

## ATTO PRIMO

UNA CAMERA IN CASA DI LUNARDO.  
*Margarita e all'arcolaio, Lucieta fa la calza. Ambedue sbadigliano mentre il sipario si alza.*

LUCIETA  
Siora mare?

MARGARITA  
Fia mia?

LUCIETA (*ironica*)  
Che strazza d'alegría!  
Dir che xe carneval.

MARGARITA (*ironica*)  
Co sti ciass!

LUCIETA  
Sti spassi!

MARGARITA  
Co sta malinconia ...

LUCIETA  
Da funeral.

MARGARITA  
Ma!

LUCIETA  
Ma!

MARGARITA  
Figurarse!  
In t'un ano che son maridada  
Vostro pare che spasso m'à dà?

LUCIETA  
E sì, mo, sala no vedea l'ora  
Che'l se tornasse a maridar?  
Co gera sola disea in tra mi:  
Sior pare povareto,  
Nol gna gnissun al mondo  
Che possa mo un pocheto  
Menarme a spazzisar;  
Bia pazientar.

MARGARITA  
Figurarse!

LUCIETA  
Se in casa ghe sarà siora maredagna  
No sarà più cussi.  
El s'a ben mariadà, ma cara ela,  
Le cose xe restae quel che le gera!

MARGARITA  
El xe un orso fia.  
Nol se diverte lu  
E el ne fa pair nu.  
Figurarse, mi allevada  
Da mia mare nel bombaso  
Tra i festini e che la vada!  
Dove mai go batuo el naso?  
Basta, basta, taso, taso.  
Almanco vu ciaparè su,  
Ve sposarè, respirarè,  
Ciò, poverazzza, bon pro ve fazza.

LUCIETA  
La diga, siora mare,  
Quando me maridarogio?

MARGARITA  
Quando che, figurarse,  
Al ciel ghe piaserà

LUCIETA  
E co ghe piaserà lo savarogio?

MARGARITA  
Mo che sempiesta!  
Certo che vu lo savarè.

## ACT ONE

A ROOM IN LUNARDO'S HOUSE  
*Margarita is spinning, Lucieta is knitting. Both yawn during the pause as the curtain rises.*

LUCIETA  
Dear Madam!

MARGARITA  
My child?

LUCIETA (*ironically*)  
A merry time we're having!  
And it's carnival too!

MARGARITA (*ironically*)  
How inviting!

LUCIETA  
How exciting!

MARGARITA  
It could not be more dreary.

LUCIETA  
Yes, that is true.

MARGARITA  
Well!

LUCIETA  
Well!

MARGARITA  
Fancy that now!  
It's a year since I married your father;  
You'd have thought he'd have taken me out.

LUCIETA  
And all that time I was hoping and hoping  
That he would marry a second wife!  
You know, when I was alone, I thought  
My father must be lonely,  
And I of course had no one  
To come and take me out  
For a little bit of fun.  
What could be done?

MARGARITA  
Fancy that now!

LUCIETA  
I thought that if I only had a stepmother,  
'Twould be another thing.  
Well, he did marry you—but, dearest madam,  
It never made the slightest bit of diff'rence.

MARGARITA  
He's a bear, that man!  
There's nothing *he* enjoys,  
So no pleasure for us!  
Fancy that now—my dear mother  
Brought me up to be a lady,  
And we knew the proper people.  
Yes, and what have I come down to?  
Fancy that now! I say nothing.  
I pity you; you'll find it true.  
The time will come when you'll be wed,  
And when you're married I wish you joy  
of it!

LUCIETA  
But tell me, madam, tell me,  
How soon am I to be married?

MARGARITA  
How soon? Fancy that now!  
Heav'n knows when that will be.

LUCIETA  
Well, Heaven only knows; but shall not I  
know?

MARGARITA  
God bless the child!  
Why, surely you'll have to know yourself.

LUCIETA

La diga, la me diga:  
Ghe xe gnente in cantier?

MARGARITA

Ghe xe e no ghe xe.

LUCIETA

No la sa gnente?

MARGARITA

Se parlo el ziga.

LUCIETA

Via, cara ela.

MARGARITA

Tasè, putela, che mi no so.

LUCIETA

Gnanca mo gnente mo gnanca mo!

MARGARITA

Coss'è sti sesti?

LUCIETA

Sia malignazzo!  
No go gnissun al mondo  
Che a mi me vogia ben.

MARGARITA

Ve ne vogia anca massa . . .

LUCIETA

I par tutti d'accordo  
Per darm'e del velen.

MARGARITA

Vardè, sentì che roba!

LUCIETA

Sior pare co l'me vede el cria,  
Nol fa che stapazzarme.

MARGARITA

E mi, siora petassa?

LUCIETA

Ela per consolarme  
La mola e po la tien.

MARGACITA (*indignata*)

Mo brava, disè ben!

LUCIETA

No go gnissun al mondo  
Che a mi me vogia ben.

MARGARITA

Mi v'ò anca massa in mente,  
Frascona, figurarse.

LUCIETA (*imitandola*)

Figurarse!

MARGARITA

Aveu dito qual cossa?

LUCIETA

Mi siora? Propio gnente.  
La fa che me bisega in sen  
Caldeto che'l cuor el consola,  
E po, ciapè su, la ghe mola  
E el dolce la cambia in velen.  
Oi miei se podesse sperar  
Magari in cao'l mondo lontana  
D'aver anca mi la mia mana  
Un puto che m'abia a incontrar.

MARGARITA

Se parlo ghe meto nel sen  
Caldeto che'l cuor el consola;  
  
Se taso fasendoghe gola  
El dolce ghe cambio in velen.  
Da resto vorave sperar  
Che pò no sia tanto lontana  
Par ela un pocheto de mana  
  
Qualcun che la vogia sposar.

LUCIETA

But, madam, won't you tell me,  
Is there nothing settled yet?

MARGARITA

There is, and there is not.

LUCIETA

And you know nothing?

MARGARITA

Your father'd scold me—

LUCIETA

Oh, dearest madam!

MARGARITA

Ask no questions, you'll hear no lies.

LUCIETA

You never tell me a single thing.

MARGARITA

Now, you be quiet!

LUCIETA

You'd make a saint swear!  
There's not a soul to love me,  
In all this world of strife.

MARGARITA

Now you know how I love you.

LUCIETA

They're all banded against me  
To poison my whole life.

MARGARITA

You must not talk nonsense.

LUCIETA

My father, when he sees me, just shouts and  
shouts  
And curses at me blindly.

MARGARITA

And I, how do I treat you?

LUCIETA

Oh madam, you mean kindly,  
But you're always my father's wife.

MARGARITA (*indignant*)

I like that!

LUCIETA

There's not a soul to love me  
In all the wide, wide world.

MARGARITA

Serves you right. How can you say such  
wicked  
Things? You bad girl! Fancy that now!

LUCIETA (*mimicking her softly*)  
Fancy that now!

MARGARITA

What was that you said?

LUCIETA

I, madam? I said nothing.

There's something, I know, she's concealing,  
She wakes in my bosom a hope that is dear,  
But instead of the secret revealing  
She turns all my hope into fear.  
Ah me, is there no one to take me,  
No suitor on sea or on land?  
How happy, how happy 'twould make me  
If someone would ask for my heart and  
my hand.

MARGARITA

Should I now the truth be revealing,  
'Twould wake in her bosom a hope that is  
dear;  
And yet what would come of concealing?  
'Twill turn all her hope into fear.  
But yet, if I do not mistake me,  
I guess what her father has plann'd;  
There's nothing more happy would make  
me,  
If someone would ask for her heart and  
her hand.

LUCIETA

Ma!

MARGARITA

Ma! Vien vostro pare!

LUCIETA

Presto a laorar.

(*Lunardo entra bel bello senza parlare.*)

MARGARITA (*fra sè*)

Velo qua, eh!

LUCIETA (*piano*)

El vien co fa i gati.

(*forte a Lunardo*) Patron sior pare.

MARGARITA

Sioria, paron!  
No s'usa gnanca de saludar?

LUNARDO

Laorè, laorè.  
Per farme un complimento  
Stralassè de laorar?

MARGARITA

Za figurarse,  
Semo le schiave more!

LUNARDO

Che strambezz!  
Cossa songio? Un orso? Un tartaro?  
Aguzin de la galia?  
Seben no vogio ciassi  
Vegnimo a dir el merito,  
Laorè  
E savarò darve i vostri spassi.

LUCIETA

Caro, caro el me sior pare!

Indovino, scometo  
Lu ancuo, par un pocheto  
El vol menarme in mascara.

LUNARDO

In mascara? In mascara?

MARGARITA (*fra sè*)

Adesso si, el va zoso!

LUNARDO

E gave tanto muso  
De dir sto bocon de resia?  
M'aveva mai visto mi, siora strambazza,  
Vegnimo a dir el merito,  
Sul mio muso una mascara de strazza?  
Cosa xela sta mascara? . . .  
Le pute non à d'andar immascarae.

MARGARITA

Le maridae, par altro . . .

LUNARDO

Siora, no, siora no,  
Ganca le maridae,

MARGARITA

Figurarse, e cossa xele  
Tute quele che ghe va?

LUNARDO

"Figurarse, figurarse"  
Mi no vago a savariar.

MARGARITA

Parchè, "vegnimo  
A dir el merito",  
Parchè sè un rustego.

LUNARDO

Siora Malgari, non la me provoca!

MARGARITA

Sior Lunardo, no la me stuzzega!

LUNARDO

Siora Malgari!

MARGARITA

Sior Lunardo!

LUCIETA

Well!

MARGARITA

Well! Here comes your father.

LUCIETA

Quick, back to work!

(*Lunardo enters very quietly without speaking.*)

MARGARITA (*softly*)

He is here now.

LUCIETA (*softly*)

Like a cat, and says nothing.

(*aloud to Lunardo*) Good day to you, sir.

MARGARITA

Good day. Pray, sir,  
Have you no greeting for us today?

LUNARDO

To your work, to your work!  
Just out of mere politeness  
Would you leave your work undone?

MARGARITA

Oh, fancy that now!  
Are we a pair of slaves?

LUNARDO

Pair of idlers! What am I then?  
A savage? A polar bear?  
Or d'you think that I'm an ogre?  
I stand no contradiction,  
And that's the long and short of it.  
Do your work,  
And I shall take thought for your diversions.

LUCIETA

Oh father, now I know you really are the best  
Of fathers! I'll wager, I guess it,  
To-night, come now, confess it,  
You mean to take me to the masquerade.

LUNARDO

The masquerade? The masquerade?

MARGARITA (*aside*)

There, now he's lost his temper.

LUNARDO

And you've the face to tell me  
You want to go out in a mask?  
You little brazen-face, you I am asking,  
And that's the long and short of it,  
Have you ever known me to go a-masking?  
Who are you to go masking?  
Such things are not allow'd for girls like you.

MARGARITA

No, not until you're married.

LUNARDO

Not even then, not even then.  
That cannot be allow'd.

MARGARITA

Fancy that now! Well, what are they,  
All the women who are there?

LUNARDO

"Fancy that now, fancy that now!"  
All I say is, I don't care.

MARGARITA

Well, if you want to know  
"The long and short of it,"  
You're just an old curmudgeon!

LUNARDO

Siora Malgari, do not provoke me.

MARGARITA

Sior Lunardo, you were the first, you know.

LUNARDO

Siora Malgari!

MARGARITA

Sior Lunardo!

LUCIETA

Mo via, sior pare, via  
No me ne importa de andar,  
Ma che nol cria.  
Sior pare, via el sia bon,  
El staga in alegría  
Che mi za so un paston,  
So la so cara fia.  
Per far el carneval  
No penso a immascararme,  
Per mi ogni cossa val  
E basta per distrarme.

MARGARITA

A dir la verità  
Sta puta val tant'oro,  
E chi la sposará  
Ghe tocarà un tesoro;  
E mi, col cuore in man,  
La bramo fortunada;  
Vorave, anca doman,  
Vederla colocada.

LUNARDO (*fra sé*)

De ste consolazion,  
Ah! No ghe n'è che una,  
Sì, caro el mio paston,  
Voi far la tua fortuna.  
(*forte*) Ben vignì qua e sentì.  
De le volte anca mi  
Pararave che fusse fastidioso,  
Ma ancuo mo, son de vogia.  
Sapiè, fie, che stasera  
Disnemo in compagnia.

LUCIETA

O magari, sior pare! Dove? Dove?

LUNARDO

In casa.  
Ho invidà tre galantuomeni  
Cole so brave muger:  
Disnaremo, ridaremo  
E s'avremo da goder.

LUCIETA

Manco mal!

MARGARITA

Manco mal!  
E chi xeli figurarse?

LUNARDO

Aspetè! Sentì chi i xe.  
Vegnarà sior Simon Maroele.

LUCIETA e MARGARITA

Bon!

LUNARDO

Sior Maurizio de le Strope!

LUCIETA e MARGARITA

Megio!

LUNARDO

E sior Cancian Tartufola.

LUCIETA e MARGARITA

Mo Caro!

LUNARDO

No i xe tre omuni come si diè?

MARGARITA

Sior sì! Sior sì!

LUCIETA (*a Margarita*)

Tre rusteghi pezo de lu!

MARGARITA (*a Lucieta*)

Tre rusteghi pezo de lu!

(*a Lunardo*) Tre rusteghi

Pezo de vu!

LUNARDO

Eh! Al di d'ancuo parona  
Usa cussì pensar quasi ogni dona.

Quando un omo xe serio e prudente

E che grilli nol ga nel cervelo,  
Per le femene cossa mo xelo?

LUCIETA

I pray you, sir, be calm.  
I would rather not go  
Than make you angry.  
Now please you, sir, be kind  
To your most loving daughter,  
Who always bears in mind  
The lessons you have taught her.  
'Tis carnival tonight,  
But I'll not think to mask me;  
I know but one delight,  
To do whatever you ask me.

MARGARITA

Now I can really say  
I tell the truth with pleasure;  
Who bears that bride away  
Will find he's got a treasure.  
I cannot think it right  
That she should pine in sorrow;  
'Twould fill me with delight  
To see her wed tomorrow.

LUNARDO (*to himself*)

I know it is not right  
That she should pine in sorrow;  
'Twould fill me with delight  
To see her wed to-morrow.

(*Lucieta dances and sings.*)

(*aloud*) Well, I have news for you both.  
I dare say you'll have thought  
That I haven't been always too good-natur'd,  
But today I'm feeling cheerful.  
So now let me tell you,  
We are dining in company to-night.

LUCIETA

How exciting! Dear father, where? Where?

LUNARDO

At home.  
I've invited three worthy gentlemen  
And their ladies, too, to dine.  
We shall spend a pleasant evening  
And laugh and drink our wine.

LUCIETA

Not so bad.

MARGARITA

Not so bad.  
Fancy that now! And who are they?

LUNARDO

Wait a moment. Now you shall hear.  
I have ask'd Sior Simon Maroele.

LUCIETA and MARGARITA (*disappointed*)  
Oh!

LUNARDO

Sior Maurizio de le Strope.

LUCIETA and MARGARITA (*horified*)

Bless him!

LUNARDO

And Sior Cancian Tartufola.

LUCIETA and MARGARITA (*yawning*)  
Delightful!

LUNARDO

Are they not all of them substantial men?

MARGARITA

They are indeed.

LUCIETA (*to Margarita*)

Three bears such as never were known!

MARGARITA (*to Lucieta*)

Three bears such as never were known!  
(*to Lunardo*) Three bears, you may say,  
Their manners are worse than your own.

LUNARDO (*amiably*)

You're just like all other women;  
That is the way you all judge what a man's worth.  
When you meet one who's serious and prudent  
And has not got a brain full of maggots,  
What do women say? What's their opinion?

El xe un rustego, un orso, un tiran.

Perchè vu femene

Volè strambezzì

Petegolezzi  
E stomeghezzi,  
Le mode ultime,  
Volè merletti  
E pò ciasseti  
E pò spasseti,  
Volè sui abiti

Oro e lustrini,  
Volè teatri,

Volè festini,  
La vostra casa

Ve par preson, (*a tutta voce*)  
Ma pensè a quelle tante famegie

Che ogni zorno va zo in precipizio  
Che sbrissando sul fango del vizio  
In miseria in rovina le va.  
Parlio ben?

MARGARITA (*sospirando*)

Sì, sì, parlè benon.  
Sì, sì, parlè benon.  
Vegnarà siora Marina?

LUNARDO

Col mario, certo, seguro.

MARGARITA

Vegnarà siora Felice?

LUNARDO

Col mario, se pol pensar.  
(*piano a Margarita*)

Cussì gnente ghe xe de scuro  
E gnissun pol sospettar e no...

(*a Lucieta*) Cossa steu a spionar?

LUCIETA

Nol vol che senta?

LUNARDO (*piano a Margarita*)

No vedo l'ora de destrigarmela.

(*a Lucieta che ascolta ancora*)

Andè de là! ...

LUCIETA

Cossa ghe fazzio?

LUNARDO

Andè ve digo.

LUCIETA

Cossa ve intrigo?

LUNARDO

Fora de qua,  
Che deboto deboto ...

MARGARITA

Via, obedilo vostro sior pare.

LUCIETA

Eh! Vago, sì, sì, vago ...

(*esce poi facendo capolino dalla porta*)

Son de là... (*esce*)

MARGARITA

E cussi, come va sto maridozzo?

LUNARDO (*si guarda intorno*)

Sss!! ... Spetè. Mi credo ... credo ...  
credo, vedè, d'averla maridada.

MARGARITA

Con chi se pol saver?

He's a curmudgeon, a savage and a bear.

(*with increasing contempt*)

I know what women want—they like to chatter,  
Slander their neighbors—what does it matter?

They're all for finery—the latest fashions,  
There's no restraining their foolish passions.  
If you would satisfy their silly fancies,  
You'd spend a fortune on routs and dances.  
In days of old women were contented  
To mind their houses and stay at home;  
But now they drive their husbands all demented,

For every evening they want to roam.  
They want amusements, they want excursions.

They're always asking for new diversions;  
To plays and operas they'd have you take 'em,  
But you will never contented make 'em.  
Look around, you can see with your own eyes,  
Every day comes the news of disaster;  
When the husband is not the master,  
Then to certain destruction he'll come,  
Aren't I right?

MARGARITA (*sighs*)

Oh yes, you're always right,  
You're always right, of course you're right.  
Did you ask Siora Marina?

LUNARDO

With her husband, as is correct.

MARGARITA

Shall we see Siora Felice?

LUNARDO

With her husband, I expect.

(*softly to Margarita*)

If we ask them both together,  
Then we know there's nothing wrong, and we...

(*to Lucieta, angrily*) What are you doing here?

LUCIETA

May I not listen?

LUNARDO (*softly to Margarita*)

I shan't be happy till I am quit of her.

(*to Lucieta who is listening again*)

You go away.

LUCIETA

What have I done, sir?

LUNARDO

Be off, I tell you.

LUCIETA

What is the matter?

LUNARDO

Take yourself off and be quick,  
Or I'll smack you.

MARGARITA

You must do as your father bids you.

LUCIETA

I'm going, sir, I'm going—

(*putting her head in at the door*)

Sir, I'm gone. (*exit*)

MARGARITA

Tell me now, have you found the girl a husband?

LUNARDO (*looks around cautiously*)

Not so fast. I fancy I might say—I have arriv'd—  
At something like a settlement.

MARGARITA

With whom? May I not know?

LUNARDO

Zitto! Che gnanca l'aria sapia . . .  
Col fio de sior Maurizio.

MARGARITA

Filipeto?! Eh! Xelo un contrabando?

LUNARDO

I fati mii no vogio  
Se gabia de saver.

MARGARITA

Sior sì! E la puta  
Quando lo savarà?

LUNARDO

Co la se sposara.

MARGARITA (*incredula*)

Ah!

(*Lunardo fa un grugnito affermativo.*)  
Ah? E no i s'a vedar prima?

LUNARDO

Siora no:  
Mi no son uso stomeghezzi secondar.  
Chi la vede a pena in muso  
La ga anca da sposar.

MARGARITA

E se nol ghe piase?

LUNARDO

Son paron mi.

MARGARITA

Ma omo benedeto,  
Se no la piase al puto?

LUNARDO

(*sorpreso, tra se, poi ad alta voce*)  
Impossibile!  
M'a dà parola el pare,  
Seguro son de tuto.

MARGARITA

O che bel matrimonio!  
Proprio el consola el cuor.

LUNARDO

In casa mia le pute  
No ga da far l'amour  
(*esce, ma rientra subito*)  
Saveu chi xe!

MARGARITA

Chi?

LUNARDO

Sior Maurizio.

MARGARITA

El pare del puto.  
Vienlo per stabilir?

LUNARDO

Andè de là

MARGARITA

Me mandè via?

LUNARDO

Me pararia.

MARGARITA

Oh! Ma de dia par vu chi son?  
Son la muger.

LUNARDO

E mi el paron.

MARGARITA

Mo che bel satiro!

LUNARDO

Presto caveve!

MARGARITA

Mo che bel catego!

LUNARDO

Su destrigheve!

MARGARITA

Uh!

LUNARDO

La fènimio?

LUNARDO

Hush, for not a soul must know it.  
He's the son of Sior Maurizio.

MARGARITA

Filipeto! Why must it be a secret?

LUNARDO

Well, why should all the world  
Know my family affairs?

MARGARITA

Quite right. And your daughter,  
When will you tell her, pray?

LUNARDO

When? On her wedding-day.

MARGARITA (*incredulously*)

What?

(*Lunardo grunts affirmatively.*)

And you won't let them meet before that?

LUNARDO

I shall not.

'Tis not my custom to allow such goings on.  
If a man but looks upon her, dash it all!  
He'll have to marry her.

MARGARITA

But if she doesn't like him?

LUNARDO

That's my affair.

MARGARITA

But dear my lord and master,  
Supposing he won't have her?

LUNARDO

(*at first taken by surprise, then loudly*)  
That's impossible, quite impossible.  
His father has given me his word for it.  
The whole thing now is settled.

MARGARITA

That's a nice sort of marriage!  
Well, we must hope for the best.

LUNARDO

I tell you, I do not approve  
Of all these sentimental goings-on.  
(*leaves, but re-enters immediately*)  
D'yé know who's here?

MARGARITA

Who?

LUNARDO

Sior Maurizio.

MARGARITA

The young man's father?  
Coming to fix the day?

LUNARDO

You leave the room.

MARGARITA

I leave the room?

LUNARDO

Of course you do.

MARGARITA

And who am I to go away?  
I am your wife.

LUNARDO

That's all you are.

MARGARITA

What do you mean by it?

LUNARDO

I tell you once more, ma'am.

MARGARITA

Now, you behave yourself!

LUNARDO

There's the door, ma'am!

MARGARITA

Ooh!

LUNARDO

Are you going?

MARGARITA

Mo che bestion!

(*Lunardo la spinge fuori; lei ritorna di continuo, e così fanno una specie di danza.*)

LUNARDO

L'è andada finalmente.

Co custia senza urlar no se fa gnente.  
Ghe vogio ben assae,  
Ma qua cussì  
Comando mi.

(*Maurizio entra con gravità.*)

MAURIZIO

Sior Lunardo, patron.

LUNARDO

Sior Maurizio, sioria.

(*Si siendono e si guardano fissi.*)

MAURIZIO

Go parlà co mio fio.

LUNARDO

Coss'alo dito?

MAURIZIO

L'è contento el se sa. Ma sì, el voria . . .  
Vedarla un pochetin.

LUNARDO (*alzandosi*)

Sior no,  
Sti pati no avemo stipulà.

MAURIZIO

(*gli fa segno di sedersi*)

Ben ben quieteve;  
El puto obedira.

LUNARDO

Vegnimo a dir el merito  
La dota è pareciada.

MAURIZIO

No voi bezzi; investimoli.

LUNARDO

Come ve piasarà.

MAURIZIO

No spendè in abiti che mi no vogio.

LUNARDO

Mi ve la dago tal qual la xe.

MAURIZIO

Sarave a dir?

LUNARDO

Sea no ghe n'è.

MAURIZIO

In casa mia no vogio sea,  
No vogio scufie, nè tabarine,  
Nè cartoline da far i rizzi  
Nastri o topè.

LUNARDO

Sieu benedeto!  
La pensè proprio come se diè!  
Ghe fareu zogie?

MAURIZIO

I so manini, el so aneletto  
I so recini . . .  
E po la festa ghe darò un zogelo  
De la bon'anima de mia muger.

LUNARDO

*Requie in eterna.*

MAURIZIO

*Requie.*

LUNARDO e MAURIZIO

*De profundis clamavi, ecc.*

LUNARDO

Oh! a proposito  
No fessi migia ligar ste zogie  
A la moderna?

MARGARITA

Lord, what a bear!

(*Lunardo pushes her out; she keeps perpetually turning, so that they perform a sort of unwilling dance.*)

LUNARDO

Thank goodness, I've rid of her.

If I don't let her have it,

She takes no notice.

With all my heart I love her,

But in this house she must obey.

(*Maurizio enters solemnly.*)

MAURIZIO

Sior Lunardo, good day.

LUNARDO

Sior Maurizio, your servant.

(*They sit down and look hard at each other.*)

MAURIZIO

I have talk'd with my son.

LUNARDO

And what does he say?

MAURIZIO

Well, of course he's pleased enough,  
But he would like just to have a sight of her.

LUNARDO (*rising*)

No, no.  
Our contract does not contain that clause.

MAURIZIO

(*signs to him to sit down*)

Well, well, pray calm yourself.  
To my son my words are laws.

LUNARDO

Then now the long and short of it is,  
The dowry is all ready.

MAURIZIO

In investments, I hope it is.

LUNARDO

Sir, just as you prefer.

MAURIZIO

No wasting money, please, upon a *trousseau*!

LUNARDO

I give her to you just as she is.

MAURIZIO

What do you mean?

LUNARDO

Silk she wears none.

MAURIZIO

I don't approve of silk at all.  
I don't approve of the new French fashions,  
Ribbons and laces and powdered faces,  
Curl-papers on the head.

LUNARDO

Yes, I agree, sir.  
With every single word you have said.  
D'ye give her jewels?

MAURIZIO

A pair of bracelets, a little ring too,  
A pair of earrings—and then on Sunday  
She can wear the necklace  
That once belong'd to my lamented wife.

LUNARDO

*Requiem aeternam.*

MAURIZIO

*Aeternam.*

LUNARDO and MAURIZIO

*De profundis clamavi, etc.*

LUNARDO

Oh, I forgot to say, I hope  
You won't have the stones re-set for her  
In the latest fashion.

MAURIZIO (*ridendo*)

Ma sogio mato,  
D'aver ste vogie? Mi?  
Pare mio, de sti spegazzi  
Mai go fato nè farò.  
Modernele ogni diese ani  
E in cent'ani capirè,  
Che do volte le comprè.

LUNARDO

Ah! Gh'è pochi che pensa cussi.

MAURIZIO

E gh'è pochi che ga i nostri bezzi.

LUNARDO

Mo sior sì, ch'el xe un gusto star ben.

MAURIZIO

E caponi, straculi magnar.

LUNARDO

E a bon mercà

MAURIZIO

E senza debiti.

LUNARDO

E senza strepiti.

MAURIZIO

Senza secae . . .

LUNARDO

Paroni nu . . .

MAURIZIO

Le donne quace.

LUNARDO

E i fioi da fioi.

MAURIZIO

Come che va.

Cussi ò arlevà mio fio.

LUNARDO

E mi cussi la puta

MAURIZIO

Un bagatin nol buta.

LUNARDO

La mia tuto sa far:  
Fin in cusina la lava i piati.

MAURIZIO

E mi el mio puto parchè nol s'usa  
Cole massere a bazzegar  
In fin le braghe voi che el se cusa,  
E che le calze el sapia far.

LUNARDO

Bravo dasseno!

MAURIZIO

Eh! Go giudizio.

LUNARDO

Fèmolo donca sto sposalizio.

MAURIZIO

Certo.

(*si abbracciano*)

LUNARDO

E ve aspetto ancùo a dinzar.

MAURIZIO

E magneremo.

LUNARDO

Se godaremo.

MAURIZIO

Staremo alegrì.

LUNARDO

Faremo festa!

MAURIZIO

Faremo festa!

LUNARDO e MAURIZIO  
E i dise i stupidi che no godemo.

Puffe! Martufi! Da petufar!

(*escono a braccetto*)

MAURIZIO (*laughing*)

I should be mad, sir, to waste my money.  
Have them re-set? I? I?  
No, good sir, I have never been  
Nor ever shall be such a fool.  
Have your stones set every ten years,  
In a hundred years you'll find  
You'll have paid for them twice over.  
Yes, twice what they cost at first.

LUNARDO

Not many men would have thought of that.

MAURIZIO

Not many men are as wealthy as we are.

LUNARDO

It's a fine thing to feel you are safe.

MAURIZIO

And to know you can eat what you will.

LUNARDO

To pay cash down—

MAURIZIO

To have no creditors—

LUNARDO

To have no bickerings—

MAURIZIO

Lead quiet lives—

LUNARDO

Have peace at home—

MAURIZIO

Obedient wives—

LUNARDO

And children too—

MAURIZIO

Good girls and boys.

Thus I've brought up my son.

LUNARDO

Thus I've brought up my daughter.

MAURIZIO

He'll never waste a farthing.

LUNARDO

My girl knows how to cook;  
I've even made her—ha! ha! wash  
up the dishes.

MAURIZIO

And as there's always a certain danger  
If boys get chattering with the maids,  
I taught my boy to patch his breeches  
And darn his stockings himself as well.

LUNARDO

Come now, I like that!

MAURIZIO

I knew you would, sir.

LUNARDO

Let them be married.

MAURIZIO

That's understood, sir.

(*They embrace.*)

LUNARDO

Then you'll come and dine with us?

MAURIZIO

With every pleasure.

LUNARDO

You're very welcome.

MAURIZIO

We'll eat and drink—

LUNARDO

And we'll be merry.

MAURIZIO

And we'll be merry.

LUNARDO and MAURIZIO

To think that people say we don't

enjoy our lives!

Idiots and meddlers! Let them go hang!

(*exeunt arm in arm*)

### TERRAZZA IN CASA DI MARINA

A sinistra sarà un tetto sporgente con due porticine; quella più lontana dal pubblico è nascosta da della biancheria stesa ad asciugare. A destra diversi vasi con fiori e una piccola panca. In fondo, i tetti di Venezia, con molti camini e torri. Un cielo blu di primavera. Marina è in piedi sopra una seggiola stendendo la biancheria. Una serva porta i vasi di fiori dalla casa; uno di essi è troppo pesante e non riesce ad alzarlo.

MARINA (*cantarellando*)

"El specio me ga dito che son bela  
Che ghe somegio a una rosa bianca . . ."  
(*S'interrompe e parla alla serva.*)  
Issa! Issa! Coraggio.

SERVA

Siora, el pesa.

MARINA (*scende dalla sedia*)

Quà, quà, bona da gnente.  
(*aiuta la serva a trasportare il vaso*)  
Aveu visto? Andè a torghene ancora.

SERVA

Siora sì.

MARINA

E vardè de no rompar.

SERVA

No, no siora. (*esce*) . . .

MARINA

(*riprende a cantarellare*)

"Che ghe somegio a una rosa bianca."

Ga dito el specio.  
"Le rose bianche à el manego spinoso,  
Le bele done ga el mario gelo . . ."

(*S'interrompe nuovamente vedendo la serva la quale entra battendo un vaso contro la biancheria.*)

Cossa feu? No vedè che ghe andè drento?

SERVA

Gnente, gnente, parona xe sta el vento.

MARINA

(*sale di nuovo sulla seggiola e riprende il suo cantare con insistenza*)

"Le bele done ga el mario geloso.

E mi me vendico e per dispetto  
Me sero in camara, me fico in leto."

(*Filipeto compare all'abbaino.*)

FILIPETO

Sior'ama! Sior'ama Marina.

MARINA (*contenta*)

Filipeto?! . . . Che miracolo?

FILIPETO

Sior'amina, no la sa?

MARINA

(*subito, spaventata, salta giù dalla seggiola*)

Oh! Dio, disgrazie?  
Cossa xe sta?

FILIPETO

Ghe xe sior barba?

MARINA

No, nol ghe xe quell'orso, no.  
Cossà gaveò?

FILIPETO (*alla serva*)

Senti ste là, ferma cussì . . .  
Sel vien disemelo,  
Che me la moco . . .  
(*a Marina*) Nol ga dito sior pare?

### THE ROOF-TERRACE OF MARINA'S HOUSE.

On the left there is a projecting roof with two small doors; the one further from the audience is hidden by washing hung up to dry along the left side of the stage. On the right are several pots of flowers and a small bench. In the background there is a view over the roofs of Venice, with many chimney-pots and towers; the lagoon in the distance. Blue sky as in spring. Marina is standing on a chair hanging up washing. A young maid brings pots of flowers out of the house; she finds one too heavy to lift.

MARINA (*singing to herself*)

"The glass has told me I am fair to look on,  
And whiter than the rose is my  
complexion—"

(*She breaks off and speaks to the maid.*)  
Lift it, stupid, with both hands!

MAID

"Tis too heavy.

MARINA (*gets down from the chair*)

You girls are good for nothing.

(*She helps the maid carry the pot.*)

Run along now, go and get me some more.

MAID

Very good, ma'am.

MARINA

And be sure not to drop them.

MAID

Very good, ma'am. (*exits*)

MARINA

(*singing while she arranges the flowers*)  
"And whiter than the rose is my  
complexion."

The mirror said so.

"But roses all have thorns, our poets tell us,  
And lovely women husbands who are  
jealous."

(*Re-enter the maid with flowers and knocks them against the washing.*)

Silly girl, can't you look where you're  
going?

MAID

'Twas the wind blew the washing in my  
face, ma'am.

MARINA

(*She stands on the chair again and hangs up the washing. She continues to sing to herself, aggressively.*)

"And lovely women husbands who are  
jealous.

But if there's any trouble with my own—ah,  
I lock the door on him and sleep alone—ah!"

(*Filipeto appears at the nearer door.*)

FILIPETO

Aunt Marina! Aunt Marina!

MARINA (*delighted*)

Filipeto! Well, I never!

FILIPETO

You haven't heard the news?

MARINA

(*suddenly frightened, jumping down from the chair*)

Oh Lord! What's happened?  
Tell me the worst.

FILIPETO

But where's my uncle?

MARINA

Oh, he is out; you need not fear.  
Tell me the news.

FILIPETO (*to the maid*)

Stay there by the door, keep a lookout,  
If he comes, tell me quick,

For I must hide.

(*to Marina*) Did my father say nothing?

MARINA

Ma, sior oco, de cossa infin?

FILIPETO

La varda ben.

MARINA

Su via . . . !

FILIPETO (*vergognandosi*)

El me vol... el me vol... za..., el me vol...  
El me vol maridar.

MARINA

Oi miei! Respiro!

(*alla serva*) Portè cipro e pandòli.

FILIPETO

No, sior' amia.  
Son de scampon, se co sior pare  
Fazzo maron, povaro mi el me copa.

MARINA

No conta, avè parlà  
E gavè de star qua.  
Ma disemene tante e chi mai xela

Sta novizzeta bela?

FILIPETO (*sorridendo*)

La xe la fia de sior Lunardo Crozola.

MARINA

Lucieta? O ben! Ve piaselà?

FILIPETO

Mi vista no la go.

MARINA

Ma i vela farà vedar.

FILIPETO

Ho paura de no.

MARINA

Ah! Bruti cani!  
E se no la ve piase?

FILIPETO

Eh! Se non la me piase, ma de dia,  
Lasso che i se la peta e scampo via!  
Lucieta xe un bel nome

Che el cor pol stuzzegar,  
Per tutta la mia vita  
Mi lo voria ciamar:  
Ma po? Se salvo quello  
Altro non gh'è de belo,  
Senza de un bel viseto  
El nome xe pocheto.  
E goi da darghe el cuor  
Senza un fiatin de amor?  
O che facenda bruta,  
De pezo no se dà:  
Qua se nessun me agiuta  
Son proprio dispara. (*piange*)

MARINA

Se podesse far mi che ve vedessi . . .

FILIPETO

Ah! Magari, ah! Benedetta  
Amia cara, amieta bela,  
Che xe zovene anca ela  
Che capisse el mio sofrir.  
La me agiuta; la me salva  
Che son proprio dispara  
La me agiuta, la me salva  
Da sti afani, da ste pene.  
Ah! La rompa ste caene  
Che me fan tanto languir.

MARINA

Ah! Una vogia maledetta  
Sento in cuor de farla bela,  
Tanto vu che la putela  
No gavè più da soffrir.  
Se me meto no i se salva  
No i se salva, no, no, no,  
No me tien le so caene,  
No gavè più da soffrir.

MARINA

Why, what had he to say to me?

FILIPETO

I hardly dare—

MARINA

Come, come!

FILIPETO (*hesitating*)

He has found—yes, he has found—  
He has found me a wife.

MARINA

Oh dear! I breathe again.

(*to the maid*) Bring the sherry and  
biscuits.

FILIPETO

No, I thank you, Aunt Marina,  
I've slipped away, father doesn't know,  
And if he finds out he'll make a world  
of trouble.

MARINA

No, now that you have come  
You have got to stay here.  
For of course you must tell me all  
about it,  
And who the blushing bride is.

FILIPETO (*smiling*)

She is the daughter of Sior Lunardo  
Crozola.

MARINA

Lucieta! That's good! D'you like the girl?

FILIPETO

Not having seen her I can't say.

MARINA

They'll surely let you meet her.

FILIPETO

Well, I'm thinking—they won't.

MARINA

Oh what barbarians!  
But what if you don't fancy her?

FILIPETO

Oh, if I do not like her, good Lord,  
I'll leave her where she is and run away.  
Lucieta! Lucieta! Her name at least is  
pretty;  
It sounds a happy sign.  
'Twould surely be a pity  
Should I not make her mine.  
And yet—I hate to doubt her—  
If there's naught else about her  
To give me satisfaction,  
Her name's no great attraction.  
What will my father say if I do not obey?  
But if she does not please me,  
I'd sooner run away.  
If they will not release me,  
There could be nothing worse;  
My life will be a curse. (*weeps*)

MARINA

Now I wonder if I could manage  
something—

FILIPETO

Oh, my sweetest Aunt Marina,  
Do not laugh at my demeanour,  
You, yourself, you know, have been a  
Pretty women in your time.  
You must help me, you must save me,  
Or they'll drive me to a crime.  
If my father wants me married  
He must let me see the bride.  
For I must be sure I like her.  
Yes, before the knot is tied.

MARINA

Well, of all the silly fathers  
Yours, I think, is quite the worst;  
If you've got to wed Lucieta  
He must let you see her first.  
If I do not help you quickly  
There'll be trouble, I can see.  
I shall find a way to help you  
If you leave it all to me.

SERVA

El xe qua! (*esce*)

FILIPETO (*spaventato*)

Xe sior barba!

MARINA

Fermeve!

(*Simone entra dalla porta vicina.*)

SIMON

Cossa falo mo sto frascon?

FILIPETO

Sior barba patron.

SIMON (*bruscamente*)

Sioria.

MARINA

Bel acetò ghe fe a mio nevodo.

SIMON

Co v'ò tolto go meso per pato  
Che mi in casa no vogio parenti.

FILIPETO

Vado.

SIMON

Bravo.

MARINA (*trattiene Filipeto*)

Ma cossa el v'à fato?

SIMON

A mi gnente, ma vogio cussì.

FILIPETO

Sior'amia la lassa, la lassa che vaga.  
Sior barba gh'el zuro no voi più tornar.

MARINA

El xe mio nevodo mi vogio che'l staga.  
Ve robelo fursi? Coss'è sto scazzar?

SIMON

E mi mo ve digo che vogio che'l vaga,  
No l'odio ma i bisi nol m'à da seccar.

FILIPETO (*a Simon*)

Patron. (*a Marina*) Patrona.

MARINA

(*con esagerata dolcezza, per annoiare Simon*)

Bon di, colona.

FILIPETO

(*tra sé allo zio*)

Siéstu picaco!

(*forte*) Patroni!

SIMON

Sc'iao!

(*Filipeto via de corsa.*)

MARINA

Caro da Dio! (*gli manda un bacio*)

SIMON

Ciapè! (*l'imita sgraziatamente*)

MARINA

Perchè steu qua?

SIMON

Perchè de sì.

(*Passeggiano su e giù per la scena. Marina è furibonda ma si ritiene.*)

MAID

Master's here! (*disappears*)

FILIPETO (*in a fright*)

Here's my uncle!

MARINA

Stay here.

(*Enter Simon by the nearer door.*)

SIMON

What are *you* doing here in the house?

FILIPETO

Your servant, sir.

SIMON (*rudely*)

Good day.

MARINA

That's a nice way to speak to my nephew!

SIMON

When I married you I told you plainly  
That I don't want to see your relations.

FILIPETO

I'll go.

SIMON

Thank you.

MARINA (*still holding Filipeto by the arm*)  
What have you got against him?

SIMON

Not a thing; but I won't have him here.

FILIPETO

Dear Aunt, I beseech you, allow me to go,  
And I will not intrude here again, sir.  
I vow.

MARINA

This boy is my nephew, I want him to stay;  
Do you think him a thief, that you drive  
him away?

SIMON

I bear no ill-will to the lad, and you  
know it,  
As long as he does not come here any  
more.

FILIPETO (*to Simon*)

Your servant. (*to Marina*) Good day,  
ma'am.

MARINA

(*with exaggerated sentimentality,  
to annoy Simon*)

Sweet lamb, I love you!

FILIPETO

(*to himself, at his uncle*)

You may go hang, sir!

(*aloud*) Your servant.

SIMON

Good day.

(*Filipeto runs out.*)

MARINA

Oh, you're a love! (*throws him a kiss*)

SIMON

My dear! (*throws her a kiss*)

MARINA

Why are you here?

SIMON

Because I am.

(*They walk up and down the stage separately. Marina is furious, but controls herself.*)

MARINA		MARINA
Gaveu fata la spesa?		Did you go to the market?
SIMON		SIMON
Siora, no.		Not to-day.
MARINA		MARINA
Ancuo no se disna?		Then aren't we to have any dinner?
SIMON		SIMON
Siora, no.		Not to-day.
MARINA		MARINA
Ah! No se disna?		What? Have no dinner?
SIMON		SIMON
Siora, no.		Not to-day.
MARINA		MARINA
No?		No?
SIMON		SIMON
No!		No!
MARINA		MARINA
Ma parcossa in bon'ora?		But why not? Tell me that now.
SIMON		SIMON
Perchè magnemo fora.		To-day we're dining out, ma'am.
MARINA		MARINA
Caro e dove?		Really? And where then?
SIMON		SIMON
Co mi.		With me.
MARINA		MARINA
Ma dove?		Yes, but where?
SIMON		SIMON
Eh! Dove? Vegini e magnè.		H'm! Where? You feed with me.
MARINA		MARINA
Ma prima me dirè ...		But tell me first of all ...
SIMON		SIMON
Gnente!		No!
MARINA		MARINA
Se gh'è riguardo!		Shall I wear my best gown?
SIMON		SIMON
No ghe n'è dove che vago mi.		Certainly not, if you're going out with me.
MARINA		MARINA
Ma dove andemio?		Where are we going?
SIMON		SIMON
Ma! Vegrare co mi.		You're going out with me.
MARINA		MARINA
Ma la xe curiosa ...		You're a very curious man.
SIMON		SIMON
Mo curiosa seguro.		It's you who are curious.
MARINA		MARINA
Ciapo su e vago in leto.		I am going to bed then.
SIMON		SIMON
E mi a magnar.		And I to dine.
MARINA		MARINA
Ma dove me menue, sia maledeto?		Where are you going to dine. Tell me, drat you!
SIMON		SIMON
Vegni co mi che lora savare.		You come with me, and then you will find out. (Simon leaves; Marina is furious.)
<i>(Simon parte. Movimento d'ira di Marina.)</i>		
MARINA		MARINA
Ghe la fazzo, cospetina! Me despoglio, vago in leto, Sero suso sì perdina E che'l bata lu se'l vol. (Vede il cappello di Simon dimenticato da lui e gli parla come se fosse Simon.)		If he treats me like a Turk does, I'll undress and go to bed, Lock the door fast, I will indeed, sir, You may knock then to wake the dead. (She sees Simon's hat and talks to it as if it were Simon himself.)
Mo vardelo, benedeto! Nol fa vogia sto bonbon? Che zogelo! Che capeto, Che delizia el to paron. (Si preme ironicamente il cappello al cuore e sta per buttarlo dietro Simon quando entra la serva.)		Oh, a jewel of a husband Is the man to whom I'm wed! So affectionate and gentle— Every blessing on his head! (She presses the hat to her heart and is then on the point of throwing it after Simon, when the maid enters.)

SERVA

Siora, i è qua.

MARINA

Chi xe qua?

SERVA

Siora Felice col cavalier servente  
E col mario che ghe va drio.

MARINA

E qua li fe vegnir?

SERVA

Mi no saveva,  
I è lori che à volesto.

MARINA

Ma no ghe ne fè mai una de sesto!  
Andè, corè, feli restar da basso,  
No xe creanza, presto . . . Via! . . .  
(Entra Felice, seguita da Riccardo, passano  
sotto la biancheria e vengono avanti.)

FELICE

Eh, no la se descomoda,  
Siora Marina cara. Cossa vorla?  
Mi da la strada l'aveva vista  
E per matada son vegnua su.

MARINA (alla serva)

Bruta sempia.

FELICE

Felice dal bel estro  
Tuti me vol ciamar!  
Marina dal bel viso,  
Quassù nel paradiso,  
Mi vegno a saludar.  
Marina dal bel viso  
Mi vegno a saludar,  
Mi vegno a saludar.

MARINA

O siela benedeta,  
O siela benedeta,  
Benedeta. (si baciano)

(Cancian entra, anche lui sotto la biancheria, È affannato e molto seccato.)

MARINA (ai due uomini)

Patroni mii.

CANCIAN (melanconico)

Patrona.

MARINA (alla serva)

Va a tor dele careghe. (La serva esce.)

RICCARDO (a Marina)

Servitore umilissimo.

MARINA (al conte)

Ghe son serva. (a Felice)  
Chi xelo sto lustrissimo?

FELICE

Un conte.

MARINA

Ma cospeto!

FELICE

Un cavalier foresto,  
De mio mario el xe amigo  
E lu ve dirà el resto.

CANCIAN

Mi no so gnente.

FELICE (ride)

Ah, ah, ah, ah! Sior conte  
La compatissa sala!  
Semo de carneval  
E mio mario se gode  
A farne tarocar.  
N'è vero, sior Cancian?

CANCIAN (fra sé)

E bisogna che ingiota!  
(a Felice) Siora sì.

MAID

Madam, they are there.

MARINA

Who are there?

MAID

Siora Felice, with her gentlemen-in-waiting,  
And Sior Cancian is just behind.

MARINA

You've brought them all up here?

MAID

You never told me.  
'Twas the lady who insisted.

MARINA

Have you no common sense, you little idiot?  
Run down at once, tell them to stay below.  
How can I receive them up here? Run! . . .

(Enter Felice with Riccardo; they pass  
under the washing and come forward.)

FELICE

Pray be not put out for us.  
Siora Marina, dearest! You'll forgive me?  
I cast a glance up as I was walking  
And took a fancy to come upstairs.

MARINA (to the maid)

Oh you stupid!

FELICE

Felice I was christen'd,  
Happiness is my name!  
So let me, like the poet,  
(I name him not, you know it)  
Hail you in Paradise,  
Of all the flowers the fairest,  
The loveliest and the rarest,  
That here delights the eyes!

MARINA

Felice, dearest treasure,  
I welcome you with pleasure,  
Oh what a sweet surprise! (They kiss  
each other.)

(Enter Cancian, also from under the washing. He is out of breath and much annoyed.)

MARINA (to the gentlemen)

Your most obedient.

CANCIAN (depressed)

Your servant.

MARINA (to the maid)

You go and get the chairs out. (The maid leaves.)

RICCARDO (to Marina)

Madam, your most humble servant.

MARINA (curtseying to Riccardo)  
Most obedient. (to Felice, aside)  
Who is this gorgeous gentleman?

FELICE

A nobleman!

MARINA

You don't say so!

FELICE

Come all the way from Florence  
A friend of my dear husband,  
As he himself will tell you.

CANCIAN

I? What do I know?

FELICE (laughing)

Ha, ha, ha, ha! I hope, sir,  
That you will be indulgent.  
Carnival time is here;  
You must allow my husband  
To have his little joke.  
Is that not so, Sior Cancian?

CANCIAN (aside)

And that's what I must swallow!  
(to Felice) That is so.

FELICE

Ma guarda quanti fiori  
E come i xe bei!  
La ga fato benon  
A darghe un respiro.

MARINA

Ah! Senti sto caldetto?  
La se dirave Pasqua  
Ma intanto la se comoda.  
(*La serva porta due seggiola ed esce.*)

FELICE (*sedendosi*)

Sì, sentemose un fià.

RICCARDO (*sedendosi presso Felice*)

Fortuna m'è propizia,  
Che tal posto mi dà.

CANCIAN

E mi dove me sentio?

RICCARDO

Amico, se volete  
Bando alle ceremonie,  
Siete padron, sedete.

FELICE

Mo conte mio par cossa dixelo ste fredure?  
Galo forse paura ch'el sia geloso? Oh no!  
El sa chi son.  
Da resto lu, bamin, el se comoda  
In qualunque sia liogo.

Magari anca ghe basta

Quela bancheta là!

(*Cancian va lentamente verso la banchetta.  
Felice segue i suoi movimenti con gesti di spiegazione.*)

Anzi, eco... el ghe va,  
Là... là... cussi, vede.  
Oh belo, el s'à senta.

(*Cancian si siede. Felice, molto contenta di sé stessa, si alza, si mette dietro di lui e lo accarezza.*)

Mio mario el xe un galantomo  
Che me stima, che me ama.  
E cussi lu anzi el brama  
Che la so fida muger  
La conversa onestamente  
Co un onesto cavalier.  
N'è vero sior Cancian?

CANCIAN

Siora sì

RICCARDO (*a Felice, piano*)

A dir il ver finora  
Ne dubitavo alquanto;  
Ora vieppiù il servirla  
Sarà mia gioia e vanto.  
(*Egli prova di baciare la mano di Felice, ma lei la ritira con un sorriso.*)

CANCIAN

Che bestia che so sta de torlo in casa.

MARINA (*fra sé*)

Che gaina!

(*Felice si siede tra Marina e Riccardo. Volta la spalle a Riccardo e si mette a parlare con Marina.*)

FELICE

E cussi  
Ancuo disnemo insieme.

MARINA

Dove?

FELICE

Ma come? No la lo sa?

MARINA

No veramente.

FELICE

Da Sior Lunardo.

FELICE

Look there at all these flowers!  
I never saw so many.  
And how well you have done  
To give them air in plenty!

MARINA

Yes, what weather we're having!  
You'd almost think 'twas Easter.  
But will you not be seated?

(*The maid brings in two chairs and goes out.*)

FELICE (*sitting down*)

You are kindness itself.

RICCARDO (*sitting down by the side of Felice*)

By fortune I am favour'd indeed  
If by your side I sit.

CANCIAN

There don't seem to be chairs enough.

RICCARDO (*rising*)

Sir, will you not allow me?  
Pray do not be punctilious!  
Yours to command! Be seated!

FELICE

My lord, you're too amusing!  
Do you really suppose my husband jealous?  
Oh, no, he knows me well.  
My husband's like a child;  
He'll content himself with the humblest  
position.  
He'll be only too happy sitting upon that  
bench.

There now, you'll see what he will do.

(*Cancian moves slowly toward the bench;  
Felice follows his movements with explanatory gestures.*)

Look, look, the dear man, O la!

Look there, look there,

He's found his chair.

(*Cancian sits down. Felice, very much pleased with herself and swaying elegantly, moves towards him, stands behind him and caresses him.*)

Oh, my husband is a worthy man  
Who loves me and respects me;  
That's why he now expects me,  
As a model of a wife,  
To converse with none but gentlemen  
Of pure and blameless life.  
Is't not so, Sior Cancian?

CANCIAN

That is so.

RICCARDO (*to Felice, softly*)

I must confess I doubted  
If he was so confiding;  
Now you have my devotion,  
And he no cause for chiding.

(*Riccardo attempts to kiss her hand, but she coquettishly withdraws it.*)

CANCIAN

A fool I was to introduce him to her.

MARINA (*aside*)

She's a sly one!

(*Felice sits down in the middle with Marina on one side and Riccardo on the other. She now turns her back on Riccardo and talks to Marina.*)

FELICE

Now my dear, to-day we dine together.  
Yes, indeed, we dine together.

MARINA

Where, pray?

FELICE

You tell me you do not know?

MARINA

Really and truly.

FELICE

At Sior Lunardo's.

MARINA

Desso ò capio! Nozze?

FELICE (*sorpresa*)

Che nozze?

MARINA

No la sa gnente?

FELICE

Mi no, mi no.

MARINA

No la sa gnente?

FELICE

Mi no, la diga!

MARINA

Gran novità!

FELICE

Oè? De Lucieta?

MARINA

Si ben, ma zito,

FELICE

Chi ve l'à dito?

MARINA

(*a Felice indicando i due uomini*)

Senteli là?

FELICE (*al conte*)

Ma andemo via sior conte.

Me par che la sbandona quel povaro mario.

La ghe vada darente,  
La lo compra un fiantin.  
Sala, el ghe tende a le ciacole sconte.  
Povero, fio l'è tanto cortesan.  
N'è vero sior Cancian?

CANCIAN

Eh! Che nol se descomoda  
Che a mi no me n'importa.

FELICE

Ah! Ah! Caro colù  
Xelo, gnanca un burlon?  
Metarlo el vol d'impegno.  
Via che'l taca una volta!

RICCARDO

Subito. (*siede presso Cancian*)

CANCIAN (*fra sè*)

El vol star fresco.

FELICE (*a Marina*)

Via, la me conta. E sta Lucieta?  
(*Marina e Felice bisbigliano tra loro con grande eccitamento.*)

RICCARDO (*a Cancian*)

Signor Canciano, non mi dite niente?

CANCIAN

Go altro per la mente.

FELICE

Cossa? Gnancora no la ga vista?

MARINA

Nè che i se veda  
Gnanca no i vol.

FELICE

No i s'â da vedar?  
Piase! Ma questo xe un gran codogno!

MARINA

Sfido, de peso dar no se pol.

FELICE (*piano*)

E se tentessimo  
Prudentemente...

MARINA

Now I understand. There's going to be a wedding.

FELICE (*taken aback*)

A wedding?

MARINA

You didn't know it?

FELICE

Not I, not I.

MARINA

What, never knew it?

FELICE

My dear, do tell me.

MARINA

You'll be surprised.

FELICE

Oh! Lucieta?

MARINA

'Tis still a secret.

FELICE

Who was it told you?

MARINA

(*pointing to the men*)

Hush, they will hear.

FELICE (*to Riccardo*)

Now pray you, my lord, I beg you will oblige me.

Just look at my poor husband sitting all alone!

Be so kind, and draw near him.  
Entertain him with talk;  
He loves to join in polite conversation.  
I can assure you he's a man of fashion.  
It's not so, Sior Cancian?

CANCIAN

I beg he'll not disturb himself.  
I need no entertaining.

FELICE

Ha! Ha! Did you hear that?  
What a charming reply!  
That is his way of talking.  
Now, my lord, won't you join him?

RICCARDO

Yours to command. (*sits by Cancian*)

CANCIAN (*aside*)

He's had enough of her.

FELICE (*to Marina*)

Now you can tell me all about Lucieta.

(*Marina and Felice whisper to each other in great excitement.*)

RICCARDO (*to Cancian*)

Signor Canciano, why are you so silent?

CANCIAN

I have other things to think of.

FELICE

Goodness! D'you mean he hasn't yet seen her?

MARINA

No, and believe me, the parents have said  
They're not to meet until they are wed.

FELICE

What, not to see each other?  
Heavens! Who ever heard of such nonsense?

MARINA

Isn't it? That's just what I always said.

FELICE

I never heard of such a thing, never!  
(softly) But now I wonder if we could not somehow—

## MARINA

Pian che i ne sente!  
Magari in mascara.

FELICE (*forte, ai due*)

Via cari siori,  
Che i pensa lori? (*piano, a Marina*)  
La senta vissere  
Cossa me bulega.

(continuau a parlare fra di loro  
concitatamente)

RICCARDO (*a Cancian*)

E così questa sera ove si va?

## CANCIAN

A casa.

## RICCARDO

E la Signora?

## CANCIAN

A casa.

## RICCARDO

Ah! Intendo: fate conversazione.

## CANCIAN

Sior sì, in letto.

## RICCARDO

In letto? Ma a che ora?

## CANCIAN

A do ore.

## RICCARDO

Ma questi mi canzona!

## CANCIAN

Proprio dasseno.

## RICCARDO

Ah?

CANCIAN (*grugnito*)

Uh!

FELICE (*raggiante*)

Cossa ghe par?

## MARINA

Ma se lo so che l'è una gran dritona!

## FELICE e MARINA

Per farla in barba ai omeni  
Astuzia non me manca,  
Se savari fin anca  
El diavolo sfidar.  
Che i casca i orsi in trapola  
L'è proprio un gusto mato  
E quando el colpo è fato  
Nissun lo pol disfar.  
Ah! Si, cantar vittoria  
In gloria dele done  
E il mondo de parone  
Volemo dominar. (*ridono*)

CANCIAN (*a parte*)

Un cicisbeo secagine,  
Una muger demonio,  
Ma caro el matrimonio!  
Go fato un bel afar.  
Mi ò fredo e quella ciàcola,  
Costù me rompe i bisi,  
Ma gnanca ai Campi Elisi  
Più ben no se pol star.

RICCARDO (*sentimentalmente a Felice*)

Vago sembiante amabile.  
Donna per cui sospiro  
Per te quanto martiro  
Io non saprei soffrir?  
Ma ahime, soave e gelida  
Gentile e pur sì casta,  
Ahi quanto mai contrasta  
Virtude i miei desir.

(Simon entra.)

## SIMON

Marina?

## MARINA

Sior?

## MARINA

Hush, they will hear us.  
Perhaps in masquerade—

FELICE (*loudly, to the men*)

Oh, what impertinence!  
How dare you listen? (*softly, to Marina*)  
Marina, I'll tell you  
What I am thinking of.

(They whisper together.)

RICCARDO (*to Cancian*)

Tell me, sir, this evening where do we go?

## CANCIAN

Home.

## RICCARDO

And the Signora?

## CANCIAN

Home.

## RICCARDO

I understand; you've a party at home, then?

## CANCIAN

We have. In bed.

## RICCARDO

In bed? At what time?

## CANCIAN

At eight.

## RICCARDO

He must be making a fool of me.

CANCIAN (*with intention*)

No need of that.

## RICCARDO

What?

CANCIAN (*grunts*)

Ugh!

FELICE (*radiantly*)

There, what do you say?

## MARINA

I've always said that you're an arch-intriguer!

## FELICE and MARINA

A women always wins the game  
By her peculiar science;  
Old Satan we could put to shame  
Were he not in alliance.

A nice trap we for the bears have set,  
And hope they'll fall into it;  
Full well we'll make them rue it,  
For then 'twill be too late.  
Though they think their own way to get,  
We women will get round them;  
Completely we'll confound them,  
Our rights we'll vindicate.

CANCIAN (*aside*)

I can't endure my wife's young man,  
And she's the very devil.  
Yes, life is full of trouble  
Within the married state.  
Her foolish tongue runs on and on  
In chatter vain and silly;  
I'm feeling rather chilly,  
But here I have to wait.

RICCARDO (*sentimentally to Felice*)

Fairest of all on earth below!  
Angel for whom I languish!  
For my rapturous anguish  
Have you but cold disdain?  
Your soul is chaster than the snow,  
With kindly words you spurn me;  
While flames of passion burn me  
And rack my heart with pain.

(Simon enters.)

## SIMON

Marina!

## MARINA

Sir?

SIMON

Coss'elo sto baccan?  
Cossa feu? Chi l'è colù? (*indicando Riccardo*)

FELICE (*a Simon*)

Serva.

SIMON (*a Felice*)

Sioria. (*a Marina*) Ah?

FELICE

Sior Simon, son qua  
A farghe un fià de visita.

SIMON

A chi?

FELICE

A elo.

SIMON (*a Marina*)

Andè de là.

MARINA

Che usa sta increanza . . . ?

SIMON

Ghe penso mi.  
Vu andè de là, ve digo.

MARINA

Mi?

SIMON

Vu.

MARINA

Mi?

SIMON

Sì!

FELICE

Via, via, siora Marina,  
Obedirlo bisogna so mario.

La varda mi col mio,  
Lu parla apena e subito xe fato.

MARINA

Eh! Sì, ho capio. Brava! Brava!  
Patroni.

RICCARDO (*a Marina*)

Reverenza. (*fa un inchino*)

SIMON (*al conte, imitandolo*)  
Me sprofondo.

MARINA (*a Riccardo*)

Lustrissimo.

SIMON (*a Marina*)

Patrona, patrona, patron.

MARINA (*a Simon*)

Vado e taso malagrazia

Perchè za per mia disgrazia  
Una pua sempre sarò.

(*inclinandosi a Riccardo ed a Felice*)

Reverisso . . . Complimenti . . .

(*a Simon*) Ma se mai perchè mi taso  
Vu credessi far el mato,  
Con un naso tanto fato

Mi ve vogio far restar.

(*a Riccardo e Felice*)

Complimenti . . . Riverisso . . .

(*fa per andare poi torna e dice a Simon*)

Manco mal che i ve conosse  
Che sè un rospo, che sè un can . . .

(*a Riccardo e Felice*)

Ghe son serva . . . (*a Simon*)

E che proprio no sè degno

De goder sto marzapan.

(*a Riccardo e Felice*)

Serva sua! (*fra sè*)

Ah! Ah! Ah! Che catarigole

SIMON

Who's making all that noise?  
What are you doing? Who is that?  
(points at Riccardo)

FELICE (*to Simon*)

Good day, sir.

SIMON (*indifferently*)

Good day. (*to Marina*) Well?

FELICE (*boldly*)

Sior Simon,  
I've come to pay a little call on you.

SIMON

On me?

FELICE

On you, sir.

SIMON (*to Marina*)

You go away.

MARINA

Your manners are disgusting.

SIMON

Leave that to me.

You go away, I tell you.

MARINA

I?

SIMON

You.

MARINA

I?

SIMON

Yes.

FELICE

Come, come, Siora Marina,  
You must always do what your husband  
says.

Just look at me with mine!  
He hardly says a word—you see how I  
obey him.

MARINA

I do indeed. Brava, brava!  
Your servant.

RICCARDO

Your most obedient. (*bowing to Marina*)

SIMON (*mocking Riccardo*)

Your most humble.

MARINA (*to Riccardo*)

Your most obsequious!

SIMON (*to Marina*)

You servant, your servant, your servant!

MARINA (*to Simon*)

I am going, but it's time that you were  
knowing

That it's not because I'm showing  
Blind obedience to your word.

(*curtseying to Felice and Riccardo*)

You'll allow me? Fare you well, sir.

(*to Simon*) I say nothing, I say nothing

To your blustering and huffing,

I say nothing, for I know you're only

bluffing,

And I find you quite absurd.

(*to Felice and Riccardo*)

Your obedient! Most obedient!

(*goes to the door and then comes back and says to Simon*)

As a bear and a savage

You've become famous all your life.

(*to Felice and Riccardo*)

Humble servant! (*to Simon*)

And you don't deserve the honour

Of possessing such a wife.

(*to Felice and Riccardo*)

Fare you well! (*as if to herself*)

Ha! Ha! Ha! What's this that's tickling?