

# Cyrano de Bergerac

Edmond Rostand's moving tale of unrequited love . . .

Adapted for round-the-table reading by Joellen Bland

## Characters

CYRANO DE BERGERAC, *poet and swordsman*

RAGUENEAU, *pastry cook*

COUNT DE GUICHE, *nobleman*

LE BRET, *Cyrano's friend*

CHRISTIAN DE NEUVILLETTE, *young soldier*

ROXANE, *young lady*

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARDS

TWO CADETS

MAN

**TIME:** *Mid-seventeenth century.*

**SETTING:** *Paris.*

**RAGUENEAU:** Fresh pastries! Custards! Hot rolls! Come to me, Ragueneau. There is no finer cook in Paris! And while you devour my delicate delectables, I will tell you, at no extra cost, a

beautiful story that will bring tears to your eyes, laughter to your soul, and an irresistible urge to cheer for the hero. His name—Cyrano de Bergerac. One of the greatest swordsmen in France. A brave soldier, proud and passionate poet, and stouthearted companion to all honest men. Perhaps you have heard of him? And the handsome young soldier, Christian de Neuville, and the lovely lady Roxane, whom they both loved to distraction? It began fifteen years ago, in 1640, when a play was being presented at the Hotel de Bourgoyne in Paris. The actor Montfleury was performing, but Cyrano detested him and boldly interrupted him.

**CYRANO:** King of clowns, you are a blot on the beauty of art. Leave the stage at once!

**RAGUENEAU:** When Montfleury hesitated, Cyrano leaped to the stage with his sword drawn.

**CYRANO:** Fly, you gaping goose! Shoo! Take to your wings before I pluck your plumes!

**RAGUENEAU:** Montfleury fled in terror

and the audience rose to its feet in loud protest, but Cyrano faced them all. He was not afraid of anything or anyone.

**CYRANO:** Approach, young heroes! All who wish to die, raise your hands! This simpering sausage, this monarch of mountebanks who makes a mockery of acting, shall play here no more.

**RAGUENEAU:** No one dared approach Cyrano, but one man dared to speak. Such a fool he was!

**MAN:** Do you mean to take Montfleury's place, monsieur? Your clown's face will do very well.

**RAGUENEAU:** Certainly, this man had never heard of Cyrano's reputation with a sword. Cyrano turned to him and fixed him to his place with the fierce glare of a hawk.

**CYRANO** (*Slowly, fiercely*): Sir, are you by any chance referring to my nose?

**MAN** (*Hesitantly*): Well, monsieur, it can hardly be missed.

**CYRANO** (*Shouting*): Does it astonish you?

**MAN** (*Nervously*): No, monsieur, not at all. I merely—

**CYRANO** (*Louder*): Does it dangle like a trunk? Or is it as crooked as an owl's beak?

**MAN** (*Becoming frightened*): No, monsieur, of course not.

**CYRANO:** Possibly, do you find it just a bit large?

**MAN** (*Very frightened*): Oh, no, no, monsieur. It is very small.

**CYRANO** (*Roaring*): You imbecile! Don't lie to me! My nose is huge. It is magnificent! A great nose indicates a great

man, and I allow no one to insult me!

**MAN** (*Frantically*): Help! Let me out of here!

**RAGUENEAU:** The foolish man escaped out the door, but the Count de Guiche, a rich and powerful nobleman in the audience, was determined that Cyrano would not escape.

**DE GUICHE:** Sir, your nose is very large, indeed. Immense! An extremely unattractive appendage!

**CYRANO:** Ah! Sir, your rank is grand, but your speech is simple. Had you proper wit, you might have said in a friendly manner, "Sir, your nose is a rock! A crag! A peninsula!" Or, in a sweet, kind voice, you might have inquired, "Sir, do little birds perch there when they come to sing to you?" Or, "Do be careful, sir. A weight like that might make you top-heavy." (*With rising fury*) You have not the intelligence to make a joke of me, and while I say these things lightly about myself, I allow no one else to make this feature of my countenance a theme for comedy.

**DE GUICHE** (*Angrily*): Bumpkin! Who are you?

**CYRANO:** Cyrano de Bergerac!

**DE GUICHE:** Buffoon! Poet! I have heard of you.

**CYRANO:** Then draw your sword, sir. As we joust, I will compose a rhyme just for you.

**DE GUICHE** (*Sneering*): You will never complete it.

**RAGUENEAU:** With all the ladies and gentlemen and common folk watching from every corner, Cyrano staged the finest performance I had ever seen in that theatre. With every thrust of his sword and line of his poem, he drove de

Guiche to exasperation.

**CYRANO:**

Where shall I skewer you, peacock?

Here in your heart or under your shawl?

Better for you to have shunned this brawl!

Hear how my steel rings musical!

Mark how my point floats light as foam,

Ready to drive you back to the wall!

Then, as I end the refrain, thrust home!

**RAGUENEAU:** Cyrano lunged, de Guiche staggered, dropped his sword, and tumbled backward off the stage. His friends rescued him and carried him out, sorely wounded and vowing revenge. How the audience cheered! Cyrano had won their admiration. But his comrade in arms, Le Bret, quickly drew him aside.

**LE BRET:** I am afraid you have made a dangerous enemy, Cyrano.

**CYRANO:** What do I care? De Guiche is a pompous fool. He insulted me and I gave him only half what he deserved!

**LE BRET:** He will not forget you, my friend. This wouldn't have happened if you hadn't broken up the play. Why do you hate Montfleury? He isn't so bad.

**CYRANO:** He is a terrible actor, an insult to the theatre. And he dares to smile upon a beautiful lady like a great snail crawling over a rare, sweet flower!

**LE BRET:** Cyrano, is it possible that you are in love? You have never mentioned anyone to me.

**CYRANO:** Le Bret, look at me. The plainest woman would despise me, with this nose of mine marching on before me by a quarter of an hour. Whom, then, should an ugly creature

like me love? Why, only the most beautiful woman in the world. The most wise, most witty, most sensitive.

**LE BRET:** Your fair and gentle cousin?

**CYRANO** (*With a sigh*): Yes. Roxane.

**LE BRET:** Then go and tell her.

**CYRANO:** Impossible! How much hope have I with this nose?

**LE BRET:** You have your wit, your courage, your reputation as a swordsman. You must speak to her!

**CYRANO:** I cannot, Le Bret. She might laugh at me, and that is the one thing in this world I could not bear.

**LE BRET:** She would never laugh at you. She is too much a lady. . . Ah! Here comes RaguenEAU.

**RAGUENEAU:** Cyrano, I bring a message from the lady Roxane. She was in the balcony and witnessed your performance. She wishes to see you privately. She asks that you name a time and place.

**CYRANO** (*Overwhelmed*): Le Bret, she wishes to see me! She remembers that I exist! Can you believe it? Where? I . . . your shop, RaguenEAU! Tonight at seven!

**RAGUENEAU:** An excellent choice, sir. I will tell her at once.

**LE BRET:** Are you happier now, Cyrano?

**CYRANO:** Happy! I am a storm—a flame! I have ten hearts!

**RAGUENEAU:** That evening I welcomed Cyrano to my shop. While he waited for Roxane, I tried to persuade him to taste my succulent roast pheasant, but he wouldn't touch it. He seemed to be in a daze, and just sat down at a table

with pen and paper before him.

**CYRANO:** I will write a letter to Roxane, unsigned, for I dare not speak such words of love to her. The letter I have written to her in my heart a thousand times, torn up, and written again.

**RAGUENEAU:** He wrote quickly until Mademoiselle Roxane appeared, whereupon he sprang to his feet and greeted her with a grand sweep of his plumed hat and a low, courtly bow.

**CYRANO:** Welcome, cousin. I am honored that you think of me.

**ROXANE:** Dear Cyrano, please sit down. I must know if you are still the same dear companion and friend that you were when we were children, playing by the pond in the garden.

**CYRANO:** You mean the garden at Bergerac, where you came every summer?

**ROXANE:** Yes. That delightful place where you used to make swords out of bulrushes.

**CYRANO:** And you made dolls out of dandelions.

**ROXANE:** And you did everything I asked you.

**CYRANO:** I could never refuse you. Nor can I now.

**ROXANE:** Then I will dare to tell you that I . . . I love someone!

**CYRANO** (*Breathlessly*): Yes?

**ROXANE:** Someone who does not know, at least, not yet.

**CYRANO:** Ah!

**ROXANE:** He loves me, too, but he is afraid and never says a word.

**CYRANO** (*Expectantly*): Yes?

**ROXANE:** He is a soldier in the Guards, in your regiment. And such a man! So proud!

**CYRANO:** Ah!

**ROXANE:** So brave!

**CYRANO:** Ah!

**ROXANE:** So handsome!

**CYRANO:** Ah! (*Suddenly, in dismay*) What? Handsome?

**ROXANE:** Though we have never spoken, our eyes have met and we both know that we love each other.

**CYRANO** (*Crushed*): I . . . I see. What is his name?

**ROXANE:** Christian de Neuville.

**CYRANO:** I don't know him. He must be a new recruit. Roxane, why do you tell me this?

**ROXANE:** Because he is a new soldier— young and impetuous—and I don't know what I would do if anything happened to him. You, Cyrano, are so brave, so invincible in a fight. I thought, perhaps, you might . . .

**CYRANO:** Protect him?

**ROXANE:** Yes! Will you, for me? For the sake of our long friendship?

**CYRANO:** I—I—yes, Roxane. Anything for you.

**ROXANE:** And will you be his friend as well?

**CYRANO** (*After a pause; between his teeth*): I will be his friend.

**ROXANE:** You are wonderful! Thank

you, dear cousin! I must go now. Farewell.

**CYRANO:** Farewell. (*After a pause*) Oh, my Roxane! You will never know what torture you have just inflicted upon me! But my love for you will overcome it somehow.

**RAGUENEAU:** After Roxane left my shop, and before Cyrano could sufficiently recover, in came the Captain of the Guards, with several cadets from Cyrano's regiment. Le Bret had told them about Cyrano's performance at the theatre, and they had come to cheer him.

**CAPTAIN:** Here he is. Cyrano, you are a hero!

**CYRANO:** Captain, I am only myself.

**LE BRET:** Cyrano, they want to hear all about it. (*Quietly*) But what is the matter? You look pale. Are you in pain?

**CYRANO:** Only in my heart. No one but you shall know.

**1ST CADET:** Come, Cyrano, tell us your story!

**2ND CADET:** Tell us how you skewered de Guiche! We have new men here who do not know your reputation.

**CYRANO:** It is simple to tell, my Gascons. After I chased that ridiculous bumbler, Montfleury, from the stage, one foolish spectator dared to stare at—

**CHRISTIAN** (*Interrupting*): Your nose, monsieur?

**RAGUENEAU:** From a far corner of the room came that bold remark. The cadets froze in their places, unable to believe their ears. Cyrano stiffened, and his eyes flashed fire.

**CYRANO** (*Tensely*): Who said that?

**CHRISTIAN:** I did!

**RAGUENEAU:** A smiling young man, blond and extremely handsome, rose to his feet. I did not know him.

**CYRANO** (*Thundering*): I would know your name, sir, before you die!

**CHRISTIAN:** My name is Christian de Neuville, sir, and I assure you I am in the best of health.

**CYRANO:** Draw your sword, Christian de Neuville, and prepare to. . .to. . . (*Recognizes name*) Christian de Neuville. Ah! It is you! (*To himself*) It would be he! (*Recovering, with difficulty*) Ah! Well! You are new. I will excuse your impertinence, your audacity on that account. (*Calmer*) Now, as I was saying, this knave dared to stare at me and I drove him from the theatre. Then I faced that strutting peacock, de Guiche. He swung his sword and I caught it fair on—

**CHRISTIAN:** Your nose!

**CYRANO:** No more! Out of here, all of you! Leave me alone with this Christian de Neuville!

**1ST CADET:** Cyrano will chop him into sausage!

**2ND CADET:** Mince meat! There'll be nothing left of him!

**RAGUENEAU:** The cadets tumbled out of my shop and only Cyrano and the bold recruit remained. To my astonishment, Cyrano put away his sword and smiled at the young man.

**CYRANO:** Well, sir, you have courage. That pleases me. And you are very handsome, which does not please me at all.

**CHRISTIAN** (*Perplexed*): Sir?

**CYRANO**: Come, put down your sword. I am Roxane's cousin, and for her sake, you are spared.

**CHRISTIAN** (*Startled*): Her cousin! Sir, I am honored to meet you. Please, forgive my rudeness. I only wished to show my new comrades that I am not a coward.

**CYRANO**: A coward would not have spoken to me that way and lived.

**CHRISTIAN**: If only I could win Roxane! I am dying of love for her. Can you help me?

**CYRANO** (*With a sigh*): You might begin by sending her a love letter.

**CHRISTIAN**: Oh, I cannot write to her. I am a soldier, not a poet. When I am near Roxane I am speechless! I could never find the words to speak what is in my heart.

**CYRANO**: I have the words. Why not borrow them?

**CHRISTIAN**: What do you mean?

**CYRANO**: Take my poetic soul and let it speak to Roxane through you.

**CHRISTIAN**: Sir! You would do this for me?

**CYRANO**: For *her*! And besides, it would be a poet's game.

**CHRISTIAN**: Very well, let us try the letter.

**CYRANO**: Here it is. I wrote it to an imaginary lady to amuse myself, but it will serve Roxane beautifully. Take it. It needs only an address and your signature.

**CHRISTIAN** (*Gratefully*): Monsieur de

Bergerac, you are a true and generous friend.

**RAGUENEAU**: Christian was such a happy young man! How was he to know that Cyrano was hiding his own aching heart behind the beautiful letters and speeches he wrote for Christian to send and speak to Roxane?

**ROXANE**: Cyrano, Christian is beautiful! Brilliant! He is even more of an intellectual than you!

**CYRANO**: He talks well, does he?

**ROXANE**: He does not talk, he rhapsodizes! The things he says are enchanting, beyond description.

**CYRANO** (*To himself; sighing*): If only she knew!

**RAGUENEAU**: Every night for several weeks Christian came to Roxane's house to gaze at her on the balcony and speak to her as Cyrano had rehearsed him. But one night Christian wanted a change.

**CHRISTIAN**: Cyrano, I have taken my words and letters from you long enough. It was a game at first, but now Roxane loves me truly, and I am not afraid to speak for myself.

**CYRANO**: Very well, if you insist.

**CHRISTIAN**: She is coming. (*In sudden panic*) Cyrano, don't leave! Step into the shadows so she won't see you.

**RAGUENEAU**: Perhaps you are wondering how I know about all this? Simple! I often went to Roxane's house to deliver pastries and meats for her dinner. Could I help it, if on this particular night, I lingered a little longer than usual?

**ROXANE**: Christian, I have been wait-

ing for you. Speak to me in the pleasant twilight. No one will disturb us.

**RAGUENEAU:** Poor Christian gazed at her adoringly, but when he opened his mouth to speak, he fumbled and stammered for several minutes before he was finally able to say—

**CHRISTIAN** (*Breathlessly*): I . . . I love you, Roxane!

**ROXANE** (*Gently*): Yes, I know. Now be eloquent.

**CHRISTIAN** (*Nervously*): I I love you so!

**ROXANE:** Oh, do not jest with me! You must improvise. Rhapsodize!

**CHRISTIAN:** I . . . I would be so happy if you love me, too.

**ROXANE:** Christian, tell me how you love me.

**CHRISTIAN:** How? Why. . . very much!

**ROXANE** (*Disappointed*): Is that all? (*Quickly*) You bore me tonight. Gather your dreams together into lovely words as you have before.

**CHRISTIAN:** I . . . I . . . I love. . .

**ROXANE** (*Sharply*): Christian! If that is all you can say, then good night!

**CHRISTIAN** (*Desperately*): Roxane! Wait, please! I will find the words!

**RAGUENEAU:** But the lady Roxane went inside and closed the window. Christian was devastated!

**CHRISTIAN:** Cyrano, help me! I can't say what she wants to hear, and I shall die unless she loves me.

**CYRANO:** Very well! I'll stand here underneath the balcony and whisper what you must say to her. Call her.

**CHRISTIAN:** Thank you, Cyrano! (*Calling*) Roxane! Roxane!

**ROXANE:** What is it? (*Annoyed*) Oh, you again? Go away! I don't think you love me anymore.

**CYRANO** (*In a whisper*): No, not any more. . .

**CHRISTIAN:** No, not any more. . .

**CYRANO** (*In a whisper*): I love you ever more, and more and more.

**CHRISTIAN:** I love you ever more, and more and more!

**ROXANE:** Well, that's a little better. But why do you speak so haltingly? Has the evening air given you a cold?

**CHRISTIAN:** Why, yes, yes, I am a bit hoarse.

**ROXANE:** But still you can speak softly and I will hear you.

**CYRANO:** Christian, this is too difficult. You step here under the balcony and I will take your place. Give me your hat. I will imitate you with a slight cold. (*Louder*) Dearest Roxane, through the warm summer gloom my words grope in darkness toward the light of you.

**ROXANE:** But my words, well aimed, find you readily.

**CYRANO:** My heart is open wide and waits for them. But if you let a hard word fall upon me, you will crush me.

**ROXANE:** Never!

**CYRANO:** Night veils us both. You see the darkness of a long cloak in the gloom, and I see the whiteness of your summer gown. You are all light, I am all shadow. Hear that I love you, love beyond reason. . .

**RAGUENEAU:** Such beautiful words of love Cyrano spoke for Christian! So eloquent, because he was really speaking of his own passionate love for Roxane. Cyrano spoke until Christian climbed up to the balcony and claimed the kiss that Cyrano's words had won for him. Can you imagine the pain and jealousy in Cyrano's heart? Who knows how long he could have remained had not the Count de Guiche suddenly appeared at the gate.

**DE GUICHE:** Mademoiselle! What is this? Who is that with you?

**CHRISTIAN:** Sir, I am Christian de Neuville.

**DE GUICHE:** In the uniform of a Guard! Come down at once, you rogue! I'll have you put in irons!

**CYRANO:** You have no authority here! He is the lady's guest.

**DE GUICHE:** What? The buffoon of Bergerac! What are you doing here?

**CYRANO:** I have come to pay a call on my cousin, the lady Roxane. Perhaps Monsieur de Neuville and I should ask you why you are here at this late hour?

**DE GUICHE** (*Outraged*): How dare you question me!

**ROXANE:** I will answer for him, Cyrano. The Count de Guiche has been a suitor of mine.

**CYRANO** (*Shocked*): What?

**ROXANE:** But I never encouraged him, and now he must give way, for Christian is the only man I shall ever love.

**DE GUICHE:** So, you reject me for this peasant. Well, mademoiselle, say farewell to him! I have been made

Colonel of the Guards. Tonight we leave for duty at Arras. (*Harshly*) Christian de Neuville, report to your regiment at once!

**ROXANE:** To fight with the Spanish?

**DE GUICHE:** Yes, to war! And Monsieur de Bergerac goes, too! Say farewell, mademoiselle, for a long time. Perhaps forever!

**ROXANE:** Cyrano, remember your promise to me! Take care of him!

**CYRANO:** I'll do my best.

**ROXANE:** Have him write to me faithfully.

**CYRANO:** I promise you will receive a letter every day.

**RAGUENEAU:** And so the young lovers were parted, and the company of Guards marched off to the siege of Arras. They fought bravely, but a famine struck and the Spanish proved to be stubborn fighters. The Gascon cadets suffered greatly.

**1ST CADET:** Who can sleep in this place? The firing never stops.

**2ND CADET:** There is not a crumb to eat. Not a drop to drink. How long can we survive?

**CAPTAIN:** Le Bret, where is Cyrano?

**LE BRET:** There, Captain, just coming in. The fool has been through the Spanish lines again.

**CAPTAIN:** Cyrano, are you all right?

**CYRANO:** I already wrote a farewell for you, Christian—just in case.

**CHRISTIAN:** Why must it end like this?

**CYRANO:** It is nothing to die in battle.



*(Reflectively)* But not to see her again is unbearable. To think that I shall never—

**CHRISTIAN:** What?

**CYRANO** *(Quickly)*: That *we* shall never. . . I mean, that *you* will—

**CHRISTIAN** *(Sharply)*: Give me that letter!

**1ST CADET:** Ho, Captain! A coach is coming this way!

**CAPTAIN:** Stand ready! It may be a trick.

**RAGUENEAU:** But it was no trick. A coach came rolling through the Spanish lines at top speed and stopped in the midst of the cadets. A dusty coachman leaped to the ground and opened the door for. . .

**ROXANE:** Good evening, gentlemen!

**CYRANO:** Roxane!

**RAGUENEAU:** The cadets were astonished to see a beautiful lady in their midst, smiling and calm, as if she hadn't just come through the enemy lines at great risk.

**CHRISTIAN:** Roxane, how did you get here?

**ROXANE:** My passport was a smile for every Spanish gentleman who stopped us, and I had only to say that my dearest love awaited me, and they let me pass! I do believe the Spanish are more romantic than the French.

**CAPTAIN:** Mademoiselle, it is dangerous for you to be here. There will soon be desperate fighting.

**ROXANE:** Captain, I will stay beside my dear Christian, and die with him if I must!

**1ST CADET:** Here is a brave lady. If only we had refreshment to offer her.

**ROXANE:** Some cold ham and chicken, some bread and fruit and white wine would be very nice.

**2ND CADET:** Alas, mademoiselle! We have nothing!

**ROXANE:** Don't be so sure of that. Look in the coach and see what you find. Don't you recognize my coachman?

**LE BRET:** It is Ragueneau!

**1ST CADET:** He has brought his cook shop to us!

**2ND CADET:** Bravo! A feast before we fight!

**RAGUENEAU:** The starving cadets crowded around the coach and the lady Roxane and I served them the finest repast they had known for days. Only Cyrano and Christian stood to one side, talking seriously to each other.

**CYRANO:** Christian, I must tell you that I have written to Roxane more often than you think. Every day, in fact.

**CHRISTIAN** *(Angrily)*: Every day? Why?

**ROXANE:** Cyrano! Christian! Come, have something to eat.

**CYRANO:** Come, but say nothing to her about the letters.

**CHRISTIAN:** Roxane, this is so kind and generous of you. But tell me why you came here at such terrible risk.

**ROXANE:** Because I heard of your hardships and could not bear the thought of your suffering. And because of your letters, dear Christian! Each one was more wonderful than the last. I read them over and over; each page was like

a petal fallen from your soul, sweet and true. I had to come and be with you!

**CHRISTIAN:** But, Roxane—

**ROXANE:** Through your beautiful letters I found your true soul, and that is what I love the most.

**LE BRET:** Mademoiselle, come. The cadets wish to offer you a toast.

**ROXANE:** I'll only be a moment, Christian.

**CHRISTIAN** (*Miserably*): Cyrano, did you hear what she said? She doesn't love me any more. She loves you!

**CYRANO:** No! She doesn't know what she is saying.

**CHRISTIAN:** She loves only my soul, and my soul is *you*! And you love her! Don't deny it!

**CYRANO:** Yes. . .I love her. More than life itself!

**CHRISTIAN** (*Bitterly*): Then tell her, and let her choose between us.

**CYRANO:** She has already chosen you.

**CHRISTIAN:** No. I am tired of being my own rival. I want her love for myself, for what *I* am, or not at all. Go—tell her the truth. I'll walk to the end of the parapet.

**RAGUENEAU:** Christian walked quickly away from Cyrano who, after a moment of great torment, went to Roxane and drew her aside.

**CYRANO:** Roxane, Christian has doubts about what you just told him.

**ROXANE:** Oh, but he must believe me! His soul is so beautiful, that I should love him even if he were not young and

handsome, even if he were unattractive, or. . .or even. . .

**CYRANO** (*With difficulty*): Or even. . . ugly?

**ROXANE:** Yes, even then I would love him. In fact, I should love him all the more!

**CYRANO** (*Brokenly*): Oh, how can I bear this happiness? Roxane, I have something to tell you.

**RAGUENEAU:** But at that moment the Spanish attacked and the cadets ran to their posts. For the next few terrible moments the roar of cannon fire and the cries of the wounded filled the air over the camp. Then came a lull in the shooting, and Le Bret staggered through the smoke from the parapet.

**LE BRET:** Cyrano!

**CYRANO:** What is is?

**LE BRET:** Christian is shot! Mortally wounded. They are bringing him down from the parapet.

**CYRANO:** Christian. . .dying! Then I can never tell Roxane the truth!

**RAGUENEAU:** Christian was brought down and Cyrano was instantly at his side.

**CYRANO:** Christian, can you hear me?

**CHRISTIAN** (*Weakly*): Yes.

**CYRANO:** Roxane loves you!

**CHRISTIAN:** Then I die happy.

**CYRANO** (*Quietly*): And I die with you, in my heart.

**RAGUENEAU:** Moments later Christian was dead. The lady Roxane wept over his body, with Cyrano beside her.

**CYRANO:** He cannot hear you now. Come with me, Roxane.

**ROXANE:** There is a letter in his hand.

**CYRANO** (*Softly*): My letter.

**ROXANE** (*Weeping*): His last letter to me. Oh, Cyrano, no one else knew him but you. He was a fine, gentle man, a poet with a heart deeper than we knew, a soul magnificently tender. And now he is gone!

**CYRANO** (*Softly*): My love mourns for me and does not know.

**RAGUENEAU:** At that moment a sound of trumpets rang through the noise and smoke over the parapet.

**CAPTAIN:** Our army comes! If we can hold on a little longer, we can win the battle! Cyrano, lead the charge! We will follow you!

**CYRANO:** I have two deaths to avenge now—Christian's and my own! Ho, Gascons! Forward!

**RAGUENEAU:** With Cyrano leading them, the cadets bravely charged the enemy and drove them back. The French were victorious, and that cowardly Count de Guiche never dared to interfere with Cyrano again. After the battle, the lady Roxane went to live in a convent in Paris, and Cyrano visited her faithfully every Saturday over the next fifteen years. Then, one Saturday I went to the convent to take some fresh bread to the lady Roxane, and found her weeping.

**RAGUENEAU:** My dear lady, it is to your credit that you remain faithful to Christian after all these years. But why do you weep now?

**ROXANE:** I have just been reading over his last letter. Our hearts still meet and his love flows all around me when

I read it. But I must dry my eyes. Cyrano will come soon and I must be smiling for him.

**RAGUENEAU:** My poor old friend! He is so lonely and miserable, yet so proud! His poetry has made him many enemies, for he attacks almost everyone with his bitter rhymes.

**ROXANE:** It is his nature to speak out against injustice, and no one dares harm him. All fear his sword.

**RAGUENEAU:** Still, I have heard rumors in the streets that he may meet with some accident, and I worry about him.

**CYRANO:** Roxane!

**ROXANE:** Cyrano! You are late today. It is already twilight.

**CYRANO:** I was delayed.

**RAGUENEAU:** You look pale, my friend. Come, sit down.

**CYRANO:** I'm all right. I . . .oh-h-h!

**ROXANE:** Cyrano! What is the matter?

**CYRANO:** Nothing, nothing. Just my old wound from the battle at Arras.

**ROXANE:** Ragueneau, there is some wine in the kitchen. Would you bring it, please?

**RAGUENEAU:** Yes, of course.

**ROXANE:** Sit here, Cyrano. Will you take off your hat?

**CYRANO** (*Quickly*): No. There is a chill in the air.

**ROXANE:** We all have our old wounds. I have mine in this dear letter. It is so hard to read now, so torn and blood-stained.

**CYRANO:** Christian's letter? Roxane, you promised me that some day you would let me read it.

**ROXANE:** Yes, I did. Would you like to read it now?

**CYRANO:** Yes, I would.

**ROXANE:** The light is very dim.

**CYRANO:** I can see. (*After a pause*) "Farewell, Roxane, today I die."

**ROXANE:** It is kind of you to read it aloud.

**CYRANO** (*With great feeling, but growing gradually weaker*): "My heart is still so heavy with love I have not told. No more shall my eyes drink the sight of you like wine, never more follow the sweet grace of you, and my heart cries out, 'Farewell, my dearest, my own treasure, my love. . .'"

**ROXANE:** It's so dark. How can you see the words?

**CYRANO:** "I am never away from you. Even now I shall not leave you."

**ROXANE:** Cyrano!

**CYRANO:** "In another world I shall be the one who loves you beyond—"

**ROXANE** (*Stunned*): You are not reading the words, you *know* them! They are *yours*!

**CYRANO** (*Faltering*): No. . .no. . .

**ROXANE:** Now I understand everything. You spoke to me under the balcony, and you wrote the letters, all of them.

**CYRANO:** Roxane. . .

**ROXANE:** Why were you silent all these

years? Why do you break the silence now?

**RAGUENEAU:** Cyrano, what recklessness! Le Bret has just come and told me everything!

**ROXANE** (*Alarmed*): What is it?

**LE BRET:** Cyrano was struck on the head in the street. A man dropped a heavy log of wood from a rooftop. I left him, unconscious and bleeding, and ran to get a doctor. But when I returned. . .

**ROXANE** (*Crying*): Cyrano!

**CYRANO:** I had to come, Roxane. I had to see you.

**ROXANE:** Your head. . .let me hold it.

**CYRANO** (*Rousing himself*): I should have been struck down by the sword of a hero, dying with laughter on my lips. What a jest! I was ambushed; my battlefield a gutter, my noble foe a knave with a log of wood!

**ROXANE** (*Miserably*): Oh, do not die! I love you! You are the only man I have ever really loved!

**CYRANO** : Roxane, do not mourn the less that good, brave, noble Christian, for he loved you truly. But perhaps the tears you let fall for him may for a little while be tears for me. My dearest love, farewell!

**RAGUENEAU:** And so my friend died bravely, mourned by his love and his friends. Today I carry on my business as usual. I cook, I bake, and I tell his story so that it may live on even when I can no longer tell it. Cyrano de Bergerac! Roxane! Christian! There is no sweeter love story ever to be told.

**THE END**