

# Christine and Raoul

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Submitted: April 12, 2007

Updated: April 12, 2007

*An RC done like the fairy tale Jorinda and Jorindel.*

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# 1 - Christine and Raoul

There was once an old castle, that stood in the middle of a deep gloomy wood, and in the castle lived a Phantom. Now this Phantom could take any shape he pleased. All the day long he flew about in the form of an owl, or crept about the country like a cat; but at night he always became a man again. When any young man came within a hundred paces of the castle, he became quite fixed, and could not move a step till the Phantom came and set him free; which he would not do till he had given his word never to come there again: but when any pretty maiden came within that space she was changed into a bird, and the Phantom put her into a cage, and hung her up in a chamber in the castle. There were seven hundred of these cages hanging in the castle, and all with beautiful birds in them.

Now there was once a maiden whose name was Christine. She was prettier than all the pretty girls that ever were seen before, and a Viscount, whose name was Raoul, was very fond of her, and they were soon to be married. One day they went to walk in the wood, that they might be alone; and Raoul said, 'We must take care that we don't go too near to the Phantom's castle.' It was a beautiful evening; the last rays of the setting sun shone bright through the long stems of the trees upon the green under wood beneath, and the turtledoves sang from the tall birches.

Christine sat down to gaze upon the sun; Raoul sat by her side; and both felt sad, they knew not why; but it seemed as if they were to be parted from one another for ever. They had wandered a long way; and when they looked to see which way they should go home, they found themselves at a loss to know what path to take.

The sun was setting fast, and already half of its circle had sunk behind the hill: Raoul on a sudden looked behind him, and saw through the bushes that they had, without knowing it, sat down close under the old walls of the castle. Then he shrank for fear, turned pale, and trembled. Christine was just singing,

*'The ring-dove sang from the willow spray,*

*Well-a-day! Well-a-day!*

*He mourned for the fate of his darling mate,*

*Well-a-day!'*

when her song stopped suddenly. Raoul turned to see the reason, and beheld his Christine changed into a nightingale, so that her song ended with a mournful /jug, jug/. An owl with fiery eyes flew three times round them, and three times screamed:

'Tu whu! Tu whu! Tu whu!'

Raoul could not move; he stood fixed as a stone, and could neither weep, nor speak, nor stir hand or foot. And now the sun went quite down; the gloomy night came; the owl flew into a bush; and a moment after the Phantom came forth pale and tall, with staring eyes, and a mask covering half his face. He

mumbled something to himself, seized the nightingale, and went away with it in his hand. Poor Raoul saw the nightingale was gone-- but what could he do? He could not speak, he could not move from the spot where he stood. At last the Phantom came back and sang with a beautiful voice:

*'Till the prisoner is fast,*

*And her doom is cast,*

*There stay! Oh, stay!*

*When the charm is around her,*

*And the spell has bound her,*

*Hie away! away!'*

On a sudden Raoul found himself free. Then he fell on his knees before the Phantom, and prayed her to give him back his dear Christine: but he laughed at him, and said he should never see her again; then the Phantom went his way.

Raoul prayed, he wept, he sorrowed, but all in vain. 'Alas!' he said,

'what will become of me?' He could not go back to his own home, so he went to a strange village, and employed himself in keeping sheep. Many a time did he walk round and round as near to the hated castle as he dared go, but all in vain; he heard or saw nothing of Christine.

At last he dreamt one night that he found a beautiful purple flower, and that in the middle of it lay a costly pearl; and he dreamt that he plucked the flower, and went with it in his hand into the castle, and that everything he touched with it was disenchanting, and that there he found his Christine again.

In the morning when he awoke, he began to search over hill and dale for this pretty flower; and eight long days he sought for it in vain: but on the ninth day, early in the morning, he found the beautiful purple flower; and in the middle of it was a large dewdrop, as big as a costly pearl. Then he plucked the flower, and set out and traveled day and night, till he came again to the castle.

He walked nearer than a hundred paces to it, and yet he did not become fixed as before, but found that he could go quite close up to the door. Raoul was very glad indeed to see this. Then he touched the door with the flower, and it sprang open; so that he went in through the court, and listened when he heard so many birds singing. At last he came to the chamber where the Phantom sat, with the seven hundred birds singing in the seven hundred cages. When he saw Raoul he was very angry, and screamed with rage; but he could not come within two yards of Raoul, for the flower he held in his hand was his safeguard. He looked around at the birds, but alas! there were many, many nightingales, and how then should he find out which was his Christine? While he was thinking what to do, he saw the Phantom had taken down one of the cages, and was making the best of his way off through the door. Raoul ran after him, touched the cage with the flower, and Christine stood before him, and threw her arms round his neck looking as beautiful as ever, as beautiful as when they walked together in the wood.

Then he touched all the other birds with the flower, so that they all took their old forms again; and he took Christine home, where they were married, and lived happily together many years: and so did a good many other lads, whose maidens had been forced to sing in the Phantom's cages by themselves, much longer than they liked.