

“Légères hirondelles,” (You slender light-winged swallows) duet, sung by Mignon and Lothario, from MIGNON by Ambroise Thomas, libretto by Jules Barbier and Michel Carré, 1866, based on Goethe's novel *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* (*Wilhem Meister's Apprenticeship*.)

SYNOPSIS: At an inn in Germany, Lothario, an aged wandering minstrel, meets Mignon, a young woman who had been abducted by gypsies when she was a child. He is strangely drawn to her and they sing a duet, praising the beauty and lifestyle of the swallows around them, who are free to fly off to happier places.

MIGNON (*playing Lothario's lute*)

Légères hirondelles,
oiseaux bénis de Dieu,
ouvrez, ouvrez vos ailes,
envolez-vous, adieu.

You slender light-winged swallows,
you birds that God has blessed,
go open your wings widely,
and fly away, farewell!!!

LOTHARIO (*aside*)

(Le vieux luth s'éveille sous ses jeunes doigts
Et semble, merveille, répondre à sa voix.)

(The old lute awakens under her young fingers
and seems, as by magic, to answer her voice.)

BOTH

Fuyez, légères hirondelles,
oiseaux bénis de Dieu
Ouvrez, ouvrez vos ailes!
envolez-vous, adieu.

Fly off, you slender swallows,
you birds that God has blessed;
go open your wings widely,
and fly away, farewell.

LOTHARIO

Fuyez, adieu!

Fly off, farewell!

MIGNON

Fuyez vers la lumière;
fuyez vite là-bas,
vers l'horizon vermeil.
Heureuse la première
qui reverra demain
le pays du soleil.
Légère hirondelles,
Oiseaux bénis de Dieu, etc.

Fly off into the sunshine,
fly quickly, far away,
to find the red-streaked sky.
How happily the first one
will see tomorrow's dawn,
in the land of the sun.
You slender light-winged swallows,
you birds that God has blessed, etc.

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