

Psyche

A Play

By Christopher Vened

Based On

The Hans Christian Andersen's Tale Of The Same Title

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CAST OF CHARACTERS

<u>The Narrator:</u>	She/he speaks directly to the audience while narrating the story and invoking the action with gestures at the same time.
<u>Lorenzo:</u>	A reclusive young artist who seeks perfection in art
<u>Angelo:</u>	Lorenzo's outgoing friend who loves life
<u>Adele:</u>	A noble girl whose unearthly beauty inspires Lorenzo to sculpt Psyche
<u>Adele's Father:</u>	A rich nobleman who commissions Lorenzo to make a marble sculpture of Psyche
<u>Servant in Villa Farnesina:</u>	A servant to Adele's family
<u>Francesca:</u>	A model for the artists who wants to be sculpted by Lorenzo
<u>Marco:</u>	An artist who admires Lorenzo's work
<u>A Group of Young Artists:</u>	Free spirited Renaissance artists with whom Lorenzo socializes at the Café Grotto
<u>Viola And Gaia:</u>	Two models for the artists with whom Lorenzo dances in Cafe Grotto
<u>Brother Ignatius:</u>	A doctor and a priest, who advises Lorenzo to become a Monk.
<u>Monks in the Monastery:</u>	Who initiate Lorenzo to life in the Monastery
<u>Two Grave Diggers:</u>	Who find the sculpture of Psyche in the garden and dig it out two centuries later.
<u>Museum Patrons:</u>	Who admire the sculpture of Psyche, which is displayed in the museum

Space

An Young Artist's Atelier

The Street of Rome

Villa Farnesina

An Artists' Cafe Grotto in Rome

Monastery

Time

Renaissance

PROLOGUE

SET UP: Rome

THE NARRATOR

At dawn, the morning star shines brightly. Its rays fall on the white walls of the city as if it wanted to write upon them all the stories it knows: all that it has seen through the thousands of years on earth. Listen! Here is one of its stories: Not long ago - and by "Not long ago" the star means "a few hundred years ago" -- its rays followed a young artist who lived in Rome.

SCENE 1

SET UP: A Young Artist's Atelier

The NARRATOR points at LORENZO, a young artist, who makes a sculpture in his workshop.

THE NARRATOR

Time has changed the city, but not as rapidly as it changes a human being from infancy to old age. The Church was holy and all-powerful; and art was holy and at its height. In Rome lived the world's greatest painter, Raphael, and that epoch's leading sculptor, Michelangelo. The Pope himself admired these artists and paid visits to their workshops. Yes, artists were esteemed, honored, and even rewarded; but this does not mean that every great talent was recognized.

This young artist lived in an old house on a narrow street! He was poor and unknown. But he had friends who knew about his skills and talent.

Lorenzo continues to make a sculpture in his workshop. ANGELO, Lorenzo's friend, enters.

ANGELO

Good morrow, Lorenzo.

LORENZO

Morrow, Angelo.

ANGELO
What do you have?

LORENZO
What?

ANGELO
What are you working on right now?

LORENZO
Oh, I finished this one yesterday, but today I am not happy with it.

ANGELO
Let me see.

LORENZO
Nothing to see.

Angelo looks at the sculpture.

ANGELO
What are you complaining about? It's quite good.

LORENZO
Quite good?

ANGELO
(while admiring the sculpture)
Yes, everything is done well: form and proportions, good counterpoint and balance.

LORENZO
It's just craft, Angelo, technical skill.

ANGELO
Well, not only. It's beautiful. I like it a lot, Lorenzo.

LORENZO
What do you like about it?

ANGELO
Many things.

LORENZO
Can you be more specific?

ANGELO

Well, I like the sensual line of the body and ...

LORENZO

I was not after that, the sensual line of the body.

ANGELO

What were you after, Lorenzo?

LORENZO

Don't you see it?

ANGELO

See what?

LORENZO

Yes, it must not be there but only in my head.

ANGELO

What is it, Lorenzo?

LORENZO

Its just another failure, Angelo. It is just that..

Lorenzo takes a mallet and smashes the sculpture
into pieces.

ANGELO

What are you doing?

LORENZO

Destroying imperfect creation, Angelo.

ANGELO

Don't do it!

LORENZO

It must be gone! Disappear from the world!

ANGELO

Stop it! Stop it, Lorenzo! You are mad.

LORENZO

It's gone, Angelo! Puff! I smashed it!