



THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA by Gaston Le Roux

Adapted by John-Robert Partridge & Catherine Prout

A SMITH SCRIPT

This script is protected by copyright laws.

No performance of this script – IN ANY MEDIA – may be undertaken without payment of the appropriate fee and obtaining a licence.

For further information, please contact SMITH SCRIPTS at info@smithscripts.co.uk

CHARACTERS

Christine

Raoul

Erik

Madam Giry

M. Moncharmin

M. Richard

Persian

M Debiegne

M. Mercer

Carlotta

Meg Giry

Phillipe

Joseph Buquet

Doctor

Guests/Theatre-goers

The Phantom of the Opera

By Gaston Le Roux adapted by John-Robert Partridge & Catherine Prout

ACT 1 SCENE 1 – PROLOGUE

Music begins, lights fade to black. Whispers and echoes are heard. LX up

BUQUET

The Opera ghost really existed, He was not, as was long believed, a creature of the imagination of the artists

PHILLIPE

the superstition of the managers or a product of the absurd and impressionable brains of the young ladies of the ballet

MEG *(looking at MADAM GIRY)*

...their mothers, the box-keepers,

BUQUET

...or the scene shifters

PERSIAN

He existed in flesh and blood

PHILLIPE

It would not be difficult to find at the present day, in the foyer of the ballet, old men of the highest respectability

PERSIAN

Men upon whose word one could absolutely rely

MADAM GIRY

Who would remember as though they happened yesterday the mysterious and dramatic events that occurred

PERSIAN

But none of those men had thought that there was any reason for connecting the legendary figure of the Opera ghost with this terrible story until now.

Blackout.

ACT 1 SCENE 2 - AFTER THE FIRST SHOW

Backstage at the Opera House we see the corridor leading to the changing rooms and one area set out for CHRISTINE's dressing room with another set out for the GIRLS dressing room. The last few notes of the finale of Faust is heard followed by rapturous applause. We see MADAM GIRY in the GIRLS dressing room waiting for MEG and CHRISTINE lying on her chaise recovering from fainting.

RAOUL and PHILLIPE walk down the corridor towards CHRISTINE's changing room.

PHILLIPE

What an evening, spectacular!

RAOUL

Spectacular, didn't you see poor Christine fainting?

PHILLIPE

Never mind about her, you looked like you were going to faint, What's the matter?

RAOUL

I don't know, Phillipe. She never sang like that before. It was indescribable

PHILLIPE

Well why not go in and tell her so yourself.

RAOUL

No.

PHILLIPE

No? Raoul, you have come to the Opera every night for the past month since you found out she was here and now you're telling me you won't go and see her?

RAOUL

She probably wouldn't even recognise me, I knew her when we were children.

PHILLIPE

Then it won't matter will it? You will be just another admirer. Come along!

The men turn to go into CHRISTINE's changing room. MEG runs along the corridor and into her changing room.

MERCER

(To PHILLIPE) Ah, Monsieur what a pleasant surprise to see you here! Come to offer you congratulations to Mme. Daae?

PHILLIPE

I had hoped to do so

MERCER

It is wonderful to see you this evening, I am so glad you could make it tonight. I trust you are staying for the farewell ceremony for M. Debieulle? The new managers are looking forward to meeting you

PHILLIPE

Good Monsieur, perhaps it would be a good idea to give Miss Daae some air there is not enough to breathe in here. It may be best for us to step outside.

MERCER

Yes, yes I quite understand

They exit.

LX up on Madam Girv.

MADAM GIRY

Is there any reason for this interruption and terrible noise?

MEG

It's the ghost!

MADAM GIRY

Don't be silly, have you seen him?

MEG

Oh yes, as plainly as I see you now.

MADAM GIRY

You girls see the ghost everywhere. What does he look like?

MEG

A tall man in evening dress and...

MADAM GIRY

And how strange is that to see a man at the Opera in dress clothes? You are letting your imagination get the better of you Meg.

MEG

But mother his dress suit is different, it covers a skeleton with a death's head. And the death's head can leave the body and float around on its own. And he can change his head and it will be a dozen or so different heads

MADAM GIRY

That is quite enough. Where did you hear this nonsense?

MEG

Joseph Buquet. He also said there was a man they call the Persian who follows the ghost and Joseph Buquet said...

MADAM GIRY

Joseph Buquet would do well to hold his tongue

MEG

Why?

MADAM GIRY

He should not be saying such things to little girls.

MEG

But you believe in the ghost...

MADAM GIRY

What I believe and what Joseph Buquet tells young ladies of the Opera are not the same thing. Even if I did believe I would suspect that the ghost would not like to be spoken of like that.

MEG

But...

MADAM GIRY

But nothing Meg. As I said Joseph Buquet should hold his tongue in future. It will bring nothing but bad luck

BUQUET

He is extraordinarily thin and his dress-coat hangs on a skeleton frame. His eyes are so deep that you can hardly see the fixed pupils. You just see two big black holes, as in a dead man's skull. His skin, which is stretched across his bones like a drumhead, is not white, but a nasty yellow. All the hair he has is three or four long dark locks on his forehead and behind his ears.

*A rope is placed around BUQUET's neck and he is violently strangled.
Mercer comes running in to Madam Giry*

MADAM GIRY

Monsieur? What's wrong? Monsier Mercer what is the matter?

MERCER

Awful

MADAM GIRY

What is?

MERCER

Awful

MEG

What?

MERCER

Joseph Buquet

MEG

What about him?

MERCER

Joseph Buquet is dead, he was found hanging on the third floor

MEG

It's the ghost!.... I didn't say it, I didn't say it was him

MADAM GIRY

Poor M. Buquet. Oh, what are we to do now? Oh, poor M. Debienne's and it is his retirement ball tonight, he will be heart broken, M. Buquet has been a scene shifter here for over a decade. Debienne cannot retire and our new managers cannot celebrate their taking over after an event such as this. Monsieur?

MERCER

He was found hanging between the tabs but...he was found with the rope around his neck, the stage manager went to get a knife to cut him down but on his return the rope had been removed

PHILLIPE, the Count de Chagny enters

PHILLIPE

Oh Madam Giry, what an evening! What a performance! Christine Daae was marvellous tonight, a triumph. She revealed a new Margarita tonight, a Margarita of splendor, of radiance. The whole house went mad, rising to its feet, shouting, cheering, clapping. It was clearly too much for the poor girl, Christine sobbed and fainted and had to be carried to her dressing-room. A fellow in the next box said why had so great a treasure been kept from them all that time? A total triumph Madam Giry! Whats the matter?

MADAM GIRY

Its just some bad news that's all nothing to worry you

MEG

Joseph Buquet is dead

MADAM GIRY

Meg!

PHILLIPE

What? Could no one help him?

MADAM GIRY

I am afraid it was too late Monsieur and when they went to cut him down the rope was already gone.

MEG is quietly crying.

PHILLIPE

Listen to me this is a terrible tragedy but you need to forget about that for tonight. No one can help him now. We will take care of things in the morning. For now we need to get through the rest of this evening and under no circumstances do you tell anyone it will only upset people. I will inform those who need to know but you all need to go on now and get ready and remain strong

Lights go down on the scene and come up on CHRISTINE in her dressing room with RAOUL and the DOCTOR

CHRISTINE

What happened?

RAOUL

You fainted, at the end of the performance. The rapid pace of you being thrust in to understudy Carlotta and perform so magnificently must have been too much for you but you will be fine.

CHRISTINE

(To RAOUL) Monsieur, who are you?

RAOUL

Mademoiselle, I am the little boy who ran into the sea to save your scarf. Raoul?

CHRISTINE laughs but does not seem to recognise him.

RAOUL

We used to play together when you lived in Perros with your father; you would say you had seen sprites and make up stories about them...Little Lottie? The Angel of Music?

CHRISTINE swoons as if dizzy RAOUL steadies her.

RAOUL

Mademoiselle since you are pleased not to recognize me, I should like to say something to you in private that may help you realise who I am, something very important.

CHRISTINE

When I am better, if you don't mind? I think it would be best for you to leave now

RAOUL

But you may be ill, I would like to stay

CHRISTINE

I am not ill thank you but I would like to be alone, please go away. I feel very restless tonight

RAOUL

I shall wait outside for you

CHRISTINE

Not now, I will not be seeing anyone else tonight

RAOUL and the DOCTOR leave the room. RAOUL waits in the corridor and spends a moment at her door then turns to listen when he hears a man's voice.

ERIK V/O

Christine, you must love me

CHRISTINE

How can you talk like that? When I sing only for you!

ERIK V/O

Are you very tired

CHRISTINE

To-night I gave you my soul and I am dead

ERIK V/O

Your soul is a beautiful thing, child and I thank you. No emperor ever received so fair a gift. The angels wept tonight

It grows quiet, suddenly the door opens and CHRISTINE walks through and RAOUL hides from her, as soon as she has gone he enters the dressing room.

RAOUL

Is someone here? Come out and show yourself! Why do you hide? You shan't leave this room until I let you. If you don't answer, you are a coward! But I'll expose you!

RAOUL lights a lamp

RAOUL

Hello! I must be going mad

Raoul exits pursued by a shadow of the Phantom

ACT 1 SCENE 3 – THE RETIREMENT PARTY

The retirement party of M. DEBIENNE. Present are MONCHARMIN, RICHARD, PHILLIPE, MEG, MADAM GIRY, M.DEBIENNE and other guests. MADAM GIRY stands up and begins to recite her speech.

MADAM GIRY

My dear manager. It is with sadness that you leave us for your well deserved retirement, we wish you well and thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the encouragement and love you have given to each of us over the years during the good times and the bad. And I think I speak for everyone when I say that you will be sorely missed.

PHILLIPE

Here, here!

The shape of a man moves around the corner of the room, un-seen by everyone except MEG

MEG

The Opera Ghost!!!!

The onlookers laugh at the outburst by MEG

MADAM GIRY

Now Meg this is not the time, please be quiet

MEG

But I saw him!

PHILLIPE

Come over with me now Meg.

He comforts her and takes her to one side.

DEBIENNE

Madam Giry, thank you so much for your kind and thoughtful words. I will always look back on the opera with good thoughts and I hope that my replacements Monsieur Richard and Moncharmin will find the opera as enchanting as I always have. Thank you

RICHARD

Thank you Monsieur we are delighted to be here

MONCHARMIN

Yes, delighted

RICHARD

We have heard so much about you wonderful people and I very much look forward to running the theatre

DEBIENNE hands the keys of the theatre over to RICHARD and MONCHARMIN and the crowd clap the hand over. A general party atmosphere is resumed.

GUEST #1

Monsieur Debienne! My best wishes for your retirement and condolences for your loss, it really is such a pity about Joseph Buquet

DEBIENNE

Sorry?

GUEST #1

The death of Joseph Buquet is not so natural as you might think?

DEBIENNE

Is Buquet dead?

GUEST #1

Yes, he was found, this evening, hanging on the third floor

DEBIENNE

Ladies and Gentlemen, please excuse me I must have a few moments with Monsieur's Richard and Moncharmin

Everybody leaves.

MONCHARMIN

I am sorry to hear this very sad news did you know him well?

DEBIENNE

Yes

RICHARD

Well I wouldn't let it ruin your evening, after all he was only a scene shifter

DEBIENNE

Gentlemen, there is something I need to talk to you about. Did you know the gentlemen who spoke to me earlier?

MONCHARMIN

No, I have never seen him before why?

DEBIENNE

Can I just look at the master keys?

RICHARD

What for?

DEBIENNE

Please Monsieur

RICHARD

Oh very well

DEBIENNE

I think it would be advisable for all the locks in the theatre to be changed

RICHARD

Why? Is there something wrong with the locks? Surely that should have been your responsibility to change the locks and maintain the building. This was not part of the price

DEBIENNE

I would suggest new locks in your office, the boxes, orchestra pits and the dressing rooms

MONCHARMIN

Why do we have thieves at the Opera?

DEBIENNE

No monsieur, something far worse. The Ghost

RICHARD and MONCHARMIN begin to laugh

RICHARD

Oh sir, please do tell us your ghost story

DEBIENNE

Be serious sir, this is not something to find amusing. I would never have spoken to you about the ghost but I received formal orders from him that I was to be pleasant to him and grant any request he might make. He instructed me to inform you of his presence and of his needs. I warn you now, for your own well-being do as he says. In years past when I have disobeyed or deviated from his orders something fantastic and disastrous has occurred

MONCHARMIN

Sir, I can take a joke as well as the next man Moncharmin is not so patient

RICHARD

Indeed I am not

MONCHARMIN

What does this ghost of yours want?

DEBIENNE

He asked me to hand you the memorandum book for the theatre and ask you to take particular attention with clause number 5

MONCHARMIN

Clause number 5, let me see... 5....Or if the manager, in any month, delay for more than a fortnight the payment of the allowance which he shall make to the Opera ghost, an allowance of twenty thousand francs a month, say two hundred and forty thousand francs a year

RICHARD

Oh, is that all. Does he want anything else?

MONCHARMIN

Yes... Box Five on the grand tier shall be placed at the disposal of the Opera ghost for every performance which shall be attended on by his 'most excellent' Box Keeper Madam Giry. Oh Monsieur Debienne give me your hand. May I congratulate you on this charming little joke

RICHARD

I now understand why you're retiring from the management of the National Academy of Music. Business is impossible with so unreasonable a ghost.

DEBIENNE

Certainly, two hundred and forty thousand francs are not to be sniffed at, and have you considered what the loss over Box Five meant to me? I did not sell it once; why, it's awful! I really can't work to keep ghosts! I prefer to go away! Let me go

RICHARD

It seems to me that you were much too kind to the ghost. If I had such a troublesome ghost as that, I should not hesitate to have him arrested.

DEBIENNE

But how? I have never seen him

MONCHARMIN

But he comes to the box

DEBIENNE

I have never seen him in his box

RICHARD

Then sell it

DEBIENNE

Sell the ghost's box? Well Gentlemen if you don't believe me try it

DEBIENNE hands the keys back to them and he exits leaving RICHARD and MONCHARMIN who laugh.