

PHOEBUS and FREDERIC have entered on their patrol of the Cathedral. They see ESMERALDA lingering in an alcove as the rest of the CONGREGATION returns to prayer. FREDERIC moves to go toward ESMERALDA, his hand on the hilt of his sword. PHOEBUS holds out a hand.

START **PHOEBUS**

It's all right. I'll take care of it. (*FREDERIC nods and continues his patrol. PHOEBUS crosses to ESMERALDA.*) I thought you disappeared in a puff of smoke.

ESMERALDA

Don't believe everything you see. (*She tries to get past him.*)

PHOEBUS

And where do you think you're going? (*PHOEBUS reaches for her, but ESMERALDA swiftly pulls her knife out and has it to his throat.*) Easy...I already shaved this morning.

ESMERALDA

You missed a spot.

PHOEBUS

Calm down. Give me a chance to apologize.

ESMERALDA

For what?

PHOEBUS

This. (*PHOEBUS grabs ESMERALDA and forces her to drop the knife.*) Still, I'm impressed. You fight almost as well as a man.

ESMERALDA

Funny, I could say the same about you. (*ESMERALDA elbows PHOEBUS in the lower gut and retrieves the knife, keeping her distance. He buckles, then recovers.*)

PHOEBUS

Don't cause any more trouble—

ESMERALDA

And if I do, you'll arrest me?

PHOEBUS

It is my duty to protect this Cathedral.

ESMERALDA

From dirty Gypsies like me?

PHOEBUS

I have my orders to follow.

ESMERALDA

And if there's one thing a good soldier knows, it's how to follow orders.

PHOEBUS

Who said anything about my being a good soldier?

ESMERALDA

Are you saying you're not?

PHOEBUS

Listen, this promotion has gotten me away from a place I never want to go back to. I will do whatever it takes to keep it.

ESMERALDA

Every soldier I've ever met is so full of good excuses.

PHOEBUS

Where are you from, anyway?

ESMERALDA

You're asking a Gypsy? All I know is I've come from nothing. Just like you.

PHOEBUS

How do you know that about me?

ESMERALDA

Your neck may be smooth, but your hands are rough, and grimy from pig slop. (*Tenderly:*) And worse...

PHOEBUS

Worse?

ESMERALDA

Burying your comrades in unmarked graves. (*PHOEBUS stares at her; can she see that deeply into his soul?*) Please let me go. I must see that boy. What happened to him was my fault.

PHOEBUS

A soldier knows not to fight a battle he can't win.

ESMERALDA

Yes, you soldiers are only interested in winning the battle.

#11 TRANSITION TO BELL TOWER

A noise on the staircase catches her attention. QUASIMODO has been lingering on the steps, watching ESMERALDA. As she turns her head, he disappears. ESMERALDA moves purposefully toward a staircase. PHOEBUS follows.

PHOEBUS

Where are you going?

ESMERALDA

To see that boy.

PHOEBUS

Why can't you mind your own business?

ESMERALDA

It has to be somebody's business. (*She starts to climb the stairs to the bell tower.*) Hello? Are you up there?

As she climbs the stairs, we transition to...

STOP