

SCENE 5.I.

Act V of "Cyrano de Bergerac," set in 1655 within the serene park of the Sisters of the Holy Cross in Paris, introduces an atmosphere rich with autumnal beauty and tranquility. The vivid description sets the stage: Majestic trees, an expansive house with broad steps, a central plane tree standing with an almost sentinel-like presence, and a semi-circular stone bench tucked among large boxwood trees. The background unfurls with an alley of chestnut trees extending toward a chapel, barely visible through the tree branches, all under a sky viewed through layers of green lawns, other paths, tree clusters, and the winding expanse of the park.

Autumn has cloaked the foliage in red, contrasting with the eternal green of the lawns and the darker hues of the boxwood and yew trees. Yellow leaves blanket the ground under each tree, their presence also felt on the steps and benches, their rustle a constant underfoot in the alleys. Amidst this natural tapestry, a large embroidery frame stands beside a chair, surrounded by baskets filled with skeins and balls of wool, a tapestry left incomplete.

As the curtain rises, the serenity of the scene is complemented by the quiet activities of nuns within the park. Some walk gently to and fro, while others gather on the stone bench, weaving a semblance of a community around an elder Sister. The tranquility of their routine is lightly disturbed by an innocuous moment of vanity from Sister Claire, who is caught glancing not once, but twice in a mirror, presumably to check if her coif sits just right.

This opening scene, elegantly capturing a moment suspended in time, sets a contemplative tone, hinting at themes of reflection, the passage of time, and perhaps the impending intrusion of the external world into this secluded serenity. Through the detailed description of the surroundings and the simple, yet telling, interactions among the nuns, a vivid backdrop is established for the developments to unfold in this final act of the play, promising a blend of beauty, melodrama, and perhaps introspection.