Love's Limit

A One Act Comic Opera

The Music by John Elliot Mallandaine
The Text by Robert Reece, Junior

This libretto is a transcription from the manuscript submitted to the Examiner held in the British Library (Add MS 53048 B). The manuscript was actually a printed libretto, probably the final published libretto except for the inclusion of advertisements. Unfortunately, there appears to be no online version so a transcript has been made of the Examiner's copy. **{x}** is the page number

The dialogue is in two columns with the speaker in the left-hand column. Vocal items are in the centre of the page with the singer also in the centre or towards the left.

See https://www.englishromanticopera.org/non-operas/Loves_Limit.htm for more details on the opera.

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Love's Limit

Scene 1

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A village in Provence—bright morning,—landscape of vineyards and distant hill slopes, -R. the cottage of Cecile, with *window to open. Villagers, vine dressers, etc. assembled outside the cottage with little nosegays in their hands.*

CHORUS.
Awake! awake! the skies are bright,
The moments quickly fleet;
The fields are flooded o'er with light,
The flowers are fresh and sweet.
The morning dew,
Reflects the hue,
Of thousand buds around,
And dainty notes
From birds' sweet throats,
Amongst the leaves resound.
Come! quit thy bower,
Late wears the hour,
Twice have we sung our lay;
Come out and meet
Us while we greet
The morn of your bright fête day.

[*Villagers throw their nosegays against Cecile's windows—she opens them* and *sings.*

Thanks! friends, your welcome brings my heart delight,
And makes the joyous morning still more bright.
Happy the villagers,
Hearts so light,
Joyfully singing
From morn to night,
Ever beguiling care with smiling.
Making the hours
Bright as the flowers;
Though fate frown,
Never east down.
Ye/We never envy the splendour of town.
Tra! la! la!
[*Chorus accompanies the repeat.*

[*Chorus dance here till Cecile enters, they shake hands with her and greet her, giving her little presents. Max comes forward with a bouquet.*

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Max Ah! fair Cecile, fresh as a rosebud, not as gay as a humming bird. I scarcely dare to offer vou these poor flowers but I was up ere dawn this morning to pluck them in the wood two leagues off. See! They've scarcely lost the dew on them

Cecile Oh Max! how good of you to think of me – they are beautiful – my favorite wild friends – a thousand thanks, Max!

Max No thanks; only consent to wear them today

Cecile With all my heart

Max (*aside*) I wish it was – that girl's turned all our heads, and stolen many hearts; I can answer for one, heigho) [*retires*

Cecile Oh! How pretty! Thank you, dear Lisette! Did you make this (*receiving presents*.) all yourself. Oh my! Margot, the very thing I wanted. How delightfu1 it is to have a fête like this! Only it won't do to have them when one gets a little older; instead of pretty purses, one has tea-kettles, and comforters, and I don't know what else, because people always know how old you are if you keep your birthday. Well, never mind, I'm only eighteen, and have a long time to look forward to before I come to the tea-kettles and comforters! Oh, I am so happy, dear friends! I am coming after you to have a dance in the field – so don't wait for me.

Max Adieu, Cecile! You won't forget the flowers; they're wild and homely, but they are good and pure, and as sweet, if not sweeter, than rarer exotics.

Cecile (aside) Poor fellow! *He's* the wild flower; a pity he's so very fond of me – or that I wasn't so—well! Well!

Chorus Good bye, Cecile, au revoir, Cecile, don't be long!

[*Exeunt Max and Chorus*

Rondo - Soprano

Dancing, singing, ever ringing
Joy's sweet changes all the day,
Thus so brightly and so lightly
Let youth's moments glide away;
But much I fear, though sorrow hero
Hath never shown his gloomy face,
There's one danger is no stranger,
Love, that lurks in every place.

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Dancing, singing, over ringing
Joy's bright changes all the day,
May be cheering, but I'm fearing,
Cannot keep sly love away.

Tra la la etc

Dancing, singing, ever ringing
Joy's sweet changes all the day,
Thus so brightly and so lightly
Let youth's hours glide away.
Yos, you may labour to forget,
But roguish love will plague you yet,
And.slyly creep in where peace has been,
Which by *his* spell, is soon upset.
Dancing, singing, ever ringing
Joy's sweet changes all the day,
May be cheering, but I'm fearing,
Cannot keep sly love away.
Tra la la, etc

Cecile Yes! and the worst of it is I have got two lovers, and what to do with them I can't say; one's bad - I mean good - enough, but *two* - that's too bad, - I mean good. I don't know what I'm saying, I get so confused when I begin to think of them. Ah, Susanne!

Enter Susanne

Sus Cecile, dear, how are you this bright day? See, here is a pair of gloves, stitched and embroidered all by myself.

Cecile Oh! how charming! Will they fit - let me try.

[*tries gloves*.

Sus Oh yes! they're sure to fit; I've got a pattern one.

Cecile Why! how did you get it? I never gave you one.

Sus No! that, would never have done, for I wanted to surprise you.

Cecile Where *did* you get it then?

Sus From Jabot!

Cecile Good gracious! now I recollect, he made me give him one.

Sus Where's the other?

Cecile Well! I'm afraid Pierre has the other!

Sus (*laughing*.) That's economical, certainly; but Cecile, it won't do to go on as you do, encouraging first one, then the other, making each think he is the favoured suitor. Can't you choose? (*aside*.)1 wish she would, I might have one then myself.

Cecile Choose! how can I? Why, when Pierre is with me, I think I like him best, till Jabot comes, and then I fancy I prefer him; and when they're both aaway –

Sus Yes! then you *know* you love –

Cecile Both!

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Sus Nonsense, Cecile, you can't love two; your heart is like old Clicquot's inn, in the village here.

Cecile How?

Sus Why, the owner puts up it notice for accommodation for travellers, and you know there's only room for one after all.

Duo

Cecile When my lovers attack me together,
Sue As often they do I will say;
Cecile Can I judge of the value of either?
Sue Well! send one adorer away.
Cecile Dismiss one! but which shall I choose?
Sue Whichever you think you prefer;
Cecile I'm sure I can't either refuse,
Sue I'm certain that neither will stir!

Ensemble

You/I must choose one
And refuse one!
Tho' they boast an equal claim,
Or my/your trouble
Will be double
And my/your chance remain the same

Cecile I'm afraid what you say is true.

Sus I'm sure it is, and now what do you intend to do?

Cecile Well, really, you see I've

Sus You hav'nt made a silly promise, have you? (*aside.*) I wonder has she fixed on Jabot.

Cecile Well, I've promised to let this day's events decide who is to be the fortunate man.

Sus And your grandfather is away too! how fortunate!

Cecile How unfortunate, rather; he might have relieved me from the importunities which –

Sus Which you like so much, eh?

Cecile Which I expect and can't escape. (*looking off*) Ah! what's that?
[*Pierre singing outside*

Sus An importunate lover ready to hand.

Cecile Oh! now look, isn't he handsome? Isn't he noble? Look how he walks!

Sus Very like other men, only stiffer in the back.

Cecile Nonsense! that's dignity!

Sus It looks like starch. I prefer Jabot.

Cecile Eh? what?

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Sus I was saying Jabot, isn't half so free and easy in his manner. These soldiers seem to expect a woman to ran into their arms at the first glance

Cecile Well! what of that? Arms is their profession.

Sus It's my turn to say "nonsense" now; but do you intend to let him meet you here?

Cecile No! I must be looked for a little first--anyhow, Pierre is first in the field.

Sus So a soldier should be. *(aside.)* I spy a preference.

Cecile Well, Susanne, you will come with me, and help me to arrange my presents.

Sus Certainly. *(aside.)* I hope Jabot will arrive soon; but not before Pierre and Cecile are occupied with each other.

Cecile Now, Susanne!

Sus Here I am, dear! [*They run into cottage.*

Enter Pierre and Jacques R. 3rd R. looking about.

Pie Not here! why Jacques, you said you saw her!

Jac If I didn't see her gown in the distance, may the next cartridge I bite choke me!

Pie Jacques! if she chooses me to-day, I'll make a man of you.

Jac Couldn't you do something besides that for me; you see I—

Pie Don't be absurd - your know what I mean - you shall have my good word in the service, and ten crowns down as earnest of my good will.

Jac Never mind the word, sergeant, the crowns are sufficient inducement.

Pie Pooh! you don't appreciate glory.

Jac Don't 1! look at my rank and pay! *there's* stimulus to glory!

Pie Well! I can't stop talking—

Jac You never can.

Pie Hold your tongue! I say I can't stop talking here with *you - go* into the cottage and over the farm till you find Cecile, and either send her here, or let me know.

Jac All right, sergeant! I'll find her; can I say anything to her for you?

Pie No!

Jac Can I transmit a fond embrace?

Pie Certainly not! be off!

Jac Well! I thought it might be agreeable to you.

Pie What the embrace?

Jac No, the service; very well! you shan't have it.

Pie What! the service?

Jac No, the embrace.

Pie Get along do—time is valuable
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Jac I never found mine so, or I shouldn't waste it in ferreting girls out for other people [*exit into cottage*

Pie That fellow's impudent, but he's useful; the sharpest blade in the regiment – for an intrigue or an encounter the most invaluable agent. I wonder why Cecile wasn't here to greet me? Will she select me after al; or must this rustic lover overcome the man of war. No! my heart tells me she affects *me*, and if a smooth tongue, a tolerably prepossessing appearance, and a bright coat can't win the way – why women aren't what I've proved them to be hitherto.

Song – Pierre

(*Trumpet Call*)

Some love to praise a soldier's life
If he's but young and active,
Because he wears the bright blue coat,
To women so attractive.
Because he roams from town to town,
Unchidden[1] as the bee,
And service of his country's still
His best excuse or plea.

[1] No scolded or reproved

But tho' he lives a cheery life,
Is active, young, and smart,
Ho may contend but can't defend
Thu fortress of his heart.
In vain would I this citadel.
Invulnerable prove;
Without a siege the little fort,
Has yielded up to love.

Re – enter Jacques, leading in Cecile; as they enter – enter Susanne and Jabot at back, cautiously

Pie Ah! my darling Cecile; fresh and lovely as ever!

Cecile Good morning, Pierre; how bright and smart you look this morning.

Pie Do I. (*to Jac. aside*.) Get out!

Jac And I brushed his things up too! [*retires*

Cecile This you know is my fête day, Pierre, and I have had such a lot of pretty presents

Jac (*at back*.) Disgustingly loud hint.

Pie Ah, Cecile, do you think I forgot that? Not I! see here. (*searches in pocket*.) Eh! what's this! why I must have left -

Cecile Left! what!

Pie Jacques! go instantly and fetch (whispers)

Jac How about the crowns, eh? [*Pie threatens him*

Cecile (*aside*) What do I hear? a crown! Oh how charming! What a distinguished attention to me.

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Pie Go at once!

Jac All right! I'm going - (*aside*) to stay where I can see what passes; he's forgotten all about the fête! Ha! Ha!

[*stands at back R*

Pie And now Jacques has gone, dearest Cecile, tell me, is it in vain that I have sighed so long for you; is this day to make me happiest of men?

[*Jabot and Sus come forward suddenly*

Jabot Certainly not, sir! [*they start*

Cecile Jabot! You here!

Pie Sir! this interruption –

Sus Wait a minute, till Monsieur Jabot has presented his cadeau to Cecile.

Jabot A poor thing, Mademoiselle, but from my own trees, (*presenting fruit in basket*.) gathered in your honour.

Jac (*at back*.) And your orchards.

Cecile Oh; how beautiful they look; as bright and fresh as (*Pie. and Jabot together*.)- your eyes!

Pie What business have you to take my simile, sir?

Jabot *My* simile, sir!

Cecile It belongs to both of you gentlemen.

Jac (*at back*.) A dead heat this time for the simile!

Pie Allow me, Mademoiselle, to- [*offering arm*

Jabot No, allow me! [*offering arm*

Pie Sir, you are impertinent!

Jabot Sir, you are insulting!

Cecile Gentlemen, gentlemen—pray don't quarrel.

Sus I told you, Cecile, what would happen.

Cecile I will go with you both.

Pie By no means. Mademoiselle, you have given your word that this day shall decide the fortune of one of us - I claim the fulfilment of that promise.

Jabot So do I. Remember, I have loved you longer than he has.

Pie Because you're older, sir!

Jabot Confusion!

Cecile Oh, Jabot! I know I owe you a debt.

Jac I hope she'll have Jabot; I'll cultivate Jabot!

Jabot Don't speak of it!

Cecile A debt of gratitude.

Jac (*relapsing*.) Oh!

Cecile Didn't you save my life once?

Pie I'll protect it while I have an arm!

Cecile And you, Pierre, aren't you the handsomest fellow in the regiment.

Jabot Cecile!

Cecile Aren't you the best looking man in the village?

Sus Choose, Cecile! [*Jac. comes forward.*

Pie, Jabot, Sus Yes, choose, choose!

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Quintet

Sus Pray make your selection
Confine your affection
Jac To one of the objects before you
Jabot Allow me to say!
Pie Sir! You're much in the way
Permit me to say, I adore you
Sus You've said that before
& Cecile Yes, a thousand times o'er!
Jabot I repeat!
Cecile&Sus Pray don't talk in that fashion!
Sus You see what you've done
Jac This is excellent fun!
Jabot I claim the reward of my passion!
Pie Ah!dearest Cecile, the ardour I feel!
Jabot The passion that burns in my heart!
Sus 'Tis no use together!
Cecile I wonder then whether
I couldn't select them apart
Pie I'll not yield – I'll not yield
Jabot And I'll ne'er quit the field
together Your answer I crave!
Cecile (*To Jabot*) You're handsome! (*to Pie*) You're brave
Ah! What shall I do?
Sus Let me whisper to you [*they whisper*
Cecile An excellent plan!
Jac Arranged by Susanne!
Jabot & Pie Who's the fortunate man,
Pray say if you can?
Cecile (seriously) In my awkward position
I make a condition:
To which, when it's told
I expect you to hold.
[*repeat ensemble* "In her awkward etc
All Agreed! Agreed!
And now proceed.

Cecile The first who quits this farm today and passes o'er the line [*pointing off*
Within your sight, which separates our neighbour's land from mine,
All claim to me thereby shall be accounted to resign.

Jabot, Pie, And Jac Oh! Oh! Oh

Jabot, Pie and Jac
Here's a position
Cecile, Sus and Jac
Ha! Ha! Ha!
What a decision
Jabot, Pie and Jac
Who passes the line
Her hand must resign
Nor longer a suitor stay
Chorus Ha! Ha!

Cecile
Here's a position!
Ha! Ha! Ha!
Whar a decision!
Ha! Ha! Ha!
Who passes the line
My hand must resign
While he who remains wins the day
Ha! Ha!

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Pie & Jabot This is too bad! What does it mean?

Cecile It means this – your merits are so equal that, to be just, I must choose neither or both.

Jac I suggest, neither.

Cecile So I have settled that if either of you can be induced to retire beyond this farm before evening, the one who remains shall be my choice.

Sus What do you think of that, gentlemen?

Jac Yes, but suppose neither go?

Sus I never thought of that! dear me!

Cecile In that case, gentlemen, I abide by my grandfather's choice.

Pie (*aside*.) He hates me!

Jabot (*aside.)* He detests me!

Pie (*aloud*.) Is this your firm decision?

Jabot Can you hold us to this condition?

Cecile Inexorably! Remember! before nightfall! and that boundary—till then; farewell. [*exit Cecile into cottage*.

Pie Here's a kettle of fish.

Jabot What's to be done? He must be got off somehow. [*retires*

Pie I must manage to wheedle him off the farm. [*retires.*

Sus (*to Jac*.) Aren't they in a fine predicament?

Jac Yes, but you sec there's two of us against Monsieur Jabot's one head.

Sus I beg your pardon, Monsieur Jabot's head and *mine*.

Jac What! is it war?

Sus To the extremity - I may say to the boundary! If I can't make some mischief out of this to my own good, I have no head on my shoulders.

Pie (*coming forward*.) Under these conditions, sir, I presume you will at once retire.

Jabot The very thing I was about to suggest to you, sir.

Pie I shall not stir!

Jabot And I shall remain here!

Pie Very good, sir.

Jabot (*to Sus*.) Can't you suggest a plan to escape this?

Sus Yes, yes, I'll help you. [*whispers*

Pie Jacques.

Jac Ready, Sergeant.

Pie Do you see a way to get this fellow over the line.

Jac Hum—ha--eh—{*whispers*)—Now

Pie Good sir, good day! [*exit* L.

Sus Now, follow my directions and go!

Jabot Implicitly! Farewell, Susanne; if I succeed, I won't say what I'll do for you. [*exit* R

Sus If you do succeed you will be a clever fellow - it's hard to be obliged to stifle one's feelings, and help your rival to the dish you want yourself; bother those soldiers—they're so high **{14}** and mighty, and impetuous in their love. They carry all before them and seize your heart as a highwayman takes a purse. I hate that violent style. I like Jabot's lovemaking bast – it's quiet, sentimental, and unobtrusive--real, romantic love making!

Song - Susanne

They say that young Love as he journeyed thro' France,
Had wandered away from his track,
And came to a neat little village by chance,
With two wallets of hearts at his back.

The first of these wallets was filled to the neck,
The contents of the second were few;
The first held the hearts that were fickle and false,
The second the hearts which were true.

Now, wearied and troubled he lay down to rest,
From his shoulders the wallets untied—
And, closing his eyes' soon forgot in his sleep,
The burden that lay by his side.

It was late when he woke—in a hurry he rose,
And calling his business to mind,
His journey resumed as before—but, 'tis said,
Left one of the wallets behind!

But the error then made, shows the difference still,
'Twixt the cits and the sons of the tillage,
For the fickle and false Love took into the town,
And left the true hearts in the village.

Sus Now for some contrivance; there's not much time to perfect a good design, but I must trust to quick wits, and set a scruple or so aside. Ha! whom have we here. [*retires*

Enter Pierre and Jacques on tiptoe, looking about.

Jac That's it, sergeant—you pitch it strong with Cecile, while the other ruffian is out of the way, and I'll dispose of Susanne.

Sus Will you, my lad. [*hides herself.*

Pie And Jacques, I have a brilliant idea! Do you go to Maître Cloché's, and buy me two or three large bundles of straw and firewood.

Jac Good gracious! for what? Are you going to smoke your rival out?

Pie Nonsense!

Sus (*aside*.) What's this? I must listen!

Pie Go, and set the straw and wood at the extremity of that field yonder; you see?

Jac Yes; beyond the boundary, isn't it?

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Pie Only a few yards – but sufficient for my purpose. Then, as the clock strikes seven, contrive to fire it, and instantly return to me.

Jac All right; but I'm in the dark as yet

Pie Never mind; go at once – everything depends on your celerity and caution

Sus Well! I am amazed [*Enter Jabot at back* R

Quartet

Pie Softly, softly, cautiously
Let no eye pry or spy
Sus Ah! You know not I am nigh! [*Jabot at back*

Pie & Soon there'll be, you will see,
Jac Quite/such a grand catastrophe!

Pie Mind how you go!
Jac None shall know!

Except your humble servant here [*Jabot*
Sus & Till I/you raise such a blaze
Jabot Will fright the village far and near
[*repeat ensemble. Exit Jac* L
Sus A pretty plot! I must run for Jabot [*exit* R

Pie Now for Cecile; if my plan succeeds Jabot will be checkmated for ever

Song – Pierre

Open thy lattice wide my love,
Look out and thou shalt see
Thy faithful Pierre still standing here,
Singing this lay to thee!
Out of thy nest, beautiful bird,
Fly to his arms who waits thee here,
Soon as the gentle strain is heard,
Soft as the air when no leaf is stirred.
Listen and follow, my dear, my dear!

A bird is calling from yonder bower,
His mate is answering near;
The bee is wooing a drooping flower,
And I am pleading here.
Out of thy nest, beautiful bird,
Fly to his arms who waits thee here –
Now as the gentle strain is heard,
Soft as the air when no leaf is stirred.
Listen and follow, my dear, my dear!

[*Cecile looks from out of the casement.*

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Cecile Pierre! Pierre! –

Pie My angel, I am here - come to me!
[*as she retires, enter Janot and Sus, at back. Cecile comes from the cottage, and as Pie is about to embrace her Janot interposes himself*

Pie Confusion!

Jabot Is this a time for love - see here, read that letter!

Pie (*reading.*) Called away,-" my brother arrested--will be shot!" What is this? - was ever fate so cruel! (*aside*.) I see the trick. [*enter Jac.* L.

Jabot No time is to be lost apparently! go at once-your poor brother - shot! - ah!

Pie Only my word can save him - I fly!

Jabot Yes-fly at once- [Pie is rushing off, Jac. checks him

Jac (*aside*.) It's a fabrication - I overheard Susanne - go at and return here directly.
[*exit Pie and Jac*

Jabot And now, Cecile, I claim your promise - let us, however, see him off. There he goes, as hard as he can - yes, he crosses the (*enter Pie*.) boundary! Oh, Cecile! (*about to embrace her, Pie. suddenly enters and takes his place*) You here -inhuman creature!

Pie Yes; fancy my poor brother! perhaps even now the file of muskets is levelled at his manly breast!

Cecil Oh, Pierre! why don't you save him?

Pie Simply because-

Cecile Can any reason intervene?

Pie I don't happen to have a brother. Ha! ha! Monsieur Jabot.

Jabot Discovered! what a trick!

Pie Try again, Monsieur Jabot! Cecile, pray retire for a while; be fair to both of us.

Sus *(aside*.) I've not done yet, Monsieur Pierre!
[*exeunt Cecile and Sus into cottage*

Pie (*going*.) Adieu, Cecile - bon succes, Jabot - my poor brother! ha ha! ha!
[*exit Pie laughing*

Jabot What a confounded mistake! - however, I must make the most of time- Cecile! Cecile! Hist! [*Cecile appears at window*

Cecile Go away, Jabot! you are wasting time - you will be ensnared, you may be sure and I shall keep to my word, and you must abide the condition; now go away, that's a good man. [*shuts window*

Jabot That's pleasant. Something must be done, and at once. What a cruel condition for Cecile to tie us to. I must seek for Susanne - she has such a capital head for a plot; without her I should be in despair. She is very pretty, too, and takes an interest in me, I'm sure; well, I may lose, and the alternative isn't unattractive.

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Song - Jabot

Say, who is the craftsman so famous of old,
That forges the wondrous chains,
That gird all mankind in invisible fold,
Whose links are of pleasures and pains?
Who laughs at the game he has caught in his toil,
As he sits in the bright clouds above,
And claims both the monarch and clown as his spoil?
'Tis the cunning old craftsman, Love!

Say, who is the child with the bright rosy face,
And the shadowy arrows and bow,
Who smiles from the skies with an innocent grace,
As he watches weak mortals below?
Who playfully poises his dangerous dart,
Tho' 'tis winged with the plumes of the dove,
And laughs when his shaft has struck home to a heart?
'Tis the cunning young craftsman, Love!

[*clock strikes seven. The stage has been gradually getting darker during the song-at the end a red glare is seen at distance, R. Enter hurriedly Pierre and Jacques*

Pie Oh, Mons. Jabot-look! look!

Jabot What do I see, flames? [*enter Susanne*

Jac Roaring flames. Fire! fire!

Cecile (*at window*.) Good gracious! a fire, and on your premises, Mons. Jabot.
Pie Is it possible, yes-yes! Oh, Mons. Jabot, run, run!

Jabot I fly! [*as he is going, out Sus. checks him.*

Sus A trick! a ruse! Go quickly and return! [exit Jabot

Pie & Jac There he goes! no he doesn't! he is coming back! [*enter Jabot*

Jabot On second thoughts-

Pie What, would you see your property burnt?

Jabot Certainly not.

Pie Fly then!

Jabot Thank you; as you kindled the blaze, you had better put it out.

Sus, Cecile & Jabot Ha! ha! the biter bit!

Jac Dead beat again; but I must get Jabot off once more, or I lose my ten crowns. Susanne! Susanne!

Sus What is it? [*they whisper*

Cecile This is the most amusing incident-

Jabot Once more sir, I leave you, but with your plan frustrated.

Pie And my poor brother, eh! Ha! ha!

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Cecile, Sus & Jac Ha! ha! [*exit Jabot*

Sus It's evident she prefers Pierre. I must manage one other stratagem which cannot fail! I see I'm in the way. (*Cecile enters from house*.) I will return to Jabot. [*exit Sus*.

Pie 'Tis not night yet, dear Cecile, and I still hope to win you.

Duo

Pie
He who truly loves,
Never should despair,
But should count his toils
Trifles light as air!

Cecile
She who sees her love
Ever strong and brave,
May when danger's nigh,
Lend a hand to save.

Pie
He who will be weak
When danger is assailing
Ne'er can hope to win;
Love admits no failing.

Cecile
Women sometimes yield
If you but importune;

Pie
I shall ask and ask again,
Till I know my fortune!
He who truly loves, &c.

Cecile And now I must go in. Adieu!

Pie Adieu! darling Cecile. In a short time I will claim you.

Cecile How confident you are! - take care.

Pie Here come Susanne and Jabot, I think; this time they shall not catch me here alone. (*retires behind tree.*) No! it's only Susanne!

Recitative and Air - Susanne

In vain I strive, and school my heart to choose,
Together pleading neither I refuse,
And, hardest trial! my heart of stone
Would not surrender, when each pleads alone.

Air

How shall a maiden answer,
When lovers' twain are sighing?
How yield her heart to either,
When both there's no denying?
My village spark is handsome,
His heart is soft and true;

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Then there's the dashing soldier,
That love's to boldly woo,
One fain would win my heart away,
By earnest gentle tone,
The *other* by a bolder siege,
Would make my heart his own.

Enter Susanne running.

Sus Mons. Pierre; oh, Mons. Pierre-not here! capital! Mons. Jacques! Mons. Jacques!

Enter Jacques

Jac Here! what's up now!

Sus Cecile wants you in the walk outside, she is near the boundary - at least go there, she will join you directly.

Jac Eh! what! What does Cecile want at the boundary?

Sus Go, I tell you!

Jac I'm gone; I smell a rat. [*exit.*

Sus Splendid capital! Cecile! Cecile! (*Enter Cecile.*) Where's Pierre, Cecile?

Cecile Gone I think.

Sus Quick, quick, run as far as the boundary, or Pierre will have crossed it, and it will be too late-

Cecile What do you say?

Sus Ask no questions, but run after him, and if you would save him, prevent him crossing the boundary.

Cecile I'll go at once. [*runs off*

Sus Capital! better and better. Jacques joins her – now for Pierre; Mons. Pierre! Mons Pierre!

Pie (*advancing.*) Who calls Pierre?

Sus Oh! Pierre,-look there in the distance, Jabot is running away with Cecile! Oh! what's to be done. Save her! save her!

Pie I will - the villain - the ravisher! I'll have him. [*rushes out* L.

Enter Jabot

Jabot Is it all right?

Sus Splendid! there he goes-he's sure to pass the boundary, for I see he's near it, and no one's there now; Jacques and Cecile have met and finding the trick, I suppose have returned by way of the garden.

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Enter Cecile

Cecile Oh! Susanne! fancy-

Jabot (*shouting*.) Huzza! he has passed the fence! Victory! victory! Come to my arms, Cecile. [*about to embrace when Pie. interposes.*

Pie Not so fast! ha! ha!

Sus Why who was that? Then-

Pie That was Jacques, I suppose; I met him and told him what to do. Ha! ha!

Jabot This is intolerable.

Cecile & Sus Ha ha ha! Adieu, Mons. Jabot, adieu! I have not been quite run away with yet! [*exeunt Cecile and Sus*.

Pie Sir, we have had enough of this.

Jabot I agree sir, to that!

Pie While your tricks were simple delusions- fair enough we'll say in love - I could afford to laugh at their folly and frustration; now, however, you have chosen to throw a slur upon Cecile's name by supposing her capable of running away with you. I beg to tell you sir, I consider your conduct infamous, and look on you as no man!

Jabot 'Sdeath! am I to bear this! I promised Susanne too-

Pie What! a coward then!

Jabot Not another word sir-we meet.

Pie Agreed - and where and when?

Jabot Here, and now!

Enter Jacques with swords.

Jac I think I'm wanted!

Jabot This insult was premeditated then? So be it!
[*they choose swords and fight, Pie. falls.*

Jabot Wounded? [*kneels by him.*

Pie (*faintly.*) To death! You fence well!

Jac Help! help! [*lights seen coming.*

Pie 'Twas my fault, I confess; forgive me. Oh, fly! fly! [*sinks back*

Jabot What is to be done?.

Jac It's all over! they're coming! fly for your life!

Jabot I can never forgive myself for this [*rushes out.*

Torches. Enter Max, Villagers, Susanne and Cecile

Cecile What is this! Pierre wounded - dead! Oh, Jacques.

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Sus Good heavens! here's a conclusion - who killed him

Jac Jabot!

Crowd Jabot, Jabot! the assassin-let us follow him.

Max Ah, he flies, he reaches his house - he passes it and crosses the meadow! Ah!

Jac Yes! he has passed the boundary! Hurrah!

Pie leaps up and seizes Cecile - surprise.

Cecile & Sus Pierre! and alive!

Pie No other, I assure you.

Cecile Then your death-

Jac Was my device, Mademoiselle, and-

Sus You have won after all. *(aside*.) I can't let this rest here [*runs out*.

Pie Pardon, dear Cecile, the deception I have practised, but I had to win you at any hazards, and thanks to Jacques, have succeeded.

Sus And Jabot?

Pie Oh, he'll be sufficiently repaid by the knowledge that I am not killed.

Cecile Really, the means you employed, Pierre, were almost unjustifiable. [*laughs*.

Pie It was almost too bad, I confess; but consider the stake - I would have let him nearly kill me sooner than - (*shouts of "Jabot! Jabot!" outside*). What's that? (*runs up*) as I live there's Susanne jumping about and waving a handkerchief; and, oh! can I believe my eyes,- Oh, it's all over!

Cecile What, Jabot returned! [*shouts outside*.

Pie Too true! (*aside*.) I wonder how he'll take the joke.

Enter Jabot and Susanne

Jabot Pierre can I trust my senses-alive?

Pie Alive, and laughing, Jabot! (*aside*.) All's right, I see.

Jabot Whew! what a weight off my mind; but now you are alive, what have you to say to me for this trick?

Pie Merely what we have each been saying all the morning; all's fair in love and war.

Sus I think it was very cruel, and if I had been-

Pie Only you weren't, you know; I know you are extremely glad of the result.

Sus Hush-hush, for goodness sake.

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Pie & Cecile Ha! ha! Oh, Susanne!

Jabot (*aside.*) Can it be possible! this accounts then for her anxiety. I've been a fool. Well, Susanne!

Sus Yes, Jabot!

Jabot I suspect you have not been disinterested in all your endeavours to save me from my rival's snares.

Sus Indeed, Jabot, I was.

Cecile Of course she was. (*aside.*) Jabot! are you a man?

Jabot Certainly!

Cecile Do you love me?

Jabot Well, I *did*!

Cecile How?

Jabot Well, you see Pierre might justly object now!

Pie Man-the thing's clear-look at that girl!

Jabot Well! I see what you mean; Susanne!

Sus Yes, Jabot!

Jac (to Jabot.) Go it.

Jabot If you will believe, after the events of this morning, that I can have room in my heart for another than Cecile, if I tell you that pride rather than the hope of winning what I saw was not to be mine, kept me on the field to-day, can you-

Sus Oh, Jabot, indeed I worked for you honestly to-day, and-

Jac And you mean to work for him for the rest of the term of his and your natural existence.

Jabot Well! Susanne! what do you say?

Sus We'll talk of it another time, Jabot; but I don't mind saying-

Pie Say no more-the thing's settled; Jabot, take her. Bless you, be happy!

Sus & Jabot Indeed! thank you! [*they go off together*.

Cecile So we have both won, after all.

Pie A proper conclusion to a game so fairly played.

Jac Ahem!

Pie Jacques, you rascal, I'll owe you those ten crowns.

Jac So I supposed you would.

Cecile Well, Pierre, we meet to-morrow; Susanne, good night, dear. I'm afraid I shall sleep no more than you will. Gentlemen, farewell; you are both victors in love.

Jabot But I in war-eh, Pierre? [*imitates fencing.*

{23}

Pie Well I yield you that; we are friends?

Cecile I hope for ever

Chorus Finale

Love, the mighty Lord of all,
Once more wins by bold essay,
Tho' by one attack repulsed,
Fighting up some other way-
Honour to the brave in love,
See! their suit successful prove!

Love, the mighty, &c

Curtain