

Phantom of the Opera Populaire

Posted originally on the [Archive of Our Own](http://archiveofourown.org/works/34527781) at <http://archiveofourown.org/works/34527781>.

Rating:	General Audiences
Archive Warning:	Creator Chose Not To Use Archive Warnings
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	NCT (Band) , NCT Dream , NCT 127 - Fandom , Phantom of the Opera - Lloyd Webber
Relationship:	Lee Donghyuck Haechan/Mark Lee
Characters:	Mark Lee (NCT) , Lee Donghyuck Haechan , Huang Ren Jun , Na Jaemin , Lee Taeyong , Lee Jeno , Suh Youngho Johnny , Jung Yoonoh Jaehyun , Moon Taeil , Kim Jungwoo (NCT) , Lefevre , Reyer , Byun Baekhyun
Additional Tags:	Surprises along the way , inspired by Phantom of the Opera , Lead opera singer LEE DONGHYUCK (manifesting) , Baritone Mark Lee , Ballet!dancerHuangRenjun , Ballet!dancerNaJaemin , Ballet!teacherTaeyong , Productionstaff!Doyoung , Opera Populaire (NCT) , (Un)betaed , Vicomte!Jeno
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2021-10-16 Updated: 2021-10-20 Words: 2,954 Chapters: 2/10

Phantom of the Opera Populaire

by [orphan_account](#)

Summary

We've passed the point of no return.
Say you'll share with me one love, one lifetime.
Lead me, save me from my solitude.
Say you want me with you, here beside you.
Anywhere you go let me go too –

Donghyuck, that's all I ask of you.

Notes

Hello! Welcome back to another fanfare of my mind. A curious concoction of my NCT-deprived brain.

P.S. Andrew Lloyd Weber's OST for the 2004 movie of his musical would be a warming bg for this fic
(I know the broadway versions are so good too, but I fell deeply in love the version in the movie).

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Think of Me

The music reverberates the surrounding chairs and boxes of the opera house. Multiple helpers were cleaning and polishing the attendee's chair. The supernumerary dancers, singers, and the orchestra could feel the sweat dangling by the hair of their necks. They needed to finish their dress rehearsals for the night's Hannibal production.

Once Jungwoo, the lead countertenor fussed his way towards the front of the stage, the helpers immediately covered their ears with some muffs they found while cleaning the prop beds the day before. It was no secret that Jungwoo had his best days at the opera but these days, his voice began to waver so much and it hurts their ears. Even the maestro, Monsieur Reyer, had to cringe when the lead's voice had gone a bit out of tune. Taeil, the baritone for the production, simply barged his way through the song and mostly only paid attention to his lover. This in turn, led him to miss his chance to board the prop elephant for his part.

On the other side of the opera house, Donghyuck fits his pointe shoes with the help of rosin powder. He quickly ties tidies up and joins his two best friends who are waiting for him.

"Come along, dad might seem calm but he's not always fond of late dancers", Renjun remarks as they pass through their quarters and head down the stairs toward the opera stage. "Even if it's us", Jaemin hums in agreement as he followed while holding Donghyuck's hand to steady him.

Donghyuck yawns while nodding. "I've overslept again." He explains as he catches up to his friends' speed. When they arrived, the trio immediately dispersed to their positions and caught up to Taeyong's stretching routine. Jaemin and Renjun immediately gets a scary look from their dad while Donghyuck hides his sleepy smile in his focused dance.

The usual fast-paced rehearsal was cut abruptly by the arrival of the current owner of the opera house, Lefevre. With him are two handsomely dressed men towering over everyone within vicinity. All the performers stopped and focused on the seemingly abrupt announcement.

"Good work, everyone! I presume you are all ready for tonight's production." At this, the maestro's composure cracked a bit. He knew the leads were still fumbling and the fact that the night would bring a full house did not soothe his soul. Before he could utter a word, the owner gestured for the two men to step forward and let themselves be known to the full staff and performers.

"Monsieur Reyer, Mr. Taeyong, ladies and gentlemen, please If I could have your attention. I am sure you have heard of some rumors detailing my imminent retirement. I can now tell you that these were all true and it is my pleasure to introduce you to the two gentlemen who now own the Opera Poulair, this is Mr. John Suh and Mr. Jaehyun Jung." John Suh, the taller of the two simply bowed while the other handsome fellow did not hide

his delight at their business venture. The surprised people clapped in acknowledgement and confusion at the sudden change of owners.

Donghyuck, Jaemin, and Renjun steps closer towards the center of the crowd to get a good view of the people being introduced. Lefevre adds, "And we are deeply honored to introduce our new patron, the Vicomte de Changy." At this, another handsome gentleman stepped from behind the owners. He introduces himself as Jen0. "My parents and I are honored to support all the arts especially the world renowned Opera Populaire."

Donghyuck's eyes widened as he takes in the built form of his childhood friend from years ago, when his father still lived. Beside him, Renjun blushed as Jaemin bumped his shoulder to gesture at the vicomte. Still, Jaemin noticed Donghyuck's recognition at the vicomte. "Do you know him?", Jaemin asks and silently earned a nod from an excited Donghyuck. "We used to be childhood friends back when my father was still alive." Renjun and Jaemin then smiled at their friend's luck. "Go speak to him then." Renjun whispered. Donghyuck can only giggle before stepping closer to the crowd, towards Jen0's direction.

"Vicomte, gentlemen, this is Monsieur Jungwoo, our leading countertenor for five seasons now and Signor Taeil." Lefevre adds.

"An honor, signor. I believe I'm keeping you from your rehearsal. I will be here this evening to share your great triumph. My apologies, monsieur." Jen0 excuses as he heads toward the exit. He passes by a smiling Donghyuck and uttered apologies as he pushed past him. His eyes, however, lingered a second too late at the two people behind the smiling stranger.

Once he was gone, Donghyuck faced his friends and said, "He does not recognize me." His downturned face was held up by Jaemin with his comforting words. "He will definitely recognize you if you meet him later." Renjun said.

The owners then request to hear the aria of Ellise from Hannibal's production to be performed by Monsieur Jungwoo. He smugly bows before signaling Reyer to start.

Think of me, think of me fondly, when we've said goodbye.
Remember me once in a while - please promise me you'll try.
hen you find that, once again, you long to take your heart-

Just as the maestro Reyer cringed yet again, a wooden pole wrapped in one of the painted backgrounds of the production came flying down and pinned the leading singer of the opera. Jungwoo screams as he bats his fists on the ground. Taeil immediately responds and calls for Jungwoo as he tries to lift the offending pole. Internally, he was grateful that his beloved was not hit directly in the head.

Above and unbeknownst to them all, was a dark clothed figure swiftly exiting the ropes room where poles were tied and kept.

The owners forgot their momentary shock and also rushed to attend to the ruffled singer. Taeyong called for the staff assigned to monitor the poles. Someone had to be responsible,

according to the panicking new owners. When Doyoung arrived, he shares a quick glance at Taeyong and nodded imperceptibly.

“Pray, tell- what happened, man? Was no one able to secure the ropes of the poles above?” Reyer asks in frustration. Doyoung, with his wide eyes, simply bowed his head and clasped both his hands. He replied, “By God, I am telling you the truth, I was not at my post and no one was manning the ropes and poles- Please signors, I was not there and if there was, it must have been the ghost!”

Jaehyun’s left eye twitches, “Good heavens! Will you show a little courtesy?”. In addition, John faces a fuming Jungwoo and pleaded, “Monsieur, please! These things do happen.”

Once the lead singer was free and standing, he coldly spoke, “See! These things do happen! Well, until you stop these things happening, I will not be singing!” He is then assisted by Taeil and together they leave the stage.

Their little bubble of frustration was even more burst when Taeyong stepped forward and handed the two gentlemen a note. It was stamped with a red seal. John accepts it with confusion painting his features. Levefre sighs in defeat.

“Ah, here we go. Gentlemen, before I join my family in Frankfurt, I am letting you know that this opera house is apparently being run by a mysterious phantom. This figure also sends his will and intentions through letters and notes like what you have in your hands right now. I used to have such headache whenever I received such demands. Now, I am free. If you need me, you know where to find me.” The previous owner put on his bowler hat and left the new owners and their staff astounded.

Jaehyun, the least confused of the two owners, faced Taeyong and gently asked to expound on what they had just heard. He laments the late information that came with this expensive opera house. John could only put his lips in a tight line as the lead dancer and teacher replied grimly, “The phantom runs this opera house. All the score and production ideas come from his ingenuity. Kindly read the note in your hand to further understand the situation.”

John reads it aloud, “Welcome the Opera Populaire, gentlemen. I am deeply honored to welcome you. As such, I am sure you have prepared the salary of 20,000 francs which I am expecting by nightfall. Also, I pray you continue to leave box 5 empty for my use.” This was met with a snort from Jaehyun who exclaimed, “What a demand!”

Jaehyun, thinking a mile a minute, asks Taeyong and Reyer if there are understudies for the lead roles. Reyer shakes his head. “A full house, Jaehyun! We would have to cancel a full house.” Johnny laments as he takes off his own hat to reflect on the situation.

“There is someone who could sing, signor.” Taeyong suggests as he gestures for Donghyuck to come forward. Obediently, Donghyuck moves gracefully to face the two owners. Reyer subtly shakes his head but is quite curious at the situation.

“This dancer boy?”, Jaehyun asks curiously. “Can you guarantee his skills with a voice teacher?” John asks Taeyong. The ballet teacher only smiles mysteriously as he encourages Donghyuck to share his opinion.

“I do not know him but- he taught me well.” Donghyuck replies.

Behind them, Jaemin and Renjun shared a knowing look. ‘So that’s why he is always late to go to bed.’, they thought. Both owners could only sigh in frustration as they signaled Reyer to lead the orchestra. John nods encouragingly at Donghyuck while Jaehyun comments that these strings of event is doing nothing to calm his nerves.

And Donghyuck sings in his heavenly voice:

*Think of me, think of me fondly, when we've said goodbye.
Remember me once in a while - please promise me you'll try.
When you find that, once again, you long to take your heart back and be free –
if you ever find a moment spare a thought for me ...*

*We never said our love was evergreen,
or as unchanging as the sea –
but if you can still remember, stop and think of me ...
Think of all the things we've shared and seen –
don't think about the things which might have been ...
Think of me, think of me waking, silent and resigned.
Imagine me, trying too hard to put you from my mind.
Recall those days, look back on all those times,
think of the things we'll never do - there will never be a day,
when I won't think of you ...*

*We never said our love was evergreen,
or as unchanging as the sea –
but please promise me, that sometimes, you will think of me!*

Later that night, the production of Hannibal was already considered a success as Donghyuck sings and steals the hearts of the audience. He earns multiple ‘bravos!’ and yellow roses.

In box 5 of the theater, which was supposed to be empty, housed Jen0’s shocked and awed form. “Bravo!” He yells and claps before leaving the box and heading down the stairs to meet with the lovely songbird.

“Can it be? Can it be Donghyuck? You’re really not a bit of the gawkish boy that once you were. You may not remember me, but I remember you.”

Think of Me

Chapter Summary

All the praise and glorified words didn't belong to him-
The praises and roses deserved to be given to him.

Chapter Notes

See the end of the chapter for [notes](#)

“Yes, you did well. He will be pleased.” It was Taeyong who met Donghyuck right after his performance. The latter’s adoptive parent had held him in his warm arms as he was congratulated and praised.

The star of the show almost couldn’t smile in with his luck. He was chosen to perform Ellise’ aria! Him-Donghyuck! He was the one who outshone everyone with his version of Ellise’s dress. The material making up his costume was sparkly and showed off his tanned and slim shoulders. The bodice also hugged every curve in his body.

He really couldn’t believe his luck. It was always Jungwoo and Taeil who dominated the stage for several years now and suddenly, he was pushed into the limelight. Donghyuck couldn’t help but tremble in both excitement and nervousness when he was asked to perform the aria on the spot. However, it was all thanks to his master- his tutor- the-

“Now if you’ll excuse me, I need to discipline those who disgraced ballet in the scenes.” Taeyong whispers as he headed for the offending dancers. At this, Donghyuck smiled as he too, had experienced the ballet teacher’s nagging. He decides to ditch the throng of people waiting to meet him and passes beneath Doyoung, who was busy fixing ropes, one floor above him.

He reaches his favorite place- the little altar alcove for remembering the dead, deep within the opera house. Once he reached the candle holders right in front of the angels’ mural, he lit a single candle in memory of his father. He clasps his hands together and pray.

He barely even finished praying when a deep voice sang to him, “Bravo, bravo, bravissimo.” The voice seemed to resonate from everywhere inside the little cove.

Donghyuck lifts his head in acknowledgement.

The songbird opens his mouth to respond but is stopped when Jaemin and Renjun enters the altar cove. “Donghyuck! Donghyuck.” They chorused. Both sported proud smiles and donned fairy-like outfits from their duet performance earlier.

“Where in the world have you been hiding?” Jaemin starts but is easily calmed when Renjun rans up to hug the gown clad Donghyuck. “Really, you were perfect! I only wish I knew your secret.” Renjun exclaims in excitement. The songbird could only give a look of gratitude to his two friends.

“Who is this new tutor?” Jaemin asked in succession, making himself comfortable beside the two who have resorted to sitting on the floor. Donghyuck draws a deep breath before he whispers, “My father once spoke of an angel. I used to dream he’d appear. Now as I sing, I can sense him and I know he’s here. Here in this room he calls me softly, somewhere inside hiding. Somehow I know he’s always with me, he- the unseen genius.” The songbird closes his eyes as he lets his mind wonder.

He remembers every detail of memories that he kept. Memories that he had of him and his father, Baekhyun. His father a renowned violinist with a voice that put almost any angels to shame. ‘Maybe that’s why he was taken from me, to sing in the Lord’s presence’, Donghyuck sadly thinks as he recalls the dying words of his father, that he will send him an angel of music, an angel of music who will sing songs in his head. He speaks of these events with clarity to his eager best friends.

“He is no other than my angel of music- the mysterious tutor who has always been with me since I was adopted by Taeyong.” Donghyuck whispers and as he opens his eyes, it was Jaemin and Renjun’s furrowed brows of concerns that finds. The two had always wondered by Donghyuck slept so late and woke at odd hours. But to hear the odd reason given to them by the songbird, they were not easily comforted.

“Donghyuck, you must have been dreaming. Stories like this can’t come true.” Renjun assuages as he holds the songbird’s hand in a warm countenance.

“Donghyuck, you’re talking in riddles- and it’s not like you.” Jaemin adds as he slowly lifts himself up before gently pulling the others to stand. He carefully nudges them towards

the exit of the alcove. Donghyuck, slowly realizing his friends' concern, can only nod and follow them out. Without his friends knowing, Donghyuck subtly tipped his head around and tried to find the source of the angel's voice. Seeing no one, he decides to sing a bit more to call on his angel. Fortunately, his friends were not against it. They could only watch him in awe as they slowly make their way back to the waiting room meant for the songbird.

"Angel of Music! Guide and guardian! Grant to me your glory!"

"Who is this angel?" Renjun and Jaemin asks quietly. Dongyuck could only sing his heart as he retraces his steps carefully.

"This Angel of Music! Hide no longer! Secret and strange angel

He's with me even now."

"Your hands are turning cold," Jaemin hums and he moves closer to warm Donghyuck's hands.

"All around me"

"Your face, Donghyuck- it's white!" Renjun claims as he tries to warm up the songbird's cheeks which have indeed gone a pale.

"It frightens me"

"Don't be frightened." Both Jaemin and Renjun answers as they nudge him faster towards his waiting room. There was no need for Donghyuck to get spooked even more.

Am I, really?

The trio were all astounded when they find the totality of Donghyuck's waiting room to be covered by countless bouquets and vases of flowers. Everything was dedicated to him, the star of the show. Before the best friends could tease and place flower crowns on Donghyuck's head, they were ushered by their dad who could only smile at their antics.

“See you later, Donghyuck. Enjoy your night.” Renjun calls out before Taeyong can fully get them out. Jaemin also adds, “Worry not your pretty little head, Hyuck. Get some rest.” Once they were outside, Taeyong suddenly returns with a single stalk of a black rose. It also had a silky black ribbon beautifully tied below its bloom.

“He sent this for you.” Was all Taeyong could say while smiling before leaving the room for good. Donghyuck, shocked at the gift, could only gently thumb the silk gingerly. If he had any hesitation regarding his tutor’s existence- it was quelled by the one thing he had sent. This black rose was his answer.

Chapter End Notes

At this point, I am just writing to make you remember and praise Donghyuck's lovely and unique voice.
Thanks for reading

End Notes

This fic was originally for NOMIN or RENMIN but I simply cannot just let go of the idea of LEE DONGHYUCK as lead opera singer (MANIFESTING!) in my favorite musical. Also, imagine Mark as the mysterious opera genius who falls deeply in love with the living embodiment of sunshine.

Context for the (merged) plot:

Hannibal/Ellise' Aria - popular opera production/part

IL MUTTO

Don Juan Triumphant

Countertenor- male counterpart of the female soprano

Orchestra- musical accompaniment for theatre performances

Box - Elevated seat for VIP audience at theatres

The Phantom of the Opera OST (2004 movie)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmE0QECdcL8>

Please [drop by the Archive and comment](#) to let the creator know if you enjoyed their work!