Part III:

The History and Characters behind the Phantom
History of *Phantom*

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**Question for discussion:**

*What is a Phantom?*
History of *Phantom*

The Phantom character, often referred to as the “Opera Ghost”, is a man that causes mysterious “accidents” at the Paris Opera House if the theater is not being run according to what he thinks is best. While some workers claim he is not real, the old owner of the theater paid him 20,000 francs a month to stay in his lair and not hurt or harass the people in the theater.
History of *Phantom*

As a novel, the story’s popularity was very little..... *However*, once it became a theater production/ movie, it has become of the most famous stories in the history of the European and American culture.

- Has been seen by more than 130 million people.
- Has been produced in 145 cities in 27 countries.
- Has made over $5.6 BILLION dollars in show revenue
- Movie version has pulled in over $158 MILLION at the world-wide box-office, rivaling many of the most famous movies of all time.
- Is Broadway’s longest running show ever (24 years)
Our story centers around our Phantom. Although his name is never mentioned in the film, in the book his name is Erik. He is played by Gerard Butler.
Characters of *Phantom*

Yeah, that guy that played King Leonidas from *300*
Characters of *Phantom*

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Characters of *Phantom*

*High-pitched voice:*
That’s the same guy!?!?
Characters of *Phantom*

High-pitched voice:
That’s the same guy!?!?
It is a little strange to see such an action star singing in an Opera movie, but he does a good job, promise!

Characters of *Phantom*
Characters of *Phantom*

You know you want to say it like this:
Characters of *Phantom*

Erik wears a mask because he was born with a facial deformity. His appearance was so bad that, even as a baby, his own mother did not love, hug, or kiss him at all.

His father was a master mason who built many famous structures around the world, but Erik could not live with the fact that his mother did not love him so he ran away at a young age and joined a group of travelling gypsies.
He was an attraction for the “freak show” part of the gypsy carnival called “Le Mort Vivant” or “the Living Dead”. He hid his deformity as much as he could, but while living with the gypsies he became a great illusionist, magician and ventriloquist.
Characters of *Phantom*

Erik’s talents, freak show appearance, and his great singing voice, made him a well known performer and he was offered a job by the Shah of Persia as an entertainer, advisor and mason to help build an elaborate palace called Mazenderan- designed with so many trap doors and secret rooms that nothing could be considered private.
Characters of *Phantom*

Erik’s position as advisor leads him to becoming the Shah’s political assassin. He is trusted by the Shah and gains much power and influence learning the country’s political secrets. Erik gains quite a reputation as an assassin, famous for using a unique noose referred to as his “Punjab Lasso”.

[Diagram of the Punjab Lasso]
Characters of *Phantom*

Erik was so powerful and feared that stories of his assassinations caused people who crossed him to warn each other to keep their hands “at the level of their eyes”-

To always be ready to block Erik’s lasso from getting them around the neck!
Characters of *Phantom*

Before long, the Shah worries that Erik has learned too much and gained too much power, so he orders him blinded and executed. A friend of Erik’s, referred to as “the Persian” helps smuggle Erik out of the country and they escape.
Characters of *Phantom*

They flee to Constantinople (between Persia and Europe) where Erik is again commissioned by the ruler to build parts of a grand palace called Yildiz-Kiosk.
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Just Kidding.
This is it.
Characters of *Phantom*

Again, his strong personality and multiple talents lead to him being feared and exiled because he knows too much and is becoming too powerful for the ruler. He flees to spend time with the Tonkin Pirates of the region—picking up many fighting and survival skills.
Characters of *Phantom*

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Characters of *Phantom*

Eventually he wants to live a normal life like normal people, so he moves to Paris and works as a contractor building houses, eventually winning a contract to build the Palais Garnier (Pah-lay Gar-knee-A) – the famous Paris Opera House, or *Opéra Populaire* in French.
Characters of *Phantom*

In building this famous Opera House, the Phantom built in numerous trapdoors and secret passageways. Erik even included a secret lair for himself within the Opera House, where he could live and not be bothered, as he planned to spend the next 20 years writing an epic musical theater piece of his own that he would be remembered by.
Setting of *Phantom*

This is where the bulk of the story takes place, in the 1870’s.
The Paris Opera House
Other characters and background to *Phantom*
La Carlotta

Carlotta Giudicelli is the Opera House’s Prima Donna headliner soprano singer. A symbol for the definition of Prima Donna today, she is a talented performer, but thrives on drama and demands special treatment or else she will quit. She does not work well with others; she is very vain.
Ubaldo Piangi is the Opera’s tenor singer, working with La Carlotta. He is the male lead in the productions, and for comic relief, always has a “little person” following him around on stage, copying his every move—audiences loved this!
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Richard Fermin and Gilles Andre have just made a fortune in the “scrap metal” business, and recently bought the Opera House. They know very little about musical theater, and so the Phantom leaves them notes on how he wants “his theater” to be run appropriately.
Helping to fund the new owners is their “patron” or financier. This is Raoul, who comes from a very wealthy family. His title is the Vicomte de Chagny- and he is excited to be a part of helping pay for the day to day operation of the arts performed at the Opera Populaire.
Characters of *Phantom*

The Opera House not only employs hundreds of people to make the daily theater shows work, but many dancers and singers that are not rich actually live there. Many young orphans and talented poor children leave home to live and work for the theater company.
Madame Giry is one of the longest tenured managers of the Opera House. She is in charge of the girls who there, as well as being famous for teaching and choreographing the ballet dancing numbers during the musicals. Her daughter, Meg, is one of the talented dancers who lives in the Opera House.
Christine Daae (dye-yay) was raised by her musician father Gustave because her mother died when she was six. She grew up following her father around as he performed, often spending time with Raoul’s family - they played and read stories together - as childhood sweethearts.
Christine’s father would read her and Raoul Scandinavian fairy tales and tales of the Angel of Music who bestows musical talents to his students- and their favorite story of Little Lotte (Lot-E)- a girl who finds an injured bird and nurses it back to health- this becomes Raoul’s nickname for Christine.
Unfortunately, a few years later, her father died as well, leaving her an orphan. She moved to the Paris Opera House where she currently lives and works in the musicals. She wants to honor her father by pursuing a life of the arts—singing and dancing.
Christine

When Christine’s father died, he told her that he would visit her as an angel- the Angel of Music (from their childhood stories). This is good, because when Christine first arrives at the Opera, her voice was bad- they describe it sounding like “a rusty hinge” squeaking on a door.
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Luckily for Christine, our Phantom is a very gifted music teacher and spends years tutoring Christine in secret- never showing himself to her, but letting her believe that he is the “Angel of Music” that is either her father’s spirit, or sent by her father to watch over her and guide her.

By pretending to be this Angel of Music, Christine obeys and loves her “angel”, and Erik has fallen in love with Christine- dedicating his epic opera that he is writing to her.
As the our story begins, the new owners have not paid the Phantom his salary, so he causes “accidents” in the rehearsal that leads Carlotta to quit, and Christine to get her “big break” as the leading Opera singer, under his teaching.
Christine

Unfortunately, all of this happens at the same time that Raoul shows up with the two new owners. Christine learns that she loves both the Phantom and Raoul, and both men love her as well....
Christine

Sounds vaguely familiar....
Christine
Sounds vaguely familiar....
Christine

In fact, they are often compared...
Christine

Which side will you choose if there is no vampire/werewolf option?
Christine has to choose between the “beast” who is rough around the edges but loves her, and the town’s rich and handsome bachelor who loves her too.

I think I’ve seen that before, too...
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I think I’ve seen that before, too...
Let’s Recap:

This is the Phantom of the Opera-

What do you know about him, his life, his history, his story?

5 Facts:
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
Let’s Recap:

This is Christine-

What do you know about her, her life, her history, her story?

3 Facts:
1. 
2. 
3. 
Let’s Recap:
This is Raoul-
What do you know about him, his life, his history, his story?
3 Facts:
1.
2.
3.