

## **The Elixir of Love**

[Opera buffa, in two acts; text by Romani. First produced in Milan in 1832; in English at Drury Lane Theatre, London, in 1839.]

### PERSONAGES.

Nemorino, a young husbandman. Sergeant Belcore. Dr. Dulcamara, a travelling quack. Landlord. Notary. Pietro, peasant. Adina, a country girl. Gianetta, } Floretta, } her companions.

[Farmers, peasants, soldiers, villagers, etc.]

The scene is laid in an Italian village; time, last century.

Few more graceful little operas have been written than "The Elixir of Love." Its heroine, Adina, a capricious country girl, is loved by Nemorino, a farmer, whose uncle lies at the point of death, also by Belcore, a sergeant, whose troops are billeted upon the neighboring village. Adina has both her lovers in suspense when Dr. Dulcamara, a quack, arrives in the village to sell his nostrums. Nemorino applies to him for a bottle of the Elixir of Love, and receives from him a bottle of ordinary wine with the assurance that if he drinks of it he can command the love of any one on the morrow. To make sure of its agreeable properties, he drinks the whole of it with the result that he accosts Adina in a half-tipsy condition, and so disgusts her that she promises to marry the sergeant in a week. In the mean time an order comes for the departure of the troops, and the sergeant presses her to marry him that day.

Adina gives her consent, and the second act opens with the assembling of the villagers to witness the signing of the marriage contract. While the principals and notary retire for the signing, Nemorino enters, and finding Dr. Dulcamara begs of him some charm that will make Adina love him; but as he has no money the quack refuses to assist him. Nemorino is in despair, but at this juncture the sergeant enters out of humor, as the capricious Adina has refused to sign until evening. Finding that Nemorino needs money, he urges him to enlist, and for the sake of the bonus of twenty crowns he consents. Nemorino hastens with the money to the quack, and obtains a second bottle of elixir which is much more powerful than the first. The girls of the village somehow have discovered that Nemorino's uncle has died and left him a handsome property, of which good fortune,

however, Nemorino is ignorant. They use all their charms to attract his favor. Nemorino attributes his sudden popularity to the elixir, and even the quack himself is surprised at the remarkable change in his customer. Nemorino now pays Adina off in kind by making her jealous. Dr. Dulcamara comes to her assistance, seeing an opportunity for the sale of more elixir. He explains its properties to her, tells her of Nemorino's attachment, and advises her to try some of it. Struck with his devotion, she announces another change of mind to the sergeant, and bestows her hand upon the faithful Nemorino.

The opera abounds with bright and gay musical numbers, the most attractive of which are the long and characteristic buffo song, "Give Ear now, ye Rustic Ones," in which Dr. Dulcamara describes his various nostrums to the villagers; the charmingly humorous duet, "Much obliged," for Nemorino and Dr. Dulcamara; and the ensemble, "The Wine-cup full teeming," in which the half-tipsy Nemorino appears in the finale of the first act. The prominent numbers of the second act are the beautiful duet, "What Affection and oh, how cruel," for Adina and Dr. Dulcamara; the beautiful romanza for Nemorino, "In her Dark Eye embathed there stood" ("Una furtiva lacrima"), which is of world-wide popularity; and Adina's gracefully melodious aria, "So much Joy is more than my Heart can contain."