# GEORGE AND CHARLOTTE 1

GEORGE. "Thank God."

CHARLOTTE. *(Weakly.)* "Yay." *(Stepping elegantly down the last two steps of the stairway.)* And I float down, out of the carriage, like an angel from heaven…"

GEORGE. Spotlight!

CHARLOTTE. *(As* ROXANE.*)* "Good morning, gentlemen."

GEORGE. "Roxane, on the King's service?!"

CHARLOTTE. "Yes. In the service of my own king: Love."

GEORGE. That's it! It'll make the scene!

CHARLOTTE. "Cyrano. My best friend. I need your help."

GEORGE. *(As* CYRANO, *kneeling, taking her hand.)* "I am at your disposal, madam, now and forever."

*(*GEORGE *kisses her hand and lays his cheek upon it.)*

CHARLOTTE. *(Moved.)* When you do that, George, center stage, in front of a thousand people holding their breath, I wet myself, I can't help it.

GEORGE. Thank you, my darling.

CHARLOTTE. Kiss me. Now. Before the moment passes.

*(*CHARLOTTE *lifts his nose and kisses him on the lips. They start necking on the chaise—when* ETHEL *enters from backstage.)*

ETHEL. Don't mind me, I'm just the hired help.

GEORGE. Well, well, if it isn't the Hound of the Baskervilles.

*(During the following,* GEORGE *and* CHARLOTTE *remove their* CYRANO *clothes and put on their relaxing clothes.* CHARLOTTE, *of course, looks stunning.* ETHEL *gathers up their costumes to take them away.)*

CHARLOTTE. *(To* GEORGE.*)* Don't start.

GEORGE. Oh, she can't hear a thing I'm saying. She hasn't heard a word in twenty years. *(To* ETHEL.*)* Have you, Quasimodo?

CHARLOTTE. George, stop it.



GEORGE. Tell me, Ethel, have you frightened any little children lately? Offered them a ride on your broomstick?

CHARLOTTE. George—

GEORGE. I cannot believe, to this day, that *that* is your mother. Here you are, the greatest stage actress in a generation, and you were spawned by a troll?

CHARLOTTE. George, cut it out.

GEORGE. You must have been switched at birth. Somewhere out there is Ethel's real daughter, traveling with Ringling Brothers as the Wolf Woman of Borneo.

CHARLOTTE. *(As* ETHEL *starts to exit heaped with the bundle of clothes.)* Thank you, Mother!

GEORGE. *Thank you, Mother!*

ETHEL. *(As she goes out the door.)* George, my hearing aid is in, now grow up!

*(*ETHEL *exits, and* GEORGE *slams the door, hurting his back.)*

GEORGE. *Ow!* God, my neck! Am I getting old, Charlotte?

CHARLOTTE. No, dear, you're just falling apart.

GEORGE. *(Bitterly.)* No wonder they didn't want me for the *Pimpernel* movie.

CHARLOTTE. Us, dear, they didn't want us.

GEORGE. It would have put us right back on top. George and Charlotte Hay in the new Frank Capra production, *The Twilight of The Scarlet Pimpernel.*

CHARLOTTE. There will be other movies.

GEORGE. We were this close, Charlotte. I could taste it! *(Beat.)* No wonder Hollywood is such a cesspool. I mean, please. *Frank Capra* directs *The Twilight of The Scarlet Pimpernel*??

CHARLOTTE. I didn't even get to meet him.

GEORGE. Nor did I. Nor do I care to, may he rot in hell.

CHARLOTTE. I can see it now. "Mr. Pimpernel Goes to Washington."

**GEORGE.** Exactly! Ow! My neck...!

**CHARLOTTE.** Get down, George. I'll work on it.

*(During the following,* **GEORGE** *sits next to the chaise and* **CHARLOTTE** *massages his neck and shoulders.)*

**GEORGE.** You do realize they started filming yesterday. At this very moment, the cameras are rolling and Ronald Colman is wearing *my tights.*

**CHARLOTTE.** *(Calmly, as the massage continues.)* Oh, George, let them have their Ronald Colman and their Greer Garson. Who gives a damn.

**GEORGE.** You're right.

**CHARLOTTE.** I'm sure that Miss Garson will do a perfectly adequate job.

**GEORGE.** You're right.

**CHARLOTTE.** If that's what they want.

**GEORGE.** I agree entirely.

**CHARLOTTE.** ...Stupid little bitch.

*(***GEORGE** *laughs.)*

I met her once. Did you know that? She was filming *Pride and Prejudice* and I was next door filming *It Came From Below. (With increasing bitterness.)* She was cutting the crusts off little tea sandwiches and I was fighting a giant gorilla.

**GEORGE.** Charlotte—

**CHARLOTTE.** She was making love to Laurence Olivier and I was cutting the tentacles off an octopus the size of a house. *(Enacting the scene:)* "It's alive! Get back! It's about to explode!" "But Mommy—" "Don't Mommy me, you little nag, just hold your breath!" *Kaboooom! Ahhhhhhhhhhhhhhhh!*

**GEORGE.** Charlotte... Charlotte!

*(***CHARLOTTE** *stops.)*

**CHARLOTTE.** How's your neck?

**GEORGE.** Better. But don't stop.



*(The massage continues.* **GEORGE** *is relaxing. He's almost asleep.)*

**CHARLOTTE.** George?

**GEORGE.** Hm?

**CHARLOTTE.** Can I ask you a question?

**GEORGE.** Mm.

**CHARLOTTE.** Did you sleep with Eileen?

**GEORGE.** *(Sitting up with a start.)* Charlotte! How can you say such a thing?!

**CHARLOTTE.** I've seen how you look at her.

**GEORGE.** She's a pretty girl. I'm not dead.

**CHARLOTTE.** Not yet. I know exactly when it happened, George. We were in the middle of that terrible fight.

**GEORGE.** And whose fault was that?

**CHARLOTTE.** It was your fault, dear. You called me the world's oldest living ingenue.

**GEORGE.** I merely mentioned that a woman in her fifties should not try to play Saint Joan. It's like watching Eleanor Roosevelt play Peter Pan.

**CHARLOTTE.** I happen to admire Eleanor Roosevelt.

**GEORGE.** So do I, but I don't want to watch her fly out the window.

**CHARLOTTE.** You're changing the subject.

**GEORGE.** For heaven's sake, Eileen barely knows I exist.

**CHARLOTTE.** Oh, please. When you walk into the room she starts to glow. I could use her for a reading lamp.

**GEORGE.** You are off your rocker. It's extraordinary. It is unkind.

**CHARLOTTE.** George, I don't mind as long as you tell me the truth! Did you sleep with her or didn't you?! Yes or no?!

**GEORGE.** ...*No*!!! All right?! The answer is no!!

**CHARLOTTE.** *(Skeptically.)* Really?

**GEORGE.** Oh, it's killing you about the film, isn't it.

**CHARLOTTE.** Don't be silly, that has nothing to do with it.