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SF PERUSALS

Nymph Errant

Music & Lyrics by
Cole Porter

Book by
Steve Mackes
& Michael Whaley

Based on the Novel by
James Laver

A Samuel French Acting Edition



SAMUEL FRENCH
FOUNDED 1830

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(Name of Producer)

Presents

Nymph Errant (100%)

Music & Lyrics by
Cole Porter (50%)

Book by
Steve Mackes & Michael Whaley (50%)

Based on the Novel *Nymph Errant* by
James Laver

Nymph Errant
opened at the Chichester Festival Theatre
on August 5 , 1999

Cast

Evangeline Edwards	RAE BAKER
Joyce Arbuthnot-Palmer	HELEN ANKER
Henrietta Bamberg	ALISON CARTER
Bertha	RUBY-MARIE HUTCHINSON
Madeline St. Maure	ISABELLE GEORGES
Miss Pratt The Cocotte Mrs. Bamberg Aunt Ermyntrude	MARILYN CUTTS

and

MARK ADAMS

The Orchestra

Keyboards	JO STEWART
Flute/Violin	HELEN DUFFY
Bass/Percussion	JOFF MORGAN
Director	ROGER REDFARN
Designer	HUGH DURRANT
Musical Arrangements/ Musical Director	JO STEWART
Choreographer	NIKKI WOOLLASTON
Lighting Designer	NIGEL HOLLOWELL HOWARD
Sound Designer	GREGORY CLARKE *for Aura Sound*
Orchestrations	ADRIAN BULLERS
Music Management	BILL OCCLESHAW
Costume Supervisor	DIANE WILLIAMS
Company Manager	PHILIP DEVERELL
Stage Manager	JO WEEKS
Deputy Stage Manager	ADAM HAVOC
Assistant Stage Managers	SUE O'BRIIEN CAROLINE BURNETT
Sound Engineer	JASON BARNES
Minerva Carpenter	KARL MEIER

NYMPH ERRANT

In that it has never had a major professional revival, *NYMPH ERRANT* has been until now one of the greatest "lost" musicals of the post-war years; it is also the most important of all Cole Porter's scores never to have enjoyed a Broadway run.

Its history is complex and curious. Early in 1933, the London impresario Charles Cochran (who had already given Gertrude Stein and Noël Coward some of their major stage and musical hits) bought the stage rights in a novel written by a young and then very junior Keeper at the Victoria and Albert Museum, later to make his name as one of the most distinguished of all art and costume curators, James Laver.

Cochran's first idea was to get Laver's novel turned into a play. It was Gertie who convinced him to go for the musical and when Noël declined the commission ("I am not the kind of hired hack who can be summoned by Miss Lawrence to convert others' work into vehicles for her"), Gertie and Cochran turned to his nearest American equivalent, Cole Porter.

Porter loved the novel, and gave it his best shot — the score included three of his greatest hits ("Experiment," "The Physician" and Elizabeth Welch's solo number, the one that introduced her to London stardom, "Solomon"). However, its total and utter Englishness meant that the score never achieved an afterlife on Broadway or film and it is now so unknown in America that the sleeve notes for one recent recording solemnly announce the score to have been based on "Margaret Kennedy's The Constant Nymph," a somewhat different novel.

Gertie was by then living with Douglas Fairbanks Jr. and wrote proudly to her old revue co-star Bea Little that they had "just taken a house in Berkeley Square." "In that case," replied Bea sharply, "you will have to put it back again at once." Gertie had also spent these many years telling the American satirist Alexander Woollcott (*THE MAN WHO CAME TO DINNER*) how well her only daughter was doing at school in Paris. "And what," asked Alexander, tiring of the correspondence at last, "does she teach there?"

Cochran was determined to spare no expense on *NYMPH ERRANT*; Romney Brent was to adapt and direct, Doris Zinekisen to do sets and costumes and for the choreography he brought over, ten years before *OKLAHOMA!*, a young American dancer called Agnes de Mille, whose diary of the show is a little masterpiece in itself. Cole Porter she found a "small, finely boned little man with a round doll head, like a marionette;" as for Gertie, "she is unreliable, chaotic, undisciplined, she can't dance and she can't sing, but who cares? She's a great blazing star even in rehearsal; she delivers; she leads the field; she breaks the tape; her best foot is always forward."

American interest in the show, even at its Manchester try-out, was so great that for the first time in history an entire radio crew was sent over from New York by NBC to broadcast reaction. Gertie on that Manchester opening night did the first-ever live transatlantic broadcast.

Cochran fired one or two lesser members of the cast on tour, including a singer he notably described on stage as "like a Czarina vomiting," and not without troubles they moved south to the Adelphi for much re-rehearsal. The first night, as so often with Gertie and Cochran, was a vast social success but critics next morning were somewhat less impressed. One described Porter's score as "minor-key Coward" and another thought *NYMPH ERRANT* "a pantomime for intellectuals, parched in sentiment and unrelentingly 'witty,' which is the one thing English audiences really hate in musicals."

Nevertheless, Gertie and Elizabeth Welch scored huge personal triumphs and backstage Gertie went on "collecting jewels as other people collect gramophone records;" (Agnes de Mille again) "her energy is legendary on stage and off, and her chic and fun set the style in whatever city or theatre she graces."

NYMPH ERRANT ran on at the Adelphi through the winter of 1933/4, achieving a run of five months and 154 performances. After it closed, there were constant rumors that it would be seen next season on Broadway, but though Gerite did one or two American concert performances of it in later years, the show proved essentially untranslatable in its local references. A decade later, another of her great hits, LADY IN THE DARK, would find it similarly difficult to

cross the ocean in the other direction.

Sheridan Morley, 1999

CHARACTERS

(6 female and 1 male)

Evangeline Edwards: English, young and beautiful but unwise to the ways of the world. Her journey is one of growth and learning as she goes from a young schoolgirl to a woman who finally, after much trial and error, finds herself and real love.

Henrietta Bamberg: American and beautiful; speaks with a broad mid-west accent; shows irreverent freedom in her speech and manner.

Madeline St. Maure: A French beauty of the sullen type but quite vivacious in temperament. In spite of her "*Jeune Fille*" air, she has a latent voluptuous quality.

Joyce Arbuthnot-Palmer: English country. She is very hearty and always talks through a smile. Would rather spend her time with or on a horse.

Bertha: German; with a zaftig body and the kind of pretty face that heavy girls so often possess.

***Miss Pratt**: Tall, prim and proper; very English. In spite of her reserved school teacher looks, there is passion within her, expressed in the advice she gives her students.

***The Cocotte**: Once a great courtesan, she is now a little world-weary and tired. Shunned by the younger women and resigned that her time has passed, there is a noble sadness about her.

***Mrs. Bamberg**: Henrietta's rich American mother who is spending thousands of dollars for her daughter to marry a title.

***Aunt Ermyntrude**: Evangeline's dotty sweet old aunt in Oxford.

****Andre de Croissant**: Sophisticated, handsome French impresario; when excited, he is slightly over the top and very dramatic.

****Alexi Gregorgevitch Stukin**: Manic-depressive Russian orchestra leader who imagines himself madly in love with Evangeline.

****Fritz**: The German nudist who takes Evangeline to a nudist colony in Bavaria.

****Count Ferdinand**: The Count who comes to Evangeline's rescue and takes her to Venice.

****Constantine Koumoudouropolos**: The Greek shipping magnate who wins Evangeline in a card game.

****Kassim**: The big, burly, and blustering Turkish soldier who has an affinity for silk. He sells Evangeline and Bertha into slavery, causing them to become harem girls.

****Ali**: The palace Eunuch who is a fan of Evangeline and treats her as an equal.

****Victor Calverston**: The young man desperately in love with Evangeline, whom she keeps encountering throughout her adventures.

*All played by the same actress

**All played by the same actor

SCENE BREAKDOWN

ACT 1

Scene 1	Belle Vue Pension / Lausanne Rail Station
Scene 2	A Train Compartment
Scene 3	The Square at Neauville Sur Mer
Scene 4	The Gala at Neauville Sur Mer
Scene 5	Alexi's Apartment and a Cafe in Paris
Scene 6	Pierre Fort's Apartment Paris
Scene 7	The Grand Hotel Kurzdorfer
Scene 8	A Grand Palazzo in Venice

ACT II

Scene 1	Ruins in Smyrna / A Tavern
Scene 2	Desert / Harem Quarters
Scene 3	Gare de Lyon, Paris / Opening Night Folie de Paris / Jewelry Shop
Scene 4	A Garden in Oxford

SONGS

ACT I

THEY ALL FALL IN LOVE	Evangeline, Joyce, Henrietta, Madeline & Bertha
EXPERIMENT	Pratt, Evangeline, Joyce, Henrietta, Madeline & Bertha
BAD FOR ME	Evangeline & Andre
THE COCOTTE	The Cocotte
HOW COULD WE BE WRONG	Alexi & Evangeline
YOU'D BE SO NICE TO COME HOME TO	Victor
THE GREAT INDOORS	Joyce
BACK TO NATURE	Fritz & Evangeline
YOU'RE TOO FAR AWAY	Victor
THEY'RE ALWAYS ENTERTAINING	Mrs. Bamberg, Henrietta & Servants
GEORGIA SAND	Henrietta
NYMPH ERRANT	Evangeline, Constantine, Joyce, Henrietta, Madeline & Bertha

ACT II

RUINS	Evangeline & Company
BACK TO NATURE / Reprise	Cross Over Music (Orchestration)
BAD FOR ME/Reprise	Harem Intro Music (Orchestration)
THE PHYSICIAN	Evangeline
CAZANOVA	The Tango (Orchestration)
SOLOMON	Bertha
WHEN LOVE COMES YOUR WAY	Victor
SI VOUS AIMEZ LES POITRINES	Madeline & Company
AT LONG LAST LOVE	Evangeline
EXPERIMENT / Finale	Evangeline, Victor, Miss Pratt, Joyce, Madeline, Henrietta & Bertha

OVERTURE

ACT I

Scene 1

Scene: *Pension Belle Vue / Rail Station, Lausanne.*
Time: *A May evening, 1933.*
At Rise: *The house curtain goes up, revealing an act curtain featuring a patchwork of hotel luggage labels from European grand hotels of the period.*

(At end of overture, spot hits MISS PRATT, a lady of a certain age. She steps forward with an arm full of roses and walks down center as she addresses the audience.)

PRATT. Yes well. What a great gathering of alumni we have here. I recognize so many former students. *(Taking her glasses and peering into the first row.)* And it is evident in your faces, a bit older and longer perhaps, that the lessons of time and gravity, taught at this school for so long, are working still—yes, in some cases working overtime—continuing to teach each and every one of you. Nevertheless, it warms my heart to see you here in Switzerland at the Pension Belle-Vue. And now if you will excuse me I must wish a few very special girls bon voyage.

(EVANGELINE comes running in.)

EVANGELINE. Miss Pratt.

PRATT. Evangeline Edwards I shall miss your sweet smile in my classroom. *(Hands her a rose.)* This is for you. *(EVANGELINE takes the rose, tries to speak, PRATT continues on.)* No, no, not a word. You will make me misty. You're heading for the station? *(EVANGELINE nods.)* Tell the other girls I will join them there shortly.

(PRATT exits, lights down to spot on EVANGELINE.)

EVANGELINE. The other girls:

(Pool of light comes up on JOYCE in a pose of the period; she is dressed to kill for travel.)

Joyce Arbuthnot-Palmer, a fellow English chum.

(Another pool comes up on HENRIETTA posed and dressed for travel.)
Sassy Henrietta Bamberg, our only American.

(Another pool comes up on BERTHA posed and dressed for travel.)
That would be big-hearted Bertha.

(Another pool comes up on MADELINE posed and dressed for travel.)
Naughty, saucy Madeline St. Maure, French of course.

(Lights out on girls.) Oh but look at the time, I really must fly. Taxi!

(EVANGELINE runs off as lights are up on JOYCE and HENRIETTA.)

JOYCE. Bertha, please we're going to be late.
HENRIETTA. Yeah, get a move on. Some of us have trains to catch.

(BERTHA enters loaded down with suitcases.)

BERTHA. Why must I always carry the suitcases?
HENRIETTA. Because, my dear Bertha, as I've said to Joyce so often, you have the constitution of an ox, not to mention the back of a pack mule.

(BERTHA exits.)

JOYCE. It's hard to believe that four years have passed and we are finally graduated.
HENRIETTA. Yes and what a waste of four years it was.
JOYCE. Henrietta how can you say that? We learned a little of everything.
HENRIETTA. And a lot of nothing.

(BERTHA enters, pushing a luggage cart; MADELINE sits on top of the bags.)

MADELINE. Ah, mon petite amies, c'est magnifique, un reunion des filles!
BERTHA. Madeline, you are not ze queen. Get off ze cart!
HENRIETTA. Yes, you're making the other baggage look cheap.
MADELINE. I think you mean *chic.*
BERTHA. She means cheap.

JOYCE. But where is Evangeline?

MADELINE. Where is Evangeline? I will close my eyes and think.

HENRIETTA. Just pull your skirt down. It might be rude if people were to see your thinking cap.

MADELINE. Americans can be so annoying. Or perhaps it is just *this* American.

BERTHA. After today, you could never see her again.

MADELINE. Yes, isn't that wonderful?

BERTHA. No, nein. It is sad. I think I will miss everyone here.

JOYCE. I think I see Evangeline now. Bertie, go tell her to hurry. Bitte?

(BERTHA nods and exits.)

HENRIETTA. You have done such a splendid job of training her. What's your secret, treats?

JOYCE. Do you have to be so cruel?

HENRIETTA. Yes, I think I do.

(EVANGELINE enters carrying the rose, followed by BERTHA with bags.)

EVANGELINE. Thanks awfully darling, you're a lamb. Put them there. *(To the others.)* Here we are one last time. Before going our separate ways. Me, back to Oxford.

BERTHA. I'm to University in Berlin.

HENRIETTA. It's Venice for me. A long, long summer with Mama.

JOYCE. I'm for Brussels, then on to London.

MADELINE. And I am bound for who knows where?

HENRIETTA. Isn't that right next to no place in particular?

EVANGELINE. It doesn't matter where we're heading. With our schooling complete, now it's time for each of us to embark on a new mission, a quest.

MUSIC: EXPERIMENT (STING)

BERTHA. A quest for what?

EVANGELINE. Why, to find true love.

JOYCE. Love? What an idea. Do you think it will ever happen to me?

MADELINE. You mean it hasn't already?

JOYCE. Uh, well, uh ....

HENRIETTA. Love happens to everyone. Sooner or later. Like

it or not.

JOYCE. Really?

EVANGELINE. Yes, really. Henrietta's right. I assure you, one day we will all be madly in love with someone ... or two ... or three.

MUSIC: THEY ALL FALL IN LOVE

EVANGELINE.
EACH YEAR, WHEN SPRING, QUITE UNINVITED,
GIVES A GARDEN PARTY TO THE WORLD UNITED,
EV'RYONE GETS SO EXCITED
THEY DON'T KNOW WHAT THEY'RE THINKING OF.
FOLKS WHO'VE SPENT THE WINTER FREEZIN',
WHIFF THE BALMY BREEZE AND SIMPLY LOSE THEIR REASON.
THEY KNOW IT'S THE OPEN SEASON,
FOR FALLING IN LOVE.

THE YOUNG FALL, THE OLD FALL,
THE RED-HOT MAMMAS, AND THE COLD FALL,
FROM THE LILY WHITE TO THE BLACK AS NIGHT,
THEY ALL FALL IN LOVE.

HENRIETTA.
THE FOOLS FALL, THE WISE FALL,
THE WETS, THE SPRINKLED, AND THE DRYS FALL,
FROM THE MEN WHO DRINK TO THE MEN WHO WINK
THEY ALL FALL IN LOVE.

JOYCE.
YOU MAY BELIEVE YOUR BROKER IS VERY MEDIOCRE
AT PLAYING WITH YOUR STOCKS AND BONDS.
AT BUSINESS HE MAY BLUNDER
BERTHA.
YET HE'S A PERFECT WONDER WHEN HE PLAYS WITH BLONDES.

HENRIETTA.
OLD MAIDS WHO OBJECT FALL,
OLD MEN YOU WOULD NEVER SUSPECT FALL.
JOYCE.
EVEN BABIES, WHO CAN HARDLY CRAWL, FALL?
HENRIETTA.
'CAUSE THEY ALL FALL IN LOVE.

MADELINE.
THE WAGS FALL, THE BOOBS FALL,
THE GOLD-BRICK SELLERS AND THE RUBES FALL,
JOYCE.
FROM THE UNDERBRED TO THE OVERFED?
ALL.
THEY ALL FALL IN LOVE.

EVANGELINE.
THE GOOD VERY OFT FALL,
MADELINE.
THE HARD-SHELLED BAPTISTS AND THE SOFT FALL,
HENRIETTA.
JUST TO PROVE THEY BELIEVE, IN THE FALL OF EVE,
ALL.
THEY ALL FALL IN LOVE.

HENRIETTA.
THE SOLEMN UNDERTAKER IS SHYER THAN A QUAKER,
AS LONG AS HE IS FILLING GRAVES,
BUT LET HIM MEET A MISSUS
WHO HASN'T PREJUDICES, AND HE MISBEHAVES.
BERTHA.
THE ANGELS ON HIGH FALL,
HENRIETTA.
AND MEN LIKE LINDBERGH WHO CAN FLY FALL,
EVANGELINE.
EVEN BOXERS MUCH TOO PURE TO FALL, FALL,
ALL.
'CAUSE THEY ALL FALL IN LOVE.

(At the song's end, a young man, VICTOR CALVERSTON crosses the platform, absent-mindedly looking about; he bumps into EVAN-GELINE; she drops her flower, which he steps on. The two make eye contact. VICTOR, by his expression, is immediately smitten.)

VICTOR. Excuse me, I am so clumsy.
EVANGELINE. You're standing on my flower.

(He picks up the now bent and battered rose and offers it to her.)

VICTOR. And to think, I am a horticulturist.

EVANGELINE. You did wonders for this. It's ruined.

(She lets the flower fall to the ground.)

VICTOR. I'm Victor Calverston. And I really do apologize. I wish you would allow me to—

JOYCE. Vangy, stop talking to strangers and come over here.

(EVANGELINE turns and joins her friends; VICTOR looks longingly after her; he picks up the fallen rose, regarding it like a jewel. As he exits, EVANGELINE removes four little packages from her purse and distributes them.)

EVANGELINE. Here we are chums. One for each of you.

HENRIETTA. What's this?

JOYCE. *(Ripping the paper off.)* Oh, Vangy, you silly girl.

EVANGELINE. It's nothing. They're all the same. I just couldn't resist.

BERTHA. *(Opening hers.)* A little pin.

JOYCE. Of a knight?

HENRIETTA. In shining armor. How fabulous.

BERTHA. *(Pinning hers on.)* I will wear it always. Close to my heart.

EVANGELINE. I have one myself. see? *(Lifting her collar flap to reveal the pin.)* I like to imagine, under the armor, maybe it's a woman in there. Embarking on an adventure. A female knight errant.

JOYCE. Or a nymph errant.

HENRIETTA. On a quest like us, to find true love and adventure. Why not?

MADELINE. Why not? Because, mon cherie, that is not the way of the world. Women do not travel the countryside having adventures. And Evangeline, you will never find that prince charming. Why, you will probably end up an old maid living with your aunt.

HENRIETTA. Oh Pooh!

(Except for MADELINE, the girls busily put on their pins.)

JOYCE. But I do say, I rather like this nymph errant idea. I'm sure she would ride atop a magnificent steed. Its head back, nostrils flared, muscles bulging, flanks heaving—

MADELINE. I would like this steed's address.

EVANGELINE. Are we talking about horses or men?

HENRIETTA. What's the difference? They're both overbearing beasts.

EVANGELINE. You ask what's the difference? You're missing the most important thing of all.

MADELINE. The size of the man's bank account?

HENRIETTA. I think Evie means love and romance.

EVANGELINE. Yes. I'm talking about a deep, deep, singular commitment to another person.

JOYCE. Like the way you felt about the doctor?

BERTHA. Last year when you got the flu.

HENRIETTA. You were sick in love with him.

EVANGELINE. *(Blushing.)* Oh! Why— And I was just beginning to forget him!

(The other girls laugh as MISS PRATT enters, carrying four roses.)

MISS PRATT. I want to remember you all just like this. Young, beautiful and happy.

HENRIETTA. *(Brightening and being the hostess.)* Look girls, the chemistry department has arrived.

JOYCE. Miss Pratt, thank you for coming to bid us farewell.

PRATT. You girls have been my favorite students. And I couldn't let you leave these. A flower for each of you. To serve as a symbol of your future growth. Evangeline already got hers. *(Distributing the flowers.)* As you go out into the world, like the rose, you too will open your pedals.

HENRIETTA. *(Looking at Madeline.)* Well, if she opened her pedals any wider—

MADELINE. At least mine aren't beginning to droop.

PRATT. Girls, girls, soon, like carbon-dioxide or some other gaseous substance, you will dissipate into all parts of the continent.

HENRIETTA. Any last instructions for us before we go?

PRATT. Instructions, about what?

BERTHA. Life.

JOYCE. Love.

MADELINE. Men!

PRATT. Well, I do have one suggestion.

MUSIC: EXPERIMENT

PRATT.
BEFORE YOU LEAVE THESE PORTALS
TO MEET LESS FORTUNATE MORTALS,
THERE'S JUST ONE PARTING MESSAGE I WOULD GIVE TO YOU
YOU HAVE ALL LEARNED RELIANCE
ON THE SACRED TEACHINGS OF SCIENCE
SO I HOPE, THROUGH LIFE, YOU NEVER WILL DECLINE,
IN SPITE OF PHILISTINE
DEFIANCE

TO DO WHAT ALL GOOD SCIENTISTS DO.
EXPERIMENT, MAKE IT YOUR MOTTO DAY AND NIGHT.
EXPERIMENT, AND IT WILL LEAD YOU TO THE LIGHT.
THE APPLE ON THE TOP OF THE TREE IS NEVER TOO HIGH TO ACHIEVE.

GIRLS.
JUST TAKE AN EXAMPLE FROM EVE,

PRATT.
EXPERIMENT
BE CURIOUS, THOUGH INTERFERING FRIENDS MAY FROWN
GET FURIOUS AT EACH ATTEMPT TO HOLD YOU DOWN,
IF THIS ADVICE YOU ONLY EMPLOY,
THE FUTURE CAN OFFER YOU INFINITE JOY.

GIRLS.
AND MERRIMENT,
EXPERIMENT
AND YOU'LL SEE.

(Goes into a production number (could be tap) that uses luggage carts and suitcases and covers the entire platform.)

GIRLS.
EXPERIMENT, MAKE IT YOUR MOTTO DAY AND NIGHT.
EXPERIMENT, AND IT WILL LEAD YOU TO THE LIGHT.
THE APPLE ON THE TOP OF THE TREE IS NEVER TOO HIGH TO ACHIEVE.
JUST TAKE AN EXAMPLE FROM EVE,

PRATT & GIRLS.
EXPERIMENT
BE CURIOUS, THOUGH INTERFERING FRIENDS MAY FROWN
GET FURIOUS AT EACH ATTEMPT TO HOLD YOU DOWN,
IF THIS ADVICE YOU ONLY EMPLOY,
THE FUTURE CAN OFFER YOU INFINITE JOY
AND MERRIMENT,
EXPERIMENT
AND YOU'LL SEE.

(At the end of the song, the girls are standing on rear platforms. On applause, they open their respective doors and exit into the train cars leaving MISS PRATT alone SC for blackout.)

End of Scene 1

Scene 2

Scene: *Interior of train car.*
Time: *Immediately following.*
At Rise: *Center section of train car flies out to reveal interior of railway carriage; seated is ANDRE DE CROISSANT, an attractive Frenchman in his 40's, looking admiringly at the rear view of EVANGELINE hanging out the window.*

EVANGELINE. Miss Pratt, my bag, if you please.

PRATT. *(Off stage.)* Good-bye, dear. And don't forget: experiment!

EVANGELINE. *(Pulling bag inside.)* I won't, good-bye!

(There is the sound of a train pulling out. Standing on the seat, EVANGELINE places her bag on the overhead rack. ANDRE watches closely. As she steps down, he feigns reading his book. She settles down to a book of her own. ANDRE glances repeatedly at her; he lights a cigarette.)

ANDRE. *(Indicating the smoke.)* Pardon, Mademoiselle. *(She resumes reading; ANDRE returns to his book, but just for a moment.)* You are English, no?

EVANGELINE. I am English yes.

ANDRE. I love the English.

EVANGELINE. Of course you do.

ANDRE. The English woman she has, how you say, the stately body. She holds her beauty. *(Suddenly, EVANGELINE's eyes widen. She opens her purse and looks inside. She searches her pockets and then the floor, growing increasingly frantic.)* The Spanish, they fade quickly and the Italians, such temperament. As for the Germans—

EVANGELINE. *(Interrupting him.)* I've lost my ticket! What an idiot! I must have left it— Oh, what am I to do?

(ANDRE removes two tickets from a pocket and holds one out.)

ANDRE. Perhaps I may be of assistance, Mademoiselle?

EVANGELINE. This is just dreadful. How am I going to— Where can I— *(Seeing the ticket in his hand.)* What's that?

ANDRE. For you.

EVANGELINE. You always carry an extra, in case you meet a damsel in distress?

ANDRE. Ah, non. You see, my friend she miss the train, and now I have two. One for me and now one for you. It is fortunate, no?

EVANGELINE. Uh ... uh ... I really can't thank you enough.

ANDRE. *(Under his breath.)* We shall see.

EVANGELINE. Pardon?

ANDRE. Please. It is nothing. You have been at school, yes?

EVANGELINE. This was my last year. I'm completely finished.

ANDRE. Ah non, Mademoiselle, you are only just beginning! The London season starts.

EVANGELINE. I don't live in London. I live in Oxford with my aunt.

ANDRE. With your aunt! What a pity. If I were a young, beautiful woman like you, I would go on the stage.

EVANGELINE. Now, that is something I have never considered.

ANDRE. And why is that?

EVANGELINE. I don't think I have any talent.

ANDRE. Then you are one of the lucky ones. I often find talent only gets in the way. Can you sing?

EVANGELINE. No

ANDRE. Can you dance?

EVANGELINE. Not very well.

ANDRE. Acting?

EVANGELINE. None.

ANDRE. Brava! Where have you been hiding? I can make you the great star. Ah yes, you wear the beautiful clothes. You sit in the beautiful dressing room surrounded by the beautiful baskets of flowers and the young men, very correct, come in and kiss your hand and your arm and your— *(Demonstrating, then stopping himself.)*

EVANGELINE. But it can't be as easy as all that.

ANDRE. No? I own the *Folie de Paris* and there it is moi, Andre de Croissant, who makes the stars. And I would be so very happy to make you.

EVANGELINE. *(Wavering.)* Do you really think I could be a star?

MUSIC: EXPERIMENT (STING)

ANDRE. I implore you. Grab life with the gusto. You must give it a try.

MUSIC: IT'S BAD FOR ME

EVANGELINE.
YOUR WORDS GO THROUGH AND THROUGH ME
AND LEAVE ME TOTALLY DAZED.
FOR THEY DO SUCH STRANGE THINGS TO ME

THEY NEARLY MAKE ME GLOOMY,
FOR YOU, SIR, ARE SO CLEVER, SO OBVIOUSLY "THE TOP,"
I WISH YOU'D GO ON FOREVER, I WISH EVEN MORE YOU'D STOP.
OH, IT'S BAD FOR ME, IT'S BAD FOR ME,
THIS KNOWLEDGE THAT YOU'RE GOING MAD FOR ME,
I FEEL CERTAIN MY FRIENDS WOULD BE GLAD FOR ME,
STILL IT'S BAD FOR ME.
IT'S SO GOOD FOR ME, SO NEW FOR ME
TO SEE SOMEONE IN SUCH A STEW FOR ME,
AND WHEN YOU SAY YOU'D DO ALL YOU COULD FOR ME
IT'S SO GOOD FOR ME, IT'S BAD FOR ME,
I FELT TILL YOU WHISPERED TO ME, COMPLETELY LEFT ON THE SHELF,
BUT SINCE YOU STARTED TO WOO ME, I'M JUST CRAZY ABOUT MYSELF.
IT'S A BOON FOR ME, A BREAK FOR ME
TO HEAR THAT YOUR HEART'S ON THE MAKE FOR ME.
YET NO MATTER HOWEVER APPEALING, I STILL HAVE A FEELING
IT'S BAD FOR ME.

(The tempo picks up as EVANGELINE is chased by ANDRE around the train compartment interior.)

EVANGELINE.
OH, IT'S BAD FOR ME, IT'S BAD FOR ME
THIS KNOWLEDGE THAT YOU'RE GOING MAD FOR ME.
ANDRE.
I FEEL CERTAIN MY FRIENDS WOULD BE GLAD FOR ME,
EVANGELINE.
BUT IT'S BAD FOR ME.
IT'S SO GOOD FOR ME, SO NEW FOR ME
TO SEE SOMEONE IN SUCH A STEW FOR ME
AND WHEN YOU SAY YOU'D DO ALL YOU COULD FOR ME
IT'S SO GOOD FOR ME, IT'S BAD FOR ME.

ANDRE. *(All over her.)* Come with me to Neauville Sur Mer and then on to Paris. By this fall, I promise you will already have a reputation.

EVANGELINE. *(Breaking away.)* That's rather what I'm afraid of.

ANDRE. You must trust me. The world needs you. I need you. Please Miss ... Miss ....

EVANGELINE. Evangeline Edwards.

ANDRE. *(Total recovery.)* Evangeline Edwards! Don't worry we can change that. Ah, I will teach you things in Neauville.

EVANGELINE. Even if I could go, isn't Neauville expensive?

ANDRE. To a beautiful woman, nothing is expensive.

EVANGELINE. I don't know. I'm just not sure. Maybe if we cared for each other. If we had a past, well no, not exactly a past. What I mean— Oh, I wish I knew what I meant!

(Lights up on an image of MADELINE through a scrim.)

MADELINE. Evangeline you will never find that Prince Charming. You will probably end up an old maid living with your aunt.

(Lights out on MADELINE.)

EVANGELINE. Oh really, just watch me!

ANDRE. I would love to watch you. Evangeline, you are young, beautiful and charming! Do not let life pass you by. Say 'yes' to my offer.

EVANGELINE. I must say, I find myself leaning that way.

ANDRE. Lean a little further mon cher.

EVANGELINE. But for a place like Neauville Sur Mer, I have nothing to wear. *(ANDRE lowers a travel case and opens it; he pulls out gowns, each more beautiful than the last; lights down to a pin spot on EVANGELINE.)* Oh ....

MUSIC: BAD FOR ME / REPRISE

(Starts slow and builds in tempo until the end is a full out belt number.)

EVANGELINE.
IT'S SO GOOD FOR ME, SO NEW FOR ME
TO SEE SOMEONE IN SUCH A STEW FOR ME,
AND WHEN YOU SAY YOU'D DO ALL YOU COULD FOR ME
IT'S SO GOOD FOR ME, IT'S BAD FOR ME,
I FELT, TILL YOU WHISPERED TO ME, COMPLETELY LEFT ON THE SHELF,
BUT SINCE YOU STARTED TO WOO ME, I'M JUST CRAZY ABOUT MYSELF.
IT'S A BOON FOR ME, A BREAK FOR ME,
TO HEAR THAT YOUR HEART'S ON THE MAKE FOR ME,
YET NO MATTER HOWEVER APPEALING, I STILL HAVE A FEELING
IT'S BAD FOR ME.

(At the song's end the train car breaks away and splits to wings taking EVANGELINE off, and giving way to an outdoor cafe in Neauville Sur Mer.)

End of Scene 2

Scene 3

Scene: An outdoor cafe in Neauville Sur Mer.
Time: Several days later.
At Rise: Lights up on the front of a small cafe on the grand promenade of this seaside resort. Seated at a cafe table is a woman with a long cigarette holder. She wears a large hat and is posed like a poster of the period. Two women stroll nearby, their faces hidden by parasols.

(ALEXI, a disheveled and quite mad Russian, enters and takes a seat at the table next to the woman.)

WOMAN. Ah Alexi, my young Russian friend, why so sad?

ALEXI. Mad? I'm not mad. Why does everyone think I'm mad?

WOMAN. I said 'sad.' But now that you mention it ....

ALEXI. Oh. It is true I am suffering.

WOMAN. From what? Is it your music? No, I think it must be an affair l'amour.

ALEXI. I cannot speak of it. Nothing, not terror, torture, prison, or all the armies of the world can make me reveal what I am feeling. *(A beat.)* All right. I'm in love.

WOMAN. As I suspected. And who is the object of your anguish?

ALEXI. A beautiful English girl. The young friend of Monsieur de Croissant. Every night they come to the casino and dance before my bandstand. I am so taken with her I want to kill myself.

WOMAN. Dramatic, but not very practical. Why don't you let me help. I shall introduce myself to the young lady and tell her all about you. Well, not all. I will discreetly leave out the fact that you have no money. *(Looking off in the distance.)* I think that is she approaching now.

ALEXI. Look at me. Shaking. I can't face her.

(ALEXI ducks beneath his table as MADELINE enters; the older

woman approaches her.)

WOMAN. Excuse me, I beg your pardon, but my friend here— *(Gesturing in the direction of ALEXI; he is gone.)* Where did he go? Ah, my friend has been admiring you on the casino dance floor.

MADELINE. I have not been at the casino. You are confusing me with someone else.

(The older woman returns to her table as EVANGELINE enters. Looking sophisticated in the latest clothes and hairstyle, she turns to the wing.)

EVANGELINE. Yes darling, Madam Arthur's shop. I must have left them at the counter. I'll be in the cafe. *(Seeing MADELINE and then to audience.)* You can imagine my surprise when I looked and there, big as life, was Madeline.

MADELINE. *(Seeing EVANGELINE.)* Evangeline? Mon Dieu I can't believe my eyes. What are you doing here? And what have you done to yourself?

EVANGELINE. When in Rome, or in this case, Neauville Sur Mer. Are you with your parents?

MADELINE. Praise the heavens no.

EVANGELINE. Not a man?

MADELINE. If you must know, I came here with the Comte de Bigorre, the famous aviator. But we had a fight and poof, he flew away. You are here with your Aunt?

EVANGELINE. Not exactly.

ANDRE. *(Entering with a pair of sunglasses.)* I found them. I found them.

(He presents the glasses to EVANGELINE; MADELINE looks him over.)

MADELINE. Not exactly, I should say.

EVANGELINE. Monsieur Andre de Croissant, Madeline St. Maure. We attended school together.

ANDRE. *(Taking her hand and kissing it.)* Charme, Mademoiselle.

MADELINE. Enchante, Monsieur. The two of you are here for the season?

ANDRE. Oui. Then we return to Paris, where Evangeline will be my new star.

EVANGELINE. Oh, Andre, I keep telling you, that is just too ridiculous.

MADELINE. Cheri, you do not want to be a star? Silly girl. If I

had such a chance— *(Giving ANDRE a sexy stare.)* I would jump on it.

ANDRE. *(Aroused.)* Really?

MADELINE. *(Giving him a great view of her cleavage.)* Mais certainement.

ANDRE. *(Wiping his brow with a handkerchief.)* I must make some calls to Paris. My backers. *(To Madeline.)* Would you join us at this evening's gala if you have no other plans?

MADELINE. How very sweet. I would be most charmed. Especially now that I am alone.

ANDRE. Beautiful young women do not remain alone for long. Evangeline, while I attend to business, you and Madeline can go shopping. For this evening's costumes.

(He takes out a wad of money, hands some to EVANGELINE, kisses her hand and exits; the older woman moves closer to EVANGELINE.)

MADELINE. Darling, how very clever of you to find a lovely rich man.

WOMAN. Excuse me, Miss?

EVANGELINE. Have we met?

WOMAN. No. But I was hoping I could speak to you concerning a—

MADELINE. That is impossible. We are in a hurry. And you are intruding. *(To EVANGELINE as she pulls her away.)* We don't want to be seen with a woman like her. She's a Cocotte!

EVANGELINE. A what?

MADELINE. A Cocotte. A courtesan. Once, quite famous. But now what you call a been-has.

WOMAN. *(Watching the girls exit.)* So the young women do not wish to speak with a lady such as myself. Don't worry my dears, your day, will come soon enough.

MUSIC: THE COCOTTE

WOMAN.
WHILE THE LUCKY ONES SIT TOGETHER
WITH NOTHING TO CURSE BUT WEATHER
PERMIT ME TO TELL YOU OF MY SAD FATE.
FOR DUE TO MY GREAT DISCRETION

IN PRACTICING MY PROFESSION
I SUDDENLY WAKE UP TO FIND I DATE.
WHEN LADIES STILL HAD PROPRIETY,

WOMEN LIKE ME WERE COVERED WITH GLORY,
BUT NOW, SINCE THESE DAMNED SOCIETY- WOMEN
INVADED MY TERRITORY

A BUSTED, DISGUSTED COCOTTE AM I,
JUST A FLOP FROM THE TOP TO THE BOTTOM AM I
WHILE THOSE FAT FEMMES DU MONDE
WITH THE MEN WHOM ONCE I OWNED
SPLASH AROUND LIKE HELL-BOUND HIPPOPOTAMI.
SINCE ONLY DAMES WITH THEIR NAMES ON THEIR CHEQUES APPEAL
TO MODERN MEN, INSTEAD OF SEX, I NOW HAVE EX-APPEAL.
WHAT WILL MA SAY TO ME
WHEN SHE SEES I'VE TURNED OUT TO BE
AN ANNOYED, UNEMPLOYED COCOTTE?

AND ON MY TOMBSTONE I TRUST
WILL BE WRITTEN "EXCUSE THE DUST
OF A FAST BUT OUTCLASSED COCOTTE."

(On the last lines, the lights dim to a pin spot on her face. As she exits, the set begins to change to a fantasy garden.)

End of Scene 3

Scene 4

Scene: *The same outdoor square.*
Time: *That same evening.*
At Rise: *"It's Bad for Me" music underscoring comes up in a waltz tempo as the cafe transforms, with lights and trees, into an outdoor pavilion and the setting for the gala.*

(A masked couple in spectacular costumes waltzes across and off. As they cross, a masked girl dressed as Marie Antoinette enters, dancing. She is followed by EVANGELINE, dressed as a Pirouette, ANDRE in a knight's suit of armor complete with visored helmet, and MADELINE in a Cleopatra outfit that barely covers her.)

EVANGELINE. Andre how are you managing?

(ANDRE gestures and mumbles indistinctly.)

MADELINE. The helmet is stuck, no?

EVANGELINE. He said it fit fine at the costume shop. If only we could loosen this visor.

(She tugs at the helmet to ANDRE's discomfort and incoherent protest.)

MADELINE. I have it. We get one of those corkscrews for the wine and pry it loose.

(ANDRE responds with mumbles that express fear for this idea.)

MADELINE. Come with me. I know what to do.

(MADELINE leads ANDRE upstage and off. The COCOTTE enters in costume.)

WOMAN. Oh, Miss, excuse me?

EVANGELINE. You were at the café earlier. You wanted to speak with me?

WOMAN. I am merely the messenger for one who is desperately in love with you.

EVANGELINE. Desperately in love. With me?

WOMAN. It is young Alexi. He conducts the orchestra in the casino.

EVANGELINE. How very odd—

WOMAN. Yes, he can be. Oh, you mean the situation.

EVANGELINE. But also very sweet and charming. Tell the young man that I am greatly flattered, but I am here with a friend. But please, let him know in a nice way, won't you?

WOMAN. Of course. You may count on it. You are very kind.

EVANGELINE. *(Watching the COCOTTE exit; to audience.)* Someone desperately in love with me! It's a lovely thought, but I do have an escort somewhere around here. *(She crosses UR and stops. From behind a column, a laughing MADELINE leans out. Suddenly an arm in familiar knight's armor grabs MADELINE and pulls her back into the dark. EVANGELINE moves away and breaks into tears; ALEXI enters and crosses to her.)* Andre, how could you? And with Madeline of all— *(Seeing ALEXI.)* Ah! How long have you been there?

ALEXI. A moment only. Permit me. I am Alexi Gregorgevitch Stukin.

EVANGELINE. I know who you are. The conductor.

ALEXI. It has been my dream to make your acquaintance.

EVANGELINE. About that, did the woman, your friend, older,

tell you—

ALEXI. Her expression alone told me my aspirations were hopeless.

EVANGELINE. And yet, you are still here.

ALEXI. I find hopelessness so irresistibly beautiful. Like you.

EVANGELINE. Listen, Alexi, Georgei—whatever, don't you have an orchestra to—

ALEXI. No more. I quit. How I hate this place. The shoddy pretense. The red lips, painted faces, the fine clothes bought with what? Their own bodies. *(Seeing that she is reacting to this personally.)* Forgive me. You are not like them. You are the reason I stayed.

EVANGELINE. What do you mean?

ALEXI. The first night you came here was the night I had intended to leave. But when I saw you, I became entranced. I knew the Frenchman would never, could never understand your soul. And I hoped— But now, I *must* kill myself *(Beat.)* or perhaps I go to Paris.

EVANGELINE. Please, Alexi. Choose Paris.

ALEXI. I will. If you choose Alexi. If you come with me.

EVANGELINE. Oh. No, I am so unhappy, I'm afraid you would not find me very good company.

ALEXI. You are unhappy? Then let us die together!

EVANGELINE. I'm not quite that unhappy!

MADELINE. *(Off stage.)* Would I have my very own plumes and jewels? Andre, you sweet, lovely man, of course I will be your star. Viva la poitrine!

ALEXI. *(To EVANGELINE.)* There is nothing now to hold you here. Come with me to Paris.

EVANGELINE. *(To audience.)* What should I do? I feel such a fool. *(Looking at her costume.)* I'm even dressed for the part.

ALEXI. You just had a patch of bad luck.

EVANGELINE. Alexi, you're very sweet. You would take things slow? You wouldn't rush me? *(ALEXI nods yes and no appropriately.)* All right, then on to Paris. There's just one problem. I have nothing to wear.

ALEXI. I have some money and prospects. Whatever you want, it is yours.

MUSIC: HOW COULD WE BE WRONG?

ALEXI.
THE MOMENT I SAW YOU AND YOU LOOKED MY WAY,
THAT MOMENT OF MOMENTS I STARTED TO SAY:
"COULD THIS BE MY LONG-LOST DREAM COME TRUE?"
THE MOMENT WE TOUCHED, I KNEW.

EVANGELINE.
HOW COULD WE BE WRONG?
WHEN WE BOTH ARE SO SET ON IT,
HOW COULD WE BE WRONG?
ALEXI.
OUR LOVE IS SO STRONG
I'D BE WILLING TO BET ON IT,
HOW COULD WE BE WRONG?

BOTH.
WHY SHOULD IT EVER DIE?
DARLING, YOU AND I
ARE TOO WONDERFULLY HAPPY TODAY
TO THROW IT AWAY.
NOW, LIFE IS A SONG
IF WE BUILD A DUET ON IT,
HOW COULD WE BE WRONG?

(A 1930's type map flies in that traces their route from Neauville to Paris. They move behind a scrim, in what is suggestive of a moving rail car. Singing, they change clothes as the set changes.)

BOTH.
WHY, SHOULD IT EVER DIE?
DARLING, YOU AND I
ARE TOO WONDERFULLY HAPPY TODAY
TO THROW IT AWAY.
NOW, LIFE IS A SONG
IF WE BUILD A DUET ON IT,
HOW COULD WE BE WRONG?

(They are in a Paris apartment; he is in bed, watching her; she is in her undergarments, folding her clothes.)

EVANGELINE. Good-bye Andre. And good riddance. You and Madeline can have each other. I've found someone new.

ALEXI.
THE MOMENT I SAW YOU, AND YOU LOOKED MY WAY...

EVANGELINE.
OH, HOW COULD WE BE WRONG?
COULD WE BE WRONG?
COULD WE BE WRONG?

End of Scene 4

Scene 5

Scene: *A Paris Street / Café.*
Time: *Several weeks later.*
At Rise: *Evangeline enters agitated, wearing the remains of what looks to be a painting; she is yelling at someone off stage.*

EVANGELINE. Well you cad, had you not been chasing me around, I would not have fallen through your painting. You unspeakable man. You charlatan, preying on helpless young women. *(Aside.)* Paris has not been pretty. Poor Alexi, and I do mean poor, is out of money and out of hope, I fear, of ever finding work. We haven't eaten in days. That is why I agreed to pose in the nude for a so-called artist. *(Beat.)* But he turned out to be more panter than painter....

(Lights up on VICTOR sitting at a café table; he notices her and approaches.)

VICTOR. Oh, Miss. Miss, do you remember me?
EVANGELINE. Should I?
VICTOR. We met briefly and quite by accident in—
EVANGELINE. Neauville?
VICTOR. Lausanne. I killed your flower.

(He fumbles in his pocket and produces a bent, dog-eared, poor excuse of a dried rose. He shows it to her proudly.)

EVANGELINE. Of course. You are in the field of accounting.
VICTOR. Horticulture. Smashing outfit, is that the latest rage in Paris?
EVANGELINE. Oh, my God. I have to get out of this. It's been swell seeing you again ... Billy?
VICTOR. Victor! Listen, I'm in Paris a few days. Do you think we could spend some time—
EVANGELINE. That would be quite impossible. Please excuse me.
VICTOR. But I don't even know your name.
EVANGELINE. Evangeline. Now, I must get home.
VICTOR. *(Watching her exit.)* Evangeline. Home. What I wouldn't give ....

MUSIC: YOU'D BE SO NICE TO COME HOME TO

VICTOR.
IT'S NOT THAT YOU'RE FAIRER

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