

CYRANO

Screenplay by

Erica Schmidt

Based on the stage musical adapted and directed by

Erica Schmidt

from *Cyrano de Bergerac* by Edmond Rostand,

Music by

Aaron & Bryce Dessner

Lyrics by

Matt Berninger & Carin Besser

Roughly 1640 but as timeless as it is period.

ROXANNE's home is small; only essential pieces of furniture - tasteful but poor. A shelf of books in pride of place. In contrast, her wardrobe overflows with elegant dresses. She stands looking at them. Her chaperone, MARIE, at her side.

ROXANNE

I'm hungry.

MARIE

A lady never complains.

Roxanne throws aside an extravagant red dress.

ROXANNE

We can't eat dresses. If only the Duke had sent bread.

MARIE

I think he wants to marry you.

ROXANNE

I'd rather marry *you*.

Marie snorts in amusement despite herself.

MARIE

He's a Duke and you, my dear, a rapidly ageing orphan.

ROXANNE

I won't be rescued, I'm not in distress.

MARIE

We have no money! Not a bean!! Your whole life our country has been at war and-

MARIE (CONT'D)

Everyone must make compromises in a war-

ROXANNE

(lovingly imitating)
"everyone must make compromises in a war"

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

I don't love The Duke de Guiche.

Roxanne picks out a sage green dress.

MARIE

Wear the dress he sent.

ROXANNE

No. Red is vulgar and reeks of lechery.

Marie reluctantly helps her put the sage dress on.

MARIE

If you don't love him -

ROXANNE

Or even like him -

MARIE

- Then why did you accept his invitation to the theatre?!

ROXANNE

Because we can't afford the tickets and I want to see the play!

2 EXT. ROXANNE'S HOUSE. CONT 2

De Guiche's ornate carriage pulls up outside Roxanne's home.

3 INT. ROXANNE'S ROOM. CONT. 3

MARIE

(at window)

He's here! Now don't be rude to him.

ROXANNE

I'm not. I'm enigmatically distant and...fashionably late - where are my shoes?

MARIE

(big warning)

If you anger him he'll ruin us.

ROXANNE

Where are they?

Marie helps Roxanne look for the shoes.

MARIE

Marry the Duke and you'll be rich. I promised your father I'd keep you safe.

ROXANNE

No one's safe in a cage.

MARIE

A clever marriage is your only option.

ROXANNE

I have no intention to marry *anyone*.

MARIE

Believe me, spinsterhood is bleak.

Marie hands Roxanne her shoes. Roxanne tries but can't reach her feet in the dress.

ROXANNE

And love? Does that count for nothing with you?

Marie puts Roxanne's shoes on her.

MARIE

It might smell rosy for a year or two but love doesn't *last*. What lasts is compromise and sacrifice. Children need love. Adults need money.

Marie rushes down the stairs to meet De Guiche. The surly but quite handsome LANDLORD hovers.

LANDLORD

(to Marie)

Tell your mistress she's two months behind with the rent.

MARIE

(hurrying past)

It's coming, I promise.

4 INT. INSIDE CARRIAGE AS IT TRAVELS THROUGH CITY. CONT. 4

Roxanne and Marie sat opposite DE GUICHE and VALVERT (a Comte in service to De Guiche, dressed in ribbons and bows).

De Guiche, in elaborate finery, looks Roxanne up and down for a while. It's disturbing.

DE GUICHE

(nods at her dress)

It's perfectly fetching. But I longed to see you in crimson silk.

ROXANNE

Mmm, I couldn't wear that dress.

DE GUICHE

No?

ROXANNE

I don't have the shoes to match. Sorry.

DE GUICHE

I will rectify your errant shoelessness.

Valvert snorts. Roxanne looks at him.

ROXANNE

Perhaps the good Duke should have sent the dress to you, Valvert?

VALVERT

Oh, I tried it. Too loose on the bust.

De Guiche and Valvert snigger. Roxanne forces a smile back. Marie looks anxiously between them.

As the carriage takes them to the theater, De Guiche and Valvert talk and Marie makes polite small talk. Roxanne looks out the window. We don't hear them as she sings.

Song. SOMEONE TO SAY

ROXANNE

*WHAT DOES IT FEEL LIKE TO SLOW DANCE IN
SUNLIGHT WITH SOMEONE YOU LOVE?
SOMEBODY WHO SEES YOU AND WON'T EVER LEAVE
YOU ALONE WHATEVER COMES...*

The carriage drives along the narrow streets of the city, it passes couples in love. As Roxanne sees them, they dance.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

*I NEED SOMETHING TO DIE FOR
WRITE POEMS AND CRY FOR
AND I WON'T BE ASHAMED
I'M NOBODY'S PET NO ONE'S WIFE NO ONE'S
WOMAN AND I WON'T PLAY THAT GAME
I'D GIVE ANYTHING FOR SOMEONE TO SAY
THAT THEY CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT ME AND
THEY'LL BE THERE FOREVER
I'D GIVE ANYTHING FOR SOMEONE TO SAY TO ME
THAT NO MATTER HOW BAD IT GETS THEY WON'T
TURN AWAY FROM ME*

5 EXT. A STREET. CONT.

5

Roxanne continues to sing:

ROXANNE (O.S.)

*WHAT DO YOU DO WHEN YOU'RE ALWAYS WAITING
TO FIND LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT?
IF I'M NAIVE WHY DOES ALL THE POETRY SAY
THAT I MIGHT?
I HAVE HEARD SONGS THAT SAY LOVE CONQUERS
EVERYTHING HOWEVER YOU NAME IT.
IT'S RIGHT THERE IN FRONT OF YOU WHEREVER
YOU ARE. YOU JUST HAVE TO CLAIM IT.*

CHRISTIAN has just arrived in the city. (A poor country boy and handsome) He carries a single bag with all he owns in the world.

He peers into the window of a bakery. 'RAGUENEAS' is written on the glass. He counts his change to see if he can afford something to eat.

De Guiche's carriage drives past. Christian sees Roxanne's reflection in the window. Roxanne does not see Christian.

Christian turns and stares at Roxanne as she passes. He must see her again. He chases after the carriage.

6 EXT. OUTSIDE THE THEATER. CONT.

6

A grand old theater. THEATREGOERS gathered on the street. A sign says the HOUSE IS FULL.

Marquis, Comtes, Vicomtes and Barons in wigs and fine clothes walk in the door past the guards who nod to them.

Poor folk, plainly dressed, wait behind a rope to get in.

De Guiche helps Roxanne down from his carriage and offers her his arm.

Christian arrives behind the carriage and sees Roxanne exit it. He grabs the arm of a poor stranger.

CHRISTIAN

(pointing to Roxanne)

Who's that?

STRANGER

The Duke De Guiche. Second only to the King.

CHRISTIAN

No. The lady?

STRANGER

Oh, Roxanne.

Suddenly LE BRET (The Captain of the Guards, in uniform) grabs the stranger's arm.

LE BRET

Have you seen Cyrano?

STRANGER

Not yet.

Christian sees Le Bret's rank and uniform and salutes.

CHRISTIAN

Christian Neuville. I'm a new recruit.
I'm enlisting in the King's Guard
tomorrow.

Le Bret smiles in friendly warning.

LE BRET

Well good luck with that. At ease.

Le Bret heads into the theater to look for Cyrano.

As they climb the steps, De Guiche and Roxanne pass by two women in dresses overdone with dripping lace. They wave at De Guiche, giggle, swoon, whisper behind fans obviously flirting with him. Roxanne sees the exchange and shoots Marie an 'I told you so' look.

LADY 1

What superb ribbons Duke De Guiche.

LADY 2

(playing the
innuendo)

Gorgeous piping ... and trim.

DE GUICHE

Doeskin and beaver, ladies, doeskin and
beaver.

P.O.V. of Christian as he watches Roxanne and De Guiche go into the theater (the guard bows and holds back the crowd as they pass) followed by Valvert and Marie.

Christian makes a quick decision. He finds a lurking 'SCALPER' and after some intense negotiation manages to buy a ticket with the last money he has.

We follow Christian inside the theater.

7 INT. THEATER. CONT.

7

We see all the levels of society in the descending tiered boxes and the poor, on the floor, standing. The floor is a dangerous place - jostling and cramped.

Christian moves through the crowd. He passes a THIEF (holding a knife) with a group of five rough looking YOUNG MEN gathered close, he whispers intently:

THIEF

Be swift, be crafty, take from the women
and the men without swords.

THIEF 2

And children?

THIEF

A child with a full purse *is* an adult.

The thieves nod and set to work.

ROXANNE

I'D GIVE ANYTHING FOR SOMEONE TO SAY
 THAT THEY CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT ME AND
 THEY'LL BE THERE FOREVER I'D GIVE ANYTHING
 FOR SOMEONE TO SAY TO ME
 THAT NO MATTER HOW BAD IT GETS THEY WON'T
 TURN AWAY FROM ME

Christian is looking all around for Roxanne. De Guiche, Valvert, Roxanne and Marie take their seats in a premium box on stage. Finally Christian sees her.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

IF LOVE'S THERE I FEEL IT AND ITS STARE
 IT WOULD BE A FREEDOM AT FIRST SIGHT
 I'LL BE WALKING ON AIR
 IF LOVE'S THERE WON'T DARE RUN AWAY
 I'LL SWALLOW MY PRIDE AND I'LL ASK YOU TO
 STAY

Roxanne sees Christian for the first time. Their eyes lock as she sings the last lines, they both fall instantly and irrevocably in love, at first sight.

Roxanne gasps and points behind Christian as a thief grabs his bag and runs off through the crowd. Christian turns and gives chase. The spell is broken. The song is over.

Christian rushes past a THEATRE BUFF and his young SON in the crowd.

THEATRE BUFF

Ahhh! *Theatre*. Inhale it my boy.
 (Boy looks confused)
 Literally.
 (Boy gingerly
 breathes in)
 Feel it? Yes? Tonight you will see the
 magnificent Montfleury. The greatest actor
 of his generation.

The boy smiles up at his father as the audience chants and bangs on the boxes: 'Play. Play. Play.' It's like a modern day boxing match or live music event - alive with eager fans.

The concessions girl offers oranges. Roxanne takes one and then another. And then two more. She passes one to the grateful Marie. De Guiche pays.

As the lights dim Roxanne starts tearing into her oranges.

The curtain parts. The corpulent MONTFLEURY enters; he is dressed as a shepherd boy with a bonnet covered in roses and carrying a large crook. The audience applauds warmly.

The son of the Theatre Buff looks confused, 'him'??

Montfleury finds Roxanne in the box. He smiles at her.

Then girls dressed as sheep enter and dance.

MONTFLEURY

(huge voice)

"Happy is he who far from Court and
Societies sway in isolation self imposed
shuns company; And who, when the soft wind
whistles wishingly upon he-

Suddenly - from the back of the house:

CYRANO'S VOICE

Montfleury! What are you *doing* here?!

Two of the sheep on stage freeze and look at each other.

SHEEP GIRL

Cyrano?

The second sheep nods emphatically.

CYRANO'S VOICE

After your performance last week I sent
you a letter urging you to retire!

Roxanne recognizes the voice and searches the crowd. At the same time Le Bret (close to the stage) turns with a gasp under his breath:

LE BRET

ROXANNE

Cyrano?

Cyrano.

Montfleury looks defiant. The audience in the boxes look around. The groundlings whisper excitedly. They think Montfleury is alright but they love Cyrano.

MONTFLEURY

"Happy is he who far from court and
Societies -

CYRANO'S VOICE

(louder)

Did you receive my letter?

MONTFLEURY

Sway in isolation self imposed -

CYRANO'S VOICE

Well??!

Montfleury suddenly breaks character and shouts:

MONTFLEURY

Yes I received your letter and I burnt it!
I am a professional actor.

MONTFLEURY (CONT'D)

I've received numerous prizes. I have performed at court for the King himself. I have been successfully entertaining the people for over three decades. And now I will ACT!

All the ARISTOCRATS give him loud applause and cheers (including De Guiche and Valvert)

ARISTOCRATS

Act! Act! Act!

Montfleury thanks them for their support and prepares to continue. As he draws breath:

CYRANO'S VOICE

You've been *brutalizing* the people for thirty years! You've bludgeoned them into believing that your trumpeting noise and preposterous gestures are art!

The GROUNDINGS cheer and Roxanne claps her hands in delight. De Guiche glances at her with displeasure.

BOY

(to Theatre Buff)

Is this part of the play?

THEATRE BUFF

Most certainly not. It's an outrage.

(shouts out)

Montfleury is a God!

The boy cringes. Aristocrats applaud. Montfleury acknowledges the compliment and draws breath.

CYRANO'S VOICE

(to Montfleury)

In the name of all that is holy, *desist!*

MONTFLEURY

(to Cyrano)

You have no authority here!

The rich stand - looking for who is speaking - they are excited and scandalized.

VALVERT

Bellow, Montfleury, act like thunder!

CYRANO'S VOICE

(to Valvert)

I suggest you keep quiet or I will trim your ribbons and bows-

The crowd standing on the floor cheer this idea.

ALL THE MARQUIS
Do your acting, Montfleury!!

CYRANO'S VOICE
He'd better not-

MONTFLEURY
"Happy he who shuns"

CYRANO'S VOICE
Final warning!

MONTFLEURY
(to Cyrano,
furiously)
In insulting me, you insult *The Dramatic Muse* and worse; you desecrate this theater, this crucible of human...humanity! This sacred Wooden O!

THEATRE BUFF nods in passionate agreement, his son stifles his laughter.

We finally see Cyrano for the first time. He's up in the Gods. He hooks his sword hilt over a rope and drops to the orchestra floor where the groundlings part for him.

CYRANO
No, Sir! Untrue! I'm sorry but you lie!
You've made this stage your personal sty!
The Dramatic Muse has fled the building,
She scarpered when you started
gilding the lily with your
(imitates booming)
'Great Big Voice'
The poor Muse had no choice!
I love this place and all it means:
Poetry. Romance. Terror. *Truth*.
I've loved it here since early youth.
I can't stand aside while you dishonour it
with your pumping and hideous jigs,
I will not abide your thumping and
dreadful wigs.
(sheep look nervous)
Montfleury, you've abandoned the truth,
you've lost your core.
You can't remember how truth *feels* and
what it's *for*.
So now, please leave this stage, never to
return.
And I will applaud the new integrity
you'll earn.
EXIT MONTFLEURY!

Pandemonium! While the Groundlings cheer, Roxanne applauds, beaming at Cyrano. He coolly nods to her. Le Bret notices this moment.

MONTFLEURY

I am not moving one step from the centre of this stage! I am *necessary*. I am a teller of truths: profound, comical, tragical, mystical, whatever you bloody wantical!

The Aristocrats cheer.

CYRANO

If you won't leave by invitation then I'm compelled to use force.

Cyrano vaults over the stalls gate and charges through the crowd who part to let him pass. They're going wild.

MONTFLEURY

Help me, someone! Protect me! Arrest him! Help please-

The theater manager (JODELET) emerges from backstage.

JODELET

Please Cyrano -

Cyrano leaps onto the stage and turns to the crowd.

CYRANO

Will anyone here defend this great sausage? I will duel with any volunteer with all the honour commensurate to his station! Is anyone willing to fight for Montfleury?

Laughter and derision from the boxes and cheers and shouts from the groundlings.

MARQUIS

You are no Samson!

CYRANO

I'm no Goliath either! But I fight like the two combined.

MARQUIS

I think not! Goliath was a GIANT!

Cyrano draws his sword. Boxes gasp. Groundlings cheer.

CYRANO

(to Marquis)

Care to think again?

The Marquis shakes his head and hides behind his lady companion. The crowd laugh. But not de Guiche and Valvert who look on in fury from their box.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

No volunteers? You came here to see him
but you won't fight for him? Montfleury.
Exit. Or face this sword.

Cyrano strolls back to the stage.

MONTFLEURY

Sir?? please...

CYRANO

On a count of three you will Exit Stage
Right - *hurriedly*.

MONTFLEURY

Please.

CYRANO

One.

MONTFLEURY

(to Jodelet)

Do something!

CYRANO

Two.

JODELET

Cyrano, please sir, for the sake of the
play?!

CYRANO

Three!

Montfleury runs off. Cyrano looks at Roxanne and bows to her.
She smiles at him warmly. De Guiche sees the exchange and
doesn't like it.

Members of the audience stand. The boxes boo. The floor
applauds Cyrano, ladies whisper from behind fans.

JODELET

Ladies! Gentlemen! Please.

A MARQUIS

I came to see a play!

CYRANO

So did I. But that man explodes them! Fire
him from a cannon and we'd win the war!

People laugh and pound the boxes.

THEATRE BUFF

We have *paid* to see a play!

CYRANO

And I have saved you from seeing a fiasco!

THEATRE BUFF

We paid to see Montfleury!!

JODELET

(to Cyrano, urgently)

Yes, what about their money?

CYRANO

(sighs)

Always the money.

Cyrano tosses Jodelet a bag of coins.

JODELET

(Opens bag, to Cyrano)

At this price sir, you can close the theater every night.

(to Audience)

Ladies and gentlemen, you will be refunded in full at the door.

(general cheering)

Clear the house! Clear the house!

The chandeliers descend. The lobby doors open. The audience begins to leave. De Guiche pulls Valvert aside.

DE GUICHE

He may be silver-tongued but his sensibility is base.

VALVERT

He should learn some manners.

DE GUICHE

So, teach him.

VALVERT

...Now...?

De Guiche nods, ominously.

VALVERT (CONT'D)

Despite his vulgarity he's known as an accomplished swordsman...

DE GUICHE

All the more pleasure for *you*. He denied us our entertainment; now make us laugh, Valvert, bring us *joy*. Torture the little beast.

De Guiche smiles. Then begins to exit from the box with Roxanne and Marie while Valvert descends to the floor.

Le Bret touches Cyrano who grins as they embrace.

CYRANO
Le Bret!

LE BRET
Dinner?

CYRANO
Love to! But. No money.

LE BRET
You had a full bag of coins.

CYRANO
All donated to the long-suffering patrons
of this theater.

LE BRET
But how will you eat??

CYRANO
The gesture was more important.

They turn to go but Valvert steps in front of Cyrano.

VALVERT
You.

CYRANO
Me, Sir?

VALVERT
You're a *freak*.

Roxanne gasps. The audience stops exiting and turns.

VALVERT (CONT'D)
Nothing to say, *freak*?

CYRANO
The insult is antique but I accept it.

VALVERT
Ha! *Freak*.

The audience slowly form a circle around Cyrano and Valvert
who stare at each other. Ten yards apart.

CYRANO
Have you exhausted your dictionary of
scorn? Is that *it*?

The crowd laughs and claps.

VALVERT

Who is this savage who dares to present himself in public without ribbons, bows or braids?

CYRANO

I'm not *au courant*, it's true. But think of my deeds as ribbons, my humour as a bow, my -

VALVERT

Oh, do pipe down or else you'll drown - in verbosity.

CYRANO

A fellow poet! Pleasure to meet you. Cyrano De Bergerac.

De Guiche nods at Valvert - 'Do it'. Valvert throws his glove in Cyrano's face. Audience gasp.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

I accept your challenge.

Tension. Valvert draws his sword. Cyrano draws. Roxanne watches intently.

VALVERT

(to crowd)
I'll make *short* work of this!

CYRANO

(to crowd)
Isn't he a hoot?

Valvert lunges but Cyrano brilliantly evades him.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

A palpable miss.

This lunge and evade continues a while. Valvert is losing face. Now he plays to the crowd for sympathy:

VALVERT

It's hard to hit a target quite so small.
The man is barely four feet tall!

Sudden silence. Those who know him know Cyrano won't like this. Cyrano stares at Valvert. Then catches Roxanne's eye. She gives him a worried, sympathetic smile. A tension. Will he slice Valvert to ribbons of flesh? Some of the crowd step back in anticipation of blood. But Cyrano has other ideas...

CYRANO

He calls me 'freak', 'short', 'small'.
It's so...on *the nose*.
Our language is rich,

CYRANO (CONT'D)

a jewel box, a ruby.
But this perfumed booby
uses words: 'small'?
like some old marquis
Takes a fall...

Cyrano collapses, feebly. The crowd laugh. Cyrano groans on the floor and then springs up bursting with life:

CYRANO (CONT'D)

(to Valvert)

Where's the muscle, where's the sinew?
Or should I take it that these words
aren't in you?
God gave us all a heart and brain,
opened up we'd seem the same,
But when He made our outward frame,
Such infinite variety
brought mostly pain.
(sarcastically)
Thank you, Lord!

Le Bret cheers. Cyrano takes in Roxanne a moment.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

Some got figures tall and fine
but God made others...aquiline.

Valvert makes to lunge at Cyrano but De Guiche (enjoying it) prevents him.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

Some were blessed with a face that could
launch a thousand ships,
(to Valvert)
Others got a mug to sink them.

Cyrano hunches over in curved fashion...

SONG: 'When I Was Born'

CYRANO (CONT'D)

SIR, WHEN I WAS BORN THE NURSES LAUGHED
HYSTERICALLY.
THEY'D NEVER SEEN ANYTHING QUITE LIKE ME
APPARENTLY
I'LL NEVER FORGET IT. I CAN STILL HEAR
THEM JOKING.
ONE SAID, "MY GOODNESS WHAT HAS GOD BEEN
SMOKING?"
AND WHEN THEY HANDED ME OVER TO MY MOTHER.
SHE HANDED ME BACK AND SAID
"ARE YOU SURE THERE ISN'T ANY OTHER?"

Cyrano goes after him - his skill is dazzling. Cyrano keeps besting Valvert as he sings:

CYRANO (CONT'D)

FROM WHEN I WAS BORN I LEARNED TO CONTROL
MY TEARS. WHEN THEY CARRIED ME HOME
THROUGH TOWN I LEFT A TRAIL OF BROKEN
MIRRORS.

YES! WHEN CHILDREN SEE ME THEY SCREAM AND
RUN AWAY. YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT!
HALLOWEEN'S MY FAVORITE HOLIDAY.

As Cyrano sings each rhyme he makes a sword strike that
precisely removes Valvert's ribbons, bows and wig.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

I AM A MONSTER! I AM A MUTANT! A FREAK OF
NATURE. I'VE HEARD ALL THE UGLY HATEFUL
NOMENCLATURE.
I TOLD A GIRL ONCE I LOVED HER. CRICKETS.
SHE LOOKED AT ME AND SAID, "I SUPPOSE I
COULD SELL TICKETS."
AT SCHOOL THE ONLY THING I LEARNT IS FOLKS
ARE PLENTY CRUEL,
THEY MADE ME PAINT MY FACE WITH WHITE AND
PLAY THE TEACHERS FOOL
*CAN'T YOU SEE I'M MORE THAN YOU THINK
I'VE HEARD IT ALL SO MANY TIMES
EVERYBODY KNOWS I'M SO MUCH MORE THAN A
FREAK
IF YOU WANNA TRY TO HURT ME, YOU BETTER
GET IN LINE*
YOU JUST HAVE TO SAY IT. I GET IT. IT
MAKES SENSE.
WHEN YOU HAVE YOUR KIND OF TALENT FOR
CLEVER VICIOUS COMMENTS.
MY HEART'S NOT EVEN ANGRY. IT'S JUST THE
WAY IT BREAKS. AND DON'T BE SO TOUGH ON
GOD. EVERYBODY MAKES MISTAKES.
YES! ONE SIGHT OF ME COULD MAKE A STATUE
CRY!
GUESS WHAT ELSE! WHEN BLUEBIRDS LAND ON ME
THEY SHIT THEMSELVES AND DIE!
WHICHEVER WAY I LOOK AT YOU CAN'T FIND A
TASTEFUL SIDE, A SPECIMEN LIKE YOU BELONGS
IN FORMALDEHYDE
YES! WHAT YOU'VE HEARD IS TRUE. I AM NOT A
RUMOR, I'M LIVING PROOF THAT GOD HAS A
SICK SENSE OF HUMOR.
*CAN'T YOU SEE I'M MORE THAN YOU THINK
I'VE HEARD IT ALL SO MANY TIMES
EVERYBODY KNOWS I'M SO MUCH MORE THAN A
FREAK
IF YOU WANNA TRY TO HURT ME, YOU'D BETTER
GET IN LINE*

Song over - Cyrano advances on Valvert forcing him backwards.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

(coldly)

Take this and this and *that*.

He pins Valvert at the neck with the point of his sword and holds him there.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

I'll have you horizontal,
Unspeakable, speechless rat.

He forces Valvert to his knees and finally to the floor. Victory. Applause. Le Bret whistles. Roxanne exhales with relief. De Guiche shakes his head.

Cyrano turns and walks away. The crowd chant his name.

CROWD

Cyrano! Cyrano! Cyrano!

Cyrano bows to them with graceful humility. But Valvert suddenly springs up and lunges at Cyrano's back -

ROXANNE

(warning him)

Cyrano!

Her oranges fall to the floor. Cyrano turns and draws; Valvert runs onto his sword. It plunges deep into his guts and through. Terrified screams from the crowd.

Cyrano looks at the shocked Valvert with pity - they stand locked together by the sword - almost in embrace - Cyrano whispers intimately to Valvert, no one else hears this:

CYRANO

Yes. It all goes in.
My God, how it hurts.

Cyrano swiftly withdraws his sword and Valvert collapses, mortally wounded. Several Comtes rush to Valvert and crowd around him. Le Bret pulls Cyrano away; Cyrano looks back:

LE BRET

Quickly -

CYRANO

The poor dead fool.

LE BRET

You had no choice -

They join the crowd exiting the theater as-

8 INT. DE GUICHE'S CARRIAGE. MOMENTS LATER.

8

De Guiche is raging.

DE GUICHE

He went too far.

ROXANNE

Valvert insulted him and then challenged him to a duel.

DE GUICHE

Valvert's a Comte - or was - in *my* retinue.

ROXANNE

I assure you Cyrano took no pleasure from it.

De Guiche thinks.

DE GUICHE

You *know* him?

Roxanne pauses a moment.

MARIE

They're from the same town, in the South West.

ROXANNE

Cyrano is my oldest friend.

DE GUICHE

It would be to your advantage to end the friendship.

Marie gives Roxanne a sharp look, 'don't contest this'.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

I won't wait forever.

ROXANNE

(nervous smile)

Did I miss a proposal?

De Guiche leans in to her. Holds her chin firmly.

DE GUICHE

Don't push it, pretty thing.

He releases her. Roxanne looks away out the window.

9 EXT. A DIFFERENT STREET. LATER, SAME NIGHT

9

Le Bret and Cyrano heading home after dinner. The eating house behind them. Both men are a little drunk and merry.

CYRANO

How about a drinking song? Like soldiers do.

LE BRET

We're better than that. At least, I am.

Cyrano chuckles.

LE BRET (CONT'D)

May I ask a question?

CYRANO

Anything.

LE BRET

(muses)

It's a little personal.

CYRANO

I have no secrets from you.

LE BRET

Are you in love?

Cyrano stops dead, completely thrown.

CYRANO

Whatever gives you that idea?

LE BRET

I knew you wouldn't like it.

CYRANO

Do I seem offended?

LE BRET

No. But your guard is up.

CYRANO

It's just...some things are private.

LE BRET

What gave me 'the idea' was your performance at the theatre today. I sensed you were playing to one particular member of the audience...

CYRANO

Oh, who?

Le Bret stares at him.

LE BRET

Let's not continue this charade. If you want to unburden, fine. If you don't then that's fine too.

Cyrano stares back. A long time. Then smiles, softly.

CYRANO

Yes. Yes! I am in love. I dare. My sole purpose on this earth is to love Roxanne.
(slight pause)
Feel better now?

LE BRET

Do *you*?

Song. MADLY

CYRANO

*HAVE YOU EVER WANTED SOMETHING
SO BADLY YOU CANNOT BREATHE
HAVE YOU EVER LOVED SOMEONE MADLY?*

LE BRET

I don't think I have.

CYRANO

Isn't she...*magnificent*?

LE BRET

(playfully)

Yes she is, though perhaps a little vain?

CYRANO

Yes but magnificently so.

LE BRET

There's some pretension in there too.

CYRANO

She's full of it!

LE BRET

I wasn't sure about her hair today.

CYRANO

Agreed! But even her imperfections are perfect. In our little town, back in the day, she was practically worshipped. To some she was notorious, to me, glorious.

LE BRET

Does she know?

CYRANO

You think a person with her beauty - in mind, body and soul - doesn't *know* about it?

LE BRET

I meant does she know you're in love with her?

CYRANO

No! It would *mortify* her. Someone like me, supposing to love perfection? She'd be offended. No, if I ever confessed she'd never see me again.

LE BRET

You don't have a very high opinion of her.

CYRANO

What? She's The Alps.

LE BRET

But you don't trust she has the *depth* to look beyond your -

CYRANO

Careful...

LE BRET

Your unique physique.

CYRANO

Not bad.

LE BRET

To love you for who you are not for how you look.

CYRANO

Yes, yes, yes but don't you see? I'm simply not worthy of her.

Song resumes:

CYRANO (CONT'D)

*I'VE HELD MY BREATH SINCE I SAW HER.
I'VE TRIED TO LOOK AWAY BUT I CAN'T RESIST
I KNOW EVERY DETAIL OF HER, I MADE A LIST
I CAN'T TELL YOU HOW LONG I'VE THOUGHT
ABOUT HER. I'VE KEPT EVERYTHING SHE'S
MISSED. SHE'S GONNA LAUGH AT THE ONE THAT
BRINGS HER LOVE LIKE THIS.
HAVE YOU EVER WANTED SOMETHING
SO BADLY YOU CANNOT BREATHE
HAVE YOU EVER LOVED SOMEONE MADLY?*

LE BRET

When you were fighting Valvert she was
anxious.

Le Bret imitates Roxanne watching Cyrano at the theater.

LE BRET (CONT'D)

She turned quite pale, her lips trembled
and parted, and she touched her heart -

Le Bret touches his heart and fans himself.

LE BRET (CONT'D)

You should tell her. You love her.

CYRANO

Never. My fate is to love her from afar.
To confess would be to shatter the
beautiful dream.

Cyrano smiles reluctant and rueful.

LE BRET

You forget, I've seen you in battle.
You're a fighter to the end. But in love
you've raised the white flag. Have faith
in her. Tell her the truth.

Marie is bustling down the street towards them at speed. She
checks no one's watching, then:

MARIE

(to Cyrano)

A word. Roxanne wishes to meet with you,
alone.

CYRANO

(instantly
exhilarated)

What? Why?

MARIE

She won't say, no matter how much I berate
her. But she says it's urgent.

CYRANO

Then take me to her at once!

MARIE

Not now you vulgar person! At *night*??

CYRANO

Then *when*?

MARIE

She'll go to early Mass tomorrow. After she leaves the church she'll meet with you. Somewhere discreet, she said it must be private.

Le Bret looks at Cyrano significantly, then raises an eyebrow.

MARIE (CONT'D)

(to Le Bret)

I'll thank you, Captain Le Bret, to lower that eyebrow. There is nothing unseemly here.

LE BRET

I bow to your expertise on the matter.

Marie bristles, unsure whether she's been insulted or complimented.

MARIE

(to Cyrano, sharply)

A venue, please.

In his excitement, Cyrano can't think.

MARIE (CONT'D)

I've never seen him silent before, it's quite appealing.

CYRANO

Let me *think*.

MARIE

Where?

CYRANO

I'm thinking where!
(to Le Bret)

Where?

LE BRET

Ragueneau's. There's a room upstairs.

MARIE

7 o'clock. She'll be there.

CYRANO

I will too.

MARIE

And so will I. Goodnight.

Marie hurries back the way she came.

CYRANO
(beaming)
She wants to see me! *Privately*.

LE BRET
There it is.

CYRANO
Alone! (Except for the crone).

Cyrano is running. Le Bret laughs, trying to keep up.

CYRANO (CONT'D)
I must not succumb to hope! Hope is
madness. Hope is hell!

LE BRET
Hope is *life*.

CYRANO
I need an army to vanquish! I have ten
hearts and twenty arms, I could kill a
hundred men!

Le Bret laughs and stops walking.

LE BRET
Good night my friend. And good luck
tomorrow.

CYRANO
(hopefully)
This could be *it*.

LE BRET
Have faith.

Le Bret turns to leave.

CYRANO
Where are you off to at this late hour?

LE BRET
Some things are private.

Le Bret heads towards a dark alley.

CYRANO
(suddenly remembers)
Thank you for dinner!

Le Bret waves without turning. Cyrano dances away in the other
direction.

10 EXT. STAIRS. SAME NIGHT.

10

Cyrano walks past a wealthy carriage and horses stopped in the street. The figure inside is in shadow.

Suddenly Cyrano is jumped by ten men. They come at him all at once forming a large circle. He draws his sword.

CYRANO

I had hoped to fight one hundred. But ten will do.

Cyrano runs a man through with his sword. He knocks another one into the water and then jumps in after him. The water is ankle deep and shining in the moonlight. Cyrano holds the man down with his foot while he fights off another with his sword. He lets go of the man in the water who is now dead and runs the other through and takes his sword. He jumps out of the water and duels with two at once, a sword in either hand, at the water's edge. He defeats both. He is attacked from behind and as he turns he is cut on his hand. He keeps swashbuckling until the remaining two attackers flee.

Cyrano clenches his hand to stop bleeding. The carriage drives off quickly. We see De Guiche in the back. Cyrano watches the carriage pass. Then continues his walk home.

11 INT. CYRANO'S ROOM, THE GARRISON - FOLLOWING MORNING. 5AM.

11

Cyrano's room is spacious, minimal and very neat. A single bed (made with military corners) along a wall. A large desk neatly piled with books and stacks of loose paper (his poetry and writing). A straight line of ink pens on the desk. There is a single high window and a small wash basin.

Cyrano is up early. He's writing a letter and taking great care over it.

The wound on his hand is now bandaged.

Close in on Cyrano as he writes. Nearly finished he smudges a word. He curses, puts the letter to one side and starts again.

12 EXT. STREET - TWENTY MINUTES LATER

12

Cyrano walks quickly. He's tense with nervous energy. He stops a moment in the empty street. Catches his breath. Breathes in deeply, steadying himself.

13 INT. RAGUENEAU'S SHOP - LATER, SAME MORNING

13

A bakery and food store. Copper pots, bowls, wooden tables. Low ceilings, brick archways, wood beams.

Smoked glass windows on the street front. RAGUENEAUS in gilt letters (This is the same shop Christian first looked in.)

RAGUENEAU is seated, hard at work, writing.

CYRANO

Morning, Ragueneau.

RAGUENEAU

Cyrano! Just the man!

CYRANO

What time is it?

RAGUENEAU

Almost six. I'm up with the muse, as it were. A poem. Needs your expert ear-

CYRANO

I'm told you have a private room.

(Ragueneau nods,
slightly
suggestively)

I mean a room where two people can have some privacy.

RAGUENEAU

Bit early for an assignation...

CYRANO

I mean *talk* privately without interruption!

Ragueneau grabs his poem from the table -

RAGUENEAU

I'll show you. Simultaneously I'll recite what I have so far. The poem is entitled 'Constellation'.

(seeking approval)

Eh?

CYRANO

Terrific.

They walk through the bakery.

RAGUENEAU

"My love is akin to the Sun;

'Tis a vast ball of fire"

Now through the kitchen. They pass a line of bakers, up to their elbows in flour and dough:

A BAKER

I saw your duel last night!

CYRANO

Which one?

The baker turns to the man next to him.

A BAKER

Which one?! What panache!

Cyrano and Ragueneau continue walking-

RAGUENEAU

"And you, my love, are Venus,
My heavenly earthly desire"

Ragueneau shows Cyrano a large room full of tables and chairs, waiters set them out.

RAGUENEAU (CONT'D)

(proudly)

'Heavenly earthly', eh?

CYRANO

Something more private?

RAGUENEAU

I understand. Discretion!

Ragueneau leads Cyrano up a steep narrow stair:

RAGUENEAU (CONT'D)

"Jupiter and Pluto are planets,
Revolving - like us - far apart"

14 INT. ATTIC OF THE BAKERY - MOMENTS LATER

14

A window looks out on a back garden of roses. Two chairs, a basin of water. A mirror. Paper and pencils on a table.

CYRANO

Good.

RAGUENEAU

"But oh may these words bring you closer,
May I woo you with this Art".

(pause)

That's it. Thus far.

Cyrano is looking out the window, deep in thought.

RAGUENEAU (CONT'D)

There's a long way to go but - be brutal -
do you think the planetary metaphor holds?

CYRANO

It holds firmly.

RAGUENEAU

It's not too obvious? I can take it.

CYRANO

Perhaps consider sublimation?

RAGUENEAU

...Right...?

CYRANO

Try a different pattern of imagery? Maybe something you know intimately.

RAGUENEAU

Hmm. Anything in mind?

CYRANO

Baking?

RAGUENEAU

Sensuality and longing expressed through the act of baking?

CYRANO

Why not?

RAGUENEAU

Rising dough. Flour. Ovens. Heat! My God - thank you - thank you!

Ragueneau leaves Cyrano in a dash to rework the poem.

Cyrano stands alone in the room. He drinks water from the basin with his hands. He is surprised by his reflection in the mirror. He looks at himself. At first he feels ok, even confident and then crushing doubt consumes him. He turns the mirror so his reflection is hidden.

Now he takes his letter from his pocket and re-reads it. Curses. Something's wrong. He folds it away and sits at the desk to rewrite it.

CYRANO (VO)

Dear Roxanne,

As Cyrano writes, he sings.

Song. YOUR NAME

CYRANO (CONT'D)

*EVERY MORNING AT THE BREAK OF LIGHT I SEE
YOU STANDING IN THE SUN.*

As Cyrano sings, we see three different worlds (Cyrano, Roxanne and the Bakers) with continuous action

14A INT. ATTIC OF THE BAKERY. CONT. 14A

Cyrano writing, looking out the window at the roses, singing

14B INT. ROXANNE'S ROOM. CONT. 14B

Roxanne dressing in a bright sunlit room. She is briefly critical of her face in the mirror. She is dressing quickly, for church.

14C EXT. CHURCH. CONT. 14C

A beautiful cathedral. We should feel Roxanne is small against the great hand of God. Roxanne and Marie kneel in prayer; deep in thought.

14D INT. BAKERY. CONT. 14D

The flour ballet. The bakers baking and dancing a sensual expression of Cyrano's desire.

The flour ballet is a dance that begins in reality: measuring and using flour to bake and grows to a spectacular, sexual dance where flour is tossed, hangs in the air and covers the dancers.

CYRANO

*YOU LOOK AT ME WITH THE KINDEST EYES.
EVERY MORNING I'M OVERCOME.
INFATUATION AND DESPERATE DESIRE, MADNESS,
ENCHANTMENT AND SHAME.
SORROW AND GLORY AND BLINDING EUPHORIA.
EVERYTHING'S THERE IN YOUR NAME.
IN DARKNESS WHEN I CLOSE MY EYES I SEE
YOUR HAIR COME UNDONE.
I LOSE MYSELF EVERY TIME.
EVEN NOW I'M OVERCOME
YOUR SMILE, YOUR FLESH, THE BRUSH OF YOUR
BREATH, HUMILIATION AND PAIN.
MY HUNGER, MY PATIENCE, MY DEVASTATION.
EVERYTHING'S THERE IN YOUR NAME.*

Roxanne, now masked - only her eyes are revealed - and Marie arrive at the bakery and are escorted through and up the stairs by Ragueneau.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

*ROXANNE, WHAT AM I SUPPOSED TO SAY?
WORDS ARE ONLY GLASS ON A STRING.
THE MORE I ARRANGE THEM AND LINE UP AND
CHANGE THEM
THE MORE THEY MEAN THE SAME THING.
ROXANNE, ROXANNE -*

Roxanne enters the room followed by Marie and Ragueneau.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

Roxanne.

He stands and quickly puts the letter in his pocket.

It's cramped in the small room. A silence. Roxanne and Cyrano communicate with a quick look between them.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

(to Marie)

Do you like rabbit stew? Downstairs they -

MARIE

I loathe rabbits. I hate their taste and I hate the way they savage a garden.

CYRANO

Shank of Lamb?

MARIE

Never on a weekend.

ROXANNE

She likes tongue.

Marie practically salivates.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

For heaven's sake, please, go and eat.

MARIE

Fine. And I'll pray for your sins while I do.

CYRANO

(to Ragueneau, sotto)

A huge slab of tongue. And keep it coming.

Ragueneau and Marie go, closing the door behind them. Roxanne removes her mask. She seems nervous.

ROXANNE

I have a confession to make.

CYRANO

To me?

ROXANNE

(nods)

It concerns you. It's relevant to you.

Cyrano nods, just managing to contain his anticipation.

CYRANO

Shall we sit?

He places two chairs side by side, two feet apart. He sits on one and holds his hand up, concealing his face like a Priest in a confessional. Roxanne chuckles but then sees the bandage.

ROXANNE

Oh, you're wounded.

CYRANO

A scratch. Please.

He gestures to the other chair but she remains standing.

ROXANNE

I know your shoddy work. The dressing's loose. Come.

She takes him over to the window for the light. She seats him at the table and then lays his arm out, palm upwards.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

May I?

Cyrano nods. Holding his breath at her proximity. Roxanne carefully unties the bandage and gently unwinds it.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

Hmm.

CYRANO

Your confession?

ROXANNE

It can wait a moment.

The cut is deep and still bleeding. Roxanne looks concerned.

CYRANO

It's only a scratch.

ROXANNE

It's a wound and it needs cleaning.

Roxanne fetches the small basin of water.

CYRANO

I've been wounded many times. This is not a *wound*.

ROXANNE

Then we'll call it a cut.

CYRANO

'Scratch' is more accurate.

Roxanne dips her handkerchief in water and cleans the cut.

ROXANNE

I dispute 'more'. There are no *degrees* of accuracy. A thing is either accurate or it isn't. You taught me that.

CYRANO

(amused)

As you wish, I'll settle for cut.

ROXANNE

A deep one. In fact, the more this cut reveals itself the more ridiculous your original choice of word appears. Only someone with a meagre grasp of language could call this wound a scratch.

She looks at him beadily then chuckles. As does he.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

How did you get it?

CYRANO

Last night. A duel.

ROXANNE

(shakes her head,
indulgently)

And look what happens.

CYRANO

You should see the other guys.

ROXANNE

I'm not impressed by your swordsmanship.

CYRANO

Oh, I know. Or rather, I know you pretend you're not.

She sighs and begins to re-tie the bandage round his hand.

ROXANNE

I'd be angry with you if you died.

CYRANO

Only 'angry'?

ROXANNE

Incandescent. This might hurt.

She ties the bandage, tightly. It hurts. But Cyrano doesn't flinch. She smiles at him.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

So brave.

CYRANO

Thank you.

They gaze at each other, warmly.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

Will you make your confession?

ROXANNE

Yes. I must. And there's only so much tongue Marie can chew on.

She looks at Cyrano then looks away.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

I feel shy. Huh. Never mind.
Erm...Yesterday. At the theatre...

A pause.

CYRANO

Yes?

ROXANNE

I...can barely believe I'm saying this; I realised...or I became aware - suddenly - that I was in love.

CYRANO

I see.

ROXANNE

I'm madly in love. But the man in question has no idea.

Cyrano permits himself a secret little smile.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

And...I don't know how to tell him.

CYRANO

Well...perhaps he feels the same...?

ROXANNE

It's possible. I have hopes.

CYRANO

How do you know you love him?

ROXANNE

Because...it's as if I've always *known*. Or always *known* him. He was always *there* but this intense romantic connection had not yet manifested.

CYRANO

I understand.

He steals a glance at her but her profile is inscrutable.

ROXANNE
(sudden panic)
Supposing it's all a delusion?

CYRANO
(immediately)
No! You're clearly in love.

ROXANNE
My mind's racing. I'm feverish.

CYRANO
Would you like some water?

ROXANNE
No. It's got your blood in it.

CYRANO
You were saying?

ROXANNE
I don't know what I was saying.

CYRANO
Tell me about him. It might reassure you
there's no delusion?

ROXANNE
Yes. Good. Well...I feel he's rather
proud. And very charming. He's mysterious
but not obscure. His face is so bright
with intelligence.

Cyrano silently eases his letter from his pocket.

CYRANO
(loving it)
What else?

ROXANNE
Erm...well, he's beautiful, obviously.

A pause.

CYRANO
Is he?

ROXANNE
Oh, yes. But his natural modesty means
he's completely unaware of it.

CYRANO
I've met people like that.

ROXANNE

They are *so* rare.

CYRANO

Yes.

A pause. Cyrano unfolds his letter, unseen by Roxanne.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

Perhaps...I could make a confession too?

ROXANNE

Yes but I haven't finished mine!

CYRANO

Sorry. Do continue.

Roxanne focusses.

ROXANNE

Cyrano. I need you to help me.

CYRANO

At your service.

ROXANNE

This man I love is a Guard.

CYRANO

Mmm.

ROXANNE

In your regiment.

CYRANO

Of course he is.

ROXANNE

Of course??

CYRANO

In the sense that - I interrupted, carry on.

ROXANNE

It's embarrassing to admit but I've never actually spoken to him.

CYRANO

Of your love?

ROXANNE

Of anything! I fell in love with him at first sight. A thunderbolt. It's madness! Fantastical. And yet it's absolutely *real*.

During this Cyrano slowly pockets the letter and turns his face away from her. Tears spring to his eyes.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

Cyrano?

CYRANO

(weakly)

Here.

ROXANNE

You seem -

CYRANO

Just the wound playing up.

ROXANNE

Poor you. I've got some ointment at home.

(barrelling on)

I mean, supposing he's an *idiot*? He might be just an incredibly beautiful man with the mind of a - a rabbit.

(slight pause)

Except he isn't. He can't be.

(determinedly)

I need him not to be. Anyway, I've made some discreet inquiries and I'm told he is Christian - Christian Neuvillette.

CYRANO

(illogical hope)

Neuvillette? Never heard of him.

ROXANNE

He's a new recruit, he starts today.

CYRANO

(dashed)

Ah.

ROXANNE

To the point. To your presence here: I know how you Guards treat the new recruits; your ancient initiation rituals and so on. The Guards are notorious for their garrulousness which often descends into brawling and then duelling and worse. I fear for Christian.

CYRANO

Not without cause.

ROXANNE

All the guards respect you.

Cyrano can't deny it. She turns to him, intense, desperate.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

So please will you protect him? Please ensure he comes to no harm?

She looks at Cyrano who stares, helpless.

CYRANO

I can refuse you nothing.

ROXANNE

And never let him fight a duel?

CYRANO

No.

ROXANNE

And guard his life with your own?

CYRANO

Yes.

ROXANNE

And be his friend?
(brief pause)
Say you will.

CYRANO

(snaps)
I might not *like* him!

ROXANNE

But all the same befriend him.

CYRANO

(sighs)
Yes.

ROXANNE

And make him write to me.

Cyrano flinches.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

And I'll write back. We'll exchange long, poetic, love letters.

CYRANO

I will suggest that he writes to you but I can't control the content or length of his letters.

Cyrano and Roxanne look at each other for a moment.

ROXANNE

You're always so kind.

She touches his cheek. Cyrano is silent. Wounded.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

Now. You said you have a confession too?

CYRANO

It's not important.

ROXANNE

I'll support you as you've supported me.

CYRANO

Really. It's nothing.

She can see he means it.

ROXANNE

How's that hand?

CYRANO

Painless. A scratch.

Roxanne laughs. Cyrano manages a smile. She senses something's not quite right and decides to indulge him.

ROXANNE

How many men did you duel with last night?

CYRANO

(softly)
A hundred.

ROXANNE

Really?

CYRANO

Ten.

She gently touches his arm.

ROXANNE

All the same, what courage.

CYRANO

I've done better since.

15 INT. GUARDS GARRISON. TRAINING YARD - DAY

15

The garrison is a military training facility and housing complex for the Guards.

THE KING'S GUARD 'By order of His Majesty' is emblazoned over the door. The training yard is huge and open to the sky.

Sword practice, shooting ranges, horse riding and military drills are happening concurrently. Le Bret - their Captain - is instructing the group in sword fighting.

Cyrano is training with relentless fury: push ups, jumps, punching bag, back to the floor, same again. He's in shirt sleeves and sweating.

THE GATE KEEPER

(announcing)

The Duke De Guiche.

All the Guards stop training and turn. This is an unusual visit. De Guiche is a civilian not a military man. The Guards bow to him grudgingly. Le Bret steps forward.

DE GUICHE

Captain.

Le Bret nods to De Guiche, 'What can I do for you?'

De Guiche walks past him to where Cyrano trains.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

(to Cyrano)

I heard of your recent adventure. I've come to express my admiration.

Le Bret steps towards Cyrano.

LE BRET

Cyrano?

He barks to the Guards.

LE BRET (CONT'D)

Carry on!

The men return to training. Off De Guiche's look Le Bret stops Cyrano from doing more push ups.

DE GUICHE

I could barely believe it. A lone man triumphant against ten.

Cyrano stares. Still drained by his encounter with Roxanne.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

I'm inviting you to join my retinue.

CYRANO

I thank the Duke for his generous offer but I must decline.

DE GUICHE

There are great advantages to following me.

CYRANO

I know. But I follow no one.

De Guiche keeps his temper, tries a different route:

DE GUICHE

I'm told you write poetry - in common with numerous men these days. But I'm told *you* write uncommonly well. I like to publish those I admire. I could put your work in print. Distinguish you.

(smiling)

I'd only change a few lines and I pay handsomely. You could buy a fine pair of calfskin gloves.

CYRANO

I'm not for sale. Neither is my work.

DE GUICHE

Aren't you proud?

CYRANO

Aren't you observant?

DE GUICHE

(firmly)

Take this seriously.

The guards start to watch, the yard slowly grows quieter.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

Those men last night were incompetent. Others might not be. *Someone* out there has taken against you. Join my retinue and you'll be protected.

The Guards and the Yard are now silent.

CYRANO

First, you try to recruit me. Then, you try to buy me. When you learn I have no price, you warn me my life is threatened by an unknown enemy.

Cyrano comes close to De Guiche so no one else hears this exchange:

CYRANO (CONT'D)

I saw you last night. The blood of those ten dead souls is on your hands. You're a tyrant posing as a noble.

DE GUICHE

It's a shame we can't accommodate each other. You'd be a sweet companion for the acquisition I *will* make: Roxanne.

A jolt of fear surges through Cyrano. De Guiche turns and walks away. His footsteps echo.

16 EXT. THE GATE OF THE GARRISON - MINUTES LATER 16

De Guiche's carriage exits the great gate, passing Christian.

Christian presents his orders. He is ushered through. He has retrieved and now carries his stolen bag.

17 INT. GUARDS GARRISON. TRAINING YARD. CONT. 17

The Guards have returned to training, Le Bret pulls Cyrano aside:

LE BRET
Don't push him too far.

CYRANO
To be his enemy is a badge of honour.

LE BRET
Which might get you killed.

CYRANO
Let him try. I'll best any he sends. Let them come.

LE BRET
He offered you a good wage.

CYRANO
I belong here. With you.
(of other Guards)
With them. I won't be his toy, a *thing to be kept*. What would you have me do, Le Bret? Join a retinue? No, thank you. Dedicate poems to De Guiche? No, thank you. You want me to swallow insults? To crawl? To kneel? To beg? Play both sides? Flatter??? No, thank you. Attend meetings? Suffer fools? No, thank you. Live for others opinion of me? No, thank you! I prefer a different kind of life. My own. I answer to no one and I am content, thank you!

LE BRET
(realising)
She doesn't love you?

CYRANO
Don't ever say it!

Christian enters the dining hall still dressed in civilian clothes. The Guards look at him. The room grows quiet. One by one they stand and gather.

GUARD 1
(whispering)
It's the new recruit.

Christian stands awkwardly. The Guards approach him. They whistle and make threatening sounds. They look like they're going to kill him. Christian rolls up his sleeves.

CHRISTIAN
I've heard how this works. I'm ready.
Who's first?

A huge, tough GUARD steps forward. The men applaud. Christian knocks him down with one blow. The men are staggered.

Cyrano has been watching and suspects this must be Christian.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)
Who's next?

Cyrano charges into the center of the circle.

CYRANO
I am.

Christian laughs. The Guards go quiet. Sixty Guards stand in a wide circle around them. Tension.

CYRANO (CONT'D)
What's so funny?

CHRISTIAN
First I must fight an elephant and now a mole?

Cyrano draws a sword. Christian too.

CYRANO
On guard.

CHRISTIAN
Just remember you drew first.

CYRANO
What's your name?

CHRISTIAN
Why?

CYRANO
I like to know the names of those I kill.

CHRISTIAN
(furiously)
I am Christian Neuvillette, *Sir*.

Cyrano suddenly throws his sword down and runs at Christian full tilt. He tackles him, gets the advantage - keeping Christian off his feet, he then drags him out of the yard. The Guards watch, waiting for the death blow...

18 GARRISON STORES AND CELLAR. CONT.

18

Cyrano pushes Christian down the stairs into the cellar.
Cyrano walks slowly down the steps with his arms held open.

CYRANO
Embrace me.

CHRISTIAN
Sir??

Cyrano embraces Christian.

CYRANO
I'm her brother.

CHRISTIAN
Whose?

CYRANO
Who d'ya *think*?!

CHRISTIAN
Roxanne??

CYRANO
Yes.

CHRISTIAN
(carefully)
You don't *look* like her brother.

CYRANO
We're old friends, like siblings but not.
We're very close.

CHRISTIAN
And, what...?

CYRANO
(airily)
She's told me everything; the theatre,
'love at first sight', all that.

CHRISTIAN
She loves me??

CYRANO
(agonised)
She believes so.

Christian's face breaks into a huge grin; he grabs Cyrano's hand and shakes it hard.

CHRISTIAN

Sir, I am so glad to know you!

The shaking goes on a bit too long.

CYRANO

That's enough now.

CHRISTIAN

Forgive me, please, for insulting you earlier, I -

CYRANO

Yes, yes, yes.

CHRISTIAN

She loves me!

CYRANO

Now. *Listen*. Roxanne wants a letter from you.

CHRISTIAN

(suddenly sad)

Oh.

CYRANO

No?

CHRISTIAN

Impossible. If I write to her she won't want me.

CYRANO

(thrilled)

Really, why?

CHRISTIAN

I can't write love letters.

CYRANO

(sotto)

Rabbit.

(to Christian)

You just say what you feel. As long as it's true you can't go wrong.

CHRISTIAN

A woman like Roxanne wants wit, romance...
(with dread)
maybe even *poetry*.

CYRANO

You're right, you'd better leave town.
(Christian looks
woeful)
I didn't mean it.

CHRISTIAN

I'm very confused. Are you here to help me
or hinder me?

CYRANO

(sighs)
Help.

CHRISTIAN

You see, in battle I have inordinate
courage. I can do anything. But with
women, my whole life I've been useless,
silent, I'm...what's that word for when
you're bad at expressing yourself?

CYRANO

Inarticulate.

CHRISTIAN

That's it! I can't express what I feel -
on paper and...not on paper. I don't know
how to speak romantically. Roxanne will be
extremely disappointed.

CYRANO

She must not be.

CHRISTIAN

But I have no wit!

Cyrano thinks. Knows what he must do...

CYRANO

Borrow mine.

CHRISTIAN

Eh?

CYRANO

My words on your lips.

CHRISTIAN

I can't. It's a *lie*. I'd be deceiving the
woman I love.

CYRANO

Well it's better than losing her.
(looks at him)
Call it a fantasy, a dream, call it
pretend. A dream might be a lie but it is
also true.

CHRISTIAN

Wait - what?

CYRANO

Sometimes illusion is kind.

CHRISTIAN

Is it?

CYRANO

Often! Read a book or two and you'll find out.

CHRISTIAN

There's no need to be patronising.

CYRANO

Sorry.

CHRISTIAN

Accepted. But will the deceit work?

CYRANO

Is the prize not worth the risk?

CHRISTIAN

(swooningly)

Yes. Ohhh, Roxanne...

CYRANO

(suddenly)

Oh, Roxanne -

Christian is staring at him.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

(correcting)

- Will be so pleased to receive your letter.

CHRISTIAN

May I ask, why are you helping me? What can you gain?

CYRANO

I am a poet, my words go to waste unless spoken aloud. I'll make you eloquent while you make me handsome.

Song. SOMEONE TO SAY

CHRISTIAN

*GOD WHAT I'D DO TO JUST BE ABLE TO TELL
HER WHAT IT'S LIKE WHEN I SEE HER
IT'S SOMETHING LIKE*

Happiness
CYRANO

SOMETHING LIKE
CHRISTIAN

Hunger
CYRANO

AND SOMETHING LIKE
CHRISTIAN

Fear
CYRANO

As Christian begins to sing, in the cellar of the garrison, we see the Guards training in the yard above and as he sings the training slowly morphs into a waltz - soldiers dancing with soldiers, in contrast to the flour ballet, this is a stoic, respectful, observed expression of courtship - it's beautiful but militaristic and stiff.

CHRISTIAN
*I'D GIVE ANYTHING FOR SOMEONE TO SAY
ALL THE WORDS I DON'T HAVE
AND I CAN'T PUT TOGETHER
I'D GIVE ANYTHING FOR SOMEONE TO SAY TO
HER THAT SHE'S ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT
AND I CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT HER.*

The Guards blend marching and drills and dance - as if sixty soldiers standing at attention suddenly all pirouette - a dream of freedom of expression within a rigid form.

*MY FATHER TOLD ME LETTERS AND BOOKS
WEREN'T MEANT FOR THE SON OF A SOLDIER
COURAGE AND STEAL, THE TRIALS OF THE REAL
WORLD ARE WHAT MATTER AND ALL THAT SHOULD
MOLD YOU
GOD WHAT I'D DO TO HAVE THE ONE THING THAT
YOU HAVE THAT I NEVER WILL.
YOU HAVE SOMETHING WORTH GIVING. A REASON
FOR LIVING. ALL I DO WELL IS*

Kill?
CYRANO/CHRISTIAN

The Guards slowly resume training; Christian and Cyrano are still in the cellar. The Guards join Christian and sing the final chorus.

CHRISTIAN/GUARDS
*I'D GIVE ANYTHING FOR SOMEONE TO SAY
ALL THE WORDS I DON'T HAVE AND I CAN'T PUT
TOGETHER
I'D GIVE ANYTHING FOR SOMEONE TO SAY TO
HER*

CHRISTIAN/GUARDS (CONT'D)
**THAT SHE'S ALL I CAN THINK ABOUT AND I
CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT HER.**

**I'D GIVE ANYTHING FOR SOMEONE TO SAY
THAT THEY CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT ME
AND THEY'LL BE THERE FOREVER.
I'D GIVE ANYTHING FOR SOMEONE TO SAY TO ME
THAT NO MATTER HOW BAD IT GETS
THEY WON'T TURN AWAY FROM ME.**

Cyrano takes the letter he wrote to Roxanne from his pocket.
He hands it to Christian.

CYRANO
Use this. Simply sign it at the bottom.

CHRISTIAN
Great! When did you write it?

CYRANO
A while ago.

CHRISTIAN
But -

CYRANO
I always have a letter in my pocket
for...some imaginary woman. It's the
romantic custom here.

CHRISTIAN
But don't we need to make it specific to
her?

CYRANO
Count on vanity to make Roxanne think it
was only for her.

CHRISTIAN
But the letter itself is applicable to *all*
women??

CYRANO
Not all, but most.

CHRISTIAN
What a brilliant scam! You should make
thousands of copies and sell them to every
man in the city. You'd make a fortune!

Christian embraces Cyrano.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)
(waving the letter)
I'm convinced we're destined to be friends
for life.

CYRANO

You think?

CHRISTIAN

The very *best* of friends.

Christian runs out with the letter.

CYRANO

And I, my heart will lend.

He watches Christian in the distance.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

(under his breath)

Dammit. I kind of like him.

19 EXT. CITY STREETS. MINUTES LATER. 19

We follow Christian as he runs along the city streets past soldiers marching until he arrives at Roxanne's door.

20 EXT. ROXANNE'S FRONT DOOR. MINUTES LATER. 20

Roxanne's apartment has a balcony overhung with wisteria - not yet in bloom. Glass doors from the balcony lead to her bedroom. Downstairs her street door is large.

Christian approaches and thinks. He presses his head and his hand against the door. Rather than knock, he puts the letter under the door and runs away.

21 INT. ROXANNE'S DOOR INSIDE HER HOME. DAYS LATER. 21

A letter, with no return address is slid under the door.

Marie picks it up curious: who is it from? And takes it to Roxanne in bed.

As she sings we see the passage of time and accumulation of letters; the scenes overlap within the song moving back and forth faster and faster building to the climatic end.

Song. EVERY LETTER

ROXANNE

*THE INK ON THE PAPER MAKES ME NERVOUS
I NEARLY LOSE MY VISION
AND THEN MY BREATH AND MY PULSE AND MY
MIND ... QUICKEN*

*HEAD BELOW MY KNEES, I COME ALIVE WITH
EVERY STROKE OF EVERY LETTER IN EVERY LINE
YOU WRITE
KEEPS ME AWAKE, THINKING BACK OH...
MY FIRST SIGHT OF YOU WAS MY FIRST HEART
ATTACK*

The light in the room fades from daylight to night as Marie lights the candles.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)
 EVERY LETTER MAKES ME LOSE MY REASON
 EVERY WORD IS LIKE YOUR KINDEST TOUCH
 AND IF I TOLD YOU HOW MUCH I NEED YOU
 WOULD YOU GIVE ME YOURSELF OR TURN AND RUN

Another letter appears under the door. Roxanne rushes to collect it and goes to the window where she sees Christian running away.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)
 YOU LIGHT UP DESIRE JUST BY DESCRIBING IT
 I READ TO MYSELF UNTIL I GO BLIND
 YOUR WORDS FALL AROUND ME ALL THROUGH THE
 NIGHT
 I CAN'T RESIST AND I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT

22 INT. CYRANO'S ROOM IN THE GARRISON.

22

Cyrano sitting at his table and writing.

CYRANO
 WILL YOU BE HELD?
 WILL YOU BE TOUCHED?
 BY MY HAND THROUGH THIS PAPER IS THIS ALL
 TOO MUCH?
 WILL WE BE RAVAGED?
 WILL WE BE TRUE?
 TO SOMEBODY PERFECT, SOMEBODY LIKE YOU?

Christian enters the room.

CHRISTIAN
 I'M TIRED OF YEARNING
 I'M TIRED OF LEARNING
 I NEED TO DRINK YOU
 MY HEART HAS BEEN BURNING

23 INT. ROXANNE'S ROOM.

23

Roxanne is writing her reply. Marie stands outside her door. Roxanne is unhappy with her efforts - takes the page and throws it into the air.

CHRISTIAN/ROXANNE
 EVER SINCE I SAW YOU
 BACKWARDS THROUGH THE GLASS
 OF A THIN WINDOW PAIN
 LIKE A THIN SEE THROUGH MASK

Letters begin to fall around Roxanne.

23A EXT. STREET. NIGHT.

23A

Letters are raining down from the sky as Christian runs.

ROXANNE/CHRISTIAN
*THESE WORDS ARE THE TRUTH JUST LET THEM
 SINK IN
 THROUGH YOUR THIN FINGERED GLOVES TO YOUR
 HAND TO YOUR SKIN
 LIKE RIBBONS ON WRISTS
 LET THEM HOLD YOU AND TWIST
 LET THEM TOUCH YOU ALL OVER
 UNTIL YOU CAN'T RESIST*

24 INT. CYRANO'S ROOM IN THE GARRISON. DAYS LATER.

24

Cyrano writes quickly. He studies a letter from Roxanne as he composes his response. Christian runs in bringing him another letter from her. Cyrano gives Christian a letter and he leaves. Cyrano sits back and reads.

ROXANNE/CHRISTIAN/CYRANO
*EVERY LETTER MAKES ME LOSE MY REASON
 EVERY WORD IS LIKE YOUR KINDEST TOUCH
 AND IF I TOLD YOU HOW MUCH I NEED YOU
 WOULD YOU GIVE ME YOURSELF OR TURN AND RUN*

Cyrano is in the middle; Christian and Roxanne are superimposed to his left and right -

25 INT. ROXANNE'S HOME. DAYS LATER.

25

Roxanne, at her writing desk, writing.

ROXANNE
*YOU LIGHT UP DESIRE JUST BY DESCRIBING IT
 I READ TO MYSELF UNTIL I GO BLIND
 YOUR WORDS FALL AROUND ME ALL THROUGH THE
 NIGHT*

25A EXT. STREET. NIGHT.

25A

Christian running with letters still falling around him.

CHRISTIAN/ROXANNE
I CAN'T RESIST AND I DON'T WANT TO FIGHT

25B INT. CYRANO'S ROOM IN THE GARRISON. NIGHT

25B

Cyrano reading letters and playing with a feather.

CYRANO/ROXANNE/CHRISTIAN
 DIM THE LIGHTS GIVE ME EVERYTHING I WANT
 JUST TALK TO ME LIKE YOU DO IN YOUR SONGS

25C EXT. ROXANNE'S DOOR. DAY.

25C

Christian kisses another letter and slides it under the door. The door opens and Roxanne steps out but Christian has disappeared. She sits on the step. Unseen by Roxanne, Christian hears her sing the last line.

ROXANNE
 YOUR LETTERS ARE DRAWINGS ON ME FROM ABOVE
 I KNOW WHO YOU ARE AND I KNOW YOU ARE LOVE

The deception has succeeded. He looks at her conflicted and guilty, loving and longing.

26 EXT. A PUBLIC GARDEN. DAYS LATER. SPRING.

26

Cyrano and Roxanne walking through a maze, Marie a few paces behind.

ROXANNE
 Every day I think: 'I couldn't love him more'. Then a new letter arrives and my heart expands to accommodate more love. He understands me instinctively; he knows *exactly* what I respond to, what thrills me. It's uncanny - but so exciting.

CYRANO
 I'm pleased for you.

ROXANNE
 But *are* you?

CYRANO
 Why wouldn't I be?

ROXANNE
 Well, it's quite tedious having to listen to someone waxing on about finding true love.

She looks back at Marie vaguely examining a weed. Roxanne steers Cyrano into a row of hedges out of sight.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)
 I want to meet with him. In private. Can you arrange it?

CYRANO
 Erm...

ROXANNE

I need to *know* him.

A pause. Cyrano just manages to control his jealousy.

CYRANO

Would you love him if he wasn't handsome?

ROXANNE

I can't imagine it. He's beautiful and expresses himself beautifully. It's perfectly logical.

CYRANO

(suddenly)

Roxanne, I must tell you -

But she's straight in:

ROXANNE

"The more you take of my heart, the more I have to give"

"Since I need a heart to long for you, keep mine and send me yours".

CYRANO

First he has too much heart, then not enough?

ROXANNE

(pokes him)

You're jealous!

CYRANO

(startled - quietly)

Me?

ROXANNE

Of his writing! It's fascinating: you're both brilliant but exact opposites in style. Christian is overt, passionate, fiery.

CYRANO

(taken aback)

Whereas *I*?

ROXANNE

You are...coded, witty, rueful.

CYRANO

Coded?

ROXANNE

Yes! You *know* it! None of us know what's *really* going on in that whirring brain of yours.

Then she worries she's offended him...

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

His words aren't *better* than yours! Just differently put. But both are endlessly quotable.

CYRANO

You know his letters by heart?

ROXANNE

Every one.

CYRANO

I'm flattered.

Roxanne looks confused.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

- On his behalf.

ROXANNE

You'll arrange the meeting?

CYRANO

As ever, I'm at your service.

He bows to her then walks away in a foul mood.

27 INT. CYRANO'S ROOM - A FEW DAYS LATER *NEW SCENE*

27

Cyrano at his desk. Christian stood over his shoulder, reading the letter aloud as Cyrano writes.

Cyrano dislikes this but tolerates it.

CHRISTIAN

"Our mutual friend, the" - what's this?

CYRANO

'Redoubtable'.

CHRISTIAN

(reading)

"Our mutual friend the redoubtable Cyrano has informed me that you wish to meet. I am deeply honoured by this new..."

(pause)

Cyrano? Dear friend?

Cyrano stops work, abruptly, annoyed by the interruption.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

'Redoubtable'. I just wouldn't say it. It's not *me*.

CYRANO

It's *not* you.

Cyrano carries on writing while Christian seethes.

28 INT. ROXANNE'S SITTING ROOM.

28

Roxanne, Marie and De Guiche - who sports new uniform.

DE GUICHE

I've come to say goodbye. I leave tonight for the front. It's grim. But orders are orders.

ROXANNE

Grim?

DE GUICHE

We're losing the war. It's ugly. They've promoted the nobility to turn it around. As you see, they've made me a Colonel.
(false modesty)
Me? Shows how desperate they are.

Roxanne smiles appropriately. Then worries:

ROXANNE

Does this new rank put you in command of the Guards?

DE GUICHE

It does. Cyrano is mine.

Roxanne - alert to this.

ROXANNE

Are the Guards being sent to the front?

DE GUICHE

Naturally. They're in my regiment.

ROXANNE

All of them?

DE GUICHE

Of course.

Roxanne turns away. Devastated. De Guiche detects it.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

Why upset, dear lady?

ROXANNE

You're going to war, you might die and you're leaving *tonight*...I'm...beside myself.

DE GUICHE

May I take your concern as a sign of affection?

Roxanne nods a fraction. Thinks...

ROXANNE

I must tell you that Cyrano is no longer my friend. In truth, we have ceased to like each other. I ended it - as you counseled.

DE GUICHE

Good.

A pause.

ROXANNE

I know how you could make him suffer.

DE GUICHE

Oh?

ROXANNE

Why don't you leave him and all the Guards behind? Make them idle, here in the city, with the women and children?

DE GUICHE

(chuckles)

He'd hate that!

ROXANNE

More than 'hate', it would humiliate him; no heroics, no medals, no glory. His warrior pride is his great weakness.

DE GUICHE

Indeed. I like it!

(takes her in)

Only a woman could concoct such a plan.

ROXANNE

Only a man could say so.

De Guiche moves closer to Roxanne.

DE GUICHE

Am I to understand this as an act of love?

ROXANNE

(very firm, defiant)

It is.

DE GUICHE

I hereby bury his orders to the front.

He takes out the orders and separates the Guards from the rest. Roxanne just manages to conceal her relief.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)
 Poor little Cyrano and all his little friends.

De Guiche gazes at Roxanne, lust overwhelming him.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)
 Marie. Some tea.

MARIE
 I'm afraid we are out of tea, sir.

DE GUICHE
 (snaps)
 Leave us.

Marie gets up reluctantly. She leaves the room looking at Roxanne with warning.

De Guiche stares at Roxanne. Then touches her cheek. Her lips...

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)
 I like your tricks. I wager you know some more...

ROXANNE
 No, sir.

DE GUICHE
 I think you do.
 (breathing her in)
 How can I leave you?
 (pause)
 Maybe I won't? I love you, Roxanne. I love you.

Roxanne conceals her horror as he edges closer to her.

29 INT. HALLWAY. CONT.

29

Marie listening at the door.

ROXANNE (O.S.)
 It's a terrible shame but leave you *must*.
 The battle can't happen without the
 Colonel.

30 INT. SITTING ROOM. CONT.

30

Roxanne subtly shifts her position on the sofa.

ROXANNE

I so admire your bravery.

DE GUICHE

I'm not brave, I'm dutiful.

ROXANNE

You're too modest. It's you who will lead the charge into battle. I couldn't love a man who hides from danger.

DE GUICHE

Do you love me?

ROXANNE

I love the man for whom I fear.

DE GUICHE

So I must go to war?

ROXANNE

(manages a tear)

Yes.

De Guiche stares at her hard. Then gets up and crosses the room. At the door he turns back-

DE GUICHE

One last look at the woman I love.

He throws open the door and runs straight into Marie.

31 INT. ROXANNE'S HALL AND DOOR. CONT.

31

Marie shows De Guiche out handing him his coat and hat. Marie turns to find Roxanne standing behind her-

MARIE

Put out this fire you're playing with. Let the men go and fight their wars.

ROXANNE

The Guards must never go to the front - it's a death sentence.

MARIE

If De Guiche finds out you've used him you'll end your days in a brothel - or worse - a convent.

ROXANNE

I will protect those I love, whatever the cost to myself.

MARIE

But *think!* If you marry him *now* he'll most likely be killed in battle within the month. You'd be a *rich widow* and beyond reproach. You could grant me a pension. Think about it!

ROXANNE

I'm attending a salon tonight. I must dress.

32 EXT. THE STREET APPROACHING ROXANNE'S HOUSE. EVENING.

32

Cyrano and Christian walking fast - mid-argument. Cyrano highly agitated, Christian pretty cool.

CYRANO

This is folly!

CHRISTIAN

She said she wants to meet me so what's wrong with surprising her?

CYRANO

You're not prepared!

CHRISTIAN

She *loves* me, I don't need to prepare. Why can't you relax?

CYRANO

Will you at least look at these conversational witticisms?

Cyrano hands Christian a sheet of densely written paper.

CHRISTIAN

No, thank you.

CYRANO

Memorise this *now!*

CHRISTIAN

No! I'm going to speak to her in my own words.

CYRANO

I strongly advise against it.

CHRISTIAN

And when the moment is right, I will take her in my arms.

CYRANO

There will be no 'moment' if you don't study *this*.

He thrusts the document at Christian who rebuffs it.

CHRISTIAN
I'll be fine! All *your* fancy words and phrases are now in *my* vocabulary. I will simply *repeat* them - no, what is it?

CYRANO
Regurgitate them?

CHRISTIAN
That's it! That's what I will do.

A pause. Cyrano considers.

CYRANO
Off you go then.

Christian turns to go then turns back.

CHRISTIAN
I'm very grateful for all your help but...with extreme respect, I don't think I need you anymore.

CYRANO
(smiles)
I'm sure you're right. Now fly to Roxanne, dazzle her with your transcendent words.

Cyrano bows to Christian, turns and walks away. He's greatly amused by this development.

CYRANO (CONT'D)
(muttering)
And so it ends.

33 EXT. ROXANNE'S HOUSE. LATER, SAME DAY

33

Roxanne and Marie leave for the salon. Christian is hiding in the street, watching her.

CHRISTIAN
(nervous whisper)
Cyrano??

But Cyrano is long gone.

Roxanne is studying her lecture notes on the move. Marie steering her out of trouble on the busy street.

Roxanne - nose in her notes - walks straight past Christian. He can't bring himself to stop her.

Cyrano is also watching, hidden. Christian follows Roxanne and Marie at a distance.

34 INT. THE SALON/CORRIDOR. CONT.

34

A beautiful old lecture theatre. Roxanne seen through a doorway. She's giving a talk. The room is full of women, no men allowed. She's dazzling the room.

Christian peers in through the door from the adjoining corridor.

Suddenly - Roxanne sees him. Surprised and delighted she momentarily falters. Christian smiles warmly.

Roxanne finishes her lecture to wild applause. Christian claps at the door.

As the salon guests get up from their chairs Christian starts to leave. Then - he's thrilled to see Roxanne come running out the door to find him.

Both are very nervous at this first proper encounter.

ROXANNE

Christian!

CHRISTIAN

Hello!

He bows quite elegantly.

ROXANNE

How did you know I was here? Which is not to say that I flatter myself that you're here to see *me*.

(stops)

I'm gabbling.

CHRISTIAN

I heard about this - this -
(unsure what it is)
This - women only -

ROXANNE

Salon?

CHRISTIAN

Yes! From a friend.

ROXANNE

Oh, is she here?

CHRISTIAN

No, she's a man - I mean *he* is.

ROXANNE

Will you come with me? So we can talk?

Christian nods, slightly unnerved by this prospect. She leads him to a narrow staircase.

35 INT. ORCHESTRA CIRCLE ABOVE SALON. MOMENTS LATER

35

They emerge into the beautiful ornate circle. The salon guests are taking tea below in the stalls.

CHRISTIAN

Oh!

ROXANNE

Isn't it beautiful!

CHRISTIAN

Mmm. It is very steep...

ROXANNE

Oh do you suffer from vertigo?

CHRISTIAN

No. But I don't like heights.

Roxanne laughs, she thinks he's joking. Christian is confused by having not got the joke. He remains speechless. He can't think of a thing to say.

After a while:

ROXANNE

There are some silences that are comfortable and there are some that are frightened with tensions. What do you think is the nature of this one?

Christian thinks very hard.

CHRISTIAN

I think...it's a bit of both.

ROXANNE

(slightly brow knit)
...I agree.

Roxanne observes the ladies of the salon below.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

I love the sound of a room full of women. Listen. Do you hear that?

CHRISTIAN

What?

ROXANNE

The power of the feminine.

CHRISTIAN
(after a while)
...I agree.

A pause.

ROXANNE
Talk to me.

CHRISTIAN
I love you.

ROXANNE
Oh! Yes. Sometimes raw, simple words are
the most potent deployment of language.

CHRISTIAN
(encouraged)
I love you.

ROXANNE
The sheer *surprise* of repetition! Yes. But
say some more. What else?

CHRISTIAN
I love you sooooo much.

Roxanne bristles. CYRANO's shadow appears (unseen) in the
glass behind them. He's been listening.

ROXANNE
When you write you say it a thousand
different ways without even resorting to
those three overused little words.

CHRISTIAN
Sorry, *which* little words??

ROXANNE
Please, *dearest* Christian, speak to me as
you do in your letters?

Cyrano receives this with glee.

CHRISTIAN
(Desperate)
You are an angel to be adored, my love is
so so big it is absurd.

ROXANNE
I'm sorry?

CHRISTIAN
You are a beautiful flower. May I smell
your neck?

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

(sudden poetic
inspiration)

Or give it a peck?

Christian begins to go there, Cyrano is appalled.

ROXANNE

(rises sharply)

Monsieur Neuville!

CHRISTIAN

Don't go! *Please*. My passion has rendered
me - aaagh, what is it?!

ROXANNE

Stupid?

CHRISTIAN

No, but it does begin with an 'S'.

ROXANNE

Tell me when you've found it.

She heads towards the stairs and Cyrano scarpers promptly.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

And I am *not* a flower!

37 OMITTED

37

40 EXT. STREET - CONT.

40

Roxanne runs home, tears in her eyes -

ROXANNE

TALK OF BLANK SPACE BEHIND THE SUN
 WHERE YOU TOLD ME YOU'D MEET ME WHEN
 EVERYONE'S GONE
 TELL ME THAT NOTHING MAKES SENSE BUT THE
 SOUND
 OF MY VOICE IN YOUR HEAD EVEN WHEN I'M
 NOWHERE AROUND
 MAKE LOVE MAKE SENSE IN THE LOVELIEST WAY
 INFINITE AND SIMPLE IN AN INK BLACK SKY
 TURN ME TO WATER LIKE YOUR LETTERS DO
 MAKE ME NOT KNOW WHETHER TO LAUGH OR CRY

I NEED MORE. I NEED MORE
 I NEED WAVES OF DESIRE TO COME OVER ME
 AND TEARDROPS ON THE FLOOR.

41 INT. ROXANNE'S HOUSE - CONTINUOUS

41

Roxanne in her home, still furious starts to undress.

ROXANNE

I FEEL LIKE I'VE BEEN TO LONG WITH MY
 THOUGHTS ANY WAY I'VE CORNERED MYSELF IN
 THE LONELIEST PLACE
 I WON'T LET YOU LOSE ME NOW THAT YOU'VE
 FOUND ME
 YOU KNOW WHAT TO SAY SO JUST SAY IT NOW TO
 ME
 I FLOAT THROUGH THE HOURS WITH EVERYONE
 ELSE
 BUT I ALWAYS ONLY THINK OF YOU BY MYSELF

 TELL ME YOUR SECRETS, WHO ARE YOU IN
 PRIVATE
 WHEN YOU CAN'T SLEEP TELL ME HOW YOU
 SURVIVE IT

Marie comes in and helps her.

I NEED MORE. I NEED MORE
 I NEED WAVES OF DESIRE TO COME OVER ME
 AND TEARDROPS ON THE FLOOR.

42 EXT. STREET. SAME TIME

42

Cyrano bustles along, Christian tries to keep up.

CHRISTIAN

Help me! I beg you! If I don't win her
 back I'll die!

CYRANO

Then you'd better improve your
regurgitation skills.

Christian stops, faces Cyrano.

CHRISTIAN

Alright! I need you. I was an idiot to
believe I didn't! I apologise!

CYRANO

Am I essential?

CHRISTIAN

Of course.

CYRANO

Do I know best?

CHRISTIAN

Always.

CYRANO

Will you obey without pedantry,
prevarication or quibbling?

Christian is flummoxed.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

Just say yes.

CHRISTIAN

(immediately)

Yes.

CYRANO

Good! Follow me!

43 INT. ROXANNE'S ROOM - SCENE CUT

43

44 EXT. BALCONY/STREET - ROXANNE'S HOUSE - CONT.

44

Cyrano and Christian are just arriving. Cyrano hides while
Christian looks up at Roxanne as she sings to him.

ROXANNE

*I NEED MORE. I NEED MORE
DON'T YOU DARE TELL ME YOU LOVE ME
I'VE HEARD THAT LINE BEFORE
I'VE HEARD THAT LINE BEFORE*

At the climax of the song Roxanne goes back inside. Christian
gazes up with longing. Cyrano pops out.

CYRANO

Now. You stand *there*,
 (in front of balcony)
 And I will be *here*.
 (beneath balcony)
 When she returns I'll whisper what you
 must say to her.

CHRISTIAN

No?!!

CYRANO

Yes, I'm going to feed you the words.

CHRISTIAN

It's madness! How can it possibly work?!

Cyrano seizes Christian and pins him to a wall. It's
 surprisingly ruthless.

CYRANO

Do Not - Ruin This - Again.

Cyrano releases him. Christian shakes himself off and moves
 out from under the balcony. Cyrano gestures, 'throw stones at
 her window'. Christian does so.

45 INT. ROXANNE'S ROOM. CONT. 45

Roxanne hears the stones. She goes to the glass doors.

46 EXT. STREET/BALCONY. CONT. 46

Roxanne comes back out onto the balcony.

ROXANNE

Who's there?

CHRISTIAN

Speechless Christian. I must talk to you.

ROXANNE

I'd rather read your letters.

Roxanne waves several of 'his' letters.

CHRISTIAN

Please!

ROXANNE

Do you regret what occurred at the Bell
 Tower?

CHRISTIAN

Yes!

A pause.

ROXANNE

'Yes'??? That's your considered explanation and apology? I'm beginning to fear you're just a weird young man who likes writing letters. Maybe you don't even love me? Good-night.

She turns to go.

CHRISTIAN

Wait!

Gestures to Cyrano, 'feed me words'.

CYRANO

(whispers urgently)

I could no more stop loving you then I could stop the sun rising.

CHRISTIAN

I could no more...
..stop loving you
...than I could stop
...the sun rising

ROXANNE

(disbelieving)

Oh really?

Christian looks at Cyrano, 'more'.

CYRANO

My cruel love has never stopped growing-

CHRISTIAN

My cruel love has...never stopped growing...

CYRANO

-in my soul from the day it was born there.

CHRISTIAN

in my soul from the day it was born there.

ROXANNE

If your love is cruel you should have killed it.

CYRANO

I tried! But it has the strength of Hercules.

CHRISTIAN

I tried...but it has the strength of - ?

CYRANO

Hercules.

CHRISTIAN

Hercules!

(to Cyrano,
whispering)

Got anything better?

CYRANO

(to Christian,
daggers)

Shh!

Neither of them can remember who's turn it is to speak.

ROXANNE

Are you still there?

CYRANO & CHRISTIAN

(at the same time)

Yes!

ROXANNE

(prompting)

You were speaking of your Herculean love?

Christian stares at Cyrano, 'Come on then'. But for once Cyrano can't think of anything to say.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

Do continue. Please.

Both men hop about in frustration. Then, Cyrano realises only the truth will do:

CYRANO

Roxanne, my love for you is so powerful...

CHRISTIAN

Roxanne, my love for you is so powerful...

CYRANO

It has tamed the wild dogs...

CHRISTIAN

It has tamed the wild dogs...

CYRANO

Of my pride and doubt.

CHRISTIAN

Of my pride and doubt.

Christian nods, 'good'. Roxanne likes it too, but:

ROXANNE

Why do you speak so haltingly?

CYRANO

(whispered, to
Christian)

This is impossible!

CHRISTIAN

(whispered)

No, it's *working*, keep going!

Cyrano signals Christian to be quiet. They're both under the balcony now. Roxanne above them unseeing.

ROXANNE

Are you going to answer my question?

CYRANO

(aloud)

My speech seems halting because...in this darkness my words stumble to your ear.

Christian grabs him - this wasn't the agreement - he does the talking not Cyrano.

ROXANNE

Mine have no such difficulty.

CYRANO

Your words fall, mine must climb.

ROXANNE

Then perhaps I should come down to you?

CYRANO/CHRISTIAN

(urgently)

No!

ROXANNE

Why not?

CYRANO

I like this way of talking. I like us being invisible to each other. I can't be stunned into silence by your beauty. Now, in this awkwardness, I'm free at last to speak from my heart...

ROXANNE

Why is your voice an octave lower?

Christian grins wickedly, gestures to Cyrano, 'Over to you'.

CYRANO

Because...I am daring for once to be myself.

ROXANNE

Why would you fear to be yourself?

CYRANO

To be laughed at.

ROXANNE

For what?

CYRANO

For...for having too much emotion. I do
not look - or, or speak - as I feel.

She's won over. The moon is full. There's a gentle breeze.

Cyrano steals from under the balcony - hiding in the shadows
to see her and risk being seen. He sings.

Song. OVERCOME

CYRANO (CONT'D)

*THE WAY I FEEL IS LIKE FALLING STARS
DIVING INTO COLD OCEAN WAVES
WORDS CAN ONLY GET ME SO FAR
BUT THEY CANNOT DESCRIBE THE WAY THAT IT
HURTS EVERY TIME I SEE YOU I AM OVERCOME.
I TRY TO TELL YOU...TELL YOU HOW MUCH I
NEED YOU. BUT I TURN AND RUN.*

ROXANNE

YOUR LETTERS TO ME ARE LIKE MUSIC.

CYRANO

*THEY'RE JUST A MASK IN A LONELY COWARD'S
GAME.*

ROXANNE

WHAT IS IT YOU'RE SO AFRAID OF LOSING.

CYRANO

*THAT I MIGHT LOSE EVERYTHING IF I LOSE THE
PAIN.*

ROXANNE/CYRANO

*CUZ EVERY TIME I SEE YOU I AM OVERCOME.
IT'D MAKE YOU LAUGH TO THINK SOMEONE LIKE
ME COULD KEEP SOMEONE LIKE YOU.
I AM SO DUMB.*

CYRANO

*YOU WORE YOUR HAIR DOWN ONE DAY LAST
SPRING IN THE CHAPEL.
YOUR LIPS PAINTED RED, I REMEMBER THE DAY.*

ROXANNE

*WE HADN'T MET YET. HOW COULD YOU POSSIBLY
REMEMBER THAT?*

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

YOU WATCHED ME THEN? WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY
SOMETHING?
CUZ EVERY TIME I SEE YOU I AM OVERCOME. I
TRY TO TELL YOU...
TELL YOU HOW MUCH I NEED YOU TOO.
BUT LOOK WHAT I'VE BECOME.
NOTHING FEELS REAL ANYMORE WHEN YOU'RE NOT
AROUND ME.
EVEN THE SKY LOOKS LIKE IT'S BEHIND GLASS.
HEARING YOUR VOICE NOW, I CAN SEE
EVERYTHING CLEARLY. I CAN SEE THAT YOU
REALLY ARE MY LOVE AT LAST.

CYRANO

BUT OH ROXANNE,

ROXANNE

I'M RIGHT HERE LOVE.

CYRANO

WORDS FAIL ME.

ROXANNE

PLEASE COME TO ME.

CYRANO

I TRY BUT I CAN'T.

ROXANNE

THIS IS REAL LOVE.

CYRANO

DARE TO BELIEVE YOU'D HAVE ME.

ROXANNE

I HAVE NO DOUBT. I KNOW THAT YOU'RE THE
ONE NOW.

CYRANO

YOU DON'T KNOW ANYTHING.

ROXANNE

I KNOW THAT IT'S YOU.

CYRANO

ROXANNE, IF THIS WAS TRUE

ROXANNE

JUST TELL ME WHAT YOU NEED NOW.

CYRANO

THEN I'D NEED FOR NOTHING.

ROXANNE

JUST TELL ME WHAT TO DO.

CHRISTIAN

Give me a kiss!

CYRANO

(to Christian)

No!

Cyrano and Christian struggle under the balcony. Christian wants the kiss, Cyrano wants the romance.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

(to Roxanne)

I asked for a kiss but I was too bold!

ROXANNE

(disappointed)

You don't insist?

CHRISTIAN

Yes!

CYRANO

No!

CHRISTIAN

Be quiet!

CYRANO

You be quiet!

ROXANNE

Is someone with you?

CYRANO

No! No! I was arguing with myself, my base desires are at war with my chivalry.

Cyrano shakes free of Christian and steps from under the balcony. He stands in the dark looking up at her. The moon is behind a cloud. If she strained, she'd see him.

ROXANNE

You were talking of a kiss?

CYRANO

Yes, but what *is* a kiss?

ROXANNE

Surely you *know*??

CYRANO

I meant metaphorically. Is a kiss a vow? A promise? A confession? Is it a secret, a moment of eternity, a communion, a heart beat?

ROXANNE
 (frustrated)
 No more metaphors! Come and claim your
 kiss - literally!

CYRANO
 (simply)
 Go to her.

CHRISTIAN
 It seems wrong now.

CYRANO
 (resigned to it)
 She wants *you*.

He pushes Christian to the balcony. Christian quickly climbs.
 Roxanne watches with mounting excitement...

CHRISTIAN
 Roxanne!

ROXANNE
 My one true love!

He takes her in his arms and they kiss passionately. Cyrano
 watches for a moment then turns and walks away. Heartbroken.

47 EXT. ROXANNE'S BALCONY. CONT. 47

Christian and Roxanne kiss more and more intensely against the
 wall of her balcony. Her hand pressed on the glass of the
 balcony door. Their passion escalates as Cyrano hurries away.

48 EXT. STREET. MOMENTS LATER. 48

A Priest approaches Cyrano on the street.

PRIEST
 Which house belongs to Ms Roxanne?

CYRANO
 Who wants to know?

PRIEST
 I have a letter for her.

CYRANO
 From *whom*?

PRIEST
 It's confidential. And urgent.

Cyrano yells up to the balcony.

CYRANO

Roxanne!

The happy couple stop kissing. Cyrano smiles.

49 INT. ROXANNE'S DOOR AND ENTRY HALL. MOMENTS LATER.

49

Roxanne runs down the stairs and opens the door for Cyrano and the Priest. Christian follows.

The Priest and Cyrano enter the modest hall.

PRIEST

Ms Roxanne, the noble Duke De Guiche asked me - in specific, as it is a holy matter - to bring this directly to you.

Roxanne takes the letter and steps away from the men. As she reads - with mounting horror - to herself:

DE GUICHE (V.O.)

My dearest. I have sent a holy man to you with a choice. You have declared your love for me and I can no longer wait to enjoy your treasures. I am on my way to you. If you keep the priest there I will marry you. If you send him away, we shall consummate our love without the bonds of vows. Your choice. Either way, I will possess you tonight.

Cyrano interrupts her reading.

CYRANO

(quietly)
All well?

Roxanne shows him the letter; he scans it quickly-

PRIEST

What does it say?

CYRANO

Roxanne there's something you should know-

Marie comes down the stairs. She looks at Roxanne questioningly: 'Who is Christian? What's going on here?'

Roxanne grabs the letter and pretends to read it aloud.

ROXANNE

"This letter is delivered into your hands by a saintly and extremely discreet Priest. Inform him" - he means you sir -

The Priest bows.

CYRANO

Roxanne-

ROXANNE

- "that it's the Cardinal's will that he give the blessing of holy matrimony in secret and without delay in your home to you and...Christian Neuville." "

Christian looks at Roxanne in confusion.

CHRISTIAN

What?

PRIEST

(pleased)

I told you it was a holy matter from a worthy lord.

ROXANNE

(to Cyrano)

Is this acceptable - to you - my love?

MARIE

Roxanne what madness is this?!

CHRISTIAN

Nothing could make me happier!

ROXANNE

It says we must hurry!

CYRANO

Roxanne!

ROXANNE

Yes?

Christian looks at Cyrano and takes Roxanne's hand.

Cyrano looks at Roxanne; her face is shining with joy. Christian's face too. He can't ruin it.

CYRANO

De Guiche is heading here *now*.

MARIE

(sternly to Roxanne)

I warned you!

ROXANNE

Will you delay him? Improvise!

CYRANO

Are you sure you want to marry Christian?

ROXANNE

Yes! Yes! Yes!

Cyrano exits.

MARIE

But you said marriage was a cage. You've been saying it for years!

ROXANNE

But I hadn't met him yet!
(hugs Christian.)
Marie, will you be my witness?

MARIE

It would betray every single piece of advice I've ever given you!
(Roxanne pleads,
winningly)
Is this truly what you want?

ROXANNE

I've never been more certain of anything.

MARIE

(to Christian)
You don't know what you're in for.

CHRISTIAN

Yes I do. A great adventure.

Marie - despite herself - rather warms to him and then turns to Roxanne with a kind of blessing

MARIE

I'll get your parent's rings.

Roxanne tears up and embraces Marie.

50 EXT. WALKWAY ABOVE ROXANNE'S DOOR. CONT.

50

Cyrano paces broodily on a walkway over an arch. From this position he can see into Roxanne's home and her door and the street below.

51 INT. ROXANNE'S SITTING ROOM. SAME TIME.

51

Marie places a piece of lace over Roxanne, a make shift veil. She gives them the rings. The Priest begins the ceremony.

PRIEST

Dearly beloved...

Roxanne and Christian kneel in front of him.

52 EXT. DE GUICHE HOUSE, STREET. SAME TIME 52

De Guiche leaves his mansion wearing a cloak over his uniform - trying not to be recognised.

He hurries towards Roxanne's home, lurking in shadow.

Song. WHAT I DESERVE

DE GUICHE

*I DESERVE A LITTLE KINDNESS
I DESERVE MY DUE RESPECT
I DESERVE TO BE BELOVED
JUST LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE*

53 EXT. WALKWAY OVER ROXANNE'S DOOR. CONT. 53

Cyrano paces as he watches the wedding.

DE GUICHE (O.S.)

*I DESERVE MY PLACE IN HEAVEN
I DESERVE AN EQUAL SHARE
I DESERVE MY RIGHTFUL CUT
OF EVERYTHING EVERYWHERE*

54 INT. ROXANNE'S SITTING ROOM. CONT. 54

The Priest reading from the vows.

Cyrano's P.O.V as:

DE GUICHE (O.S.)

*GOD, ROXANNE, AM I ASKING FOR TOO MUCH?
WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO BEG FOR WHAT
EVERYBODY WANTS*

55 EXT. THE STREET. CONT. 55

De Guiche hurries, fervent with excitement...

DE GUICHE

*TAKE ME RIGHT NOW. I DON'T CARE
IF I HAVE YOUR LOVE, I'LL HAVE NO FEAR*

56 EXT. WALKWAY OVER ROXANNE'S DOOR. CONT. 56

Cyrano paces furiously. His POV of wedding as we hear:

PRIEST

If anyone here knows of any reason why
these two should not be wed, let them
speak now or forever hold their peace.

Cyrano opens his mouth to scream as De Guiche sings:

DE GUICHE (O.S.)

*NOTHING'S EVEN, NOTHING'S FAIR
ROXANNE, I DIDN'T ASK TO BE HERE*

57 EXT. STREET OUTSIDE ROXANNE'S HOME. CONT. 57

DE GUICHE

*I'LL PICK THE LOCK. I'LL DRAW THE KNIFE
I'LL CLIMB THE WALL. I'LL CRASH THE GATE.
CAUSE I DESERVE A HAPPY LIFE
WHATEVER I'M NOT GIVEN, I'LL TAKE
GOD ROXANNE AM I ASKING FOR TOO MUCH?
WHY SHOULD I HAVE TO BEG FOR WHAT
EVERYBODY WANTS?*

*I DESERVE A LITTLE KINDNESS
I DESERVE MY DUE RESPECT
I DESERVE TO BE BELOVED
JUST LIKE EVERYBODY ELSE*

De Guiche enters Roxanne's courtyard. Cyrano whistles to alert the wedding party - but they don't hear him.

Cyrano leaps off the walkway a second too late (or is it?) and lands some way behind De Guiche - just as De Guiche arrives - lusty and adrenalised - at Roxanne's door.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

*GOD GAVE ME THE LIFE I'M LIVING
SHE BETTER MAKE NO MISTAKE
I DESERVE TO BE FORGIVEN
WHATEVER I'M NOT GIVEN, I'LL TAKE*

He flings open the door -

58 INT. ROXANNE'S HOME - CONT. 58

- and strides in to find:

Roxanne and Christian passionately kissing. Marie joyously throwing rice about. The Priest applauding the charming young couple he's just married.

De Guiche recoils - immediately exits -

59 EXT. OUTSIDE ROXANNE'S HOME - CONT. 59

- And runs into Cyrano lurking outside.

DE GUICHE

Do you know what's happened in there?!

Cyrano nods.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

The slut! She's married that...*guard!*
She's *insane!* I love that woman!

(softly)

I really do.

Cyrano stares, disconsolate. Neither man is delighted by the loud merry cheers from inside.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

Well I'm done with love. It does one
nothing but harm.

Cyrano can't disagree. De Guiche paces a bit.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

You're quiet. For once.

Cyrano vaguely shrugs. De Guiche suddenly has an idea and smiles, wickedly.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

I'm going back in.

Cyrano follows as De Guiche heads back in -

60 INT. ROXANNE'S SITTING ROOM - CONT. 60

De Guiche strides into the room - which has barely changed since his previous entry - Christian and Roxanne are *still* kissing, the Priest and Marie are now toasting each other with large glasses of wine.

DE GUICHE

Your attention!

De Guiche removes his cloak revealing his uniform. Christian immediately comes to attention and salutes him.

De Guiche turns to the merry Priest.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

You're dismissed - or defrocked or
whatever it is.

The Priest is very confused.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

Get out.

The Priest does so. Now De Guiche turns on Marie.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

You - upstairs. I don't want to see your face.

Marie leaves. Now he turns to Christian, coolly businesslike:

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

Neuville. Your regiment go to war tonight. Your orders -

Takes the order from his jacket, hands it to Christian.

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

- are to leave at once for the front. Deliver these immediately.

ROXANNE

You promised the Guards would -

DE GUICHE

(pointedly)

Promises. Now say goodbye to your husband.

ROXANNE

You mean to make me a widow?

DE GUICHE

Only God knows.

(to Cyrano)

The wedding night can wait.

De Guiche makes to leave.

CYRANO

Don't forget your big cape.

DE GUICHE

(collecting it)

It's a *cloak*.

De Guiche exits. Christian drops the salute. He and Roxanne cling to each other. Marie appears. Much crying and sadness.

The ominous sound of drums and marching in the distance. Cyrano steels himself. Mentally preparing for the war.

CHRISTIAN

Kiss me again.

ROXANNE

Again and again-

She does-

CYRANO

Christian, we must go.

Christian follows Cyrano into the hall area, Roxanne holding onto Christian's hand.

CHRISTIAN

again -

They kiss. Roxanne lets go of Christian's hand, he heads into the anteroom.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

again -

Once more they hold each other and kiss.

CYRANO

(gently)

Enough.

Roxanne - overcome with sorrow - won't let Christian go.

CHRISTIAN

(to Cyrano)

You don't know what it is to leave her.

On Cyrano. He knows.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

Roxanne - look at me. I love you and I will return to you.

Christian turns Roxanne to him and kisses her one last time then he runs off to deliver the orders. Cyrano follows.

Roxanne calls to Cyrano from the balcony window before he can leave.

ROXANNE

Promise me he won't be cold or hungry.

CYRANO

I can't promise that.

ROXANNE

Promise me he will be faithful.

CYRANO

Of course he will but I can't promise you.

Roxanne looks at Cyrano searchingly.

ROXANNE

Promise, that he will write to me.

CYRANO

That, I can promise you.

Cyrano hurries off towards the departing army.

Drums in the distance. Roxanne weeping on her balcony.

61 EXT. MOUNTAIN/GUARDS EMBANKMENT/CAMP - DAY (MONTHS LATER) 61

A vast, cold, black landscape, empty and desolate. A low lying mist rolls down a mountain peak.

A small battalion of SOLDIERS perched almost on the top of the mountain. They're holding the high ground and paying dearly for it. They have no tents only makeshift shelters. Their uniforms are tattered, supplemented with sheepskin, rugs and metal. They're starving and wounded.

Christian looks wrecked. He's sitting on a rock by a canon, cleaning his weapon, starving, staring out at the ruined land.

Occasionally a shot rings out, more sport than combat; a reminder of the terror they face.

Song. CLOSE MY EYES

Words in **BOLD** are sung by the entire company of Guards.

CHRISTIAN
 HOW IS IT I FEEL YOU CLOSER TO ME NOW THAT
 THE **WORLD'S BETWEEN US?**
 WHAT I WOULDN'T DO JUST TO GET SOME SLEEP,
 BUT WE'RE **TAKING FIRE.**
 THERE ARE SOME THINGS THAT MY MIND CAN'T
 DO SO THE **MACHINE TAKES OVER.**
 I'D LEAVE THIS WORLD TO GET BACK TO YOU
 BUT I'M **GETTING TIRED.**

62 EXT. MOUNTAINSIDE GRAVE YARD. DAWN. 62

The song, 'Close My Eyes', continues...

Hundreds of crude wooden crosses, bleached white, against the black mountainside.

CHRISTIAN (O.S.)
 IF I CLOSE MY EYES MAYBE I'LL
 SEE YOU THERE **ONE MORE TIME.**

The figure of Cyrano runs, in silhouette across the horizon.

63 EXT. MOUNTAINS/GUARDS EMBANKMENT AND CAMP - NIGHT. 63

Christian still sitting by the cannon continues to sing.

CHRISTIAN
 AND IF I GAVE YOU MY WORD.
 I'M SO AFRAID. **YOU WON'T BELIEVE IT.**
 AND IF I TOLD YOU ALL I'VE DONE I KNOW
 IT'D **MAKE YOU CRY.**
 SO I WILL CLOSE MY EYES WHILE THE FALLING
 SKY **LAYS DOWN BETWEEN US.**

64 EXT. VALLEY PATH. DAWN. 64

'Close My Eyes' continues.

Cyrano runs beside a path, never on it, he swiftly zig zags across the barren ground.

CHRISTIAN
 SOMETIMES YOUR VOICE IS ALL THAT I CAN
 HEAR
 LATELY **IT'S GETTING QUIET**
 IT USED TO BE SO TENDER AND NEAR
 BUT NOW IT SOUNDS **MILES AWAY**
 DOES IT EVER FEEL LIKE THIS TO YOU?
 ROXANNE I DON'T KNOW **WHAT TO DO.**
 BUT IF I CLOSE MY EYES MAYBE I'LL SEE YOU
 THERE
ONE MORE TIME AND IF I GIVE YOU MY WORD
 I'M SO AFRAID YOU WON'T **BELIEVE IT**
 AND IF I TOLD YOU ALL I'VE DONE
 I KNOW IT'D **MAKE YOU CRY**
 SO I WILL CLOSE MY EYES AND LET THE
 FALLING SKY LAY DOWN **BETWEEN US**
 I WOULD CLOSE MY EYES AND LET THE FALLING
 SKY LAY DOWN BETWEEN US

65 EXT. THE VALLEY/ENEMY CAMP. DAWN. SAME DAY. 65

'Close My Eyes' continues.

Cyrano picks his way through the enemy camp, past well ordered tents in long straight rows. He reaches the front line where well attended canons stand ready. A group of INFANTRY MEN in clean new uniforms are slumped against a canon - all of them asleep.

Cyrano silently runs towards them and stops in the space next to the canon shaft. Beneath the canon is a basket of APPLES.

He quickly takes as many as he can pack in his pockets - determined to steal as much as possible.

As he's about to leap into 'no-mans land' one of the infantry wakes up and SHOUTS -

66 EXT. EDGE OF THE SOUTH CRATER. CONT. 66

Cyrano runs the edge of the south crater, his figure against a giant cloudscape

67 EXT. MOUNTAINS/GUARDS EMBANKMENT AND CAMP. DAY 67

Song, 'Close My Eyes', finishes.

A boy, Guard 3, sits inside a broken bell on the edge of a ridge, 'The Killing Ground'. He's on listening duty and sure enough he hears someone coming. He pulls a rope to sound the alarm. An early telegraph system alerts the right sentry who in turn pulls another rope alerting HQ.

LE BRET steps out of HQ and raises a telescope. He sees Cyrano dive over the ridge, shots ringing out around him, and dive into the bell.

Inside the bell Cyrano takes a moment to catch his breath.

CYRANO

Morning.

GUARD 3

Any Grub?

Cyrano hands the boy a bright red apple.

GUARD 3 (CONT'D)

Bless you.

CYRANO

The tall always starve first.

He ducks out of the bell leaving the boy munching on the apple.

Cyrano arrives up at the HQ tent and greets Le Bret.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

Every morning they shoot and miss

LE BRET

One morning they'll get lucky. You're
risking your life to send a letter.

CYRANO

I promised he'd write.

Cyrano observes Christian asleep nearby.

CYRANO (CONT'D)
 He's dying of hunger and yet still
 handsome.

Cyrano walks away.

LE BRET
 Where are you going?

CYRANO
 To write a letter.

Cyrano places an apple in Christian's open hand.

67A INT. OFFICER CAMP

*67A

De Guiche paces. In front of him, an attendant sits at the *
 table, quill in hand, looking at unfinished, unsigned orders.*

DE GUICHE *
 These orders from the King are a suicide *
 mission and he's commanded me to decide *
 which unit is most expendable. Me! ... *
 It's an honor, a sign of the King's faith *
 in me... *

The attendant looks at him blankly. *

DE GUICHE (CONT'D) *
 Or, he doesn't want the blood of an entire *
 company on *his* hands. *

The attendant waits holding the orders with quill in hand. *

DE GUICHE (CONT'D) *
 Send the guards. Address the orders to *
 Captain Le Bret. *

The attendant looks at him. *

DE GUICHE (CONT'D) *
 No one can match them in bravery. *
 I serve my King not my spite. *

The attendant addresses the orders. De Guiche stamps them *
 ruefully and as he does: *

DE GUICHE (CONT'D) *
 Let God decide the rest. *

De Guiche's face falls. *

68 INT. FOXHOLE. MOUNTAIN CAMP - LATER

68

Using his gun as a desk, Cyrano writes. Around him lie those closest to death. Suddenly Cyrano hears Le Bret's voice -

LE BRET (O.S.)

Attention! Gentlemen of the Guards! Make
ready: we have orders from the King!

The exhausted, starving Guards stare in disbelief.

LE BRET (CONT'D)

Guards! Check your weapons! Prepare!

LE BRET (CONT'D)

68A EXT. MOUNTAIN CAMP - MORNING

68A

Cyrano comes out of the foxhole and rushes to Le Bret at the HQ tent. Sitting nearby is a small emaciated boy.

CYRANO

Le Bret?

LE BRET

This child has delivered our orders from the King.

He hands the orders to Cyrano to read for himself. The orders bare the name of the Duke De Guiche.

CYRANO

These come from De Guiche.

LE BRET

Correct. In service of the King.

CYRANO

We've been *holding* this God forsaken rock for months - on the King's orders.

LE BRET

(ironically)

And now we have the noble distinction of being chosen to mount an attack.

CYRANO

De Guiche wants me dead.

LE BRET

The odds are against us.

CYRANO

The odds are impossible.

LE BRET

You've always said you like impossible odds.

Silence. A look between them recognising their years of shared experience.

CYRANO

I'd rather die down there fighting than starve up here waiting!

LE BRET

Then ready yourself.

They Embrace.

68B EXT. MOUNTAIN CAMP - CONTINUOUS

68B

The soldiers and assorted stragglers are preparing for battle as they sing, 'Wherever I Fall'

Close on Guard 1 as he loads his gun.

Song. WHEREVER I FALL

GUARD 1

I HAVE A WIFE I HAVEN'T SEEN SINCE LILACS
BLOOMED IN ST. HIPPOLYTE.
SHE ALWAYS WEARS THEM IN HER HAIR AND SHE
LETS 'EM FALL DOWN EVERYWHERE.
I CAN SEE HER IN THE GLOWING LIGHT
DRESSING WITHOUT A SOUND.
I PROMISED I'D BE HOME ALRIGHT BUT I GOTTA
LAY THIS BODY DOWN.
SO TAKE THIS LETTER TO MY WIFE AND TELL
HER THAT I LOVED MY LIFE.
TELL MY BOYS THE LORD HE FOUND ME. BUT I
SAY THEIR NAMES OUT LOUD AND THEY'RE ALL
AROUND ME.
AND TELL 'EM NOT TO CRY AT ALL. HEAVEN IS
WHEREVER I FALL.

The Officer takes Guard 1's letter.

Guard 2, sitting and pulling on a second pair of socks and then, carefully lacing his boots.

GUARD 2

I HAVE A GIRL I THINK I LOVE HER. I
SHOULDA TOLD HER, INSTEAD I TOLD HER
MOTHER.
I GAVE HER CHOCOLATES. I BOUGHT A RING.
BUT I NEVER TOLD HER ANYTHING.
BUT I CAN SEE HER IN EVERY DETAIL NOW
TURNING IN MY MIND
I BARELY KNEW THAT GIRL AT ALL BUT I WILL
LOVE HER TILL THE END OF TIME.
SO TAKE THIS LETTER TO MY GIRL AND TELL
HER THAT I SAW THE WHOLE WORLD.
AND SAY THAT RIGHT BEFORE I FELL I SAID
HER NAME OUT LOUD, ISABELLE.
AND TELL HER NOT TO CRY AT ALL. HEAVEN IS
WHEREVER I FALL.

The Officer takes his letter.

Guard 3, shakes as he takes a swig from a flask and sings-

GUARD 3

I HAVE A FATHER. HE ISN'T WELL. HE THINKS
HE MIGHT BE GOING TO HELL.
HE WAS A SINNER. HE LIKED TO FIGHT. SO I
DON'T KNOW. HE MIGHT BE RIGHT.
I CAN SEE HIM EVERY SUNDAY MORNING DIVING
INTO THE FRAY.
HE WASN'T ONE OF GOD'S BEST MEN BUT I
LOVED HIM ANYWAY.
SO TAKE THIS LETTER TO HIM PLEASE AND TELL
HIM I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE HIM.
I WENT IN FIRST. I RANG THE BELL. I CALLED
HIS NAME OUT LOUD AND I GAVE 'EM HELL.
SO TELL HIM NOT TO CRY AT ALL. HEAVEN IS
WHEREVER I FALL.

The Officer takes his letter.

ALL

TELL 'EM NOT TO CRY AT ALL. HEAVEN IS
WHEREVER I FALL.

68C INT. FOXHOLE. MOUNTAINS/EMBANKMENT/CAMP - CONTINUOUS

68C

CHRISTIAN
Roxanne.

CYRANO
I know.

CHRISTIAN
I wish I could write her one last letter.

CYRANO
You have.

Cyrano takes a letter from his pocket.

CHRISTIAN
Let me see.

CYRANO
No need.

CHRISTIAN
Of course there's a need.

Christian takes the letter and reads. Then stops.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)
(pointing)
What's this? This...what is it?

CYRANO
Stain?

CHRISTIAN
No - and yes - it's a tear!

CYRANO
Is it? That's odd.

Christian forces him to look at it.

CYRANO (CONT'D)
Ah. Yes. We artists are sometimes so *moved*
by our own creations that we...you know.
Poetic empathy.

CHRISTIAN
You cried writing this letter?

CYRANO
(nods)
I can't bear not to see her again.

Christian looks at Cyrano sharply -

CYRANO (CONT'D)

(covering fast)

We will never see her again I mean. Which is to say you. You her beloved husband might die and never see her again. That's what I meant. That's the tear stain.

A pause.

CHRISTIAN

You're in love with her.

CYRANO

What? You've gone mad. You're starving.

CHRISTIAN

Deny it then. Do you *love* her??

CYRANO

Too simple.

CHRISTIAN

I *knew* it! But I didn't - I didn't dare let myself *believe* it! Oh my God! - I feel sick - you - you've *always* loved her!

Christian storms off, Cyrano hurries after him -

CYRANO

I will deny it!

CHRISTIAN

You *can't* deny it - you can't even hide it!

Cyrano grabs Christian - stopping him.

CYRANO

Christian. This is most important: if I die and you live and she mentions the letters, don't be surprised -

CHRISTIAN

At what?

CYRANO

If she mentions...their volume. You've written to her more often than you...know.

CHRISTIAN

How dare you!

CYRANO

Sorry.

CHRISTIAN

How often?

CYRANO
Often enough.

CHRISTIAN
Twice a week?

CYRANO
(sheepishly)
No.

CHRISTIAN
Three times a week??

CYRANO
...more.

CHRISTIAN
Four?? Five??

CYRANO
A bit more.

CHRISTIAN
Every day?!

CYRANO
(suddenly proud)
Yes! Every day - twice! And four on her
birthday!

Christian grabs Cyrano by the collar, he raises his fist to punch him in the face. Cyrano looks at him defiantly and with kindness - he doesn't defend himself - Christian cries out in frustration and hits the ground. He looks off in the distance. Suddenly the pain shifts on his face, an understanding, a clear recognition...

CHRISTIAN
She doesn't love me.

CYRANO
Of course she does.

CHRISTIAN
In her most recent letter she said she
loves me because of my *soul*.

CYRANO
What could be more loving?

CHRISTIAN
You are my soul.

Cyrano hadn't thought of that. A flicker of hope passes across his face, despite himself.

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

We must tell her the truth and you must confess your love.

CYRANO

Never.

CHRISTIAN

Why not?

CYRANO

No point. The world will never accept a 'midget' with a tall beautiful woman.

CHRISTIAN

Never mind the *world* - what about Roxanne? She's got a *huge* heart. In the same letter she reassured me that she'd still love me even if I return from this hell a broken man; disfigured - and body destroyed.

CYRANO

She said that?

Christian shows Cyrano this letter from Roxanne.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

I don't believe her.

CHRISTIAN

I don't doubt her.

(urgently)

Either way, no more deception.

From outside they can hear the sound of the men preparing for battle.

LE BRET (O.S.)

Take your positions!

68D EXT. MOUNTAIN CAMP - CONTINUOUS

68D

It's almost dawn. Fear in the air. Le Bret barks orders and checks his men

LE BRET

Platoon commanders steady your men! Hold fast!

The Guards assemble behind the canons, gripping their guns, poised for the attack. Cyrano and Christian are amongst them, still passionately arguing - in loud whispers.

CYRANO

We betrayed her. We can *never* tell her. It would break her heart.

CHRISTIAN

We *have* to tell her. It's our moral - our
moral -

Cyrano about to supply the word but Christian has it:

CHRISTIAN (CONT'D)

Obligation. We *have* to tell her the *truth*: that we've deceived her brutally *and* we're both in love with her. We must let her decide our fate; one of us - none of us - *she* must have the choice. And I'm certain she'll choose *you*.

Le Bret walks forward.

LE BRET

Company form line!

The company move out from their positions and form a line behind Le Bret

CYRANO

She's chosen *you* already. Love at first sight. She's *married* you.

CHRISTIAN

But she doesn't *love* me - she doesn't even *know* me.

LE BRET

Form Line!

CYRANO

Then she's going to be doubly disappointed because she doesn't love *me* either.

CHRISTIAN

I think she *does*.

LE BRET

(finally)

Captain, steady your men!!

CHRISTIAN

(whispers)

And *I* would prefer to be loved for my true self or not at all.

LE BRET

Hold! Hold Fast!

Christian makes his decision and charges out of the line scrabbling up towards the skyline.

CYRANO

Christian! NO!

Cyrano is about to follow but Le Bret grabs him. They look at each other - Cyrano furious; Le Bret defiant.

Christian runs up the ridge and as soon as he hits the skyline a shot rings out! He stops - a look of confusion and shock on his face - and then falls back. His hands claw at the black lava grit.

LE BRET

Company advance!

As the company begin their slow march forward Cyrano breaks the line and runs towards Christian.

ALL

**TELL THEM NOT TO CRY AT ALL
HEAVEN IS WHEREVER I FALL**

Cyrano arrives at Christian who's prone but alive. He pulls Christian into the mouth of the bell for cover.

The Guards arrive at the top of the ridge, take aim and fire, but many are themselves hit and fall back down.

Cyrano tries to staunch Christian's bleeding.

CYRANO

You will *live*! You will live for Roxanne who loves you! We'll do as you say and she will choose *you*-

ALL

**TELL THEM NOT TO CRY AT ALL
HEAVEN IS WHEREVER I FALL**

CHRISTIAN

(with dying breath)

Tell her... everything.

(very quietly)

...Roxanne

Christian dies. Blood flowing. Cyrano in agony. He carefully places the last letter he wrote in Christian's breast pocket.

He stands turns and runs up the ridge, as he does a musket shot hits him in the left shoulder blade. He faces the firing enemy and runs with everything he's got towards the mist of musket fire.

69 INT. CLOISTERED INFIRMARY, THE CONVENT OF THE LADIES OF THE HOLY CROSS - DAY * 69 *

Rows and rows of white wimples.

CAPTION: FIFTEEN YEARS LATER.

SISTER CLAIRE and MOTHER MARTHE ministering to a dying nun. *
SISTER CLAIRE catches sight of herself in the reflectative *
halo of a crucifix above the nuns bed. *

Beyond Claire's reflection: older ROXANNE is reading to
another sick nun.

*
*

MOTHER MARTHE

Sister Claire, must I remind you, you have accepted a life without mirrors, stop admiring yourself or I will be forced to tell Cyrano.

SISTER CLAIRE

Oh no. He'll make such fun of me.

MOTHER MARTHE

And promise me that you will stop trying to convert him.

SISTER CLAIRE

He's been coming here every Saturday for as long as I can remember. Why does he not believe?

MOTHER MARTHE

Ms Roxanne is his faith. These visits his service.

SISTER CLAIRE

It saddens me he won't see heaven. *

MOTHER MARTHE

I'm sure the Lord has a plan for him. You should worry about his remaining time on earth. Get him to eat.

SISTER CLAIRE

He always says he's not hungry. He says, 'I ate good meat yesterday.'

MOTHER MARTHE

It's not true. He's too proud to admit he can't afford it. He's starving. Insist he eats with us.

SISTER CLAIRE

Yes, Mother.

De Guiche (Older. Distinguished. Well dressed) walking the exterior collindale. *

SISTER CLAIRE (CONT'D)

Surely not? That's the Grand Marshal Duke De Guiche. *

MOTHER MARTHE

It is.

SISTER CLAIRE

He's famous.

MOTHER MARTHE

Yes, child.

SISTER CLAIRE

He won the war for us.

MOTHER MARTHE

So they say.

SISTER CLAIRE

And now he is building us a new church!

MOTHER MARTHE

I wonder why.

SISTER CLAIRE

He's like a saint.

MOTHER MARTHE

Mmm...

70 EXT. BELL TOWER - MINUTES LATER.

* 70

Roxanne and De Guiche stand beside an ancient bell.

*

DE GUICHE

Please. End your mourning. Return to the world.

ROXANNE

I'll cease to mourn when I'm dead. Until then I'm content here; the library has enough good books to see me through this life.

DE GUICHE

(gently)

My mistake was to fall in love with a woman who reads.

ROXANNE

You should try it. They say it's quite fashionable.

DE GUICHE

Will you ever forgive me?

*

ROXANNE

I have already.

*

DE GUICHE

Was Christian really so-

Roxanne gives him a firm, 'no more of that please'.

De Guiche watches her. He loves her. But has learnt to control himself. *

DE GUICHE (CONT'D)

I saw Cyrano in the street. Last winter.
He looked frail.

ROXANNE

His war wound pains him greatly.

DE GUICHE

I sent him a little money. He returned it.

ROXANNE

He wouldn't want your charity. Or anyone's. He still has his pride.

DE GUICHE

(nods)

He's lived without compromise. A free man.

ROXANNE

A rich man's fantasy; the poor are never free.

DE GUICHE

(slight smile)

You're probably right.

(pause)

Is he coming today?

ROXANNE

If it's Saturday he'll be here at exactly six o'clock to bring me the news.

71 INT. CYRANO'S ROOM - AFTERNOON - SAME DAY

71

Cyrano. Fifteen years older. He slowly and carefully puts on his coat. His side pains him greatly.

He looks in the mirror. Does his best to look his best.

His desk is piled with unsent letters to Roxanne.

72 EXT. STREET/ROXANNE'S HOUSE - MINUTES LATER - SAME DAY

72

Cyrano slowly walks up the street. He's unsteady.

He walks past Roxanne's old house. He stops a moment.

There's someone on the balcony. She's waving to him. He shields his brow from the sun to see who it is.

He realises it's MARIE and waves back.

Now a man emerges from inside and joins Marie. It's that handsome LANDLORD seen before.

He puts his arms around her and she responds lovingly. They're clearly an item.

Cyrano smiles. Who'd have believed it.

73 EXT. ANOTHER STREET - TWENTY MINUTES LATER - SAME DAY 73

Cyrano slowly heading towards the convent.

This is a very long walk for him. He has to stop. Searing pain attacks his side.

Suddenly, he falls to the ground. He simply collapses. A woman screams. PEOPLE rush to his aid.

Amongst them is LE BRET - still Captain of the Guards - in his uniform. He's run from 'Ragueneaus' having heard the screams.

Le Bret cradles Cyrano in his arms. Cyrano slowly opens his eyes and recognises him. He manages a smile despite the pain.

LE BRET
Hello, old friend.

CYRANO
Did I fall?

LE BRET
Not at all. The ground rose up and hit you.

Cyrano smiles. He has a small cut on his brow which Le Bret dabs with his handkerchief.

LE BRET (CONT'D)
But you're still here.

CYRANO
I mustn't be late.

74 EXT. BELL TOWER, CONVENT - LATER * 74

Sister Claire has joined Roxanne. Together They strike the bell. Six o'clock. Roxanne smiles in anticipation, she looks out but doesn't see Cyrano... *

SISTER CLAIRE
He'll be here.

ROXANNE
(very worried)
He's always on time.

Roxanne hurries down the tower steps. *

75 OMITTED * 75

76 INT. CHURCH UNDER CONSTRUCTION - MOMENTS LATER

* 76

Roxanne almost runs into Cyrano as she rushes towards the convent and he emerges out of it.

CYRANO

Going somewhere?

ROXANNE

You're *late!*

CYRANO

Yes. I was delayed.

ROXANNE

By what?

CYRANO

An untimely visitor.

ROXANNE

You sent him away?

CYRANO

I fear I only put him off for a short while.

ROXANNE

Well, he'll have to wait because I won't let you leave before nightfall.

She helps him to the bench and he sits with relief.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

You've cut yourself.

Cyrano waves away her concern, as firmly as he can.

CYRANO

A scratch. *Really.*

Cyrano closes his eyes. Sister Claire is sweeping at a distance.

*
*

ROXANNE

Aren't you going to tease Sister Claire? She waits all week for it, you know?

Sister Claire blushes and looks down.

CYRANO

Sister Claire. You have such lovely eyes, why do you keep them cast down?

SISTER CLAIRE

Oh!

A pause.

CYRANO
(suddenly)
I ate good meat yesterday!

SISTER CLAIRE
When you're ready, come to the dining hall
and I'll give you a big bowl of soup.

CYRANO
Yes, yes.

SISTER CLAIRE
(surprised)
Good!

ROXANNE
Sister Claire is trying to convert you.

SISTER CLAIRE
I am not! Mother warned me off.

CYRANO
Tonight, for once, I will let you pray for
me.

SISTER CLAIRE
I haven't waited for your permission.

CYRANO
God bless you.

Sister Claire touches Cyrano's arm and leaves. But something troubles her about all this...

Cyrano tenderly watches Roxanne as she works.

CYRANO (CONT'D)
Do you remember the day we first met? *

ROXANNE
(laughing) *
Yes. *

CYRANO
It was an early morning in early June. I'd
come to borrow a book from your father. We
found you in the library curled up on the *
floor in the dawn light, a tome for a *
pillow, reading the very book I'd come *
for. *

ROXANNE
I refused to hand it over. *

CYRANO
Your youth made it forgivable. *

ROXANNE
I hadn't finished reading it! *

CYRANO
I didn't mind. You said you would give it
to me as soon as you had. *

ROXANNE
And I did. As if we'd always known each
other. *

CYRANO
And now we have ... *

Cyrano looks up at the light coming in. *

CYRANO (CONT'D)
They say light is the soul of a holy
space. It's designed to be enough...
enough beauty to... to just let go. *

ROXANNE
Are you melancholy?

CYRANO
(trying to rally)
No. No.

ROXANNE
Do you have my daily paper?

He nods.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)
Good.

Cyrano gives his paper but it's a struggle to speak and breathe...

CYRANO

Last Saturday, the nineteenth, I saw you.
And then a week passed in which nothing
important happened and now here I am
again.

ROXANNE

Cyrano?

CYRANO

Yes. The news. Last Saturday the Head Of
State ate too many prunes and took to his
bed with a fever: he was executed by his
physician and now he is feeling much
better. There was a ball last Sunday and
seven hundred and sixty three wax candles
were burned. Out. On Monday our troops
were reported to have beaten - everyone -
everywhere. Tuesday a little tiny dog had
to be given a very large enema.

(Roxanne laughs.)

On Wednesday...nothing. Thursday, someone
somewhere who isn't us took a new lover.
On Friday...

Cyrano feels faint. His eyes close.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

I was the Queen of - almost. Today...

Roxanne sees his eyes are closed.

ROXANNE

Shall we get you that soup?

CYRANO

Not yet.

ROXANNE

My dear. What's to be done?

*

Cyrano looks at her and smiles - weak.

CYRANO

It's just my old wound from the war.

ROXANNE

Damn that war.

Roxanne touches her breast where she keeps a letter.

CYRANO

You told me...one day...you would let me
read Christian's last letter.

ROXANNE

Now?

CYRANO

Please.

As the sky darkens Roxanne hands him the letter he wrote from Christian, fifteen years before.

As Cyrano opens the envelope we see blood on it.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

"Farewell Roxanne. I believe this will be my last day, my beloved. My soul is heavy with unexpressed love. Fullness of heart can not be recorded. It will not live on in my bones when I'm gone, it will not be buried in my grave. The exact measure of my love can not be given to you in words to outlast my last breath. No matter how I wish it. I am dust and dust to dust"-

It's dark now. Roxanne watches him closely. He's not reading but *reciting*. His eyes closed.

CYRANO (CONT'D)

"I am going to die today-

ROXANNE

You're not reading. You're remembering.

He folds the letter. Shrugs. A simple sign of admission, regret, longing, sorrow. Love.

She gets up. Walks away. Now turns on him.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

It was *you*. *

CYRANO

No, Roxanne. *

ROXANNE

Make your confession. *

CYRANO

No. *

ROXANNE

The letters - *

CYRANO

No.

ROXANNE *
The words - *

CYRANO *
No! *

ROXANNE
The voice in the night below my balcony -
all of it - *you!* I married him because of
your words!

CYRANO
You married *him* - not my words.

ROXANNE
Why are you denying it?

CYRANO
Because...I don't love you, my love.

ROXANNE
Yes you do!

CYRANO
Christian loved you.

ROXANNE
You wrote this letter! This *tear* was
yours!

CYRANO
The blood is his.

ROXANNE
Why tell me *now*?

CYRANO
I've told you nothing.

ROXANNE
After *fifteen years* - why?!

Cyrano gets to his feet shaky and unsure. He faces her and speaks the heartfelt truth.

CYRANO *
I believe this will be my last day.

ROXANNE
No.

Cyrano falls to the ground - collapses into the leaves.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

No!!

Roxanne holds him in her arms.

Song. NO CYRANO

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

*NO CYRANO, I WON'T LET YOU GO. HOW CAN
YOU NOT SEE? I'M ALONE CYRANO. I'VE
NOWHERE TO GO. YOU HAVE TO STAY WITH ME.*

CYRANO

*OH ROXANNE, I DON'T UNDERSTAND. THE ONE
YOU LOVE'S NOT HERE. I BURIED THAT MAN
WITH MY VERY OWN HANDS LONG AGO IN A
BLACKBERRY FIELD.*

ROXANNE/CYRANO

*HAVE YOU EVER WANTED SOMETHING
SO BADLY YOU CANNOT BREATHE
HAVE YOU EVER LOVED SOMEONE MADLY?*

CYRANO

*IT'S OK ROXANNE. I'VE KNOWN WHAT I AM FROM
THE SECOND YOUR EYES HELD MINE.
EVER SINCE THEN I'VE BEEN A PATIENT MAN.
PATIENT WITH DESIRE.*

ROXANNE

*I KNOW CYRANO. I KNOW WHO YOU ARE. LOVE I
FEEL THE SAME.
SO NO CYRANO, I WON'T LET YOU GO. LOVE'S A
PAINFUL, PAINFUL GAME. *
HAVE YOU EVER WANTED SOMETHING
SO BADLY YOU CANNOT BREATHE
HAVE YOU EVER LOVED SOMEONE...MADLY?*

CYRANO

You love me?

ROXANNE

Yes. And I won't lose you twice.

A slow, sweet kiss - which kills him.

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

It's you I love.

CYRANO

(weakly)

No. You loved the words... *

ROXANNE

No. *You*.

She looks him in the eye. She knows he's about to die and needs him to know this:

ROXANNE (CONT'D)

I love Cyrano. Cyrano is my love. I've always loved Cyrano.

He gazes at her a moment, full of regret.

CYRANO

And I loved...my pride.

Cyrano dies in Roxanne's arms.

The leaves slowly fall.

In the distance, the nuns are walking to mass.

Sister Claire comes running from the building, fear in her eyes.

Roxanne is weeping.

FADE TO BLACK.