

The PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

By Gaston Leroux
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SYNOPSIS.

Consternation is caused on the last night that the Opera is managed by Debenne and Poligny because of the appearance of a ghost, said to have been in evidence on several previous occasions. Christine Daae, a member of the opera company, is called upon to fill a very important part and scores a great success. Count de Chagny and his brother Raoul are among those who applaud the singer. Raoul tries to see Christine in the dressing room, but is unable to do so and later discovers that some one is making love to her. She emerges alone, and upon entering the room he finds it empty. While the farewell ceremony for the retiring manager is going on, the Opera Ghost appears and informs the new managers that Box No. 5 is reserved for him. Box No. 5 is sold with disastrous results. The managers receive a letter from the Opera Ghost calling attention to the error. Christine Daae writes Raoul that she has gone to visit the grave of her father. He goes also, and in the night follows her to the church. Wonderful violin music is heard. Raoul visits a graveyard. Raoul is found next morning almost frozen. Moncharmin and Richard investigate Box No. 5 and decide to see the performance of "Faust" which is the leading part. Carlotta, who sings the part to Christine, Carlotta, refusing, loses her voice in the middle of a song and the main chandelier crashes down, killing a woman and wounding many. Raoul searches for Christine, who has disappeared. He sees her at last, but does not speak, and later a note is received from her making an appointment for a masked ball. Raoul meets Christine at the ball. He sees a person in the disguise of Red Death. He hears her conversing with some one whom she calls Erik. Raoul visits Christine and tells her he knows the name of the man whom she calls Erik. He becomes secretly engaged prior to a polar expedition that Raoul is to make. The tale relates a strange adventure with the unseen Erik and promises to run away with Raoul. Raoul announces his intention of marrying Christine, which displeases Philippe. In the midst of a performance the stage is enveloped in darkness and Christine disappears. No trace of her is found. Moncharmin and Richard behave strangely.

CHAPTER XV. (Continued).

Hideous thoughts flashed through Raoul's congested brain. Of course, Erik must have discovered their secret, must have known that Christine had played him false. What a vengeance would be his!

And Raoul thought again of the yellow stars that had come, the night before, and roamed over his balcony. Why had he not put them out for good? There were some men's eyes that dilated in the darkness and shone like stars of the dark eyes. Certainly Albinus, who seemed to have Raoul's eyes by day that night eyes at night, everybody knew that.

Yes, he had undoubtedly fired at Erik. Why had he not killed him? The monster has let on the gutter about the bar or a chamber who—movement—stare that stare—would while the very same, with the hair of a gutter-stare. No doubt Erik was at that time, contemplating some terrible deed against Raoul. But he had been wounded and had seemed to die. What a vengeance would be his!

Such were the cruel thoughts that haunted Raoul as he sat in the dingy and dingy room.

"Christine! Christine!"

His voice awakened the girl's eyes. His eyes scattered over the furniture the clothes which his beautiful bride was to have worn at the time of their flight. Why had she not been told to leave earlier?

Why had she toyed with the "dreadful catastrophe"? Why toyed with the monster's heart? Why, in a fine access of pity, had she insisted on singing us a last sop to that demon's soul, her divine song.

Holy angel in heaven blessed. My spirit longs with thee to rest!

Raoul, his throat filled with sobs, oaths and insults, fumbled awkwardly at the great mirror that had opened one night before his eyes, to let Christine pass to the murky dwelling below. He pushed, pressed, groped about, but the glass apparently obeyed no one but Erik. . . . Perhaps actions were not enough with a glass of the kind? Perhaps he was expected to utter certain words? When he was a little boy, he had heard that there were things that obeyed the spoken word!

Suddenly, Raoul remembered something about a gate opening into the Rue Scribe, an underground passage running straight to the Rue Scribe from the lake. . . . Yes, Christine had told him about that. . . . And, when he found that the key was no longer in the box, he nevertheless ran to the Rue Scribe.

Outside, in the street, he passed his trembling hands over the huge stones, felt for outlets. . . . met with iron bars. . . . were those they? . . . Or these? . . . Or could it be that air-hole? . . . He plunged his useless eyes through the bars. . . . How dark it was in there! . . . He listened. . . . All was silence! . . . He went round the building. . . . and came to bigger bars, immense gates! . . . It was the entrance to the Cour de l'Administration.

Raoul rushed into the doorkeeper's lodge.

"I beg your pardon, madame, could

you tell me where to find a gate or door, made of bars, iron bars, opening into the Rue Scribe . . . and leading to the lake? . . . You know the lake I mean? . . . Yes, the underground lake . . . under the opera."

"Yes, sir, I know there is a lake under the opera, but I don't know which door leads to it. I have never been there!"

"And the Rue Scribe, madame, the Rue Scribe? Have you never been to the Rue Scribe?"

The woman laughed, screamed with laughter! Raoul darted away, roaring with anger, ran up-stairs, four stairs at a time, down-stairs, rushed through the whole of the business side of the opera-house, found himself once more in the light of the stage.

He stopped, with his heart thumping in his chest; suppose Christine Daae had been found? He saw a group of men and asked:

"I beg your pardon, gentlemen. Could you tell me where Christine Daae is?"

And somebody laughed.

At the same moment the stage buzzed with a new sound and, amid a crowd of men in evening-dress, all talking and gesticulating together, appeared a man who seemed very calm and displayed a pleasant face, all pink and chubby-cheeked, crowned with curly hair and lit up by a pair of wonderfully serene blue eyes. Mercier, the acting-manager, called the Vicomte de Chagny's attention to him and said:

"This is the gentleman to whom you

Raoul was the last to enter. As he was about to follow the rest into the room, a hand was laid on his shoulder and he heard these words spoken in his ear:

"Erik's secrets concern no one but himself!"

He turned around, with a stifled exclamation. The hand that was laid on his shoulder was now placed on the lips of a person with an ebony skin, with eyes of jade and with an astrakhan cap on his head: the Persian!

The stranger kept up the gesture that recommended discretion and then, at the moment when the astonished viscount was about to ask the reason of his mysterious intervention, bowed and disappeared.

CHAPTER XVI.

Mme. Giry's Astonishing Revelations As to Her Personal Relations With the Opera Ghost.

Before following the commissary into the manager's office I must describe certain extraordinary occurrences that took place in that office which Remy and Mercier had vainly tried to enter and into which MM. Richard and Moncharmin had locked themselves with an object which the reader does not yet know, but which it is my duty, as an historian, to reveal without further postponement.

I have had occasion to say that the managers' mood had undergone a disagreeable change for some time past and to convey the fact that this change was due not only to the fall of the chandelier on the famous night of the gala performance.

The reader must know that the ghost had calmly been paid his first twenty thousand francs. Oh, there had been wailing and gnashing of teeth, indeed! And yet the thing had happened as simple as could be.

One morning, the managers found on their table an envelope addressed to "Monsieur O. G. (private)" and accompanied by a note from O. G. himself:

"The time has come to carry out the clause in the memorandum-book. Please put twenty notes of a thousand francs each into this envelope, seal it with your own seal and hand it to Mme. Giry, who will do what is necessary."

The managers did not hesitate; without wasting time in asking how these confounded communications came to be delivered in an office which they were careful to keep locked, they seized this opportunity of laying hands on the mysterious blackmail. And, after telling the whole story, under the promise of re-

but Richard objected. He no doubt had a plan, for he said:

"Don't let us make ourselves ridiculous! All Paris would laugh at us. O. G. has won the first game; we will win the second."

He was thinking of the next month's allowance.

Nevertheless, they had been so absolutely tricked that they were bound to suffer a certain dejection. And, upon my word, it was not difficult to understand. We must not forget that the managers had an idea at the back of their minds, all the time, that this strange incident might be an unpleasant practical joke on the part of their predecessors, and that it would not do to divulge it prematurely. On the other hand, Moncharmin was sometimes troubled with a suspicion of Richard himself, who occasionally took fanciful whims into his head. And so they were content to await events, while keeping an eye on Mother Giry. Richard would not have her spoken to.

"If she is a confederate," he said, "the notes are gone long ago. But, in my opinion she is merely an idiot."

"She's not the only idiot in this business," said Moncharmin pensively. "Well, who could have thought it?" moaned Richard. "But don't be afraid . . . next time, I shall have taken my precautions."

The next time fell on the same day that beheld the disappearance of Christine Daae. In the morning a

"What do you mean? I don't understand."

"Oh, you understand quite well. In any case, you're got to understand . . . And, first of all, tell us his name."

"Whose name?"

"The name of the man whose accomplice you are, Mme. Giry!"

"I am the ghost's accomplice? It . . . His accomplice in what, pray?"

"You do all he wants."

"Oh! He's not very troublesome, you know."

"And does he still tip you?"

"I mustn't complain."

"How much does he give you for bringing him that envelope?"

"Ten francs."

"You poor thing! That's not much, is it?"

"Why?"

"I'll tell you that presently, Mme. Giry. Just now we should like to know for what extraordinary reason you have given yourself body and soul to this ghost . . . Mme. Giry's friendship and devotion are not to be bought for five francs or ten francs."

"That's true enough. . . . And I can tell you the reason, sir. There's no disgrace about it . . . on the contrary."

"We're quite sure of that, Mme. Giry!"

"Well, it's like this . . . only the ghost doesn't like me to talk about his business."

TOWN TO BUY LIGHTHOUSE

Scituate to Acquire Tower From Which Two Girls Scared Off British Invaders.

Boston, Mass.—The old Scituate light, located on the Sand Hills, Scituate, scene of the exploit of Rebecca and Abigail Bates, who, during the war of 1812, scared off a British ship by playing the fife and drum, will become the property of the town of Scituate when the town purchases it from the government.

The old stone tower, from which the lantern has long been removed, has lain idle on the end of the Sand Hills since the establishment of Minot's



Old Scituate Tower.

light, with which it was confused by mariners many years ago.

A year ago the scheme of a local land company to acquire, the lighthouse was defeated by the hue and cry that was raised by citizens of Scituate and patriotic societies all over the country. In the town meeting last March the town raised \$1,000 for the purchase of the lighthouse.

The story of the heroic Bates girls may be found in many of the histories of the Bay state. The two young daughters of Aaron Bates, the light-keeper, lived with their father on the then lonely strip of beach half a mile from the village of Scituate.

One day when their father was in his fields a mile from the lighthouse a British man-of-war came in and anchored half a mile off the shore. The boatloads of sailors started ashore. The invasion of Scituate was undoubtedly prevented by the two girls, who, taking from the wall a fife and drum which had been carried by their grandfather in the revolution and on which they had frequently practiced, they got behind a sand hill and struck up "Yankee Doodle" to such good effect that the sailors returned to the ship, which sailed away. The girls have been called the "American Army of Two."

FIND VALUABLE OLD VOLUMES

British Museum Gets Two Copies of the "Lyd of our Lady"—Copies Are Rare.

London.—The British Museum has just secured two copies of the only two leaves known of the so-called second edition of the "Lyd of our Lady" by John Lydgate, printed by Caxton about 1484 in folio.

Some time ago the librarian of the St. Bride Typographical Library, Mr. R. A. Peddie, discovered among a collection of pamphlets and other papers originally the property of William Blades a bundle of early printed leaves and fragments of leaves wrapped in a leather binding from which the boards had been removed. On investigation it was discovered that the whole of the printed matter was from Caxton's press and the binding itself was from his workshop. There were thirty-eight leaves of the Boethius, printed about 1478, and there appeared to be little doubt that the binding originally belonged to the Boethius and that the careful disintegration of the boards had resulted in the remaining fragments.

Among these fragments these six copies of the two leaves before referred to were discovered. One leaf was still pasted on the binding. The "Lyd of our Lady" contains ninety-six leaves and there are eight copies now known to be in existence.

BRIGHT CHILD IS A DANGER

Every Community Should Have the Right to Direct Education, an Educator Says.

Washington.—Children of exceptional mental brilliancy are even greater dangers to society than those defective or abnormally stupid. This is the conclusion of Dr. Maximilian P. E. Grossmann of the United States bureau of education in a report made public here. The educational expert based his statement on the comprehensive study made in the schools of the United States.

As a remedy for the uplift of misguided juveniles the scientist advocates legislation giving the community the right to direct the educational training of every child.

Wildcats Kill Fancy Sheep.

Great Barrington, Mass.—Wildcats got into a flock of fine imported sheep on the country estate of Howard Willets of New York at New Marlboro and killed 35 of them. Each sheep had its throat chewed open and its tongue eaten out. The rest of the carcass was unmolesied. The sheep were of a valuable breed of fancy imported stock and were killed in a hill wood lot where wildcats often have been shot.



"Are You Still on Good Terms With the Ghost?"

note from the ghost reminded them that the money was due. It read:

"I'm just as you did last time. It went very well. Put the twenty thousand in the envelope and hand it to our excellent Mme. Giry."

And the note was accompanied by the usual envelope. They had only to insert the notes.

This was done about half an hour before the curtain rose on the first act of Faust. Richard showed the envelope to Moncharmin. Then he counted the twenty-thousand-franc notes in front of him and put the notes into the envelope, but without closing it.

"And now," he said, "let's have Mother Giry in."

The old woman was sent for. She entered with a sweeping courtesy. She still wore her black taffeta dress, the color of which was rapidly turning to rust and lilac, to say nothing of the dingy bonnet. She seemed in a good temper. She at once said:

"Good evening, gentlemen! It's for the envelope, I suppose?"

"Yes, Mme. Giry," said Richard, most amiably. "For the envelope . . . and something else besides."

"At your service, M. Richard, at your service. And what is the something else, please?"

"Indeed?" sneered Richard.

"But this is a matter that concerns myself alone. . . . Well, it was in Box Five one evening, I found a letter addressed to myself, a sort of note written in red ink. I needn't read the letter to you, sir; I know it by heart, and I shall never forget it if I live to be a hundred!"

And Mme. Giry, drawing herself up, recited the letter with touching eloquence:

- Madam:
- 1523. Mlle. Menetrier, leader of the ballet, became Marquise de Cussy.
 - 1522. Mlle. Marie Taglioni, a dancer, became Comtesse Gilbert des Voisins.
 - 1546. La Sota, a dancer, married a brother of the King of Spain.
 - 1547. Lola Montes, a dancer, became the morganatic wife of King Louis of Bavaria and was created Countess of Landsfeld.
 - 1548. Mlle. Maria, a dancer, became Baronne d'Herneville.
 - 1570. Theresa Hessler, a dancer, married Dom Fernando, brother to the King of Portugal.

Richard and Moncharmin listened to the old woman, who, as she proceeded with the enumeration of these glorious nuptials, swelled out, took courage and, at last, in a voice bursting with pride, flung out the last sentence of the prophetic letter:

1855. Meg Giry, Empress!

Exhausted by this supreme effort, the box-keeper fell into a chair, saying:

"Gentlemen, the letter was signed, 'Opera Ghost.' I had heard much of the ghost, but only half believed in him. From the day when he declared to my little Meg, the flesh of my flesh, the fruit of my womb, would be empress, I believed in him altogether."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Tactful Request.

Dobbieigh was a confirmed borrower, and, what was worse, he seldom returned the borrowed articles. He had held on to Whibley's umbrella, for instance, for nearly a year.

"And I'm blest if I know how I am ever going to get it back," said Whibley.

"Easy," said Hickenlooper. "Call a messenger and send Dobbieigh this note."

And he scribbled off the following: "Dear Dobbieigh: If you can spare it I'd like to borrow that umbrella of mine for a couple of days. Can you oblige me?"—Harper's Weekly.



He Listened. All Was Silence!

should put your question, monsieur. Let me introduce M. Mifroid, the commissary of police."

"Ah, M. le Vicomte de Chagny: Delighted to meet you, monsieur," said the commissary. "Would you mind coming with me? . . . And now where are the managers? . . . Where are the managers?"

Mercier did not answer, and Remy, the secretary, volunteered the information that the managers were locked up in their office and that they knew nothing as yet of what had happened.

"You don't mean to say so! Let us go up to the office!"

And M. Mifroid, followed by an ever-increasing crowd, turned toward the business side of the building. Mercier took advantage of the confusion to slip a key into Gabriel's hand:

"This is all going very badly," he whispered. "You had better let Mother Giry out."

And Gabriel moved away.

They soon came to the managers' door. Mercier stormed in vain: the door remained closed.

"Open in the name of the law!" commanded M. Mifroid, in a loud and rather anxious voice.

At last the door was opened. All rushed into the office, or the commissary's heels.

crecy, to Gabriel and Mercier, they put the twenty thousand francs into the envelope and without asking for explanations, handed it to Mme. Giry, who had been reinstated in her functions. The box-keeper displayed no astonishment. I need hardly say that she was well watched. She went straight to the ghost's box and placed the precious envelope on the little shelf attached to the ledge. The two managers, as well as Gabriel and Mercier, were hidden in such a way that they did not lose sight of the envelope for a second during the performance and even afterward, for, as the envelope had not moved, those who watched it did not move either; and Mme. Giry went away while the managers, Gabriel and Mercier were still there. At last, they became tired of waiting and opened the envelope, after ascertaining that the seals had not been broken.

At first sight, Richard and Moncharmin thought that the notes were still there; but soon they perceived that they were not the same. The twenty real notes were gone and had been replaced by twenty notes of the "Bank of St. Farce!"

The managers' rage and fright were unmistakable. Moncharmin wanted to send for the commissary of police,

"I beg your pardon, madame, could