



Module 3

Unit 9

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Module 3

Unit 9: Audio introductions

Task 1: Multiple choice¹

Question 1

An audio introduction is provided in order to...

- a) allow describers to demonstrate their writing skills.
- b) spoil surprises.
- c) create a framework by which to understand the piece.
- d) create cognitive overload.

Question 2

How does pre-show information differ from pre-visit information?

- a) Pre-show information creates the world of the piece. Pre-visit information supports the visit to the venue by persons with sight loss (PSL).
- b) Pre-show information supports the visit to the venue by PSL. Pre-visit information creates the world of the piece
- c) Pre-show information is very basic. Pre-visit information is much more complicated.
- d) Pre-show information is very short. Pre-visit information lasts much longer.

2



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¹ The responses are based on the ADLAB PRO core videos. Only one answer is correct.

Question 3

How do you decide the order in which to describe the characters?

- a) By order of importance in the production.
- b) By order of appearance in the production.
- c) By order of celebrity status.
- d) Be guided by the printed programme.

Question 4

What is the most important aspect of the set to describe?

- a) How it is changed.
- b) Every detail is equally important.
- c) What it is made from.
- d) The general impression of each location.

Question 5

In order to support the AD, the AI must...?

- a) Be delivered by two describers.
- b) Maintain consistent terminology for people and places.
- c) Tell the story.
- d) Give information about access provision for guide dogs.

Module 3

Unit 9: Audio introductions

Task 2

Aim(s):

- Learners can construct descriptions of characters and settings for an audio introduction for a live performance.

Grouping: pairs or small groups.

Approximate timing: 30 - 60 minutes in class.

Material and preparation needed:

- Additional video for Unit 1 (AV_M3_U1_1).
- Relevant scripts contained in the handout.
- Writing materials.
- Recommended reading: Fryer, L. (2016) *An Introduction to Audio Description: A Practical Guide*. London: Routledge, pp.155 – 163.

Development:

Write a description of one or more characters from the video of examples of live events (AVM3_U1_1), drawing on the script as necessary.

Additional comments:

As a follow up, learners could compare their description with others, such that the whole class develops a single set of descriptions, covering all the characters in one performance.

Further reading

As a follow-up you can ask students to read:

- Reviers, N. (2014). Audio Introductions. In *Pictures Painted in Words*. In A. Remael, N. Reviers & G. Vercauteren (Eds), *ADLAB audio description guidelines*. Trieste: EUT. Retrieved from https://www.openstarts.units.it/bitstream/10077/11838/1/ADLAB_UK.pdf
- Roether, C. L., Omlor, L., Christensen, A., & Giese, M. A. (2009). Critical features for the perception of emotion from gait. *Journal of Vision*, 9(6), 15-15.



Task 2: Handout

Examples of Live Events AD script

Clip 1: Margaret Catchpole.

Scene Two Ipswich

Meg: (knocks on a door, Dr. Stebbings opens it). Oh Doctor, doctor.

Dr. S: Margaret Catchpole! How lovely to see you. Is it a social visit?

Meg: No Doctor urgent call.

Dr. S: Oh you'd better come in. The privvy's out the back, my house keeper will show you where to go.

Meg: No Doctor, I need your medical assistance

Dr. S: That sounds serious. Don't tell me. You're feeling a little hoarse?

Strawberry: Watch it you.

Meg: No, it's Little Evie, she's hot & red all over

Dr. S: Like Playboy?

Meg: I'm sorry?

Dr. S: Me too, I apologise. Let's get back to our guessing game, it was rather fun. Do you feel like a pair of curtains?

Meg: Pardon?

Dr. S: Pull yourself together.

Meg: Doctor, are you ignoring me?

Dr. S: Next. (He goes inside & shuts the door)

Meg: (knocks again) Doctor, this is important. Little Evie is very ill.

Auntie Flam needs your help & expertise immediately.

Dr. S: I can see it's a chronic case.

Meg: Why?

Dr. S: You keep coming back! All right dear. Can I hitch a ride?

Strawberry: Not likely! (Strawberry runs off. The Doctor & Meg in pursuit).

Clip 2: The Phantom Bantam of The Opera

ON STAGE PUPPET BOX

A mysterious tune is played on a chanter suggesting somewhere in the far east or Egypt. We see a large statue/figure of a chicken. In its headdress is a huge diamond. A very long arm extends from the curtain and steals the diamond. The music changes and the curtain is closed. The Egyptian addresses the audience.

EGYPTIAN Welcome ladies and gentlemen to the Paris Opera house circa 1890. What you see here is just a small section of a vast and impressive building. *Referring to the set.* This bit isn't so impressive, *and then a shabby bit of dressing....* and this bit isn't impressive at all. Allow me to introduce myself. I am a traveller of sorts, but for now I have settled in Paris - At the opera house. My face is a familiar one – eyes, nose, mouth, roughly here, *indicating loosely...*and so on. Across the world I am known by many names. The singers and ballerinas here, know me as “The Egyptian.” In the piazzas of Rome I am “The Stranger,” in Seville, they call me “Mysterio” and to the widows of Hove I am “Mr Chunk Monkey.” While in Paris, I’m engaged on a secret mission and my true identity must remain an eni... ening... en...igma. Sorry but that’s a difficult word to say. Ask anyone.

What I'm about to tell you is the true and unedited tale of the phantom of the opera. Most versions omit one foul and unsavory element, and if you are of a nervous disposition, standing by the eggsits are trained therapists, wattle be able to help. You will notice that during the story, I shall inhabit a number of characters with varying degrees of success.

Music.

We join the Paris Opera on the night of a gala, celebrating the end of the directorship of Herr Otto Kruger and the arrival of Monsieur Aubergine Richard. A hitherto unexceptional member of the chorus, Christine Daae, has stepped in for the ailing diva Carlotta, and has triumphed in the title role of the opera, "Giblette" by Goujon. Meanwhile, under the stage, a machinist, Joseph Bouquet, has been found dead. It was a night to remember!

It was a night to remember,
 When all the bells of Paris rang,
 In such harmonious celebration,
 The night the lowly maiden sang,
 Her very soul she surrendered
 To have her moment in the sun,
 But once that fortune had been tendered,
 The hapless maiden was undone.
 She sang like an angel,



A nightingale at eventide,
Like the silver mist at dawn,
Like the calm before the storm,
Like a ghost that walks the night.
It was a night.
Infernal blight.
Unholy sight.
A night to remember.

It was a night to remember,
The darkest forces were at play,
The shadow of a foul pretender,
Led the lovely maid astray.
She called him her angel,
She gave her soul to be the best,
Like a bonded slave of old,
Like a trinket bought and sold,
And now for her there'll be no rest.
Eternal rest.
A hopeless quest
Unholy jest.
A night to remember.

Clip 3: 2023

SCENE FIVE

That night, inside the lab. Chris listens to sci-fi music as he works. Mary watches him, unseen. Chris comes out of the sterile area to his laptop, enters some information and closes the lid. He exits, as if to go home. Mary emerges, approaches the laptop and opens it. Chris returns and, unnoticed by Mary, watches her. Mary attempts to access data on it via genetic biometric recognition and the keyboard.

CHRIS

Music off.

It stops but Mary isn't aware of the change. We hear heavy rain

outside.

Mary takes out a pair of smart glasses, attempts to hack into the system that way. She fails.

CHRIS

Computer off.

The laptop shuts itself off.

Frustrated, Mary repeatedly tries to switch it back on. She is unsuccessful. She exits, exasperated and watched by Chris.

SCENE SIX

Two days later. Chris and Mary sit on the bench in Alexandra Gardens, eating lunch. Chris eats from his Doctor Who lunch box.

MARY



I love that smell.

CHRIS

(looking at his sandwich)

Tuna?

MARY

No. The one after it's rained. It reminds me of camping when

I was little.

CHRIS

Did you go a lot?

She nods.

CHRIS

With the Guides or...?

MARY

Mam and Dad would take me to the Gower. Dad liked to surf.

CHRIS

Was he any good?

MARY

The best. *Chris wipes his brow & takes off his glasses. He eyes Mary*

SLIGHT BEAT

CHRIS

Mary, what are you doing?

MARY

Eating sandwiches.

CHRIS

No, I mean with me.

MARY

Getting to know you.

CHRIS

And that's really all you want?

MARY

Course.

Clip 4 Moon

Moon: I know you need a torch



Module 3

Unit 9: Audio introductions

Task 3

Aim(s):

- Learners can collaborate to write an audio introduction for opera, incorporating information from the printed programme such as a synopsis divided between acts.

Grouping: pairs or small groups.

Approximate timing: 180 minutes: 120 minutes at home, watching both videos before the class, and 60 minutes in class, writing the AI.

Material and preparation needed:

- Additional video for Unit 1 (AV_M3_U1_2).
- Additional video for Unit 1 (AV_M3_U1_3).
- Script for *The Phantom Bantam of the Opera* in handout.
- Programme for *The Phantom Bantam of the Opera* in handout.
- Example of an AI in handout.
- Writing materials.
- Recommended reading: York, G. (2007). Verdi made visible: audio introduction for opera and ballet. In Díaz Cintas, J., Orero, P. & A. Remael (Eds), *Media for all: subtitling for the deaf, audio description, and sign language* (pp. 215-231). Amsterdam: Rodopi.



Development:

Ask learners to write the complete pre-show information for an AI for *The Phantom Bantom of the Opera* incorporating additional information from the programme.

Additional comments:

1. This can be expanded by creating pre-visit information for a venue known to the learners or by researching the actual venue(s) on the Internet.
2. As a follow up, learners could compare their descriptions with others, such that the whole class develops a single AI.



Task 3: Handout 1

Example of an AI

Welcome to this audio introduction to the Devil and Mr Punch – a new show from Improbable. The audio described performances in the Barbican’s Pit Theatre are on Weds 15th Feb at 7.45 pm and on Sat 25th Feb at 2.30pm. There will be a touch tour an hour before each performance. The show lasts for 85 minutes and there is no interval. Your describer is Louise Fryer. Please note a haze machine is used in the performance.

The following introduction will take about 10 minutes to listen to and includes information about the Devil and Mr Punch, with descriptions of the set, characters and costumes, followed by access information and contact details.

According to a short article in the printed programme, the puppet named Mr. Punch made his first recorded appearance in 1662, so this year marks his 350th anniversary. Improbable are celebrating with a re-imagining of Punch and Judy. 6 actors between them manipulate a whole host of puppets. Some are traditional, Punch-and-Judy-style glove puppets, but there are also wooden and papier-mache figures inspired by a 19th century New York Puppeteer and Showman called Gus White.



The Pit is a small studio theatre. It's arranged for this production with a single tier of audience seating facing the floor-level performance space. The walls and floor are painted black and there's a black curtain across the back. Just in front of the curtain a little stage has been created – a rectangle of floorboards – making an area 15 feet wide and 9 feet from front to back. Towards the back of the boards, a wall made of wooden panels of different sizes, creates the façade of the puppet theatre. The whole structure is about 8 feet tall and 10 feet wide, with a door frame on each side so it extends the full width of the floorboards. The façade is topped by a triangular gable, and at its apex is the carved figure of a knight holding a sword and two flags, the US stars and stripes. There's a line of turned wooden posts above - like bannisters – and strung across them are two lines of bunting made from more stars and stripes and union jacks. The door frames on either side of the façade, could be screened by a red velvet curtain, except the curtain is always drawn back.

An old upright piano is positioned in the centre of the wall, with its back pressed against the panelling. Directly above the piano is a ledge – suggesting a mantelpiece, with a large picture frame above. The frame is 3 feet wide and two feet high. It's carved and gilded, with red velvet curtains where the picture would be. The curtains draw back to reveal a miniature stage, with a backdrop painted on the wall behind. On each side of the piano is a narrow cupboard door, about 2 feet wide and 5 feet tall – just big enough for a man to



squeeze through. There's another ledge above each door and above that, to the right and left of the main picture frame, but set a little higher, are two smaller picture frames – 2 feet wide by 18 inches tall – big enough to frame a man's head and shoulders, or a smaller puppet. At the start these are also curtained off, but the curtains open and close as required. As we gradually discover, other little square or rectangular openings concealed within wooden panels can hinge or slide open, so puppets may appear above the piano, on the ledge above the cupboard door, in the cupboard itself, in any one of the three picture frames, or all of them simultaneously. The doorways on other side allow musicians or puppeteers or very large puppets to emerge from behind the façade onto the forestage. Our attention is directed by lighting, which may spotlight one or more openings in the panelling while the rest is in darkness.

The programme tells us that Punch and Judy shows were very popular in the US and entertainers would come from England to perform. Amongst them, Harvey and Hovey, who are briefly mentioned in a New York Armory newspaper in 1879. Mr. Harvey and Mr. Hovey are in charge of this performance. They are dressed almost identically in black bowler hats, collarless cotton shirts, black waistcoats, black morning coats, grey pin-striped trousers and spats – but their clothes are stained and crumpled, giving the impression that these are travelling players – with what the programme refers to as 'the desperate showmanship of the itinerant medicine shows'. Both men are in their 30s, with faces whitened and eyebrows blackly painted as

are their black moustachios with curled tips. Mr Harvey is the more authoritative of the two. Mr Hovey more shy and retiring. He has a thinner face and wears small, round, wire-framed spectacles. For most of the time he allows Mr Harvey to act as master of ceremonies. Mr Harvey is played by Nick Haverson and Mr Hovey by Rob Thirtle.

There are 4 more human members of the company, sometimes hidden behind the façade, operating the puppets, at other times coming onto the forestage to play instruments. The pianist is John Foti. He's in his 30s, with short brown hair and a beard. Over narrow brown trousers, and a silk waistcoat, he wears an 18th century Admiral's tailcoat, with gold tasselled epaulettes and embroidered pocket flaps on display as he sits at the piano with his back to us. The piano is accompanied by double bass, played by Saskia Lane. She's also in her 30s, with blonde hair piled up extravagantly, and she shows off her slim figure in an 18th century style taffeta gown with a bodice of crimson velvet.

The other two members of the company, Jessica Scott and Seamus Maynard are rarely visible, apart from occasionally contributing to the music. More often all we perceive of them is the occasional hand, wrist, or face incorporated into a puppet, many of which are very inventive.

Mr Punch is probably the most traditional – a glove puppet with a papier mache head. He has a large, hooked nose and a long chin that

curves up to meet it, and his bald pate has just a fringe of grey hair at the back. Mr Punch has a white ruff at the collar of his long grey smock that conceals the puppeteer's hand and wrist.

Mr Punch's wife Judy, a Policeman, and a Scottish Dr. are similarly made but there are lots of other types of puppets too. The first we meet, two knights, Tancredi and Orlando, are more like marionettes – they dangle from a string but their arms are operated by rods. Their hinged and jointed bodies are 18 inches tall and dressed in full armour. Puppets can be made from just about anything. Sometimes a puppeteer's own head will sit on a little puppet body; at others the puppeteer's own bodies support a huge puppet head. There are little rubbery piglets – each about 9 inches high – with plump pink bellies - that sit on the ledge, their little trotters dangling, simply manipulated by a visible hand. A crocodile appears within the picture frame, with just a pair of tiny front legs resting on the frame that's otherwise filled by his green papier mache head, his 18" long jaws lined with gleaming white teeth, ready to snap. Toby the dog is a complete figure, with a pale brown body, dark brown ears and a darker patch over one eye. He sits with his hind legs drawn up under him, his front paws ready to type at a typewriter, his jaws can open and close.

The Devil is also a full figure, but malproportioned. His giant head, with pointed horns and ears, balances on a much smaller body with thin little arms and legs manipulated by two puppeteers so he can

stretch up and reach from the bottom of the picture frame to the top. The Devil is naked, his flesh coloured skin reddened and charred – presumably from the fires of hell, pictured on the painted backdrop within the picture frame.

Cast and Production Credits

The Devil and Mr Punch has been devised by Julian Crouch, Rob Thirtle, Nick Haverson, John Foti, Saskia Lane, Jessica Scott and Seamus Maynard.

The text is by Nick Haverson, Julian Crouch and Rob Thirtle.

Directed by Julian Crouch.

Set Design is by Julian Crouch, with Rob Thirtle and Mike Kerns.

The Puppets have been designed by Julian Crouch with Jessica Scott.

Costume design is by Sarah Laux with Julian Crouch.

Music and Lyrics by John Foti, Saskia Lane, Julian Croch and the company.

Lighting Design by Marcus Doshi.

Sound Design by Darron West.

Access Information for the Barbican

The address of the Barbican Centre is Silk Street, London EC2Y 8DS.

The centre has a concert hall, two theatres, cinema, two art galleries, a public lending library, conservatory, conference facilities, restaurants and bars arranged on seven levels.

We will provide some basic information regarding your visit. However if you require more details, The Barbican has an access guide on their website www.barbican.org.uk, as well as an audio guide. If you prefer to telephone, we will give contact telephone numbers at the end of this information.

If you're arriving by car there's a drop off point at the Silk Street entrance, which brings you in on the Ground floor of the Barbican Centre, known as Level G. There's a second drop off point at the 'Stalls Floor roadway' entrance, which brings you in on 'Level minus one'.

The Barbican has four car parks. Two are off Beech Street (which has westbound access only) and two are off Silk Street near the main entrance. If the Barbican car parks are full, alternative parking is available in Aldersgate Street. It's possible to book parking spaces in advance either online or through the Box Office, or you can pay on the day. Prices start from £5 for up to 2 hours. Customers with a blue badge can obtain a voucher allowing free parking by presenting their blue badge at the Box Office. There are also wider accessible bays which are available for advance booking.

If you are arriving by tube the nearest station is Barbican on the Circle, Metropolitan and Hammersmith & City lines. Exit the station and cross Aldersgate Street in front of you. Walk through the road tunnel before taking the first turning right into Silk Street. The

Barbican is straight ahead. Alternatively, there's a route which requires following signs to the Barbican. Exit the station using the stairs to the first floor, cross the road using the footbridge, then follow the signs to the Barbican. Other Underground stations nearby are Moorgate, St Paul's, Bank, Liverpool Street and Mansion House.

The nearest rail stations are Liverpool Street, Farringdon and Blackfriars. City Thameslink services serve Barbican, Moorgate and Cannon Street.

Bus Route 153 stops outside the Barbican in Silk Street. Starting from outside Liverpool Street Station, it runs daily to the Barbican, Angel and Finsbury Park. Numerous other services also run near the Barbican centre.

The Main entrance at Silk Street opens automatically and is ramped. Inside there are lifts which give access to all 7 levels. From the bottom up, these levels are known as level minus two, minus one, level G, then levels one, two, three and four. The main lifts have tactile buttons and voice announcements. Within the Barbican Theatre itself there are a further two lifts which give access to all the theatre levels.

The Advance Box Office for the Theatre is situated at the Silk Street entrance on Level G.

Tickets for theatre performances on the day are available from the Box Office on level minus one. On this level there's a cloakroom and two entrances to the Theatre Stalls seating. You can collect your headsets, braille and large print cast lists at the Stalls Right entrance. If you wish to listen to the introductory information 15 minutes before the start of the performance, please make sure you collect your headset in good time.

Toilets, including accessible toilets, are situated throughout the centre.

The Barbican Theatre seats 1666 people on four tiers – the stalls, the circle, (which is also known as the mezzanine), upper circle and gallery. The stalls seating is accessed from level minus one, the seating on all the other tiers from Level G.

There's a choice of restaurants, cafes and bars within the centre, including Searcy Restaurant and Bar on Level 2, telephone 0207 588 3008 for reservations, The Balcony and Bistro Bar on Level 1 – telephone 0207 382 6180, and the Waterside Cafe on the ground floor. Foyer bars and cafes open approximately one hour before a performance, and interval drinks can be ordered.

Please note that this information has been supplied by the venue and although every effort has been made to check details, you may still



have some queries. In this case, we would ask you to contact the theatre direct for clarification.

Useful Information and Contact details

At the Barbican centre Guide or assistance dogs are welcome in the theatre, or can be looked after by cloakroom staff during the performance. If you have not already done so, please could you let the theatre know if you are bringing a guide dog. The number to call for this, or any other information regarding your visit is 0207 638 8891, Monday to Saturday 9am to 11pm, Sundays and public holidays, 11am to 11pm.

If you need assistance in planning your visit you can also call House Management on 0207 382 7348 or 0207 382 7342, Monday to Friday 9.15am to 5pm.

Alternatively you can email access@barbican.org.uk.

Task 3: Handout 2

Phantom Bantam of the Opera: Programme copy

Common Ground Theatre Company present their Xmas show 2016-17
The Phantom Bantam of the Opera by Pat Whymark and Julian Harries.

Background

This year we really mixed up our genres – combining the gothic splendours of Gaston Leroux’s classic tale, Edgar Allen Poe’s early detective horror, Murders in the Rue Morgue, mysterious tales of the “East”, such as W.W. Jacobs’ The Monkey’s Paw and J. Milton Hayes’ The Green Eye of the Little Yellow God, and not forgetting the classic Mating and Breeding of Poultry by Harry M. Lamon

The Paris Opera. 1895. Young soprano Christine and her childhood sweetheart Raoul are made for each other, but the mysterious Phantom that haunts the opera house is madly in love with her too. Deep in the cavernous bowels of the building he is hatching an evil plot. But meanwhile, “as cluck would have it”, something else is hatching in his eggsistential nest.

Join us as we ruffle the feathers of this classic yarn – and be prepared for a chickeny twist in the tale!

The Common Ground Christmas shows have become a fixture of the Suffolk festive calendar. This year's comic extravaganza will tour to Stowmarket, Felixstowe, Woodbridge & Aldeburgh, before rolling into town for their annual residency at the New Wolsey Studio. Fri 23rd | Doors 7pm Sat 24th | Doors 3 30pm (matinee) 7pm (evening)
TICKETS AVAILABLE: £12 (full) £7 (concession U21)

As always, the show will feature the wonderful music of Pat Whymark, and star Ipswich favourite Julian Harries, who this year will be spending several hours in make-up and donning the famous mask of the Phantom.

Cast

Julian Harries (Phantom; Aubergine Richard) - Well-known to East Anglian theatre audiences for his Eastern Angles xmas shows over many years, for his Widow Twankey in the New Wolsey's Aladdin, and many appearances at the Mercury, Colchester, Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds, and Southwold and Frinton Summer Theatres. He is currently playing Dr Jake Houseman in the UK and International tour of Dirty Dancing (which plays at the Ipswich Regent on 20th-25th March, 2017)

Tracy Elster (Carlotta, Meg Giry, Valerius, Edam) - For Common Ground Theatre Company, Tracy has appeared in The Tinderbox, The Prisoner of Zenda, The Perils of Pinocchio, The Bell and Gallows Song

(our first ever show). She has appeared in three of Julian and Pat's Eastern Angles Christmas shows – The Haunted Commode, Crampons of Fear and Mystery of The Blood Beast Horror of Wolfbane Manor Mystery. Other theatre credits include Still Small Voice & Headlands with The Hal Company, Between The Cracks for Theatre Royal Bury St Edmunds, Our Big Land with Romany Theatre Company, The Three Lives of Anna Thomasian, Firefly Women's Writing Group, Berlin, Broadway & Beyond for Light Path/New End Theatre, Dancing at Lughnasa & Oliver Twist with Eastbound Touring Theatre Company.

Joe Leat (Raoul, Wae Ling Fernandez, Celeste) For Common Ground, Joe has appeared in Justin & The Argonauts, The Count of Monte Cristo and The Prisoner of Zenda. He played Mother Superior/Mr Facsimile in The Mystery of St Finnigan's Elbow (Eastern Angles Xmas show, 2014-15). Other credits include Casanova, A Christmas Carol and Mindgame for Spinning Wheel Theatre Co. The 39 Steps and Murder By The Book with Suffolk Summer Theatres (2016 season)

Roger Parkin (Egyptian, Doctor, Kruger, Signor Biscotti) – This is Roger's first show with Common Ground. His theatre credits include Manwhore at The Old Red Lion, Soggy Brass at The Southwark Playhouse, The Glass Protégé at the Park Theatre, San Domino at The Arcola, The Merry Wives of Windsor at The Dell (RSC), Watson in Sherlock Holmes at Leicester Square Studio Theatre/The Kings Head, and Next Time I'll Sing To You at The Orange Tree Theatre.



Eloise Kay (Christine) – Also making her Common Ground debut, Eloise’s credits include A Series of Unfortunate Breakups for Some Riot Theatre, The Glorious Damnation of Eddie Small for Zut Alors Theatre, Mirror Me with Hello Theatre, Macbeth for Young Shakespeare Company, The Blonde Bombshells of 1943 with Ovation Theatre and Pretty Shrewd for Vienna's English Theatre.

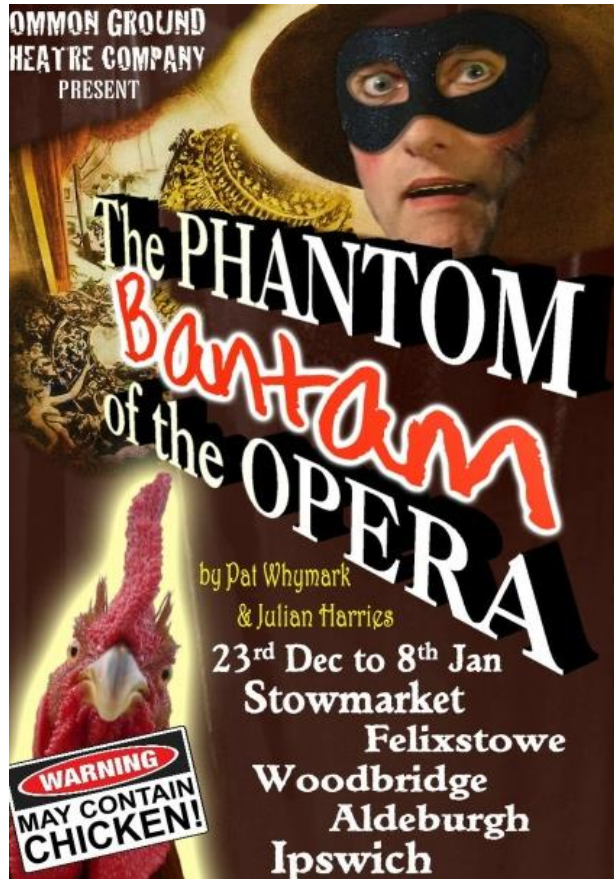
ABOUT COMMON GROUND THEATRE COMPANY

Common Ground Theatre Co was founded in 2007 by Pat Whymark and Julian Harries to create new music theatre. We have been touring steadily since then, mainly within East Anglia, producing eighteen new plays which have been received stunning reviews both here and in London. We have received funding from Heritage Lottery Fund, The Suffolk Foundation, The Seckford Foundation, Suffolk Youth Ops, The Brook Trust and Suffolk Single Gateway.

Common Ground are committed to keeping small-scale theatre alive and well in East Anglia, presenting shows that are, first and foremost, entertaining. Our productions are character-based and always emotionally engaging.

Julian Harries & Pat Whymark are the creative team behind *Stoat Hall*, *The Mystery of St Finnigan's Elbow* & many more Eastern Angles Christmas shows, and it is that sense of playfulness that we hope runs

through all our work. As an actor Julian has appeared in Eastenders, Detectorists, Spies of Warsaw, Doctors, and performed with The Royal Shakespeare Company, Royal National Theatre and in the West End.



COMMON GROUND THEATRE COMPANY PRESENT

The PHANTOM Bantam of the OPERA

by Pat Whymark & Julian Harries

23rd Dec to 8th Jan
Stowmarket
Felixstowe
Woodbridge
Aldeburgh
Ipswich

WARNING
MAY CONTAIN CHICKEN!

The PHANTOM of the OPERA
 by Pat Whymark & Julian Harries

The Paris Opera. 1895. Young soprano Christine and her childhood sweetheart Raoul are made for each other, but the mysterious Phantom that haunts the opera house is madly in love with her too. Deep in the cavernous bowels of the building he is hatching an evil plot. But meanwhile, "as cluck would have it", something else is hatching in his egg-sistential nest.

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The Common Ground Christmas shows have become a fixture of the Suffolk festive calendar. As always, the show will feature the wonderful music of Pat Whymark, and will star Ipswich favourite Julian Harries, who this year will be spending several hours in make-up and donning the infamous mask of the Phantom (or one we can find on ebay).

"Consummate daftness & cockle-warming silliness... Julian Harries is compulsive viewing".
 Ben Sharratt - The Stage (reviewing *The Canterville Ghost*)

<p>The John Peel Centre, Stowmarket Friday 23rd December, 7.30pm Saturday 24th December, 4pm & 7.30pm BO: 01449 774678/johnpeelcentre.com</p>	<p>Jubilee Hall, Aldeburgh Sunday 1st January - 4pm & 7.30pm Monday 2nd January - 4pm & 7.30pm Common Ground Box Office - 07807 341364</p>
<p>St Mary's Hall, Walton (nr Felixstowe) Tuesday 27th December - 4pm & 7.30pm Wednesday 28th December - 4pm & 7.30pm Common Ground Box Office - 07807 341364</p>	<p>New Wolsey Theatre Studio, Ipswich Wednesday 4th January - 7.30pm Thursday 5th January - 7.30pm Friday 6th January - 7.30pm</p>
<p>Bredfield Village Hall (nr Woodbridge) Thursday 29th December - 4pm & 7.30pm Friday 30th December - 4pm & 7.30pm Common Ground Box Office - 07807 341364</p>	<p>Saturday 7th January - 4pm & 7.30pm Sunday 8th January - 3pm & 7pm BO - 01473 295900/wolseytheatre.co.uk</p>

Prices: Full - £12 (New Wolsey Studio £13) Under 21s - £7 (proof of age required)

www.commongroundtc.co.uk



Task 3: Handout 3

The Phantom Bantam of The Opera – script

ON STAGE PUPPET BOX

A mysterious tune is played on a chanter suggesting somewhere in the far east or Egypt. We see a large statue/figure of a chicken. In its headdress is a huge diamond. A very long arm extends from the curtain and steals the diamond. The music changes and the curtain is closed. The Egyptian addresses the audience.

EGYPTIAN Welcome ladies and gentlemen to the Paris Opera house circa 1890. What you see here is just a small section of a vast and impressive building. *Referring to the set.* This bit isn't so impressive, *and then a shabby bit of dressing....* and this bit isn't impressive at all. Allow me to introduce myself. I am a traveler of sorts, but for now I have settled in Paris. At the opera house, my face is a familiar one – eyes, nose, mouth, roughly here, *indicating loosely...*and so on. Across the world I am known by many names. The singers and ballerinas here, know me as “The Egyptian.” In the piazzas of Rome I am “The Stranger,” in Seville, they call me “Mysterio” and to the widows of Hove I am “Mr Chunk Monkey.” While

in Paris, I'm engaged on a secret mission and my true identity must remain an eni... ening... en...igma. Sorry but that's a difficult word to say. Ask anyone.

What I'm about to tell you is the true and unedited tale of the phantom of the opera. Most versions omit one foul and unsavory element, and if you are of a nervous disposition, standing by the eggsits are trained therapists, wattle be able to help. You will notice that during the story, I shall inhabit a number of characters with varying degrees of success.

Music.

We join the Paris Opera on the night of a gala, celebrating the end of the directorship of Herr Otto Kruger and the arrival of Monsieur Aubergine Richard. A hitherto unexceptional member of the chorus, Christine Daae, has stepped in for the ailing diva Carlotta, and has triumphed in the title role of the opera, "Giblette" by Goujon. Meanwhile, under the stage, a machinist, Joseph Bouquet, has been found dead. It was a night to remember!

It was a night to remember,
When all the bells of Paris rang,
In such harmonious celebration,



The night the lowly maiden sang,
She sang like an angel,
A nightingale at even tide,
Like a silver mist at dawn,
Like the calm before the storm,
A gentle ghost that walks the night.
It was a night to remember,
The darkest forces were at play,
The shadow of a foul pretender,
Led the lovely maid astray.
She called him her angel,
She gave her soul to be the best,
Like a bonded slave of old,
Like a trinket bought and sold,
And now for her there'll be no rest.
It was a night,
Infernal blight,
Unholy sight,
A night to remember.

Song "A Night to Remember". At the end of the song, Christine receives huge sfx applause and she faints. Raoul steps forward. He is rather a fay, hysterical young aristocrat.

RAOUL Help! Help here! Is there a doctor in the house?

The Egyptian becomes the doctor with a bag and a pair of specs.

EGYPT Yes, I am a doctor, look here is my doctor's bag with all my doctor's stuff in it. Ha ha.

RAOUL Help me get the poor diva to her dressing room.

BOTH *As they carry her across to her dressing room.*

Oh... agh... errooo...

Fah...

DOCTOR Sit her down my friend. I'll attempt to bring her round with this.

He produces a small courgette and hums mystically as he wafts it under her nose.

RAOUL Nothing's happening.

DOCTOR It doesn't work with everyone. Just a minute. *He gets a squeaker and squeaks it in her face a few times.*

CHRISTINE Oer....

DOCTOR Never fails.

RAOUL What sort of doctor are you?

DOCTOR I'm a very nice doctor.

CHRISTINE Ohagh....

RAOUL Thank heavens! Christine, Christine wake up.

CHRISTINE Where am I?

DOCTOR Madame, you are safe in your dressing room with two strange men.

RAOUL I am no stranger to Christine Dae. In fact once we were childhood sweethearts but I doubt she remembers me.

Christine comes to.

CHRISTINE Raoul! My childhood sweetheart. I thought you were still serving in the navy. I haven't seen you for years.

RAOUL Dear Christine. I am between commissions and staying in Paris with my brother. When I heard you

were to sing tonight at the Opera House, I had to come.

CHRISTINE Who's this bloke?

DOCTOR I am Doctor Nefarius. I had the honour of watching your performance this evening.

RAOUL He just brought you round with his squeaker.

CHRISTINE How fortunate that you were here. I am quite recovered now, thank you doctor.

DOCTOR Even so, I should give you a brief examination before I leave. You may have hit your head when you fell, and as any experienced doctor will tell you, hitting your head can really hurt.

CHRISTINE Very well.

DOCTOR Look right, look left.... Good, no hearing problems. Now how many fingers am I holding up?

He waggles his fingers about in a strange way.

CHRISTINE Er....

RAOUL *Irritated.* The lady is fine, thank you doctor. Please don't let us keep you from your other lucky patients.

DOCTOR Madame, are you happy to be left alone with this velvet fop?

RAOUL Do you mind? I am Raoul, Count de Chagny, you shabby practitioner!

DOCTOR Ooof!

CHRISTINE Gentlemen please. It would be most improper to be alone in my room with any man. I should like you both to leave.

DOCTOR Of course.

CHRISTINE The stress of the performance has completely drained my talent battery and I need to recharge.

DOCTOR Your servant, Madame. Come sir!

He mimes going through the mimed door with difficulty.

Aaaghw. That's a really narrow door. *He exits. As Raoul goes...*

RAOUL Christine, can I meet you at Moo Moo's later for cocktails? I should so like to talk with you about your poor father and the old days, in Perros.

CHRISTINE Not tonight Raoul. I... I have a previous engagement.

RAOUL I see. Another time then.

CHRISTINE Perhaps. Goodbye Raoul.

Raoul waits in the corridor. He paces, full of love sick anxst.

RAOUL Oh Christine! The sound of her voice has pierced my very soul. I thought three years in the navy would cure me of romantic thoughts about girls, but even after this long absence I am still in love with the one I left behind. And what a magnificent performance she gave as Goujon's Giblette.

Little Meg Giry runs passed. She's hysterical.

MEG Help! Help! Oh sir, do not tarry in the corridors of this accursed place!

RAOUL What's the matter, my fair young ballerina?

MEG Agh! All us ballet girls are in a panic! We have seen the Phantom!

BALLERINAS La Phantome! Aaaaagh!

RAOUL What Phantom?

BALLERINAS Agh!

MEG Surely the whole of Paris has heard of the phantom -

BALLERINAS Agh –

MEGthat stalks the seventeen floors of this theatre. He has been seen everywhere from the roof to the lowest mezzanine.

RAOUL My poor mademoiselle. How you women are prone to imagining things and getting hysterical about a trifle.

BALLERINAS La trifle! Agh!

RAOUL There you are.

MEG But sir, I am Little Meg Giry, my mother, Madame Giry cleans the Phantom's box.

BALLERINAS La boite de Phantome! Agh!

RAOUL He has his his own box? What nonsense.

MEG Box five, sir. Mother has seen him and heard him many times. I can hardly bear to speak it aloud!

RAOUL Then whisper.

MEG *Whispered.* His appearances always presage some kind of catastrophe, A harbinger of death, is the Phantom!

BALLERINAS *Whispered.* Agh!

RAOUL But the diva merely fainted.

MEG Far worse things have happened here tonight. Joseph Bouquet, the chief machinist was found dead on lower mezzanine three!

RAOUL Agh!

MEG And now there's an escaped lunatic in the building
who's pretending to be a doctor.

RAOUL Agh... oh.

MEG I must go. There's a reception in the Salon Garnier.
Herr Otto Kruger is retiring and going back to his
native Brusovia. Monsieur Charmin starts tomorrow.
He's from Paris.

RAOUL You run along then.

MEG Yes, Madame Celeste will be wondering where I've
got to.

RAOUL Madame Celeste?

MEG The ballet mistress, monsieur. She's from Belgium...
and she's awfully strict.

RAOUL Mmmm.

MEG Goodbye sir.

PHANTOM *from off*. Errrrgh.

MEG What was that?

RAOUL Probably just the old boiler.

PHANTOM Oagh!

MEG No sir. It was – The Phantom!

BALLERINAS Agh!

She goes.

RAOUL What a silly girl. It was clearly plumbing related. Getting air trapped in your pipes is a common problem and can lead to a build up of sludge. This can be prevented by regularly flushing your system and descaling your old boiler.

PHANTOM Eeeeeragh....

RAOUL There it is again.

Christine is asleep in her dressing room. We hear the voice of the Phantom through an off stage mic. Raoul listens through the door.

PHANTOM Christine. You must sing only for me!

RAOUL What's this? Surely my innocent Christine cannot be entertaining a man in her dressing room?

CHRISTINE But tonight, as the ill fated Salmonella, I gave you my very soul! And now, I am eggshattered.

PHANTOM Oh!

CHRISTINE Sorry.

PHANTOM Your soul is a rare and beautiful gift. Better even than shopping vouchers from Monsieur Aldi. But I forbade that fool Kruger to stage this opera and he defied me!

CHRISTINE But why?

PHANTOM I find the content offensive.

CHRISTINE Forgive me, I had no choice in the matter.

PHANTOM It is not your fault, Christine.

CHRISTINE Did you cry at the end?

PHANTOM Oh yes.

RAOUL This is an outrage. How dare this lothario
compromise my Christine!

CHRISTINE I could not have performed as I did without your guidance.

PHANTOM Indeed. Before our lessons your voice sounded like a
cat being forced porridge.

CHRISTINE I know, it was bad.

PHANTOM Listen my dear. Tonight I have a surprise for you,
downstairs.

CHRISTINE What surprise?

PHANTOM A very special gift.

CHRISTINE Is it a scooter?

PHANTOM No, something far more valuable.

CHRISTINE A Harley-Davidson?

PHANTOM *Slightly irritated.* No. To receive this gift you must come with me to the lower mezzanines.

RAOUL The devil!

CHRISTINE But I don't even know how get below the stage.

PHANTOM Then prepare to be amazed!

He begins to sing.

Come away my sweet cheri,
Tarry not and come with me,
To a land beyond the sea,
Hold my hand and come with me....

Christine joins. She is hypnotized. Raoul is affected too.

RAOUL What are these hypnotic strains?

PHANTOM Have no fear my little lamb,
For your fate is in my hands,
Let your shepherd lead you down,

To greener pastures, underground!

RAOUL I must not succumb to this sorcery. I must burst in
and save Christine's honour before I lose my will.
Burst!

*As Raoul opens the imaginary door we see Christine
apparently walking through her cheval mirror. The singing
reaches a climax, there's a blinding light and a shimmer on a bell
tree, and Christine is gone.*

RAOUL Great heavens! I must have a fever. I thought I saw
Christine disappear into her horse mirror. It
cannot be. But I know I didn't imagine that voice
because Little Meg heard it too. Tomorrow I will
question Christine and discover the identity of my
rival!*He exits.*

*The party in the Salon Garnier. Richard, Schlee,
Carlotta wearing a wooly muffler and occasionally inhaling a Vick's
Sinex.*

KRUGER Ladies and gentlemen, five happy years, have I done
this opera house director type thing, and now to my
native land of Brusovia I must return. My heart, she

is happy and full to the lid of memories alright, and no lie how I'll miss all you farty biscuits.

RICHARD My dear Kruger, your sentiment does you proud. Friends, let us celebrate our esteemed colleague and his many successful years at the Opera house. Soon I will have the honor of filling his seat, and I can only hope I do it justice. Raise your glasses if you will, to Director Otto Kruger!

ALL Director Otto Kruger!

Carlotta enters.

KRUGER Ah here is Carlotta, our wonderful soprano.

RICHARD Enchante, madame.

CARLOTTA Mademoiselle.

RICHARD Forgive me, Mademoiselle. I was so sorry to hear that you were not able to sing this evening.

CARLOTTA Yes, I have a nasty head cold Monsieur, mainly in the sinuses, here and here, but the throat is also inflamed, and thus the voce is compromised.

- RICHARD I hope you will be back to form for Saturday's performance.
- KRUGER She get better with lots of sleepy time.
- CARLOTTA Monsieur Richard, we are all greatly looking forward to your directorship.
- RICHARD It's quite new to me at the moment but I'm sure I'll muddle through.
- CARLOTTA I know a little of how the Opera House functions Monsieur, and will be happy to help if I can.
- RICHARD I have heard that the famous alto, Natalia Dabitov now runs the Opera House in Minsk and produces her own work. Have you ever felt inclined towards management?
- CARLOTTA Good heavens no! The only thing I can produce with any reliability is mucus.
- RICHARD How charming.
- CARLOTTA Well sir, now that I have shown my face I should go home.

RICHARD It's not that bad.

CARLOTTA I mean, I should retire.

RICHARD No need for that, just get some thicker makeup.

CARLOTTA Doh!

She exits. Otto brings some documents for Richard to sign.

RICHARD Oh dear, do you think I've offended her?

OTTO It's no big job to offend Carlotta. She high strung, like racehorse is it.

RICHARD I see.

OTTO And she's mighty miffed because of success of Christine.

RICHARD Ah, she's jealous.

OTTO So Monsieur, you have only to sign these papers and the house he is yours.

RICHARD I expect you'll miss the old place.

OTTO Oh yes sir, I love him more than my own mother.

RICHARD *Having signed.* There, I think that's everything.

OTTO Aha ha ha ha! Free, free at last!

RICHARD What?

OTTO Free from the phantom thing and the debts and the damp in the basement.

RICHARD Phantom?

OTTO Yes he has my life made misery of, with his demands for ready cash and his walking through walls and his ugly mug.

RICHARD Ha! I never heard of a ghost asking for money. I see what you're up to sir. You're having a naughty joke with me.

OTTO 'Tis no joke. Look here, it's his terms and conditions.

He hands Richard a document.

RICHARD *Reading.* 1.You will pay 2000.00 Francs per year in used notes, payable at the start of the season. This must be given to the cleaner, Madame Giry, who will leave it for me in box five. 2. Box five will always remain unsold for my personal use, and I want a free programme and an ice cream at every performance. 3. Christine Daeer must sing all leading roles from now on because that Carlotta is rubbish. 4. There will be no mention or appearance of chickens or anything related to chicken in any opera. NB. Your opera house maybe at risk if you do not keep up your payments. Signed P of the O.

RICHARD What nonsense!

OTTO Punters in box five have heard his ghostly whispering. They run, screaming from the theatre. Just ask the box office if you think me full of crapofbull.

RICHARD Some silly prank, nothing more.

OTTO And Joseph Buquet, he dead and no one know how or why.



RICHARD A regrettable accident. Sir, this joke has gone far enough. Although I have no doubt that rumours of this phantom improved your business, I shall have no need of him.

OTTO This spook, he ruin my business, now he ruin yours. He flood your basement, he crawl up your flies and tamper with your rigging.

RICHARD I have heard there is an underground lake here, but I've got the damp man coming on Thursday. And I'm sure there are safety issues that need my attention. Now, sir I have a million and one things to do. I wish you goodbye and good luck.

OTTO Good luck to you too matey. You'll need it. Ha ha ha ha !

He exits. Richard tears up the Phantom's terms.

RICHARD Phantom indeed. Pah! This Saturday Carlotta will sing the leading role in Poulet's "Le Coq du Jour" featuring the dance of the little spatchcock girl. And I will sell all the boxes. Even so, I will question this Madame Giry woman person and see if she can shed any light on the shenanigans in box 5.

Music. The Egyptian enters.

EGYPTIAN Meanwhile, Christine Daeë has gone to the Breton village of Perros, where she and the love sick Raoul grew up together.

Christine enters with flowers.

CHRISTINE It is the anniversary of her father's death and she is putting flowers upon his grave – It is late, it is dark, and the creatures of the night sing out in unholy chorus!

He seems to conduct the sounds. Owl hoots, wolf howls. An elephant trumpets. A penguin squawks and chatters. The Egyptian exits with a flourish.

CHRISTINE Oh Father, how I wish you could have seen my performance as Giblette. You would have been so proud of your little Christine. I would like to sing for you now, one of the many beautiful songs you taught me as a child.

She sings a beautiful first note....

Oh.....

Any old iron, any old iron, any any any old iron,
You look sweet, talk about a treat,
You look dapper from your napper to your feet.....

Raoul has appeared during this.

RAOUL Christine!

CHRISTINE Raoul! What are you doing here? Have you followed me?

RAOUL When I heard you had cancelled your engagements, I asked your aunt, Madame Valerius, where you had gone.

CHRISTINE I see.

RAOUL I need to speak with you urgently.

CHRISTINE What about?

RAOUL When I heard you sing, on the night of the gala, I realized that I was.. I was...

CHRISTINE Impressed?

RAOUL No...

CHRISTINE Completely blown away?

RAOUL Well, er....

CHRISTINE I know, I was sensational. That Carlotta's finished!
Her vibrato spans about ten notes, all of them flat.
It's impossible to harmonize with her. No, she's
history. I'm the daddy now. Come on! Get in! Yes!!

She does a few fist pumps.

RAOUL I see success hasn't spoilt you.

CHRISTINE No, but I am not the innocent child you once knew.

RAOUL Do you remember that time you dropped your hat?

CHRISTINE I didn't think you'd noticed.

RAOUL No, when we went for a row on the lake, yonder.
Your pretty little beret fell in the water and I dived in
to rescue it.

CHRISTINE Then I dived in to rescue you.

RAOUL Aha ha.

CHRISTINE So anyway, you were complimenting me on my performance.

RAOUL Oh yes. I was astonished at the effortless strength and purity of your voice.

CHRISTINE Do you remember how I would sing to the gentle strains of my father's violin?

RAOUL As if it were yesterday. And to reach the high notes you'd make such a contorted expression, it looked like your face was being sucked out through a straw. Oh happy days!

It happens too often that life intervenes
Our childhood fancies turn into lost dreams,
And as we grow older, love turns to esteem,
And passion's replaced with a nice custard cream.

CHORUS

Oh love, illusive love,
Fill my envelope of bliss,
Put it in Cupid's sack,
And write in large letters on the back,

“Sealed with a loving kiss.”

Do you remember the day we first met?
You wore short trousers, and you your beret,
I was convinced it was love at first sight,
I couldn't blink coz my plaits were too tight.

I'd strum a love song, when lonely and blue,
And I'd always fiddle when thinking of you,
We'll never recapture true love's rosy blush,
It went down the pan all along with first flush.

BRIDGE

As I look back down my memory pipe,
Into a culvert of woe.
Regret fills my trap,
There's waste in my stack,
My cistern won't run at peak flow.

*They nearly kiss. The phantom appears dressed as a
huge bat and twitters.*

RAOUL What was that sound?

CHRISTINE Just a bat. The graveyard is full of them.

RAOUL Christine I must ask. The other night at the theatre, I distinctly heard a man's voice coming from your dressing room.

CHRISTINE That would be most improper. How dare you accuse me of such a thing.

RAOUL I heard your conversation, and I came in to save your honour. But as I entered, you seemed to vanish into your mirror.

CHRISTINE The voice you heard was not a man. It was an angel, Raoul. The Angel of Music.

RAOUL You are deluded.

CHRISTINE No Raoul, he's as real as Father Christmas.

RAOUL And does your angel have wings and a harp?

CHRISTINE I think he's got a banjolele, but he couldn't possibly have wings.

RAOUL Why not?

CHRISTINE Because he’s afraid of feathers, and I’m forbidden to mention anything related to chickens.

A muffled cry from off.

RAOUL This is absurd! They don’t exist, Christine.

CHRISTINE They do. We had a big brown one that laid eggs and my dad wrung its neck.

RAOUL Angels, not chickens.

CHRISTINE Well this angel exists alright. I never see him, yet he is always there, watching, listening. He has been teaching me these last months, mostly on stage when everyone has gone home. It is because of him that I am such an absolutely brilliant singer.

RAOUL But how did you disappear like that? Where did you go?

CHRISTINE I’m not sure myself, for the sound of his voice puts me in a sort of trance.

RAOUL You speak as if you are in love with this so called “Angel”.



CHRISTINE What if I am? It's no business of yours. I'm going back to Paris tomorrow. Don't try to see me again - if you value your life!

She exits. The bat flies around Raoul, twittering. He tries to wave it away.

RAOUL Christine!.... Get away, you vermin!

The bat flies off as The Egyptian approaches, tripping over a grave stone as he goes.

PHANTOM Ow.

He kicks the stone and exits. The Egyptian has been watching from the shadows.

EGYPTIAN Monsieur!

RAOUL Please, don't attack me, I'm wearing my best tie.

EGYPTIAN I only wish to speak with you.

RAOUL Very well. What do you want?

EGYPTIAN You are Raoul, the Comte de Chagny?

RAOUL I am. Who are you? Were you spying on us?

EGYPTIAN Not intentionally. I am known as The Egyptian.

RAOUL You don't look very Egyptian.

EGYPTIAN Since my travels in the middle east, I have gone by this name.

RAOUL Are you some kind of agent?

EGYPTIAN I am chief of the Cairo Police.

RAOUL How long have you held that position?

EGYPTIAN Only since I came in. Would you like me to change it?

RAOUL If you would.

The Egyptian does an elaborate physical shift.

EGYPTIAN Sir, I must warn you that you are in... *he picks up a grave...GRAVE* danger.

RAOUL Me? Why?

EGYPTIAN Because of your interest in Christine Dae. Have you heard rumours of The Phantom who terrorizes the Paris Opera?

RAOUL Oh, not you as well!

EGYPTIAN But you are aware of the death of Joseph Buquet, are you not?

RAOUL Yes, he had some sort of accident.

EGYPTIAN The cause of his death is still a mystery. We cannot rule out the possibility of MURDER!

RAOUL Has a weapon been discovered?

EGYPTIAN No. But the marks on his body are consistent with being poked to death with the end of a Toblerone – like this.

He takes out an unwrapped Toblerone and prods Raoul with it.

RAOUL Get off.

EGYPTIAN I have pursued this phantom half way across the world, and I believe he is responsible for the death of Joseph Buquet!

RAOUL There is no phantom of the opera. There is no angel of music. Christine is in love with another man - and my heart is broken!

He exits.

EGYPTIAN Three days later Monsieur Richard interviews Madame Giry the cleaner, in his office.

Richard enters. He is on the phone.

RICHARD Yes.... Oh that's very good..... What a saucy mood you're in today.

Madame Giry enters.

To Giry. Ah Madame, please take a seat, I won't be a minute.

GIRY Yes sir.

RICHARD What are you wearing?... An apron eh? He he he...
Yes of course.... Don't I praise you enough? ... Oh,
you little minx.

GIRY Ahem.

RICHARD I have to go, we can continue this later....Of course I
do.... Keep something in the oven for me. Bye bye.

He replaces the receiver.

GIRY Your wife, sir?

RICHARD No it was the butcher. I was just complimenting him
on his wonderful display of lard.

GIRY I see. What did you want to talk to me about?

RICHARD I just thought it was time I got to know you a little
and ask you a few questions about how you perform
your duties.

GIRY I hope I give satisfaction sir.

RICHARD I'm sure you do. So Madame, have you always been a
cleaner?

GIRY Lawks no, its just how I makes me pain and buerre.

RICHARD Bread and butter?

GIRY That's right sir.

RICHARD What did you do before?

GIRY I had a magic act, I did. Toured all over the monde
with me twin sons, Gustave and Andre.

RICHARD Fascinating.

GIRY They was me assistants, behind the scenes as it were,
hidden from view in me cabinet of illusions (*said in
French*) Caw, they got up to all sorts of tricks.

RICHARD Why did you stop performing?

GIRY Well sir, not liking to pull the wool over people's
eoilys, I showed 'em how me tricks was done and the
other magicians didn't like it.

RICHARD But did the audience like it Madame?

GIRY Oh yes sir, they used to go wild when I got the boys out for the finale.

RICHARD I'm sure.

GIRY But me 'ealth started to suffer, and what with that and juggling two small children.

RICHARD Now there's an act I'd pay to see.

GIRY Pardonne?

RICHARD Madame, on a more serious note, what do you know about the so called phantom?

GIRY The phantom? I like him. He's the perfect gentleman. Sometimes, while I'm cleaning out his box, he gives me a sherbet lemon.

RICHARD Then you must have seen him.

GIRY Oh no sir. I've heard his voix but I've never set eoilys on him.

RICHARD A disembodied voice? How can that be?

GIRY Well he's a fantome, nest pas?

Signor Biscotti calls angrily from off.

BISCOTTI Monsieur, I wait for ages! Why you let me stew here in my angry- juice?

RICHARD Oh heavens! I forgot I was interviewing the two tenors this morning. Gentlemen, please come in! *To Giry.* At Saturday's performance I will sit in box five and put your so called phantom to the test. If I find that you are taking the Michelle, you'll be out on the rue before you can say Jaques Cousteau.

GIRY Cor, love a canard!

She exits. Signor Biscotti and Mr Wae Ling Fernandez enter.

RICHARD Ah, Signor Biscotti, and Mr Wae Ling Fernandez. Our two wonderful tenors! Please be seated.

BISCOTTI Why you want to talk to both of us?

RICHARD Er, well, to get to know you better. Mr Fernandez, lets start with you. I believe you have quite an exotic parentage.

FERNANDEZ Indeed I have monsieur. My father was of course the famous baritone, Jesus Fernandez and my mother was Mae Wae Ling, principal cellist with Kawasaki Opera.

RICHARD And I believe you spent your childhood in the north east of England.

FERNANDEZ That's right, I was born in Newcastle, then we moved to a bungalow in Gateshead.

BISCOTTI Come to the point monsieur. I have a libretto to learn.

FERNANDEZ Yes and I have big pile of fan letters to respond to like.

RICHARD Very well.

BISCOTTI Enough talk of the small things. Signor Richard I want to know why you have us in your office room,

like we naughty boys! Spread the beans, now please.

RICHARD I will spread the beans but they may not be to your taste. The previous management made rather a mess of the opera house finances. Frankly, we can no longer afford to keep two tenors on the payroll. I'm going to have to let one of you go.

BISCOTTI You joke with us!

RICHARD Fraid not. Problem is, I can't decide which one of you I want to keep.

During the following the tenors sing some notes in the sentences to demonstrate their superiority.

FERNANDEZ I, Fernandez have the most impressive range.

BISCOTTI My coloratura is the best in the world.

FERNANDEZ What about my ariosa?

BISCOTTI My falsetto?

FERNANDEZ My castrate?

BISCOTTI Glissando?

BOTH I think you'll find that I am your man, yes I am, I'm
your man.

RICHARD I'm afraid I've made my decision. The tenor I'm
sending home is Wae Ling Fernandez!

FERNANDEZ I can't believe it! This is outrage! I shall speak to my
agent straight away like! Goodbye!

He exits.

BISCOTTI You make the good choice Monsieur.

RICHARD Kindly don't make me regret it.

Biscotti becomes the Egyptian.

EGYPTIAN Three days later. It is the interval of the evening
performance of "Le Coq du Jour."

Christine is touching up her makeup.

PHANTOM Christine!

CHRISTINE Yes, I am here. Did you see act 1?

PHANTOM Oh yes. That Carlotta is really annoying. After tonight she will never sing in this theatre again.

CHRISTINE What do you mean?

Biscotti enters.

BISCOTTI Ah, Christinissimo! Prega, come with me to Moo Moos tonight and we speak love and drink sparkling Pompano.

CHRISTINE I'm sorry, I'd like to but I'm afraid... my boyfriend would be jealous.

BISCOTTI Who is this boyfriend? Is it that Fernandez? Agh, I hate him, he is slang word for buttocks.

CHRISTINE It isn't him. Signor Biscotti, I have no wish to hobnob with you. Please go.

BISCOTTI Will you not give me a crumb of comfort?

CHRISTINE No! You grow stale, Signor.

PHANTOM *(Unseen)* Get out, dough-ball!

BISCOTTI Who said this? Who call me dough-ball?!

PHANTOM Begone, you pastry puff, or I will use the creaming method on you!

BISCOTTI I see what is the game. You are entertaining another. Where does he hide?

CHRISTINE It's just...the old plumbing. Voices carry, you know. Look, here comes Carlotta, why don't you invite her to Moo Moos?

BISCOTTI No, she smell of Olbas. I don't like.

Carlotta enters. Biscotti bows.

CARLOTTA Did I hear my name mentioned Signor Biscotti?

BISCOTTI Er....

CARLOTTA Is there something you'd like to ask me?

BISCOTTI No. I go now to rest before my next entrance.

CARLOTTA Ah, you are a little fatigue?

BISCOTTI How dare you?!

He exits.

CHRISTINE I think Signor Biscotti's going to ask you out later.

CARLOTTA At last! I've been working on him for ages.

CHRISTINE I didn't know you liked him.

CARLOTTA I don't, but it would do my career no harm to be seen walking out with the most celebrated tenor in Paris. Even if he does smell of mothballs.

CHRISTINE What a cocktail.

CARLOTTA Sorry?

CHRISTINE He wants to buy you a cocktail.

CARLOTTA The silly old thing. But I suppose its only natural that he would favour a more experienced woman over those silly ballerinas and you chorus girls. Do you mind if I sit with you before my next aria?

CHRISTINE If you like.

CARLOTTA I once dreamed of becoming a prima ballerina you know. Alas that dream could never be realized.

CHRISTINE Why not?

CARLOTTA Because I was far too voluptuous.

CHRISTINE Oh really.

CARLOTTA I was built to sing. I have exactly the right figure and vital statistics, 44, 26, 36, in lovely English inches. What are yours?

CHRISTINE 30, 99, 85.

CARLOTTA What?

CHRISTINE Oh no, sorry that's my sort code.

CARLOTTA Christine, do you know what this is?

CHRISTINE It's a letter.

CARLOTTA A letter warning me not to sing tonight. Did you send it?

CHRISTINE Of course not.

CARLOTTA

 Good. Because if I found out that you did I would make you eat it.

CHRISTINE *Uneasy*. It's probably just a joke.

CARLOTTA Probably. The letters I receive are normally most complementary. And sometimes I get gifts from particularly wealthy admirers. In fact just today, having heard I was indisposed, a fan left me this special preparation for the voice.

CHRISTINE What is it?

CARLOTTA No idea, but I've coated my nodules in it, and now I feel much better. Tonight, Poulet's greatest opera will be my greatest triumph. I've tasted success, you know.

CHRISTINE I know.

CARLOTTA It tastes like...the best paella. And you always want more! Success, that is - too much paella can leave you feeling listless and rather bloated.

CHRISTINE I'm sure you will be magnificent.

CARLOTTA Thank you, my dear. I always wanted to sing the role of the little Spatchcock girl, and with this linctus my voice will soar to the heavens! Tonight I feel like I could go on all night. Mee mee mee mee mee mee ma!

Carlotta and Christine exit.

Music begins.

ASM Act two beginners. Miss Lavazza and Miss Dae to the stage please.

CARLOTTA I believe that's my cue.

Carlotta and Christine exit to the stage. Music. The phantom whispers things to Richard to be inserted into song. Song in which Carlotta starts to belch at the end of phrases.



CHORUS All day long the farmyard throng, E F# G EF#EbE
BECBB BbBC#BbB

Their bleats their moos
Their cockadoodle doos
Cry as one, that the farmer's son,
The Spatch cock girl
Doth miserably misuse. BGAF#GE
Am Dm

BISCOTTI I am in a rage of jealousy, CCCCEFFAA ABbBbBb
EF AA

My Bb lust for her A7destroys me,
She B7smiles at the geese, Emshe sings to the cock,
ABBBF# BBBBG BCCCG
EEF#GBAGF#

If C! could just touch one beautiful B7 lock
Of her hair! How I D7despair!
G D

CHORUS Oh Signor Farmer, please do not harm her,
AAABBBBBA AACCCE

The lovely Am spatchcock girl, she is your Cfriend,
The cock may Gclaw her, but the hens Dadore her,
See how Amprettily she collects their eggs,
CCleans them out and tidies their nest. Tidies their
D7nest! B7 EDEF#

CARLOTTA All day long the farmyard throng,

Sense my woe and misery.
 How I long for a different song,
 How I long to be wild and free.

CHORUS Tra la la and tra la lee,
 CARLOTTA How I long to be wild and... *Belch*
 CHORUS How she longs for a different song,
 CARLOTTA How I *Belch* to be *Belch* and free.

RICHARD What's wrong with the woman?
 PHANTOM Her performance is quite effervescent, is it not? Aha ha ha!

RICHARD Oh no, people are leaving!
 PHANTOM I warned you, Richard.

BISCOTTI How I burn for her,
 CARLOTTA How he frightens me,
 BISCOTTI I would hang for her,
 CARLOTTA He will murder me,

CHORUS Signor farmer! Do not harm her!

CARLOTTA How I long for a different song,
 How I long to be *Belch* and free.
Belch I long to be bold and strong,
 Tra la *Belch* and tra *Belch* lee..



CARLOTTA *Spoken.* Oh ye Gods, what's happening to me?

CHORUS How she longs to be bold and strong,

CARLOTTA Tra *Belch belch* and *Belch belch belch*.

She runs off. Christine takes over. The Phantom laughs.

The lights begin to flicker.

RICHARD *He looks up at the ceiling.* Great heavens! The
chandelier! It's coming down. Look out below!!!

ALL Aaagh!

*Blackout. Lights come up to reveal the chandelier on
Biscotti's head.*

CHRISTINE Signor Biscotti!

RICHARD Get everyone out! Call an ambulance!

Biscotti is helped off stage.

PHANTOM Thank you Monsieur. A most - illuminating evening.
Ah hahaha!

RICHARD You devil! Show yourself! Come out and fight like a man! Madame Giry! Come here immediately!

GIRY Alright, alright! Don't get yer culottes in a twist.

RICHARD What is going on in this theatre?

GIRY Its just like I said. You 'eard him, didn't yer? With yer own oreillys.

RICHARD It's all some elaborate hoax.

GIRY This is le Phantom's box, Sir. He told you to keep it vacant.

RICHARD What's so special about it? Looks perfectly normal to me.

GIRY He likes box five coz it's the best view of the auditorium. Trez belle ain't it?

RICHARD Yes, when it's full of happy punters and not the scene of a terrible accident. They'll close us down for sure!

GIRY Close I' opera house? Never.

RICHARD Now help me search this box.

GIRY Very well.

They duck down out of view.

RICHARD Oh god, I just felt something awful.

Madame Celeste pops up.

CELESTE Monsieur Le Manager!

RICHARD/GIRY It's Madame Celeste, the Breton ballet mistress.

CELESTE Quite so.

RICHARD And where are your corps?

CELESTE My girls are at the bar.

RICHARD Practicing their positions.

CELESTE No drinking. And I don't blame them. Indeed, I've had a couple of stiff ones myself.

RICHARD Good heavens.

CELESTE The fact is, they're terrified, monsieur. Le
Phantome!

DANCERS *(Off)* Le Phantome! Aagh!

CELESTE Who knows where he'll strike next.

RICHARD Oh, not you too.

CELESTE He's been interfering with their garnitures.

RICHARD Their what?

CELESTE Their swan lake tutus have been shredded. Their
pom-poms have been pinched. And their plumage
plundered!

RICHARD Eh?

CELESTE The feathers on their tutus, monsieur. Gone. Every
last one of them. My swans cannot fly without their
feathers.

RICHARD Look, I know this is a difficult time. But we mustn't
get down.

CELESTE We must get down. I need at least three sack loads by tonight.

RICHARD The haberdashery is closed, Madame.

CELESTE I hold you responsible Monsieur! Even their little headdresses have been plucked.

A black hand removes Giry's hat and puts it on Richard. Richard's hat is put on Giry.

CELESTE Their fascinators have been stolen...

The hand takes Madame Celeste's fascinator and puts it on Giry.

And their accessories are in disarray.

The hand puts all the hats on the wrong head.

RICHARD That may be, but we must all keep a cool head.

The hand knocks all the hats off. The three run from the box.

ALL Aaagh!

GIRY It's the phantom!

RICHARD Rubbish. It's that Kruger, he's trying to destroy me –
but why?

CELESTE Impossible! He has left for Brusovia.

GIRY Perhaps he's got an accomplice, someone on the
inside.

RICARD Who were his friends?

GIRY He and Madame Celeste were trez close.

CELESTE What are you implying, bleach monger?

GIRY Madame and Herr Kruger was out on the town
t'other night.

RICHARD Oh really.

CELESTE Mind your business, you Parker of the nose.

GIRY They was going down my rue, holding hands! I sees
'em from me fenetre.

CELESTE I bet that got your curtains twitching.

RICHARD Ladies, please!

CELESTE If you must know, Otto Kruger proposed to me, but his new job is poorly paid and I could never marry a man with such a small bonus. Take control of this theatre Monsieur, or I will leave and my girls will go with me! Adieu!

GIRY Vache.

She exits. A letter appears as if from nowhere.

RICHARD But what's this?

GIRY That'll be from the phantom. You're in trouble now.

RICHARD Ahem. *Reading.* Dear Richard,

"If it must be war between us, so be it. Here are my demands." Demands indeed. "One: I insist that Christine Dae sing the role of Dolcelata the dairy maid in your forthcoming production of Monsieur Gervic's "La Belle Dame sans Fromage". Two: You are to reinstate Mr Fernandez immediately - he is a

married man, so of course he doesn't flirt with the ladies." Ha! "And anyway he isn't sexy." Oh, I wouldn't say that. "Three: Carlotta must play the supporting role of Edam the magic cow". And who's going to break that news to her. Certainly not me. Not without full body armour. "Four: I have made a gift to Miss Dae of a very special piece of jewellery - a diamond brooch - which she is to wear at every performance."

Madame Giry listens with interest. Her right eye starts to flicker strangely.

How dare he hold this theatre to ransome?!

GIRY You better do as he wants Monsieur. Unless you want to lose all your light fittings.

RICHARD But I don't understand. How could he have tampered with the chandelier? He was whispering in my ear immediately before and after it fell.

GIRY Search me. I better go now sir, I've got to iron the cat.

RICHARD Good heavens.



GIRY By the way, could you order some more *whispering* feather dusters?

RICHARD We only got a new batch last Tuesday.

GIRY Yeah but they've lost all their feathers.

RICHARD Well I'm afraid you're out of luck. There's a shortage in Paris at the moment. Feathers are simply flying off the shelves. Ho ho ho! Flying off the sh....

Thunder.

We don't normally get storms at this time of year. I hope we don't get struck by lightning or anything like that.

GIRY Oh I dunno. I've always liked a bit o' lightning.

Giry exits mysteriously.

THE EGYPTIAN With Biscotti in hospital, the position of resident tenor went to Wae Ling Fernandez. After that fateful night, Christine Dae vanished. She did not appear for several days...not even for a photo-shoot

with "Allo Allo" magazine. Hers was not the only disappearance. Cesar, the lucky theatre horse, was stolen! He had been bought by the opera house when just a talented young colt, from the Foal-y Bergeres. *Lays another wreath.* But for Monsieur Richard, there were more woes to come.

Raoul bursts in.

RAOUL Burst!

EGYPTIAN Raoul was desperate. *Raoul looks desparate.* His eyes were wild...*Raoul does wild eyes.* His hair and clothes dishevelled...*Raoul roughs up his hair and clothes...*his Aldis bag had started to bio degrade....and a little bit of dribble was coming out of his mouth... *he dribbles a bit down his chin.*

RICHARD Ah, the Comte de Chagney. You seem upset, sir.

RAOUL Indeed! I have sore misgivings!

RICHARD That'll clear up with bed rest.

RAOUL I mean for Miss Dae. She has disappeared!

RICHARD Disappeared? I hope not, she's singing the lead on Saturday.

RAOUL I fear for her safety! I believe she's gone through her mirror again.

RICHARD What are you talking about?

RAOUL Some nights ago, I heard a voice, coming from her dressing room. The voice was singing. It was mesmerizing. I've never heard anything so beautiful, and haunting and almost...not human.

RICHARD Oh lord.

RAOUL I burst through the door to find Christine in a sort of trance. I ran to her, but as I did, her mirror seemed to split into a thousand shards of light. I was dizzy, dazzled, disorientated...

RICHARD Dumbfounded?

RAOUL Yes!

RICHARD Discombobulated?

RAOUL Yes!

RICHARD *Tries to think of another one.* No, can't think of any more. Carry on.

RAOUL I believe the voice was the so-called "Angel of Music". I found this card outside her door.

RICHARD "Angel of Music. Singing teacher. All styles from pop to classics. Enquiries care of Madame Giry, Opera House, Paris." *He examines the card.* Nicely embossed. A quality card.

RAOUL Oh Monsieur, I fear Christine is in GRAVE danger. If only I knew where she was!

RICHARD She's at her Aunt's house in the Rue de Michel Rue.

RAOUL Right, thanks.

He goes to exit.

EGYPTIAN Monsieur?

RAOUL Oh, it's you.



EGYPTIAN I have some information that may be of interest to you.

RAOUL What information?

EGYPTIAN Shhhh. First, we must go to the street corner where we cannot be overheard.

They walk about a bit, then someone gives the Egyptian a lamp post.

RAOUL What have you got for me?

The Egyptian hands him the lamp post.

EGYPTIAN Hang on. *He turns the light on.* Right. I know the true identity of the so called “Angel of Music”.

RAOUL Excellent!

EGYPTIAN Also, I have discovered how he gets about in the opera house without being seen.

RAOUL Brilliant! Anything else?

EGYPTIAN Quavers are on special offer at Monsieur Aldi’s!

RAOUL Wow! You're brilliant! Can we be best friends?

EGYPTIAN Yes, I'd like that.

They both giggle in a rather childish way.

RAOUL Now let's go and find Christine.

EGYPTIAN I will show you the way.

RAOUL Thanks Mr... forgive me, I've forgotten your name.

EGYPTIAN Here at the opera, I am known as "The Egyptian." In the piazzas of Rome I am...I'll tell you on the way.

RAOUL Right.

They exit.

Madame Valerius' flat. She has fake legs made of balloons in a pair of tights.

VALERIUS Ah Christine, I am so grateful to you for coming to help me with these, my difficult legs.

CHRISTINE I see the swellings have returned.

VALERIUS Yes, in the cold weather they fill up with condensation.

CHRISTINE I'll do my best to reduce the pressure aunty, but I don't have much time before rehearsals.

VALERIUS Bless, you child.

A doorbell rings.

VALERIUS Now who can that be?

CHRISTINE Wait while I look out of this mimed window.

She rubs the glass providing sfx.

It is Raoul my childhood sweetheart, and a stranger.

VALERIUS Ah! How your cheek blushes. Why do you not encourage the count my dear?

CHRISTINE Because I am just a lowly commoner's child and he is a count. His father would never approve such a match.

VALERIUS And neither would your Angel of Music.

*The door bell again. Raoul and the Egyptian enter.
Christine opens the door.*

EGYPTIAN ...and to the widows of Hove, I am...

CHRISTINE Raoul!

RAOUL Christine!

CHRISTINE Who is this gentleman?

EGYPTIAN Here in Paris, I am known as....

RAOUL This is the Egyptian. He's my new best friend.

Raoul and the Egyptian giggle boyishly.

VALERIUS You are welcome gentlemen. Aagh!

RAOUL Christine, I must have a private word with you in
this private corner.

CHRISTINE Very well.

VALERIUS Aagh.

CHRISTINE Monsieur, perhaps you could help my poor aunt and relieve the pressure in her legs.

EGYPTIAN What do I do?

CHRISTINE It's quite easy, just use this.

She hands the Egyptian a hat pin. The following scene is punctuated by balloons bursting.

RAOUL Christine, this is our one chance of happiness. I love you, but if you don't run away with me now, I have resolved to join the Polar expedition and you will never see me again.

CHRISTINE Oh Raoul, I so want to be with you, but if your father found out he'd explode.

Bang.

VALERIUS Agh!

CHRISTINE And what of the Angel? If he caught us, he'd beat you up massively.

RAOUL Yes, I know that my plan could backfire.

Bang.

VALERIUS Agh!

RAOUL But we must seize the day, Christine. I adore you
above all others.

CHRISTINE What others?

RAOUL Er, it s just a figure of speech. I have never loved
before.

CHRISTINE Good.

Baloon squeaking noises.

RAOUL Anyway, you can talk. What about your boyfriend,
the Angel of music?

CHRISTINE He isn't my boyfriend. I only feel pity for him, I
believe that underneath, he hides a terrible secret.

RAOUL What secret?

CHRISTINE It's something to do with chickens. He's terrified of feathers and he is haunted by two demons that he calls "The Oven Readies".

RAOUL Forget him Christine and be mine forever!

CHRISTINE Oh Raoul, how my heart bursts.

Bang.

VALERIUS Agh!

CHRISTINE I must sing for him once more before we leave. Come for me after the performance of La Belle Dame sans Fromage on Saturday and we will fly.

The Egyptian releases a balloon.

RAOUL But what if he should discover our plan?

CHRISTINE Impossible! He'd have to be hiding somewhere in this room, listening to our conversation.

The phantom reveals himself to the audience.

Madame Valerius gets up with her normal legs.



VALERIUS That's much better thank you Mr Egyptian.

EGYPTIAN Happy to oblige madame. Is there a Monsieur Valerius I wonder?

VALERIUS Alas no, I am a widow. I came to Paris just after Valerius passed away.

EGYPTIAN I see.

VALERIUS But I'm originally from Hove.

EGYPTIAN *Suggestively.* I see!

RAOUL Christine, I will attend Saturday's performance, and afterwards, I will come for you! Adieu!

CHRISTINE Until Saturday!

Raoul exits.

EGYPTIAN Madame Valerius. *He kisses her hand.*

VALERIUS Goodbyeeee.

All exit except the Egyptian.

EGYPTIAN Nothing else had occurred back at the Opera house and the rest of the week went by as usual. Wednesday, hotly pursued by Thursday and Friday bringing up the rear, despite being the firm favourite. Eventually Saturday crossed the finish line, and Christine was getting dressed for the evening performance.

Wae Ling Fernandez knocks on Christine's door.

CHRISTINE Who is it?

WAE LING It's just me, Fernandez, your leading man.

CHRISTINE I'm still changing but you can stand in the doorway and speak to me.

WEA LING Alright but I would'nt want to get wedged in like.

CHRISTINE What do you want to speak to me about?

WEA LING I wondered if you would accompany me to Gi Gi's later.

PHANTOM Oerh.



- WAE LING They do an all you can eat chicken special.
- PHANTOM Aaaagh!
- CHRISTINE Mr Fernandez, you are married man. What would your wife say if she knew you were asking young ladies to dinner?
- WAE LING Yeah well, my wife doesn't understand me.
- CHRISTINE I'm not surprised. No, I won't come out with you, sir. And if you value your personal safety, you will never approach me again.
- Richard enters.*
- RICHARD Ah Mr Fernandez, I just wanted to wish you luck for this evening.
- FERNANDEZ Thank you.
- RICHARD And by the way, I think you're very sexy.
- ASM Act one beginners to the stage please! Miss Dae, Miss Lavazza and Mr Fernandez to the stage please.

Christine emerges in her costume. She is wearing a huge diamond brooch. Music. They take their positions. Song about cheese. During the song Edam the cow enters looking pissed off. During the tenor's aria, his trousers begin to lower and rise according to the notes sung. As the piece climaxes, there's a blackout and Christine disappears. Wae Ling and Fernandez come forward.

Dolcelata the dairy maid in your forthcoming production of Monsieur Gervic's "La Belle Dame sans Fromage". Two: You are to reinstate Mr Fernandez immediately - he is a married man, so of course he doesn't flirt with the ladies." Ha! "And anyway he isn't sexy." Oh, I wouldn't say that. "Three: Carlotta must play the supporting role of Edam the magic cow".

DOLCELATE

O gentle gentle Edam, the sun doth shine so bright,
 And all of nature's beauty is such a pleasant sight,
 Your jolly flanks and withers they make me feel so
 gay,
 The world is full of wonders on such a perfect day!
 The fields are radiant with corn, in the golden light
 of dawn,



Buttercups are everywhere, butterflies do fill the air.

EDAM Moo, moo.

DOLCELATE Oh hear me ancient Edam, the oldest of the herd,
I'll tell to you a secret you must not breathe a word,
For handsome Giovanni, the boy who cuts the
cheese,
Hath asked your Dolcelate for her hand upon his
knees.
Though your milk is past its best and your udders
have gone west,
How I love to see you graze as you pass your final
days.

What say you gentle Edam?

DOLCELATE Moo, moo.

Should I consent to wed him?

EDAM Moo, moo, moo!

DOLCELATE Aha ha ha ha, I'll take that as a "yes."

Giovanni the cheese boy enters.

But soft for it is he, my sweet heart Giovanni! I will
conceal myself for a jest, behind this old discarded
vest.

GIOVANNI I am Giovanni Giuseppe Fromaggio,
Known to all as lucky Giuseppe, the boy who cuts
the cheese.
But hear me Edam, I keep a secret from the world,
My union with my Dolcelata cannot be,
For I am married, already,
To a lunatic bride,
How Dolcelate will despise me,
When she discovers I have lied.

What say you Edam?
Answer me Edam,
Give me sweet words to take this agony away,
What say you Edam?

EDAM Moo.

Dolcelate reveals herself.

DOLCELATE Oh do not tell me you have lied, that you have
another bride,
For if it's true I'll surely die, tiran ta ra!

GIOVANNI Yes its true I'm afraid, I deserve your upbraid, Tiran
tara tiran tara tara.

DOLCELATE By the heavens up above, only death shall be my
love,
Nevermore will I trust, tiran tara.

GIOVANNI By the seven gates of hell, I can hear the tolling
knell,
For I will die this very night, tiran tara.

DOLCELATE No, for I will take my life, using this your cheese
knife,

GIOVANNI Give me back my cheese knife.

DOLCELATE I can never be your wife.

*Dolcelate stabs herself through the heart and starts
dying. Giovanni takes the knife.*

GIOVANNI Oh no, someone call a doctor. My own beloved! My world is falling down!

DOLCELATE His world is falling down!

His trousers begin to slowly descend.

RICHARD What's wrong with his trousers?

GIOVANNI My secret is revealed! Now this weapon I will weald!

DOCELATE His secret is revealed! Now this weapon he will weald!

RICHARD Oh no!

GIOVANNI Come monstrous dagger!

DOLCELATE Oh monstrous dagger!

GIOVANNI Pierce my breast and I will yield!

RICHARD Get him off the stage!

GIOVANNI Tiran ta tara tiran tara tiran tara!

The lights flicker as before. His trousers go up and down. Edam tries to pick them up. Blackout. A scream.

CHRISTINE Aaaaaaaaaaagh!

Lights up, Christine has gone.

FERNANDEZ Stop the performance! The diva has disappeared!

FERN/EDAM *Sung.* Christine, Christine! Oh she has disappeared, Disappeared! She has gone! She was here and now she's gone!

End of Act one.

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Act 2

Madame Celeste takes the girls for a ballet warm up. They are rehearsing the Dance of the Drumsticks.

CELESTE Now young ladies, we have a new member of the the corps de ballet to welcome among us. This is Filet Mignon.

FILLET Hello. I'm so excited, and pleased to be here, and honored and pleased and thrilled and really excited. I'm sure we will all be great friends.

The other girls look doubtful.

CELESTE Filet is a highly experienced dancer from my country, Brussels. This is Sorelli, Babette, and Meg Giry whose mother is a cleaner here.

Sorelli and Babette laugh. Madame Celeste cracks her whip.

Girls! Remember our motto!

GIRLS We're ballerinas, not hyenas, and we don't look down on cleaners.



CELESTE Precisement! Now, your performance last week of the Drumstick chorus was abysmal, appalling and ashamedful. Observe Filet, and tell me what is wrong as I demonstrate some of the most embarrassing positions.

The girls laugh. Celeste cracks her whip again.

GIRLS Pardonne Madame.

CELESTE First, the all important drumstick positions.

She goes through a few moves.

 Demi drumstick, pas de drumstick, and grande jete de drumstick. Now repeat and Filet, you will join in please!

FILET Yes, Madame.

GIRLS Demi drumstick, pas de drumstick, and grande jete de drumstick.

CELESTE Better. Now, Sorelli, I want to see your extension.

SORELLI But I've still got the painters in.

The girls snigger.

CELESTE Enough! What will Filet think of you, you rabble!
 Ballerinas, go to the bar.

The girls pick up a long piece of dowel.

It is time for practice. I will call out a series of positions but I will change the usual routine randomly to keep you “on your toes.” Aha ha ha. You see I have a jolly good Belgian sense of humour.
 Music Please!

Musical intro.

FILET What fun, I love a challenge!

SORELLI You teacher’s pet.

BABETTE We’ll beat you up later.

MEG Don’t be so mean.

BABETTE I’ll pull your unitard.

SORELLI And I will butter your pumps.



FILET Don't care.

CELESTE En avant! Un, deux, trois! Ballone, ballotte, balance et battu!

GIRLS Ballone, ballotte, balance et battu!

CELESTE Cabriolle, chasse, shirley basse et lulu.

GIRLS Cabriolle, chasse, shirley basse et lulu.

CELESTE Grande Beyonce...

GIRLS Grande Beyonce...

CELESTE Petite Beyonce....

GIRLS Petite Beyonce...

CELESTE And jete and turn!

GIRLS And jete and turn!

The girls jump round and have to catch the pole.

CELESTE Now from behind. And full fondue.



FILET May I demonstrate the drumstick positions Madame?
At the academy I won the Colonel Sanders prize two
years running.

BABETTE I bet you sucked up to the judges.

FILET How dare you!

CELESTE Very well Filet. Show us your prize winning
drumsticks.

Filet goes to demonstrate. A hideous groan from off.

PHANTOM AAAAghergh!

FILET What was that hideous groan from off?

CELESTE ‘Twas le Phantome!

GIRLS Le Phantome! Aagh!

They all run off.

EGYPTIAN Meanwhile, deep in the bowels of the Opera House,
Eric le Phantom and Christine are rowing across the underground
lake on one of three faulty pedaloos that Eric bought as a job lot

from Felixtowe pleasure beach. They were bound for the Phantom's salon on lower mezzanine six. Far above them, a storm was brewing and ominous sounds echoed eerily through the building. Eric was a haunted man but what foul agency was stalking him through his secret tunnels and hidden passages, was still an eni... an enig...a mystery.

Music. Thunder, and chicken noises.

THE UNDERGROUND LAKE

The Phantom and Christine row across the lake.

- PHANTOM Are you comfortable Christine?
- CHRISTINE Quite comfortable. Though my legs are a little tired.
- PHANTOM Yes these pedaloos are hard work. But you must keep going or we won't reach my grand salon 'til after the dinner gong and then we'll have to hungry.
- CHRISTINE Oh. Do you have a cook then?
- PHANTOM Yes, Madame Moutard, she's a stickler for punctuality, and a bit of a troll.



The head of a troll appears with a dinner gong, which it rings.

PHANTOM Dammit!

CHRISTINE Why don't you sack her?

PHANTOM No one else would work for me because I'm so ugly. She was my cook when I was a child, so she's used to my hideous deformity. My real mother abandoned me and my father married a make up lady from Debenhams. She provided me with this Rimmel beauty palette with blusher, smudger, and waterproof mascara.

CHRISTINE Wow! That's gorgeous.

PHANTOM Yes, and it doesn't bring me out in a rash like some of the cheaper brands.

A muffled chicken noise and a peal of thunder. The phantom reacts.

CHRISTINE What exactly is wrong with your face?

PHANTOM Would you like to see – beneath the mask?

CHRISTINE Yes, I am prepared, however gruesome it is.

PHANTOM Promise you won't scream or anything.

CHRISTINE I wouldn't be so heartless.

PHANTOM Very well! Close your eyes.

He begins to take off his mask with some difficulty.

CHRISTINE Are you ready yet?

PHANTOM Hang on I can't get the bloomin' thing off.

CHRISTINE Can I look now?

PHANTOM Wait, let me do the pose. There!

CHRISTINE *Opening her eyes. Aaaaagh!*

PHANTOM Horrible isn't it?

CHRISTINE You're so old!

PHANTOM No Christine, I'm actually only thirty, but I have the face and body of a fifty four year old man!

CHRISTINE That's terrible. Have you always looked like that?

PHANTOM Yes, and just imagine this face on a baby.

CHRISTINE Oh please no, I can't.

The phantom removes his hat to reveal a baby bonnet and produces a stuffed baby grow and puts it under his chin. He makes a sad face.

PHANTOM Mother!

CHRISTINE Aaaagh!

Another chicken noise. The Phantom reacts.

CHRISTINE What was that?

PHANTOM What was what?

CHRISTINE That noise.

PHANTOM What did it sound like?

CHRISTINE Like a

PHANTOM A what?

CHRISTINE A big sort of ...bird.

PHANTOM What kind of bird?

CHRISTINE A chi.... Chi... I don't know. It must have been my imagination.

PHANTOM Yes. Let's change the subject shall we?

CHRISTINE Right. *Pause*. I say, why have you always got that cape on?

PHANTOM Aaaaagh!

CHRISTINE Sorry.

PHANTOM You have spoken the unspeakable!

CHRISTINE It was an accident. I just don't understand what your problem is.

PHANTOM There are things in my past, certain - crimes I committed, that I would prefer to forget.

CHRISTINE But what's it got to do with....

PHANTOM I told you to change the subject!

CHRISTINE Fine. *Pause.* So, what's your salon like then?

PHANTOM It is most luxurious, and brimming with French eighteenth century elegance.

CHRISTINE Nice.

PHANTOM It's my favourite period in French interiors. No expense has been spared. I do hope you like it.

More ghostly chicken noise.

PHANTOM We have arrived.

CHRISTINE I never knew there were so many lower floors beneath the opera house.

PHANTOM Yes, that's why I had a chair lift installed by Monsieur Stannah. Now, I'll just park the pedaloe in my designated space....

CHRISTINE I'll do it.

PHANTOM Very well.

Christine begins to reverse and bangs into a bit of set.

PHANTOM Don't try and reverse into it, woman! We'll be here all night.

CHRISTINE I'm perfectly capable of parking a pedaloe, thank you. Damn, it won't start.

PHANTOM Use more choke!

CHRISTINE I'm trying.

PHANTOM You've flooded it now!

CHRISTINE It's your fault for stressing me out.

PHANTOM Oh, come out of the way. There, now that's text book parking.

CHRISTINE Ha!

PHANTOM Now, the official entrance is down that corridor but I have a secret short cut that leads directly into the lounge diner.

CHRISTINE Aren't you afraid I'll reveal its whereabouts?

PHANTOM Who would you tell my dear? After tonight you will never see another human being, except me of course.

PHANTOM *They go through a panel in the wall.* Behold! My grand salon!

CHRISTINE Oh.

PHANTOM Don't you like it?

CHRISTINE Yes - its just I was expecting Louis the Fourteenth, this is more... Louis Walsh.

PHANTOM Well seeing as you'll spend the rest of your days here, I'll let you redesign it.

CHRISTINE Can't I be allowed out at weekends? To go to parties and stuff?

PHANTOM No Christine, you might meet some handsome young count and leave me.

CHRISTINE I wouldn't, honest.

PHANTOM I cannot afford to risk it. You must stay here forever!

CHRISTINE Gulp.

PHANTOM Now, we must mark your arrival with a midnight feast. Make yourself at home while I get the cheesy footballs.

CHRISTINE I don't like cheesy footballs.

PHANTOM I've got Quavers.

CHRISTINE That will clear up with bed rest.

PHANTOM No, Quavers are my favorite potato based snack with a music related name.

CHRISTINE Really.

PHANTOM I have also composed a special song in honor of our union. It's called "Our Souls Combine, Our Hearts Entwine."

CHRISTINE *With irony.* I can't wait to hear it.

PHANTOM I will sing it for you upon my return.

CHRISTINE Oh ye gods! What am I going to do?

PHANTOM Here are my accounts. You can make a start on those.

He exits.

CHRISTINE Alas! I will never again see the light of day, or go shopping in Romford Market. I wonder what time it is? Gosh, I'm so very tired.....

She goes to sleep. The head of a white horse appears.

CESAR Hello.

CHRISTINE Hello! Hello, is somebody there?

CESAR It's me, Cesar, the lucky theatre horse.

CHRISTINE I didn't know there was a lucky theatre horse.

CESAR Oh yes, that's me, that is. I've been here ages. They trot me out when they do the big procession in the opera, Godiva. I was doing alright, 'til I got kidnapped by the phantom!

CHRISTINE Me too. I say, how come you can talk?

CESAR I can't. This is a dream.

CHRISTINE A dream! Of course, it all makes sense! The kidnapping, the chair lift, the pedaloe on the underground lake. Thank heavens, it's all been just some fantastic dream!

CESAR No. Just this bit.

CHRISTINE Bugger.

CESAR Mind you, if you was to be nice to me in the dream, I might help you escape.

CHRISTINE Er... wait while I get my head around that. Right. What can I do for you?

CESAR Well, I'm very partial to Quavers. The Phantom has just taken delivery of a bulk order from Monsieur Aldi's, but he won't let me have any.

CHRISTINE The stingy git.

CESAR Yes he's as tight as ar.....

Singing from off.

PHANTOM “Our souls combine, our hearts entwine, in bliss
forever more.”

CHRISTINE He’s coming back.

PHANTOM “My love shall not desert me...”

CESAR Why don’t you make a run for it?

*The Phantom appears with a tray of Quavers and two
bottles of J20.*

PHANTOM “Because I’ve locked the door.”
Rum tum tum tum, instrumental break....

CESAR Don’t forget our deal.

CHRISTINE I’ll do what I can.

PHANTOM Rum tum tum....

CHRISTINE Wait. Is this still the dream?

CESAR No.

PHANTOM “And now, let’s celebrate!” *Blackout. The Egyptian comes forward.*

EGYPTIAN Meanwhile, Raoul is in his boudoir. He is tossing and turning in his sleep, First, he dreamt he was a Belfast plumber...

RAOUL Yer thermostat’s on the blink, there, right enough.

EGYPTIAN Then an Australian lad with a pet dolphin....

RAOUL Dad, Dad, Flipper’s caught in the marshes!

EGYPTIAN But oh, dear listener, ooooooh what a fiendish image had been planted in the mind of this impressionable youth, in the graveyard at Perros.....

Music. Dream state lighting.

RAOUL Christine! Angel of music... chickeny demons.... his oven readies.... his oven readies.....

Two oven readies appear on sticks. Raoul’s oven ready nightmare. A song. At the end Raoul is back in bed and is awoken by a knock on the door. A hand passes Raoul a letter.

Ah a letter. Perhaps it's a ransom note from the kidnapper! *He opens it.*

No, its from the Egyptian. *Reading* "Hey Butterface. Meet me in Christine Dae's dressing room at ten o clock, and I'll help you find her. Kiss kiss, smiley face, besties!" It's ten now, I'd better hurry. Taaaxiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiiii!

He runs on the spot as the Egyptian sets the table and screen around him. Various items are on the table and hanging over the screen which are used to highlight appropriate words in the following. The Egyptian is sniffing Christine's tights.

RAOUL Burst.

EGYPTIAN Oh!

RAOUL What are you doing?

EGYPTIAN Just checking for DNA evidence.

RAOUL Find anything?

EGYPTIAN No, I've combed the place.

RAOUL There can be little doubt who is responsible.

EGYPTIAN Eric the phantom.



- RAOUL Eric, eh? What a common sort of name.
- EGYPTIAN This won't be his first brush with the law. How I'd love to put the bracelets on him.
- RAOUL You know him of old?
- EGYPTIAN Indeed. Eric was in Egypt when I first heard of him. He was wanted for stealing a fabulous diamond from the eye of an ancient Egyptian statue.
- RAOUL Statue of what?
- EGYPTIAN The chicken god, Nugget, brother of Knorr, god of gravy and soup.
- RAOUL So that explains why he cannot bear the mention of chicken! It's remorse.
- EGYPTIAN I don't think so. There's something else going on that's got Eric in a lather.
- RAOUL Christine is with him, I'm sure of it. But where?
- EGYPTIAN Tell me what you remember about the time in her dressing room when she disappeared and you were....

RAOUL Discombobulated?

EGYPTIAN Yes.

RAOUL Well, I burst in, as usual, and Christine was in front of her mirror, there. Then I heard the beautiful singing, was blinded by a flash of light and she was gone.

EGYPTIAN Then unless I'm a Dutchman, and I'm not, the key to this mystery is Christine's mirror. There must be a secret passage behind it. Help me feel for the mechanism.

RAOUL Nothing. Looks like you're a Dutchman after all.

EGYPTIAN Tot ziens! Een prettish dag.

RAOUL Dammit.

The Egyptian leans on the mirror and it turns on a centre axis, taking him with it.

Where have you gone? This is no time for jests. Do not make sport of me sir, my nerves will not wigstand it!

The Egyptian pushes on the mirror and Raoul goes backward behind it.

EGYPTIAN Raoul! I've found the secret entrance! Where are you?

Raoul comes out again behind the Egyptian, startling him.

Woah!

RAOUL Well, what are we waiting for?

EGYPTIAN *Producing a gun.* This, my Colt single action Rimfire revolver, with spur trigger, pearl tips and bird head butt grips. Isn't she a beauty?

RAOUL 'Spose. What about me? I haven't got a gun.

EGYPTIAN *Making a gun shape with his hand.* You'll have to just do this. The Phantom might think it's a novelty gun in the shape of a ladies hand. I'll go first.

RAOUL Oh lord, I bet they'll be spiders.

EGYPTIAN Don't worry, if one crawls on your back, I'll shoot it.

RAOUL What?

EGYPTIAN Now stop being such a muff bangle.

RAOUL I hope you know how to use that thing, we might find ourselves in a tight's pot.

Flourish and exit.

The roof of the opera house. Thunder continues. Madame Giry enters.

GIRY Ah, from up here on the Opera House roof, I can see the tiny people coming and going about their pathetic business, unaware of the great power that is about to be unleashed in their midst! Look at them in their carriages and furs and their massive wads of cash. Shopping for festive gifts for their loved ones I'll warrant – when all I can afford for my boys are these identical turtle neck sweaters in their favourite shade of pink.

She holds up a bag with a shop label of some sort on.

No matter! My quest will be rewarded with glory, for the gods are on my side. Oh how puny the world

seems from this, the roof of the highest building in all of Paris!

VOICE *From off.* What about the Eifel Tower?

GIRY Other than the Eifel tower!

VOICE The Tuillery Palace

GIRY ...and The Tuillery Palace....

VOICE Notre Dame?

GIRY ...other than the Eifel Tower, the Grande Arch, Notre Dame and quite a few other places!!!

More thunder. A ghostly chicken noise. She reveals some strange looking diodes etc.

Once I have assembled my infernal device, order will be restored in the heavens. Mmmm. These components look complicated. It's lucky I have a background in engineering. Just one elemental element is needed to make the circuit complete.

Organ music and SFX.

Come thunder, come lightning, come life affirming
fire!

With dirge and din, expunge the sin,
Annoint this ruse, and light my fuse,
And strike and peel until they feel the sting of my
desire!

*Raoul and the Egyptian under the stage, going down
lots of steps.*

RAOUL It's awfully dark.

EGYPTIAN As dark as the bowels of HELL!

RAOUL Aaagh! CobWEBS! EGYPTIAN Aaagh! I know
but we've got to keep our heads. Eric is a master of trap doors, and
secret passages and he knows this theatre like the back of his HAND.

RAOUL Then we are at his MERCY!

EGYPTIAN Yes, I'm scared. Should we go BACK ?

RAOUL No. We must save CHRISTINE!

EGYPTIAN On that we are agreed my friend. By the way, I still
really like you.

- RAOUL And I you. *They do thumbs up and giggle.* I know!
Lets be a gang.
- EGYPTIAN A gang, yes. *They do thumbs up again.* What shall we
call ourselves?
- RAOUL How about “The Two Nice Boys.”
- EGYPTIAN That’s sweet, but I think we need something more
dangerous... How about “The Knuckle Knobblers?”
- RAOUL Mmm. Does it have to be hand related?
- EGYPTIAN Yes. Its good to have a theme. What about “Pinkie
and the Pokey Man?”
- RAOUL Only if I can be Pinkie. I don’t want to be the Pokey
Man.
- EGYPTIAN Nor do I. He sounds really annoying.
- RAOUL Yes, I hate being poked, it drives me MAD. Got any
more ideas?
- EGYPTIAN How about, “The Thumbs Up Chums!”

RAOUL Oh I like that! *They do thumbs up and giggle.*

An eerie chicken cluck noise.

What was that noise?

EGYPTIAN Sounded like a clucking chicken.

PHANTOM Aerh!

EGYPTIAN And that, my friend, was the Phantom! He is nearby.

RAOUL Where?

EGYPTIAN He could be anywhere. Back in Egypt he perfected the art of concealing himself in any environment. Remember the bat in the graveyard at Perros?

RAOUL Yes.

EGYPTIAN That was the Phantom.

RAOUL Nooo, don't be silly.

EGYPTIAN Look, up ahead. There's a light. We must be on the lower first mezzanine, where the gas boys are.

RAOUL Are they a gang too?

EGYPTIAN No they work here. They're in charge of all the gas lights and appliances at the theatre. Look through that grille and you'll see them.

RAOUL What grille?

Someone hands Raoul a grill through a curtain. A hissing sound. They look through the grill at the audience.

They don't seem to be doing much.

EGYPTIAN No they're an idle lot. They mostly just sit there releasing gas.

RAOUL Isn't that dangerous?

EGYPTIAN Yes.

RAOUL Does the management know?

EGYPTIAN I doubt it.

The rat catchers appear gradually with sfx.

EGY/RAOUL Aaaagh! *They grab each other.*



EGYPTIAN What's that?

RAOUL Just my lunchbox.

EGYPTIAN No, that. What are you fiends? Demons! Show yourselves, we are not afraid.

RAOUL I am.

The rat catchers appear.

PINKY We baint be demons.

POKEY We be rat catchers maister.

PINKY Ar, tis so, rat catchers that we be.

RAOUL Should you be carrying a naked flame near the old gas pipes?

PINKY No maister, we baint be allowed on the first lower mezzapine coz it's dangerous.

EGYPTIAN What are you doing here then?

POKEY We likes living on the edge.

EGYPTIAN In that case I have no choice but to report you to the management. What are your names?

POKEY That’s Pinky, and I’m the Pokey Man.

He starts poking Raoul on the shoulder.

RAOUL Oh NO.

EGYPTIAN Steady Raoul.

PINKY We aint seen you down in these mirky parts. You be trespassing.

POKEY Maybe that’s us what should report you.

PINKY What be your names?

RAOUL We’re The Thumbs Up Chums. *Equal emphasis.*

EGYPTIAN No Raoul, The Thumbs **Up** Chums. This is our secret sign.

They do the thumbs up and giggle. Blackout.

RAOUL Help! Help! It’s gone dark!



POKEY That's our bloomin' lanterns goin' out again. Pinkey,
strike a match.

EGYPTIAN Is that wise, with all this gas in the air?

A match strike.

RAOUL Take cover!

Lights come up.

EGY/RAOUL Pheew.

EGYPTIAN It must be pretty inconvenient for you chaps having
to carry those old lanterns about.

PINKIE Ar, 'twould be better to have both hands available to
deal with the vermin.

POKEY And a more reliable source of light.

EGYPTIAN We too are greatly disadvantaged down here without
some kind of hands free illumination. Mmmm.

Song. "If only someone could invent the head torch."

- PINKIE We best get on maister. See all them little beady eyes out there? Them's be raaarts and we gotta catch 'em.
- RAOUL I suppose you'll poison them or chop their poor little heads off.
- POKEY No we sells 'em to Burger King.
- EGYPTIAN I say, can you tell us how to get down to the lower mezzanines and the underground lake?
- PINKY What you wanna go down there for?
- POKEY That be the Phantom's lair.
- RAOUL We have business with this Phantom.
- PINKY On your 'eads be it. You gotta find the trap doors what lead down.

Someone holds out a trap door frame.

Here's one of 'em.

He puts it on the floor.

POKEY There's a Stannah on the third floor.

PINKEY At the bottom, there's another trap leading down.

POKEY But isn't that.....

PINKEY Good night to yous maisters.

EGYPTIAN Thanks Pinky, thanks Pokey Man.

PINK/POKE See yer!

EGY/RAOUL Yes, bye.

Pinky and Pokey exit. Another chicken noise accompanied by thunder.

EGYPTIAN Right. After you.

They struggle through the first trap door. A huge thunder clap with lightning strike.

GIRY *From off.* Ahahahahahahaha!

The Phantom's salon. There's a large box of Quavers by the Phantom's chair. The Phantom is playing his huge organ.

CHRISTINE *Whispering.* Cesar, Cesar, where are you?

Cesar appears from somewhere.

CESAR I'm here. Is he looking?

CHRISTINE No, he's playing his horrible organ. Have you got a plan for getting us out of here yet?

CESAR Have you got the Quavers?

CHRISTINE Yes, here.

CESAR Right. There's a secret entrance via the underground lake to the river in the Rue de Michel Rue. That's how he got me down here. Trouble is, the Phantom's blocked it up with a huge boulder.

CHRISTINE Can't you shift it?

CESAR No, I tried, but I'm built for speed not heavy lifting.

CHRISTINE Then all is lost! Oh Raoul, I'll never see you again!

PHANTOM Who were you talking to?

CHRISTINE Myself. Who else is there?

PHANTOM I am here if you wish to talk about your singing.

CHRISTINE What if I want to talk about boys?

PHANTOM I'm not interested in boys. And nor should you
 be. I will be your only family now.

CHRISTINE What about my aunt? I'd like to see her again.

PHANTOM Sorry, you're grounded. Anyway you don't need
 anyone else.

CHRISTINE You're no fun.

PHANTOM Ah but I could be. I've learned some new games
 and I've bought a joke book.

CHRISTINE What sort of games?

PHANTOM Charades for one. We can play now if you like.

CHRISTINE I do like charades.

PHANTOM Very well, I'll start. You'll never get it. Not in a million years!

He acts out his own name.

CHRISTINE Seven syllables. First syllable, fan. Phantom of the opera?

PHANTOM Yes. There, that's enough fun to keep you going for a week. Now I need to get back to my masterpiece. Would you like to hear some of it?

CHRISTINE Is it uplifting?

PHANTOM It is a grandiosity of lugubriosity! An distilation of desolation! I have been working on it since I was eight years old, and the inspiration has come from the tragedy of my own existence – before I met you of course.

CHRISTINE What's it called?

PHANTOM "The Judgement of Krampus."

CHRISTINE Who's Krampus?

PHANTOM A hideous demon, half man, half crab. He was ejected from Paradise because the angels could not bear to look upon him. I have spent the last three years perfecting his theme. It is my greatest achievement. Here it is.

He plays a sad tune in a minor key and sings about Krampus the crab demon and his sworn revenge.

CHRISTINE That's Aulde Lange Syne in a minor key.

PHANTOM Don't be absurd! It's my life's work.

CHRISTINE Play it again in C major.

The Phantom begins to play. It's Aulde Lang Syne.

.... And never brought to mind...

PHANTOM *Stops playing. I'm going to my room. I do not wish to be disturbed!*

The Puppet box.

EGYPTIAN That was a tight squeeze.

PHANTOM What a curious place.

EGYPTIAN Yes, it's a repository for old bits of scenery and whatnot.

RAOUL What are those sausage type things?

EGYPTIAN They're sausages. They are part of the set for "The Butcher of Barcelona." This way. Watch where you're going!

RAOUL Sorry, it's just very dark. Can we hold hands?

EGYPTIAN No! Get off.

RAOUL Look at all those figureheads. They're creeping me out.

EGYPTIAN From "Trafalgar" There's a real sea battle in that one. Down here.

RAOUL Woah! A massive stuffed dog!

EGYPTIAN A prop from "Doggiedamarung, Twilight of the Dogs" by....

RAOUL Wagner?

EGYPTIAN Poochini. Nearly at the bottom.



RAOUL Oh god. I'm trembling all over. I think I'm having a heart attack!
 EGYPTIAN Luckily I know first aid. Stand still.
He head butts Raoul.
 RAOUL Ow that really hurt.
 EGYPTIAN Stopped you being scared though hasn't it?
 RAOUL Yes, but now I've got a massive lump.
 EGYPTIAN I'll soon get rid of that with my special head massage.
 RAOUL Go on then.
The Egyptian head butts him again.
 Ow!
 EGYPTIAN Better?
 RAOUL Yes actually.
 EGYPTIAN Good. Still got your handgun?
 RAOUL Yes. I'm fine now. Thank heavens there are no spiders.
 A giant spider appears.
 Aaagh!
 EGYPTIAN From the opera "The Merry Black Widow."
 RAOUL Help, help, it's on top of me!
 EGYPTIAN It probably just wants to play.

RAOUL It's got it's fangs in my satsumas.

EGYPTIAN Hang on, there's only one guaranteed way to get rid of spiders.

RAOUL How?

EGYPTIAN You have to hit them repeatedly with your whole body, like this.

He begins bashing the spider.

Away with you!

The spider runs off.

Ha! Never fails.

RAOUL Thanks Eeeg.

EGYPTIAN Don't mench Ra. Look, there's the Stannah.

They go down it making a sound effect or we use a sound effect.

And the final trap door. I think I can see the lake. I'll go first.

RAOUL Righto. Looks like quite a drop.

EGYPTIAN Don't worry, I'll catch you.

The Egyptian disappears.

Now, jump!

RAOUL Aaaaaaaaaaagh!

He continues to shout until the mirrors are set and the puppet box is struck. When the lights come up, Raoul jumps and lands on the floor. The Egyptian is holding his arms out in futile gesture.

I thought you were going to catch me.

EGYPTIAN Sorry, I forgot.

RAOUL What is this place?

EGYPTIAN Some kind of mirrored chamber. And no way out by the looks of it. Lucky you remembered to wedge the trap door open.

RAOUL What? You didn't tell me to wedge it open.

EGYPTIAN Oh lord. Now we're really in the brown stuff and I don't mean tobacco.

RAOUL No way out! No way out! No way OUT!!

EGYPTIAN Don't panic, that's what Eric wants. Wait, I can hear music. We must be very near Eric's salon.

RAOUL Agh! Look here, it's a noose. What's that for?

EGYPTIAN My guess is that prolonged exposure to these mirrors which make you look really unattractive, combined with lack of food and water, would induce hysteria followed by regression, delusions of grandeur, and finally suicide!

RAOUL Aha ha ha ha! Mother!

EGYPTIAN Raoul?

RAOUL You will address me as Ceasar!

EGYPTIAN Raoul!

RAOUL Alas, I die!

He puts his gun shaped hand in his mouth. The Egyptian grabs him.

EGYPTIAN Pull yourself together man! Give me the gun. Now, is your lunchbox still in tact?

RAOUL I think so.

EGYPTIAN Good. At least we wont starve – yet.

RAOUL But there’s only a finger of fudge and one undamaged satsuma left.

EGYPTIAN There must be another way out, another trap door leading to Eric’s rooms. Help me find it.

Christine is in the Phantom’s chamber. They are rehearsing. Music.

PHANTOM Again Christine!

CHRISTINE What for?

PHANTOM You will not improve without constant and rigourous practice.

CHRISTINE But I'm brilliant already.

PHANTOM No, you must sing with your very soul!

CHRISTINE What's the point in giving my all if no one's going to hear it?

PHANTOM I will hear it. Now sing it again or I will confiscate your writing materials.

CHRISTINE You absolute arse!

PHANTOM Again! And remember, this is Paulina's death song. You must feel utter despair!

CHRISTINE Very well, but this is the last time. Ever!

No more will I breathe the sweet fresh air,
No more will I see sunlight upon the scented lawn,
Nor hear my lover's tread upon the stair,
Oh ye angels bear witness how I sough, how I morn,

For the days of merry laughter,
The days of gentle words,
The happy ever after,
The rapture of the birds.

And in that rapture we'd entwine,
And speak our love aloud,
And our voices were divine,

Like gods upon a silver cloud.
And pretty bluebells rang
In every woodland glade,
And the nightingale, she sang,
In the blessed evening shade.

Oh woe is me, alack a day,
For my dying soul is floating far away.
Far away.

The Phantom falters and stops playing.

CHRISTINE What's the matter?

PHANTOM I'm all depressed now.

CHRISTINE Well its your own fault.

A knock on the door.

PHANTOM Come in!

Pinky enters.

What do you want Pinky, I'm busy?

PINKY Just come to let you know you've caught a couple of rats
 in your mirror trap.

PHANTOM What?

PINKY Two gentlemen, one shabby, the other a velvet fop.

CHRISTINE Raoul!

PHANTOM So! At last I can be rid of my tormenters. The chief of
 the Kairo police and that dipstick of a count, my rival.
 Are they armed?

PINKY Aye, they've both got guns. One of ems a novelty gun in
 the shape of a lady's hand.

PHANTOM Yes, I've seen those, they're pretty lethal, but they will
 be useless in my chamber of mirrors. Aha ha ha ha!
 Thanks Pinky.

PINKY Maester. Exits.

Eric switches a switch on the wall.

EGYPTIAN That devil's turned the lights up.

RAOUL It's getting hotter. Oh God!

CHRISTINE What have you done?

PHANTOM When I turn this dial to gas mark 8 you will hear the tormented cries of your lover as he slowly cooks in my chamber of death along with that ridiculous plod. They will be the toast of Paris. Aha ha ha!

CHRISTINE Murderer! *Christine goes for the switch.*

PHANTOM You cannot save them, unless of course, you consent to marry me.

CHRISTINE Never!

PHANTOM Very well. As the temperature rises your boyfriend will have time to reflect on his behaviour. Aha aha!

Eric goes to the dial.

CHRISTINE Raoul, I will love you forever.

PHANTOM One....

RAOUL Christine, is that you?

PHANTOM Two....

CHRISTINE Yes, I will be yours even after you've been burned to a crisp.

RAOUL What?

PHANTOM Three....

EGYPTIAN Miss Dae, Eric must have a key somewhere.

PHANTOM Four...

CHRISTINE There's a big bunch hanging on his organ.

PHANTOM Five....

EGYPTIAN Get them and follow my voice. There's got to be a door.

PHANTOM Six....

CHRISTINE I think I see it!

She begins to try keys in the lock.

EGYPTIAN Wait! There's another trap mechanism in the floor.

PHANTOM Seven...

RAOUL But where will it lead?

PHANTOM Eight!

EGYPTIAN Anywhere's better than this.

He pulls the trap door up over him. Blackout and thunderclap, lightning strike and splash sfx. Lights up to reveal Raoul alone in the chamber with a very red face.

From off. Ok this is worse.

PHANTOM Ha! The fool has fallen into the underground sewer. Soon the mechanical mascerator will crush him to a pulp along with all the other excrement.

EGYPTIAN Help me!

RAOUL No! Help me!

CHRISTINE I'm coming Raoul.

The final key works and Raoul comes tumbling out into the Phantom's room. The Phantom grabs Christine.

PHANTOM Don't shoot or the diva gets it.

RAOUL No, it isn't a gun its just my hand.

CHRISTINE Raoul!

PHANTOM Oh what a clever Count you are - but I tire of you, and this is a real gun.

He produces a gun.

Bye bye!

Another thunder and lightning strike. A Stannah sfx.

PHANTOM Wait a minute. Who's coming down the Stannah?

Madame Giry appears in an egyptian headdress and frock. She carries a sceptre with a chicken's head on it.

CHRISTINE Madame Giry!

GIRY I am Madame Giry to you, but I go by many names.

RAOUL Not another one.

PHANTOM What do you want? I'm in the middle of my big baddy moment.

GIRY I have come for the eye of Nugget, for as well as being a reliable cleaner, I am High Priestess of the ancient Egyptian cult of the Chicken God. I have pursued you half way across the world.

PHANTOM Gasp!

GIRY Thief! Murderer!

CHRISTINE To Eric. Did you kill Joseph Bouquet?

PHANTOM No, I haven't killed anyone, yet.

GIRY I'm afraid Joseph came upon me in the flies while I was stealing the safety chain off the chandelier for my secret weapon. So I was obliged to use my pecker stick to beat him to death.

RAOUL/CHRIS Secret weapon?

CHRISTINE Is it in that carrier bag?

GIRY No, this is two nice pink jumpers for my boys for Christmas.

PHANTOM How did you know it was me that stole the eye?

GIRY When I was touring my magic act in Egypt I joined the cult of Nugget and it was my day to clean his statue. When you stole the famous eye, I was out of sight, cleaning around the giblets area. I saw you take it with me own oreillys.

CHRISTINE What's the eye of Nugget?

GIRY It is the diamond set into your brooch, Miss. Hand it over.

Eric lunges towards the brooch and grabs it.

PHANTOM You won't get your wash-day hands on my booty!

GIRY Then I must call forth my chicken avenger.

She gets out a remote control device.

PHANTOM What?

More lightning and thunder.

GIRY Come, spirit of Nugget! Brother of Knorr! Consort of Paxo! I the high priestess of your ancient cult summon thee! Life giving lightning, electrify my

chicken avenger that he may arise on his infernal drumsticks and that I may guide him with this battery operated controller. Together we will restore to its rightful place, The Eye of Nugget!

More thunder and chicken noise. A huge thunder peal. The cyber chicken appears and goes towards the Phantom.

GIRY It lives! It Lives! Aha ha ha ha ha!!

PHANTOM No! Noooooo!

Music. The Phantom runs off followed by the Chicken and Madame Giry.

RAOUL He's getting away!

CHRISTINE He's heading for the lake! We have to stop him or I'll never be free.

RAOUL How?

CHRISTINE I know a short cut, and....

*She picks up Madam Giry's bag.
I've got an idea.*

RAOUL What about the Egyptian?

CHRISTINE We'll have to come back for him. Hurry!

The lake. The Phantom enters in a pedalo and Madame Giry and the chicken follow close behind. More thunder and lightning.

SOMEWHERE ON THE LOWER MEZZANINES

Raoul and the Egyptian struggle through a final trap door – The Egyptian says “I am going to drop down into the phantom’s lair. You must do the same. Don’t worry I’ll catch you.” Aaagh blackout and they fall into the chamber of mirrors.

CHAMBER OF MIRRORS

There’s no escape. The trap door has now self locked. The Egyptian has told Raoul that he once saved Eric’s life back in Egypt when he was going to be executed for stealing the diamond eye of the Goddess statue of Nugget. The Egyptian says to keep still incase movement sets the trap/torture chamber off. They hear talking and listen.

ERIC'S SALON and CHAMBER OF MIRRORS

Eric and Christine on the other side of the wall. Eric says “The wedding march or the requiem mass? Now that his great Opera, The Triumph of Don Juan is complete he wants to be married and live a

normal life. He's fed up with hiding in the dark. He describes the type of activities he'd like to do, and clubs he would join. He hears a scratching sound and a chicken noise. He is alarmed. He goes off to investigate and get some more Skips. Raoul calls out to Christine. She answers that she's been tied up. Raoul says wait while I suppress a cry of helpless rage. She says she can see the door that leads to the torture chamber and Eric keeps the key in a small pouch hanging on his organ and she's not allowed to touch it. More chicken noise plus the sound of mechanical movement. Christine struggles free and gets the keys off the organ. Eric returns with a family sized bag of Skips. He sees the keys are gone and seizes them from Christine. She cries out. Raoul says he can no longer muffle his anguish and makes a strange noise. What's that? Sounds like unmuffled anguish. There's someone in my torture chamber. If we turn off the lights Christine can see in the little window. She peers through a picture frame. In the chamber bright lights come on. Christine pretends there's no one there. The Phantom then tortures his captives with a range of light displays and sound effects to match, including snatches of the BeeGees. He laughs in triumph. The Egyptian says that Eric owes him his life and that he must save them and do the right thing. Eric says he will save them if Christine promises to marry him at 11 o'clock tomorrow. He assures her that she'd have fun as he knows loads of card tricks and has a whole library of holiday slides. She agrees. Eric says if they search they will find a trap door which leads to his new lift. Raoul is annoyed with the Egyptian for making him go down all those

steps. They find it and drop through as before. Another blackout covered by their cries.

A WATERY TRENCH

They are in a trench of water which is rising around them. Demonic laughter. A small straw appears in the water and Eric jumps up and tries to drown them. Christine begs Eric and he pulls them out.

ERIC'S SALON

He stuffs the Egyptian in a crate of Quavers, (which has an open back) and is going to kill Raoul with his “bear” hands. He puts them on and approaches Raoul menacingly. The sound of a lift descending many floors and growing chicken noise.

Eric is terrified. A ding as the lift arrives and out gets Madame Giry with a remote control. Short exchange about the diamond. She carries a designer carrier bag with something soft in it. The phantom thinks it contains the weapon of vengeance she has referred to but It’s a pair of matching novelty jumpers for her twin boys for xmas. She presses her remote shouting “I feel like chicken tonight” and a huge robotic chicken like the Terminator appears and goes toward Christine who’s still wearing the diamond. Raoul says she must take it off. She throws it to the phantom who catches it and runs off. Christine frees Raoul. Raoul says that no one knows the secret ways of the undercroft better than Eric and he’s sure to get away. If only they could reach the other side of the lake before him, he’d be surrounded. But why would the phantom let us stand in his way?

Christine has an idea. She calls for Cesar and grabs Madame Giry's designer bag. Raoul asks her why. Music.

THE UNDERGROUND LAKE and BANK

Chase involving Pedaloes with Madame Giry and the chicken in one, the phantom in another. The phantom reaches the bank and laughs. He knows a route out into the street. The chicken gets out and goes towards him. Suddenly two oven readies block his passage. The chicken throws feathers at him as they pull him down. He gives a final agonized shriek. The chicken retrieves the jewel for Madame Giry who gives thanks to the goddess Nugget for sending the oven readies. She and the chicken exit, the chicken doing a final short tap dance and wave. Raoul and Christine take the top of their chicken jumpers off and as they go to kiss, the Phantom runs off with a mad laugh.

THE LIFT

Raoul and Christine get in the lift Raoul complements her on the jumper idea. They sing something about their oven ready love.

ON STAGE

The Egyptian comes forward and does a summing up for the audience as all the characters in turn enter, with the phantom last. Song and end.

Note: The Egyptian has tracked Eric across the middle east and through Europe to Paris where he is hoping to arrest him for the

theft of the Third Eye of Nugget, the Chicken Goddess, consort of Knorr, god of cook in sauces. He masquerades as a wealthy patron and often questions the dancers about the so called phantom.

What on earth is that?

Just my sandwiches.

For unbeknownst to all those ponsy opera gits I, Madame Giry, am the high priestess of the cult of Nugget, the Ancient Egyptian chicken god.

Come, spirit of Nugget! Brother of Knorr! Consort of Paxo! I the high priestess of your ancient cult and appreciation society summon thee! Arise on your infernal drumsticks and come to my aid. Send life giving lightning to electrify my chicken avenger, that he may restore to its rightful place, The Eye of Nugget!

More thunder and chicken noise. Possibly a song. A huge thunder peal. The chicken legs begin to move..she also has the jumpers in a bag and says they are two lovely jumpers for her twin boys.

GIRY It lives! It Lives! Aha ha ha ha ha!!

It was a night to remember,
When all the bells of Paris rang,

In such harmonious celebration,
The night the lowly maiden sang,
She sang like an angel,
A nightingale at even tide,
Like a silver mist at dawn,
Like the calm before the storm,
A gentle ghost that walks the night.

It was a night,
Infernal blight,
Unholy sight,
A night to remember.



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