

An Additional Scene from Molière's Tartuffe

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An Additional Scene from Moliere's Tartuffe

Claudia Gruett

ACT 5

SCENE 3.5

TARTUFFE, KING, PALACE GUARD, OFFICER

Lights fade out as purple curtains drop over different sections of the house set.

At the same time, stagehands wheel off the different furniture pieces and place two thrones center stage. In addition, a table and a few chairs are placed stage right. Then the PALACE GUARD will stand with perfect posture stage right with his hands ready to grab his sheathed sword. Once the setup is finished, a golden-yellow light will shine upon the stage as the scene unfolds.

TARTUFFE

(Frantically rushes onto stage and almost runs into the PALACE GUARD:)

PALACE GUARD

(Draws weapon:)

Hault! What do you think you're doing?

TARTUFFE

I'm sorry good sir for the scare,

But are you aware

That there is an imposter lurking about.

PALACE GUARD

(Slight pause to show that he is thinking:)

I really do have some doubts.

Is there a way you can prove that what you say is true?

If not we are through.

TARTUFFE

You see these documents in my hand.

They carry the weight for a family to be banned.

PALACE GUARD

(Leans over to glance at the documents:)

TARTUFFE

Aha! Wait. Now do not pry.

For how do I know you are not a spy?

These papers are the reason why

I came here in the first place

To speak to Your majesty, Your Grace.

PALACE GUARD

Ah now it all makes sense.

Please wait here and do not be tense.

I will go and get Your Majesty,

So you two can talk about this travesty

(Exits stage right:)

TARTUFFE

(Aside:)

And now that my plan is underway

This time tomorrow, midday.

The roles will switch

And Orgon will no longer be rich.

Here as I wait, I must keep up my charade

And make it look like I just prayed.

In order for my scheme to succeeded

I must let my false sainthood take the lead.

So that I can keep up my facade

I'll get down on my knees and pretend to ask God.

To help and guide me through this rough time

And ask for forgiveness on behalf of my friends for their crimes.

(TARTUFFE then gets on his knees and puts his hands together in a praying position.)

(Footsteps can be heard and the KING and PALACE GUARD enter stage right.)

TARTUFFE

(Loudly:)

Oh God please help me

For my friends have been acting quite beastly.

I struggle because I want to protect them,

But I do not want to be dragged down by the sins of scum.

Please show me that what I have done is just.

That is why I have given You all my trust.

KING

(Coughing to clear his throat:)

TARTUFFE

(Frantically stands up and brushes the dust/dirt off his pants:)

KING

Please forgive me for disturbing your prayer.

TARTUFFE

Oh no worries! I just did not hear you come in there.

(Gestures stage right:)

Pardon my lack of manners, I am Tartuffe of Paris

And I've come here quite embarrassed.

You see I found these papers in the house where I'm staying

And they seem to be a bit dismaying.

KING

(Aside:)

Strange that he claims he is from Paris, but yet

His accents suggests that

He comes from the Southern part of France...

(Slight pause to show he is thinking:)

I think that I will give this Tartuffe a chance
To save himself from unintentional deceit.

I just hope I can be discreet.

(To TARTUFFE:)

From Paris you say,

Have you always lived there or are you from farther away?

TARTUFFE

No I am a Parisian, born and raised.

I do not want to sound crazed,

But I am quite distressed about these documents

And what it means for the house's occupants.

KING

Ah yes let me take a look,

So I can figure out if your friends are crooks.

It seems to me that these are an exile's documents.

Would you mind if I take these and discuss them

With an Officer, so we can decide an outcome

For your friends that is worthy and just?

You can wait here it shouldn't take long.

TARTUFFE

Would you mind if I tagged along?

KING

I think it would best.

If you let me do the rest.

Here take a seat.

(Motions to a nearby chair.)

And I'll have my servant bring you a treat.

TARTUFFE

I guess that will have to do.

I'll bid you adieu.

(Lights fade out on the stage as all the actors exit stage right. Once offstage, golden-yellow lights shine across the stage as the KING, PALACE GUARD, and OFFICER enter stage left and huddle around a table inspecting the documents:)

OFFICER

It looks like these documents are real.

KING

I mean I could have told you that. You can tell by the seal.

OFFICER

Your majesty then why did you call me here?

KING

Well you see I have a few fears.

OFFICER

What do you mean?

KING

I do not want to be obscene,

But I have reason to believe

That this man, Tartuffe, is trying to deceive

Us. I have to admit

He seems like a hypocrite.

OFFICER

Your majesty, even for you, these accusations

Seem a bit extreme for these situations.

KING

No, no, you do not understand

I think Tartuffe had this all planned

For when I went to meet him

He appeared to be saying some sort of hymn

Normally I would not find this odd,

But his prayers were quite loud. It seems like a facade.

OFFICER

Maybe he just doesn't know how to lower his voice?

KING

I guess that could be

But it seems to me

That he wanted me to hear his intercessions,

So that I would believe him without any questions.

While a true Saint

Would not be so quaint.

Later on he stated that he was from the city of Paris.

This lie was pretty careless

Because his accent suggests he's from the South.

(Dramatic pause:)

Officier. Do you remember,

A few months ago, last September,

You were trying to chase

A criminal who was near impossible to trace.

OFFICER

You mean the one who ran around the South?

The one with a charismatic mouth?

KING

Yes, yes him!

It seems to me that Tartuffe resembles

That treacherous man who makes me tremble.

OFFICER

Oh wow.

I see it now.

(Loudy sighs:)

What are we going to do?

We cannot let him get away this time too.

KING

I know. We will have to be cunning

To keep him from running.

I propose we let him think

That we trust his every word.

But once he leads you back to his estate

You will state

How I figured out his true identity.

You shall then arrest him and there shall be, finally, amenity.

OFFICER

Your majesty this plan is foolproof,

But what are we going to do about the family he dooped?

KING

I do not believe they should take a fall

When their crimes are rather small.

I mean after all their treachery helped us find

The criminal who would not think twice about deceiving the blind.

Therefore, tell them that I pardoned their mistakes

And then you shall arrest this fake.

OFFICER

Shall I leave now

So that I can be back by sundown?

KING

Yes. Yes. Have haste

And be careful not to make a mistake.

For we cannot let him be away.

This villain needs to pay