

“C’est une chanson d’amour” (It’s a song of love) Duet, Antonia and Hoffmann, LES CONTES D’HOFFMANN (THE TALES OF HOFFMANN), Act III, 1881. Music by Jacques Offenbach, libretto by Michel Carré and Jules Barbier, based on the stories of E.T.A. Hoffmann.

SYNOPSIS: Hoffmann is reunited with Antonia, one of his loves, and they express their emotions in a poignant love duet.

ANTONIA

C’est une chanson d’amour qui s’envole,
triste ou folle,
qui s’envole triste ou folle, tour à tour!
C’est une chanson d’amour
La rose nouvelle sourit au printemps

Làs! Combien de temps vivra-t-elle?
Combien de temps vivra-t-elle? Vivra-t-elle?
Ah!

HOFFMANN

C’est une chanson d’amour qui s’envole, triste...

ANTONIA

--triste ou folle.

BOTH

C’est une chanson d’amour qui s’envole, etc.

HOFFMANN

Un rayon de flamme pare ta beauté
Verras-tu l’été, fleur de l’âme?
fleur de l’âme...

ANTONIA

C’est une chanson d’amour qui s’envole...

BOTH

...triste ou folle
qui s’envole
triste ou folle,
tour à tour.

This is a song about love that flies off,
sad or merry,
that flies away, sad or merry, each in turn.
It’s a song about love; it’s a song about love.
The new blooming rose smiles with pleasure
at Spring,

Alas! How much time will it live?
How much time will it live? Will it live?
Ah!

This is a song about love that flies off, sad..

---sad or merry.

This is a song about love that flies off, etc.

A ray of pure light makes you lovelier still,
Will you see the summer, flow’r of my soul?
Flow’r of my soul...

This is a song about love that flies away...

...sad or merry,
that flies away
sad or merry,
each in turn.

--From “Bel canto, the French Connection,” a course for Lifelong Learners at UC Santa Cruz,
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