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LIBRETTO WITH A
CORRECT ENGLISH
TRANSLATION.

CYRANO

PUBLISHED BY

FRED. RULLMAN, Inc.

THEATRE TICKET OFFICE,

111 BROADWAY, NEW YORK.
TRINITY BUILDING (REAR ARCADE)

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RULLMAN'S
THEATRE
TICKET
OFFICE

111 BROADWAY, NEW YORK CITY

(TRINITY BUILDING, REAR ARCADE)

OFFICIAL PUBLISHER OF
OPERA LIBRETTOS
AND PLAY BOOKS
IN ALL LANGUAGES

TELEPHONES, RECTOR . 8817, 8818, 8819

CYRANO

OPERA IN FOUR ACTS

BY
WALTER DAMROSCH

WORDS BY
W. J. HENDERSON

After the Drama by EDMOND ROSTAND

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PUBLISHED BY FRED RULLMAN, Inc.
AT THE THEATRE TICKET OFFICE, 111 BROADWAY
NEW YORK

CHARACTERS

CYRANO DE BERGERAC	<i>Baritone</i>
ROXANE	<i>Soprano</i>
LISE	<i>Soprano</i>
DUENNA	<i>Alto</i>
A FLOWER GIRL	<i>Soprano</i>
A MOTHER SUPERIOR	<i>Alto</i>
CHRISTIAN	<i>Tenor</i>
RAGUENEAU	<i>Tenor</i>
A CADET	<i>Tenor</i>
DEGUICHE	<i>Bass</i>
LE BRET	<i>Bass</i>
A TALL MUSKETEER	<i>Bass</i>
MONTFLEURY	<i>Tenor</i>
A PRIEST	<i>Bass</i>
FIRST CAVALIER	<i>Bass</i>
SECOND CAVALIER	<i>Tenor</i>
THIRD CAVALIER	<i>Bass</i>

*Chorus of Preciuses, Pages, Nuns, Cavaliers,
Gascony Cadets, Marquises, etc.*

SYNOPSIS

ACT I.

The great hall of the Hotel de Bourgogne, in 1640. A sort of tennis-court arranged and decorated for theatrical performances.

The hall is a long rectangle, seen obliquely, so that one side of it constitutes the background, which runs from the position of the front wing on the right, to the line of the furthest wing on the left, and forms an angle with the stage, which is equally seen obliquely.

This stage is furnished on both sides along the wings with benches. The drop curtain is composed of two tapestry hangings, which can be drawn apart. Above a harlequin cloak, the royal escutcheon. Broad steps lead from the raised platform of the stage into the house. On either side of these steps the musicians' seats. A row of candles fills the office of footlights.

Two galleries run along the side; the lower one is divided into boxes. No seats in the pit, which is the stage proper. At the back of the pit, that is to say, at the right, in the front, a few seats raised like steps, one above the other; and under a stairway which leads to the upper seats and of which the lower end only is visible, a stand decked with small candelabra, jars full of flowers, flagons and glasses, dishes heaped with sweetmeats, etc.

In the centre of the background, under the box tier, the entrance to the theatre, large door which half opens to let in the spectators. On the panels of this door, and in several corners, and above the sweetmeat stand, red playbills announcing LA CLORISE.

At the rise of the curtain the house is nearly dark and still empty. The chandeliers are let down in the middle of the pit until time to light them.

The audience arriving gradually. Cavaliers, burghers, lackeys, pages, the fiddlers, etc

ACT II.

Ragueneau's shop. Cooking place on the right of stage. Tables with preparations of various kinds on them. Large double door at back leading into street. Set in general in the same way as in the original. At rise of curtain several cooks are seen at work. Much bustle and movement. Ragueneau seated at a small table, left, writing with puzzled face and scanning his lines on his fingers.

ACT III.

(Street before the house of ROXANE. Balcony with vines on the columns. House of CLOMIRE opposite with practicable door and steps. At rise of curtain, moonlight. Soft music and chorus heard in the house of CLOMIRE.

ACT IV—SCENE I.

(Camp of the Gascony cadets. Arras in the distance. Earthwork in the background. Tents, etc., in the foreground. Sunrise. The cadets lie asleep about the stage. All are ragged, pale and gaunt. LE BRÈRE on watch. Silence on stage after curtain rises. Then shots are heard outside.)

ACT IV—SCÈNE II.

(The park of a neighboring convent. Shade trees. At the right the entrance to the convent. In the center a large tree. At the left a semi-circular stone seat. Vines, flowers, etc. The stage is filled with nuns in an attitude of prayer.)

CYRANO

ACT I.

CAVALIER.

We come too early; how shall we kill
the time?

SECOND CAVALIER

I'll sing to you my latest rhyme.

A MUSKETEER (*pursuing a flower
girl*).

Give me one kiss, and I will call you
queen.

GIRL.

You are too bold. Take care; we
shall be seen.

ANOTHER CAVALIER.

How stupid is this waiting. Will you
have a bout with me?

FOURTH CAVALIER.

Right gladly, and I'll hit you, one, two,
three. (*They fence.*)

(*Enter PAGES.*)

CHORUS OF PAGES (*singing a faran-
dole*).

THE CROWD.

Bring in more lights! The play, the
play begin;
Bring on the actors, be they fat or
thin;
Let us have drama, prose or merry
verse;
Rid us of thinking, nothing could be
worse.

(*Enter a band of MARQUISES*)

THE MARQUISES.

What! We enter all too early,
Are we soldiers rude and burly?
Shall we tarry, sorry wights?
In the dark? Where are the lights?
(*Candle lighter enters and lights
candles.*)

(*Enter CHRISTIAN AND LE BRET.*)

CHRISTIAN.

You who know the stories of the town,
Miladi's fan, her cloak, her glove,
The very lace upon her satin gown,
Oh, tell me who is she I love?

LE BRET.

I crave your pardon of your hand and
grace;
I may not know her 'till I see her
face.

CHRISTIAN.

Oh, for the day of the grand crusade,
When a soldier won by a soldier's
fame;
And the flashing blow of a manly
blade
Would carve a path to a noble
dame.

I am no dealer in pretty words;
I cannot twitter with these fine birds;
If she's poetic, I have no tropes;
If she is subtle, farewell, my hopes!
In yonder box she always sits;
There, near the end.

LE BRET.

Alas!

CHRISTIAN.

Why say you so?

LE BRET.

It is Roxane, whose wit is like a sword;
With words alone her heart you may attack,
And be repelled, if by you she is bored.
She's cousin to the brave de Bergerac.

(Enter RAGUENEAU.)

CHRISTIAN.

I know him not.

RAGUENEAU.

I heard a mighty name.
Good masters, I am here to seek the same.

(To CHRISTIAN) Know you not CYRANO, the wise, the brave, the great?
His blade is half the shears of fate.
His wit is quicker than a bounding ball.

And he's a poet, master of us all
Hat with triple feather,
Doublet with a flowing skirt
Cloak and sword together
Sweep behind with saucy flirt
While before him goes
His most majestic nose.
Oh, masters, what a nose is there.
But speak about it none may dare.
Save in the house and under breath;
It is the very nose of death.
The nose before, the sword behind—
Wise men to them both are blind.

CHRISTIAN.

An errant boaster, I'll be bound.
(retires up stage).

LE BRET (looking round).

Good Ragueneau, he can't be found.

RAGUENEAU.

He will be here, for he has made a bet
To stop the play, and he'll not forget.
Montfleury he's forbidden to appear;
You'll see he will be here.

(Enters PRECIEUSES, followed by ROXANE.)

THE PRECIEUSES.

The lace upon the garb of love are we
By dainty hands alone caressed to be.
No vulgar passion shall assail our hearts.
They may be pierced alone by gentle darts.

MARQUISES.

For you our hearts are gently beating,
Receive our most devoted greeting;
For you we're sighing, we are kneeling;
Oh, ladies fair, be not unfeeling;
But hearken to our vows of love.

(As ROXANE enters after the PRECIEUSES, the MARQUISES and CAVALIERS follow her with bows and adulation. She waves them all off with her fan. The PRECIEUSES ascend the stairs to the boxes. ROXANE pauses on the third step.)

ROXANE.

Ah, messieurs, gallant and gay,
We come to see the play,
Not you. But spare us all your vows repeated
A woman's favor is not meted
To many words, to many smiles;
To win a heart you must use deeper wiles.
Oh, woo a woman not with pretty graces,
Nor yet with oft repeated burning vows,
And woo her not with silken hose and laces,
Nor yet with pretty airs and lowly bows.
Dream not to win her by a melting glance,
Nor with the singing of your shining blade;
For all your pride and pomp and circumstance
By one quick flash of wit may be dismayed.
You'll not overtake the love you are pursuing
With languid eyelid and a dulcet tone;
Seek for the soul of her you would be wooing,
And melt it by the glory of your own.

PAGES.

She's pretty, but she makes too much
ado,
We know a quicker way than that to
woo.

(*The MARQUISES crowd around
ROXANE, but DE GUICHE enters and
pushes in front of them.*)

DE GUICHE (*offering his hand to
escort her to box*).

None but the brave deserve the fair.

ROXANE.

Am I so brave? Well, then I dare.

(*Accepts his escort, MARQUISES re-
tire in disgust.*)

(*Overture by the orchestra on the
stage. The play of BARO begins.*)

(*Enter MONTFLEURY on the mimic
stage.*)

MONTFLEURY (*as Phaedo*).

Happy the man, who freed from fash-
ion's fickle sway,
In exile self-prescribed whiles peace-
ful hours away,
And when the zephyrs sigh amid the
murmuring trees—

CYRANO (*in the crowd*).

Fat one, I forbade you to appear!
(*General consternation.*)

VOICES.

Who is it? What is this surprise?

RAGUENEAU.

'Tis he, I win!

MONTFLEURY.

But—

CYRANO (*rising in his place and draw-
ing his sword*).

Mountain! Remove thyself from off
the plain.

MONTFLEURY (*going*).

Excuse me, gentles, but I feel a pain.

(*MONTFLEURY goes off. General hub-
bub. CYRANO comes down stage and
is surrounded by the crowd.*)

VARIOUS VOICES.

This is an insult! We have paid to
see the play!
Who is it dares to drive our pet away?

CYRANO.

Be silent all. Does any one object?
I have a talisman to win respect.
(*Lays hand on hilt.*)

DE GUICHE (*who has come down
from the box*).

We came to hear Baro's immortal
verse.

CYRANO.

My friend, such immortality's a curse.

PRECIIEUSES.

To slur Baro's delightful name,
How dare he? What a shame?

CYRANO.

Beautiful creatures, do you bloom and
shine;
Be ministers of dreams, your smiles
our anodyne.
But though for "La Clorise" you all
may weep,
Baro's narcotic shall not make you
sleep.

DE GUICHE.

This is too much. Sir, do you stop all
shows
By pushing into them your mighty
nose?

CYRANO.

Poor wit to poorer manners wed.
I'll tell you what you might have said.
Although with fancy's passion not in-
flamed,
You could have posed and courteously
declaimed;
O lordly nose, no wind so bold
As dares to give the whole of you a
cold.
Or this: Wert thou a man or army
born,
That thou must carry such a bugle
horn?
Or else this parody of beautiful
thought,

From "Pyramus and Thisbe" neatly caught,
Behold the nose that spoiled its master's face,
And now is blushing at its own disgrace.
But you, monsieur, have no such words as these;
I speak more wit than you if I but sneeze.

DE GUICHE.

Buffoon!

CYRANO.

Ai! That does awake the nerve
Within my rapier, it will forth to serve. (*Draws.*)

DE GUICHE.

A poet fight?

CYRANO.

I will not run away
But improvise a ballad while we play.
And at the last line I shall touch.

DE GUICHE.

My friend, you promise far too much
(*Draws.*)

CYRANO (*declaiming*).

Ballade of the duel which deBergerac
Fought with a noble who good sense
did lack.
That is the title. Now, sir, the attack.

THE CROWD.

Aha! With eagerness we're on the rack.

(*Tableau—A ring, in the pit, of those interested. The pages climb to good places to see. All the women stand in the boxes. CYRANO closes his eyes a moment as if in thought, then looks up to ROXANE, advances and crosses swords with DEGUICHE.*)

CYRANO.

Now gentles and ladies all fair,
Look well on this noble and me;
I rhyme you a rhyme debonair
And as light as the foam of the sea,
Yet not all devoid of esprit;
A song of a nobleman vain,

And the chime of the ballad shall be
I touch as I end the refrain.

(*They begin to fence.*)

Good brother, I pri' thee despair
Of stopping my ballad or me;
My sword will be into your lair
Or ever my feint you may see.
For I guard from my head to my knee,
While blows on your falchion I rain;
And the chime of my ballad shall be
I touch as I end the refrain.

Oh, queens of our hearts, do you see,
How the sword beats the time of the strain?

For the chime of my ballad shall be
I touch as I end the refrain.

(*With the last line CYRANO lunges and DEGUICHE staggers. CYRANO bows. Applause from the crowd. Flowers are thrown from the boxes. Men congratulate CYRANO. RAGUENEAU dances with joy. LE BRET is tearfully anxious.*)

DEGUICHE (*supported by friends*).

Sometime, my poet, we shall meet;
And then remember that revenge is sweet.

(*CYRANO makes a gesture of contempt. DEGUICHE is supported off. All follow except CYRANO and LE BRET.*)

ROXANE.

(*As she passes CYRANO after descending from her box.*)

Cousin, your sword and wit keep well
in tune

But yonder gentle will not pardon
soon.

These dull men are the flint, you sharp
ones steel

Beware the fire the sparks will make.

CYRANO.

I kneel

Before your grace.

Forewarned,

I am forearmed. Also I am adorned
In that you smile upon me from your
skies.

(*Exit ROXANE attended.*)

CYRANO.

So much for fools. And yet who is
the wise?

I played but for the favor of her eyes.

LE BRET.

You love?

CYRANO.

You stare, and yet I am a man;
 Despite this nose I dare to love
 Roxane.
 Yes, even this may smell the budding
 spring,
 And e'en my eyes may look across this
 mount
 To where, beside some clear and
 sunny fount,
 The roses blossom and the robins sing;
 And if I see a lover and his lass
 Go hand in hand along the verdant
 grass,
 I think that I would gladly give my all
 If joy like this my lonely life would
 grace;
 And then I see upon the garden wall
 The shadow of my face!

LE BRET.

My friend! (CYRANO motions him
 away and turns aside as if to hide
 his emotion. Enter DUENNA.)

DUENNA.

Most reverend and gracious sir, my
 mistress bids me say that she has
 something for your private ear.

CYRANO

My private ear!

DUENNA.

There are things—

CYRANO.

Ah, my heart!

DUENNA.

To-morrow at the very break of day
 She goes into the church to pray.
 When that is done her cousin she will
 seek,
 Tell me where she alone with him can
 speak.

CYRANO.

With me alone?
 Am I the sport of fate?
 At Ragueneau's the pastry cook's I
 wait.

ENSEMBLE.

DUENNA.

How noble, how noble his bearing,
 How eager the light of his eyes;
 But yet for him who would be caring?
 His nose, what a terrible size!

CYRANO.

Oh, long will the night be a-wearing
 E'er dawn shall encrimson the skies;
 But the darkness will be not despair-
 ing;
 'Twill flee from the light of her eyes.

LE BRET.

Away with your gloomy despairing,
 Live now in a happy surmise!
 To-morrow you'll early be faring
 To read the bright speech of her eyes.

DUENNA.

We'll be there. Fail us not at seven.

CYRANO.

I shall come. 'Twill be foretaste of
 heaven.

(Exit DUENNA followed by LE BRET.
 Actors appear on the stage and be-
 gin a rehearsal.)

CYRANO.

Now could I the very mountain fell
 With blinding sweeps of lightning
 steel!

Now could I with one poetic spell
 The lifetime of a heart reveal!

Now could I hold a thousand men at
 bay,—

My sword the key to blank oblivious
 gate,

My arm the rhythmic pendulum of
 Fate—

And make for every blow a rounde-
 lay!

AN ACTOR.

Silence there! We're trying to re-
 hearse.

CYRANO.

To hell with thee and with thy tawdry
 verse!

(Re-enters LE BRET.)

LE BRET.

Cyrano, DeGuiche is on thy track!
A hundred men await thee to attack

CYRANO.

Who told him that I was in the mood?
A hundred? For my blade they shall
be food.

ACTORS.

Against one man a hundred? What
is this?

CYRANO.

Sweet friends, I'll woo them with a
kiss. (*Draws sword.*)
The sharp salute of death. Oh, bliss!

VARIOUS ACTORS.

What a rare fight 'twill be!
Let us go out to see.

CYRANO.

Bravo. But you may only look.
No interference will I brook.
And you good fiddlers, play a merry
hilt
To time the dancing of my happy hilt.
(*The actors and actresses come down
from the stage with the candles.
The fiddlers fall into the train.*)

CYRANO.

So, that is meet my spirit to attune
And forth we fare a most important
troop

Of prize comedians to the lady moon
But I alone shall make the final swoop.
Ye, gods, I think I never have lived
before;

A hundred? Give me fifty score.
Come on, my friends. Throw wide
the door.

(*LE BRET opens the door. View of
Paris in the moonlight. Soft music.*)

CYRANO.

Lo, Paris, that sleeps and is breathless
In silence and midnight mist;
Lo, Paris, immutable, deathless,
Her brow by the moonbeam kissed!
The dream of the centuries round
thee,

The luminous guardians above;
The calm of the peace all around thee
A shrine for the couch of my love;

(*Turns and sees the actors and
LE BRET waiting for him.*)

Break, silence of night! Wake a hun-
dred alarms!

Cyrano de Bergerac proclaims "To
arms!"

(*To the sound of the violins and with
the flickering of the candles, the
procession moves out, CYRANO
twenty steps ahead, LE BRET fol-
lowing and the actors dancing and
capering in the rear.*)

CURTAIN.

ACT II.

RAGUENEAU (*rising*).

The morning sun turns copper pan
to gold
And burns to silver all the pewter
spoons;
The soaring Muse her fancy's wings
shall fold,
The lyre shall hum with useful cook-
ing tunes.

AN APPRENTICE (*approaching Rague-
neau and showing his work*).

Nougat of fruit!

ANOTHER APPRENTICE.

Pound cake à la Richelieu!

A THIRD.

Pastry of cakes à la Charlemagne!

A FOURTH.

Potpourri du Boeuf à la "Pomone" du
Cambert!

AN APPRENTICE (*approaching with
a candied lyre*).

This in your honor I have made.

RAGUENEAU.

Wit and fancy you've displayed;
Take this coin and drink my health.

(*Enter LISE.*)

My wife! Pray, hide your little
wealth.

(*Apprentice retires.*)

Observe this lyre, a tribute to my
fame.

LISE.

Such waste of dough! It is a shame!

RAGUENEAU.

What have you there? The poems
of my friends
Made into paper bags! To what sad
ends
We come at last!

LISE.

It is the only way they ever pay.

(*Enter CYRANO.*)

CYRANO.

What is the hour of this long day?

RAGUENEAU.

Six o'clock. And I was there!

CYRANO (*impatently walking about*).

Where?

RAGUENEAU.

The duel! What blows did rain!
"And I touch as I end the refrain."

LISE.

That seems to be his whole delight;
He talks of it from morn 'till night.

RAGUENEAU.

And the chime of the ballad shall be—

CYRANO (*interrupting*).

What time is it?

RAGUENEAU.

Five minutes past six.

CYRANO (*going to the writing table
and seating himself*).

Shall I plunge my heart into a sea of
ink?

(*Enter a TALL MUSKETEER.*)

MUSKETEER (*to LISE*).

Good-morning!

CYRANO.

Quiet. I cannot think.

RAGUENEAU.

A friend of my wife, most deadly and severe.

CYRANO.

What time is it?

RAGUENEAU.

A quarter past.

CYRANO.

Come, now, good pen,
My thoughts in sober line arrayed,
I'll write the dream I cannot tell,
And she shall read me passing well.
(He writes.)

(Enter half a dozen lanky and ill-fed poets.)

THE POETS.

Eagle of pastry cooks!
Lord of the pie!
We praise thee, we love thee,
Without thee we'd die.
To the fire, to the fire of thy oven
We bring our Pierian flame,
And chant in a festival chorus
The height of thy glorious fame.
(During the ensemble the poets eat right and left.)

LISE.

Now that my husband is befooled and blind,
You may speak freely; I'll be kind.

MUSKETEER.

Every day I come to put
My valor underneath your foot.

CYRANO.

The light of the love that I bear thee
Illumines my dreams and my days;
But never my visions can dare thee
To follow their passionate ways.
If that I dream, I dream of thee;
If I awake, thine eyes and lips I see.

RAGUENEAU.

Oh, honor far beyond imagination!
In my poor shop he has found inspira-
tion.

CYRANO (*having finished the letter*).

So speed my hopes. There is no need
to sign it;
Into her hand myself I shall consign
it.

A POET.

Ragueneau, what have you writ of
late.

RAGUENEAU.

A recipe for making cake.

POET.

How great!

POETS.

Let us hear it!

RAGUENEAU.

"How to make almond cheese cake."
Eggs you get a half a dozen free from
all rancidity,
Break them in a pannikin and beat
them 'till they're white;
Lemons, too, you strain a few to get
the smart acidity,
Throw in milk of almonds 'till you
have the mixture right.
Syrup sweet as much as meet you add
to make it saccharine,
Pour the whole into a mold of dough
as light as snow;
Add a pinch of creamy cheese and sift
a powdered cracker in,
Put it in the oven while the cinders
gently glow.
Let it bake adagio and wait with calm
placidity
Until the crust is golden brown as
Andalusian wine;
Then take it out and let it cool, you'll
eat it with avidity,
And cheese cake à la Ragueneau
you'll say is all divine!

A POET.

Perfection is outdone by you.

OTHER POETS.

'Tis rubbish of the rarest make.

CYRANO (*looking off through center door*).

(*To Poets*).

Now begins the sunlight of this happy day,
Her duenna yonder comes this way.
Messieurs, go warm your fancies in the sun.

RAGUENEAU (*driving them out*).

When he says a thing that thing is done.

(RAGUENEAU *with his hands full of paper bags with the poems on them follows them out*. CYRANO *approaches the tall musketeer who is still talking to LISE*.)

CYRANO.

Your presence also I no more require.

LISE (*as musketeer starts to go*).

With rage and grief I think I shall expire.

Why do you not defy him to his face?

MUSKETEER.

Defy him to his face! His face!
That face!

(*Exit hastily, LISE following him angrily*.)

(*Enter the DUENNA*.)

DUENNA.

Sir, my mistress bids me say—

(ROXANE *appears at the door*.)

CYRANO.

Madame, have you taste for honeyed cakes?

DUENNA.

I dote upon them to the verge of death.

CYRANO (*filling bags*).

Here then within the soft melting heart

Of Saint Amant's most intimate ballade,
I prision for thee tarts of precious jam,
And puffs of cream as white as Alpine snow.
Go feed thyself to indigestion's brink,
But do so in the street.

DUENNA.

Sweet sir, I go.

(*Exit into street*.)

(*As soon as she is off ROXANE comes down*.)

ROXANE.

First let me thank you for that yesterday
You did rebuke a churl, who seeks to force
His hand upon me in unwelcome bonds.

CYRANO.

I am glad I served you. Yet again
I shall be glad to play your humble slave.

ROXANE.

For this I came, but first I must disclose—

(*Hesitating*)

I must discover—Are you still the same,
As in the days when we were boy and girl?

ROXANE.

The days are gone, the years are sped,
Since we as children played together;

And all the roses now are dead,
That blossomed in that sunny weather.

How sweet it is now to recall
Those hours that come no more to cheer us;

To think our forest world and all
Its magic shadows yet are near us.
Come back in memory to the glade,
Just you and I and not another;
Once more I'll be a little maid,
And you shall be my elder brother.

CYRANO.

It comes again as if 'twere yesterday.
And then—

ROXANE.

'Those were the days of long and
happy games.

CYRANO.

And berries somewhat sour.

ROXANE.

The time when you obeyed
The sharp commands of her with
whom you played.
Sometimes as we two roamed the land,
Forgetful of the passing hours,
You, seeking for me rarest flowers,
Would meet with thorns and hurt
your hand.
And I, forgetting that you were my
brother,
'And playing that I was your little
mother,
Would look severe and scold,
And seize your hand to hold.

*(She takes his hand and stops
amazed.)*

Why, what is this? A cut! The
same!
You stupid boy, for shame, for
shame!

*(She sits at the table and bathes his
hand with the water in the glass.)*

ROXANE.

You've been in a fight, you naughty
child!
Now tell the truth at once.

CYRANO *(laughing)*.

'Tis naught.
Some finescore fools a little wild
By me alone were caught.
'Twas something else you thought but
did not dare—

ROXANE.

But now I know that you will really
care;
For with the perfume of the happy
past
I breathe resolve my aching heart
to cast
Upon your patience. There is one I
love.

CYRANO *(aside)*.

Now give me strength, ye holy
powers above.

ROXANE.

As yet he knows it not.

CYRANO.

Ah!

ROXANE.

But soon he will.

CYRANO.

Ah!

ROXANE.

Poor boy, he dares not speak his
burning thought;
But from his eyes his heart streams
out in fire.

CYRANO.

Ah!

ROXANE *(completing the bandage on
his hand)*.

And he, too, is a Gascony cadet,
And in your company. Is not that
strange?

CYRANO.

Ah!

ROXANE.

He wears upon his noble brow the
stamp
Of intellect, of genius. And he's
brave,
And handsome as a young Olympian
god.

CYRANO *(starting up)*.

Handsome!

ROXANE.

As yet we have but spoken with our
eyes.

CYRANO.

His name?

ROXANE.

Baron Christian de Neuvilette.

CYRANO.

Why tell you this to me?

ROXANE.

Because I hear
That all you Gascons quarrel every
day,
And that your dinner guests are
swords and death.
But you who face a hundred men and
laugh
To scorn the flash of every naked
blade—

CYRANO.

Might keep your little baron safe from
harm.
I see. Your elder brother am I once
again.

ROXANE.

And never in a duel shall he fight?

CYRANO.

I swear it.

ROXANE.

Oh, I really love you quite!

(During the latter part of the above dialogue RAGUENEAU has appeared at the door, trying to engage the DUENNA in conversation. She has eaten all her tarts and RAGUENEAU in pantomime tries to interest her in the poems on the bags. She is not pleased, and he gives her more tarts, which she eats. She and RAGUENEAU gradually come down the stage on the side opposite to CYRANO and ROXANE.) QUARTET.

ROXANE.

The dream of my sorrow is broken,
The dawn of my hope is here;
For the word which thy lip has
spoken,
Has emptied my heart of fear.
The world and my life grow golden
In the light of a new-born day;
And I fly from the darkness olden,
To sunrise I float away.

CYRANO.

The dream of my fancy is broken,
The dawn cometh gray and drear;
For the word which thy lip has
spoken,
Has melted my heart to a tear.
My summer is past and is over,
And the sun goes out of the day,
As the blossom is blown from the
clover;
The world goes cold and gray.

RAGUENEAU.

Look not in the bag, but upon it,
Where grow all sweets of the brain;
A triolet, ballad or sonnet,
Shall make every tartlet vain.
Oh, were I of poets the master,
I'd fly from my shop far away;
I'd be a perennial faster,
And carol my songs all day.

DUENNA.

Oh, give me a honey-filled pastry,
A well-flavored wafer or tart;
A spice of confection that's tasty,
Is better than your limping art.
Oh, were I of poets the master,
I'd drive them all far, far away;
And nevermore be a pale faster,
But eat all the livelong day.

(At the close of the quartet ROXANE and DUENNA exeunt, while CYRANO stands silent and RAGUENEAU goes on declaiming.)

RAGUENEAU.

Into the outer darkness of the night
Hurl pastries and confections vain;
Within make sunrise of eternal light
With bright confections of the
poet's brain.

(A sudden noise is heard outside. Shouts of the cadets. Then enter the Gascony cadets, CARBON DE CASTLE-JALOUX and LE BRET.)

CARBON.

He is here!

CYRANO.

Captain!

THE CADETS.

A hundred to one and the one
victorious,
Ventre St. Gris, but that was
glorious!

(CADETS surround CYRANO and shake
his hands.)

LE BRET.

Be on your guard. Here comes De
Guiche.

(Enter DE GUICHE with attendants.)

DE GUICHE.

Monsieur de Bergerac, I must be
frank;
You fought me fairly and you fairly
won.
So let that pass; for now the chance
of war
Decides that we shall battle side by
side.
I hear that I am fortunate in this,
And so I come to view you at your
ease.

CYRANO.

The Gascony cadets are ne'er at ease.

CASTEL.

Since here am I and all my good com-
mand,
Pray, Cyrano, present us in due form.

CYRANO.

We are the Gascony cadets,
Who value life not at a breath,
And whistle in the teeth of death.
We are the Gascony cadets;
We wear our feathers curled in sets,
All fighters, liars, devils we,
The wild cadets of Gascony,
With titled names and nameless debts.
We are the Gascony cadets,
We love to make our rendezvous
Where foes are fierce and we are few;
For there the Gascon rapier gets
The food that still its hunger whets;
Lunge and parry, cut and thrust,
Like the whirlwind, gust on gust,
Charge the Gascony cadets.
We are the Gascony cadets,
With limb of snipe and tooth of fox,

And hearts as hard as mountain rocks,
Cat beards and eyes of falconets,
We come, our captain's grizzled pets,
To where the battle smoke is blue,
And there the roads of death we hue;
We are the Gascony cadets!

CHORUS (*ad libitum*).

Beware the pace our anger sets;
For they that follow, they that fly,
But meet the Gascon sword to die;
We are the Gascony cadets!

DE GUICHE.

Farewell, Messieurs!
Soon your valor shall be tried.

(DE GUICHE, *exit with his attendants*.)

(*The cadets retire up the stage*.)

(*Christian has come in and mingled
with the cadets at the back. They
ignore him. He comes down at the
conclusion of CYRANO'S song and
seats himself at a small table where
LISE serves him.*)

A CADET.

Cyrano, your story.

CYRANO.

Presently. (*Goes up with LE BRET.*)

CADET.

Oh, tell the story for our novice here;
'Twill teach him what he must expect
from us.

CHRISTIAN.

Novice!

CADET.

'Twere best to warn you now, my pal-
lid friend,
There's one thing that you must not
speak about.

(*Lays his finger on his nose.*)
Or else you'll have yon tiger on your
back.

CHRISTIAN.

It is the—? Thanks. But tell me
pray

When southern gentles far too boast-
ful grow,
What should a northern soldier find
to do?

CADET.

Prove that the north has courage like
the south.

CHRISTIAN.

I thank you.

CADETS (*in a clamor*).

The story, the story!

CYRANO.

(*Comes down and seats himself in the
center. Cadets surround him.
CHRISTIAN sits a little in front and
at the side.*)

'Twas only an evening of sport;
And the moon, fickle lady, smiled
bright,
Then suddenly hid, and the night
Was as dark as the Pharaoh's court.
I declare I could not see as far—

CHRISTIAN.

As your nose!
(*General consternation. CYRANO rises
slowly.*)

CYRANO.

Who is that man?

CARBON.

He joined this morning.

CYRANO.

His name?

CARBON.

Baron Christian de Neuvilette.

CYRANO. (*Aside.*)

Roxane! Mon dieu!
(*Slowly reseats himself.*)
(*Restraining himself.*)
I declare I could not see as far
As the lamp in the street on my right.
(*Consternation. All resume their
seats.*)
When at once rose a cry of "A mort!"

And I found myself hemmed in by
steel.
But I parried, I lunged and I thrust—

CHRISTIAN.

Your nose.

CYRANO (*restraining himself with
difficulty*).

I warded a blow—

CHRISTIAN.

From your nose.

CYRANO.

Clear the room! (*Springs to his feet.*)

(*The cadets rise hastily and start for
the door.*)

CADETS (*sotto voce*).

What shall we see when we come
back?
Yon idiot's dust in every crack!

(*All go out except CYRANO and
CHRISTIAN. They stand gazing at
one another a moment.*)

CYRANO.

You may embrace me.

CHRISTIAN.

What is this you say?

CYRANO.

You may embrace me.

CHRISTIAN.

But I do not understand.

CYRANO.

I am her cousin and she calls me now
Her brother. She has told me all the
tale.

CHRISTIAN.

Does she love me?

CYRANO.

Perhaps. (*Lays his hand on Christian's shoulder.*)
How handsome!
Roxane expects a letter from you soon.

CHRISTIAN.

Alas!
I am a fool in use of words.
I love, but have no tongue to speak of
love.
I am a very dunce in talk.

CYRANO.

My wit I'll lend you if you like.

CHRISTIAN.

What mean you?

CYRANO.

Let me then explain.
We two shall woo her as a single one;
You with the face of Love her eye to
reach,
I with the promptings of your every
speech;
And in a twinkling the thing is done.

CHRISTIAN.

And you would do this thing for me?

CYRANO.

For you? For my amusement! You
agree?

CHRISTIAN.

Oh, gladly. But the letter that should
go at once?

CYRANO (*producing his letter from
his bosom.*)

The letter? Here it is.

CHRISTIAN.

But will this letter suit Roxane?

CYRANO.

As if 'twere made for her.
(*They stand embraced.*)

(*Cadets one by one put their heads in
at the door. They are amazed.*)

CADETS.

Oh, wonderful! What means it?
They embrace!

(*Cadets all come down. Also the TALL
MUSKETEER.*)

(*Enter LISE and RAGUENEAU.*)

THE MUSKETEER.

Oh, now it seems there are no blows,
If one presumes to talk about a nose.
(*Goes up to CYRANO.*)
Monsieur, pray tell me what can make
so huge a smell?

CYRANO (*turning quickly and striking
him.*)

Thy nose, thou idiot, in the stews of
hell!

CADETS.

Beware the pace our anger sets;
For they that follow, they that fly,
But meet the Gascon sword to die;
We are the Gascony cadets!

(*As they sing the refrain of the song,
they dance and turn somersaults in
joy at seeing CYRANO himself
again.*)

Curtain.

ACT III.

CHORUS.

Roses are ever fair;
 So is love sweet;
 Love and roses are rare,
 And life is like wind fleet;
 Life and roses are at love's feet.
 Love's feet are on the hearts of kings;
 Love's kisses are on the lip of
 death;
 Love's song is mute for him who sings
 Songs made alone of life and breath.
 Love's song is strong
 Where life and death meet;
 Love and death are long,
 And life is like wind fleet;
 Death and life are at love's feet.

(ROXANE and DUENNA come out of
 the house of CLOMIRE.)

ROXANE.

So dies the music in the soul of night,
 Like sighs upon the rosy lips of Love.
 Here let us tarry while I bathe my
 soul
 In these pale fountains of most chaste
 delight.

(DUENNA retires up stage. ROXANE
 sits by the flower bed in the center
 of the stage in the moonlight.)

ROXANE.

Here do I let my hungry fancy pass
 The bolted gates of maiden secrecy,
 To browse upon the pastures of his
 wit,
 The scented clover blossoms of his
 thought
 Yea, on his words my soul is waxing
 great;
 Oh, Christian, it must widen to the
 skies
 Ere it shall make a circle of such girth
 As may embrace the stature of thy
 mind!

(At the conclusion of the solo the
 DUENNA comes down.)

DUENNA.

Be warned in time, for by my fickle
 eyes
 Through yonder street I see De
 Guiche approach.

ROXANE.

A shadow on the silver of the moon.

(Enter DE GUICHE.)

DE GUICHE.

Fortune favors me for once at least.
 I find you in the moonlight like a beam
 Of Cynthia's gladsome smile upon the
 night.
 I come to say adieu.

ROXANE.

You will depart?

DE GUICHE.

I go to war. There is a siege around
 The walls of Arras. I am to command.

ROXANE.

I wish you joy.

DE GUICHE.

It is no joy to part.
 When I am with my Gascony cadets—

ROXANE.

Your what?

DE GUICHE.

My Gascony cadets.
 They are a portion of my new
 command.
 Your cousin Cyrano is in my power;
 Trust me to make him know that well.

ROXANE (*singing to a seat on the bench*).

Christian!

DE GUICHE.

You fear for him?

ROXANE.

For whom?

DE GUICHE.

For Cyrano.

ROXANE.

Bah! For Cyrano! It is not he indeed;
And yet I grieve that one for whom I care
Should face the danger of a dreadful war.

DE GUICHE (*astonished and pleased*).
At last upon the eve of going hence
You speak to me in kindness. It is sweet.

ROXANE.

You take revenge but weakly. Cyrano
Will bubble o'er with joy to go to war.
If you would make him suffer, keep him here,
A prisoner of inaction while you march.

DE GUICHE.

A woman's wit! It is a keen revenge.
I have the orders for the wild cadets.
I'll keep them here.

(*Touches his pocket.*)

So you sometimes play tricks?

ROXANE.

I do, sometimes.

DE GUICHE.

I love you to distraction.
I go but to return. Another day
Let Arras wait for succor; meanwhile
I

Pretending to have started shall abide
With Capuchins near by. An hour
from now

With mask upon my face I shall
return.

When yonder orb of night shall dimly
burn (*Exit DE GUICHE.*)

ROXANE.

Mine be the task to keep thee far
away.
What matters all since Christian is to
stay?

(ROXANE goes into the house followed
by the DUENNA.)

(*Enter CYRANO and CHRISTIAN.*)

CYRANO.

My friend, you are insane. I have not
yet
Rehearsed you in the speeches for to-
night.
You must not speak to her 'till you
have learned
The items of the dialogue.

CHRISTIAN.

It wearies me
To borrow all my words. 'Twas well
at first,
But now I feel she loves me, and
alone
Without your prompting will I speak
to her.

CYRANO.

'Twere better if you would prepare a
trope—

CHRISTIAN.

A plague upon your tropes. My two
good arms
Shall bind her to me in a warm em-
brace,
And she shall know I love her well.
(*The door of ROXANE'S house opens
and she is seen at the threshold.*)
Do not leave me! See, she comes!

CYRANO.

My friend, I shall not meddle. Use
your arms.
(*Retires behind the wall.*)

(ROXANE comes out and lingers be-
side the fountain.)

ROXANE

Thrice the icy Cynthia hath described
Her orbit pale since that I waited here,
And still he does not come,

CHRISTIAN.

Roxane!

ROXANE.

Ah, you have come. Well then, we
are alone;
The air is mild; the moon is clear and
high.

Sit here; I'll listen while you talk to
me.

(CHRISTIAN sits beside her on the
bench and shows that he does not
know what to say. Finally he speaks
in desperation.)

CHRISTIAN.

I love you.

ROXANE.

Then dilate upon your love.

CHRISTIAN.

I love you.

ROXANE.

That is twice I've heard your theme.
Play variations on it, fast and slow.
Come, improvise. You have a perfect
theme.

CHRISTIAN.

I love you very much.

ROXANE.

Prosaic, bald.

CHRISTIAN.

'Twould be a joy
To think that you in good return loved
me.

ROXANE.

Nay, tell me how you love me.

CHRISTIAN.

Why, I said
With all my heart.

ROXANE.

Do better

CHRISTIAN.

I love you just as much as I can love.

ROXANE.

Oh, stupid! (*Rises.*)

CHRISTIAN.

No, I don't.

ROXANE.

More stupid! (*She moves toward the
house.*)

CHRISTIAN.

Love makes of me a fool.

ROXANE.

So I've observed.

It irks me, sir, as if you had put off
The pleasing front which nature gave
to you.

Go, my friend, and find your scattered
wits. (*She goes into the house.*)

CHRISTIAN (*following her to the
door.*)

Roxane! Roxane!

(*Re-enter CYRANO accompanied by
two pages with lutes.*)

CYRANO.

Victorious, you have driven her from
the field.

CHRISTIAN.

Help me, Cyrano, I am undone

CYRANO.

It wearies you to borrow all your
words.

CHRISTIAN.

Oh, do not jest. I tell you I shall die
If to her favor I am not restored.

(*Light appears in the balcony
window.*)

Oh, look!

CYRANO.

Be silent. All may yet be saved.

(*To the pages.*)

Go stand upon the corners of the
street,

And if a woman comes play out a tune

That's merry; if a man, a sad one;
 go.
(The pages go off in opposite directions.)
 Stand you beneath the balcony, and
 say
 Verbatim every word I say to you.
 Now call to her.

CHRISTIAN.

Roxane.

ROXANE *(opening the window)*.
 Who calls?

CHRISTIAN.

'Tis I.

ROXANE.

Ah, yes, you've come to say with all
 your heart
 And very much. You do not love me
 more.

CHRISTIAN *(prompted by CYRANO)*.

How could I love you more? There is
 no more
 Than all.

ROXANE.

Your wit the darkness doth restore.

CHRISTIAN.

Love makes a cradle of my sigh-
 rocked heart,
 And grows so great he tears it all
 apart.

ROXANE.

Then you should smother him by slow
 degrees.

CHRISTIAN.

But, madame, he's a little Hercules,
 Who had to struggle when he lately
 tried
 To overcome the twins Mistrust and
 Pride.

ROXANE.

You are improving, but your speech
 doth halt;
 Pray tell me why your fancy is at
 fault.

CYRANO *(to CHRISTIAN)*.

It is too hard. Now let me answer
 straight,
 And you the issue of the contest wait.
(Takes CHRISTIAN'S place).

ROXANE.

Your words come lamely, yet you are
 quite near.

CYRANO.

They have to grope through dark-
 ness to your ear.

ROXANE.

Mine have no trouble.

CYRANO.

Mine climb, yours do but fall;
 I catch them in my heart. Your ear
 is small;
 My heart is large, for love has made
 it wide.

ROXANE.

You're doing better. Now your words
 up ride
 Like soaring hawks upon the sea of
 night.

CYRANO.

Like birds they fly up to the brilliant
 light
 Like birds they flutter round it in their
 fright.

ROXANE.

If flying is too great a burden, friend,
 Wait but a little and I will descend.

CYRANO.

No, stay; let us now have done with
 verbal feats!
 The night is holy; let us keep it so,
 By letting our sweet thoughts un-
 jeweled go
 As Nature made them. Hence with
 guard and thrust
 Of cunning words. Oh, think the time
 supreme,
 The time of which all earthly lovers
 dream,
 And let us speak as only lovers must.

ROXANE.

Oh, say no more! I tremble at thy word;
My heart is fluttering like a frightened bird.
And if thou wilt, thou mayest ascend to bliss,
If here thou findest it.

CYRANO (*pushing CHRISTIAN*).

Go take thy kiss.

(CHRISTIAN *climbs to the balcony and embraces ROXANE*.)

CHRISTIAN.

Oh, my love!

CYRANO.

Turn in my heart, thou deadly knife of woe!
Dives he. I, Lazarus, below.
Yet on his lips she doth her passion wreak
Upon the words that Cyrano did speak.

(*The lutes are heard*.)

A tune that's merry and a tune that's sad.

'Tis neither man nor woman; that's a monk. (*He pretends to run in from a distance*.)

Ho, there, Roxane!

ROXANE.

Who calls?

CYRANO.

'Tis Cyrano.
Is Christian there?

CHRISTIAN.

My friend, you see me here.

ROXANE.

I will come down.

(ROXANE *disappears in the house*.
CHRISTIAN *descends*. The MONK *enters*.)

CYRANO (*to the MONK*).

I bow before your robe.

MONK.

Pax vobiscum. Madeleine Robin
I come to seek.

CHRISTIAN.

'Tis here she lives.

(ROXANE *comes out accompanied by page with lantern*.)

ROXANE.

What is
The call? (MONK *hands her a letter*.)
'Tis from De Guiche.

CHRISTIAN.

The villain dares!

ROXANE (*motioning to him to wait*).
(*Reading*.)

My regiment is marching. I am thought to have gone. I wait here at the convent and send you word by the priest. In an hour I shall be with you. Provide to receive me alone, and— (*To the priest*.)

Know you what this letter doth contain?

I am commanded by my lord De Guiche

To let you marry me unto this man.
(*Pointing to CHRISTIAN*.)

MONK.

A worthy gentleman. Be reconciled.

ROXANE.

I shall endeavor.

(*Page opens the house door for the priest*. ROXANE *speaks quickly to CYRANO*.)

When De Guiche shall come,
As this informs me that he will, do you
Detain him 'till the nuptial knot is tied.

CYRANO (*pushing all toward the house*).

Go in, go in! I shall be sentry here.

(*They go in*.)

CYRANO.

Adam and Eve go into Paradise
And I, the guardian angel, stay out-
side.

I must bestir myself. De Guiche will
come.

How shall I hold him here? I must
devise—

*(The lutes are heard playing a solemn
tune.)*

Oh, melody most doleful! 'Tis the
inan.

*(Retires behind a corner of the house.
Enter DE GUICHE.)*

*(He moves toward the house, when
CYRANO falls in front of him as if
from a height.)*

DE GUICHE.

From whence did this untimely person
fall?

CYRANO.

From the moon!

DE GUICHE.

The man is surely mad.

CYRANO.

Away up there I was and now I'm
here.

DE GUICHE.

He is insane. I'll humor him. My
friend—

CYRANO.

Where am I?

DE GUICHE.

Let me pass!

CYRANO.

Am I in Venice or in Genoa? What
place is this?

DE GUICHE.

Pray, let me pass. A lady waits me
there.

CYRANO.

Ah, then I am in Paris! That is good!

DE GUICHE.

The madman has not wholly lost his
wit. *(Laughs.)*

CYRANO.

Pray, pardon me that I am travel
stained;

Star dust is in my eyes, and on my
sleeve,

Behold a comet's hair! *(Pretends to
blow a hair off his sleeve.)*

DE GUICHE.

Sir, I wish—

CYRANO.

You wish, monsieur, to know
How I ascended to yon yellow ball.

I might have clad myself in armor
plate,

And then a magnet hurled into the
air

By which I should have soon been
drawn

Aloft.

DE GUICHE.

Why so you might. But was that what
you did?

CYRANO *(imitating the noise of the
surf and making extravagant
gestures).*

Hoo-ish! Hoo-ish!

DE GUICHE.

And what is that?

CYRANO.

Why, can't you tell?

DE GUICHE.

Indeed, I cannot tell.

CYRANO *(solemnly).*

It is the tide!

DE GUICHE.

The tide!

CYRANO.

What time the lady moon doth woo
the deep,
I lay upon the beach as from a' bath.
With water of the sea I was all wet,
And when the moon began to draw it
up,
Of course I went. And mark, my head
went first,
Because my hair was fullest of the sea.
And so I rose as would an angel rise
To seek his habitation in the skies.
And after floating up I felt a shock;
And then—

DE GUICHE.

And then?

CYRANO (*resuming his natural voice
and manner*).

The time is up. Monsieur, you now
are free.

DE GUICHE.

That voice! Then do I dream?

(*The door of ROXANE'S house opens
and lackeys appear carrying
candles.*)

That nose! I am awake! 'Tis Cyrano!

CYRANO.

Cyrano. And they are man and wife.

DE GUICHE.

Who are?

(*He turns around and sees behind the
lackeys ROXANE and CHRISTIAN
holding hands, while the MONK
stands smiling beside them. The
DUENNA in a robe de cambre fol-
lows.*)

DE GUICHE.

You! Roxane! (*Bowing to CHRIS-
TIAN.*) You, monsieur! (*To
CYRANO.*) And you!

My compliments, explorer of the
moon!
Your wonders never cease. I do
advise
That for a book you note them
briskly down.

CYRANO.

What you advise is almost a com-
mand. (*Bows low.*)

DE GUICHE.

And now, madame, prepare
To bid adieu unto your dearest lord.

ROXANE.

What!

DE GUICHE.

Now my command is starting for the
war;
(*To CHRISTIAN.*) You will proceed to
join your company.

ROXANE.

To go to war!

DE GUICHE.

Of course. That is the word.

ROXANE.

The Gascony cadets are not to go.

DE GUICHE (*taking the order out of
his pocket and handing it to CHRIS-
TIAN*).

Oh, yes they are. And here is the
command.
Pray take it to the captain now your-
self.

ROXANE (*throwing herself into
CHRISTIAN'S arms*).

Christian!

DE GUICHE (*with a malignant look at
CYRANO*).

The wedding night is somewhat far as
yet.

CYRANO.

He thinks that he is giving me great
pain!

CHRISTIAN (*embracing ROXANE*).

Oh, dearest love, once more.

CYRANO.

Oh, come, 'tis time to start. Enough!

ROXANE (to CYRANO).

And promise me, my ever honest
friend,
That every day a letter he will send.

CYRANO.

Of that be certain. I will promise
that.

(CYRANO leads CHRISTIAN away from
ROXANE, who falls into the arms of
the DUENNA. DE GUICHE stands at
the back triumphantly pointing off,
while the march of the regiment is
heard in the distance.)

Curtain.

ACT IV.

SCENE I.

LE BRET.

God send they do not wake these
weary ones.

'Tis Cyrano returning from the lines.

SENTRY (*outside*).

Who goes there?

CYRANO (*outside*).

De Bergerac. Be still!

(CYRANO *climbs up over the embankment at the back and comes down stage.*)

LE BRET.

Thank God! You are unwounded?

CYRANO.

Know you not
It is their habit not to hit me?

LE BRET.

Yes;
But madness 'tis your life thus to
expose
To send a letter for another man.
You do this every day.

CYRANO.

I promised her that he should write,
and I
Will keep that promise with my very
blood.

(CYRANO *goes toward a tent.*)

LE BRET.

Where go you now?

CYRANO.

To write another one. (*He goes into
a tent.*)

(*Daybreak has passed into sunrise.
Report of a gun outside. Echoing
of trumpets and drums. General
awakening of the camp.*)

CYRANO (*laying his hand on CHRIS-
TIAN'S shoulder*).

My friend.

CHRISTIAN..

Roxane!

CYRANO.

Ah, me! Roxane! Ah, me!

CHRISTIAN.

If I had time to write a last farewell!

CYRANO.

I have it written. (*Takes a letter
from his doublet.*)

CHRISTIAN.

Let me see it then. (*Seizes the letter.*)
What is this? A tear!

CYRANO (*hurriedly taking the letter
back*).

It seems that I
In writing made myself believe was
In earnest. Poets oft are snared by
fancy thus.

CHRISTIAN.

Will fancy make you weep a real tear?

CYRANO.

Yes; to die is naught, but not to see
Her face and form, ah, therein lies the
pain.

(*Shots heard outside. Voice of senti-
nel challenging.*)

CYRANO.

What is that?

LE BRET.

A coach comes into camp! (*Cries outside.*)

What's that? They cry "The service of the king."

(*DE GUICHE comes down. All fall in at attention. The coach comes on curtains drawn and lackeys up behind. Coach stops. The cadets uncover. Drums roll. Two soldiers let down the steps. ROXANE comes out of the coach.*)

ROXANE.

Good-morning! (*At the sound of her voice all in the act of bowing low straighten up. General sensation.*)

CHRISTIAN AND CYRANO (*simultaneously*).

Roxane! Great heaven!

DE GUICHE.

The service of the king!

CHRISTIAN.

But this is madness!

CYRANO.

Tell us why you come.

ROXANE.

To see the man I love I sped
Across the field and rippling fell,
Where grasses grew and waters fled
And sang the birds that knew me
well.

No space could keep us far apart;
No dream could bring us face to
face;

The hunger in my heart of heart
No fonder fancy could displace.
And so "To horse!" my soul pro-
claimed;

Set whip to steed and onward fly,
To find my love and be not shamed
With him to conquer or to die.

(*Throws herself into CHRISTIAN'S
arms.*)

CYRANO.

But here you must not stay,

ROXANE.

Why not?

DE GUICHE.

In forty minutes more or less—

CYRANO.

'Tis less!

ROXANE, (*looking around at the
cadets.*)

I see. A battle here will soon begin.

DE GUICHE.

This is the post of danger.

CYRANO.

By your leave.

ROXANE.

I understand.

(*To DE GUICHE.*)

You wish him to be killed. (*Again
embraces CHRISTIAN.*)

I will not go.

DE GUICHE.

But here you will see death.

ROXANE.

Monsieur, we shall excuse you. Do
not wait.

DE GUICHE.

I shall inspect my guns and then re-
turn. (*Exit.*)

(*CYRANO goes into his tent as ROX-
ANE comes down to CHRISTIAN. DE
GUICHE remains at the rear giving
orders.*)

CHRISTIAN.

Roxane, you have not told me why
you came.

ROXANE.

Thy letters! thy dear letters writ in
tears,
And yet in words of fire that paled
their ink;
Thy thoughts that seemed the song of
all the years
That float to far eternity's dim brink.
Each fluttering leaf a petal from thy
soul
That fall on mine to mark its sweet
control;
Oh, love, thy letters have indeed un-
masked
The secret beauty which I could not
find,
Thy face did make me to thy spirit
blind;
But now I come to thee alone, un-
asked
To crave thy pardon that I did not
see
Thy inner glory and thy poesy;
To tell thee here I love thee all and
whole;
And not thy beauty masters, but thy
soul.

CHRISTIAN.

Roxane!
I would be loved a simpler way.

ROXANE.

But think!
'Tis now I love thee best, for were
thy face—

CHRISTIAN.

Ah, do not say it!

ROXANE.

If thou wert ugly, still would I be
thine!

CHRISTIAN.

God! (*A pause—then pushing her
from him.*) Go smile upon my com-
rades ere they die.

(*ROXANE goes to a group of cadets
at the rear. CYRANO comes out of
his tent equipped for battle.*)

CHRISTIAN (*to CYRANO*).

She loves me now no more! 'Tis you
she loves!

CYRANO.

What do you mean?

CHRISTIAN.

She loves me for my soul! You are
my soul;
'Tis you she loves. And you have
writ to her
Not my love, but your own.

CYRANO.

'Tis even so.

CHRISTIAN.

Then tell her, for she says that she
would love
My soul, were I no handsomer than
you.
So let her choose between us. Tell
her all!

(*He rushes off. ROXANE comes down
as if to look for him and meets
CYRANO.*)

ROXANE.

He did not, then, believe me?

CYRANO.

When you said—

ROXANE.

That I should love him were he—

CYRANO.

Ugly. (*Shots outside.*)

ROXANE.

I should love him still.

CYRANO.

My God! Perhaps she means it all!

(*Enter LE BRET hurriedly. He
whispers to CYRANO.*)

The end has come! My lips are sealed
for aye.

ROXANE.

What is it? What has happened?

(Men enter bearing the dead body of CHRISTIAN, which they, LE BRET and CYRANO endeavor to conceal from ROXANE.)

CYRANO.

Nothing.

ROXANE.

Then
What is it you conceal?

CYRANO.

Nay, come away.

(He endeavors to draw her away. She breaks from him, rushes forward through the crowd and discovers CHRISTIAN'S body.)

ROXANE.

Ah!
(She stands transfixed. Trumpets and drums heard. Shots and confusion.)

CARBON (appearing at back with drawn sword).

Now, Gascony cadets, come to your posts. (Forming of men at back.)

ROXANE.

(Having sunk beside CHRISTIAN and felt wildly for his wound, draws forth the letter.)
A letter in his breast. It is for me.

CYRANO.

My letter! It becomes his dying word. (More shots and cries.)
Roxane, the battle rages; you must fly.
(Draws his sword. Enter DE GUICHE.)

ROXANE (kissing the letter as she puts it in her bosom).

(She is fainting, when RAGUENEAU catches her and bears her off.)

CYRANO (watching her go).

Farewell to life and light! Now welcome death!

(Tremendous tumult. Cadets come straggling over the embankment and fall. CARBON is hit and falls.)

(Above the bank suddenly appears a formidable force of Spaniards.)

(Volleys are fired from both sides. Cadets fall.)

CYRANO AND CADETS.

Like the whirlwind, gust on gust,
Charge the Gascony cadets!

(He leaps forward, followed by a few cadets, and sinks wounded on the embankment.)

(Dark stage and change of scene during music.)

SCENE II.

CHORUS OF NUNS.

Adoramus te, Christe, et benedicimus
Tibi

Quia per sanctam crucern et passionem
tream redimisti mundum.
Domine, miserere nobis.

(Enter ROXANE, accompanied by RAGUENEAU, pale and dishevelled.)

ROXANE.

I crave yon shelter!

NUNS.

Peace be with you here!

RAGUENEAU.

From Arras battlefield all day we
fled,
A peasant led our weary footsteps
here.

MOTHER SUPERIOR.

Welcome, child; these are the gates of
peace.
But yet the wrecks of war have drifted
here.
Two fugitives, one wounded, are
within.
But come with us and rest your
wearied limbs.

(Exeunt all into the convent. After they are all off, enter, from behind the house, CYRANO. He staggers to the stone seat and sits.)

CYRANO.

So runs at last the silly world away.
And all of life is made into a dream
From which I shall awake in some far
day
Beyond the furthest planet's fiery
gleam.

Then shall the spirit, freed from mortal throes,
Leap out to greet its fellows face to face,
And grow eternally to perfect grace:
And I shall be myself—without my nose.

(It begins to grow dark. CYRANO reclines as if faint upon the seat. The chorus of nuns is heard within. ROXANE slowly comes out of the convent. She does not at first see CYRANO.)

CYRANO *(seeing her)*.

Roxane! *(He starts up and staggers back to the seat.)*

ROXANE.

Who's that? You, Cyrano? You here!
You're faint; you're wounded, cousin,
are you not?

CYRANO.

A petty scratch, Roxane; I am but faint
From long retreating. Think not now
of me.
But think of him whose glory all is yours.

ROXANE.

I think now of naught else. Oh, Cyrano,
His letters were the essence of his soul.
And life and love were graven there in fire!

CYRANO.

Such letters wrote he ever twice a day.

ROXANE.

You know?

CYRANO.

I know; I was his closest friend.

ROXANE.

And this, the last that never left his breast. *(She draws the letter forth.)*

CYRANO.

The letter! Yes, I know, I know it now. *(He starts up, but sinks again.)*

ROXANE *(anxiously)*.

Your wound!

CYRANO.

My friend's last writing will you let me see?

(She hands it to him.)

CYRANO *(reads)*.

Good-by, Roxane, I am about to die!
ROXANE *(turning quickly)*.

My letter; you are reading it aloud!
(It grows darker, so that he cannot read the letter.)

CYRANO.

(Repeating the letter without looking at it.)

To-day the end of time will come for me,
A time too short to tell to thee my love.
No more my eyes upon thy eyes shall look—

ROXANE.

What is this voice my memory recalls?

CYRANO.

And so I cry to thee a far farewell.
Farewell, my heart, my life, my very soul!

ROXANE.

(Goes and stands behind him and sees that he is repeating the letter.)

That voice through darkness I have
heard before.
You do not read; you know the words
by heart.

CYRANO.

(Starts and turning round sees her beside him. Makes a gesture of surprise and hangs his head.)

Roxane!

ROXANE *(after a pause)*.

And so 'twas you!

CYRANO.

No, no, it was not I.

ROXANE.

I see it all. The letters, they were
yours.

CYRANO.

No!

ROXANE.

The tender wit, the lovely folly, yours!

CYRANO.

No!

ROXANE.

The voice that spoke to me from out
the dark
Beneath the balcony, was also yours.

CYRANO.

'Twas Christian, dear, I swear it was
not I.

ROXANE.

The soul that I have worshipped has
not fled,

The face was his, the mind was ever
thine;

CYRANO.

I loved you not; 'twas Christian all
the time.

ROXANE.

You love me.

CYRANO.

No, Roxane.

ROXANE.

You love me, dear!

CYRANO.

No, no, my dearest love, I love you
not!

*(Enter LE BRET and RAGUENEAU
hastily.)*

LE BRET.

'Tis madness, monstrous madness!
He should not have left the bed.
His wound is bleeding fast.

ROXANE.

My God! *(She kneels beside him.)*
And I have hurt you, I have wrecked
your life.

CYRANO.

Nay, do thyself no wrong.
Because of thee across my life has
passed
The silken rustle of a woman's gown.
(Moonlight.)

RAGUENEAU.

But see, your other friend, the lady
moon.

CYRANO.

Your pardon, lady moon,
Anon I come.

*(Suddenly he is seized with a shiver-
ing and staggers to his feet.)*

Not there! Not there! Not in the
lap of ease,

But on my feet will I receive, fair
death.

*(He goes and leans against the tree in
center and draws his sword.)*

What, madame, do you mock me? Do
you stare

Upon this crannied peak inviolate,
My nose? Thou gaunt virago, thou
hast none!

What sayest thou? It is no use to
fight?

One does not fight because he hopes
to win.

A hundred to one! I see you each and
all,

And know you all, my ancient enemies.

Hypocrisy and Prejudice and you,
Weak Compromise, I here defy you
all!

(Beats the air with his sword.)

*(He sweeps the air with sword and
stops panting. Leans against tree.)*

(Starting up again.)

But when to-night I pass the jewelled
gate

Of Paradise and face the crystal
throne

Of Majesty inscrutable, behold,

I shall salute the Infinite on high

With that which enters heaven with-
out a stain.

*(The sword falls from his hand. He
staggers and drops into the arms of
LE BRET and RAGUENEAU.)*

ROXANE *(leaning over and kissing
him)*.

And that shall be?

CYRANO.

My soldier's snow white plume!

(Dies.)

Curtain.



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DUENNA

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MOTHER SUPERIOR

CHRISTIAN

RAGUENEAU

DE GUICHE

LE BRET

FIRST MUSKETEER

SECOND MUSKETEER

MONTFLEURY

A CADET

A MONK

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