, which being a young man of rare discernment you will observe. You are a young man of discretion, I’m sure, and will readily recognise a Louis when you see one.

*(Gives coin.)*

**Cadeaux**

What are you chucking the dinale about like that for?

*(Ravannes threatens Cadeaux.)*

**Simon**

Yes, sir, I can, and I knows a gentleman when I sees one, too.

**Cadeaux**

Yes, and you sees one, two now.

**Ravannes**

Just so. I’m one, and my friend’s the other.

**Cadeaux**

No, you’re the hother and my friend’s one.

**Simon**

Oh, yes, sir. I can see that. Thankee very much.

**Ravannes**

No thanks, friend. Put it in your pocket. It is the duty of those who have the means to keep money in constant circulation to make it pass from hand to pocket.

*(Beckons Cadeaux.)*

From pocket to hand.

**Cadeaux**

*(Takes money from Simon’s pocket.)*

I’ve got it, I’ve got it!

*(Spins it up, Ravannes catches it. Cadeaux throws bundle on floor and goes up, sitting on chair in the* *sulks.)*

**Ravannes**

I’ve got it, I’ve got it!

*(Business.)*

**Simon**

You’re very good.

**Ravannes**

No, we’re not too good.

**Cadeaux**

No, he ain’t a bit too good.

**Ravannes**

We require a private room and a dinner for two at one.

**Cadeaux**

*(Coming down, takes up bundle, etc.)*

A dinner for two at one, enough for six at any time, not a dinner for six at two enough for one alas.

**Simon**

We’re very full, gentlemen.

**Cadeaux**

And we’re very empty gentlemen. Send I may never see grub if I couldn’t eat a uncooked ostrich.

**Ravannes**

Very well, show us to an apartment.

**Simon**

I’m afraid it’ll be our worst room.

**Ravannes**

No matter! We’ll make the best of it.

**Simon**

*(Crosses L.)*

I’ll find out. I’ll call the guv’nor.

**Cadeaux**

*(C. falls on knees.)*

The guv’nor! I can prove a halibi!

*(Ravannes pushes Cadeaux, crosses to R.. Simon exits L.)*

**Ravannes**

Not the governor of Toulon, you idiot! D’you wish to betray us? Keep up appearances as I do. Laugh, talk, joke, be gay – put on a bold front.

**Cadeaux**

How can I laugh, talk, joke with my ’art in the ’eel of my boot?

*(Enter Simon and Dufois from Inn.)*

**Dufois**

How d’ye do, gentlemen?

**Ravannes**

How d’ye do, sir?

*(To Cadeaux)*

Now then, speak up.

**Cadeaux**

How d’ye do, guv’nor? Pretty well? Like me? Tol lol, eh?

Ha, ha, ha! D’you know, I thought you were the guv’nor of the pris….

*(Ravannes kicks Cadeaux.)*

A prize guv’nor, you know.

**Ravannes**

*(C.)*

Come, waiter, drinks! The landlord will pledge us.

**Cadeaux**

He won’t get much on us.

*(Ravannes threatens.)*

You told me to joke!

**Ravannes**

And do you call that a joke?

**Cadeaux**

Yes, and a pretty good one too.

**Dufois**

*(L.C.)*

Look alive, Simon! Ask the gentlemen what they will have.

**Simon**

*(L.)*

What will you take, gentlemen?

**Cadeaux**

Anything that’s loose.

**Ravannes**

Shut up! Oh nips, nips, of course, the usual.

*(Simon exits.)*

**Cadeaux**

Usual, usual, of course. Vicious water for me.

*(Crosses to R.)*

**Dufois**

Vicious water?

**Ravannes**

My friend’s expressive way.

*(Simon enters with drinks.)*

Thanks.

**Dufois**

That’s eau de vie.

**Cadeaux**

That’s the odeur ve likes.

*(Drinks his glass and is about to take Ravannes’s. Ravannes stops him. Cadeaux drains both glasses.)*

**Simon**

The gentlemen require a dinner and a room.

*(Crosses to L.)*

**Dufois**

If I can find room for the gentlemen….

**Cadeaux**

… the gentlemen can find room for the dinner.

**Dufois**

No 7, Simon. Take the gentlemen’s portmanteau.

**Cadeaux**

No! No!

*(Ravannes threatens.)*

Well, he don’t look honest.

**Ravannes**

Thank you. Thank you very much.

**Simon**

*(To Dufois)*

They’re real gentlemen, sir.

*(Going L. with portmanteau)*

**Dufois**

I shouldn’t have thought it.

**Simon**

I can tell gentlemen. Can’t deceive me.

*(Exit L.)*

**Dufois**

I’m sorry, gentlemen, we are rather crowded. It will be a small room.

**Ravannes**

Not a word, my dear sir! We have been used to small rooms. In our last hotel, in fact, we were to a certain degree confined.

**Cadeaux**

But we done our time, sir. It was our first offence.

**Ravannes**

*(Threatens)*

We must be content and take things as we find them.

**Cadeaux**

We make a rule o’ doin’ that.

**Dufois**

You see, sir. The Marquis de Pontvert having dropped in with his friend the Chevalier….

**Ravannes**

Chevalier? Can it be my old college-chum? What name? What name?

**Dufois**

B…. B…. Brabazon!

**Ravannes**

*(Flourishing stick and placing it to his side)*

No, not the same, not the same!

*(Crosses to R.)*

**Dufois**

The Marquis is awaiting the arrival of a guest.

**Cadeaux**

*(Crosses to Dufois.)*

A guest….

*(Business)*

Can it be my old college pudden chummy? What name? What name?

**Dufois**

Um…. I forget the name.

**Cadeaux**

*(Crosses to R, imitating Ravannes.)*

Not the same, not the same.

*(Goes up stage.)*

**Dufois**

*(L.)*

A carriage went to meet him at the Cross of St Jean.

*(Business of Cadeaux)*

He is coming from Varrol, by the diligence. He is called Vicomte de….

**Ravannes**

*(C.)*

V. de….

**Cadeaux**

*(R.)*

V. de….

**Ravannes**

Hush, fool!

**Dufois**

V. de B….

**Ravannes**

V. de B. Aha!

**Cadeaux**

V. de B. Oho!

**Dufois**

B. something!

**Cadeaux**

B. what?

**Ravannes**

Be damned!

**Cadeaux**

Not the same, not the same!

*(Business of falling over umbrella)*

**Simon**

*(From Inn)*

This way, gentlemen.

*(Exit.)*

**Dufois**

Ah! What name shall I enter?

**Ravannes**

If you would allow us to remain incog a little longer. It’s a surprise we are preparing for – well, I should be glad if you would allow the surprise to remain incog too.

**Dufois**

Certainly! Pray go on, sir.

*(Ravannes and Dufois bow round one another.)*

**Ravannes**

So pleased to meet a landlord of your appearance.

*(Picks Dufois’s pocket as he bows to Cadeaux.)*

Not at all good. In confinement one loses one’s dexterity and gets quite out of all form.

*(Cadeaux same business with Dufois, trying to pick pocket. Ravannes kicks Cadeaux.)*

Come on, you fool. I’ve done him!

*(Exit to Inn.)*

**Cadeaux**

Oh, all right.

*(Business of taking apron and slipper. Follows Ravannes.)*

**Cerise**

*(Entering R.U.E.)*

We are to await the Marquis with you, Monsieur Dufois.

**Dufois**

You honor me, ladies.

**Erminie**

*(Following Cerise on)*

Ha! Ha! I quite envy the girls the fun they’re having with that old fop the Chevalier.

**Cerise**

Erminie, how can you be so light-hearted when you think of the fate that’s awaiting you?

**Erminie**

I don’t think there’s such a thing as fate or, if it’s waiting, let it wait. Fate ain’t fate till the fatality has occurred and, as it hasn’t, fate isn’t.

**Cerise**

And how do you maintain such strength of purpose?

**Erminie**

By proper training, my dear, accustoming the mind to be firm, saving all energies for the final struggle. But that’s not all.

*(Crosses to Cerise.)*

Cerise, do you believe in dreams?

**Cerise**

Some dreams, certainly.

**Erminie**

Well – no, I shall not tell you mine.

**Cerise**

Why not?

**Erminie**

Because you might interpret it by the rule of contraries, and it’s too beautiful to spoil.

*(Cerise exits to Inn, followed by Dufois.)*

**No. 8 – Dream Song (Erminie)**

**I**

AT MIDNIGHT ON MY PILLOW LYING,

BY MY DAILY TOIL OPPRESS’D,

TO ME WEARY, CARE-DENYING

DEEP PROFOUND THAT GIVETH REST,

WHEN A TINY BIRD ALIGHTED

ON MY LATTIC’D WINDOW-SILL,

WELCOME GUEST, THO’ UNINVITED

CHEERING BY HIS JOYOUS TRILL.

CALLING SWEETLY, HOV’RING O’ER ME,

RISE AND COME WITH ME ALONG.

SWIFT THROUGH FAIRY GLADES IT BORE ME,

REALMS OF PURE TRANSCENDENT SONG.

*(Refrain)*

SONG OF JOY, SONG OF CHEER,

SONG OF PROMISE SOFT AND CLEAR,

SWEET SOUNDS THAT FILL

THE TRANQUIL GROVE,

GLAD, JOYOUS TRILL

OF HOPE AND LOVE.

**II**

HOW BLISSFUL WAS THE WOND’ROUS PLEASURE?

AH! SUCH HAPPINESS WAS MINE;

THE REMEMBRANCE I WILL TREASURE

IN MY BOSOM’S INMOST SHRINE;

BUT WHAT A GRIEF WAS MINE AT FINDING,

ON AWAKING WITH A SCREAM,

EARTH’S SURROUNDINGS ALL REMINDING

ME ’TWAS BUT A HAPPY DREAM.

YET HIS JOYOUS, MELLOW SINGING

ECHOES FAINTLY, LINGERS STILL,

IN MY EARS WITH GLADNESS RINGING,

SEEMS MY HEART WITH HOPE TO THRILL.

*(Refrain)*

SONG OF JOY, etc.

**Erminie**

The delusion may prove false, but the delusion is pleasing, and till the spell is broken I’ll hope on, dream still, let the awakening come when it may.

*(Crosses to left. There is an upper window, first floor, set straight to audience. Ravannes opens window in built-out portion of house, showing himself and Cadeaux at table.)*

**Ravannes**

*(Seeing Erminie)*

What a pretty lady! How do you do, dear?

**Cerise**

What impertinence! I shall tell the Marquis.

*(Exit L.)*

**Erminie**

I’ll go and tell my Papa.

**Ravannes**

Give my love to your Papa!

*(Exit Erminie. Business at table with Cadeaux and Ravannes)*

**Ravannes**

*(Looking at letters)*

Ah, Caddy, these papers are interesting! Letters too! Vicomte de Brissac! So that’s our friend of the pine-tree!

**Marquis**

*(Speaks outside)*

No, no, Chevalier

**Chevalier**

*(Outside)*

But my dear Marquis.

**Cadeaux**

Stow it! Some ’uns comin’!

*(Marquis and Chevalier enter R.)*

**Chevalier**

The Princess expected! My dear friend, why did you not inform me you anticipated a visit from the distinguished Princess?

**Marquis**

*(Crosses to bench L.)*

I did not think of it.

*(Sits.)*

**Chevalier**

Not think of a princess? Had we not better return to the château? She might arrive in our absence. And who would receive? Who would be honored?

**Marquis**

Don’t be alarmed. Plenty of time. She’s not expected for some hours. I must await my young friend the Vicomte de Brissac.

**Chevalier**

But to neglect a princess! And doubtless the Vicomte knows his way.

**Marquis**

Not at all. He has never been here. His elder brother visited us when a boy. He was, I may tell you, my intended son-in-law, but the poor fellow died, and we have induced a younger brother to take up the contemplated alliance.

**Ravannes**

Ah, I understand!

**Chevalier**

And are the young people strangers to each other?

**Marquis**

Entirely! The young gentleman is strange to all of us.

**Ravannes**

Good! That is well to know.

**Marquis**

*(Rising, crossing R.)*

We have never seen him, in fact till the last year scarcely heard of him.

*(Ravannes comes down from house with papers in hand.)*

**Chevalier**

Whilst he was a younger son, why the deuce would you?

**Marquis**

And consequently I have not the least idea what he is like.

**Ravannes**

*(Who has jumped down from window)*

Permit me, my dear Marquis, to enlighten you. These papers, my credentials, will advise you that I am the Vicomte de Brissac.

**Marquis**

*(Crosses to him.)*

Welcome, son of my oldest friend. Allow me – the Chevalier de Brissac, also an old friend!

**Ravannes**

I should have recognised him as an old friend of yours anywhere. Chevalier, your name is well known to me!

**Chevalier**

But, sir, I should not have known you from Adam.

**Ravannes**

Probably not, sir. Adam was before my time.

**Marquis**

*(Calls)*

Erminie, come hither, child! Erminie! Your future bride is here, sir, awaiting your arrival.

*(Cerise enters from Inn, Erminie follows, Ravannes kneeling and kissing Cerise’s hand.)*

**Ravannes**

Ah, what happiness! Yours is the face I have seen in my dreams. I could love no other!

**Cerise**

What impudence!

**Erminie**

*(Crosses to R. of Marquis.)*

That’s all right. Then I’m sure Papa will not insist upon dooming you to life-long misery with me.

**Ravannes**

Why! Is not this…?

**Marquis**

No, sir, that is my daughter.

**Ravannes**

*(Crosses to Erminie.)*

Of course, I might have known it.

**Erminie**

You might, but you didn’t. That is the face of your dreams.

**Chevalier**

Doubtless the Vicomte disbelieves in dreams.

**Ravannes**

*(L. of Erminie)*

I do, Chevalier, thank you. That lady’s was the face of my dreams, but your countenance is the bright reality of my waking moments.

*(Taking Erminie’s hand)*

**Erminie**

You may find it a stern reality.

**Marquis**

You found it dull travelling alone?

**Ravannes**

Well, I….

*(Aside)*

There’s that confounded Caddy to account for.

*(Aloud)*

The fact is I had a companion. He’s somewhere about.

*(Crash.)*

I trust you will pardon my relying on your well-known hospitality. I have taken the liberty to bring a friend, the Baron Bonne. And a bonny baron Baron Bonne is….

*(Ravannes to L. Enter Eugène L.U.E., down R. of Ravannes.)*

**Marquis**

My dear Vicomte, delighted to receive any friend of yours.

**Eugène**

The chaise has returned without your expected guest.

**Cerise**

This is the Vicomte de Brissac.

**Marquis**

How, then, did you come?

**Ravannes**

We travelled on foot.

**Chevalier**

I should as soon think of travelling on my head.

**Marquis**

This, then, accounts for your appearance being wretched.

**Chevalier**

Not to say loathsome.

*(Crosses to Ravannes.)*

**Erminie**

Don’t wonder, Papa, if I’m not struck with the object of your choice.

**Eugène**

Is this the ruffian poor Erminie is doomed to wed?

*(Crosses R.)*

**Ravannes**

I’m nothing to my friend!

*(Crosses C.)*

**Chevalier**

Then pray don’t introduce him to the ladies!

**Ravannes**

Alas, dear friends, our sad plight is easily accounted for. We have been set upon by thieves.

**Omnes**

Thieves?

**Ravannes**

Thieves! After being set down by the diligence, we were set upon, seized, dragged into the woods, stripped of our valuables. My papers I fortunately saved.

**Marquis**

What an outrage!

**Ravannes**

Yes, we were fortunate to have escaped with our lives and the rags of our despoilers.

**Cerise**

How dreadful!

**Erminie**

How droll! I can’t help laughing at my suspicions. You should have explained at first.

*(Eugène goes up R.)*

**Ravannes**

The sight of you drove all else from my mind.

*(Crosses to Erminie.)*

**No 9 – Concerted Piece**

**Ravannes**

THE BLISSFUL PLEASURE, I PROFESS

OF SUCH A MEETING OVERJOYS ME;

I HAVE NOT THE LANGUAGE TO EXPRESS

THE JOY I FEEL, AND THAT ANNOYS ME.

THOUGH WITH BLESSINGS BESET,

AS I ROAM THE WORLD THROUGH,

I NEVER CAN FORGET

MY FIRST MEETING WITH YOU.

*(Marquis crosses to Eugène, Chevalier to Cerise.)*

**Erminie**

I BEG THAT YOU’LL NOT TROUBLE NOW,

SOME OTHER DAY, WHEN MORE COLLECTED,

YOU MAY DECLARE, PROTEST AND VOW

WITH METAPHORS MOST UNEXPECTED.

THOUGH WITH WORRIES BESET,

IT IS EQUALLY TRUE,

I SHALL NEVER FORGET

MY FIRST MEETING WITH YOU.

*(All advance.)*

**Ravannes, Erminie, Marquis, Chevalier, Eugène & Cerise**

WITH WHATEVER BESET,

IT IS EQUALLY TRUE, etc.

*(At end of ensemble all go up to same position, Ravannes advancing and crossing down to Cadeaux extreme L., introducing him as the others again advance. Enter Cadeaux, slightly intoxicated, from Inn.)*

**Cadeaux**

*(L.)*

HELLO! WHAT’S THE ROW, THE RUMPUS?

**Ravannes**

SILENCE!

*(Aside)*

**Cadeaux**

STOW IT! DON’T YOU THUMP US!

**Ravannes**

WE’VE A BOLD GAME ON TO-NIGHT.

MUM! BE STEADY!

**Cadeaux**

FLY! ALL RIGHT!

**Ravannes**

SINCE HOSPITABLY YOU EXTEND

YOUR FAVORS, I’LL PRESENT MY FRIEND,

MY FRIEND THE BARON. YOU WILL FIND HIM QUITE AN ODDITY,

STRANGE IN HIS HABITS, IN HIS MANNER AND ADDRESS,

PRIZ’D AS A CURIO, A SALEABLE COMMODITY,

ERRATIC AND ORIGINAL, YOU SEE.

**Omnes**

YES! YES!

*(Ravannes crosses back to C. position as before, singing.)*

**Ravannes**

MY FRIEND THE BARON’S QUITE A FEAST

OF PHRASE AND CUSTOMS OF THE EAST  
ACQUIRED THE ARAB TRIBES AMONG,

EXPRESSIVE, WHAT ONE MIGHT CALL STRONG.

**Omnes**

HIS FRIEND THE BARON, etc.

*(All repeat bowing. Cadeaux at end to symphony crosses C., backs and, bowing, runs against Chevalier.)*

**Cadeaux**

*(C.)*

I’M PROUD TO MEET YER. HOW D’YE DO?

OLD COCKALORUM, HOW ARE YOU?

**Chevalier**

COCKALORUM? COCKALORUM?

**Cerise**

SOMEWHAT VULGAR, SCARCE DECORUM.

**Ravannes**

MY FRIEND THE BARON’S QUITE A FEAST, etc.

**Omnes**

HIS FRIEND THE BARON, etc.

*(Dance at end.)*

**Cadeaux**

I’m werry pleased to scrape all your inquaintinces, and I proposes as we all wets our whistles.

*(Crossing right)*

**Omnes**

Wet our whistles?

(Eugène and Erminie go up and get over to Cerise, L.C.)

**Ravannes**

Arabic, pure Arabic!

*(Crosses to Cadeaux.)*

I’ll strangle you if you’re not quiet!

**Cadeaux**

Don’t! It’s my first offence!

**Ravannes**

A wonderful man, Chevalier.

*(Turning from Cadeaux to Chevalier)*

**Chevalier**

*(Crossing Ravannes to Cadeaux)*

An uncommon man, a study. I’m interested.

*(Offers snuff box.)*

Will you honor me?

**Cadeaux**

*(Taking it and pocketing it)*

Like a bird, sir, like a bird!

**Marquis**

Not a jail bird, I trust.

**Cadeaux**

No, I never was in trouble afore. It’s my first….

**Ravannes**

*(Threatening Cadeaux)*

Silence, fool!

*(Crossing to C.)*

My friend has been in the East too long, where he has been Ambassador at the Court of Mahmoud. It is a custom there to constantly exchange snuff boxes. Hence the expression “up to snuff”.

**Chevalier**

Yes, but this is scarcely an exchange.

**Ravannes**

No, of course not. That’s the Baron’s little eccentricity.

**Erminie**

*(L.C.)*

I believe all the wise men come from the East, don’t they, Baron?

**Cadeaux**

*(R.)*

Well, them as is there knows a thing or two. What they don’t know is hardly worth learning. If it is, blow me.

**Omnes**

Blow me?

**Chevalier**

Your friend the Baron’s language is rather obscure. I scarcely follow him.

**Ravannes**

It is peculiar, but I understand him, and he perfectly understands me.

*(Crosses and kicks Cadeaux.)*

**Marquis**

Eugène, will you kindly precede us and suggest such extra preparations as you deem necessary?

**Eugène**

*(L.)*

Certainly! Cerise, will you come?

*(Going up C.)*

**Cerise**

Yes, brother. How I pity him!

*(Following up)*

**Erminie**

*(L.C.)*

I’ll walk on too.

**Marquis**

*(L.)*

No, no! The Vicomte will doubtless have much to say to you.

**Ravannes**

Yes, I’m full of mind messages, regards from my sister, kindest love from my mother.

*(Ravannes, who has remained next to Cadeaux threatening in dumb show, again crosses to C.)*

**Marquis**

*(R.)*

Your mother? She has been dead these six years!

**Ravannes**

*(C.L. of Chevalier)*

Yes, about six years.

**Cadeaux**

*(R.)*

Six years and a week come Michelmas.

*(Aside)*

I got him out of that!

**Ravannes**

My mother! I was alluding to the mother of the Baron.

**Cadeaux**

Yes, he allus calls her Ma.

**Erminie**

Has the Baron a mother, then?

**Cadeaux**

Yes, poor dear, I was her first offence.

**Chevalier**

I should like to meet a woman of such mark.

**Cadeaux**

A mole under the left ear.

**Marquis**

*(To Ravannes)*

How is your worthy father?

**Cadeaux**

He’s all right.

**Ravannes**

Never better. You should have seen him yesterday setting out for the hunt.

**Marquis**

Good gracious! I never thought he would leave his room again. Why, Chevalier, he’s been confined for seven years!

**Cadeaux**

Scuse me! They couldn’t give it ’im for a fust offence.

*(Business with knife)*

**Ravannes**

Exactly! And is likely to be. I said you should have seen my father at the window when we were setting out for the hunt with the mother of the Baron.

**Chevalier**

Does the dear lady hunt?

**Cadeaux**

No, she don’t ’unt. She used to ’unt with Aunt, but Aunt ain’t in the ’unt now. Mother don’t ’unt either. We was at the ’unt, and Mother was in the window with Father, and that’s how it was.

*(Omnes enter. Villagers, swells, flower-girls, et al enter R. from fair.)*

**Marquis**

I am pleased, my friends, you are here. It enables me to present to you the future husband of your favorite Erminie.

**Omnes**

Hurrah!

*(Cadeaux crosses C. during speech and gets presented in the place of Ravannes.)*

**Marquis**

Come, let us go on to the château!

*(Business in mise en scène books)*

**No 10 – Finale**

**Chorus**

AWAY TO THE CHÂTEAU! AWAY TO THE THRONG,

WHERE BRIDEGROOM AND BRIDE WILL BE PLIGHTED ERE LONG,

WHERE WELCOME SHALL MEET THEM,

WHERE CHEERING SHALL GREET THEM,

WHERE FRIENDS SHALL ENTREAT THEM,

ALL BLESSINGS IN SONG.

**Erminie**

MARRIAGE IS A HOLY UNION,

ANGEL GUIDED FROM ABOVE.

MARRIAGE SHOULD BE SWEET COMMUNION,

GOVERN’D BY THE GOD OF LOVE.

**Cerise**

THOUGH THERE MAY BE OCEANS ROLLING

STORMILY BETWEEN TWO LIVES,

SOME REMEMBERED WORD CONTROLLING

OFTEN HOPE OF LOVE REVIVES.

**Eugène**

WHEN THE FATES ARE BLACK AS RAVEN,

WHEN THE SUN OF HOPE HAS SET,

OFT THE STORM-TOSSED GAIN A HAVEN.

WHY NOT LOVE? IT MAY BE YET.

**Marquis**

LOVE PREVAILS IN EV’RY FASHION,

LOVE THE TYRANT MAY CONTROL,

LOVE REMAINS THE RULING PASSION,

LOVE PREDOMINATES THE SOUL.

**Omnes**

MARRIAGE IS A HAPPY UNION, etc.

HARK, THE SOLDIERS HERE AGAIN RETURN!

HARK, WHAT MAY IT MEAN WE SOON SHALL LEARN!

*(Eugène and Cerise exeunt as soldiers enter.)*

**Delaunay** & **Soldiers**

ALL FOR GLORY THE SOLDIERS’ LIFE,

FROM THE CONFLICT SCORNING E’ER TO FLEE.

THE HERO’S FAME, HIS AIM IN STRIFE,

IN LOVE, IN WAR THE VICTOR HE!

**Delaunay**

BE NOT ALARMED, BE NOT ALARMED!

WE’RE OF TWO THIEVES IN CHASE,

FROM PRISON ’SCAPED, FROM PRISON ’SCAPED,

WE’VE TRACKED THEM TO THIS PLACE.

**Marquis**

THIEVES? THEN THEY’RE THE SAME, DEPEND,

WHO STOPPED AND ROBBED MY NOBLE FRIEND

AND HIS COMPANION. SEE THEIR PLIGHT!

**Erminie**

POOR THINGS, NO DOUBT PAPA IS RIGHT!

’TWAS THEY MOLESTED, RIFLED, MOBBED,

DESPOILED, ILL-TREATED, BEAT AND ROBBED.

**Delaunay**

THEY ARE DOUBTLESS THE MEN.

SHOULD YOU KNOW THEM AGAIN?

**Ravannes**

OH YES, OH YES, THE ONE IS A GENTLEMAN QUITE.

**Delaunay**

HE’S THE WORSE OF THE TWO.

**Cadeaux**

QUITE SO, THAT’S RIGHT.

**Ernest**

*(Entering)*

THANK FATE AT LENGTH I’VE FOUND MY WAY.

IS THIS THE LION D’OR, I PRAY?

**Ravannes**

QUICK, SERGEANT, SEIZE THE VILLAIN, PRAY!

**Cadeaux**

BE CAREFUL HE DON’T GET AWAY!

**Ernest**

NO, NO, BELIEVE ME!

**Marquis**

SEIZE THE THIEF!

**Ravannes & Cadeaux**

YES, SEIZE THE THIEF!

**Chorus**

SEIZE HIM, SEIZE HIM, BIND THE THIEF,

MAKE SECURE THE ROBBER CHIEF.

SEIZE HIM, SEIZE HIM, BIND THE THIEF,

MAKE SECURE THE ROBBER CHIEF.

**Marquis**

WITH THAT VILE WRETCH TO GAOL BE GONE,

AND TO THE CHÂTEAU NOW LEAD ON.

**Chorus**

AWAY, AWAY, AWAY, AWAY, AWAY TO THE CHÂTEAU.

**Principals** & **Chorus**

AWAY TO THE CHÂTEAU, etc.

**CURTAIN**

**No 10 – Entr’acte**

**ACT II**

*Scene: Grand Salon in Château de Pontvert, with waiting maids and lackeys.*

**No 11 – Introduction, Chorus, Ensemble & Song ‘Woman’s Dress’ (Marie)**

**Female Chorus**

HERE ON LORD AND LADY WAITING,

COURT GALLANTS AND NOBLES ALL,

EV’RY ONE IMPORTUNATING

TO AND FRO, AT BECK AND CALL.

*(Entrance of Marie, R3)*

**Marie**

NO INTERMISSION,

GIVE EXHIBITION,

WHAT GOOD TUITION,

THOUGH HURRIED HAS BROUGHT:

AND COMPENSATIONS,

REMUNERATIONS,

PAY FOR THE PATIENCE

WITH WHICH YOU’VE BEEN TAUGHT.

**Contraltos**

MAY WE TAKE YOUR HAT, YOUR STICK, SIR?

BRUSH YOUR CLOTHES, SIR, TIE YOUR SHOES?

YOU WILL FIND WE’RE VERY QUICK, SIR,

NOT A MOMENT DO WE LOSE.

**Female Chorus**

MAY WE START TO FETCH OR CARRY,

STITCH OR FASTEN, TIE AND LACE,

EVERY TOILET NECESSARY,

POWDER PUFF FOR ARMS OR FACE?

HERE ON LORD AND LADY WAITING, etc.

**Marie**

**I**

THE SIMPLE MAID

FROM VILLAGE GREEN,

UNUSED TO RICH ATTIRE

IS NOT AFRAID

OF SILKEN SHEEN;

TO CONQUEST SHE’LL ASPIRE.

HER FINGERS DEFT

ARE NEVER SLOW

TO FASHION A SUCCESS

FROM FINEST WEFT.

WHO DOES NOT KNOW

A WOMAN’S FORTE IS DRESS?

*(Refrain)*

YES, THOUGH FASHION OFTEN RANGES,

WE ARE EQUAL TO ITS CHANGES,

THOUGH THE WAIST PREVAILING’S HIGH UP,

OR THE SKIRT ACCEPTED SHORT,

ALTER BONNET, CAP OR HEAD-DRESS.

TUCK OR LACE CONFINE, OR SPREAD DRESS,

BRANCHING PULL BACK, PUFF OR TIE UP,

AND IMPROVING QUICK AS THOUGHT.

**II**

ON FLOUNCE OR TRAIN

THE FEMALE MIND

FROM BABYHOOD IS BENT;

HER INFANT BRAIN

BE SURE YOU’LL FIND

ON DREAMING DOLLS INTENT.

A WOMAN’S WILL

TO CHANGE LESS APT

THAN FASHION’S WAYWARDNESS,

BUT DEXTROUS SKILL

WILL SOON ADAPT

ITSELF TO CHANGE OF DRESS.

*(Refrain)*

YES, THOUGH FASHION, etc.

*(Entrance of Javotte)*

**Javotte**

Come now, you extras, bustle about. Remember that you’re not engaged to amuse yourself but to attend to the guests.

**No 11a – Exit (Female Chorus)**

HERE ON LORD AND LADY WAITING, etc.

**Simon**

*(Entering R.C.)*

Hello, hello there.

**Omnes**

Oh, it’s only Simon.

**Marie**

I declare if I didn’t think it was someone of importance.

**Simon**

*(C.)*

“Only Simon.” I like that! It’s only your astounding vanity prevents you observing I am a person of importance. It’s not often the Pontvert livery is distended by a figure like mine.

**Marie**

No! Such figures as yours are rare.

*(Crosses down to R.)*

**Omnes**

Ha! Ha! Ha!

**Javotte**

I can’t see that there’s anything to laugh at. His form may be formidable, but it’s uniformly symmetrical.

**Simon**

And no padding. That’s right, Javotte, stick up for your future lord and master.

**Javotte**

My lord and master?

**Simon**

Haven’t you promised to …?

**Javotte**

To marry you. But, if I promise to obey, it won’t be to obey always. You’re never satisfied, Simon, with what’s done for you.

**Simon**

I’m satisfied that you’ll do for me. Oh, Javotte, I wouldn’t have missed this for the world – the dresses, the flowers, the lights, to say nothing of the eating and drinking. It’s too much.

**Marie**

Simon never forgets the eating and drinking.

*(Omnes laugh.)*

**Javotte**

Some of the guests seem to think of it too.

**Simon**

That Baron doesn’t think about it, he does it right off. Twelve glasses of Benedictine already, to say nothing of two he spilt into the lap of the old Princess.

*(Omnes laugh.)*

**Javotte**

Did he? Didn’t she storm at him?

**Simon**

No, she’s a bit sweet on him and smiled at his confusion.

**Javotte**

He must have been in a state.

**Simon**

No, she was in a state, but he scraped it up with a spoon, and says, “It’ll dry straight. It’s my first offence.”

*(Omnes laugh.)*

**Marie**

Come, girls, let’s attend and watch the fun.

*(Girls exeunt C.)*

**Javotte**

You didn’t expect anything so gorgeous as this, did you, Simon?

**Simon**

Well, not quite. The lights and glitter are heavenly, but I prefer the half-light of the retiring-rooms. There’s a sentimental something – murmurs and whisperings.

**Javotte**

And taking of hands.

**Simon**

Yes, that’s it.

*(Takes her hand.)*

**Javotte**

And putting arms round waists.

*(Business)*

And kissing sometimes.

*(Business)*

**Simon**

Yes, often.

*(Laughter off R. & L.)*

**Javotte**

Come to the still room for another lesson!

*(Exit R.)*

**Simon**

Sponge or ice-cake?

*(Exit L. Enter Eugène and Cerise, L.U.E.)*

**Eugène**

*(R.C.)*

The Marquis has observed and questioned me on my dejected manner. I must avoid his presence.

**Cerise**

*(L.C.)*

Then he will ask for you. Try, brother, to throw off your depression. Let the surrounding festivities arouse you!  
**Eugène**

How can I, Cerise, when I think that my dear Erminie is to be consigned to the care of that loud, bombastic Vicomte? I can’t help the feeling that there is a false ring about his gentility.

**Cerise**

It seems impossible that he can be the brother of our dear friend Ernest.

**Eugène**

It is almost past belief, while the vulgar drolleries of the friend the Baron are too genuine to be assumed. I can’t resist a strong suspicion….

*(They promenade down to L. door.)*

**Cerise**

Of what, Eugène?

**Eugène**

I can scarcely say. You shall know when my surmises take a more definite shape.

**Cerise**

Be sure you let them conjure up forms of brighter promise.

**Eugène**

I will endeavor, sister.

*(Cerise exits L.)*

**No 12 – Song ‘The Darkest Hour’ (Eugène)**

**I**

DARKEST THE HOUR ERE LIGHT OF DAWN BEAMETH,

DEEPEST THE GLOOM ERE THE STORM CLOUDS DIVIDE,

BE THAT MY FAITH. IN THE ADAGE THERE SEEMETH

HOPE, TO BE CHERISHED, WHATE’ER MAY BETIDE.

VAIN, VAIN THE DREAM, MY LOVED ONE CAN NEVER

MINE BE; AS VAIN IS THE ONCE-PLIGHTED VOW.

WHAT POW’R CAN CHANGE THE DOOM WE MUST SEVER.

AH, COULD THE FUTURE LOOK BLACKER THAN NOW?

DARKEST THE HOUR, etc.

**II**

HOW SHALL I CHEER MY HEART’S SAD REPINING?

WHERE SEEK THE TRUST IN MY BOSOM SHOULD DWELL?

WHERE WILL APPEAR THE CLOUD’S SILVER LINING?

WHENCE COME THE RADIANCE MY GRIEF TO DISPEL?

LIFE’S LIGHT HAS GONE; MY PATHWAY IS LONELY,

DREARY! THE STAR OF MY LIFE’S BRIGHTNESS GONE,

SET NE’ER TO RISE. ’T WOULD SEEM MY HOPE ONLY

RESTS IN THE THOUGHT – THE BELIEF THERE IS NONE.

DARKEST THE HOUR, etc.

*(Eugène L., Marquis and Chevalier enter C. opening.)*

**Marquis**

We took three thousand prisoners and…. Alone, Eugène? I won’t have you brooding alone in corners. Don’t let the loss of fortune bring morbid ideas that you are looked down upon. Go, find a partner and enjoy yourself.

*(Eugène exits L.)*

I like to see the young folks cheerful.

**Chevalier**

I endeavor to be cheerful myself though I am old – that is older than I was when younger than I am. Everything is *par excellence* in Pontvert – worthy of the salons of Paris. The only blot to my mind is that fellow we picked up at the inn.

**Marquis**

Yes, I am forced unwillingly to admit that I have not been favorably impressed. There is a loudness, an unwarranted amount of….

**Chevalier**

Confidence, confidence is the failing of the rising generation.

*(Crosses L.)*

**Marquis**

I should have called it by a less charitable name.

*(Crosses R.)*

The Baron to them is a revelation. They’ve never seen anything like him before.

**Chevalier**

I trust they never may again.

*(Erminie, Ravannes, Delaunay, Eugène and guests, lacqueys and maids enter.)*

**No 13 – Chorus & Solo (Erminie)**

**Chorus**

JOY ATTEND ON ERMINIE,

HERS BE EVERY EARTHLY BLISS,

MAY HER DIREST SORROW BE

OFT RETURNING DAYS LIKE THIS.

LET OUR POOREST WISHES BE

JOY ATTEND ON ERMINIE.

**Erminie**

THANKS, DEAR FRIENDS, MY THANKS RECEIVE,

WITH GOOD WISHES YOU CONFUSE,

THAT I’M GRATEFUL, PRAY BELIEVE,

BUT AT LOSS WHAT WORDS TO USE,

I CONFESS – TO EXPRESS

HOW YOUR WISHES MY HEART TOUCH,

BUT I THANK YOU. THANKS SO MUCH.

**Chorus**

JOY ATTEND ON ERMINIE, etc.

**Erminie**

Thank you very much, dear friends, for your kind wishes, but I feel you are making a little too much of me.

**Delaunay**

No, no, Mademoiselle. We can never do you justice.

**Chevalier**

Where is the Princess? The illustrious lady will be *ennuyé*.

*(Exit Chevalier C. and L.)*

**Delaunay**

I’m afraid we strangers don’t receive too many of your favors.

**Erminie**

Pray don’t impeach my impartiality, Captain.

**Eugène**

You really must not be too hard upon our fair debutante. She is not accustomed to crowds.

**Marquis**

*(Coming down C. to Erminie)*

You forget, Eugène, our guests are not accustomed to debutantes like Erminie.

*(Marquis goes up and off C., guests following him.)*

**Delaunay**

Oh, Mam’selle, may I put my name down for a dance?

**Eugène**

*(Crosses to Erminie.)*

I consider it my duty to defend Mam’selle Erminie from your onslaught.

*(Eugène and Erminie go off C.)*

**Delaunay**

Hang it all, where? The army is not to be slighted.

**Javotte**

*(Entering R.)*

Did Monsieur require anything? I hope the waiters are attentive, that Monsieur is not neglected.

**Delaunay**

Oh no, no!

**Javotte**

If I can get Monsieur anything?

**Delaunay**

Not if you’re to leave me to fetch it. You’re a deuced pretty girl!

**Javotte**

*(Crosses L. of Delaunay.)*

Ah, that’s Monsieur’s fun. He doesn’t mean it!

**Delaunay**

Indeed I do, little one. When I look into your eyes I have but one desire – and that is….

**Simon**

*(Entering L. D.)*

Ice or sponge-cake?

*(Delaunay R., Simon C., Javotte L.)*

**Delaunay**

No, fellow, no.

**Marie**

*(Entering R. D.)*

Is there anything I can do for Monsieur?

**Maids**

*(Enter R. D. and C. D.)*

Anything for Monsieur le Capitaine?

**Delaunay**

Come along, my dears, and I’ll see.

*(Crosses to R.D.)*

**Lacqueys**

*(Enter R.D.)*

Anything for Monsieur?

**Delaunay**

No, no, hang it, no!

*(Delaunay runs off C.D., lacqueys and maids following.)*

**Javotte**

Now they’ve taken him away. That’s your meddling!

**Simon**

*(Crosses R.)*

And a good job too, traitress!

**Javotte**

We’re not accustomed to bad language in the Château Pontvert.

**Simon**

Beware, Javotte! Soldiers are dangerous. Think of my faithful heart, think of me.

*(Laughs outside. Erminie and Eugène enter L.)*

Ice or sponge-cake?

**Javotte**

Ice or sponge-cake?

*(Simon crosses and exits L., Javotte following)*

**Eugène**

*(R. of Erminie)*

Your confiding trustfulness must be contagious. In spite of myself I feel hopeful, though I fail to see whence aid can come.

**Erminie**

Time works wonders. It may be weeks before I am formally betrothed to de Brissac, and marvels may happen ere then.

**Eugène**

The dream is blissful, Erminie, but the awakening…. Is it wise to be living in a fool’s paradise?

**Erminie**

No paradise was ever made for fools. Wise men accept Elysium, fools hesitate and lose it.

**Eugène**

Where do you acquire such comforting philosophy?

**Erminie**

From old ballads composed by grey-bearded cynics. I have one to suit your case.

**No. 14 – Ballad ‘The Sighing Swain’ (Erminie)**

**I**

A LOVER IN HIS MIRROR GAZED

WITH VISAGE WAN AND GLARE HALF-DAZED,

TO SEE IF THINNER HE HAD GROWN

WITH LOVE; TO HOPE, ALAS, UNKNOWN;

HE BRUSHED HIS UNKEMPT LOCKS ASIDE

WITH CARELESS HASTE, AND VIEWED WITH PRIDE

AND MORBID JOY THE LINES OF CARE

THAT BLIGHTED DREAMS HAD PLANTED THERE;

WITH SIGH AND GROAN HIS BOSOM HEAVES,

DESPONDING PLAINT ALONE RELIEVES.

AH ME! AH WOE!

THE DEEP-DRAWN SIGH,

ALACK! HEIGHO!

OH, LOVE, I DIE,

HEIGHO! AH WOE!

**II**

DEPRESSED, HIS SPIRITS LOWER SINK

AS WANDERING NEAR THE LAKELET’S BRINK,

AND IN ITS SURFACE – GAZING ON.

ONCE MORE HIS VISAGE WOE-BEGONE,

HE BRUSHED AWAY THE SILENT TEAR,

BUT NE’ER LOOKED UP TO SEE, QUITE NEAR,

THE GODDESS, HOPE, WITH SWEET DESIRE

TO BID THE HAPLESS SWAIN ASPIRE;

HE GROANED AND MOANED, NOR LOOKED AROUND,

BUT DROOPING O’ER, FELL IN AND DROWNED.

AH ME! AH WOE! etc.

**Eugène**

I reproach myself for smiling at your banter, for I know it is the assumed gaiety of a true heart, striving to beguile its fears.

*(Erminie and Eugène cross and wonder off L. D. Cerise enters C., followed by swells.)*

**Cerise**

I am very sorry, but I have promised the Vicomte.

**First Guest**

And after?

**Cerise**

I have promised the Baron.

**Second Guest**

And the following?

**Cerise**

Engaged.

**Third Guest**

And the next?

**Cerise**

Engaged.

*(Laughter without, and Princess’s voice heard.)*

**Omnes**

What’s that?

**Cerise**

The Princess’s voice.

*(Cerise and followers group R.)*

**Omnes**

The Princess!

**Princess**

*(Without)*

Oh, Baron, I vow you must not.

*(Princess laughs outside.)*

**Javotte**

*(Enters L.C.)*

Don’t be alarmed. It’s only the Baron amusing the Princess de Gramponeur with his tricks. She’s in fits of laughter.

*(Exeunt Javotte, preceded by guests. Princess enters L.C. on Cadeaux’s arm.)*

**Princess**

I declare you are so entertaining, so nice.

**Cadeaux**

*(L.C.)*

Ah, your Highness, if the little dicky-birds had only whispered about you in the times that’s parst. Send I may never. Yer does me proud and the reciprocity as you shows tords me’s mutual, that’s a certainty.

**Princess**

*(R. of Cadeaux)*

How nice! Such unique phraseology! How you do remind me of my dear defunct Gramponeur!

**Cadeaux**

What? Your old man, eh? Ah, who knows? It was allus thought I was changed at birth.

*(Goes L.)*

**Princess**

How nice! How deliciously romantic! You may have been kidnapped, perhaps stolen.

**Cadeaux**

*(L. C.)*

I ain’t. I’m innocent. I can prove a halibi.

*(Falling on his knees.)*

**Omnes**

Ha! Ha! Ha! Bravo!

*(Marquis and Chevalier enter L.D.)*

**Chevalier**

Ah, here is the dear Princess.

**Princess**

Ha! Ha! Oh, Marquis, I do declare he’ll be the death of me.

**Cadeaux**

What a turn she guv me. Ravvy’ll finish me. I knows he will.

**Chevalier**

*(Crosses to Princess.)*

I have been telling the Marquis I know I can prevail upon you to prolong your visit.

*(Benedict (tall) enters L. D., drops into L. corner. Salver with bottle of Benedictine, two liqueur* *glasses. Cadeaux sees and at once helps himself to a glass.)*

**Princess**

Impossible, Chevalier.

**Marquis**

Oh, then I must get the Baron to persuade you to remain another week.

*(Marquis crosses to Princess.)*

**Princess**

How nice!

**Chevalier**

Where is the fascination? I fail to see any charm in the fellow myself.

**Princess**

How could you not appreciate the dear Baron?

**Chevalier**

Confound the Baron!

*(Goes up in a temper.)*

**Cadeaux**

*(Who has followed Marquis on again, helping himself to wine – to Benedict)*

I told you for to stick to me in every room, Benedict, and you didn’t stuck.

**Princess**

His tricks are wonderful, Marquis!

**Omnes**

Oh, wonderful!

**Princess**

And his sleight of hand is marvellous!

**Omnes**

Most marvellous!

**Princess**

He charmed a diamond bracelet from my very wrist and declares I shall find it in my jewel-case on my return to Paris, and when a gold necklace and a purse of money were placed under a handkerchief he changed them at a word into a pair of old gloves and a bunch of grapes.

**Omnes**

Wonderful!

*(Chevalier again advances R. of Cadeaux, by Princess.)*

**Chevalier**

Not at all! With a little practice I….

**Marquis**

Yo! Ha! Ha! I’m glad we’ve found you a lion, ladies!

**Princess**

Ah, but he’s not an ordinary lion.

**Chevalier**

No, a stuffed lion!

*(Goes up.)*

**Princess**

He does so remind me of my poor dear Gramponeur – so original, so daring. Marquis, would you believe it, we’ve positively been romping?

**Marquis**

No! No! Ha! Ha! Ha!

*(Cadeaux, who has longingly watched Benedict, again fills up glass.)*

**Cadeaux**

*(Taking glass of Benedictine off salver)*

Yr realth ter ryal lioness, and may the skin of a gooseberry be allus big enough for a humbrella for hall yer hennimies.

*(Omnes laugh.)*

**Marquis**

The sentiment is certainly sensible.

*(Goes up.)*

**Cadeaux**

Won’t yer ryness have wee nippee?

**Princess**

Wee nippee? How nice!

**Cadeaux**

No, of course not. Such drops as these ’ud be no good to a real tip-topper like you.

**Chevalier**

*(L. of Princess)*

Tip-topper?

**Omnes**

Tip-topper?

**Princess**

What is a … tip-topper?

**Chevalier**

Don’t ask, my dear Princess. It may be a shock to your refinement.

**Princess**

No, the dear Baron.

**Chevalier**

Damn the Baron!

*(Chevalier goes up, furious, but meets and exits with Cerise C. Delaunay exits C.)*

**Cadeaux**

*(To Princess)*

Yer ’ealth ter ’ighness, and may your father’s daughter allus have a loving smile for my uncle’s nevy.

**Princess**

How he does remind me of my poor dear Gramponeur!

*(Exit Benedict L.)*

**Cadeaux**

*(Crosses to Princess)*

Ah, how different things might a bin if they wasn’t as they is. But who knows what sentence the old book destiny will parse on us yet? I believe in omens, leaven myself to the sweet little chirrups as sit up aloft and allus goes on what the dicky-birds say.

*(Flunky with salver exits.)*

**No 15 – Song and Whistling Chorus ‘What the Dicky-Birds Say’ (Cadeaux)**

**I**

I’M NOT TOO FREE AN AGENT LIKE ALL THE REST OF YOU,

THERE’S THEM AS LOOK ARTER MY FATE,

I ARKS ’EM FOR ADVICE WHEN I’VE ANYTHING TO DO,

THEIR LONGING FOR MY WELFARE’S VERY GREAT.

WHENEVER I WISH TO STEAL FROM THE NIGHT

A FEW HOURS FOR TO USE IN THE DAY,

AFORE THAT I KNOWS I’M A DOIN’ WHAT’S RIGHT,

I SEES WHAT THE DICKY-BIRDS SAY.

*(Refrain)*

CHIRP, CHIRP, CHIRP, CHIRP,

IN THE SHRILLEST TONE—

CHIRP, CHIRP, CHIRP, CHIRP,

IN A TONGUE OF THEIR OWN.

WHAT THEIR WARBLES AND TWITTERS CONVEY,

TAKING THEIR STUDY AND THOUGHT

ERE THE MIND CAN BE BROUGHT

TO DEFINE WHAT THE DICKY-BIRDS SAY.

CHIRP, CHIRP, CHIRP.

**II**

WHEN BROUGHT BEFORE HIS BEAKSHIP MY EVIDENCE TO GIVE,

I’M ALLUS IN A DREADFUL STATE

FOR FEAR I’LL HAVE TO GO TO A SETTLEMENT TO LIVE,

A PENAL ONE IS SURE TO BE MY FATE.

NOW, JURIES AIN’T VERY WELL UP TO THEIR JOB,

THEY FOR FEAR OF CONFINEMENT ALL DAY

THE VERDICT AGREE ON BY SPINNIN’ A BOB;

AT LEAST SO THE DICKY-BIRDS SAY.

*(Refrain)*

CHIRP, CHIRP, CHIRP, CHIRP, etc.

*(Ravannes, Marquis, Cerise, Chevalier and Benedict re-enter. Ravannes meets Cadeaux, leaves ladies.)*

**Ravannes**

*(Crosses to Cadeaux.)*

Be careful, Caddy. Pull yourself together and don’t drink any more liqueur.

**Cadeaux**

Look here, Ravvy, I’ve swiped two souvenir silver spoons.

*(Ravannes takes spoon and threatens.)*

**Cadeaux**

*(On his knees)*

No, I can prove a halibi.

**Omnes**

Ha! Ha! Ha! How clever!

*(Delaunay is R. with Cerise. It is useless to mark the position in this scene as they are constantly* *changing, but they may easily be followed, all crosses being marked.)*

**Ravannes**

*(Crosses to Princess.)*

He positively deceives me, and I’m accustomed to him.

**Cerise**

*(R.C.)*

Get him to perform some more tricks.

*(Benedict again L.)*

**Ravannes**

*(L.C.)*

My noble and illustrious friend Baron Bonny will do his best to please you all.

**Cadeaux**

Of course. I shall be only too pleased to best you all.

*(Ravannes threatens.)*

Ho! Ho! Ah, Benedict, I will again. It’s lovely, Benedict. Yer ’ealth ter ryal lioness, and may you long live to reccommember the day when yer uncle was a doin’ the nobby.

*(Ravannes stops his drinking, knocks wine on floor, comes round L. of Cadeaux, meets Benedict.)*

**Chevalier**

*(L. of Princess)*

Doing the nobby? Where is the sense of such an expression? What is …?

**Princess**

Chevalier, don’t interrupt the Baron.

**Chevalier**

Damn the Baron!

*(Goes up again annoyed, goes round and falls down R. of Princess. Exit Benedict.)*

**Ravannes**

*(To Benedict)*

Get out! After the gavotte my noble friend will show you his wonderful card-tricks.

*(Crosses in front to Cerise.)*

**Cadeaux**

The merry little hanky-panky fakes.

**Cerise**

*(R.)*

Hanky-panky? What does it mean?

**Ravannes**

*(R.C.)*

Pure Arabic! The Baron has explored the hitherto unknown portions of street Arabia and lived there as a sheik for several years.

**Cadeaux**

That’s where I learnt to write the oracle.

**Marquis**

*(At back, to Delaunay, as if discussing battle)*

The enemy were on our right flank…..

**Princess**

*(To Chevalier, who has come on from R.)*

Why will you persist in interrupting the Baron?

**Chevalier**

*(R.C.)*

Oh, damn the Baron!

*(Goes up and round Cadeaux, crosses to Princess.)*

**Princess**

Poor dear Gramponeur used to speak Arabic, and I never could understand a word. Oh, he is so like…. You little humming bird!

**Cadeaux**

You little grasshopper!

*(Marquis and Delaunay down L.)*

**Ravannes**

The Baron speaks the language like a native.

**Cadeaux**

Yes, comes as natural to me as thieving.

**Omnes**

As what?

**Ravannes**

As thieving to a monkey. My honored friend had not finished his sentence.

*(Chevalier advances L. of Princess.)*

**Cadeaux**

No, not by two years and….

*(Ravannes kicks him.)*

Oh!

**Princess**

Chevalier, why will you interrupt the Baron?

**Marquis**

Just at that moment the Marshall said….

**Chevalier**

Damn the Baron! Ah, yes, to be sure. May I have the pleasure?

**Princess**

I have promised the Baron.

**Chevalier**

Oh, damn that Baron!

*(Exit C.)*

*(Cadeaux crosses, leading up Princess for dance. Others go to places.)*

**No 16 – Vocal Gavotte (Chorus)**

**I**

JOIN IN PLEASURE, DANCE A MEASURE,

FONDLY TREASURE HOURS SO BRIGHT.

PRIM SEDATELY, NOT TOO STATELY,

COLDNESS GREATLY MARS DELIGHT.

LIGHTLY STEP WITH GRACEFUL BEARING,

SUITABLE PRECISION SHOW,

FINISH COMES OF LONG PREPARING,

VIS-À-VIS AND DOS-À-DOS.

*(Refrain)*

FAIREST BELLE WITH BRAVEST BEAU,

STATELY BUT WITH HEARTS A-GLOW.

IN THRALL SUBLIME BUT MEASURED TIME,

MATED ALL ELATED GO!

**II**

STEPPING SPRIGHTLY, LAUGHING LIGHTLY,

NOISY CHATTER FILLS THE THRONG,

ANIMATION CLOAKS FLIRTATION,

FESTIVE JOYS WE’LL STILL PROLONG.

WHEN THE DIN OF MUSIC’S LOUDEST

SIGHING SWAINS MAY DARE THEIR FATE,

PLEAD WITH MEEKEST, DARE THE PROUDEST

IN THE MAZY TÊTE-À-TÊTE.

*(Refrain)*

FAIREST BELLS, etc.

*(Principals exeunt C., maids R. and L. Enter Simon R.D., Eugène entering with Marquis L.D.)*

**Simon**

The Sergeant, Monsieur le Marquis.

*(Simon exits R. Marquis and Ravannes C., Sergeant R.)*

**Marquis**

*(R.C.)*

What is your mission, Sargeant?

**Sergeant**

I am from Monsieur le Maire.

**Eugène**

*(C.)*

The Maire?

**Sergeant**

*(R.)*

He has been with our prisoner and sends a letter for Monsieur le Marquis. This, with a written statement of the prisoner, is for the Captain.

**Marquis**

*(R.C.)*

Read it, Eugène.

*(Eugène takes note.)*

**Ravannes**

*(L.)*

Strewth, the situation is growing critical. If that statement reaches Delaunay, we’re lost.

*(Crosses straight over to Sergeant.)*

If you’ll allow me, I shall be delighted to bear the missive to your Captain.

**Sergeant**

I was to deliver them into his own hands.

*(Refusing to give papers)*

**Marquis**

Remain, Sergeant. Your Officer shall be found.

**Eugène**

*(C. reads)*

“I have fixed to-morrow for the examination of the prisoner if convenient for you to be present with the Vicomte and his friend.”

**Marquis**

To-morrow? That is impossible.

**Erminie**

*(L.C.)*

Why, Papa?

**Marquis**

The notaries will be here for the signing of your betrothal contract.

**Eugène**

*(L.)*

To-morrow! Alas, all is over!

**Erminie**

*(Crosses to Marquis.)*

Why to-morrow, Papa? What is the object of this haste? Are you so anxious to be rid of me?

**Eugène**

*(L. to Erminie)*

Oh, consider how dull will be your existence without the happy face that was its only brightness.

**Marquis**

I know it, Eugène. I am a rough old soldier, but I have a father’s heart and shall feel the parting keenly.

**Ravannes**

Spare us, Sir, spare us your parental pangs.

*(Exit C.)*

**Erminie**

Why not postpone – a month, a week?

*(Ravannes goes up and off.)*

**Marquis**

No, no, to-morrow our friends will be here. I must not be selfish. I will consider only your happiness.

**Erminie**

I don’t want my happiness considered.

**Marquis**

Ah, your love for your old father prompts that avowal. But I can bear it, my darling. I have had experience in suffering – your poor, dear mother’s loss, which you can scarce recall.

**Erminie**

Ah, if I had now her gentle guidance and support. My memories, if faint, are sweet. I fancy I can see her tender face and hear her low, sweet voice in the dear old lullaby of my childhood days.

**No. 17 – Lullaby (Erminie)**

**I**

DEAR MOTHER, IN DREAMS I SEE HER,

WITH LOV’D FACE SWEET AND CALM,

AND HEAR HER VOICE WITH LOVE REJOICE

WHEN NESTLING ON HER ARM.

I THINK HOW SHE SOFTLY PRESS’D ME,

OF THE TEARS IN EACH GLIST’NING EYE

AS HER WATCH SHE’D KEEP, WHEN SHE ROCK’D TO SLEEP  
HER CHILD WITH THIS LULLABY.

BYE, BYE, BYE, BYE, BYE.

*(Refrain)*

BYE, BYE, DROWSINESS O’ERTAKING,

PRETTY LITTLE EYE-LIDS SLEEP,

BYE, BYE, WATCHING TILL THOU’RT WAKING,

DARLING BE THY SLUMBER DEEP.

**II**

AH, E’EN WHEN HER LIFE WAS EBBING

HER WORDS WERE ALL OF ME,

MY FUTURE YEARS WERE ALL HER FEARS

HER FATE ’TWAS NOT TO SEE.

MY FATHER, I HEAR YOU WEEPING,

AS IN SORROW YOU’RE STANDING NIGH;

AND MY MOTHER’S PLAINT, IN HER ACCENTS FAINT,

WAS THIS TENDER, SWEET LULLABY.

BYE, BYE, BYE, BYE, BYE.

*(Refrain)*

BYE, BYE, etc.

**Marquis**

*(Crosses R.)*

Enough, Erminie, of these mournful recollections.

*(Going up)*

Come, my friend, you are here for enjoyment. Eugène, take the Sergeant and endeavor to find Delaunay.

*(Exit C. Omnes exeunt except Eugène, Erminie and Sergeant C. Ravannes enters from L., going down R.C.)*

**Eugène**

Erminie, even your courage must falter beneath this blow.

**Erminie**

Nearly. Return presently. I’m going to make an appeal to the Vicomte, tell him of our love, and beg him to relinquish his claim.

*(Sergeant crosses over from R.)*

**Eugène**

There is little hope in that. Come, Sergeant.

*(Eugène and Sergeant exeunt L.D.)*

**Erminie**

*(Stopping Ravannes, who is following Sergeant)*

Vicomte, I must have a few words with you.

**Ravannes**

*(L.C.)*

Certainly! A thousand. I will return.

*(Going R. to door. This scene should be made slightly dramatic, Ravannes in his anxiety betraying* *himself about papers, but to his own benefit as she takes it.)*

**Erminie**

*(R.C.)*

No, no, now. You must hear me. I have an appeal to you to your generous nature. Your nature is generous, I’m sure.

**Ravannes**

It is, it is. I have the tenderness of a woman.

**Erminie**

You are the blight upon two loving hearts.

**Ravannes**

The mildew shall be removed.

*(Goes up to back, trying to get away.)*

**Erminie**

You are standing between two kindred souls.

*(She brings him back.)*

**Ravannes**

Then I will step aside.

*(Going across R.)*

**Erminie**

Not till you have heard. Oh, by the love that I might and should have felt for you, had you been he – by the hate which, as you are not, fills me – that is not hate, but hate compared with the love I feel for him.

**Ravannes**

Him? Who? Captain Delaunay?

**Erminie**

No, Eugène.

**Ravannes**

Eugène, he? Let me fly. I cannot stay to witness his bliss.

*(Crosses again L.)*

**Erminie**

Oh, Vicomte, be merciful. Give me up.

*(Following)*

**Ravannes**

I do, I do, though with the effort a human heart is broken.

**Erminie**

Two others will be made whole, and they will for ever bless you.

**Ravannes**

They’re very good.

**Erminie**

You will scorn the contract, refuse to sign, destroy the paper.

**Ravannes**

*(Crosses R.)*

If I can obtain them from the Sergeant, yes.

**Erminie**

The Sergeant?

*(Following him R.)*

**Ravannes**

The Cap.… The Marq….

*(Half aside)*

I had a scheme, would have effected everything. But, if Delaunay reads that paper, all is lost.

**Erminie**

Then he shall not read it.

Not? What? Rot! I’m losing my nerve.

*(Goes up R.)*

**Delaunay**

*(Enters L.D., reading letter. Sergeant follows.)*

“I beg that you will take the trouble to read the accompanying statement. The effrontery of the prisoner may surprise you.” What can be…?

**Erminie**

*(Taking paper as he opens it)*

No, no, Captain, business tomorrow. This evening is devoted to pleasure.

*(As she puts paper behind her, Ravannes seizes it.)*

**Ravannes**

Exactly.

*(Aside to Erminie)*

In the corridor after supper you shall know my plan to save you.

**Erminie**

But Eugène! May I tell…?

**Ravannes**

In the corridor after supper, yes.

**Delaunay**

But hang it all. Duty!

*(Omnes enter.)*

**Ravannes**

Duty is now to attend on beauty. And from such service who would shrink?

**Omnes**

None, none.

**Marquis**

*(Entering C. from L. with Eugène, who, comes down L. of Erminie)*

Come, Erminie, your slaves must be dying for food.

**Erminie**

*(C.)*

Yes, Papa.

*(To Eugène)*

The Vicomte will help us, will tell you more in the corridor after supper.

*(Guests fill up stage. Princess enters, followed by some guests, Chevalier.)*

**Princess**

*(Entering C.)* The dear Baron is so clever. He has won 200 francs off me.

**First Guest**

And fifty off me.

**Second Guest**

And 500 off me.

**Chevalier**

And 20 off me.

**Cadeaux**

*(Entering C. from L.)*

Only practice. The quickness of the ’and deceives the hye. Where’s Benedic?

*(Sees Sargeant.)*

I’m innocent. I can prove a halibi.

**Ravannes**

*(To Cadeaux)*

Idiot!

**Omnes**

How clever!

**Simon**

*(Enters C.)*

Supper!

**Chevalier**

Princess, may I?

**Princess**

I have promised the Baron.

*(Chevalier exits C.)*

**Chevalier**

Oh, damn that Baron!

*(Cadeaux crosses, offering arm to Princess, and guests select their partners and wander off to Chorus.)*

**No 18 – ‘To Supper’ (Chorus)**

COME, TO SUPPER LET’S REPAIR,

DANCING GIVES A ZEST

FOR THE VIANDS, RICH AND RARE;

NIMBLE FEET MUST REST.

GAILY HAVE THE HOURS FLOWN

IMPERCEPTIBLY.

LIGHT FANTASTIC BLISS UNKNOWN,

SWEETEST MELODY.

THE TABLE GAY

WITH JUSTICE CLAIMS

OUR MORTAL FRAMES;

AWAY! AWAY!

**CURTAIN**

**No 19 – Melos**

*(Music for change of scene)*

*(Mechanical change from ballroom, the walls revolving. This scene may be greatly simplified if necessary. The change may be worked in a dozen different ways. The gallery and staircase may also be dispensed with, although of great value where they can be had. The three doors in flats are of the greatest importance, and the scene should suggest a passage or corridor with other doors.)*

**ACT III (ACT II, SCENE II)**

*Scene:- An old panelled oak-chamber, massive and heavy carvings. By fire-place R.. openings arched R. and L. at back, three doors in flats with others seen off at side. A staircase runs up from L. to gallery at back, across over chamber doors showing other doors painted on exit on gallery R. A stand of armour stands at this sign. Important it is placed on during working of scene.*

*(Ravannes enters, followed by Cadeaux on top of staircase and down stage, Cadeaux now with his bundle and umbrella of Act I.)*

**Ravannes**

Come along, Caddy, leave the window open in case of need.

**Cadeaux**

Oh, Ravvy, let’s scarper! What’s the good of stopping to be copped?

**Ravannes**

What’s the use of leaving to wander around the country with the hound of justice at our heels and the certainty of capture at the finish?

**Cadeaux**

Oh, don’t talk so, Ravvy.

**Ravannes**

We must have horses and a carriage.

*(Coming down stairs)*

**Cadeaux**

Oh, what a swag we could land if we had. I could a filled a wan to-night.

**Ravannes**

We shall have them. I am waiting for my affianced bride. I shall get her to agree to an elopement.

*(Crosses to fire-place.)*

**Cadeaux**

Elope and leave your old pal?

**Ravannes**

No, no, with my rival the secretary and so obtain by her orders the conveyance which is to secure our flight.

**Cadeaux**

*(C.)*

Oh, Ravvy, what a general you’d a bin!

*(Looking about nervously)*

**Ravannes**

By this plan we shall also secure her diamonds. No female ever elopes without her jewelry.

*(Crosses L.)*

**Cadeaux**

Oh, it’s too good. It can’t come off. We may be nabbed at any moment.

**Ravannes**

I know. We must risk that.

**Cadeaux**

No, Ravvy, let’s give ourselves up. We’ve had a hevingly hevening.

**Ravannes**

Stop trembling, or I’ll end your nervousness.

*(Seizes him savagely.)*

**Cadeaux**

No, Ravvy, I can prove a halibi.

**Erminie**

*(Without)*

I am here, Eugène.

**Ravannes**

She’s coming, Caddy, and the blooming bird is with her. To tell him our plan would be dangerous. He half suspects already. Up the stairs quick! We must wait till she’s alone.

*(Cadeaux stumbles on stairs.)*

You blundering fool!

**Cadeaux**

Don’t, Ravvy, it’s my first offence.

*(They go half way up stairs.)*

**Eugène**

*(Enters with Erminie L. from corridor.)*

I must then wait and trust. But can you not give me an idea whence this aid will come?

**Erminie**

*(C.)*

Why, from our friend the Vicomte, as you should have guessed.

**Eugène**

*(L.C.)*

He our friend I can scarce believe!

**Erminie**

Of course not. He is your hated rival. But, if he does all he has promised, you may yet live to thank and bless him for your happiness.

**Eugène**

My Erminie!

*(Embraces her.)*

**Javotte**

*(Enters corridor L., followed by Simon.)*

Hmm! All right, Mam’selle, nobody here but me!

**Simon**

That’s all. Nobody here but….

**Javotte**

*(Boxes his ear.)*

How dare you make me tell Mam’selle a story like that, please? The Vicomte is not in the supper-room. He left the table with his friend the Baron, so Simon says.

**Erminie**

Seek him, Eugène. He is a stranger to the Château and may have lost his way. I must see him to-night. Look through the corridors.

*(Eugène exits L., Erminie following.)*

**Javotte**

*(As Erminie and Eugène exeunt L.)*

What are you standing there for, stupid? Didn’t you hear Mam’selle say she must see the Vicomte to-night?

*(Ravannes watches from stairs, runs down and follows her off, unseen by Javotte, his object being to* *see her alone. Ravannes goes off L.)*

**Simon**

I’ve enough of him to-night and a great deal too much of the other swells. What was that Captain saying to you?

**Javotte**

Oh, he was only asking if I’d seen the Sergeant.

**Simon**

Couldn’t he ask without kissing you?

**Javotte**

Oh, that was an accident.

**Simon**

A what?!

*(Stamps foot.)*

**Javotte**

Why, you jealous simpleton, he was going to whisper but, the corridor being dark, he mistook my mouth for my ear.

**Simon**

He’d better mind I don’t mistake his cranium for a hogshead and tap it.

**Javotte**

You go along and search the corridor for the Vicomte.

**Simon**

You come along with me to insure against accidents. I want no more mistakes in your military manoeuvres.

*(Exeunt R. corridor R. Cadeaux gets under stairs L. Erminie, Cerise and Ravannes enter L. and come down C.)*

**Ravannes**

*(L.)*

It is useless. Your father is obdurate. I cannot move him.

**Erminie**

*(C.)*

Then there is no hope? No way?

**Ravannes**

I have vowed to serve you and I will. I have considered everything. There is but one way. You must elope.

**Cerise**

*(R.)*

With you?

**Ravannes**

No, such happiness is not for me. With Eugène.

*(Leaning on banister, foot of stairs)*

**Erminie**

That would be delightful. I wonder he never proposed it.

**Cerise**

You are not serious, Erminie?

**Erminie**

Indeed I am if it can be done.

**Ravannes**

I will arrange all details, see you safely off, and remain to bear the brunt of the Marquis’s anger.

**Cerise**

But you are not counting on Eugène. Will he be agreeable?

**Erminie.**

No, I’m afraid he will never consent to carry me off.

**Ravannes**

A mere detail. Then you must carry him off!

**Cerise**

It’s deliciously romantic, but I’m afraid you mustn’t think of it. You can’t go this way.

**Erminie**

Yes I can, and take you with me. To go alone wouldn’t be at all proper.

*(Goes up. Cadeaux under stairs drops his umbrella out, making a noise. Ladies start. Cadeaux dives out and tries to get away round corner to corridor. Ravannes just catches long sleeve of coat as he is disappearing, brings him forward.)*

**Ravannes**

My friend the Baron….

**Cadeaux**

How are you, girls?

**Ravannes**

… has promised every assistance. Send your authority and he’ll make all arrangements with the grooms. The regular postilions we must dispense with. My friend will act in that capacity.

**Cadeaux**

No, I was never on a hoss….

*(Tries to get away. Ravannes holds him, and his coat comes off.)*

**Ravannes**

*(L.C.)*

The Baron is an accomplished horseman. Who can you send with him to the stables?

*(Enter Javotte R.)*

**Erminie**

*(R.C.)*

Where is Javotte?

**Javotte**

*(C.)*

I’m here, Mam’selle.

*(Cadeaux business of trying to find sleeve of coat)*

**Erminie**

I want a messenger to Joliquet at the stables.

**Javotte**

I understand, Mam’selle. Simon shall go. He’s not far away.

*(Exit R.)*

**Erminie**

Shall we require to take anything?

**Ravannes**

Well, a change….

**Cadeaux**

*(Crosses L.)*

A few things in a bundle – your tooth brush and your Sunday togs.

**Ravannes**

You may be away some days. It may take time to bend your father’s will.

**Cerise**

Then we must get our trunks from the storeroom.

**Erminie**

That might arouse suspicion.

*(Simon and Javotte R.)*

**Ravannes**

Very probably. A few necessaries, trifles, knickknacks.

**Cadeaux**

Trifles we have a knack o’ nicking,

**Ravannes**

Your jewelry.

**Erminie**

Jewelry?!

**Ravannes**

You see, jewelry can always be changed back to money on a pinch.

**Cadeaux**

*(L.)*

Not a pinch back jewelry.

**Javotte**

Here’s Simon, Mam’selle.

**Erminie**

Simon, take this gentleman to the stables. Tell Joliquet whatever instructions he may give are to be obeyed to the letter.

*(Speaks with Javotte and Cerise.)*

**Simon**

Yes, Mam’selle. This way, my Lord.

*(Up L.)*

I love horses. I could live in a stable. Come along.

**Cadeaux**

If I could find Benedic and get a drop of summat to steady my nerves. I’m trembling like a jelly-fish.

**Ravannes**

Good horses, mind. Be steady and cautious.

**Cadeaux**

I’ll bring a jackass.

*(Exeunt Cadeaux and Simon L.)*

Cerise

*(R.)*

Come then, Javotte. Be diligent and don’t betray us.

**Javotte**

If I breath a word, may I never get married!

*(Cerise and Javotte exeunt L.C.D.)*

**Ravannes**

*(To Erminie)*

Tell Eugène nothing. Say only he is to meet you in the garden at three.

*(Aside)*

By that time we shall be clean away. I have four packages in readiness. The Baron will assist me to take them to the chaise.

*(Crosses to R.C.)*

**Erminie**

*(Goes to L.D.C.)*

Look, this is my dressing-room. The chambers are beyond.

**Ravannes**

How shall we find it again in the dark? A light might attract attention. And the doors in this corridor are all so much alike.

**Erminie**

We will place a sentry.

**Ravannes**

A sentry?

**Erminie**

Yes, this stand of armour. My great grand uncle René. We will drag him to the right side of our door.

**Ravannes**

Capital! That will be our guide.

**Marquis**

*(Without L.)*

Come, Princess!

**Erminie**

Be cautious! The guests are approaching. The party is breaking up.

*(Servants enter with lights, Marquis, Princess and Chevalier R., Eugène et al L. Some guests with* *servants go up stairs.).*

**Princess**

I can’t tell you how much I’ve been amused, Marquis.

**Marquis**

Delighted, Princess. Your room is here.

*(Pointing out C.D.)*

Here is your door, Chevalier.

*(Indicating R.D.)*

**Princess**

Thanks!

*(Seeing armour)*

What is that?

**Marquis**

That? The armour of a famous warrior, my grand-uncle René.

**Princess**

How nice! So like poor, dear Gramponeur. Where is the dear Baron? He is so clever. He has taken my watch to regulate.

**Ravannes**

He is making an important astronomical calculation. He is taking the altitude of a star.

**Princess**

Just like poor, dear Gramponeur.

**Marquis**

Come, Eugène, you shall accompany me on my rounds. Once more, friends, good night!

**No 20 – Concerted Piece ‘Good-Night’**

**Chorus**

’TIS GROWING LATE, ’TIS GROWING LATE,

AND TIME INDEED TO END THE FÊTE,

**Principals**

OR WE SHALL SEE THE MORNING’S LIGHT

BEFORE WE SAY TO YOU GOOD-NIGHT.

GOOD-NIGHT, GOOD-NIGHT,

MAY DREAMS BE BRIGHT,

GOOD-NIGHT, GOOD-NIGHT.

**Marquis**

Good night, Princess, and pleasant dreams.

*(Marquis exits R., Chevalier R.C.D. Princess C., guests R. and L. and up staircase.)*

**Eugène**

*(To Erminie)*

Have you succeeded?

*(Eugène, when others nearly off, brings Erminie a little forward.)*

**Erminie**

*(L.C.)*

All will be well. Have not time to impart more now. Meet me in the garden at three.

**Eugène**

*(R.C.)*

At three in the garden. Can I?

**Erminie**

If you can’t, I must ask the Vicomte.

**Eugène**

I will be there.

**Erminie**

I thought you would.

*(Lights go down a little as servants exeunt.)*

**Marquis**

*(Without)*

Eugène.

**Eugène**

Yes, Marquis, I’m coming.

*(Exit R.)*

**Erminie**

*(Crosses to L.C.D. as Cerise and Javotte with light enter. Lights up.)*

First, to move the sentinel.

**Cerise**

The stand of armour?

**Erminie**

Yes, here he is.

*(Moves armour.)*

Now there he is.

*(Armour R. of L.D.)*

**Cerise**

They can’t very well miss that.

**Erminie**

Now to collect our things. Oh, how nervous I’m getting!

*(Lights down. They exeunt L.C.D. as Ravannes comes down stairs.)*

**Marquis**

*(Without)*

Come, Eugène, we must go down and see our friends depart.

**Ravannes**

The devil!

*(Hides on staircase.)*

**Chevalier**

*(Enters from R.C.D.)*

I cannot account for this restlessness.

*(Marquis and Eugène (with light) enter R. Lights up.)*

**Marquis**

Chevalier, you here?

**Chevalier**

Yes, if you’ll allow me, I’ll go down with you, get a little air and look at the moon.

**Marquis**

As you please, Chevalier.

*(Crosses L.)*

You’re unused to these late hours. Come along!

**Chevalier**

Just so. Come along!

*(Exeunt L. Lights down. Ravannes during speech gropes down stairs and feels his way to armour.)*

**Ravannes**

Why don’t these old fools go to bed? Caddy, Caddy! No matter! He knows – the room next the figure. I must help those girls with our plunder. There’ll be a dearth of jewelry to-morrow! Ah, here is the silent sentry! This then is the room.

*(Exit L.C.D.)*

**Cadeaux**

*(Entering by gallery and coming down staircase and coming down)*

Ravvy! Ravvy! Ravvy is so reckless! It’s the biggest plant I ever was in, and if I’m nabbed it’ll be the biggest tree I ever was up. I’ve had 14 days, 8 months four times, 1 year twice, 7 years unfinished. This’ll be a fourteen penn’orth if I can’t prove a halibi. Eh? What? What did you say?

*(Touches armour.)*

Oh, it’s the old iron image. Right. He marks the room. The door at the side. Which side? Right can’t be wrong. So here goes.

*(Exit to C. room – Princess’s.)*

**Chevalier**

*(Enters L.)*

I shall be better in bed. How dark!

*(Screams heard. Cadeaux re-enters hurriedly.)*

**Cadeaux**

The wrong room. I’m innocent. I can prove a halibi!

*(Exit hurriedly R., feeling his way.)*

**Chevalier**

*(L., crossing C.)*

Eh? What? My room is somewhere here.

*(Going to C.D.)*

**Princess**

*(Entering)*

It’s scandalous. I never…!

*(Seizes Chevalier.)*

I have you, monster. Don’t attempt to escape. Help, help! Where is the dear Baron? Why is he not here to protect me?

**Marquis**

*(Entering L. with Eugène, with light. Lights up.)*

Princess! Chevalier! What has happened?

**Princess**

*(C.)*

Seize this iniquitous old man!

**Marquis**

*(L.C.)*

Pray be calm! Let us avoid raising the house. What has occurred?

**Princess**

*(C.)*

He has unblushingly intruded upon the privacy of my apartment.

**Chevalier**

*(R.)*

No! No!

**Princess**

Dare you deny? I caught you here at the very door trying to make your escape.

**Marquis**

Believe me, there is some mistake.

**Eugène**

*(L.)*

Indeed, Princess, the Chevalier was with us but this moment.

**Marquis**

Pray retire, Princess. I will make all enquiries. I am assured the Chevalier is a….

*(Leads Princess to door C.)*

**Princess**

… a bold, bad man. I would secure my door were I not so afraid of ghosts.

**Marquis**

Make your mind easy, Princess. The Ponverts have all died natural deaths.

**Princess**

How nice! Just like poor, dear Gramponeur. Thank you, gentlemen, so much.

*(Exit C.D.)*

**Chevalier**

*(R.)*

It is really a great deal past my comprehension. The Princess is perfectly sane, I trust.

**Marquis**

*(C.)*

She’s been dreaming of you, Chevalier. It will be all right in the morning. Here’s your room. Now, who’s been moving Uncle René’s armour?

*(Eugène moves armour back to R. of C.D., its original place)*

**Eugène**

The servants must have been making some changes.

**Marquis**

They know my objection to changes, or ought to by this time. Good night, Chevalier. You’ll be better in bed. Here you are on the right of Uncle René.

**Chevalier**

Better in bed on the right of Uncle René.

*(Exit R.D.)*

**Marquis**

*(Going R.)*

Come to my room, Eugène, and we will talk over these suspicions of yours.

**Eugène**

I can scarcely say what my suspicions are, but I fear all is not right.

**Marquis**

Ever thoughtful for our affairs. How different from that puppy, the Vicomte. Ah, if you and Erminie…. But there! Regrets are useless.

**Eugène**

Oh, sir!

*(Aside)*

Am I dreaming? Believe me, sir….

**Marquis**

Yes, I know, it can’t be helped. If people don’t fancy each other, they don’t.

*(Exeunt Marquis and Eugène R.)*

**Ravannes**

*(Opening L.D.)*

Caddy! Oh, what? Not there! I thought I heard him.

*(Closes door.)*

**Chevalier**

*(Entering R.D.)*

My light is out.

*(Crosses L.)*

Most annoying! If I could but find my way to the Marquis’s room.

*(Ravannes opens door again.)*

**Ravannes**

Sh! Are you there?

**Chevalier**

Am I here?

*(On the R. of the L.D. sinks frightened, half against flat at side of door.)*

**Ravannes**

You idiot! Surely you know if you’re there or not?

**Chevalier**

Yes, I am here.

**Ravannes**

I’m glad you’ve made up your mind. Where the devil have you been so long?

**Chevalier**

Where the devil have you been so long?

**Ravannes**

Don’t keep echoing my words! Come here! Take hold of this bundle! Reach out, can’t you? Why, you’re shaking like a dice-box!

**Chevalier**

What am I to do with it?

**Ravannes**

What am I to do with it? Didn’t we arrange it before?

**Chevalier**

Did we?

**Ravannes**

Take it into the bottom of the stairs. Make no mistake, or I’ll strangle you.

*(Shuts door.)*

**Chevalier**

I’m going. Preserve me! I’m engaged in a burglary! Oh, Mr. Confederate, don’t kill me!

*(Exit L.)*

**Cadeaux**

*(Entering L.)*

All’s clear, if things can be clear when they’re not at all clear. The darkness is clear enough. If this isn’t darkness, I don’t know darkness when I see it.

*(Shoves by accident armour back to R. of L.D.)*

Hello! Can’t you look where you’re passing? Oh, it’s the tin-man!

**Ravannes**

*(Opening door.)*

Sh! Have you come back?

**Cadeaux**

*(R. of L.D.)*

Of course, I should ha’ bin here before, but I got twisted.

**Ravannes**

You have been here before. What do you mean?

**Cadeaux**

Have I? I didn’t know.

**Ravannes**

Have you taken the bundle?

**Cadeaux**

No, I’ve come for it.

**Ravannes**

Come for what?

**Cadeaux**

The bundle, o’ course.

**Ravannes**

You had it.

**Cadeaux**

Yes, I dropped it off the stairs.

**Ravannes**

Yes, yes, who else? No fooling!

**Cadeaux**

How do I know who else?

**Ravannes**

No fooling!

**Cadeaux**

That’s just what I say. Turn it up!

**Ravannes**

Fool! Come inside and get the jewelry.

*(Exeunt into room.)*

**Chevalier**

*(Entering L.)*

I never felt so frightened. I’m in peril of my life. If I can now find my room, I’ll lock myself in and be content with the darkness till morning. Ah, here is the armour. How fortunate! The Marquis said on the right. Thank goodness I am safe at last.

*(Exit C.D. Ravannes and Cadeaux enter. Screams. Alarm bell rings.)*

**Ravannes**

What the deuce is that? There’s an alarm.

**Cadeaux**

It’s all up. I’m innocent. I can prove a halibi.

**Ravannes**

Up the stairs quick! Throw down your bundle! Quick, quick!

*(They exeunt up staircase. Screams, alarm bell, Marquis and Eugène R., guests follow. Simon, Javotte* *and Sergeant enter with lights.)*

**Marquis**

*(Crosses L.)*

What’s the matter? Here, the chamber of the Princess.

**Princess**

*(Running on centre)*

Save me! Help, help!

*(Chevalier enters C.D.)*

**Omnes**

Chevalier!!!!

**Princess**

That libertine again! Now, Marquis, I shall be believed.

**Chevalier**

No, no, I am innocent. It’s a mistake. I have been half-murdered. There are burglars in this house.

**Omnes**

Burglars??!!

*(Erminie and Cerise enter L.C.D.)*

**Marquis**

Erminie! Cerise! What is this?

**Erminie**

Oh, Papa, forgive me. I was going to elope.

**Marquis**

With the Vicomte?

**Erminie**

*(C.)*

No! With Eugène!

**Marquis**

*(L.C.)*

How dare…?

**Eugène**

*(R.)*

Sir…, I….

**Erminie**

Oh, he knew nothing about it. I was going to carry him off.

**Cerise**

*(Crosses R.)*

The Vicomte promised to help us.

**Delaunay**

*(Entering L.)*

Marquis, a serious imposition has been practised on you. The pretended Vicomte is no other than the notorious thief Ravannes.

**Omnes**

Ravannes?!

**Princess**

How different from his friend the Baron!

**Delaunay**

The supposed Baron is really none other than Ravannes’s companion, the escaped convict Cadeaux.

*(Princess faints in Chevalier’s arms. Delaunay crosses to L.)*

**Simon**

I always thought they were no gentlemen.

**Javotte**

Don’t you interfere!

**Ernest**

*(Entering L.)*

Marquis, may I have the honor of introducing myself? Ernest, Vicomte de Brissac.

**Eugène & Cerise**

Ernest!

**Ernest**

Cerise!

*(Business. Vicomte crosses to Cerise, embracing.)*

**Marquis**

There will be no difficulty in arranging matters here, I see.

**Cerise**

This is Eugène’s dearest companion.

**Eugène**

And Cerise’s fondest friend.

**Princess**

So like poor, dear Gramponeur.

*(Shouts. Ravannes, Cadeaux and soldiers enter, Ravannes and Cadeaux bound.*

**Ravannes**

Ah, ladies, sorry our little trip was interrupted!

**Cadeaux**

Ah, Princess, how different it might ‘ave bin, if they wasn’t as they is.

**Marquis**

A precious fool I shall look tomorrow when the notaries arrive and no bridegroom.

**Erminie**

There’s Eugène, Papa.

**Marquis**

Well, Eugène, what do you say?

**Eugène**

Oh, Sir, what could I say?

**Princess**

How nice!

**Ravannes**

The blushing brides who owe to us their happiness will plead in our defence.

**Cadeaux**

I shall plead guilty. It’s my first offence, and I can prove a halibi.

**No 21 – Finale**

**Erminie**

SHOULD WE GAINYOUR FAVORS, EVERY HEART IS GAY.

TRA LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA!

AND ALL REJOICING WE SHALL GO OUR WAY,

TRA LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA!

**Eugène**

LET GRACE NOT IRE IN YOUR HEARTS ABIDE,

LET YOUR SMILES ALL OUR EFFORTS GUIDE;

IN COUNSELS MILD YOUR DECISION GUIDE,

FOR THE TASTE OF SUCCESS IS SWEET.

**Erminie**

TRA LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA, LA!

**Principals & Chorus**

DEIGN, PRAY, TO CHEER EACH HEART

KINDLY ERE YOU DEPART;

A WEIGHT OF CARE DISMAYING, ALLAYING,

SAY, WITH OUR EFFORTS WE GAIN HERE A VICTORY,

AND ERMINIE TRIUMPHANTLY MAY LONG CONTRIVE TO REIGN.

**CURTAIN**