

# OFFENBACH

## ORPHEUS IN THE UNDERWORLD

English Version by Donald Pippin

### ACT ONE

*Scene: a rustic field with a shepherd's cabin in the foreground.*

#### PUBLIC OPINION:

*(spoken over soft music)*

My rightful name is Public Opinion.  
Although I play a thousand roles  
And kings are under my dominion,  
At home I'm simply called . . . The Polls.

The mind of man cannot unravel  
The mystery of how I travel,  
The speed with which I cover ground;  
In other words, I get around.

I show up in the strangest places,  
From barber shop to taxi cab.  
Wherever people stop to gab,  
I'm there in all my many faces.

An active lady for my age,  
My favorite spot is center stage.

They say I'm blind, or at least myopic,  
Haphazard, moody, prone to change,  
Bored with all but the latest topic,  
Enamored of the new and strange,

Spouting credos with a passion  
For as long as they're in fashion,  
Shallow, vicious – thanks a lot!  
I see you asking, though, so what?

To oversee the panorama  
I plan to play a crucial part  
In the play about to start,  
To do no less than mold the drama.

On cue, here comes Eurydice,  
But you'll be hearing more from me!

**EURYDICE** (*entering with flowers*)

**A girl longing for a lover  
Is soon out of bed;  
She's up and eager to discover  
The day still ahead.**

**Free to roam the fields for hours,  
The meadows in bloom,  
Off she goes to gather flowers –  
Need I say for whom?  
For whom? Ah! Ah!**

**But not a whisper to my husband,  
By the way.  
I bring the gorgeous, handsome shepherd  
My bouquet.  
To him I go with eyes aglow,  
And you know who is not to know.**

**His face is always in my fancies,  
So pensive and sweet.  
Each day I come with pinks and pansies  
To lay at his feet.**

**Would that I were single!  
For can I deny  
That my heart is all a-tingle?  
Are you asking why?  
You ask? Ah! Ah!**

**But not a whisper to my husband,  
Need I add?  
I tingle not for him  
But for the shepherd lad.  
To him I go with eyes aglow,  
And you know who is not to know.**

*EURYDICE: (after knocking at the cabin door)* Why, he must have stepped out!  
Poor boy, he's restless, for the same reason I am. But when he returns, his humble  
cabin will be a paradise of flowers.

ORPHEUS: Ah, there she is! My charming nymph, my adorable Amaryllis! Up so early, and alone, too! I'll surprise her with the sound she finds so ravishing.  
(*violin flourish*)

EURYDICE: Heavens! My husband!

ORPHEUS: (Good God! My wife! . . . Well, I've let myself in for it. But in such a situation it's always best to take the offensive.) Well, well! So I have found you out! No, no, don't explain. Your guilt speaks for itself.

EURYDICE: So I am guilty of knocking at a neighbor's door. How shocking! How scandalous!

ORPHEUS: Such virgin innocence! And to whom are you tossing this avalanche of flowers?

EURYDICE: To the wind. And you, my cherubic companion. To whom are you rendering this revolting serenade?

ORPHEUS: To the moon.

EURYDICE: The truth, dear husband, is all too clear, the score fifty-fifty. I have my shepherd, you have your nymph. I am delighted. You keep yours, I'll keep mine.

ORPHEUS: So this is the new morality that we hear so much about. I find it in the worst possible taste. I blush for you.

EURYDICE: The color doesn't suit you, dear. Try another.

ORPHEUS: Eurydice, for shame!

EURYDICE: Maestro Orpheus, it is high time that we speak frankly. In plain and simple Greek, I find you unbearable. When I married you, I thought I was in love with a sensitive artist, a romantic dreamer, an inspired poet. Little did I know that I was chaining myself for life to the most pompous, conceited, self-centered – the most boring man in all of Greece. Ha! You consider yourself a wizard because you invented iambic pentameter. Personally, I consider that your single greatest assault on humanity.

ORPHEUS: A fine critic! Your idiocy, Eurydice, is indestructible, based on a solid rock of native insensitivity.

EURYDICE: Am I to spend the best years of my life, pretending to be enraptured every time you saw away at that execrable instrument?

ORPHEUS: My violin! Madame! Is nothing sacred?

EURYDICE: I find it fully as offensive as your verses. Go, charm your silly little nymph! Poor thing, wait till she finds out what's in store for her. As for me, I have found a gorgeous, godlike shepherd. I am in love with Aristeus. He is in love with me. And nothing can keep us apart.

**ORPHEUS:**  
**So that's the score!**

**EURYDICE:**  
**Quite right, my sweet.**

**ORPHEUS:**  
**As husband, I'm obsolete.**

**EURYDICE:**  
**True, very true,**  
**And tiresome, too.**

**ORPHEUS:**  
**My art is only fair to middling.**

**EURYDICE:**  
**If one can speak**  
**Of work so weak.**

**ORPHEUS:**  
**When I perform you call it fiddling?**

**EURYDICE:**  
**By any name**  
**It's all the same.**  
**No, no! Your music has no merit;**  
**None but nincompoops can bear it.**  
**Oh, the torture and chagrin**  
**Each time you touch the violin!**

**ORPHEUS:**  
**You have the gall to say it?**  
**No matter, I'll repay it.**

**EURYDICE:**  
**And how? And how?**  
**Your scowl does not scare me.**

**ORPHEUS:**

Dear wife, so fond and tender,  
My pleasure is to please.  
For you I now shall render  
My latest masterpiece.

**EURYDICE:**

Mercy! Mercy! Spare me! Spare me!

**ORPHEUS:**

A crowning work of art,  
A symphony in song!  
And only two hours long.

**EURYDICE:**

Oh, heaven help me! Two hours long?

**ORPHEUS:**

Two hours long!  
Unless I add some more.

**EURYDICE:**

I'll cover up my ears.

**ORPHEUS:**

A work that I adore.

**EURYDICE:**

I really have to go.

**ORPHEUS:**

Music of the spheres!

**EURYDICE:**

No, no, no, no, no, no, no!  
Spare me! Spare me!

(Orpheus plays)

**EURYDICE:**

Abomination! A desecration!  
And furthermore, a bloody bore.

**ORPHEUS:**

The inspiration! A revelation!  
A noble score that I adore!

**EURYDICE:**  
Do you intend never to end!

**ORPHEUS:**  
A lovely theme! A sigh, a dream!

**EURYDICE:**  
If you go on, I shall scream. Ah!

**ORPHEUS:**  
Here comes the part that I adore.

**EURYDICE:**  
Oh, please, no more! It's such a bore!

**ORPHEUS:**  
Once again, the haunting motif,  
Full of hope, full of grief.

**EURYDICE:** (*mimicking*)  
La la la la la  
I say again it drives me insane.  
Stop, you've exhausted my patience!

**ORPHEUS:**  
The sublime modulations!

**EURYDICE:**  
No, no, no, no, no!  
Old and tired! Uninspired!

**ORPHEUS:**  
Here is a part straight from the heart.  
Pizzicato! Molto legato!  
Amoroso! Agitato!  
Forte, forte! Tremolo!

**EURYDICE:**  
Old and tired! Uninspired! Ah! Ah!

Oh, the scratching and the screeching!  
I'll endure no more of this agony.  
Venus, here I kneel, beseeching:  
From this madman, oh deliver me!

**Scratching and screeching!**  
**Yes, my friend,**  
**We have reached the end.**

**Venus, from this madman, oh deliver me!**  
**Oh, from my husband set me free. Ah, free!**

EURYDICE: Lovely, compassionate Venus! Deliver me from my sweet Orpheus, and each year I shall offer you a dozen milk white lambs.

ORPHEUS: Omnipotent Jupiter! Deliver me from my tender Eurydice, and I will compose forty stanzas in praise of your glory. (to Eurydice) Madame! I am under no delusions as to your devotion. As for your lack of breeding, that is beyond repair.

EURYDICE: Then we have come to a happy agreement. The obvious solution is divorce.

ORPHEUS: Divorce! Nothing would please me more. But I have a reputation to uphold. I'm a celebrity, a genius, an immortal poet, head of the conservatory. What will people say? I may as well confess my one weakness: I am the slave of Public Opinion. In her hands I turn to putty. No, I have no choice but to fight back with all the weapons at my command.

EURYDICE: (*witheringly*) Your quill, or your bow?

ORPHEUS: I see no reason for divulging my techniques. I shall merely drop a small hint: I would advise your shepherd boy not to come frolicking through the wheat field.

EURYDICE: And why should he not?

ORPHEUS: He may find some nettles amid the golden stalks. I'll say no more. I am late for my class; my pupils are waiting. Farewell, my pet, and take my advice. Be warned! (*exit*)

EURYDICE: Oh, there is nothing I would put past that maniac! Nettles amid the golden stalks . . . some foul mischief! A trap, no doubt! I must find Aristeus and head him off before he comes running through the field to embrace me. (*exit*)

(*Aristeus, apparently a comely shepherd, enters immediately from the opposite side*)

**ARISTEUS**  
**Just a green shepherd lad,**  
**In true Arcadian fashion,**

**My work is tending bees  
And poetry's my passion.**

**The rustic life is mine,  
Its plain and simple joys.  
Oh, the stars ever shine  
On us bucolic boys.**

QuickTime™ and a  
decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

**Spry ponies and placid cows  
In fields forever sunny;**

**Lambs frolicking on the green,  
As larks and linnets sing, ah!  
Lads crowning the village queen  
In lusty rites of spring,  
Rites of spring, lusty rites of spring.**

**How sweet the joys, the wholesome joys  
Of country boys!  
The rustic life beneath the tree,  
The life for me!**

**Shy shepherd and buxom lass  
Exchanging bashful glances;  
Folk grouping upon the grass  
For rounds and morris dances;**

**Wool-gathering, idle dreams  
Within a sheltered grove, ah!  
Where olive or willow seems  
To whisper vows of love,  
Vows of love, secret vows of love.**

**How sweet the joys, the wholesome joys  
Of country boys!  
The rustic life beneath the tree,  
The life for me!**

Ha, ha, ha! (*a diabolical laugh*) Yes, that's the line to give the public. How they eat it up! And it leaves me free to go about my devilish business. Today's the day I settle account with Orpheus, once and for all . . . Ah, here she comes! My tender Eurydice!

EURYDICE: (*returning*) How could I have missed him? . . . Oh, there he is! Thank God, I am not too late! Aristeus! My love! Watch out! Danger! Stay where you are! Don't move!

ARISTEUS: My sweet! Aren't you being a bit melodramatic? Danger? Nonsense!

EURYDICE: Hush! Be quiet!

ARISTEUS: But my dear, if I am not to move and not to speak, you leave me at a loss. Shall we try sign language?

EURYDICE: Aristeus! In the name of love, do not approach me! Stay away, I warn you!

ARISTEUS: My little chipmunk! How extraordinarily timid you are today. Why the sudden shyness? You are not yourself.

EURYDICE: It's not my timidity, it's your life! Take one step toward me and you die. My husband has found out everything. He has spied on us and now has set a trap for you in the wheat, the warm, soft cushion of our innocent embraces . . .

ARISTEUS: An idle threat! I defy it!

EURYDICE: Aristeus! You run to meet your death!

ARISTEUS: And what lover would not risk death for the sake of a single embrace?

EURYDICE: (with an ecstatic sigh) Oh, my dearest! Your love and your courage inspire me! Very well, let us die together! (*She runs toward him*)

ARISTEUS: Come to me!

EURYDICE: (*suddenly stopping*) Ah!

ARISTEUS: Ha, ha! Your husband's trap has sprung.

EURYDICE: I am caught!

ARISTEUS: (More than you yet realize.)

EURYDICE: (*almost dreamily*) Good heavens, what an odd sensation!

ARISTEUS: Pluto becomes himself again . . . one, two , three, presto! (*throwing off his shepherd's cloak*) And now let's add a touch of atmosphere. (the stage darkens) Ha, that's the way I like to see it. Dark and homey!

EURYDICE: Dear God, am I dying?

PLUTO: You'll find out very soon. *Lasciate ogni speranza!*

EURYDICE: And yet I feel no pain at all . . .

PLUTO: We'll discuss it later . . .

EURYDICE: Later? You're coming, too? It's all so strange . . .

PLUTO: So . . . French.

EURYDICE:

QuickTime™ and a  
decompressor  
are needed to see this picture.

**A sigh, a letting go of breath.  
Then yielding to a soft embrace,  
Then yielding to a soft embrace . . .**

**I travel toward a friendly shore  
Where none can weep and none can mourn,  
And close to him that I adore,  
In death I find a life reborn.  
In death, sweet death, I find a life reborn.**

*(She falls into a trance)*

PLUTO: Out like a light. Poof! . . . Hmm! A tear . . . a human tear . . . But let's be off! First, however, let's capitalize on our divinity with a parting shot at the dispossessed husband. *(gestures over Eurydice's head, she revives)* Take my pen. You wouldn't leave without saying goodbye?

EURYDICE: *(writing)*

“Dear husband, here's to let you know  
My shepherd was in fact Pluto.  
With him I leave this earthly life.  
In haste, your liberated wife.”

PLUTO: The poetry is not sublime . . . *C'est la vie. No! C'est la mort!* And now we head for home. To the somber depths! *(They disappear together.)*

ORPHEUS: *(returning)* What the devil! As usual, I finish my lessons at noon. I step outside and it's the middle of the night! Already suppertime and I've not yet had lunch. Is the sun off course? Did Apollo oversleep? By Jupiter! What's this? My wife's writing! *(reads)*



PUBLIC OPINION Young man, you are to march yourself right up to Olympus. I'm coming, too, to keep an eye on you. There you will make your appeal to Jupiter – no use having talent if you don't use it. I want you to bring along your loveliest melody – it doesn't have to be original. And for heaven's sake, put on a clean shirt. You will plead, melt his heart – as only you can – persuade him to restore your beloved Eurydice to your lonely arms.

ORPHEUS: What! Ask for Eurydice back? God forbid!

PUBLIC OPINION: For the enlightenment of posterity. It's about time you made a name for yourself.

ORPHEUS: But I don't want her back!

PUBLIC OPINION: The example will be all the more touching. A model for future husbands.

ORPHEUS: But suppose she likes it where she is?

PUBLIC OPINION: You refuse me? You prefer my vengeance? Very well. Let's see. I'll have to get busy. You don't mind losing your position at the conservatory? You wish to be scorned by your colleagues, trounced by your rivals, booed by the public, panned by the critics, forgotten by posterity?

ORPHEUS: No, no, no! Anything but that!

**PUBLIC OPINION:**

**Come, come, come with me!  
Come! Led by Public Opinion,  
May honor, not love, prevail. Come!  
Hand in hand, as your trusty companion,  
Your trusty, true companion,  
I lead you down the murky trail.**

**I lead the way. So come!  
Led by Public Opinion,  
May honor, not love, prevail.  
When duty calls,  
Go for honor and acclaim.**

**ORPHEUS:**

**Drat! Bound to Public Opinion,  
I'm prisoner without bail,  
A prisoner without bail.  
Hand in hand with my cursed companion  
I go along hoping to fail.**

**And I obey, and I obey. I come!**

**Bound to Public Opinion,  
I'm prisoner without bail,  
A prisoner without bail.  
Against my will I play the game.**

*(they leave together)*

*Scene 2: Olympic Heights, home of the gods.*

**GODS:** *(asleep)*

**Sleep on, sleep on! Lower the lights.  
Come, join the drowsy crew.  
For here on these Olympian heights  
There's never a damn thing to do.  
You folk out there, I have to warn ya:  
Here it's worse than Southern California.  
Mmmm . . .**

**VENUS:**

*(entering quietly with a languorous yawn)*

**I'm Goddess of Love, none to compare!  
At break of day a tired Venus  
Returns from a divine affair –  
I trust you'll keep this just between us.**

**Some tend to smirk  
When I get off from work;  
You'd think it was a crime  
To put in overtime.**

**After much ado,  
My eyes are heavy, too,  
So heavy, so heavy, too . . . *(sinks into sleep)***

**CUPID:** *(tiptoeing in)*

**I'm Cupid, the boy with the bow.  
At night I leave to go exploring,  
And back at dawn I come tiptoe  
While others still are soundly snoring.**

**None need ever learn  
The hour of my return.  
Home again at dawn,  
They'll never know I've gone.**

**After much ado,  
My eyes are heavy, too,  
So heavy, so heavy, too . . .** *(also sinks into sleep)*

**GODS:**

Mmmm . . .

**MARS:** *(entering, in full uniform)*  
**I'm Mars, God of Arms, full of drive!  
Unless they plan to ban or bar wars,  
It's safe to say that I'll survive  
At least until the age of star wars.**

**No one has to know  
That I've been on the go.  
Home again I creep  
To catch a little sleep.** *(he, too, falls asleep)*

**GODS:**

Mmmm . . . *(a horn call is heard)*

**JUPITER:** *(waking up with a start)*  
**Who is making this horrible din  
After everyone's safely tucked in?  
It had better be none of my kin.**  
*(Diana enters, with horn)*  
**Ah, Diana! My favorite daughter!  
And so talented on the horn!  
Wake up, you gods, and greet the morn.  
Rise and shine! Yawning I forbid!  
Out with a song! Let's have a tune  
To greet the Goddess of the Moon,  
And, all in all, a decent kid.**

**GODS:**

**O hail Diana, chaste and fair!**

**VENUS:**

**Dear, but why the look of despair?**

**OTHERS:**

**Yes, why the look of despair?**

**DIANA:**

**A bitter pain beyond compare!  
Ah, me! A pain beyond compare,**

**Beyond compare!**

**Often I leave my shady mountain –  
Non non non nonny non non –  
Seeking my own, my Acteon.  
Non non non nonny non non.**

**And near a clear secluded fountain –  
Non non non nonny non non –  
I find alone my Acteon.  
Non non non nonny non non.**

**GODS:**

**You find alone your Acteon?**

**DIANA:**

**I find alone my Acteon.**

**Early this morn, I left the mountain –  
Non non non nonny non non --  
Seeking my own, my Acteon.  
Non non non nonny non non.**

**But searching in vain around the fountain –  
Non non non nonny non non –  
Not to be found was Acteon.  
Non non non nonny non non.**

**GODS:**

**No hide nor hair of Acteon?  
Not to be found was Acteon.**

**DIANA:**

**Not to be found was Acteon.**

Poor Acteon! What could have happened to him? He swore that nothing could keep him away.

JUPITER: I'll tell you what happened to him. This little affair of yours has been causing me some concern. It's a father's duty to look out for his daughter's reputation, and it was clear that yours was being seriously compromised. I got rid of him.

DIANA: Got rid of him?

JUPITER: I changed him into a stag. Don't fret, my dear. Your reputation is intact. I have sent out a press release giving you full credit – outraged by his bold pursuit, his shocking audacity, his unwelcome advances, et cetera, et cetera . . .

DIANA: But I wasn't, they weren't!

JUPITER: A white lie to enrich the pages of mythology. My dear chaste daughter, we have to preserve the image. We are divinities, not just anybody! We must not disappoint the public.

MINERVA: A fine one to talk! That's all I have to say.

JUNO: Wise Minerva, has some new escapade of my husband come to light?

JUPITER: Now, now, Juno. Let's not jump to conclusions. Gossip, pure and simple gossip. The columnists are always out to discredit me. Anything for a story.

JUNO: If the rumor is unfounded, it will be for the first time. Minnie, dear, tell me what you know.

JUPITER: Now, sweetheart, please! Don't make a scene. Not here in public. A few serious matters have come to my attention. Mars!

MARS: (with a salute) Ay, ay, sir!

JUPITER: You are aware that lovely Venus here is a married woman with a family. Her husband Vulcan charges . . .

VENUS: His charges are absurd, preposterous! Absolutely untrue. I deny everything. Were he not my husband, I would sue him for libel.

JUPITER: Bravo! Well done! That's exactly the point I'm trying to get across. It's our duty to the public. And it solves everything. But hereafter, a little restraint, please!

A GOD: What a phony!

DIANA: What a bully!

CUPID: Big Daddy!

JUPITER: Cupid! What is my little one up to?

CUPID: Here I am, daddy!

JUPITER: I've been hearing most disturbing reports about your recent behavior. Staying out all hours, shooting at random, stirring up mischief, and letting the ambrosia burn. Child, unless you shape up, I shall have to take away your flying privileges.

CUPID: (The old man's on it again.) But daddy, why did you give me wings if I'm not to use them?

JUPITER: Young man, I gave you wings so that you could get home on time. And let's see that you do so.

CUPID: (to Venus) Mom, why does he always take it out on me? I never get to have any fun.

VENUS: You're right, darling. Daddy is being impossible.

MINERVA: Frankly, I find this atmosphere insufferable. Where is the intellectual stimulation that I require? These relentless blue skies . . .

BACCHUS: What I need is a little drink.

MINERVA: (turning upon him with self-righteous indignation) Bacchus! Because you created wine, you are under no obligation to consume it all yourself. I created logic, but you would never catch me using it.

CUPID: I have an idea, Aunt Minnie! We can all go on strike!

VENUS: Hush, child! That's one of the corrupted versions, an error in the translation. Mars! Minerva! (to Cupid) You, too, darling. I have a few matters that call for private discussion. Follow me.

MINERVA: Venus has mischief up her sleeve.

BACCHUS: This ought to liven things up a little.

OTHERS: About time! Sounds interesting. Fun!

*(all exit, except Jupiter and Juno)*

JUNO: And I, too, sir, have something to discuss. Though it's not yet made the headlines, I have heard on good authority that a mortal girl, lovely as a goddess – or so they say – has been kidnapped by an unidentified god. Don't lie to me! The girl's name is Eurydice. *(bitterly)* The god's name . . . need I say it?

JUPITER: Honey, there you go again! Always thinking the worst. Where will your blind jealousy lead you? How can you think for a minute that I would abuse my power by committing such a crime? I am as innocent as you yourself.

JUNO: The same old tune . . .

JUPITER: But rumors have reached me as well, and I have my suspicions. If they are correct, just watch! I will prove my fidelity as a husband by my zeal in punishing the escapades of others. I am determined to get to the bottom of this, and have already sent Mercury, my faithful messenger, to bring back the facts.

JUNO: (*with the utmost contempt*) You hypocrite!

JUPITER: And if I am not mistaken, those are his wings I hear flapping through the ether this very minute.

MERCURY:

(*entering on winged feet*)

**I'm Mercury, the messenger,  
A gifted god that some regard  
The postal service, as it were –  
May I present my calling card?**

**A jack of many trades, perforce,  
A dynamo at work and play;  
To reinforce the claim, of course,  
I've brought along a resume.**

**At first a lowly errand boy,  
I combed the country far and wide;  
My big promotion – joy, oh joy –  
I got the job of travel guide.**

**From travel soon I took to trade,  
The god of all that buy and sell;  
The racketeer and renegade  
In turn became my clientele.**

**When times became a little tough  
I took to dice and games of chance,  
A course that took me soon enough  
Into the world of high finance.**

**From there I drifted into crime,  
A phase I feel was justified;  
Though god of thieves, my extra time**

**I gave to lawyers on the side.**

**My troubles with the law began,  
And forced to plead my own defense,  
The former cosmic handyman  
Became the god of eloquence.**

**How will my long career turn out?  
What now awaits the messenger?  
You will know that I am still about,  
I still am very much about,  
When you shake your thermometer,  
Your silver quick thermometer.**

**JUNO:  
The silver quick thermometer.**

**MERCURY:  
Hop, hop!**

**JUNO:  
Hop, hop!**

**MERCURY:  
Hop, hop! So meet the messenger,  
A gifted god that some regard  
The postal service, as it were –  
May I present my calling card?**

**JUNO & JUPITER:  
Hop, hop! We meet the messenger,  
A gifted god that some regard  
The postal service, as it were –  
You may present your calling card.**

MERCURY: Greetings to the supreme ruler and master of the heavens and the firmament, creator of the , , ,

JUPITER: Never mind the formalities. Get to the point.

MERCURY: Chief! I come straight from the Underworld.

JUPITER: Where Pluto, no doubt, was keeping open house as usual?

MERCURY: Not this time. Pluto was on vacation.

JUPITER: On vacation?

MERCURY: For the past two weeks. He got back just an hour ago, rested, cooled off, ready for work.

JUPITER: Back from where?

MERCURY: Our usual vacation spot, the earth. But he did not come back alone. No, no, no! With him was a gorgeous little number, kidnapped from her husband.

JUPITER: Aha! This gorgeous little number . . . what was her name?

MERCURY: Her name? Her name? Ah, yes. Eurydice!

JUPITER: You see, my dear What did I tell you?

JUNO: Oh, darling, forgive me! How could I have been so unjust? Never again!

JUPITER: There, there . . . you were understandably upset. Oh, that rascal Pluto! This time he will not get away with it. You summoned him here?

MERCURY: Listen! The wheels of his chariot!

PLUTO: (*entering*)

**(How he stares at me? Does he suspect?  
I'd better throw him off the trail –  
Flattery will do it.  
I could start by admiring the property . . .  
A few phrases that I picked up from a travel brochure.)**

**Ah! What a perfect paradise!  
Intoxicating, captivating, seventh heaven!  
This divine, delectable, delicious, dazzling  
Dwelling on Olympus!**

**Idyllic, the life that you lead!  
Frolicking, reveling, idling, too,  
Under skies ever blue,  
While I have to toil in the pits,  
Confined to the smoky chambers  
Of the underworld down below.**

**How soothing and balmy the breeze,  
Like the breath of a goddess!  
Utter delight, the scent of laurel and of myrtle,  
Of nectar and ambrosia!**

**Hear the coo coo coo of the shy turtle dove,  
Making love!  
And the song of Apollo,  
His fingers on the lyre,  
Creating golden honey.**

**Forest and water nymphs,  
Muses at leisure;  
The Graces, the Graces, the Graces  
We don't forget, no, no! No, no! No, no!  
The Graces we don't forget  
As in a row they dance,  
Tripping the light fantastic  
Under the ring around the moon.  
Oh the moon, oh the moon, oh the moon of May!**

**Hear the coo coo coo of the shy turtle dove,  
Making love!  
And the song of Apollo,  
His fingers on the lyre,  
Creating golden sound.**

**How sweetly scented is the air!  
A mellow medley of aromas,  
The perfume of the night  
And the perfume of the day,  
The perfume of the dawn  
And the perfume of the dusk,  
And the perfume of sky  
And the perfume of Graces,  
The perfume of Muses,  
The perfume, the perfume, the perfume  
Of nymph and goddess!**

JUPITER: As soon as you can tear yourself away from the perfume counter .

PLUTO: Ah, sir, the relief! After being so long cooped up in the Underworld  
A hellhole, if you'll pardon the expression.

JUPITER: Yes, but I hear that you manage to get away once in a while . . . a cozy,  
rustic cabin – so they tell me – amid the golden fields of Thebes, on earth.

PLUTO: A cabin? On the earth? Who thought that one up?

JUPITER: And there through deceit and trickery you have violated the laws of Olympus, stolen a young wife from her adoring husband and carried her off to your own dark kingdom.

PLUTO: Sir! How could you believe . . .

JUPITER: Silence! When I speak, others bow their heads and tremble!

PLUTO: But sir!

JUPITER: Enough! I am not in the habit of discussion. Before me, even the gods cringe and cower! (*sounds of shouting offstage, "Down with Jupiter!"*) Now what could that be?

PLUTO: It doesn't sound like the gods cringing and cowering.

GODS: (*reentering*)



The bully bosses us about;  
Turn upon him, kick him out.

Arise! Arise! Arise!  
For freedom we unite!  
Gods, to a man, stand up and fight!

**JUPITER:**

A revolution! A revolution!  
Who knows where this could lead?

**PLUTO:**

(A revolution of the gods!  
A piece of luck! Exactly what I need!)

**GODS:**

To hell with nectar and ambrosia!  
No more nectar!

**DIANA:**

I have had it up to here.

**GODS:**

No more ambrosia!

**VENUS:**  
**Give me beef and a round of beer.**

**GODS:**  
**Roast beef and beer!**

**PLUTO;**  
**You're right! A far more appetizing menu.**  
**Speak out and tell me more.**  
**My friends! Pray continue,**

**GODS:**  
**Arise! Arise! Arise!**  
**Arise! You browbeaten underling!**  
**Rebel against the bullying,**  
**The badgering and bullying!**  
**How did he become the king?**

**Arise! Arise! Arise!**  
**No more ambrosia, no more nectar!**  
**Why let the bully boss and hector?**  
**Show the rascal who we are.**  
**Arise! Arise!**  
**This time the tyrant's gone too far.**

JUPITER: What's this? Revolt? A full-fledged revolution?

GODS: Down with Jupiter!

JUPITER: I'm ashamed of you. Controlled, manipulated by an operator like him?

PLUTO: Say, who's calling who an operator?

JUPITER: A bandit! A body snatcher who abuses his position by stealing unsuspecting wives from their husbands.

MINERVA: How fascinating! Do go on!

PLUTO: Malicious rumor! Totally unfounded.

JUPITER: So you compel me to name names? Very well. This outlaw has just stolen the beautiful Eurydice from her grief-stricken husband Orpheus, the violinist. So much for his level of morality!

PLUTO: Morality! Listen to Dad!

VENUS: The perfect gentleman!

MARS: The pillar of virtue!

DIANA: Old faithful!

MINERVA: Why, your own past is so appalling that respectable mothers refuse to allow their daughters to read your biography.

DIANA: Were I not goddess of chastity, I could tell you a few stories myself.

OTHERS: (ad lib.) And I! And I! Me, too!

JUPITER: I haven't time to stay and listen to this nonsense.

GODS: Oh, yes you do! You'll stay and listen! You'd better listen!

JUNO: It's the punishment you deserve!

**DIANA:**



A la-dy's bed you en-tered sly-ly as her own hus-band, so they say.  
With many wives, I wonder wryly  
If you would score so well that way.

**DIANA, then GODS:**

**Ha ha ha! Ha ha ha!**  
**Jupiter, seducer and producer of the show, oh ho!**  
**Ha ha ha! Ha ha ha!**  
**On the go for ladies, oh the pagan dynamo!**

**MINERVA:**

**By all accounts a cad and coward,**  
**So you became a horny bull.**  
**And though Europa you deflowered,**  
**It was a sleazy stunt to pull.**

**MINERVA, then GODS:**

**Ha ha ha! Ha ha ha!**  
**Jupiter the conqueror, the idol of the Greek!**  
**Ha ha ha! Ha ha ha!**  
**Thunder-wielder, wonder worker, hero so to speak.**

**VENUS:**

**As Leda lay beside the water,**

**A regal swan came floating by –  
But we can make the story shorter  
If you relay the rest, not I!**

**VENUS, then GODS:  
Ha ha ha! Ha ha ha!  
Jupiter, the superstud, the universal sham!  
Ha ha ha! Ha ha ha!  
What a great impersonator! What a hunk of ham!**

**CUPID:  
To win a nymphet – say, who is she? –  
There came a monster from the sea.  
Though she detected something fishy,  
It's clear enough to you and me.**

**CUPID, then GODS:  
Ha ha ha! Ha ha ha!  
What a cast of characters! A classic repertoire!  
Ha ha ha! Ha ha ha!  
What a fishy, wishy-washy customer you are!**

**PLUTO:  
Examine these disguises rightly:  
What is the message they convey?  
Your ugly face is so unsightly  
You can succeed no other way.**

**PLUTO, then GODS:  
Ha ha ha! Ha ha ha!  
Antiquated, overrated, bawdy and bizarre!  
Ha ha ha! Ha ha ha!  
What a trooper! Jupiter, the would-be superstar!**

MERCURY: (*entering excitedly*) Sir! A moment!

JUPITER: Well, what is it? Can't you see that I'm occupied?

MERCURY: But sir, two strangers are at the gate. It seems to be an emergency.

JUPITER: Who are they?

MERCURY: Orpheus, the musician . . .

PLUTO: (Orpheus here! Bad news!)

JUPITER: (Orpheus here! Good news! I'll expose this roughneck once and for all.)

MERCURY: And with him is a somewhat overbearing lady who calls herself Public Opinion.

JUPITER: Public Opinion! By all means, let them come in! Now children, truce to our little quarrels. We must behave ourselves and keep up appearances. Quick, to your places! Here, wait till I get to the throne . . . Where is my lightning? No, no, no, my Sunday lightning! Venus, you here on my right. Take my arm, Diana, on my left. Cupid, Minerva, in front.

PLUTO: And I?

JUPITER: You sit on the criminal bench where you belong. Everybody else, a family tableau. Positions, please! Let them enter . . .

PLUTO: (*eyes on Orpheus*)  
He approaches, he advances;  
See him glower, see him glare.  
Awkward are the circumstances;  
I'd be better off elsewhere.

**ORPHEUS;**  
**(entering with Public Opinion)**  
**Cautiously my step advances**  
**In this hazardous affair.**  
**Owing to the circumstances,**  
**I must seem a husband in despair.**

**GODS & PUBLIC OPINION:**  
**He approaches, he advances;**  
**Let the guilty god beware.**  
**Hero come to take his chances,**  
**Pity this poor husband in despair.**

**GODS:**  
**He appears! We'll observe!**  
**Come to plead. We'll attend.**

**PUBLIC OPINION:**  
**You must prepare to make your plea;**  
**You owe it to posterity and me!**

**ORPHEUS;**  
**I must prepare to make my plea;**

**I owe it to posterity.**

**GODS:**

**He appears! Hear him out.  
Come to plead. To the end.**

**PUBLIC OPINION:**

**You must prepare to make your plea,  
Or I'll get even!  
The time has come to take your chances,  
Play the husband in despair.**

**ORPHEUS:**

**I owe it to posterity.  
Lost in despair!  
Owing to the circumstances,  
I'm a husband in despair.**

**GODS:**

**Yes, we'll observe and we'll attend;  
We'll hear him out unto the end,  
A hero come to take his chances,  
Wretched husband in despair.**

**JUPITER: (to Orpheus)**

**Mere mortal man, why are you here?**

**PUBLIC OPINION: (to Orpheus)**

**Pull out all the stops, weave a spell.  
In tones made liquid by a tear,  
You must plead, you must implore  
Permission to go down to hell  
And retrieve the wife you adore.**

**ORPHEUS:**

**If you insist . . .**

**PUBLIC OPINION:**

**You're on!**

**ORPHEUS:**

**(while playing the violin ravishingly)  
Che faro senza Eurydice?**

**GODS: (in tears)**

**Human grief too great to bear!**

**DIANA:**  
Mortal yet divine despair!

**GODS:**  
Mortal yet divine despair!

**ORPHEUS:**  
She was snatched away . . .

**JUPITER:**  
By? . . .

**ORPHEUS:**  
By Pluto!

**OTHERS:**  
What! By Pluto? Say not so!

**ORPHEUS & PUBLIC OPINION:**  
Yes, by Pluto. Now you know.

**OTHERS:** (*almost spoken*)  
Was it Pluto?

**ORPHEUS:**  
It was Pluto!

**JUPITER:**  
The law is on your side.  
Deceit combined with villainy!  
I command Pluto now  
To return your Eurydice.

**ORPHEUS:**  
(Oh, no! Oh, no! She goes to me!)

**PLUTO:**  
(Oh, no! Oh, no! A blow for me!)

**JUPITER:**  
To enforce my command,  
Pluto, I'll take the helm.  
King of all, I myself  
Shall go to the nether realm.

**GODS:**

**Down to hell! Down to hell!  
O Jupiter, we beg you! We, too, want to go;  
Adventure and excitement and fun down below.  
Oh, let us go! Do let us go!  
Oh, do! Oh, do!  
O Jupiter, do, do take us along with you!**

**JUPITER:**

**Enough! How can I say no?  
My family of course must go.**

**GODS:**

**Hooray! Hip, hip, hooray!**

**JUPITER:**

**Come along, everyone! Come along!**

**GODS:**

**Have the festive flag unfurled!  
Long live the leader we maligned!  
On his journey to the Underworld  
Friends he would never leave behind.**

**Come on! Come on! Come on!  
La la la la la, away!  
We go to take a holiday.  
La la la la la, away!  
The gods are in the mood for play.**

**A change of scene, a change of air –  
The giddy gods let down their hair.  
We leave our grand, exalted heights  
To seek a land of new delights.**

**JUPITER:**

**When I step out I take the family.  
Hell-bent for fun, the gods are on a spree.**

**GODS:**

**When we step out we take the family.  
Hell-bent for fun, the gods are on a spree.  
Away, away, away!  
We go off to take a holiday,  
A change of scene, a change of air –**

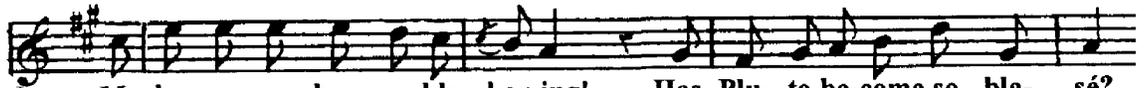
The giddy gods let down their hair.

End of Act One

## ACT TWO

*Scene: a The Underworld – Pluto’s boudoir.*

EURYDICE: (*alone*) Imprisoned in Pluto’s boudoir! Solitary confinement! Not a soul for company except for that loathsome idiot John Styx, who serves as my jailer. Oh, what have I got myself into? Pluto, Pluto! If this is your idea of a honeymoon! . . .



My days are un- bear- a-bly bor-ing! Has Plu- to be-come so bla- sé?

How long can he go on ignoring  
A girl who came such a long way?  
My spirits are sinking, not soaring;  
I notice in fact with dismay  
My husband looks better each day.

A word of advice to you ladies:  
Think twice before coming to Hades.  
Think again! Think again! Ah!

So eager to please as a lover,  
He promised to show me around;  
But now that the novelty’s over,  
He’s nowhere in hell to be found.  
The say I have gone to the devil,  
Where sinners and satyrs abound.  
Believe me, it’s not such a revel.

A word of advice to you ladies:  
Think twice before coming to Hades.  
Think again! Think again!

*(John Styx enters)*

EURYDICE: Back again! What do you want?

JOHN STYX: Didn't you ring? (How beautiful she is! I can't bear it.)

EURYDICE: I did not ring. Nor would I ever ring for a nobody like you.

JOHN STYX: You look down upon me because I am a servant, because I am Pluto's butler. But my station has not always been so lowly. (*with quiet pride*) On earth, I was King of Arcadia . . .



**When I was king with pow'r un-bound- ed, the pride and en- vy of the land,  
By pomp and wealth was I surrounded,  
With an army at my command.**

**In dusty death my glory ended;  
Gone is the crown that once I wore.  
Yet only one lack have I lamented:  
You were not mine then to adore.**

**Were I yet king in dazzling splendor,  
You would be queen upon the throne.  
All I possessed to you I'd render,  
And I would worship you alone.**

**I've nothing left now in my coffer,  
And yet, undaunted, I implore:  
Receive the one gift I have to offer –  
A heart that loves you all the more.**

EURYDICE: Your heart you can keep.

JOHN STYX: For consolation, I turn to my one and only vice – drink.

EURYDICE: So that explains it. You are not mad, you are intoxicated.

JOHN STYX: Intoxicated, yes! On pure water . . . the waters of Lethe, waters of forgetfulness. But even if I consumed the entire river, I shall never forget the lovely face of the girl I have been privileged to stand guard over for two blessed days . . .

EURYDICE: Insufferable!

JOHN STYX: Reconsider. True, I am not handsome, but I am sweet, good-natured, generous . . . oh, drat! My master is returning. Back we go, once again to the inner chamber.

EURYDICE: So I am to be popped back into the cage?

JOHN STYX: If he finds you here, I'll be fired on the spot, to coin one of our local expressions.

EURYDICE: Oh, how long is this wretched joke going to continue?

*(they leave together, just before Pluto and Jupiter enter)*

PLUTO: (Ah, she is not here! Friend Styx had time to conceal her. Good servant!)

JUPITER: *(looking around)* Something tells me she is in this room.

PLUTO: Looking for something, chief?

JUPITER: No, no, just admiring your intimate little chamber . . . so pleasant, so private . . . All right, stop beating about the bush. Where have you put her?

PLUTO: I can't imagine who you could be referring to.

JUPITER: You know who I mean. Where is Eurydice?

PLUTO: Eurydice! An unusual name. Where have I heard it before? You persist in that wild fantasy of yours. You still believe that I am a kidnapper! Look around. Play the detective, See for yourself.

JUPITER: *(aside)* What I see is a keyhole. That means that something is locked inside . . . Well, well! I am not blessed with the gift of metamorphosis for nothing. I will find a way through it.

PLUTO: As you see, your suspicions are groundless. Come, you needn't apologize, no hard feelings. I am neglecting my duties as a host. Let us return to your fellow Olympians and to the party that I have arranged for your welcome. It's no party without you!

JUPITER: *(aside)* Yes, the way to her is through the keyhole. But how to do it? I shall have to comb through my repertoire for something slender, petite . . .

PLUTO: *(to John Styx as he reenters)* Keep an eye on him. Don't let him out of your sight. He's shrewd as the devil . . . well, not quite! *(to Jupiter)* Come! The party is waiting! *(the three leave together)*

EURYDICE: (*returning to an empty room*) I thought I heard voices. Oh, would it were someone coming to my rescue!

JUPITER: (*returning as a fly*) Who would recognize me now? So dainty! So tiny! So winged! Jupiter, turn on the charm!

**EURYDICE:**

**A flicker I felt on my shoulder,  
The touch of a delicate brush.**

**JUPITER:**

**I'd better be backward, not bolder;  
Rebuff I shall risk if I rush.  
Never mind what the darling does,  
Not a word! I shall merely buzz.**

**EURYDICE:**

**What a charming fly!  
What a pleasing drone!  
Comforting, as I  
Am otherwise alone.**

**JUPITER:**

**Do I detect a sigh?  
Does she see talent in my tone?**

**EURYDICE:**

**A charming fly!**

**JUPITER:**

**Do I detect a sigh?  
How I do buzz on! (he continues to do so)**

**EURYDICE:**

**With your soothing hum,  
How kind of you to come.  
O pretty creature on the wing!  
How sweet of you to sing to me.  
A tiny ray of light you bring,  
For here I'm under lock and key.**

**Charming fly, do stay for a while;  
Stay and be my own little pet.  
Linger a bit, cheer me and I'll  
Care for you and share a duet.  
My pretty, stay a little while, do!**

**JUPITER:**  
(To take the darling in my net,  
I'll play a wee bit hard to get.)  
**EURYDICE:** (running after him)  
Buzzing off, weaving in and out . . .

**JUPITER:**  
Try and catch! Try and catch!

**EURYDICE:**  
Settle down, little gadabout!

**JUPITER:** (*hopping onto a piece of furniture*)  
Try and catch! Try and catch!

**EURYDICE:**  
Why so fickle, why so fickle, why so flighty!

**JUPITER:**  
(A dear and dainty, dear and dainty Aphrodite!)

**EURYDICE:**  
Are you afraid, are you afraid that I've a swatter?

**JUPITER:**  
By hocus-pocus, hocus pocus I have got her.)

**EURYDICE:**  
Why should you choose to fly away?

**JUPITER:**  
My wings I use to fly away.

**EURYDICE:**  
With a soft and silken net  
Of featherweight,  
I'll pursue and trap my pretty pet  
(she approaches on tiptoe).

**JUPITER:**  
(We shall find out who catches who.)

**EURYDICE:**  
Ah! The fly is taken!  
No more silly struggle.

**My pretty captive!**

**JUPITER:**  
**(Your pretty captive is apt to have the final chuckle.)**

**EURYDICE:**  
**Sing your solo! Brave, bravo!**  
*(Jupiter continues to buzz, and Eurydice chimes in.)*

**BOTH:**  
**Dear little pet, caught in the net!**  
**Now you're mine, oh now you're mine!**

EURYDICE: So I have caught my pretty winged jewel!

JUPITER: That jewel is yours to keep.

EURYDICE: Good heavens! It talks . . . Help! Help!

JUPITER: Don't be alarmed, my sweet. I am only temporarily a fly. The real name is Jupiter, king of the gods, who adores you.

EURYDICE: Mighty Jupiter!

JUPITER: *(the boy next door)* Just call me Jove. Had we met sooner, Pluto would never have carried you off to this morbid environment., You would be with me on Mt. Olympus.

EURYDICE: Mt. Olympus! Away from this frightful place!

JUPITER: It is not too late. . . To avoid suspicion, I shall return to the party that Pluto is giving in my honor. But first we must get you out of here. While I keep John Styx distracted, you slip away. I'll have a disguise ready for you, so that you can join me at the party. From there, in the crowded confusion, we shall escape together unnoticed.

EURYDICE: I am yours to command!

JUPITER: In half an hour! . . . Oh, I am the happiest bug alive!

*(John Styx enters. Jupiter flies around him while John Styx takes swats at him. Eurydice slips out, followed by Jupiter. Pluto returns in great agitation.)*

PLUTO: Where is Eurydice? Where is the fly?

JOHN STYX: *(looking blank)* Fly . . . fly . . . fly . . .



To Pluto, our infernal host,  
A hale and hearty toast!  
A toast to our infernal host!

'Tis here the high and lowly mix  
And mingle by the Styx.  
We mix and mingle by the Styx.

The doors of hell are open wide  
For all that wish to step inside.  
The daring and the devilish  
Are bound to find it just their dish.

For young and old that like it hot  
It's quite the perfect, perfect spot,  
The place for you!

**JUPITER:** (*to Eurydice*)  
My dear! Loveliest of mortals!  
Like Venus, of charm and grace divine!  
Grant a favor for us to savor:  
Sing to Bacchus, a pet god of mine.

**GODS:**  
Grant a favor for us to savor:  
Sing to Bacchus, great god of wine!

**EURYDICE:**  
Upon a sylvan throne  
With a garland of myrtle crowned,  
There sat the god of wine  
With his true devotees –  
The cloven-footed fawn,  
Roving nymphs of the woods around –  
Come to offer him praise.

**GODS:**  
Come to offer him praise.  
Evoe! Evoe!

**EURYDICE & GODS:**  
Hail to Bacchus and all his fellows!  
Here's to wine that lifts you up,  
Warms the heart, inspires and mellows.  
Hail the juice that fills the cup!

**Hail great Bacchus, friend of mine!  
Hail the loving god of wine. Evoe!  
Blessed Bacchus, loving god of wine!**

**EURYDICE:**

**The god in turn replied:  
Sorrow ever encloses.  
You creatures of the earth,  
Blown about by the breeze,  
Are made for joy and mirth.  
Gather vine leaves and roses;  
Come and offer me these.**

**GODS:**

**We shall offer you these. Evoe! Evoe!**

**EURYDICE & GODS:**

**Hail to Bacchus and all his fellows!  
Here's to wine that lifts you up,  
Warms the heart, inspires and mellows.  
Hail the juice that fills the cup!**

**Hail great Bacchus, friend of mine!  
Hail the loving god of wine. Evoe!  
Blessed Bacchus, loving god of wine!**

**JUPITER:**

**In a crystal glass  
I see Queen Marie Antoinette.  
To her court let us pass  
And dance a minuet.**

**GODS:**

**What a delicate  
Dainty minuet!  
Jupiter is light on his feet.**

**Like the court of Queen  
Marie Antoinette,  
Elegant, sedate and discreet.**

**From a black and white  
Old world silhouette  
Notice the polite,  
Well-mannered beat.**

**What a delicate  
Dainty minuet,  
Where milady and milord meet.**

**Of another century  
And a world long gone by,  
Lords and ladies here we see  
Dancing at Versailles.**

**What a delicate  
Dainty minuet!  
Notice the polite, subdued beat.**

**From a black and white  
Old world silhouette  
Lords and ladies dance  
The smoothly graceful minuet.**

*(the minuet turns into the cancan)*

**Come on! Bring it up to date!  
Let go and celebrate.  
Now drum and trumpet call  
To start the Offenbacchanal.**

**Steady on your feet,  
Get ready for the beat.  
The Offenbacchanal for one and all!**

EURYDICE: *(to Jupiter)* And now let's make our escape . . .

JUPITER: Yes, with what little breath we still have, let us flee together.

PLUTO: *(barring the way)* Not leaving so soon?

EURYDICE: Pluto!

JUPITER: Oh, the devil!

PLUTO: A little respect, please! Do you think that I've not seen what has been going on under my own nose? That I've not recognized this fair Bacchante?

JUPITER: *(laughing)* Well, well! He has found us out.

PLUTO: Laugh now. I shall laugh later. And the joke will be on you. So you expect to carry her off to Olympus!

JUPITER: And who is to stop me?

PLUTO: Why, you yourself . . . and her husband now on his way.

EURYDICE: My husband! I'd forgotten all about him.

PLUTO: That seems to be your tendency. (*to Jupiter*) And have you also forgotten your promise to him? Ha, ha, ha! I shall have my revenge. She will go not to you, not to me, but to him . . . the music man.

JUPITER: Oh, fool! Why did I make such a careless promise? (music begins)

PLUTO: The drama heads to a climax. This means switching from prose to verse. Brace yourselves!

Madame, you recognize this dulcet tone?

EURYDICE:

That draws from him a sigh, from me a groan?  
My husband, yes . . .

PLUTO:

Who enters my domain  
To seek you out and lead you home again.  
Great Jupiter we know is wondrous wise;  
He gives you back to him that you despise.  
And yet your husband comes off none the worse:  
I trust that sorrow will improve his verse.

EURYDICE:

Jupiter!

JUPITER:

Fear not, my sweet, I have a little scheme.  
You gods, on guard! Do not let down the team.  
Who knows? Perhaps photographers, reporters  
Arrive with him across the somber waters.  
We play for generations yet to come;  
Let's show Olympus at its optimum!

(*Orpheus enters with Public Opinion*)

ORPHEUS: (*to Public Opinion*)

Well, if I must, I must; I'll do my best.

Posterity had better be impressed!  
(to Jupiter) Great king! . . .

JUPITER:

Enough! Omit the rhetoric!  
I bow to your request. Let us be quick.  
I gave my word; that promise I renew:  
Your wife Eurydice returns with you.

ORPHEUS:

You silence me by granting my desire.

JUPITER:

Yet there is one condition I require.  
Symbolic and significant or not,  
The point I make is vital to the plot.  
Until your journey's ended, bear in mind,  
You walk in front, Eurydice behind.  
If in distrust or fear you turn around  
Before you reach the world of solid ground,  
Eurydice is lost, this time for good.

PLUTO:

What kind of game . . .

JUPITER:

The terms are understood!  
Proceed! Behind you walks Eurydice.  
Resist, do not look back. Thus I decree!

PUBLIC OPINION:

Till you leave these solemn portals  
You are not to look behind.  
Bear in mind, your fellow mortals  
Will remember and judge you in kind.  
*(the journey begins)*

GODS:

A husband rather in a bind.  
Alas, alack! He loses all by looking back.

JUPITER:

Did I miscalculate  
In thinking he would sneak a peak?

PUBLIC OPINION:

We're nearly there, safe home to port!

A feat unique!

JUPITER:

There is no time to wait.

I must . . . I shall . . . My last resort!

*(He hurls a bolt of lightning; Orpheus turns around. All cry out.)*

*PUBLIC OPINION:*

Wretched man! Fatal, fatal blunder!

ORPHEUS:

I've always been afraid of thunder.

PLUTO:

Thus empty handed you return.

I claim her as my own!

JUPITER:

Not yours nor mine.

PLUTO:

What!

JUPITER:

No! She belongs by rights to Bacchus!

ALL:

You give her to Bacchus!

**EURYDICE:**

**Oh, joy! How perfectly divine!**

**I get the god of wine**

**And start a new career**

**In such a friendly atmosphere.**

**You people light of heart,**

**Come help me get a start**

**In celebrating fellowship and cheer!**

*ALL (going wild)*

**La la , la la la la, la la . . .**

**THE END**

