

**THE IMAGINARIUM OF DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

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**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 DON appears with rubbish which he puts in 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. DON, unable to take his eyes off this amazing apparition shouts back into the house from where light from a TV flickers.

**DON**

Carol!... Carol!

**CAROL (V.O.)**

What?

**DON**

Come here! Quick!

**CAROL (V.O.)**

What is it?

**DON**

Quick!

**CAROL (V.O.)**

(irritated)

I'm trying to watch this! It's the last episode!

**DON**  
(annoyed)  
Come here!!!

CAROL appears in the doorway.

**CAROL**  
What is it?

But the wagon and horses have gone.

**DON**  
It's gone!

(CONTINUED)

1    **CONTINUED:**    2.  
1

CAROL, disgusted, swats him on the head with the flat of her hand and goes back inside.

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 has stopped. The back begins to open, top, bottom and sides, like a dark menacing flower unfolding its petals.

Shadowy FIGURES manoeuvre the side panels and begin to raise the roof.

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.

**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 ASTONISHING 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.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED :

3.  
4

**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... yes, ladies and gentlemen, more than a thousand years old ... he has the power to empower your mind. A secret learned in the mystic East. Let Doctor Parnassus open your imagination. Let him guide and transport you to worlds and possibilities you never dreamt of... If you dare. But... Beware... there are dangers. You will have to choose. Will your soul fly?... Or will it be dashed on the rocks of darkness? 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 which gives her prominent hips and breasts) 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.

**ANTON/MERCURY (CONT'D)**

(to the audience)

Or, if you must...

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

**(CONTINUED)**

**4 CONTINUED: (2)**

**4.**  
**4**

**ANTON/MERCURY (CONT'D)**

... scour the squalid depths with  
Putrid's brother, Stench!

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! There's no  
greater bargain on planet earth!

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.

MARTIN is now on stage and heading for DOCTOR PARNASSUS who  
is still in a trance.

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

More laughter from the MOB.

(CONTINUED)

4 CONTINUED: (3)

5.  
4

**MARTIN**

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

MARTIN is on the verge of tweaking DOCTOR PARNASSUS' nose or pulling his beard when VALENTINA diverts him.

**VALENTINA**

Stop! Get off the stage!

MARTIN turns his bleary focus to VALENTINA.

**MARTIN**

Thas a nice pair of jugs.

MARTIN'S mates roar their approval.

**VALENTINA**

Get off the stage!

**MARTIN**

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

MARTIN lunges at `Beauty' who retreats up stage.

MARTIN blunders into the scenery as he pursues `Beauty' who stays just out of reach. She takes cover behind a cut-out tree.

ANTON and PERCY climb back onto the stage as MARTIN continues to chase `Beauty'. VALENTINA evades him by ducking through the mirror (made of flexible reflective material slit down the middle). MARTIN crashes after her.

ANTON and PERCY exchange worried looks. They look at DOCTOR PARNASSUS. Should they wake him from his trance? They decide not to but it's a difficult decision.

**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.

`Beauty' weaves in and out of the 2 dimensional trees as MARTIN chases her further into the increasingly magical forest. Beauty's costume has been transformed into something wonderful. (A rainbow studded with diamonds?)

VALENTINA comes into view. MARTIN is in hot pursuit.

**(CONTINUED)**

**6.**

**MARTIN**

Come here you little sexpot!

VALENTINA stops, turns, smiles sweetly and slams her fist hard into MARTIN'S gut. He doubles up. 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. `Beauty' has vanished.

VALENTINA, `Beauty', slips back on stage through the mirror. Her costume has reverted to its original state. She examines her knuckles on the hand with which she punched Martin.

ANTON looks at her. She shrugs. DR. PARNASSUS is still in a trance, his lips moving soundlessly. ANTON watches DOCTOR PARNASSUS in awe. `Beauty' sighs. She's had enough.

MARTIN is lost and terrified in the dark forest.

**MARTIN**

Mum...Mum!...

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 - all in the clutches of HAND CREATURES swinging on "vines".

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED:

7.  
7

But, the "vines" are 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 crowd - all desperate for a drink.

**MARTIN (CONT'D)**

Please... I'll never...! Never 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 MARTIN'S collar.

Down he plummets. The ground rushes up. MARTIN is as good as dead. But when he hits the ground, rather than going SPLAT!!, he bounces high in the air, turns a couple somersaults and lands on his feet.

He can't believe what has just happened... and then he hears music. Beautiful, ethereal music.

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 12X12 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 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.

(CONTINUED)

7 CONTINUED: (2)

8.  
7

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 nightclub suddenly EXPLODES IN A BALL OF FLAME.

8 EXT DINGY BACK STREET

8

The sound of police sirens. We are back outside in front of the theatre.

DR. PARNASSUS rises unsteadily, coming out of his arduous trance.... "Beauty" moves to support him as, exhausted, he loses his balance and snaps out of his trance.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

(holding his head)  
Valentina...

**VALENTINA**

(indignant)  
He was chasing me.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

(angry)  
You don't go through the mirror.

**VALENTINA**

I had to get away.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

You hit him.

**VALENTINA**

Self defence.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

You're out of control. Ever since your mother died...

**VALENTINA**

When I was three!

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

I don't want to talk about it!

**VALENTINA**

(indignant)  
You brought it up!

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED:

9.  
8

DOCTOR PARNASSUS turns on ANTON.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

We don't accept drunks!

**ANTON**

We c-couldn't stop him.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

People must be in their right minds when they make the choice.

**ANTON**

I know. I'm s-sorry.

**DRUNKEN GIRL (V.O.)**

Martin!...

The POLICE are dealing with a drunken mob of nightclub REVELLERS, making arrests.

A distraught, hysterical, DRUNKEN GIRL is looking for MARTIN.

**DRUNKEN GIRL (CONT'D)**

Martin!... Martin!...

She sees `Beauty'.

**DRUNKEN GIRL (CONT'D)**

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.

**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.

**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!

(CONTINUED)

8 CONTINUED: (2)

10.  
8

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, wisely, decides to head off conflict. He steers DOCTOR  
PARNASSUS away from the POLICEMAN.

**PERCY**

(to POLICEMAN)

He's doing his bit to save the human race. He thinks it's got a future. Quaint, eh? I keep telling him to get a proper job.

(shaking his empty collection cup)

Check it out.. another night with nothing in the kitty.

**POLICEMAN**

I want you freaks out of here. Now. If I ever see you in this parish again I'll do you.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS bows exaggeratedly, with a hint of mockery.

The POLICE OFFICER suspects that DOCTOR PARNASSUS is taking the piss, but decides not to press it. Instead, he knees MARTIN'S struggling friend to the ground.

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 dustcart rumbles into view and its CREW begin emptying bins and picking up rubbish.

10      **EXT      A HOLIDAY FAIR      NIGHT**      10

Shooting galleries. Music. Loud aggressive rides. PEOPLE milling around.

(CONTINUED)

10      **CONTINUED:**      11.  
10

The wagon is parked at the edge of the fair. The stage is set. ANTON dressed as Mercury is 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 steps forward, once again in his mediaeval demon costume.

**PERCY**

(indicating ticket machine)

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

**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 beautiful doves.

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?

(CONTINUED)

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.

**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?

(CONTINUED)

10 CONTINUED: (3)

13.  
10

**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!

ANTON looks across the stage to her. She mimes that a certain someone has gone into the mirror. ANTON considers waking DOCTOR PARNASSUS but thinks better of it. Instead he heads off upstage and through the mirror in pursuit of Diego. VALENTINA takes over the pitch.

**VALENTINA (CONT'D)**

Ladies and Gentlemen, let Dr.  
Parnassus be your guide...

11 INT/EXT MAGICAL LANDSCAPE

11

ANTON moves through the cut -out trees and into a fantastic, brightly coloured landscape of Dr. Seuss-like hills and valleys. The sky is full of cloud-sized soap bubbles.

Diego is in the distant 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.

(CONTINUED)

11 CONTINUED:

14.  
11

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!

The landscape, in response to DR. PARNASSUS' rage suddenly rips apart, fragmenting and spinning with ANTON inside it.

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

(enraged)

AAAHHHH!!! DAMN AND BLAST!!!

Things fly in all directions.

12 INT/EXT MAGICAL LANDSCAPE

12

ANTON, recovering, struggles out from between giant 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 what appear to be 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... all very video-game-like. Thrilling aggressive music blares forth.

MR NICK appears, still in red waist-coat and bowler hat, but this time in the form of a CUT-OUT shooting target with a bull's-eye on his chest.

**(CONTINUED)**

**12 CONTINUED:**

**15.  
12**

**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.

The other bridge appears to be made of black and white piano keys and looks 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 - the tune DR. PARNASSUS is humming, 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!

(CONTINUED)

12 CONTINUED: (2)

16.  
12

**ANTON**

(miserable )  
I c-can't.

**DIEGO**

What?

**ANTON**

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...

He hesitates...the music from the pianos seems to have an effect on him. 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! That's the wrong choice!  
That bridge leads to failure and  
despair. You'll be dead before  
you're thirty. This is the one.  
This is the bridge to manhood!

DIEGO looks uncertain, unnerved. For a moment we think he might change his mind, but he presses bravely on across the piano bridge.

17.

13    **EXT    A HOLIDAY FAIR    NIGHT**

13

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! It's that weirdo up there! Do  
something, Dad, do something!

**LINDA**

I want my brother! I want my little  
brother!

On stage DR. PARNASSUS, continues to hum in his trance-like state. 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.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

(delighted with Anton's  
'message')

Ha,ha! Success! One little devil  
out of the fire... makes it all  
worthwhile!

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

**INSPECTOR**

Where did you say you're from?

(CONTINUED)

13 CONTINUED:

18.  
13

**DR. PARNASSUS**

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 (CONT'D)**

Hooplah!

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.

**MUM**

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

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

(descending from his glass plinth)

And so... a glimmer of hope... Perhaps eternity has not been in vain!...

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.

**(CONTINUED)**

**13 CONTINUED: (2)**

**19.  
13**

DIEGO, full of wonder and oblivious to his family, looks back at PARNASSUS and gives the old man the thumbs-up.

PARNASSUS smiles and raises his thumb 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?

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

**INSPECTOR**

(to Parnassus)

Next time I find you doing business  
without a permit I'll impound your  
wagon.

**POLICEMAN**

(to Parnassus)

I'll be doing worse than  
that...now, bugger off!

**DR. PARNASSUS**

With pleasure.

He bows mock graciously.

**14 INT BACK STAGE DRESSING ROOM A MOMENT LATER 14**

Valentina, half-undressed, is struggling out of her `Wisdom' costume while at the same time looking at pictures of beautiful homes and gardens in a very battered copy of `Homes and Gardens'. Without make-up and costume she appears much younger.

(CONTINUED)

**14 CONTINUED:**

**20.  
14**

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 packing-up and closing 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 Parnassus... 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**

(distracted)  
He's come to collect.

**PERCY**

I thought so.

(CONTINUED)

15 CONTINUED:

21.  
15

**DR. PARNASSUS**

What can I do?...

**PERCY**

(grimly)

Nothing.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

There must be something!

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

**PERCY**

You're going to have to tell her.

16 EXT CITY STREETS LATER

16

The wagon makes its way through city streets.

PERCY is sitting on the roof driving. ANTON is lying on the roof looking up at the stars. VALENTINA is sitting next to him lost in thought.

**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**

(sotto voce)

Valentina?

**VALENTINA**

(irritated)  
Val... Val.

**ANTON**

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

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED:

22.  
16

**VALENTINA**

He's not here is he? He's inside  
getting pissed.

**ANTON**

Are you happy?

**VALENTINA**

(ironic)  
Ecstatic.

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

**VALENTINA (CONT'D)**

Hey! That's mine!

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

**VALENTINA (CONT'D)**

Give it me!

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

**ANTON**

(sotto voce)  
Would you really be happy in one of  
those p-places?... N-not me.  
Well... m-maybe...with you.  
(suddenly urgent)  
Let's run away. Make a new life  
together. I'll retrain. Computers.  
Stocks and bonds. We could be

happy. Just the two of us.

**VALENTINA**

(sotto voce)  
Anton?

**ANTON**

What?

**VALENTINA**

Shut up.

**ANTON**

Why d-do you always have to p-pretend to be so b-brutal?

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (2)

23.  
16

**VALENTINA**

I'm not pretending.  
(coquettishly)  
Anyway... 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? Parnassus says so too. Are you  
saying he's ridiculous?

**ANTON**

No...

**VALENTINA**

(teasing)

Yes you are. I'll tell him.

**ANTON**

He knows I worship him....

**VALENTINA**

He takes advantage.

**ANTON**

I don't mind. He's extraordinary...  
Like you.

**VALENTINA**

Puhlease.

**ANTON**

You are.

(CONTINUED)

16 CONTINUED: (3)

24.  
16

**VALENTINA**

Parnassus is a pain. Okay he's  
extraordinary but I'm not. I don't  
want to be like him. I want to be  
like other people. Like them.  
(gesturing to the passing city)  
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 her head back up)  
Actually, I'm going to be sixteen.  
Shall I tell Parnassus I know? I  
think he knows I know. Silly man.  
Sweet sixteen.

She disappears down the hatch, then quickly pops back up.

**VALENTINA (CONT'D)**

(mischievously)  
The age of consent.

**17 INT DOCTOR PARNASSUS' DEN THAT MOMENT 17**

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.

**(CONTINUED)**

**17 CONTINUED: 25.  
17**

He picks up an open bottle of spirits and takes a swig. Clearly he's already had a few drinks.

**VALENTINA O/S**

(cross with him)  
You haven't eaten anything.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

(startled)  
Valentina...

She comes in.

**VALENTINA**

I go to all this trouble and you  
leave it.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

I'm not hungry.

**VALENTINA**

Are you ill?

**DR. PARNASSUS**

(anguished)

Valentina... my miraculous child..  
I have something to tell you.

**VALENTINA**

Now what?

She starts tidying up.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

(avoiding the question)

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

**VALENTINA**

(she's heard this before)

Oh for God's sake!

**DR. PARNASSUS**

What was I thinking of!

**VALENTINA**

Percy liked the soup.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

(agitated)

Why does everybody want to live  
forever?

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (2)

26.  
17

**VALENTINA**

That's normal isn't it?

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Immortality's a curse! Any fool can  
tell you that!

Valentina picks up Parnassus' nearly empty bottle.

**VALENTINA**

You know it doesn't agree with you.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

(in difficulty)

Valentina...

**VALENTINA**

(losing patience)

And I'll be sixteen on Thursday, so  
let's not have any more tosh about  
that.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Listen to me!

**VALENTINA**

You think you're so clever and that  
everybody else is an idiot! You  
can't stop me growing up just by  
lying about my birthday! It's  
ridiculous!

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Shut up! Shut up and listen to me!  
Listen to me! I need to tell you  
something, before it's too late!

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

DR. PARNASSUS shakes the paper-weight 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?

(CONTINUED)

17 CONTINUED: (3)

27.  
17

**DR. PARNASSUS**

**QUIET!**

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

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

Many centuries ago, as a matter of  
fact...

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... by someone I  
had hoped never 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, continuing through the snowstorm, over fields, forests, valleys, rocks, until it reaches the monastery, high on a rugged hill. Here it enters one of the dimly lit monastery windows, taking us into a dining hall.

19 INT MONASTERY DINING HALL NIGHT

19

Entering via a window and looking down into the monastery dining hall, we see DOZENS OF MONKS sitting at a long refectory table. They are eating their supper and listening to a young DR. PARNASSUS who is sitting on a dais at the far end of the hall, his eyes closed, in a trance, telling a story.

A log fire burns in a big fireplace.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

... Having captured the wind and  
tamed the storm ... 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.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

**19 CONTINUED:**

**28.  
19**

**DR. PARNASSUS (CONT'D)**

A rider who would challenge the  
very foundations of the world...

The door to the refectory swings open with a crash.

The MONKS look up.

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 DINING HALL**

**LATER**

**20**

DR. PARNASSUS and MR NICK are sitting at the fire.

Behind them, in the hall, MONKS come and go.

On the dais, a MONK continues with the story. This monk is a  
younger PERCY.

**PERCY**

... And as the waters rose... the  
people's need for stories grew.  
Stories that would feed a great  
hunger. 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.

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED :

29.  
20

**MR NICK**

Nothing? Really. Are you telling me that if you stop telling a story...  
(waving in the direction of Percy)

This story... something you made up, a fiction... that the universe ceases to exist?

**DR. PARNASSUS**

You make it sound so simple.

**MR NICK**

And you believe it?

DR. PARNASSUS smiles.

**MR NICK (CONT'D)**

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!

(CONTINUED)

20 CONTINUED: (2)

30.  
20

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.

**MR NICK (CONT'D)**

Cheer up... I've freed you from  
this ridiculous nonsense.

MR NICK undoes the spell.

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, travel, learn a foreign language...

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, at any given time... someone is telling a story! Sustaining the universe! Right now, it's happening.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

20 **CONTINUED: (3)**

31.  
20

**DR. PARNASSUS (CONT'D)**

That's why we're still here. You can't stop stories being told somewhere! You can't be everywhere!

MR NICK is furious.

**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



DR. PARNASSUS and PERCY are performing on a street corner in modern clothes. As are all the PASSERSBY who pay them no attention.

They look exhausted, like beggars...and very old.

**DR. PARNASSUS (V.O.)**

It seemed as though the Devil,  
after all... had triumphed... And  
then... one day....

A BEAUTIFUL WOMAN (played by the same actress as Valentina,  
but older with different coloured hair) comes into view.

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

From the very first moment I saw  
her, I was head-over-heels in love.  
She was beautiful, enchanting,  
delightful, young... But I... I was  
several thousand years old! How  
could I woo her? What could I do?

**23 EXT. CLIFF TOP EVENING**

**23**

CUT TO a desolate cliff top where PERCY is struggling with 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.

**(CONTINUED)**

**23 CONTINUED:**

**33.  
23**

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.

**24 EXT. RIVER DAY 24**

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

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

**DR. PARNASSUS (V.O.)**

The devil granted me mortality  
again...and youth and great powers.  
I won my bride. I was in love. But  
at what price...

The boat bumps into a submerged log. DR. PARNASSUS tries to push free. Several cigarette butts float past. Looking up, DR. PARNASSUS sees a man sitting on the riverbank, fishing, smoking a cigarette. It's MR NICK .

There is a loud and ominous clap of thunder.

**25 INT. PARNASSUS' DEN NIGHT 25**

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

...at what price....

DR. PARNASSUS looks haggard. He closes his eyes. He sways and drops the paper-weight.

**VALENTINA**

Father!...

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

DR PARNASSUS is glad of the excuse not to go on.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

We've stopped.

**VALENTINA**

What do you mean `at what price'?

(CONTINUED)

34.

25 CONTINUED:

25

**DR. PARNASSUS**

(turning back to his Tarot cards)

It'll wait, it'll wait. Another time. Something's happened. You'd better go and see.

**VALENTINA**

Typical! You insist I listen to a story and then you don't finish it!

More banging from above.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Go and see!

VALENTINA turns and goes.

PARNASSUS looks miserable but, almost relieved. He turns over the next card.

It's The Hanged Man. It depicts a body hanging from a gibbet surrounded by several arcane objects.

PARNASSUS studies the card, trying to wring some meaning from it - then lays The Hanged Man in the space between the others. He takes a swig from the bottle.

26 EXT WAGON ON BLACK FRIARS' BRIDGE NIGHT

26

The wagon has stopped in the middle of Blackfriar's bridge. It's pouring with rain.

VALENTINA, wearing some sort of covering against the rain, climbs out of the hatch and onto the roof of the wagon.

Here she finds ANTON pointing excitedly down into the Thames.

**ANTON**

Incredible! I saw somebody dancing in the air.. under the bridge..

VALENTINA looks doubtfully at PERCY who peers morosely out from under his sou-wester and shakes his head.

**ANTON (CONT'D)**

It's true! There was a sh-shadow on the water, when the lightning flashed...

(CONTINUED)

26 CONTINUED:

35.  
26

Lightning flashes again.

We see what ANTON and VALENTINA see. A shadow, on the water, of someone `dancing', hung by his neck with a rope attached to the underside of the bridge.

**ANTON (CONT'D)**

(triumphant)  
You see! The d-dancer!

**VALENTINA**

(horrified)  
There's someone hanging there!

**ANTON**

(smugly to Percy)  
I t-told you!

**VALENTINA**

A rope! Get a rope!

27 EXT SIDE OF BLACK FRIARS' BRIDGE MOMENTS LATER 27

ANTON is `absailing' over the side of the bridge. One end of a rope is tied around his waist, the other is attached to the bridge parapet. A lantern dangles from his waist.

VALENTINA and PERCY watch 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.

(CONTINUED)

27 **CONTINUED:**

36.  
27

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.

Eventually, with a big enough swing, he manages to hook his foot around the HANGING MAN who has gone limp. Dead.

With extreme difficulty and great discomfort, ANTON pulls the MAN close to him, takes a knife from his pocket and cuts the MAN'S rope.

ANTON and the MAN are now swinging back and forth together on ANTON'S rope which is threatening to cut ANTON in half.

**ANTON**

Arghhh!!!!

**VALENTINA**

You've done it! Brilliant!

**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 turn  
up.

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 Saville Row 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.

(CONTINUED)

37.  
28 CONTINUED:  
28

The MAN appears to be dead but VALENTINA decides to try the kiss of life.

ANTON is made uncomfortable seeing VALENTINA administer the kiss of life and he 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?

29    **EXT    BLACK FRIARS' BRIDGE                    REAR OF WAGON MOMENTS LATER**  
29

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**

Don't argue.

**PERCY**

The boss said leave him.

(CONTINUED)

29    **CONTINUED:**

38.  
29

**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**



**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)  
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 (CONT'D)**

Any credit cards?

**MAN**

What?..Oh..OK... you can have  
whatever you want.. just don't..

**PERCY**

...with your name on them.

**MAN**

Ah...right.. good idea.  
(searching his pockets)

(MORE)

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: (2)

40.  
30

**MAN (CONT'D)**

My wallet... it's gone. Nothing.  
I've been robbed.

**PERCY**

Don't look at us.

**CREATURE**

What's your name?

**PERCY**

(sceptical)  
He can't remember.

Suddenly a mobile phone starts ringing. 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**

Might be for you.

**PERCY**

They'll know who you are.

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, the MAN `accidently' steps on it. The phone is crushed.

**PERCY (CONT'D)**

Pity.. I speak Russian.

ANTON and PERCY glare with deep suspicion at the MAN.

**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?

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: (3)

41.  
30

**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.

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!

**VALENTINA (O.S.)**

Is he okay?

She appears from inside the wagon.

**VALENTINA (CONT'D)**

(to man)  
Are you alright?

**MAN**

Yes... thank you.

**VALENTINA**

(to PARNASSUS who is in  
deep thought)

He tried to kill himself.

**ANTON**

With his hands t-tied behind his b-back?

They all look at one another. Good point.

**PERCY**

Actually, I saw that trick performed many years ago at....

**ANTON**

S-somebody was trying to k-kill him.

(CONTINUED)

30 CONTINUED: (4)

42.  
30

**VALENTINA**

My God... that's exciting.

**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. I hope. Please... Give me the benefit of the doubt.

PERCY and Anton exchange knowing looks.

**VALENTINA**

(appealing to PARNASSUS)  
Father?

DOCTOR PARNASSUS, looking up from his study of the bricks and noose, takes the MAN aside, looks closely, trying to read the

strange markings on his forehead.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

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.

**MAN**

(puzzled)

Mr Nick?

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

(impassioned)

Don't toy with me. Tell me you're an emissary from Mr Nick.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

30 CONTINUED: (5)

43.  
30

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS (CONT'D)**

Tell me you've come with a proposition. Tell me what I want to hear!

TONY doesn't know what DR PARNASSUS is talking about but he grasps the fact that if he wants to be allowed to stay here he needs to play along.

**MAN**

Yes.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Thank God! 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**

He's from Mr Nick.

**PERCY**

No he's not.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

He's come with a proposal.

**PERCY**

No he hasn't.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

All is not lost.

**PERCY**

What proposal?

**VALENTINA**

Father?

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

(looking at the card, then  
to the MAN)  
You're welcome.

**MAN**

(croaking)  
Thank you.

PERCY groans and tears his hair.

VALENTINA is pleased. ANTON is not.

VALENTINA kisses PARNASSUS on the cheek.

44.

31 INT DOCTOR PARNASSUS' DEN A LITTLE LATER 31

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

**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**

**MAN**  
(trying to look on top of  
it)  
I like your study.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**  
The message.

**MAN**  
(cautiously)  
The message?

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

**MAN**  
Ah... Well... That's the problem...

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**  
Problem? What problem?

**MAN**  
Unfortunately... I've lost my  
memory.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**  
What!?

**MAN**  
It'll come back. I'm sure.

(CONTINUED)

31 CONTINUED :

45.  
31

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**  
You've lost your memory?

**MAN**  
I just... it needs time... to  
recover.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

(incredulous)

You've come here with a message....  
A vitally important message from  
Mister Nick... A matter of life or  
death... and you can't remember  
what it is!?

**MAN**

Not at the moment. I'm sorry. It's  
never happened before.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

**AAAAARRRRRRGGGGHHH!!!**  
**BUGGERBUGGERBUGGER!!!!**

**32    EXT    SHOPPING MALL PARKING LOT    NIGHT    32**

The wagon is parked in a shopping mall parking lot. The  
theatre is being opened up by PERCY and ANTON. 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**

He says you must work... to focus  
your mind. You can help out front..  
sell tickets. Ah, here we are...  
(Pulling out a full  
bottomed wig)  
Try this. You can be 'Justice'.

The MAN tries on the wig and looks in a mirror.

VALENTINA tries not to laugh.

**(CONTINUED)**

**46.**  
**33    CONTINUED:    33**

**MAN**

(pulling a face)  
Exactly. A laughing stock.

**VALENTINA**

Just like the rest of us.

**MAN**

(pulling out a carnival  
mask)  
I think I'll hide behind this.

**VALENTINA**

No face. No name. The mystery  
thickens. I'm going to have to give  
you a name...

She presses a metal breast-plate to his chest.

**VALENTINA (CONT'D)**

... until you remember who you are,  
I dub thee Saint George. You can  
save me from the dragon. George.

**GEORGE**

Hold on!.. what dragon?

**VALENTINA**

You've met Parnassus.

Mischievously, she ties a chiffon tutu around his waist.

**GEORGE**

Now you are making fun of me.

VALENTINA giggles.

**GEORGE (CONT'D)**

I'm sorry but, nobody laughs at me  
without paying the price....ah,ha.

He begins tickling her. She laughs uncontrollably, falling  
backwards into the costume skip..

**ANTON O/S**

We c-can't do it. We...

ANTON enters wearing his Mercury gear.  
GEORGE and VALENTINA rollicking about.

He freezes, seeing  
They stop, look up.

**VALENTINA**

Hi, Anton.... what?

(CONTINUED)

33 CONTINUED: (2)

47.  
33

**ANTON**

The show. We c-can't do it. It's  
your father...

**VALENTINA**

(alarmed)  
What is it? What's happened?

34 INT DOCTOR PARNASSUS' CABIN MOMENTS LATER

34

VALENTINA and ANTON arrive in the doorway, dismayed.

GEORGE hovers in the background.

DOCTOR PARNASSUS is attempting to get ready for the show but  
he's so drunk he can hardly stand. He's already put some  
article of clothing on back-to-front or inside out. PERCY is  
trying to help.

**VALENTINA**

Oh no!

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

Can he remember!  
(seeing Man in doorway)  
Can you remember?

**GEORGE**

Not yet.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

Bloody useless! Mr Nick sends an  
emissary and he can't bloody  
remember! It's a bloody disaster!

**VALENTINA**

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

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

I am not drunk! I'm under  
considerable stress.

**VALENTINA**

(to Percy  
You'll have to do it.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

No! No understudy! The audience  
won't tolerate an understudy!  
There's only one Doctor Parnassus,  
and I am he!

(CONTINUED)

34 CONTINUED:

48.  
34

**GEORGE**

(interrupting)  
Somebody make some strong coffee.

EVERYONE looks at George.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

Strong coffee? Brilliant!  
(sarcastically saluting  
George)  
This is why fate has brought us  
together. Don't worry about  
remembering... It's all the same to  
a man on a galloping horse!

35 EXT SHOPPING MALL PARKING LOT THEATRE

35

DOCTOR PARNASSUS is on stage, floating' on his glass pillar,  
apparently in a trance but, humming erratically. He is flanked  
by VALENTINA and ANTON who stay close to PARNASSUS in case he  
falls. PERCY is in his medieval costume/one-man-band outfit.  
They all look uneasy.

**ANTON**

(a bit low-key)  
For one night only... raise your  
sights... encounter the majesty,  
the beauty, the miracle that's in  
each and every one of you. Take  
this opportunity to expand your  
horizons. It's not too late.  
Experience the Imaginarium of the  
great Doctor Parnassus.

VALENTINA peers out over the `footlights' in the hope of catching sight of GEORGE.

**VALENTINA**

Where's George?

He's nowhere in sight.

**ANTON**

(sarcastically)

P-probably remembered he had a wife  
or t-two back in Russia.

VALENTINA gives him a dirty look.

**49.**

**36 INT SHOPPING MALL SUPERMARKET THAT MOMENT 36**

GEORGE, wearing his `romantic' Venice carnival mask is smooth-talking several middle-aged LADIES on queue at the supermarket check-out.

He's carrying the theatre's ticket dispenser.

**GEORGE**

Three tickets for the price of  
two... That's a fantastic deal.  
It's a brilliant show. Much better  
than sex.

Much ribald laughter from the flattered LADIES.

**37 EXT SHOPPING MALL PARKING LOT LATER 37**

The shoppers have gone. The last car drives out of the car park leaving it empty except for the theatre wagon.

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**

Let's close up quick while the going's good.

**VALENTINA**

(amazed)  
He's never not done a show before... Maybe he's past it.  
(hopefully)  
Maybe it's time to retire.

PARNASSUS groans in his sleep.

**ANTON**

(looking out front)  
Oh n-no!

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

Bubbling with excitement, the mob arrives.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED:

50.  
37

**EVELYN**

Oh look! How fascinating.

The other WOMEN agree.

**EVELYN (CONT'D)**

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

**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.

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

We hear a crash.

THE CAMERA PANS around. PARNASSUS has fallen off his perch and is now lying on the floor...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....

**GEORGE**

But being a true professional he tried to keep going, at considerable risk to his health.

VALENTINA and GEORGE exchange a quick look. VALENTINA thinks she's found a kindred spirit.

(CONTINUED)

37 CONTINUED: (2)

51.  
37

**DEIDRE**

We want our money back.

**GEORGE**

No problem...dear ladies. No problem at all. I'm so terribly sorry. I can't apologize enough. You can have your money back or, if you like... an extra free ticket. Better yet, two extra free tickets if you buy another ticket at half price. This offer is only available today.

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



afford to buy Valentina a b-  
birthday cake.

**VALENTINA**

(offended)  
That's enough!

ANTON storms off. GEORGE looks at VALENTINA sympathetically.

**GEORGE**

Don't be angry with him. He's a  
little bit jealous. He's young.  
Insecure. I'll make it my job to  
boost his confidence.

VALENTINA smiles at George with admiration and approval.

**GEORGE (CONT'D)**

When's your birthday?

**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.

(CONTINUED)

**41 CONTINUED: 53.  
41**

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

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**

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**

On Valentina?

**MR NICK**

No?

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

You bastard!

**MR NICK**

First to five?... You might win. And save her. What do you have to lose?

**DR. PARNASSUS**

I'll kill you!

(CONTINUED)

41 CONTINUED: (2)

54.  
41

**MR NICK**

(laughs)  
Now that would be something. By her  
birthday then.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

What! Impossible!..you've seen the  
business we're doing.

**MR NICK**

Things are going to pick up. As  
sure as eggs is eggs.

He closes the hatch/shutter with a bang.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

Wait!

Too late. He's gone.

42 EXT DERELICT BUILDINGS DAWN

42

Back amongst the derelict buildings the Troupe is resting and  
doing chores. The horses are grazing.

VALENTINA sits at a mirror fussing with various hair styles -  
slyly trying to catch GEORGE's attention.

PARNASSUS, holding his aching head, sits a short distance  
away sadly watching her. PERCY is with him.

**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.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED:

55.  
42

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Trust in providence, Percy.  
Remember the hanging man. The cards  
don't lie.

**PERCY**

No... but they sure as hell like  
being economical with the truth.

CUT TO ANTON who is painting a long-stemmed, wooden  
flower...he comes over to VALENTINA with it in his hand.

**VALENTINA**

(looking away)  
Don't talk to me.

**ANTON**

P-please...I'm sorry about last  
night. I behaved like an idiot.

**VALENTINA**

Yes.

ANTON suddenly plops down on his arse in a puddle of mud.  
Then spins, flips the flower high into the air and, rolling  
face down onto his stomach, catches the stem with his  
clenched buttocks. VALENTINA bursts out laughing.

**ANTON**

You must admit... even idiots have  
their qualities.

CUT TO GEORGE who is peeling potatoes, badly. PARNASSUS and  
PERCY come up behind him.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

George... We'd like to know who you  
really are.

**GEORGE**

What?... Yes. Me too.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

I may be able to help.

**GEORGE**

Really? What?... How...?

PERCY produces a small contraption with wires from behind his back and gives it to DR PARNASSUS.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (2)

56.  
42

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

Hold this piece of wire.

**PERCY**

You won't feel a thing.

GEORGE takes the end of the wire.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

I'm going to put the tips of my fingers on the top of your head.

He does so.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS (CONT'D)**

I want you to relax and try as far as possible to think of nothing.

**GEORGE**

That's not difficult... in my condition.

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

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

Hold your breath.

GEORGE does so.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS (CONT'D)**

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

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

**PERCY**

You may breathe normally.

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

**GEORGE**

What... ?

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

Alas, this technique has its limitations.

**GEORGE**

But... Did you discover anything?

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (3)

57.  
42

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

(dramatically)

Your name.

**GEORGE**

My name?... What is it?

**PAUSE.**

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

Anthony Shepherd.

**TONY**

(stunned)

My God! That's it! You're right!  
Anthony Shepherd! They call me  
Tony. Tony Shepherd! That's who I  
am!

VALENTINA and ANTON begin to pay attention and gather around.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

And... you used to do good works.

Something to do with charity I think.

**TONY**

Yes...That's right! That's right!  
But how?...

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

(dismissively)

It's an ancient technique of mental divination, but I'm very rusty and it doesn't always work satisfactorily.

**TONY**

But that's amazing! Brilliant!  
(oddly concerned)  
Was there anything else?

DOCTOR PARNASSUS shakes his head, no.

**TONY (CONT'D)**

(relieved)

That's absolutely fantastic! Thank you. Perhaps I'll remember other things.

PARNASSUS smiles and bows slightly ironically.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (4)

58.  
42

**VALENTINA**

Charity work? I knew you were a good person.

**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**

That's so strange. And horrible..  
it's a complete blank. But I do  
remember I was involved in some  
sort of charity.. trying to do  
good, to make the world a better  
place, you know...inspire people,  
give them hope....

(self deprecatingly)

What an arrogant idiot.

VALENTINA looks at him thinking `what a sympathetic person.'

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)

Mozart's flute concerto in G.

**TONY**

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

ANTON looks at the metal pipe.

**ANTON**

I found it.

**TONY**

It's mine.

(CONTINUED)

42 CONTINUED: (5)

59.  
42

**ANTON**

Oh. 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 to me!

**ANTON**

(derisively)

Oooooh!

**VALENTINA**

Anton, that's enough.

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

**TONY**

Thank you.

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

60.

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**

What's eating Anton?

ANTON pricks up his ears.

**PERCY**

He's in love with Valentina?

**DR. PARNASSUS**

(dumbfounded)

In love....?

**PERCY**

It happens.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

The little snake! I'll skin him alive!

CUT TO ANTON who winces.

**PERCY**

While you're at it, don't forget the other one.

DR. PARNASSUS looks at PERCY questioningly.

**PERCY (CONT'D)**

The viper, the scorpion, the amnesiac boa constrictor. Tony.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Quite another kettle of fish.

**PERCY**

Really?

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

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

(CONTINUED)

**PERCY**

(ironic)

And he's going to help us win five souls.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

I think he might. Valentina sees good in him.

**PERCY**

She'd be better off with Anton.

CUT TO ANTON who's pleased.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

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

CUT TO ANTON who looks puzzled.

**PERCY**

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

**DR. PARNASSUS**

(sighs)

You're not wrong... Ah, Percy, what would I do without you?

**PERCY**

Get a midget.

CUT TO ANTON as he moves, thoughtfully, away.

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

ANTON, as Mercury, is doing his pitch.

**ANTON**

Sleep no more. Procrastinate no longer. Embrace this once in a life-time opportunity. Let the mind of Doctor Parnassus be the portal to the infinite world of your

imagination.

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

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED:

62.  
44

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

What are you doing? Please concentrate. We've got a tremendous amount of work to do tonight. A great deal depends on it.

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

**ANTON**

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

However, the AUDIENCE - a few PASSERS-BY and DRINKERS who have drifted out of the pub for a smoke - aren't much interested in ANTON. Instead they pay more attention to the masked TONY who, decked out in a stylish costume, is working the sparse crowd with his smooth charm.

ANTON, irritated, glances back at DOCTOR PARNASSUS who is worried about the lack of customers.

TONY is now surrounded by fascinated WOMEN. They laugh at one of his jokes. One pretty young woman, SALLY, in particular seems to be smitten by the handsome 'actor'. TONY smiles seductively at her.

The sight provokes ANTON. He leaps off the stage, grabs SALLY by the wrist and begins to pull her to the stage.

PERCY keeps playing.

**SALLY**

(laughing)

What?... Hey, what you doing?

**ANTON**

T-taking you to the heart of your  
imagination!

ANTON is trying to compete with TONY but just can't manage  
the charm.

**SALLY**

(good humoured)  
Oh my god! No way!

**ANTON**

You won't regret it!

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: (2)

63.  
44

**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 at the same time!

ANTON is still pulling SALLY onto the stage.

**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.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: (3)

64.  
44

**FEMALE FRIEND**

That's really stupid.

**SALLY**

Let go!

**ANTON**

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

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, disappears 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.

(CONTINUED)

44 CONTINUED: (4)

65.  
44

**FEMALE FRIEND**

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

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

**VALENTINA**

Father! Father!

45 INT/EXT THE MIND OF DR. PARNASSUS THAT MOMENT

45

Terrified, ANTON and the screaming SALLY are spun through a black void clinging desperately to an asteroid as planets and

stars spin madly around them.

Blood-red lightning bolts crackle and crash. Chaos.

**46 EXT OUTSIDE PUB THAT MOMENT**

**46**

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

TONY and PERCY try to hold them back.

**TONY**

Please. Everything's alright. It's okay. Really. I promise you.

A MIDDLE AGED WOMAN hits him with her handbag.

TONY and PERCY are 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...

A DRUNK takes a swing at PERCY, misses, and connects with **TONY**.

**TONY (CONT'D)**

Ugh!

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

**(CONTINUED)**

**46 CONTINUED:**

**66.  
46**

PERCY, desperate, produces a pistol and fires a couple of shots into the air.

EVERYONE dives for cover.

PERCY, taking advantage of the temporary lull, begins to race around, untying, unhooking, and pulling on ropes.

The theatre begins to close up as the horses bolt and the

wagon clatters off down the street, bits falling off as it goes.

**VOICE IN CROWD**

Somebody call the police!

A battered TONY, chased by the enraged crowd, just manages to clamber on board, with the help of VALENTINA.

The wagon narrowly succeeds in out-pacing 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 in his bowler and red waistcoat.

**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. Get out of the way!  
(appealing to Tony)  
Tony.

TONY, battered and bleeding, helps her lift PARNASSUS and manoeuvre him to his room.

(CONTINUED)

**48 CONTINUED: 67. 48**

ANTON is mortified. PERCY pats him on the back.

**PERCY**

Better luck next time.

**49 INT PARNASSUS' ROOM NIGHT**

**49**

TONY helps VALENTINA 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. We are doomed.

**VALENTINA**

(very concerned)

Ssshhhh... Thanks, Tony. Leave us.

TONY, nods, leaves slowly. Listening.

**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**

Do me a favour. Take a long walk  
off a short pier.

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**

What were you doing to that girl  
behind the mirror?

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED:

68.  
50

**ANTON**

(incensed)  
What are you suggesting?

**TONY**

Oh, c'mon...we all heard her  
screaming.

**ANTON**

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

**TONY**

Terrifying? Why? I don't  
understand.

**ANTON**

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

**TONY**

Your not trying to tell me that  
mind control stuff is real?

**ANTON**

You 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 g-  
get it... N-not in a million years.

**TONY**

Hang on.. if he can really control  
people's minds, why isn't he ruling  
the world? Why bother with this  
crappy side show?

**ANTON**

He d-doesn't want to rule the world  
d-does he?... He wants the world to  
rule itself!

**TONY**

What a waste... Tell me about the  
mirror. What's the point of that,  
if not to razzle-dazzle the public?

(CONTINUED)

50 CONTINUED: (2)

69.  
50

**ANTON**

(smiles sardonically)  
You're way off the mark.  
(taking a swig)  
It's a b-bloody great mystery...  
wrapped in a b-brown p-paper b-bag  
enema...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.

TONY sits there busily thinking.

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.



**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 the show's not attracting many people. Forgive me but... I see two ways of tackling this problem.

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

52 CONTINUED: (2)

71.  
52

**TONY (CONT'D)**

Either the style of the show is at fault... or the type of audience. I would suggest changing both.

PERCY has appeared, dragging a damaged flat.

**PERCY**

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

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

Shhh!

He sits down heavily.

**TONY**

I'm sorry but.. you're not modern. People want 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. It works. Trust me,  
I understand this world.

(with a wink)

This kind of mind control. Let's  
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. The police.

**TONY**

There'll be a better class of  
police too.

**PERCY**

That'll be the day.

(CONTINUED)

52 CONTINUED: (3)

72.  
52

**TONY**

The trick is not to hide. Change  
your colours. Be bold. Go where  
they would least expect to find  
you. I think we have been brought  
together for a reason. I don't  
believe in coincidence. You saved  
my life. Now let me do something  
in return.

PARNASSUS confers with PERCY.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

Our time's nearly up... This could be what we need.

**TONY**

(to Valentina)

This can be my birthday gift to Valentina.

VALENTINA smiles and nods to PARNASSUS.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Well then...

(with a burst of energy)

For God's sake let's do it!!!

**PERCY**

(sighs)

Yeah, okay, but what exactly do we do?

**TONY**

Well... First of all, I want you to give me your money. All of it.

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

Then PARNASSUS sees something beyond the wagon...ANTON, downcast, heading off through the swirling plastic bags and flying rubbish... a battered suitcase in his hand.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Anton! Where are you going?

No answer from ANTON.

VALENTINA runs after him but, he marches on silently.

(CONTINUED)

**VALENTINA**

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

(pummelling his back)

Anton... I'm the one who wants to

run away!  
(he slows)  
Are you trying to wreck my  
birthday, or what?

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

**VALENTINA (CONT'D)**

Please. We need you.

Moved, ANTON turns to her. She smiles sweetly.

**VALENTINA (CONT'D)**

How much money have you got?

**53 EXT BOND STREET EVENING**

**53**

Close up on Parnassus's glass plinth..now open-topped and  
sitting on the edge of the stage... full of the troupe's  
savings. A sign proclaims "Please Take Generously"

Directly behind the glass box is a half-globe with the  
continent of Africa featured. Sitting on top is Percy  
playing something ethnic but tasteful on a flute with one  
hand...his other is held out pathetically... a beggar. He's  
blackened up and dressed in rags. He doesn't look happy. He  
sneaks nervous glances at the glass box of money.

The wagon, newly painted in sleek and stylish black and  
white, stands in Bond Street or some similarly fashionable  
street with expensive shops and art galleries. RICH WOMEN  
anxious to be conspicuous in their consumption of wealth  
glide past.

New signs proclaim 'The Choice Is Yours' 'The Imaginarium -  
More Exclusive than ever'.

The stage, hung with soft, flowing, gauzy fabric, has been  
chromatically divided in half - one side black, the other  
white.

On the dark side a bloated, sun-glassed woman consuming vast  
quantities of food reclines on an elaborate lounge. She is,  
in fact, a very uncomfortable ANTON in full and fulsome drag.

**(CONTINUED)**

Center stage stands DR. PARNASSUS dressed as a stylized doctor with head reflector. In his hand is a staff with an elaborate sun on the top. He is blindfolded.

On the white side of the stage stands the mirror and a stylized Tree of Knowledge with bright red apples. Under the tree, and reflected in the mirror, sits VALENTINA as Eve...naked except for a long wig that maintains her modesty. She gracefully combs her hair.

Above the mirror is a sign proclaiming "The Naked Truth".

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

TONY, in a beautifully cut white suit, and wearing his 'romantic' Venetian carnival mask sits in profile in a dreamy pose on the edge of the white side of the stage.

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)

Excuse me, madam. I'm afraid we can't accept this.

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

**TONY (CONT'D)**

We are here to give...not take. We are here to help those in need. If it's money you need, then here it is.

(referring to the glass plinth)

If it's the flowering of the soul you need, then here we are 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?

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: (2)

75.  
53

**TONY**

Cost? Money is no good in the  
Imaginarium. This is a refuge for  
hearts in need of truth. 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)**

There are hard choices to be made  
in life.

(he indicates the  
tableaux)

What about the dreams of the less  
fortunate in the world. Do you  
have time for their dreams? Or are  
you like I once was...do you just  
despair? Despair at all that is  
wrong in the world..

(getting to his feet)

...despair at your inability to do  
anything to change it.. to make it  
better...I despaired so much at the  
powerlessness of my own existence  
that I took the easy way out...the  
coward's way...I committed suicide!  
Yes, that's right, I killed myself.  
Can you understand my despair? But  
I was saved...saved by a  
miracle...The Imaginarium...and

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.

During his speech, more and more people have gathered. Some are actually weeping. They are press forward putting money in the plinth. Tony tries to stop them but, they insist. VALENTINA, ANTON, PERCY, and DR. PARNASSUS are astonished by TONY'S performance.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: (3)

76.  
53

**VOICES IN CROWD**

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

**TONY**

Please, I'm sorry but, we're booked solid at the moment.

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.

**LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN (CONT'D)**

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

PERCY is appalled.

**LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN (CONT'D)**

Who's in charge here?

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

TONY spots them too 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 and enter the Imaginarium.

**LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN**

But, I haven't paid.

(CONTINUED)

53 CONTINUED: (4)

77.  
53

**TONY**

We don't want your money. We want your hopes and dreams. You may make a donation later, if you wish.

**LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN**

But...

**TONY**

This is a rare moment. Very few are chosen. Don't miss this once-in-a-life-time opportunity. 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're the luckiest woman in the world.

The LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN steps into the mirror. TONY hesitates..a moment of uncertainty. VALENTINA encourages him

with a smile. He steps through.

Across the street a clock begins striking the hour.

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

**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.

**54 INT/EXT IMAGINARIUM**

**54**

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

Soft fabrics waft, cleansing waterfalls cascade, rose-petals float through the air, beautiful girls swing from swings attached to clouds - all in delicious slow motion.

**LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN**

(overcome)

Oh... how gorgeous...

**(CONTINUED)**

**54 CONTINUED:**

**78.  
54**

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

TONY, disorientated, 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.

**LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN (CONT'D)**

(moans softly)

Ohhh... What bliss... and I don't even know your name...

**TONY**

Tony...

**LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN**

Tony. How dashing.

A bar or two of tango encourages them to take a couple of intimate tango dance steps.

Now gently wafting curtains part 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 fear you must go alone.

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.

(CONTINUED)

54 CONTINUED: (2)

79.  
54

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; Keats, Shelly, Byron, James Dean, 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 must make a choice...and... actually, to be honest, I'd strongly recommend this one.

**LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN**

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

**TONY**

(thinking fast)

Exactly. To be reborn, first you must die. All of them have achieved a kind of immortality. And we love them all the more for it. They won't get old or fat. They won't get sick or feeble. They are beyond fear. 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**

There's not a moment to lose.

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.

(CONTINUED)

**TONY (CONT'D)**

But your sacrifice must be pure.  
You have to let go of all these  
worldly goods.

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)**

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.

**55    EXT.    STAGE    EVENING    55**

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... I had no idea...  
It's just... incredible.

...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)  
Hooplah!

The LOUIS VUITTON woman reappears, sitting on a cut-out cloud  
descending from the ceiling of the stage. She looks radiant.

She is weeping, completely overcome by her experience.  
PARNASSUS steps forward and helps her to her feet. She kisses  
his hands in gratitude.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED:

81.  
55

**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 corral 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 descend, ecstatic, emptying the contents of their handbags, their pearls, earrings and diamond rings into the glass box.

TONY pays off the cops who 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 four large dark heavy RUSSIAN MEN, all laden with luxury shopping walk past.

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.

(CONTINUED)

55 CONTINUED: (2)

82.  
55

**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..

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.

The RUSSIANS charge through the shampoo-commercial landscape. No TONY.. Just slo-mo fashion models and soft wafting fabrics and aromatic breezes.

**VLADIMIR (IN RUSSIAN)**

Where did he go?

**PIOTR (IN RUSSIAN)**

You tell me... It can't be him.  
He's dead. We killed him.

**SERGE (IN RUSSIAN)**

So why did he run?

(CONTINUED)

83.

56 CONTINUED:

56

**GREGOR (IN RUSSIAN)**

There he is!!

In the distance, TONY is hiding behind some billowing fabric. On being spotted, he takes off up a hill.

The RUSSIANS race toward the hill only to crash into a solid wall - painted as a landscape with TONY frozen in mid stride. Looking off to their right they see Tony heading up another hill. But as they rush in that direction another wall rises up blocking them. Again it is painted with a hill and TONY frozen in midstride. A third and fourth wall rise up.. surrounding and trapping the RUSSIANS.

There is a cell door in one wall. Like crazy animals they start throwing themselves against the door trying to break it down. It won't budge.

While the others batter the door, GREGOR, who has been somewhat affected by the soft shampoo commercial world, sits quietly in a corner picking pretty flowers.

Exhausted, the other RUSSIANS collapse on the ground.

GREGOR gently breathes in the aroma of the flowers and exhales. As he does the door swings open. The other RUSSIANS

gape at him... then barrel out the door.

Outside is a new, beautiful, landscape - the sky 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.

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

Unfortunately, their way is blocked by an over-bright, hyper-active, wide-eyed sales girl.

**SALES-GIRL**

Hi! Hello! Today's special! Reach for the clouds! Discover your true potential! Gift certificates are available at...

The RUSSIANS roughly shove her aside. As they rush past, GREGOR pauses, hands her his flowers.

**GREGOR**

Relax...smell the flowers.

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: (2)

84.  
56

Reaching the base of TONY'S ladder, the RUSSIANS start climbing.

Seeing 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.

**THE LADDER COMPLETELY SEPARATES IN TWO.**

Tony struggles to maintain his balance - and somehow 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, start to beat him up.

**SERGE**

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

They scrawl strange symbols on TONY'S forehead.

**TONY**

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

**VLADIMIR**

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

ANTON struggles to his feet.

**ANTON**

Stop it! L-leave him alone!

(CONTINUED)

56 CONTINUED: (3)

85.  
56

The RUSSIANS turn and, thinking ANTON is a fat, bossy, middle-aged woman, hesitate.

**ANTON (CONT'D)**

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 LONG-LEGGED GIRLS in mini-skirted police outfits 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.

**(CONTINUED)**

**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 find themselves in a desolate, empty landscape. Nowhere. Nothing.

**TONY**

Did you see me!! I almost reached the clouds! I could have...it was incredible...I was almost there...

**ANTON**

Shut up!

Over a distant rise the wagon appears, pulled by the horses. ANTON drags Tony, babbling and stumbling, towards it.

**TONY**

I made my choice and I climbed... I felt so much potential. I could have done anything. I have to have another chance...another go...I need this...

**57 EXT SOMEWHERE DOWN RIVER - MUD FLATS EVENING**

**57**

The wagon is parked on waste ground. It looms out of nowhere illuminated by a light leaking from within.

We hear PERCY'S angry voice.

**PERCY O/S**

Maybe you were holding them upside down.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

What?

57 CONTINUED:

87.  
57

**PERCY**

That cards! The bloody Tarot cards!

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS O/S**

(distraught and angry)

Enough, Percy! Enough!

**TONY O/S**

I made a mistake. A big mistake. I know that and I'm sorry.

58 INT THE STAGE - CONTINUOUS

58

The angry troupe huddles amongst the clutter of props and jumbled scenery. TONY is on trial.

DR. PARNASSUS is sitting in a corner, head in hands. He seems utterly destroyed.

**ANTON**

You're a l-liar. You've been lying to us all along. Who are you? Who were those thugs?

**TONY**

I am not a liar!

**ANTON**

No?

**TONY**

No! I just... didn't divulge everything I knew.

**PERCY**

Comes to the same thing.

**TONY**

Absolutely not. Not in law.

**ANTON**

You stole their money.

**TONY**

No. I didn't.

**ANTON**

That's what they said.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED:

88.  
58

**TONY**

Are you going to believe them  
before you believe me?

**PERCY**

Why not?

**TONY**

Because they're irredeemably bad  
people, and I'm essentially good. I  
know that sounds terribly prim and  
arrogant and self righteous, but  
I'm trying to be honest. Look, the  
truth is... in order to get my  
charity off the ground I needed  
capital.

ANTON looks askance.

**TONY (CONT'D)**

(in response to Anton)

Yes, I know, and you're right, but  
that's the way the grown-up..the  
real world works. You can't make  
omelettes without soiling your  
hands. Or should that be the other  
way round? Anyway, I - with  
hindsight very foolishly - accepted  
a loan from people who seemed to  
me, at the time, to be very decent  
and sincere. There was absolutely  
no way I could have known that they  
were part of a ruthless organised  
crime syndicate and that they  
wanted to use my charity to launder  
money. I made a mistake. And I have  
to live with that. I'm sorry. What  
more can I say?

VALENTINA wants to believe TONY. ANTON and PERCY don't.

**VALENTINA**

(distressed but basically  
sympathetic)

Oh Tony.

**TONY**

But, can we not talk about me for a  
moment.. I want to thank the Doctor  
for letting me experience the most  
sublime, inspiring ....

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED: (2)

89.  
58

**ANTON**

So why were they trying to k-kill  
you? "Again!" is what they said.

**TONY**

What?

**ANTON**

(answering his own  
question)

The first time they hung you from  
the b-bridge... right?... B-because  
you stole their money.

**TONY**

Stop saying that! I didn't steal  
it! I didn't have it. I'd had to  
invest in infrastructure. I needed  
more time. When you run a charity  
you have to give lots of money  
away. You wouldn't believe the red  
tape. The Charity Commission are a  
bunch of fascists. It's incredible.  
I mean... c'mon give me a break...I  
almost died today.. and I said I'm  
sorry... and anyway..... this was  
supposed to be a special day...it's  
Valentina's birthday.

He pulls out the LOUIS VUITTON WOMAN'S beautiful necklace  
from his pocket.

**TONY (CONT'D)**

Happy birthday. For a beautiful woman.

He puts it around Valentina's neck. VALENTINA smiles. ANTON glowers.

**ANTON**

The marks on your face...

**TONY**

Marks?

**ANTON**

They scrawled something on your forehead. Symbols... Signs...

TONY looks uncomfortable, tries to rub his forehead clean.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED: (3)

90.  
58

**PERCY**

You had some of those when we rescued you.

**ANTON**

Yes, what's that about?

But, before he can say anything, there's 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**

(sotto voce)  
No! Leave it!

PERCY sits down.

The knock comes again.

**VALENTINA**

(sotto voce to the DR.

**PARNASSUS)**

Who is it?

**DR. PARNASSUS**

(sotto voce)

It's too late... for visitors.

Once more someone knocks. Everyone is edgy. Particularly  
**PERCY.**

The knock comes again.

**PERCY**

(sotto voce, agitated)

Please 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.

(CONTINUED)

58 CONTINUED: (4)

91.  
58

**PERCY (CONT'D)**

(embarrassed)

Sorry, I just... I've got a thing  
about...

59 EXT OUTSIDE THE WAGON THAT MOMENT

59

DR. PARNASSUS and MR NICK move away from the door and go  
around to the front. The stage is half-opened.

The horses are standing steaming nearby.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

(very down)

I know... It's over....you've

won...

**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**

You're joking... toying with me.  
Like a cat with a mouse... As is  
your privilege.

**MR NICK**

Sal didn't get to make a real  
choice. You were gaga. Out for the  
count. Wouldn't be fair...And  
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.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED:

92.  
59

...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**

Valentina... my darling girl. We must do another show! Now! Quickly! Get ready to move out!

**VALENTINA**

Who was that?

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

Somebody asking the way. Where's Tony?

**VALENTINA**

I overheard you... He wasn't asking the way.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

Please! Get everybody together. Another show! Tony! Percy!

**VALENTINA**

I want to know what's going on.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

(harnessing the horses)  
Not now.

**VALENTINA**

Yes, now! I want to know the truth!

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

The truth?

**VALENTINA**

What are you hiding?

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

There are more important things, at this moment!

(CONTINUED)

**VALENTINA**

It's something to do with that bloody rambling story you were telling me the night we found Tony isn't it?

PARNASSUS sighs. Stops. He checks his watch

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

Yes.

**VALENTINA**

So tell me.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

What I told you was... the truth. I really am thousands of years old. I have been immortal. I have been mortal. And I have had many dealings with the devil. Too many.

**VALENTINA**

(fearful)

What are you saying?...

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

Remember the woman I was telling you about?.. the one I was so desperately in love with.. so in love that I made a deal with the devil? That was your mother... ..she was so beautiful, so enchanting...so...

Looking at VALENTINA, DR. PARNASSUS sees her morph into the BEAUTIFUL WOMAN appearing. He almost swoons.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS (CONT'D)**

... so young. She was everything I had ever dreamed of. I made a choice. I bargained away my immortality. I regained my youth... and I won her. I did! I won her...!

The BEAUTIFUL WOMAN morphs back into VALENTINA.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS (CONT'D)**

...but at a price...

DR. PARNASSUS looks haggard. He closes his eyes. He sways and loses his balance.

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (3)

94.  
59

VALENTINA stops him from falling.

**VALENTINA**

What price?

**DR. PARNASSUS**

(anguished)

It's too terrible...

**VALENTINA**

Tell me...

**DR. PARNASSUS**

I... The price of my obsession...

(he groans)

I can't say it.

**VALENTINA**

Say it.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

You.

**VALENTINA**

What?

**DR. PARNASSUS**

I was mortal again... on condition  
that... any children I fathered...  
would, on their sixteenth  
birthday... belong to him.

**VALENTINA**

(stunned)

Him?...

VALENTINA can't take it in.

**VALENTINA (CONT'D)**

But... didn't...

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Your mother never knew. She died  
before I had to tell her.

**VALENTINA**

I don't believe this! It can't be true. It's just another of your wretched stories... A cruel story!

**DR. PARNASSUS**

If only...

(CONTINUED)

59 CONTINUED: (4)

95.  
59

**VALENTINA**

Why do you say these things?

**DR. PARNASSUS**

It's true. Every word. But all is not lost.

VALENTINA looks at him.

**DR. PARNASSUS (CONT'D)**

(feverishly)

A new wager... The first of five. If I win... you're free... you're mine again.. and we can win! Where's Tony? We can still win!

**VALENTINA**

By playing games with the devil!?

**DR. PARNASSUS**

With one more show. The day isn't over.

**VALENTINA**

No!

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Valentina.

**VALENTINA**

All my life you've made me play `Beauty', `Truth', `Justice'... filled my head with dreams and high ideals. All that crap! While... all the time...! The devil was right! You're arrogant! Vain and arrogant!

I'm just another one of your stupid wagers!... You're beneath contempt.

She rushes off into the dark night.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Valentina! That's not true! It's not like that! Wait! Come back! Valentina!

A dark silhouette stands in the shadow of the wagon. It's TONY. What has he heard?

96.

60 INT 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.

PERCY stops by DR. PARNASSUS before he exits.

**PERCY**

Telling the truth... Always a bad idea.

61 EXT MONTAGE OF SCENES NIGHT

61

ANTON, running, calling for VALENTINA.

PERCY is scouring the area on horseback.

ANTON running through a newspaper-filled tip, sees a headline on one of the newspapers. 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?

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED:

97.  
62

**TONY**

Saving Valentina.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

(befuddled)  
What?... How?

**TONY**

I overheard you. You only need one more to win. Me! I'll be that one. I'll take the risk to save Valentina and, hopefully, you sir. We've still got a few minutes.

Tony steers DOCTOR PARNASSUS towards his glass column.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**

Yes! Yes! Of course! Of course!  
Thank God! Thank God!

**TONY**

(to himself)  
How about thanking me?

**DR. PARNASSUS**

What?

**TONY**

I expect nothing in return.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

(trying to go into a  
trance)

No. You're a saint... A saint.

**TONY**

Only Valentina's hand in marriage,  
if she'll have me...

**DR. PARNASSUS**

(not listening)

Oh, my head...

**TONY**

And, as your son-in-law...  
perhaps... initiation into the  
secrets of the trance.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

No! I can't do it!

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED: (2)

98.  
62

**TONY**

But...

(realizing Parnassus is  
referring to his  
inability to go into a  
trance)

Why not?! What's wrong?

**DR. PARNASSUS**

My mind... I can't concentrate...  
I'm too upset...

**TONY**

You must do it! You have to do it!  
It's the only way to save your  
daughter!

**DR. PARNASSUS**

(distracted)

I know...

**TONY**

(sitting PARNASSUS down)  
Concentrate. You must concentrate.  
(clearing the way to the  
mirror)  
I'll make the right choice. I'm  
sure of it. I can feel how right it  
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 God!... Doctor... We can save  
her.. you and me. I need this. We  
both need this. Please. The trance.

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)**

Bugger!

He steps back out of the mirror. Goes to PARNASSUS who is  
weeping.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

It's no good!

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED: (3)

99.  
62

TONY shakes him hard.

**TONY**

PULL YOURSELF TOGETHER!... Sir.  
Concentrate...or you'll have lost  
her forever.

PARNASSUS slowly goes into a sobbing kind of trance state.

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 useless... Hopeless... I thought I was strong, but 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. 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, but it's not... it's a lie...I hate it!

TONY lifts her up, putting his arm around her.

**TONY**

Everything's going to be alright... I'll take you away. I'll show you the world. My world. The great big beautiful world I've always dreamed of... You'll love it.

VALENTINA, grateful, clings to TONY.

(CONTINUED)

62 CONTINUED: (4)

100.  
62

**TONY (CONT'D)**

Yes?

**VALENTINA**

Maybe.

**TONY**

C'mon then.

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**

No!

TONY tries to snatch the paper but ANTON steps back.

**ANTON**

N-not a bad p-picture, Tony.  
Listen to this Valentina... it's about Tony's b-beautiful world..

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS O/S**

Valentina!       Where are you?

PARNASSUS is still in his trance but, mumbling.

**ANTON**

...Anthony Shepherd, who was arrested last week on charges of...

VALENTINA is surrounded. Confused.

**TONY**

(to Valentina)

Valentina, Don't listen to that.  
I'm innocent. This is the work of people who are trying to destroy me! Evil people! Believe me! Look, I'll show you the truth!

TONY pulls VALENTINA towards the mirror.

**(CONTINUED)**

ANTON tries to stop him, but TONY pushes him back, off the stage. He crashes to the ground.

**TONY (CONT'D)**  
(grabbing VALENTINA)  
Hurry!

TONY and VALENTINA disappear through the mirror.

**DOCTOR PARNASSUS**  
(sobbing in his trance)  
Valentina! Forgive me.

Mist and rain descend as TONY and VALENTINA run through the darkened shapes of the shampoo-commercial landscape - now tattered, ragged, and wind blown. Darkness reigns.

**TONY**  
This isn't right. This is all wrong. Which way?

Soaked and cold they spy a welcome sight. A uniformed valet with an open umbrella stands by the door of a sleek limo.

**VALET**  
Your car is here, Mr.Tony.

**TONY**  
Ah, Lester, just in time.

TONY ducks under the umbrella and helps VALENTINA into the car ahead of himself.

As she slides across the seat she notices the driver - bowler hatted and smoking a cigarette.

**VALENTINA**  
No! Tony, don't get in! Get away!

She pushes TONY back and scrambles out...dragging him back out into the dark rain.

The driver turns around. It's MR.NICK.. looking vexed.

VALENTINA and TONY struggle through the rain. Suddenly, they

find themselves in deep water up to their chests. They are sinking. Through the mist they see a boat. It is the gondola that transported the LOUIS VUITTON LADY.

(CONTINUED)

63 CONTINUED:

102.  
63

**TONY**

Help! Over here!

The boatman turns the boat in their direction. TONY tries to pull himself on board. The boatman reaches down to help.

**BOATMAN**

Give me your hand

It's MR. NICK. VALENTINA recoils, drags TONY off the boat.

**TONY**

Stop! What are you doing! We'll drown!

**VALENTINA**

No we won't. This is the way.

She points to jumbled rocks just visible in the darkness. They drag themselves onto them. The rocky monoliths appear to be the same as the landscape ANTON climbed over when he was searching for DIEGO, the son of THE FAMILY FROM HELL.

And, like a repeat of that experience, from behind the ridge rises the Parnassus-faced Mongolfier balloon. But, now the eyes stream tears and rain pours down. In the basket is **ANTON**.

**ANTON**

Don't d-do it. Don't g-go on. Not with him! He's all lies.

**VALENTINA**

Just like my father. Leave me alone. I don't care anymore. I want a new life.

**TONY**

Valentina...

He pulls her away..towards a little tumble-down cottage. Warm candlelight glows in the windows, smoke curls from the chimney. They run to the door. TONY bangs on it. Someone can be heard unlatching the locks inside.

A child's crying cuts through the wind.

VALENTINA turns and sees a little girl sitting on the path... among flapping laundry. She rushes to her, tries to pick her up but, the little girl resists..

(CONTINUED)

103.

63 CONTINUED: (2)

63

**VALENTINA**

Tony, help me, she's heavy.

The door has just opened and TONY is halfway through. He turns, irritated.

**TONY**

What is it now?! Can't we just go inside and get dry.

Behind him, in the warmth, stands the old BABOUSHKA.

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 holds on to her.

**TONY (CONT'D)**

(shouting angrily)  
Ostanobuite bas menshi schit!

The little girl goes quiet. VALENTINA looks at TONY with surprise. The BABOUSHKA looks angry. Suddenly a light begins to suffuse TONY and the little girl. A small orchestra can be heard playing garden party music.

**VALENTINA**

You did it! You made the right choice!

The light fills the screen and we find...

...TONY, sleekly groomed and immaculately dressed, holding the smiling little girl. She too has been cleaned and buffed. The sun shines. He stands in...

64 EXT CHARITY GARDEN PARTY DAY

64

...a large well kept lawn covered with smart guests, BUSINESS PEOPLE, POLITICIANS, POP STARS, CELEBS...

Behind and beyond them is an impressive country house.

A small orchestra is playing. There is a marquee.

WAITERS and WAITRESSES move amongst the assembled notables bearing trays of drinks and food.

TONY is the focus of attention. A TV current-affairs/news JOURNALIST with CAMERA CREW is following him around.

(CONTINUED)

64 CONTINUED:

104.  
64

**TONY**

Sustainability's great, if you can achieve it. The problem is, in many cases you simply can't, 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.

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.

**JOURNALIST**

And what's your message to the Prime Minister?

**TONY**

(laughs engagingly)

I wouldn't presume to have a 'message' for the Prime Minister... Fortunately for the Foundation, I think we pretty much see eye to eye on most things.

Now we hear a distant buzzing. EVERYBODY looks up.

**(CONTINUED)**

**64 CONTINUED: (2)**

**105.  
64**

They see a speck in the sky, it's the PRIME MINISTER'S approaching helicopter...

TONY and the posse of JOURNALISTS and PHOTOGRAPHERS rush off leaving VALENTINA standing alone.

**65 EXT HELICOPTER LANDING PAD DAY**

**65**

The PRIME MINISTER and his WIFE get out of the helicopter, followed by their AIDES. TONY and the PRIME MINISTER shake hands for THE TV CAMERAS.

VALENTINA watches from a distance..ignored.

A huge chandelier illuminates a grand ornate ballroom where 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 PRIME MINISTER 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.

**(CONTINUED)**

**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**

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**

What? How?...

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 little bastard!

(CONTINUED)

**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)  
Take your hands off him!! Stop it!

**TONY**

Get off me! What are you doing?  
(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 lavished  
on 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.

68 INT THE BALLROOM CONTINUOUS

68

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.'

Stunned silence as the horror of this happy scene sinks in.

Then...

**GUESTS**

My God! Somebody stop him! He's a  
monster! Get him!

As one they leap to their feet.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED:

108.  
68

TONY looks up and freezes. 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**

Forgive me, Anton. I was wrong.

**ANTON**

I know... I'm not a child.

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!!!... Who!!!??? Tell me!!!

**DR. PARNASSUS (O.S.)**

Valentina! My darling daughter!  
There you are!

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: (2)

109.  
68

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  
facilititater, 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..it's  
all my fault. What have I done?...

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...

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: (3)

110.  
68

**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 little fool! You're to blame!..  
for everything... 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 to be 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.

(CONTINUED)

68 CONTINUED: (4)

111.  
68

**MR NICK (CONT'D)**

You think you deserve punishment but you're a kid - you have no idea...trust me.

VALENTINA feints another direction. MR NICK blocks her.

**VALENTINA**

(a crazed look)

Wrong. I'm 16...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...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.

112.

69 EXT STRANGE MOUNTAIN LANDSCAPE

69

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 his 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, the star prize... not part  
of the bloody score... And you  
lumbered with eternal life all over  
again... 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... 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)

Those weird markings you found on  
him... on his forehead... Those  
satanic-symbol, so-called,  
things... What's all that about?...  
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?...

**(CONTINUED)**

**69 CONTINUED:**

**113.  
69**

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?

70 **EXT SOMEWHERE ON THE MOUNTAIN**

70

TONY, sweating, panting for breath, is running up the mountain.

Below, the MOB is still in hot pursuit.

TONY reaches the summit. In front of him, is his salvation - an empty gibbet. A noose hangs from the crossbeam.

**TONY**

Thank God for that!

TONY relaxes a little.

We can hear the mob now, struggling up the mountain.

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 a chair with the noose around his neck. He smiles and opens his hand. The metal tube has vanished.

TONY panics. The MOB is getting closer.

**(CONTINUED)**

70 **CONTINUED:**

**114.**  
**70**

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 what he  
said... If you manage to kill me,  
he'll release Valentina. Yes? Am I  
right?... I am aren't I? It's all  
lies. He can't release her. And why  
not? Because he doesn't have her.  
He can't have her because she's the  
prize.

(gaining confidence)

He doesn't have five wins. But if  
you kill me he will, won't he?  
You'll have lost Valentina forever!

DR. PARNASSUS does a double hand shuffle.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Choose.

(CONTINUED)

**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 kicks the chair away.

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 onto the chair, tightening the noose around his neck.

(CONTINUED)

70 CONTINUED: (3)

116.

70

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 as the MOB kicks the chair away from under him.

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?

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. The swirling dust thins to reveal DR.PARNASSUS, alone, exhausted, trudging across a vast desert.

He's tormented by his thoughts.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

What else could I do, Valentina?  
What else could I have done... What  
other choice could I have made?...  
Damn!... It was the right choice...  
Of course it was... Of course...  
But where are you?

**(MORE)**

**(CONTINUED)**

71 **CONTINUED:**

117.  
71

**DR. PARNASSUS (CONT'D)**

Where's my beautiful daughter?  
Where's my darling? How long must I  
suffer?

There is no proper road, only endless sand, but nevertheless  
DR. PARNASSUS reaches a signpost which indicates two distinct  
paths.

One leads to a tidy little suburban home, the other up an  
dramatic mountain pass via a painfully steep staircase cut  
into the rock (the same one that MARTIN THE DRUNK chose not  
to climb days earlier.

**DR. PARNASSUS (CONT'D)**

No, no, no... No more choices,  
please... No more choices...!!!

Enraged, he tries to push the sign over, but is too feeble.  
Exhausted, he subsides onto a smooth protruding stone.

**VOICE (V.O.)**

(angry)

Hey!

DR. PARNASSUS, alarmed, rolls quickly off the stone.

Now on his knees he finds himself looking at the top half of  
PERCY'S head and face. What he'd thought was a stone was, in  
fact, his old companion buried in the sand.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Percy!

DR. PARNASSUS, overjoyed, begins to dig PERCY out.

**PERCY**

About bloody time!

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Where have you been?

**PERCY**

(irritated)

Here!

**DR. PARNASSUS**

How long have you been here?

**PERCY**

How long's a piece of string? Don't ask daft questions.

(CONTINUED)

71 CONTINUED: (2)

118.

71

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Thank God I found you. I need your advice.

(indicating sign)

I've got a problematical choice to make.

**PERCY**

Problematical my arse! Come on... I know it's against the grain...

PERCY grabs DR. PARNASSUS'S cloak and begins to pull him across the sand in the direction of the bungalow. We can now see the sign reads `Easy'...

**DR. PARNASSUS**

(on his dignity)

No! Suburban bungalows and all that they evoke are anathema to me.

Dammit Percy! Stop! I've got my pride!

**PERCY**

Yeah, it goes just before the fall.

PERCY grabs DR. PARNASSUS'S cloak and begins to pull him across the sand in the direction indicated by the sign which

we can now see reads 'Easy'..

**PERCY (CONT'D)**

Come on... I know it's against the grain...

**72 EXT SUBURBAN BUNGALOW**

**72**

PERCY pulls the reluctant DR. PARNASSUS up the drive of a suburban bungalow, past a perfect lawn and double garage, to the front door.

PERCY rings the bell.

DR. PARNASSUS tries to make a run for it but PERCY holds him fast.

The door is opened by VALENTINA. She's older and is carrying a BABY in her arms.

Both DR. PARNASSUS and VALENTINA are astonished. Neither knows what to say.

**(CONTINUED)**

**72 CONTINUED:**

**119.  
72**

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Valentina...?

**VALENTINA**

Father...?

(recovering)

Where have you been?... All these years... I thought you were dead.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

So did I. But you... I...

**VALENTINA**

Come in.

VALENTINA steps back and ushers her father in.

**PERCY**

(aside)

So far, so good.

PERCY is about to follow, but VALENTINA, focussing on her father, closes the door in his face.

73 INT SUBURBAN BUNGALOW

73

VALENTINA shows DR. PARNASSUS into the sitting-room. He sits on the sofa.

**KID'S VOICE (V.O.)**

Mummy? Can I have some ice-cream?

A SMALL BOY enters from the kitchen.

**KID**

Mummy?

**VALENTINA**

Billy, this is your grandad. Say hello to your grandad.

(to Parnassus)

I think he looks a little like you.

BILLY takes one look at DR. PARNASSUS and runs back into the kitchen.

VALENTINA laughs.

**VALENTINA (CONT'D)**

He's only five. And he's very shy.  
Would you like some tea?

(CONTINUED)

73 CONTINUED:

120.

73

DR. PARNASSUS nods.

**VALENTINA (CONT'D)**

Okay, you look after Imogen.

She gives him the baby.

**VALENTINA (CONT'D)**

She's eight months, and, so far, fortunately, doesn't look in the least like you.

DR. PARNASSUS is moved.

**VALENTINA (CONT'D)**

This is all I ever wanted... I know  
it's not what you wanted for me,  
but...well... there you go... I'm  
happy.

ANTON enters.

**ANTON**

Hello Doctor.

He puts his arm around VALENTINA.

**VALENTINA**

We're both happy.

DR. PARNASSUS doesn't know what to say. He sits there, a  
ragged old man with a baby on his knee, tears streaming down  
his face.

**74 EXT RAILWAY STATION CENTRAL LONDON**

**74**

Little cut-out cardboard figures are 'performing' in a toy  
theatre.

**VOICE OF TOY CHARACTER (V.O.)**

It's your choice. You can stay here  
and look after mum and dad, or come  
with me and help fight the giant.

**SECOND TOY CHARACTER (V.O.)**

I'll have to think about it.

THE CAMERA pulls back to show PERCY manipulating the puppets  
and giving them voices. He and DR. PARNASSUS are running a  
stall selling toy theatres. Business is good.

**(CONTINUED)**

**74 CONTINUED:**

**121.  
74**

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. DR. PARNASSUS takes the money and expertly wraps the theatre.

**DR. PARNASSUS**

Beautifully made. It'll last for years if properly looked after.

**NINE YEAR OLD SON**

Does it come with a happy ending?

**DR. PARNASSUS**

I'm afraid we can't guarantee that.

THE CAMERA angles across the table...

In a shadowy corner stands MR NICK, smoking a cigarette.

**THE END**