REFLECTION ON THE MYSTERY OF THE PHANTOM

An Honors Thesis (ID 499)

by

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Listening to my "Phantom of the Opera" tape, I look back on the chain of events that got me so interested in the production and the origin of this show.

College
Ball State University
Honors College
Sophomore Year
1987-1988
New Roommate
Sara Rene’
freshman
theatre major
loved to sing
gorgeous voice
hometown girl
interest in shows
Hometown girl
same high school
our severe dislike for
each other then
try this arrangement to
get her into the
honors dorm
Shows
Les Miserables
Evita
Chess
Cats
Phantom of the Opera
Hometown people
sceptical of our living
together
waiting on war of wits
surprised by our growing
friendship
Fall 1987
my decision
London Center in Spring
Regent's College
All alone?
I don't know anyone going

Then, it hit me. Maybe I would be able to talk Rene' into going with me. Talking Rene' into it was easy. The hard part would be to convince her parents. Bunny, Rene's mom, was the easy part. She loves to travel and she was all for Rene' going to London. The big problem was convincing her dad. "Laid back Jim" could be pretty stubborn when he wanted to be. I do not remember exactly how he was convinced, but he WAS convinced. So, during winter quarter of 1987 Sara Rene' Martin signed up to go to London Center that spring.

Plans
books from library
books from bookstore
books from friends
Read! Read! Read!
Make it through this quarter!
Explanations

What to do

Toughest part
Calvin Gene
Jamie
friends
family
it's not forever
we will return—we hope
eat
shop
dance
drink
eat
travel
get lost
write home
eat
walk
master the tube
be like Britains
avoid homesickness
see the royal family
theatre
eat
tish
chips
custard
vinegar
tea
crumpets
finger sandwiches
malls
markets
Harronds
Hamleys

Eat

Shop

Dance
The Empire
The Hippodrome
the dorm at Regent's

Drink
beer
lager
baby shams
wine
dark
light
anything
everything
someone else buys
Scotland
Ireland
Wales
Finland
the continent

Travel
Get lost
London HAS to get
lost in London,
That's the way to

Write home
pictures
postcards
packages
family
friends
boyfriends
to Harrods
while shopping
through the parks
around Wimbledon
on day trips
after the tube stops
to theatres
sightseeing
getting lost
finding ourselves
to everywhere
switching
race to meet it
crowded stations
meeting people
strange looks
punks
homosexuals
AIDS billboards
packing in
rude people
bums/whiners
our bums--pinched
We get the hang of it!
It's impossible!
too much to do
think of people
miss them
take a minute
I'm late!
no such luck
Have you seen the palace?
a couple movie stars
Do they count?

hitch hike???
bus
train
airplane
"Everyone who goes to
learn. That's the
way to experience
LONDON!"

Walk

Tubes

Be like Britains
Avoid homesickness

See the royal family
Breakfast
baked potatoe
baked beans
scrambled eggs
eat
drink
meet people
hang out with Brits

Theatre-- there lies the key to my interest in "The Phantom of the Opera." Rene' crammed me full of theatre facts before we left the States. Once in London, we planned on seeing all of the theatre productions we possibly could. On the top of our list was the top show in London at the time, "The Phantom of the Opera."

The Phantom
Her Majesty's Theatre
Haymarket
across the street from

American Express
Friday, March 11

up at 4:00 a.m.
cut by 4:30 a.m.
darkness
walking
tubes not running yet
Walk! Walk! Walk!
passing bums
dirty
street cleaners
bundled newspapers
still walking
bag ladies
eerie glow occasional streetlamp

Walk
on
and
on
and
on
for
what
seemed
like
forever!

The theatre
FINALLY!
people already there
Americans casual, friendly

next time remember a blanket

sold out for 1 1/2 years returns

only two guaranteed seats

may be this is all for nothing

No, No, No. We HAVE to be able to get seats. We did
so much to get here. We wanted to see this show so badly.
We had to want it to get up that early!

8:00-- it's open. Ticket office here we come! Please,
please, please let there be tickets when we get there. At
this point we did not care about the twenty-some people
behind us. Here we go. Please lady...

"May I help you ladies?"

I hope so. "We would like two tickets for "The Phantom
of the Opera", please." Thank God she had two tickets.
Rene' and I both paid our money. Then, we headed back to
Regent's College. We had to get a nap. The tubes were
running by then, but we decided to be energetic and walk
back to Regent's.

By the time we got back to the dorm we were both so
excited and energetic that we decided to take our showers,
go get something to eat and do some sightseeing.

Later, after a casual day of running around, we ate
dinner and went up to our room to get ready for our big
night at the theatre. Rene' and I dressed in our finest.
As we were leaving the college, several of our friends
commented about how envious they were. We were going to see
Andrew Lloyd Weber's version of "The Phantom of the Opera"

We took the tube as we made our way to the theatre this
time. Our anticipation had us on a natural high. As we
approached the theatre, several scalpers approached us
asking if we wanted tickets or if we had any extra tickets.
We found that there was big money in scalping theatre
tickets in London. We decided that if people were willing
to pay that price (and they were theatre regulars) this must
definitely be a show worth seeing.

That night, sitting in the dress circle of Her
Majesty's Theatre, I fell in love with the magic of "The
Phantom of the Opera." Rene' and I took our morning journey
once more before we returned to the States.

Once I got back to the States, I looked into the
history of this great show. I read the novel and I found
copies of two of the movies. Again, I was entranced by the magic of the phantom. I remember thinking that perhaps this interest would be something for me to write about...
Before Gaston Alfred Louis Leroux wrote The Phantom of the Opera, he did a great deal of research. He searched through old records and documents, interviewed numerous people and tracked down people in order to talk to them.

Gaston Leroux searched the National Academy of Music’s Archives for information detailing three important events. The first event was the kidnapping of a premier opera singer, Miss Christine Daaé. The second event was the disappearance of Raoul, the Vicomte de Chagny. The third event was the death of Raoul’s older brother, Count Philippe. The count’s body was found on the bank of the underground lake in the lower cellars of the Opera.

Leroux read documents, read memoirs and talked to people who remembered these bizarre occurrences. Leroux met the examining magistrate of the case (Philippe’s death). While talking to the examining magistrate, Leroux learned of a mysterious witness who was called “the Persian”.

Leroux then tracked down this mysterious witness, the Persian. The Persian produced documentary proof of the existence of the phantom or ghost of the opera house. The Persian produced several letters belonging to Miss Christine Daaé. These letters were proof of the existence of the ghost.

Later, when workmen were digging in the cellars of the opera house to bury phonographs for posterity, they uncovered a human skeleton. At first the skeleton was thought to be the victim of a demented commune. Leroux, however, made the claim that he was sure that the body belonged to the phantom of the opera.

Leroux’s novel begins by taking the reader back to the 1880’s. The reader is immediately informed of the backstage gossip of the “phantom of the opera”. The phantom is said to have a death’s head instead of a face. He is supposedly a silent figure in dress clothes that materializes at his own will backstage.

Madame Giry announces that Buquet, the chief scene-shifter was found hanging beneath the stage. Then, because Carlotta (the opera’s prima donna) is ill, Christine takes her place a magnificent gala. The gala is attended by Philippe, the Comte de Chagny and his brother Raoul, the Vicomte de Chagny. After the performance, Philippe and Raoul go backstage where Christine has fainted. Christine awakens to Raoul standing by her. Raoul talks of childhood rememberances when he saved a young girl’s scarf from the sea.

Christine goes into her dressing room while Raoul waits outside the dressing room door. While waiting, Raoul hears a man’s voice telling Christine she must love him. Christine emerges from her dressing room alone. Raoul has hidden in order to see who Christine will leave with. After Christine leaves, Raoul looks in the dressing room to see who was talking to Christine, but all he finds is an empty dressing room.
The two managers of the opera house hand it over to two new managers. As Deblenne and Poligny turn the opera over to the new managers, they also hand over a document. This document contains the opera ghost's demands for an allowance of 20,000 francs a month and Box 5 for his personal use. The new managers decide to ignore these demands which the prior managers have always honored.

When the new managers allow Box 5 to be sold, the performance is destroyed due to maniacal laughter coming from someone unseen. When Madame Giry is asked about the situation, she replies that the new managers have angered the ghost. She tells the new managers of other times the ghost has caused disturbances in the opera. The new managers call Madame Giry a madwoman and they fire her.

Christine becomes reluctant to sing. She sends Raoul a letter confessing remembrance of their shared childhood experiences. Christine also adds that she is going to visit her father's grave at Perros-Guirec in Brittany. After receiving the letter from Christine, Raoul decides to go after her.

Raoul remembers Christine's father. He was a Swedish peasant with a rare gift for music. His young daughter (Christine) seemed to be an off-shoot of her father's musical talent. Christine's father was brought to Paris by Valerius, a renowned music professor. When Christine and her father spent a summer in Brittany she and Raoul met. They met by chance when Christine's scarf blew off into the sea. The young Raoul then saved it for her. After that the two played together every day until the autumn when they parted. Christine's father died shortly after that and Christine forced herself to forget the young aristocrat she had grown so fond of, Raoul. Christine pushed herself continually toward a career in music. Since she has been at the opera, Raoul has watched her every performance.

At Perros, Christine instinctively waits on Raoul. He asks her why she has ignored him. He tells her about the time he heard voices in her dressing room. Christine reacts by becoming very pale and nervous. Then Christine tells Raoul about the Angel of Music who has been giving her singing lessons. Christine tells Raoul that she believes the Angel is her father, come back to give her the help he promised to someday give her.

In the middle of the night, Christine goes to the graveyard in a trance-like state. Raoul follows her. In the graveyard Raoul hears perfect music. The music draws Raoul toward the grave of Christine's father. Raoul is suddenly attacked by a spectre with a death's head. Raoul is knocked unconscious. In the morning, Raoul is mysteriously brought back to the inn-- still unconscious.

Back at the opera house the two managers go to have a closer look at the infamous Box 5. They both swear they see something or someone there. Moncharmin says he saw a death's head resting on the ledge. Richard swears he saw
the figure of a woman like that of Madame Giry. The two managers decide to watch Saturday's performance from Box 5.

The managers receive a letter full of demands. The mysterious letter is signed "O.G.". The managers figure out that the abbreviation is short for Opera Ghost. The ghost's demands include: restitution of Box 5 for his personal use, replacement of Carlotta with Christine-- on a permanent basis, return (rehiring) of Madame Giry, payment of his salary. The letter ended with a threat of a curse if all of the ghost's demands are not met.

The stablekeeper comes in to the managers' office and demands the dismissal of the stablemen. This demand comes after the disappearance of Cesar, the prize horse of the opera. The phantom is the alleged abductor of the horse. Madame Giry then enters the managers' office with a letter from the Opera Ghost. She is literally thrown out of the office. The stablekeeper leaves.

The next person to visit the managers' office is Carlotta. She too has received a letter from "O.G." Her letter states that if she continues to perform a role suited to Christine, she will face a misfortune greater than death. The letter urges Carlotta to come down with a bad cold so Christine can take her place in Saturday's performance. The letter increases Carlotta's will to go on instead of letting the ghost pressure her to give up her role to Christine. Carlotta does not give up her role to Christine. During the performance Saturday, Carlotta loses her voice and begins croaking like a toad.

The Opera House becomes chaos. The managers collapse in their seats in Box 5. The Phantom's voice is heard throughout the opera house as it says Carlotta is singing to bring down the chandelier. The phantom can not be seen, but as he finishes saying this the huge chandelier hanging from the ceiling of the opera house crashes to the floor in the middle of the stalls. Following the incident the papers are filled with news of the disaster. Miraculously, only one person was killed by the falling chandelier. The person killed was a woman attending the opera for the first time in her life. The woman was also the woman Richard had chosen to replace Madame Giry.

Christine mysteriously disappears following the incident. In his search for Christine, Raoul questions the widow of the music professor who brought Christine's father to France. When Raoul asks the widow if she knows where Christine is, the old woman says that Christine is with the Angel of Music.

Raoul receives a letter from Christine. In the letter she asks him to meet her at the opera's masked ball. She asks him to keep their meeting a secret. At the ball, Christine tells Raoul she must give him up. Christine says she cannot see him anymore. After this meeting Raoul hides in Christine's dressing room. From his hiding place he watches as Christine talks to a voice coming from the
mirror. Then, Christine steps into the mirror and disappears.

The next day Raoul visits the widow of the professor again. This time he finds Christine with the widow. Raoul tells Christine that he saw her speak to a man named Erik in her dressing room---a man whose voice came from Christine's mirror. Christine tells Raoul that Erik is her Angel of Music. Then, Christine makes Raoul promise not to visit her dressing room again unless she sends for him.

Christine and Raoul's relationship becomes very uneasy. They finally go to the rooftop of the opera house to talk. Christine tells Raoul of a visit she had with Erik. Christine tells Raoul how she was lured to Erik's lair. She tells of how she got there on the back of the missing white horse. When she got there she found that Erik's bed was a coffin. Erik played her one of his own compositions that he had written expressly for her. The title of his grand opera was "Don Juan Triumphant." Christine told Raoul that once she had snatched Erik's mask and revealed a hideous face. Later, Erik had confessed his true love for her. He had promised to make her a great singer. Then, Christine told Raoul of her pity for Erik.

Above Christine and Raoul, unknown to them, sits Erik. Erik has heard their whole conversation. As Raoul and Christine leave the roof, the Persian meets them at the foot of the stairs and suggests they take a different route from the rooftop.

That night Raoul wakes up and feels like Erik is watching him. The next day Philippe tells Raoul that he should not marry Christine because she is utterly mad. Philippe uses Christine's ghost stories as an example of her madness.

During a performance of "Faust" Christine suddenly vanishes off of the stage before a bewildered audience. There is speculation as to whether the disappearance is Raoul's doing or Erik's. Raoul's innocence is proven by his immediate concern backstage.

The managers decide to finally give in to the demands of the phantom. The managers place 20,000 francs in an envelope. The francs are mysteriously replaced by false banknotes while the envelope is still in the managers' office. Madame Giry is accused of switching the francs and false banknotes. Madame Giry is proven innocent when Monchamir attaches several francs to his coat with a safety pin. These francs, like the ones in the envelope, mysteriously disappear.

The police are called in to deal with the disappearances of the money and Christine. The theory developed is that Philippe has abducted Christine in an attempt to keep Raoul from marrying her.

Raoul talks with the Persian. The Persian tells Raoul that he has a special interest in the Phantom. The Persian goes on to tell Raoul that Christine is with the Phantom somewhere in the opera house. Raoul and the Persian go to
Christine's dressing room. The Persian shows Raoul how Christine's mirror can become a door leading to the secret inner passages of the opera house. Raoul and the Persian go down into the secret cellars. They both act as though they are constantly ready to fire their pistols. They feel that this offensive position will serve as a precaution against the Phantom's deadly punjab lasso.

Raoul and the Persian meet up with a large, eerie, fiery head. This fiery head comes toward Raoul and the Persian. The two men back themselves against the wall. The fiery face continues toward them bringing with it an immense amount of noise. The noise is made up of hundreds of tiny sounds. The noise comes in waves like the waves of an ocean coming in with the tide. Raoul and the Persian scream in horror and pain. The waves of noise are accompanied with waves of little legs, claws, nails and teeth that attack the two men's legs. Raoul and the Persian kick at the painful waves at their legs. The fiery head tells Raoul and the Persian not to follow it. The head also tells the two men to let it pass because he is the Rat-Catcher. The legend of the Rat-Catcher said that the rat-catcher turned the light (fire) on himself in order to attract the rodents and draw them through the passageways. After the Rat-Catcher passes them, Raoul and the Persian continue on their search for the Phantom.

At one point the two men think they have found the Phantom's lair. They lower themselves into the room to find it is a torture chamber they can not escape from. Here, the Persian takes over the narration. He describes how he reached the Phantom's lair in a previous trip through the passageways. On his prior trip he had to cross the underground lake. While he was crossing the lake, the boat he was in was pulled under the water. The Persian was then attacked by Eric while he was underwater. The Persian barely escaped drowning. Continuing, the Persian tells Raoul that he knew Eric in his own country. Erik was an deformed person of superior intellect. The Persian offered a challenge to Erik dealing with Erik's obsession with Christine. Then, the Persian returns to the problems at hand--- escaping from the torture chamber and finding Christine.

Christine is imprisoned in the room next to the torture chamber. She can converse with Raoul and the Persian, but she can not do anything to help them. Erik offers Christine a challenge. He has two boxes, one with a scorpion and one with a male grasshopper. Erik tells Christine she must choose one and turn it. If she chooses the correct one, Raoul and the Persian will be saved. If she chooses the other one, the opera house will be destroyed. To speed Christine's decision, the Phantom turns up the heat in the torture chamber. Raoul and the Persian begin hallucinating. Then, before Christine makes a decision, the Persian finds a way out of the chamber. He leads Raoul into a chamber full of barrels of gunpowder. Christine, not knowing the two men
have escaped, decides to take a chance with Erik's challenge. She turns the scorpion. Suddenly the room that Raoul and the Persian are currently in is flooded with water. Here the Persian's narration ends.

Leroux takes over the story saying that he heard it from a very old man shortly before the old man died. Raoul and the Persian were forced unconscious by the flood. The Persian was awakened by Christine caring for him in Erik's chambers. Erik introduces Christine as his wife. The Persian and Raoul are mysteriously returned to their homes. Later, Philippe is reported to have drowned in the lake under the opera house.

Erik goes to visit the Persian. He tells the Persian he (Erik) is dying. Erik tells the Persian that Christine is the first woman who has allowed him to kiss her. Erik explains that the death of Philippe was beyond his control. Erik says he tried to save Philippe. As a sign of allegiance, Erik turns over all of the papers and evidence relevant to Christine's disappearance. Erik then leaves in a cab. Three weeks later, Erik's death was reported in a simple advertisement that said, "Erik is dead."

In his epilogue, Leroux explains that the Persian was the only person to know the whole truth about Erik. The Persian explained that Erik had been born a monster. Erik's earliest memory was that of a mask being placed over his face while he was still in the cradle. Erik, born the son of a master mason, travelled Eurasia with freak shows. Erik became a talented musician, a master architect and a practicing ventriloquist. As an architect, he became a master at designing secret passageways and trapdoors. Erik had spent some time working on the construction of the Paris Opera House. During this time he developed the labyrinth of secret passageways and trapdoors that were used during the mysterious dealings with the Phantom of the Opera. Erik had planned to use this labyrinth as his hideaway from mankind. Before his death, Erik blocked off all of the entrances to his secret lair. Only one trapdoor was ever found. That trapdoor was found in the managers' office. It was through the use of this door that Erik was able to remove the money from the managers' possession. The manuscript for Erik's "Don Juan Triumphant" was never found, nor did anyone ever find an entrance to his underground home after his death.

Here the book ends. Leroux leaves the reader on the edge. Leroux leaves many questions unanswered. The reader's imagination is left to run wild with these unanswered questions.
"The Phantom of the Opera" as a silent film relies heavily on the still shots of words. These still shots provide the audience with some of what was said by different characters. The still shots of words also provide important plot facts for the audience.

This silent movie often jumped back and forth between scenes. In my opinion, this was often very confusing. However, in a few places it added to the suspense. This was the case in the closing scenes.

I found it hard to watch this movie because of the silence. It was difficult to see the actors' and actresses' lips moving yet I could not tell everything that they said. The still shots rarely provided the audience with the entire dialogue. I found this very frustrating.

The most intriguing part of the movie, other than the basic plot, was the acting. I was intrigued by the differences in the style of acting then and now. Today's audiences would hardly stand for the overemphasis of every action to the extent that they were exaggerated in this film. In the age of special effects and make-up I doubt that many viewers would be entranced by the simplicity of the effects in this film. Many actors and actresses would consider working with these props and effects beyond unbearable.

There are many differences between the silent film and the films of today. I think that is one of the most interesting things about this film. After all of this time, this story is still one of great interest to the people. In remaking this story, people keep looking back to the original film. It is fascinating that we can continue learning from something that we are so far ahead of today.
The movie begins by showing a picture of Gaston Alfred Louis Leroux. Also shown is a picture of the Paris Opera House from the time of the mysterious occurrence of the Phantom of the Opera.

Philippe and Raoul are on the grand staircase of the Opera House waiting on a show to begin. Raoul hopes to hear his sweetheart, Christine, sing. Everyone takes their seats and the show begins. Christine, under the direction of a mysterious teacher, has become quite an aspiring prima donna.

After the performance, Raoul proposes marriage to Christine. She answers him by saying that there is a force driving her on. Therefore, she feels like she can not marry Raoul, yet.

The managers of the opera house resign quite suddenly and two new managers take over. The two new managers are almost immediately warned of the talk of the ominous Phantom of the Opera.

The scene shifts to the gloomy depths of the cellars of the opera house. Here, Simon and Joseph Buquet are talking with Florine Papillon as they all work. Simon and Joseph are brothers in charge of shifting the scenes for the opera. Since Florine is the property man, they all work closely together. As the men are talking, the ballerinas run through the room yelling, "The Phantom!"

Carlotta, the favorite prima donna of the Paris Grand Opera, goes to see the new managers in their office. She takes them a letter she has just received. The letter states that Christine will take over the role that Carlotta currently plays. The letter also states that any attempt to stop Christine from playing this role would be disastrous.

In the cellar, the ballerinas are talking about the Phantom. Some say he has no nose while others say he has an enormous one. Joseph Buquet tells the ballerinas he has actually seen the Phantom. According to Buquet, the Phantom has ghastly pits where his eyes should be. In these pits there is no light---they are like holes in a grinning skull. Buquet continues saying the Phantom's face is like leperous parchment with yellow skin stretched drum-tight over protruding bones. Buquet is warned that ghosts do not like to be seen or talked about. Paying no heed to the warning, Buquet offers to take the ballerinas to where he saw the Phantom.

Alone in her dressing room, Christine locks the door. From the hidden space beyond the walls of the dressing room comes a melodious voice that sounds like the voice of an angel. It speaks to Christine telling her that she will take Carlotta's role in the Opera. A shadow appears on the wall. The voice seems to belong to the shadow. The voice tells Christine, "You will triumph! All Paris will worship you!" The voice goes on to tell Christine to forget all worldly things and think only of her art and her master. Christine promises to sing for him---for forever.

The scene shifts back to Buquet and the ballerinas in the cellar. He has taken them to where he saw the Phantom.
The ballerinas get scared and begin running around the cellar. Wanting to get out of the cellar as fast as possible they use the trapdoors that lead to the stage.

The next day Christine and Raoul meet in the garden near the Opera House. Christine tells Raoul her master has spoken to her and she must devote her life to her art. Raoul then asks Christine about her mysterious master. Christine reminds Raoul of her father talking about the Spirit of Music. Because of her praying for the gift of song Christine feels that her father, in Heaven, has sent her the Spirit of Music. That is who she says her master has to be. Christine tells Raoul that she has never seen the Spirit, but he has been her inspiration. Therefore she feels that she must obey his wishes. Raoul says that someone is playing a joke on Christine. This upsets Christine so much that she runs away from Raoul.

Carliotta is extremely ill on Wednesday so Christine must take her place in the Opera’s performance. Backstage there are rumors of the Phantom. Raoul sits in the audience with Philippe. Philippe jokes Raoul that he has been tossed aside for the Phantom. Raoul vows to win Christine back.

The managers ask who occupies Box 5 of the opera. They are answered by a lady they do not know. She tells them that Box 5 is the Phantom’s. This causes the managers to ask exactly who this Phantom is. The lady avides that specific question and simply answers that Box 5 has stood in a foreigner’s name for quite some time. The Phantom always presents his credentials, but he never shows his face nor does he ever speak. Madame Giry agrees with the unknown woman. Then, she continues saying she has never seen the Phantom’s face and she has only heard his voice once.

The managers go into Box 5. They see a shadowed figure sitting in the box. Scared, the two managers leave the box. After collecting themselves, the two managers return to Box 5. This time the managers find the box empty. They leave the box hurriedly.

Christine reaches an operatic high by singing the immortal trio in the opera. For her performance, Christine receives a standing ovation. Following the performance, Christine bows and faints.

Raoul goes to Christine’s dressing room to see Christine. She asks Raoul who he is after she hears the Phantom’s voice. Raoul is asked to leave. Then, everyone leaves Christine’s dressing room except Christine. Raoul remains outside of the dressing room. He hears a voice inside the dressing room talking to Christine. The voice tells Christine that the world was placed at her feet that night. Christine asks her master how she can repay him. The spirit answers that soon he will take form and demand her love. Raoul is still listening outside the dressing room when Christine leaves. Once Christine is gone Raoul goes into the dressing room looking for the man to whom the voice belongs. Raoul’s search is futile.
In the cellar, Ledoux sees a man hanging when the curtain goes up. Ledoux goes to get other witnesses. When they all return, the body is no longer hanging. It is found lying on the ground. The men remove their hats to honor the dead man, Joseph Buquet. Around Joseph Buquet's neck is the Punjab Lasso--the Phantom's strangling cord. The vow is made by all to find the Phantom out.

Another note is sent from the Phantom to Carlotta. The note warns Carlotta not to sing the following night. Again, Christine is to take Carlotta's place. Carlotta takes the note to the managers. After refusing to heed the warning, she prances out of the managers' office. The managers then receive a note from the Phantom that says Christine will take Carlotta's place the next night--or else. The letter goes on to say that the Phantom's identity must remain a secret. The letters are reported to M. Faure, the prefect of police.

The next night Carlotta performs her usual role while Christine stands in the wings as her understudy. The managers watch the performance from Box 5. After Raoul sends Christine a message, she sends him a reply in which she tells him to never try to see her again.

The lights begin flickering while Carlotta is on stage. The Phantom appears as a shadow. His voice fills the Opera House. He says, "Behold! She is singing to bring down the chandelier!" As he finishes saying this, the huge chandelier falls to the floor. The audience becomes chaotic and Raoul begins to make his way to Christine's dressing room.

Backstage is also chaotic. Christine returns to her dressing room. As Raoul arrives at Christine's dressing room he hears the Phantom talking to Christine. The Phantom tells Christine he has come for her. Christine replies that she is ready. The Phantom tells Christine to walk toward her mirror. Christine obeys and she walks through her mirror into the cellars.

The Phantom comes up behind Christine. She looks at him and backs away even though he is wearing his mask. The Phantom tells her he is her master. He leads her on down the stairs. As he does so he tells her, "Look not upon my mask--think rather of my devotion which has brought you the gift of song."

The Phantom leads Christine on to a horse where she faints. The Phantom then puts Christine on the horse which he leads deeper into the cellars. The Phantom leads the horse to a lake formed by seepage from the River Seine. Then, the Phantom puts Christine into a boat and takes her across the lake. On the opposite shore, the Phantom takes Christine to his lair.

As the Phantom removes his hat and cape Christine awakens. She then shys away from the Phantom as he tells her he has brought her here because he loves her. He tells Christine he has awaited this time, "...when that which is
good within me, aroused by your purity might plead for your love.

Christine gets jittery so she runs into another room where she finds a coffin. The Phantom calmly admits that this is where he sleeps. "It keeps me mindful of that other dreamless sleep that cures all ills--forever!" Christine then figures out that the Phantom is indeed her Spirit of Music. The Phantom tells her, "If I am the Phantom, it is because man's hatred has made me so." Christine's love is needed to redeem and save the Phantom. The Phantom explains that men once knew him as Erik. He has lived in the cellars for years--a nameless legend. Christine faints. The Phantom rushes toward her and carries her to an elaborate curtained bedroom.

There is a mob above in the Opera House where the headlines state that Christine Daae has disappeared following the chandelier disaster. In the managers' office Raoul demands to know why the police are not doing anything to find Christine. Raoul tells the managers that he saw Christine disappear through the mirror in her dressing room. Raoul vows that if no one will help him find her he will find her on his own--even at the cost of his life.

The night that Christine spends in the Phantom's lair is one of tortured dreams. When Christine gets up she finds bride's clothes beside the bed along with a note from the Phantom. The note says she will come to no danger as long as she does not touch the mask. The note says she will be free as soon as her love for the spirit overcomes her fear. The note is signed "Erik."

Christine walks out of the room to find the Phantom at his organ composing his opera, "Don Juan Triumphant." Christine is entranced by the music. The Phantom is composing his opera, "Don Juan Triumphant." Christine reaches out for the Phantom. Suddenly, she draws back. Then, she reaches out for him again. This time she removes the mask he wears. The Phantom angrily turns around. Christine stumbles down a few steps as the Phantom follows her. He forces her to look at his hideous face. Christine covers her face with her hands. The Phantom talks of Christine not heeding his warning.

Christine promises to be his slave if he will let her go. She says if he loves her as much as he says he does, he will let her go. The Phantom says he will prove the depth of his love for her by letting her return to her world. He goes on to say he will let her sing in the opera again. He warns her that she is his alone and if she does anything to jeopardize that, like see Raoul, it will mean death for both Christine and Raoul. Then, the Phantom cries and Christine vows to never see Raoul again.

Raoul receives a message from Christine warning him to stay away from her. She warns him that it is dangerous for him to see her.

At the annual Paris Opera's Masquerade Ball, Christine looks for Raoul. The couple find each other on the grand
staircase. Then, a spectral figure appears at the top of the staircase. The figure is dressed as the Red Death— the Phantom has arrived. The crowd of people on the staircase splits as the figure descends the stairs. Everyone crowds around to see the Phantom. The Phantom tells the people, "Beneath your dancing feet are the tombs of tortured men—thus does the Red Death rebuke your merriment!" Then the Phantom spots Raoul and Christine.

The couple flees to the roof of the Opera House. They sit beneath the statue. Christine asks Raoul if anyone can hear them. Unseen by Christine and Raoul, the Phantom is above them on the statue. Christine tells Raoul she has seen the Phantom. She begs Raoul to save her from the beast that is the Phantom.

Because Carlotta is under a spell she will never sing again so Christine must return for the Opera's performance that night. Christine asks Raoul to take her away after that night’s performance. Raoul promises to be at the stage door after the performance. He promises Christine they will fly to England. The Phantom whispers that Christine has betrayed him. Christine and Raoul kiss and leave the roof. The Phantom comes down from his hiding place on the statue.

The managers find an announcement in their office. The announcement says that Erik was born during the Boulevard Massacre. He is a self-educated musician and master of the black arts who was exiled to Devil's Island for the criminally insane. He had escaped from there and was currently at large. Raoul uses this announcement to figure out that this Erik is their Phantom of the Opera. After coming to this realization, Raoul shares this information with the Prefect.

The next night everyone is nervous and scared. Christine, left alone in her dressing room, nervously prepares to go on stage. Christine goes on stage and performs. When she comes off stage, Raoul goes to her dressing room. She tells Raoul that the Phantom knows of their plan. She then asks Raoul to believe in her and save her. Raoul tells Christine that his carriage is waiting for them outside the stage door.

Christine goes back on stage to finish the performance. The cue man is grabbed from beneath. After he disappears, the Phantom appears where the cue man was. Christine sees the Phantom and she is scared. A man runs onto the stage. The curtain falls. Raoul runs for the stage. Christine is missing, only her wig is found. Backstage becomes chaos.

Raoul begins looking for Christine. He looks in her dressing room. Then, a foreigner says he can take Raoul to Christine. Raoul asks the foreigner about his identity. The foreigner says he is Ledoux of the Secret Police. He has been studying the Phantom for a month.

Ledoux and Raoul begin looking for a catch in Christine's dressing room mirror. The mirror moves. The two men had found the secret entrance to the Phantom's hiding place. Ledoux tells Raoul that this is where Erik was.
confined during the Second Revolution. Ledoux tells Raoul that these cellars used to be torture chambers. Lastly, Ledoux advises Raoul to keep his hand up by his face as a precaution against the punjab lasso.

The two men discover the trapdoor that cost Joseph Buquet his life. Phillipe is somewhere far behind Raoul and Ledoux. He had come after his brother because he feared for Raoul’s life. Raoul and Ledoux are met by a messenger from the shadows, a fiery skull.

The Phantom is arguing with Christine. The Phantom accuses Christine of lying to him. He says that she thought that she and her lover could cheat him. The Phantom calls Christine an ungrateful fool. Then, he threatens her with an evil spirit to match his evil face. The Phantom says that Christine shall bring him love.

Raoul and Ledoux stumble across a trap that causes them to fall into a pit. They find themselves in the “Room of Many Mirrors.” This room is one of the rooms that used to be a torture chamber.

The Phantom tells Christine he is a human being who will not be denied his happiness. Phillipe yells for Raoul when he reaches the edge of the underground lake. This alerts the Phantom to the visitor in his underground lair. The Phantom then leaves Christine to greet his caller. The Phantom steps into the lake with a pipe to breathe through. Phillipe sets off from the opposite side of the lake in a small boat. The Phantom tips Phillipe over causing Phillipe to drown in the underground lake.

Raoul begins calling to Christine. Christine calls out to Raoul in return. Christine then begins looking for a door that will lead her to Raoul and Ledoux. Unfortunately, when Christine finds the door it is locked. Christine begins looking for the keys.

The Phantom climbs out of the lake and returns to Christine. He tells her that their caller has departed. Then, he sits down at the organ to continue composing.

Outside on the street, Simon Buquet has found an outdoor entrance to the Phantom’s hiding spot below the Opera. Simon Buquet makes plans to avenge his brother’s death that night.

Inside, the Phantom continues composing. Christine continues secretly looking for the keys to help her get to Raoul. When Christine finds the keys, she grabs them and sneaks toward the locked door that separates her and Raoul. The Phantom turns, asks for the keys and grabs them from Christine’s hand. Raoul and Ledoux can be heard in the other room. The Phantom asks Christine if she heard voices. Then, he says that perhaps they have some more callers. The Phantom looks through a secret window into the locked room and sees Raoul and Ledoux. After seeing the men, the Phantom turns the heat up in the locked room. As the heat reaches unbearable levels, the Phantom beckons Christine over to watch Raoul and Ledoux suffer.
Outside on the street an angry mob is gathering. The mob is led by Simon Buquet. The scenes begin flashing from the mob on the street to the Phantom lair where Raoul and Ledoux are suffering in the heat.

The Phantom asks Christine what she would offer him to spare Raoul's and Ledoux's lives. While the Phantom is talking to Christine, Raoul and Ledoux find a trapdoor and escape to another room. The two captives find themselves locked in this room with a large supply of gunpowder. The Phantom returns to his composing at his organ. Christine is offered the chance to save Raoul and Ledoux. The mob from outside is getting closer to the Phantom's lair.

The Phantom presents Christine with two insects, a grasshopper and a scorpion. Christine is told that if she turns one of the insects Raoul and Ledoux will be set free. However, if she turns the wrong insect, the opera house will explode. The mob is closing in. They are getting very close. Christine reaches for the grasshopper, then she withdraws her hand. She turns the scorpion and water rushes into the room where Raoul and Ledoux are being held.

Raoul and Ledoux are trapped. Christine offers to do anything to save Raoul. The Phantom opens a trapdoor, sparing the lives of the two men. Christine rushes to Raoul. The mob is seen at the edge of the underground lake. The water level of the lake is so low that the people in the mob just walk right through the water.

The Phantom pulls Christine from Raoul. Then he rushes off with her. Raoul goes after Christine and the Phantom. The mob reaches the opposite side of the underground lake and catches up with Raoul. The Phantom leads Christine out of the Opera. The Phantom and Christine take Raoul's waiting carriage. The mob is close behind them now and is led by both Simon Buquet and Raoul.

Christine jumps from the carriage and the Phantom crashes the carriage while he looks to see if she is unhurt. Raoul stops to help Christine. Seeing Raoul with Christine, the Phantom runs away. The angry mob chases the Phantom to the river's edge. Here, the Phantom raises a threatening fist when the mob corners him. When the Phantom opens his empty fist, the mob descends upon him. The Phantom jumps into the river. The angry mob watches as the Phantom disappears beneath the surface and the rising air bubbles cease.

The movie ends with scenes of a honeymoon as Raoul and Christine kiss.
Act One

The show opens. The scene is set on the stage of the Paris Opera in 1862. The contents of the opera house are being auctioned off. The people present are the auctioneer, porters, bidders, and Raoul, the Vicomte de Chagny. Raoul is 70 and in a wheelchair. The auction begins when the auctioneer bangs his gavel down. Lot 663, a poster from the house's production of "Hannibal", is the first thing auctioned off. Lot 664 is a pistol and skulls from another production. Lot 665 is a music box, with a barrel monkey playing symbols on the top. The music box still works and it plays a charming little tune. Raoul buys the music box and briefly sings to it as if it were human. Then, the auctioneer continues, moving to Lot 666, a chandelier that figures into the disaster of the Phantom of the Opera affair. The auctioneer informs the audience that the workshop has restored it and fitted it with wiring for electricity. The auctioneer says, "Perhaps we may frighten away the ghost of so many years ago with a little illumination, gentlemen. He switches on the chandelier and it begins rising. The Phantom's theme plays while the chandelier rises and the stage returns to its earlier grandeur.

The audience is taken back to 1831 to the rehearsal of "Hannibal". Here, the audience learns that Lefevre, the opera house's manager, is retiring and selling the opera house to Firmin and Andre. Meg and Christine are both ballet girls in the chorus at the opera. Meg has great talent as a dancer, but Christine falls out of step. Christine has developed a great love of music because of her father. He was a famous violinist. Carlotta begins singing her aria for the new managers, but is cut off when a backdrop crashes to the stage. The chorus of ballet girls sing that the Phantom of the Opera is there. Buquet says that no one was at his post to cause the backdrop to fall. Andre says that these things happen. Carlotta says that until these things stop happening, she does not happen. Madame Giry has a note from the Phantom welcoming the managers to his opera house. The note also commands that Box 5 be kept empty and the Phantom's salary be paid. It is announced that the Vicomte de Chagny is the new patron of the opera. Christine grabs Meg's arm at that announcement. The next dilemma faced is that there is no understudy for Carlotta because the show is so new. Meg volunteers Christine to take over the lead during Carlotta's absence. Madame Giry seconds the nomination. Meg sings for the managers, timidly at first. Then her voice becomes stronger. While she is singing, things are transformed to that evening's performance. Christine is singing and Raoul recognizes her.

The curtains close and open again, putting the audience backstage looking at a closed curtain after the performance. Everyone congratulates Christine on a wonderful performance, Madame Giry congratulates her and says, "He will be
pleased."

Christine moves toward her dressing room as it becomes visible on stage. Meg follows her. As Christine opens her dressing room door, she hears the Phantom congratulating her. She turns around and sees Meg. They go into the dressing room and Meg asks Christine about her mysterious voice tutor. Christine tells Meg it is the Angel of Music that her father told her about when he was alive. Madame Giry calls Meg away to practice. Madame Giry then gives Christine a note from Raoul. Raoul comes to congratulate Christine on her performance. Christine rushes to him then she backs off. Christine and Raoul talk and he says he wants to take her out to eat.

Christine sings to her Angel of Music. The Phantom becomes apparent in the dressing room mirror. Raoul returns and hears voices in the dressing room. He cannot get in though because the door is locked. Christine walks through the mirror to her Angel of Music. The mirror returns to normal, the door unlocks and Raoul enters to find a deserted dressing room.

Christine walks part of the way down to his lair. Then she and the Phantom take a boat through the misty waters of the underground lake. Christine and the Phantom sing a duet. They arrive at the Phantom's lair and the boat becomes a bed. There is a pipe organ to one side and a large mirror to the other. The Phantom sings to Christine and then leads her to the mirror. He removes the dust cover from the mirror to reveal the image of Christine in a wedding dress. Christine moves slowly toward the mirror until the image thrusts her hand out towards Christine. Christine faints. The Phantom catches her and carries her to the bed where he lays her down.

The next morning the Phantom is playing music and writing it down as he plays it. Beside the bed where Christine is still sleeping is the barrel organ music box with the monkey on top. It plays as Christine wakes up. Christine only vaguely remembers the night before. She moves toward the Phantom who does not see her. She tears away his mask. He furiously sings to her, but it becomes a sad cry. She holds the mask out to him. He takes it and hurriedly puts it back on. Then he hurries her off saying that the two fools that run his theatre will be missing her. As they leave, the Phantom's lair sinks into the floor.

Buquet appears in front of the curtain holding a piece of rope serving as a mock punjab lasso. Buquet shows the chorus girls his defense against the Phantom's deadly noose. He shows off in front of the chorus girls. He warns them to be constantly on their guards or the Phantom might get them with his magical lasso. A trap door opens and a shadow appears as the Phantom emerges. The girls run off in fear. The Phantom stares at Buquet then sweeps his cape around Christine. Madame Giry enters as the Phantom and Christine leave. Madame Giry has seen what has happened and she tells Buquet he had better hold his tongue.
The curtain separates. The scene is set in the managers' office. Firmin is scornfully eyeing the newspaper. He starts singing about the mystery of Carlotta, then Christine leaving. It turns into quite a lively tune about how the mystery will pack the house. Andre comes in shouting how it is damnably free publicity. Firmin tries arguing that it is free publicity. Andre points out that they have no cast. Firmin points out the queue. Andre has been sorting his mail through the ordeal, and he realizes that they each have a note. They open their notes. Andre reads his aloud. It talks about what a charming gala the performance was, no loss when Carlotta left. Christine's success, the entrancing chorus, and the appalling dancing. Then Firmin reads his letter. It is just a reminder that the phantom's salary has not been paid. The letters are both signed "C.G."---standing for Opera Ghost.

Raoul bursts into the room demanding, "Where is she?" He is looking for Christine. The managers do not know where she is. Raoul says he wants an answer and he wants to know why they sent him a note. Raoul reads his note that says not to fear for Miss Daee, the Angel of Music has her under his wing. It also says that Raoul should not try to see her again. Andre and Firmin both deny sending the note. Raoul wonders who did send the note if it was not the managers. Carlotta bursts into the room demanding, "Where is he?" She is looking for Raoul. She in turn complains about the letter that Raoul sent her. Raoul reads Carlotta's letter aloud. It says that her days as a star are numbered. Christine would be taking her place that night, and if Carlotta showed up to take Christine's place a great misfortune would occur. Raoul denies sending the letter. The managers are beginning to tire of these notes. Firmin and Andre sing a song about receiving far too many notes (most of them about Christine). Madame Giry and Meg walk into the room. Madame Giry announces that Miss Daee has returned. Madame Giry sent her home to rest, and says that Christine will see no one. Then Carlotta asks Madame Giry if Christine will sing.

Madame Giry replies, "Here, I have a note!"

Raoul, Carlotta and Andre all say, "Let me see it!"

Firmin grabs the note and begins reading it. The Phantom's voice gradually takes over the reading. The note says that several notes of the most amiable nature have been sent about the running of the theatre. They will have one last chance to satisfy those wishes---in the casting of the new show, "Il Muto". The note goes on to say that the Phantom is anxious to see Christine's career progress. Therefore Carlotta should be cast as the pageboy and Christine should play the role of the countess. The role of the countess calls for charm and appeal while the role of the pageboy is silent. Therefore, the Phantom calls his casting ideal. The letter ends with the Phantom saying that he will watch the performance from his usual seat in Box 5 which should be kept empty for him. Finally, should his plans not be
carried out a disaster beyond their imagination would occur. This letter was also signed "O.G."

Carriotta then pitches a fit. Firmin brings it to an end by saying that Christine will be playing the role of the pageboy and Carlotta will be playing the role of the countess. Then everyone in the room goes on about their own thoughts. Carlotta worries about herself and her pride. Andre and Firmin worry about their prima donna. Raoul worries about Christine and her angel. Madame Giry warns everyone of the Phantom's scorn. Meg wonders if the Angel is really an angel or a madman, from Heaven or Hell. Raoul plans to begin a new game against the Phantom in Box 5. The scene ends with the Phantom threatening that if it is to be war between them and his demands are not met, a disaster beyond their imagination will occur.

The curtains close and Raoul, Andre and Firmin step out to talk in front of them. It is a performance of "Il Muto". Raoul says he will be sitting in Box 5 because all of the other seats are taken. The men all take their seats. The curtains separate. The scene is an eighteenth century salon with a canopied bed in the center. Carlotta is playing the countess and Christine is playing the pageboy. Serafino. Serafino is disguised as the countess's maid. There are four people off to one side of the stage discussing the countess's affair with Serafino. Don Attilio, the countess's husband comes in and tells his wife he has been called away to England on official business. To the audience he says that he thinks that his wife is unfaithful. He is not really going to England. Instead he is going to hide and watch his wife. Don Attilio pretends to leave and hides. After she thinks he is gone, the countess rips off Serafino's disguise to reveal manly breeches.

The Phantom's voice interrupts the scene. He is upset because Box 5 has not been kept empty for him. Meg shouts, "He's here! The Phantom of the Opera!"

Christine breaks character and says, "It's him...I know it...it's him." Carlotta gets upset because Christine's part is supposed to be silent, so she calls Christine a little toad. The Phantom comes back with the comment that maybe it is she that is the toad. Carlotta tries to begin the scene again. However, when she tries to sing, she croaks like a frog. She regains herself and tries to begin again. Again, she croaks. The Phantom is laughing, quietly at first, but his laughter gets more and more hysterical as Carlotta croaks on. The chandelier begins to blink and the Phantom says that Carlotta is singing to bring down the chandelier. Carlotta says that she can not go on.

Andre and Firmin rush onto the stage. Firmin says the performance will resume in ten minutes with Christine Daae in the lead. The chandelier returns to normal. Then Andre asks for the ballet from Act 3. The ballet begins. Behind the backdrop is the Phantom's shadow. Meg sees it and falls out of step. Suddenly, Buquet's body falls and dangles in the air at the end of a noose. The punjab lasso has gotten
him. Christine screams for Raoul who rushes to her side. They rush off to the roof. Firmin tries to placate the audience as the curtain closes behind him. Then he steps off stage and the curtain opens to reveal the happenings on the roof.

It is twilight on the roof of the Opera House. Raoul asks Christine why she has brought him there. Christine does not want to go back to the theatre because she is afraid the Phantom will kill her. Raoul tries to convince her the Phantom is all in her mind. Christine tells Raoul that she has been to the Phantom's world of unending night and that she has seen his face. She says that the Phantom's voice filled her spirit and she heard music like she had never heard before. Raoul says Christine's name twice. Then the Phantom echoes Raoul saying her name. Christine is scared. Raoul and Christine look deep into each other's eyes. The mood changes as they sing a love song together. They kiss. Then Christine realizes she must go. She asks Raoul to wait for her. They hurry off. The Opera House's crest comes down into the audience's view. The Phantom stands up in it. He has heard everything Raoul and Christine have said. At first the Phantom is sad and feels rejected. Then, Raoul and Christine can be heard off stage singing their love song. The Phantom's song turns to one of rage. He says that they will curse the day they did not do all that he asked of them.

The curtain closes and the cast from "Il Muto" step in front of it, taking their bows after the performance. Christine is dressed as the lead. The Phantom's maniacal laughter fills the theatre. The audience sees him high above the stage on the crest. The chandelier begins rocking and blinking. On the Phantom's command of, "Go," the chandelier crashes into a million pieces on the stage at Christine's feet. The lights fade.

END OF ACT ONE---INTERMISSION
ACT TWO

The next act opens. The audience sees an elaborate staircase filled with immobile people. The staircase cannot be seen clearly by the audience because of the gauze curtain in front of it. Andre and Firmin back their ways cautiously onto the stage from opposite directions. They are both dressed as skeletons with opera capes. They finally back right into each other. They both cautiously call out. Then they raise their masks and recognize each other. They congratulate each other on a wonderful evening and they drink to a wonderful new year. Firmin says it is a shame that the Phantom is not there. The gauze curtain is removed to reveal the Opera House staircase. The opera ball begins. Among the fancy costumes are a peacock, a lion, a dragon, Mephistopheles, a highwayman, a clown, knights, an executioner, ladies, a monkey with cymbals, a toy soldier with a drum, a toy soldier with a triangle and a toy soldier with bells. The four with instruments wander around playing music. As the ball begins everyone sings a grand song. Everyone talks about the wonderful past six months with no notes and no ghost. They drink a toast to a wonderful new year and the new chandelier.

Christine and Raoul gain the spotlight as Christine admires the engagement ring Raoul gave her. She wears it on a chain around her neck because she wants to keep their engagement a secret for a while. Raoul does not understand the need for secrecy. Christine is swept into the dance section. She begins to get upset because all of her partners seem to be replicas of the Phantom. Raoul loses her in the crowd, so he rushes around looking for her. Finally, he rescues her from the dance section and holds her close.

At the height of activity, a grotesque figure appears at the top of the staircase. Dressed in an elaborate, crimson outfit, a more elaborate crimson hat, and a Death's face mask, the Phantom has arrived at the opera ball. With ominous steps he slowly descends the staircase. All of the other guests grow silent and move to the far sides of the staircase. The Phantom announces that he has written them an opera called "Don Juan Triumphant". He throws it to Andre and advises that all instructions be followed exactly because there are worse things than a shattered chandelier. Christine, entranced, approaches the Phantom. He rips the secret engagement ring from her neck telling Christine that her chains are still his and she will sing for him. Everyone cowers away until he disappears into a cloud of smoke. The curtain closes.

Madame Giry rushes onto the stage in front of the curtain. Raoul stops her. She says that she knows no more than anyone else, but Raoul thinks that she does. Finally, she tells him of a travelling fair that came through the city many years before. There was a man with the fair who was a prodigy—-scholar, musician, architect, composer and inventor. He was kept in a cage because he was a freak of
nature; more monster than man. He turned up missing—escaped. No one ever found him. Many said he had died. Madame Giry had seen him before he escaped, and she had seen him after his escape in the darkness of the theatre. Then, Madame Giry realizes she has said too much to Raoul on the subject of the mysterious Phantom of the Opera. She disappears into the darkness before Raoul can ask her any more questions. Raoul rushes off looking for her.

The curtain opens. Andre and Firmin are in their office discussing the score of the Phantom's opera. They do not like it at all. As they discuss their dislike for the Phantom's opera, they also discuss the notes they just received from the Phantom. Andre's is about the orchestra's inabilities and Firmin's is about the chorus's poor talent. Outraged by the score, Carlotta and Piangi burst into the office. Raoul and Christine walk in shortly thereafter. Carlotta verbally attacks Christine saying that she is to blame for the role assignments. Christine finally blows up at Carlotta and says she wants no part of the new opera. Andre and Firmin pressure Christine to do it. Meg and Madame Giry join the scene. Madame Giry has with her another note from the Phantom. They all stand in line side by side as she reads it. The Phantom's voice takes over as everyone is singled out. He says that Carlotta must be taught to act instead of her usual strutting around the stage. Piangi must lose some weight because it is unhealthy for someone his age to be that round. The managers must learn that their place is in the office not in the arts. Christine will do well, but she has room to improve, and she should return to him so that she can improve. The note is signed, "Your obedient friend and angel.

Raoul suddenly has a plan on how to snag the Phantom if Christine will be in the opera. Everyone is unsure of this plan so they discuss it for a little while. Christine is extremely scared. Raoul pressures her until she finally runs out of the managers' office. Raoul addresses an imaginary Phantom and threatens that this time the downfall will be the Phantom's. The lights dim and the props are changed to a rehearsal scene.

Rayer is supervising the learning of a new piece for "Don Juan Triumphant." Because Piangi keeps singing the song the way he thinks it should be, he keeps messing up. Carlotta complaints that at least Piangi's way sounds like music. Madame Giry says that Carlotta would never speak that way if the composer were there. Carlotta replies that he is not there and she goes on with her complaining. Everyone begins talking and arguing. Then, the piano begins to play by itself. It plays with a great force and rhythm. Everyone falls silent and freezes. As the piano plays the song they have been futilely working on for hours, they all sing their parts perfectly. Christine moves away from the group and begins singing on her own. The other voices fade and the scene changes as Christine sings of her father's promises to her.
The new scene is a graveyard. In the center is a pyramid of skulls in front of a large cross. Christine sings to her father wishing he were with her again. She asks him to help her say good-bye to the past so she can go on and live her life. The Phantom steps out from behind the cross. He sings to Christine very softly and enticingly. Raoul appears in the shadows and just watches the Phantom and Christine for a moment. Christine begins to let down her resistance and moves toward the Phantom. Raoul speaks up, renaming the Phantom the Angel of Darkness. Raoul calls to Christine. She wakes from her trance, runs to Raoul and they embrace. The Phantom grabs a spike with a skull impaled on top and with a quick movement he sends balls of fire from the mouth of the skull to the ground at Raoul's feet. Raoul slowly begins walking toward the Phantom. The Phantom coaxes him on. Raoul is almost at the Phantom's feet when Christine rushes forward and pulls Raoul back. The Phantom declares war on them both and disappears in a flash of fire. The curtain closes.

The night of the premiere of "Don Juan Triumphant", Andre, Firmin and Raoul are talking in front of the curtain. The orchestra is warming up while the firearms chief is instructing his men where to station themselves throughout the theatre. There is a marksman positioned in the pit aiming for the stage. Raoul informs him to shoot to kill. The chief asks if all of the doors are secured. One by one the riflemen answer that their doors are secure. Then the Phantom replies, "I'm here-- the Phantom of the Opera." The riflemen run in the direction of his voice. Then, from a different direction, his voice repeats the same thing, and the riflemen all run in that direction. This happens several times until the Phantom's voice comes from Box 5. In the confusion, the marksman in the pit fires a shot. Raoul yells at him. The Phantom then tells them that their joke is wearing thin. He says to let the audience in and let the opera begin.

The curtain opens. The final scene of "Don Juan Triumphant" is set. There is a huge hall with a curtained arch, behind which is a bed. There is a fine table set for two in the foreground. Don Juan's servant, Pessarino, is directing the staff. Don Juan, played by Piangi, emerges from the bed with a gypsy dancer, played by Meg. He throws her a purse and she rushes off. Don Juan and Passarino make plans to switch places so Don Juan can impress Aminta, played by Christine. Don Juan and Passarino make plans to switch places so Don Juan can impress Aminta, played by Christine. Don Juan hides in the bed and Passarino leaves the room. Christine enters the room singing. Don Juan pretending to be Passarino enters the room from behind the bed's curtain. Instead of being Piangi, the Phantom is wearing Don Juan's cloak. The Punjab lasso has killed Piangi (however the audience does not see that yet). Don Juan hides his face in the hood of his robe. He sings to Christine and she sings her reply to him. Then, they sing a lovely duet, and everyone realizes it is the Phantom behind the hood instead of Piangi. The Phantom
removes a ring from his finger and gives it to Christine. It is her engagement ring from Raoul. Slowly, she puts it on her finger. Then, quite calmly, she removes the Phantom's mask, revealing his hideous face to the audience. The Phantom then sweeps his cape around her and they disappear together. Meg pulls the bed's curtain back to reveal Piangi propped against a post with his head gruesomely tilted to one side. Upon seeing Piangi, Meg screams. Mass confusion follows. Involved in the confusion are: police, riflemen, Raoul, Meg, Carlotta, Firmin, Andre, Madame Giry and numerous stagehands. Madame Giry grabs Raoul and hurries off with him.

The Phantom sings furiously to Christine as they cross the underground lake to his lair. The voices of the gathering mob can be heard off stage. Raoul and Madame Giry can be seen on the path above slowly making their way down to the depths of the opera's underground. Madame Giry reminds Raoul to keep his hand at eye level to avoid the punjab lasso. Then, she says she will go no farther with him. Raoul removes his coat and plunges into the water, lost from sight. The angry mob is seen at the top of the slope. The gate to the Phantom's lair descends as the rest of his lair rises.

The dummy of Christine sits crumpled in the throne. The Phantom pulls Christine from the boat. He still does not have a mask on since Christine pulled it off on the stage. She frees herself from his grasp and asks him if he is satisfied. The Phantom coldly sings to Christine and places a wedding veil on her head. As they sing to each other the Phantom realizes that Raoul is present, and he announces to Christine that they have a guest. Raoul pleads with the Phantom from the other side of the gate. The Phantom gestures and the gate rises as Raoul scrambles under it. The Phantom then catches Raoul around the neck with the punjab lasso. After the Phantom lets go of the end of the rope it magically remains suspended in mid-air.

The Phantom taunts Raoul, turns to Christine, and offers her an ultimatum. She can buy Raoul's freedom by starting a new life with the Phantom. The Phantom, Raoul and Christine then beg and plead with each other. Finally, the Phantom tells Christine to make her decision. She thinks for a moment, then moves toward the Phantom. She sings to him and then kisses him fully on the mouth while Raoul watches in horror.

After the kiss, the Phantom holds a candle above Raoul's head, and the suspended rope falls. The mob can be heard in the background. The Phantom turns to Raoul and tells him to take Christine, leave and forget everything. Christine and Raoul move off toward the boat. The Phantom looks mockingly at his mask. Magically, the monkey music box begins playing, and the Phantom listens to it carefully. Christine re-enters and walks slowly toward the Phantom. She takes her ring off her finger and gives it to him. He sings that he loves her as she hurries off and he puts the
ring on his finger. Christine and Raoul can be heard singing part of their love song as the boat pulls away in the shadows. The Phantom looks after Christine and sings, "You alone can make my song take flight. It's ever now, the music of the night." Then, he walks slowly to the throne, sitting down in his cloak.

The mob appears above, climbing down the gate. As the first member of the mob reaches the Phantom's lair, the Phantom wraps his cloak around himself and disappears. The first member of the mob is Meg. As she reached the ground of the Phantom's lair, she crossed over to his throne and picks up the one remaining part of the Phantom---his mask. As she looks at it, the lights fade and the curtain closes.

THE END
Andrew Lloyd Webber's "The Phantom of the Opera" is superb! It is a story of love, suspense and intrigue. The director, actors, setting, special effects and music all helped to change a simple plot into a very interesting and exciting show. The basic plot of this show is the old and overused plot of a heroine who is placed in extreme danger by some mysterious figure from the outside of society.

The director has an important role in this musical because he basically creates the roles the actors must play. The director has to make sure that the actors play their roles perfectly. Harold Prince is the director that Andrew Lloyd Webber worked with in "The Phantom of the Opera". Unlike the book by Gaston Alfred Louis Leroux, there are no set descriptions of the characters in the musical. Prince was given the basic guidelines for each of the characters as developed by Andrew Lloyd Webber, the writer of the music, and Charles Hart, the writer of the lyrics. Therefore, Prince had to work closely with both writers as well as the numerous actors in this show.

Along with the development of the characters, the director is also has to be sure that everything will be understood by the audience. It is the director's job to pull everything together before the show goes onto the stage. I was amazed at the excellent job Harold Prince did with this show. Everything came together superbly to make the show enjoyable and easy to understand. Prince made a massive contribution to the development of the plot by working with the actors in their creation of their characters and also by pulling everything together when it was all complete.

The characters the actors portray develop the plot through their interactions and their songs. There is a large amount of character interaction in this show because everyone knows everyone else. They all work in the same place therefore they see each other everyday. Their jobs are also dependent upon their interaction. Although there are some who are new to the group (Andre, Firmin and Raoul), they are introduced in the second scene of the first act so they quickly become involved with the rest of the group. Each character has a special role in the show.

The Phantom provides the major source of antagonism. He is the mysterious figure from the outside of the theatre's society circle. Along with Christine, he provides two themes for the show. The first theme developed is that good wins out over evil in the end. The second theme the Phantom helps develop is that when you love someone, you will give up something that you really want in order to make the person you love happy.

Christine is the innocent heroine. She is the major protagonist of the show. She alone sees the good side of
the Phantom. She loves Raoul so much that she is willing to
give up her own dreams and happiness so that Raoul can live.

Raoul, along with Madame Giry, is the strength of the
show. He stands strong for Christine, the woman he loves.
He decides to give up his life in order for Christine to
realize her dreams and be happy. Raoul plays the hero of
the show to complete his complementation of Christine as
heroine.

Andre and Firmin provide the comic relief of the show.
This bumbling pair serves as a sort of Laurel and Hardy in
provide the show with a light interlude mixed amongst the
serious moods of trauma and suspense that are predominant
throughout the show.

Carlotta serves as an obstacle in this show. Her
animosity toward Christine provides some excitement
throughout the show. Carlotta causes the innocent image of
Christine to finally break when Carlotta provokes Christine
to retaliation.

Madame Giry serves as the key to this mysterious
puzzle. Along with being the answer to one puzzle, she is a
puzzle in herself. She knows throughout the entire show
that the Phantom is indeed a man—a very brilliant man.
Although Madame Giry knows it though she wants to use it for
negative force. In reality she is a positive force within the
positive role in the making of this romantic story.

Meg Giry is a small and vital character to
Christine at the beginning of the show. She serves as a
symbol of friendship and love to serve to develop
Christine's character because of her deep caring for
Giry,

Buquet demonstrates the average person's
reaction to something that he does not understand or that
frightens him. Buquet uses the stories of the Phantom to
impress or frighten others who are even more vulnerable to
the frightful stories than he. The chorus girls and other
cast members are key example of the people who Buquet shares
his stories with.

Monsieur Reyer also reacts like an average person.
When things get too difficult for him to handle comfortably,
he runs away leaving the trouble for someone else to deal
with. When the Phantom becomes too much for him to
understand he runs away by selling the opera house to Andre
and Firmin.

The characters are all unique. Therefore the
interactions of the characters serve as a model of a larger
society. The uniqueness of the characters allows each
person from the audience to associate with one of the
characters. The interactions of the characters show the
audience their own interactions within society.

The settings, staging and props also enhanced the
performance. All of these give the audience a better
picture of exactly what is going on and where it is happening. For example, at the end of Act One Scene two, Christine is singing the end of her aria from "Maniobra". She bows toward the audience, and the curtain closes to open again almost immediately. The scene has changed so Christine has her back to the audience. The curtain in front of Christine closes and the scene goes on; only now it is backstage instead of on stage. The quick changing of the props allows the audience to be taken from the audience to backstage in a matter of seconds. The manner in which the settings were changed added to the magic and mystery of the show. The audience would become so enthralled in the action on one part of the stage that they would not see the movement of the props on another part of the stage. Then, when the action would shift to where the new props were, the audience was left to wonder how these new props had appeared on stage without their noticing.

The special effects were also beneficial to the development of the plot. They too allowed the audience to better understand and experience the action of the show. The special effects helped to develop the mystery and magic of each scene. The underground lair of the Phantom is partially created by the rolling mist across the stage. The chandelier, both in its rising and falling, seems to have a mind of its own— or to be obeying the Phantom's will. In Act Two, Scene Five there was blue lightning flashing in the background. In this same scene, fireballs flew from the Phantom's staff. These fireballs were so natural they seemed very realistic. Two other fascinating effects were the Phantom's voice travelling around the theatre and the monkey-topped music box that played of its own accord. Effects such as these added greatly to the mystery of the show.

Music was also used as a special effect throughout the show. Music was played in the background during several scenes to create suspense. The music was another element that added to the plot because of its aid in developing the characters and the mood of the show. This was largely because all of the major dialogue was sung. The major role of music in this show was that it was the major driving force for the characters. The love of music is what originally drove the Phantom and Christine together. The Phantom's love of music pulled him toward Christine. He wanted to teach her his music and his love for music. Music is the one thing that everyone in the show had in common. All of the characters had a tie to music—a love of it. Christine loved music so much it brought her to the stage. It was her music that allowed her to express herself. Raoul used music to express himself to Christine. Through music Raoul and Christine expressed their love for each other. Carlotta simply presented her music without feeling. She
provides a contrast to the other characters in that manner. The music played a dual role in the show by pulling the characters together and then neatly pulling them apart.

"The Phantom of the Opera" can be found as a novel, a film and a show in the theatre. As a musical it is intriguing largely because of the director, characters, setting, props, special effects and music all of which contribute to the plot. Andrew Lloyd Webber, Harold Prince and Charles Hart have effectively used everything in their power to add a new life to Gaston Alfred Louis Leroux's original story. Although the plot is basic, it is masterfully developed. The show is fantastic. The fact that a simple plot can be developed and carried off so well is amazing. The emotion involved is wonderfully evident. Andrew Lloyd Webber's production of "The Phantom of the Opera" is an excellent example of how a new twist being applied to an old plot can create a wonderfully alive and exhilarating show.