

MARGUERITE

Yes. In... In England, Percy- when do the wedding guests leave the bride and groom... alone?

(After a beat, PERCY whirls about to the guests.)

PERCY

Time to go! Tally-ho! Home, everyone! Bedtime for all!

OZZY

Not bloody likely, m'lad. Not before we've danced with the bride!

PERCY

And so you *shall*, but if you think I'll relinquish my French jewel *this* quickly, you're quite mad!

(PERCY and MARGUERITE begin to dance.)

PERCY

Darling, I hope you like our English style of dancing.

MARGUERITE

It's lovely, Percy- yes, but perhaps later tonight I shall teach you how we French...dance.

PERCY

Later tonight, we shall not...be dancing.

(ELTON cuts in to dance with MARGUERITE.)

PERCY

Oh, all right then, Elton- you may borrow her for all of five minutes. But mind you don't tread upon her feet! She's made of crystal, my wife.

(DEWHURST enters.)

PERCY

~~Oh, but I do love the sound of that... my wife.~~

START

DEWHURST

Percival.

PERCY

Dewhurst!

DEWHURST

Percy, I've just returned from Paris. I must speak with you. Now.

(The men take turns dancing with MARGUERITE as PERCY and DEWHURST step aside.)

PERCY

Dewhurst, though I do always relish a chat with you, I am at the moment a bit more eager to share my bridal night with my *bride*, so if this might wait-

DEWHURST

Percy, the Marquis de St. Cyr is dead.

PERCY

What?

DEWHURST

Yes. By the guillotine. And his family killed with him.

PERCY

But... how?!

DEWHURST

Denounced by Citizen Chauvelin, whose *power* grows in France by the day.

PERCY

Yes, I know, but- But my God, Dewhurst- how did Chauvelin find him? I arranged the safe passage *out*.

DEWHURST

Percy, someone betrayed St. Cyr. Delivered to Citizen Chauvelin a note with the exact whereabouts of his hideaway.

PERCY

Impossible. No one knew but you and Ozzy and myself, and I suppose Marguerite knew. I'd trust you and Ozzy with my life, and Marguerite-... Don't be absurd. Marguerite feels nothing but disgust for this new French regime.

DEWHURST

Percy, how well do you know your wife? In six weeks time, how well could any man know a woman?

PERCY

I know her as I know my own heart.

(DEWHURST takes a note from his pocket. It is the note Marguerite gave Chauvelin at the Comedie Francaise.)

DEWHURST

Then lay your eyes upon this. A note from your wife to Chauvelin. I was able to obtain it just before I left. I believe that is her hand.

END

PLEASE READ ALL ROLES
THAT AREN'T PERCY AS
ONE CHARACTER

SCENE ELEVEN
Blakeney Estate: The Library

(As the lights come up, PERCY stands in his library, wearing an outrageous outfit. JESSUP enters.)

JESSUP

Sir- The gentlemen have been readied.

PERCY

Send them in.

(JESSUP exits. DEWHURST, OZZY, ELTON, FARLEIGH, HAL AND BEN enter, wearing equally outrageous outfits.)

START

DEWHURST

Percy, really now- there *is* a *limit*.

PERCY

Patience, lads. There's a method to my madness.

DEWHURST

But *tis* madness! Spies and cutthroats surround us and we play *dress-ups*?

PERCY

Precisely.

FARLEIGH

Percy! I *demand* to know why I'm forced into this get-up! Upon leaving my house, the footman *giggled*- right in my *face*!

ELTON

Well, I think it's rather nice for a change. Quite..summery.

PERCY

Elton, sometimes you frighten me...*But*- we shall all continue to look "*summery*" for a while yet, boys. Desperate times call for desperate measures, what? We've been summoned to the palace.

BEN

The *palace*?

FARLEIGH

By the *prince*?

PERCY

Yes. He has his suspicions. If he finds us out, he'll shut us down straightaway. British-French relations are tenuous enough these days without rabble rousers runnin' about.

HAL

Is that what he calls us? *Rabble Rousers*?

PERCY

That is how he refers to "the Pimpernel and his men," whomever they might be. But he'll never think it's *us*, will he? Naturally not, for the mere mention of that scoundrel makes us...

ALL

..Swoon?

END

PERCY

Indeed! Such ruffians besmirch the very name of manhood. Nay, tis our duty as males not to rush to the battle, but to the tailor!

No. 12

THE CREATION OF MAN

(Percy, Ozzy Dewhurst, Elton, Farleigh, Hal & Ben)

Percy: PEACOCKS!

Elton: SINK ME!

Percy: THINK YE, SIR,
HOW THOSE FEATHERED BOYS
LOVE TO FLAUNT THEIR TAILS!
STALLIONS!

Farleigh: ZOUNDS, SIR!

Percy: HOUNDS, SIR! STAGS!

Dewhurst: OF THE GOOSIE AND THE GANDER, SIR,
WHICH GENDER IS THE GRANDER, SIR?

Percy: TO RENDER TOTAL CANDOR, SIR:
THE SPLENDOR IS THE MALE'S!

OZZY

But Percy, I simply can *not* hop about wearin' pink chiffon.

PERCY

Ozzy, whatever we *must* do to deflect suspicion, we *shall* do- which in this case is.. *to shimmer!*

SONG - INTO THE FIRE

112 113 114

[Lightning & Thunder — Men turn and put on their disguises. When they whirl about in unison, they have been transformed into a motley group of French townspeople.]

When it splits, choose the vocal part that best suits your voice

START

115 116 117 118

ALL: Percy, T.,B,

Some- one

(Str)

(+Rds)

(+Tpts)

(Hns/Tbns/Bsn)

(VclBs)

119 has to face the val - ley, rush in and ral - ly And win, boys! _____

T1/T2, Bari, Bs: 120 121 Ten: Percy: Ten:

has to face the val-ley! Rush in! We have to ral-ly And win, _____ boys! _____ When the

(Rds in Svcs/Hns/Tpts)

(Vn/Vlal"Str")

(Low Strl/Tbns/Bsn)

123 By God, you know you've got to March on, _____ boys!

124 125 126 Percy:

world is say-ing not to, By God, you know you've got to March on, _____ boys! Nev-er

T1/Percy, T2/Bari, Bs:

(Tpt1)

(Tpt2)

(Hns)

("Pno")

127 [France!] 128 129 130 All:

hold back your step for a mo- ment! Look a - live! Oh, your cour- age will grow! Yes, it's

tr

(Picc, Fl tr/Vns 8va)

("Pno"/Ob)

(Hns/Tbns)

(Hns/Tbns)

131 132 133 T1/T2,B1/B2 (~Percy) T1,T2/Bari/Bs:

high - er and high - er And in - to the fire we go

(Picc)

(Vns)

(Vns)

(Brs)

(Hns/Brs)

("Pno")

(Vcl/Bs)

ff
(Timp)

9

134 Percy: 135 Percy, Ten: 136

In - to fire Bari: Bs: On - ward

(Sn. Dr) (+Field Dr) (Vns)

(Piccl/"Glock" 8va)

(Hns)

(Low Str/Tbn1-2/Bsn)

[As the number ends, the scene is transformed from Percy's schooner to the Place de la Bastille.]

137 Percy, Ten: (straight tone) 138 139 (add vibrato) 140

Bari, Bs: ho!

(Field Dr/Sn. Dr) **END**

Applause segue