



**PHILIPPE**

*"I know what my privileges are"*

## Character

Philippe

The aesthete

**Age :** 47 yrs

**Gender:** male

**Keywords:** aristocratic, arrogant, privileged, self-centered

**Drama:** Philippe, as an aristocrat and the richest client, embodies the way prostitution was considered as mundane as that type, and how the system was considered a legitimate part of society, that was widely tolerated due to being considered necessary to cater to the desires of men. Philippe also illustrates, through his personal mourning (he becomes a widower between the first two scenes) the fear of change and growing old that resides in most men. Confronted to mortality and death, will he try to grow out of his hedonistic posturing, or dive even more into his passions to forget a meaningless existence?

**Narrative arcs:** fear of growing old, fear of change, mourning, reconsidering life choices

## Story

I am a hedonist and an aesthete. I grew up with every comfort and everything money and good breeding can give you. I was born in the old aristocracy that survived all French revolutions, and I am proud to be part of the country's elite. Both my sisters made good, proper marriages, and I, as the only son, inherited the family's fortune. I know what my privileges are.

I made an arranged marriage, and had two children out of it, though don't see them very often. There is respect in my marriage, but no love and passion. We both did our duties by our families. I take care of the estate and of my money, but the rest of the time I can devote to my passions and entertainment.

I like the gentlemen's Clubs, horse races, and of course the brothels. Some of the better Houses are like a second place of residence to men like me. Status and money give us all the pleasure and fun one can buy. Life at home can be so boring, sitting silent with the wife, with nothing to say. So I live mostly away from home to find pleasure. I am really an expert in all good things, the fine wine, the flesh of women. I am an expert in all pleasures. My wife knows, of course, even if she pretends not to. I guess sometimes she resents me for being away so much, but she never complains. This is how things go in our families.

*The Flowers of May* is the brothel I am the most used to. I am a regular client of Flora's, the House's leading courtesan. We have an old understanding and friendship, Flora and I, I like being comfortable with her, the

uncomplicated appeal of sex with her. I also like that my old friend André, the prefect of Police of Paris, is also a regular here. It is nice, having a friend around. The Flowers were not my favorite place originally, but Mia, the owner's sister, convinced me to give it a try. She was right. In this House, you can find exactly what you're looking for.

I like the parties at the Flowers, I feel at home there. I find a respite from solitude and emptiness in existence. This is why I've decided to take my nephew Paul there, the next time I visit. He is my eldest sister's son, but has grown up surrounded by women, he needs to learn how to be a man.

I have learnt that my wife has been taken ill, though she hid from me how serious her condition was. I don't know how to react. We've never been closed, but it is hard for me to imagine my wife dead. I am wondering now, what I did with my life? What will be remembered of me when I am gone? Have I wasted my existence in the pursuit of pleasure?

## **Past**

*Philippe looked at the girl. Fair-haired, a true aristocratic profile. She looked quite good.*

*"We'll be married soon, Beatrice. Are you happy ?*

*- Yes, my lord. I can promise you, I'll be a good wife for you. I want to do my duty by my family.*

*- This is well. I'm sure we'll be very happy together."*

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*Philippe and André were sharing drinks:*

*"I saw you at the races the other day, with that dreadful character Barthelemy. What in hell are you doing, entertaining that man's company?" asked Philippe.*

*"I like him well enough. He's fun to be around. Sometimes it is pleasant to seek the company of lesser people, to feel comforted in one's superiority. Isn't it the exact reason why you're always having Flora?*

*- It's not quite the same. Flora is quite exceptional, quite the talented lover. I can't seem to be tired of her. But I'll probably go for some of the other girls tonight. Maybe one of the new ones. Have you noticed the redhead? I find her to be quite a delightful little piece."*

## Others

**Flora** (37 yrs) : the favorite, my mistress these past ten years. We are almost like an old couple, I don't take other girls often, and she rarely has other clients, though she has to when Madam May demands it. She's a great lover and a friend, even with the differences of fortune and class between us.

**Iris** (25 yrs) : Flora's rival, an ascending, bashful personality. I would be quite a catch for her. Will I let myself be tempted ? I could find the idea appealing, but Flora would be extremely jealous if I did.

**Rose** (22 yrs) : a strange girl, who abuses the drug and always likes to speak her mind out of turn. They say she suffers a lot, gets all the worst clients, especially Barthelémy. How does she even survive all the violence? That is quite a mystery.

**Violette** (17 yrs) : the new girl, quite fresh and pretty. She could be a gift for Paul. Let's see if she becomes a strong one like Flora or if life at the brothel breaks her.

**André** (42 yrs) : he's an old friend. He comes from a more modest family, but he made a great political career. He's smart and a great listener. However, he seems to be always on edge, and nervous. I know he finds comfort at the brothel. But will that be enough for him?

**Barthélémy** (35 yrs) : he's a social climber who made it after marrying a rich widow and becoming an influential industrialist. He's close to Flora, they've known each other since he was a bouncer at the Flowers. I don't like him and find him vulgar, and he seems to enjoy provoking me.

**Paul** (19 yrs) : my nephew, who just arrived in Paris to study and make his place in the world. I intend to educate him into all things pleasurable, and make sure he becomes a true man of the world.

## **Game structure**

#1 Workshops

#2 Introduction scenes

#3 Opening

#4 Act I, daytime: the New Year celebration

#5 Act I, nighttime: in the chambers

#6 Act I, remembrances: black box time

#7 Intermission

#8 Act II, daytime: Autumn Solstice

#9 Act II, nighttime: in the chambers

#10 Act II, remembrances: black box time

#11 Intermission

#12 Act III, daytime: Farewell

#13 Act III, remembrances

#14 Intermission

#15 Epilogue