

# COUNT ORY

*Music by*

Gioacchino Rossini

*English Version by*

Donald Pippin  
(1986, 1993)

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San Francisco, California

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## CAST OF CHARACTERS

<b>Count Ory</b>	An unscrupulous, lusty young nobleman, willing to go to any lengths in pursuit of the Countess
<b>Rimbaud</b>	His helpmate
<b>Isolier</b>	Page to Count Ory, also in love with the Countess
<b>Countess</b>	A recluse in the castle, having forsworn love until her brother's safe return from the crusade
<b>Ragonda</b>	Her companion and confidante
<b>Aged Tutor</b>	Responsible for Count Ory's behavior, a burden that would age anyone
<b>Alice</b>	A peasant girl

Cavaliers, Attendants and Peasants

# Count Ory

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## ACT ONE

This colorful, picturesque Medieval landscape could have been lifted straight from the pages of a story book. On the left, an imposing castle, with massive walls, turrets, battlements, banners, a moat and a drawbridge. On the right, in marked contrast, a simple, lowly hovel wherein not even the most rigorous of holy men could accuse himself of indulging the senses.

The Crusades are in full swing -- offstage. By a curious turnabout, in these wars only the wealthy and influential go overseas to fight. So, what about young, husky, rich Count Ory and his equally privileged companions? Why are they hanging around here not far from home? Why are they not off spreading Christianity -- looting cities, burning down villages, slicing up heathen? Let's hope that they're not lolling around spouting out once popular slogans like "Hell no, won't go," or "Make love, not war"?

No. None of this high-minded defiance. The explanation is simple and, I must add, does them little credit: the God-fearing soldiers bravely marching off to Palestine have left behind their wives, their sisters, their sweethearts. An enterprising youth seeking conquest and adventure does not have to go far to find it. The abandoned women are gathered close by, isolated and presumably safe in the heavily fortified castle. Virtuous to a fault, to the consternation of some, they have sworn to forego the company of men until their husbands, brothers or lovers return from war. In other words, they are asking for grand opera.

To a hot-blooded rascal with unlimited means, like Count Ory, the challenge is self-evident, and the lovely Countess who leads such a chaste life inside the castle is an irresistible target. But how to make headway? How to even get started? Even Don Giovanni would have been nipped in the bud if not allowed to be seen or heard, much less get within striking distance. Still, there is one possibility: the Countess just might make an exception to a harmless looking old man . . . a monk perhaps. Better yet, a hermit, free to roam the land as a wise, learned adviser and counselor immune to the sins of the flesh. Even better if the old man is frail and blind. The seed, once planted in Count Ory's fertile brain, is quick to take root.

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Initial translation Dec. 1985, transcribed 1992 -  
final 1-7-93

It is obvious that we are dealing with a remote, long gone era as shown by the ease with which he passes himself off as a learned man simply by claiming to be one. Not to mention the eagerness with which everyone from top to bottom is taken in by a smooth talker who promises miraculous benefits. Of course, it could never happen today, but we are back in an age when the therapist, the wonder-worker, the magician, the fortune teller are rolled into one. The unlikely hermit you are soon to meet specializes in soothing the lovelorn. It opens so many opportunities.

Yet however adept he may be in proclaiming his own unique talents, even a first class hermit can benefit from the services of an advance man to stir up local interest – a John the Baptist, so to speak. None does it better than Rimbaud -- note the accent on the second syllable. He also happens to be Ory's bosom buddy, a fact that says all you need to know about *him*. As he woos the crowd, take my advice: don't listen.

RIMBAUD Friends and neighbors, close attention!  
Only ask and you shall hear.

ALICE and CHORUS  
Any question that arises?  
I suppose he specializes  
In the making of a match?

RIMBAUD Shrug the shoulders! Wait till after.  
You'll forget about the laughter  
When you wind up with a catch.

ALICE and CHORUS  
Save the laughter till hereafter

RIMBAUD Wait till after

ALICE and CHORUS  
When the chicks begin to hatch.

RIMBAUD Laugh it off, pooh-pooh, be merry —

ALICE and CHORUS  
Do forgive a little joke;

RIMBAUD You'd be wiser to be wary.

ALICE and CHORUS  
We're simple-minded country folk.  
Oh, do forgive a little joke  
Of simple-minded country folk.

RIMBAUD Remember, after he has spoken,  
A gift would be a timely token.

ALICE and CHORUS  
Bread and butter, cheese and honey,  
Nothing crude or crass like money.  
Gold or silver he'd protest.

RIMBAUD Set the table.

ALICE and CHORUS  
Overflowing!

RIMBAUD Be unsparing!

ALICE and CHORUS  
Trust a peasant.  
Country folk are all for sharing  
With the gift that you suggest.

RIMBAUD Wine and brandy from your cellar —  
Bring the holy man the best.

ALICE and CHORUS  
We'll receive the fortune teller  
As a very special guest,  
As a special guest.

RAGONDA *(coming from the castle)*  
What's the meaning of the racket?  
While Milady's heart is aching  
You indulge in loud merry-making?

Servants ought  
To be taught  
Not to shout,  
Not to sing  
Nor to linger about  
When dear Madame is so tired out.  
With the Mistress  
In such distress,  
All is lost  
Unless, unless ...

If the hermit would but see her,  
He could form his own idea,  
Find the magic panacea  
That would heal her heavy heart.

CHORUS He's the man!

RIMBAUD and ALICE  
The very man!

ALL                   Hooray, the hermit!  
Let us call upon his art.

RAGONDA            With his knowledge and his wisdom  
He'll provide the cure we seek.

RIMBAUD            By relying on his system,  
Widows wed within a week.  
Just by practicing his technique  
Widows wed within a week.

RAGONDA            I am told that none resist him!  
Such a learned hermit!  
How till now could we have missed him?  
Right away we must enlist him,  
Hear him speak.

ALICE, and CHORUS  
With his knowledge and his wisdom,  
He'll provide the cure we seek.

*(Count Ory enters disguised as a hermit with a long white beard.)*

COUNT ORY         **An aged man devoted  
To a life of contemplation,  
My work has long been noted  
For most remarkable results, ah!**

**Abroad at times I wander;  
I seek, observe and ponder.  
A servant dedicated  
To exalted exploration,  
My skills are celebrated  
In the most exclusive cults.**

**Tired of canes and crutches?  
You long for higher places?  
You men would win a duchess?  
In such do I excel.**

**I concentrate on cases  
That call for softer touches,  
The way to sweet embraces  
And wedding bells as well.**

COUNT ORY         You want to hold the aces?  
All this and more I can do.  
I light the light for you, and you.

Adviser and physician,  
A man above suspicion,  
I ply a secret art, ah!

Known to heal the lonely heart.

COUNT ORY      No overnight sensation,  
No mad impersonator,  
No peddler of salvation,  
I offer what you need.

                    No shady operator,  
My service comes guaranteed.  
Indeed, my service comes guaranteed.

                    A secret art, a secret art  
To heal the lonely heart.

RAGONDA        Have you a moment?

COUNT ORY      Of course. I am here to serve.  
Lovely girls, don't be bashful.  
Come, you can tell the hermit;  
I am yours to command.  
Speak out, that I may offer  
A helping hand.

CHORUS          Not a fraud, not an actor,  
He's a born benefactor!

RAGONDA        My eardrums! My eardrums!  
Solo, please! The chorus later!

COUNT ORY      Do not stand on ceremony;  
Say what is on your mind.

CHORUS          Not a fake and not a phony,  
He's a god and saint combined.

ALICE and RIMBAUD  
So, you first!

OTHERS          No, you first!

RIMBAUD        This rugged fellow  
May I present? He  
Would like a virgin  
Of two and twenty.

COUNT ORY      Simple. Simple. Simple. Simple.

ALICE            The hermit knows already  
What I seek. Oh, Yes!  
A quick proposal  
From my slow Enrico.

COUNT ORY        Of course, of course, of course, of course.

RAGONDA        Forlorn and lonely  
Without my husband,  
I beg for only  
His safe return.

Oh, relieve my sorrow  
And my concern.  
Oh, bring him tomorrow  
Back home to me.

COUNT ORY        (Ah! Their gullibility  
Is imbecility;  
And though I play with it  
I get away with it;  
Although I play with it,  
I get away with it.)

Yes, ladies, gentlemen,  
And you, my sweeties!  
To your entreaties  
I hold the key.

RIMBAUD        Upon persuasion,  
The hermit offers  
An invitation  
To one and all.

COUNT ORY        (To try my powers,  
These dainty flowers  
In desperation  
Will come to call.)

ALICE and CHORUS

What an occasion!  
Oh, how did we worm it?  
A kind invitation  
To visit the hermit!

His pledges enchant us;  
Three wishes he'll grant us;  
Long life, love and riches —  
Enough for one day.

ALL                Born benefactor,  
Not just an actor,  
Here to attract  
The true devotee.

RAGONDA        (*to the Count*)  
It's this way — how shall I put it?

The problem is Milady.  
While our heroic soldiers  
Pursue renown and glory  
On the battlefields  
Of the Middle East,  
We women, though flowers  
Still in the prime of springtime,  
Persevere in a vow  
To live in solitude,  
Quarantined in the castle:  
No men allowed.

COUNT ORY (Wasting! I see a challenge come my way.)  
Is this perchance the castle of the Countess?

RAGONDA So devoted to her brother,  
Gone off to battle!  
How she sighs and she suffers,  
In the depths of despair!  
She needs your wisdom,  
And desires consultation without delay.

COUNT ORY (Here's a job made to order!)  
Of course! Depend on me!  
After a life of study,  
These symptoms are familiar.  
Go back to her at once  
And tell her I await.

COUNT ORY (*to the girls*)  
You, too, I'll not neglect.  
Welcome to my humble dwelling.  
(What delightful rewards  
I find in fortune telling!)

ALL Born benefactor,  
Not just an actor,  
Here to attract  
The true devotees.

*Exeunt*

Even while Ory is basking in glory as a saintly hermit looking forward to an easy conquest, retribution is on the way, inching step by step, closer and closer in the form of a cantankerous old professor, a servant of the Duke, Ory's overbearing father, whose present assignment is to track down the wayward son. With him is an amorous young page named Isolier who, like Ory, has but one thing on his mind. He, too, has caught a glimpse of the irresistible Countess.

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TUTOR            You may as well admit it;  
                      We're going around in circles.

ISOLIER          Professor, take a breather.  
                      Time out till you recover.

TUTOR            May I ask, what possessed you  
                      To take your own direction?  
                      As you see, we are lost.

ISOLIER          (I had my reasons.  
                      Over there lies the castle  
                      Of the Countess I'm in love with.  
                      I must go, take the gamble,  
                      No matter what the cost.  
                      To her I have confessed  
                      The agonies I suffer.  
                      She remains cold as ice  
                      Despite how much I love her.)

                      (*The tutor sits down*)  
                      Five minutes must suffice;  
                      Then it's upward and onward.

TUTOR            Of all the thankless errands,  
                      This takes the cake!  
                      His grace, the duke, my grand employer,  
                      Has given the command:  
                      I am to scout the land  
                      And find his wayward son, Ory,  
                      A devil on the loose,  
                      And, woe is me, my pupil!

TUTOR            I turn my back a minute,  
                      He slips away,  
                      Leaving his feisty father holding the noose.

ISOLIER          In a word,  
                      He's out raising hell.

TUTOR            He may be hiding,  
                      No doubt in some disguise,  
                      But how am I to tell  
                      Which way the madness lies?

ISOLIER          As his tutor, you've the honor  
                      Of heading off his merry pranks.  
                      All the glory goes to you.

TUTOR            You can have it!  
                      I say, no thanks!

A hired lackey,  
I play the sleuth,  
Forever chasing  
That wayward youth.

A bloody spy,  
A private eye!  
Ah, what a slap in the face,  
For years of serving His Grace!  
From my high plateau,  
Forced to sink so low!

I'm a scholar, a professor!  
Accustomed to No, sir! and Yes, sir!  
Now long of tooth and short of breath,  
Pursuit of youth will be my death;  
Not for fun I run to my death.

I huff and puff to stay apace,  
But never quick enough for His Grace.

I stall, I stammer  
To no avail;  
He is the hammer  
And I'm the nail.  
The slaughtered lamb,  
That's what I am!

Ah, what a measly reward,  
For years of service to a Lord!  
For my toil and sweat  
This is all I get.

I'm his teacher, not his buddy,  
And my place a quiet study.  
Little rest shall I enjoy  
Till I find that crazy boy.

Ever when his goal is romantic,  
I must drop the role of pedantic.  
On the road, I play the fool,  
To be the butt of ridicule.

Past days of glory  
Appear remote;  
My category  
Is now the goat.  
Imagine me,  
A P.H.D.!

Ah, what a slap in the face,  
What a slap in the face  
For years of serving His Grace!  
From my high plateau  
Forced to sink so low!

GIRLS                    *(emerging from the hermit's hovel)*  
Though now we leave  
Your humble cell,  
Why must we say farewell?  
Why say farewell?

                              Your excellent advice  
Is well worth hearing twice.  
All honor goes to you,  
For words so wise, so true,  
For words so wise and true.

                              This interview  
We shall pursue.

                              We shall return to knock at your door,  
Burning to learn, and ready for more.  
To each young hopeful you have foretold  
Household and husband, long life and gold.

TUTOR                    Some budding beauties!  
Oh, me! Oh, my!  
My roving master  
Has to be close by.

*(to the girls)*  
Pardon, young ladies!  
Oh, tell me, I pray:  
Think back a bit  
And kindly say:  
When did the hermit  
First come this way?

GIRLS                    One week ago!

TUTOR                    Is that a fact?  
A week exact?

GIRLS                    A week precisely!

TUTOR                    That figures nicely.  
He's been a week  
At this address?

GIRLS                    No more, nor less.

TUTOR                    For just a week?

GIRLS                    That's as of right now.

TUTOR                    (Aha! The light now  
Begins to dawn!  
It is a week  
That Ory's been gone!)

The figures tally,  
The facts confirm it:  
That phony hermit  
Is young Count Ory.

That phony hermit is Count Ory.  
As clear as ABC,  
He is no nonentity.

Through laws of logic  
Have I succeeded;  
The missing clue  
Was all I needed.

TUTOR

The figures tally;  
The facts confirm it:  
My pampered pupil  
Is the hermit!

I might have known it!  
Here have I found him  
Where gathered round him  
Are beauties galore.

The hermit's identity  
Is clear as ABC,  
And furthermore,  
He's not a mere nonentity:  
No! That imposter  
Is young Count Ory!

I clearly see  
He's Count Ory,  
Young Count Ory.

GIRLS

This ancient relic I would rank  
At best a cross and crusty crank.  
The man is hot and in a huff;  
We girls have listened long enough.

Come on, let's go,  
Away, away!  
We must not stay.

*The girls leave, but the Tutor detains Alice.*

TUTOR

This hermit, young lady,  
Can be seen for a price?

ALICE

He's coming right away;  
Forget the fee.  
Milady, the Countess,  
Has need of his advice.

ISOLIER            *(with joy)*  
 We'll meet!

ALICE             A strange and new affliction  
 Weighs heavy on her heart.

TUTOR            *(There's something slightly shady  
 About this languid lady.)*

ISOLIER           *(Unexpected touch of paradise!)*

TUTOR            *(The irresistible Countess  
 Who drives men to the brink  
 I think may soon supply  
 The missing link.)*

*(to Isolier)*  
 You stay here,  
 While I go and find our vanished escort.  
 I shall return full force by and by.  
 We shall have sport  
 If what I suspect  
 Is correct.

*The Tutor leaves.*

ISOLIER           A piece of luck!  
 To gaze upon my angel!  
 But who can tell me how  
 To get beyond just looking?  
 Perhaps I should consult  
 Some person wise and old ...

                      This honest hermit!  
 He will have the answer,  
 The magic key ...  
 But maybe ... to ask is overbold ...  
 Take heart! For am I not  
 The page of Count Ory?

*Count Ory enters.*

ISOLIER           Sir, if you would be so kind ...

COUNT ORY       *(My young page! The rascal!  
 Some romance is on his mind!)  
 To what do I owe the pleasure,  
 My dear Isolier?*

ISOLIER           *(astonished)*  
 You know my name!

COUNT ORY       A simple gift we call clairvoyance.

ISOLIER           No reward's enough  
 For such a man of genius.

*(offers a purse)*  
 The gold I offer  
 Is, alas, rather meager.

COUNT ORY      No matter.  
*(takes the purse)*  
 My duty is to serve.  
 I'm yours! Patient, but eager.

ISOLIER          There's a fair lady far above me,  
 And I only live to have her love me.  
 For her beauty I am afire,  
 Fiercely burning with a sweet desire,  
 Fiercely burning with a sweet desire.

COUNT ORY      (So here we go again! Desire, and fire.)

ISOLIER          Now we come to the part ironic,  
 For her point of view is strictly platonic.  
 Vows of virtue she has sworn,  
 While I suffer, and sigh forlorn;  
 While I suffer, and sigh forlorn.

COUNT ORY      Another lyric line — You sigh, forlorn.

ISOLIER          So until the return of her brother,  
 Off crusading in some land or other,  
 No would-be lover, and here I quote:  
 "None shall cross my castle moat."

COUNT ORY      (Now it starts getting serious. Oh, no!)

ISOLIER          So determined am I to see her,  
 And to win her, despite my age,  
 I have hatched a bold idea.

COUNT ORY      Go on, go on! Tell me your plan, my pretty page.

ISOLIER          As a nun in holy orders,  
 I shall brave these forbidden borders.  
 To her I'll go in disguise.

COUNT ORY      In deeds, not delay, victory lies;  
 Take the lady by surprise.  
 Take the lady by surprise.  
 (Here's a plan that I'll employ.)

Such resolve I'm proud to see,  
 Worthy even of Count Ory!  
 Oh, what a clever plot  
 For just a boy!

(He's a fool! Furthermore, a traitor!  
 His just desserts I'll tend to later.)

ISOLIER (Hope again springs to life inside me  
With such a master here to guide me.)

COUNT ORY (I hold my tongue,  
But we shall see  
Who wins the prize —  
Myself or he?)

ISOLIER (Though I am young,  
I'm on the way;  
A man so wise  
I shall obey.)

I have one other iron in the fire;  
Your support prepares the ground.

COUNT ORY And how?

ISOLIER Soon will my lady  
Come here to seek your advice.

COUNT ORY (He's found it out already!  
Oh, the way things get around!)

ISOLIER You must say  
That her own heart of ice  
Is the root of her dismay.

COUNT ORY Of course! Of course!  
Her lack of feeling is the source.

ISOLIER And the way she can recover  
Is to take me for a lover.

COUNT ORY Of course! Of course!  
The very plan we shall employ!  
I shall recommend a lover.  
(But the lucky man will not be he!)

ISOLIER Giving in, she will recover.

COUNT ORY Such resource I'm proud to see,  
Worthy even of Count Ory!  
Oh, what a clever plot for just a boy!

(He's a fool! Furthermore, a traitor!  
His just desserts I'll tend to later.)

ISOLIER (Hope again springs to life inside me  
With such a master here to guide me.)

COUNT ORY (I hold my tongue,  
But we shall see  
Who wins the prize —  
Myself or he?)

ISOLIER           (Though I am young,  
I'm on the way;  
A man so wise  
I shall obey.)

At last, the hermit's exalted reputation brings forth the sequestered Countess, who now comes to seek his advice. We have been told that she is in agony because of her brother's absence. The hermit provides a more accurate diagnosis.

*The Countess enters.*

COUNTESS       Isolier, you are here?

ISOLIER         To consult with the hermit.  
For I burn in a hell,  
A purgatory.

COUNT ORY      Born to serve and assist:  
That is my humble role.  
Do tell me your story.

*Count Ory beckons Isolier to speak; Isolier beckons the Countess; she beckons Isolier; back to the Countess. Finally ...*

COUNTESS       *(approaching Count Ory)*  
**Beset beyond my power  
By grief, despair and sorrow,  
My youth, though full in flower,  
Will fade before tomorrow.  
I sink to rise no more.**

**Lost at sea, tossed by waves ever rougher,  
For the peace of the grave I implore.  
How long? How long am I to suffer?**

**In anguish I languish.  
Torn by a wound past healing,  
To you in despair I come kneeling.  
Kind sir, be not unfeeling!**

**Oh, guide me back safe to shore!  
Resolve this tug of war;  
My peace of mind restore.  
My peace of mind, my peace of mind restore.**

**After struggle and pain,  
Peace once again!  
After sorrow and woes,  
Oh, for peace and repose!  
Sweet repose in my heart  
Oh, restore!**

CHORUS         Her tears in truth are tragic;  
So sad, yet unresigned!

Revive her with your magic;  
Restore her peace of mind.

With the aid of your art  
Lift the weight from her heart.  
Lavish your art;  
Lighten her heart.  
Lavish your art, sir.  
Relieve her heavy heart.

ISOLIER            *(to the Count)*  
From the depths of her soul  
It is you she's addressing.  
Kind hermit, take control,  
And give us both your blessing.

COUNT ORY        Your hopes by no means are hollow.  
Dear lady, I assure you,  
For a cure, you  
Need but follow  
The course I shall chart.

The pains and pangs you suffer  
Are located in the heart.  
You need but take a lover  
And the symptoms will depart.

COUNTESS        A solemn vow I've spoken  
That must remain unbroken.  
I swore to love no more  
Till my brother returns from war —  
A vow that heaven heard.  
I'd sooner die than to break my word!  
Sooner death by far than to break my word!

COUNT ORY        Release already is granted,  
As I read from signs above.  
The garden must be planted:  
You are free again to love!

COUNTESS        Oh, blessed liberation!  
Inspired, divine interpretation!  
Oh, man of science!  
Complete compliance  
Will now become  
My rule of thumb.

COUNT ORY        Release ...

ISOLIER            To love!

COUNTESS        Release to love!  
Oh, brilliant hermit!  
Your guiding light  
Has steered me through the dark of night.

Isolier, your form and figure  
 Call to life my youth and vigor.  
 Why delay? Oh, why postpone?  
 Dear Isolier! My heart is yours!  
 My heart is yours alone!  
 I'm yours alone.

COUNTESS      Now face to face  
                     With love and joy,  
                     I can surrender.

                    Serene and tender,  
                     I can embrace  
                     My darling boy!

CHORUS        The pangs and pains she suffered  
                     Have quickly gone away;  
                     The hermit has discovered  
                     A grateful dévotée.

ISOLIER        (I've got my heart's desire!)

COUNT ORY    (*aside, to the Countess*)  
                     A private word of warning,  
                     For you face deadly danger.  
                     You must proceed with care!  
                     A certain man beware ...

COUNTESS      Beware?

COUNT ORY    His name is Isolier!

COUNTESS      Oh, no!

COUNT ORY    That dissipated page  
                     Of the shameless Count Ory,  
                     And his partner in vice.  
                     Of the two I'll say no more  
                     Till we're alone.  
                     I fear their wrath and rage.  
                     Dear, let us go inside.

COUNTESS      (My blood has turned to ice!)  
                     Wise, honored friend,  
                     On you shall I depend,  
                     As mentor and guide.  
                     (*takes his arm and starts toward the castle*)

*Tutor enters, with followers.*

TUTOR         We are bound to recognize him!

FOLLOWERS    He's around, and we'll surprise him.  
                     Look around! Look around!

TUTOR            Don't I know Rimbaud?  
His faithful friend, and every bit as foolish.

RIMBAUD        There is no need to shout —  
Pianissimo!

TUTOR            I've found him out;  
He can't deny it!  
As any fool can see ...

COUNT ORY      Hold your tongue! Old man, be quiet!

FOLLOWERS      He is Count Ory!

WOMEN          Not Count Ory! Not Count Ory!

COUNT ORY      You win! Yes! That's me.

QUARTET        Ah! I'm appalled, repelled, revolted  
At the oily ploy unfolded;  
I'm appalled, repelled, revolted.

                    Face to face we meet the foe.  
Who was to know  
He'd stoop so low?  
Who could know?

TUTOR            They're appalled, repelled, revolted  
At the plot that comes unfolded.

                    With a look I laid him low;  
'Twas I dealt the blow.  
Thus I laid him low.

RIMBAUD and COUNT ORY  
                    Though appalled, repelled, revolted,  
                    They will answer quid pro quo.

                    Here's an end to mad caprices;  
                    Careful plans are torn to pieces.  
                    We have been dealt a deadly blow.  
                    What a blow!            *Ragonda enters.*

RAGONDA        Madame, good news! A letter has come.  
A full report at least  
Of our men who fight far from home,  
Out to solve the problem of the Middle East.

COUNT ORY      A blow for me, no doubt.  
I'll have to grin and bear it.

ALL                Do read and let us hear it.

TUTOR            (*to Count*)

Strike one, two, three, you're out!

ALL                   The atmosphere is tense;  
Why keep us waiting in suspense?

COUNTESS           *(reads)*  
"Dear sister, just a line.  
The long crusade is finished!  
In numbers undiminished  
We sail from Palestine."

RIMBAUD and TUTOR  
Hard luck for some!

COUNTESS           *(continuing)*  
"Through grimy dirt and mud  
We fought the battle well.  
With swords now red with blood  
We felled the infidel."

RIMBAUD and TUTOR  
Hard luck for some!

COUNTESS           *(continuing)*  
"As God and fate direct us,  
We head for native ground.  
In two days time expect us  
Home safe and sound."

*Count Ory starts to sneak away.*

RAGONDA           *(sarcastically)*  
Count Ory, you can't be leaving!  
Oh, you must stay and help celebrate.

COUNT ORY           I could not refuse such a treat.

COUNTESS           Our soldiers you will surely want to meet.

COUNT ORY           (Despite a change of weather,  
The chase I shall renew.)  
*(quietly to Rimbaud)*  
To get my act together,  
A day will have to do.

RIMBAUD and TUTOR  
So do we go or do we stay?

OTHERS              We could still be in for trouble;  
His gall is all too plain.  
Precautions we'll redouble  
Till our men are home again.

COUNT ORY           (I can still stir up some trouble;  
Their scorn is all to plain.

My efforts I'll redouble;  
I'll have to try again.)

LADIES           The last crusade is ended;  
The heroes head for home.  
A welcome high and splendid  
Will greet them when they come.

COUNT ORY and RIMBAUD  
The masquerade is ended  
And we must head for home.  
Though plans are now suspended,  
Our time is yet to come.

COUNT ORY       Come along, come along!  
We are off and away!  
For now we shall retreat.  
They say revenge is sweet  
And we have one more act to go.

ISOLIER           (With me must he compete,  
And I'm prepared to meet the pro.)

COUNT ORY       I've still one day  
To plan repayment blow for blow.

ISOLIER           With me must he compete,  
And I'm prepared to meet the pro.  
Undaunted, I  
Will do or die.

COUNT ORY       Undaunted, I  
Go riding high.

COUNTESS         I feed no more upon despair,  
Nor sigh alone, forlorn.  
The charm of love newborn  
Is my security from care.

RAGONDA          The man I wed, whom I adore,  
Will soon be home from war.

COUNTESS         With love reborn,  
In song my heart begins to soar.

RAGONDA          The man whom I adore  
Is safe at last, and home from war.  
No secret why  
I float so high.

COUNTESS         I now can dry  
The tearful eye.

RIMBAUD          We are off and away,  
We are off and on our way.

TUTOR            Come on, let us get going,  
For there's no way of knowing  
Which way the wind is blowing  
Back home with dear old dad.  
(A holy terror, let me add.)

LADIES            We sing again  
A welcome song  
To greet our men  
Away so long.

COUNT ORY and RIMBAUD  
We'll try again  
Before too long,  
So until then  
Delay the song.

TUTOR            Now why so slow?  
We have to go!  
Come on. I say again:  
Delay the song!  
Delay the song and come away!

### **End of Act I**

### **ACT II**

Act Two takes place that very night inside the castle, whose impregnable walls we have already seen from without. While threatening clouds indicate that a heavy storm is on the way, the act opens with the apparently undramatic spectacle of ladies getting ready to retire for the night. Only someone who has never been to an opera before will presume that they are in for a good night's sleep. Smug in their supposed security, they are not yet aware that Count Ory is on the loose, still intent upon his single-minded goal, the capture of the Countess, despite a startling and most unwelcome development. The soldiers are due back from Palestine. Time is running out. He must act quickly. Furthermore, he has to come up with a new approach. His con game has been exposed. The hermit is caput.

Facing such obstacles, a lesser man no doubt would give up and turn his eyes elsewhere. But opera has no tolerance for a lover so faint hearted. On the contrary, to our hero, for want of a better word, a temporary setback merely serves as a creative spur to bolder endeavor. We have already seen his creativity at work when Isolier, the amorous page, innocently revealed to him his plan of dressing as a nun in order to gain access to the castle and the Countess. You may be sure that Ory was listening with rapt attention, absorbing every word. And so we have reason to worry when from outside in the stormy night, pleading for shelter, we hear a chorus of nuns – nuns whose voices have evidently become hoarse through exposure to the elements.

*Scene: Inside the castle.*

COUNTESS and RAGONDA

**Calm is the air,  
Tranquil the waters;  
Here life gently flows  
Unruffled and sweet.**

**We breathe repose  
In these quiet quarters,  
Safe from the snare  
Of man's deceit.**

COUNTESS        I cannot yet contain my feelings —  
The audacity of Count Ory!  
His underhanded double dealings  
Go beyond iniquity.

RAGONDA        Beneath contempt, I would term it!  
The monster, oh the rat!  
I would have that beastly hermit  
Drawn and quartered, then fried in fat.

COUNTESS        Thank the Lord, the danger's over.  
We can retire for the night.  
My peace of mind I shall recover,  
Though I may leave on the light.

Let us to bed, unbound by fear,  
For he would never venture here.

COUNTESS and RAGONDA

Calm is the air,  
Tranquil the waters;  
Here life gently flows  
Unruffled and sweet.

We breathe repose  
In these quiet quarters,  
Beyond the snare  
Of man's deceit.

CHORUS         Thunder rolls! Coming closer!

COUNTESS        Oh! Rain assaults the roof!  
The elements at war,  
As the winds rage and roar.  
The flash of jagged lightening!  
The crash of angry thunder!

RAGONDA         With faith be fortified,  
And heaven will provide.



The monster! Why has he not  
 Been struck by lightening?  
*(indignantly)*  
 Oh, the brute!

COUNTESS           Who can you mean?

RAGONDA           From him they flee!

COUNTESS           *(agitated)*  
 Tell me ... from the beginning.

RAGONDA           Once again, dirty work  
 From Count Ory!  
 Is there no woman safe?  
 These helpless pilgrims  
 He pursues without mercy.  
 Poor dears! Starved, cold and wet,  
 They come to us exhausted,  
 To beg for food and shelter.

COUNTESS           They do not ask in vain.

RAGONDA           Your answer I assumed:  
 Our doors are open.  
 A pleasure to assist  
 Those that deserve.

COUNTESS           Pleasure and duty.  
 How many ladies are there?

RAGONDA           Nearly a dozen.

COUNTESS           So many!

RAGONDA           As shy as mice, they hide their faces.

COUNTESS           Are they young or old?

RAGONDA           Well-seasoned!

COUNTESS           And attractive?

RAGONDA           Well, hardly.  
 For such a wolf as Count Ory,  
 Nothing is out of bounds.  
 I put them in the parlor,  
 On the verge of collapse,  
 Still shaken by the ordeal.  
 Nonetheless, there is one  
 Who would see you for a moment  
 To express the appreciation  
 And gratitude of all.  
 Ah! So bashful!  
 The lady dares not enter.

COUNTESS            Come in. A chat I shall enjoy.

RAGONDA            My dear Don't be afraid.

*Count Ory enters, in nun's habit.*

COUNTESS            (Ragonda was correct.  
Our timid lady  
Is demure and modest,  
But hardly Helen of Troy.)

COUNT ORY           The language of the lover,  
Now long gone out of fashion,  
Alone conveys the passion  
Your open arms inspire.

COUNTESS            How quaint!

COUNT ORY           *(correcting himself)*  
Your feel for sharing,  
So kind, so caring,  
I'll evermore admire.  
I'll admire and adore.

COUNTESS            I did no more than duty.  
Indeed, 'twould be far stranger  
To ignore the cries of danger  
From ladies in despair.

COUNT ORY           *(smiling to himself)*  
Despair!

COUNTESS            A wrong prevented,  
I go contented:  
Let rascals all beware!  
Rogues and rascals beware!

COUNT ORY           Your compassion, poise and beauty,  
Other charms till now only hinted,  
On my heart shall stay imprinted,  
As my hand can testify.  
*(he takes her hand)*

COUNTESS            *(she draws it back, somewhat resentfully)*  
You're not yourself!  
Still so flustered!

COUNT ORY           Lady, be not offended  
By one that you befriended,  
Whose needs you have attended.

                              I tremble to remember  
                              The nightmare you turned awry.  
                              I tremble to remember

The horror turned awry.

COUNTESS            There, there! The ordeal is over.

COUNT ORY           Cordial lady!

COUNTESS           The tears of distress you can dry.  
*(to herself)*  
(Disturbed and agitated,  
She still is badly shaken,  
Disturbed, flustered and shaken,  
Or I am much mistaken:  
Confusion sad to see!)

*(to the Count)*  
No need to fear tonight, my dear;  
We shall defy that Count Ory.

COUNT ORY           *(to himself)*  
(I'll have to struggle harder  
To curb my flaming ardor;  
The fires that reawaken  
Have got control of me.)

*(to her)*  
No need tonight to tremble;  
We're safe from Count Ory.

BOTH                 No need to tremble here;  
No need to fear.  
Tonight we shall defy Count Ory.

COUNT ORY           They say he'll stop at nothing.

COUNTESS           With me he'll not get started.

COUNT ORY           With you he's much enamored.

COUNTESS           Ah! His head should be examined.

COUNT ORY           Suppose, reformed, he pleaded,  
And on his knees he came to you —  
Madame, then what would you do?

COUNTESS           Were he indeed so minded,  
Displeasure and cold disdain  
Are all his change of style would gain.

No Don Giovanni,  
No Casanova,  
No randy rover  
Can I abide.

The kind I care for  
I look elsewhere for;

With duller colors  
I'm satisfied.

The womanizer,  
The gay deceiver,  
Would be far wiser  
To step aside.

COUNT ORY (My vestal virgin,  
My lofty Venus,  
There stands between us  
A wall of ice.

COUNT ORY You bang the gavel,  
You carp and cavil  
While we could travel  
To paradise.

But you are done for!  
The girl I gun for,  
Become a nun for,  
Will pay the price.)

COUNTESS They come! Your weatherworn companions!

COUNT ORY They are all rather frail.  
Ah, well! We ladies!  
(My lusty cavaliers  
Have taken the veil.)

*Cavaliers enter, all in nun's habit.*

COUNTESS The poor dears must be starving.  
I'll order some cheese and apples.

COUNT ORY Nectar and ambrosia!  
What a treat! Fruit and cheese!  
(A menu rather modest  
For appetites like these.)

*Countess exits.*

CAVALIERS All is ripe for a revel!  
Look around, look about.  
Cut loose and play the devil,  
For time will soon run out.

Have a day  
On a high;  
You can pay  
By and by.

COUNT ORY *(to Tutor)*  
Here's a scene to my liking!  
Old guiding star and beacon,  
So you join the masquerade!

TUTOR           Against my better judgment,  
Just to keep an eye.  
If the Duke ...

COUNT ORY       My father!

TUTOR           Not to mention my employer,  
Found out about these follies,  
I'd be cast to the lions.

COUNT ORY       Friend, you are part of the party,  
One of the leading players,  
Making the cast complete.  
Room here for every sort,  
Balance and variety,  
Each man to his talents:  
We provide the spice and sport,  
And you provide the prudence and propriety.

TUTOR           What demon put you on  
To a scheme so outlandish?

COUNT ORY       Ah, my page, Isolier!  
My rival in romance —  
A fact unknown to him.  
He foolishly confided,  
Revealed his clever plan  
Of dressing as a sister  
To carry off the lady.  
For which I thank him duly.

TUTOR           May the gods strike him down!

COUNT ORY       By rewarding Yours Truly.

CAVALIERS       All is ripe for a revel!  
Look around, look about.  
Cut loose and play the devil,  
For time will soon run out.

                    Have a day  
                    On a high;  
                    You can pay  
                    By and by.

*Food is brought in.*

TUTOR           Food for beggars!  
Where is the entrée?  
Whoever heard of skipping  
To cheese and fruit?

COUNT ORY       We nuns must not indulge in gourmet dining.  
Now sisters ...

TUTOR                   Where's the wine?

ALL                       Where's the wine?

RIMBAUD               *(entering with a basket under his cloak)*  
Companions! Here is your answer!

ALL                       Rimbaud!

RIMBAUD               The hero of the hour!  
The roving gypsy  
Returns from his travels  
Already tipsy.

                              Gather round! All attend!  
Hear how a rousing story  
Comes to a glorious end.

                              The atmosphere was eerie,  
My corner dark and dreary;  
In need of hibernation,  
I settled down to doze.

                              But suddenly awaking,  
A flash of inspiration!  
Here was an undertaking  
That brought me to my toes.

CAVALIERS             Dry of throat, I would suppose.

RIMBAUD               In search of lubrication,  
I start my exploration  
In worthy emulation  
Of valiant Count Ory.

                              Roaming around at random,  
Ready to meet a phantom,  
I enter first a chamber;  
What amazing things I see!

CAVALIERS             Surprises? You're asking me?

RIMBAUD               No drink, alas, alack! But  
A zither, lute and sackbut;  
No idle bric-a-brac, but  
A spinning wheel and loom.

RIMBAUD               On to an inner sanctum,  
With scrolls that reach the ceiling,  
The panelled shelves revealing  
A cloistered reading room.

CAVALIERS             Rather gloomy, I presume.

RIMBAUD            Next at a banquet table  
I take a rest from roaming,  
But despite a careful combing,  
I find no bill of fare.

                         Resuming cloak and dagger,  
I turn a rusty handle,  
Proceed by lighted candle  
To stagger down a stair.

CAVALIERS           Into the dragon's lair.

RIMBAUD            Surely a captive maiden  
Is guarded by a giant;  
But undeterred, defiant,  
I continue to explore.

                         Down to the bottom level;  
No sign of captive maiden;  
Instead, a cellar laden  
With barrels on the floor.

CAVALIERS           Eureka! Tell me more.

RIMBAUD            A dark and dismal dungeon,  
Inhabited by spiders,  
A warning to outsiders  
To leave while all is well.

                         The object of my mission!  
This sort of ammunition  
Puts an army in condition  
To fell the infidel.

CAVALIERS           And send them straight to hell.

RIMBAUD            Here is the pride of nations!  
Italian, French and Spanish.  
There's fuel enough to banish  
Your cares to kingdom come.

RIMBAUD            In short, champagne and sherry,  
The best of beer and brandy,  
And forty barrels handy  
Of fine old-fashioned rum.

CAVALIERS           That's a nice, tidy sum.

RIMBAUD            I hesitate no longer;  
Intent upon the booty  
I obey the call of duty  
And make a bold attack.

                         The nations soon surrender;  
The barrels yield their plenty,

And drink enough for twenty  
I hoist upon my back.

I pick the finest  
To bring the boys;  
A sudden noise!  
I hold my breath.

The sound approaches,  
Each minute stronger;  
It's suicidal  
To linger longer.

Off, like an arrow!  
Now life or death!  
They cry out, A robber!  
A robber! Arrest him!

My heart is pounding,  
My feet are bounding.  
I'm not inclined  
To look behind.

So now at our leisure  
We open the treasure  
I bring from down below.

All hail to the hearty!  
Get set for a party,  
And let the liquid flow!

Now at your leisure  
Open the treasure  
I bring from below.

All hail to the hearty!  
Get set for a party,  
A treasure in tow.

Covered with glory,  
Treasure in tow;  
Covered with glory,  
I end the story  
As star of the show.  
The star of the show.

CAVALIERS

Now at our leisure  
Open the treasure,  
Treasure he brings from below.

Hail the hero!  
Hero with treasure in tow.  
A treasure from below,  
From down below.

COUNT ORY        He comes with plundered spoils  
From the cellar of our absent host.  
To our lord, off crusading on foreign soils,  
I hereby propose a toast.

ALL                A toast! A toast!  
Salute the absent host!  
To the lord of the castle  
We empty the glass;  
To the lord of the castle,  
A certified ass.

He calls for sword and sabre  
And heads for Palestine,  
And leaves behind his neighbor  
To polish off the wine.

A toast to him, to him.

A toast to him,  
To the lord of the house  
Let us drink and carouse.  
A tumultuous toast.  
To our absentee host

Hooray! Hooray!  
Be merry while you may —  
Live for today.

*(they drink)*  
Here's a wine to warm the senses;  
Our host spares no expenses.  
One and all we invite,  
With song to fill the night,  
A hearty song  
In praise of love and delight.

Come along!  
With a song to fill the night.  
Come along!  
All for love and delight.

ALL                As we pass and we pour,  
We repeat as before:  
A tumultuous toast.  
To our absentee host

Hooray! Hooray!  
Be merry while you may ...  
Live for today.

COUNT ORY        A step! One of the household!  
Quick, ladies! Down on your knees.  
And stash away the bottles.  
Get out your rosaries.

*The Cavaliers close their mantles, hiding their bottles and pretending not to see Ragonda, who passes.*

ALL                    Oh, angel of mercy,  
Divine, chaste and holy!  
On the meek and lowly,  
Oh, turn thy guiding light.

Protect our providers,  
Kind and open handed,  
That offer the stranded  
Shelter for the night.

*Ragonda exits.*

RIMBAUD            Safely out the door!  
Come, you miserable sinners!  
Here's plenty more!

ALL                    Hooray! Hooray!  
Be merry while you may ...  
Live for today.

To the lord of the house  
Let us drink and carouse.  
Hooray! Hooray!  
To him who's far away.

COUNT ORY        She's returning. The bottles!  
*(all conceal their bottles)*

COUNTESS        *(entering)*  
(Dear, dedicated sisters!  
All absorbed in their prayer!)  
May I bother you for a moment?  
It is late, high time to retire.  
Rooms are ready  
With all that you may require.

*She exits.*

COUNT ORY        Sleep soundly, bountiful Countess.  
I wish you pleasant dreams.  
My time will come!  
Before much longer  
I'll open my heart,  
Lock, stock and barrel,  
Unreservedly revealing  
A wondrous wealth of feeling.

*Count Ory leaves with the nun-cavaliers. The Countess returns, with Ragonda and her ladies.*

COUNTESS        Yes! To give rewards the giver!  
A tiny touch of cheer  
To sisters so sincere.

*(a ring)*  
 Who's ringing? At such an hour,  
 Please, no more callers!

RAGONDA *(re-enters)*  
 A page!

COUNTESS  
 A page, who hopes to enter  
 This quiet haven  
 Where men are not permitted?  
 I'd like to see that fellow  
 Who dares to try.

ISOLIER *(entering)*  
 Dear cousin, I am that fellow  
 Who is far from deserving  
 The fire and fury  
 That lights your eye.

COUNTESS  
 What is your purpose here?

ISOLIER  
 I'm sent by his Grace, the Duke,  
 With a message,  
 Some news of great importance both to you  
 And your ladies.

This very evening,  
 Sharp at midnight,  
 Homeward bound,  
 Their husbands and your brother  
 Return safe and sound.

ALL  
 Midnight! Oh, tell us more!

ISOLIER  
 Back from Palestine,  
 Their intention is to surprise you  
 By stealing home so late.

ALL  
 My husband {brother}! Home from war!  
 Oh, I can hardly wait!

ISOLIER  
 The Duke is not convinced,  
 For it is his belief  
 That a homecoming husband  
 Should always give a warning.  
 Joy so unexpected  
 Could sometimes come to grief.

COUNTESS  
 At last! Our gallant men  
 Returning safely!  
 Heaven has heard our prayer.  
 Our faith has been rewarded.  
 I must inform our guests,  
 Share our pleasure ...

ISOLIER            Your guests?

COUNTESS        Nuns on the run,  
Compelled to flee  
That horrid Count Ory.

ISOLIER            (I smell another rat ...  
That vampire!)

                      Do continue.  
These persecuted nuns ...

COUNTESS        Worn to a frazzle!

ISOLIER            Too late to alert you!  
Now at large in the castle  
Is this same Count Ory  
And all his lusty gang  
Who are under the habit.

ALL                Ory!

COUNTESS        We are invaded!

RAGONDA         This may require some explaining ...  
My husband finds his dear wife entertaining  
At night  
A dozen cavaliers!

ALL                A trap! They have us here at their mercy!

ISOLIER            If we can last one hour,  
Some will come to the rescue.  
While help is on the way,  
We have to play for time.

ALL                An hour! I tremble like a feather!

COUNTESS        Worse than all of the rest put together  
Is Count Ory!  
God help us! ... It's he! ...  
Approaching ...

ISOLIER            A dozen Counts I defy!  
And I laugh at death and danger.  
To prove my love am I prepared to die.  
*(he signals the ladies to withdraw)*

COUNTESS        I tremble hot and cold,  
Helpless with fear.

ISOLIER            My love is burning bright.  
Dearest, waste not a tear.  
In the still of the night

Remember I am here.  
(*he blows out candles*)

*The following scene takes place in total darkness, and could be entitled "Dark Doings".*

COUNT ORY        (*entering*)  
Drawn by the dark, secure and undercover,  
I venture forth to claim my tender prize.  
Forced on and on by the zeal of a lover,  
I creep in shadow to the place where she lies.

By love and hope tormented,  
I fight my fire with fire;  
In silent dark descended  
I feed upon desire.

In the dark now descended,  
I feed on desire,  
Feed on my sole desire.

COUNTESS and ISOLIER  
By fear and hope attended,  
My heart propelled by fire,  
In dark and silence blended  
With him {her} can I conspire.

ISOLIER            (*softly, to the Countess*)  
Play along!

COUNTESS        Who is there?

COUNT ORY        It's I . . . Sister Colette.  
So lonely in my chamber,  
Sleep was far from my eyes;  
So agitated, so terrified,  
I lay awake.

Lady, allow, do but allow me  
To remain here by your side.

ISOLIER            (He's in for a surprise!)

COUNTESS        (The monster in disguise!)

COUNT ORY        (*approaching Isolier*)  
I've recovered already.  
This I prefer;  
Better by far.  
Nothing to fear.

ISOLIER            (Yes, a *pas de trois!*)

COUNT ORY        Here I am far from fear.

*He takes Isolier's hand; Isolier takes the Countess' hand.*

- COUNTESS           What are you doing?
- COUNT ORY           The stress and strain depart,  
Taking your hand,  
Pressing it close to my heart.
- COUNTESS           (He's pressing my hand to his heart.)
- ISOLIER             *(softly, to Countess)*  
Lady, unbend!  
Your hand you can lend.  
No need to deny  
Your manly ally.
- COUNT ORY           By a touch so tender  
Is my life restored.  
At last I fondle  
The hard-earned reward.
- By love and hope tormented,  
I fight my fire with fire;  
In silent dark descended  
I feed upon desire.
- In the dark now descended,  
I feed on desire,  
Feed on my sole desire.
- COUNTESS and ISOLIER  
                          By fear and hope attended,  
My heart propelled by fire,  
In dark and silence blended  
With him {her} can I conspire.
- COUNTESS           You must leave, return to your chamber.  
Dear Colette, back to your bed!
- COUNT ORY           Leave you now? Not I!  
The answer's no!  
I am staying here instead.
- COUNTESS           I tremble! ... Oh, God!  
Oh, say not so! Oh, say not so!
- COUNT ORY           Receive a lover who implores  
Of the lady he adores ...
- COUNTESS           Oh, my God! I am betrayed  
By a cruel masquerade!
- COUNT ORY           But it was not for me to choose;  
Cruel love is my excuse.  
I was compelled to do a wrong for

This little hand that I so long for.  
*(he kisses Isolier's hand)*

COUNTESS (Such a love I do not need.)  
You must go.

COUNT ORY Relent, Milady!  
How long am I to plead?

*The sound of a trumpet is heard from afar!*

COUNTESS At hand I hear the trumpet call.  
Soon our soldiers all  
Will be home from war.  
All safely home from war.

COUNT ORY At hand I hear the trumpet call.  
Soon those blasted soldiers all  
Will pound upon the door.

ISOLIER At hand I hear the trumpet call.  
Soon their soldiers all  
Will be home from war.

COUNTESS and ISOLIER  
No more to fret, no more to fear;  
The tramping feet are drawing near.

COUNT ORY (They're drawing near!)  
The sound of danger drawing near;  
I'm lost if they should find me here.

*Countess exits.*

COUNT ORY Too late! Men at the gate!

ISOLIER *(stepping forward)*  
And time for your departure  
Before the marching men intervene.

COUNT ORY *(with surprise and indignation)*  
My own page, Isolier!

ISOLIER With whom dear Sister Colette  
Played such a tender, touching scene.

COUNT ORY For such a plot you will pay!  
Beware my anger.

ISOLIER Beware your father's anger.  
He'll be here any minute,  
And I would guess he'll have some questions.

COUNT ORY Oh, no!

*The Countess returns.*

COUNTESS            You who have warred upon us women  
                              We now proclaim a prisoner of war.

COUNT ORY           Here at your feet, Milady,  
                              I kneel and beg for mercy.  
                              My men are not to blame.  
                              For their release,  
                              What ransom do you name?

COUNTESS            A pledge to leave at once,  
                              That honest wives need not blush for shame.

ISOLIER                I know an old secret passage.  
                              Be quick before they find you!  
                              I'll go along  
                              To shut the door behind you,  
                              With the final laugh.

COUNT ORY            So to the page  
                              I'm just a paragraph!

COUNTESS            At the gate, returning victorious,  
                              Our brave marching men are on the way.  
                              After duties prolonged and laborious,  
                              The call of love they now obey.

COUNT ORY            The position becomes precarious  
                              If my friends extend our stay.  
                              It's over! It's over!  
                              It's time to end the play.

COUNT and CHORUS    It's over! It's over!  
                              It's time to end the play.

COUNTESS and RAGONDA  
                              In triumph, gallant and glorious,  
                              The heroes come to save the day.

ALL                     They return, standing tall and victorious,  
                              To the common call of love we all obey.  
                              The call of love that all obey.

**End of the Opera**