

SCARAMOUCHE

*adapted from the novel
by Rafael Sabatini*

by Craig Sodaro

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STORY OF THE PLAY

It is 1797, shortly before the French Revolution. Unsure of his parentage, Andre Louis Moreau is definitely sure of himself. Raised by a wealthy noble, Andre has had every advantage in life. Now in his early twenties and a lawyer, Andre is being swept up in the spirit of rebellion overtaking France. When a peasant is shot for poaching on the land of the Marquis de La Tour d'Azyr, Andre accompanies his friend Philippe to demand recompense from the Marquis. Goaded into a duel, Philippe is killed and Andre vows revenge.

When Andre incites the people to rise up against the King's legal representative, he becomes an outlaw with a price on his head. He meets up with the Binet Troupe, a group of traveling actors. Andre joins them as the dashing Scaramouche, a character not unlike his own: rash, bold, daring, but willing to escape at an opportune moment. As Scaramouche, Andre can stay in disguise and not fear being arrested.

Soon Andre falls in love with his leading lady, Climene. She, however, is taken with the Marquis de La Tour d'Azyr, a man of nobility and wealth. After she spends a weekend at his chateau, Andre's world crashes in on him and from the stage he demands the audience attack and kill the Marquis. Though the Marquis escapes, Andre can no longer appear as Scaramouche.

But his friend, Le Chapelier, president of the National Assembly, has more important things for Andre to do. The Marquis has been goading unwitting representatives of the people into duels and killing them. Le Chapelier asks Andre to balance the slate with his superior swordsmanship. With Philippe's death still to be avenged, Andre agrees. As all of Paris is in turmoil and roving bands of peasants attack the nobles, Andre stands face-to-face with the Marquis, ready for a duel to the death.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

(10 m, 10 w, 4 flexible, plus extras)

(Doubling possible)

CLIMENE: The elder, about thirty.

CUSTOMER ONE

CUSTOMER TWO

MADAME SOUFFRAGE: An interested customer at the cafe.

LEANDRE: The elder, also about thirty.

ANDRE LOUIS MOREAU (SCARAMOUCHE): Early twenties.

QUENTIN DE KERCADOIS: His uncle, fifty.

PHILIPPE DE VILMORIN: A friend, early twenties.

ALINE DE KERCADOIS: Quentin's niece, early twenties.

MARQUIS DE LA TOUR D'AZYR: Wealthy landowner, twenties.

DE CHABRILLANE: Cousin of Marquis, about thirty.

DE LESDIGUIERES: King's Lieutenant.

LE CHAPELIER: Friend of Andre's, early twenties.

POLCHINELLE: An actor, about twenty.

LEANDRE: The younger, twenty.

CLIMENE: The younger, twenty.

MADAME BINET: Head of the troupe, forty.

COLUMBINE: An actress, about twenty.

GISELLE: A servant girl, late teens.

ROMAINE: Another.

MADAME LAGRON: A widow, thirty.

MADAME GARNIER: A mother, speaks briefly in the Assembly.

SECOND: Non-speaking role, assists at duel.

SERVANT

NOTE: Additional production notes and a pronunciation guide can be found at the end of the script.

SYNOPSIS OF SCENES

ACT I

Scene 1: Cafe Teatre, somewhere in Paris, 1797, then the Chateau of Quentin de Kercadois, 1789.

Scene 2: Garden at the Chateau de Gavrilac, a short time later.

Scene 3: The Salle de Pas Perdu in Nantes (the headquarters of the King's legal representative in Nantes), a week later.

Scene 4: A barn somewhere in the countryside outside of Nantes, that night.

Scene 5: An upstairs room at an inn in Nantes, serving as the green room, three days later.

Scene 6: The green room at the Comedie Francaise, Paris, several weeks later.

Scene 7: The same, the following Monday.

ACT II

Scene 1: Le Chapelier's apartment in Paris, immediately after.

Scene 2: The Assembly Hall at Versailles (Hall of Manege), several days later.

Scene 3: Le Chapelier's apartment in Paris, the following morning.

Scene 4: The Bois de Boulogne, a short time later.

Scene 5: The Paris apartment of Quentin de Kercadois, that afternoon.

NOTE: It is very important to keep the play moving with no real breaks between the scenes. The action is continuous and fluid. The script has been broken into scenes for ease of production and to aid in understanding when and where the episodes occur. The only real break, however, comes between Acts I and II.

ACT I
Scene 1

(The Cafe Teatre, somewhere on the left bank of Paris, 1797. The tables far left and right are decked with checkered tablecloths and candles. Up center are platforms which include a stairway up left that provides an exit thanks to a wall or curtain. An archway up right serves as an entrance to the cafe. Up right costumes hang on a series of hooks. A generic pastoral scene is painted behind the main platform. Furniture consists of crude benches and chairs along with a table set on the main platform. The table is not covered with a checkered tablecloth. The decor reflects a run-down, low class cafe. AT RISE: Two CUSTOMERS sit at table left, lingering over glasses of wine. CLIMENE enters right, crosses to them. She carries a tray holding a bottle.)

CLIMENE: Another?

CUSTOMER ONE: Oui, Madam.

CUSTOMER TWO: Those costumes, there ... are they real?

CLIMENE: As real as any costume can be real.

CUSTOMER ONE: You are a philosopher!

CLIMENE: A realist. Costumes are disguises. Therefore,
how can they be real?

CUSTOMER TWO: You were on the stage?

CLIMENE: You see that poster?

CUSTOMER ONE: Quelle belle femme!

CLIMENE: Oui, Monsieur ... quelle belle femme.

CUSTOMER TWO: She is you?

CLIMENE: The wine, she improves with age. We humans
are not so lucky!

*(CLIMENE and CUSTOMERS laugh as MADAME
SOUFFRAGE enters through arch.)*

MADAME SOUFFRAGE: Excuse me?

CLIMENE: Oui, madame! A table?

Scaramouche

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(LEANDRE enters from stairs and stands on bottom one during next speeches.)

MADAME SOUFFRAGE: That depends.

CUSTOMER ONE: I'll vouch for the wine.

MADAME SOUFFRAGE: Are these the remnants of the Binet Troupe?

CLIMENE: Oui, Madam ... but how did you know?

MADAME SOUFFRAGE: I have my sources.

LEANDRE: What business do you have with the Binet Troupe?

MADAME SOUFFRAGE: *(Moving to LEANDRE.)* Could this be ... no, no, I think not.

CLIMENE: Whom do you seek?

MADAME SOUFFRAGE: Scaramouche!

LEANDRE: Scaramouche? I've not thought of that devil in a very long time.

MADAME SOUFFRAGE: You knew him?

LEANDRE: I am Leandre, and this is Climene.

CLIMENE: But alas ... there is no Scaramouche.

LEANDRE: A casualty of the Revolution?

CLIMENE: Last seen racing from Paris ... years ago.

MADAME SOUFFRAGE: I would like a table.

LEANDRE: The choice is yours.

MADAME SOUFFRAGE: *(Sitting.)* And on that gentleman's recommendation ... some wine.

CLIMENE: *(Pouring.)* May I be so bold as to ask why you are looking for Scaramouche?

MADAME SOUFFRAGE: I am writing a piece for "Le Figaro."

LEANDRE: A woman?

MADAME SOUFFRAGE: One of the benefits of all the bloodletting is that we females have improved our status slightly. Monsieur de Belleville, the editor ... he has often wondered about Scaramouche ... what can you tell me? Where did he come from? What was he like?

LEANDRE: *(Thinking back.)* Where to begin ... he was born with a gift of laughter ... and a sense that the world was mad!

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