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# *Optimism!*

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## Voltaire's Candide

A true, exact and complete telling of the classic masterpiece of

*Francois Marie Arouet de Voltaire*

by TJ Edwards

In rhymed couplets  
For 9 or more actors

Dear Reader:

Here is a story to make Christopher Durang blush: The daughter of a Pope has one buttocks cut out by an Imam; a German princess becomes a concubine and splits her time between a Catholic Inquisitor and Portugal Jew; men one-quarter monkey marry beautiful girls in South America; a whole town sings "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" to the whipping of a young man; a famous philosopher catches the clap while practicing his metaphysics and loses half his face; fratricide; public executions; resurrections—and there's plenty more in this comedy.

CANDIDE is among the most fantastic works of literature, yet truly little known. What the public's been missing! This play—in rhymed couplets—brings the story to a wide audience. It requires no set and the simplest of props and costumes.

A production of this play recently sold out in Washington, D.C.; it received rave reviews and was "Helen Hayes Recommended." Another production was done in Brooklyn where the only set pieces were two trunks on wheels—which became boats, sleds, tables, carts—everything needed for the show. It was a huge hit and audiences *returned* to see the play. Laughs shook the house. Theatre intelligencia felt they'd been to a dependable evening of classical theatre, and everyone else just had a ball.

This play is written for nine actors—or more. It could be done with fewer actors, but that would call on courageous directorial resources. There is an open-source attitude between playwright and director. The director will assign roles depending upon actors' capabilities and have them *go play*. At the end of this script is a breakdown of roles for each scene.

The play starts as a standup, then leaps into a cinematic explosion. Good lighting and fast entrances are key. In this classic, given new life, happy travels—

TJ Edwards

# Optimism! Or Voltaire's *Candide*

by TJ Edwards

Actor

Welcome, friends! We beg your indulgence  
Lend us your ears and we promise repugnance  
Will sprawl to every corner of our lowly stage  
As we tell a tale from an ancient age

More than 200 years have passed since a Frenchman  
—a Frog to you who loathe and resent them—  
Penned a book with the sub-title “Optimism”  
Which is said to act as humanity's *prism*

Now wait—*stop*—I know what you're saying:  
This guy on stage, why all his braying?  
This isn't *Candide* by Lenny Bernstein (*stine*)  
Oh, I love that music, puts me right on could nine!

No! Folks! Lenny didn't grasp *Candide* at all  
And after our show, you'll feel appall  
For that saccharine meringue, that candy soufflé  
What you're in for now is the *real* play

Yes, the real *Candide*, that's why you're here  
Unless your wife brought you and to escape her leer  
You figured a good nap in one of our theatres  
Is better than that chilly stare of hers:  
*brrrrrrrr*

A brief aside, I think, might be fitting  
Which applies to *Candide*, though perhaps unwitting  
A week ago we were visited by Homeland Security  
They accused this theatre of a treacherous perfidy  
They said the Latino who serves drinks at our bar  
Was an illegal immigrant—and drove him off in a squad car!

There we got a lesson in cause-and-effect  
And if you think that's the theme of *Candide*, you're correct!  
This leads to that, and that leads to this  
In *Candide*'s case, it begins with a kiss

As for this theatre, the lesson was clear  
In cause-and-effect, and here it is, right here:  
If you're ever looking for a new barista  
For godsake don't hire a former Sandanista

But back to our play, the tawdry *Candide*  
For there's one more thing I have to concede:  
Voltaire—that magnificent philosopher from France—  
Wrote his book in a hurry, with ants in his pants  
Thirty brief chapters and so fast-moving  
Vulgar, jarring—anything but soothing

So that's how we'll seize on his literary feast  
We'll attack the stage like an angry beast  
With dispatch and haste, and cinematic action  
And we modestly hope your congratulatory reaction  
Will have you on your feet when the evening ends  
For it's on your pleasure that an actor depends

So here we are folks, the first of thirty scenes  
Meet the youth named *Candide*, now in his late-teens

Oh, but one final couplet to end the suspense  
It's time to lift off! Let the show commence!

ACTOR           **Chapter 1     How Candide was brought up in a magnificent  
Castle and how he was expelled from the same**

BARON           Nephew, Candide!

CANDIDE                                 On my way there, Highness!

BARON           That's Barron to you!

CANDIDE                                 Oh, yes, sir, yes, yes!

BARON           Come here, nephew, and stand by my side

CANDIDE           Your orders, uncle, I shall ever abide

BARON           First, I want to talk about my daughter  
For countless boys have fervently sought her  
Affections

CANDIDE                                 That's no surprise, liege

BARON           She's now seventeen and under siege  
By suitors from every part of Westphalia  
You know what they have in mind?

CANDIDE                                 Saturnalia?

BARON           Correct!

CANDIDE                                 The reason, sir, I suspect  
Is because she's so nubile and tempting

BARON           That's exactly why I've been dissenting  
Every male who makes a carnal advance  
All they want is to get in her pants  
Oops! Forgive me, I meant to say *bloomers*  
Have you seen that?

CANDIDE                                 Well, I've heard the rumors

BARON           Nephew, your job's to keep an eye on her  
Can you do that?



PANGLOSS Sure can, boy, for I've divined it  
(*carefully*) For every effect . . . there is a cause  
This is one of the *two* universal laws  
By which we all live. The other law, I say with zest,  
Is that all things—*always*—end for the best

CANDIDE Always?

PANGLOSS Yes

CANDIDE But what if something awful takes place?

PANGLOSS That's not bad at all, son, it's God's good grace

CANDIDE But what if I fall and something gets broke?

PANGLOSS The Optimist knows that's good fortune's stroke  
This world is *the best of all possible*  
It's true, though seemingly not at all plausible  
Things always are—and end—for the best  
To that end let me give you your first test  
Tell me, lad, the reason we have noses?

CANDIDE To smell?

PANGLOSS That's what everyone *supposes*  
But a nose was made to hold up your specs  
Follow me, boy, this isn't complex  
So if a nose is the cause, what is the end?  
Spectacles! Upon a nose spectacles depend!  
Good. Next. Let's move on to breeches  
Your wise professor here now beseeches  
You to tell him the reason we have pants

CANDIDE Because our legs are bare, by any chance?

PANGLOSS Yes! See, our lower limbs were uncovered  
And when we learned that, pants were discovered

CANDIDE May I, optimistically, sir, pose a query?  
Something specific and not merely theory?

PANGLOSS Shoot

CANDIDE                    If there's a girl—*any girl*—let's say  
Who's kissable—?

PANGLOSS                    Then you must kiss her and today!  
Lips were *intended* to receive a kiss  
It's a means to an end to provide you bliss

CANDIDE    Don't you tutor the young Cunegonde, sir?                    ( *kune—i—gahnd* )

PANGLOSS    The Baron's sweet daughter? I give lessons to her

CANDIDE    And of cause and effect, to you she's listened?

PANGLOSS    Since the age of five, that girl's been christened  
In my weighty, metaphysic belief

CANDIDE    My, how I find that quite a relief

PANGLOSS    Here she comes now, lad, by luck, our way

CANDIDE    You want me to leave, sir?

PANGLOSS                    No: stay, son, stay

CUNEGON    Doctor, pardon, something's troubling my mind  
But to interrupt you, I am not inclined

PANGLOSS    It's fine, I'm your tutor, *mon petite cutie*

CUNEGON    Candide, you're here. A boy of such beauty

CANDIDE    Hi

PANGLOSS                    You have a question, young Cunegonde?  
I know all there is, I'm prepared to respond

CUNEGON    So I went to the park for a walk yesterday  
And in the bushes I saw a girl lay  
On her back. It was our servant, that brunette?  
I think you know her, the pretty Paquette?  
Our domestic loudly began to moan  
With *you*, Doctor Pangloss, for she wasn't alone  
You kissed her and, while in the bushes,  
What I soon saw was both of your tushes

PANGLOSS Hm.

CUNEGON Was that an example of cause and effect?  
As you squeezed and cuddled and huddled and necked?

PANGLOSS Dear, what I was doing was not obscene  
Though I can't discuss it, you're far too green  
But I'd a *cause* for that lady-in-waiting

CUNEGON And the effect, I'll guess, was your constant gyrating?

PANGLOSS Time to go. First lesson over, *Monsieur Candide*  
Apply what I've taught and you'll surely succeed ( *exits* )

CUNEGON So. Here we are, cousin. Together at last  
I've not see you in five years. You've grown fast

CANDIDE And you. You are really a woman now  
And beautiful, too

CUNEGON You think so?

CANDIDE And how  
So you're been studying cause and effect?

CUNEGON Since I was five, but how could I expect  
It had applications so varied  
Oh, a question: are you married?

CANDIDE Not yet.

CUNEGON Goodness, isn't that a relief?  
Oh, look. Look there. I've dropped handkerchief

CANDIDE I'll get it. Here. and put it in your hand  
And what I'm feeling I can't understand  
But surely it'd meet Pangloss' approval  
May I kiss you?

CUNEGON No! It'd mean your removal  
From Westphalia! It's pure trouble if we got caught  
A royal marriage is what daddy's sought

CANDIDE. But Pangloss would say it's all's for the best  
We'll put his philosophy to the test  
I shall kiss you, Cunegonde, for I have cause

CUNEGON Daddy won't like it but put those beautiful paws  
Right here. Aw, what the heck, why be discreet?  
Pull me closer, cousin, and let our lips meet

ACTOR So those two young souls shared a first kiss  
Guileless and simple—what could be amiss?  
*Plenty.* The Baron then entered and saw their embrace  
So Cunegonde got a slap in the face  
But Candide, our hero, he fared far worse  
For upon his head now descended a curse  
And before being led out of that town  
The Baron removed his royal crown  
And kicked the young lad ferociously hard  
—This from a 350-pound tub o' lard!—  
Here the boy learned that love has a cost  
As he entered his very own Paradise Lost

ACTOR **Chapter 2 What happened to Candide among the Bulgarians**

CANDIDE Now you must ask yourself, Candide  
What led you to such a foolish deed?  
To exchange that perfect heaven on earth  
— Life in a castle, with kindness and mirth—  
For the walking life of a homeless tramp  
Kissing your cousin! *Fool.* Hey, an Army camp  
Sign says: Wald-berghoff-trarbk-dikdorff

BULG 1 Lookee, mate, there. Look who's coming forth  
A boy on his way toward our inn  
You think he's all right or a little too thin?

BULG 2 Too thin? Forget it. Son, hey! Had dinner?

CANDIDE Me? I'm starving. I got so much thinner  
After walking three days, a hundred-miles

BULG 2 Come eat with us here! We turn frowns to smiles!

BULG 1 But first, I have to measure you for size  
To see if you're one to win the prize

CANDIDE Prize for?

BULG 2 I estimate you're five-foot—

BULG 1 —Right!

Kid, guess what? You eat free tonight!

CANDIDE Wow, that's the most incredible luck

BULG 1 Sit down we're having rosemary duck

CANDIDE Ha! Great. I was just about to eat my shoe

BULG 2 That's something, around us, you'll never do  
And I hope you don't find it one bit funny  
If we offer you this big bag of money?

CANDIDE Money? Really? Okay. If you insist

BULG 2 We do. Don't take it, we'll be downright pissed  
Off

BULG 1 There. So go ahead, son. Go on, eat

BULG 2 See how lucky you were coming down our street?

CANDIDE So all *is* for the best, as Pangloss spoke  
Food, friends, money

BULG 2 Kid, how 'bout a smoke?

BULG 1 Hey, one question: Who is it you're most fond?

CANDIDE Oh, that's easy, sirs: it's Miss Cunegonde

BULG 2 No, no. If you're asked here where you love begins  
You must say the King of the Bulgarians

CANDIDE The problem is that I don't know him

BULG 1 Quite soon, you will, and then can show 'im  
Your patriotic, martial devotion  
To do that, lad, we use *this* motion  
Raise the wrist

( *shows salute* )

Then give it a little twist

( *Candide's is pushed to salute* )

BULG 2        While doing that you must say one thing  
                  "I've fealty for the Bulgarian King"

CANDIDE       I fealty—

BULG 1                                Great! You're now Bulgaria's defender!  
                  You get a gun and you'll never surrender  
                  For your salute has you now conscripted  
                  You'll also be extremely uplifted  
                  To know the time's come to march: Ten-hut!

CANDIDE       I'd love to go with you gentlemen, but—

BULG 2        Silence! It's deadly insubordination  
                  To speak against the Bulgarian nation  
                  For that you get thirty whipping lashes  
                  Or if you'd rather *not* those bloody gashes  
                  I'll give you instead, if you abstain,  
                  One dozen bullets right through your brain

CANDIDE       Um, sirs, I am not here to disagree  
                  But I think you're forgetting men's wills are *free*  
                  We have something called *liberty*, a gift from God  
                  So let's spoil the child and spare the rod

ACTOR         Candide, just then, got his back whipped raw  
                  And all the while his face held an awe  
                  He wondered how he could stay an Optimist  
                  While a flogging like that continued to persist  
                  He started to plead to have his head smashed in  
                  When Bulgaria's king rode up with a grin

KING            Hi! *Stop*. Who's that boy?

BULG 2                                My lord, an apostate

KING            Then I'll be the one to decide his fate  
                  Son, tell me, what is your name?

CANDIDE                                It's Candide

KING            Okay. Now give me a reason why you should be freed

CANDIDE       Uh, sir, I'm living a certain metaphysics  
                  It's simple, profound—it works without tricks











PANGLOSS My boy, you just failed a crucial exam!

CANDIDE How so? See your face? Pox'd, every part  
Pangloss, you look like a walking human fart!

PANGLOSS My looks were not caused by the Albarean invasion  
They're the effect of another contagion

CANDIDE Effect? Another? So what was the cause?

PANGLOSS Love

CANDIDE *Love?* Your logic has flaws!

PANGLOSS No! Recall my tryst with that maid in the park?  
Whose name was Paquette?

CANDIDE You were naked

PANGLOSS And stark

I was to learn that *before* my affair  
That girl'd been frequently visited *down there*  
By a monk. That holy man had a disease venereal  
Which can be traced back in a line, *serial-ly*,  
To Columbus' visit to American lands

CANDIDE So all this lies at the devil's hands

PANGLOSS But everything here is still for the best

CANDIDE You mean you're *glad* you carnally acquiesced?

PANGLOSS Yes! And I'll give you the wherefores and whys  
And how the best of all worlds still applies  
Columbus' men brought diseases back to Spain  
And, sure, it's led to significant pain  
In my groin, *but*—we got more than sores  
From those North American Indian whores  
Columbus also brought back *chocolate*. And *tobacco*  
Those are well worth the clap, now, donchaknow

CANDIDE I will not say that your pupil agrees  
But, my master, what would *now* most please  
Is for me to find your privates a cure





PANGLOSS Till the town collapses, half of Lisbon!

CANDIDE Flame and ashes cover the streets!

SAILOR Hot dog! My chance to get women and eats

CANDIDE Say, brutal sailor, where are you headed?

SAILOR To steal money, liquor and find a whore to be bedded  
Argh!

CANDIDE Look out, Pangloss, that stone's falling down!

PANGLOSS It's all for the best ( *Candide pushes Pangloss and gets bonked* )

CANDIDE Great! It hit *me* on the crown ( *Candide collapses* )

PANGLOSS That's even better!

CANDIDE I'm dying: oil and wine . . .

PANGLOSS It's a lecture you need, son, then you'll be fine  
In fact, that's something that all here could use ( *to audience* )  
Lisbonites: You've logical errors I'll disabuse  
Though 30,000 of your people have perished  
This is a moment that still should be cherished  
For all is for *good*—things can't be otherwise,  
Though I hear a lot of anguish in your cries—  
Things can never be other than they *are*

INQUISITOR Excuse me, your words, sir . . . a little bizarre

PANGLOSS No!

INQUISITOR Then you must deny Original Sin?  
The fall of Man and his punishmen'?

PANGLOSS The fall of Man and the curse that came with it  
Makes the best of all worlds completely legit

INQUISITOR Are you denying that Man has Free Will?

PANGLOSS There's nothing I say that doesn't fulfill  
Free Will can exist . . . with *necessity*

INQUISITOR It's upon you now I feel some pity  
I hope you'll forgive this small imposition  
( *reveal!* ) But I'm a member of the Inquisition!  
Ha, ha! You two shall follow this awesome jailer  
Who does hangings and burnings—and is he a nailer!  
It's time to save your corrupted souls  
So let's fire up the furnace—and extra coals!

CANDIDE Why did you open your mouth so fat!

PANGLOSS Though soon I'll be screaming, we're exactly where we should be at

ACTOR **Chapter 6 How a splendid *auto-da-fé* was held to prevent earthquakes, and how Candide was flogged**

INQUISITOR ( *addressing all* ) Our city's been destroyed by three-quarters  
So to stop more earthquakes, we'll use these boarders  
To cleanse Lisbon with a public penance  
Torture them fully, let's not take a chance  
Have that man hanged, then a slow rustic roasting  
It won't be long till we're all boasting  
The Catholic Church has saved the day  
Oh, how we love a good *auto-da-fé*!

ACTORS Yea!

JAILOR ( *stupid dolt* ) Wear mitre

CANDIDE I have to put on a paper hat?

PANGLOSS Doesn't seem like the type to enjoy a chat

INQUISITOR You, sir, time for your hanging! *This* way

PANGLOSS Before I go, I have something to say  
Would it be terribly inconvenient  
If I got a sentence a trifle more lenient?

INQUISITOR Yes

CANDIDE Goodbye, my teacher, you shan't be forgotten



CANDIDE Oh! It's beautiful! Now what should I do?

OLD WOMAN Wait here and sit on that brocaded couch *(Woman exits)*

CANDIDE If I didn't know better, I'd surely vouch  
That life's a series of terrible dreams  
Yet right here life's lovely, or so it seems  
I'm in a cottage in the country  
In a dazzling room with absolutely no affrontery

*(Old woman enters supporting a veiled, shaky woman wearing jewels)*

OLD WOMAN Here, my boy: the moment of suspense  
Remove that veil: your shock will be immense

*(Candide removes the veil and sees Cunegonde; he is speechless and falls to his knees)*

CANDIDE Life is a dream. I'm completely agast!  
How can it be your breath's not been your last?

CUNEGON I breathe even better now near your charms  
Oh, Candide, take me in those fabulous arms!

CANDIDE Alive! Alive! Can this be believed?

CUNEGON It's true, my love, your arms are not deceived

CANDIDE But I was told you were badly raped  
Your belly slit open—was it merely scraped?

CUNEGON No, the knife went in and it was pretty deep  
No, don't cry, love—no, no, please don't weep

CANDIDE How can I not when I'm this happy!  
Oh! But didn't they butcher your oversized pappy?

CUNEGON I'll lay bare the whole story, my dear  
But first what I so badly need to hear  
Is the tale of your treacherous travels

OLD WOMAN So upon that couch, Candide unravels  
His cruel journey to her splendid arms:  
Of Pangloss, Jacques and all the harms  
That they endured. For their reunion, she felt elation  
And unbound sorrow at his friends' annihilation

OLD WOMAN    **Chapter 8**                      **Cunegonde's story**

CANDIDE        So Pangloss was hanged, then he was to burn  
I saw him no more. That's it. Your turn

CUNEGON        (*slowly nodding*) Of my journey here, this is my story  
Prepare for the worst: it's pretty gory  
Those Bulgarians entered our castle  
And gave mom and dad a real hassle

( *soldier enters with cleavers* )

BULGARIAN      Iiieeee!

CUNEGON        They arrived in what seemed like a blitz  
And sliced my parents into small bits  
As for my beautiful elder brother  
They punctured him like every other  
Then a big soldier came striding my way

BULGARIAN      Hey, little girlie, like a roll in the hay?  
You are what's called the spoils of war  
You won't get paid, but you'll be my whore  
I'll strip you bare and breach you often

CUNEGON        He did that but my rage never did soften  
( *to him* ) "You think I'm scared of your six-foot size?  
You see these claws? I can scratch out your eyes!"  
But all of a sudden, who came in the room?  
A captain with a pistol and—

CAPTAIN    Boom! Boom! Boom!  
I've blown to bits that brute 'tween your knees  
Whaddya say to that?

CUNEGON    Like, "Holy Geeze!"

CAPTAIN        I'm a captain, so you now belong to me  
You'll tend my house and keep me company

CUNEGON        He liked me a lot but I was noncommittal  
Of philosophical learning, he had very little  
He bored me terribly, almost to death  
Then, one day, he said kinda under his breath

CAPTAIN      For three months I've owned you, little miss  
But I've fallen into a fiscal abyss  
I'm broke. I don't have any more money  
So I did something, maybe, a little crummy  
I sold you to that Jew: Don Issachar  
Who trades in Portugal from lands afar

CUNEGON      You sold a princess to a merchant Jew!

CAPTAIN      Hey! It won't be so bad if you learn Hebrew  
I'm told that this cad is a lady's man  
So better devise a chastity plan  
Buckle up!

CANDIDE                      Had you relations intimate!

CUNEGON      Patience, darling, I'm just getting into it                      (*pause*)  
The Jew badly wanted my slender bod  
But I held him off with a frosty façade  
I didn't want to yield to an indiscretion  
So he brought me here, as his possession  
—Brought me to this house, to be subdued  
And it's so grand—

CANDIDE                      Don't tell me you were wooed!

CUNEGON      Don't get worked up, there's much more to tell  
Candide, the pressure was a living hell  
Then one day he let me travel to Mass  
Where a holy man there made a lecherous pass

INQUISITOR    Maybe you'd like to be part of my flock  
Follow me, sinner, come this way, *walk*  
Walk to my room, my bejeweled abode

CUNEGON      Once in his chamber, he there did explode  
When he learned I was owned by the Issachar Jew

INQUISITOR    *No!* You are commanded now to eschew  
That sick eccumenical relation  
Honey, for you, I have my own expectation  
If he don't give in, I'm ready for a fight  
It's the Grand Inquisitor versus the Israelite!

CUNEGON But Issachar has pull: he's the court's banker  
This might invite our good king's rancor

INQUISITOR True. Then I'll threaten the Jew with an *auto-da-fe*!

ALL Yea!

CUNEGON But the Hebrew knew his opponent's cache  
So the pair had to settle for a compromise  
For three days I'd be the Jew's carnal prize  
The three other days, I'd go to the cleric  
But don't, my dear, now get hysteric,  
For after six months I've resisted them both  
I've had no relations, I give you my oath

CANDIDE But tell me, love, why you did not *flee*?

CUNEGON I guess I was depressed! Pangloss lied to me  
Love, ours is *not* the best of any world  
I mean, from a princess to a working girl?!  
Duh!

CANDIDE But how was it *I* came to be saved?  
My life was over, they had me *enslaved*

OLD WOMAN Then in his firm arms she told the story  
Of the Inquisitor's invitation and the truly gory  
Finish to that unexpected, fateful day  
Where Cunegonde attended Candide's own *auto-da-fe*

ALL Yea!

OLD WOMAN She plotted Candide's liberation  
To bring him to her secluded location  
And in all her devices, she was assisted  
By me, the old woman—I was enlisted!  
For a moment the pair were so content  
They didn't foresee a dramatic event  
This was the Sabbath and the Jew had his rights  
Remember: he got three days and *three nights*

DON (*entering*) Honey, It's Donny! Your big Don's home!  
(*sees Candide*) Hey! Whadda you doin' here?

CANDIDE

Um, Shalom



CUNEGON No! No! It's the Inquisitor!

INQUISITOR Cunegonde! Sunday morning! It's my hour!  
By mutual consent I have the power  
To command your body's every move  
There's a man in this dress: that I'll soon prove!  
Don, dead? By the boy I flogged? What's in your hand?  
Drop it! Bow down! That's my holy command!

CANDIDE If I do, you'll burn me, and also my lass  
So as for your orders, father, I'll pass  
The price is my eternal salvation  
But now's no time for hesitation  
I've suddenly entered the killing mood  
So guess what, holy man? *You're screwed* (stabs Inquisitor)

INQUISITOR Son, that's it! You're excommunicated! (dies)

CANDIDE Your threats, I find, a bit overrated

CUNEGON Candide—*unreal*—in just a few minutes  
You've butchered a Jew and one of the prelates!

CANDIDE We need a way out of this cursed land  
Perhaps you, Old Woman, can lend a hand

OLD WOMAN The stable horses will ride us away  
Grab your money and jewels for we must pay  
For travel and munchies and lodging  
Because I soon expect that we'll be dodging  
The posse of the Holy Brotherhood

CANDIDE How could Pangloss find any of this good? (they leave)

INQUISITOR ( *rising from dead* ) When the friars came and found their dead brother  
The trio was gone and in quite another  
Quaint and rustic small mountain town  
But the trio didn't like what they there found  
They rented a room at an inn for the night  
And big trouble started at dawn's first light



GENERAL

It gave me a thrill!

I name you captain and give you command  
Of sailing this boat to Paraguayan land  
There trouble's brewing, a big rebellion  
Led by a nasty Jesuit hellion  
It's a priest who's teaching every native  
To think for themselves and be creative  
—something our monarch will not allow—  
The rear is the stern, the front is the bow  
The boat's yours, I wish you smooth sailing!

CANDIDE

My how things change. Why was I failing  
To remember my strict Panglossian creed?  
Things are just great now that we've been freed!

CUNEGON

Yes, things always are—and end—for the best

CANDIDE

Turn this big barge south-southwest!

CUNEGON

The breeze! The breeze! I'm forgetting my trials  
No more pain, love, from me now only smiles  
Though no one could ever endure much worse

( *like Titanic* )  
( *on boat* )

OLD WOMAN

The way you complain . . . a little perverse . . .

CUNEGON

Excuse me?

OLD WOMAN

Complain! Complain! And all the time  
Your burdens were nothing compared to mine

CUNEGON

Old woman, I think you're forgetting your place

OLD WOMAN

Back off, kiddo! I need some space  
I'm tired of your ceaseless carping and whining  
When it comes to misery, *mine's defining*

CUNEGON

( *taken aback* ) I laugh at you now! Ha! You had it worse?  
No one else could endure my curse  
Were you raped by two Bulgarians?  
Stabbed in the belly, *twice*, by their hands?  
Seen your castle completely destroyed  
And made to watch something you couldn't avoid:  
Your parents murdered before your eyes  
And seen *him* tortured, try that on for size!

A Jew and a priest . . . Lady, I'm a *Barroness*  
But what would you know of royal noblesse?

OLD WOMAN ( *simmering* ) How dare you. You know nothing of my birth  
If you did you'd cut your sniggering mirth  
But perhaps you'd like to see my backside,  
Know reason I limp—know the pain that I hide  
Then you'd see how completely mendacious  
Your assertions are. Child, *act more gracious*

CANDIDE Old woman, you must have a harrowing tale  
May I hear it?

OLD WOMAN Yah. But be prepare to wail

OLD WOMAN **Chapter 11**                    **The old woman's story**

OLD WOMAN Think these eyes were always bloodshot?  
My nose always touched my chin? It did not  
I'm the tenth child of Urban the Pope  
And Princess Palestrina—before life lost hope  
Your palace, beside mine, would look like a stable  
My dresses cost more than you'd ever be able  
To know. My looks, they said, inspired pure love  
Like an angel delivered me from above  
My breasts, early formed, were firm and white  
Carved like Venus de Medici. How they did excite  
The boys! My brows were black, my eyes like fire  
Poets came from miles and all were inspired  
To write me tomes, or even an opus  
The women who dressed me—ah, the great *fuss!*  
I was engaged to marry Prince Massa-Carrara  
A boy so handsome, his sight brought pure awe  
Our wedding was planned as the best in creation  
Pomp, magnificence, joy, elation!  
But my prince's mistress—a marchioness—  
Was also invited . . . and there began my distress . . .  
My prince was polite: his lover he didn't shun  
She came to our wedding, then he began a convulsion  
You see, in his lips, she'd set a poisoned chocolate  
And our perfect marriage was over like that  
So my mother took me to her island estate

( *a prince appears  
for dumbshow* )

To grieve. The galley we sailed on wasn't just great:  
It was gilded like St. Peter's alter in Rome  
But we never reached our country home  
For we were boarded by pirates along the way  
And stripped like monkeys. How can I convey  
The pain? They set us along a galley wall  
And ordered all of us girls to stand tall  
Then I got a surprise and felt a cringe  
When they stuck in a finger where a syringe  
Is reserved for cleansing women's parts  
These pirates weren't dumb, they had smarts  
They were searching where a diamond could hide  
But found nothing while they groped me inside  
My mother, even more ravishing than I,  
Was taken with me to Morocco, and it's no lie  
To say that before that boating excursion  
I was the purest of any virgin  
I had saved myself for my perfect prince  
But how can a girl possibly convince  
A negro captain to shield her maidenform?

*( pirates appear  
for dumbshow )*

*( negro captain appears )*

NEGRO Never! I want something young and soft and warm!  
So I give this white angel a special honor  
I shall make her my one and only whore!"

OLD WOMAN Moracco swam in blood when our boat arrived  
The pirates on shore all felt deprived  
For they didn't receive a girl from our ship  
Enraged, they charged at us and began to rip  
Every girl to pieces. Each pulled at a limb  
Until all were torn apart. What is more grim  
Than watching the person who gave you birth  
Mutilated and scattered over Moroccan earth?  
But, see, I was spared for my captain held a sword

*( pirates mime fight )*

NEGRO Come at me and you'll be fatally gored!  
Those who oppose my fury and wrath  
Will die in a colossal Moroccan bloodbath!

OLD WOMAN But then things turned worse for my negro fell

NEGRO Dag!

*( negro captain carried off )*

OLD WOMAN                    All died but me. The *stench*, the *smell*  
Of on every side of me, a cadaver  
Could you ever forget that? No, not ever  
But somehow I rose from that bloody heap  
And dragged myself to a bank so steep,  
Where cool water flowed, I collapsed and swoon  
And when I awoke, I saw a crescent moon  
And a beautiful stranger's glowing face!  
A white man? Here? In this God-awful place?  
He shook his head and muttered to me:

CASTRATO                    "*O che sciagura d'essere senza coglioni!*"

CANDIDE                    Old woman, don't stop, I beg you go on  
What is the fate that that stranger spawned?

CASTRATO                    **Chapter 12      Continuation of the old woman's misfortunes**

OLD WOMAN                He carried me to a hostel nearby  
And in a high voice, he promised he'd try  
To raise me to health

CASTRATO                    You are so perfect  
I shall never show you any disrespect

OLD WOMAN                What are you doing in this distant land?  
Speaking my language?

CASTRATO                    Yes, I understand  
It's odd. But you'll be even more surprised  
To learn it was *Naples* where I was baptized

OLD WOMAN                My own country! How did you get here?

CASTRATO                    That story demands to tell you I'm queer

OLD WOMAN                Wha—?

CASTRATO                    In Naples, each year, I think you know  
A thousand boys get a sharp cut below  
The navel. They use a thin metal blade  
For that's how capons and castrati are made  
But if you survive that groinal slice

Your voice, might be, as high as the mice  
They cut my marbles! So that was my fate  
I became soprano, but one so great  
I sang for the Princess Palestrina

OLD WOMAN My mother!

CASTRATO What do you mean-ah?  
You can't be the girl I raised till age six?  
Your looks, even then, held men transfixed

OLD WOMAN The girl your raised, diva, I am she!

CASTRATO Then your princess mother, where can she be?

OLD WOMAN Four-hundred yards hence, cut in quarters  
Not only her, but all her supporters

CASTRATO Those wretched and filthy Muslim swine!  
Princess Palestrina was ever divine!

OLD WOMAN But how came you here, alive and alone?

CASTRATO I was sent here, child, not by some throne  
But by an imperial *Christian* Power  
When I arrived, that Moroccan king glowered  
But he did approve of my holy mission  
Which was to give him heavy ammunition  
To kill other Christians hoping to trade  
On nearby seas. Morocco had it made!  
I gave him weapons to complete the quest  
But as you've sadly learned, his pirates are the best

OLD WOMAN I know that now, and too terribly

CASTRATO *Ma che sciagura d'essere sense coglioni!*  
Dear, I shall take you to our native land

OLD WOMAN That's what I thought the soprano had planned

CASTRATO (*aside*) But mine's a lie, I'll sell her as a slave!  
In the country Algiers

OLD WOMAN You sissy knave!  
You'd make money off the girl you raised?

CASTRATO I'm a princess, too. Don't act so amazed

OLD WOMAN The jabs I endured in filthy Algiers  
Walking the casbah, face full of tears  
But one thing fortunate came to pass:  
A deadly plague: so the city died *en masse*

CASTRATO I'm dying too! Your Napolise eunich!

OLD WOMAN Sorry, cream puff, but know what's ironic?  
You *are* a prick, despite that slice

CASTRATO Can't you even be a little bit nice?  
I know, I know I couldn't 'a been meaner  
But you'd be mean, too, if you lost your wiener

OLD WOMAN I did survive, though I, too, caught the plague  
Here my memory's just a bit vague  
For they sold my body again and again  
Till I ended up living on a small island  
Off Turkey. Human bondage had me become  
A slave in the harem of a big Imam

( *other females enters* )

IMAM Ladies! You're living under Muslim code  
Bend for prayers, keep the back bowed  
Also, you're never to speak aloud  
You, there, white girl: your shroud!

OLD WOMAN One day some Russians attacked our fort  
But their invasion was soon cut short  
By twenty soldiers from a tribe of Turks  
Who were ordered to keep us alive—the jerks  
We were trapped in a citadel for weeks  
We starved! Shrank up! Our girly physiques  
Continued to get more and more puny  
The hungry guards got more and more loony  
Then a tough Turk came up with a plan

TURK Brothers! Can we speak man-to-man?  
We're twenty recruits and what have we got?  
Not one scrap of food—but these girls, a lot!  
There're full of flesh and of them I count eight  
So why don't we eat them? I bet they'd taste great!

TURKS Yaaahhh!

IMAM            In the name of Mahomet, the prophet  
I tell you, boys, to stop it!  
The flesh of women is blest and divine  
I know you're hungry, but I draw the line!  
Still . . . I don't think the good Lord would knock it  
If each missy gave up just one buttock  
I, your Imam, will make the incision  
Like if performing a giant circumcision  
And we shall so please heaven by our charity,  
This test of our faith and austerity,  
That all our foes will surely be smitten            ( *guards drag off female* )

OLD WOMAN    You know what it's like to watch your own butt bitten?  
And swallowed? After it's been carved out?  
Was I to feel good that that Imam was devout?  
Then—as our booty slid down those Turk throats  
The guards didn't see the Russian boats  
That were docking on the citadel wharf  
Hundreds of Russians attacked and dwarfed  
The guards eating our rears. All Turks were killed  
Then the Imam's devout blood was also spilled

IMAM            I-eeee!

OLD WOMAN    The Russians brought in a doctor from France

DOCTOR        You'll need bandages and special French underpants!

OLD WOMAN    When all of us healed and could walk again  
They sent us to Moscow and several men  
Made us their servants. I hoed a garden  
I was beaten daily, which did harden  
My resolve to leave that heinous noble  
After a year, I escaped and went global  
From Russia to Riga, Rostock to Bremen  
Utrecht to Leyden, the Hague to Saarbrucken  
Since coming west, I've only been a drudge  
None of this story for you did I fudge!  
The fateful end of my tragic memoir  
Ended with service to a Jew, Don Issachar . . .  
A *Jew*! Me! Born daughter to a Pope!  
Did I deserve this kind of life?

CUNE & CAN

Nope. Nope

OLD WOMAN So many times, kids, I wished I'd been slain

CANDIDE Lady, you have been through some major pain

CUNEGON Yeah, I was soiled and had a huge heartache  
But that's a whopper. Lady, you take the cake

ACTOR **Chapter 13 Three till intermission! How Candide was obliged to separate from the fair Cunegonde and the old woman**

SAILOR Land ho! Captain! There! Over there!

CANDIDE Listen! For a landing, everyone prepare  
We must turn the ship twenty-two degrees  
We're at the New World: it's Buenos Ayres

FERNANDO Welcome, sailing crew! Here there's fun galore  
I'm a mustachioed *bon vivant* and the city's governor  
Forget formalities, just say 'hello'  
For at your service is Don Fernando  
But the ladies here all call me Big Don ( *to Cunegonde* )  
Question, for you, kid: Y'like getting' it on?  
You married to this puny, little buck?  
Or you wanna try some gubernatorial luck?

CANDIDE Good sir, she's not my wife, nor my sister  
But neither does this lass call me mister  
We plan here, sir, to tie the marriage knot  
And something, excellency, we'd like a lot  
Is for you to tend to our South American wedding

FERNANDO (*to self*) That's exactly what I was dreading  
( *to all* ) Welcome, captain, to this faraway place  
You must know that civility and grace  
Requires you now to inspect my troops  
Or did you forget your manners?

CANDIDE No, *oops!*  
Bye. Inspecting is custom and my duty ( *exits* )

FERNANDO Goodness, you're lovely. Aren't you beauty? ( *holding Cunegonde* )  
For you I declare my hunky passion  
Why not succumb to the Latin fashion  
Of lovemaking? I have a huge, dark oak bed  
Marry me, not that twit. Have a hairy man instead!





- SERGEANT Through South America the pair did go  
Till the land of Paraguay they did reach  
( *turns to pair* ) Halt right there, you son of a beech!  
And you, little man, standing at his side  
Off that mare or I'll blast your girlie hide
- CACAMBO We come in peace, sir, I hope you determine  
I and this captain, a noble German  
When the priest in charge learns he Teutonic  
He'll invite us inside, like, totally quick
- SERGEANT Shut up! I'll tell this to His Eminence  
But one step more and it's you I'll mince  
( *goes to Rev Father* ) He's German, Father, so the servant says  
But who can say if he really is?
- REV FATHER Bring him to me. ( *Candide steps forward* ) Bow and kiss my gown  
Where are you from: what country, what town?
- CANDIDE Westphalia, Father, a hole-in-the-wall
- REV FATHER Stop. What'd you say? Stand up. Stand tall
- CANDIDE Precisely a castle called Thunder-ten-tronckh
- REV FATHER What are you saying? Am I sober or drunk?
- CANDIDE You heard the truth, most Reverend Father
- REV FATHER Not Father, Candide. I'm Cunegonde's brother!
- CANDIDE *What?*
- REV FATHER Cousin! Yes! Now let flow my tears!
- CANDIDE Can this be true? Can I believe my ears?  
Oh, Pangloss! Pangloss! I wish you weren't hanged!  
All *is* for the best! I'll be damn—*danged*  
But how did you survive that deadly attack?  
Your body was pierced, both front and back
- REV FATHER I came so close to being deceased  
But I lived. And now I'm a Jesuit priest!  
In the New World, I run a colony  
I'm radical, *yes*, very anti-bourgeoisie

CANDIDE I'll give you news to make you howl  
You heard that your sister was disemboweled?

REV FATHER Sadly

CANDIDE Padre, please, don't be morose  
She's in Buenos Ayres now—*alive*—that close!

REV FATHER Best of all worlds! Oh, cousin, you're right!  
How many times did Pangloss recite  
That maxim that we all thought so silly?  
*Ouuu*, I ought to give you a wet willy!  
Come sit at my table, till night let us feast  
Fill up our goblets. I tell you this priest  
Is liberally inclined! Drink and be regaled  
While I reveal, Candide, a harrowing tale

ACTOR **Chapter 15 How Candide killed his dear Cundgonde's brother**

REV FATHER It was lucky, cousin, you were not around  
The day the enemy came and found  
Our family in the room with the big throne  
First, they cut mom and dad to the bone  
Cunegonde, then, was taken by a brute  
Me? They pointed a gun, ready to shoot  
But, instead, punctured me ten times with swords  
Then threw my body on a cart with boards  
To be dragged behind an ornery ass,  
To a hole in the earth, a grave where, alas,  
They stood ready to toss my bloody corpses in ( *collapses dead* )  
Then . . .

PRIEST Stop! I'm a priest! I must remove his sin!  
On this poor soul, with water made holy,  
I sprinkle it lightly and say very slowly  
*Pax vobiscum, Ad astra per aspera* ( *Peace be with you; a hard road leads to the heavens* )  
Okay, dump them in now, it's okay, *yah*  
Wait! That one moved! *Stop*. He's alive!

REV FATHER They saw me still breathing, then I was revived

PRIEST Take him to Father Superior!

REV FATHER They did so with motives ulterior

SUPERIOR     We need priests and this one's really pleasing  
                  Raise him to health and soon he'll be easing  
                  Our South American Jesuit shortage  
                  Ordain him for he makes the Paraguay portage

REV FATHER    I put on the dress and become big priest here  
                  And now you tell me my sister is near?

CANDIDE        Yes!

REV FATHER                Then let's get her, Candide, what do you say?  
                  They can'y harm you while you're under my sway

CANDIDE        Yes, let's go. For it's she I shall marry  
                  Then over the threshold, your sister I'll carry!

REV FATHER    ( *pause* ) What's that? What? *You'll* wed my sis?  
                  Something is wrong here. What did I miss?

CANDIDE        She's the aim of my heart above all things

REV FATHER    Candide, you're common. She was born for kings

CANDIDE        But I freed her from a Churchman and a Jew

REV FATHER    No. No. Listen: she can never marry *you*

CANDIDE        Recall when Pangloss said all men are equal  
                  Our marriage, ergo, is the logical sequel

REV FATHER    You think you're my equal? ( *slaps him* ) You're common trash

CANDIDE        My face is bleeding. You've caused a deep gash

REV FATHER    *My equal?* For your insult, you've more coming     ( *draws a sword* )  
                  If you got sense, punk, better start running

CANDIDE        Cousin, don't do it! It's not you I oppose!                     ( *draws sword* )

REV FATHER    Come, pantywaist, take your girlie blows!             ( *a fight, Candide stabs him* )  
                  Bastard. Truly   ( *dies* )

CANDIDE                        No, I'm the mildest of men!  
                  But now I've killed another priest again  
                  Pangloss, hear me! He was my wife's brother!  
                  I hate your philosophy, oh, give me another!

CACAMBO ( *entering* ) O, my good master, what have you done?

CANDIDE  
It's senseless, Cacambo, trying to run  
Let's raise our swords and sell our lives dearly  
I love you, boy, and I mean that sincerely

CACAMBO  
I'll tell you, sir, I'm not ready to die  
So here's something better I think we should try  
First, take off this dead priest's frock  
Fast! Fast! They're ticking! The hands of the clock!  
Swap garments, get on the horse, and off we trot ( *dressing Candide*  
You'll look like his double, and you won't be caught ( *as a priest* )  
It can work. So tell me, master, are you game?

CANDIDE  
I am, Cacambo, in the Almighty's name  
*Alea iacta est, Annus horribilis* ( *The die is cast, a horrible year* )

CACAMBO  
Proceed, Reverend Father, you go first

CANDIDE ( *to audience* ) This world is absolutely, positively *the worst*

REV FATHER ( *rising* ) They got away, then, without suspicion  
Know what's up next? Intermission!  
Go! Enjoy! But better tip that barista bloke  
It's a cause-and-effect world, friends. No joke!

*End of Act Primus*

## ACT TWO

ACTOR  
Okay, folks, settle down—get back in your seat  
You used the privy, had a bite to eat  
But we've got an hour left of our show  
Then you can applaud, grab your stuff and go  
Oh, and if you haven't turned off your cell phone  
Guess what? You're not alone  
Thank you! So . . . on to the second act:  
This one's truly philosophy packed  
Here you'll grasp what Voltaire thought  
About what Candide really should have been taught  
So—*look*—here he approaches, our brave hero  
With his very good friend, little Cacambo





ACTOR            **Chapter 17    Arrival of Candide and his valet in the country  
Of Eldorado and what they saw there**

CACAMBO        We've left *Oreillon* and met the frontier  
But, lord, life is awful in this hemisphere  
Let's return to Europe, a place we know  
It's safer there

CANDIDE                            I can't, if I would go  
Back to the homeland I'd be hung and fried  
I can't return

CACAMBO                            Then there's something we've not tried  
There's a city called *Cayenne* in little Guiana  
—it's a seaport town, a sort of a spa—  
There's a lot of French in that island place  
Who give all strangers a kiss on the face

CANDIDE        I'm surprised, little friend, at all you know  
What a swell idea

CACAMBO                            So come on, let's go!

ACTOR            The trip was wretched, a treacherous grind  
Over peaks and troughs, and they couldn't find  
Food along their endless, trekking way  
Only hardship day after day after day  
Their horses starved and collapsed from fatigue  
They were sure they'd die, walking league after league  
Their fate they felt sealed when there on the ground—

CANDIDE        Cacambo, look. Come look what I've found  
A glittering rock. A ruby? An emerald?

CACAMBO        Lord, here. And *here*. Pebbles made of pure gold  
They're scattered all over, everywhere

CANDIDE        The Almighty's answered my earnest prayer!  
We're rich!

CACAMBO                            But still we don't have any food  
These rocks are nice but without chow we're screwed

PERUVIAN        (*approaching*) Hello! If you like rocks, take all you want

- CANDIDE ( *whispers* ) Pretend they're worth nothing, play nonchalant
- CACAMBO Yes, we're collectors, and think yours are fine  
But one question—
- PERUVIAN Yes?
- CACAMBO Any place we can *dine*?
- PERUVIAN Come to our little village, there ahead  
Have anything you'd like, even a bed  
We're part of a clan that once owned Peru,  
Cut off from the world—whaddya gonna do? ( *moving to table* )  
Ah, we've just arrived in time for dinner  
The hostess here is a real winner
- HOSTESS Four soups garnished with two large parrots ( *over a feast* )  
A hundred-pound condor served with carrots  
Here's roast monkey with excellent flavor  
Over here, fresh from the incubator,  
Six-hundred hummingbirds in a deep dish  
Oh! Perhaps you gentlemen might wish  
For a ragout, or a pastry of eleven fruits?
- CANDIDE Do I take them off or leave on my boots?
- HOSTESS Come as you are, that's our social code!
- CACAMBO ( *to Candide* ) But how do we pay? How much is owed?
- CANDIDE Can we use these gems to cover all this?
- HOSTESS Pay us with *stones*? No! We would be remiss  
In our land's sacred and gracious duty  
If, for feeding you, we took your booty  
Our entire nation would at once lament  
If this bill wasn't paid by our government
- CANDIDE A Socialist land? Is that government best?  
Look: everybody's calm here, nobody's stressed  
Pangloss knew there was a country of this sort  
I'll start with a big communal glass of port!







You may go. But of this I must warn:  
The way out is frightful—and you could be torn  
To pieces if you fell—the mountains are high,  
With peaks like *that*, and if you fell you'd die  
( *pause* ) So I'll help. I'll call up the inventing crew  
Those brainiacs always know what to do

CANDIDE Thanks, sir

KING But before I wish you God speed  
Is there anything else from me you need?

CACAMBO Um, perhaps some sheep and a few provisions?  
And these rocks on the ground—they're your decisions—  
But they'd look nice on my coffee table

KING Why some want stones we'll never be able  
To comprehend. Sure, take all you can find  
No one round here pays them any mind

CANDIDE Adieu!

CACAMBO Adieu!

PERUVIAN The scientists from Eldorado  
Built a machine to carry all their cargo  
And sheep—one-hundred, they numbered,  
Loaded with gems, fully encumbered—  
Over the mountains, they went on a hoist  
It worked! They got over! Everyone rejoiced! ( *clamoring and hooting* )

CANDIDE Now to Cayenne, where we'll purchase a ship

CACAMBO We can get a frigate or cutter or a slip

CANDIDE Then on to Cunegonde. I'll give her these sheep!

CACAMBO My lord, you're so happy. Look: you *weep*

CANDIDE On a sleigh led by mutton, I say Cacambo  
Tally-ho! Tally-ho! Tally-ho! Tally-ho!



When I worked too slow and didn't fulfill  
My orders. My leg was cleaved when I tried to run  
Let me tell ya: *that* wasn't a whole lotta fun  
So you can have sugar, we blacks pay the price  
But about the Dutch, I'll say something nice:  
They made us Christians so we can pray  
And wear nice clothes on the Sabbath day  
And hear them preach: "If you're black or white,  
It don't matter for all must share in God's light!"

CANDIDE        (*moved*) Oh, Pangloss. This is an abomination!  
I now renounce your wicked creation  
Optimism!

CACAMBO                                Lord, tell me, what is that?

CANDIDE        Cacambo, it's philosophical scat  
It's the mania of thinking all's going well  
While we, and the world, are going straight to hell

CACAMBO        Dry your tears, lord, this is Surinam's gate  
We can sell some jewels at the going rate  
To rescue Cunegonde, then we'll buy a craft  
Ask that captain there

CAPTAIN                                Kids, you gotta be daft  
Buenos Ayres? You're crazy to go back  
Don Fernando keeps that girl in the sack  
Twenty-four seven. She's his best whore, they say  
Return there, kid, and you're dead in a day

CACAMBO        He won't suspect me, lord, I'll go back  
I'm unknown and can handle this crackerjack  
I'll make him an offer he can't refuse  
With this bag of diamonds. I'm sure I won't lose

CANDIDE        And we'll have plenty left. Good. Bring the old hag back, too

CACAMBO        I love you, lord, and this won't be *adieu*                                (*leaves*)

CANDIDE        Be safe! (*beat*) I'm in Surinam now, so I'll hire a ship  
You look like a captain. Hey, you there, *skip*

VANDERDENDUR    *Yah?*





“You have done the world’s only honest work!”  
But don’t think peace-lovers aren’t equally berserk  
I’ve been in places where the arts do flourish  
And it’s upon *envy* those freaks are nourished  
They’re cruel, and with worry afflicted  
Tell me, to *what* are all artists addicted?  
To they’re own secret narcissistic grief

CANDIDE Um, that’s a kinda scary belief  
Yet *good* in this world, there simply must be

MARTIN If so, it’s never appeared to me ( *sound of a cannon* )

CANDIDE Martin, there’s a cannon off our port bow  
Two ships are at war

MARTIN I’ll say, and how  
One of them’s French, the other Dutch  
Want to stay topside?

CANDIDE Yep, very much  
Look! The French blew a hole in that Dutch ship  
It’s sinking below with the hole it did rip  
Down the ship goes

MARTIN With a hundred on deck  
They’re starting to pray—the water’s to their neck!  
The boat continues leaking  
The praying men go on shrieking ( *pause* )  
They’re gone. All the men killed. All drowned

CANDIDE Martin—*there*—look, see what I’ve found!  
Swimming toward us, it’s a *red sheep*  
One from my flock, bobbing in the deep  
My lamb was on that boat, oh, I’ll make rescue  
Such joy I feel for you now—you pretty ewe!  
Ha! See! That Vanderdendur’s been repaid  
With a fitting fate he could not evade  
Crime, my friend Martin, sometimes gets its due

MARTIN But innocent men were also part of that crew  
They’d like another fate, if they had their druthers  
God punished the thief, the devil drown the others

ACTOR            **Chapter 21    Candide and Martin approach the coast  
of France and argue**

MARTIN            Candide, there's France, I know that coast

CANDIDE            Been there before? Whaddya like most?

MARTIN            Nothing. Of the provinces I've traversed  
It's hard to tell which is the worst  
The French all talk twaddle and utter nonsense  
France is a land of peevish pretense

CANDIDE            That mustn't be true of the gay Paris                    (*pronounce Par-ee*)

MARTIN            Oh, there they think chaos will set them free  
At loving, that town is completely fanatical

CANDIDE            For a German that really very problematical  
But we're going to Venice so our stay will be short  
Things will be wonderful in Paris, old sport

MARTIN            Son, why do you always look for the best?

CANDIDE            Now why did I pick a companion depressed?

MARTIN            Folly

CANDIDE                        Then *you* tell me why the world was formed

MARTIN            To infuriate us: that's it, unadorned

CANDIDE            You think in man there is wholly no good?

MARTIN            Finally, kid, I think you've understood!  
Man is cowardly, flighty, gluttonous  
Drunken, grasping, envious  
Every man is a traitor and cheat  
A liar, a drunkard and backbiting freak  
Men are such weaklings and so fanatical  
But worst of all, completely hypocritical

CANDIDE            And it's been so, you say, since time's begun?

MARTIN            Haven't hawks always have eaten the little pigeon?  
If the nature of a bird cannot change  
Why, for man, would it be so strange?

CANDIDE I'll tell you why, Martin, and it gives me a thrill  
Because man has something called *Free Will*

MARTIN Come on. You joke

CANDIDE In a word: no

MARTIN You've so much to learn, kid. Here's France. Let's go

ACTOR **Chapter 22 What happened to Candide and Martin in France**

MARCHIONESS So tell me, young boy, what brought you here?

CANDIDE We went to a show, where a man did appear  
Who invited me to this tinselled abode  
He said in one night that I'd be showed  
As much of gay life in your fine city  
As if I'd lived here a year or two or three

MARCHIONESS Come, young lad, and sit on my divan  
*Ou*, aren't you are a fetching, little man  
What do you think of Paris so far?

CANDIDE It's a sociable land and the people are  
Witty and charming, ready to delight

MARCHIONESS Especially . . . at *night*  
You're so young and fresh and tender  
Isn't there a girl you've given surrender?  
Who's gotten your love? Or are you a monk?

CANDIDE Well, to Miss Cunegonde, who makes me love-drunk  
It all began when her handkerchief dropped  
Since then, my love for her hasn't stopped

MARCHIONESS You should say there was once a girl in your past  
But at seeing me, your love couldn't last  
When her hankie fell, you were her martyr  
Now you'll be mine as I drop my garter  
Can you get it, son? And put it on, please?

CANDIDE Yes, mam ( *he slides it up her leg* )

MARCHIONESS Further! High up! Up, way past the knees!



- GENDARME For bulging pockets. Clean them out!  
Jewels! Gold! Now you'll do without  
Off you both go, to the dungeon
- CANDIDE Is it wrong to have riches fairly won?
- GENDARME In France we live in a Socialist state  
We'll spread 'round your booty, you reprobate
- CANDIDE Martin, these people I cannot endure  
Who can fathom their left-wing manure?  
I go to prison for being too rich?
- MARTIN Quiet, Candide. Let me make him a pitch  
( *to cop* ) Judicial proceedings we'd like to forgo  
See these diamonds, here?—that's three in a row  
Why should they go to the public pot?  
In your possession they'd buy a nice. . . *yacht*  
Or *house*. Or anything you desired
- GENDARME For accepting bribes I'd not only be fired  
But taken straight to the guillotine!  
( *quietly* ) Honestly, sir, you wouldn't come clean?
- MARTIN Never ( *gives diamonds* )
- GENDARME Please proceed to your destination!  
Your detention has been a small aberration  
But before I wish you an *au revoir*  
I advise you run as fast and as far  
As you possibly can
- MARTIN For where?
- GENDARME Normandy  
For other *Gendarme* have heard, believe me,  
Of the riches bulging there in your pocket
- MARTIN Your advice, monsieur, I shall not knock it  
*Au revoir*
- GENDARME *Au revoir!*
- CANDIDE But Venice from Normandy, Martin, is far



MARTIN Did he lose the fight?

GUARD No! But he didn't fulfill  
His sacred maritime obligation

MARTIN Could I get a further explanation?

GUARD The battle's outcome doesn't matter a lot  
But he kept his boat far from enemy shot

MARTIN His vessel didn't get close enough?  
But aren't the French guilty of the same stuff?  
Their boat would have been just as far away

GUARD No matter! ( *to admiral* ) Last chance, fatty, to pray ( *then to Martin* )  
He'll be an example to make men fight  
Close your eyes jumbo and out goes the light ( *blows his brains out* )  
You won't, again, be bothered by his scream  
In war, there are times, when you take one for the team

CANDIDE ( *deeply moved* ) I'll never again set foot on this shore  
Senseless killing . . . Martin, please implore  
Our captain now to ready his vessel

MARTIN It's deep emotions with which you wrestle  
Here he comes

CAPTAIN ( *arriving* ) We're set to sail, Italy bound  
The plan is to go all the way around  
That big rock—you know—Spanish Gibraltar  
Then on to Italy

CANDIDE Please do not falter  
For I must see my dear Cunegonde again  
And my good servant, Cacambo, my frien'  
Finally, Martin—finally all goes well now  
Don't you think so?

MARTIN I don't possibly see how





But you always get a nice pat on the rump  
When they're done and they've finished the nasty  
Since Westphalia, I've been a patsy  
For any man who comes by with some coin  
For me, now, life is all about the groin  
( *pause* ) And how have you fared since leaving our land?

MARTIN I think the time's come to hold out my hand  
You sure see that I've won our bet

CANDIDE You haven't, Martin—you haven't, not yet  
( *to Paquette* ) In the park, I saw you, you looked so gay

PAQUETTE Then you should have come round there yesterday  
When I was robbed and beaten by a cop  
Look, no man who has money's gonna stop  
And hire me if I'm looking sour  
Y' gotta be chippy when you work by the hour  
That's what appealed to this bulging monk

CANDIDE That can't be true, father?

FRIAR It is. Slam dunk

MARTIN Bet's over, come on, you must admit

CANDIDE It's not, I'm only finished with Paquette!  
Father, you radiate joy far and wide  
With this pleasing girl here by your side  
You *must* be happy, you don't even pay rent  
Everything you get is heaven-sent

FRIAR Give me a break, puh-leeze!  
You know what it's like to live on your knees?  
I pray my monastery burns to the ground  
Because no one's more repulsive to be around  
Than monks. I was forced into this robe I detest  
At the age of fifteen—but would have been best  
To have me strung up and hanged instead  
Every day it's 10,000 prayers for the dead!  
I go home to those dormitory walls  
And want to bang against them till off my head falls  
My brothers all feel the same. So we buy tarts

MARTIN Pay up, Candide, and prove you've got smarts





MARTIN        So his *pleasure*, then, is being *displeased*?  
Don't you see that that's mentally diseased  
Our bet?

CANDIDE                    I'll pay . . . but I'm not yet in despair  
I'll find Cunegone if I have to look everywhere  
I'll do that for what I still have is *hope*  
You won't ever see this face frown or mope

MARTIN        Too often I've seen hope convert to grief  
Here's the moral, Candide: all happiness is brief

ACTOR            **Chapter 26                    How Candide and Martin supped with six  
Strangers and who they were**

MARTIN        Okay, so now another month's gone by  
And you no longer mope—you outright cry  
For nowhere in Venice can you discover  
The girl you want to be your lover  
So what I recommend is drink and food  
Sit at this table. There's six here—in a good mood  
I'll go ask the chef if he has some quail                    ( *steps away* )

CACAMBO        ( *approaches, whispers* ) Lord, shortly follow me and do not fail

CANDIDE        *Cacambo*? My friend! You're here, let's embrace!  
And where is Cunegonde? Oh, let me see her face

CACAMBO        ( *whispers* ) In Constantinople, that's where she lives

CANDIDE        Stop it, you kidder! Come on, tell me, what gives?

CACAMBO        Keep quiet now! I'm here as a servant  
My master's over there and very observant

CANDIDE        If Cunegonde's not here, then let's go for her now!

CACAMBO        I can't, Candide, my new lord needs his chow  
See, on my trip I was caught and made a slave  
It was either that or a watery grave  
Then I was sent to Cunegonde's overseer  
Which brought an end to a terrible year  
But we might escape when the dinner's done  
Ah! My king over there needs another bun  
Coming, sir! ( *to Candide* ) Dine here and wait in readiness                    ( *exits* )

- MARTIN        (*returning*) Know who's at our table? You'll never guess!  
Our companions before us are six real kings  
It's funny, you know, what life sometimes brings  
Men, will you tell this boy whom he's dining with?
- ACHMET        There's not one of us here who's a Jones or a Smith!        (*laughter*)  
I'm a Sultan, called Achmet the Third  
Most of my family had a head severed  
By other family members in our humble tribe  
I live in a seraglio and am here to imbibe  
In wine and food at the Carnival of Venice!        (*cheers*)
- IVAN            I am called Ivan, his equal in this  
I, too, was royal: an emperor's line  
But my kin were killed before I was nine  
So they keep me in jail but for once a year  
When I'm sent to celebrate Carnival here!        (*cheers*)
- EDWARD        I am one of the former English Kings  
Charles, by name, and Carnival brings  
Endless delight to one who's dethroned  
For all my subjects were burned and stoned  
After my scepter was ripped from my hand  
And as for Carnival? There's nothing's so grand!        (*cheers*)
- POLE #1        It's the Polish people I once ruled  
My kingdom was taken and I was schooled  
On surviving the murder of all your kin  
Ohhh, I just can't wait for Carnival to begin!        (*cheers*)
- POLE #2        With this Polish King I shared a like fate  
I even shared his country—Poland was great!  
But my kingdom was lost, not once, but twice  
Believe me, this Carnival? Ain't nothin' so nice!        (*cheers*)
- CORSICAN      The land of Corsica was my domain  
My story, as theirs, is much the same  
Once everyone knew me as Majesty  
Before I was shackled—now my only glee  
Is Carnival time in the city of canals  
When I get to call these kingly losers my pals!        (*whooping, cheering*)



CANDIDE           And is my girl still the marvel of beauty?

CACAMBO           Serving you, lord, is my singular duty

CANDIDE           And is it a palace in which she resides?  
I'll put my hands on her curvy sides  
And *squeeze*

CACAMBO                           Lord, the time has come to set straight

CANDIDE           You're pausing. That carries a certain weight

CACAMBO           See . . . Cunegonde's become the slave of a Turk  
And that guy is truly an incredible jerk  
She washes his dishes at every meal  
She's only his maid now

CANDIDE                           Well . . . no big deal  
I've got money here for to make rescue

CACAMBO           Good, my lord—great—but before you do  
I have a tad more information . . .

CANDIDE           I really don't like your hesitation

CACAMBO           . . . She's ugly! Ugly! Ugly as sin!  
My god she's ugly—and so far from *thin*  
Men yell at her—*dog!*—when she passes by

CANDIDE           Well . . . I'm good and my principals still apply:  
Even if Cunegonde looked like a beast,  
To me, it wouldn't matter in the very least

CACAMBO           Who couldn't love you? A guy old school

CANDIDE           Will you go downstairs for food? Here, use this jewel

CACAMBO           You rock ( *leaves* )

CANDIDE                           And need to walk. Look at these filthy knaves  
Rowing our boat. All wretched, disfigured slaves  
Their mugs are horrid—ghastly and gross  
Wait. Wait. What's this? I see . . . ? Is it a ghost?

PANGLOSS           Heave, ho, heave, ho—  
To spare the lash you row, row, row  
Please, please, don't hit me, master  
See my oar? I'm rowing faster

CANDIDE Pangloss!

PANGLOSS No, boss!  
Don't whip me, sir, with your pizzle again!

CANDIDE I'm not your captain, I'm your long, lost frien'!

PANGLOSS This must be a joke? The young Candide?

CANDIDE My learned master: I am, indeed!  
You're alive and rowing a galley boat?

PANGLOSS See, all's for the best! Remember that quote?

CANDIDE And beside you here? Do I trust my eyes?  
Cunegonde's brother? Now how did you rise  
From the dead? With my own hands, you were slain

REV FATHER But your sword, Candide, didn't touch a major vein  
I lived!

CAPTAIN Christian dog, what's going on here?  
Our boat's not moving, I'm trying to steer

CANDIDE You've capture a Baron and a metaphysician  
How much to free them?

CAPTAIN They're men of *position*?  
Then fifty-thousand—that's my price

CANDIDE These gems are worth twice that—like them?

CAPTAIN Nice!  
You're free

PANGLOSS My pupil's now my liberator! (*he weeps*)

REV FATHER The money you paid, I'll quickly restore

CANDIDE To repay me, neither of you shall bother  
For you're my kin and you're like a father

PANGLOSS (*weeping*) Aup!

CANDIDE So let's all go to the Turkish coast  
To get Cunegonde, for what I want most  
Is to pool the souls affecting my life  
And be together as I make her my wife

PANGLOSS I'm feeling a certain philosophical mania!  
Where are we going?

CANDIDE To a prince of Transylvania!

ACTOR **Chapter 28** **What happened to Candide, to Cunegonde,  
to Pangloss, to Martin, etc.**

CANDIDE Father, I must ask your pardon once more  
For causing that awful blood and gore  
By thrusting my sword so deep in your side

REV FATHER Cousin, forget it

CANDIDE But you nearly *died*

REV FATHER Fortunately, an apothecary  
—A college brother living close to me—  
Took up my carcass and healed that cut

CANDIDE But how'd you come here, by whom or by what?

REV FATHER Okay. So I asked for Roman permission  
To leave my southern New World mission  
To Constantinople they told me to go  
To give alms to the poor, and thereby to sew  
Good will and cheer among the Muslim tribe  
But what the Church didn't circumscribe  
Was conduct fit for collar-wearing men

CANDIDE Okay? So what happened then?

REV FATHER A week into my philanthropic mission  
I got into an awkward position  
With a comely boy, a Sultan's page  
Who was—*okay*—about half my age  
See, the day was hot and he wanted to bathe  
And I didn't know I shouldn't behave  
As the natives do. So I followed local custom  
And swam with that spry Mahometan  
Then, I learned, in almost no time,  
That I'd committed an Islamic crime  
See, Muslims and Christians can't together be bare  
So a Mullah condemned me, saying with a glare:

“A hundred strokes upon his feet!”  
Then into a galley they gave me a seat  
On the rowing aisle and let me pull oars!  
I wanted to say: “Hey, Mullah, up yours!”  
Still I leaned that priests should never cavort ( *crosses near Cacambo* )  
With Islamic boys. Or boys of any sort. ( *Cacambo inches away* )

CANDIDE           Huh. Master?

PANGLOSS                           Now my tale: first I was to hang, then to burn  
But it was raining so their big concern  
Was the wood they'd piled high for my pyre wouldn't light  
So I wasn't burnt, for they thought hanging might  
Be sufficient to send my soul to hell  
But the rope round my neck wasn't tied very well  
So when I dropped, the wet knot didn't bind  
And I hung there, still breathing—hey, I didn't mind  
But then I passed out for it'd been a long day  
Remember we both had that *auto-da-fé* ?  
So a surgeon took my body to be dissected  
But by that doctor I wasn't well inspected  
He laid my carcass on the carving table  
And made an incision from my chin to my navel  
My guts hung out, and I awoke and screamed, “*Yike!*”  
Can you imagine what that felt like?  
The doctor was stunned, then he pushed in my guts  
Sewed me back up, for he thought he'd gone nuts  
Then he nursed me back to health with his care  
And tried to help me get a job— but none anywhere  
The only work around was in shipping trade,  
—Which is really beneath me, and not well paid—  
Anyway, I booked work on a ship to Constantinople  
When I got there I went out looking for a pupil ( *erie Islamic music* )  
Down winding streets I soon found myself lost  
And entered a weird, mysterious mosque  
I saw a capped and bearded Imam in there  
With a pretty your girl reciting a prayer . . .  
Her bosom, I then saw, was uncovered!  
I walked a bit closer and then I discovered  
Between her breasts she held bunches of flowers  
Tulips and roses—which, they say, empowers  
The faithful while they continue to pray  
Flowers slipped from her breasts so without delay

I returned them with respectful haste  
But it took a long time for me to get them well placed  
So! The Imam got angry and called for help  
They found I was a pagan and gave me a whelp  
And a hundred strokes on the souls of my feet  
I was sentenced, with the Baron, to a rowing seat  
On that galley. Since then, son, I've been a slave

CANDIDE Recall the wisdom, to me, you once gave?  
That all's for the best—how can that still hold?

PANGLOSS It does! You know what's yet for us to unfold?  
I still embrace being fate's firm minion  
And hold fast to my philosophical opinion

CANDIDE Then you won't recant?

PANGLOSS Haven't. Won't. Shan't

ACTOR **Chapter 29 How Candide found Cunegonde and the old woman again**

CACAMBO It's time to halt our discussions of the mind  
For our ship's arrived and on shore you'll find  
The house of a prince of Transylvanian stock  
And our two women—who are part of his flock

REV FATHER *Nooo.* What's become of my enchanting sister?  
She looks like a wretch, her face is a-blister  
She's wrinkled and toothless—no charm to her step  
In short she's a hag. Right, cousin?

CANDIDE Yep  
( *an fat and toothless, witch-haired Cunegonde appears* )

CUNEGON Lover! Oh, Candide! Is that your sweet face?  
Take me in your arms for your strongest embrace!  
And can it be—? Brother! And my learned master!

CANDIDE I shall save you, ladies, from present disaster  
I'm buying you both with these jewels in hand

CUNEGON Great! Then you'll do what you always planned  
Kiss this sweet face and forevermore!

CANDIDE After what we've been through, wouldn't that be a bore?













CACAMBO      Cacambo sold veggies; it wasn't much money  
But enough to live on. Huh, kinda funny

PANGLOSS      Pangloss didn't often philosophize  
For the farm had helped him grow more wise  
Though sometimes he said to his fine young friend:  
Kid, it's so hard to tell what in life will portend  
Perhaps all events, everywhere, *are* linked up  
And all *is* for the best, my fine young pup  
For if from our castle you'd not been expelled  
If the Baron didn't boot you and loudly yelled  
If you'd not been clapped in the Inquisition  
Then traveled to that New World mission  
If into your cousin you'd not run your sword  
Then left Eldorado and got back on board  
And traveled to France, then here to this land . . .  
Tell me, kid, would life be so grand?  
Now eat citrons. And pistachios!  
Pineapples, cashews. C'mere, look at those!

CANDIDE      From you, professor, I learned quite a bit  
But the main thing I learned is . . . I forgit  
Let's just do our work, let's just till our soil  
So we can evade our singular foil  
Which we have found is a devil called *need*  
For the only way that we shall succeed  
Is through work, and work, and work some more  
So on philosophy, can we close the door?  
And here end our words, if we may beg your pardon  
For the time has come—all of us—to cultivate our garden      (*pause*)

ACTOR      That's our show, folks, as you might expect  
Our cause is the theatre — so tell us the effect  
If you like what we've done, clap your hands in the air  
But if you didn't like it . . . well, don't blame us. Blame:

ALL      Voltaire!

*BLACKOUT*

## CANDIDE breakdown of roles for all thirty scenes

### Chapter 1

Baron  
Candide  
Pangloss  
Cunegonde  
Actor

### Chapter 2

Candide  
Bulgarian 1  
Bulgarian 2  
King  
Actor

### Chapter 3

Woman  
Candide  
Man  
Orator  
Wife  
Jacques

### Chapter 4

Candide  
Pangloss  
Actor  
Jacques

### Chapter 5

Jacques  
Candide  
Pangloss  
Actor  
Sailor  
Inquisitor

### Chapter 6

Inquisitor  
Jailer  
Candide  
Pangloss  
Actor  
Choir  
Woman

### Chapter 7

Candide  
Woman  
Cunegonde  
Actor

### Chapter 8

Candide  
Cunegonde  
Bulgarian  
Captain  
Inquisitor  
Actor  
Woman  
Don Issachar

### Chapter 9

Don Issachar  
Cunegonde  
Candide  
Woman  
Inquisitor  
Actor

### Chapter 10

Cunegonde  
Woman  
Candide  
General

### Chapter 11

Woman  
Negro  
Castrato  
Candide

### Chapter 12

Woman  
Castrato  
Imam  
Turk  
Doctor

### Chapter 13

Sailor  
Candide  
Don Fernando  
Cunegonde  
Woman  
Shipman

### Chapter 14

Woman  
Candide  
Cacambo  
Sergeant  
Rev Father

### Chapter 15

Rev Father  
Priest  
Fr Superior  
Candide  
Cacambo  
Actor

### Chapter 16

Cacambo  
Candide  
Oreillon  
Actor

### Chapter 17

Cacambo  
Candide  
Actor  
Peruvian  
Hostess

### Chapter 18

Cacambo  
Candide  
Hostess  
Old Man  
Actor  
King

Chapter 19

Candide  
Cacambo  
Negro  
Actor  
Captain  
Vanderdendur  
Martin

Chapter 20

Martin  
Candide

Chapter 21

Martin  
Candide

Chapter 22

Marchioness  
Candide  
Martin  
Gendarme

Chapter 23

Martin  
Candide  
Guard  
Admiral  
Captain

Chapter 24

Martin  
Candide  
Friar  
Paquette

Chapter 25

Candide  
Senator  
Martin

Chapter 26

Martin  
Candide  
Cacambo  
Achmet  
Ivan  
Edward  
Pole #1  
Pole #2  
Corsican

Chapter 27

Martin  
Candide  
Cacambo  
Pangloss  
Rev Father  
Captain

Chapter 28

Candide  
Rev Father  
Pangloss

Chapter 29

Pangloss  
Rev Father  
Candide  
Cunegonde  
Woman

Chapter 30

Actors  
Candide  
Pangloss  
Rev Father  
Cacambo  
Cunegonde  
Woman  
Martin  
Friar  
Paquette  
Dervish  
Old Man