

“Ah, mes amis,” LA FILLE DU RÉGIMENT (DAUGHTER OF THE REGIMENT) Act I
by Gaetano Donizetti, libretto by Jules-Henri Vernoy de Saint-Georges and Jean-
François Bayard, 1840.

SYNOPSIS; Tonio and Marie are in love but she is the mascot (“daughter”) of a proud regiment that considers Tonio unworthy of their beloved “child.” He enlists in the army, just to show how serious he is about her and expresses his joy at his new status in life and at the fact that she loves him.

TONIO

*Ah, mes amis, quel jour de fête! *

Je vais marcher sous vos drapeaux.

L’amour, qui m’a tourné la tête
désormais, désormais, me rend un héros.

Ah, mes amis, quel jour de fête!

Je vais marcher sous vos drapeaux.

Ah! quel bonheur, oui, mes amis,

je vais marcher sous vos drapeaux.

Oui, celle pour qui je respire,

à mes vœux a daigné sourire.

Et ce doux espoir de bonheur

trouble ma raison et mon cœur!

*Ah! mes amis, quel jour de fête! *

Je vais marcher sous vos drapeaux.

(*repeat)

Ah, my friends, what a day for feasting!!

I shall march under your flags.

Love, which has turned my head,
from now on, makes me a hero.

Ah, my friends, what a day of feasting!

I shall march under your banners.

Ah, what happiness; yes, my friends,

I shall march under your banners.

Yes, she for whom I’m longing

has deigned to smile upon my love.

And this pleasant hope of such joy
disturbs both my mind and my heart.

Ah, my friends, what a day for feasting!

I shall march under your flags.

(Tonio and the soldiers discuss Marie’s fate; they don’t want her to marry someone whom they consider an enemy or, worse yet, a hick! Indeed, they assume that she’s “married” to the regiment. Tonio says he’s now part of their unit and only joined out of love for Marie. They refuse the match until he swears that she loves him. Surprised and outwitted, they give their consent, to which Tonio replies joyously.) In this outburst, there are 9 high C’s. It’s the aria that brought international fame to Luciano Pavarotti.

Pour mon âme, quel destin!

J’ai sa flamme, et j’ai sa main.

Jour prospère, me voici,

Militaire, militaire et mari,

militaire et mari .

Pour mon âme, etc.

*Me voici, me voici,

*Militaire et mari! *

Militaire!

For my heart, what good luck!

I’ve her love and I’ve her hand.

Oh, great day, here I am,

Both a soldier, a soldier and a mate,

both a soldier and a mate.

For my heart, etc.

Here I am, here I am,

both a soldier and mate!

I’m a soldier!

--From “A Tribute to Pavarotti,” a lecture for Santa Cruz Opera Society, Inc.
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