

CYRANO♀

### Scene One

SETTING: an open space that can become many things. TIME: indiscriminate.

*(The play begins in stillness. The space is empty, and the lights are out. After a quiet moment, voices can be heard approaching. Then a door erupts open, and several people enter, the lights turn on, and voices and bodies fill the space.)*

*(Boxes, benches, costumes, food, and whatever else is being carted through the space. Voices are heard as people go on and off the playable area, freely speaking to or otherwise interacting with the audience.)*

*(There is impromptu dialogue setting the scene while they're literally setting the scene, and marking a light and boisterous beginning. All but the following three characters exit. DONNA has food with her. LIGNIERE sees this, and grabs a cupcake from her to eat. CYRANO sees this, and approaches.)*

CYRANO

*(Brandishing a baguette like a sword, over-dramatic)*

Hold, villain!

LIGNIERE

For what reason dost thou accost me, thus?

CYRANO

Thou hast not yet paid the fare.

LIGNIERE

Fare? What fare where?

CYRANO

*(Indicating the cupcake)*

Why, that fare there!

*(LIGNIERE grabs a baguette of his own.)*

LIGNIERE

If this be the fare, then I tell thee "Fair thee well!"

*(LIGNIERE raises the baguette to swing at CYRANO, but DONNA grabs it.)*

DONNA

Shut up, both of you!

*(She takes the baguette from CYRANO.)*

These are not swords, and you are not musketeers!

CYRANO

But that is the last pastry.

DONNA

No, it's not.

*(She presents a cupcake.)*

CYRANO

You saved one for me?

DONNA

Don't I always?

LIGNIERE

But she gave one to me first!

DONNA

Ligniere, just because you got it first doesn't mean it was meant for you.

*(MONTFLEURY enters, enraged.)*

MONTFLEURY

You!

LIGNIERE

*(Mouth full of pastry)*

Crap.

MONTFLEURY

So this is where you've been.

LIGNIERE

Sir, I—

MONTFLEURY

I don't want to hear it, Linguini! You were given explicit instructions to watch the cadets while I visited with the Cardinal!

LIGNIERE

I lost track of time.

MONTFLEURY

You're cramming cupcakes.

CYRANO

*(Also eating)*  
They're quite good.

MONTFLEURY

Ah. Cyrano. I thought I saw your nose peeking from the shadows.

CYRANO

Your voice gave way to my ears; my nose isn't part of this.

MONTFLEURY

Then stuff it, codpiece.

CYRANO

But if it were, this piece of cod might sniff hypocrisy.

MONTFLEURY

Go back to filling your face. Carve out those nobody-to-love handles.

*(MONTFLEURY tries to walk away from CYRANO, but CYRANO prevents him with a baguette.)*

CYRANO

You'd know all about having nobody to love.

MONTFLEURY

*(Indicating CYRANO)*  
I don't have time for corner stops.

CYRANO

It's always hard to go home, isn't it?

MONTFLEURY

You're lucky I didn't bring my sword.

CYRANO

You're lucky you didn't bring your sword.

MONTFLEURY

*(Indicating her nose)*  
Maybe I can borrow yours? Tell me, when you sharpen it, is there any grindstone left?  
*(CYRANO brandishes the baguette, and swings at MONTFLEURY. He then grabs a baguette of his own. They duel.)*

You will learn respect!

CYRANO

Respect can't be learned, only earned.

MONTFLEURY

You will listen to me, Cyrano! You'll keep your nose down, like a good little b—

CYRANO

Are you trying to teach me a lesson? Wouldn't you rather have Ligniere do it, so you can see your uncle, and take credit for it?

MONTFLEURY

My uncle is—

CYRANO & MONTFLEURY

The Cardinal!

CYRANO

And how will the Cardinal reward his good little altar boy, this time?

MONTFLEURY

Everything I have, I deserve.

CYRANO

Does he ask you over for mass? How is his mass? Large, or—

*(MONTFLEURY rages, seizing CYRANO. This is a real moment of danger. He withdraws a small blade, and brings it to CYRANO's nose.)*

MONTFLEURY

One more word, and I'll carve this Gargamel to match the Sphinx.

*(CHRISTIAN and ROXANE enter.)*

ROXANE

Cyrano!

CHRISTIAN

Captain?

ROXANE

What is going on?

MONTFLEURY

Nothing. Right, Cyrano?

CYRANO

Right.

ROXANE

I think it best you leave.

MONTFLEURY

Of course! Much to be done.

*(MONTFLEURY hands CYRANO bread. He leans into her ear.)*

I don't have time for you, and your yeast.

CYRANO

Are you saying you want to bake with me?

LIGNIERE

Cyrano...

MONTFLEURY

Someday, very soon, you're going to learn your place.

CYRANO

I don't have time for lessons.

MONTFLEURY

That's because someone like you doesn't get time. Someone like you doesn't get a second glance.

ROXANE

Montfleury—

CYRANO

You mean a poet? A duelist? A friend?

*(MONTFLEURY laughs.)*

No, I know what you mean. You've got jokes, right?

DONNA

Cyrano, you're—

CYRANO

If you've got them, let them fly, Montfleury! C'mon! How about something poetic for the poet, hmm? "When you sup it must annoy you, dipping in your cup," or something descriptive: "a rock, a peak, a cape, a peninsula; an oblong capsular!" Or were you thinking something more modern?

LIGNIERE

Audiences like modern.

CYRANO

Oh, Ligniere. He thinks he nose everything. Now, this could go one of two ways, depending on if I'm Jewish.

LIGNIERE

Historically: Safer to not be. Can you smell what I'm thinking?

CYRANO

We'll avoid that. Sexually: we're going to ignore the obvious phallic references. And no, my name isn't Dick.

LIGNIERE

Disapproving: All I hear are nose from you.

CYRANO

Juvenile: that's because I nose best. Culinary: that bell pepper must be good for cooking. Complimentary: you smell really good. Respiratory: your nose is so big there is an echo when you inhale. Polite: excuse me, you have a face on your nose. Early 2000s: your nose is so large, even Dora couldn't explore it. Medieval: when I'm laying down it works as a sundial. Fashionable: it's hard having a big nose; all my pullover shirts have stretch marks. Recreational: I sniffed cocaine five months ago. I'm still waiting for it to get into my system.

*(CYRANO becomes serious.)*

Or there's optical: I can't see past it. Global: neither can anyone else. Ironic: I can't rise above it. Social: no one will let me. Truth: I'm more than my nose. Truth: no one believes that. Truth: I don't believe that.

MONTFLEURY

Advice: no one gets something for nothing.

CYRANO

Thanks, but no thanks: I do everything.

MONTFLEURY

Not enough.

CYRANO

You can't do enough to be born in the right family.

MONTFLEURY

Jealous?

CYRANO

I hear there isn't much to be jealous of down there.

MONTFLEURY

I'd be willing to show you, if your nose didn't make me self-conscious.

CYRANO

Just reach out. Or are your hands too small to grab me?

MONTFLEURY

Is that what you want?

CYRANO

*(She starts to withdraw her sword)*

I only want a reason.

MONTFLEURY

I'll give you ten.

*(They've gotten quite close, and the air is tense.)*

ROXANE

Montfleury! Go! Now.

MONTFLEURY

Being your cousin doesn't mean I can't—

ROXANE

Please.

MONTFLEURY

*(After considering for a moment)*

For you.

*(He withdraws slightly.)*

It's been lovely, as always. Have a good night. Stay safe, Roxane. Lingerie. Cyrano.

*(He exits.)*

CHRISTIAN

Did he just call you "Lingerie?"

ROXANE

Cyrano, you know better.

CYRANO

He was after Ligniere. What was I supposed to do?

ROXANE

Leave him alone! He's the captain of your company.

CYRANO

For now.

CHRISTIAN

What does that mean? Going to take him out?

CYRANO

I could.

CHRISTIAN

Not likely.

CYRANO

Excuse me?

CHRISTIAN

I mean, look at you.

*(CYRANO quickly approaches CHRISTIAN. LIGNIERE moves CHRISTIAN aside, DONNA and ROXANE stop CYRANO).*

DONNA

Cyrano, please, he didn't mean anything by it.

CYRANO

Who are you, huh? Christian, right?

CHRISTIAN

Yeah, but listen, I didn't mean—

CYRANO

Right! Neville's boy.

ROXANE

Cyrano—

CYRANO

How does it feel to be here because your father was too stupid to stay alive?

*(All are still for a moment.)*

ROXANE

Christian—



*(He shrugs her off and exits. LIGNIERE goes after him.)*

Cyrano...

CYRANO

Did you hear him? He's pathetic!

ROXANE

He misspoke.

CYRANO

I was wrong. He's not pathetic; you're pathetic for defending him.

ROXANE

Christian merely said something he shouldn't have. I bet you can relate.

*(ROXANE exits.)*

CYRANO

Roxane, wait!

*(Pause. It is now only CYRANO and DONNA.)*

Should I insult you, so you can leave, too?

DONNA

Is that what you want?

CYRANO

It's never about what I want.

*(CYRANO goes to exit.)*

DONNA

You make too many enemies.

CYRANO

You make too many friends!

DONNA

Not everything has to be a fight.

CYRANO

I wasn't out-of-line.

DONNA

You wouldn't have to say it if you weren't.

CYRANO

What am I supposed to do? Just let it happen?

That's what some expect.

DONNA

I am not what people expect.

CYRANO

I know.

DONNA

What's that supposed to mean?  
*(Catches herself.)*  
Sorry. I didn't mean to—

DONNA

Don't apologize, or people might think you're capable of sympathy.

CYRANO

As long as it's not empathy.

CYRANO & DONNA

Anything but that!

*(They laugh together.)*

Montfleury... He's the captain? Him?

CYRANO

I know.

DONNA

And then Christian has the audacity—

CYRANO

He's new.

DONNA

He's stupid! New and stupid! I never knew such green could make me see such red.

CYRANO

Is that his fault?

DONNA

Yes! No.

CYRANO

*(Beat.)*  
Why did she follow him out?

DONNA

You pushed them both out.

CYRANO

I didn't mean to push her out.

DONNA

Well, they're friends.

CYRANO

What?

DONNA

Friends. You remember those?

CYRANO

Vaguely.

DONNA

They don't cost much; just a little love.

CYRANO

I barely have a little.

DONNA

It'll go a long way.

CYRANO

I need it for myself.

DONNA

Just yourself?

CYRANO

*(Smiling)*  
Well... maybe I have a little extra.

DONNA

Does that mean you love?

CYRANO

Me? Love? That I should love...  
*(Laughs, and then pauses.)*

I must.

DONNA

You what?

CYRANO

Don't make me say it again.

DONNA

Why haven't you said anything before?

CYRANO

It's easier to say nothing.

DONNA

I understand that completely.

CYRANO

What do you mean?

DONNA

Nothing. I knew it!

CYRANO

How?

DONNA

You're too angry to not be in love.

CYRANO

That's the dumbest thing I've ever heard.

DONNA

Am I wrong?

*(CYRANO says nothing.)*

Do I know her?

CYRANO

Better than anyone.

DONNA

Well?

*(CYRANO says nothing.)*

Tell me about her!

CYRANO  
I don't know. She's... it doesn't matter

DONNA  
You're an awful liar.

CYRANO  
I don't like lying to you!

DONNA  
Then don't. You sound stupid.

*(CYRANO takes a moment, and then the words suddenly come forward.)*

CYRANO  
I'm resolved that Fate has cursed me to love the fairest of the world. She is the most brilliant, most refined... yet danger mortalized. She's unsuspecting, full of charms unconscious. Like a sweet perfumed rose, a snare of nature, within whose petals Cupid lurks in ambush! Diane herself cannot be more graceful, nor walk more lightly, than she. This "she," this Love incarnate, to know warmth not from her embrace, but from the possibility of it.

*(DONNA is flushing.)*

Warmth felt through mere proximity. It is ambitious, but trying; tasteful to the world, treasonous to the self; burning, yet the purpose of yearning.

DONNA  
*(Invested in the language)*  
Keep going.

CYRANO  
I long for this Venus to mount her conch blown sea-ward—

DONNA  
OK, please stop.

CYRANO  
Sorry.

DONNA  
Why haven't you told her? Assuming, of course, you haven't.

CYRANO  
We're too close.

DONNA  
The mighty Cyrano shows fear!

CYRANO  
I'm not scared!

DONNA  
Then tell her!

CYRANO  
I will! I mean... I wrote this letter.

*(She withdraws the letter from her person.)*

DONNA  
Can't tell her yourself? Face-to-face?

CYRANO  
I want to. But... I can't explain. Here.

DONNA  
For me?

CYRANO  
Read it.

*(DONNA takes the letter, hesitantly. She seems to be holding her breath. She opens it, and reads it briefly.)*

DONNA  
This is to Roxane.

CYRANO  
Well, yes. Who else?

DONNA  
She's your cousin.

CYRANO  
Through marriage. Something like my mother's uncle's sixth cousin's something or other, who married blah blah blah. There's no blood between us.

DONNA  
And no love lost between us.

CYRANO  
So you approve?

What would that matter?

DONNA

You're my best friend.

CYRANO

I'm also hers.

DONNA

And?

CYRANO

*(Beat.)*

I don't know two better people than you.

DONNA

Do you think she might—that I might have a chance? I mean, I don't even know if she likes women. Does she?

CYRANO

She...I don't know.

DONNA

But you see her every day! What are—

CYRANO

Looking at that letter, again?

LIGNIERE

*(LIGNIERE has entered, unbeknownst to the others.)*

All right, that's enough.

CYRANO

*(CYRANO stows away the letter.)*

You knew about this?

DONNA

*(Accusatory)*

She's been carrying that thing for a week. Made a few different versions.

LIGNIERE

And you didn't tell me?

DONNA

LIGNIERE

*(Perhaps apologetic)*  
I thought it'd be better coming from her.

DONNA

I want to see it.

CYRANO

No.

LIGNIERE

*(LIGNIERE withdraws a letter, and hands it to her.)*  
I know it by heart. "I love thee!"

CYRANO

Shut up.

DONNA

"Thine eyes..."

LIGNIERE

"Thy lips..."

CYRANO

Stop!

DONNA &amp; LIGNIERE

"When I see thee come, I faint for fear."

CYRANO

Enough!  
*(CYRANO grabs the letter, tears it in half, and throws it to the ground.)*  
What do you want, Ligniere?

LIGNIERE

Can't I just stop by to say "hi?"

CYRANO

No.

LIGNIERE

I've turned over a new leaf.

CYRANO

You're still from the same tree.



LIGNIERE  
*(He is nervous)*  
It's Montfleury. He's—out there.

DONNA  
What do you mean, “out there?”

LIGNIERE  
You know what I mean.

CYRANO  
Is he alone?

LIGNIERE  
No.

CYRANO  
Armed?

LIGNIERE  
I didn't stay to see.

CYRANO  
I'll go with you.

DONNA  
Go out the back!

CYRANO  
We mean to leave, not to flee; we take the front.

LIGNIERE  
Maybe she's right. We—

CYRANO  
Ligniere. I didn't keep you safe for the last several years just to watch you die now.

LIGNIERE  
I didn't want you to save me, just to watch you die for me now.

CYRANO  
I'll be too busy protecting you to die.

LIGNIERE  
And who will protect you?

CYRANO

Donna, of course! You're coming, aren't you?

DONNA

You go ahead. I'll finish up, and run out back. I don't need to see all those innocent people slaughtered.

*(They laugh. CYRANO and LIGNIERE exit. DONNA follows toward the door, watching them go. Alone, she turns back to exit the other way. Stopping, she looks to the torn letter on the floor. She steps to it, and picks it up. She reads a little of it again, smiles, perhaps sadly, and tucks it away in her pocket. She exits.)*

## Scene Two

SETTING: outside. TIME: immediately following.

*(The set is dark, and the air is still. After a moment, LIGNERE and CYRANO enter, suddenly. LIGNIERE is swinging his blade, uttering a long and loud battle cry. CYRANO has her blade withdrawn, but notices no one is there.)*

CYRANO

Ligniere.

*(He continues screaming.)*

Ligniere!

*(He continues screaming.)*

Ligniere!

*(She cuffs him, and he comes out of his trance, realizing no one is there.)*

LIGNIERE

He was right here.

CYRANO

Probably still is.

LIGNIERE

Maybe he went home.

CYRANO

Doubtful.

LIGNIERE

Yeah. But maybe.

CYRANO

Well, for now, it seems it's just the three of us.

*(LIGNIERE is confused, and then realizes she's referencing her nose as the third person.)*

Let's go, then.

*(They sheathe their swords. CYRANO goes to exit.)*

LIGNIERE

What do you think of Donna?

CYRANO

What?

LIGNIERE  
Donna. What do you think of her?

CYRANO  
We're about to die, and you want to talk about Donna?

LIGNIERE  
I thought you liked her.

CYRANO  
Well, sure. I mean, what's not to like?

LIGNIERE  
She's gorgeous.

CYRANO  
We all know that you're in love with her.

LIGNIERE  
Well, no—I mean, yes—

CYRANO  
Make up your mind.

LIGNIERE  
I... fancy her, sure, but it's not to the point of love.

CYRANO  
You love her.

LIGNIERE  
Yes. She doesn't love me.

CYRANO  
What makes you say that?

LIGNIERE  
What if I were to tell you that she's in love with someone else?

CYRANO  
I'd say they're extremely unlucky, as I'd have to stab them in the neck for you out of principle.

LIGNIERE  
*(Laughing)*  
Yes, well—

CYRANO

Whom do I have to stab in the neck?

LIGNIERE

No one! I mean, there's one...

CYRANO

Who? Another man in the company?

LIGNIERE

Yes. No? That's to say she's less interested in men, and more—

MONTFLEURY

Am I interrupting something?

*(MONTFLEURY emerges from the shadows.)*

CYRANO

Ligniere was just asking me on a date, but I told him I was holding out for you.

MONTFLEURY

Ah, moving away from the fairer sex?

CYRANO

And toward someone who'd use sex as a fare.

LIGNIERE

*(Aside)*

Can we stop making "fair" versus "fare" jokes?

MONTFLEURY

"The more the merrier," I always say.

CYRANO

I didn't peg you for a polygamist. Misogynist, sure—

MONTFLEURY

I thought you liked it rough?

CYRANO

Follow me home, and I'll show you just how rough.

*(CYRANO and LIGNIERE go to exit. MONTFLEURY shoves them back.)*

MONTFLEURY

Leaving? We were just getting comfortable.

CYRANO

I don't do second base on first dates, sorry.

MONTFLEURY

Licorice, are you going to let her talk for you?

LIGNIERE

Absolutely.

MONTFLEURY

I was hoping we could come to a peaceful resolution here.

CYRANO

Says the missionary holding his sword.

MONTFLEURY

Purely precautionary. I simply want you two to show me proper respect.

CYRANO

Maybe if you earned it.

MONTFLEURY

I am your captain!

CYRANO

Because your uncle is the Cardinal!

MONTFLEURY

I served for five years.

CYRANO

And your sword has never been wet.

*(MONTFLEURY puts his hand on his sword's hilt.)*

Aww. Can't get it up?

*(MONTFLEURY quickly puts his hand to CYRANO's throat. CYRANO tries to withdraw her sword, but he forces her arm still. LIGNIERE leaps forward.)*

LIGNIERE

Hey!

CYRANO

*(Firmly)*

Ligniere, don't!

*(LIGNIERE is still.)*

MONTFLEURY

Scared of my naked blade?

CYRANO

Keep your “blade” to yourself.

MONTFLEURY

Not having fun without all your friends?

CYRANO

Just do what you came to do, and get it over with.

MONTFLEURY

You misunderstand. I didn’t come here to force myself onto you. No matter how much you may want it.

*(He gets very close to her, so only she can hear him.)*

There is no water that could wash your grotesque off of me.

LIGNIERE

Leave her alone, or the Cardinal finds out.

*(MONTFLEURY eases up.)*

MONTFLEURY

I told your cousin I wouldn’t hurt you.

CYRANO

I didn’t tell her I wouldn’t hurt you.

MONTFLEURY

You’ll have to get through them, first

*(MONTFLEURY references toward the audience. CYRANO and LIGNIERE suddenly realize they’re surrounded.)*

Have a good night. I’ll be sure to sing your praises at dawn.

*(MONTFLEURY exits.)*

CYRANO

Get behind me.

LIGNIERE

Members of our company?

CYRANO  
No. Mercenaries.

*(DONNA enters.)*

DONNA  
Cyrano, is that you? I heard—oh, God!

CYRANO  
Stay with Ligniere!

LIGNIERE  
How many are there?

CYRANO  
Only a hundred?

LIGNIERE  
“Only...”

DONNA  
This theater’s too full.

CYRANO  
Donna, you were right.

DONNA  
About?

CYRANO  
I make too many enemies.

*(The lights dim, and the sounds of advancing steps are heard. The lights begin to flicker, and the sound increases. The flickers change to moments of darkness interrupted with moments of light. In these moments of light, we get tableaux of CYRANO fighting foes we cannot see. As the sequence continues, the sound crescendos, and we slowly see CYRANO being worn down, and almost defeated. An enemy appears, unseen by CYRANO. We hear “Cyrano” called out. She turns around, sees the enemy, but it is too late. Before the final blow, the enemy is struck, and falls to the ground. DONNA is seen holding a rolling pin. The stage is then draped with darkness and silence.)*