

CAMILLE (following her eagerly): And I must talk to you, Valencienne! And you must listen to me . . . (He tries to embrace her.)

VALEN. (reluctantly drawing away from him): No, no, Camille—

CAMILLE: But you must! You know I love you—

VALEN. (restraining and hushing him): It frightens me to hear you say such things— even when we're alone.

CAMILLE: When else can I say then to you? Oh, Valencienne!—

VALEN. (again restraining him, but half-heartedly, and with amorous looks at him): Camille dear . . . it's only an infatuation, and I shall really have to cure you of it . . . You don't mean half you say to me, do you now?

CAMILLE: I mean every word! You're the only one in the world for me!

No. 3 . . . "A HIGHLY RESPECTABLE WIFE"

(Duet: VALENCIENNE and CAMILLE)

Surely your heart must tell you it's true—
The day we met I fell in love with you!

VALEN.: No, no, Camille, I will not listen—
You ought to get married—

CAMILLE: Get married?
—and then you'll forget me!

VALEN.: How could I forget you?
You are the one that I shall adore

VALEN.: You must not say such things . . . to me . . .
For ever more!

A highly respectable wife,
Unused to conjugal strife;

My husband trusts me completely—
I dare not behave indiscreetly!

I fear 'tis in vain that you plead;
Who knows where the path would lead?

You say I'm your heart's desire—
But really it's time you learned
It's foolish to play with fire—
You may get your fingers burned.

Go warily—go charily—
I bear a very honoured name;
Do realise, if you're unwise,
You'll only have yourself to blame!

You will live to love another day—
A gay, soignée Parisienne;
So please pretend I'm just a friend,
And never speak of love again!

CAMILLE: "A highly respectable wife,
Unused to conjugal strife"—
Why had you to be both a spouse and
That one honest one in a thousand?

I fear you reprove me in vain;
Unchangeable I shall remain—
In love for the rest of my life
With a highly respectable wife!

I beg you believe me, dear;
I mean every word I say;
Unless you would grieve me, dear,
Don't scorn me and turn away . . .

Go warily—go charily—
No! darily—
I bear a very honoured name
Unchangeably, with heaven as my aim!

VALEN.: Do realise, if you're unwise
I realise
You'll only have yourself to blame!
It isn't wise, but love you just the same!

VALEN.: You will live to love another day—
some gay
Let me hear you say
Paris—
soignée
that you love me, Valencienne!

VALEN.: So please pretend
On this depend:
I'm just a friend—
till life shall end,
And never speak of love again!

CAM.: I'll never fall in love again!
CAM.: I'll never fall in love again!

(They break apart as ZETA enters from the Ballroom.)
ZETA (to VALENCIENNE): Ah, there you are, my dear! Enjoying yourself?
VALEN. (with a covert glance at CAMILLE): Very much indeed.

ZETA: Excellent—excellent! But don't forget that Madame Glavari will be arriving almost at once.

VALEN.: I was just going to see about it . . .
ZETA: Always the perfect hostess! (To CAMILLE.) My dear Count, will you escort the Baroness?

CAMILLE: Delighted, your Excellency.
(VALENCIENNE takes his arm, and they exit L. together.)
ZETA (Looking after them): Charming fellow! Pity he's French.
(Njegus enters R.)

ZETA (Cont.): Well? Have you been out for the Count?
Njegus: Yes, your Excellency. He was not at home.
ZETA: What about his Club?