

## **Andrew Lloyd Webber**

### **"Notes/Prima Donna"**

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[[[NOTES:]]]

FIRMAN

"Mystery after gala night"  
It says "mystery of sopranos flight"  
"mystified" all the papers say  
"we are mystified we suspect foul play"

Bad news on soprano scene -  
first Carlotta, now Christine!  
Still, at least the seats get sold  
gossip's worth its weight in gold . . .

What a way to run a business!  
Spare me these unending trials!  
Half your cast disappears,  
but the crowd still cheers!  
Opera!  
To hell with Gluck and Handel -  
It's a scandal that'll pack 'em in the aisles!

ANDRE

Damnably!  
Will they all walk out?  
This is damnably!

FIRMIN

Andre, please don't shout . . .  
It's publicity! And the take is vast!  
Free publicity!

ANDRE

But we have no cast . . .

FIRMIN

But Andre,  
have you seen the queue?  
Oh, it seems you've got one too . . .

ANDRE

"Dear Andre what a charming gala!

Christine enjoyed a great success!  
We were hardly bereft when Carlotta left -  
Otherwise the chorus was entrancing,  
but the dancing was a lamentable mess!"

FIRMIN

"Dear Firmin, just a brief reminder:  
my salary has not been paid.  
Send it care of the ghost, by return of post.  
P.T.O.:  
No-one likes a debtor,  
so it's better if my orders are obeyed!"

FIRMIN/ANDRE

Who would have the gall to send this?  
Someone with a puerile brain!

FIRMIN

These are both signed "O.G." . . .

ANDRE

Who the hell is he?

BOTH

Opera ghost!

FIRMIN

It's really not amusing!

ANDRE

He's abusing our position!

FIRMIN

In addition he wants money!

ANDRE

He's a funny sort of spectre . . .

BOTH

. . . to expect a large retainer!  
Nothing plainer -  
he is clearly quite insane!

RAOUL

Where is she?

ANDRE

You mean Carlotta?

RAOUL

I mean Miss Daae -

where is she?

FIRMIN

Well, how should we know?

RAOUL

I want an answer -

I take it that you sent me this note?

FIRMIN

What's all this nonsense?

ANDRE

Of course not!

FIRMIN

Don't look at us!

RAOUL

She's not with you, then?

FIRMIN

Of course not!

ANDRE

We're in the dark . . .

RAOUL

Monsieur, don't argue -

Isn't this the letter you wrote?

FIRMIN

And what is it, that we're meant to have wrote?

(Realizing his mistake)

Written !

ANDRE

"Do not fear for Miss Daae.

The Angel of Music has her under his wing.

Make no attempt to see her again."

RAOUL

If you didn't write it, who did?

CARLOTTA

Where is he?

ANDRE

Ah, welcome back!

CARLOTTA

Your precious patron -  
where is he?

RAOUL  
What is it now?

CARLOTTA  
I have your letter -  
a letter which I rather resent!

FIRMIN  
And did you send it?

RAOUL  
Of course not!

ANDRE  
As if he would!

CARLOTTA  
You didn't send it?

RAOUL  
Of course not!

FIRMIN  
What's going on . . . ?

CARLOTTA  
You dare to tell me,  
that this is not the letter you sent ? !

RAOUL  
And what is it that I'm  
meant to have sent?

"Your days  
at the Opera Populaire are numbered.  
Christine Daae will be singing on your behalf tonight.  
Be prepared for a great misfortune,  
should you attempt to take her place."

ANDRE/FIRMIN  
Far too many notes for my taste -  
and most of them about Christine!  
All we've heard since we came  
is Miss Daae's name . . .

GIRY  
Miss Daae has returned.

FIRMIN

I trust her midnight oil  
is well and truly burned.

ANDRE

Where precisely is she now?

GIRY

I thought it best that she went home . . .

MEG

She needed rest.

RAOUL

May I see her?

GIRY

No, monsieur, she will see no-one.

CARLOTTA

Will she sing?

Will she sing?

GIRY

Here, I have a note . . .

RAOUL/CARLOTTA/ANDRE

Let me see it!

FIRMIN

Please!

(Opens the letter and reads.

The PHANTOM'S voice gradually takes over)

"Gentlemen, I have now sent you several notes of the  
most amiable nature, detailing how my theatre is to be  
run. You have not followed my instructions.  
I shall give you one last chance . . ."

PHANTOM'S VOICE (taking over)

. . . Christine Daae has returned to you,

and I am anxious her career should progress.

In the new production of "Il Muto",

you will therefore cast Carlotta as the Pageboy,

and put Miss Daae in the role of Countess.

The role which Miss Daae plays calls for charm and  
appeal.

The role of the Pageboy is silent -

which makes my casting, in a word . . . ideal.

I shall watch the performance from my normal seat in Box Five, which will be kept empty for me. Should these commands be ignored, a disaster beyond your imagination will occur.

FIRMIN (taking over)

"I remain, Gentlemen, Your obedient servant, O.G."

CARLOTTA

Christine!

ANDRE

Whatever next . . . ?

CARLOTTA

It's all a ploy to help Christine!

FIRMIN

This is insane . . .

CARLOTTA

I know who sent this:  
The Vicomte - her lover!

RAOUL

Indeed?

Can you believe this?

ANDRE

Signora!

CARLOTTA

O traditori!

FIRMIN

This is a joke!

ANDRE

This changes nothing!

CARLOTTA

O mentitori!

FIRMIN

Signora!

ANDRE

You are our star!

FIRMIN

And always will be!

ANDRE  
Signora . . .

FIRMIN  
The man is mad!

ANDRE  
We don't take orders!

FIRMIN  
Miss Daae will be playing the Pageboy-  
the silent role . . .

ANDRE/FIRMIN  
Carlotta will be playing the lead!

CARLOTTA  
It's useless trying to appease me!  
You're only saying this to please me!  
Signori, e vero?  
Non, non, non voglio udire !  
Lasciatemi morire!  
O padre mio!  
Dio!

GIRY  
Who scorn his word,  
beware to those . . .

CARLOTTA  
You have reviled me!

GIRY  
The angel sees,  
the angel knows . . .

RAOUL  
Why did Christine fly from my arms . . .?

CARLOTTA  
You have rebuked me!

ANDRE/FIRMIN  
Signora, pardon us . . .

CARLOTTA  
You have replaced me!

ANDRE/FIRMIN  
Please, Signora, we beseech you . . .

GIRY

This hour shall see your darkest fears . . .

MEG/RAOUL

I must see her . . .

CARLOTTA

Abbandonata!

Deseredata!

O, sventurata!

GIRY

The angel knows,  
the angel hears . . .

RAOUL

Where did she go . . .?

CARLOTTA

Abbandonata!

Disgraziata!

ANDRE/FIRMIN

Signora, sing for us!

Don't be a martyr . . .

RAOUL/GIRY/MEG

What new surprises lie in store . . .?

ANDRE/FIRMIN

Our star . . .!

CARLOTTA

Non vo' cantar!

[[[[PRIMA DONNA:]]]]

ANDRE

Your public needs you!

FIRMIN

We need you, too!

CARLOTTA

Would you not rather have your precious little ingenue?

ANDRE/FIRMIN

Signora, no!

The world wants you!



ANDRE/FIRMIN

Prima donna first lady of the stage!

Your devotees are on their knees to implore you !

ANDRE

Can you bow out when they're shouting your name?

FIRMIN

Think of how they all adore you!

BOTH

Prima donna,

enchant us once again!

ANDRE

Think of your muse . . .

FIRMIN

And of the queues round the theatre!

BOTH

Can you deny us the triumph in store?

Sing, prima donna, once more!

RAOUL

Christine spoke of an angel . . .

CARLOTTA

Prima donna, your song shall live again!

ANDRE/FIRMIN

Think of your public!

CARLOTTA

You took a snub,

but there's a public who needs you!

GIRY

She has heard the voice of the angel of music . . .

ANDRE/FIRMIN

Those who hear your voice,

liken you to an angel!

CARLOTTA

Think of their cry,

of undying support !

RAOUL

Is this her angel of music . . .?

ANDRE  
We get our opera . . .

FIRMIN  
She gets her limelight!

CARLOTTA  
Follow where the limelight leads you!

MEG  
Is this ghost an angel or a madman . . .?

RAOUL  
Angel or madman . . .?

ANDRE/FIRMIN  
Leading ladies are a trial!

GIRY  
Heaven help you,  
those who doubt . . .

CARLOTTA  
You'll sing again,  
and to unending ovation!

RAOUL  
Orders! Warnings!  
Lunatic demands!

GIRY  
This miscasting will invite damnation . . .

ANDRE/FIRMIN  
Tears . . . oaths . . .  
lunatic demands are regular occurrences!

MEG  
Bliss or damnation?  
Which has claimed her . . .?

CARLOTTA  
Think how you'll shine in that final encore!  
Sing, prima donna, once more!

GIRY  
Oh fools, to have flouted his warnings!

RAOUL  
Surely, for her sake . . .

MEG

Surely he'll strike back . . .

ANDRE/FIRMIN

Surely there'll be further scenes -  
worse than this!

GIRY

Think, before these demands are rejected!

RAOUL

. . . I must see these demands are rejected!

MEG

. . . if his threats and demands are rejected!

ANDRE/FIRMIN

Who'd believe a diva happy to relieve a chorus girl,  
who's gone and slept with the patron?  
Raoul and the soubrette, entwined in love's duet!  
Although he may demur, he must have been with her!

MEG/RAOUL

Christine must be protected!

CARLOTTA

O, fortunata!  
Non ancor abbandonata!

ANDRE/FIRMIN

You'd never get away with all this in a play,  
but if it's loudly sung and in a foreign tongue;  
it's just the sort of story audiences adore,  
in fact a perfect opera!

RAOUL

His game is over!

GIRY

This is a game you cannot hope to win!

RAOUL

And in Box Five,  
a new game will begin . . .

GIRY

For, if his curse is on this opera . . .

MEG

But if his curse is on this opera . . .

ANDRE/FIRMIN

Prima donna, the world is at your feet!  
A nation waits, and how it hates to be cheated!

CARLOTTA

The stress that falls upon a famous prima donna!  
Terrible diseases, coughs and colds and sneezes!  
Still, the driest throat will reach the highest note,  
in search of perfect opera!

MEG/GIRY

. . . then I fear the outcome . . .

RAOUL

Christine plays the Pageboy,  
Carlotta plays the Countess . . .

GIRY

. . . should you dare to . .

MEG

. . . when you once again . . .

ALL

Light up the stage with that age old rapport!  
Sing, prima donna, once more!

PHANTOM'S VOICE

So, it is to be war between us! If these demands are not  
met, a disaster beyond your imagination will occur!

ALL

Once more!

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