

Jean lives on the moon. From up there, he sees Earthlings: he longs to join them and make friends, but once on Earth, the lawyer decides to put this stranger in chains. Jean finds himself alongside prisoners, but with a moonbeam, he can slip through the bars. At a masked ball where he's having a great time, the lawyer reappears. Jean must flee again. He reaches an observatory, the guards knock on the door, and quickly, he must take off: destination moon! In the rocket, Jean hears the song of the cosmos. Back in his house on the moon, words rise to him: it's his neighbors from planet Earth who have launched themselves into the sky. "I'll wait for you, for an eternity, if necessary," Jean shouts to them from the moon. The chorus replies, "Having a friend is a joy worthy of infinity."

Knowing that the orchestra would be made up of period instruments, we looked for a story that would lend itself to their particular timbres: the softness of the flute and strings, the shimmer of the harpsichord... that's why we turned to this book by Tomi Ungerer, whose hero is a "Lunian," knowing that the story had to be developed into a mini-opera.

SCENE 1

Jean lives on the moon. From up there, he sees Earthlings: he really wants to join them and make friends!

SCENE 2

The comet heard his wish and drags him back to Earth, warning him: "I don't know if you'll be able to come back."

SCENE 3

They both encounter stars with their roaring laughter. The landing is a bit bumpy!

SCENE 4

The comet has vanished. The curious earthlings wonder what happened, but the lawyer decides to put this stranger in chains.

SCENE 5

A little scared, Jean finds himself alongside prisoners for whom time no longer matters and sympathizes with Pierre, who comes from the sun. He wants to free them all, but it's impossible!

SCENE 6

Jean realizes that, like the moon, he is shrinking and can slip out of the prison.

SCENE 7

It's nighttime, and a poetic encounter with flowers leads him to... surprise!

SCENE 8

A masked ball where he is congratulated on his costume, where all languages are heard. But, attracted by the noise, the lawyer reappears, and Jean must flee again.

SCENE 9

In the forest, the flowers mislead his pursuers, and Jean runs faster than time. SCENE 10

In his mad dash, he bumps into the door of an observatory where he's welcomed by a mischievous old scientist who has developed (well, almost) a rocket. The guards knock on the door; too bad for the final calculations, they must quickly take off: destination: moon!

SCENE 11

In the rocket, after the jolts of departure, Jean hears the song of the cosmos.

FINAL

Back in his house on the moon, words rise to him: it's his neighbors from planet Earth who have launched themselves into the sky. "I'll wait for you, an eternity, if necessary," Jean of the moon shouts to them.

The chorus replies, "Having a friend is a joy worthy of infinity."

BOOKLET

PRELUDE

ENTRY CHORUS

Up there in the sky
Cuddled up in his silver sphere
Lives a fabulous being,
They call him Jean, Jean of the Moon.
To us earthlings, one night
He wanted to visit...
We will tell you
What the world has forgotten!

ON THE MOON, SCENE 1

JEAN

Night after night
All alone, so alone,
I'm bored!
I'm bored!
Recitative, looking at the earth
From here I can see you very well
Ah, if only I could
Once, just once
Be among you
And have a little fun!

THE COMET, SCENE 2

THE COMET, appearing

Jean! He turns around, amazed

JEAN

Who's calling me?

THE COMET

It's me, the Comet...

JEAN

How beautiful you are!

THE COMET

I heard your wish, it will be granted.

But...

JEAN

But?

THE COMET

It's not in my power to say

If you'll be able to come back...

JEAN

It doesn't matter!

THE COMET

Are you sure?

JEAN

I've thought about it a lot,

It's decided!

THE COMET

In that case, come, I'll take you.

Hold on tight to my train of fire,

Are you ready?

JEAN

Oh yes!

THE COMET

Here we go!

THE STARS, SCENE 3

THE STARS

Where are you going, Jean? Where are you going?

JEAN

On earth, wander, wander...

THE STARS

It's very far, far away...

Jean of the Moon, a...

THE COMET

In the blink of an eye, he'll be there!

THE STARS

Ah, ah, ah!

JEAN, pressing himself even closer to the Comet

How I love the crystal-clear laughter of the stars!

THE COMET, overjoyed

Watch out, the landing's a bit bumpy!

(orchestral cataclysm)

EARTH! SCENE 4

EARTHLINGS, raising their heads one by one

FIRST GROUP

What was that?

SECOND GROUP

Did you hear that?

THIRD GROUP

It came from the mountain...

FIRST GROUP

A fiery arrow pierced the sky!

ALL

Oh!

THE LAWYER, emerging from the shadows, accompanied by guards

Halt! Who's there?

JOHN, carrying the Comet's garment on his arm, as if apologizing

...I fell from the sky!

Some of the stars become the earthlings, the other the lawman and his guards

THE LAWYER

You see, you gentleman likes to joke... Your name, peasant!

JOHN

John of the Moon.

THE LAWYER

And He persists!

THE EARTHLINGS

Perhaps it's true?

THE LAWYER, to his guards

Come on, you others! Put this in irons!

The guards carry out the order.

IN PRISON, SCENE 5

JEAN

O moon, moon
I'm so sad without you...
Why did you undertake this great journey?

A SHADOW

I wondered that too...

JEAN

Who's there?

THE SHADOW

My name is Pierre, Pierre of the sun.

JEAN

You're very dark for a sun.

PETER

It's been so long since I've seen the light!

JEAN

What is your crime?

PETER

I wanted to bring them a little warmth, they prefer e-lec-tri-ci-ty!

We hear voices rising:

CHORUS OF PRISONERS, mouths closed,

JEAN, not reassured

Who Are they?

PETER

All the prisoners who spent years in this dungeon come to greet you. Suffering, abandonment, rebellion, and even hope for a better day are engraved on these walls.

JEAN

What do they want?

PETER

To leave you a little of themselves... and wish you good luck!

JEAN

Ah, why can't I take you?

THE PRISONERS, backing away

Im-pos-si-ble...

JEAN

Pierre! You, at least tonight, flee this tomb with me!

PETER

I can't.

JEAN

Why?

PETER

It would be the end of the night and you could get caught!

He disappears. Jean collapses.

FREE! SCENE 6

JEAN, dreaming at the window

With all that, I had forgotten, I am made of moonlight

Soon I could slip between the bars!

Farewell, Brother Sun!

Companions of the night, farewell, I will not forget you.

He escapes.

THE FLOWERS, SCENE 7

There are nocturnal flowers that open at night.

CHORUS (spoken and ORCH)

A FLOWER, seeing Jean

Flowers, flowers, my sisters, wake up!

THE FLOWERS

What light emanates from you?

JEAN

It is the brightness of the moon. And you are stars fallen from the sky...

Oh, how good you smell!

THE FLOWERS

It is our lives that evaporate.

JEAN

May this marvelous hour then be endless!

THE FLOWERS

Ah, if only you could speak the truth!

Endless, endless...

THE PRISONERS become THE FLOWERS

MIDNIGHT ROSE

Are you a prince?

JEAN

Oh no!

MIDNIGHT ROSE

It doesn't matter!

THE FLOWERS

Midnight Rose!

To Jean: Come on!

JEAN

Where Are you taking me?

THE FLOWERS

Surprise!

THE MASQUERADE BALL, SCENE 8

JEAN, circulating among them

Wonderful!

PIERROT

Wow! My dear Lunien! Your costume is magnificent! May I know who made it for you?

JEAN

Oh, an old friend of mine!

CHORUS AND DANCE OF THE MASKS:

Under our masks

Our hearts are beating

Clap, our hands

Clap, our feet (repeat)

Clap, our hands and our feet

Under my mask

Under your mask

Under our masks

Who am I,

Who are you? (4 times)

Under our masks

Our hearts are beating

Clap, our hands

Clap, our feet (repeat)

Clap, our hands and our feet
Under my mask
Under your mask
Under our masks
Until morning
Die Whole Night
All night
All night!
Under our masks
Our hearts are beating
Clap, our hands
Clap, our feet
Clap, our hands and feet
Let's dance until tomorrow, ah!
At its height, the party is interrupted
The lawman places his hand on Jean's shoulder.
A violent cymbal crash causes a great commotion, the movement of the crowd helps him escape.
One after the other, they slow their movements, then, turning their backs on the audience, become trees.
THE LAWMAN and his henchmen
This racket will soon be over! Come on, get out, disperse!
THE MASKS
Why? We haven't done anything wrong!
THE LAWMAN
Nighttime disturbance! Do you know this individual?
THE MASKS
No, no!

IN THE FOREST, SCENE 9 *Spoken scene and ORCH*

Jean runs through the forest. We hear the voices of the flowers without seeing them.
THE FLOWERS, whispered
This way, that way!
Run, run, little Jean
Run like the wind
So fast, here he is
Before time.

THE OBSERVATORY, SCENE 10, *spoken scene, orchestral orchestra*

JEAN, bumping into an object in the night
Ouch!
EKLA OF SHADOWS, an old man, thus showing that he has been working on his work for a long time, or God himself, the positive double of the lawyer: just as the children have divided into two groups, he too is double.
Well, young man, where are you running to? It's as if you have all of humanity after you!
That, for example, the man in the moon!
I introduce myself: Ekla of Shadows, at your service, and this is my observatory.
Come in quickly. As soon as they have passed through the door:
Come, I'll show you something.
JEAN
A spaceship!
EKLA OF SHADOWS
You mean a special vassal.

JEAN

Special.

EKLA OF SHADOWS

Yes, well, anyway, let's move on! What do you say?

THE GUARDS, banging violently on the door

We know he's here! Deliver him to us!

EKLA OF SHADOWS

The door won't last long. We have to act quickly! I really don't have time to make the final checks, but according to my calculations, it should work.

JEAN

Do you think so?

EKLA OF SHADOWS

Young man, life sometimes invites us to take risks...

JEAN

But...

EKLA OF SHADOWS

Quickly get in there! And... good luck! Oh, I almost forgot: once you get there, press this button, but not before, do you understand?

JEAN nods.

I would have loved to talk for hours with you... about the moon! He hugs him, very moved.

THE ROCKET, SCENE 11

FINAL

THE CHORUS OF EARTHLINGS and the orchestra

JEAN

What do I hear?

THE CHORUS OF EARTHLINGS

We are your neighbors on Earth

We missed you so much

So we launched into the sky

JEAN

Have a good trip!

I'll wait for you...

an eternity if necessary!

THE CHORUS OF EARTHLINGS

How good it is to be reunited,

How sweet it is to have a friend,

O joy worthy of infinity!

THE END