

The PHANTOM OF THE OPERA

By Gaston Leroux

Author of THE MYSTERY OF THE YELLOW ROOM and THE PERFUME OF THE LADY IN BLACK. Illustrations by M.G. Kettner Copyright 1911 by The Bobbs-Merrill Company

SYNOPSIS.

Consternation is caused on the last night that the Opera is managed by Debiennes and Poligny because of the appearance of a ghost, supposed 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 managers 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 alone, 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. Moncharamin and Richard investigate. Box No. 5 and decide to see the performance of "Faust." Raoul from seats of that box. Carlotta, who sings the leading part in "Faust," is warned to give 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 is the person in the disguise of Rex Death. He hears her conversing with some one whom she calls Erik. Raoul visits Christine and tells her he knows the name of the unseen man whom she calls the Angel of Music. Christine and Raoul become secretly engaged prior to a night expedition the Raoul is to make. Christine 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. Moncharamin and Richard believe strangely. Raoul searches madly for the missing singer. The Opera Ghost demands the first installment of his allowance, and when it is left at an appointed place the same mysteriously disappears. Raoul goes in search of Christine. He meets a mysterious person known as the Persian. The Persian later aids Raoul in locating Christine and they gain access to a secret chamber. The two find themselves in a passageway which they expect will lead to where Christine has undoubtedly been carried by Erik. The Persian knows Erik in his true form and the contractors who built the Opera. Also that while the work was in progress there was built a secret torture chamber beneath the stage. From this chamber Raoul and the Persian hear Erik and Christine conversing. Erik claims a bag containing a quantity of keys. Christine looks into the chamber and assures Erik that there is no one there. She discovers that he is a ventriloquist. Erik and the Persian are almost overcome by the horrors of this room, and while searching for means of release they come upon a barrel of gunpowder. Erik had planned to blow up the Paris Grand Opera and all in attendance should Christine refuse to be his wife. They find Christine. Erik returns and by flooding the torture-chamber with water threatens all with death.

CHAPTER XXVI. (Continued.)

Erik left the room for a moment, and the Persian raised himself on his elbow, looked around him and saw Christine Daae sitting by the fireside. He spoke to her, called her, but he was still very weak and fell back on his pillow. Christine came to him, laid her hand on his forehead and went away again. And the Persian remembered that, as she went, she did not give a glance at M. de Chagny, who, it is true, was sleeping peacefully; and she sat down again in her chair by the chimney-corner, silent as a sister of charity who had taken a vow of silence.

Erik returned with some little bottles which he placed on the mantelpiece. And, again in a whisper, so as not to wake M. de Chagny, he said to the Persian, after sitting down and feeling his pulse:

"You are now saved, both of you. And soon I shall take you up to the surface of the earth, to please my wife."

Thereupon he rose, without any further explanation, and disappeared once more.

The Persian now looked at Christine's quiet profile under the lamp. She was reading a tiny book, with gilt edges, like a religious book. There are editions of The Imitation that look like that. The Persian still had in his ears the natural tone in which the other had said, "to please my wife." Very gently, he called her again; but Christine was wrapped up in her book and did not hear him.

Erik returned, mixed the daroga a draft and advised him not to speak to "his wife" again nor to any one, because it might be very dangerous to everybody's health.

Eventually, the Persian fell asleep, like M. de Chagny, and did not wake until he was in his own room, nursed by his faithful Darius, who told him that, on the night before, he was found propped against the door of his flat, where he had been brought by a stranger, who rang the bell before going away.

from behind the wall of the torture-chamber, and had no doubt concerning the crime and the criminal. Knowing Erik as he did, he easily reconstructed the tragedy. Thinking that his brother had run away with Christine Daae, Philippe had dashed in pursuit of him along the Brussels Road, where he knew that everything was prepared for the elopement. Failing to find the pair, he hurried back to the opera, remembered Raoul's strange confidence about his fantastic rival and learned that the viscount had made every effort to enter the cellars of the theater and that he had disappeared, leaving his hat in the prima donna's dressing-room beside an empty pistol-case. And the count, who no longer entertained any doubt of his brother's madness, in his turn darted into that infernal underground maze. This was enough, in the Persian's eyes, to explain the discovery of Count de Chagny's corpse on the shore of the lake, where the siren, Erik's siren, kept watch.

The Persian did not hesitate. He determined to inform the police. Now the case was in the hands of an examining-magistrate called Faure, an incredulous, commonplace, superficial sort of person (I write as I think), with a mind utterly unprepared to receive a confidence of this kind. M. Faure took down the daroga's depositions and proceeded to treat him as a madman.

Despairing of ever obtaining a hearing, the Persian set down to write. As the police did not want his evidence, perhaps the press would be glad of it; and he had just written the last line of the narrative I have quoted in the preceding chapters, when Darius announced the visit of a stranger who refused his name, who would not show his face and declared simply that he did not intend to leave the place until he had spoken to the daroga.

The Persian at once felt who his singular visitor was and ordered him to be shown in. The daroga was right. It was the ghost, it was Erik!

He looked extremely weak and leaned against the wall, as though he were afraid of falling. Taking off his

a deep sigh. Then, speaking in short phrases and gasping for breath between the words:

"Daroga, don't talk to me . . . He was dead . . . by the time . . . I left my house . . . he was dead . . . when . . . the siren sang . . . It was an . . . accident . . . a sad . . . a very sad . . . accident. He fell very awkwardly . . . but simply and naturally . . . into the lake!"

"You lie!" shouted the Persian. Erik bowed his head and said:

"I have not come here . . . to talk about Count Philippe . . . but to tell you that . . . I am going to die."

"Where are Raoul de Chagny and Christine Daae?"

"I am going to die."

"Raoul de Chagny and Christine Daae?"

"Of love . . . daroga . . . I am dying . . . of love . . . That is how it is. . . I loved her so!"

"And I love her still . . . daroga . . . and I am dying of love for her, I . . . I tell you!"

"If you knew how beautiful she was . . . when she let me kiss her . . . alive . . . it was the first . . . time, daroga, the first . . . time I ever kissed a woman."

"Yes, alive . . . I kissed her alive . . . and she looked as beautiful as if she had been dead!"

The Persian shook Erik by the arm.

"Will you tell me if she is alive or dead?"

"Why do you shake me like that?" asked Erik, making an effort to speak more connectedly. "I tell you that I am going to die. . . Yes, I kissed her alive."

"And now she is dead?"

"I tell you I kissed her just like that, on her forehead . . . and she did not draw back her forehead from my lips! . . . Oh, she is a good girl! . . . As for her being dead, I don't think so; but it has nothing to do with me. . . No, no, she is not dead! And no one shall touch a hair of her head! She is a good, honest girl, and she saved your life, daroga, at a moment when I would not have given two pence for your Persian skin. As a matter of fact, nobody bothered about you. Why were you there with that little chap? You would have died as well as he! My word, how she entreated me for her little chap! But I told her that, as she had turned the scorpion, she had, through that very fact, and of her own free will, become engaged to me and that she did not need to have two men engaged to her, which was true enough."

"As for you, you did not exist, you had ceased to exist, I tell you, and you were going to die with the other!"

Only, mark me, daroga, when you were yelling like the devil, because of the water, Christine came to me with her beautiful blue eyes wide open, and swore to me, as she hoped to be saved, that she consented to be my living wife! . . . Until then, in the depths of her eyes, daroga, I had always seen my dead wife; it was the first time I saw my living wife there. She was sincere,

room of you, I came back alone. . . "What have you done with the Viscount de Chagny?" asked the Persian, interrupting him.

"Ah, you see, daroga, I couldn't carry him up like that, at once. He was a hostage. . . . But I could not keep him in the house on the lake either, because of Christine; so I locked him up comfortably, I chained him up nicely—a whiff of the Mazenderan scent had left him as limp as a rag—in the Communists' dungeon, which is in the most deserted and remote part of the opera, below the fifth cellar, where no one ever comes, and where no one ever hears you. Then I came back to Christine. She was waiting for me."

Erik here rose solemnly. Then he continued, but, as he spoke, he was overcome by all his former emotion and began to tremble like a leaf:

"Yes, she was waiting for me . . . waiting for me erect and alive, a real, living bride . . . as she hoped to be saved. . . And, when I . . . came forward, more timid than . . . a little child, she did not run away . . . no, no . . . she stayed . . . she waited for me. . . I even believe . . . daroga . . . that she put out her forehead . . . a little . . . oh, not much . . . just a little . . . like a living bride. . . And . . . and . . . I . . . kissed her! . . . I! . . . I! . . . I! . . . And she did not die! . . . Oh, how good it is, daroga, to kiss somebody on the forehead! . . . You can't tell! . . . But I! . . . My mother, daroga, my poor, unhappy mother would never . . . let me kiss her. . . She used to run away . . . and throw me my mask! . . . Nor any other woman . . . ever, ever! . . . Ah, you can understand, my happiness was so great, I cried. And I fell at her feet crying . . . and I kissed her feet . . . her little feet . . . crying. You're crying, too, daroga."

my wedding-present . . . a dress (from your poor, unhappy Erik . . . I know you love the boy . . . don't cry any more!" She asked me, in a very soft voice, what I meant. . . . Then I made her understand that, where she was concerned, I was only a poor dog, ready to die for her . . . but that she could marry the young man when she pleased, because she had cried with me and mingled her tears with mine!

Erik's emotion was so great that he had to tell the Persian not to look at him, for he was choking and must take off his mask. The daroga went to the window and opened it. His heart was full of pity, but he took care to keep his eyes fixed on the trees in the Tuilleries gardens, lest he should see the monster's face.

"I went and released the young man," Erik continued, "and told him to come with me to Christine. . . . They kissed before me in the Louis-Philippe room. . . . Christine had my ring. . . . I made Christine swear to come back, one night, when I was dead, crossing the lake from the Rue-Scribe side, and bury me in the greatest secrecy with the gold ring, which she was to wear until that moment. . . . I told her where she would find my body and what to do with it. . . . Then Christine kissed me, for the first time, herself, here, on the forehead—don't look, daroga!—here, on the forehead—on my forehead, mine—don't look, daroga!—and they went off together. . . . Christine had stopped crying. . . . I alone cried."

Daroga, daroga, if Christine . . . her promise, she will come back soon!"

The Persian asked him no questions. He was quite reassured as to the fate of Raoul Chagny and Christine Daae; no one could have doubted the word of the weeping Erik that night.

The monster resumed his mask and collected his strength to leave the daroga. He told him that, when he

felt his end to be very near at hand, he would send him, in gratitude for the kindness which the Persian had shown him, that which he held dearest in the world: all Christine Daae's papers, which she had written for Raoul's benefit and left with Erik, together with a few objects belonging to her, such as a pair of gloves, a shoe-buckle and two pocket-handkerchiefs. In reply to the Persian's questions, Erik told him that the two young people, as soon as they found themselves free, had resolved to go and look for a priest in some lonely spot where they could hide their happiness and that, with this object in view, they had started from "the northern railway station of the world."

Lastly, Erik relied on the Persian, as soon as he received the promised relics and papers, to inform the young couple of his death and to advertise it in the Epoque."

"Go to the opera."

"And the cab drove off into the night. That was all. The Persian saw Erik to the door of his flat, and Darius helped him down to the street. A cab was waiting for him. Erik stepped in; and the Persian, who had gone back to the window, heard him say to the driver:

"The Persian had seen the poor, unfortunate Erik for the last time. Three weeks later, the Epoque published this advertisement:

"Erik is dead."

THE END.

A Motor Suggestion.

"I ran across an old acquaintance the other day."

"Good heavens! Did you kill him?"

MRS. MANGES ESCAPES OPERATION

How She Was Saved From Surgeon's Knife by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Mogadore, Ohio.—"The first two years I was married I suffered so much from female troubles and bearing down pains that I could not stand on my feet long enough to do my work. The doctor said I would have to undergo an operation, but my husband wanted me to try Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound first. I took three bottles and it made me well and strong and I avoided a dreadful operation. I now have two fine healthy children, and I cannot say too much about what Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has done for me."—Mrs. LEE MANGES, R. F. D. 10, Mogadore, Ohio.

Why will women take chances with an operation or drag out a sickly, half-hearted existence, missing three-fourths of the joy of living, when they can find health in Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound?

For thirty years it has been the standard remedy for female ills, and has restored the health of thousands of women who have been troubled with such ailments as displacements, inflammation, ulceration, tumors, irregularities, etc.

If you want special advice write to Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co. (confidential) Lynn, Mass. Your letter will be opened, read and answered by a woman and held in strict confidence.

Foley Kidney Pills Relieve

promptly the suffering due to weak, inactive kidneys and painful bladder action. They offer a powerful help to nature in building up the true excreting kidney tissue, in restoring normal action and in regulating bladder irregularities. Try them.

How to Work While You Play. A French collaborator of Thomas Edison has just invented a sewing machine which is also a piano. Its mechanism is so arranged that every time the operator strikes a note on the keyboard, she completes one stitch. A single waltz will hem three handkerchiefs—Beethoven symphony will sew an entire trousseau. Thus, the dressmaker can work and play at one and the same time, and the more they play, the more they work. To bring the invention into the vogue it so fully merits, schools will be established in many parts of France for the training of young women for the degree of M. P. M.—"master piano machinists." Music with its charms will thus be given an undoubted utilitarian value, and all the roundabout societies "for the furtherance of musical appreciation" will be left in the shade by a simple mechanical contrivance.

Its Kind. "There is one matrimonial net which seldom fails to catch the feminine fish."

"What is it?"

"A coronet."

Protests but Pays. Griggs—I am surprised that you put up with your wife's extravagance. Briggs—I don't. I merely put up for it.—Boston Evening Transcript.

Changed Color. "I put all the gray matter my brain had into a book."

"Then it was read."

Breakfast Sunshine Post Toasties and Cream

There's a delicious smack in these crisp, appetizing bits of toasted corn that brings brightness and good cheer to many and many a breakfast table.

Toasties are untouched by hand in making; and come in tightly sealed packages—clean and sweet—ready to eat with cream and sugar.

Wholesome Nourishing Easy to Serve

Sold by grocers everywhere



Silent as a Sister of Charity Who Had Taken a Vow of Silence.

hat, he revealed a forehead white as wax. The rest of the horrible face was hidden by the mask.

The Persian rose to his feet as Erik entered.

"Murderer of Count Philippe, what have you done with his brother and Christine Daae?"

Erik staggered under this direct attack, kept silent for a moment, dragged himself to a chair and heaved

as she hoped to be saved. She would not kill herself. It was a bargain.

Half a minute later, all the water was back in the lake; and I had a hard job with you, daroga, for upon my honor, I thought you were done for! . . . However! . . . There you were! . . . It was understood that I was to take you both up to the surface of the earth. When, at last, I cleared the Louis-Philippe



"Poor, Unhappy Erik!"

and she cried also . . . the angel cried!

Erik sobbed aloud and the Persian himself could not retain his tears in the presence of that masked man, who, with his shoulders shaking and his hands clutched at his chest, was moaning with pain and love by turns.

"Yes, daroga . . . I felt her tears flow on my forehead . . . on mine, mine! . . . They were soft . . . they were sweet! . . . They trickled under my mask . . . they mingled with my tears in my eyes . . . they flowed between my lips. . . . Listen, daroga, listen to what I did. . . . I tore off my mask so as not to lose one of her tears . . . and she did not run away! . . . And she did not die! . . . She remained alive, weeping over me, with me. We cried together! I have tasted all the happiness the world can offer!"

And Erik fell into a chair, choking for breath.

"Ah, I am not going to die yet . . . presently I shall . . . but let me cry! . . . Listen, daroga . . . listen to this. . . . While I was at her feet . . . I heard her say, 'Poor, unhappy Erik!' . . . And she took my hand! . . . I had become no more, you know, than a poor dog ready to die for her. . . . I held in my hand a ring, a plain gold ring which I had given her . . . which she had lost . . . and which I had found again . . . a wedding-ring, you know. . . . I slipped it into her little hand and said, 'There! Take it! . . . Take it for you . . . and him! . . . It shall be

felt his end to be very near at hand, he would send him, in gratitude for the kindness which the Persian had shown him, that which he held dearest in the world: all Christine Daae's papers, which she had written for Raoul's benefit and left with Erik, together with a few objects belonging to her, such as a pair of gloves, a shoe-buckle and two pocket-handkerchiefs. In reply to the Persian's questions, Erik told him that the two young people, as soon as they found themselves free, had resolved to go and look for a priest in some lonely spot where they could hide their happiness and that, with this object in view, they had started from "the northern railway station of the world."

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