

Georges Bizet (1838-1875)

Carmen

*Lyric drama in Four Acts**

Libretto by Henri Meilhac (1831-1897) and Ludovic Halevy (1834-1908)
Based on the novel by Prosper Merimee, published in 1847

First performance: Paris, Opera-Comique, March 3, 1875

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**(Opera Carolina production will be performed with one intermission)*

THE STORY

Spain, about 1820

Act I A square in Seville.

Soldiers and passers-by stop in the town square waiting for a glimpse of the cigarette girls who work in the factory next to the square. Micaela, a girl from the country, is shyly looking for corporal Don Jose. Morales tells her he will arrive with the changing of the guard. He tries to entice Micaela to enter the guardhouse with him, but she is able to avoid his advances and rushes out. Don Jose arrives with the changing of the guard as the cigarette girls take their midday break. Among them is Carmen. She sings the sensual Habanera in which she warns all men to be careful if she chooses to love them. Jose ignores the beautiful gypsy, and at this, she throws him a flower. At first he seems indifferent to her, but when left alone, he muses on her wild and reckless charm. Micaela returns with news of Jose's mother. He reminisces about country life with her and promises to meet her later that evening. Micaela leaves to return home. Just then, an uproar is heard in the cigarette factory. A fight has broken out and Carmen has knifed another worker. She is arrested and left in the care of Don Jose as she awaits transport to prison. She entices Jose with the seductive dance, Seguidilla – if he will let her escape, she tells him, she will meet him at Liliás Pastias' tavern outside town where she will dance for only him. He succumbs to her allure, releases her and is himself arrested for aiding her escape.

Act II Liliás Pastias' tavern, several months later.

Carmen is dancing with her friends Frasquita and Mercedes. Zuniga informs Carmen that Don Jose has been released from prison. The famous matador Escamillo arrives and entertains the crowd with tales of the bullring. His attention turns to Carmen who he invites to join him in Seville. The smugglers Remendado and Dencairo convince Carmen, Frasquita and Mercedes to assist in their latest plan. Carmen tells them she will meet them all later, since she is going to wait for Don Jose, who she is sure will come to her. When Jose arrives, he tells Carmen that he kept the flower she threw to him all the time he was in prison as a token of his love for her. Carmen rejects him, replying "If you love me, you will join me and my companions in the mountains, there we can be free." Jose refuses. But when Zuniga returns and tries to seduce Carmen, Jose attacks his superior officer. The smugglers return to take Zuniga prisoner and Jose, once again a fugitive, flees with them.

Intermission

Act III The smugglers mountain hideout.

Several months have passed. Jose and Carmen are becoming estranged. His remorse, and thoughts of home grow. Dencairo and Remendado prepare the smugglers for their next raid. Left alone, Carmen, Frasquita and Mercedes begin reading their fortunes with Tarot cards. The cards for Frasquita call for love; for Mercedes wealth; for Carmen – death. The campsite is now deserted. Micaela enters having braved the mountain pass to find Don Jose. Frightened by sound of approaching people, she hides. It is Escamillo who has frightened her. He has come to the mountain camp for a rendezvous with Carmen. Don Jose learns that Escamillo and Carmen are lovers and a knife fight ensues. When the fight is broken up, Micaela is discovered. She tells Jose that his mother is dying and implores him to return with her. He agrees, but only after promising to have his revenge on Carmen.

Act IV Before the bullring in Seville.

The parade of matadors enters the square on their way to the bullring. Last among them is Escamillo, now escorted by Carmen. Frasquita and Mercedes warn her that they have seen Don Jose lurking about. She tells them to go inside; that she can handle him. Don Jose confronts Carmen. At first, he is calm and implores her to return to him. When she refuses he becomes violent. With the crowd cheering in the background for Escamillo, Don Jose stabs Carmen in a fit of rage. The gypsy seductress dies in his arms.

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Carmen

English translation by James Meena

Act I A town square in Seville

Guards Everyone passes by the town square.
Common everyday people,
coming and going.

Morale We just stand around the guardhouse, killing
time. Some of us smoke, some talk,
watching the passers-by. Everyone comes
through the city square.
(Micaela enters)

Hey! Look at that pretty girl.
She seems to want to talk to us.
Wait -- she's turning away.

Guards We will help her!

Morale What are you looking for, my dear?

Micaela I am looking for a soldier.

Morale Here I am!

Micaela The soldier I am looking for is called Don
Jose. Do you know him?

Morale Don Jose! We all know him.

Micaela Really? Is he here?

Morale No. He is part of another company.

Micaela Then, he's not here.

Morale No, my beauty. But, he will be here soon.
He will arrive with the changing of the
guard.

Guards Yes. You will see him when our
replacements arrive.

Morale But, while you wait for him, my lovely one,
Why not rest in our guardhouse a while?

Micaela In there? With you!

Morale Why not? With us!

Micaela No, no. Thank you very much kind sirs.

Morale Enter without fear!
I pledge we will protect you.

Micaela I don't doubt you, truly.
But I'll come back later all the same.
I'll return after the changing of the guard.

Morale But you can stay with us until the changing
of the guard.

Guards Stay with us!

Micaela No. No. I cannot. Farewell, gentlemen!
(Exits quickly)

Morale The dove has flown away...
And we return to our boring pastime.

Guards Such droll, common people, coming and
going through the square.

*A trumpet sounds the changing of the guard. The
troops are followed by a group of street children who
imitate them.*

Children

Here we are, following the dashing soldiers.
Trumpets sounding:
Ta ra ta ta!
We march with head upright like little
soldiers,
Keeping time as we march.
One! Two! Left! Right!
Shoulders back. Chest upright.
Arms at our sides - just like them!
Here we are!
Following the dashing soldiers.
Trumpets sounding:
Ta ra ta ta!

(Morales approaches Don Jose)

Morale A charming young lady came by,
asking for you. She wore a blue dress, and
had pretty braids.

Jose That must have been Micaëla.

Children

As the guard returns to barracks
the trumpet sounds. We march with heads
upright like little soldiers.

Keeping time as we march.
One! Two! Left! Right!

Zuniga Tell me, corporal, is that the building
where the cigarette girls work?

Jose Yes, captain. It is filled with women
of easy virtue.

Zuniga I've heard they are pretty.

Jose Captain Zuniga, I cannot say.
Such women do not concern me.

Zuniga Yes, yes. Morales told me what concerns
you... A charming country girl called
"Micaëla"... With a simple blue dress and
innocent braids.

Well? Am I right?

Jose You are correct.
I admit that I love her.
As for the cigarette girls and their beauty,
You can judge for yourself.

(the girls saunter into the square)

Men The noon bell has sounded, and we wait for
them. . . The beautiful cigarette girls.
To you we send proposals of love.
Look at those impudent coquettes.
So flirtatious with their cigarettes and their
glances.

Girls Gently the smoke billows to the sky.
Its fragrance perfuming the air,
Sweetly intoxicating the soul.
A lover's tender words,
Are but smoke.
Their rapture, and their promises,
Are but smoke.

Men But why do we not see Carmencita with
you?

(Carmen enters)

There she is! Finally! Carmencita.
Carmen!

We've been waiting to see you.

Be kind and speak to me!
Tell me when you will love me!

Carmen When will I love you? I can't say.
Perhaps never. Perhaps tomorrow.
But one thing is sure: Not today!

Habanera

Love is a rebellious bird
that none can tame.
If you call for it, it will refuse to come.
Threats and prayers will not help,
and it matters not if you speak or not.
For the one I prefer, is the quiet one.

Love is a gypsy child.
It knows no law.
If you don't love me, I will love you.
If I love you, be on your guard!

The bird you tried to surprise
beats its wings and flies away.
Love will never come if you wait for it.
When you ignore it, it is there.
Many times in your life,
it will come and it will go.
When you think you have it, you don't.
Ignore it, and it is yours.

Men Carmen! We are yours.
Have pity and tell us:
Which of us do you choose?

(Carmen throws a rose at the feet of Don Jose)

Girls Love is a gypsy child.
It knows no law.
If you don't love me, I will love you.
If I love you, be on your guard!

Jose Her look! And her brashness!
And this flower
Has pierced my heart like an arrow.
Its fragrance is powerful, and its petals
lovely. And her...
If there truly are sorceresses –
she is one!

(Micaela returns)

Micaela Jose!

Jose Micaela.

Micaela At last!

Jose I am so pleased you're here.

Micaela It was your mother who sent me.

Jose Tell me, what news from my mother?

Duet

Micaela She sends me as a messenger, with a letter.

Jose A letter?

Micaela As well as some money, and . . .

Jose And what?

Micaela I don't dare tell you.
It is something more precious than money.
And to a good son, it is a true prize.

Jose What is it? Tell me.

Micaela Just as she gave it to me, I will give it to you. As we left church your mother embraced me, and said: "Please go to Seville for me.

I cannot travel, but it is an easy trip for you.
Find my son. Find my Jose,

And tell him that his mother thinks of him
night and day,

That she regrets his leaving,
and that she forgives him.

Tell him, dear child, that I wait for his
return, And give him this kiss."

Jose A kiss from my mother.

Micaela For her beloved son.
Jose, with this kiss I fulfill my promise.

Jose I see my mother and my village in your eyes. Memories of times past.
Sweet thoughts of home.

Micaela You will see your mother and your village again. Oh, sweet memories of your childhood.

Jose You fill my heart with strength and with courage.

Together Oh sweet memories of yesterday!

Jose Stay a while as I read the letter.

Micaela No, no. Read it later, and I'll come back.

Jose But why leave?

Micaela I would rather you read it alone. Until later.

Jose You'll return?

Micaela I promise.

Jose Have no fear, mother.
Your son will obey this time.
I do love Micaela, and I will marry her.
As for this flower, and that vile sorceress . . .

(Just then, screams are heard from the factory and the bell sounds the alarm)

What is this uproar?

(The cigarette girls rush from the factory, one is wounded)

Girls Help! Can't your hear us?
Help! Soldiers! Help us!
It was Carmen.
No. No. It wasn't!
It was, too!
She started it all.
Don't listen to them.
Listen to us!

Manuelita proudly announced
that she was buying a burro.
Then Carmen replied: "Why bother?
A broomstick would suit you just fine."

Manuelita replied: "There are times
my jackass would be perfect for you!
And then, you stuck up
witch, you'll act like a princess!"
And that did it.
The scratching and clawing started!

Zuniga To hell with your chatter! Jose!
Take two men and find out who started this.

Girls It was Carmen.
No. No. It was not!
Yes. It was Carmen!
No. It was Manuelita!

Zuniga Enough! Get these women away from me!

Girls Don't listen to her! Listen to me!
It was Carmen who started it.
It was Manuelita who started it.

Jose Sir. There was a fight. Insults at first.
Then it came to blows.
A woman was injured.

Zuniga And who started it?

Jose *(pointing to Carmen)*
That one.

Zuniga Hear that? What do you say now?

Carmen Hit me. Burn and torture me.
I will say nothing.

Zuniga Spare us your songs.
Now do as I say. Answer!

Carmen I hold a secret.
I love someone, and
I would die before telling you who.

Zuniga Since you take that tone with me,
you can sing your song to the prison walls.

All To prison!
(Carmen fights back)

Zuniga Damnation. You are a spirited one.
Such a shame. She is seductively beautiful.
But we should teach her manners.
Bind those two sweet hands.

(Carmen's hands are tied up. She is left in the care of Don Jose. They are alone)

Carmen Where will you take me?

Jose To prison. I can do nothing else.

Carmen Really? Nothing else?

Jose No. I must follow orders.

Carmen Ah, me. I know very well that in spite of
your orders you will do just what I want,
because you love me.

Jose Me? Love you!

Carmen Yes, Jose. The flower I gave you,
you know, the sorceress' flower.
You can throw it away now.
It has worked its spell.

Jose Not another word!
Do you understand me?

Carmen Very well, my pretty officer.
I will not say another word.

Seguidilla

Carmen By the outskirts of Seville is the tavern of
Lillas Pastia.
I am often there,
Dancing and drinking Manzanilla.
But it is boring to dance alone.
True pleasure is found in pairs.
So, to soothe my boredom
I will bring my lover along.
My lover? I forgot.
I threw him out yesterday!
My poor heart is free to find new
consolation.
I know dozens of gallant men,
But they do not suit me.
At week's end, I will love the one
Who wants to love me.
Who wants my love?
It is here for the taking.
How fortunate you are here!
By the outskirts of Seville is my friend
Lillas Pastia's tavern.
There I will dance and drink Manzanilla
wine.

Jose Quiet! I told you not to talk to me!

Carmen I'm not talking to you.
I'm singing to myself.
And I was thinking; or is it now a crime to
think? I'm thinking of a certain officer who
loves me, and who I could love in return.
My officer isn't a captain, or even a
lieutenant.
He is just a corporal,
but that is good enough for a gypsy.
And I will be happy with him.

Jose Carmen, I am drunk with your words.
If I give in, if I free you . . .
Will you keep your promise?
Will you love me?

Carmen Yes. We will dance the Seguidilla.

Jose At Lillas Pastia's. You promise?

Zuniga *(Enters with guards. As they do, Jose quietly loosens the rope tying Carmen's hands)*

Here are your orders. Go!

Careful. Don't trust her.

Carmen *(Aside to Jose)*

On the way, I will push you as hard as I can.
Let yourself fall. I will do the rest.

(As they escort her out, Jose feigns to fall, Carmen pushes the guards and escapes. Realizing he has been duped, Zuniga arrests Don Jose)

Act II

Two months later.

The taven outside of town, owned by Lillas Pastias

(Carmen, Frasquita and Mercedes are dancing)

Carmen The sistrum undulates, and the gypsy dances
Tambourines stroke the beat,
and guitars fill the air with their sultry
refrain.

The gypsy's silver rings
shine against their glowing skin.
Their dresses billow in the air.
The dance and song become one.
At first shy and timid,
It then grows and grows.

The gypsies pound their instruments
and we are bewitched.
And the mad, feverish rhythm
intoxicates us all!

Frasquita Lillas Pastia told me . . .

Zuniga What does master Pastia want?

Frasquita He says the tavern must close soon.

Zuniga Very well. We'll leave.
Will you come with us, my beauty?

Frasquita No, I can't.

Zuniga And you, Carmen. Will you join me?
Listen. Just between us. You dislike me?

Carmen Why would I?

Zuniga Because Jose went to prison for you.

Carmen What has happened to him?

Zuniga Why, he's been released.

Carmen He's free? So much the better.
Good night, to all our gentlemen lovers.

(a crowd is heard in the streets)

Crowd Long live the matador.
Long live Escamillo!

Zuniga A torchlight parade for the winner
of the bullfight at Granada.
Hey! Why not join us?
We will toast your victory.

(Escamillo enters along with the crowd of people)

Escamillo *Aria*

I gladly return your toast, my friends.
Matadors and soldiers both know the joy of
battle.

When the bull ring is filled
on the day of fiesta,
The crowd raises a thunderous roar!
Their cheers reach fever-pitch!
As in war -- it is the day of glory
for men of courage!
Come! Toro! En garde!
Toreador, en garde!
Know that your lover's
dark eyes are fixed on you,
And that love awaits you.

Suddenly . . . All is quiet.
What has happened?
The bull hurls himself from the pen.
He charges - Attacks!
A horse is struck and his rider falls.
"Ah! Bravo!" The crowd exclaims.
And the bull attacks again!
He runs furiously, now trying
to shake off the banderillas.
The ring is drenched in blood!
And I stand alone.
Now I measure my opponent.
Come! Toro! En garde!

(to Carmen)

Tell me your name, my beauty,
so it may be on my lips in battle.

Carmen Carmen, or Carmencita. as you wish.

Carmen On that point I will agree with you.
When it's a matter of deception
women are more subtle than men.

Dencairo At least tell us who you're
waiting for.

Carmen Oh. No one special.
Just a soldier who went to prison for me.

Dencairo A most delicate affair.
Perhaps prison has changed his
mind about you.
Are you sure he'll come here to see you?

(Don Jose is heard approaching the tavern)

Carmen You see. I was right.

Frasquita A handsome soldier!

Dencairo Who could be of service to us.
Tell him to join us – try, at least!

Carmen Fine, but he'll refuse. Now get out!

(Jose enters)

At last, Jose.

Jose Carmen.

Carmen And you just left prison?

Jose Where I spent two months.

Carmen You blame me, don't you?

Jose But no!
And I would gladly go back, if it
was for you.

Carmen You love me, then?

Jose I adore you.

Carmen Your captain was here.
We danced for him.

Jose What? You danced for him?

Carmen Don't tell me you're jealous?

Jose Yes. I am jealous!

Carmen Calm down, my dear Jose.
To soothe your jealousy,

I will dance in your honor.
Sit there, Don Jose.
The dance begins.

*(Carmen begins dancing for Jose. Military trumpets
are heard in the distance)*

Jose Wait a moment, Carmen.
Wait, just a moment.

Carmen And why, if you please?

Jose It seems . . . I hear . . .
Yes. The trumpets sound assembly.

Carmen *(continuing to dance)*
Bravo! What good luck.
It is sad to sing without an orchestra.
And now we have music falling
from the sky!

Jose You don't understand, Carmen.
It's the signal for assembly.
I have to return to my barracks.

Carmen Return? To your barracks!
Ah! I have been a fool!
How I put myself out to amuse and
please you.
I sang for you! I danced for you!
God forgive me, I almost loved you!

Ta ra ta ta! Oh my, the trumpets sound!
Ta ra ta ta! Oh dear, he needs to leave!
Go then! Coward!
Take your saber and return to barracks!

Jose It is wrong of you, Carmen, to mock me.
I suffer at leaving you.
Never has a woman so consumed my soul.

Carmen *(taunting him)*
Ta ra ta ta! My God!
It's assembly. I will be late!
He loses his nerve.
And then -- he loses his love!

Jose So you don't believe I love you?

Carmen No!

Jose Listen to me.

Carmen But you will be late.

Jose You will listen to me, Carmen.

Aria

The flower you gave me
Was ever with me in prison.
Although withered, its fragrance remained.
And for hours on end,
Its fragrance filled my soul.
And at night, I would close my eyes
And I could see you.
At times I would curse you, detest you.
I would question why destiny
Crossed our paths.
Then I would repent,
As though I had blasphemed.
And I felt but one desire, one hope:
To see you again, oh my Carmen.
For you only had to throw
One glance my way,
To capture my entire being.
Only show me that
I mean something to you...
Carmen, for I truly love you.

Carmen No. You do not love me.

Jose What did you say?

Carmen No. You do not love me.
For if you loved me,
you would follow me -- there . . .
Yes! To the mountains.
You would follow me.
You would take me on your horse
and like a hero, sweep me away.
There -- to our mountain camp
you would take me, if you loved me.
Up there no officers can order you.
And no trumpets sounding assembly
making you leave me.

The open sky. The gypsy life.
The universe as country. Free will as law!
And most of all, the thing most intoxicating:
Freedom!

Jose Alas! Carmen, have pity on me.

Carmen Come with me to the mountains.
Take me!

Jose Ah! No more.
No! I will hear no more!
Desert my regiment! Dishonor!
Infamy! I will not!

Carmen Go then!

Jose Carmen. Have pity.

Carmen No. I will love you no more.

Jose Listen. Please, Carmen.

Carmen So be it. Farewell. Forever!
Go then.

Jose Carmen. Farewell forever!

(Just then, Zuniga returns)

Zuniga Hola! Carmen! Open the door!

Jose Who could that be?

Carmen Be still. Quiet.

Zuniga The door was unlocked.
I let myself in.
Ah! What is this, my dear?
It seems you've chosen poorly.
To take a soldier
when you could have an officer.
Get out! Return to barracks.

Jose *(defiantly)* No!

Zuniga You will leave!

Jose I will not!

Zuniga Fool. Damn you!
You will pay for this.

Carmen He's mad with jealousy.
Friends! Come help me!

(Frasquita, Mercedes, El Remendado, Dencairo and the smugglers enter, taking Zuniga captive)

Carmen My pretty officer. Love has played
a mean trick on you.
You've come at a very bad time, alas.
And we are forced to keep you
with us for at least an hour.

Remendado My dear sir. Would be so kind as
to accompany us outside.
It will be a parade!
Do you agree to come with us?
What is your answer, comrade?

Zuniga Certainly. All the more so

as your argument is so compelling.
But beware -- next time,
I will get you all.

Dencairo But until then, come with us
with no further delay.

Carmen *(to Jose)*
Are you with us finally?

Jose I have no choice.

Carmen Ah! How unkind. But, what does it matter?
You will enjoy it once you're there.
How beautiful is the gypsy life.
The universe as country.
And above all: Freedom!

Act III
Several months later

Smugglers Fortune awaits us.
But we must take care not to reveal
ourselves. Our plan is good,
but we need a strong will to succeed.
While peril is all around, we will face it.
We go ahead, despite the storm and
thunder...
Without fear of the soldiers who search for
us. Without fear we go!

Dencairo Wait here and rest for about an
hour. Meanwhile, I will see if the path
is guarded, so we can move our loot.

Carmen *(to Don Jose)*
What are you looking at?

Jose I was thinking that in that valley
is one who thinks I am an honest man.
She is wrong. Alas.

Carmen And who is this person?

Jose Ah! Carmen, hold your tongue –
I'm speaking of my mother.

Carmen Of course. Then you should go back to her.
Our life here means so little to you.

Jose You're saying I should leave!

Carmen I am.

Jose Hear this: If you ever say that again . . .

Carmen What? You'll kill me?
Well? You can't even answer me!
What does it matter?
Destiny is master of us all.

*(Carmen, Frasquita and Mercedes begin reading
their fortunes in the Tarot cards)*

Trio

Frasquita Shuffle. Cut the deck.

Mercedes Good! Let's begin.

Frasquita Three cards here.

Mercedes Four there.

Together And now, speak my lovely cards.
Tell us the future.
Tell us who will betray us.
Tell us who will love us.
Speak. Tell us of the future!

Frasquita For me, I see a young man
who loves me completely.

Mercedes For me, I see a wealthy old man
who speaks of marriage.

Frasquita Mine takes me on his valiant horse,
off to the mountains.

Mercedes And mine builds me a palace,
where I am his queen.

Frasquita Undying love! Romantic days of
joy!

Mercedes Gold unending!
Diamonds and precious gems!

Frasquita Mine becomes a famous hero,
leading men into battle.

Mercedes Mine -- what's this?
Can I believe my eyes?
Yes! He dies!
Ah! I am a widow
with a huge inheritance!

Together Speak again, lovely cards.
Tell us what will be.
Tell us who will betray us.

Tell us who will love us.
Speak again! Tell us our future.

Mercedes Fortune!

Frasquita Love!

Carmen Let's see what the cards say to me.

(Carmen turns the cards)

Diamonds. Spades.
Death!
First for me, then for him.
For us both. Death!

Aria

In vain one evades the bitter answer,
in vain one shuffles again.
It is of no avail.
The cards are true, they do not lie.
If in the book of life,
Your page is happy - draw without fear.
The card in your hand announces good
fortune.
But if you draw death, your fate is sealed.
You can try twenty times,
But the cards will not repent.
Yes. If you draw death, no matter how you
try the unrepentant cards reply:

Death! Again! And again!
Only death!

Together Speak to us, lovely cards.
Tell us of our future.
Tell us who will betray us.
Tell us who will love us.
Speak! Tell us of the future.

Mercedes Fortune.

Frasquita Love.

Carmen Again, death!

(The smugglers return)

What did you discover?

Dencairo There is a good chance of success.
Jose! You stay up there
and guard the contraband.

Frasquita Is the path is clear?

Dencairo For now. But we must be cautious.
There are three guards near the pass.
We'll have to deal with them.
Take the goods.
This is our chance - let's take it!

Girls As for the guards, we will take care of them.
All men are the same.
They love to please a woman.
So, let us go ahead of you.
Yes. We will take care of the guards!
Men are so predictable.
They love to please women.
Leave them to us.

All They love to please.
The guards will be compliant.
They will be gallant.
The guards will be charming to us.
Men love to please.
The guards will succumb.
Yes. We expect they will fall into our trap.
The guards will succumb
to a woman's charms.
Yes, the path will be cleared.
Let's be off! On to success!

(They all exit, leaving the stage empty. Micaela enters, having climbed the mountain path to find the smuggler's hideout)

Micaela At last -- I have found the smugglers' camp.
It is here that I will find him.
And the promise I made to his mother,
I will keep without fear.

Aria

I told myself I could conquer my fear,
But my courage is false.
In the depths of my soul I tremble.
Alone in this place,
the truth of my peril is plain.
But I should have no fear.
For you will give me strength,
I know you will protect me, O Lord.

I will confront her face to face,
that vile sorceress!
Whose evil heart made a criminal
Of the one I loved so well.
I know she is dangerous.
And beautiful. But I will master my fear.
I will find him, and speak to him.
O Lord, protect me.
Ah! I was foolish to think

I would not be afraid.
But I will master my fears.
Alone in this place, I know my peril.
But I know you will protect me, O Lord.
Protect me, and grant me strength, O Lord.
(She hears someone approaching)

Up there -- on that high rock.
Is that Jose? Yes. Jose! Jose!
He does not hear me.
But, no... He is aiming his rifle at me!
Ah! What now? I have nowhere to turn.

(A shot is fired. Escamillo rushes in)

Escamillo An inch more and that shot
would have hit me.

Jose Your name! Quickly!

Escamillo Hey! Careful, my friend.
I am Escamillo, matador from Granada.

Jose Escamillo? I know of your fame,
and you are welcome here.
But you have truly taken a risk
by coming here alone.

Escamillo I will not disagree with you on that.
But, you see, my friend,
a mad love compels me,
And I would be unworthy of her
if I did not risk my life to see her.

Jose So, your love is here?

Escamillo Indeed. She is a captivating gypsy.

Jose And her name?

Escamillo Carmen.

Jose Carmen!

Escamillo I know she had taken a deserter as a
lover, A mad affair.
But I think it's over now. . .
For the loves of Carmen
never last more than six months!

Jose And still you love her?

Escamillo Yes, my friend. Madly.

Jose You know that to take one
of our women will cost you dearly!

Escamillo So be it! I'll pay any price!

Jose What if the price is my knife in your heart?

Escamillo Your knife?

Jose Do you understand me?

Escamillo Of course!
The deserter whom she loved is you!

Jose Yes. I am her lover!

Escamillo I am delighted, my friend.
En garde!

Jose Defend yourself! For death awaits you!

*(A knife fight between them begins. Carmen and the
smugglers enter, stopping the fight)*

Carmen Stop! Jose!

Escamillo My soul is overjoyed that it
was you who saved me, Carmen.
As for you, my friend, we fought well,
and today you may have won.
But we will play again for this beauty!

Dencairo Enough of this!
We are off to complete our mission.
(to Escamillo)

And you, my friend, farewell!

Escamillo First allow me one more word.
I invite you all to Seville for the bullfight.
I promise a brilliant performance.
And those who truly love me will attend.
Calm down, my friend.
I have said what I came to say.
Nothing remains, but to bid you "adieu".

Jose Take care, Carmen.
I grow tired of your abuse.

Dencairo Get ready, comrades.
Time to go!

Remendado Wait! Someone is hiding here.

Carmen A woman!

Dencairo Thankfully it's not a spy.

Jose Micaëla. Good God!

Micaela Jose!

Jose Why are you here?

Micael I've been searching for you.
In that valley is a home filled with sorrow.
A lonely woman, your mother,
laments the loss of her son.
She weeps and calls for you.
Take pity on her, Jose.
Ah! Jose! Come home with me.

Carmen Go then. You have never
taken to our life here anyway.

Jose You want me to leave?

Carmen Yes. You should go.

Jose You want me to leave so you
can follow your new lover!
No! That will not happen!
Even at the cost of my life
I will not leave you, Carmen!
And the chain that binds us
will bind us to death.
Even if it costs my life.
No! No! I will not leave!

Carmen This may cost your life, Jose.
The chain will be broken.

Jose Leave Micaela. My soul is damned.

Micaela Alas. Jose! Hear me!

Jose Ah! You are mine, and I will
force you, damned sorceress . . .
To submit to the destiny
that leads us both to destruction.
Even at the cost of my life,
I will never leave you!

Micaela Ah! Stop! Don Jose!
Hear my last plea.
Alas, Jose. Your mother is dying.
And she would not want to die
without having forgiven you.

Jose My mother -- close to death?

Micaela Yes, Don Jose. Then come.

Jose I will go with you!
(to Carmen)

You think you've won,
but we will meet again!

Act IV
Weeks later in Seville

*(A crowd has gathered in front of the bullring,
anticipating the parade of matadors)*

Children They're coming! The quadrille!

People Where? Where are the toreros?
They are almost here, the brave toreros.
Their lances will flash in the sunlight.
Cheer for the brave bullfighters!
But here are the police with their ugly faces!
Away with you! Leave us alone!

Here is the matador brandishing his
gallant sword.
He who at the climax of the drama
strikes the final blow!

(Escamillo enters. Carmen is at his side)

Long live Escamillo! Ah! Bravo!
Here they are. The dashing quadrille
that fights the bull.
We cheer for their glory today!
Bravo! Glory and long life to Escamillo!

Escamillo If you love me, Carmen,
If you truly love me,
You will watch my victory today,
and be proud to be mine.
You will be there in the stands
for me today, if you truly love me.

Carmen Ah! I do love you, Escamillo.
And may I die . . .
If I have ever loved anyone
as much as I love you.
Ah! I truly love you.

People There -- see?. The mayor has arrived!

*(The matadors and people begin to enter the
bullring)*

Frasquita Carmen. A word.
Do not stay here.

Carmen And why not, if you please?

Mercedes He is here.

Carmen Who?

Frasquita Don Jose.
He's hiding in the crowd.

Carmen Yes. I see him.

Mercedes Be careful.

Carmen I am not a woman who cowers before a man.
I will wait for him, and I will speak to him.

Frasquita Carmen. Believe me.
Do not stay here.

Carmen I am not afraid of him.

Mercedes Be careful.

(They leave. Carmen is left alone. Don Jose approaches)

Carmen So. You've returned.

Jose I have.

Carmen They told me you would come here.
My friends think I should be afraid for my
life. But I am brave, and I run from no one.

Jose I am not here to hurt you.
But to implore you.
Let us put aside our past, Carmen.
Yes, we will go away together
and begin a new life.

Carmen You ask the impossible.
Carmen will not lie to you.
Between she and you, all is over.

Jose Carmen, there is still time.
Let me take you away from this life.
And save myself as well.

Carmen No! I know the hour is here.
I know you will kill me.
But whether I live or die - no!
I will never give in to you!

Jose Carmen. There is still time.

Carmen Why continue with this?

Jose Yes. There is still time.

Carmen My heart does not belong to you!

Jose You truly do not love me?
You no longer love me!

Carmen I no longer love you.

Jose But I still adore you, Carmen.

Carmen Why do you persist?
Your pleading is useless.

Jose Carmen, I still adore you.
All right! If it will please you
I will be a smuggler.
I will do anything you want.
Anything. Do you hear?
But do not leave me.
Oh, my Carmen. Remember.
We once loved each other!
Ah! Do not leave me!

Carmen Carmen will never give in to you!
She was born free and free she will die!

Jose Where are you going?

Carmen Leave me alone!

Jose The one the crowd cheers for is
your new lover!

Carmen Let me go!

Jose No! You will not go to him!

Carmen Leave Don Jose. I will not go with you.

Jose Tell me to my face that you love him!

Carmen Yes! I love him! And before death itself
I declare that I love him!

Jose My life. . . My soul. . .
Damned for love of you!
Shall I let you go to be in his arms?
No. You will not laugh at me!
Carmen -- you will stay with me!

Carmen No! No! Never!

Jose I am tired of fighting you!

Carmen Fine! Strike me then, or let me pass!

Jose For the last time, sorceress.
Will you come with me?

Carmen This ring you gave me . . . Take it!

Jose And you -- take this!

(Jose stabs Carmen)

Now it is over. . . Arrest me if you will,
For I have killed my love.
Ah! Carmen!
My beloved Carmen!

End