

# BLITHE SPIRIT

## AUDITION PACK

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## BLITHE SPIRIT – ABOUT THE PLAY

**Charles Condomine**, a novelist, and his wife, **Ruth**, have invited their friends **Dr. and Mrs. Bradman** to join them for drinks and dinner with a local clairvoyant, **Madame Arcati**. Charles is planning a novel about a homicidal spiritualist and wants to observe the behavior of Madame Arcati during a séance after dinner. The Bradmans arrive, and the four friends discuss Madame Arcati, sure that she will be a harmless fraud. They are interrupted when Madame Arcati arrives, dinner is served, and the séance begins. Much to the surprise of the two couples, there are supernatural manifestations--the table trembles, Madame Arcati falls into a trance, and Charles hears the voice of **Elvira**, his first wife, whom he loved dearly but who died several years ago. Frightened, he wakes Madame Arcati, and the party breaks up.

As Charles shows the Bradmans out, in walks the ghost of Elvira, gray from head to foot. Only Charles can see and hear her, and he and Ruth immediately quarrel about her presence. The cross-conversation between Charles and Ruth and Charles and Elvira is exasperating to Ruth, who, believing Charles drunk, goes off to bed in a huff.

The next morning at breakfast, Ruth is very cool to Charles and insists that he had too much to drink the night before. When he insists that he had a hallucination, Ruth attributes it to indigestion. The bickering continues until Elvira enters, carrying roses. When Charles sees her, a comical miscommunication begins, with Ruth unable to see or hear Elvira and feeling certain that Charles's unpleasant remarks are meant for her. Ruth becomes convinced her husband is mad and tries to soothe him and go for a doctor. Charles, frantic to be believed, enlists Elvira's help, and she moves a bowl of flowers around the room to prove her existence. Ruth becomes hysterical, not sure whether she is being deluded, is going insane, or is in the presence of a ghost.

Later, alone, Ruth visits with Madame Arcati again--and is shocked and angered that Madame Arcati is unable to dematerialize Elvira and believes that Charles subconsciously wanted Elvira back. When Ruth is rude to her, the spiritualist leaves in a huff. Elvira and Charles enter, and Elvira seems delighted that she will be a permanent guest. Ruth swears to rid herself of the ghost.

Suspense builds when, several days later, both **Edith** (the maid) and Charles have accidents--Edith because of axle grease rubbed on the stairs and Charles on a ladder that proves to have been sawed nearly in two. Ruth insists, and Charles is convinced, that Elvira is trying to kill Charles to have him for herself again. Ruth leaves in the car, which Elvira had booby-trapped for Charles, and is killed in the ensuing "accident." The act ends with Elvira frantically retreating from Ruth's ghost, invisible to Charles.

Charles calls Madame Arcati, who goes into a trance to try and dematerialize Elvira. It works in reverse, though, and in walks, the ghost of Ruth, now visible, along with Elvira, to Charles. After trying all sorts of supernatural tricks, Madame Arcati is about to despair; the ghosts simply will not go away. Then she realizes that it was not Charles who called up Elvira and Ruth--it was Edith. The maid, when discovered, is contrite, and Madame Arcati hypnotizes her; and the ghosts vanish at last. Suggesting that Charles travel for a while, Madame Arcati exits.

Charles, now alone, but *not* alone, teases Ruth and Elvira about how much he will enjoy his freedom. Vases crash into the fireplace, pictures come crashing down, the mantel topples--and the curtain falls.

**BLITHE SPIRIT – PRODUCTION DATES**

and

**A NOTE ABOUT REHEARSALS**

*Blithe Spirit* is a co-production with the Numerica PAC. Performances will take place in-the-round on the Numerica PAC stage, with intimate audience seating on either side of the stage.

**PERFORMANCE DATES AND TIMES:**

**Friday Feb 4 7:30 pm**

**Saturday Feb 5 2:00 pm**

**Saturday Feb 5 7:30 pm**

**Sunday Feb 6 2:00 pm**

**Thursday Feb 10 7:30 pm**

**Friday Feb 11 7:30 pm**

**Saturday Feb 12 2:00 pm**

**Saturday Feb 12 7:30 pm**

Please note: both Saturdays, Feb 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> are two-show days.

Rehearsals are TBD, but will likely be Mondays-Thursday evenings, beginning the week after Christmas. We will try to accommodate any and all reasonable conflicts as we create our rehearsal schedule. **All performers must be available for the entirety of tech week, which begins Sunday January 30<sup>th</sup>.**

## BLITHE SPIRIT – CHARACTER DESCRIPTIONS

**Charles Condomine (35-50)** - a novelist. Charles is bright, sophisticated, articulate, and debonair but somewhat at the mercy of his wives, present and past. His dabbling in spiritualism comes about only because he's planning to use it as a subject for a novel which is what leads Charles to set up a séance. He is skeptical at first but becomes a reluctant true believer when the ghost of his first wife appears—and stays.

**Ruth Condomine (30s)** - Charles's second wife. Like her husband, Ruth is witty and sophisticated. Ruth is a bit stuffy and a little predictable. She is genuinely concerned that Charles has truly lost his mind (when Elvira appears) and does what's needed to restore order in their home and Charles to normalcy.

**Elvira (20s/30s)** - the ghost of Charles's late first wife. In life, Elvira was spirited, outgoing, wild, and carefree. In death, she is no different (for example, she socializes with Genghis Khan, etc.). She does (did?) love Charles, if somewhat casually, and is jealous of Ruth.

**Madame Arcati (???)** - Of indeterminate age, Madame Arcati is the local eccentric, and considers herself a genuine spiritualist and medium. It appears she truly is in contact with the other world and inadvertently is the “medium” through which Elvira is called back to this one.

**Dr. George Bradman (40's/50's)** - is a good friend of the Condomines who is invited to dinner and the séance. He is entirely skeptical of anything to do with the occult but tries his utmost to go along with the proceedings for the sake of Charles's research.

**Violet Bradman (30s/40s)** - is Dr. Bradman's wife. Simple and naïve, she is quite excited about being in the presence of the medium, whom she finds fascinating.

**Edith (late teens/20s)** - is the Condomine's new maid. Extremely eager to please. She is nervous and tears around at breakneck speed trying to do things right and make a good impression.

*Please be aware that British accents will be required for most of the characters.*

## BLITHE SPIRIT - MONOLOGES

**RUTH:** This is intolerable! I've been making polite conversation all through dinner last night and breakfast and lunch today--and it's been a nightmare--and I am not going to do it anymore. I don't like Elvira any more than she likes me and what's more I'm certain that I never could have, dead or alive. I am now going up to my room and I shall have my dinner on a tray. You and she can have the house to yourselves and joke and gossip with each other to your heart's content. The first thing in the morning I am going up to London to interview the Psychological Research Society and if they fail me, I shall go straight to the Archbishop of Canterbury—

**ELVIRA:** I sat there, on the other side, just longing for you day after day. I did really--all through your affair with that brassy looking woman in the South of France I went on loving you and thinking truly of you--then you married Ruth and even then I forgave you and tried to understand because all the time I believed deep inside that you really loved me best... that's why I put myself down for a return visit and had to fill in all those forms and wait about in draughty passages for hours--if only you'd died before you met Ruth everything might have been all right--she's absolutely ruined you--I hadn't been in the house a day before I realized that. Your books aren't a quarter as good as they used to be either.

## BLITHE SPIRIT - MONOLOGES

**CHARLES:** Ruth--Elvira--are you there? I just want to tell you that I'm going away so there's no point in your hanging about any longer--I'm going a long way away--somewhere where I don't believe you'll be able to follow me. In spite of what Elvira said, I don't think spirits can travel over water. Is that quite clear, my darlings? You said in one of your more acid moments, Ruth, that I had been hag--ridden all my life! How right you were--but now I'm free, Ruth dear, not only of Mother and Elvira and Mrs. Winthrop-Lewellen, but free of you too, and I should like to take this farewell opportunity of saying I'm enjoying it immensely! Good--bye for the moment, my dears. I expect we are bound to meet again one day, but until we do, I'm going to enjoy myself as I've never enjoyed myself before.

**MADAME ARCATI:** I did was requested to do, which was to give a séance and establish contact with the Other Side. I had no idea that there was any ulterior motive mixed up with it. Am I to understand that I was only invited in a spirit of mockery...? (*incensed*) Tricks of the trade!?! Insufferable! I've never been so insulted in my life. I feel we have nothing more to say to one another, Mrs. Condomine. Your attitude from the outset has been most unpleasant, Mrs. Condomine. Some of your remarks have been discourteous in the extreme and I should like to say, without umbrage, that if you and your husband were foolish enough to tamper with the unseen for paltry motives and in a spirit of ribaldry, whatever has happened to you is your own fault, and, to coin a phrase, as far as I'm concerned you can stew in your own juice!

**BLITHE SPIRIT – SCENE SIDES #1**

**RUTH – MADAME ARCATI**

**MADAME ARCATI:** My dear Mrs. Condomine, I came directly I got your message.

**RUTH:** That was very kind of you.

**MADAME ARCATI** [*briskly*]: Kind? Nonsense! Nothing kind about it--I look upon it as an outing.

**RUTH:** I'm so glad--do sit down. I am profoundly disturbed, Madame Arcati, and I want your help.

**MADAME ARCATI:** Fire away.

**RUTH:** It's most awfully difficult to explain.

**MADAME ARCATI:** Facts first--explanations afterwards.

**RUTH:** It's the facts that are difficult to explain--they're so fantastic.

**MADAME ARCATI:** Facts very often are. Come now--take the plunge--out with it. You've heard strange noises in the night no doubt--boards creaking--doors slamming--subdued moaning in the passages--is that it?

**RUTH:** No--I'm afraid it isn't.

**MADAME ARCATI:** No sudden gusts of cold wind, I hope?

**RUTH:** No, it's worse than that.

**MADAME ARCATI:** I'm all attention.

**RUTH** [*with an effort*]: I know it sounds idiotic but the other night--during the séance--something happened--

**MADAME ARCATI:** I knew it! Probably a poltergeist, they're enormously cunning, you know, they sometimes lie doggo for days—

**RUTH:** You know that my husband was married before?

**MADAME ARCATI:** Yes--I have heard it mentioned.

**RUTH:** His first wife, Elvira, died comparatively young--

**MADAME ARCATI** [*sharply*]: Where?

**RUTH:** Here in this house--in this very room.

**MADAME ARCATI** [*whistling*]: Whew! I'm beginning to see daylight!

**RUTH:** She was convalescing after pneumonia and one evening she started to laugh helplessly at one of the B.B.C. musical programs and died of a heart attack.

**MADAME ARCATI:** And she materialized the other evening after I had gone?

**RUTH:** Not to me, but to my husband.

**MADAME ARCATI** [*rising impulsively*]: Capital-capital! Oh, but that's splendid!

**RUTH** [*coldly*]: From your own professional standpoint I can see that it might be regarded as a major achievement!

**MADAME ARCATI** [*delighted*]: A triumph, my dear! Nothing more not less than a triumph!

**RUTH:** But from my own personal point of view, you must see that, to say the least of it, it's embarrassing.

**MADAME ARCATI** [*walking about the room*]: At last--at last genuine materialization!

**RUTH:** Please sit down again, Madame Arcati.

**MADAME ARCATI:** How could anyone sit down at a moment like this? It's tremendous! I haven't had such a success since the Sudbury case.

**RUTH** [*sharply*]: Nevertheless, I must insist upon you sitting down and controlling your natural exuberance. I appreciate fully your pride in your achievement, but I would like to point out that it has made my position in this house untenable and that I hold you entirely responsible.

**MADAME ARCATI** [*contrite*]: Forgive me, Mrs. Condomine--I am being abominably selfish--[*She sits down*] --How can I help you?

**RUTH:** How? By sending her back immediately to where she came from, of course.

**MADAME ARCATI:** I'm afraid that that is easier said than done.

**RUTH:** But my dear Madame Arcati...

**MADAME ARCATI:** There was a time of course when a drop of holy water could send even a poltergeist scampering for cover, but not anymore--"*Où sont les neiges d'Antan?*"

**RUTH:** Be that as it may, Madame Arcati, I must beg of you to do your utmost to dematerialize my husband's first wife as soon as possible.

**MADAME ARCATI:** I assure you I will do anything in my power to help--but at the moment I fear I cannot offer any great hopes. The time has come for me to admit to you frankly, Mrs. Condomine, that I haven't the faintest idea how to set about it.

**RUTH** *[rises]*: Do you mean to sit there and tell me that having mischievously conjured up this ghost or spirit or whatever she is and placed me in a hideous position you are unable to do anything about it at all?

**MADAME ARCATI:** Honesty is the best policy.

**RUTH:** But it's outrageous! I ought to hand you over to the police.

**MADAME ARCATI** *[rising]*: You go too far, Mrs. Condomine.

**RUTH** *[furiously]*: I go too far indeed? Do you realize what your insane amateur muddling has done?

**MADAME ARCATI:** I have been a professional since I was a child, Mrs. Condomine-- "Amateur" is a word I cannot tolerate.

**RUTH:** It seems to me to be the height of amateurishness to evoke malignant spirits and not be able to get rid of them again.

**MADAME ARCATI** *[with dignity]*: I was in a trance. Anything might happen when I am in a trance.

**RUTH:** Well, all I can suggest is that you go into another one immediately and get this damned woman out of my house.

**MADAME ARCATI:** I can't go into trances at a moment's notice--it takes hours of preparation--in addition to which I have to be extremely careful of my diet for days beforehand. Today, for instance, I happened to lunch with friends and had pigeon pie which, plus these cucumber sandwiches, would make a trance out of the question.

**RUTH:** Well, you'll have to do something.

**MADAME ARCATI:** I will report the whole matter to the Society for Psychical Research at the earliest possible moment.

**RUTH:** Will they be able to do anything?

**MADAME ARCATI:** I doubt it. They'd send an investigating committee, I expect, and do a lot of questioning and wall tapping and mumbo jumbo and then they'd have a conference, and you would probably have to go up to London to testify--

**RUTH** [*near tears*]: It's too humiliating--it really is.

**MADAME ARCATI:** Please try not to upset yourself--nothing can be achieved by upsetting yourself.

**RUTH:** It's all very fine for you to talk like that, Madame Arcati--you don't seem to have the faintest realization of my position.

**MADAME ARCATI:** I did what I was requested to do, which was to give a séance and establish contact with the other side--I had no idea that there was any ulterior motive mixed up with it.

**RUTH:** Ulterior motive?

**MADAME ARCADE:** Your husband was obviously eager to get in touch with his former wife. If I had been aware of that at the time I should naturally have consulted you beforehand after all "*Noblesse oblige*"!

**RUTH:** He had no intention of trying to get in touch with anyone--the whole thing was planned in order for him to get material for a mystery story he is writing about a homicidal medium--

**MADAME ARCATI** [*drawing herself up*]: Am I to understand that I was only invited in a spirit of mockery?

**RUTH:** Not at all--he merely wanted to make notes of some of the tricks of the trade.

**MADAME ARCATI** [*incensed*]: Tricks of the trade! Insufferable! I've never been so insulted in my life. I feel we have nothing more to say to one another, Mrs. Condomine. Good--bye—

**BLITHE SPIRIT – SCENE SIDES #2**

**CHARLES – RUTH – ELVIRA**

**RUTH:** Well, darling?

**CHARLES** [*absently*]: Well?

**RUTH:** Would you say the evening had been profitable?

**CHARLES:** Yes I suppose so.

**RUTH:** I must say it was extremely funny at moments.

**CHARLES:** Yes, it certainly was.

**RUTH:** What's the matter?

**CHARLES:** The matter?

**RUTH:** Yes--you seem odd somehow--do you feel quite well?

**CHARLES:** Perfectly. I think I'll have a drink. Do you want one?

**RUTH:** No, thank you, dear.

**CHARLES** [*pouring himself out a drink*]: It's rather chilly in this room.

**RUTH:** Come over by the fire.

**CHARLES:** I don't think I'll make any notes tonight--I'll start fresh in the morning. [*He is bringing his drink over to the fire when he sees ELVIRA*] My God!!

[*He drops the drink on the floor. RUTH jumps up.*]

**RUTH:** Charles!

**ELVIRA:** That was very clumsy, Charles dear.

**CHARLES:** Elvira!--then it's true--it was you!

**ELVIRA:** Of course it was.

**RUTH** [*coming to him*]: Charles--darling Charles--what are you talking about?

**CHARLES** [*to ELVIRA*]: Are you a ghost?

**ELVIRA:** I suppose I must be--it's all very confusing.

**RUTH** [*becoming agitated*]: Charles--what do you keep looking over there for? Look at me--what's happened?

**CHARLES:** Don't you see?

**RUTH:** See what?

**CHARLES:** Elvira.

**RUTH** *[staring at him incredulously]:* Elvira!!

**CHARLES** *[with an effort at social grace]:* Yes--Elvira dear, this is Ruth--Ruth, this is Elvira.

**RUTH** *[with forced calmness]:* Come and sit down, darling.

**CHARLES.** Do you mean to say you can't see her?

**RUTH:** Listen, Charles--you just sit down quietly by the fire and I'll mix you another drink.

Don't worry about the mess on the carpet--Edith can clean it up in the morning.

*[She takes him by the arm.]*

**CHARLES** *[breaking away]:* But you must be able to see her she's there--look--right in front of you--there--

**RUTH:** Are you mad? What's happened to you?

**CHARLES:** You can't see her?

**RUTH:** If this is a joke, dear, it's gone quite far enough. Sit down for God's sake and don't be idiotic.

**CHARLES** *[clutching his head]:* What am I to do--what the hell am I to do!

**ELVIRA:** I think you might at least be a little more pleased to see me after all, you conjured me up.

**CHARLES:** I didn't do any such thing. I did nothing of the sort.

**ELVIRA:** Nonsense, of course you did. That awful child with the cold came and told me you wanted to see me urgently.

**CHARLES:** It was all a mistake--a horrible mistake.

**RUTH:** Stop talking like that, Charles--as I told you before, the joke's gone far enough.

**CHARLES** *[aside]:* I've gone mad, that's what it is--I've just gone raving mad.

**RUTH** *[going to the table and quickly pouring him out some neat brandy]:* Here--let me get you a drink.

**CHARLES** *[mechanically--taking it]:* This is appalling!

**RUTH:** Relax.

**CHARLES:** How can I relax? I shall never be able to relax again as long as I live.

**RUTH:** Drink some brandy.

**ELVIRA:** Very unwise--you always had a weak head.

**CHARLES:** I could drink you under the table.

**RUTH:** There's no need to be aggressive, Charles--I'm doing my best to help you.

**CHARLES:** I'm sorry.

**RUTH** [*bringing him some more brandy*]: Here--drink this and then we'll go to bed.

**ELVIRA:** Get rid of her, Charles--then we can talk in peace.

**CHARLES:** That's a thoroughly immoral suggestion, you ought to be ashamed of yourself.

**RUTH:** What is there immoral in that?

**CHARLES:** I wasn't talking to you.

**RUTH:** Who were you talking to, then?

**CHARLES:** Elvira, of course.

**RUTH:** To hell with Elvira!

**ELVIRA:** There now--she's getting cross.

**CHARLES:** I don't blame her.

**RUTH:** What don't you blame her for?

**CHARLES:** Oh, God!

**RUTH:** Now look here, Charles--I gather you've got some sort of plan behind all this. I'm not quite a fool. I suspected you when we were doing that idiotic séance.

**CHARLES:** Don't be so silly--what plan could I have?

**RUTH:** I don't know--it's probably something to do with the characters in your book--how they, or one of them would react to a certain situation--I refuse to be used as a guinea pig unless I'm warned beforehand what it's all about.

**CHARLES** [*patiently*]: Ruth, Elvira is here--she's standing a few yards away from you.

**RUTH** [*sarcastically*]: Yes, dear, I can see her distinctly--under the piano with a horse.

**CHARLES:** But, Ruth...

**RUTH:** I am not going to stay here arguing any longer...

**ELVIRA:** Hurray!

**CHARLES:** Shut up.

**RUTH** [*incensed*]: How dare you speak to me like that!

**CHARLES**: Listen, Ruth--please listen--

**RUTH**: I will not listen to any more of this nonsense--I am going up to bed now. I'll leave you to turn out the lights. I shan't be asleep--I'm too upset so you can come in and say good night to me if you feel like it.

**ELVIRA**: That's big of her, I must say.

**CHARLES**: Be quiet--you're behaving like a guttersnipe.

**RUTH** [*icily--at door*]: That is all I have to say. Good night, Charles.

**BLITHE SPIRIT – SCENE SIDES #3**

**CHARLES – MADAME ARCATI – EDITH**

**EDITH:** Did you ring, sir?

**MADAME ARCATI:** The bandage! The white bandage!

**CHARLES:** No, Edith.

**EDITH:** I'm sorry, sir--I could have sworn I heard the bell or somebody calling--I was asleep--  
-I don't rightly know which it was...

**MADAME ARCATI:** Come here, child.

**EDITH:** Oh!

*[She looks anxiously at CHARLES.]*

**CHARLES:** Go on--go to Madame Arcati--it's quite all right.

**MADAME ARCATI:** Who do you see in this room, child?

**EDITH:** Oh, dear...

**MADAME ARCATI:** Answer please.

**EDITH** *[falteringly]*: You; madame—

*[She stops.]*

**MADAME ARCATI:** Go on.

**EDITH:** The Master.

**MADAME ARCATI:** Anyone else?

**EDITH:** Oh no, madame...

**MADAME ARCATI** *[inflexibly]*: Look again.

**EDITH** *[imploringly, to CHARLES]*: I don't understand, sir--I--

**MADAME ARCATI:** Come, child--don't beat about the bush look again.

**MADAME ARCATI:** Do you see anyone else now?

**EDITH** *[slyly]*: Oh, no, madame.

**MADAME ARCATI:** She's lying.

**EDITH:** Oh, madame!

**MADAME ARCATI:** They always do.

**CHARLES:** They?

**MADAME ARCATI** *[sharply]*: Where are they now?

**EDITH:** By the fireplace. Oh!

**CHARLES:** She can see them--do you mean she can see them?

**MADAME ARCATI:** Probably not very clearly--but enough--

**EDITH** *[bursting into tears]*: Let me go--I haven't done nothing nor seen nobody--let me go back to bed.

**MADAME ARCATI:** Give her a sandwich.

**EDITH** *[drawing away]*: I don't want a sandwich. I want to go back to bed--

**CHARLES** *[handing EDITH the plate]*: Here, Edith.

**MADAME ARCATI:** Nonsense--a big healthy girl like you saying no to a delicious sandwich--I never heard of such a thing sit down.

**EDITH** *[to CHARLES]*: Please, sir, I...

**CHARLES:** Please do as Madame Arcati says, Edith.

**EDITH** *[sitting down and sniffing]*: I haven't done nothing wrong.

**CHARLES:** It's all right--nobody said you had.

**MADAME ARCATI:** Look at me, Edith. *[EDITH obediently does so]* Cuckoo--cuckoo--cuckoo

**EDITH** *[jumping]*: Oh, dear--what's the matter with her? Is she barmy?

**MADAME ARCATI:** Here, Edith--this is my finger--look *[She waggles it]* Have you ever seen such a long, long, long finger? Look now it's on the right--now it's on the left backwards and forwards it goes--see--very quietly backwards and forwards--tic--toc--tic--toc--tic--toc.

**BLITHE SPIRIT – SCENE SIDES #4**

**RUTH – MRS. BRADMAN – MR. BRADMAN**

**MRS. BRADMAN** [*in armchair*]: Does it show any signs of clearing?

**RUTH** [*at window--looking out*]: No, it's still pouring.

**MRS. BRADMAN**: I do sympathize with you, really I do--it's really been quite a chapter of accidents, hasn't it?

**RUTH**: It certainly has.

**MRS. BRADMAN**: That happens sometimes, you know--every thing seems to go wrong at once--exactly as though there were some evil forces at work. I remember once when George and I went away for a fortnight's holiday not long after we were married we were dogged by bad luck from beginning to end--the weather was vile--George sprained his ankle--I caught a terrible cold and had to stay in bed for two days and to crown everything the lamp fell over in the sitting room and set fire to the treatise George had written on hyperplasia of the abdominal glands.

**RUTH** [*absently*]: How dreadful.

**MRS. BRADMAN**: He had to write it all over again--every single word.

**RUTH**: You're sure you wouldn't like a cocktail or some sherry or anything?

**MRS. BRADMAN**: No, thank you--really not--George will be down in a minute and we've got to go like lightning--we were supposed to be at the Wilmots' at seven and it's nearly that now.

**RUTH**: I think I'll have a little sherry--I feel I need it.

*[She goes to the side table and pours herself some sherry.]*

**MRS. BRADMAN**: Don't worry about your husband's arm, Mrs. Condomine--I'm sure it's only a sprain.

**RUTH**: It's not his arm I'm worried about.

**MRS. BRADMAN**: And I'm sure Edith will be up and about again in a few days--

**RUTH**: My cook gave notice this morning.

**MRS. BRADMAN:** Well, really! Servants are awful, aren't they? Not a shred of gratitude-- at the first sign of trouble they run out on you--like rats leaving a sinking ship.

**RUTH:** I can't feel that your simile was entirely fortunate, Mrs. Bradman.

**MRS. BRADMAN** [*flustered*]: Oh, I didn't mean that, really I didn't!

[*DR. BRADMAN comes in.*]

**DR. BRADMAN:** Nothing to worry about, Mrs. Condomine it's only a slight strain-

**RUTH:** I'm so relieved.

**DR. BRADMAN:** He made a good deal of fuss when I examined it--men are much worse patients than women, you know, particularly highly strung men like your husband.

**RUTH:** Is he so highly strung, do you think?

**DR. BRADMAN:** Yes, as a matter of fact I wanted to talk to you about that. I'm afraid he's been overworking lately.

**RUTH** [*frowning*]: Overworking?

**DR. BRADMAN:** He's in rather a nervous condition--nothing serious, you understand--

**RUTH:** What makes you think so?

**DR. BRADMAN:** I know the symptoms. Of course, the shock of his fall might have something to do with it, but I certainly should advise a complete rest for a couple of weeks--

**RUTH:** You mean he ought to go away?

**DR. BRADMAN:** I do. In cases like that a change of atmosphere can work wonders.

**RUTH:** What symptoms did you notice?

**DR. BRADMAN:** Oh, nothing to be unduly alarmed certain air of strain--an inability to focus his eyes on the about--a person he is talking to--a few rather marked irrelevancies in his conversation.

**RUTH:** I see. Can you remember any specific example?

**DR. BRADMAN:** Oh, he suddenly shouted "What are you doing in the bathroom?" and then, a little later, while I was writing him a prescription, he suddenly said "For God's sake, behave yourself!"

**MRS. BRADMAN:** How extraordinary.

**RUTH** [*nervously*]: He often goes on like that--particularly when he's immersed in writing a book

**DR. BRADMAN**: Oh, I am not in the least perturbed about it really but I do think a rest and a change would be a good idea.

**RUTH**: Thank you so much, Doctor. Would you like some sherry?

**DR. BRADMAN**: No, thank you--we really must be off.

**RUTH**: How is poor Edith?

**DR. BRADMAN**: She'll be all right in a few days--she's still recovering from the concussion.

**MRS. BRADMAN**: It's funny, isn't it, that both your housemaid and your husband should fall down on the same day, isn't it?

**RUTH**: Yes, if that sort of thing amuses you.

**MRS. BRADMAN** [*giggling nervously*]: Of course I didn't mean it like that, Mrs. Condomine--

**DR. BRADMAN**: Come along, my dear--you're talking too much as usual.

**MRS. BRADMAN**: You are horrid, George. Good--bye, Mrs. Condomine--

[*Rises.*]

**RUTH** [*shaking hands*]: Good--bye.

**DR. BRADMAN** [*also shaking hands*]: I'll pop in and have a look at both patients sometime tomorrow morning.

**RUTH**: Thank you so much.

**BLITHE SPIRIT – SCENE SIDES #5**

**CHARLES – RUTH**

**CHARLES:** We might make her walk about with a book on her head like they do in deportment lessons. [*CHARLES gives RUTH cocktail*] Here, try this.

**RUTH** [*sipping it*]: Lovely--dry as a bone.

**CHARLES** [*raising his glass to her*]: To *The Unseen!*

**RUTH:** I must say that's a wonderful title.

**CHARLES:** If this evening's a success I shall start on the first draft tomorrow.

**RUTH:** How extraordinary it is.

**CHARLES:** What?

**RUTH:** Oh, I don't know--being in right at the beginning of something--it gives one an odd feeling.

**CHARLES:** Do you remember how I got the idea for "The Light Goes Out"?

**RUTH:** Suddenly seeing that haggard, raddled woman in the hotel at Biarritz--of course, I remember--we sat up half the night talking about it--

**CHARLES:** She certainly came in very handy--I wonder who she was.

**RUTH:** And if she ever knew, I mean ever recognized, that description of herself--poor thing... here's to her, anyhow...

**RUTH:** Used Elvira to be a help to you--when you were thinking something out, I mean?

**CHARLES** [*pouring out another cocktail for himself*]: Every now and then--when she concentrated--but she didn't concentrate very often.

**RUTH:** I do wish I'd known her.

**CHARLES:** I wonder if you'd have liked her.

**RUTH:** I'm sure I should--as you talk of her she sounds enchanting--yes, I'm sure I should have liked her because you know I have never for an instant felt in the least jealous of her--that's a good sign.

**CHARLES:** Poor Elvira.

**RUTH:** Does it still hurt--when you think of her?

**CHARLES:** No, not really--sometimes I almost wish it did--I feel rather guilty--

**RUTH:** I wonder if I died before you'd grown tired of me if you'd forget me so soon?

**CHARLES:** What a horrible thing to say...

**RUTH:** No--I think it's interesting.

**CHARLES:** Well to begin with I *haven't* forgotten Elvira--I remember her very distinctly indeed--I remember how fascinating she was, and how maddening--[sits] I remember how badly she played all games and how cross she got when she didn't win--I remember her gay charm when she had achieved her own way over something and her extreme acidity when she didn't--I remember her physical attractiveness, which was tremendous--and her spiritual integrity which was nil...

**RUTH:** You can't remember something that was nil.

**CHARLES:** I remember how morally untidy she was...

**RUTH:** Was she more physically attractive than I am?

**CHARLES:** That was a very tiresome question, dear, and fully deserves the wrong answer.

**RUTH:** You really are very sweet.

**CHARLES:** Thank you.

**RUTH:** And a little naïve, too.

**CHARLES:** Why?

**RUTH:** Because you imagine that I mind about Elvira being more physically attractive than I am.

**CHARLES:** I should have thought any woman would mind--if it were true. Or perhaps I'm old--fashioned in my views of female psychology.

**RUTH:** Not exactly old--fashioned, darling, just a bit didactic.

**CHARLES:** How do you mean?

**RUTH:** It's didactic to attribute to one type the defects of an other type--for instance, because you know perfectly well that Elvira would mind terribly if you found another woman more attractive physically than she was, it doesn't necessarily follow that I should. Elvira was a more physical person than I--I'm certain of that--it's all a question of degree.

**CHARLES** [*smiling*]: I love you, my love.

**RUTH:** I know you do--but not the wildest stretch of imagination could describe it as the first fine careless rapture.

**CHARLES:** Would you like it to be?

**RUTH:** Good God, no!

**CHARLES:** Wasn't that a shade too vehement?

**RUTH:** We're neither of us adolescent, Charles, we've neither of us led exactly prim lives, have we? And we've both been married before--careless rapture at this stage would be incongruous and embarrassing.

**CHARLES:** I hope I haven't been in any way a disappointment, dear.

**RUTH:** Don't be so idiotic.

**CHARLES:** After all your first husband was a great deal older than you, wasn't he? I shouldn't like to think that you'd missed out all along the line.

**RUTH:** There are moments, Charles, when you go too far.

**CHARLES:** Sorry, darling.

**RUTH:** As far as waspish female psychology goes, there's a strong vein of it in you.

**CHARLES:** I've heard that said about Julius Caesar.

**RUTH:** Julius Caesar is neither here nor there.

**CHARLES:** He may be for all we know--we'll ask Madame Arcati.

**BLITHE SPIRIT – SCENE SIDES #6**

**CHARLES – ELVIRA**

**ELVIRA** [*turning away*]: The whole thing's been a failure--a miserable, dreary failure--and oh! What high hopes I started out with.

**CHARLES**: You can't expect much sympathy from me, you know. I am perfectly aware that your highest hope was to murder me.

**ELVIRA**: Don't put it like that, it sounds so beastly.

**CHARLES**: It is beastly. It's one of the beastliest ideas I've ever heard.

**ELVIRA**: There was a time when you'd have welcomed the chance of being with me forever.

**CHARLES**: Your behavior has shocked me immeasurably, Elvira, I had no idea you were so unscrupulous.

**ELVIRA** [*bursting into tears*]: Oh, Charles.

**CHARLES**: Stop crying.

**ELVIRA**: They're only ghost tears--they don't mean anything really--but they're very painful.

**CHARLES**: You've brought all this on yourself, you know.

**ELVIRA**: That's right--rub it in. Anyhow, it was only because I loved you--the silliest thing I ever did in my whole life was to love you--you were always unworthy of me.

**CHARLES**: That remark comes perilously near impertinence, Elvira.

**ELVIRA**: I sat there, on the other side, just longing for you day after day. I did really--all through your affair with that brassy looking woman in the South of France I went on loving you and thinking truly of you--then you married Ruth and even then I forgave you and tried to understand because all the time I believed deep inside that you really loved me best... that's why I put myself down for a return visit and had to fill in all those forms and wait about in draughty passages for hours--if only you'd died before you met Ruth everything might have been all right--she's absolutely ruined you--I hadn't been in the

house a day before I realized that. Your books aren't a quarter as good as they used to be either.

**CHARLES** [*incensed. Rises*]: That is entirely untrue . . . Ruth helped me and encouraged me with my work which is a damned sight more than you ever did.

**ELVIRA**: That's probably what's wrong with it.

**CHARLES**: All you ever thought of was going to parties and enjoying yourself.

**ELVIRA**: Why shouldn't I have fun? I died young, didn't I?

**CHARLES**: You needn't have died at all if you hadn't been idiotic enough to go out on the river with Guy Henderson and get soaked to the skin--

**ELVIRA**: So we're back at Guy Henderson again, are we?

**CHARLES**: Did you have an affair with Guy Henderson?

**ELVIRA**: I would rather not discuss it if you don't mind.

**CHARLES**: Answer me--did you or didn't you?

**ELVIRA**: Of course I didn't.

**CHARLES**: You let him kiss you though, didn't you?

**ELVIRA**: How could I stop him? He was bigger than I was.

**CHARLES** [*furiously*]: And you swore to me--

**ELVIRA**: Of course I did. You were always making scenes over nothing at all.

**CHARLES**: Nothing at all.

**ELVIRA**: You never loved me a bit really--it was only your beastly vanity.

**CHARLES**: You seriously believe that it was only vanity that upset me when you went out in the punt with Guy Henderson?

**ELVIRA**: It was not a punt--it was a little launch.

**CHARLES**: I don't care if it was a three--masted schooner, you had no right to go!

**ELVIRA**: You seem to forget why I went! You seem to forget that you had spent the entire evening making sheep's eyes at that overblown--looking harridan with the false pearls.

**CHARLES**: A woman in Cynthia Cheviot's position would hardly wear false pearls.

**ELVIRA**: They were practically all she was wearing.

**CHARLES:** On looking back on our married years, Elvira, I see now, with horrid clarity, that they were nothing but a mockery.

**ELVIRA:** You invite mockery, Charles--it's something to do with your personality I think, a certain seedy grandeur.

**CHARLES:** Once and for all, Elvira--

**ELVIRA:** You never suspected it but I laughed at you steadily from the altar to the grave--that's why I went out on the moors that day with Captain Bracegirdle. I was desperate.

**CHARLES:** You swore to me that you'd gone over to see your Aunt in Exmouth!

**ELVIRA:** It was the moors.

**CHARLES:** With Captain Bracegirdle?

**ELVIRA:** With Captain Bracegirdle.

**CHARLES** I might have known it--what a fool I was--what a blind fool! Did he make love to you?

**ELVIRA** *[sucking her finger and regarding it thoughtfully]*: Of course.

**CHARLES:** Oh, Elvira!

**ELVIRA:** When I think of what might have happened if I'd succeeded in getting you to the other world after all--it makes me shudder, it does honestly... it would be nothing but bickering and squabbling forever and ever and ever... I swear I'll be better off with Ruth--at least she'll find her own set and not get in my way.

**CHARLES:** So I get in your way, do I?

**ELVIRA:** Only because I was idiotic enough to imagine that you loved me, and I sort of felt sorry for you.

**CHARLES:** I'm sick of these insults--please go away.

**ELVIRA:** There's nothing I should like better--I've always believed in cutting my losses. That's why I died.

**CHARLES** *[rises]*: Of all the brazen sophistry--

**ELVIRA:** Call that old girl in again--set her to work--I won't tolerate this any longer--I want to go home.

*[She starts to cry.]*

**CHARLES:** For heaven's sake don't snivel.

**ELVIRA** [*stamping her foot*]: Call her in--she's got to get me out of this.

**CHARLES** [*going to the dining room door*]: I quite agree--and the sooner the better.

**BLITHE SPIRIT – SCENE SIDES #7**

**CHARLES – ELVIRA**

**RUTH:** I wish you wouldn't be facetious with the servants, Charles--it confuses them and undermines their morale.

**CHARLES:** I consider that point of view retrogressive, if not downright feudal.

**RUTH:** I don't care what you consider it. I have to run the house and you don't.

**CHARLES:** Are you implying that I couldn't?

**RUTH:** You're at liberty to try.

**CHARLES:** I take back what I said about it being a good morning--it's a dreadful morning.

**RUTH:** You'd better eat your breakfast while it's hot

**CHARLES:** It isn't.

**RUTH** [*putting down the Times*]: Now look here, Charles--in your younger days this display of roguish flippancy might have been alluring--in a middle--aged novelist it's nauseating.

**CHARLES:** Would you like me to writhe at your feet in a frenzy of self--abasement?

**RUTH:** That would be equally nauseating but certainly more appropriate.

**CHARLES:** I really don't see what I've done that's so awful.

**RUTH:** You behaved abominably last night. You wounded me and insulted me.

**CHARLES:** I was the victim of an aberration.

**RUTH:** Nonsense--you were drunk.

**CHARLES:** Drunk?

**RUTH:** You refused to come to bed and finally when I came down at three in the morning to see what had happened to you I found you in an alcoholic coma on the sofa with the fire out and your hair all over your face.

**CHARLES:** I was not in the least drunk, Ruth. Something happened to me--you really must believe that something very peculiar happened to me.

**RUTH:** Nonsense.

**CHARLES:** It isn't nonsense--I know it looks like nonsense now in the clear, remorseless light of day, but last night it was far from being nonsense--I honestly had some sort of hallucination—

**RUTH:** I would really rather not discuss it any further.

**CHARLES:** But you must discuss it--it's very disturbing.

**RUTH:** There I agree with you. It showed you up in a most unpleasant light--I find that extremely disturbing.

**CHARLES:** I swear to you that during the séance I was convinced that I heard Elvira's voice--

**RUTH:** Nobody else did.

**CHARLES:** I can't help that--I did.

**RUTH:** You couldn't have.

**CHARLES:** And later on I was equally convinced that she was in this room--I saw her distinctly and talked to her. After you'd gone up to bed we had quite a cozy little chat.

**RUTH:** And you seriously expect me to believe that you weren't drunk?

**CHARLES:** I know I wasn't drunk. If I'd been all that drunk, I should have a dreadful hangover now, shouldn't I?

**RUTH:** I'm not at all sure that you haven't.

**CHARLES:** I haven't got a trace of a headache--my tongue's not coated--look at it.

*[He puts out his tongue.]*

**RUTH:** I've not the least desire to look at your tongue; kindly put it in again.

**CHARLES:** I know what it is--you're frightened.

**RUTH:** Frightened? Rubbish! What is there to be frightened of?

**CHARLES:** Elvira. You wouldn't have minded all that much. Even if I had been drunk--it's only because it was all mixed up with Elvira.

**RUTH:** I seem to remember last night before dinner telling you that your views of female psychology were rather didactic. I was right. I should have added that they were puerile.

**CHARLES:** That was when it all began.

**RUTH:** When what all began?

**CHARLES:** We were talking too much about Elvira--it's dangerous to have somebody very strongly in your mind when you start dabbling with the occult.

**RUTH:** She certainly wasn't strongly in my mind.

**CHARLES:** She was in mine.

**RUTH:** Oh, she was, was she?

**CHARLES:** You tried to make me say that she was more physically attractive than you, so that you could hold it over me.

**RUTH:** I did not. I don't give a hoot how physically attractive she was.

**CHARLES:** Oh yes, you do--your whole being is devoured with jealousy.

**RUTH** [*rises and starts to clear table*]: This is too much!

**CHARLES:** Women! My God, what I think of women!

**RUTH:** Your view of women is academic to say the least of it--just because you've always been dominated by them it doesn't necessarily follow that you know anything about them.

**CHARLES:** I've never been dominated by anyone.

**RUTH:** You were hag--ridden by your mother until you were twenty--three--then you got into the clutches of that awful Mrs. Whatever--her--name--was--

**CHARLES:** Mrs. Winthrop--Lewellyn.

**RUTH:** I'm not interested. Then there was Elvira--she ruled you with a rod of iron.

**CHARLES:** Elvira never ruled anyone, she was much too elusive--that was one of her greatest charms.

**RUTH:** Then there was Maud Charteris --

**CHARLES:** My affair with Maud Charteris lasted exactly seven and a half weeks and she cried all the time.

**RUTH:** The tyranny of tears! Then there was--

**CHARLES:** If you wish to make an inventory of my sex life, dear, I think it only fair to tell you that you've missed out several episodes--I'll consult my diary and give you the complete list after lunch.

**RUTH:** It's no use trying to impress me with your routine amorous exploits--

**CHARLES:** The only woman in my whole life who's ever at tempted to dominate me is you--you've been at it for years.

**RUTH:** That is completely untrue.

**CHARLES:** Oh no, it isn't. You boss me and bully me and order me about you--won't even allow me to have an hallucination if I want to.

**RUTH:** Alcohol will ruin your whole life if you allow it to get a hold on you, you know.

**CHARLES:** Once and for all, Ruth, I would like you to understand that what happened last night was nothing whatever to do with alcohol. You've very adroitly rationalized the whole affair to your own satisfaction, but your deductions are based on complete fallacy. I am willing to grant you that it was an aberration, some sort of odd psychic delusion brought on by suggestion or hypnosis. I was stone cold sober from first to last and extremely upset into the bargain.

**RUTH:** You were upset indeed! What about me?

**CHARLES:** You behaved with a stolid, obtuse lack of comprehension that frankly shocked me!

**RUTH:** I consider that I was remarkably patient. I shall know better next time.

**CHARLES:** Instead of putting out a gentle, comradely hand to guide me, you shouted staccato orders at me like a sergeant major.

**RUTH:** You seem to forget that you gratuitously insulted me.

**CHARLES:** I did not.

**RUTH:** You called me a guttersnipe--you told me to shut up and when I quietly suggested that we should go up to bed you said, with the most disgusting leer, that it was an immoral suggestion.

**CHARLES** [*exasperated*]: I was talking to Elvira!

**RUTH:** If you were, I can only say that it conjures up a fragrant picture of your first marriage.

**CHARLES:** My first marriage was perfectly charming and I think it's in the worst possible taste for you to sneer at it.

**RUTH:** I am not nearly so interested in your first marriage as you think I am. It's your second marriage that is absorbing me at the moment--it seems to me to be on the rocks.

**CHARLES:** Only because you persist in taking up this ridiculous attitude.

**RUTH:** My attitude is that of any normal woman whose husband gets drunk and hurls abuse at her.

**CHARLES** *[shouting]*: I was not drunk!

**RUTH:** Be quiet, they'll hear you in the kitchen.

**CHARLES:** I don't care if they hear me in the Folkestone Town Hall--I was not drunk!

**RUTH:** Control yourself, Charles.

**CHARLES:** How can I control myself in the face of your idiotic damned stubbornness? It's giving me claustrophobia.

**RUTH** *[quietly]*: You'd better ring up Doctor Bradman.



# Blithe Spirit

## AUDITION FORM

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Birth: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Numbers(s): Best: \_\_\_\_\_ Next: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Guardian name(s) if under the age of 18 \_\_\_\_\_

**Performance Experience:**

Show	Role	Company	Year

Continue on back if necessary. "Please see resume" is sufficient if you have attached a resume.

**Additional Training/Education:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Special Skills:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**REHEARSAL/PERFORMANCE DATES**

*Rehearsals are TBD, but will likely be Monday – Thursday evenings, beginning the week after Christmas. Reasonable conflicts will be accommodated. All performers must be available for the entirety of tech week.*

**Read-through/Tablework:** Dec 27-30

**Performances:** Friday, Feb 4 – 7: 30 pm

**Week 1:** January 3-6

Saturday, Feb 5 – 2 pm & 7:30 pm

**Week 2:** January 10-13

Sunday, Feb 6 – 2 pm

**Week 3:** January 17-20

Thursday, Feb 10 – 7:30 pm

**Week 4:** January 24-27

Friday, Feb 11 – 7:30 pm

**Tech Week:** January 30 – February 3

Saturday, Feb 12 – 2 pm & 7:30 pm

**Please list ALL rehearsal conflicts:**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_