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## The Rats of the paris opera house

Megan Brooks  
*University of Richmond*

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## The Rats of the paris opera house

*Megan Brooks*

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 bend  
ing 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*