

REVISIONS TO C'EST LA VIE SCRIPT (or LA VIE ENNUI)

*The following revisions were made to the script based on performances made after the premiere production in Chicago. I have found the play to be shorter—as well as funnier and more effective—thanks to these revisions. Please make them to the script you received from Dramatic Publishing. Merci beaucoup! – Gregg Opelka*

pp 7-8 (Opening recorded voiceover)

Use this opening voiceover speech instead:

MALE VOICEOVER

*Mesdames, messieurs, j'ai le très grand plaisir de vous souhaiter la bienvenue Chez Leplée...*

*(Suddenly realizing his mistake)*

Oh! *Pardon!* Ladies and gentlemen, it gives me a *large* pleasure to wish all of you this beautiful evening a very warm welcome to Chez Leplée, our little nightclub set right in the heart of the off-off-off

*(with finality)*

off Montmartre district. Tonight, your two favorite songbirds, Dominique and Fatiguée, have a wonderful surprise in store for you. But before we start—*s'il vous plait*, a few brief words. First, there will be no more cocktails served until after the show is over. This is because tonight our waiter—Yves—is also operating the light board.

*(The lights flash wildly for a few seconds.)*

*(Dryly.)* For the first time.

*(One more short wild light flash)*

Yes, as you can see, it is “All About Yves.” Second, no photographs, please. If you want to see pictures of our two lovely stars, go to the police station.

*(crescendoing throughout this speech)*

And now, *mes amis*, Chez Leplée is honored to present the girls with the low notes and the high heels, the girls who gave the “OOMPH” to the Arc de Triumpe, the girls who put the “OOZE” in “chanteuse”—Dominique Jolie and Fatiguée Fourbue, in a one-night-only presentation of their new musical sorbet, C'EST LA VIE.

p. 9: Change D's line “Ooh, and there are so many of you. That is nice” to “You were wrong, Fatiguée—there are more than two of them! That is nice.”

p. 9 Change D's line “You know, for a man your age...” to this: “You know we love you.” *(She makes three "air kisses" in his direction.)* “You look awfully handsome tonight.”

p. 11: Fatiguee: “They are ~~usually~~ not worth the whistle.” (Cut “usually”)

p. 12: Change D's line to “conveniently detained by the Chief of Police.”

p. 17: Right before F's “But you know what the worst part of it is?”, add these lines:  
“I've learned: Men, Dominique, are like taxis. When you don't need one, they're everywhere. And when you DO? -- you're better off walking.”

p. 22: Replace the first two speeches and the first two sentences of the third speech with these:

F: Ooh, I see Dominique's song pleases you! *Très bien, très bien.* She's a wonderful entertainer. After all, I trained her myself!  
(*Noticing Dominique.*) *Qu'est-ce que c'est, ma chère Dominique?* Have you seen something strange?

D: (*MOVING CLOSER TO F.*) *Oui.* You're not wearing my zebra boa!

F: Why would I wear your zebra boa when there are so many others in the dressing room? I just grabbed the first one I saw.

D: But you always grab my zebra boa!

F: Dominique, I think you need a little break. You look like Hamlet after his visit from his dead papá. JPP! Take our poor sparrow... (etc.)

p. 23: Cut the sentence: "She didn't even notice..." and the two following sentences. Resume with "Besides, tonight..."

p. 24: Cut the lines : "Oh and s'il vous plait..." through "Chief of Police."; change the next line to these few lines: "Ah, JPP, you are a German train! Right on time, my friend! Right on time!"

p. 27: After D's "And just what did you hear?", add this:

(*FATIGUEE notices JPP paying too close attention to this exchange.*)

F: JPP! Go get me my jacket. *Vite, vite!*

(*JPP quickly exits, sorry to be missing the good part. As soon as JPP is gone, F. continues, relishing the dirt*)

F: I heard the ballet master..."

p. 27: Change D's "in his apartment" to "in his bedroom."

p. 27: Cut F's "Don't you understand that?"

p. 28: Right after D's line "ready to come back," cut the rest of her speech and F's next speech. Then cut the first two lines of D's speech and start with "And then you got me the audition..."

p. 28: In D's line "...just so much vodka under the bridge" cut the words "so much"

p. 29: After F's "just fine with me," replace what follows (up to D's next line) with this:

(*Just as she finishes saying this, JPP enters with her jacket. She continues her rant to him, an innocent bystander*)

F: What do YOU want?!

(*JPP holds out her smoking jacket. She takes it brusquely. He heads for the piano.*)

Merci! Now go write a symphony.

p. 29: Change D's "Be nice to him" to "Calm down."; Change F's next speech to: "JPP—different? Next you'll be telling me the Eiffel Tower is tall. (beat; resigned) Oh very well. Whatever."

p. 30: [Note: the women perform this song wearing Dietrich-like men's smoking jackets, very chic; they lose the jackets right after the song]

p. 32: Change D's line "That must be his new..." to "It's his new..."

p. 32: In F's line "Enough ~~already~~" cut the word "already" ; a bit further on, cut the words "and write something new"

p. 33: Change F's lines "That's impossible...himself." To "No, he beat me to that already."

- p. 34: Cut F's line "Besides...as the rest of them."
- p. 35: In D's first speech, cut the word "Monsieur" before "Hamlet"; then cut the next two sentences and change the last sentence to "Is the great Madame Fourbue considering a return to the classics?"
- p. 35: Cut D's line "No, what is our problem?"
- p. 35: In F's line, replace "You are right there. I mean," with "Really,"
- p. 35: Cut D's and F's lines "Flamenco." "Brava."
- p. 35: Change the next few lines thus:  
D: And who has your acting experience? Genet, Moliere, Marivaux, Feydeau, Cocteau.  
F: Keep going! I'm enjoying this!  
D: You're right! We are overworked AND underpaid! I want to be a star. Or at least I want to earn the salary of a star.  
F: Right! Let's take the great Piaf herself.
- p. 36: Change D's line to: "Well, apart from fame, money and men, I can't think of a single thing."
- p. 36: Cut F's "Think harder" and the following line.
- p. 36: After F's "...Orphan Edie gets a home," the rest of the speech should read:  
"I tell you, that girl was a genius. She perfected the fine art of Looking Impoverished to Get Work."
- p.36: Change F's "It's all an act" speech to this:  
F: The waif look. It's all an act. The outstretched arms that say, "Pity me." The vacant stare that says, "Help me." The quavering vibrato that says, "Believe me." It's as real as a gypsy's oath.
- p. 42: Reverse the order of D's line and drop the 'O' to read like this: *Mon dieu! Quels jolis fleurs!*
- p. 42: Cut F's "How do I know?"
- p. 42: Change the first two lines of D's speech about Francois to read like this:  
D: I remember when François and I split up. He sent me a Venus fly-trap as a farewell gift.
- p. 43: Cut D's "You're incorrigible."
- p. 44: In D's first speech change "The waiter" to "He" (The waiter is running the light board—see new opening speech.)
- p. 44: In D's second speech, cut the word "probably" and change the last sentence to read:  
No, darling, an involuntary facial spasm is hardly an invitation to a *tête-à-tête*
- p. 44: Replace the next 3 speeches (D-F-D) with this one by D:  
D: Fatiguee, can you believe it?—we're doing our very own show! Isn't this exciting?
- p. 44: Cut D's "Oh Fatiguee you are too cynical" line
- p. 44: In F's speech, cut "Escape?" and change the next line to:  
"Dominique, you are priceless! Escape is what..." (the rest as written)
- p. 45: Cut D's "What is to tell?" and the first line of F's next speech.
- p. 45: In D's speech, change the word "newspapers" to "croissants."
- p. 45: Cut D's "I believe men lack..." line and the following three lines through "going power."
- p. 46: Change D's "sur la plage" in the first speech to "by the sea."
- p. 49: In F's speech beginning "I wish I could say..." cut "~~went off to explore Africa and~~"
- p. 49: Cut F's "not a day younger"

- p. 50: Cut F's "like that" (after "money problems or something")
- p. 50: in F's final speech, after "To be honest," the speech should read as follows:  
I wasn't crazy about the idea, but it did keep the wolf away from the door for a few weeks.  
And then—a few years. Until keeping the wolf away from the door just became a way of life.
- p. 51: Cut D's line "Where would we go?"
- p. 51: In the next speech, cut F's "It wouldn't be so hard for you" and the word "money"
- p. 52: change the word "ex-dancer" in F's line to "ex-ballerina"
- p. 52: in F's speech, cut "Start a new life."
- p. 54: In D's speech, change "the ladies" to "you ladies"
- p. 56: Cut D's "No, on second thought...kind enough" line.
- p. 57: Change D's line to "special bottle" (from "new bottle"); cut "with everything"; add "Don't go away."
- p. 57: Change F's second line to:  
F: Jean-Paul-Pierre, I'm changing the program. I need to sing this number tonight instead.
- p. 60: Cut D's "Our employer...mousetraps" lines. Add one line: "Here you go, mon cher" as she brings a glass of champagne to JPP. Then resume with "Perhaps you are ..."
- p. 60: Change D's line to: "Avec the brass section. Oo-la-la."
- p. 60: Change F's next speech to:  
F: And we have the most fantastic parties. We sing, dance, play cards...
- p. 60: After "dry champagne," change the next two lines to:  
D: The neighbors don't even bother complaining about the noise.  
F: Because they know the Chief of Police is right here with us.
- p. 60: In D's last speech cut the "Oh my God."
- p. 64: Change D's "before we took our break" to "on our break"
- p. 65: In D's first speech, add "*Monsieur*" after "doing here?";  
change the last "I mean" to "we're just"
- p. 68: If using the song "C'est la Vie" change the final sentence of F's line to read thus:  
F: No, my friends--everything will be all right—come what may. You see, in France we have a little saying...

NOTE: If using the title *C'est La Vie*, replace all the JPP compositions with the alternate pages in the score using "*C'est La Vie*" in lieu of "*La Vie Ennui*." And obviously, the final song should be *C'est la Vie* and not *La Vie Ennui*.