

## The True Beauty Behind the Phantom's Mask in Andrew Lloyd Webber's *The Phantom of the Opera*

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### ABSTRACT

The Phantom of the Opera is a novel by Gaston Leroux that has been adapted into plays and films. The adaptation of the novel in the play is still being staged in several theatres overseas this year. The best play adaptation is Andrew Lloyd Webber's Phantom of the Opera (1986) because it became the longest-running theatrical event in Broadway history. The neat appearance of the play cannot be separated from the reference play script, which explains all the intrinsic elements. The mask that characterises the Phantom's appearance holds a paradoxical meaning for the beauty he desires to get compassion. Therefore, the following study aims to explore the paradox of the mask as a metaphorical symbol worn by the Phantom from a close reading approach. The analysis is based on the play The Phantom of the Opera by Andrew Lloyd Webber. The metaphorical symbol of the mask is discovered by analysing the narrated details and related dialogue conversations. Then, its intensity directly connects with the paradoxical meaning that using a mask to cover up deformity hides true beauty. Thus, it can be concluded that covering something does not always make it good, and the thing covered is a good object without realising it. This study is expected to increase awareness and open new perspectives that previously defined the Phantom's appearance as hideous, but it turns out that it contains beauty.

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### INTRODUCTION

The popularity of the novel by French author Gaston Leroux entitled *The Phantom of the Opera* has remained strong over time (Kruger & Saayman, 2017). According to data presented by Schneider and Agnew (2022), *The Phantom of the Opera* by English producer and musical theatre Andrew Lloyd Webber, has made a profit of billions of dollars over the 33 years of the play's performances by involving promotion through the box office, records, tours, cast, recordings, merchandise, videos, and films. Due to its consistent success and popularity, the play *The Phantom of the Opera*, which Andrew Lloyd Webber has successfully worked on since 1986, will be used as the literary source for analysis in the study.

*The Phantom of the Opera* focuses on the character of the Phantom for his mysterious masked appearance. Interestingly, the Phantom is described as a terrible person. Sternfeld (2016) explains the Phantom in numerous ways, such as a monster, criminal, genius, God, ghost, and his physical disability blurs regularly with his soul, where numerous characters locate the origin of his problem. Chandler (2009) also emphasises the dreadful side of the Phantom as an inborn composer living in a basement, which contrasts with the image of Andrew Lloyd Webber, the author, surrounded by the public spotlight of his success.

The image of the Phantom is indistinct from several existing studies because his masked and unmasked appearances create various impressions. However, most studies identify the Phantom's appearance as terrifying, even when wearing a mask. Therefore, it is crucial to define true beauty so that the Phantom can be accepted in society, considering that his efforts to wear a mask did not affect his real face, which was also considered terrifying. Jessop

(1933) defines beauty as an aesthetic attitude that is merely natural. True beauty is tied to nature. Marshall (1922) also argued that beauty and truth are identical. The blurring of the Phantom's image in the social environment is most likely due to the oddity of his appearance and his nature hidden behind the use of the mask. The mask worn by the Phantom and the illusion of his nature will be the main implications of this study.

The Phantom's bad portrayal as the main protagonist succeeds in raising questions about whether his character and appearance are that bad. From previous studies, Hapsari et al. (2021) discuss that the Phantom's terrible character in the novel is motivated by various problems and terrors he has experienced since childhood, which impacted his growth. However, Moura (2018) argues that the Phantom's terrifying side remains constant from the novel to various adaptations because of his efforts to protect Christine, a student he fell in love with. Therefore, whatever the motive behind his cruel treatment and terrible appearance, the Phantom's persona is the mysteriously creepy ghost to society, the angel of music to Christine, and his shadow dealing with his crimes, as explained by Raharto and Permatasari (2019).

Exploring the Phantom's character cannot be separated from the white mask he wears almost always. Güven (2022) indicates that the masked Phantom is a character who is both a terrorist and a murderer by pretending to be a ghost in his film criticism. It aligns with the Phantom's identity in the novel as a ghost that makes people around him feel the danger of his existence, especially when his mask is removed (Lee, 2013). The statement implicitly identifies two vicious connotations in the Phantom: uncovering the mask as a murderer and covering the mask as a ghost. Contrary to the argument, Raharto and Permatasari (2019) believe that the Phantom's persona in society differs from the persona he wants to show to his loved one. According to Pafort-Overduin and Tak-Ignaczak's (2014) study of all works of *The Phantom of the Opera* literature, they emphasise that the Phantom is terrifying to those he does not like but bright and pleasant to Christine. Until now, there has been no constant agreement regarding the image separated by using the mask on the Phantom's face.

Drumright (2012) conveys his impression of the Phantom mask, which has a double meaning in the form of the characters and the reader. She continues that the Phantom has the traits that can attract whomever he wants. Karali (2020) agrees that the Phantom's general effect on the audience also contributes to the problematization of mind-body dualism in affecting theory and literary criticism, which also surfaces in cognitive psychology as an emotion–cognition interaction. The phantom's face and the famous mask are both feared and overjoyed, but with a reassuring dose of pity (Sternfeld, 2016).

Most results of previous studies identify the Phantom, both from his masked and unmasked appearances, as a terrible person. Therefore, this study aims to show that the Phantom has true beauty in his face. This beauty is unexpectedly present in his natural appearance, which has been identified as terrifying by most previous studies, even in the character of the Phantom himself. A paradoxical meaning can be explored from the Phantom's use of a mask as a metaphor for the face and supported by symbols that lead to goodness. Furthermore, this study will explain that the Phantom at least has a good side to his appearance that still needs to be widely recognised. This hypothesis arises from the characteristics of the mask proposed by Rousseau, which is that the mask represents falsehood in society, as quoted by Haider (2021). Haider (2021) mentions that removing the mask is a form of self-development that leads to negative consequences because it shows a parody of something desired using artificial objects to balance differences in views. However, this analysis wants to explore whether taking off the mask may not always lead to negative consequences when the action is closely associated with revealing hidden truths for reconciliation, in my opinion. The existence of other possibilities for removing the mask will be a further issue. Another possibility is that removing the mask could be a good indication that requires a paradox study to prove it.

## METHODS

The analysis process is based on the play *The Phantom of the Opera* by Andrew Lloyd Webber in 1986. The reason behind choosing the play adapted by Andrew Lloyd Webber rather than other artists is the continued success and popularity over the years. It is supported by a recent study by Overton (2025) that found *The Phantom of the Opera* is

the longest-running play in Broadway history. This study will use literary theory to find the true beauty in the Phantom's facial appearance that has not been identified in previous studies of *The Phantom of the Opera*. Smith (2016) explains that close reading is an activity concerning texts: a technically informed, free-grained analysis of some piece of writing, usually in connection with some broader question of interest.

The breakdown process will be continued by citing several dialogues and narratives that represent the character development of the Phantom, especially the primary motives and purposes of using masks. There are also criteria required when selecting dialogue excerpts for further analysis. The main criterion is to scan dialogues containing the words mask, face, and other keywords related to the adjective of appearance by corresponding to the Phantom's point of view and other characters. First, metaphorical and symbolic analysis will be used to interpret the mask's images as an object attached to the Phantom. All of that will be grouped into data collection and data analysis. Kairuz et al. (2007) stated that data collection is gathered from the analysis of texts to explore a specific concept. She continues that the data analysis ensures that the verbatim transcripts enable a clear exploration of the dialogue and narrative.

The accompanying meaning behind the Phantom's mask is crucial, as it is consistently worn in almost every appearance. Haider (2021) finds that the mask represents the falsity of society for Rousseau. He continues to show the quasi-Rousseauian notion of dropping the mask in the pre-Hegelian historicist reading of the Phenomenology as a 'kind of self-development of hell'. It indirectly shows that removing the mask became a bad identification before the emergence of the historicist Hegel. Then, Haider (2021) continues Capital as a 'parodic recapitulation of a Hegelian theodicy of world-spirit' whose 'teleological narrative' is one in which the 'reconciliation between the individual and the universal takes place at the expense of the individual'. Theodicy is a philosophy about God that allows humans to do evil for good purposes (Tilley, 2000). It is also related to teleological narrative, meaning every human action has a purpose and function (Sternberg, 1992).

## RESULTS

The close reading method successfully collected several data points in the form of narrative quotes and dialogues that describe the motivation and purpose of the phantom character in the play, *The Phantom of the Opera*, particularly when wearing a mask. Moreover, the quotes will be classified into several categories. All of these categories below are purely key quotes without interpretation or commentary.

### ***The Phantom's Charm Described in Narration***

- a. Inside the room, the mirror opens. Behind it, an inferno of white light stands the Phantom (p.14).
- b. Standing in the frame of the mirror is an efficiency of Christine dressed in a wedding gown, a perfect wax-face impression. In the darkness, it creates the uncanny illusion of an actual mirror image (p.18)
- c. As the mob enters the lair, the Phantom wraps his cloak around himself and disappears. Meg crosses to the throne and picks up his mask in her small hand (p.77)

### ***The Phantom's Persona in Public View***

- a. "... I am the mask you wear..." (p.15)
- b. Masquerade! Hide your face, so the world will never find you! Masquerade! Every face is a different shade! Masquerade! Look around – There's another mask behind you! (p.46).
- c. He's there, the Phantom of the Opera... [SIC] Beware the Phantom of the Opera." (p.15).
- d. Masquerade! Burning glances, turning heads...[SIC] Masquerade! Stop and stare at the sea of smiles around you! (p. 46).

### ***The Phantom's Desires and Beliefs in His Image***

- a. "I am your Angel... [SIC] Come to me: Angel of Music." (p.14).
- b. "Flattering child, you shall know me, see why in the shadow I hide!" (p.14).
- c. "Look at your face in the mirror – I am there inside!" (p.14)
- d. "Damn you! You little prying Pandora! You little demon — "(p.19).

- e. "Say you want me with you, here beside you... [SIC] Anywhere you go, let me go too - Christine, that's all I ask of—" (p.69).
- f. "That fate, which condemns me to wallow in blood has also denied me the joys of flesh... [SIC] this face - the infection which poisons our love." (p.72).
- g. "'Hounded out by everyone! Met with hatred everywhere! No kind words from anyone! No compassion anywhere!'" (71).

### ***The Minority Views Towards the Phantom Appearance***

- a. "This haunted face holds no horror for me now... [SIC] It's in your soul that the true distortion lies... [SIC]" (72-73).

## **DISCUSSION**

### ***The Function Behind the Phantom Mask***

The abstract concept that implies the Phantom's mask contains a symbolic function is the white light that illuminates the Phantom's first appearance in front of Christine, as described, 'Inside the room, the mirror opens. Behind it, an inferno of white light stands the Phantom.' (p.14). In the symbol, white is conceptualised as goodness. It is due to the implication that white is associated with light, goodness, innocence, purity, and perfection, as Cerrato (2012) states. The Phantom's white mask, reflecting in the mirror, gives off a pure illusion that supports his disguise as an angel of music to make Christine fall in love with him. It is demonstrated in the Phantom's statement to Christine, 'I am your Angel... [SIC] Come to me: Angel of Music' (p. 14).

The word 'inferno' precedes the word 'white', thus creating a contradiction in meaning that simultaneously has bad and good connotations for the Phantom. The sentence '... an inferno of white light stands the Phantom' (p.14) can refer to the metaphorical meaning of the concept proposed by Lakoff (1993). According to Lakoff (1993), ontological metaphors are meanings that compare two abstract things, such as objects, emotions, feelings, activities, and ideas. The word 'inferno' has a literal meaning when someone has very strong feelings that are difficult to control (Dictionary, n.d.). Therefore, through the Phantom's first appearance in front of Christine, he has identified himself as a person with a solid desire to emit a good aura in the extremely large white light through the mask reflected in the mirror.

The goodness that the Phantom wants to achieve through the mask is beauty. It is shown through direct images in ontological metaphors when Christine sings the song taught by the Phantom. The lyric fragment is, "... I am the mask you wear..." (p.15), which shows a cross-domain map with 'mask' as the source domain and 'I am' as the target domain. Lakoff (1993) explains that cross-domain is a form of metaphor mapping with the target domain as the source domain. The word 'I am' refers to Christine, a woman in her 20s who is described as having a prominent appearance (p.3). Thus, Christine's beautiful appearance indirectly implies the Phantom's intention of using the mask to give the illusion of beauty.

The discussion about Phantom's mask containing a particular function is not just a hypothesis. The hidden meaning of the mask is implied quite clearly in the song *Masquerade* sung by the guests at the New Year's party. The guests sing the lyrics, 'Masquerade! Hide your face, so the world will never find you! Masquerade! Every face is a different shade! Masquerade! Look around – There's another mask behind you!' (p.46). Therefore, the song *Masquerade* engages readers to be more alert to the people around them because it turns out there are many who use masks to cover things. It is like the Phantom, who uses a mask to satisfy his desire for a beautiful appearance. The lyric fragment 'There's another mask behind you' (p.46) is also part of a metaphor because a mask is analogous to someone's disguise of their real face, which has been hidden. The lyrics in the song contain all the elements that must be present in a metaphorical function, including various expressions that a mask can use to transfer truth and human sensibility in triggering awareness.

The mask worn by the Phantom contains metaphorical and symbolic meanings. It can be seen from the Phantom wearing a white mask, which includes symbols of goodness and purity, to radiate his aura. However, the way the

white light reflected through the Phantom's mask in the mirror is described as an inferno in a metaphorical context, which makes the Phantom's intention to wear a mask refer to something excessive and has a bad connotation. Meanwhile, the goodness that Phantom desires is beauty, which is reflected in Christine's appearance. To make Christine fall in love with him, the Phantom disguises himself as an angel of music in his masked appearance. The song *Masquerade* reveals that the function of the mask as a cover to hide identity in the form of a new face is a symbolic identification. Then, the function of the mask as a means of disguise in various contexts, including beauty, is related to the metaphorical context.

### ***The Paradox of Beauty in a Mask***

From the analysis before, the Phantom uses the mask for beauty purposes to support his disguise as an angel of music sent by Christine's late father. However, it turns out the illusion that Phantom emits through the mask is different in the eyes of the people around him. The mask gives a mysterious illusion that is interpreted with various images. To understand clearly what kind of beauty the Phantom emits through his mask, it is necessary to explore its paradoxical meaning because there is a contradiction in the intention and function of the use of the mask.

A paradox is a statement that seems on its face to be logically contradictory or absurd yet turns out to be interpretable in a way that makes sense (Abrams & Harpham, 2015). At the beginning of his direct appearance, the Phantom provides an abstract riddle that suggests Christine must find out why he is hiding in the shadows. The Phantom expressed this riddle, "Flattering child, you shall know me, see why in the shadow I hide!" (p. 14). The mask creates the illusion of a shadow when used. Shadow can obscure the truth that wants to hide behind the mask. The Phantom shows the truth behind the mask by pointing to the beauty of Christine's face reflected in the mirror through the continuation of the riddle, which reads, "Look at your face in the mirror – I am there inside!" (p.14). In general, the function of the mask is to cover the ugliness of the face with the illusion of beauty, but in his riddle, the Phantom shows that the truth behind the mask is the beauty reflected in Christine's face. However, the Phantom points to Christine's beauty as something inside him, probably intended for his desire for beauty due to an imperfection he keeps hidden.

Identifying abstract deviation from the mask in the Phantom's riddle draws out two conflicting distinctions. The first correct statement of analysis is given by saying that the mask is to cover the face with the illusion of beauty. Then, the second correct analysis is given by saying that the mask is to cover the truth in the form of beauty. To ascertain the meaning of a contradiction, it is essential to condition that two expressions possess the same meaning only if they can be interchanged *salva veritate* without altering the sentence's truth in the context of a propositional attitude (Ackerman, 1990).

The second statement contains the truth based on the existence of an eerie voice that is heard when Christine walks to the lair, which is the Phantom's hiding place. The mysterious voice says, "He's there, the Phantom of the Opera... [SIC] Beware the Phantom of the Opera." (p.28). The eerie voice reacts to the Phantom's masked appearance, which emits a dangerous and terrifying aura. The fearful reaction is obtained because the Phantom forms his image as an opera ghost at the Opéra Populaire. The Phantom relishes his disguise in his masked appearance by carrying out various kinds of cruel terror, whereas he is an ordinary man disguised behind a mask. Meanwhile, the first contradiction statement is also true because the Phantom only strengthens his disguised image as the angel of music in front of Christine by choosing white for the mask, which can radiate goodness and holiness.

The illusion emitted from the use of the mask becomes increasingly blurred when the Phantom stands in front of a broken mirror. The mirror shards creep to the edge of the frame so that the focus is scattered. The situation is explained in the description, 'Standing in the frame of the mirror is an efficiency of Christine dressed in a wedding gown, a perfect wax-face impression. In the darkness, it creates the uncanny illusion of an actual mirror image.' (p. 18). The appearance of the masked Phantom is juxtaposed again with the beauty of Christine wearing a wedding dress through the mirror. However, Christine's beauty is in the form of a statue created by Phantom. The statue of Christine's bride identifies how seriously the Phantom's obsession with beauty leads him to own it completely, even though his appearance is shattered like a mirror. It is supported by the meaning of a wedding dress that is closely related to

marriage, which unites two people. Therefore, the purpose of wearing a mask is to cover the face by enriching the illusion of beauty, which is a paradoxical issue in the first contradiction.

The Phantom's intention to use a mask as an attribute to support beauty becomes vigorous when Christine suddenly takes off the mask to satisfy her curiosity. The Phantom shows an angry reaction and cannot hold back a curse in the form of, "Damn you! You little prying Pandora! You little demon —" (p.19). Pandora's box is a term that has close connotations to ancient Greek mythology. Pandora is the first beautiful woman in Greece to receive a box as a gift from Zeus on her wedding day with Epimetheus (Panofsky & Panofsky, 1956). Grund and Brock (2019) reveal that creatures with all evil qualities will appear when Pandora's box is opened to harm humans during the day and night. The meaning of Pandora's box is in line with the situation experienced by the Phantom when Christine removes his mask. The revelation of Phantom's facial disfigurement causes anger and makes him lose his gentle manners towards Christine. The Phantom feels that his disfigured face is a shame that will tarnish the views of those around him. From a common perspective, people will abandon someone with a terrifying facial appearance like the Phantom. It is confirmed by the results of a study by Macgregor (1990), which reveals that some people are repulsed and even threatened by sight. This situation represents that the mask is to cover the face with the illusion of beauty, as the first correct statement explained before.

The song *Masquerade* brings significant clues to the meaning of masks paradoxically. It is shown in the lyrics fragment 'Masquerade! Burning glances, turning heads...[SIC] Masquerade! Stop and stare at the sea of smiles around you!' (p.46). Everyone will be fooled by using a mask that hides one's identity, as the mask can hide the burning glances in the lyric fragment with a smile. *Masquerade* portrays the dark side of wearing a mask as a way to escape from all reality that refers to the truth. The truth is covered by falsehood through a mask that can deceive identity, behaviour, and personality. Furthermore, no matter how far someone disguises themselves using a mask, there will always be a shadow of the real face, which causes anxiety because the absolute truth cannot be avoided or destroyed. The lyrics of the song *Masquerade* indirectly convey bias regarding the use of masks that emphasise covering up the truth in the form of beauty, a statement of the second paradoxical contradiction.

According to Miller (2007), to be true implies being in harmony with the facts, sometimes even with reason or accepted norms, and precisely accurate, despite being false, which means being untrue, wrong, inaccurate, deceitful, and lying. The statement emphasises that the Phantom's disfigured face is the truth while the mask is a falsity. The correct thing always refers to goodness. This common thread finds the paradoxical meaning of the Phantom mask, which strongly contradicts the general perspective and within the character of the Phantom himself. From the beginning, the Phantom's goal in using a mask is to cover up the flaws on his face, which disgust people and commit crimes against him. However, the mask that the Phantom believes can radiate a good aura from a beautiful appearance covers up the instinctive goodness within him.

The Phantom will behave well without the disguise of a mask or when interacting with people who already know his real face. An example is the Phantom's cautious approach to expressing his love for Christine. The following are the Phantom's unfinished sentences expressing his love for Christine: "Say you want me with you, here beside you... [SIC] Anywhere you go, let me go too - Christine, that's all I ask of—" (p.69). He considers the possibility of an adverse fate for a beautiful woman like Christine, who would live with someone viewed as dreadful by everyone. The Phantom could not finish his proposal as Christine could not bear to show the Phantom's real face behind the mask. Christine wants to show the audience at the Opera Populaire that the Phantom's face without a mask is true beauty. A beauty that is entirely at odds with the standard perspective due to its hideous disfigurement. However, disability is a truth that also means goodness. The beauty in the Phantom's disfigured face is mystical. According to Synnott (1989), mystical beauty has profound implications for beauty and someone physically disabled and ugly, as the equation comes from Plato and Homer.

The Phantom's unattractive appearance causes him to fear love and avoid being loved due to plummeting his self-confidence when he no longer wears his mask. He states this directly in front of Christine, "That fate, which condemns me to wallow in blood, has also denied me the joys of flesh... [SIC] this face - the infection which poisons our love."

(p. 72). Apart from that, his mother's hatred and fear also trigger the Phantom's low self-confidence about his face after seeing him, who had just been born. The Phantom expresses his sadness, "That fate, which earned a mother's fear and loathing... [SIC] A mask, my first unfeeling scrap of clothing." (p. 72). The Phantom has been aware that the mask is an attribute that supports his fake appearance since childhood. He uses a mask to cover all his sadness and fear with a callous look. The Phantom's awareness of wearing a mask shows that the contradictory truth of using a mask is still the first issue, whose aim is to cover the face with the illusion of beauty.

Nevertheless, Christine denies the Phantom's ugly flaw in his face as true beauty. The Phantom's words, "Pity comes too late - turn around and face your fate: an eternity of this before your eyes" (p. 72), are opposed by Christine as a positive thing rather than a person who needs to be pitied. This is because the word 'eternity', which refers to the Phantom's disfigured face, has a close context with the truth. Stump and Kretzmann (1991) state that eternity is attached to an absolute truth. The Phantom wearing the mask is beautiful because that makes Christine love him as the mysterious angel of music. However, his appearance without the mask is attractive because his deformity is eternal, as it contains the truth. The Phantom without the mask is also true goodness because he will behave appropriately without disguise as an opera ghost who does cruel terror to anyone except Christine, the only one who identifies him as an angel of music. The Phantom will not take extreme actions beyond the limits disguised by his new identity through the mask.

Christine expressed, "This haunted face holds no horror for me now... [SIC] It's in your soul that the true distortion lies... [SIC]" (p.72-73). Christine's point of view reveals that the Phantom feels hideous about his disfigured appearance because he believes that society's definition of beauty does not include him. The evidence is when Christine listens to the Phantom complain, "Hounded out by everyone! Met with hatred everywhere! No kind words from anyone! No compassion anywhere!" (p.71). The Phantom distorts the concept of beauty due to society's poor attitudes towards his facial flaws, which act as a trigger. Of all the people who believe that a mask is used to enhance one's appearance in disguise, Christine is the only one aware of the paradoxical meaning behind the contradiction. Christine refers to the second contradiction issue.

Ultimately, the Phantom begins to believe that his flaws are true beauty. True beauty is appearance as it is, without falsehoods in the form of masks that hide one's true self. Wearing a mask can trigger things beyond oneself that lead to deception. The resolution begins when the Phantom starts to leave the white mask he has been wearing. The Phantom disappears somewhere using his magic powers as a magician, as the description explains, 'As the mob enters the lair, the Phantom wraps his cloak around himself and disappears. Meg crosses to the throne and picks up his mask in her small hand.' (p. 77). The Phantom throws away the white mask that signifies the beauty he wants to show to the public because he wants to show the beauty in himself through the flaw on the right side of his face. The Phantom feels that his need for beauty has been fulfilled in himself through Christine's confession. He gives up Christine to Raoul, which is the best decision, so that Christine's beauty will not be tarnished by the Phantom's crimes when wearing a mask. Therefore, both of them will be beautiful with their real facial appearance.

### ***The True Beauty in Phantom***

In the previous discussion, two contradictory statements arose concerning the function of the mask as a symbol of covering and metaphorically in the form of disguises. The two statements that have been discussed regarding the contradictions are the first correct statement of analysis, given by saying that the mask is to cover the face with the illusion of beauty. Then, the second correct analysis is given by saying that the mask is to cover the truth in the form of beauty. These two statements can relate to the dialectical method that Hegel proposed. The dialectic theory maintains that something—for example, human thought—develops in a way characterised by the so-called dialectic triad: thesis, antithesis, and synthesis (Popper, 1940).

The first correct statement of analysis is given by saying that the mask is to cover the face with the illusion of beauty, which is part of the thesis. A *thesis* is a statement that can motivate conflict because it will probably be like most things in the world (Popper, 1940). The thesis also correlates with the concept of paradox, in which the context needs to identify a contradiction in a general belief. The supporting ideas of the first statement are that the Phantom

disguises himself as an angel of music to Christine, the Phantom creates the Christine statue wearing a bridal dress, and the Phantom curses Pandora's Box when Christine removes her mask. All of these supporting ideas show the awareness of the Phantom's mind that his natural face, which has a deformity, is ugly. He needs to beautify his appearance by using an object in the form of a mask to cover it.

Hegel foregrounds the distinction between the ideality of Subjective Spirit and the reality of Objective Spirit (Moyar, 2010). The Phantom wears a mask of awareness that his facial deformity is a form of ugliness, supported by the views of the people around him. The people around the Phantom consider him to be a terrible figure. The Phantom attempts to survive in society by wearing a mask as a form of reconciliation to find a point of peace, so that people do not oppress him because of his deformed face. The way the Phantom represents his ideal concept of beauty through the mask is a subjective spirit. However, people still thought the Phantom's mask appearance was terrible in reality. This reality is the objective spirit.

The Phantom's decision to use the mask contradicts the value of natural beauty. Christine realises the contradiction that the Phantom had distorted the meaning of beauty regarding his real face. The mask makes the Phantom's appearance even more terrifying because his pure beauty in the form of deformity covers up and makes him take actions beyond his control. It includes the second true statement about the function of masks to cover the truth in the form of beauty, which is the antithesis point in Hegel's theory. Antithesis is the opposing idea because it is directed against the thesis (Popper, 1940). Christine proves that the Phantom's disfigured face is more beautiful than his masked appearance by showing that the Phantom's weak or tender nature is more human without the mask. Christine said this vaguely through her dialogue to Phantom, "What kind of life have you known...? God give me courage to show you, you are not alone' (p.76). Apart from that, the eerie voice and the song *Masquerade* in the play also try to express the function of a mask, which is to cover a person's actual appearance by implicitly hiding their true beauty.

The struggle between the thesis and the anti-thesis continues until some solution develops the relative value of both by trying to preserve the merits and avoid the limitations; then, the result will be the synthesis (Popper, 1940). Previously, the Phantom thought his disfigured face was ugly. Still, after Christine realises that the Phantom's disfigured face is beautiful compared to the mask, the Phantom understands that what Christine said is true. The mask has been dissolving its original nature due to forming a new identity. Meanwhile, the nature of masks is beautifying, but if used consistently, they will destroy a person's identity. Therefore, it is better to take care of a disfigured face than to cover it with a new identity. Then, the true beauty is the Phantom's natural face, which contains deformity without the mask that he realises as a beauty in himself.

## CONCLUSION

*The Phantom of the Opera* introduces a new side to the unusual function of masks. The Phantom uses a mask as a form of reconciliation to conform to people's standards of beauty in general, so that his disfigured face is not included in beauty. In the process of reconciliation, Phantom sets metaphors in his deformed appearance, hidden by the beauty of the mask as an object that represents the face by paying attention to symbols. The symbols chosen by Phantom refer to the meaning of goodness, such as the white mask, placement on the right side of the face, and identity as the Angel of Music to Christine in his masked appearance. On the other hand, Christine is a minority variable who breaks the general perspective that the Phantom's disfigured face is true beauty because it contains the truth. Christine underlined that it should be noted that masks and the illusion of beauty do not create a true concept because masks are objects that contain falsehood. Therefore, a paradoxical meaning is created that true beauty is a natural face that is received with love to be cared for by the Phantom instead of being covered with a mask. It is important to emphasise that the general public should change the minority perspective to the majority. In the end, this study believes that actions to spread the belief in natural beauty are required. Therefore, it wants to encourage any research on such a topic.

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