MANON.

ACT I.

(The courtyard of the inn at Amiens. Enter POUSETTE, JAVOTTE, ROSETTE, GUILLOT and DE BRÉTIGNY.)

GUILLOT (calling): Hello there! Mine host! Must I shout continually to get an answer?

DE BRÉTIGNY: Bring us some drink!

GUILLOT: Something to eat! Hello there!

DE BRÉTIGNY: A fine place, indeed, is this!

GUILLOT AND B: Still no one coming?

GUILLOT: This will not do at all. We should receive better attention!

DE BRÉTIGNY (angrily): Are you alive or buried?

GUILLOT: It seems that the Innkeeper is dead!

POUSETTE: Wait, sir! keep up courage.

GUILLOT AND B: A fine place, indeed!

POUSETTE AND OTHERS: Call him again! Keep calling!

(All, in chorus, appeal to the INNKEEPER.)

DE BRÉTIGNY: Now the rascal’s come at last!

GUILLOT: This way, you rogue!

INNKEEPER, D ‘ye think I’m neglectful? Patience then; I’ll quickly serve the food.

(Enter servants with the repast and wines, from inn.)

INNKEEPER (graciously): Here is much to select from.

ALL: Good!

INNKEEPER: Ragout!
ALL: Very good indeed!

POUSETTE: Heavens! It is fine!

(All follow INNKEEPER into the house.)

NOTE. In the English production of this opera the preceding portion of Act. I is sometimes omitted and the performance begun with the following:

(The TOWNSPEOPLE enter, crowding around the hotel. The bell rings.)

CHORUS OF TOWNSPEOPLE:
Hark! hark! The hour is sounding,
See the coach the corner rounding!
We must see all.
At some to laugh,
To smile on beauty,
Is what we call
Our solemn duty.

(LESCAUT enters, followed by two GUARDSMEN.)

LESCAUT (to his companions): This is the place, or I’m mistaken, where the coach from Arras stops to bait man and beast.

THE GUARDS: This is the place.

LESCAUT (dismissing them): Good-day!

THE GUARDS: Ah, surely thou art joking, Lescaut, Thou wilt not leave us thus?

LESCAUT (good-humoredly). Not I!
A wine-shop there is close at hand,
Where they sell only liquor that’s strong.
Here awaiting my cousin I stand,
But you I’ll rejoin before long.

THE GUARDS: Well; don’t forget.

LESCAUT (appearing hurt): What do you mean? You go too far!

THE GUARDS (entreatingly). Lescaut!

LESCAUT. Ah well!
I perhaps, shall lose my memory
When next you want a drink of me.
Be off to the wine-shop at hand,
And there let the liquor flow free.
Here awaiting my cousin I stand,
You can drink while you’re waiting for me

L’AUTRES: C’est bien! parfait!

POUSETTE: O douce providence! On vient nous servir.

(Tous rentrant dans le hôtellerie.)

(Le Bourgeois et les Bourgeoises envahissent peu peu l’hôtellerie. Le cloche entendre.)

CHOEUR (Bourgeoises et Bourgeoises):
Entendez vous la cloche,
Voici l’heure du coche,
Il faut tout voir! tout voir!
Les voyageurs, les voyageuses
Il faut tout voir!
Pour nous c’est un devoir!

(LESCAUT entre suivi de GARDES.)

LESCAUT: C’est bien ici l’hôtellerie
Où le coche d’Arras
Va tantôt s’arrêter!

LES GARDES: C’est bien ici.

LESCAUT (les congédiant): Bonsoir!

LES GARDES: Quelle plaisanterie! Lescaut, tu pourrais quitter!

LESCAUT: Jamais! Jamais! Allez à l’auberge voisine,
On y vend un clairet joyeux;
Je vais attendre ma cousine,
Et je vous rejoins tous les deux!

LES GARDES: Rappelle toi!

LESCAUT: Vous m’insultez, c’est imprudent!

LES GARDES: Lescaut!

LESCAUT: C’est bon! Je perdrais la mémoire
Quand il s’agit de boire!
Allez! à l’auberge voisine
On y vend un clairet joyeux!
Je vais attendre ma cousine,
Allez trinquer en m’attendant!
En m’attendant, allez trinquer!
(Exeunt the GUARDS.)
(Travellers appear in the court-yard, with porters and servants, carrying baggage.) Commotion; travellers seeking parcel, valises, etc.)

TOWNSPEOPLE (Joyfully): Here they come! Here they come!
(The coach arrives, travellers alight from it.)

AN OLD LADY (adjusting her head-dress): Oh! this is shameful! My pretty bonnet!

TOWNSPEOPLE (laughing): Now do just look at that old woman!

TRAVELLER: Hi! porter, here!
PORTER (in bad temper): All right! All right!
TOWNSPEOPLE (laughing): Ah, how our sides will ache with laughter!

VARIABLE TRAVELLERS:
Tell me, sir, I pray, where’s my birdcage?
Hi! here I say.
Answer me!
Hi! Here, now guard,
My turn first!
My boxes!
Where’s my trunk?

ALL: Answer me!

POSTILLIONS AND PORTERS: All right! All right!
Just wait a bit!

TRAVELLERS (loudly): Why don’t you give us each his luggage?

POSTILLIONS AND PORTERS: Not so much bluster. Make less noise, we say!

TRAVELLERS: Heav’n’s, that this worry there should be
For harmless travellers such as we!
Ah! every man his will should make
Before he dare a journey take!

POSTILLIONS, PORTERS, AND TOWNSPEOPLE:
Ah! what a life (we/these) poor men lead!
Who would endure it hut for need?
See, up and down (we/they) go in vain,
For when down, up (we/they) go again.
TAVELLERS (following the POSTILLIONS): Look here, I'm the first.

POSTILLIONS (brusquely): You're the last!

TAVELLERS: I'm the first.

POSTILLIONS: No!

TOWNSPEOPLE (laughingly imitating): You're the last. No!

(MANON, who has come out of the crowd, regards the scene with astonishment.)

WOMEN (looking at MANON): Oh, look! Look at that young woman!

LESCAUT (observing her in turn). I'm almost sure that yon fresh and pretty girl is Manon, my fair relation. (To MANON.) I am Lescaut!

MANON (with some surprise): You! Is that true? (Simply and without reserve.) Come, kiss me then!

LESCAUT: Certainly, my dear. Who would It? (Aside.) My word! she is a pretty maiden, and quite a credit to our family.

MANON (embarrassed): Ah, cousin mine! excuse me, pray.

LESCAUT (aside): What a charming girl!

MANON (with expression):
A simple maid, fresh from lovd home,
To me it is so strange to roam.
Dear cousin mine. excuse me, pray,
For awkwardness on such a day.
(With vivacity.) Oh! pardon me for Prattling so,
Since this is my first trip, you know.
I scarce had started on my way,
Than with delight I wond'red gazed
On meadows, woods, and mansions fair-
What marvel then that I was dazed!

My heart was light as trees flew past,
Their branches waving in the wind,
And I forgot, so glad I felt,
That I must leave these joys behind.

VOYAGEURS (poursuivant les Postillons): Je suis le premier!

POSTILLONS: Le dernier!

VOYAGEURS: Je suis le premier!

POSTILLIONS: Non!

BOURGEOIS (imitant les POSTILLONS): Les dernier! Non!

(MANON qui vient de sortir de la foule considère tout ce tohu-bohu avec étonnement)

BOURGEOISES (regardant MANON): Voyez cette jeune fille!

LESCAUT: Eh! j'imagine que cette belle enfant, c'est Manon! ma cousine! (À MANON.) Je suis Lescaut!

MANON (avec une légère surprise): Vous mon cousin (Simplement.) Embrassez-moi!

LESCAUT: Mais très volontiers, sur ma foi!
Morbleu! c'est une belle fille Qui fait honneur à la famille!

MANON (avec embarras): Ah! mon cousin! mon cousin, excusez-moi!

LESCAUT (à part): Elle est charmante!

MANON (avec émotion):
Je suis encor tout étourdie,
Je suis encor tout engourdie,
Ah! mon cousin! Excusez-moi!
Excusez un moment d'émotion.
Je suis encor tout étourdie.
Pardonnez à mon bavardage
J'en suis à mon premier voyage!
Le coche s'éloignait à peine
Que j'admirais de tous mes yeux,
Les hameaux, les grands bois, la plaine,
Les voyageurs jeunes et vieux.

Ah! mon cousin, excusez-moi!
C'est mon premier voyage!
Je regardais fuir, curieuse,
Les arbres frissonnant au vent!
Launched on the world thus beautiful,-
(Nay, mock me not, 'tis truth I say,)
It seemed that I had sudden flown
To Paradise that happy day.
Then came a moment of distress:
I wept aloud, I know not why.
An instant after, how I laughed!
(With a burst of laughter.) To find reason do not try.
Ah I cousin mine, excuse me, pray.

(Passengers and Attendants fill the Inn-yard. The departure bell rings.)

POSTILLIONS (to TRAVELLERS): Now then, time’s up, sirs!

TRAVELLERS (in comical alarm): What’s that you Ray!

POSTILLIONS: We say time’s up; you see, the coach is ready!

TRAVELLERS:
What! now, so soon?
Ah! is not this provoking!
Heavens! that this worry, there should be
For harmless travellers such as we!
Ah! ev’ry man his will should make
Before he dare a journey take.

(The crowd slowly disperse, leaving LESCAUT and MANON together.)

LESCAUT (to MANON): Wait a moment. Be prudent; I
am going to find your luggage.

(EXIT LESCAUT.)

THE TOWNSPEOPLE (finally dispersing): We have
discharged our solemn duty. (Exeunt.)

(MANON remains alone.)

GUILLOT (appearing on the balcony of the pavilion):
Miserable landlord! are we never to have any wine? (He
observes MANON.) Heavens! What do I see? Young

(BOURGEOIS:
Il faut tout voir!
Pour nous c’est un devoir!

(Ils disparaissent.)

Manon reste seule.)

GUILLOT (sur le balcon du pavillon):
Hôtelier de malheur! Il est donc entendu Que nous
n’aurons jamais de vin! (Apercevant Manon) Ciel! qu’ai-
lady! hem I hem! Young lady! (Aside.) Really, my head is turning round!

MANON: (aside and laughing): What a funny man!

GUILLOT:
Young lady,
I am Guillot de Morfontaine.
I am rich
and would give a good deal
to hear a word of love from you.
Now, what do you say to that?

MANON: That I should be ashamed, if I were not more disposed to laugh.

(MANON laughs, and her laughter is echoed by DE BRÉTIGNY, JAVOTTE, POUSETTE, and ROSETTE, who have just appeared on the balcony.)

DE BRÉTIGNY: Now then, Guillot, what's the game? We are waiting for you.

GUILLOT: Oh! go to the devil.

POUSETTE (to GUILLOT): Are you not ashamed ? At your age!

DE BRÉTIGNY: This time I swear the dog has by chance found a prize. Never did sweeter look light up a woman’s face!

JAVOTTE, POUSETTE, AND ROSETTE (laughingly to GUILLOT):
Oh! come back, Guillot. Oh! come back !
Where a false step leads who can tell?
Be advised, Guillot, tempt not Fate.
Have a care: back while all is well.

DE BRÉTIGNY: Now then, Guillot, let the girl alone and come in. We are calling you.

GUILLOT: Ay, ay, in a moment. (To MANON.) My little one, give me a word.

DE BRÉTIGNY: Guillot, let the girl alone.

GUILLOT (softly to MANON):
A postillion is coming for me directly; when you see him, understand

je vu? Mademoiselle! hem! hem! Mademoiselle! (Apart.) Ce qui se passe en ma cervelle!

MANON (apart): Cet homme est fort drôle, ma foi!

GUILLOT:
Mademoiselle, écoutez-moi!
On me nomme Guillot de Morfontaine,
De louis d’or ma caisse est pleine,
Et j’en donnerais beaucoup
Pour obtenir de vous un seul mot d’amour.
J’ai fini, qu’avez-vous à dire?

MANON: Que je me fâcherais se je n’aimais mieux rire!

(MANON éclate de rire, et son rire est répété par BRÉTIGNY, JAVOTTE, POUSETTE, et ROSETTE qui viennent d’arriver sur le balcon.)

BRÉTIGNY: Eh bien, Guillot, que faites-vous? Nous vous attendons!

GUILLOT: Au diable les fous!

POUSSETTE (à Guillot): N’avez-vous pas honte? à votre âge!

BRÉTIGNY:
Cette fois-ci, le drôle a par hasard
Découvert un trésor.
Jamais plus doux regard
N’illumina plus gracieux visage!

JAVOTTE, POUSETTE, AND ROSETTE (à Guillot ébrient):
Revenez, Guillot, revenez!
Dieu sait où vous mène un faux pas!
Cher ami Guillot, n’en faites pas!
Revenez! Vous allez vous casser le nez!

BRÉTIGNY:
Allons, Guillot, laissez Mademoiselle,
Et revenez, l’on vous appelle!

GUILLOT: Oui, je reviens dans un moment! (A MANON.) Ma mignonne, un mot seulement!

BRÉTIGNY: Guillot, laissez Mademoiselle.

GUILLOT (à MANON):
De ma part tout à l’heure un postillon viendra,
Quand vous l’apercevrez, cela signifiera.
Qu’une voiture attend, que vous pouvez la prendre,
that a carriage is at your service.
Take it, and afterwards you shall know more.

LESCAUT (who has just entered): What do you say?

GUILLOT (confused): Oh, sir! nothing, sir!

LESCAUT (boisterously): Oh, sir! Did you say-

GUILLOT (returning to the pavilion):
Nothing, sir, I said.

LESCAUT (vient de renirer): Plaît-il, Monsieur!

GUILLOT: Monsieur?

LESCAUT: Eh bien! Vous disiez -

GUILLOT:
Je ne disais rien!

(remontant pavillon)

JAVOTTE, POUSSETTE ET ROSETTE: Revenez, Guillot, etc.
(ils rentrent en riant dans le pavillon.)

LESCAUT: (à MANON): Il vous parlait, Manon?

MANON (légèrement et vif): Ce n'était pas ma faute.

LESCAUT: Certes! et j'ai de vous opinion trop haute
Pour me fâcher!

JAVOTTE, POUSETTE, ROSETTE: Oh! Come back, Guillot; oh, come back, etc.
(Laughing, they re-enter the pavilion.)

FIRST GUARDSMAN: How now! thou comest not!

SECOND GUARDSMAN: Both cards and dice are waiting your pleasure below.

LESCAUT (to MANON): He spoke to you, Manon.

MANON (lightly): Well, can you say 'was my fault?

LESCAUT: That's true; and in my eyes you are so good that I won't trouble myself.

(The two GUARDSMEN enter)

GUARDSMEN (resignedly): To his wisdom we'll listen.

LESCAUT (to MANON): Give good heed to what I say-
Duty calls me now away,
To consult these comrades here,
Upon a point that's not quite clear.
Wait for me, Manon, just a moment, no more.
Make no mistake, but prudent be,
And one thing always bear in mind,
That safe within my hands you'll find
The honor of our family.
And if, forsooth, some silly man
Should whisper folly in your ear,
Behave as though you did not hear.
For safety's sake adopt that plan.

UN GARDE (à LESCAUT): Eh bien, tu ne viens pas?

UN AUTRE GARDE: Les cartes et les dés nous attendent làbas!

LESCAUT: Je viens, Mais à cette jeunesse
Permettez d'abord que j'adresse
Quel ques conseils tout remplis de sagesse!

LES GARDES: Écoutons la sagesse.
Now let us go and see on which of us the goddess of the

 observes to be on the lookout.

(As he goes he turns to MANON.)

Make no mistake, but prudent be.

(Exeunt LESCAUT and GUARDSMEN.)

MANON (with simplicity): Yes, I will do as I am told -
not a word, not a thought. Far away I will banish those wild dreams that with glittering splendor hold me in thrall. I'll dream no more! (Appears deep in thought. Suddenly she looks towards the pavilion in which are POUSETTE, JAVOTTE, and ROSETTE.) What happy lives those ladies live! Round the throat of one is a necklace of gold. (Rising.) Ah! beautiful dresses and gems in radiant splendor flashing! How delightful ye are to me! (Sadly and resigned) Alas! Manon, again thou'rt dreaming. Struggling vainly with thy fate; All these glories are but seeming. Leave them at the convent gate. Alas! Manon, dream thou no more. Ah! 't is easy said, but my eyes with their splendor are dazzled till I see naught else. How happy must the women be who spend their lives in search of pleasure! (She sees DES GRIEUX approaching.) Who is that? Quick, to my place!

(DES GRIEUX comes forward without noticing MANON.)

DES GRIEUX:
The hour is fixed when I depart,
yet I pause, not knowing why.
(Resolutely.) To-morrow, whatever betide, I shall embrace my father.
Yes, he will meet me gladly,
and my heart goeth forth to him.
Oh, my father, soon I shall clasp thy hand!

(Involuntarily he turns towards MANON.)

Great Heaven! Am I dreaming?
Yes, it is a vision!
Whence comes this rapturous longing?
Now I feel that my life
but begins - or is ending!
A hand of iron draws me, though resisting,
from the way I sought to go.
Spite of myself I now would kneel before her.

(He slowly approaches MANON.)

Young lady!

MANON: Sir!

DES GRIEUX: Pardon me – I do not know – I obey – I am no longer master of myself. I see you assuredly for the first time, yet my heart recognizes you.

Me mène en un autre chemin
Et malgré moi m’entraîne devant elle!

(R’approche de MANON.)

Mademoiselle!

MANON: Eh quoi?

DES GRIEUX: Pardonnez-moi! Je ne sais - J’obéis je ne sais plus mon maître - Je vous vois, J’en suis sûr,
Pour la première fois
Et mon coeur cependant vient de vous reconnaître!

(A postillion, who has been warned by GUILLOT to take the orders of MANON, appears at back. MANON looks at him, reflects, and smiles.)

MANON (to DES GRIEUX): Oh, what a chance is

(A ce moment, le Postillon à qui Guillot-Morfontaine a dit précédemment de se tenir aux ordres de Manon paraît dans le fond.)

MANON Par aventure, peut-être avons-nous mieux
thrown now in your way! There is a carriage awaiting here its owner. He has dared to make love to Manon. Be revenged!

DES GRIEUX: But how?
MANON: Let us take it - both of us.
DES GRIEUX: Good! Away!

(Exit postillion.)

MANON (troubled): But, sir – we go to - gether?
DES GRIEUX: Yes, Manon; are not our hearts united?
MANON AND DES GRIEUX: We to Paris will go. Heart to heart!
And, though Fortune may frown,
Never part!
Evermore bliss is ours,
And with love's sweetest flow'rs
Will we crown the bright hours.

DES GRIEUX (tenderly): Soon my name will become your own. (Recovering himself.)
Ah, excuse!

MANON: All unworthy is Manon,
and she desires no sacrifice;
yet otherwise 't is wrong.

DES GRIEUX AND MANON: We to Paris will go, etc.

(Repeals of laughter in the pavilion are heard.)

MANON: There they are!
DES GRIEUX: What troubles you?
MANON: Nothing! Those beautiful ladies!

LESCAUT (within): I shall expect you both at the wine-shop this evening.
DES GRIEUX (alarmed): Ha!

MANON: It is the voice of my cousin!

DES GRIEUX (en riant): Ha! Ha!
MANON: Ce sont elles!

DES GRIEUX: Qu'avez-vous?
MANON: Rien! ces femmes si belles!

LESCAUT (au dehors, aviné): Ce soir, vous rendez tout au cabaret voisin!

DES GRIEUX (effrayé): Là!

MANON: C'est la voix de mon cousin!
DES GRIEUX: Come! away!

POUSSETTE, JAVOTTE AND ROSETTE (Within):
Come back, Guillot!

MANON (with excitement):
Ah! but it must indeed be delightful to abandon sorrow, and know only pleasure!

(Exit MANON and DES GRIEUX.)

LESCAUT (entering intoxicated):
Not a coin! Dame Fortune plays me false!
(Looking for MANON.) Hi! Manon! - What! Gone away? Manon! Manon!

GUILLOT (coming out of pavilion cautiously): I'll see her once again!

LESCAUT: Ah! 't is you, my fine fellow! 'T is you have taken Manon; you! Give her up! Give her to me!

(Enter TOWNSPEOPLE and INNKEEPER.)

GUILLOT: Now, my good Lescaut, why make this noise and cause a scandal!

LESCAUT: Ah! bah! What's that to me! (To TOWNPEOPLE.) He has robbed us of our honor! And 't is a feast too good (to GUILLOT) for such a taste as yours!

GUILLOT (frightened.): What an adventure!

INNKEEPER AND TOWNSPEOPLE: Now, then, explain yourself!

GUILLOT: Good! Let us do it gently, sirs, and without prejudice.

LESCAUT (louder):
Answer me, as in a court of law – Where is Manon?

INNKEEPER: What! She who was here lately has driven away. A young man is with her; they have gone!

GUILLOT (in despair): O heavens!

(Noise, carriage in distance.)

DES GRIEUX: Viens! Partons!

POUSSETTE, JAVOTTE & ROSETTE: Revenez, Guillot!

MANON (s'arrête, indécise):
Ah! Combien ce doit être amusant de s'amuser toute une vie! Ah! Partons!

(ils s'endorment tous deux.)

LESCAUT (paraissant gris):
Plus un sou! Le tour est très plaisant!
(Appelant.) Hé! Manon quoi! Disparue! Holà! Holà!

GUILLOT (descendant doucement le perron; avec précaution): Je veux la retrouver!

LESCAUT: Ah! (barrant le passage) c'est vous! Le gros homme! Vous avez pris Manon! Vous, rendez-la moi!

GUILLOT (à LESCAUT): Regardez donc comme vous attirez la foule!

LESCAUT: Ah! Bah! ça m'est égal! (aux BOURGEOIS) Il a pris notre honneur! (À GUILLOT.) C'est un trop beau regal pour ton villain museau!

GUILLOT: Quelle aventure!

L'HÔTELIER, ET BOURGEOIS: Voyons, expliquez-vous!

GUILLOT: Soit! Mais très doucement, très doucement et sans injure!

LESCAUT: (encore plus fort):
Répondez catégoriquement;
Je veux Manon! Je veux Manon!

L'HÔTELIER: Quoi! cette jeune fille,
Elle est partie avec un jeune homme!
Écoutez!

GUILLOT: Ociel!

(bruin lointain de la voiture.)
TOWNSPEOPLE: Yes, they're off!

LESCAUT (furious): There goes the honor of our house!

INNKEEPER (indicating GUILLOT): And in the carriage of that man!

TOWNSPEOPLE: And in the carriage of that man!

LESCAUT (seizing GUILLOT): You wretch!

GUILLOT: No! hear me speak! Let me go!

PEOPLE: Ah! the bird has flown! Was ever such misfortune known!

LESCAUT: No, my honor says chastise him!

DE BRÉTIGNY (coming from pavilion with ladies): Alas! my poor Guillot! Has your love, then, escaped you?

LADIES (laughing): Oh! measure this mischance who can, For such a lady-killing man!

GUILLOT: Be silent all! I will have my revenge on that perfidious girl, and also on this fool!

ALL: Ah! the bird has flown! Was ever such misfortune known!

BOURGEOIS: Elle est partie!

LESCAUT: Mais c'est l'honneur de la famille!

L'HÔTELIER (designant GUILLOT.): Dans la voiture de Monsieur!

BOURGEOIS: Dans la voiture de Monsieur!

LESCAUT: Gredin!

GUILLOT: Lâchez! Lâchez!

BOURGEOIS: Ah! La drôle de figure!

LESCAUT: Non! Il faut que je chatie!

DE BRÉTIGNY (sorti du pavillon avec les femmes): Eh! Quoi! Pauvre Guillot!Votre belle est partie!

LES FEMMES (rient): Quelle mésaventure pour un aussi grand séducteur!

GUILLOT: Taisez-vous! Je veux être vengé, et de cette perfide et de cet enrage!

TOUT: Ah! La drole de figure! Ah! Quell malheur!