



Tracy Wells

Adapted from the novel by Victor Hugo
Illustration by Luc-Olivier Merson

BIG DOG PUBLISHING

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For Eric

*Thanks for your help and insight with this one,
And for your love and support always.*

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The Hunchback of Notre-Dame

CLASSIC. Adapted from the novel by Victor Hugo. In the towers of Notre-Dame lives Quasimodo, a deformed bell ringer. Mocked and shunned for his appearance, Quasimodo falls in love with the beautiful Gypsy, Esmeralda, who is the only one to show him kindness. When Esmeralda is condemned as a witch by the sinister archdeacon Claude Frollo, Quasimodo attempts to save her. Audiences will be spellbound by this tragic tale of love and human cruelty.

Performance Time: Approximately 120 minutes.



Left to right: Victor Hugo, 1883. Illustration (1881) by Luc-Olivier Merson showing the galerie des chimères. Notre-Dame de Paris.

About the Story

Victor Hugo (1802-1885) is considered one of the most respected authors of French literature. Hugo is best known for his collections of poems and his novels *Les Misérables* and *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame*. *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* was first published in 1831 and was originally entitled *Notre-Dame de Paris* (the name of Notre-Dame cathedral), which is translated as "Our Lady of Paris." Notre-Dame Cathedral was built from 1163 to 1345 and is known for its flying buttresses and stained glass windows. Victor Hugo, who greatly admired the cathedral, wrote *Notre-Dame de Paris* to save Notre-Dame, which was in such disrepair that officials considered demolishing it. Hugo's novel was enormously successful and led to the restoration of Notre-Dame from 1844-1864. Sadly, Notre-Dame caught fire on April 15, 2019 and suffered considerable damage. *The Hunchback of Notre-Dame* includes characters from all walks of life, from royalty to thieves, and is the first novel to feature beggars as main characters. Hugo believed writers should defend the less fortunate by documenting social injustice. During his lifetime, Hugo championed free education, universal suffrage, and the abolition of the death penalty. Hugo referred to himself as a freethinker, and though his writings focus on issues of social injustice, he always espoused optimism for the future of humanity: "In the twentieth century, war will be dead, the scaffold will be dead, hatred will be dead, frontier boundaries will be dead, dogmas will be dead; man will live." Two days before Hugo died he wrote, "To love is to act."

Characters

(14 M, 20 F, 20 flexible, opt. extras)
(With doubling: 13 M, 18 F, 16 flexible)

QUASIMODO: Hunchbacked, deaf bell ringer of Notre-Dame who was abandoned as a child by his Gypsy mother and adopted by Archdeacon Claude Frollo; one eye bulges and there is a giant wart over the other eye (see the original description from the novel for further reference); wears loose-fitting, dirty, worn clothing in earth tones; male.

CLAUDE FROLLO: Archdeacon of Notre-Dame who is obsessed with Esmeralda and orders Quasimodo to kidnap her; wears a monk's robe with a hood; male.

ESMERALDA: Beautiful, charming young woman who was stolen by Gypsies as an infant and is the long-lost daughter of Sister Gudule; dances in the street and performs tricks with her pet goat Djali; marries Pierre Gringoire but is in love with Phoebus de Chateaupers; wears a long skirt, loose blouse, head wrap, gold jewelry, a brightly colored scarf around her neck, and a green amulet; female.

PAQUETTE/SISTER GUDULE: Esmeralda's long-lost mother; a reclusive, bitter old woman; stooped over and walks with a cane; female.

PIERRE GRINGOIRE: Struggling playwright; Esmeralda marries him to save him from being hanged by a group of vagabonds; wears worn clothing and a cap; male.

PHOEBUS DE CHATEAUPERS: Captain of the King's Guard who saves Esmeralda from being kidnapped by Quasimodo; wears a decorated military uniform with boots; male.

JEHAN FROLLO: Claude Frollo's irresponsible younger brother who is a university student; dependent on Claude Frollo for money but squanders it; male.

ROBIN: Jehan Frollo's friend and a fellow student; male.

JOANNES: Jehan Frollo's friend and a fellow student; male.

FLEUR-DE-LYS DE GONDELAURIER: Beautiful, wealthy noblewoman engaged to Phoebus; wears an elegant gown; female.

ALOISE DE GONDELAURIER: Fleur-de-Lys's mother; wears an elegant gown; female.

AMELIA: Fleur-de-Lys's friend; wears an elegant gown; female.

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CLAUDETTE: Fleur-de-Lys's friend; wears an elegant gown; female.
DIANE: Fleur-de-Lys's friend; wears an elegant gown; female.
BRIGITTE: Fleur-de-Lys's friend; wears an elegant gown; female.
CLOPIN TROUILLEFOU: "King" of Gypsies, vagabonds, and thieves; wears a broken crown and cloak and walks with a cane; male.
LEONORA: Gypsy; female.
SELINA: Gypsy; female.
THEODOSIA: Gypsy; female.
ZIROLI: Gypsy; female.
MASTER FLORIAN BARBEDIENNE: Deaf judge; wears a black robe; male
MASTER JACQUES CHARMOLUE: Court clerk; wears a black robe; male
GERVAISE: Townsperson; female.
MADELEINE: Townsperson; female.
EUSTACHE: Madeline's young son; male.
JUPITER: Actor in Gringoire's play; wears a toga and carries a lightning bolt prop; male.
PLUTO: Actor in Gringoire's play; wears a toga and carries a scepter; male.
JUNO: Actor in Gringoire's play; wears a toga and carries a gold heart prop; female.
IO: Actor in Gringoire's play who plays a river nymph; wears a toga and carries a basket of flowers; female.
CARDINAL BOURBON: Cardinal; wears a robe; male.
FLEMISH AMBASSADOR 1, 2: Ambassadors that attend the Festival of Fools with Cardinal Bourbon; flexible.
KING'S GUARD 1-4: Wear plain military uniforms with belts and prop swords; male. (Note: May be played by females dressed as males.)
TOWNSPERSON 1-4: Flexible.
GYPSY WOMAN 1-4: Wear colorful skirts, scarves, etc.; female.
VAGABOND 1-4: Wear dirty, worn, clothing; flexible.
PICKPOCKETS 1-4: Wear dirty, worn, clothing Flexible.
MERCHANT 1-2: Flexible.
DJALI: Esmeralda's pet goat who can perform tricks for money; nonspeaking; flexible. Note: A puppet may be used, if desired. (See Special Effects.)

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EXTRAS (opt.): As additional King's Guards, Merchants, Gypsies, Vagabonds, Pickpockets, and Townspeople.

Options for Doubling

JUNO/LEONARA (female)

IO/SELINA (female)

CARDINAL BOURBON/FLORIAN (male)

JUPITER/VAGABOND (flexible)

PLUTO/PICKPOCKET (flexible)

FLEMISH AMBASSADOR 1/THEODOSIA (flexible)

FLEMISH AMBASSADOR 2/ZIROLI (flexible)

Note: Cast is flexible and tripling is possible, if desired.

Notes on Casting

To reduce cast: Additional doubling and tripling may be used for Townspeople, Merchants, Gypsies and Vagabonds to reduce cast size.

To increase cast: Paquette and Sister Gudule are the same character at different ages and may be played by two different actors. Claude Frollo and may be played by two actors since he ages 20 years.

Costumes

Costumes should reflect the time period. All characters should wear clothes indicative of their class/station.

Description of Quasimodo

The following is a description of Quasimodo from the novel.

"...tetrahedral nose, that horseshoe mouth; that little left eye obstructed with a red, bushy, bristling eyebrow, while the right eye disappeared entirely beneath an enormous wart; of those teeth in disarray, broken here and there, like the embattled parapet of a fortress; of that callous lip, upon which one of these teeth encroached, like the tusk of an elephant; of that forked chin; and above all, of the expression spread over the whole; of that mixture of malice, amazement, and sadness."

"A huge head, bristling with red hair; between his shoulders an enormous hump, a counterpart perceptible in front; a system of thighs and legs so strangely astray that they could touch each other only at the knees, and, viewed from the front, resembled the crescents of two scythes joined by the handles; large feet, monstrous hands; and, with all this deformity, an indescribable and redoubtable air of vigor, agility, and courage...one would have pronounced him a giant who had been broken and badly put together again...squat, and almost as broad as he was tall...with his doublet half red, half violet, sown with silver bells..."

Setting

Notre-Dame, Paris, 1482.

Sets

Streets of Paris. The steps and part of the front of the Notre-Dame cathedral are visible SL. A crudely constructed square wooden stage is CS. Shop fronts are present along the rear and SR of the stage as is the exterior of a stately home, which may or may not have a balcony. A large throne-like chair, stocks, and a hangman's gallows with noose are brought on.

Court of Miracles: There are boxes, barrels, and crates present with bright bolts of fabric draped on them to indicate individual living spaces. Small "fires" are present (lighting effects). There is a tall barrel and a large "fire" CS.

Notre-Dame: This is a representational set with elements of wood, stone, and colored glass. **Bell tower.** There are six large bells with ropes hanging from them above accessible platforms. There are "stone" gargoyles and crates positioned on the platforms. A large colored-glass window is behind the bells and accessible from the platforms. **Ground level of Notre-Dame.** The set should be divided into three sections with a general church section in the middle, an office area on one side, and a room of sanctuary on the other with a small cot and wooden stool. If possible, a working door separates the office and cell areas from the middle church sections. In the office, there is a chair, a wooden desk with jars of colored liquids, animal skeletons, books, a globe, a hammer, and a large iron nail/spike. There is a wardrobe with doors that is large enough for Frollo to hide in. It should be dusty and full of cobwebs.

NOTE: One large representational set may be used with smaller scenic elements, if desired. In this case, traditional scene breaks with blackouts are unnecessary and the director may chose to transition directly from one scene to the next.

Synopsis of Scenes

ACT I

Scene 1: Streets outside the Notre-Dame.

Scene 2: Court of Miracles.

Scene 3: Streets outside the Notre-Dame. Stocks are set up as well as a large throne-like chair.

Scene 4: Inside Notre-Dame.

Intermission

ACT II

Scene 1: Court of Miracles, one month later.

Scene 2: Streets of Paris outside the Notre-Dame. Stocks are set up as well as a large throne-like chair.

Scene 3: Inside the Notre-Dame, evening.

Scene 4: Streets outside Notre-Dame, evening. A hangman's gallows is present.

Scene 5: Inside Notre-Dame, evening.

Scene 6: Inside Notre-Dame, evening.

Props

Papers	Piece of paper
Quill pen	"Stones" (made of papier-mâché or foam for safety)
Baby basket	Flask
2 Baby blankets	6 Parasols
Green amulet, for Esmeralda	Small bag or pouch of letters that can be tied around Esmeralda's waist
2 Baby dolls	Large book
Baby shoe	Hammer
Carts with assorted wares, for Merchants	Large spike or nail
Decorative flags on poles with bells or flowers attached	Money pouch, for Jehan
Tambourines, for Gypsies	Ledger
Script, for Gringoire	Whip
Scepter, for Pluto	Scroll
Basket of flowers, for Io	Engagement ring, for Fleur
Gold heart prop, for Juno	Serving tray
Lightning bolt prop, for Jupiter	Bread
Cane, for Clopin	Cup of water
Brightly colored jester hat, for King of Fools crown	Whistle (silver)
Cane, for Sister Gudule	5 Cloaks, for Gringoire, Leonara, Ziroli, Selina, and Theodosia
4 Cloth sacks	Ear horn (cone-shaped), for Florian
Coins	Assorted weapons (torches, clubs, sticks, pipes, etc.), for Outcasts
Coin pouches	"Blocks of wood" (made of papier-mâché or foam for safety)
Broken crown, for Clopin	5 Prop swords, for King's Guard and Phoebus
Piece of wood or metal (for makeshift gavel)	Purse of rope (long enough to bind Esmeralda's wrists)
Noose	
Pitcher that breaks into 4 pieces	
Scarf, for Esmeralda	
2 Apples	
Dagger	
Purse/bag, for Madeline	
Small piece of cake (muffin/biscuit)	

Special Effects

Thunderstorm

Rain

Baby crying

Bells of Notre-Dame ringing

Sound of jingle bells

Sound of tambourines

Sound of bells ringing 7 times

Faint sound of a tambourine in the distance

Small "fires" (lighting effect)

Large shadow of a figure

Large "fire" (lighting effect)

Flickering candles (lighting effect)

Lit candles (lighting effect)

Sound of a low-pitched, mournful bell

Ominous sound of bells

Smoke or flash of light (or another distraction may be used)

Sound of banging/trying to break down a door

Dimming or use of blue light is used to indicate night falling.

Smoke or light trick to serve as a distraction

Djali (Esmeralda's pet goat). A puppeteer using a puppet or carrying a plush goat could make it appear as if the goat is tapping the tambourine or manipulating the letters. Otherwise, the goat can just be carried.

*"The saints were his friends,
and blessed him;
the monsters were his friends,
and guarded him."*

—from The Hunchback of Notre-Dame

ACT I

Scene 1

(AT RISE: *The streets of Paris outside Notre-Dame, 1482, nighttime. Stage is dark. Lights and sound of thunderstorm and rain is heard. Gringoire enters, carrying papers and a quill pen. A spotlight shines on him. He crosses to the platform, sits, and begins to write.*)

GRINGOIRE: *(To audience.)* The play opens on the darkened, rain-soaked streets of Paris outside Notre-Dame. A young mother carries her infant daughter, trying to shield her from the storm. She is a loving mother who just wants to get home, but the storm is proving too much for her and the child...

(Gringoire turns to watch as Paquette enters, carrying a basket with baby Agnes inside. Paquette is walking quickly. Spotlight dims on Gringoire. Gringoire exits.)

PAQUETTE: *(To baby Agnes in the basket.)* My goodness, it's really coming down, isn't it, my sweet Agnes? *(Thunder. Sound of an infant crying. Stops at the platform, puts the infant down, and sits. Soothing the baby.)* Don't be afraid, my child. It's only thunder. Your mama will protect you from the storm. *(Stroking the baby's cheek as the sound of crying stops.)* Mama will protect you from everything. *(Lightning. Stands.)* Right now, I need to find us both some protection from this storm. *(Looks around and sees the steps of Notre-Dame.)* The Notre-Dame. We will find shelter there. *(Crosses to the steps of Notre-Dame. Tries to take shelter, but there isn't much coverage.)* Maybe there's someone inside who can help us...one of the priests. *(Takes a blanket and covers up the basket.)* I'll be right back, Agnes. *(Takes an amulet off her neck and places it in basket.)* My emerald amulet will protect you while I get some help.

(Paquette walks up the steps and out of sight, leaving the basket behind. As soon as she is out of sight, Gypsy Women 1-3 enter. Gypsy Woman 3 carries a misshapen baby wrapped in a blanket. Gypsy Woman 1 hurries ahead and looks around.)

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GYPSY WOMAN 1: *(To Gypsy Woman 2, 3.)* Hurry! Hurry! The streets are clear.

(Gypsy Woman 2, 3 rush over and meet Gypsy Woman 1 CS.)

GYPSY WOMAN 2: *(Indicating misshapen baby.)* What are we going to do with that beast?

GYPSY WOMAN 3: Don't call him a beast! He's my child.

GYPSY WOMAN 2: That ain't no child. That there's a monster.

(Thunder.)

GYPSY WOMAN 3: *(Angrily.)* He's not a monster!

(Gypsy Woman 1 steps between Gypsy Woman 2, 3.)

GYPSY WOMAN 1: Quiet now! *(To Gypsy Woman 2.)* Must you taunt her like this? It's enough that she birthed such a despicable child. Must you add to her misery with hateful words?

GYPSY WOMAN 2: Didn't you see its eyes? One bulges from its head like a egg and the other is nothing more than a giant wart where an eye should be!

GYPSY WOMAN 1: We've all seen the child. The devil has played a cruel joke on his unfortunate soul. His misshapen spine will mean he will never walk.

GYPSY WOMAN 2: It's a monster, I tell you, sent from the devil himself!

(Lightning.)

GYPSY WOMAN 3: I can't leave him here. No one will care for him. They'll laugh at him and taunt him. Or worse!

(Gypsy Woman 3 turns away and starts to exit. She is stopped by Gypsy Woman 1. Gypsy Woman 2 crosses to Notre-Dame, sees the basket, and looks inside during the next few lines.)

GYPSY WOMAN 1: We talked about this. We can't care for him in the Court of Miracles...not the way he needs to be cared for.

GYPSY WOMAN 3: But he's my son!

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GYPHY WOMAN 1: The Lord will provide. Give this child back to him and he will bless you. I promise.

GYPHY WOMAN 2: *(To Gypsy Woman 1, 3, calls.)* Look here! It's a baby girl! And she's perfect!

(Gypsy Woman 1, 3 cross to Gypsy Woman 2, who has taken the baby from the basket.)

GYPHY WOMAN 1: *(Looking at baby Agnes.)* My, but she is perfect, isn't she? *(Reaches out to take the baby from Gypsy Woman 2. Stroking the baby's cheek.)* It's almost as if she were waiting for us to find her. *(Looking at Gypsy Woman 3, smiling. Holds up baby Agnes for her to see.)* Isn't she beautiful?

(Gypsy Woman 3 looks at baby Agnes and then down at her disfigured baby.)

GYPHY WOMAN 3: *(Sadly.)* Yes, she is.

GYPHY WOMAN 1: Why don't you hold her?

GYPHY WOMAN 3: *(Indicating her baby in her arms.)* What about him?

(Gypsy Woman 1 crosses to the basket.)

GYPHY WOMAN 1: Why don't you put him in this basket for a few minutes? The rest will do him good.

GYPHY WOMAN 3: I guess it couldn't hurt. *(Thunder. Places the misshapen baby in the basket and then reaches out for the other baby. She looks at the baby.)* She's lovely. She looks like an angel.

(Paquette enters.)

PAQUETTE: *(Speaking as she enters, not seeing Gypsies.)* I think I hear someone inside the church. We're going to be just fine, Agnes, I promise— *(Stops when she sees Gypsy Woman 1-3 gathered around her basket.)* Hey! Who are you?! What are you doing?!

(Lightning.)

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GYPSY WOMAN 2: *(To Gypsy Woman 1, 3.)* Let's get out of here!
(Rushes toward the exit.)

GYPSY WOMAN 1: *(To Gypsy Woman 3.)* We've got to go.

(Gypsy Woman 3 heads toward the basket.)

GYPSY WOMAN 3: But my baby—

(Gypsy Woman 1 puts her hand on Gypsy Woman 3's arm and guides her down the stairs, away from the basket and toward Gypsy Woman 2.)

GYPSY WOMAN 1: You have your baby. *(Pulls aside the blanket from baby Agnes, who Gypsy Woman 3 is holding. A shoe falls off the baby.)*
Right here.

GYPSY WOMAN 3: *(Unsure.)* But—

(Paquette enters and approaches the basket.)

PAQUETTE: What have you got there?

GYPSY WOMAN 1: *(To Gypsy Woman 3.)* What's it going to be?

(Gypsy Woman 3 takes one last look at her misshapen baby in the basket.)

GYPSY WOMAN 3: Let's go.

(Thunder. Gypsy Woman 3, still holding baby Agnes, rushes toward the exit with Gypsy Woman 1.)

GYPSY WOMAN 2: Hurry!

(Paquette looks in the basket and sees the misshapen baby.)

PAQUETTE: This isn't my Agnes. *(Looking up at Gypsy Women. Shouts.)* You! You've stolen my baby! *(Starts to run after Gypsy Women 1, 3, who have exited. Claude Frollo enters from the top of the stairs. He is wearing a monk's robe with the hood up. As she reaches the end of the stage, realizing she will never catch up to them, Paquette collapses to the ground. She picks up her baby's shoe.)* Agnes! My baby!

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(Frollo approaches Paquette.)

FROLLO: *(Helping her up.)* Good woman, what troubles you?

PAQUETTE: Those awful Gypsies...they've stolen my baby!

(With his arm around her shoulders, Frollo guides Paquette to Notre-Dame.)

FROLLO: But your baby is right over here.

PAQUETTE: That's not my baby. That's...that's a monster!

(Paquette collapses on the steps. Frollo picks up the basket and looks inside. Lightning. Horrified, he almost drops the basket.)

FROLLO: What...what is that?

(A baby crying is heard.)

PAQUETTE: Those Gypsies stole my Agnes and left that beast in her place!

FROLLO: What did you say your name is?

PAQUETTE: Paquette.

FROLLO: Paquette, you will stay here until we find your Agnes.

(Looking at baby.) You'll both stay here at Notre-Dame...you and this baby.

PAQUETTE: What is the baby's name?

FROLLO: He doesn't have one. *(Pause. Thinks.)* Today is the Sunday after Easter, the Low Sunday. Quasimodo. *(Looking at baby.)*

That's what I will name him: Quasimodo.

(Bells of Notre-Dame start to ring.)

PAQUETTE: The bells. They've always given me comfort.

FROLLO: The bells of Notre-Dame will do that. *(Thunder.)* Now, come. This child is inconsolable. We need to get you both warm.

PAQUETTE: Thank you, Father.

(Paquette exits up the stairs, looking at the basket as she passes it and recoiling in horror. She hurries up the rest of the stairs and exits. Baby stops crying.)

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FROLLO: *(Looking at the baby.)* You like the bells too, don't you, little Quasimodo? That's good. That's very good.

(Frollo exits up the steps as the sound of bell ringing grows louder. Storm sounds disappear. Lights fade. Suddenly, sounds of jingle bells and tambourines are heard. Lights up. The Festival of the Fools, 20 years later. Townspeople, Gypsies, and Merchants with their carts full of wares enter. The carts are festive and decorated for the festival. The Townspeople carry decorative flags on poles with bells or flowers attached. Some of the Gypsies carry tambourines. There is much decoration and celebration.)

TOWNSPERSON 1: It's finally here! The Festival of Fools!

TOWNSPERSON 2: A day when we can act without consequence.

TOWNSPERSON 3: A day when we can live with abandon!

GYPSY WOMAN 1: A day when the King's Guard will leave the Gypsies alone for a change.

GYPSY WOMAN 2: You actually think they'll leave us be?

(Gypsy 1, 2 think and then turn to one another.)

GYPSY WOMAN 1/GYPSY WOMAN 2: *(Laughing.)* Naw! Not a chance!

GYPSY WOMAN 3: But who cares? It's the Festival of Fools!

(Gypsies dance around, making merriment. Pickpockets and Vagabonds enter and occasionally pick a pocket as the Townspeople look around, shop at Merchants' carts, etc. Geroaise and Madeline enter with Eustache. Pierre Gringoire enters, looking over his script. He is followed by his Actors: Pluto carries a scepter; Io carries a basket of flowers; Juno carries a gold heart. Jupiter rushes to catch up with Pierre.)

JUPITER: Have you seen my lightning bolt, Pierre?

GRINGOIRE: Don't tell me you lost it! The show is going to start in five minutes!

JUPITER: I'll find it, don't worry. *(Runs off.)*

GRINGOIRE: *(Calls.)* You'd better! *(Steps on the platform. Actors gather around him. To Actors.)* This play has to be flawless. The cardinal himself is going to be in the audience!

JUNO: You wrote a great script, Pierre. I'm sure Cardinal Bourbon will love it.

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GRINGOIRE: I hope so. There's not much money in being a playwright, not unless your plays are performed for King Louis himself.

PLUTO: Maybe the King will come to see our performance! The Flemish ambassadors are in town to arrange the marriage between King Louis's son and their Princess Margaret of Flanders.

(Jehan Frolo enters with Robin and Johannes.)

GRINGOIRE: King Louis would never lower himself to come to a street performance.

IO: I have heard the ambassadors will be at the performance as the personal guests of Cardinal Bourbon.

GRINGOIRE: Is that so? *(Excitedly rushing around, positioning Actors, making sure everything is perfect.)* Then get to your places!

FROLLO: *(To Robin and Johannes, chuckling.)* The Festival of Fools always brings out the dregs of society.

ROBIN: Like who?

JEHAN: *(Indicating Gringoire and the Actors.)* Like that silly playwright and his acting troupe. Look at them...running all over the place like they're playing for the King. Don't they know that no one cares about their play?

JOANNES: *(With a smirk.)* You should ask them, Jehan.

JEHAN: Don't mind if I do.

JOANNES: *(To Gringoire and Actors, heckling, calls.)* Hey, there! You know that your play is going to stink like rotten cabbages, don't you?

GRINGOIRE: *(Looking over at Jehan, calls.)* What was that?

JEHAN: *(With a smirk.)* Oh, nothing! *(Collapses in laughter with Robin and Johannes.)* Maybe this show will be fun, after all!

(Jupiter runs on, carrying a lightning bolt.)

JUPITER: *(To Gringoire.)* I found my lightning bolt!

GRINGOIRE: Finally! Get up here and take your place. *(To Crowd, shouts.)* Gather around, everyone! The show is about to start!

(A Crowd gathers around the stage. King's Guard 1-4 and extras enter and disperse throughout the Crowd.)

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JEHAN: *(To Robin and Johannes.)* Let's find a good spot.

(Jehan, Robin, and Johannes stack some crates at the perimeter of the Crowd.)

ROBIN: Don't look now, but the King's Guard is here.

JEHAN: Who cares, Robin?! It's the Festival of Fools. Everyone knows we can do whatever we want today. It's the day for the people!

KING'S GUARD 1: *(To Jehan, Robin, and Johannes.)* Behave yourselves up there, boys. *(Walks away.)*

JEHAN: *(To Robin and Johannes.)* Are we going to behave ourselves, boys?

JEHAN/ROBIN/JOANNES: Not a chance! *(Laughs. Chants.)* We want a show! Put on a show!

(Jehan, Robin, and Johannes join the Crowd in chanting, "We want a show! Put on a show!" Note: They quietly chant over the next couple of lines.)

GRINGOIRE: *(Looking out at the Crowd. To Actors.)* Is the cardinal here? I don't see him...or the Flemish ambassadors...or the King!

JUNO: The crowd is getting awfully agitated, Pierre.

GRINGOIRE: I think we're going to have to start the show.

PLUTO: But what about the cardinal?

GRINGOIRE: *(Basking in the attention of the audience.)* This crowd will riot if we don't give them a show by the great playwright Pierre Gringoire. So let's give them a show! *(Jehan, Robin, Johannes and the Crowd chant louder, "We want a show! Put on a show!" Holds up his arms to quiet down the Crowd. To Crowd.)* And now, to celebrate the Festival of Fools, we have a wonderful show for you.

JEHAN: *(Shouts.)* I doubt it!

(Crowd laughs. Gringoire scowls.)

GRINGOIRE: *(To Crowd.)* Please give your attention to the Pierre Gringoire Players as they perform my original play, "The Tale of Jupiter and Io."

(Crowd applauds. Jehan, Robin, and Johannes boo. Gringoire stands at the side of the platform. Jupiter and Pluto go to the center of the platform.)

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Clopin Trouillefou enters, wearing a cloak and walking with a cane. He begs for money and pickpockets Townspeople. Townspeople shoo him away.)

JOANNES: *(Shouts.)* Hail, Jupiter!

(Crowd laughs. Gringoire scowls.)

JUPITER: "Dearest brother Pluto, let us take a trip to earth. My wife Juno has been trying my patience."

ROBIN: *(Shouts.)* Maybe you shouldn't have gotten married!

(Crowd laughs. Gringoire scowls.)

EUSTACHE: *(Loudly.)* I'm never getting married!

MADELINE: *(Clamping her hand over Eustache's mouth.)* Eustache!

(Crowd laughs harder. Gringoire crosses his arms.)

PLUTO: *(To Jupiter.)* "Ah, yes, Brother. What a grand idea."

(Pluto walks with Jupiter to the opposite corner of the stage. Io enters, pretending to pick flowers and put them in her basket.)

JUPITER: *(To Pluto, indicating Io.)* "What a lovely young woman."

JOANNES: *(Shouts.)* She's not so lovely from up here!

(Crowd laughs.)

PLUTO: *(Trying not to laugh.)* "That's Io, a river nymph."

JUPITER: "I must meet her. *(To Io.)* Hello there, little river nymph, aren't you a beauty?"

IO: *(Smiling.)* "Why, thank you, Jupiter."

(Juno enters, angrily.)

JUNO: "Jupiter! What do you think you're doing?"

JEHAN: *(Shouts.)* Oh, no! He's going to get it now!

(Crowd roars with laughter. Cardinal Bourbon and Flemish Ambassadors 1, 2 enter and approach the platform.)

The Hunchback of Notre-Dame

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CARDINAL BOURBON: What is going on here? Has the show already begun?

(Gringoire rushes over to the Cardinal.)

GRINGOIRE: *(Bowing.)* Cardinal Bourbon, my humblest apologies for starting the show without you, but the crowd was getting restless. We can start over.

AMBASSADOR 1: *(Bored.)* Is that really necessary?

GRINGOIRE: *(To Actors, calls.)* Starting places, please!

JEHAN: *(To Crowd, shouts.)* We already saw the start of the play. Now they want us to watch it all over again?

ROBIN: *(To Crowd, shouts.)* Down with the play!

CROWD: *(Shouts.)* Down with the play! Down with the play!

CARDINAL: *(To Gringoire.)* Don't restart the play on my account. None of this matters much to me, anyway. *(To Ambassador 1, 2.)* There are some gardens this way I'd love to show you.

AMBASSADOR 2: That sounds lovely.

(Cardinal and Ambassador 1, 2 start to exit.)

GRINGOIRE: *(Calls.)* We've only just begun the first scene! It's no trouble, really! Or we could just keep going and you could enjoy the rest of the play!

CARDINAL: *(Glancing back, calls.)* It's really not necessary, I assure you!

(Cardinal exits with Ambassador 1, 2.)

CLOPIN: *(To Crowd, shouts.)* Aren't we forgetting the most important part of the Festival of Fools?

JOANNES: That's right! The Theater of Grimaces.

ROBIN: *(To Crowd, shouts.)* Let's do that now!

GRINGOIRE: But my play!

JOANNES: *(Shouts.)* No one cares about your play, Gringoire.

(Clopin throws off his cloak and approaches the platform.)

CLOPIN: *(To Crowd, announcing.)* It's time to choose the King of the Fools. Who has the crown?

The Hunchback of Notre-Dame

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JUPITER: *(Excitedly.)* I'll get it!

(As Jupiter starts to rush off, Gringoire grabs his arm.)

GRINGOIRE: Not you, too!

JUPITER: *(Freeing his arm.)* Sorry, Gringoire! *(Exits.)*

GRINGOIRE: *(To Clopin.)* You may as well take the stage. It's not as if I have any use for it now. Poetry is no match for comedy.

CLOPIN: *(Bowing dramatically.)* Why, thank you. *(Gringoire walks away, sulking. Actors exit. To Crowd, shouts.)* Who among you will make the ugliest face and be crowned the King of Fools?

(Townspersons adlib, "I will," "It will be me!" etc. Clopin points to Townsperson 1-4 and motions for them to join him on the platform. Jupiter enters and runs to the platform, carrying a brightly colored jester's hat.)

JUPITER: I've got it! *(Hands the hat to Clopin.)*

CLOPIN: *(To Crowd.)* Let the Theater of Grimaces begin!

(Note: For the following, each Townsperson makes a funny face when Clopin approaches. Clopin approaches Townsperson 1, looks at his face, laughs or reacts, and then puts his hand above Townsperson 1's head. A small cheer from the Crowd is heard. Fleur-de-Lys, Diane, and Aloise enter.)

ALOISE: *(To Fleur-de-Lys.)* Why are all of these people gathered here?

FLEUR-DE-LYS: *(Disgusted.)* It must be that dreadful Festival of Fools.

ALOISE: The Festival of Fools brings out the worst in society...the thieves and the vagabonds.

DIANE: Don't forget the middle class!

ALOISE/FLEUR: The middle class! Disgusting!

(Clopin makes his way to Townsperson 2, looks at his face, laughs or reacts, and then puts his hand above his head. A louder cheer from the Crowd. Claude Frolo enters, followed by Quasimodo, who is unnoticed by the Crowd.)

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FLEUR: *(To Aloise, indicating contestants.)* Look at those people up there. Why are their faces so ugly?

ALOISE: I think that is intentional, dear.

FLEUR: They're *trying* to make their faces ugly?

(Clopin makes his way to Townsperson 3, looks at his face, laughs or reacts, and then puts his hand above his head. A louder cheer from the Crowd.)

DIANE: And the crowd loves it!

(Fleur, Diane, and Aloise exit. Clopin makes his way to Townsperson 4, looks at his face, laughs or reacts, and then puts his hand above his head. Townsperson 4 gets the loudest cheer.)

CLOPIN: *(To Crowd.)* Well, I think we have our winner.

(Clopin starts to put the jester's hat on Townsperson 4.)

ROBIN: *(Shouts.)* Wait! It appears we have one more contestant! And he's the ugliest of all! *(Points at Quasimodo.)*

[END OF FREEVIEW]