

THE IMAGINARIUM  
OF DOCTOR PARNASSUS

by

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A OMITTED A

LONDON 2007.....NOW

1 EXT NIGHT URBAN TERRACE 1

A row of rundown terrace houses. Some are boarded up. Not all the street lights work. Those that do cast shadows of parked vehicles glistening in the rain.

A front door opens and a man appears with rubbish which he starts to empty into a bin. He hears something and looks up to see four big horses pulling a hulking great wagon down the middle of the street. The wagon is a gigantic windowless box. The horses are harnessed and there are reins but no sign of a driver. It's a very weird sight. Unable to take his eyes off this amazing apparition as it passes, the man doesn't notice the rubbish missing the bin and heaping up around his feet.

2 EXT/INT NIGHT PARKED CAR IN STREET 2

A YOUNG COUPLE are snogging in the back of a parked car. Music is playing on the radio.

They are interrupted by heavy vibrations and the terrifying sight of the huge looming horse-drawn box as it trundles past.

3 EXT NIGHT THE TOWN HALL CLOCK 3

The clock shows and strikes 2am.

4 EXT NIGHT A DINGY BACK STREET 4

The wagon comes to a halt. A pause... and then the back begins to open, top, bottom and sides, like a dark menacing flower unfolding its petals.

While this is happening THE CAMERA tracks around to reveal a garishly lit club across the street.

A group of DRUNKEN YOUTHS emerge from the club, staggering, laughing, shouting, drinking, breaking bottles, and throwing up. The LADS grope the GIRLS. Everyone's having "a great time".

They see the wagon and stop, unsteadily, in their tracks.

(CONTINUED)

MARTIN

What the...!

We now see what they see. The wagon has been converted into a stage. We're looking at an old fashioned and very shabby travelling theatre. Electric footlights are powered by a clanking generator. The pediment above the stage carries the words: THE IMAGINARIUM OF DOCTOR PARNASSUS.

PERCY, a dwarf, dressed as a medieval demon and rigged out as a one-man band plays a fanfare introducing a young man (ANTON, 18-19 years old) who emerges from the back of the stage dressed as MERCURY, the messenger of the gods, with wings on his helmet and sandals.

ANTON/MERCURY

Ladies and Gentlemen... Step up!  
Step up!... I, Mercury, the  
messenger of the gods, invite  
you... tonight, for one night  
only... at this very venue... to  
enter the mind, the very great  
mind, of Doctor Parnassus!

PERCY does a roll on the drum as a curtain behind ANTON/MERCURY rises to reveal DOCTOR PARNASSUS - he appears to be an Indian holy man - long scraggly beard, chalk white make up, a large red circle on his bald head, a crown of yellow flowers, strings of beads, and partially covered in a loose-fitting swath of white cloth - apparently levitating several feet above the stage. (He's sitting on a glass plinth). DOCTOR PARNASSUS is seemingly in a trance. A bronze tripod containing burning incense stands beside him.

ANTON/MERCURY (CONT'D)

Doctor Parnassus... as old as  
time... has the power to empower  
the mind. Let Doctor Parnassus open  
your imagination. Let him transport  
you to worlds you've never dreamt  
of... If you dare. The choice is  
yours and yours alone. Transcend  
the heights on Beauty's wing.

A young woman, VALENTINA, (wearing a wig of long blonde hair and a white, flowing costume) stands facing an elaborately framed FULL-LENGTH MIRROR nestled upstage amongst cut-out trees representing a forest... This is 'Beauty'. She turns and steps forward.

ANTON takes her hand. They make a couple of dance steps together. They look enchanting and enchanted.

(CONTINUED)

ANTON/MERCURY (CONT'D)  
(to the audience)  
Or, if you must...

Now PERCY, in demon costume, leaps from behind the scenery .

ANTON/MERCURY (CONT'D)  
... scour the squalid depths with  
Putrid's brother, Stench!

PERCY blows a loud raspberry.

ANTON/MERCURY (CONT'D)  
But... Beware... there are dangers.

PERCY indicates a ticket dispenser attached to the front of  
the stage.

PERCY  
Take a ticket and join the queue!  
Only five quid a go! No bigger  
bargain while planet earth lasts!

A beer bottle lands on the stage

The DRUNKEN YOUTHS cheer.

ANTON/MERCURY  
You choose... Fulfilment, grace and  
light or... Waste, filth and  
darkness.  
(under his breath,  
watching the drunk,  
MARTIN, with contempt)  
No prizes for guessing what you'll  
do.

MARTIN has begun, with difficulty, to clamber onto the stage.

His MATES laugh and shout encouragement.

ANTON  
(not in character.. he  
stutters)  
No. Sorry. That's n-not allowed.  
You have to t-take a t-ticket  
first.

ANTON tries to prevent MARTIN from getting on stage. But  
MARTIN thumps ANTON and pulls him into the 'audience'.

MARTIN'S drunken MATES laugh and applaud. They begin tossing ANTON'S helmet around.

PERCY tries to block him but MARTIN kicks him off the stage. PERCY lands on the ground with a crash.

More laughter from the MOB.

VALENTINA retreats backstage.

MARTIN  
(drunkenly to PARNASSUS)  
Hey you...I wanna audition. I  
wan... I wanna be a star... I  
wanna...

MARTIN performs a little dance and then turns to tweak DOCTOR PARNASSUS' beard (PARNASSUS is still in his trance).

VALENTINA  
(returning with a club in  
her hand)  
Stop! Get off the stage!

MARTIN spins around surprisingly fast, snatches the club from her hand, lets it drop it to the ground, then turns his bleary focus to VALENTINA.

MARTIN  
Thas a nice pair of tits.

MARTIN'S mates roar their approval.

VALENTINA  
Get off the stage!

MARTIN  
No. I wan you... I wan you...

MARTIN lunges at VALENTINA who retreats up stage.

MARTIN blunders into the scenery as he pursues VALENTINA who stays just out of reach...behind a cut-out tree..behind the MIRROR. MARTIN chases after her... around they go.. finally she is cornered in front of the MIRROR. No escape.

Clearly frightened but, with no other choice available, VALENTINA turns and dives through the mirror (it is made of flexible reflective material slit down the middle). MARTIN crashes after her.

5 INT/EXT MAGICAL FOREST

5

The stage set, which was clearly only a few feet deep, now seems much deeper and to contain many more cut-out trees.

VALENTINA weaves in and out of the 2 dimensional trees as MARTIN chases her further into the increasingly magical forest. Her costume has been transformed into a rainbow studded with diamonds.

VALENTINA comes into view. MARTIN is in hot pursuit.

MARTIN

Come here, gorgeous!

VALENTINA stops, turns, smiles sweetly and slams her fist hard into MARTIN'S gut. He doubles up. Then a left to the chin jerks him upwards. A right cross... and MARTIN crashes to the ground. VALENTINA pauses for a moment, contemplating doing some serious damage, before striding off.

MARTIN staggers to his feet.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Come back! You bitch!

He rushes after her but, trips on a root (a real 3 dimensional tree root) and pitches face first to the ground. Recovering, he looks up. Shock. He is surrounded by a dark, terrible, and very REAL forest. THE SAME DREAM-REAL FOREST WE SAW AT THE BEGINNING OF THE FILM.

VALENTINA has vanished.

As MARTIN wipes the mud from his face, his hands tell him something is wrong. He looks at his reflection in a nearby puddle of water and SCREAMS. THE FACE IS NO LONGER HIS! IT IS SOMEONE ELSE'S! AN OLD DRUNK!

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Miss..oh missy..help!...I'm  
sorry...please! Anybody there?

5A EXT THE STAGE NIGHT

5A

VALENTINA slips back on stage through the mirror. Her costume has reverted to its original state. She examines her sore knuckles.

(CONTINUED)

5A

CONTINUED:

5A

DR. PARNASSUS is still in a trance, his lips moving soundlessly.

5B

INT/EXT MAGICAL FOREST

5B

MARTIN is lost and terrified in the dark forest.. WADING THROUGH THOUSANDS OF DISCARDED BEER CANS AND BOOZE BOTTLES.

MARTIN

Mum...Mum!...Help! Anybody...?

His voice echoes through the giant trees. But his cries are interrupted by another sound...a Tarzan-like howl.

MARTIN spins around. Strange creatures are swinging on vines through the giant trees. They are all around him.

They look like HANDS... with little heads and arms where the wrists should be. They are all howling and jabbering.

From behind, a HAND CREATURE swings down and grabs MARTIN by the collar, hoisting him high into the air.

Clearing the trees, MARTIN sees he is not alone. There are many other people - drunkards - all in the clutches of HAND CREATURES swinging on "vines"... actually long, slim tentacles... dangling from enormous, luridly coloured JELLYFISH that float through the dark, frightening, sky.

From some of the tentacles, bottles of booze dangle - just out of reach of the struggling drunks - all desperate for a drink.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Please... I'll never...! Never drink again!. Honest!... From now on... I swear!.. Not a drop!

With a smile of satisfaction, the HAND CREATURE stops jabbering and let's go of the MARTIN's collar.

Down he plummets.

MARTIN (CONT'D)

Oh, God!..Oh..NOOOOO!

The rocky ground rushes up. MARTIN is as good as dead. He hits the ground. But, rather than going SPLAT!!, he bounces high in the air, turns a couple somersaults and lands on his feet...the landing all drunks dream of.

(CONTINUED)

Astonished, completely sobered, MARTIN starts to dust himself, off but stops... he hears music. Beautiful, ethereal music. Let's call this PARNASSUS' THEME.

In the distance a light is glowing. It's the sun, rising above a majestic mountain pass. Cut into the rock, is a long stairway winding up to the summit.

The HAND CREATURE swings down, gives MARTIN the "thumbs up", and points encouragingly toward the stairway.

Reformed and determined, MARTIN heads for the stairs. But on reaching them he discovers that each one is 6 feet high. The stairway is ridiculously steep and difficult. Letters are carved into the first stair..."THE 12X12X12 STEP PROGRAM...GOOD LUCK". This is going to be tough.

The sound of a honky-tonk piano makes him turn. Behind him the sky is dark. A roadside bar/nightclub with flashing neon lights - "MR. NICK'S LOUNGE & BAR" - has appeared.

He hesitates. He could use a drink before the long climb. He heads for the club.

The door to the club is opened by a mechanical fairground figure of a jolly smiling man (MR NICK) distinguished by a bowler hat and a red waistcoat.

MR NICK  
Hi there. C'mon in. Looks like you  
could use a drink.

MARTIN, relieved and reassured by the welcome, steps inside. The door closes followed by the sound from within of much gaiety and laughter.

THE CAMERA pulls back as the bar/nightclub suddenly EXPLODES IN A GREAT BALL OF FLAME.

..the sounds of police sirens. We are back outside the nightclub. A fight has started amongst the drunken REVELLERS. A window breaks.

THE POLICE ARRIVES and start making arrests.

On stage, VALENTINA slips back through the mirror. Her costume has reverted to its original state. She examines her sore knuckles.

ANTON looks at her. She shrugs, looks nervously at DR. PARNASSUS - still in a trance, his lips moving soundlessly. He begins humming the beautiful, ethereal music we heard earlier - PARNASSUS' THEME. He is very intense, struggling with difficulty..then he seems to experience an agonizingly painful, internal explosion.

The drunken chaos is getting more violent. The POLICE arrive and start making arrests.

DR. PARNASSUS rises unsteadily, coming out of his arduous trance.... VALENTINA moves to support him as - exhausted, depressed, deflated - he loses his balance.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

(holding his head)

I lost again.. I lost him...

(turning on VALENTINA)

What did you think you were doing..?

VALENTINA

(indignant)

He was chasing me.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

(angry)

You don't go through the mirror!  
Never! Not ever!

DRUNKEN GIRL (V.O.)

Martin!...Martin!...

A distraught, hysterical, DRUNKEN GIRL tries to climb onto the stage.. she throws a bottle at VALENTINA.

FRIEND OF MARTIN

Marty!? Marty, where are you?

(a POLICEMAN grabs him)

Oi! Leave off..it's them..they've got our mate back there.

DRUNKEN GIRL

He went with that cow! I'll scratch her eyes out!

A POLICEWOMAN grabs the DRUNKEN GIRL and drags her, struggling, into police van.

MARTIN'S FRIENDS are searching for him around the stage.

POLICEMAN  
(to PARNASSUS)  
You! Gunga Din! What do you think  
you're playing at!?

DR. PARNASSUS  
'Playing'? We don't 'play'! What we  
do is deadly serious!

DR. PARNASSUS pushes aside the mirror to reveal a door in the  
back wall of the shallow stage. It is swinging open.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
Gone. Will we miss him? I don't  
think so.

The POLICEMAN looks and frowns.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS (CONT'D)  
(to the POLICEMAN  
condescendingly)  
Don't worry if you don't understand  
it immediately.

PERCY intervenes... steers DR. PARNASSUS away from the  
POLICEMAN.

POLICEMAN  
I want you freaks out of here!

PERCY kicks the POLICEMAN.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)  
(flustered)  
Ah!... Oh... sorry.. I didn't mean  
to say that word ..I meant.. uh..  
vertically deficient.. no.. not  
deficient.. crippled!.. no not  
crippled.. challenged .. vertically  
challenged?..  
(snapping)  
Damn it!... Get off my beat or I'll  
do the lot of you for something!...  
(turning to crowd)  
Oi! You! Move on!

9 EXT BACK STREETS DAWN 9

The sky is grey with the first light of dawn. The wagon rolls off down the dark street as a dust cart rumbles into view and its CREW begin emptying bins and picking up rubbish.

10 EXT A HOLIDAY FAIR NIGHT 10

CLOSE-UP on the terrified faces of PEOPLE screaming. PULL BACK to show these people enjoying a gut-wrenching ride.

Now we see and hear shooting galleries. Music. Loud aggressive rides. PEOPLE milling around.

The wagon is parked at the edge of the fair. The stage is set. ANTON dressed as Mercury is juggling and trying to attract an audience, without much success.

ANTON

Step up! Step up! For one night  
only! The Imaginarium of Dr.  
Parnassus! Not to be missed!

On stage is DOCTOR PARNASSUS, 'levitating' and in a trance, as before. Incense smoke swirls around him.

ANTON (CONT'D)

Test your imagination! Envisage the  
sublime. Let Doctor Parnassus be  
your guide. Discover the heights of  
Wisdom...

VALENTINA dances forward, looking fabulous as 'Wisdom'.

ANTON (CONT'D)

... Or, if you will, visit the  
doldrums with all that's vile and  
stinks.

PERCY as a demon with wings, descends on a wire from the top of the stage.

PERCY

(indicating ticket  
machine)

Take a ticket and wait your turn.  
Twenty quid a go, reduced to five  
for one night only!

(CONTINUED)

ANTON

The world is full of wonders,  
beauty, enchantment, for those with  
eyes to see...

He magically produces a bouquet of flowers. Throws it into the air.. it transforms into a chicken with a brightly coloured bow around it's neck..

This impressive trick is totally ignored by a group loudly arguing just in front of the stage - THE FAMILY FROM HELL.

LINDA

(aged 7)

Mum... Mum... I want to go on the  
wall of death?

MUM

Stop going on, Linda! You're not  
old enough!

DAD

They won't let you, darling.

LINDA

But I want to!!! I want to!!!

MUM

LINDA!

DR. PARNASSUS stirs from his trance. He's had enough of this.  
ANTON is juggling.

DR. PARNASSUS

Excuse me! Excuse me! Would you  
mind...

LINDA

It's not fair.

UNCLE BOB

It's the fair, but it's not fair!

UNCLE BOB laughs uproariously. LINDA pushes him into AUNTY  
FLO.

AUNTY FLO

Ow! Bloody hell!

Diego - aged 9 and absorbed in his portable video game  
wanders away from the family.

MUM

LINDA! BEEHAVE YOURSELF! I'M  
WARNING YOU!

DAD

Leave her alone!

DR. PARNASSUS

Please! This is The Imaginarium! It  
requires respect, concentration...  
Kindly go elsewhere and take your  
detritus with you?

MUM

Is he insulting us?

DAD

(to the DR. PARNASSUS,  
threateningly)

Oy!

PARNASSUS ignores him and resumes his trance.

Unnoticed by all, DIEGO has somehow managed to climb onto the  
stage and is peering at the mirror.

MUM

(looking around)  
Diego!? Where's Diego?

DAD

DIEGO!?

VALENTINA turns her head just in time to see DIEGO vanish  
through the mirror.

She starts to go after him, then hesitates.

VALENTINA

(trying to get ANTON'S  
attention)  
Pssst!

She mimes to ANTON that a certain someone has gone into the  
mirror.

ANTON

(silently mouthing)  
.. the mirror?!

ANTON moves to wake DOCTOR PARNASSUS but thinks better of it.

10

ANTON (CONT'D)

Er... better not disturb him.

Looking uncertainly at VALENTINA, he makes a decision and steps through the mirror in pursuit of Diego. VALENTINA takes over the pitch.

VALENTINA

Ladies and Gentlemen... Dr. Parnassus offers you the challenge of a lifetime... Seize this opportunity to expand your narrow horizons. Test your metal. Let Dr. Parnassus be your guide.

11

INT/EXT MAGICAL LANDSCAPE

11

ANTON moves through the cut-out trees and discovers.. not a real and frightening forest but, a fantastic, brightly coloured landscape of Dr. Seuss-like hills and valleys. The sky is full of cloud-sized soap bubbles.

Diego, is now wearing soldiers camouflage gear, his hair spikey and aggressive, is in the distance using his game controller to make the bubbles bang into each other...trying to burst them.

We can hear VALENTINA trying to continue the pitch in the face of the family from hell. Their baby has now started wailing.

Cracks in the ground begin to appear under ANTON'S feet.

VALENTINA (V.O.)

Beauty, Truth, Wisdom, Justice...  
without imagination all are dead.

MUM (V.O.)

DIEGO!!!

DAD (V.O.)

DIEGO!!!

LINDA (V.O.)

DEGSY!

DR. PARNASSUS (V.O.)

OH FOR CRYING OUT LOUD! SHUT UP!  
(enraged)  
AAAHHHH!!!

(CONTINUED)

The landscape, in response to DR. PARNASSUS' rage suddenly rips apart, exploding and hurling ANTON into the air.

Blackness.

11A EXT A HOLIDAY FAIR NIGHT 11A

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
(furious)  
It's outrageous!

VALENTINA  
(worried)  
There's something happening... a kid..

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
I know..I know.

She is interrupted by THE INSPECTOR OF FAIRGROUNDS, holding a sheaf of papers, who arrives in front of the stage.

INSPECTOR  
Excuse me, have you got a license for this... circus?

DR. PARNASSUS  
We are not a circus!

MUM  
(tearfully)  
We've lost our son.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
(to Fairground Inspector)  
Do you have any idea the dangers of interrupting a deep trance!?!...  
Now..be quiet!

DAD  
(to the INSPECTOR)  
If one of you perverts got our boy, I won't be answerable for my actions.

DR. PARNASSUS begins to hum PARNASSUS' THEME...going back into his trance.

VALENTINA resumes her pitch.

VALENTINA

Let Doctor Parnassus open the  
infinite world of your imagination.  
But, be prepared to make a  
choice...

12 INT/EXT MAGICAL LANDSCAPE 12

As the dust settles, ANTON, recovering, struggles out from  
between gigantic blocks of stone. The world has gone dark.

He hears DIEGO crying somewhere in the distance and starts to  
clamber over the shattered monoliths..

Reaching the top, ANTON sees DIEGO on the peak of a distant  
rocky pinnacle surrounded by bottomless chasms. There are two  
suspension bridges spanning the void on either side of the  
pinnacle.

CUT TO DIEGO who is in a state of confusion and terror. Is he  
lost inside a video game he can't control? He presses the  
buttons on his gaming device - to no avail.

One of the bridges leads to a bluff where war games are under  
way.. "THE WAR FAIR".. guns blaze, planes bomb, tanks  
explode. Thrilling aggressive music blares forth. IT'S A  
MODERN VERSION OF PINOCCHIO'S BAD BOYS ISLAND.

MR NICK, still in red waist-coat and bowler hat, is now a CUT-  
OUT shooting target with a bull's-eye on his chest.

MR NICK

Come on laddy, cross the bridge!  
Join up! Be a man. Kill the enemy.  
Impress your dad. Unlimited ammo.  
Great fun. Pow! Pow! Pow!

As he speaks bullets fly. Each time MR.NICK gets shot and is  
knocked flat, he pops back up continuing his spiel.

Stray bullets strike DIEGO'S pinnacle causing him to duck.

MR NICK (CONT'D)

Whoops. Nothing to worry about.  
That's just friendly fire, son

The other bridge appears to be made of black and white piano  
keys.. very rickety and unsafe.

The piano key bridge descends into a great cavern where hundreds of BOY AND GIRL PIANISTS are practising on hundreds of pianos, all playing the same tune - PARNASSUS' THEME, but with stern, demanding, PIANO TEACHERS in attendance.

## PIANO TEACHERS

No, no, start again! Again! From the top! Again! Practice! Practice!

DIEGO doesn't know what to do.

Behind him rises a strange Mongolfier balloon. DR. PARNASSUS's face is repeated again and again around its circumference. ANTON'S in the basket.

DIEGO catches sight of ANTON.

DIEGO

Help!  
(indicating gaming device)  
It doesn't work! It's broken!

ANTON

What?

DIEGO

The game!

ANTON

What g-g-game?

DIEGO

The game! The video game! The one we're in!

ANTON

I d-d-don't know what you're t-t-talking about.

DIEGO

Help me!

ANTON

(miserable )  
I c-can't.

DIEGO

What?

ANTON

(ducking flying bullets)  
I'm n-not supposed to be here.

DIEGO

What am I going to do?

ANTON

That's the p-point. It's up to you.

DIEGO

(dismayed)

But... Don't leave me! Don't let me die!

But ANTON has gone.

DIEGO, terrified, tests the bridge to the war games.

MR NICK

Attaboy, sonny. Join the men.  
Nothing to it. Hup two, hup two.  
This is the bridge to manhood!

DIEGO hesitates...the music from the pianos seems to have an effect on him...a seductive siren song. He comes to a decision. He drops his gaming device then very hesitantly steps onto the extremely wobbly piano keys.

The CUT-OUT shooting target MR NICK isn't happy.

MR NICK (CONT'D)

No, wait! Bad choice! You're fingers are too short and stubby. Those are trigger fingers, son. Wrong way! That's the Parnassus way! That bridge leads to failure and despair. You'll be dead before you're thirty.

DIEGO looks uncertain, unnerved. For a moment we think he might change his mind, but as he steps on each of the piano keys making up the bridge, they play a note. Step by step he joins in the music.. playing his part. His face lights up and he presses bravely on across the bridge. The music swells.. from hundreds of pianos... rising to a magnificent chord as a monumental organ joins in.

At last, finally, there's a bit of a crowd around the theatre, but drawn only by the FAMILY FROM HELL who are making a lot of noise.

MUM

(hysterical)

He's been kidnapped! They've taken  
him! Do something, Dad, do  
something!

LINDA

I want my brother! I want my big  
brother!

On stage DR. PARNASSUS, smiling, continues to hum, deep in  
his trance-like state. The INSPECTOR OF FAIRS rattles on.

INSPECTOR

You cannot perform here without  
appropriate authorization.

Getting no response from DR. PARNASSUS he pulls out his  
mobile phone and dials.

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

(with phone to ear)

It's me. I need some support. We've  
got trouble.

ANTON steps out of the mirror. He produces an inflated  
balloon which he releases and which then flies, zig-zagging  
out over the audience.

DR. PARNASSUS, wakes in time to see the balloon.

A roll on the drums from PERCY.

INSPECTOR (CONT'D)

Where did you say you're from?

VALENTINA

I didn't.

He lifts his arm with a flourish whereupon a gloriously  
painted canvas sky unrolls from the top of the set disgorging  
DIEGO as it reaches the stage.

DR. PARNASSUS

Voila! That worked! Success! One  
little devil out of the fire!  
Perhaps eternity has not been in  
vain!...

DIEGO rolls out tumbles across the stage and lands next to  
the rest of his FAMILY. He's beaming, laughing, full of  
wonder, transformed by his experience.

(CONTINUED)

MUM

Diego! Where have you been? I've  
been worried sick!

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
(descending from his glass  
plinth)

He magically produces a Tarot Card from the startled  
INSPECTOR'S ear.

DAD smacks DIEGO round the back of the head.

DAD

And you can wipe that silly  
expression off your face, you  
little poof.

LINDA

(gleefully)  
You're in big trouble! You're in  
big trouble!

UNCLE BOB

You've upset your mum.

AUNTY FLO

He's spoilt our evening.

DAD

And where's your gamer? He's lost  
his bloody gamer! Another fifty  
quid down the drain. You're not  
getting another one! Bloody kids!  
Why do we bother?

THE FAMILY FROM HELL moves off.

DIEGO, full of wonder and oblivious to his family, looks back  
at PARNASSUS and wiggles his fingers as if he is playing the  
piano

PARNASSUS smiles and wiggles his fingers in response.

The INSPECTOR OF FAIRS is joined by a POLICEMAN and  
POLICEWOMAN.

POLICEMAN

What's the trouble?

DR. PARNASSUS  
Ah, the fuzz.

POLICEMAN  
What did you say?

DR. PARNASSUS  
(charmingly)  
Fuzzy Wuzzy was a bear, Fuzzy Wuzzy  
had no hair, Fuzzy Wuzzy wasn't  
fuzzy wuzzy?

POLICEMAN  
You taking the piss?

DR. PARNASSUS  
'The piss'?  
(to Percy?)  
Wuz I?

PERCY  
No, you wuzn't, wuz you.

DR. PARNASSUS  
I wuzn't. Wuz you?

PERCY  
Wuz I? Wuz he?...

The POLICE and the INSPECTOR exchange dark looks. Clearly they're dealing with a dangerous trouble-maker.

INSPECTOR  
(to Policeman)  
He hasn't got a permit.

POLICEMAN  
Right!

The POLICEMAN climbs onto the stage and heads towards Parnassus, pulling out his handcuffs as he goes.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)  
You're under arrest, Sir. I am  
required by law to caution you.

The POLICEMAN grabs PARNASSUS, roughly spins him around, pins his arms behind his back, and starts to handcuff him.

POLICEMAN (CONT'D)  
Anything you say may be taken down  
and used in evidence against you.

PARNASSUS eyes darken at this humiliation.

The handcuffs click closed. The POLICEMAN spins PARNASSUS back around to face him. PARNASSUS smiles and raises his hands..no handcuffs. The POLICEMAN is stunned. To his utter amazement he finds himself locked into his own handcuffs.

PARNASSUS pinches the POLICEMAN'S nose, forcing his mouth open, produces a key, pops it in the POLICEMAN'S mouth and taps him on the back. The POLICEMAN swallows the key.

PERCY tucks a pair of plastic gloves into the POLICEMAN'S belt.

PERCY  
You'll be needing these in a few hours.

A crowd has gathered...and are taking photos.

The POLICEMAN stands confused and humiliated.

DR. PARNASSUS  
Adieu, mon General.

DR PARNASSUS bows with a triumphant flourish.

DR. PARNASSUS (CONT'D)  
Thank you... and...Curtain!

13A INT BACK STAGE A MOMENT LATER 13A

ANTON is packing up the scenery. DR. PARNASSUS approaches.

DR. PARNASSUS  
(fiercely)  
Anton! You know the rules!!...

ANTON  
I'm s-s-sorry, sir, b-but...

DR. PARNASSUS  
(breaking into a smile)  
I know.. I know. You did well...good lad.

...and PARNASSUS heads off to his dressing room leaving ANTON beaming. VALENTINA, who has been watching, is not.

ANTON  
(off VALENTINA's scowl)  
W-w-what?...

VALENTINA  
(indignant)  
You go through the mirror and he's  
all over you. I do it once and...

ANTON  
C'mon, Valentina.. I'm not his  
irresistibly scrumptious  
daughter...

ANTON looks embarrassed for being so confident.

VALENTINA  
Anton!!....

14 INT BACK STAGE DRESSING ROOM A MOMENT LATER 14

Valentina, half-undressed, is struggling out of her costume while at the same time looking at a very battered copy of 'Homes and Gardens'.. ONE ADD CATCHES HER ATTENTION....AN IDEAL FAMILY IN A SLEEK MODERN HOME

Without make-up and costume she appears much younger. She has long, beautiful red hair.

A movement of something reflected in the dressing-room mirror catches her eye.

In the mirror we see MR NICK, not a CUT-OUT, but the real thing.

VALENTINA  
(startled, guiltily hiding  
'Homes and Gardens')  
Oh!

She turns, holding her dress to cover her modesty. There's nobody there.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)  
Who's that? Who's there?

15 EXT EDGE OF FAIR / THE WAGON CONTINUOUS 15

ANTON and PERCY are closing-up the wagon.

DR. PARNASSUS, out of his make-up and costume, is smiling and humming to himself as he removes the feed bag from one of the horses.

The horse lifts its head and DR PARNASSUS recoils in shock and horror. Standing directly behind the horse is MR. NICK... a huge grin splitting his face.

MR NICK

Hello Parney... It's been a while  
hasn't it?

PERCY, winding a rope onto a cleat, hears distant laughter and looks up.

CUT TO PERCY'S P.O.V. where we see, some distance away and in a relatively secluded spot, MR NICK rocking with laughter while DOCTOR PARNASSUS looks stricken. He clutches at the back of a park bench to steady himself.

CUT TO PERCY who looks thoughtful and worried. He heads off to help DOCTOR PARNASSUS as the latter slumps onto the bench. MR NICK has vanished.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

(distraught)  
He's come to collect.

PERCY

I thought so. He's early.

DR. PARNASSUS

What can I do?...

PERCY

(grimly)  
Nothing.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

There must be something... How many  
days left?

PERCY

Three.

He looks over to where VALENTINA is helping close the theatre. PERCY follows his gaze.

PERCY (CONT'D)

You're going to have to tell her.

16

EXT CITY STREETS LATER

16

The wagon makes its way through city streets.

ANTON is lying on the roof playing a concertina and singing. VALENTINA is sitting next to him lost in thought - abstractedly tapping one leg which has an anklet of bells that tinkle out of time with ANTON. There is a chicken in a cage.

PERCY is driving.

ANTON

*When the moon hits your eye like a big pizza pie, that's amore.. When the stars make you drool just like pasta fazool', that's amore...*

PERCY

Will you shut up about food! We're clean out..and I'm starving.

ANTON

We've still got a few potatoes.

PERCY

Potatoes?!

(he spits)

For what? More god-awful watery soup? I hate soup. Disgusting stuff. Makes me sick. Reminds me of prison.

PERCY grumbles on about soup.

ANTON

Look at that moon.

(no response from  
Valentina)

I've n-never seen it so b-big. And the stars...It's so c-clear.

PERCY holds his hand out, palm up.

PERCY

(sardonically)

Rain.

ANTON

Valentina?

VALENTINA  
(irritated)  
Val... Val.

ANTON  
I c-c-can't call you Val...  
P-Parnassus d-doesn't like it.

VALENTINA  
He's not here is he?  
(nodding towards the  
window at the back of the  
wagon)  
He's back in his box.

ANTON  
Are you happy?

VALENTINA  
(ironic)  
Ecstatic.

ANTON produces an old beaten-up copy of 'Beautiful Homes' and starts thumbing through it.

We see, in the magazine, a 1950's picture of the ideal family.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)  
That's mine! It's private.

She tries to snatch it from him. He flutters it out of her reach.

ANTON  
Do you really think you'd be happy  
in one of these p-places?....

VALETTINA  
Give it me! Anton!

She wrests it from him and hides it just as PERCY looks back at them.

ANTON  
(sotto voce)  
Would you? I'm mean I wouldn't. Not  
me....well maybe I would if you  
were there... N-not me.  
Well... m-maybe....  
(sotto voce)  
(MORE)

ANTON (CONT'D)

Look...you're always going on about escaping, right?..I'll help you..we'll run away. Make a new life together. We'll retrain. I'll become an accountant. I can juggle the books. And you can... well... We'll be rich..and happy. Just the two of us.

VALENTINA

Anton?

ANTON

You and me.

VALENTINA

Anton!

ANTON

What?

VALENTINA

Shut up.

ANTON drops his act. Along with it his confidence.

ANTON

Okay.

An awkward pause. ANTON throws his hands in the air in protest.

ANTON (CONT'D)

No! Why can't you see that I... that you.. that we..

VALENTINA

We're not running away together. I can't...

VALENTINA jingles the bells on her foot.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)

(teasingly)  
... I'm under age.

ANTON

(exasperated)  
Valentina.

VALENTINA

(knowingly, teasing)  
I shall be twelve on Wednesday.

ANTON  
Don't be ridiculous.

VALENTINA  
Percy? How old will I be on  
Wednesday?

PERCY  
Twelve.

VALENTINA  
See? That's what Parnassus says.  
Are you saying he's ridiculous?

ANTON  
No...

VALENTINA  
(teasing)  
I think you are. Would you like me  
to tell him for you?

ANTON  
He knows I worship him....

VALENTINA  
Yeah and he walks all over you.

ANTON  
I don't care. He's extraordinary...  
Like you.

VALENTINA  
Ugh! Here we go again..

ANTON  
You are.

VALENTINA  
I'm not. I don't want to be like  
him. I want to be like other  
people. Like these people.

Gestures to her magazine.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)  
You know... normal. Ordinary.  
You're so lucky.

ANTON isn't sure how to take this.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)  
(half apologetically)  
You know what I mean.

She gets up, kisses ANTON on the top of his head and climbs down into the hatch.

Anton looks thoughtful, bruised.

PERCY glances back.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)  
(popping back up)  
Actually, I'm going to be sixteen.  
(laughs)  
Sweet sixteen!  
(mischievously)  
The age of consent...

She shakes her bells and disappears below.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS' cabin is tiny. It's packed with books and memorabilia; Egyptian/Assyrian/Greek/etc., magic trick paraphernalia, and much else.

A hanging lantern suspended from the ceiling throws moving shadows.

DR. PARNASSUS is slumped despondently on a cramped bed. A plate of untouched food sits on a table in front of him.

He has laid out tarot cards. To the right - The Magus.. to the left - The Devil. The next card is The Maiden. He places it carefully beneath The Magus. He picks up an open bottle of spirits and takes a swig. Clearly he's already had a few drinks.

Tinkling bells from VALENTINA'S anklet alert PARNASSUS He hastily covers the Tarot cards.

DR. PARNASSUS  
Scrumpy...

VALENTINA O/S  
(cross with him)  
You haven't eaten anything.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
I know, I know...

Parnassus takes a swig from the bottle.

DR. PARNASSUS  
I should never have brought you  
into this rotten bloody world!

PARNASSUS starts to take a swig from the bottle. VALENTINA  
snatches it away from him.

VALENTINA  
You know that doesn't agree with  
you.

DR. PARNASSUS  
(agitated, ignoring her)  
Why does everybody want to live  
forever? Immortality's a bloody  
curse.

VALENTINA  
So is pretending to be a child.  
Look at me! You know I'm not 12!

DR. PARNASSUS  
Valentina..

VALENTINA  
(emphasising her bosom)  
Look! Just look at me! Nobody's  
fooled!

DR. PARNASSUS  
(in difficulty)  
Valentina, stop..I...I have  
something to tell you.

VALENTINA  
You can't stop me growing up just  
by lying about my birthday! It's  
ridiculous!

DR. PARNASSUS  
Shut up!

VALENTINA  
I'm an adult! I want this stupid  
thing off my ankle!

DR. PARNASSUS

Shut up and listen to me! I need to explain something, before it's too late! Sit down!

DR PARNASSUS reaches up and plucks a glass paperweight out of the air - the kind that contains little models which are engulfed in a snow storm when the paperweight is shaken.

DR. PARNASSUS shakes it and watches the 'snow' swirl about.

DR. PARNASSUS (CONT'D)

One dark winter's night.. Many years ago..

VALENTINA

Is this going to take long?

DR. PARNASSUS

QUIET!... Possibly.

THE CAMERA closes in on and 'enters' the paperweight.

DR. PARNASSUS (V.O.) (CONT'D)

Many.. many centuries ago, as a matter of fact... in another life...

18 EXT INSIDE THE PAPERWEIGHT NIGHT 18

A HOODED RIDER moves slowly through the snowstorm, the horse picking its way carefully across a field of virgin snow.

DR. PARNASSUS (V.O.)

... I was visited, in my sanctuary... by someone I had hoped never to meet. Someone none of us should ever hope to meet...

In the distance, rising like a dark mountain, is a strange monastery. Dim light comes from a couple of windows.

We can hear, from far away, the indistinct droning voice of the story teller, a younger DR. PARNASSUS.

THE CAMERA moves up over and way ahead of the HOODED RIDER, and enters one of the dimly lit monastery windows, taking us into a strange hall.

19

INT MONASTERY HALL NIGHT

19

Under a bronze bell one hundred feet tall, DOZENS OF MONKS are sitting in a circle.. humming a mysterious drone. A young DR. PARNASSUS, sits on a great tree stump in the middle of the circle, his eyes closed, in a trance. A couple of leaves hang from a small shoot growing out of the tree stump. PARNASSUS is reciting a story.

Oil lamps flicker, lighting the darkness.

DR. PARNASSUS

... Having captured the wind and tamed the storm, kept the stars in their orbit and the earth turning on its axis ... the Chief Steward, laying down to take his rest, had a disturbing dream... He dreamt that a hooded rider was approaching across the snow-swept plain. A rider who would challenge the very foundations of the world...

The bell suddenly tolls. Once..twice.. someone is at the door. The door swings open with a crash and a hurricane blast of wind and snow swirls through the hall forcing the monks to clutch on desperately to their hats and robes. One of the leaves on the branch falls to the floor.

Standing on the thresh-hold is the hooded figure, covered with snow.

He throws off his hood. It's MR NICK.

DR. PARNASSUS (CONT'D)

... The Steward woke and remembered his dream. What manner of man had he dreamt of, and what did it signify?

20

INT MONASTERY HALL LATER

20

DR. PARNASSUS and MR NICK are sitting in an alcove, warming themselves by a fireplace.. playing a game of chess.

On the tree stump, a MONK continues with the story. This monk is PERCY.

(CONTINUED)

PERCY

... And as the heavens changed  
course and the waters rose. The  
people demanded of the steward a  
tale... to take away their fears...  
a story to feed their hunger for a  
deeper truth. A hunger for more  
than just understanding...

PERCY continues telling the story in the background.

MR NICK

What exactly do you do here?

DR. PARNASSUS

We tell the eternal story.

MR NICK

Oh.... What's that?

DR. PARNASSUS

The story that sustains the  
universe. The story without which  
there is nothing.

MR NICK

Nothing? Really. Are you telling me  
that if you stop telling this  
story... that the universe ceases  
to exist?

DR. PARNASSUS

You make it sound so simple.

MR NICK

And you believe it?

DR. PARNASSUS smiles.

DR. PARNASSUS

We have been ordained for this  
task.

MR NICK

Incredible. It's just incredible to  
me that you can believe something  
that can be so easily disproved.

DR. PARNASSUS

(complacently)  
I don't think so.

MR NICK turns and throws a spell at PERCY who goes rigid like a statue - struck dumb. The story stops.

DR. PARNASSUS (CONT'D)  
(alarmed)  
No!

Another MONK, sitting at the table, immediately continues the story.

SUBSTITUTE MONK  
..having been brought to the limit  
of his endurance...

MR NICK freezes him too, stopping him from speaking.

A third monk continues.

THIRD MONK  
...yet the forces of evil could not  
prevail, and...

MR.NICK renders him silent.

DR. PARNASSUS  
Stop!

MR NICK zaps DR. PARNASSUS and all the other MONKS. All still. None of them can speak.

MR NICK  
There you are. You see. The story's  
stopped. No more story... And yet,  
we're still here, the fire's still  
burning...

He pushes open a window.

MR NICK (CONT'D)  
It's still snowing. The wind's  
still blowing. Nothing's changed.

DR. PARNASSUS and the MONKS, still struck dumb, look appalled as the last leaf falls from the branch..

MR NICK (CONT'D)  
Cheer up... I've freed you from  
this ridiculous nonsense.

MR NICK undoes the spell...at the same time sneakily rearranging one of the chess pieces... in his favour.

The MONKS moan. DR. PARNASSUS slumps down in despair.

MR NICK smiles and lights a cigarette. He's enjoying this.

MR NICK (CONT'D)

Now you can use your powers to do something else. Have fun, go shopping, learn how to lift heavy things ...

Splat! A gob of bird shit lands on MR. NICK'S head. An eagle circles overhead. It swoops across the hall and exits through a window.

DR. PARNASSUS leaps up, laughing, amazed, revived.

DR. PARNASSUS

A sign! A message! That bird was a messenger... from distant places we know not of!

(triumphant)

Other places! The point is, you're wrong! And I'm wrong! It doesn't have to be us here!

(indicating monks)

Somewhere in the world, right now... someone else is telling a story! A different story! A saga.. a romance... a tale of an unforeseen death. Tragic or comic.. it doesn't matter. It's sustaining the universe! That's why we're still here. You can't stop stories being told! You can't be everywhere!

MR NICK

(irritated)

A weak hypothesis!

DR. PARNASSUS

(smiling)

Yes?

MR NICK stubs out his cigarette.

MR NICK

I tell you what... You're probably not a betting man but...

MR NICK whispers into the DR. PARNASSUS's ear.

DR. PARNASSUS (V.O.)  
And so I made my first wager with  
the devil...

20A INT. DR. PARNASSUS' DEN THAT MOMENT 20A

DR. PARNASSUS takes an ancient dusty scrapbook/diary from a shelf and opens it. Two little leaves fall out.

DR. PARNASSUS  
The first to attract twelve  
disciples would win the bet...His  
argument... the necessities of  
danger. The luxuries of fear. The  
fabled bliss of ignorance.

On each page is a painting or engraving with DR. PARNASSUS and PERCY travelling the world...through the centuries with a little theatre.

DR. PARNASSUS (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
My argument... The power of the  
imagination to transform and  
illuminate our lives... It was a  
hard fight... I won.

As each page is turned, the theatre grows. So does the number of performers on stage and the size of the audience.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS (V.O.)  
My prize... The thing I most  
coveted...  
(a voice full of horror)  
was ever-lasting life.

Another page, another performance. Now the 18TH CENTURY but the number of performers and audience has decreased..

DR. PARNASSUS (V.O.)  
Everlasting torment..  
Everlasting... Everlasting... He  
had tricked me. Had let me win.

Another show...now the early 19TH CENTURY. Smaller crowd.

DR. PARNASSUS (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
He knew times would change...that  
one day no one would want my  
stories...

21 OMITTED 21

22 EXT. 1930'S CITY STREET DAY 22

Shabby and dirty, DR. PARNASSUS and PERCY are performing on a street corner ...ignored by all the passersby. PARNASSUS plays a hurdy-gurdy. PERCY is dressed like an organ grinder's monkey.

They are exhausted... beggars...PARNASSUS is very old.

23 NOW SC 50C 23

24 NOW SC 50D 24

25 INT. PARNASSUS' DEN NIGHT 25

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
...this was the price of my  
arrogance...

VALENTINA has nestled close to her father - like a little girl being told a story by a loving parent. DR. PARNASSUS looks haggard.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS (CONT'D)  
..Forgotten. Lost. Alone and  
desperate. But then..

At that moment the wagon lurches to a stop and we hear frantic banging on the roof.

The moment of tenderness is broken.

DR. PARNASSUS  
We've stopped.

VALENTINA  
Go on, what happened?

DR. PARNASSUS  
(turning back to his Tarot  
cards)  
(MORE)



PERCY

Yeah... he's riverdancing.

VALENTINA

(horrified)

There's someone hanging there! By his neck! Quick! Help me! Get a rope!

She begins to clamber down off the wagon.

PERCY

If he's hanging by his neck... he's already got a rope.

(CONT'D)

ANTON is 'absailing' over the side of the bridge. He is wearing PERCY'S far-too-small flying harness with it's little devil wings fluttering on the back. The rope is attached to a winch on the wagon operated by PERCY.

VALENTINA helps guide ANTON'S perilous descent.

Moments later there are two bodies hanging from the bridge, the mysterious HANGING MAN'S and ANTON'S.

The MAN is hanging by a noose around his neck, still jerking in his dance of death. His hands are tied behind his back.

ANTON can't reach the MAN.

ANTON

(shouting up)

I c-can't reach him.

VALENTINA

Try again!

PERCY

Swing in!

VALENTINA

Hurry up.

ANTON shoots PERCY and VALENTINA a jaundiced look and with VALENTINA'S help on her end of the rope begins to swing back and forth.. his knife between his teeth.

Eventually, with a big enough swing, he manages to hook his foot around the HANGING MAN and with extreme difficulty, pulls the MAN close, takes his knife and cuts the cords binding the MAN'S hands and tries to get the MAN to wrap his arms around his neck but, the MAN has gone limp. Dead?

Whenever ANTON squeezes the MAN'S abdomen, the MAN emits a whistling sound.

Taking a firm grip on the MAN'S belt, ANTON cuts the noose rope. The body drops, upending ANTON and sending them swinging back and forth together. ANTON struggles to hold onto the body. The too-small harness bites into him.

ANTON  
Arghhh!!!!

VALENTINA  
Brilliant! You've done it!

The heavens open up. Rain pours down.

ANTON  
Argggg!!!

PERCY  
Come on, don't hang about! We're getting soaked up here!

VALENTINA, ANTON and PERCY manhandle the MAN over the parapet and onto the pavement.

DR. PARNASSUS has just stepped out onto the top of the wagon. Soaked. He's drunk and is swaying.

DR. PARNASSUS  
Why are you fishing dead people out of the river? He's dead. Leave him. Let's go. Before the police...

He goes, unsteadily, back inside.

VALENTINA and ANTON drag the MAN under the wagon, out of the rain.

The MAN is dressed in an expensive white suit. His jacket pockets are full of strange weights and arcane symbols have been scrawled on his forehead. He's about 30 years old and very handsome.

VALENTINA tries to administer the kiss of life.

ANTON is uncomfortable watching this and pulls her away.

ANTON

No! That won't work. And anyway,  
you d-don't know where he's b-been.  
Let me...

He brings both fists down hard on the centre of the MAN'S chest.

Boing! The 'dead' MAN coughs, sits bolt upright, spits out a little metal tube and smashes his head on the underside of the wagon, knocking himself out.

The little metal tube clatters over the asphalt.

ANTON (CONT'D)

He's alive!

VALENTINA

Thank God.

PERCY

Well, he was.

ANTON picks up the little metal tube and examines it.

ANTON

What on earth is this?

VALENTINA, ANTON and PERCY drag the MAN from under the wagon and carry him to the rear.

VALENTINA

Put him in the big trunk.

ANTON

B-but...

VALENTINA

But what?

PERCY  
The boss said leave him.

VALENTINA  
He thought he was dead.

They start to bundle the MAN in one of the travelling trunks attached to the back of the wagon. With the body hanging half in half out, ANTON suddenly stops.

ANTON  
I d-don't like it. It's none of our b-business.

VALENTINA  
What are you suggesting, we leave him on the side of the road?

ANTON doesn't want to answer that one.

PERCY  
(walking away)  
Definitely.

VALENTINA, single-handedly, hefts the MAN into the trunk and carefully places a cushion under his head. An action not missed by ANTON.

ANTON  
Come on.

ANTON jumps onto the wagon. VALENTINA follows suit as the wagon begins to move.

As the wagon trundles off the bridge, it reveals a shadowy figure... MR NICK standing by the parapet thoughtfully smoking a cigarette.

29A EXT DERELICT BUILDINGS DAWN 29A

The wagon stands, hidden, among deserted derelict buildings. All is quiet.

29B INT WAGON PARNASSUS' STUDY THAT MOMENT 29B

PARNASSUS is sleeping. He twitches and turns restlessly.

29C INT. WAGON VALENTINA'S BUNK THAT MOMENT 29C

Valentina is sleeping. She frowns and moves restlessly.

30 EXT. WAGON THAT MOMENT 30

The wagon stands, silent, as before.

The lid of the big travelling trunk slowly opens.

The MAN struggles out. His neck is sore, his wrists ache and his head is bruised. He hasn't a clue where he is. He tries to make sense of the wagon, the grazing horses, the derelict buildings.

Some distance away a bizarre, horned and tailed CREATURE is involved in a strange contorted dance.

Hoping to avoid the CREATURE, the MAN starts to move away but is stopped by a squeaky voice behind him.

PERCY (V.O.)

Hey, you!

The MAN turns around to find PERCY looking at him.

PERCY (CONT'D)

I suppose somebody saves your life  
everyday of the week.

MAN

(croaking)

What?

He can hardly speak. It hurts him to do so.

PERCY

Too much like routine to bother  
with a thank you.

MAN

(with difficulty)

What?.. who are you?

PERCY

Percival St. Antoine della Touraine  
et Sansepolcro da Piemonte the  
Third. If that proves too  
difficult, you may call me Percy.

MAN

Where are we?

PERCY

Geographically, in the Northern Hemisphere. Socially, on the margins. Narratively, with some way to go. And your name is...

MAN

(appalled)

I... I can't remember.

PERCY

That's handy.

PERCY whistles to the dancing CREATURE, who turns and approaches. The MAN is getting very nervous. PERCY pokes him with his staff.

PERCY (CONT'D)

Any credit cards?

MAN

What?..Oh..I see, look... you can have whatever you want.. just please don't..

PERCY

...with your name on them.

MAN

Ah, okay good thinking. My name. My cards...yes.

(searching his pockets)

Shit, my wallet's gone.

PERCY

Don't look at us.

CREATURE

What's your name?

PERCY

(sceptical)

He can't remember.

ANTON

I need time to figure things out. I can leave if you like.

Suddenly a mobile phone starts ringing (Tony's theme) They all look at each other. It's in the MAN'S pocket. But, he doesn't move. The CREATURE takes his head off ..it's ANTON.

ANTON (CONT'D)  
Might be for you.

The MAN still doesn't move. ANTON reaches over and tries to find the phone in the MAN'S pockets. The MAN tries to push him off and find the phone himself. The phone is retrieved but, in the struggle to answer it, it's dropped.

A WOMAN SPEAKING RUSSIAN can be heard from the phone. As ANTON and the MAN dive for it.

RUSSIAN WOMAN (IN RUSSIAN)  
(sounding urgent)  
You must get away! Quickly! They  
want to kill you! Don't stay here!

the MAN 'accidentally' steps on it. The phone is crushed.

PERCY  
Pity.. I speak Russian.

ANTON and PERCY glare with deep suspicion at the MAN.

VALENTINA appears at the window.

VALENTINA  
(to man)  
Oh...hello. Are you alright?

MAN  
Ah..well..actually..would it be  
rude to ask for something to eat?  
I'm starving.

ANTON  
We c-can't let him stay with us.

VALENTINA  
Why not?

ANTON  
We d-don't know what this is about,  
who he is, what he m-might have  
done...

MAN  
(croaking)  
I haven't done anything. I'm sure.  
(MORE)

MAN (CONT'D)

I think? That I know of. God, help me out here. Listen, I have no idea who I am, where I came from or where I'm going to....I'm just lost or if I'm you know...or... I could be... I'm just lost! I'm a little bit frightened by all of this. You all seem like decent people. I need a place to collect myself. To try to make sense of all this. But I will understand if you want me out. I get it. I won't judge you for it. Why should you trust me? I'm not sure that I would....No don't bother I'm sorry, I'll move on. You shouldn't have to.....

The MAN falls to his knees. Collapses on the ground.

PERCY and ANTON exchange knowing looks.

DR. PARNASSUS (O.S.)

Dammit! I told you to leave him. He was dead.

DR. PARNASSUS, holding a cold, damp towel to his throbbing head, appears, coughing and miserable from the wagon.

PERCY

Well, we didn't and he isn't.

ANTON

He was hanging under the b-bridge.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

Hanging?

PERCY

(handing Parnassus the  
noose)

By his neck. Until dead. If we'd had any sense.

ANTON produces the bricks with strange markings that were in the MAN'S pockets.

ANTON

We found these in his p-pockets.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS examines the bricks with great interest.

(CONTINUED)

He pulls out The Hanged Man card and compares it's arcane details - a noose, strangely marked shapes like bricks, a metal tube - to the objects found on the MAN.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
The hanged man!

DOCTOR PARNASSUS, looks up and, holding the bricks and noose, approaches the MAN

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
All the signs are here....

He peers closely, trying to read the strange markings on the MAN'S forehead.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS (CONT'D)  
..and these marks... I recognize them.

MAN  
(puzzled)  
Marks?

The MAN wipes his hand across his forehead. Looks at his inky hand.. confused.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
(sotto voce)  
You've been sent by Mr Nick,  
haven't you?

MAN  
(uncertain)  
Mr Nick?

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
Aha!...I knew it! You know his name! He has a new proposition for me doesn't he?.... a new wager perhaps...another twist in the game! He can't help himself. Thank God! Thank God for that!

DOCTOR PARNASSUS takes PERCY aside, shows him the Hanged Man Tarot Card and indicates the MAN with a nod.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS (CONT'D)  
He's from Mr Nick.

PERCY

No he's not.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

He's come with a proposal.

PERCY

No he hasn't. He thinks we've got food!

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

All is not lost.

PERCY

Yes it is. He'll find the potato!

VALENTINA

Dad? Can we keep him? He can't even walk.

PERCY

He sure can talk!

VALENTINA

Can he stay? Please.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

(looking at the card, then  
to the Man)

Of course. He must stay. Of course.

VALENTINA kisses PARNASSUS on the cheek.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS (CONT'D)

Benvenuto alla nostra casa. This way. This way.

DR PARNASSUS, keen to engage with the stranger, supposedly sent by Mr Nick, ushers the MAN inside.

MAN

(croaking)

Is there anything to eat?

PERCY groans.

ANTON looks stunned..a viper has entered their happy world.

31 INT DOCTOR PARNASSUS' DEN A LITTLE LATER 31

The MAN precedes DOCTOR PARNASSUS in the tiny room. He looks around in amazement.

PARNASSUS changes his robe in preparation for the news from the MAN.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
We can talk here. Sit down, sit  
down.

MAN  
Thank you.

He does so. DOCTOR PARNASSUS sits opposite him.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
(expectantly)  
So...

PAUSE

The MAN doesn't know what DR PARNASSUS expects but, he looks confused.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS (CONT'D)  
Oh, yes. Indeed. Thank you. The  
message.

MAN  
(cautiously)  
The message?

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
The message! What's the message?  
From Mr Nick. What does he want in  
exchange?

PARNASSUS notices VALENTINA trying to listen from below. He gets up and shuts the door.

31A INT. THE WAGON THAT MOMENT. 31A

VALENTINA continues to try to overhear the muffled conversation which is only partially understandable.

MAN V/O  
Ah... Well... t's t.. problem...

(CONTINUED)

31A

DOCTOR PARNASSUS V/O  
Prob..m? W..t problem?

MAN V/O  
I se.. to .ave compl..ly lost my  
memory.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS V/O  
You've l.. y..r memory?  
(incredulous)  
You've c.me.. with a vitally  
important message from... A mat..r  
of l... or de..... and you can't  
..member what .. is!?

MAN V/O  
No.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS V/O  
AAAAARRRRRGGGGHHHH!!!  
BUGGERBUGGERBUGGER!!!!!!

VALENTINA looks confused

31B

EXT THE WAGON THAT MOMENT

31B

Suddenly...from inside the wagon.. a crash, as something is  
hurled to the floor.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS V/O  
(howling)  
YOU'VE WHAT!! YOU'VE LOST YOUR  
MEMORY!! YOU CAN'T REMEMBER THE  
MESSAGE!! AAAAARRRRRGGGGHHHH!!!  
BUGGERBUGGERBUGGER!!!!!!

ANTON and PERCY look at each other.. concerned

32

EXT SHOPPING MALL PARKING LOT NIGHT

32

The wagon is parked in a shopping mall parking lot. It is  
ready for a show but, the curtains are closed. There are a  
few late night SHOPPERS coming and going.

33

INT BACKSTAGE

THAT MOMENT

33

VALENTINA, dressed as 'Beauty', is rummaging in a theatre  
skip, helping the MAN find something to wear for the show.

There is a slight whiff of sexual attraction in the air.

VALENTINA pulls out a golden breastplate.

VALENTINA

Ah, here we go... Dad wants you to  
work....to focus your mind.

MAN O/S

How?

VALENTINA

You can help out front  
Sell tickets..

The MAN puts on the breastplate.

He disappears behind the scenery and quickly reappears  
wearing the tutu and a long judge's wig.

VALENTINA laughs at the sight.

He throws off the wig and armour, puts on floppy period hat,  
and then a VENETIAN CARNIVAL MASK. He sees the ancient  
gramophone, turns it on, music begins.

MAN

You see a master of disguise.  
(takeing VALENTINA in his  
arms)  
Let's dance.

They begin a slow dance.

VALENTINA

No name. Now no face. The mystery  
thickens. I'll call you Saint  
George. You can rescue me from the  
dragon.

MAN

What dragon?

DOCTOR PARNASSUS O/S

(roaring)  
Get your grubby little hands off  
me..I can dress myself!

She nods in the direction of the voice.

ANTON appears at the door of PARNASSUS's den.

ANTON

Valentina, we have a problem...

He freezes, seeing the MAN and VALENTINA dancing. They stop, look up.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS O/S

Let go of me! I said let go!

With a rip and crash, PARNASSUS flies out of his elevated cabin... plummeting downwards to the stage floor...but, luckily landing in a crumpled heap inside the costume skip.

VALENTINA

Oh no!

VALENTINA rushes to help him. ANTON slides down the stairs to help. Somehow PARNASSUS manages to get to his feet. He's so drunk he can hardly stand. He's already put some article of clothing on back-to-front or inside out. PERCY stands at the top of the ladder in despair.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

Can he remember!  
(seeing the MAN)  
Can you remember?

MAN

What? No...

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

Bloody useless! It's a bloody disaster!

PARNASSUS collapsed, sobbing.

VALENTINA

You can't go on. You're drunk.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

I am not drunk! I'm grumpy! You understand nothing! No..I'm sorry...how could you? Forgive me.

VALENTINA

(to ANTON)  
You'll have to do it.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

No! No understudy! The audience won't tolerate an understudy!  
(MORE)



36 INT SHOPPING MALL SUPERMARKET THAT MOMENT 36

THE MAN, wearing his 'romantic' Venice carnival mask is smooth-talking several middle-aged LADIES on queue at the supermarket check-out. We can't hear what he is saying but, there is much laughter from the flattered LADIES.

37 EXT SHOPPING MALL PARKING LOT LATER 37

The last of the shoppers' cars are leaving the car park.

ANTON, VALENTINA and PERCY are on their own.

PARNASSUS, on his plinth, is asleep and snoring.

ANTON

Thank G-God... N-not a single customer!

PERCY

I'm closing up.

VALENTINA

He's never not done a show... what's wrong with him?

PARNASSUS groans in his sleep.

TONY (O.O.V)

(Whistles)

ANTON

(looking out front)  
Oh n-no!

ANTON sees THE MAN heading towards them with a mob of MIDDLE-AGED WOMEN in tow.

Bubbling with excitement, the mob arrives.

EVELYN

Oh look! How fascinating.

THE MAN jumps onto the stage.

MAN

We have a gig!

The other WOMEN agree.

EVELYN  
(looking at her watch)  
When does the next show start?

MAN  
Right now!  
(to Anton)  
Juggle!

PERCY  
There isn't a next show.

EVELYN and the other WOMEN are puzzled.

PERCY (CONT'D)  
We've done all the shows we're  
doing here this evening.

DEIDRE  
But we've got tickets.

THE MAN looks hopefully at VALENTINA and ANTON who don't know  
what to say.

MAN  
Ladies and Gentlemen!

PARNASSUS suddenly snaps awake, but he clearly thinks he's in  
another place in another time - in different show.

PARNASSUS  
(singing)  
.....

He topples off his perch and crashes onto the floor where he  
lies snoring and mumbling.

VALENTINA and some of the WOMEN run forward.

SYLVIA  
This man's drunk. Dead drunk.

EVELYN  
Disgraceful.

VALENTINA O/S  
(suddenly defensive of her  
father)  
He's not drunk. He's got a bad  
cold....

37

MAN

..and yet, for the sake of his audience he went on tonight, at considerable risk to his health...

(leading the applause)

A round of applause! Let's hear it... for a real trouper!

DEIDRE

We want our money back.

VALENTINA and MAN exchange a quick look.

MAN

Fine take your precious money back.

ANTON and VALENTINA begin to drag the sleeping PARNASSUS up-stage of the curtains.

MAN (CONT'D)

You can have all your money back or, if you like... an extra free ticket. How about that? Better yet, two extra free tickets if you buy another ticket at half price.

The WOMEN look on the verge of taking up the offer.

VALENTINA

(picking up from George)

This offer is only available today.

PERCY closes the curtains, leaving Tony out front.

Behind the curtains ANTON looks at VALENTINA as if to say "What are you doing?" VALENTINA smiles sweetly.

MAN

Yes indeed. We are terribly sorry for the inconvenience ladies.

38

OMITTED

38

39

INT THE WAGON THAT MOMENT

39

A large pile of coins with quite a few notes mixed in tumble onto a table.

PERCY  
He took all that?

VALENTINA  
Have you ever seen so much?!

ANTON  
That's what lying through teeth can  
get you.

VALENTINA  
C'mon... How was he to know we're  
not playing here tomorrow.

ANTON  
(sarcastic)  
Ah... That's all right then. Thanks  
to him we can afford to buy you a  
nice birthday cake...  
(turning to go)  
...and maybe even some new  
magazines!.

VALENTINA  
(offended)  
Anton!

ANTON storms out.

ANTON V/O  
Oi! That's the wrong end of the  
horse, George!

PERCY Looks at VALENTINA.

40 EXT SUPERMARKET CAR PARK THAT MOMENT 40

As the wagon trundles out of the deserted car park a DARK  
FIGURE hops onto the rear platform.

41 INT DOCTOR PARNASSUS' CABIN MOMENTS LATER 41

DOCTOR PARNASSUS is groaning and clutching his head. He has a  
fierce hangover. He pours some powder from a packet into a  
glass of water, stirs it with his finger and knocks it back.  
He grimaces and shudders.

A hatch/shutter on the small window behind him slides open to reveal the grinning head of MR NICK.

MR NICK  
You shouldn't drink, it doesn't agree with you.

Startled, DOCTOR PARNASSUS spins around.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
You! Oh, you're soooo right. What do you want? I'll do anything.

MR NICK  
(smiles)  
I know.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
You're man's lost his memory! He's bloody hopeless!

MR NICK  
He's not my man.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
What?

MR NICK  
Nothing to do with me. Name's Tony Shepherd. Little toe-rag. He used to run a big charity. I wouldn't trust him. But then... you don't trust me do you?

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
For God's sake! Tell me what you want!

MR NICK  
I just thought...seeing you so upset last night...that you needed a glimmer of hope..maybe a little bet?

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
No, it's over.

MR NICK  
Oh, come on...it's never over. What do you have to lose? You might win. And save her. How about..say..first to five?...

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
First to five?...

MR NICK  
It keeps things interesting.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
(mulling it over)  
The first of us to win five souls?  
No tricks? No cheating?

MR. NICK nods, rolls his sleeves up to show no tricks.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS (CONT'D)  
(wary but appreciative)  
Agreed.... Thank you for this.

MR NICK  
Oh, I do love a betting man...by  
her birthday then.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
What! You bastard! You've seen the  
business we're doing.

MR NICK  
Things are going to pick up. As  
sure as eggs is eggs.  
(on the verge of going)  
Okay, two days, and whoever gets  
the first five souls.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
I'll kill you!

MR NICK  
(laughs)  
Now that would be something.

He closes the hatch/shutter with a bang.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
Wait!

Too late. He's gone.

41A EXT DERELICT BUILDINGS DAWN

41A

The wagon rests amongst the derelict buildings. The horses  
are grazing.

41A

CONTINUED:

41A

VALENTINA has just finished washing THE MAN's white suit and is hanging it on a clothes-line. THE MAN is fiddling with his mobile phone. Trying to fix it.

41B

INT. THE WAGON THAT MOMENT

41B

PARNASSUS, holding his aching head, struggles down the steps from his den. He pauses, looks sadly towards VALENTINA'S sleeping area, and goes over to it. He stands deep in thought. Nostalgically he touches the stuffed animals she keeps in her bed... his little girl.

His sleeve catches on a cloth covering the wall at the head of her bed revealing a secret collage of magazine pictures.. normal homes and dream bedrooms and... in the centre, THE ADD WITH THE IDEAL FAMILY. He looks surprised.

A loud shriek from a chicken spins him around. He looks out the door of the wagon.

42

EXT. DERELICT BUILDINGS THAT MOMENT

42

VALENTINA has just finished wringing a chicken's neck...which has a brightly coloured bow around it.

TONY appears to have fixed his Blackberry.

ANTON and PERCY arrive on the troupe's bicycle loaded with shopping.

PERCY

Food! Food! Bread! Cheese! Fruit!  
Everything!

VALENTINA

(to THE MAN)

It's all your fault we're eating so  
well today.

VALENTINA flirtatiously tosses the dead chicken to THE MAN, knocking his Blackberry out of his hands - breaking it.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)

Do you know how to pluck?

ANTON is shocked to see the dead chicken.

ANTON

Is that Bertie? That was my best  
trick!

(CONTINUED)

VALENTINA  
(annoyed.. walking away)  
George thought doves would be  
better.

PERCY, eating a pork pie, goes over to PARNASSUS who is  
sitting in the doorway of the wagon.

PERCY  
Five souls.. two days, eh!?

DR. PARNASSUS  
Shh! I'm trying to think.

PERCY  
I told you didn't I?

DR. PARNASSUS  
What?

PERCY  
That he was a wrong-un.

PERCY nods his head in GEORGE'S direction where VALENTINA is  
playfully instructing him in the art of plucking.

DR. PARNASSUS  
He's been sent to us for a reason.

PERCY  
Like What? To teach us Russian?

DR. PARNASSUS  
He bought us some food. At least we  
can eat.

PERCY  
(ironic)  
I'd rather starve to death.

He takes a bite of the pork pie.

DR. PARNASSUS  
Poor Percy.. so bitter and twisted.  
Remember the hanging man. The cards  
don't lie.

PERCY  
(sceptical)  
No?..

CUT TO ANTON who is painting a long-stemmed, wooden flower...he brings it over to VALENTINA who is chopping vegetables.

VALENTINA  
(looking away)  
Don't talk to me.

ANTON  
P-please...I'm sorry about last night. I b-b-behaved like an child.

VALENTINA  
Yes.

ANTON suddenly does a pratfall in a puddle of mud, flips the flower high into the air, spins like a break dancer and, rolling face down onto his stomach, catches the stem with his clenched buttocks. VALENTINA bursts out laughing.

ANTON  
You must admit... even children have their q-q-qualities.

CUT TO THE MAN who is plucking the chicken and is covered with feathers. He picks up an old newspaper to put the giblets in but, as he spreads it out, something catches his eye (an article? a photo? We can't see) - unnerving him. He quickly scrunches up the paper and is about to throw it on the fire when, from behind, PARNASSUS taps him on the shoulder.

DOCTOR PARNSSUS  
(disingenuously, French accent)  
George, not knowing who you are, must be... very hard...

MAN  
(spinning around guiltily)  
What?. Oh.. Yes, yes it is, it is.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
I may be able to help.

MAN  
Really...?

PERCY, stepping out from behind DR PARNASSUS produces a small contraption with wires.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

You see this contraption? And this wire? Hold it.

PERCY

Don't worry. You won't feel... much.

MAN

What will this do?

Trying to look casual, THE MAN tosses the scrunched-up newspaper onto the fire and, as it catches light, takes hold of the end of the wire.

PARNASSUS puts his fingers on top of `GEORGE'S head.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

I want you to relax. Try to think of nothing.

MAN

That won't difficult... in my condition.

PERCY

Shut it.

TONY

What?

PERCY

You're mouth! Hold your breath!

DR. PARNASSUS

Let the energy flow. Let the energy wax and wane. Think of the earth, the ocean, the universe...

THE MAN does his best to oblige.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS closes his eyes. He seems to be making an effort.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

Very good, very good. Yes... Yes, I see... I see... Very interesting.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS takes his hand from THE MANS'S head and gives the contraption back to PERCY.

PERCY

You can breathe normally now.

GEORGE

What's the point of this? Did you discover anything?

The effort seems to have tired PARNASSUS. He needs to sit down.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

Alas, this technique has its limitations.

MAN

But... What did you discover? What just happened?

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

(dramatically)

A name.

MAN

A name?...My name?...

PAUSE.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

Anthony Shepherd.

MAN

(nervous)

Anthony Shepherd?...

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

They call you Tony.

VALENTINA and ANTON begin to pay attention and gather around.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS (CONT'D)

You used to do good works.  
Something to do with a charity I think.

TONY

Uh huh.. you might be right...  
Yes..it's coming back... Tony...  
Shepherd... good works.. wow!!!..It  
works your little piece of wire!  
(oddly worried)  
..uh..was there.. anything else?

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
(looking darkly at TONY)  
Well.. you must understand.. this  
is an ancient technique of mental  
divination and I'm very rusty..  
...unfortunately, that was all.

TONY  
(very relieved)  
That's absolutely fantastic! Thank  
you. Thank you so very much!

PARNASSUS smiles and bows slightly ironically.

VALENTINA  
Charity work? Cool.

PERCY  
So what was he doing dangling under  
a bridge from his neck?

VALENTINA  
Percy!

PERCY  
(sarcastic)  
Oh dear, was that a rude question?  
Have I put my foot in it?

TONY  
I know it was strange. Horrible..  
It's a complete blank. But as the  
good doctor said I was involved in  
some sort of charity...I remember  
that now. What a fool I must have  
been. Thinking I could make the  
world a better place... to give  
people hope...  
(self deprecatingly)  
What an arrogant idiot.

VALENTINA looks at him thinking 'what a guy!'

The sound of a flutey whistle distracts him. ANTON is blowing  
a tune on the metal tube he found on the bridge.

TONY (CONT'D)  
What's that?

ANTON  
(with a superior air)  
Beethoven's Ode to Joy

TONY

I mean, the pipe. Where did you get it?

ANTON looks at the metal pipe.

ANTON

I found it.

TONY

It's mine.

ANTON

Oh. You just remembered, you're a musician n-now.

TONY

It's not a musical instrument. May I have it?... Please.

ANTON

(teasing)

Are you s-sure it's yours?

TONY

Positive.

ANTON

Alright.

ANTON appears to offer the pipe to TONY but palms it so that when TONY reaches out to take it, it's gone.

ANTON (CONT'D)

It's g-gone.

TONY

(getting shirty)

Don't fool around.

ANTON

Ah, there it is.

TONY once more tries to take it. Once more ANTON makes it disappear.

TONY

(angry)

Give it here! It's my pipe!

ANTON

I was trying to bond.

(CONTINUED)

VALENTINA

Anton, that's enough.

She steps forward, takes the pipe from ANTON and gives it to TONY.

TONY

Thanks darlin'.

DR. PARNASSUS, who's been watching this exchange, looks thoughtful.

EXT THE WAGON NIGHT

PARNASSUS and CO are preparing to move out and do a show.

ANTON is working near PARNASSUS and PERCY who are unaware of his presence.

DR. PARNASSUS

I'm worried about Anton..we can't afford to put a foot wrong tonight. What's eating him?

ANTON pricks up his ears.

PERCY

He's in love with Valentina?

DR. PARNASSUS

(dumbfounded)

In love....? Who gave him permission?

PERCY

It happens.

DR. PARNASSUS

The little snake! I save him from the streets and this is my thanks. I'll skin him alive!

CUT TO ANTON who winces.

PERCY

While you're at it, there's the other one.

DR. PARNASSUS looks at PERCY questioningly.

PERCY (CONT'D)

The viper, the rattle snake, the  
amnesiac boa constrictor... Tony.

DR. PARNASSUS

Tony? Tony's quite another kettle  
of fish.

PERCY

Really?

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

He's ambitious, energetic... a man  
of destiny.

PERCY

(ironic)

And he's going to help us win.

DR. PARNASSUS

I think he might. Scrumpy sees good  
in him.

PERCY

She'd be better off with Anton.

CUT TO ANTON who's pleased.

DR. PARNASSUS

Perhaps I should just offer her  
hand to whoever helps us most in  
winning the next five souls.

CUT TO ANTON who looks puzzled.

PERCY

That's even worse than the other  
bad ideas you've had today.

DR. PARNASSUS

(sighs)

You're not wrong. Neither of them  
is worthy of her. Ah Percy.. what  
would I do without you?

PERCY

Get a midget.

DR. PARNASSUS

What?

PERCY

A little guy. Y'know... about my height.

CUT TO ANTON as he moves, thoughtfully, away.

EXT OUTSIDE PUB NIGHT

The theatre, parked outside a pub, is up and running.

ANTON, as Mercury, is doing his pitch.

ANTON

Doctor Parnassus, as old as the universe itself, versed in every mystic practice known to man and many more besides, will guide you to your destiny.

Behind the curtain, PERCY is signalling VALENTINA to see if DOCTOR PARNASSUS has been drinking. She sniffs him.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

What are you doing? Stop playing about! We all must concentrate tonight. Everything depends on it.

A roll on the drums from PERCY. The curtain rises. DOCTOR PARNASSUS 'floats' above the stage on his glass plinth.

ANTON

Let the mind of Doctor Parnassus be the portal to the infinite world of your imagination.

However, the AUDIENCE - DRINKERS who have drifted out of the pub for a smoke - Instead they pay more attention to the masked TONY who, decked out in a stylish costume, is moving amongst them, working the sparse crowd with his smooth charm.

ANTON, irritated, glances back at DOCTOR PARNASSUS who is anxious for customers.

TONY is now surrounded by fascinated WOMEN laughing at one of his jokes. One pretty young woman, SALLY, in particular seems smitten by the seductive 'actor'.

TONY

(turning to SALLY)  
..and your destiny is a very, special one.. I can feel it...

(MORE)

TONY (CONT'D)

you're going to be an actress.. no,  
an heiress.. a very rich one!..  
now, I want you to trust me..

ANTON

Sleep no more. Procrastinate no  
longer. Embrace this once in a life-  
time opportunity.

TONY takes SALLY'S hand in his. The sight provokes ANTON. He  
leaps off the stage, grabs SALLY by the wrist and pulls her  
away from TONY.

SALLY

(laughing)

What?... Hey, what you doing?

ANTON

T-taking you to the heart of your  
imagination!

ANTON, clumsily trying to charm her like TONY, tugs her  
toward the stage.

SALLY

(good humoured)

Oh my god! No way!

ANTON

You won't regret it!

FEMALE FRIEND

Go for it Sal!

SALLY

(indicating friend)

Only if she comes with me.

FEMALE FRIEND

(enthusiastic)

Now you're talking!

A few ONLOOKERS cheer.

ANTON

N-not two at the same time!

ANTON is still pulling SALLY onto the stage.

TONY

Are you crazy? Go for it lad!

SALLY

I'm not going on my own.

ANTON

Your imagination is a very special place. Doctor Parnassus will make it flower.

SALLY

I bet he will.

More laughs.

FEMALE FRIEND

We'll do it together.

More laughs.

ANTON

(shakes his head)

No. T-two c-competing imaginations in the Imaginarium at the same time... it's n-not advisable.

FEMALE FRIEND

Eh?

ANTON

The stronger imagination will overcome the weaker and then there's n-no knowing what might happen.

FEMALE FRIEND

That's really stupid.

SALLY

Let go!

ANTON

D-don't be afraid, d-dear lady. You'll be safe with me.

Like a gallant groom, ANTON sweeps her off her feet and carries her onto the stage.

SALLY

Put me down!

ANTON

Have no fear.

FEMALE FRIEND

She doesn't want to do it on her own!

ANTON

Only b-because she d-doesn't realize...

FEMALE FRIEND

Let go of her you silly pillock!

VALENTINA, worried, steps forward to try and restrain ANTON.

VALENTINA

Anton...

ANTON

It's alright! It's alright!

Staggering under the weight of the struggling SALLY, ANTON barges into DOCTOR PARNASSUS' on his glass plinth.

The plinth rocks and teeters. VALENTINA tries to stop it falling.

ANTON, unaware of what he's done, stumbles through the mirror as DOCTOR PARNASSUS crashes head first onto the stage. Crack!

From behind the mirror comes the sound of a WOMAN'S TERRIFYING, TERRIFIED SCREAMS.

FEMALE FRIEND

SALLY! They've got her in there!  
That's her screaming! SAL! They  
doing something to her! SALLY!  
Help, somebody! Help!

Upstage VALENTINA tends the stunned DOCTOR. He clutches his head in pain.

VALENTINA

Dad! Dad!

Out front, the CROWD, larger now, is reacting badly to the dreadful screams. Sally's friends try to storm the stage.

TONY tries to hold them back.

TONY

Please. Everything's alright. All  
part of the show. It's okay.  
Really. I promise you.

TONY is in danger of being overwhelmed. We can still hear  
Sally screaming from somewhere within the stage.

TONY (CONT'D)

Ladies and gentlemen. Ladies and  
gentlemen....please...

He disappears into the angry CROWD who begin pummelling and  
kicking him.

PERCY, desperate, produces a PROP BLUNDERBUSS and fires. A  
great firework shoots out... just above the crowd.

EVERYONE dives for cover.

The wagon lurches violently as the horses panic, lunging  
against the restraining chocks and snapping one of the stage  
supports. The roof begins to drop, scenery collapsing.

PERCY has lost his balance (and his cool) and is blasting  
more fireworks at the crowd.

The theatre begins to close up as the horses bolt and the  
wagon clatters off down the street, canvas flying, light  
bulbs bursting, bits falling off as it goes.

VOICE IN CROWD

Somebody call the police!

Chased by the enraged crowd, a battered TONY just manages to  
clamber on board.

The wagon narrowly out-paces the fastest of the CROWD. As it  
disappears down the street, a figure is dumped  
unceremoniously out through the back door of the wagon.

It's the terrified SALLY, sent sprawling in the middle of the  
road.

A figure steps out from the shadows to help her to her feet.  
It's MR. NICK.

47 EXT. RUBBISH TIP NIGHT 47

A police siren howls as the wagon comes crashing around the corner of a great rubbish tip and clatters to a halt... the horses steaming, sections of the theatre hanging loose, broken..an utter mess. The siren fades into the distance.

48 INT/EXT THEATRE/WAGON NIGHT 48

Amongst collapsed scenery PARNASSUS lies in a heap. The others are struggling to their feet. ANTON is desperately trying to do something useful to help PARNASSUS but, VALENTINA pushes him out of the way.

VALENTINA

What were you thinking? Look what you've done. Go away! Leave us alone.

48A EXT THEATER/WAGON NIGHT 48A

Anton, mortified, exits the wagon... past TONY.

TONY

Better luck next time mate.

49 INT THEATER WAGON NIGHT 49

VALENTINA is trying to get PARNASSUS comfortable.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

(babbling)

This is my punishment. All is lost.  
First to Five. One down.  
Impossible, Valentina. First to  
five. One down. No people. No time,  
Valentina. Doomed! We are doomed!

49A EXT WAGON THAT MOMENT 49A

TONY standing outside the door overhears....ponders the meaning of this.

50 EXT. WAGON NIGHT

50

PERCY is angrily banging about, trying to repair the damage.  
ANTON is trying to help but, is just getting in the way.

PERCY

Get out of my way! We've got to  
move on!

(pointing)

Look! The place is full of homeless  
bums. They'll get our food.

TONY arrives.

TONY

Can I help?

PERCY

Bugger off!

TONY finds ANTON sitting despondently a short way from the  
wagon swigging from a bottle. He sits down next to him.

ANTON

L-leave me alone.

TONY

(trying to be  
conciliatory)

Valentina's worried about you. She  
hoped you might talk to me.

ANTON takes another swig. Doesn't respond.

TONY (CONT'D)

What... exactly... were you doing  
to that girl behind the mirror?

ANTON

(incensed)

What are you suggesting?

TONY

Anton.. you can tell me mate.. we  
all heard her screaming.

ANTON

I was screaming as well. It was t-  
terrifying...

(CONTINUED)

TONY

Terrifying? I don't understand.

ANTON

No, well...you wouldn't. You've never been inside the D-Doctor's mind have you?

TONY

No, that's true.

ANTON

You probably think it's some k-kind of scam, d-don't you?

TONY

Isn't it?

ANTON

No... But I d-don't expect you to get it... N-not in a million years.

TONY

Fine.. but tell me.. if he can really control people's minds, why isn't he ruling the world? Why bother with this side show?

ANTON

'Side show'? That's a good one. He d-doesn't want to rule the world d-does he?... He wants the world to rule itself!

TONY

What a waste!... And the mirror? What's the point of that? A bit of hocus-pocus to razzle-dazzle the public?

ANTON

(smiles sardonically)

You're way off the mark. It's something else, man... Something... magical... inexplicable...

(taking a swig)

It's a b-bloody great mystery... an enema wrapped in a b-brown p-paper bag.. or do I mean, enigma?

He pulls himself up and starts to stagger off.

TONY

Er... one more thing....Does 'first  
to five' mean anything to you?

ANTON looks at TONY with loathing.

ANTON

I thought you were the c-clever  
one.

He walks away into the darkness. A distant police siren  
wails.

TONY sits there busily thinking.

50A

INT PARNASSUS' DEN NIGHT

50A

VALENTINA has got PARNASSUS, moaning, babbling, into his bed.  
She is dressing the bump on his head.

PARNASSUS

It's utterly hopeless.. it's  
over...

VALENTINA

Don't say that... you told me it's  
never over. You're immortal.

PARNASSUS

Ha. maybe once. Maybe.. but, no  
more... this is all my fault...do  
you understand?..

VALENTINA

Dad...it's going to be OK.

PARNASSUS

(not listening)  
No...you're a child. How can you  
understand? You've never loved...

He stares intently, madly at VALENTINA.

PARNASSUS (CONT'D)

Not like I have... not like I have.  
From the moment I looked up.. and  
saw her.. I was head-over-heels in  
love...

As he gazes at her, VALENTINA morphs into..

50B EXT 1930"S CITY STREET DAY

50B

... A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN (played by the same actress as Valentina, but older.. with dark hair..not red). She strolls down the street.

Shabby and dirty, DR. PARNASSUS and PERCY are performing on a street corner...ignored by all the passersby. PARNASSUS plays a hurdy-gurdy. PERCY is dressed like an organ grinder's monkey. (We have seen this before during the last telling of PARNASSUS' story)

As the BEAUTIFUL WOMAN passes, she drops some coins in PERCY'S outstretched hand.

DR. PARNASSUS (V.O.)

She was beautiful.. young... but  
I... I was thousands of years old!  
How I could woo her? How could I...  
so to speak...? How could I ever  
make her mine...?

50C EXT. CLIFF TOP EVENING

50C

CUT TO a desolate cliff top where PERCY is struggling with a mad, howling DR PARNASSUS, trying to prevent him from throwing himself off the cliff.

PERCY

Don't be a fool! You can't die!  
You're immortal! You'll just end up  
broken, in the eternity ward, and  
I'll be stuck looking after you!  
Forever!

DR. PARNASSUS breaks free, stumbles backwards, and pitches out into space. PERCY screams.

DR. PARNASSUS V.O.

At times like these... the devil is  
never far away.

DR. PARNASSUS is hanging by his coat, snagged on a branch angled out from the cliff face and held, like a fishing rod, by MR NICK who has a great grin on his face.

50D EXT. RIVER DAY 50D

CUT TO a much younger DR. PARNASSUS and the BEAUTIFUL WOMAN in a row boat, picnicking, as they float down an idyllic river. They are in love, very happy to be together.

PERCY, wearing a blazer, flannels and straw boater is punting.

DR. PARNASSUS (V.O.)  
 The devil granted me mortality  
 again...and youth and new powers.  
 Greater powers. I won my bride. I  
 was in love...so in love.. but at  
 what price?...

A wide view of the river reveals it full of garbage and filth and bodies of dead animals. MR. NICK is sitting on the edge of the river picnicking. He waves to PARNASSUS.

PARNASSUS' voice slows down in a dreamy, sleepy way and so does the image which fades to...

50E INT. PARNASSUS' DEN NIGHT 50E

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
 ...at what price.... what price..

PARNASSUS drifts off into a fitful sleep. VALENTINA, worried and curious, mops his fevered brow with a cloth.

51 EXT RUBBISH TIP DAWN 51

The morning light suffuses mountains of domestic refuse. Rubbish for as far as the eye can see. Plastic sacks of various colours, many spilling open. A few fires are burning.

Flocks of scavenging sea gulls hover and dive, screaming blue murder.

On one of the many pinnacles of garbage sits a lonely figure. It's ANTON, depressed, angry, forlorn.

The CAMERA SWINGS ROUND to show, below ANTON, in a valley of waste material, the wagon.

52

EXT. THE WAGON DAWN

52

PERCY has spread out the broken scenery assessing the damage. In the shadow of the wagon VALENTINA is changing TONY'S dressings.

VALENTINA

Thank God it's only cuts and bruises. I thought we'd lost you.

TONY

Sweetheart!

TONY holds her hand. Looks deep into her eyes.

TONY (CONT'D)

Val, your father seems in a terrible state. Is it money issues...

VALENTINA

I don't know...

TONY

Cause I could certainly lend a hand in that area. Or is it the show, sweet?

VALENTINA

I don't care about the show anymore.

TONY

Maybe its the police?

VALENTINA

Bring on the police. I'm sick of living like this....

She looks miserable. TONY puts his arms around her. Holds her tightly to him.

TONY

Hey now, come on. Don't say that. What you're doing is important. It's just... maybe... it should be done in a different way.

He is about to kiss her.

(CONTINUED)

DOCTOR PARNASSUS O/S  
What sort of "different" way do you  
suggest?

DR. PARNASSUS, grim faced, head bandaged, steps from behind  
the wagon.

TONY and VALENTINA quickly disengage.

TONY  
Oh, hello, good morning sir. How  
are you feeling? That was a nasty  
bump on the head you got..

DOCTOR PARNASSUS O/S  
(beady eyed)  
"Different?"

TONY  
Well, sir, I've been thinking...  
It's clear your show's not  
attracting many people.

DR. PARNASSUS  
Oh, thank you.

TONY  
Forgive me but... I see two ways of  
tackling this problem. Either the  
style of the show is at fault... or  
the type of audience. I would  
suggest changing both.

DR. PARNASSUS  
Change...?

PERCY has appeared, dragging a damaged flat.

PERCY  
Change the show!? Who the frigging  
hell do you think you are?.....

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
Shhh!

He sits down heavily.

TONY  
I'm sorry but.. you're not.. um...I  
don't know what the word for it  
is... er...

DR. PARNASSUS

Modern?

TONY

Modern. Exactly. Modern. Look.

He holds open a tattered fashion magazine to a page of beautifully photographed models in a fabulously magical setting. He thumbs through more pages of dreamy images.

TONY (CONT'D)

This is modern. This is what people want. It works. Trust me, I understand this world.

(with a wink)

With this kind of mind control. I think we should try and try to meet the public halfway.. the right public.. and in a better part of town.

From behind the wagon ANTON watches forlornly. Alone and unnoticed by the others.

PERCY

What about the filth?

TONY

(puzzled)

What?

PERCY

The filth.

DR. PARNASSUS

He means the Police.

TONY

There'll be a better class of filth too.

PERCY

That'll be the day.

TONY

(to PARNASSUS)

The trick is not to hide. Be bold. Change your colours. Go where they would least expect to find you. Trust me on this one, Doctor P. You saved my life. Now let me do something in return. Please.

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TONY (CONT'D)  
(winking at VALENTINA)  
..and as for you, my darling, I  
have a very special idea. It's time  
to see you blossom...

VALENTINA beams.

PARNASSUS pulls VALENTINA away from TONY. He is torn,  
confused.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
Scrumpy, do you believe in  
coincidence?

VALENTINA  
There's no such thing...isn't that  
what you've always told me?  
Everything has a reason.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
Yes, that's what I believe... and  
the cards? Do you believe in them?

VALENTINA  
Why are you asking me these things?

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
Scrumpy, please.. today is  
extremely important...

VALENTINA  
Oh good.. you haven't forgotten.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
Do we gamble on Tony? I want your  
opinion... I need your advice.

VALENTINA  
(sardonically)  
Is this really happening?! You're  
treating me like an adult! You  
actually want my opinion?.. My  
advice?

(PARNASSUS nods, VALENTINA  
laughs)  
Let's do it! Let's gamble! This is  
the best birthday present ever!

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
Yes. Let's do it...

VALENTINA

I love you father.

She hugs and kisses him again and again. He is overcome.

DR. PARNASSUS

(with a burst of energy)

...and the devil take the hindmost!

PERCY

(sighs)

Yeah, okay, but... what exactly do we do?

TONY

Well... First of all... how much money do we have to play with?

What?! PARNASSUS, PERCY, and VALENTINA look at each other.

TONY (CONT'D)

I'm going to need all of it.

TONY picks up PARNASSUS'S HOLLOW GLASS PLINTH and shakes it at them like a beggar's plastic cup.

In the distance.. ANTON, downcast, is heading off through the swirling plastic bags and flying rubbish... a battered suitcase in his hand. PARNASSUS sees him.

DR. PARNASSUS

Anton! Where are you going?

No answer from ANTON.

VALENTINA runs after him but, he marches on silently.

VALENTINA

What are you doing? Didn't you do enough damage last night?

(she trips him up)

Anton... I'm the one who wants to run away!

(he slows)

Please, don't spoil my birthday.

Anton stops, still not looking at VALENTINA he slowly drops his suitcase.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)

We need you.

Moved, ANTON turns to her. She smiles sweetly.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)  
How much money have you got?

Close up on Parnassus's glass plinth..now open-topped and sitting on the edge of the stage... full of the troupe's entire savings...a couple five pound notes suspended on threads and a few coins. A sign proclaims "Please Take Generously"

The wagon stands in the most expensive shopping street in London - Bond Street. RICH WOMEN anxious to be conspicuous in their consumption of wealth glide past.

The stage, has been transformed - hung with soft, flowing, gauzy fabric.

Percy, blacked up and dressed in rags. is turning a big capstan that works a large hanging feather fan back and forth... a pathetic African slave. He doesn't look happy. He sneaks nervous glances at the glass box of money.

Behind him under the fan, a bloated, sun-glassed woman reclines on cushions - consuming vast quantities of food. She is, in fact, ANTON - very uncomfortable in full drag.

A new sign proclaims 'The Choice Is Yours' 'The Imaginarium - More Exclusive than ever'.

Center stage stands DR. PARNASSUS dressed as a stylized doctor with head reflector. He is blindfolded.

In front of the mirror and reflected in it, sits VALENTINA as Eve...naked except for a long wig that maintains her modesty. She gracefully combs her hair.

DR. PARNASSUS, peeking under his blindfold, is distinctly uncomfortable by his daughter's lack of attire.

TONY, in his original, now clean, white suit, and wearing his 'romantic' Venetian carnival mask sits in profile in a dreamy pose on the edge of the stage. He plays a pastoral tune on his little brass tube.

Nobody speaks. They pay no attention to the crowd.

A few women stop, curious. One of them takes out some money and puts it in the glass plinth and turns to go.

TONY  
(retrieving the money)  
Can't accept this.

The woman stops, confused. Tony hands her back her money.

TONY (CONT'D)  
We are here to give...not take.  
(referring to the glass  
plinth)  
If it's the flowering of the soul  
you need, then we are here for you.  
But unfortunately we are booked  
solid at the moment. But thank  
you.. I can see you have a generous  
spirit.

TONY returns to his pensive pose. The women look at each other.

WOMAN  
Excuse me but, how does this work?  
What does it cost?

TONY  
Cost? Money is no good in the  
Imaginarium. This is a place for  
souls to be purified.

WOMAN 2  
How long does that take? I'm  
running late.

TONY  
Madam, why should you care about  
time? What are your dreams worth in  
minutes?

The women grow pensive.

TONY (CONT'D)  
(indicating the tableaux)  
What about the dreams of the less  
fortunate in the world. Do you  
have time for their dreams? Or do  
you just despair at all that is  
wrong in the world..  
(getting to his feet)  
...despair at your inability to  
change it?

He has their attention.

TONY (CONT'D)

I was like that once..I despaired so much at the powerlessness of my own existence that I took the easy way out. I tried to kill myself. Did kill myself! But I was saved by... a miracle...The Imaginarium! Doctor Parnassus! He brought me back from the dead. He gave me a new life. A reason to live. He has given me power to dream again... to dream of a better world.

More and more people are gathering. Some are actually weeping. They press forward putting money in the plinth. Tony tries to stop them but, they insist.

The troupe is astonished by TONY'S performance.

VOICES IN CROWD

Stop pushing!/Excuse me, can one make a booking?/Are you taking bookings?/Stop pushing at the back!

TONY

I'm sorry ladies but, we're booked solid at the moment.  
(checking his Blackberry)  
Earliest availability is..

A Louis Vuitton-dressed woman (60+ years old)at the back of the crowd shouts:

LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN

Is that child up for adoption?

She points at the blacked up PERCY.

TONY

Yes.

LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN

I want to adopt that unfortunate black child. It shouldn't be working like this. It should be in school.

TONY

...October...ish.

PERCY is appalled.

LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN  
Who's in charge here?

The LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN looks around as a couple of POLICE OFFICERS arrive on the scene.

TONY spots the POLICE and heads off the LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN as she makes towards them.

TONY  
Madam, congratulations, you have  
been chosen.

The other WOMEN gasp.

LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN  
What?

TONY  
Come forward. Enter the  
Imaginarium.

LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN  
But, I haven't paid.

TONY  
We don't want your money. Only  
your hopes and dreams. You could  
make a donation later if you feel  
you must. For the children!

LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN  
But...

TONY  
This is a rare moment. Very few are  
chosen. This way. Please.

He ushers the uneasy LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN onto the stage and guides her upstage. PARNASSUS goes into his trance.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Believe me Madam, you are the  
luckiest woman in the world.

The LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN steps through the mirror. TONY hesitates..he wants to follow..should he? He turns uncertainly to VALENTINA sitting naked as Eve.

TONY (CONT'D)  
So many temptations. Maybe just a  
peek?

VALENTINA smiles and, flirtatiously, pretends to uncover a breast.

Across the street a clock begins striking the hour.

TONY (CONT'D)  
(indicating the mirror)  
What the hell!

With a winner's grin on his face, he steps through the mirror.

VALENTINA  
Tony! Wait! You can't just....

CUT TO the two POLICE OFFICERS who start to move the crowd.

POLICEMAN  
Alright, I think it's time to move  
on, folks.

But on spotting the naked VALENTINA who winks at them, they agree between themselves to give the show a bit longer.

TONY is astonished to find himself and THE LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN in the romantic, soft-focus, pastel-colour setting of a soothing, sophisticated, shampoo commercial.

A pathway of stepping stones leads across a mirror sea. Giant lily pads on slender stalks sway above them in a liquid sky.

A dozen versions of VALENTINA, stunningly made-up and dressed in various designer outfits - float through the air - all in deliciously seductive, flirtatious, slow motion - all reflected in the mirror sea..

LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN  
(overcome)  
Oh... how gorgeous...

TONY lifts his mask to take in this extraordinary world.

TONY  
Ah... yeah. Right.

THE LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN takes TONY'S hand and looks at him meaningfully.

LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN  
(lifting his mask)  
Who are you, dear?  
(moans softly)  
Ohhh... What bliss...  
(she sees her dream man..  
not TONY)  
...and I don't even know your  
name...

TONY  
Barry...

LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN  
Barry. How dashing.

TONY catches his reflection in a giant perfume bottle drifting on the mirror sea. What? IT'S NOT HIM! HE LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE ELSE!!

Disoriented, he takes a moment to regain his composure. He smiles and, with an effort, puts his arm around THE LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN'S wide waist. He looks into her eyes. She's in love...and there is much for him to discover in this fabulous world.

A bar or two of the dark and sexy Tom Waits version of "SEA OF LOVE" encourages them to take a couple of intimate tango dance steps.

Two of the beautiful versions of VALENTINA pull open the sky background as if it was a giant curtain to reveal.. down a flower strewn path and over a bridge... a sleazy motel with a shingle over the door reads: "The One Night Stand Motel". In the office window sits MR. NICK

LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN (CONT'D)  
Oh, goodness me!

She bats her eyelashes at TONY and begins, knowingly, to pull him towards the motel.

TONY  
(resisting)  
If I'm not wrong, I think you must  
go alone. It's um...

THE LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN pouts playfully, pulling him onwards.

LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN

Why would I want to go without you  
darling?

TONY

It's one of the rules... One  
imagination at a time, free from  
the influence of another.

LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN

(petulant)

Boring.

They have reached the bridge. Stairs descend to a stream.

TONY

Oh..look... another possibility..

Below them a gondola rests in the stream as small, flower  
bedecked barques float past with framed pictures of romantic  
heroes who died young; James Dean, Jim Morrison, Rudolph  
Valentino, Marilyn Monroe, Buddy Holly, Princess Diana... the  
stream continues off into the distance to a dark, towering  
Egyptian pyramid.

TONY is as bemused as THE LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN.

TONY (CONT'D)

You have to make a choice..and...  
actually, to be honest, I'd  
strongly recommend this one. The  
gondola, darlin'.

LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN

But... Rudolph Valentino, James  
Dean, Princess Di?... all these  
people... they're dead.

TONY

(thinking fast)

But, immortal, nevertheless. They  
won't get old or fat. They won't  
get sick or feeble. They are beyond  
fear because they are forever  
young. They are gods. And you can  
join them.

LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN

(softening)

You're such a wonderful speaker.

The gondola awaits....with a beautiful male model at the helm. THE LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN smiles at him.

TONY

I know. Now be a sweetheart and get  
in the boat.

But as she hesitates a dark shadow rises over them. TONY, looking past the WOMAN'S shoulder, sees the dark waters of the stream rise up transforming into a GIGANTIC KING COBRA that towers menacingly over them. It's wearing a BOWLER HAT... and it's angry.

TONY (CONT'D)

Look at me. This is important. Your  
sacrifice must be pure. You have to  
let go of all these worldly goods.  
Allow me.

He helps THE LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN remove her necklace, earrings, bracelets, rings, broach, in double quick time and guides her onto the gondola, blowing a kiss after her.

TONY (CONT'D)

Prepare to be reborn. Remember  
nothing is permanent... not even  
death.

He turns back to see the GIGANTIC KING COBRA shrinking back below the bridge, transforming itself back into the waters of the stream. From under the arch of the bridge hangs a rope. At its end.. a hangman's noose.

TONY stares at it darkly disconcerted.

TONY (CONT'D)

Oh, shit!

TONY re-enters the stage through the mirror, looking at DR. PARNASSUS who has just come out of his trance with astonishment

TONY

(gobsmacked)

That was so... where did  
the....It's just... incredible. I  
had no idea.

...And then he realizes the clock is still striking the hour realizing that only a few moments have passed since he entered the mirror.

TONY (CONT'D)  
..how do you do this?

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
(ignoring him and with a  
big theatrical gesture)  
Voila!

TONY  
Voila?

The LOUIS VUITTON woman bursts through a paper cut-out sun at the top of the stage.. swinging downwards on a rose bedecked swing that swoops out and over the crowd... laughing, exhilarated, radiant...her hair flying loose.

PARNASSUS steps forward and helps her off the swing. She kisses his hands in gratitude.. weeping, completely overcome by her experience.

LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN  
Thank you, thank you, that was so  
beautiful, I feel so... thank you so  
much...

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
(graciously)  
Thank YOU, dear Lady, you give me  
strength to continue

Born again, tearful but transcendent, the LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN produces her cheque book and begins to write a cheque.

TONY is frozen, confused. The crowd is still... stunned by the LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN's transformation as she deposits the cheque, her handbag, her expensive coat in the glass box and glides benignly through the crowd... which parts in awe.

Pause... and then the other WOMEN rush the stage. Mayhem is narrowly averted as TONY and PERCY manage to coral them into a more-or-less orderly queue.

Across the street, standing in the doorway of a shop selling luxury goods, is MR NICK. He watches events, intrigued...

...as TONY escorts a second woman through the mirror, and a third, they reappear, ecstatic, transformed, emptying the contents of their handbags, their pearls, earrings and diamond rings into the glass box.

The cops, now bored, move on.

TONY, getting more and more flamboyant, forgets to lower his mask each time he re-enters the stage. And now a fourth woman descends. Four successes for DOCTOR PARNASSUS.

DR. PARNASSUS  
(aside to Percy)  
One more to go and we're free.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS spots MR NICK across the street, smiles, holds up four fingers.

MR NICK gives a little 'I'm not impressed' smirk and turns away and pretends to be interested in the luxury goods in the shop window as a black limo glides darkly into shot.

Four large dark heavy RUSSIAN MEN, all laden with luxury shopping, get out of the car and head to an expensive shop.

One of the RUSSIANS stops..looking at the show.. at TONY whose mask is sitting on top of his head. The leading RUSSIAN pulls him on.

VLADIMIR (IN RUSSIAN) SUBTITLED  
C'mon..What are you watching that  
crap for.

SERGE (IN RUSSIAN)  
(pointing at TONY)  
It's him!

VLADIMIR (IN RUSSIAN)  
Who are you talking about?  
(following SERGE's pointed  
finger)  
Impossible.

SERGE (IN RUSSIAN)  
I'm sure.

They start pushing through the crowd.

TONY, reaching down to help an elderly lady up to the stage, looks up and sees the RUSSIANS heading through the crowd..

He lets go of the lady sending her crashing to the ground.

55

Panic!! He pulls the mask down and begins to back up.

But it's too late, they've definitely seen him.

He spins around and rockets upstage, past DR. PARNASSUS who is deep into his trance.

TONY dives through the mirror much to the amazement of VALENTINA, ANTON, PERCY.

The RUSSIANS chase after him, shoving the queuing WOMEN aside, smashing the scenery and knocking ANTON into the wings.

56

INT/ EXT IMAGINARIUM

56

The RUSSIANS charge into a beautiful Grant Wood landscape...

No TONY...

PIOTR

Where did he go?

VLADIMIR

You tell me... I thought he was dead!

SERGE

He is. We killed him.

PIOTR

So why did he run?

GIRL V/O

Hi! Hello! Today's special!....

The RUSSIANS spin around

Popping up in front of them is an over-bright, hyper-active, wide-eyed sales girl waving endorsements and photographs of smiling celebrities.. The sky behind her is dotted with white fluffy clouds. Extending from the ground to each cloud is an incredibly long ladder. On each ladder is a person climbing upwards.

SALES-GIRL

Reach for the clouds! Discover your true potential!

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

SALES-GIRL (CONT'D)

Yes, you too can become famous,  
rich, celebrated. Using no organic  
produce or nut free foods, discover  
the power within you. Market  
research has shown that 9 out of 10  
people use only 39.4% of their  
imagination and will power.

The RUSSIANS spot Tony. He is already a hundred feet up a  
ladder and climbing.

SERGE

There he is!

SALES-GIRL

Gift certificates are available  
at...

They roughly shove the girl aside. As they rush past...

GREGOR

Relax... Smell the flowers.

CUT to TONY climbing, still wearing his carnival mask,  
looking toward the cloud above.

In the cloud float giant images of magazines and newspapers.  
On their covers are photos of A FAMOUS ACTOR posing with  
presidents, world leaders, the rich, and the famous.  
Headlines proclaim his importance, his charity work, his  
fame.

TONY climbs upwards..throwing off his mask.. revealing that  
he looks just like the FAMOUS ACTOR.

AS TONY'S mask hits the ground, the RUSSIANS reach the base  
of the ladder and start climbing.

Jolted out of his reverie, he looks down and sees the threat.  
TONY kicks hard and breaks the rungs below him..

setting off a domino effect with more rungs breaking downward  
towards the RUSSIANS. Snap! Crack! Rungs break in their  
grasp.. they fall.

The RUSSIANS land in a tangled heap as the domino effect  
continues down to the base of the ladder.

Laughing down at them, TONY turns to continue climbing - only  
to see the domino effect heading down from the top of the  
ladder... towards him.

(CONTINUED)

THE LADDER COMPLETELY SEPARATES IN TWO.

Tony struggles to maintain his balance - he slip slides downwards

Somehow he manages to get his feet on the two halves of a broken rung. Then, as if he were on giant stilts, starts to stride away.

The RUSSIANS chase after him but, his giant strides leave them far behind. Smugly, TONY looks back just as one of the legs of his ladder snags on a fallen log. He loses his balance... and plunges hundreds of feet earthward.

From nowhere, ANTON (still dressed as a fat woman) appears.. running to catch the plummeting TONY. He does and Whomp!!.. is flattened. Knocked out cold. TONY is unscathed.. his fall broken by ANTON'S padding.

But, the RUSSIANS arrive, grab TONY, throw him face down, start to beat him up.

SERGE

You thieving scumbag! We break every bone in your body!

TONY

(looking up)

No! Wait! I can explain! Give me a chance!

Seeing his face, they are, for a moment, confused.

VLADIMIR

Its not him, i told you it is not him.

TONY

Its not?

PIOTR

It has to be. Look!

On TONY's forehead there is a smudge of red. PIOTR roughly rubs at it.

Flesh coloured make-up comes off in his hand revealing the strange red markings that were on TONY'S forehead when he was rescued from under the bridge.

(CONTINUED)

PIOTR (CONT'D)

You think you fool us.. No way,  
Jose!

They resume beating TONY.

VLADIMIR

We want our money or you die again!  
This time for good!

ANTON struggles to his feet.

ANTON V/O

Stop it! L-leave him alone!

The RUSSIANS turn and, see a fat, bossy, middle-aged woman, pointing angrily at them. They hesitate.

ANTON

Stand b-back! I'm warning you!

Foolishly, he whips off his wig and assumes a manly martial arts pose. The RUSSIANS look at each other. Then, utterly ignoring ANTON, turn their attention back to beating TONY.

GREGOR walks calmly over to ANTON who is in attack mode.

GREGOR

(bending down and picking  
a flower, he offers it to  
ANTON)

Relax. Smell the flowers.

Confused, ANTON takes the flower, sniffs and then... GREGOR floors him with a powerful punch on the nose

Meanwhile, the RUSSIANS have a noose around TONY's neck and have looped the rope over a tree branch. TONY struggles to pull out the metal pipe he keeps on a string around his neck. He gets it to his mouth as if to swallow it when...

... the ground erupts and a giant London policeman's helmet rises up (we are talking 20 feet tall)and revolves - revealing DR. PARNASSUS' carved and painted face beneath.

The mouth drops open and a great red tongue rolls out like a welcoming red carpet. From inside the giant mouth a smiling policeman beckons the RUSSIANS to come on in..

The terrified RUSSIANS let go of the lynching rope.

TONY drops to the ground and, with a whistle, the brass pipe flies out of his mouth.

Behind the RUSSIANS a painted backdrop unfurls..it reads "JOIN THE FUZZ.. WE LOVE VIOLENCE".. and a chorus line of mini-skirted, fish-net stockinged, policemen appear - high-kicking a snappy song and dance number.

The astonished RUSSIANS don't know what the fuck is going on.

Suddenly, a friendly OLD WOMAN'S VOICE is heard shouting something in Russian.

Spinning around, the RUSSIANS see an old BABOUSHKA (Russian grandmother) outside a tumble-down cottage waving gaily to them. A stunned pause. Then, pell-mell, they rush to her.

RUSSIANS (IN RUSSIAN)  
Mama! Mama! Help! Save us!

As they run toward her they get smaller and smaller. She lifts her skirts and all four disappear underneath. And then.. BOOM!.. a muffled explosion balloons the skirts outward. Smoke spews out from below.

Straightening her skirt, the BABOUSHKA looks up, and pulls off her head - revealing MR.NICK's tiny head poking out of the collar. He smiles smugly.

The giant POLICEMAN DR. PARNASSUS registers disappointment and, like a balloon rapidly deflating, spins off into the sky sending up a cloud of dust obscuring everything.

The dust clears and TONY and ANTON are in a desolate, empty landscape. Nowhere. Nothing.

ANTON begins to regain consciousness.

TONY  
(shaking him)  
Wake up, Anton. C-mon..wakey  
wakey. I need your help.

ANTON  
Mnnn.... Nnnn..

TONY  
C'mon.. c'mon. Did you see me!!

ANTON  
Who are you?

TONY

It's me, mate ..Tony.. Use your imagination. God!!!.. I almost reached the bloody clouds! I could have touched them...it felt incredible... I could have done anything. I need another go...

ANTON

If your Tony... What was the name of my chicken?

TONY

Huh?... Bertie.

ANTON

Who were those thugs?

TONY

It's not important. Where have the ladders gone, Anton? You know Parnassus's mind... Help me find them.

ANTON

You stole their money.

TONY

I didn't.

ANTON

That's what they said.

TONY

Please. Are you going to believe them before you believe me?

ANTON

What about those marks?

TONY

Marks?

ANTON points at Tony's forehead.

TONY (CONT'D)

How should I know? Maybe something satanic... Devil worship... I dont know! Look, those were irredeemably bad people, and I'm essentially good. I know that sounds terribly prim.

(CONTINUED)

ANTON  
(interrupting)  
And self righteous.

TONY  
I'm trying to be honest here. The  
truth is... in order to get my  
charity off the ground I needed  
capital.

ANTON looks sceptical.

TONY (CONT'D)  
I accepted a loan from those  
people. There was absolutely no way  
I could have known they wanted to  
use my charity to launder their  
dirty money. I trusted them.  
Stupidly. A big mistake. And I have  
to live with that forever.

ANTON walks away leaving Tony.

TONY (CONT'D)  
No.. Wait!... I need to stay here..  
give me a break.. please...I almost  
died today..

ANTON leaves. TONY, alone looks around and sees he is in a  
very dangerous looking world..small fires in the distance..  
looming rusting steelwork..and shadowy figures... and...  
frightened, he runs after ANTON..

TONY V/O  
Listen to me, Anton.. please.. I  
needed their money... when you run  
a charity you have to give lots of  
money away....

TONY'S voice fades.

In the far distance, revealed amongst the ruined  
wasteland...is the wagon.. a light leaks from within.

TONY'S voice can be heard continuing from inside.

TONY V/O (CONT'D)  
.. I needed more time...You  
wouldn't believe the red  
tape.....the bureaucracy.. I'm  
sorry..

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

TONY V/O (CONT'D)  
but, I'm sure you can understand  
this, Doctor, the Charity  
Commission are a bunch of fascists.  
Believe me, it's true..

VALENTINA'S voice can be heard from inside

VALENTINA V/O  
How many times does he have to  
apologize, Anton?...

57 OMITTED 57

58 INT THEATER/WAGON- CONTINUOUS 58

The troupe sits amongst the clutter of props and jumbled  
scenery. In their center is the glass plinth heaped high with  
the money and jewelry from the woman on Bond street

DR. PARNASSUS is sitting, head in hands. He seems utterly  
destroyed.

VALENTINA

He's said he's sorry. Can we let  
him back in now?

ANTON

No!  
(to Percy)  
Keep him out!  
(to Valentina)  
He's a total fraud! Why can't you  
see that!?

VALENTINA

Jealousy is not an attractive  
thing...

She looks up and sees that Percy has locked the hatch

VALENTINA (CONT'D)

Percy! Unlock the hatch! Let him  
in!

PERCY

Why would he want him to come in?  
He know we hate him

(CONTINUED)

VALENTINA plunges her hand into the glass plinth and hauls out handfuls of money and jewelry.

VALENTINA  
Doesn't any of this mean anything to any of you?.. Have you forgotten what it was like before we found him?..

EXT ROOF OF WAGON THAT MOMENT

Tony sits twiddling his thumbs as the conversation continues below him.

VALENTINA O/S  
.. And what about those women?.. If he's so bad... what about them. You saw their faces...

ANTON O/S  
Yes... and I've seen two of his. I wonder how many more he has?..

INT THE WAGON THAT MOMENT

VALENTINA  
(pleading)  
Percy! Please! It's my birthday. This was supposed to be a special day. Look what Tony got me...

She fingers the LOUIS VUITTON WOMANS'S necklace that hangs around her neck.

There is a knock on the door which startles everyone. They exchange looks.

DR. PARNASSUS is frightened but hides this from the others.

The knock is repeated. PERCY starts to get up.

DR. PARNASSUS  
No! Leave it!

The knock comes again.

VALENTINA  
Let him in... It's Tony.

DR. PARNASSUS  
(full of forboding)  
No... I think not. Sit down.

Once more someone knocks. Everyone is edgy. Particularly PERCY.

The knock comes again.

PERCY  
(sotto voce, agitated)  
For the love of Mike! Can we answer the door? I can't stand not answering the door, or the telephone, or whatever. It's not in my nature. I won't sleep for weeks if we don't answer the door! Sorry!

DR. PARNASSUS gets up, goes to the door, opens it and steps outside, closing the door behind him.

VALENTINA, ANTON, PERCY and TONY exchange looks.

PERCY  
(embarrassed)  
Sorry, I just... I've got a thing about...

DR. PARNASSUS is slumped, seated. MR NICK stands over him.

The horses are standing steaming nearby.

DR. PARNASSUS  
(defeated)  
You've won... It's over...

MR NICK  
Four rotten Russkies?

DR. PARNASSUS  
..and the girl.. from the pub.

MR NICK shakes his head.

MR NICK

Sally doesn't count. Do you, gal?

SALLY (the woman thrown out from the wagon as they escaped from the pub mob) steps out of the shadows, puts her arms around NICK

DR. PARNASSUS

This is your pleasure, isn't it?..  
toying with me. Like a cat with a  
mouse...

MR NICK

Oh c'mon.. Sal didn't get to make a  
real choice. You were gaga. Out for  
the count. Wouldn't be  
fair...You've got four, thanks to  
your friend Tony. So... we're  
even.. it's not quite over.

He smiles, lights a cigarette, takes a deep drag...

MR NICK (CONT'D)

Not quite.  
(checks his watch)  
Oh,oh, look at the time...it's 11.

...and he wanders off into the darkness with SALLY.  
Somewhere, a clock strikes 11.

DR. PARNASSUS, agitated, watches him go.

VALENTINA (V.O.)

Father?

DR. PARNASSUS looks round to find VALENTINA standing next to  
him. He starts to round up the horses.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

Ah..We must do another show! Now!  
Quickly! Get ready to move out!

VALENTINA

Who was that?

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

Just somebody asking the way.  
Where's Tony?

VALENTINA

I overheard you... He wasn't asking  
the way.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
(changing the subject)  
Tony! Percy!

VALENTINA  
I want to know what's going on.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
(harnessing the horses)  
Not now Scrumpy! Not now!

VALENTINA  
Yes, now! I want to know what are  
you hiding?

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
(changing the subject  
again)  
Where's Tony?

VALENTINA  
It's something to do with that  
bloody rambling story you were  
telling me...Isn't it? The story  
you never finished.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
(turning away)  
Percy!!!

POW! VALENTINA punches PARNASSUS hard.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS (CONT'D)  
Ow!!

He spins around.. fists up. They stare at each other.

VALENTINA  
I want to know the truth!

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
You want the truth? I really am  
thousands of years old, I have been  
immortal and I have made a bargain  
with the devil.

VALENTINA  
..For the woman in the story..yes?

DOCTOR PARNASSUS  
Your mother...I regained my  
youth... I became mortal  
again...and I won her.

DR. PARNASSUS looks haggard. He closes his eyes.

VALENTINA  
Go on.

DR. PARNASSUS  
We lived in joy. We grew old  
together. Then one day she told me  
she was pregnant. Sixty years old  
and pregnant.. It was a miracle!  
She died giving birth.

VALENTINA  
To me...

DR. PARNASSUS  
Yes

VALENTINA  
A little miracle? Or a little  
mistake??

DR. PARNASSUS  
(devastated)  
You're the best mistake I ever  
made!

After a pause...

VALENTINA  
(fearful)  
And the bargain... with the  
devil... There are two parts to a  
bargain aren't there?

DR. PARNASSUS  
(taking a deep breath)  
He granted me mortality on  
condition that any children I  
fathered would... on their  
sixteenth birthday... belong to  
him.

VALENTINA

What?

VALENTINA can't take it in.. pulling away.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)

Why should I believe this!

DR. PARNASSUS

Because it's true. But all is not  
lost...

VALENTINA claps her hands over her ears..

DR. PARNASSUS (CONT'D)

(feverishly)

There is a new wager... The first  
to five. If I win...you're free...  
you're mine again.. The day isn't  
over.

VALENTINA

That's enough!

DR. PARNASSUS

Scrumpy! Listen to me. We can win!  
I only need one more!

VALENTINA

Listen to yourself! Who are you? I  
don't know you anymore! All my life  
you've filled my head with  
dreams...and all the while...  
you're playing games with the  
devil! And what am I?...just  
another one of your pathetic  
bets!...just another one of your  
mistakes?!

VALENTINA rushes off...

The tinkling of her bell anklet fades into the din of the  
city.

DR. PARNASSUS

(heartbroken to himself)

The best I ever made.

A dark silhouette looks down from the top of the wagon. It's  
TONY. What has he heard?

60 RXT THE WAGON MOMENTS LATER 60

DR. PARNASSUS rushes into the wagon.

PERCY is already on his feet, having heard the DOCTOR shouting.

ANTON  
What's happened?

DR. PARNASSUS  
Valentina... She's... she's gone...

ANTON rushes out in pursuit.

PERCY stops by DR. PARNASSUS before he exits.

PERCY  
Telling the truth... Always a bad  
idea.

PARNASSUS snaps. Grabs PERCY..

DR. PARNASSUS  
You smug little pustule! Get out of  
my sight! Away!

...and he throws him into the darkness.

Struggling to his feet and brushing himself off, Percy bows dramatically.. and with dignity...

PERCY  
Perhaps you'll find a midget... if  
you're lucky.

...he spins smartly on his heel and marches off into the darkness. PARNASSUS is mortified at what he has done.

61 EXT RUBBISH TIP NIGHT 61

ANTON, runs through a wind blown rubbish tip.. calling for VALENTINA. An old newspaper is blown into his face, He pulls it off, goes to throw it away but, his attention is caught by a headlined article. He stops.

62 EXT THE WAGON A LITTLE LATER 62

PARNASSUS, a bottle in his hand, is lurching around.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

You fool! You monstrous fool! You  
should be dead.

He starts to violently bang his head against the side of the wagon.

Suddenly the stage begins to unfold. PARNASSUS looks up, unable to see what or who is doing this. He drunkenly stumbles around the side to see TONY pulling ropes.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS (CONT'D)

What are you doing?

TONY

Saving your daughter, mate.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

(befuddled)

What?... How?

TONY

Easy. I'll be your fifth soul. I'll  
take the risk. We still have time  
don't we?

Tony steers DOCTOR PARNASSUS towards his glass column.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS

Yes! Yes! Of course! Of course!  
Thank God, Tony! Thank God!

TONY

And I don't expect anything in  
return, Dr. P.

He grabs a cushion to make PARNASSUS comfortable.

DR. PARNASSUS

(trying to go into a  
trance)

No. You're a saint... A saint.

TONY

Yes, well... maybe one thing would  
be nice... perhaps... an initiation  
into the secrets of your trance.

DR. PARNASSUS

No! I can't..

TONY  
I won't tell anyone!

DR. PARNASSUS  
I can't do it!

TONY  
But... Surely, if I..

DR. PARNASSUS  
Oh, my head...

TONY realizes Parnassus has not been listening to him and has been referring to his inability to go into a trance

TONY  
What about it? What's wrong?

DR. PARNASSUS  
My mind... I can't concentrate...  
I'm too upset...

TONY  
No you're not! You should be happy!  
We're about to save your daughter!  
Come on now.

DR. PARNASSUS  
(distraught)  
I know...

TONY  
(sitting PARNASSUS down)  
You must concentrate. Breathe.  
Nice and deeply. In and out. In and  
out. Think of rain falling or  
something like that! Good man!  
(clearing the way to the  
mirror)  
I have to get in there now. Don't  
worry I'll make the right choice.  
I'm sure of it. I can feel how  
right this is already.

TONY leaps back to steady DR. PARNASSUS who looked as though he were about to topple off his pillar.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Oh shit!... Doctor...hello! Look at  
me! We can save her. You and me.  
(MORE)

TONY (CONT'D)

We both need this to work so please  
pull yourself together. Focus!

PARNASSUS quiets down. Starts mumbling.

TONY rushes to the mirror. Steps through. He finds himself  
standing amongst the stage scenery. Nothing else.

TONY (CONT'D)

Jesus!

He steps back out of the mirror. Goes to PARNASSUS who is  
weeping.

DR. PARNASSUS

It's no good!

TONY shakes him hard.

TONY

PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER MAN!... Sir.  
Concentrate...or you'll lose her  
forever. Do you want that? Now  
relax and breathe....

PARNASSUS slowly goes into a sobbing kind of trance state.

TONY (CONT'D)

Good. Bravo, mate.

TONY confirms he is in a trance, then rushes to the mirror.

VALENTINA O/S

Tony...oh, Tony..

What?! TONY stops. Looks around. There in the shadows  
huddles VALENTINA, sobbing.

VALENTINA

(sobbing)

It's hopeless.. I'm useless..... I  
don't even know how to run away...

TONY hesitates.. No time! He looks back to PARNASSUS who  
seems to still be in his trance. Hesitates. Then rushes to  
VALENTINA.

TONY

It's alright... it's alright...  
Don't cry. Calm down and take some  
deep breaths for me. It's going to  
be alright, believe me.

VALENTINA

This stupid theatre...!... That's all I've ever known...! I've always believed it was something precious, magical! But it's not... it's a lie...I hate it!

TONY lifts her up, putting his arm around her.

TONY

Shh shh shh come here. Everything's going to be alright. We have a plan that will work. And I'll take you away from all this. I'll show you a world you'll love. My world. Our world. A great big beautiful world. You'll love it baby... Its all going to be perfect. Yes?

VALENTINA, grateful, clings to TONY.

VALENTINA

Yes.

TONY

C'mon then. Come with me.

They turn to the mirror but, an off-stage clearing of the throat makes them look round to see ANTON watching them. He's holding a torn and dirty piece of newspaper.

ANTON

Ah, there you are, Tony. Here's something m-might interest you.  
(reading)  
'Missing: D-disgraced head of children's charity'.

TONY tries to snatch the paper but ANTON steps back.

TONY

Can I have that please?

A crash of thunder. A strike of lightning. A storm is brewing.

ANTON

N-not a bad p-picture, Tony.  
Listen to this Valentina... it's about Tony's b-beautiful world..

TONY

Anton, we have no time for this nonsense.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS O/S

(mumbling incoherently)

Valentina! Forgive me..forgive me

PARNASSUS is still in his trance but, mumbling.. reacting to the sound of the bells on VALENTINA'S anklet.

ANTON

...Anthony Shepherd, who was arrested last week on charges of...

VALENTINA is surrounded. Confused. Rain starts.

TONY

(to Valentina)

Valentina, Don't listen to that. Anton has dug up some crazy story written years ago. It was the work of people who were trying to destroy me! Evil people! Twisting the truth! For their benefit. Happens all the time.

TONY pulls VALENTINA towards the mirror.

ANTON tries to stop him, but TONY pushes him back, off the stage. He crashes to the ground.

TONY (CONT'D)

Sorry mate. Never believe what you read in the papers!

TONY (CONT'D)

(grabbing Valentina)

Lets go! I'll show you what's true!

TONY and VALENTINA disappear through the mirror.

Thunder. Lightening.

Bird song. The sun shines gold. It is a beautiful day on the romantic river that PARNASSUS wooed his wife. In the very same boat VALENTINA and TONY float dreamily along...except that TONY doesn't look like TONY. He looks like the man in the IDEAL FAMILY ADS that VALENTINA has collected.

VALENTINA

Your world is so beautiful. I dreamed it would be just like this, Tony. I knew you were a good person.

Seeing his reflection in the water, TONY realizes, once again, that he is in someone else's imagined world. He goes along with VALENTINA.

TONY

And.. Didn't I say you'd be happy here. Isn't it perfect? If only we didn't have to make a choice.

VALENTINA

What choice? Why does there have to be a choice?

TONY

A rule's a rule?

VALENTINA

Those are my father's rules. We're free. See!

She lifts her leg to show that her bell anklet is gone.

TONY

(looking uneasily around)  
I suppose we are. But, are you sure?

VALENTINA

Tony, we're free if we really want to be! Let's just let the river do the choosing.

(leaning her head back)  
Kiss me, please.

TONY hesitates, then kisses her.

TONY

You are so beautiful... and so young.

VALENTINA

Isn't 16 legal in a boat?

TONY

Probably in here it is. But is it wise?

VALENTINA

I'm finished playing Wisdom and..  
(sweetly)  
... I think I can swim.

They embrace. At first slow and tentatively then,  
passionately. They disappear below the gunwales of the wildly  
rocking boat. Clothes sailing into the air.

The sun changes to a full moon in a brilliant night sky.

VALENTINA lies back on the bottom of the boat blissfully  
gazing at the moon....singing quietly.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)

*When the moon hits your eye like a  
big pizza pie... I've never seen it  
so big. And the stars... I love  
you, Tony.*

TONY

Val...

TONY is sitting behind her in the boat. He seems edgy..  
impatient for the cloud-climbing buzz of his potential.

VALENTINA

I want this to be forever. Do you  
feel the same way...?

TONY

(a long pause)  
.. uh...

With a bump, the boat comes to an abrupt halt on the  
riverbank. Somewhere in the dark a child is crying.

Looking around, VALENTINA and TONY spot a ragged little girl  
standing alone in the distance, sobbing.

TONY (CONT'D)

This must be my... choice. I'm  
guessing.

VALENTINA

What do you mean? There's no choice  
here! It's a child. She's alone..  
she needs our help.

TONY

Yes. A child.

She rushes to the LITTLE GIRL, tries to pick her up but, she resists VALENTINA.. screaming at her in a foreign tongue.

VALENTINA  
It's OK.. we're your friends.  
Tony, help me, she's strong.

Seeing that VALENTINA is really struggling with the LITTLE GIRL, TONY reluctantly goes to help. The LITTLE GIRL, on seeing TONY, tries to break away but, he grabs her.

TONY  
(shouting angrily)  
Ostanobuite bas menshi schit!

The LITTLE GIRL goes quiet. VALENTINA looks at TONY with surprise. He smiles with a self-deprecating shrug.

TONY (CONT'D)  
Maybe this is my world.

There is a burst of light from a flashbulb. Then another, and another.. as a crowd of photographers appears, snapping away at TONY and the LITTLE GIRL.

The image of TONY and the LITTLE GIRL freezes. Fades to black and white...

... and is the center of a large poster promoting a charity..SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN.

The poster hangs in a grand hall full of RICH BUSINESS PEOPLE, POLITICIANS, POP STARS, CELEBS.

A small orchestra is playing.

WAITERS and WAITRESSES move amongst the assembled notables bearing trays of drinks and food.

TONY is the focus of attention, now sleekly groomed and immaculately dressed, holding the smiling little girl. She too has been cleaned and buffed.

A TV current-affairs/news JOURNALIST with CAMERA CREW is following him around.

TONY  
Sustainability's great, if you can  
achieve it.  
(MORE)

TONY (CONT'D)

The problem is, in many cases you simply can't get there, for a whole variety of reasons.

TONY smiles and shakes the hand of someone in a wheelchair.

A GROUP OF GUESTS burst into spontaneous applause. Everybody loves and admires TONY. He smiles boyishly.

He moves on. The TV CREW stay with him.

JOURNALIST

Aren't you running the risk of entrenching the need for charity by increasingly institutionalising it?

TONY

Look, charity, like poor little Olga...  
(referring to the little girl)  
...is always with us, to coin a phrase...

VALENTINA appears. She is beautifully dressed, coiffed, made-up, she looks stunning.

TONY (CONT'D)

(to VALENTINA)

Ah, there you are, my lovely. Isn't she a wonder ladies and gentlemen?

The crowd applauds.

She and TONY exchange broad smiles. They're in love. He pulls her to his side and puts his arm around her. The photographers snap away.

TONY (CONT'D)

Big smiles!

JOURNALIST

And what's your message to the President?

TONY

(laughs engagingly)  
I wouldn't presume to have a 'message' for the President...  
Fortunately for the Foundation, I think we pretty much see eye to eye on most things.

Now we hear police sirens from an approaching motorcade.  
EVERYBODY looks to the entrance of the hall.

VALENTINA

I was wondering if we could have a  
moment....

TONY

One sec, love.

TONY and the posse of JOURNALISTS and PHOTOGRAPHERS rush off  
leaving VALENTINA standing alone.

The PRESIDENT and his WIFE, surrounded and followed by their  
SECURITY and AIDES enter . TONY and the PRESIDENT shake hands  
for THE TV CAMERAS.

VALENTINA watches from a distance..ignored.

A huge chandelier illuminates a grand ornate ballroom where  
the wealthy guests, in evening dress, are being seated at  
tables by liveried ushers. Large beautiful photographs of the  
underprivileged children of the world line the walls. A  
great banner reads "SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN BENEFIT BALL"

The PRESIDENT and his WIFE are seated at the head table,  
facing the dais, bubbly and expectant. Security is heavy.

TONY is conferring with his speech writers and assistants as  
VALENTINA descends the staircase looking utterly stunning in  
a beautiful gown. TONY bows, romantically kissing her hand.  
He turns her to admire their reflections in a gilt  
mirror...the perfect, beautiful, dream couple.

TONY

You look gorgeous, my love. I knew  
you wouldn't let me down.

The little girl, OLGA, and a little boy are brought forward.  
They are dressed in ethnic clothes. TONY takes OLGA'S  
hand...offers the little boy's hand to VALENTINA. She takes  
it in her own. The four of them start to walk to the door  
leading to the ballroom.

TONY (CONT'D)  
(looking to everyone)  
This is a vitally important moment  
for the future of the Foundation.  
The children of the world are  
depending on us.

ANTON (V.O.)  
Valentina!

VALENTINA  
Anton!?

TONY and VALENTINA look around. ANTON is nowhere to be seen  
but, his voice continues.

ANTON (V.O.)  
All of this is false! It's nothing  
to do with you! It's all him. It's  
his imagination!

TONY  
You little rat bag. Call security,  
somebody.

ANTON (V.O.)  
It's all rotten! A naked lie!  
You've got to understand!

The LITTLE BOY is tugging VALENTINA'S arm. She looks down.  
It's ANTON. A child-size ANTON.

ANTON (CONT'D)  
Look at this...

He produces the newspaper with TONY'S photo and news story.

ANTON (CONT'D)  
...'Tony Liar'..

TONY throws a hand over ANTON'S mouth. ANTON bites down!

TONY  
Ahhhh!!!

TONY lunges for him but, ANTON dodges out of the way.

ANTON

(reading and dodging)

'The disgraced director of the children's charity "Suffer the Little Children, who was arrested last..

Security guards have rushed in.

TONY

Stop him! Silence the lying little bastard!

ANTON

(dodging the guards)

...who was arrested last week on charges of involvement in the sale of organs from third world children to wealthy Westerners'...unghh!

TONY has grabbed little ANTON and starts hitting him.

TONY

And now he doesn't stutter! You see!? It was all an act to get cheap sympathy!

VALENTINA

(pulling TONY off ANTON)

What are you doing? Take your hands off him!! Stop it!

TONY

Get off me! He's lying. Whose side are you on?

(lashing out and hitting

VALENTINA in the face)

You've betrayed me! Haven't you? You let him in...into my world, you bitch!?... after all I've done for you... OW!!

Little ANTON has leapt on TONY's back and sunk his teeth into TONY'S ear. TONY throws him off and starts beating him.

In the glittering ballroom a children's choir sings.

## CHILDREN'S CHOIR

"We are the world..we are the  
children..."

Behind the choir the double doors of the ballroom crash  
open... exposing TONY violently beating up an 'ethnic child.'  
TONY looks up and freezes.

Stunned silence as the horror of this happy scene sinks in.

## TONY

He was being very naughty?

Then...

## GUESTS

My God! Somebody stop him! He's a  
monster! Stop him!

As one they leap to their feet.

At the same time the walls of the ballroom begin to crack and  
disintegrate. TONY'S world starts to fall apart... literally.

The floor around TONY falls away into an abyss leaving only a  
narrow escape route. He hurls ANTON aside and dashes away as  
the GUESTS pursue him. ANTON avoids being trampled but,  
loses his footing and falls over the edge.

## VALENTINA

Anton!!!

VALENTINA, fighting through the angry GUESTS, rushes to the  
edge of the abyss. ANTON is struggling to hold on to a  
broken floor joist that protrudes several feet down from the  
side of the cliff face.

## ANTON

Valentina!..help me. Please.

His grip slips. VALENTINA reaches for him, grasps his hand.

## VALENTINA

I'm sorry, Anton. I was wrong.

## ANTON

I know...

And.. ANTON REVERTS TO HIS NORMAL SIZE...AND WEIGHT.

## ANTON (CONT'D)

I love you, Valentina.

ANTON slips out of her grip, plummeting into the abyss.

VALENTINA

Noooo!

Suddenly, VALENTINA is jerked backwards by her hair.

TONY

Who's behind this!? Eh!? You didn't  
come up with this all on your own  
did you!!!???

(slapping her)

No! Someone's got at you. Someone's  
paid you!!!... Didn't they!..Speak  
a little Russian do we!?

DR. PARNASSUS(O.S.)

Valentina! My darling daughter!  
There you are!

They turn to see PARNASSUS in the distance (where once the  
ballroom stood) stumbling towards them, drunk, desperate. As  
he moves forward a new landscape is created behind him.

TONY rushes towards PARNASSUS.

TONY

You old bastard! This is all your  
doing!

DR. PARNASSUS

(drunkenly)

All my doing?... I'm merely the  
facilitatater, dear boy.

GUESTS (O.S.)

There he is! Stop him! Leave her  
alone. Get him!

Throwing his arm around TONY, PARNASSUS spins him around to  
face the MOB rushing towards him.

DR. PARNASSUS

I create the opportunities. Is it  
my fault if your not up to it?

Tony wrenches his arm free and violently shoves the drunken  
DOCTOR right into the path of the frenzied MOB. PARNASSUS is  
trampled underfoot in their rush to catch TONY.

VALENTINA

Father! No!

PARNASSUS'S body lies broken on the ground. Frantically, VALENTINA rushes to him, throwing herself on her father's battered body, sobbing hysterically.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)

NO..NO NO... Please.. father..this  
is all my fault.  
It's going to be alright... it will  
be.. please...

With siren wailing, an AMBULANCE arrives, screeching to a halt. PARAMEDICS pull VALENTINA away. They check PARNASSUS for signs of life and begin to lift him onto the gurney. VALENTINA can't control herself and tries to throw herself onto his body. The PARAMEDICS struggle with her.

PARAMEDIC

(with a severe stutter)

P-p-p-lease m-mis-s, there's-s  
n-n-othing y-y-y-you c-can d-d-o,  
he-he-he's d-d-dead...

VALENTINA

NOOOOO...!!!

VALENTINA wrenches herself out of their grasp howling like an animal and rushes away out of earshot before the PARAMEDIC can finish speaking.

PARAMEDIC

...d-dead drunk.

A bottle falls from the DOCTOR'S hand and explodes in a million fragments as it hits the ground.

The shimmering fragments coalesce into a fractured mirror corridor down which a multi-reflected VALENTINA runs - sobbing like a madwoman - lashing out at her reflections, some of which are flashbacks of her flirting with TONY, irritated with ANTON, angry with PARNASSUS.

VALENTINA

(to her reflections)

You're to blame!.. you fool!.. why  
where you ever born?... I hate you!

The multi-reflection broken mirror corridor ends at two mirrors identical to the one used in the Imaginarium. The one to the left is marked 'His' with a bowler hat, the other to the right 'Hers' with a bonnet. She hesitates.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)  
(laughing madly)  
So this is my choice!!

MR NICK appears out of the "His" mirror - a burst of flame behind him.

He makes a sweeping gesture inviting VALENTINA to enter the mirror marked 'Hers'.

VALENTINA, heads for the mirror marked 'His'. MR NICK blocks her path.

MR NICK  
Now, there's absolutely no need for that. That's just plain contrariness.

VALENTINA tries to get around him.

MR NICK (CONT'D)  
You think you deserve punishment - you have no idea...you're just a kid... trust me.

VALENTINA feints another direction. MR NICK blocks her.

VALENTINA  
(a crazed look)  
I've heard that before. And by the way, I'm a woman now...

She spins around him...he blocks....a kind of dance between them begins - confusingly reflected in the mirrors. A tango can be heard.

VALENTINA (CONT'D)  
... a selfish bitch, everyone I love dies or lies...I'm...

MR NICK  
...only fit for hell? If only.

He looks at Valentina with lascivious intent. He's tempted, briefly, but resists it.

MR NICK (CONT'D)  
No... your pop would never speak to me again. And that'd be a shame. Let's dance.

Reflected in the swirling mirror fragments, they tango until he spins her towards the right hand mirror. She sails through - and, with a mad smile, throws him a kiss.

The mirror closes with a burst of flame. The briefest flash of DR. PARNASSUS face is reflected in the mirror fragments.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS O/S  
Valentina!!!!!!

MR NICK turns, realizing he has been looking into a mirror fragment reflecting the two mirrors. The writing on the Valentina's mirror reads "His".

MR NICK  
Damn!... I've won.

DR. PARNASSUS is sitting alone on a prominent bluff (the same one he tried throwing himself off many years ago) He's distraught. Tears run down this cheeks. A distant bell tolls midnight.

MR NICK appears behind PARNASSUS...sits down beside him.

MR NICK  
Funny how things work out, isn't it?

He lights a cigarette.

MR NICK (CONT'D)  
It's not what I had in mind y'know... this.. Valentina, being the fifth... It doesn't seem right... She's supposed to be the prize... not part of the bloody score... What a bummer, eh?

No response from PARNASSUS. A Tarot cards drops from his hand. It is The Hanged Man.

MR. NICK points to the plain far below. Across the harsh ground, TONY is running for his life...pursued by the MOB.

MR NICK (CONT'D)  
I hope they get that bastard. Tear him limb from limb... But they won't... He leads a charmed life, that one...

(MORE)

MR NICK (CONT'D)

I've been trying to nail him for years... I thought I had him this time. But, there's always some prat comes to his rescue... Talk about the luck of the Devil.

(he laughs)

MR. NICK's dialogue continues over: as TONY reaches the base of the mountain. Rising in front of him is the giant stairway MARTIN the DRUNK hesitated to climb. Hearing heavenly music as the sun rises over the top of the pass, TONY starts clambering up the stairs. The mob is closing.

MR NICK (CONT'D)

Maybe it's those weird markings you found on him... on his forehead... Those satanic-symbol, so-called, things... Maybe they protect him in some way... I've never been into that black-magic stuff myself... Can't seem to get the hang of it... I know, pathetic isn't it?...

PARNASSUS ignores him, sunk even deeper into despondency.

MR NICK (CONT'D)

God, I hate to see you like this. Look, I tell you what... If you can get the lowdown on those satanic markings, or.. wait.. better still, if you can wipe that self-righteous little creep off the face of the universe... I'll give you Valentina back.

A beat. Slowly, PARNASSUS looks up.

MR NICK (CONT'D)

How about it? A deal?

TONY, sweating, panting for breath, is struggling up the stairs.

Below, the MOB is still in hot pursuit.

TONY reaches the summit. In front of him, is his salvation - an empty gibbet. A ladder is propped against it. A noose hangs from the crossbeam.

TONY  
Thank God for that!

TONY relaxes a little.

We can hear the mob now, struggling up the stairway.

TONY digs into one of his pockets and pulls out the brass tube that he has always kept close.

TONY opens his mouth and is about to slip the tube down his throat when he spots the Hanged Man Tarot card lying at his feet. A hand from behind him snatches the tube away.

TONY, startled, turns to find himself looking up at DR. PARNASSUS.

PARNASSUS is standing on the ladder with the noose around his neck. He smiles and opens his hand. The metal tube has vanished.

TONY panics. The MOB is getting closer.

With his other hand DR. PARNASSUS produces the tube from TONY'S ear.

TONY (CONT'D)  
(desperate)  
Give me that!

DR. PARNASSUS gestures at the CROWD.

DR. PARNASSUS  
Give us a moment, please.

The CROWD goes into very slow motion...but twice as angry.

DR. PARNASSUS teases TONY with magic.

DR. PARNASSUS (CONT'D)  
Here's your tube... Here's mine.  
(producing a second tube)  
But mine's just a cheap  
counterfeit... Look, it breaks...  
(he breaks it)  
But here's another...

TONY  
Stop!

DR. PARNASSUS  
You're not amused?

TONY

(desperate)

You've been talking to the devil,  
haven't you? Let me guess... If you  
manage to kill me, he'll release  
Valentina. Am I right? It's all a  
lie. He can't release her...because  
he doesn't have her. He can't have  
her because she's the prize. I know  
these things.

(gaining confidence)

He still doesn't have five wins.  
But if you kill me he will, won't  
he? You'll lose Valentina forever!

DR. PARNASSUS does a double hand shuffle.

DR. PARNASSUS

Choose.

TONY

This is ridiculous!

DR. PARNASSUS

Choose!

TONY chooses.

TONY

You've got to believe me! For all  
our sakes!

DR. PARNASSUS

Are you sure you made the right  
choice?

TONY

Look...

DR. PARNASSUS

Let's find out.

He slides the tube down his throat and steps off the ladder

He drops... dangles from the rope...the noose tight around  
his neck.

At the same moment, the MOB resumes normal speed and roars up  
the mountain.

Is PARNASSUS dead?

Working very fast, TONY hoists him over his shoulder and wrestles the noose loose. He drops PARNASSUS on the ground. He's stunned but still alive.

The MOB is closing in.

TONY slaps DR. PARNASSUS hard between the shoulder blades.

The tube pops out of the DOCTOR'S gullet. TONY catches it.

TONY

Gotcha!

TONY swallows the tube as the MOB surge around the gibbet, grabbing him, beating him, and then lifting him, tightening the noose around his neck.

Although battered, TONY winks smugly at DR. PARNASSUS, but his mood changes when he sees DR. PARNASSUS spit out several more fake tubes, then, gagging, force the real one up and out of his gullet.

With a look of realization and horror, TONY drops to his death.

The MOB cheers. Yes, he's dead.

DR. PARNASSUS tosses the metal tube to MR NICK who steps coolly out of the MOB, cigarette in his mouth.

DR. PARNASSUS

(hoarsely)

There are three cardinal rules.  
One, there's no black-magic, only  
cheap tricks. And... er... I forget  
the others. Now, where's my  
daughter?

MR NICK

How should I know? You're her  
father.

(with needle)

Her loving father.

DR PARNASSUS looks askance at MR NICK.

MR NICK (CONT'D)

She's free... isn't she? Better go  
find her, my friend.

MR NICK smiles and blows smoke in PARNASSUS'S face. The smoke fills the screen and becomes...

71 EXT DESERT DAY

71

... A dust storm. The wind is howling.

DR. PARNASSUS (V.O.)  
Valentina!.... What else could I  
do? What other choice could I have  
made?...

The swirling dust thins to reveal DR.PARNASSUS, alone, exhausted, trudging across a vast desert. His clothes are ragged, torn. His beard has grown long. Structures from the Imaginarium (the Balloon, the Pyramid, Mr. Nick's Bar and Lounge) lie scattered...broken, rusting, decaying.. in the endless sand.

DR. PARNASSUS (CONT'D)  
Damn it!... It was the right  
choice... Of course it was... But  
where the hell's my darling  
Scrumpy? Where have you gone?  
What's become of you? Somebody help  
me..tell me what's become of her!!

DR. PARNASSUS stumbles forward onto a paved road running at a right angle across his path. There is a signpost indicating left and right.

DR. PARNASSUS (V.O.) (CONT'D)  
Oh for God's sake! Not another  
bloody choice!

Enraged, he tries to push the sign over, but is too feeble.

The camera pulls back revealing that road goes only a very short distance in either direction... collapsed over a giant cliff face that continues forever.

PARNASSUS HAS REACHED THE END OF THE WORLD.

Exhausted, he sinks to his knees, hands stretched out in front of him, head bowed, back bent as if in prayer.

As the dust blows over him, the camera tightens in.

DR. PARNASSUS (CONT'D)  
No more choices..no more choices..

The sound of footsteps on pavement is heard and well-shod feet pass in foreground.

Pulling back.. PARNASSUS IS REVEALED TO BE IN A MODERN CITY  
BEGGING ON THE SIDEWALK.. AT THE FEET OF BUSY PASSERS-BY.

71A EXT. CITY STREET DAY 71A

PARNASSUS, kneeling head down.. almost prostrate, holds a  
small begging bowl in his hand. He is filthy and he stinks.  
Most who pass by give him a wide berth.

Tight on PARNASSUS. A coin drops in his bowl. He stirs. He  
hears an old familiar sound..the tinkle of little bells.

He lifts his head. The bells are real. Through the crowd he  
sees a woman's high heeled shoes with an anklet of bells  
exactly like the ones VALENTINA wore...heading away. Can it  
be?

He stumbles to his feet. He sees the back of a woman with  
long flowing red hair disappearing in the crowd.

DR. PARNASSUS  
(croaking)  
Valentina??...

Pushing and jostling through the crowd, he lurches after her  
to the annoyance and disgust of the shoppers.

DR. PARNASSUS (CONT'D)  
Wait!! Valentina!! Is it you??...

But the sound of the traffic drowns his voice.

The woman skips across the street. But PARNASSUS can't keep  
up and is disoriented by the rush of traffic.

She enters a glass fronted restaurant.

PARNASSUS struggles across the street and presses his filthy  
face to the plate glass window.

Diners, inside, near the window are repulsed by the tramp's  
face squeezed misshapenly against the glass.

With effort PARNASSUS is able to make out the red-haired  
woman. It is VALENTINA but, some years older and dressed in  
pleasantly normal clothing. She is alone.

PARNASSUS, overjoyed and waving his arms, tries to attract  
her attention. Looking in his direction, VALENTINA leaps to  
her feet with joy. But it's not for PARNASSUS.

(CONTINUED)

She has seen a business-suited man and a little girl heading toward her table. She grabs the little girl swings her around, plops her in the chair next to hers and gives the man a peck on the cheek. As they sit down we finally see his face. It's Anton. But now he is smooth, confident and relaxed. Happy.

Tears stream down PARNASSUS' face. Overjoyed, he heads for the entrance of the restaurant but, is pulled up short by someone grabbing his filthy coat from behind.

MAN O/S

Where the hell do you think you're going?

PARNASSUS turns. PERCY stands there with a tight grip on PARNASSUS'S coat. Most oddly, he is dressed as PARNASSUS used to dress.. in his former glory.

DR. PARNASSUS

Percy! You're back! I've found  
Valentina!

PERCY

And...?

DR. PARNASSUS

She's inside! I think she may have  
a daughter!

PERCY

..and you want to frighten  
her..scar a child for life..  
meeting you like this?

DR. PARNASSUS

Anton's there too. Let go of me..

PARNASSUS struggles but can't overcome PERCY'S strength.

PERCY

Not this time. Look at you! You're  
an utter disgrace! The great Dr.  
Parnassus has a lot of work to do  
before he meddles in their lives  
again. This is going to take time.

PARNASSUS sees himself reflected in the window...shocked,  
gives up struggling.. slumps defeated.

DR. PARNASSUS

Oh, Percy...what would I do without  
you?

They look at each other, smile, and in unison...

DR. PARNASSUS/PERCY  
Get a midget.

72 OMITTED 72

73 OMITTED 73

74 EXT MODERN STREET CORNER DAY 74

Little cut-out cardboard figures are 'performing' in a toy theatre.

VOICE OF TOY CHARACTER (V.O.)  
It's an easy choice.. for a true  
princess. Stay here with the king  
and queen, or come with me and help  
fight the giant.

SECOND TOY CHARACTER (V.O.)  
But, maybe I'm not a true  
princess....

THE CAMERA pulls back to show PARNASSUS manipulating the puppets and giving them voices. He no longer has a beard. No longer grand, he wears a tweed jacket and a pork-pie hat. He looks sadly ordinary... like a former alcoholic working his way up the 12 step program.

PERCY, dressed like a theatrical impresario, and he are running a stall selling toy theatres. Business is good.

The audience is made up of mainly KIDS, with some ADULTS. COMMUTERS come and go.

A COUPLE OF PARENTS purchase a theatre for their son. PERCY takes the money and expertly wraps the theatre.

PERCY  
Beautifully made. It'll last for  
years if properly looked after.

NINE YEAR OLD SON  
Does it come with a happy ending?

PERCY  
I'm afraid we can't guarantee that.

He glances over to see that PARNASSUS has stopped performing and is looking with interest at someone some distance away.

In a shadowy corner stands MR NICK, smoking a cigarette.

PERCY smacks PARNASSUS on the back of the head.

PERCY (CONT'D)  
No!...get back to work.

THE END

In London, the sideshow troupe of Doctor Parnassus promises the audience a journey to the "Imaginarium", an imaginary world commanded by the mind of Doctor Parnassus, where dreams come true. In the stories that Doctor Parnassus tells to his daughter Valentina, the midget Percy, and his assistant Anton, he claims to have lived for more than one thousand years; However, when he fell in love with a mortal woman, he made a deal with the devil (Mr. Nick), trading his immortality for youth. As part of the bargain, he promised his son or daughter to Mr. Nick on their sixteenth birthday. Val