The Rats of the paris opera house

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scutter across the stage floors
limbs -longed and gawky :
a petis de la rats. Stage
rats infesting the opera in
a masquerade hidden under blue
tulle. Rats with pointed shoes
shaped like the speared snouted
head which sprouted ribbons that
twirled outward like the wispy
whiskers and scaled tails of
unwanted pests. Lurking

beyond the wings in shadowy
nests stalk men of every shape
and size in sexual unrest ; hands
quiver in clamoring -capturing
the veracity of the real unwanted
guests. The ballet’s notes singe
signaling the end and the begin
ning of the interlude and secret
private minglings of
the Pas de deux: a step of two
dancing together as if in mutual creation. A supple back is arced over in forced submission: the bending of a plié -a tutu tulle pirouettes out in plummets -pillowing softly around knobby knees -falling over pale skin till it spills around ankles - sitting blue in the wings -patient in fearful waiting - the exchange of monetary pleasure. Bodies knocking into one another in begin -ers frustration - the tip - tap - touch of toes pointing down ward - raising the head up haloed in the stage lights the last sense of innocence crowned around the young girls head faded into blackness as the lights dimmed and the curtains closed in the paris brothel house

Foyer de la danse : a night at the ballet