

Gaston Leroux's  
The Phantom of the  
Opera

A drama in two acts  
by Kyle Walker

# GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

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# GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

*for my parents,  
whose love of horror always sent me searching for phantoms*

# GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

## CAST:

LON CHANEY/THE PHANTOM – 41, warm, insightful/vengeful, tragic.  
CHRISTINE DAAÉ – 18, talented, haunted, haunting.  
GASTON LEROUX – 56, wry, guarded, secretive.  
RAOUL DE CHAGNY – 21, naïve, sensitive, impulsive.  
PHILIPPE DE CHAGNY – 40s, superior, controlling, blunt.  
THE PERSIAN – 50s, mysterious, suspicious, penitent.  
CARLOTTA – 30s-40s, conniving, devious, vain.  
MEG GIRY – 18, crass, spunky, energetic.  
FIRMIN RICHARD – 30s-50s, shrewd, womanizing, fiery.  
ARMAND MONCHARMIN – 30s-50s, anxious, caring, apprehensive.  
SORELLI – 20s, air-headed, trusting, bighearted.  
MARIE – 18, meek, timid, overworked.  
MADAME GIRY – 40s, simple, gossip, loyal.  
JEANNE LEROUX – 44, determined, kind, clever.  
MADELEINE LEROUX – 18, innocent, giddy, starstruck.  
JOSEPH BUQUET – 40s-50s, alcoholic, rude, talkative.  
FRANCOIS POLIGNY – 50s-60s, nervous, skittish, frayed.  
MASQUERADE REVELERS – Additional roles and/or doubled.

## TIME:

Summer, 1924. Winter, 1880.

## SETTING:

The Paris Opera House,  
in memory, imagination, and magic.

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### PLAYWRIGHT'S NOTES:

An intricate set can be utilized, but a minimalistic approach is encouraged, using screen projections to create each scene on stage. Using footage from the 1925 Universal Studios silent film *The Phantom of the Opera* (in the public domain) is also encouraged, especially in the Epilogue. The end of the film ties directly into the imagery and themes of the play.

The cast is written with many doubling opportunities. Gaston can be doubled with Joseph, Poligny and/or Philippe. Jeanne can be doubled with Madame Giry and/or Carlotta. Madeleine can be doubled with Meg or Marie and/or Sorelli or even Christine. Diverse, gender-blind and color-blind casting is encouraged.

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

*Gaston Leroux's The Phantom of the Opera* premiered at Dog Story Theater in Grand Rapids, Michigan on January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2016, produced by The University Wits Theatrical Company, with original music by Todd M. Lewis. The cast was as follows:

LON CHANEY/THE PHANTOM .....	Scott Baisden
CHRISTINE DAAÉ .....	Danielle "Elle" Lucksted
GASTON LEROUX/JOSEPH/POLIGNY .....	Mark Moran
RAOUL DE CHAGNY .....	Zachary Johnson
PHILIPPE DE CHAGNY .....	Matthew Gommesen
THE PERSIAN .....	Matt Walker
CARLOTTA .....	Ashley F Viersen
MEG GIRY ..	Anessa "Anna" Johnson
MADAME GIRY .....	Mary Howing
ARMAND MONCHARMIN .....	JJ Lindke
FIRMIN RICHARD .....	Michael Pollock
SORELLI .....	Seraphina Zorn
BERNADETTE/MARIE .....	Taylor Emmons

The revised version received a workshop reading on July 17<sup>th</sup>, 2019, produced by WKTV Community Media and a virtual production on May 29<sup>th</sup>, 2020, produced by Dog Story Theater. The cast for both was as follows:

LON CHANEY/THE PHANTOM .....	Scott Baisden
CHRISTINE DAAÉ .....	Hannah Harrison
GASTON/PHILIPPE/JOSEPH/POLIGNY .....	Mark Moran
RAOUL DE CHAGNY .....	Ian Brown/Matthew Gommesen
THE PERSIAN .....	Matt Walker
MADELEINE/SORELLI/MARIE .....	Amanda Grah/Seraphina Zorn
ARMAND MONCHARMIN .....	JJ Lindke
FIRMIN RICHARD .....	Rod Zamarron/Michael Pollock
CARLOTTA .....	Ashley F Viersen
MEG GIRY ..	Beth Anne Schaub
JEANNE/MADAME GIRY .....	Brooke Maier/Mary Howing
STAGE DIRECTIONS .....	Brie Roper

# GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

## ACT I SCENE 1

*The empty stage of the Paris Opera House – Summer, 1924. Music plays off stage [“Gounod: Faust - Act 1: Entr’acte”]. GASTON LEROUX enters in darkness. As the music swells, the stage is flooded with light, startling Gaston.*

**GASTON.** Who's there?! (*JEANNE LEROUX enters.*)

**JEANNE.** It is only me, darling.

**GASTON.** Jeanne? I'm sorry. I didn't mean to—

**JEANNE.** You get jumpy every time you return here. It was the same when you gave the tour to Monsieur Laemmle.

**GASTON.** Yes, well, one tends to get nervous around a big Hollywood movie producer.

**JEANNE.** Thankfully, the opera house did most of the talking, right? Hard not to fall in love with it.

**GASTON.** Much of it has changed since I fell in love with it. And much hasn't.

**JEANNE.** Like what?

**GASTON.** Hm. (*Gaston wanders around the stage, staring off vacantly.*)

**JEANNE.** Ah, I see. You are doing it again.

**GASTON.** Hm?

**JEANNE.** You are working on a new story, aren't you?

**GASTON.** What makes you say that?

**JEANNE.** You always get that same far-off look on your face. It is like you are planning a murder. Does this new story have anything to do with your meeting today?

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**GASTON.** I am not sure yet. (*MADELEINE LEROUX enters breathlessly.*)

**MADELEINE.** Mother! Father!

**GASTON.** What is it, Madeleine?

**MADELEINE.** He... he...

**JEANNE.** Darling, you must breathe.

**MADELEINE.** He is here! I saw him get out of his carriage up front!

**JEANNE.** (*To Gaston.*) The manager said you could use his office. Shall we go?

**GASTON.** Actually, I was thinking of having the meeting right here.

**JEANNE.** On the stage?

**GASTON.** It seems the perfect place.

**JEANNE.** I suppose so.

**MADELEINE.** I'm so excited! But I am also terrified!

**GASTON.** Terrified? Of him?

**MADELEINE.** Not him exactly. But the monsters he creates. I mean, Mother and I saw him at the cinema a few months ago, and he was frightfully dreadful!

**GASTON.** I hope, for my sake, that he is not as frightfully dreadful in person.

**MADELEINE.** Oh, no! He looks nothing like the hunchback he played. He is very handsome and kind and gentle and—

**JEANNE.** Madeleine, you have not even met the man yet.

**MADELEINE.** I know! But I— He is—

**JEANNE.** A bit star-struck, are we?

**MADELEINE.** I have never met a world-famous movie star before!

**GASTON.** Do not worry, Madeleine. I am a bit scared to meet him as well. (*A long shadow grows across the stage, reaching toward Gaston. Seeing it, Madeleine screams. Gaston leaps to protect her. The shadow is revealed to be LON CHANEY. He enters carrying a large metal box.*)

**LON.** Didn't mean to frighten you. They told me you were in here. Lovely music. *Faust*, isn't it?

**JEANNE.** And quite loud at that.

**GASTON.** I apologize. I refuse to travel anywhere without my phonograph.



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**JEANNE.** You should hear how he plays it at home. Blasts it in every room.

**GASTON.** Opera should only be listened to when listened loudly.

**LON.** Of course!

**JEANNE.** Regardless, I think it might be best if I go turn it off for now.  
*(Jeanne exits. After a moment, the music stops, and Jeanne reenters.)*

**LON.** Mr. Leroux, I presume?

**GASTON.** Yes, and the phonograph operator here is my wife, Jeanne. And this is my daughter, Madeleine.

**MADELEINE.** It is nice to meet you, Monsieur Chaney.

**LON.** Please, honey, call me Lon.

**MADELEINE.** Monsieur Lon.

**LON.** *(Laughing.)* No, I mean, just Lon is fine.

**MADELEINE.** I am sorry. May I take your... um... box, Monsi— Lon?

**LON.** No, thank you, Madeleine. *(Madeleine breaks out in a fit of giggles.)*

**GASTON.** I apologize, when Madeleine found out that I was going to Paris to meet Lon Chaney, the famous American movie star, she insisted on coming.

**MADELEINE.** Father!

**JEANNE.** *(To Gaston.)* You are to blame, dear.

**LON.** How so?

**GASTON.** I formed a small movie company a while back. Just serialized films.

**JEANNE.** In which Madeleine had a few starring roles and—

**LON.** She got the acting bug.

**MADELEINE.** I must know! After the lashing scene in “The Hunchback,” when Esmerelda brings you water, the fright and surprise on your face seems so real. How did you do it?

**LON.** The key is making your audience feel the emotion, not yourself. Esmerelda didn't bring me the water, she brought it to the deformed, misunderstood creature within all of us.

**MADELEINE.** So, it is the audience that makes it real?

**LON.** Finding the character makes it real.

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**JEANNE.** *(To Gaston.)* Well, dear, while you might have come here to meet with Lon, Madeleine and I have some business to take care of downtown. So, we will leave you two in peace.

**LON.** *(To Madeleine.)* Good luck finding the character, Madeleine.

**MADELEINE.** You too. I mean, not that you need... um...

**JEANNE.** Come along, dear. *(Jeanne and Madeleine exit. A silence falls upon the stage while Lon considers his next words.)*

**LON.** I know you must be wondering why I—

**GASTON.** I know why you are here.

**LON.** You do?

**GASTON.** “The Man of a Thousand Faces” has come to put a face on the Phantom.

**LON.** Trying to, at least. That’s actually one of the reasons I wanted to see you. I was hoping to show you what I have come up with so far. May I? *(Gaston nods, and Lon opens up the box and begins applying make-up to his face.)*

**GASTON.** So, this is the magical make-up box of Lon Chaney.

**LON.** I suppose. But there is no magic in it that I have found. Just a lot of putty, spirit gum, and collodion.

**GASTON.** And you think you will be able to find the Phantom in this box?

**LON.** I hope so.

**GASTON.** That sure sounds like magic to me.

**LON.** The make-up only helps to reveal the heart of the character, the soul. That is where the true magic lies. That is why I need your help. We are slated to start filming in a few months, but the studio has got it into their heads that the ending needs more action. They want this elaborate chase scene where the Phantom gets killed by an angry mob.

**GASTON.** That seems perfect fodder for film.

**LON.** But it completely contradicts your novel. I wanted this role because the Phantom is more than just a monster.

**GASTON.** You are sure about that?

**LON.** Are you?

**GASTON.** What is it you want from me?

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**LON.** Not many people know this, but I was the one that sent Carl Laemmle here to purchase the rights to your book. I fell in love with it the moment I read it.

**GASTON.** I am afraid I will not be much use to you then; all you need is in the book.

**LON.** But the more I've read it, the less of the character I understand. I feel that something is missing. Something you did not include in the book.

**GASTON.** And that would be?

**LON.** The truth.

**GASTON.** What truth?

**LON.** Did the Phantom of the Opera actually exist?

**GASTON.** The truth does not belong on film, and it certainly does not sell books.

**LON.** I must know.

**GASTON.** *(Beat.)* Perhaps it is time.

**LON.** Tell me. The whole story.

**GASTON.** The whole story? It has been nearly 45 years since “the whole story” began. Much has changed since then. Yet the Paris Opera House has not. There is magic in this place. Magic that does not fade. Magic that, if you look closely, may even bring the stage to life. *(Lights fade – special on Gaston.)* It was January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1880 – they were preparing to celebrate the retirement of the current managers, Gerard Debienne and François Poligny, by hosting a gala performance. That night would set into motion the story of love and of horror that still haunts the Opera House to this day. *(The stage comes to life, shedding the years as lights crossfade into the next scene...)*

### SCENE 2

*Backstage at the Opera House – Winter, 1880. A shrill scream splits the silence. SORELLI enters, pursued by MEG.*

**MEG.** He's coming for you, Sorelli!

**SORELLI.** Stop it, Meg!

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**MEG.** Jammes said she saw him in the backstage passageway. Walked straight through the wall!

**SORELLI.** You shouldn't speak of him! Not on the night of a performance!

**MEG.** Opera Ghost! Opera Ghost! Opera Ghost!

**SORELLI.** I am not listening! No, no, no!

**MEG.** Calm down, I am only having a little fun.

**SORELLI.** Little Meg! I'm worried enough about tonight as it is!

**MEG.** Why? It is only a gala.

**SORELLI.** Yes, but I want to write a speech for tonight's reception dinner.

**MEG.** Are you sure you will have time to give a speech? Won't you be busy with the Count?

**SORELLI.** What do you mean?

**MEG.** He has come to see you perform every day for the past few months.

**SORELLI.** Philippe is a great patron of the arts.

**MEG.** Is that why you both seem to disappear afterward?

**SORELLI.** No!

**MEG.** Then why are you blushing?

**SORELLI.** I am not! Besides, Philippe only comes to the Opera because of his brother.

**MEG.** His brother? Oh, yes! The sailor boy!

**SORELLI.** Raoul is a highly decorated Naval officer. Just returned from a voyage around the world. And he is the one insistent on coming to the Opera. Not Philippe.

**MEG.** Probably ogling the dancers.

**SORELLI.** Not exactly. It's... well...

**MEG.** What?

**SORELLI.** Philippe says it is because of Christine.

**MEG.** Christine? (*CHRISTINE enters.*)

**SORELLI.** Oh! Christine!

**CHRISTINE.** Here you are, Meg. I was wondering if you wouldn't mind running the Delibes piece with me.

**MEG.** Of course! You wouldn't want to trip in front of the Viscount.

**SORELLI.** Meg! Hush!

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**CHRISTINE.** What is going on here?

**MEG.** Oh, nothing. Sorelli was just telling me a little secret. About you and a certain Viscount de Chagny.

**CHRISTINE.** I... I don't know what you're talking about.

**MEG.** Come now, Christine! Sorelli says that your little sailor boy has been coming to the opera to see you.

**CHRISTINE.** What? He has? I mean... He told you this, Sorelli?

**SORELLI.** He has asked after you many times.

**CHRISTINE.** Really? What did you say?

**SORELLI.** Oh, this and that.

**CHRISTINE.** Like what?

**MEG.** She said that you want him madly and cannot wait until you are in his big strong arms!

**CHRISTINE.** You didn't!

**SORELLI.** Did I?

**MEG.** Looks like it is Christine's turn to blush!

**SORELLI.** Raoul was very excited when they made you Carlotta's understudy. Is it true that you've been taking lessons?

**CHRISTINE.** Well, yes.

**SORELLI.** From whom?

**MEG.** Don't ask! I've already tried many times. It's a mystery.

**SORELLI.** Ooo! A mystery.

**CHRISTINE.** What does it matter anyway? Carlotta will never allow me to sing.

**SORELLI.** But she has never had an understudy! That must mean something.

**MEG.** She has been the prima donna for five years now. It is about time someone else takes her place. And with a rich Viscount backing you now, I'm sure it will only be a matter of time.

**SORELLI.** But you must hurry. Raoul has signed on with an American naval expedition. He leaves in only a few months.

**CHRISTINE.** Maybe that's for the best.

**SORELLI.** What?

**CHRISTINE.** Nothing. Why were you two lurking out here, anyway?

**SORELLI.** I came out here to practice my speech for tonight.

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**CHRISTINE.** A speech?

**SORELLI.** For Messieurs Debiegne and Poligny's retirement.

**CHRISTINE.** Let's hear it.

**SORELLI.** All right, all right! "Welcome Messieurs and Mesdames to the reception dinner. I hope you all enjoyed the gala performance. Messieurs Debiegne and Poligny, you will be missed greatly."

**MEG.** That's it?

**SORELLI.** Yes. Is it too long?

**MEG.** You cannot be serious.

**SORELLI.** Serious? Oh! Do you think I should add a humorous anecdote?

**MEG.** I think it is humorous all on its own.

**CHRISTINE.** Stop teasing her, Little Meg. Sorelli, it was lovely.

**SORELLI.** Yes, well if Meg hadn't scared me like she did— (*JOSEPH BUQUET enters behind them, unseen.*)

**JOSEPH.** Scare you?! (*Sorelli, Meg, and Christine scream in surprise.*)

**MEG.** Joseph! You scoundrel!

**JOSEPH.** You should be scared. What, with the Phantom of the Opera about.

**SORELLI.** The Opera Ghost!?

**MEG.** See! I told you!

**CHRISTINE.** Please, the Opera Ghost is only a silly superstition. Someone to blame when you miss a step or sing a sour note. And old scene-shifters, who have had too much to drink, only make it worse.

**JOSEPH.** I am sober and steady as a rock.

**CHRISTINE.** The Phantom of the Opera does not exist.

**JOSEPH.** He exists, all right. I saw him! Just moments ago!

**SORELLI.** You did? You really saw him?

**JOSEPH.** Stared right into the face of the demon! I was down by the footlights when a dark figure came lurking from the shadows. I chased him down to the third cellar and was this close to catching him when he disappeared. Vanished into the darkness.

**MEG.** What did he look like?

**JOSEPH.** He has dark, glowing eyes like burning embers. His skin is pulled across jagged bones, and his flesh is a sickly color, like that of

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death. He has the nose of a skeleton – eaten away by decay. He's a ghastly, decrepit, living-corpse!

**CHRISTINE.** You saw all that while chasing him in the dark?

**MEG.** My mother believes in the Ghost.

**CHRISTINE.** Your mother believes a lot of things.

**MEG.** She says he is very kind and gentle.

**JOSEPH.** Your mother's never seen his face like I have!

**CHRISTINE.** I have heard enough of this ghost story.

**JOSEPH.** But it's true! He is a loathsome demon that the Devil himself threw out of Hell for his accursed ugliness. He has razor sharp teeth and inhuman claws that are drenched in the blood of his victims.

**CHRISTINE.** So now he has claws?

**JOSEPH.** Follow me and you'll see for yourself! The third cellar is the key! I'll tear apart every inch of it to find him and expose him for the monster he is!

**CHRISTINE.** I refuse to chase any ghosts with you tonight, Joseph. Come on. We must get ready for the gala.

**SORELLI.** Shame on you, Joseph. I am nervous enough as it is.  
*(Christine, Meg and Sorelli exit.)*

**JOSEPH.** *(Shouting after them.)* You should be nervous! The Phantom haunts us all! *(In the darkness, a voice whispers from everywhere and nowhere.)*

**PHANTOM.** Joseph.

**JOSEPH.** Who said that? Who's there? *(Joseph looks around nervously, then exits. Blackout.)*

### SCENE 3

*The Manager's Office. FIRMIN RICHARD and ARMAND MONCHARMIN enter.*

**ARMAND.** But Firmin, I have never managed an opera house before.

**FIRMIN.** Neither have I. But I know music, and you know everything else.

**ARMAND.** But I cannot understand a word of opera.

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**FIRMIN.** That is the beauty of it. The audience will come regardless.

**ARMAND.** But Firmin—

**FIRMIN.** Stop being so negative.

**ARMAND.** I am only nervous.

**FIRMIN.** You are always nervous.

**ARMAND.** Where is Poligny? He said that it was an urgent matter.

**FIRMIN.** Relax, I am sure he will be here soon. I only wonder what he—  
*(FRANCOIS POLIGNY enters carrying a small book.)*

**POLIGNY.** Sorry I am late, Messieurs. There is much to do when preparing to retire.

**FIRMIN.** I am sure.

**POLIGNY.** I hope you have had a chance to explore your new opera house.

**ARMAND.** It is quite beautiful.

**POLIGNY.** Well, it is yours now.

**FIRMIN.** Yes, it is. All the paperwork is in order, everything is notarized and final, so I fail to see what is so important that you insisted upon this meeting in the final hour.

**POLIGNY.** There is something I feel you must know. Monsieur Debienne – Gerard – if he knew I was here, he would make quite the scene. But I feel that it is my duty as well as my burden to tell you about the Opera Ghost.

**FIRMIN.** Ghost?

**POLIGNY.** I am afraid so. You see, this building has a very tumultuous history. War broke out not long after construction began, leaving the Opera House half-finished and desolate.

**FIRMIN.** What does this have to do with managing the opera?

**POLIGNY.** What many do not know is that the Opera House was used to interrogate and torture prisoners of war.

**ARMAND.** That is terrible.

**POLIGNY.** That is not the worst part. Spurred by hatred and revenge, one of the prisoners rose from the grave and haunts the opera to this day!

*(Firmin and Armand exchange looks then burst out in laughter.)*

**ARMAND.** Oh, monsieur! You are truly too much! I was worrying for nothing!



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**FIRMIN.** I heard you were always close with your cast, but never that you thought yourself the comedian. A wonderful jest.

**POLIGNY.** I assure you; it is no jest.

**FIRMIN.** And the ghost shall appear before us at any moment! Oooo!

**POLIGNY.** He very well might.

**ARMAND.** Now what was it that you wanted to see us about? (*Poligny hands Armand the book he has been carrying.*)

**POLIGNY.** This is the instruction book for the Palais Garnier.

**FIRMIN.** Yes, Armand and I have a copy just like it.

**POLIGNY.** But you will want to read this copy very carefully. In it you will find the demands of the Phantom of the Opera. (*Armand flips through the book.*)

**FIRMIN.** I always enjoy a good laugh, but this is ridiculous. If you are attempting to make fools of us—

**POLIGNY.** Believe me, it is the furthest thing from my mind. But the Ghost—

**FIRMIN.** Enough of this Ghost business!

**ARMAND.** Dear Lord! This “Phantom” demands 20,000 francs a month!

**FIRMIN.** What?

**ARMAND.** And the exclusive use of Box Five for all performances. It is written here at the bottom, in red.

**POLIGNY.** Believe me, 20,000 francs is a price worth paying. And I dare not set foot in Box Five ever again. I did once and vowed never to return. Also, it seems that the Ghost has taken a liking to one of the chorus girls. Demanded I make her La Carlotta’s understudy.

**ARMAND.** Ah, yes. Christine Daaé, correct?

**POLIGNY.** A very charming girl. And the casting is not beyond merit. Though, Carlotta would not let me hear the end of it.

**FIRMIN.** This is lunacy. I refuse to follow the commands of some specter.

**POLIGNY.** Gerard and I had the same sense of stubborn rebellion when the Phantom first appeared to us. But you must obey him!

**FIRMIN.** We are trying to run an opera here; an opera whose quality has suffered due to your negligence. And you have the gall to bring us here, tell us some half-crazed ghost story, and extort 20,000 francs from us every month!

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**POLIGNY.** I wish only to warn you.

**FIRMIN.** Get out! Get out of here right now!

**POLIGNY.** Please, you must listen—

**FIRMIN.** GET OUT! (*Firmin shoves Poligny toward the exit, but Armand intercedes.*)

**ARMAND.** Firmin! Firmin! Let him be!

**POLIGNY.** Oh, I shall leave. But mark my words, he will come for you. And when he does, I pity your souls. (*Poligny exits.*)

**FIRMIN.** Can you believe that man! No wonder he is retiring. He has completely lost his mind.

**ARMAND.** Losing your temper did not help.

**FIRMIN.** Opera Ghost! What nonsense! (*Firmin exits. Armand stands for a moment, looking at the book, then exits. Blackout.*)

### SCENE 4

*Christine's dressing room. Christine and Meg enter.*

**MEG.** It is that last grande jeté. My leg extension is all wrong.

**CHRISTINE.** It looked fine to me.

**MEG.** Yours looked fine, but some of us must work for perfection, you know.

**CHRISTINE.** I am far from perfection.

**MEG.** You are the prima donna's understudy after only two years!

**CHRISTINE.** I told you; I had nothing to do with that, it was—

**MEG.** Your mysterious tutor. And, I know, I'm not allowed to ask any questions.

**CHRISTINE.** I wish I could tell you everything.

**MEG.** Everything about you is a mystery now. First the tutor and then the Viscount. What else are you hiding?

**CHRISTINE.** Nothing, I...

**MEG.** You are hiding something, aren't you?

**CHRISTINE.** It's just that tonight... I...

**MEG.** We used to tell each other everything.

**CHRISTINE.** I can't, Meg.

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**MEG.** Then I shall leave you to your secrets. *(Meg goes to exit.)*

**CHRISTINE.** Wait! *(Beat.)* Tonight is the anniversary of my father's death and—

**MEG.** Oh, Christine! I forgot!

**CHRISTINE.** It's all right, Meg.

**MEG.** I'm a horrible friend! No wonder you've been acting so strangely.

**CHRISTINE.** Yes, but—

**MEG.** Can you ever forgive me?

**CHRISTINE.** Of course. And I promise, one day I will explain everything.

**MEG.** Don't worry about that right now. What we need to worry about is that curtains go up in less than an hour! And I look dreadful!

**CHRISTINE.** Nothing could be further from the truth.

**MEG.** Yes, well, no mystery there, but I suppose I should go get ready.

**CHRISTINE.** And Meg? Your grande jeté does look very good.

**MEG.** I'm still skeptical, but I'll take the compliment. *(Meg exits. Christine turns to get ready when a voice echoes from everywhere and nowhere.)*

**PHANTOM.** Christine.

**CHRISTINE.** Angel?

**PHANTOM.** Tonight, your voice shall be revealed to the world.

**CHRISTINE.** What do you mean?

**PHANTOM.** All will be revealed in time.

**CHRISTINE.** I was wondering. Meg is such a good friend to me. Perhaps, if I told her about you—

**PHANTOM.** You are to tell no one!

**CHRISTINE.** Yes, of course.

**PHANTOM.** Your father sent me to you, and you alone can hear my voice. All others are unworthy. The Angel of Music cannot be paraded and displayed.

**CHRISTINE.** I am sorry.

**PHANTOM.** You need only quiet your mind and focus, my child. You must prepare for your grand debut.

**CHRISTINE.** Prepare for what? Angel? *(CARLOTTA enters, followed by MARIE.)*

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**CARLOTTA.** Who were you talking to?

**CHRISTINE.** Carlotta!

**CARLOTTA.** I heard voices.

**CHRISTINE.** There is no one else here, see for yourself.

**CARLOTTA.** Do not patronize me, whelp!

**CHRISTINE.** What can I do for you?

**CARLOTTA.** I do not know how you sweet-talked yourself into being my understudy, but mark my words; it will not last for long. You may have fooled Debienne and Poligny with your supposed innocence, but the new managers will not be deceived so easily.

**CHRISTINE.** What do you mean?

**CARLOTTA.** Marie? *(Marie hands Christine a folded-up letter.)*

**MARIE.** I found this in Carlotta's dressing room.

**CHRISTINE.** What is it?

**CARLOTTA.** You know what it is!

**CHRISTINE.** *(Reading.)* "Madame Carlotta – You will find it quite advantageous to refrain from attending the gala performance tonight. If you do, you will find yourself very ill indeed. Kind regards – Opera Ghost." *(Christine stares at the note for a moment – then laughs. Marie can't help but join in.)*

**CARLOTTA.** What is so funny, Marie?

**MARIE.** Nothing. I'm sorry.

**CARLOTTA.** You will be sorry!

**CHRISTINE.** Do not take it out on Marie. Someone has obviously played a childish trick on you, Madame.

**CARLOTTA.** A childish trick played by a child! If you think ghosts scare me, you are gravely mistaken.

**CHRISTINE.** You think I wrote this?

**CARLOTTA.** Do not play innocent with me, little girl.

**CHRISTINE.** I have never seen this letter before in my life.

**CARLOTTA.** Do you take me for a fool? I know how the opera works. I have done many things that I am not proud of in service to my career. And I am not about to throw away those sacrifices for an ingénue with an overactive imagination! Want some advice? *(Carlotta slaps Christine across the face.)*

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**MARIE.** Madame, you didn't need to—! (*Marie goes to Christine's side.*)

**CARLOTTA.** Get away from her, Marie! (*To Christine.*) Oh, does it hurt? It better. If not, I will make sure the next one does. And you can tell your "Ghost" the same. (*Carlotta exits.*)

**MARIE.** I'm sorry, Christine. She is—

**CARLOTTA.** (*Off stage.*) Marie!

**MARIE.** Yes. Yes. (*Marie exits. Christine regains her calm and looks back at the note, puzzled. Blackout.*)

### SCENE 5

*Carlotta's dressing room. Carlotta and Marie enter.*

**CARLOTTA.** Can you believe her? She thinks herself a rival. Her voice would not carry past the conductor's nose.

**MARIE.** She's been taking lessons.

**CARLOTTA.** Is that so?

**MARIE.** They say her voice has improved quite a lot.

**CARLOTTA.** Find out who is spreading this vicious lie and have them thrown out.

**MARIE.** Everyone's saying it, Madame.

**CARLOTTA.** Everyone? No matter. That conniving wench will never set foot on that stage again.

**MARIE.** You didn't have to slap Christine like that.

**CARLOTTA.** Maybe I should have slapped you, instead?

**MARIE.** I just meant—

**CARLOTTA.** Why don't you go console the little blackmailer? I have no use for you here. Seeing that you have now successfully lost today's pay.

**MARIE.** Please, no!

**CARLOTTA.** Get out! Get out of my dressing room at once!

**MARIE.** I need that money!

**CARLOTTA.** Would you rather lose your pay for the week?

**MARIE.** You cannot do this!

**CARLOTTA.** You shall find, Marie, that there are many things I can do. Now go. (*Marie exits.*) Everyone is going crazy except me. But they will

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

see soon enough. Precious little Christine Daaé will be the only “ghost” around here. Opera Ghost. Ha! (*Carlotta laughs but is suddenly cut off.*)

**PHANTOM.** Madame?

**CARLOTTA.** What?

**PHANTOM.** Madame, I must implore you.

**CARLOTTA.** Who is that? Where are you?

**PHANTOM.** You will not sing tonight.

**CARLOTTA.** Is that you, Christine? I swear, I shall—

**PHANTOM.** You have said many hurtful things about Christine Daaé, and I shall put an end to it.

**CARLOTTA.** How dare you—

**PHANTOM.** Listen to me.

**CARLOTTA.** I will do no such—

**PHANTOM.** Listen to me closely. Listen to my voice. Only my voice.

**CARLOTTA.** (*In a trance.*) Only your voice.

**PHANTOM.** You will not sing tonight.

**CARLOTTA.** I will not sing tonight.

**PHANTOM.** You are feeling very ill. You will go home immediately.

**CARLOTTA.** (*Fighting.*) But the gala!

**PHANTOM.** You will go home now!

**CARLOTTA.** (*Overtaken.*) I will go home now.

**PHANTOM.** And send your regrets to the management.

**CARLOTTA.** Yes, of course.

**PHANTOM.** Carlotta?

**CARLOTTA.** Yes.

**PHANTOM.** You will remember none of this.

**CARLOTTA.** Who...? Who are—?

**PHANTOM.** (*Laughing.*) Who am I? Why, I'm the Opera Ghost, of course! (*Carlotta exits, still in a trance. Blackout.*)

### SCENE 6

*The Grand Staircase. It is the night of the gala performance. RAOUL DE CHAGNY and PHILIPPE DE CHAGNY enter.*

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**RAOUL.** Come, it will be starting soon.

**PHILIPPE.** Why the rush? I am sure your chorus girl can wait.

**RAOUL.** Christine is not just a chorus girl. She is La Carlotta's understudy.

**PHILIPPE.** Dear brother, why do you torture yourself?

**RAOUL.** What do you mean?

**PHILIPPE.** For months, you have been coming here and stalking this poor girl, and she has not even batted an eyelash at you.

**RAOUL.** That makes no difference.

**PHILIPPE.** Raoul, I understand. You will be leaving soon. You deserve to go out and have some fun. I doubt there will be many women in the Arctic. But that does not mean you should obsess over just one.

**RAOUL.** Spare me the advice, Philippe. You have been coming to the opera just as much as me to see La Sorelli.

**PHILIPPE.** I may not be going on an expedition into the frozen wastelands, but I deserve some fun as well.

**RAOUL.** So, stop lecturing me.

**PHILIPPE.** But that is all that it will ever be – fun. You have always had an attachment to the fairer sex. Mother gave her life in giving life to you, so I—

**RAOUL.** Leave Mother out of this.

**PHILIPPE.** I do not think it wise to fixate on a girl who does not even know who you are.

**RAOUL.** But she does. Do you remember the summer I spent in Perros?

**PHILIPPE.** After father died. I sent you there to stay with Aunt Beatrice.

**RAOUL.** Yes, she would always take me on walks along the beach. One day, we heard music in the distance. It was the most beautiful music I had ever heard. So graceful, so tender. As if from heaven.

**PHILIPPE.** What has this got to do with your chorus girl?

**RAOUL.** We followed the music and found an old man playing a violin. He had a little daughter. She stood next to him, singing. She had the voice of an angel. (*Beat.*) That little girl was Christine Daaé.

**PHILIPPE.** I see.

**RAOUL.** I was mesmerized by her voice, hypnotized, until a sudden gust of wind picked up the scarf she was wearing and carried it out to sea.

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

Without thinking, I dove in and fetched it. After that, we were inseparable. I spent the entire summer with her and her father; listening to his stories, hearing her sing. And when you made me return home, I—

**PHILIPPE.** You locked yourself in your room for weeks. I thought it was because of Father.

**RAOUL.** When we first came to the Opera and I saw her there on stage, I fell madly in love with her all over again.

**PHILIPPE.** But you were a child. Only what, eleven years old? Things change.

**RAOUL.** Not this. Not her.

**PHILIPPE.** Love will be the death of you yet, boy. Come. After the performance, I will see if I can get you an audience with Mademoiselle Daaé.

**RAOUL.** Thank you, Philippe. *(Raoul exits excitedly. Philippe follows, shaking his head. Blackout.)*

### SCENE 7

*The hallway outside of the Grand Staircase. Firmin and Armand enter. MADAME GIRY enters behind them.*

**MADAME GIRY.** Messieurs! Messieurs!

**ARMAND.** Yes, Madame?

**MADAME GIRY.** I am Madame Giry. I am the usher for the First-Tier boxes and mother to Little Meg – that is what they call her. She is the little dancer, you know. She danced beautifully last—

**FIRMIN.** Yes, yes! Now what is it that you want?

**MADAME GIRY.** I have come to tell you that Monsieur Maniera and his party have left.

**ARMAND.** Maniera? He is—

**MADAME GIRY.** He is the gem dealer from up on the Rue Mogador. Always gives healthy tips. Let me tell you, when my fellow ushers and I see Monsieur Maniera entering the opera we become quite giddy. But I knew there was trouble when I saw where he sat for tonight's performance.



## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**FIRMIN.** Will you please get to the point! The performance is about to begin!

**MADAME GIRY.** Not if the Opera Ghost has anything to say about it!

**FIRMIN.** Oh, dear Lord!

**ARMAND.** You have heard of him?

**MADAME GIRY.** Heard of him, Monsieur? I have been his usher for the past five years.

**FIRMIN.** His what?

**MADAME GIRY.** It was during a performance of *La Juive* when I first met the Opera Ghost.

**ARMAND.** You have seen him?

**MADAME GIRY.** Of course not, Monsieur! He is a ghost, a shade, a wandering spirit. One cannot see beings that are on a different ethereal plane.

**ARMAND.** Ethereal plane?

**MADAME GIRY.** The spirit world, Monsieur.

**ARMAND.** Oh, yes. Of course.

**MADAME GIRY.** He is only a voice. A man's voice.

**FIRMIN.** A ghostly gentleman! How nice.

**MADAME GIRY.** He usually arrives in the middle of the first act and knocks three times on the door. Let me tell you, the first time I heard it, knowing full well that the box was empty, put me in quite the stupor.

**FIRMIN.** (*Under his breath.*) More than usual?

**MADAME GIRY.** I went inside the box, but it was empty. So, I turned to leave, and that was when I heard it!

**ARMAND.** Heard what?

**MADAME GIRY.** The voice! He spoke as though he was standing right next to me. And yet the box was empty!

**ARMAND.** What did he say?

**MADAME GIRY.** He asked me for a footstool.

**FIRMIN.** A footstool! He must be a wandering spirit if he needs to rest his feet during the show.

**ARMAND.** What did you do?

**MADAME GIRY.** I brought him a footstool.

**FIRMIN.** (*Whispering to Armand.*) She is a raving lunatic.

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**MADAME GIRY.** At the end of the performance, he gives me two, five, or even ten francs. But I will probably not be finding a tip from the Opera Ghost tonight.

**ARMAND.** And why is that?

**MADAME GIRY.** Some fool let Monsieur and Madame Maniera, and their friend Isadore Saack, sit in Box Five!

**FIRMIN.** The box was available, so I sold it to them.

**MADAME GIRY.** But Monsieur! That is the Ghost's box! Monsieur Maniera had just taken his seat when the Ghost bade him look to his wife. And what did he see? Why, his friend Isadore Saack whispering sweet nothings into Madame Maniera's ear and kissing her hand – obviously not as discreetly as they thought. Well, you can imagine what happened next. Bang! Bang! Slap! Slap! And the Ghost laughing all the while.

**FIRMIN.** The indiscretions of our patrons are not our concern.

**MADAME GIRY.** But you were told of the arrangement for Box Five, were you not? *(Music plays off stage.)*

**FIRMIN.** I have heard enough of this. And look! The gala has begun! This "Phantom" has caused us enough problems, and now he has made us late! *(Firmin exits.)*

**MADAME GIRY.** He will do much more than that if you do not heed his demands.

**ARMAND.** This whole Phantom of the Opera business – surely, it is a joke.

**MADAME GIRY.** I did not see Isadore Saack laughing.

**ARMAND.** I better take my seat.

**MADAME GIRY.** As long as it's not in Box Five.

**ARMAND.** Yes, of course. *(Armand exits. Madame Giry watches him go, shaking her head, then exits. Blackout.)*

### SCENE 8

*Christine's dressing room. Gaston enters in darkness. Special on Gaston. Music plays off stage ["Gounod: Roméo Et Juliette - Act 4: Amour, Ranime Mon Courage"].*

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**GASTON.** Despite the looming presence of the Opera Ghost, the gala performance went splendidly. And the audience was never more captivated than when Christine Daaé took the stage. Her voice enchanted, entranced, completely and utterly enraptured them. And the magic spell she cast seemed to bewitch even her. For at the end of her aria, as applause filled the silence, she collapsed on stage. She was overwhelmed by the audience response but, more importantly, she was overtaken by the voice she found that night. The voice of an angel. *(The lights crossfade as Raoul enters carrying Christine. Meg and Sorelli enter followed by Philippe. Raoul lays Christine down and tends to her.)*

**MEG.** Thank you, Viscount. I don't know what we would have done without you!

**SORELLI.** The way you jumped onstage! Quite exciting.

**PHILIPPE.** Raoul has always been fond of leaping before looking.

**CHRISTINE.** Angel? Angel?

**RAOUL.** Christine? Can you hear me?

**SORELLI.** *(To Meg and Philippe.)* Have you ever seen anything like that? A singer fainting on stage?

**PHILIPPE.** Never in my life! She must be quite frail.

**MEG.** I have never heard her sing like that.

**SORELLI.** Where did she get that voice?

**PHILIPPE.** Six months ago, she sang like a rusty hinge.

**SORELLI.** Philippe!

**PHILIPPE.** It is true.

**MEG.** It is not. Her voice was merely missing something.

**PHILIPPE.** Whatever it was, she evidently found it.

**CHRISTINE.** *(Rousing.)* Angel...

**RAOUL.** What?

**CHRISTINE.** Angel of Music. *(Christine opens her eyes.)*

**MEG.** Christine? Are you all right?

**RAOUL.** You are safe now, Christine.

**CHRISTINE.** *(Recoiling from Raoul.)* What are you doing in here?!

**RAOUL.** You fainted and I—

**CHRISTINE.** No, you must leave at once!

**RAOUL.** Don't you remember me? The boy who fetched your scarf?

GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**SORELLI.** You did what now?

**MEG.** Christine? I thought you didn't know the Viscount.

**CHRISTINE.** What! No! I have never seen him before in my life.

**RAOUL.** When we were little and your father—

**CHRISTINE.** Monsieur! I know nothing of this!

**RAOUL.** Christine, I love you!

**CHRISTINE.** What?

**RAOUL.** Look into my eyes, Christine, and tell me you do not know me.

**CHRISTINE.** You are a complete stranger.

**RAOUL.** But the way you sang tonight—

**CHRISTINE.** I am quite flattered, Monsieur. But I do not know who you are.

**PHILIPPE.** Are you calling my brother a liar?

**MEG.** Are you calling Christine a liar?

**PHILIPPE.** She is obviously confused.

**MEG.** The Viscount here is the one confused.

**PHILIPPE.** The Viscount graduated first in his class at the French Naval Academy.

**RAOUL.** Stay out of this, Philippe.

**PHILIPPE.** I will not stand here while your name is sullied for the sake of this girl. Come along, Sorelli.

**SORELLI.** But Christine, she—

**PHILIPPE.** Very well. Suit yourself. *(Philippe exits.)*

**RAOUL.** Something is going on here, Christine, and I will find it out. One way or another. *(Raoul exits.)*

**MEG.** Don't worry about the Viscount, Christine. You know those sailors. He must have mistaken you for one of his other port trollops. *(Meg and Sorelli laugh.)*

**CHRISTINE.** *(Sudden.)* Will you both please leave?!

**MEG.** I was only joking.

**CHRISTINE.** I want to be alone.

**MEG.** Are you sure?

**CHRISTINE.** Yes, Little Meg.

**MEG.** If that's what you want.

**SORELLI.** Great job tonight, Christine.

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**MEG.** Come on. (*Meg and Sorelli exit. A voice soothes from everywhere and nowhere.*)

**PHANTOM.** Christine. The angels wept tonight.

**CHRISTINE.** I sang for you.

**PHANTOM.** I know. And heaven heard you.

**CHRISTINE.** It frightened me. As though it were not my voice.

**PHANTOM.** Do not be afraid. You sang to me and, tonight, I sang through you. You still have much to learn. Your voice is ready, but your heart wanders. You must love only the music. You must love only me. (*Beat.*) The Viscount seemed quite agitated tonight.

**CHRISTINE.** I don't know—

**PHANTOM.** Do not lie to me, Christine! The Viscount has been fawning over you for months! I thought it was only a ridiculous infatuation. But that is not true, is it?

**CHRISTINE.** No! I—

**PHANTOM.** Go ahead! But I warn you, if you give your heart to someone here on earth, then I will have to go back to Heaven. There is not enough room in your heart for the love of music and the love of that foppish child.

**CHRISTINE.** He means nothing to me! It is as you said. A ridiculous infatuation. Believe me. Please, believe me! I love only the music. I love only you.

**PHANTOM.** I believe you. But you must be careful, Christine. You have a way of bewitching the faint of heart. You give your soul when you sing. Some may see that as an invitation. So, you must never see the Viscount again.

**CHRISTINE.** I understand.

**PHANTOM.** I am sorry that I must be strict with you, Christine. To make amends and to reward you for your faith, I shall send you a gift.

**CHRISTINE.** You have given me so much already.

**PHANTOM.** Your father sent me to you and now, to you, I shall send you your father.

**CHRISTINE.** My father? But how?

**PHANTOM.** You think it mere coincidence that tonight is the anniversary of your father's death? This is all my doing. Visit his grave, and if your faith is strong, there, he shall play to you from heaven.

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**CHRISTINE.** You would do that for me?

**PHANTOM.** For you Christine, anything. Now, go.

**CHRISTINE.** Thank you, Angel. *(Christine exits.)*

**PHANTOM.** You are very welcome, my love. *(Blackout.)*

### SCENE 9

*The Grand Staircase. Firmin and Sorelli enter, flirting and giggling.*

**SORELLI.** Monsieur Richard! Your reputation precedes you!

**FIRMIN.** My reputation? Nothing bad, I hope?

**SORELLI.** Of course not.

**FIRMIN.** Your reputation precedes you as well.

**SORELLI.** It does?

**FIRMIN.** For being the most beautiful creature in all the world.

**SORELLI.** Is that all? What of my dancing?

**FIRMIN.** Your every movement sends a quiver of ineffable languor through your entire body. *(Firmin caresses Sorelli.)*

**SORELLI.** Oh, Monsieur! *(Philippe enters.)*

**PHILIPPE.** So, this is where you disappeared to.

**SORELLI.** Philippe! I—

**PHILIPPE.** Save it. You chorus girls are all the same.

**FIRMIN.** La Sorelli happens to be the prima ballerina of the Paris Opera.

**PHILIPPE.** And you are?

**FIRMIN.** I am Firmin Richard, manager of this opera house.

**PHILIPPE.** I suppose she smelled the money on you as well?

**FIRMIN.** *(Biting.)* Is there something we can do for you, Monsieur?

**PHILIPPE.** Actually, there is. I am looking for my brother.

**SORELLI.** I have not seen him since Christine's dressing room.

**PHILIPPE.** I checked there. He must have left already. It is time I do the same. Have fun Monsieur Richard, while you can. *(Philippe exits.)*

**FIRMIN.** What was that about?

**SORELLI.** I— *(Meg and Madame Giry enter.)*

**MEG.** Have you heard!

**SORELLI.** What?

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**MADAME GIRY.** It's terrible! Just terrible! Quite the exciting night! Christine fainting, the fight in Box Five, and— by the way, did you hear that poor Isadore Saack broke his leg running from Monsieur Maniera! Tripped right down these stairs and let me tell you—

**MEG.** Mother.

**MADAME GIRY.** What?

**MEG.** You're blathering.

**FIRMIN.** Will somehow tell me what's going on?

**MADAME GIRY.** It's Joseph Buquet.

**MEG.** I think the Phantom is to blame.

**SORELLI.** The Phantom? (*A mysterious shadow descends upon the stage.*)

**MADAME GIRY.** I told you, Meg. This has nothing to do with the Opera Ghost.

**FIRMIN.** What? Did he not get his footstool tonight?

**MADAME GIRY.** You should not joke of such things.

**MEG.** I think the Phantom—

**SORELLI.** (*Seeing the shadow.*) The Phantom! (*The shadow reveals itself to be the PERSIAN.*)

**PERSIAN.** Pardon the intrusion, but I must speak to you.

**FIRMIN.** Who are you?

**PERSIAN.** Who I am is irrelevant. What I have to tell you is a matter of grave importance.

**SORELLI.** Wait, you look familiar.

**MEG.** It is the Persian!

**FIRMIN.** Persian?

**PERSIAN.** That is what they have come to call me.

**MADAME GIRY.** You're the one always prowling around backstage.

**FIRMIN.** Prowling?

**PERSIAN.** I assure you; I am merely a curious foreigner who is fascinated by the magical art of theater.

**MEG.** I think you're hoping to catch a glimpse of the dancers in their dressing rooms.

**PERSIAN.** My interest in this Opera House is not what I came to talk about. It is— (*Armand enters, frazzled.*)

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**ARMAND.** Firmin! Firmin! It is a catastrophe!

**PERSIAN.** I am glad you are here. This concerns you as well.

**ARMAND.** And who are you?

**PERSIAN.** Joseph Buquet is dead.

**FIRMIN.** What?

**SORELLI.** Joseph!?

**MADAME GIRY.** *(To Sorelli.)* That's what we were coming to tell you!

**MEG.** Everyone's talking about it.

**FIRMIN.** Oh, great.

**ARMAND.** The poor devil committed suicide.

**PERSIAN.** So sure, are you?

**ARMAND.** He hung himself in the third cellar, smelling foul of alcohol. Are you saying something else killed him?

**PERSIAN.** Or someone else.

**FIRMIN.** What are you talking about?

**PERSIAN.** Murder, Monsieur. Murder meant to look like suicide.

**SORELLI.** But who would want to murder poor Joseph?

**PERSIAN.** Perhaps he saw something he was not supposed to see.

**SORELLI/MEG.** The Ghost!

**PERSIAN.** Yes.

**MADAME GIRY.** But the Ghost is a gentle spirit. Not a murderer.

**PERSIAN.** Gentleness can hide many things.

**MADAME GIRY.** Not from me. I know the Ghost personally. Do you?

**PERSIAN.** I know... murder when I see it.

**MEG.** And Joseph saw the Ghost this morning!

**SORELLI.** And said he was going to catch it!

**MADAME GIRY.** That proves nothing.

**PERSIAN.** It proves that Joseph did commit suicide, after all. By tempting the anger of the Phantom of the Opera.

**FIRMIN.** Come, Armand. We must tend to this now before a scandal takes hold.

**PERSIAN.** There will be more scandal to come if you do not tend to the Opera Ghost.



## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**FIRMIN.** The only ghost I care about is the ghost of Joseph Buquet. Let us hope he does not haunt the front page of tomorrow's post. (*Firmin and Armand exit.*)

**MADAME GIRY.** I don't think there's been a night like this since the fire of 1873. That was, of course, when the Opera was—

**MEG.** Mother.

**MADAME GIRY.** But it is true!

**MEG.** Mother.

**MADAME GIRY.** And let me tell you! (*Meg drags Madame Giriy off stage. Sorelli approaches the Persian.*)

**SORELLI.** You don't think it was really the Ghost that killed Joseph, do you?

**PERSIAN.** (*Beat.*) Does the Ghost frighten you?

**SORELLI.** Yes. Very much so.

**PERSIAN.** Good. (*The Persian exits. Sorelli stands alone – fear building inside her. Blackout.*)

### SCENE 10

*The Perros-Guirec Cemetery. Christine enters and sits next to her father's grave.*

**CHRISTINE.** I miss you, Father. Now, more than ever. (*Beat.*) Father, I know that you sent me the Angel of Music. But did you send Raoul as well? (*Raoul enters.*)

**RAOUL.** Perhaps he did.

**CHRISTINE.** What are you doing here?

**RAOUL.** I followed you.

**CHRISTINE.** Why would you—

**RAOUL.** You do remember me, don't you?

**CHRISTINE.** (*Beat.*) How could I forget the little boy who saved my scarf?

**RAOUL.** I came back the next summer, but you were gone.

**CHRISTINE.** After you left, Father became very ill. He died that winter. Ten years ago, this very night.

**RAOUL.** I am sorry. I did not know.

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**CHRISTINE.** I moved to Paris and began instruction at the conservatoire. Friends of my father took me in, but they died a few years ago. I am all alone now, Raoul.

**RAOUL.** No, you are not.

**CHRISTINE.** He will not allow it.

**RAOUL.** Who? The man in your dressing room?

**CHRISTINE.** How did—

**RAOUL.** After Meg and Sorelli left, I listened outside your door.

**CHRISTINE.** You heard him? How is that possible?

**RAOUL.** He is using you, Christine.

**CHRISTINE.** You don't understand.

**RAOUL.** I understand well enough. His ill intent is quite clear.

**CHRISTINE.** Who I give my heart to is my choice and mine alone. The only ill intent I see tonight is a guileful Viscount eavesdropping on private conversations and stalking about in graveyards.

**RAOUL.** Who is this man, Christine?

**CHRISTINE.** *(Beat.)* Do you remember the story Father used to tell us? The story of the Angel of Music?

**RAOUL.** Yes... It was our favorite.

**CHRISTINE.** "A spirit from heaven that comes to set fire to the divine music..."

**RAOUL/CHRISTINE.** "...within every great musician."

**CHRISTINE.** That voice you heard was not the voice of a man. It was the Angel of Music. Father sent him from heaven. I thought only I could hear him.

**RAOUL.** Christine, it was only a story.

**CHRISTINE.** I know that! I have never been a superstitious person, that part of me died with my father. But the things the Angel knows and the things he has taught me. Where else can he come from, but from heaven? *(Tremulous and powerful violin music wafts through the cemetery, coming from everywhere and nowhere.)*

**RAOUL.** My God... I recognize that music.

**CHRISTINE.** You see, Raoul. It is my father.

**RAOUL.** It can't be.

**CHRISTINE.** Father?

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**PHANTOM.** Christine... *(The music disappears into the night.)*

**CHRISTINE.** Wait! Father! Don't go!

**RAOUL.** I do not believe it.

**CHRISTINE.** It was him, Raoul. He came back for me.

**RAOUL.** There has got to be an explanation.

**CHRISTINE.** There is. It was my father. *(Christine exits. Raoul looks around the graveyard, mystified. Blackout.)*

### SCENE 11

*The Manager's office. Firmin and Armand enter.*

**FIRMIN.** What are you so worked up about, Armand?

**ARMAND.** A man was found murdered in our opera house!

**FIRMIN.** The police ruled it a suicide.

**ARMAND.** But that man... the Persian. He said—

**FIRMIN.** He is a foreigner – prone to a wild imagination.

**ARMAND.** I think we should look into this Phantom business.

**FIRMIN.** And how do you propose we do that? A séance?

**ARMAND.** This is not a laughing matter.

**FIRMIN.** A man decided to hang himself at the opera. What of it? Death happens at the opera all the time. Tonight, we are putting on *Faust*. An opera about an old man saved from his deathbed by selling his soul to the devil. That is opera. That is the world. And audiences love death! *(Carlotta bursts into the office, followed by Marie.)*

**CARLOTTA.** I want her out on the street!

**ARMAND.** What are you talking about?

**CARLOTTA.** Christine Daaé!

**FIRMIN.** La Carlotta! We were sorry to hear you were not feeling well enough to perform at last night's gala.

**CARLOTTA.** I do not know how she did it. One moment, I was in my dressing room and the next, it was morning and I had missed the gala.

**ARMAND.** But you sent us a note.

**CARLOTTA.** I sent no such thing!

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**MARIE.** But Madame, you yourself gave me the note to deliver. I—

**CARLOTTA.** You are not beyond suspicion, Marie! So be quiet! And give them the note! (*Marie hands Armand a note.*)

**ARMAND.** (*Reading.*) “Madame Carlotta – If you sing tonight, you must expect a great misfortune to strike you just when you begin to sing, a misfortune worse than death.”

**CARLOTTA.** If you don't throw Christine Daaé out, then I shall be the one to leave. I know a lot of people in this city, Messieurs, very powerful people. When I am done with you, you could not find a job running a horse stable!

**FIRMIN.** Carlotta, the girl is young, naïve, and completely out of her element.

**MARIE.** The whole city is talking about her.

**FIRMIN.** You are not helping!

**CARLOTTA.** Go to the carriage! Make yourself useful! (*Marie exits.*)

**FIRMIN.** Christine does not possess your strength and presence. We are but slaves to your every word.

**CARLOTTA.** You are only trying to flatter me.

**FIRMIN.** Christine could not handle a role like this. Why just last night, she fainted on stage.

**CARLOTTA.** Did she fall on her head?

**FIRMIN.** Right on her head!

**CARLOTTA.** I hope it leaves a mark on her pretty little face.

**FIRMIN.** So, will you sing Marguerite in *Faust* tonight?

**CARLOTTA.** And Christine? You will fire her?

**FIRMIN.** I am not so sure about that. If we fire your understudy there is bound to be a scandal.

**CARLOTTA.** Something must be done with her!

**FIRMIN.** If you sing Marguerite tonight, your beautiful voice will make them forget the very name of Christine Daaé.

**CARLOTTA.** Yes. Oh, yes! I like that.

**FIRMIN.** I knew you would.

**CARLOTTA.** And I wouldn't want to waste my strength and... presence?

**FIRMIN.** We can discuss it in more detail tonight. Before the show?

**CARLOTTA.** Will you become “slave to my every word?”

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**FIRMIN.** I look forward to it.

**CARLOTTA.** I shall see you then, Monsieur.

**FIRMIN.** Madame. (*Carlotta exits, throwing glances at Firmin.*) Armand? You may want to vacate the offices this evening.

**ARMAND.** You don't say. (*Beat.*) You disgust me sometimes, you know that?

**FIRMIN.** Armand, stop your jealousy. It is not becoming.

**ARMAND.** I am not jealous. I am worried. This is not the only note received today. (*Armand pulls out another note from his pocket.*)

**FIRMIN.** Dear Lord! Another!

**ARMAND.** (*Reading.*) "My Dear Managers – Last night's gala performance was a rousing success. I look forward to tonight's performance of *Faust*, but there are a few conditions that you must follow: Number One: Box Five will be placed at my disposal immediately. Number Two: The role of Marguerite will be sung by Christine Daaé. And Number Three: Seal my 20,000 francs in an envelope from which I will collect my monthly allowance. A word to the wise is sufficient."

**FIRMIN.** (*Snatching the note.*) Give me that!

**ARMAND.** What are we to do?

**FIRMIN.** I will tell you. Tonight, we shall watch the performance from Box Five and if the Ghost comes knocking, I shall throw him out myself! (*Firmin exits, followed by Armand. Blackout.*)

### SCENE 12

*Backstage. Gaston enters in darkness. Special on Gaston. Music can be heard off stage ["Gounod: Faust - Act 3: Scene 10"].*

**GASTON.** And so, *Faust* was performed that night. Carlotta played the part of Marguerite, Christine returned to the Chorus, the managers took their seats in Box Five, and despite the threats, the night was going rather splendidly. Carlotta sang with a power born from spite and malevolence. Yes, *Faust* was going rather well. But, as we know, the Ghost always arrives late to the opera. (*The lights crossfade. The music changes ["Gounod: Faust - Act 3: Scene 11"]. Carlotta enters.*)

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**CARLOTTA.** Marie! Marie?! (*Marie enters.*) How many times have I told you? You must always be here, waiting for me, after each exit.

**MARIE.** They needed help over—

**CARLOTTA.** Do not make excuses. Just do what you are paid to do!

**MARIE.** What do you need, Madame?

**CARLOTTA.** Haven't you been watching? I have been carrying this entire show by myself. Everyone out there is filling the stage with their hot air and my make-up is sweating. Powder, Marie! I need my powder!

**MARIE.** You said to lock your make-up in your dressing room.

**CARLOTTA.** And where is my water? Do you want my vocal cords to dry up?

**MARIE.** You cannot expect me to read your thoughts.

**CARLOTTA.** I expect you to do what I tell you! Now go! Mephistopheles can only squawk out there for so long.

**MARIE.** Madame! I—

**CARLOTTA.** Or would you rather I throw you to the gutters!

**MARIE.** (*Beat.*) Go ahead. Fire me. You threaten it every day. But every day, here I am. You need me. You don't want to admit it, but it's true. Without me, you'd only have the sound of your voice to keep you company. And the worst part is that I pity you. I see you for what you are: an insecure diva whose life is as empty as her threats!

**CARLOTTA.** Look what you have done! I am about to miss my entrance! (*Carlotta exits. Off stage, the music changes ["Gounod: Faust - Act 3: Scene 12"]. Marie goes to exit, but a voice stops her.*)

**PHANTOM.** She does not deserve you, Marie.

**MARIE.** Who is that?

**PHANTOM.** Listen to me closely, Marie.

**MARIE.** I... I...

**PHANTOM.** Listen to my voice. Only my voice.

**MARIE.** (*In a trance.*) Only your voice.

**PHANTOM.** La Carlotta is quite parched. She needs her water.

**MARIE.** Her water.

**PHANTOM.** Come here, Marie. I shall give it to you.

**MARIE.** Yes.

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**PHANTOM.** Very good, Marie. Very good. (*Marie exits, following the voice. Off stage, the music swells [“Gounod: Faust – End of Act 3”]. Blackout.*)

### SCENE 13

*Box Five. Firmin and Armand are watching the performance. Applause erupts off stage.*

**FIRMIN.** You see, you were worried for nothing. We are already onto Act Four with no sign of a ghost.

**ARMAND.** We should still be on our guard.

**FIRMIN.** The only thing we should do is sit back and enjoy the show! Perhaps Madame Giry could bring us a footstool! All we need to do is knock three times! (*Three knocks echo inside the box.*)

**ARMAND.** Did you hear that?

**FIRMIN.** Yes, I heard it.

**ARMAND.** What do we do?

**FIRMIN.** Someone is at the door. (*Firmin exits briefly, then reenters.*)

**ARMAND.** Well? Who was it?

**FIRMIN.** No one.

**ARMAND.** What?

**FIRMIN.** It must have been a restless child.

**ARMAND.** Something is going on here. I don't care if it is a ghost, a child, or a conniving soprano. It must be dealt with!

**FIRMIN.** There is nothing going on and— (*Another three knocks, followed by a voice coming from everywhere and nowhere.*)

**PHANTOM.** Messieurs, I hope you are enjoying tonight's performance. It is unfortunate that it plays in a cursed house. (*The voice fades away into laughter.*)

**ARMAND.** Wait! What do you mean?!

**FIRMIN.** It was the ghost.

**ARMAND.** Yes, yes, I know.

**FIRMIN.** But it was the ghost.

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**ARMAND.** Firmin, come on, we need to get backstage.

**FIRMIN.** The ghost... (*Armand exits with urgency. Firmin exits after a moment of hesitation. Blackout.*)

### SCENE 14

*Backstage. Music plays ["Gounod: Faust - Act 4: Entr'acte"]. Carlotta enters.*

**CARLOTTA.** Marie? Marie! Where is that useless girl? I have wasted my entire Act break! (*Christine and Raoul enter.*)

**RAOUL.** You must listen to me.

**CHRISTINE.** Raoul, you cannot be back here!

**RAOUL.** He is not the Angel of Music.

**CARLOTTA.** Hello, Christine. Have you been enjoying the show from the chorus?

**CHRISTINE.** Carlotta.

**CARLOTTA.** The audience loves me! ME! They have all but forgotten about you!

**RAOUL.** Christine could sing circles around you!

**CHRISTINE.** Raoul, don't—

**CARLOTTA.** And who are you?

**RAOUL.** I am Viscount Raoul de Chagny.

**CARLOTTA.** Well, Monsieur Viscount, little Miss Christine does not sing. She croaks like a toad!

**RAOUL.** You miserable little—

**CHRISTINE.** Come on, Raoul. She is not worth it.

**CARLOTTA.** That's right. Run away. Run away to Daddy. Oh, wait. You can't. (*Christine's voice catches in her throat, her eyes flooding with tears. Marie enters in a trance, holding a glass of water.*) Ah! Marie! There you are! And just in time! (*Carlotta takes the glass of water and raises it to Christine.*) To your career and to your father! Both dead and forgotten! (*Christine runs off stage.*)

**RAOUL.** Christine, wait! (*Carlotta goes to drink the water.*)

**MARIE.** Madame! The water... Don't drink the water.



## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**CARLOTTA.** What are you talking about! What else would I do with it? Now go, I still need my powder! *(Raoul turns to Carlotta.)*

**RAOUL.** You are a monster!

**CARLOTTA.** Aren't we all? *(Carlotta downs the glass of water and begins choking. She claws at her throat, croaking and gasping. Marie runs to Carlotta's side. Raoul approaches her, stunned. Armand and Firmin enter.)*

**MARIE.** Help! Somebody!

**ARMAND.** We are too late!

**FIRMIN.** My God!

**ARMAND.** He warned us!

**FIRMIN.** The Ghost.

**RAOUL.** The Ghost? *(Beat.)* The Angel. Oh, God! Christine! *(Raoul rushes off stage. Blackout.)*

### SCENE 15

*Christine's dressing room. Christine enters in tears.*

**CHRISTINE.** That wicked woman! My father sent me the Angel. He—  
*(A voice fills the dressing room, coming from everywhere and nowhere.)*

**PHANTOM.** The world is a cruel, evil place. I have come to take you away.

**CHRISTINE.** Angel?

**PHANTOM.** I told you to love only the music. Christine. I am the music.

*(Mist rises onto the stage, revealing the PHANTOM. He is cloaked in black and wearing a mask that covers his entire face. He stretches his hand toward Christine. She moves forward, pulled by some unknown force. Raoul knocks on the door from off stage.)*

**RAOUL.** *(Off stage.)* Christine?

**CHRISTINE.** Raoul?

**PHANTOM.** Listen to me.

**RAOUL.** *(Off stage.)* He is not an Angel!

**PHANTOM.** Listen to my voice. Only my voice.

## GASTON LEROUX'S THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

**CHRISTINE.** *(In a trance.)* Only your voice... *(Raoul pounds on the door.)*

**RAOUL.** *(Off stage.)* Christine! Open the door!

**PHANTOM.** Come to me, Christine.

**RAOUL.** *(Off stage.)* Let me in!

**PHANTOM.** Forget him!

**CHRISTINE.** *(Breaking the trance.)* No! *(The Phantom steps from the mist.)*

**PHANTOM.** Christine! Please. The world has taken so much from you. Your father. Your music. I can give them all back. Believe in me and I will give you everything. *(Christine moves toward the Phantom, surrendering.)*

**RAOUL.** *(Off stage.)* Christine! No! *(Raoul throws himself at the door.)*

**PHANTOM.** Oh, Christine. You are my Angel of Music. *(Christine is enveloped by the Phantom's shadow and they disappear into the mist. Raoul breaks through the door into the dressing room.)*

**RAOUL.** Christine! Where are you?! *(Cold, malicious laughter rises from the walls, dancing around Raoul.)*

**PHANTOM.** She is mine! *(The laughter piles upon Raoul; he is forced to the ground, clasping his hands around his ears.)*

**RAOUL.** Christine! *(The lights fade around Raoul. Blackout.)*

### END OF ACT I INTERMISSION

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