

# GRAEae40

CELEBRATING *FOUR* DECADES

## The Paradis Files

### Audio-Described Character Introductions

**Ella:** I love it when we are first here.

Just Max and I.

I'm Ella, white, trans, smallfat.

Average height, cute.

I play Gerda, the maid.

As her, I'm dressed in a brown, rouchey skirt, jacket and a wide leather belt, boots and a cap.

This is Max.

Blue hair, wheelchair, beard, lipstick, heels...

Well, usually heels but tonight they're in long boots with sparkly buckles and wearing a dark brown blouse, beige trousers and one feathered earring.

I talk, they sign. For Gerda and for the Baron.

We are also both part of the Ensemble of Gossips.

**Andrea:** Right, it's time we started.

Could you introduce yourselves?

**Jelena:** I'm Jelena, I play the real piano at the back of the stage, and I'm dressed in exquisite lace.

**Charles:** I'm Charles. In the eighteenth-century I would have been considered magnificently tall. But this is the twenty-first century, and my trousers are too long.  
I'll be playing the violin.

**Milosz:** I'm Milosz and I play the accordion.

**Dominic:** I'm Dominic and I play the double bass.

**James:** I'm James and I play drums and percussion.

**Ben:** I'm Ben, a gossip too.

I am British Asian, bald, bearded and tall.

I am suited and booted in the finest linen money can buy, in shades of cream and brown, with a huge cravat.

When not gossiping, I play a pretty pervy character.

To the left of the stage, near the front, is this ornate huge frame holding the rest of our costumes, and props.

Oh, it lights up too.

Ah the Baron's jacket...

**Omar:** Hands off my jacket!

**Ben:** He is bald and bearded too, but short.

**Omar:** Charming!

I am Omar.

Handsome, deaf, mixed heritage with twinkly eyes.

Splendidly waist-coated, suited and booted in light cream.

My main role is the Baron and I don a jacket with a large ornate broach. I am a gossip too.

Centre-stage we have our elegant forte piano.

My job as a gossip is to set down and prop up the beautiful painted lid. I shall demonstrate - now it's down...now it's up.

Instead of piano keys - it lights up to the touch.

Ah Andee, another gossip!

**Andee:** That's me!

A big black smiley lass with my braids piled high.

I'm dressed in a honeycomb and gold floaty dress.

I walk with a fancy cane.

I like sitting on these chairs to the right of the piano, near the band. They are black, velvet with images of European cities.

Ah, here's Maureen!

**Maureen:** Graced by the Caribbean and singing up high,

I am always Hilde, the Baroness, wearing a silky, dusty, pink blouse, flared trousers, diamond-encrusted shoes and a warm coat.

With me is Chandu, British South Asian, big smile.  
Frisly shirt, curly hair, sparkly earrings.  
I sing and she signs for me, she gossips too.

These two large, gold, stately chairs to the left of the piano, represent my daughter's home and also the Court of Marie Antoinette. Above us is a beautiful chandelier.

Hanging above the band is a long ornate rectangular frame to display the captions for our opera.

Do we know where Bethan is?

**Bethan:** Here I am.

**Ella:** Bethan you should NOT be wearing that blue fluffy jacket at the start of the show!

**Bethan:** I did tell the director I thought I should wear it at the top of the show, like I do at the very end.  
You know topping and tailing!

**Ella:** Bethan!

**Bethan:** Sorry!

Tall like Ben, with a brunette bob and fringe.

I'm visually-impaired and a tad clumsy.

I'm standing in the other frame with red velvet curtains at each side.

**Maureen:** Bethan, get your concert frock on...

**Bethan:** My long, sapphire, embroidered dress, embossed with raised embroidered flowers. When I wear it, I become Theresia Von Paradis -The Blind Enchantress.

Chandu signs for me too.

**Andrea:** I am Andrea, your conductor.

Conductor - she/her. I'm white and a little bit Chinese

Short dark hair and glasses. Delightfully kitted out in cream like the band, wearing a waistcoat with an ornate brooch, and some fantastic pink shoes.

Let's start at the end!

**The Gossips:** The end?

**Ella:** Yes! Why not?