

(*ELLA opens the door. JEAN-MICHEL enters.*)

JEAN-MICHEL. Hello, Ella!

ELLA. Well, hello, Jean-Michel.

JEAN-MICHEL. I am sick of hiding in the shadows like a fearful person.

ELLA. Would you rather see Madame?

JEAN-MICHEL. Hiding is nice.

ELLA. How are you this evening?

JEAN-MICHEL. I'm going out with Gabrielle and I'm wound up like a tick. Tonight, she and I will go to the green grocer and beg him for whatever scraps he might have, then we shall slave over a hot stove and serve a meal to the very poorest. I do hope she's not expecting that much fun every night.

GABRIELLE. (*Entering in a simple dress.*) Good evening, Jean-Michel.

JEAN-MICHEL. Good evening, Gabrielle. I much prefer you in this simple attire. You no longer look like a carnival attraction.

GABRIELLE. You speak such kind words to me, all the day long. And what of the soup kitchen this evening?

(*ELLA exits.*)

JEAN-MICHEL. Our first responsibility is with the poor. Then we shall march to the palace steps and I shall speak with the prince. We only have one thing to worry about.

GABRIELLE. What's that?

JEAN-MICHEL. That he'll even speak to me.

GABRIELLE. Well, Ella might be a help, you know she's talked to the prince.

JEAN-MICHEL. What?! Ella talked to the prince?!

GABRIELLE. She went to the ball! They were talking about the kingdom and how to make things better. And tonight, she is going to the banquet!

JEAN-MICHEL. The world is upside down!! But don't you know what this means? If she really talked to the

prince, then I can talk to him and he'll be open to my suggestions. What do you call this feeling I have?

GABRIELLE. Optimism.

JEAN-MICHEL. Optimism. I have to do this more often.

GABRIELLE. (*Grabbing a bottle of wine and two glasses.*) You can march up to the prince and talk to him.

JEAN-MICHEL. I can march up to the prince and talk to him.

GABRIELLE. You can be a leader!

JEAN-MICHEL. I can be a leader!

GABRIELLE. You can be my boyfriend!

JEAN-MICHEL. I can be your boyfriend. Whoa, left turn! What are you doing? This looks very counter-revolutionary.

GABRIELLE. I like the man who wants to change the world, but I also like the man who brought me flowers.

JEAN-MICHEL. Who brought you flowers? Oh, I did. No, I couldn't.

GABRIELLE. You just said so. Optimism.

JEAN-MICHEL. Optimism?

GABRIELLE. (*Handing glass.*) Let yourself go.

JEAN-MICHEL. (*Drinks wine.*) I could be your boyfriend?

GABRIELLE. Yes!

JEAN-MICHEL. Yes! Yes!

(Kisses her.)

Am I your boyfriend?

GABRIELLE. Yes!

JEAN-MICHEL. Yes!!

(JEAN-MICHEL and GABRIELLE kiss passionately.

MADAME walks in.)

MADAME. So that's how it is?

(JEAN-MICHEL and GABRIELLE quickly pull apart and gasp at the sight of MADAME.)

GABRIELLE. Mama!