

Arlecchino and The Cup of Love

or

Lust's Labour Lost

by Goldwyn of Britain

characters (in order of appearance)

Brighella

Lelio

Leandro

Francescina

Valeria

Pantalone

Isabella

Colombina

Arlecchino

Capitano

Fiorinetta

scene one

(A street. The house of Pantalone, including a window, R. The house of Valeria, also including a window, L. Brighella slinks on L, looks around, sees the audience.)

BRIGHELLA:

Ah! Greetings and welcome to you all, noble signores and fair and lovely signorines. Is there any among you who might have need of the services of an honest man? If so, look no further - 'cause you won't find one around here! But, permit me to introduce myself. My name is Brighella, and I live on this street, here in Verona. Not in any of these houses - on the street. Right now, I am looking for a way to better my finances. Do any of you happen to know any rich foreigners who need a trustworthy guide? A rich widow? How about a stray dog or two? I have a deal with the butcher. If worst comes to worst, I could even *(shudders)* work. I would gladly slit a throat or two, for the right price. Or, is there some young lady you are interested in? I could get her for you. Oh, true, she might be damaged a bit, but such things happen, no? No takers? Ah, well. Brighella must seek his pigeon elsewhere.

(Lelio enters L, carrying a bouquet of flowers, and looking around uncertainly.)

Ah, the young signor Lelio approaches. Handsome, well-dressed, and . . . in love, or does my nose deceive me? *(to him)* Good morning, signor. Are you lost? Do you need help?

LELIO:

Well, yes. Do you know where I might find the house of signor Pantalone?

BRIGHELLA:

Yes.

LELIO:

Can you help me?

BRIGHELLA:

Yes.

LELIO:

Will you help me?

BRIGHELLA: That all depends.

(He holds out his hand. Lelio digs a coin out of his pouch and gives it to him. Brighella weighs the coin, feels it, smells it, bites it, finally looks at it, and is shocked by the amount.)

Who do you want me to kill?!

LELIO: No, no. Nothing like that.

(Brighella puts the coin away.)

BRIGHELLA: Too bad. *(hastily)* No refunds.

LELIO: Please tell me, good sir. Where is the house of signor Pantalone?

BRIGHELLA: *(indicating)* Why, right there.

LELIO: Grazi.

(He bows and heads R.)

BRIGHELLA: *(continuing)* But, he isn't home right now.

LELIO: So much the better.

(He exits R, into Pantalone's house.)

BRIGHELLA: So. Lelio is in love with Pantalone's daughter, Isabella. Now, if my guess is correct . . .
(Leandro enters R, carrying another bouquet of flowers and a piece of paper.)

. . . and it is . . . *(to him)* Good day, signor Leandro.

LEANDRO: *(seeing him)* Eh? Oh, it's you. No, I don't want to buy anything. I am on my way to see a lady. *(reading from the paper)* "Oh, fairest flower . . ."

BRIGHELLA: *(trying to interrupt)* But, signor . . .

LEANDRO: *(continuing)* ". . . of all Italy, . . ."

BRIGHELLA: *(trying again)* Leandro . . .

LEANDRO: *(continuing)* ". . . to whom my heart is given . . ."

BRIGHELLA: *(shouting)* Sir!

LEANDRO: Eh? What? Stop bothering me!

BRIGHELLA: You don't understand, sir. At this very moment, your rival, signor Lelio, is with the woman you love!

LEANDRO: What! With Valeria!

(He rushes to her house L.)

BRIGHELLA: No, sir. With Isabella.

LEANDRO: Oh, what a relief!

BRIGHELLA: A relief? I thought you were in love with Isabella.

LEANDRO: That was last week. And, don't you go mixing me up like that again. Signor Brighella, I will thank you to stay out of my life! *(calling)* Valeria! Valeria, my sweet!

(Francescina appears at the window.)

FRANCESCINA: Yes? Who is it?

LEANDRO: *(taken aback)* Good day to you, Mistress Francescina. Is the lovely Valeria at home?

FRANCESCINA: Yes, she is. *(teasing)* Who may I say is calling?

LEANDRO: The man she loves best in the entire world.

FRANCESCINA: *(calling)* Valeria! Lelio's here!

LEANDRO: Leandro! Leandro!!

FRANCESCINA: Sorry. I can never tell the two of you apart.

(Valeria enters L.)

VALERIA: Good morning, signor Leandro. How are you, this morning?

LEANDRO: *(suddenly tongue-tied)* I'm . . . I'm . . . I . . . I . . . I . . .

BRIGHELLA: *(whispering to Leandro)* Read her the letter.

LEANDRO: *(to him)* I can do it! *(reading)* "Oh, fayest fowler, with awful fleas, from whom my part is riven . . ."

VALERIA: Methinks, good sir, that the whole of Verona need not know our business. If it would please you to speak of these things to me privately, you may do so. Signor Leandro, will you come?

(She and Leandro exit L, into her house. Francescina closes the window.)

BRIGHELLA: *(aside)* Probably.

(Brighella looks around to make sure no-one is watching, then sneaks to the window. Just as he arrives, the window opens, revealing Francescina. Brighella retreats, and Francescina closes the window.)

"Stay out of my life," eh, signor Leandro? Well, just for that, my lovesick one, you can count upon Brighella to interfere! How, how can I best cause some trouble? Ah, here comes signor Pantalone.

(Brighella stands by Pantalone's house R and hides by putting his hands in front of his face. He then parts his fingers so he can see. Pantalone enters L, reading a letter.)

PANTALONE: *(reading)* ". . . And therefore, signor Pantalone, to insure there is no misunderstanding, I here review the terms of your proposal. I am to appoint you to the office of exchequer of all my lands and goods. In return for this, you shall bestow upon me your daughter's hand in marriage, albeit without a dowry. To these terms I agree with all my heart. I plan to arrive in Verona on the eighth, both to claim my bride and to finally meet and suitably reward my prospective father-in-law. Most sincerely yours, etc., etc. . . . the Duke of Beaconsgate¹."

BRIGHELLA: *(aside)* "The Duke of Beaconsgate!" I must remember that.

PANTALONE: Oh, happy day! Imagine me, Pantalone de Bisognosi, exchequer to the Duke of Beaconsgate! Imagine getting to handle all that money! Imagine what he will give me as a "suitable reward!" And just imagine Isabella's reaction when she learns of this! *(thinks)* Hmm. Well, no matter. She'll be delighted to have a Duke! Who wouldn't? I must go and inform her at once!

(He passes Brighella and exits R, into his house.)

BRIGHELLA: Hmm. This has possibilities.

(Screams are heard from off R.)

Definite possibilities!

(Brighella retreats L and hides again as Lelio enters R, chased by Pantalone, who beats him with the flowers. They are followed by Isabella and Colombina.)

PANTALONE: Out! Out, I say!

LELIO: But, signore . . .

PANTALONE: No "buts!" Out!

ISABELLA: Father . . .

- PANTALONE:** And no back-talk from you, daughter! *(to Lelio)* Are you still here? Shoo! Shoo!
- (He beats him with the flowers. Lelio exits L. Pantalone throws the flowers after him.)*
- BRIGHELLA:** One down, one to go.
- PANTALONE:** *(sees him)* Brighella! What are you doing, lurking around my house? Up to no good, I'll warrant. Be off with you! Leave! Depart!
- (Brighella grabs Pantalone by the shirt-front.)*
- BRIGHELLA:** Make me.
- (Pantalone breathes on him. Brighella reels back, gasping and choking, and staggers off L.)*
- PANTALONE:** Now, as for you, you little hussy . . .
- COLOMBINA:** Yes?
- PANTALONE:** Not you. Not yet. *(to Isabella)* You. You will marry the Duke of Beaconsgate, or I'll know the reason why!
- ISABELLA:** The reason . . .
- PANTALONE:** I wasn't asking! Now, go inside, daughter, before you make a public spectacle of yourself!
- (Isabella, weeping, exits R. Colombina starts to follow.)*
- Er . . . Colombina, you needn't go, just yet.
- COLOMBINA:** Why not? Aren't you afraid I'll make a public spectacle of myself, too?
- PANTALONE:** Yes, but you're used to it.
- COLOMBINA:** Why, I never!
- PANTALONE:** That's not what I hear. Come, come, my delicate little flower, this is your master speaking.
- COLOMBINA:** Only because you underpay me. So don't go getting any ideas!
- PANTALONE:** You're a woman. I'm a man.
- COLOMBINA:** I know where you can get eight-to-five on that.
- PANTALONE:** What kind of ideas could I get?
- COLOMBINA:** The mind boggles.

PANTALONE: What would you say to a little whoopee?

COLOMBINA: "Hello, little whoopee."

PANTALONE: No, no. You misunderstand. What I am trying to say is . . . I love you. I want you. I need you!

COLOMBINA: *(aside)* Well, they say trouble comes in threes. *(to him)* What about your daughter?

PANTALONE: Eh? Why bring her into this tender moment? Let's you and I go somewhere and get horizontal.

COLOMBINA: Don't you care about her, at all?

PANTALONE: Of course I do! That's why I've arranged this wonderful match for her. She'll be very happy, I assure you. As happy as we are.

COLOMBINA: How do you know? Have you ever met this fellow?

PANTALONE: Well, no . . . but he is a Duke, and all. How bad could he be?

(They look at each other, then simultaneously cross themselves.)

COLOMBINA: Anyway, Isabella will marry whoever I say she will, and that's that! Now, about us . . . Isabella should be free to marry the man of her choice, whoever it is.

PANTALONE: But, she's so immature. Last week, she was in love with signor Leandro.

COLOMBINA: And this week, it's signor Lelio. Aren't they cute?

PANTALONE: There! You see? Besides, I could never tell the two of them apart. But, why talk about them? She is going to marry the Duke! So, there!

COLOMBINA: Is that your final word on the subject?

PANTALONE: It is.

COLOMBINA: Then, I think you are a horrible, stingy old miser with the manners of a goat!

(She hits him.)

PANTALONE: I like it. Flattery will get you anywhere, my dear. Anywhere, anyplace, any time.

COLOMBINA: Never! You . . . you . . . Griffin²!

(She exits R.)

PANTALONE: She likes me. I can tell. I just have to overcome her initial shyness. I know! I'll visit Fiorinetta. She's a woman, and a highly paid one, too. If there's something she doesn't know about sex, it probably isn't done . . . outside of Westermark. She'll know how I can get Colombina to spend the night with me . . . and how I can survive it!

(He limps off L. Fanfare. Flower girls, etc., enter L in a grand procession, followed, at last, by Arlecchino.)

ARLECCHINO: Hear ye! Hear ye! Now comes El Capitano, the flower of chivalry, the king of knights, the prince of heroes, peerless among peers, son of the thunder and lightning, near relative of Death and close personal friend of the Great Devil of Hell, conqueror of armies, victor of a thousand battles, breaker of ten thousand hearts, the paragon of all virtues and object of every maiden's sighs, whose eye flashes the thunderbolt and whose temper the very gods to fear! Cringe, bow, and scrape ye before the overwhelming presence of the Great and Powerful, the magnificent, the unimaginably splendid and virile - ladies will wish to cover their eyes at this point, so as not to become pregnant - Capitano Spavento de Giangurgolo!

(Fanfare. Arlecchino gestures L. Nothing happens. He tries again.)

Capitano Spavento de Giangurgolo!!

(Fanfare again. Arlecchino gestures L again. Nothing happens again. He decides to try just once more.)

Capitano -

(Capitano enters from the rear of the house. The flower girls, etc., exit.)

CAPITANO: *(from the back of the hall)* Not yet, you fool! Not yet! I simply have nothing to wear! But . . . ah, my public!

(He comes toward the stage.)

Thank you. Thank you.

(He reaches the stage.)

Peasants.

(Arlecchino cleans him up, dusting his boots, spraying him with perfume, etc.)

ARLECCHINO: Ready?

CAPITANO: Yes, I think so. *(poses)* Ahem. Verona! For a while I take my leave -

ARLECCHINO: *(interrupting)* I'm hungry.

CAPITANO: You're always hungry.

ARLECCHINO: I can't help it. I was born with two stomachs.

CAPITANO: Verona! For a while -

ARLECCHINO: (*interrupting again*) Can't we get something to eat?

CAPITANO: How much money do we have?

ARLECCHINO: Counting the both of us?

CAPITANO: Yes.

ARLECCHINO: None.

CAPITANO: Oh, misery! That such a hero as myself should be brought to such an ill pass! Well, there is nothing for it but to beseech the aid of some kindly soul.

ARLECCHINO: You mean, you're going to beg? Again?

CAPITANO: No, you are. Again.

ARLECCHINO: Me? Why is it always me?

CAPITANO: What! You seek to cross me? Beware, o servant mine, lest my wrath shake apart the very heavens and summon forth the deluge!

ARLECCHINO: Yes, I remember March Crown³. Look. Here comes someone.

(*Brighella enters L.*)

CAPITANO: He looks honest. Try him.

(*Arlecchino kneels before Brighella.*)

ARLECCHINO: Kind sir . . .

BRIGHELLA: (*aside*) Well, well, well! What have we here?

ARLECCHINO: . . . could you possibly spare a few 'scudi for two hungry men?

CAPITANO: I am not hungry.

ARLECCHINO: That's all right. I'm hungry enough for both of us.

BRIGHELLA: (*aside*) This is too good an opportunity to pass up! (*to them*) Beggars, eh?

CAPITANO: Never!

ARLECCHINO: On the other hand, if you really want to get down to specifics . . . yes.

CAPITANO: He is.

BRIGHELLA: Well, we don't allow beggars here in Verona.

ARLECCHINO: We're willing to work . . .

(The Capitano kicks him.)

CAPITANO: Shut up.

BRIGHELLA: Do you know what the penalty is for begging? Death!

(Arlecchino bursts into tears.)

CAPITANO: What are you crying about? I'm the one who will have to do without a servant!

BRIGHELLA: Oh, is he your servant?

CAPITANO: *(suspicious)* That depends. Can I turn him in for a reward?

BRIGHELLA: Yes, of course.

CAPITANO: Yes, this man is my servant!

BRIGHELLA: I'm sorry to hear that.

CAPITANO: You're telling me.

BRIGHELLA: Because, you see, that makes you an accomplice!

CAPITANO: What! You said there was a reward!

BRIGHELLA: For being an accomplice? Indeed, there is. Do you want to know what it is?

CAPITANO: No! No! Don't tell me!

(He puts his hands over his ears. Arlecchino rushes to him and attempts to pry his hands away.)

ARLECCHINO: Go ahead. Tell him. He can take it. This is the man who fears nothing, who lives for danger, and who laughs at -

BRIGHELLA: Death.

(The Capitano faints.)

ARLECCHINO: (*surprised*) How about that? He didn't laugh.

BRIGHELLA: Yes, I am afraid it is death for both of you.

ARLECCHINO: Is there no mercy?

BRIGHELLA: There is no mercy.

ARLECCHINO: Is there no way out?

BRIGHELLA: There is no way out. Unless . . .

(The Capitano revives.)

CAPITANO: What? Tell us. Tell us!

BRIGHELLA: No. You'd never go along with it.

CAPITANO: Try us!

BRIGHELLA: A fine gentleman like you . . .

ARLECCHINO: Oh, you don't know him like I do.

BRIGHELLA: Well, perhaps . . .

CAPITANO: Please!

BRIGHELLA: I tell you what. I will let you go, on one condition. Do you see that house over there?

(All three turn and look.)

It belongs to a rich, old merchant named Pantalone. He is expecting the arrival of a certain nobleman this afternoon, to whom he will give a great deal of money. Pantalone has never met this gentleman, so all you have to do is pretend to be this nobleman, and great riches are yours. Interested?

CAPITANO: Yes. Very much.

ARLECCHINO: I don't understand.

CAPITANO: (*to Brighella*) Excuse me.

(He kicks Arlecchino.)

Shut up.

ARLECCHINO: Oh! You mean, all he has to do is pretend to be this nobleman, and this Pantalone fellow will give us money?

BRIGHELLA: More or less.

ARLECCHINO: I knew there would be a catch. What else does he have to do?

BRIGHELLA: Oh, nothing much. Just marry his daughter.

CAPITANO: What! I refuse! I cannot be tied down to one woman. I need to be free, like an eagle -- Is she pretty?

(Isabella appears at the window of Pantalone's house.)

BRIGHELLA: Judge for yourself.

ISABELLA: *(sighing)* Lelio! Leandro! Lelio! Leandro! Decisions, decisions.

(She leaves the window.)

CAPITANO: I'll do it!

BRIGHELLA: Good man!

CAPITANO: The best.

BRIGHELLA: Now, remember. When you meet signor Pantalone, you must call yourself the Duke of Beaconsgate.

CAPITANO: 'Tis an odd name. I like it not.

BRIGHELLA: The alternative is . . .

(He draws his finger across his throat.)

CAPITANO: Yet, 'tis the sort of name that grows on you. The Duke of Beaconsgate. The Duke of Beaconsgate.

BRIGHELLA: Get it?

CAPITANO: Got it.

BRIGHELLA: Good. Here comes signor Pantalone. I'd love to stay, but I . . . ah . . . have urgent business elsewhere.

(He exits R. Arlecchino tidies the Capitano up. Pantalone enters L.)

PANTALONE: Well, it is all arranged. Fiorinetta will deliver the goods to me this afternoon. She always comes through, they say. Eh? And who is this, so near to my house? One of Leandro's friends, I have no doubt. Or Lelio's. It doesn't matter. You there! Fellow! Get away from there!

CAPITANO: See here, old bag of bones, do you know who you are addressing?

PANTALONE: No! Nor do I care.

CAPITANO: *(to Arlecchino)* Tell him.

(Arlecchino marches forward and stands in front of Pantalone.)

ARLECCHINO: Signore, you are in the presence of my master, the Duke of . . . Duke of . . . *(to the Capitano)* You tell him.

CAPITANO: You're my servant. You tell him.

ARLECCHINO: I forgot.

CAPITANO: Bellatrix.

(Arlecchino looks him up and down.)

ARLECCHINO: No, it wasn't. I remember, now. Beaconsgate.

CAPITANO: Bellatrix.

ARLECCHINO: Beaconsgate.

CAPITANO: Bellatrix.

(They play scissors/paper/stone.)

ARLECCHINO: *(to Pantalone)* Beaconsgate.

PANTALONE: The Duke of Beaconsgate! Are you sure?

(Arlecchino and the Capitano play scissors/paper/stone again.)

ARLECCHINO: *(to Pantalone)* Yes, we're sure.

PANTALONE: *(bowing)* Welcome, your Grace. *(to Arlecchino)* Who are you?

ARLECCHINO: I'm with him.

CAPITANO: My servant.

(Pantalone looks Arlecchino up and down.)

PANTALONE: Are things that bad in Beaconsgate?

CAPITANO: Not really. He's from Esfenn⁴.

ARLECCHINO: *(offended)* I am not! I am from Bergamo!

PANTALONE: I have never heard of it.

CAPITANO: A town noted for its fools.

PANTALONE: And where is this Bergamo?

ARLECCHINO: I'll have you know that in Bergamo I am considered quite intelligent.

**PANTALONE and
CAPITANO:** An Tir⁵.

PANTALONE: Your Grace . . .

CAPITANO: Please, I do not wish my presence known. Too many women throwing themselves at me.

(Arlecchino chokes.)

Arlecchino, what's the matter?

ARLECCHINO: Something I couldn't quite swallow.

CAPITANO: *(to Pantalone)* Therefore, I would prefer that you address me simply as "El Capitano."

PANTALONE: Certainly, certainly. Signore . . . "Capitano" . . . my house is your house. Shall we go inside?

CAPITANO: Yes, indeed. There is a small matter I wish to discuss with you.

PANTALONE: Concerning a "suitable reward?"

CAPITANO: Well, I was thinking more along the lines of . . .

ARLECCHINO: Lunch.

CAPITANO: Arlecchino . . . wait here.

(He and Pantalone exit R. Lelio enters L and begins looking around. Arlecchino joins him in his search.)

LELIO: Is he gone?

ARLECCHINO: I think so.

(They search some more.)

LELIO: Was he still angry?

ARLECCHINO: He didn't appear to be.

(They search some more.)

Who are we talking about?

LELIO: Why, signore Pantalone, of course.

ARLECCHINO: Who else? Who are you?

LELIO: I am signor Lelio, he that loves the fair Isabella.

ARLECCHINO: And who is she?

LELIO: Pantalone's daughter, and the fairest damsel in Verona. Fairer than either of the two Cynaguan sex goddesses⁶.

(Valeria, Francescina, and Leandro enter L.)

ARLECCHINO: Ah. Is that her?

LELIO: No, that is the lovely Valeria, the second fairest damsel in Verona, with her best friend, Mistress Francescina. And he is my rival, Leandro.

(He leaves Arlecchino and goes to them.)

So, Leandro! You would court my love before my very eyes!

LEANDRO: That was last week.

VALERIA: *(to both men)* Now, my sweet, don't make such a fuss.

LEANDRO: So! You call him "my sweet" to my face!

FRANCESCINA: Would you prefer her to do it behind your back?

LEANDRO: Valeria is mine!

LELIO: She has been mine!

ARLECCHINO: Then, why were you so concerned about Pantalone?

LELIO: Because I love his daughter, Isabella.

LEANDRO: She has been mine!

VALERIA: What!

LEANDRO: Sweetheart, let me explain . . .

ARLECCHINO: I'm confused. Is it often like this?

FRANCESCINA: Only when the wind blows from the Westermark⁷.

VALERIA: No! Don't talk to me! Either of you!

FRANCESCINA: Between the two of you, she's been four-timed. Five times.

VALERIA: I never want to see either of you again!

(She exits L, into her house.)

FRANCESCINA: Relax, signori. She'll change her mind.

LELIO: I know, but . . .

LEANDRO: . . . what do we do in the meantime?

LELIO and

LEANDRO: Isabella!

(They both rush R, and, naturally, collide.)

LELIO: Signore.

LEANDRO: Signore. I was here first.

LELIO: I saw her first.

LEANDRO: I loved her first!

LELIO: She loved me first!

FRANCESCINA: Quickly, now: which is which?

ARLECCHINO: Does it matter?

FRANCESCINA: Not to them.

LEANDRO: Truce?

LELIO: Truce.

(They shake hands. It turns into an Indian wrestling contest. They cross the stage, each one pulling the other around, and finally exit L, still grappling.)

FRANCESCINA: It's nice to see friends strolling hand in hand.

(Brighella enters L.)

BRIGHELLA: Good day, Mistress Francescina.

FRANCESCINA: It was.

BRIGHELLA: How are you, this fine day?

FRANCESCINA: Leaving.

(She wets a finger and holds it up, then heads R.)

BRIGHELLA: Valeria's house is this way.

FRANCESCINA: I know. But upwind is this way.

(She exits R. Brighella motions Arlecchino to come closer. He does.)

BRIGHELLA: So, how goes it?

ARLECCHINO: Splendidly! The old miser believes my master to be the Duke, and has taken him into his house.

BRIGHELLA: Alone?

ARLECCHINO: No need to fear. My master is perfectly capable of . . .

(Arlecchino thinks, then screams and runs off R.)

BRIGHELLA: Let me see. Pantalone, Isabella, Valeria, Lelio, Leandro, and those two idiots. Seven lives ruined, and Angus⁸ isn't even here yet. Not bad. Not bad, at all.

(He exits L, laughing.)

- scene two** *(A room inside the house of Pantalone. The front door is at L, a corridor leading to the rest of the house at R, a window at UC, a small table and two chairs at DC. Colombina and Isabella enter R. Colombina dusts the table. Isabella goes to the window and looks out.)*
- ISABELLA:** Lelio! Leandro! Lelio! Leandro! Decisions, decisions.
- (She leaves the window.)*
- Colombina, I'm caught between two men. What should I do?
- COLOMBINA:** Try a little olive oil. That always works for me.
- ISABELLA:** And now my father wants me to marry some awful Duke just so he can get his hands on the Duke's money! What am I going to do with three men?
- COLOMBINA:** The possibilities are endless! If I were you, . . .
- ISABELLA:** . . . which you're not . . .
- COLOMBINA and ISABELLA:** . . . thank God . . .
- (They look at each other.)*
- ISABELLA:** Oh, why do these things always seem to happen to me?
- COLOMBINA:** I think it's hereditary. You have Pantalone for a father.
- ISABELLA:** Help me, Colombina. You know about men. Tell me about men.
- COLOMBINA:** Any men in particular?
- ISABELLA:** All men!
- COLOMBINA:** Now, there's a subject that's kept me awake long, long into the night. But, you don't really want to hear about "all men." You love signor Lelio. Or Leandro. Which is it?
- ISABELLA:** What day is it?
- COLOMBINA:** Sunday, the eighth.
- ISABELLA:** *(confident)* Lelio. *(doubtful)* Or Leandro. Oh, I'm so confused!
- COLOMBINA:** Oh, my. You do need help.
- ISABELLA:** Colombina, is it possible to love two men at the same time?

- COLOMBINA:** Well, speaking from experience . . .
- ISABELLA:** That what I need! If only I had your experience, your style, your way with men!
- COLOMBINA:** (*aside*) If only I had my way with men!
- ISABELLA:** I need an idea. How can we get rid of this new suitor?
- COLOMBINA:** Well, we could try making you so ugly he wouldn't want you.
- ISABELLA:** Impossible.
- COLOMBINA:** What if you were to get very, very sick?
- ISABELLA:** But, then I couldn't see Lelio! Or Leandro!
- COLOMBINA:** No, no. You just pretend to be sick. You would be so sick that your father wouldn't dream of marrying you off!
- ISABELLA:** But, we did that last time.
- COLOMBINA:** Oh, yeah. Well, have you ever thought that he might not be so bad?
- ISABELLA:** "The Duke of Beaconsgate?"
- COLOMBINA:** Could be worse.
- ISABELLA:** How?
- COLOMBINA:** He could be -
- PANTALONE:** (*off L*) Right this way, your Worship.
- COLOMBINA:** - here.
- ISABELLA:** Quick, Colombina! Hide me!
- (*She dives behind Colombina and tries to hide under her skirts.*)
- COLOMBINA:** That's no good. If the Duke doesn't find you there, your father will!
- (*They exit R. Pantalone and the Capitano enter L.*)
- PANTALONE:** Welcome to my house, o great and noble one. Make yourself at home. If there is anything you desire, I shall get it for you. Is there anything you want? A chair . . . a pillow . . . my daughter . . .
- CAPITANO:** Well, I have been on the road for a while, and some food . . .

PANTALONE: Ah! You have caught me at a bad time. There isn't a single crumb in the house.

CAPITANO: (*aside*) Present company excepted. (*to Pantalone*) Perhaps just a bit of wine, then.

PANTALONE: Wine? (*aside*) Expensive wine? (*to the Capitano*) See here, sir. I keep a sober household. Perhaps some water . . . ?

CAPITANO: Is it all right if I breathe?

PANTALONE: Oh, certainly, certainly! Have all the air you want! Remember, my house is your house!

CAPITANO: What there is of it.

PANTALONE: Now, I suppose your Grace wants to get right down to business.

CAPITANO: Yes. I seem to recall something about some money . . .

PANTALONE: I believe the exact phrase was "suitable reward."

CAPITANO: It was? I mean - yes, of course. We . . . ah . . . never did agree on the exact amount. Did we?

PANTALONE: (*nodding*) That's right. No, we didn't.

CAPITANO: Good, good. I'm open to negotiation.

PANTALONE: Well, I'm willing to leave the matter entirely in your hands.

CAPITANO: You mean, it's up to me?

PANTALONE: I wouldn't dream of having it any other way!

CAPITANO: I must say, that's awfully nice of you.

PANTALONE: Isn't it, though? Still, as gentlemen, I think we should agree upon some sort of a minimum.

CAPITANO: By all means!

PANTALONE: And then, anything over that would be -

CAPITANO: - sheer generosity!

PANTALONE: Absolutely.

CAPITANO: Strange, but it's almost as though we are reading each other's mind.

PANTALONE: Uncanny, isn't it?

CAPITANO: Are you sure you don't have any wine?

PANTALONE: Colombina!

(Colombina enters R.)

COLOMBINA: You called?

PANTALONE: A bottle of wine - the best I have!

COLOMBINA: But, sir, the wine is . . .

PANTALONE: And hurry!

COLOMBINA: Yes, sir.

(She exits R.)

PANTALONE: Signor Capitano, I sense a kindred spirit in you.

CAPITANO: What a coincidence!

PANTALONE: I just know that we're going to get along splendidly!

CAPITANO: True as brothers!

PANTALONE: Thick as thieves!

(The step away from each other.)

CAPITANO: I . . . ah . . . don't mean to push you, signor . . .

PANTALONE: Oh, push. Push!

CAPITANO: But, I suppose it is time we discussed actual numbers.

(Colombina enters R with a bottle of wine and two glasses. She puts the glasses down on the table.)

PANTALONE: Well, truth to tell, I have in mind a rather large figure.

CAPITANO: *(staring at Colombina)* So do I.

COLOMBINA: Sir, this wine . . .

PANTALONE: Well, don't just stand there. Pour!

(Colombina uncorks the bottle and upends it. Some purple stuff the consistency of grape jelly slowly oozes out and plops into the glasses. Pantalone is too busy beaming at the Capitano to notice. They each take a glass.)

This wine was laid down by my grandfather.

CAPITANO: Are you sure it wasn't the other way around?

PANTALONE: *(hoisting his glass)* A toast! To my future son-in-law.

COLOMBINA: Him?

CAPITANO: And to my bride.

COLOMBINA: Oh, poor Isabella!

PANTALONE: To a "suitable reward!"

CAPITANO: To be in the sum of -

(The glasses are at their lips. Isabella enters R.)

ISABELLA: Did someone call?

PANTALONE: Not now!

(He and the Capitano put their glasses down.)

Signore Capitano, this is my daughter, Isabella. Isabella, this is the Du . . . the gentleman I was telling you about.

ISABELLA: Father, I . . . I . . . I'm speechless.

CAPITANO: Naturally.

ISABELLA: I wasn't expecting anything like . . . this!

CAPITANO: You'd be amazed how often I hear that.

ISABELLA: Oh, father, if you love me, please . . .

PANTALONE: Impatient, my dear? *(to the Capitano)* Forgive her. She's eager.

CAPITANO: I'm used to it. Signore, could you possibly leave us alone to get acquainted?

ISABELLA: *(horrified)* No!

PANTALONE: What?

ISABELLA: I mean . . . not without a chaperone. It would be improper.

COLOMBINA: I'll be the chaperone.

PANTALONE: Who will be your chaperone?

COLOMBINA: I can take care of myself.

PANTALONE: So I noticed. (*aside*) Fiorinetta, hurry!

(He picks up the wine bottle and glasses and exits R.)

CAPITANO: Now, my dear . . .

ISABELLA: What shall we talk about?

CAPITANO: Us.

COLOMBINA: Guess again.

CAPITANO: Well, then, lets talk about my favourite subject.

COLOMBINA: And that is?

CAPITANO: Me. Sit down. This could take a while.

(Isabella sits in the chair to the R of the table.)

You are the fair Isabella, and I, I am the Duke of . . .

ISABELLA: Beaconsgate.

CAPITANO: Thank you. Yes. You don't know how fortunate you are, my dear. How many women have desired me, how many women have thrown themselves at me, how many women have dreamed of me, sighed for me, and threatened to kill themselves for my love!

COLOMBINA: How many?

CAPITANO: I've lost count. And, just think, you have won the prize of prizes - me!

ISABELLA: (*sotto voce*) Lucky me.

CAPITANO: Kiss me!

(He lunges for her, his lips puckered and his hands reaching for her bosom. Colombina grabs his wrists just short of their goal. Isabella faints.)

COLOMBINA: Over her dead body!

CAPITANO: I'm used to that, too.

COLOMBINA: Don't worry, Isabella. We've got him outnumbered.

(Arlecchino, screaming, runs in L. Unable to slow his momentum, he runs out R. Pause. He walks back in R, crosses to the Capitano, and taps him on the shoulder.)

ARLECCHINO: Master!

CAPITANO: What?

ARLECCHINO: Did you get it?

CAPITANO: I'm trying.

ARLECCHINO: The you-know-what.

CAPITANO: Oh. Yes. Right. *(calling)* Signor Pantalone . . .

(He retreats from his assault on Isabella, is released by Colombina, and exits R. Arlecchino, following him, encounters Colombina. They make eyes and animal noises at each other. She coyly blocks him as he tries to pass. Finally, he squeezes past her - to their mutual delight - and exits R. Isabella revives.)

ISABELLA: Oh, Colombina, we've got to do something!

COLOMBINA: *(staring after Arlecchino)* I'm planning on it!

ISABELLA: Did you see the look on his face? It gave me goose-bumps.

COLOMBINA: Yeah. Bumps.

ISABELLA: Can you imagine what being with him would be like? I'd rather hang myself!

COLOMBINA: That reminds me. I've got to get my trapeze fixed . . .

ISABELLA: Colombina! Get your mind out of the gutter!

(Colombina turns away from where Arlecchino exited, and goes to Isabella.)

COLOMBINA: I can't help it. It likes it there.

(She sits in the chair to the L of the table.)

ISABELLA: We've got to think of a way out of this mess. Got any ideas?

COLOMBINA: Well, we could always become a canton of Darkwood⁹.

ISABELLA: Everyone else has.

(They think for a while. Isabella gets an idea, then decides it won't work. Colombina does the same. Finally, they leap from their chairs at the same time.)

**COLOMBINA and
ISABELLA:**

I know! I'll disguise myself as you!

(They exit R. A knocking is heard off L. Pantalone enters R.)

PANTALONE: Coming! Coming!

(He exits L, then returns with Fiorinetta. She is carrying a large bag.)

Ah, good day to you, Mistress Fiorinetta.

FIORINETTA: Good day, signor Pantalone. And how are you this day?

PANTALONE: *(attempting to make a muscle)* I'm doing fine.

FIORINETTA: That's a matter of opinion.

PANTALONE: Did you bring . . . it?

FIORINETTA: I brought a variety. I like to be prepared.

PANTALONE: Wonderful! Let's see what you've got!

(Fiorinetta starts to undress.)

In the bag, I mean.

(Somewhat disappointed, she reaches into the bag and pulls out with a jar, which she hands to Pantalone.)

FIORINETTA: Powdered rhino's horn. Very powerful.

(Pantalone looks at the label.)

PANTALONE: Very expensive.

(He hands it back to her. She puts it back into the bag, and pulls out a thick book.)

FIORINETTA: All right. Boccaccio's Decameron. You read it out loud to her.

PANTALONE: I don't think I have that much time.

(He feels his pulse.)

Left.

(She puts the book back into the bag, and pulls out another jar.)

FIORINETTA: How about a jar of Saint Sebastian's Emotion Lotion?

PANTALONE: Does it work?

FIORINETTA: I have it on the highest authority. Guaranteed to turn a Saint into a sinner.

PANTALONE: But, how do I get her to use it?

FIORINETTA: Ah, so your problem is cooperation. *(aside)* I should have known. *(to him)* Then, I have just what you need.

(She puts the jar back into the bag and pulls out a small vial.)

My own special Passion Potion.

PANTALONE: How does it work?

FIORINETTA: Just get her to drink it.

PANTALONE: And then what happens?

FIORINETTA: Anything you want.

PANTALONE: I'll take it!

(He reaches for it, but she withholds it.)

FIORINETTA: *(warning)* It's expensive.

(He grabs it.)

PANTALONE: I don't care! It's worth it! What am I saying? Well, it's for Colombina. All right.

(Turning away from her, he pulls a coin out of his pouch, which is hanging where his codpiece ought to be. He offers it to her, but it takes some effort for her to pry it out of his fingers. She drops the coin into her cleavage.)

FIORINETTA: Grazi, signore. It's always a business doing pleasure with you.

(Arlecchino enters R.)

ARLECCHINO: Signor Pantalone, my master wishes to remind you that you have not yet concluded your business.

FIORINETTA: Oh, you have company.

PANTALONE: Yes, a great nobleman. A duke, in fact. Would you like to meet him?

FIORINETTA: A duke? Just a moment.

(She uses her mirror to check her hair, then reaches into her bag, pulls out some perfume, uses it, and puts it away. With a final flourish, she removes a handkerchief that had been masquerading as her partlet.)

Ready.

(They exit R. Isabella and Colombina enter R. Isabella wears Colombina's cap and apron and carries her feather duster. Colombina wears Isabella's hat and carries a fan. Isabella is enjoying this. Colombina isn't.)

ISABELLA: Well, Colombina, do I look like you?

COLOMBINA: You look like half of me. I don't think they're going to fall for it.

ISABELLA: Nonsense! All you have to do is act petite.

COLOMBINA: *(sotto voce)* Petite.

ISABELLA: Right. Like this.

(She glides across the floor, then turns to watch Colombina. Colombina prances.)

And be demure. Remember, you've got to live up to my reputation.

COLOMBINA: All right. Just you remember to live up to my reputation.

ISABELLA: You're right. It'll never work.

(They start to exit R. Pantalone, Capitano, Fiorinetta, and Arlecchino enter R. Fiorinetta is flirting with the Capitano.)

PANTALONE: Ah, there you are, my dear.

ISABELLA: Yes, father?

PANTALONE: Eh? What?

(Colombina quickly shoves Isabella behind her.)

COLOMBINA: I said "Yes, father?"

PANTALONE: For a moment, I thought there was something wrong with my eyes.

CAPITANO: Alas, my dear. This is where we must part.

FIORINETTA: That's all right. I have another assignation, anyway. I'm teaching two young men how to woo a lady.

CAPITANO: You give private lessons?

FIORINETTA: I give diplomas. Signore Capitano, I will see you later. Signore Pantalone . . . good luck.

(She picks up her bag and exits L. The Capitano goes to Colombina, and Pantalone and Arlecchino surround Isabella.)

CAPITANO: And now, my dear, where were we?

PANTALONE: Colombina, I have a very special treat for you tonight.

(Arlecchino, in rivalry, makes animal noises at her.)

**ISABELLA and
COLOMBINA:**

(aside) Help.

(Exeunt.)

scene three *(The street again. Valeria and Francescina enter R.)*

FRANCESCINA: Well, you'll have to forgive at least one of them.

VALERIA: I know. But which?

FRANCESCINA: Well, which one do you like better?

VALERIA: Whichever one I've seen most recently.

FRANCESCINA: Or whichever one your rival, Isabella, seems to like better.

VALERIA: That's not true! I like them for their own individual virtues, not because I enjoy stealing men from her!
(pause) Does it show that badly?

FRANCESCINA: On both of you.

(Brighella enters L.)

VALERIA: Francescina, did you just feel a sudden chill?

FRANCESCINA: You mean like someone . . .

VALERIA: . . . or some thing . . .

FRANCESCINA: . . . was sneaking up on you?

VALERIA: Perhaps we'd best go in.

(They head L and immediately encounter Brighella.)

BRIGHELLA: Good evening, ladies. What's the matter? Don't either of you have a kind word for poor Brighella?

FRANCESCINA: I do, but I won't say what kind of word it is.

VALERIA: Let us go in.

(They head L, passing Brighella.)

BRIGHELLA: Stop. Don't you want to hear the latest news?

VALERIA: We're not interested in anything you have to say.

BRIGHELLA: It's the very latest gossip.

(The ladies circle around and come back to him.)

VALERIA: That's different.

BRIGHELLA: Now, I won't mention any names . . .

FRANCESCINA: Oh, good! A guessing game!

BRIGHELLA: . . . but a certain young gentleman, who name begins with "L," . . .

VALERIA: Lelio.

FRANCESCINA: Or Leandro.

BRIGHELLA: . . . was seen this afternoon keeping company with a certain prominent local "businesswoman."
(The ladies look over the audience, picking out likely candidates.)
Fiorinetta.

VALERIA: What!

FRANCESCINA: With a courtesan!

VALERIA: My Lelio! My Leandro!

FRANCESCINA: *(aside)* My God, she's greedy.

BRIGHELLA: Rumour control has it that she is teaching him how to woo a fair lady.

VALERIA: Oh, that darling boy. To think, he's doing it just for me! Hurry, Francescina. We must be home when he comes calling!

FRANCESCINA: But, which one is it?

VALERIA: Who cares?
(She exits L.)

FRANCESCINA: *(to Brighella)* Rumour, eh?

BRIGHELLA: That's right. Nothing but the facts.

FRANCESCINA: And just where do you get your facts?

BRIGHELLA: I make 'em up.

FRANCESCINA: I know a Kingdom where you'd be right at home.

(She exits L.)

BRIGHELLA: *(to the audience)* Can't be anywhere around here. You people would never do anything like that. You're all too honest. Now, I have some swampland . . .

(Leandro enters R.)

. . . but, if you'll excuse me, I smell money.

(He plants himself in front of Leandro.)

LEANDRO: Ah, Brighella. Just the man I want to see.

BRIGHELLA: Ah, Leandro, my dear friend.

LEANDRO: Don't push it.

BRIGHELLA: Sorry.

LEANDRO: Fiorinetta said I need . . .

(Brighella produces a piece of paper.)

BRIGHELLA: . . . a sonnet.

LEANDRO: How did you know?

BRIGHELLA: I have my sources.

LEANDRO: That doesn't surprise me, coming from a man who's on a first-name basis with rats.

BRIGHELLA: Thank you. My price just doubled.

LEANDRO: They're very nice rats.

BRIGHELLA: Too late.

(Leandro pays him, and receives the paper. Brighella pulls out a mask.)

Of course, you will want a mask.

LEANDRO: A mask? Why?

BRIGHELLA: Well, no-one who is anyone, or who wants to be everyone to someone, would dream of going wooing without a mask. It just isn't done!

LEANDRO: Really?

BRIGHELLA: Would I lie to you? *(pause)* Have I done so, recently? *(pause)* Look, just trust me.

(Leandro pays him and receives the mask.)

LEANDRO: But, this sonnet. How do I know if it's any good?

BRIGHELLA: The author's been published in T.I.

(Brighella gently herds Leandro out R. Lelio and Fiorinetta enter L.)

FIORINETTA: Nonsense. Every woman likes poetry. Just do as I told you.

LELIO: But, what if . . .

FIORINETTA: Now, none of that! Be a man!

LELIO: I don't think I'm ready to be a man.

FIORINETTA: Believe me, when the time comes, you'll be ready.

LELIO: I can handle myself.

FIORINETTA: Well, let's hope you won't have to. Now, if you'll excuse me, I've got to go home and get ready. I'm going hunting.

LELIO: At night?

FIORINETTA: I do my best work at night.

LELIO: But, what can you hunt at night?

FIORINETTA: *(simply)* Dukes.

(She exits L.)

LELIO: *(aside)* A sonnet, she said. Now, where will I find . . .

(Brighella comes up behind him and puts a piece of paper into his hand.)

. . . and . . .

(Brighella puts a mask into his other hand, then steals Lelio's pouch. Lelio turns and sees Brighella.)

Thank you.

(Lelio heads R.)

BRIGHELLA: Where are you going?

LELIO: To read my sonnet to Isabella.

BRIGHELLA: Are you sure?

LELIO: Yes. Why?

BRIGHELLA: (*suggestively*) Well, after what I heard Valeria say about you . . .

LELIO: Valeria! What did she say?

BRIGHELLA: Please! What kind of fellow do you think I am? Don't answer that.

LELIO: (*dreamily*) Valeria.

BRIGHELLA: Right. That way. Practice.

(*He guides Lelio off L.*)

This evening is shaping up nicely. Anyone else want to buy a mask?

(*He goes into the audience, selling masks. Isabella enters R, chased by Pantalone.*)

PANTALONE: That's right, my dear. Keep running. Then, when we go back inside, you can have a nice, refreshing drink!

ISABELLA: No! Please! I . . . I . . . Oh, somebody help!

(*Colombina enters R.*)

COLOMBINA: Signor Pantalone. Sir. (*remembers; imitating Isabella's voice*) Father.

PANTALONE: Yes, dear?

COLOMBINA: Don't you think you'd better come in, now?

PANTALONE: She might get away!

COLOMBINA: But the night air is so cold.

PANTALONE: Cold? I don't feel cold, at all!

ISABELLA: I do!

PANTALONE: Colombina. Colombina!

COLOMBINA: (*to Isabella*) That's you.

ISABELLA: Oh! Yes. (*to Pantalone*) Yes?

PANTALONE: If you are cold, go inside. I'll be in in a minute . . . to warm you up.

ISABELLA: But, there's something you should know . . .

PANTALONE: Relax, my dear. We've got all night.

COLOMBINA: And, with you, it might take that long.

PANTALONE: (*to Colombina*) Such impertinence! (*to Isabella*) Colombina, in!

(*Isabella exits R.*)

(*to Colombina*) But, I can't stay angry at you, my darling. You'll always be Daddy's little girl. (*aside*) Amazing. One day, they're small enough to bounce on your knee, and the next . . . (*to her*) Now, you go inside, too, before the Duke comes.

COLOMBINA: The Duke! What's he coming around for?

PANTALONE: Why, to court you. After all, we couldn't have a wedding without a formal courtship, now, could we?

COLOMBINA: Yes! I mean - no!! A nice, long courtship. Say, about twenty years . . .

PANTALONE: Say, about twenty minutes.

COLOMBINA: Well, at least he'll probably bring that cute servant of his with him.

PANTALONE: Isabella! I will not have a member of my family be interested in a mere servant! That wouldn't be right!

COLOMBINA: Tell me about it.

PANTALONE: Besides, he'll be after Colombina . . .

COLOMBINA: Don't I wish!

PANTALONE: . . . but it will do him no good . . .

COLOMBINA: Oh, I wouldn't be too sure about that.

PANTALONE: . . . because I have a secret weapon! Would you like to know what it is?

COLOMBINA: Only if you feel you really have to tell me . . . Daddy.

PANTALONE: I know I can trust you, daughter. I have a Passion Potion from Fiorinetta. Once Colombina drinks it, she'll be mine!

COLOMBINA: How awful!

PANTALONE: Eh? What?

COLOMBINA: Er . . . that poor Arlecchino doesn't stand a chance.

PANTALONE: *(smug)* Yes, I know.

(He exits R.)

COLOMBINA: I've got to tell Isabella. But how? We're never alone.

PANTALONE: *(off R, calling)* Isabella!

COLOMBINA: *(to the audience)* 'Scuse me. Got to go. You know, I never realized how hard it was to be a virgin.

(She exits R. The Capitano and Arlecchino enter L.)

ARLECCHINO: I still don't see why he didn't just give you the money.

CAPITANO: He probably wanted to make sure I'd stick around and marry his daughter.

ARLECCHINO: Smart move.

CAPITANO: See here! Are you implying that I would do something as low and vile as to sneak off?

ARLECCHINO: In a minute.

CAPITANO: Less.

(Brighella enters from the audience.)

BRIGHELLA: You, there!

(The Capitano hides behind Arlecchino.)

CAPITANO: See here, sir. Do you know who I am?

BRIGHELLA: A beggar pretending to be a nobleman.

ARLECCHINO: Yup, he knows.

BRIGHELLA: What's wrong? Didn't he give you the money?

CAPITANO: The old miser won't give me the money until I court his daughter.

BRIGHELLA: The cunning old rogue! I could almost get to like him. Here.

(He hands another sonnet and mask to the Capitano.)

ARLECCHINO: What about me?

BRIGHELLA: You?

ARLECCHINO: I'm going courting, too.

BRIGHELLA: Just let her sniff your hand.

ARLECCHINO: That is no way to talk about the woman I may or may not love!

(Arlecchino draws his slapstick. Brighella draws his dagger.)

CAPITANO: Please, gentlemen, no bloodshed. For if I but see the sight of blood, my martial instincts will be aroused, and I will . . .

**BRIGHELLA and
ARLECCHINO:** You'll what?

CAPITANO: I . . . refuse to fight less than a hundred men at a time!

BRIGHELLA: This, I've got to see. *(to the audience)* Gentlemen, are we up for a melee?

CAPITANO: No! No!! Arlecchino, do something!

ARLECCHINO: Brighella! Think of the carnage!

BRIGHELLA: I am!

ARLECCHINO: Think of your honour!

BRIGHELLA: I don't have any.

ARLECCHINO: Think of the money!

BRIGHELLA: *(to the audience)* Hold it. *(to the Capitano)* You. Woo.

CAPITANO: Who woo?

BRIGHELLA: You woo!

ARLECCHINO: Woo who?

(Brighella shoves him off R, then exits into the audience. The Capitano stands at UC, his back to the audience, donning his mask. Leandro, in mask, enters R. Lelio, also in mask, enters L. They come to C and look each other up and down. The Capitano turns, comes forward between them, and goes to the window of Pantalone's house. They stare at him

for a moment, then rush to Valeria's window.)

LEANDRO: Valeria!

LELIO: Valeria!

CAPITANO: Isabella!

(Valeria appears at her window. Colombina appears at the other.)

VALERIA: Oh! Boys!

COLOMBINA: Oh, boy.

**LELIO and
LEANDRO:** *(to Valeria)* I brought a poem . . . *(to each other)* Signore.

(Francescina enters L.)

FRANCESCINA: What a surprise.

CAPITANO: *(to Colombina)* Guess who!

COLOMBINA: Animal, vegetable, or mineral?

(Isabella enters R, chased by Pantalone. They exit L.)

VALERIA: How lovely! Please read it.

CAPITANO: I have something for you.

COLOMBINA: Do I have to touch it?

CAPITANO: No. It's a poem . . . I think.

(Isabella and Pantalone enter L and exit R.)

COLOMBINA: Well, let's get it over with.

LELIO, LEANDRO, and

CAPITANO: Shall I compare thee to a summer's day? Therefore, since brevity's the soul of wit, I will be brief. Out, damn'd spot! Out, I say! O, brave new world that has such creatures in it! I know a bank whereon the wild thyme blows. Once more, dear friends, once more into the breach! What's in a name? That which we call a rose By any other name would smell as sweet. Thou know'st the mask of night is on my face, To be or not to be mad north-north-west, But screw thy courage to the sticking place And flights of angels sing thee to thy rest. The quality of mercy is not strain'd Till Birnam wood do come to Dunsinane!

(Brighella enters from the audience.)

BRIGHELLA: For your free copy, send two dollars . . .

(Francescina chases him off R. Isabella enters R, pursued by Pantalone and Arlecchino. They exit L. Valeria leaves her window, enters L, and is immediately grabbed by both Leandro and Lelio.)

LEANDRO: I love you.

LELIO: No, I love you!

VALERIA: That's nice, but who are you?

LELIO: I adore you!

LEANDRO: I worship you!

CAPITANO: *(still to Colombina)* I'm irresistible.

COLOMBINA: How do you know?

CAPITANO: I've worked Faire.

(Isabella, Pantalone, and Arlecchino enter L. Francescina and Brighella enter R. Isabella and Pantalone exit R. Brighella, seeing Arlecchino, turns and exits R, pursued by him.)

VALERIA: Francescina, wait!

FRANCESCINA: Oh, no! I'm going to watch from somewhere safe!

(She exits L. Isabella and Pantalone enter R. Arlecchino enters R and chases Pantalone off L. Francescina appears at Valeria's window. Lelio and Leandro begin a tug-of-war.)

LELIO: She's mine!

LEANDRO: No, she's not! She's mine!!

ISABELLA: Lelio? Leandro?

LELIO: Away, Colombina!

LEANDRO: Servant!

ISABELLA: Oh, where is the man who loves me?

(The Capitano leaves Colombina and comes up behind Isabella.)

CAPITANO: Right here!

(He chases her off L.)

COLOMBINA: Uh-oh! Time for emergency measures.

(She disappears from the window.)

VALERIA: I don't know which of you is which, but stop it!!

(They let go of her.)

LELIO and

LEANDRO: *(hanging their heads)* I'm sorry. *(to each other)* No, you're not!

(Pantalone sneaks on L and heads R. Brighella enters R and chases Pantalone off L. Colombina enters R.)

COLOMBINA: *(calling)* Isabella! I mean - Colombina! Colombina!

LELIO and

LEANDRO: Isabella!

(Isabella, the Capitano, and Fiorinetta enter L and exit R.)

COLOMBINA: Oh, no!

(Lelio and Leandro start toward Colombina. Valeria grabs Leandro.)

VALERIA: Oh, no, you don't!

LELIO: *(to Colombina)* My love!

COLOMBINA: I am not your love!

(Pantalone, Arlecchino, and Brighella enter L and exit R.)

LEANDRO: Let go of me!

VALERIA: So! You prefer her!

LEANDRO: No. It's just . . .

LELIO: *(to Leandro)* You! What have you done to Isabella?

LEANDRO: I'm innocent!

VALERIA and

LELIO: Ha!

(Isabella, the Capitano, and Fiorinetta enter R. Colombina places herself between the

Capitano and Isabella, allowing Isabella to exit L.)

FIORINETTA: Isabella! What are you doing?

COLOMBINA: Something I know I'll regret.

FIORINETTA: Signore Capitano, you want a woman of experience.

COLOMBINA: You want a woman of passion.

FIORINETTA: You want a woman who knows what she's doing.

CAPITANO: You're right. I want a woman.

(Brighella, Pantalone, and Arlecchino enter R and exit L. Francescina watches them go by.)

FRANCESCINA: *(aside)* Beware the two hours' traffic of our stage.

LELIO: You can have Isabella. Valeria is mine!

LEANDRO: She's mine!

FIORINETTA: He's mine!

COLOMBINA: He's mine!

**VALERIA and
CAPITANO:** *(aside)* I love it.

(Isabella enters L.)

LEANDRO: You take Isabella.

LELIO: No, you take Isabella!

FIORINETTA: Can you match this pair?

COLOMBINA: Honey, I'll see your pair, and raise you a full house!

LELIO: You love Isabella. You told me so, yourself.

LEANDRO: I lied.

FRANCESCINA: *(aside)* Anyone got a scorecard?

(Brighella enters L with a scorecard.)

BRIGHELLA: Only two ducats. Guaranteed, the latest information from the A.C.B. charts!

FIORINETTA: I know what men want.

COLOMBINA: I have what men want.

FIORINETTA: Yes, but you wrap it in duct tape!

VALERIA: So, you love me better than Isabella?

**LELIO and
LEANDRO:** Yes!

VALERIA: I knew she couldn't compete with me.

COLOMBINA: I hear you rent by the minute.

FIORINETTA: I hear you rent by the inch.

CAPITANO: *(aside)* I'm ruined!

ISABELLA: Valeria, I'd like to have a word with you.

(Pantalone and Arlecchino enter L and exit R.)

FIORINETTA: I'm woman enough to leave him wanting more.

COLOMBINA: I'll leave him unable to!

FIORINETTA: I'll burst his codpiece!

COLOMBINA: I'll melt his ducal coronet!

(Colombina turns and flees, pursued by the Capitano and Fiorinetta. They circle and exit R.)

VALERIA: *(to Isabella)* Now?

ISABELLA: Now.

(The go to UL, arch their backs, and begin yowling and hissing at each other. Francescina disappears from the window.)

LELIO: Now look what you've done!

LEANDRO: Me?!

(They go to UR and rock back and forth, choking each other. Francescina enters L.)

FRANCESCINA: Stop! Stop!

BRIGHELLA: No, let them go!

FRANCESCINA: You're enjoying this?

BRIGHELLA: Immensely. Aren't you?

FRANCESCINA: No! I've never seen anything so disgusting! (*looks at Brighella*) On second thought . . .

(Brighella chases her off L. Pantalone enters R.)

PANTALONE: What's going on, here? Colombina! Stop that!

(He grabs Isabella and pulls her away from Valeria. Valeria exits L.)

Now, go inside! At once!

ISABELLA: Yes, sir.

PANTALONE: But don't drink anything 'til I get there!

(Isabella exits R.)

(to Lelio and Leandro) Shame on you! Shame on all of you!

(Colombina and the Capitano enter R. Brighella and Francescina enter L.)

(to the Capitano) Go get her, my boy!

(Colombina and the Capitano exit L. Brighella and Francescina exit R. Lelio and Leandro exit R, still fighting. Fiorinetta enters R.)

FIORINETTA: Here, Dukie, darling. Come and get it. Or vice versa.

(She exits L.)

PANTALONE: Fiorinetta, wait!

(He exits L. Arlecchino enters R and stops, puzzled. He sniffs around.)

ARLECCHINO: Colombina has been here!

(Following the scent, he exits L. Fiorinetta and the Capitano enter L. She drops her handkerchief. He stops to pick it up. She exits R.)

CAPITANO: Blast! She got away. (*calling*) Isabella! Yoo-hoo! Isabella!

(He exits R. Colombina enters L. Isabella enters R.)

ISABELLA: Oh, Isabella! Thank goodness!

COLOMBINA: You're Isabella.

ISABELLA: Are you sure?

COLOMBINA: I know I'm not.

ISABELLA: I'm so tired of being you.

COLOMBINA: I'm not used to being vertical this long.

ISABELLA: Oh, let's hurry and switch back.

(They begin to exchange disguises.)

COLOMBINA: Listen. There's something I've got to tell you.

ISABELLA: What is it?

COLOMBINA: Your father got a love potion from Fiorinetta. One drink, and it's fate-worse-than-death time.

ISABELLA: Yes, but I don't have to worry about that.

COLOMBINA: Well, I would, if I were you.

ISABELLA: That's just it. You are me. Or, rather, I'm not you. What I mean is, the potion is for Colombina, right?

COLOMBINA: Right.

ISABELLA: Well, you're Colombina.

(No sooner does Colombina realize this than the Capitano enters R and Pantalone enters L. The two girls stand back to back for protection, Isabella facing R, Colombina facing L.)

CAPITANO: Isabella! At last I've found you!

PANTALONE: Ah, there you are, Colombina, my enchantress. Thirsty, yet?

(The girls spin around, each to her own left. The Capitano chases Isabella off L, and Pantalone chases Colombina off R. Arlecchino enters L.)

ARLECCHINO: I'm getting closer!

(He exits R. Leandro and Franchescina enter R and exit L. Valeria enters L. Brighella enters R.)

BRIGHELLA: Good evening, Valeria.

(He chases her off L. Lelio enters R. Leandro enters L. They meet at center.)

LEANDRO: Ah-ha!

LELIO: Ah-ha!

(Leandro removes Lelio's mask.)

LEANDRO: You!

(Lelio removes Leandro's mask.)

LELIO: You!

(Isabella and the Capitano enter L and exit R. Lelio and Leandro stare after the Capitano.)

**LELIO and
LEANDRO:** Who was that masked man?

(They exit R. Arlecchino enters R and heads L.)

COLOMBINA: *(offstage R)* Wait!

(Arlecchino stops. Colombina enters R and runs past Arlecchino. He gleefully chases her off L. Pantalone enters R, goes to DC, stops, and looks around.)

PANTALONE: Whew! Safe, at last!

(Immediately, Isabella, the Capitano, Fiorinetta, Lelio, and Leandro enter R. Valeria, Brighella, Francescina, Colombina, and Arlecchino enter L. The two masses converge on Pantalone.)

Stop!!!

(They do, just short of crushing him.)

I've had enough of this! Everyone, into my house! Move, move, move!

(He goes to the L end of the line - Arlecchino - and begins pushing everyone off R.)

You, too. Hurry. Hurry.

(He pushes them all off R.)

I'm going to get to the bottom of this. Well, I'm going to get to the bottom of something!

(He displays the vial of Passion Potion and exits R.)

scene four *(Inside Pantalone's house. A small table at DC. Still in line, everyone piles on from L. Pantalone follows, still pushing. Once everyone is on, he moves to DC.)*

PANTALONE: Now, then. Will someone please tell me what's going on?

(As expected, everyone talks at once.)

Quiet! One at a time!

(Everyone talks at once.)

Quiet!! *(aside)* Now I know what a Laurel's meeting is like!

(to Isabella) You first, daughter.

(Isabella steps forward.)

My, how you've . . . shrunk.

ISABELLA: Father, I am not going to marry that man!

(She indicates the still-masked Capitano.)

PANTALONE: I don't blame you. *(to the Capitano)* Who are you, stranger?

(The Capitano removes his mask.)

CAPITANO: It is I, the Duke of . . . Duke of . . . just a minute. I'll get it. The Duke of Alyshia¹⁰!

FRANCESCINA: Can't be.

CAPITANO: And why not?

FRANCESCINA: Because Alyshians never go anywhere.

COLOMBINA: Well, you know why they never go anywhere.

FRANCESCINA: Why?

COLOMBINA: They know they'd have to travel through Golden Rivers¹¹.

ISABELLA: I don't care who he is! I'm not going to marry him! I love Lelio!

LELIO: There! See?

(He sticks his tongue out at the Capitano.)

COLOMBINA: *(to Isabella)* Are you sure?

ISABELLA: Yes, Colombina. At last, I'm sure.

LELIO: My Isabella!

(He reaches out to embrace Isabella, but Pantalone interferes.)

PANTALONE: Oh, no you don't. You keep your hands off my daughter! Just stand there!

(Lelio, dejected, fig-leafs.)

Don't touch anything!

(Lelio's hands snap to his sides.)

I'm going to get something to calm my nerves.

(Showing the vial of Passion Potion to the audience, he exits R.)

LEANDRO: Isabella! I thought you loved me!

ISABELLA: I lied.

(Arlecchino goes to the Capitano.)

ARLECCHINO: Remember the money.

CAPITANO: Shut up!

(The Capitano hits Arlecchino over the head, knocking him to his knees. Arlecchino knee-walks back to his place.)

COLOMBINA: Why do you stay with him, if he treats you like that?

ARLECCHINO: Beats me.

(Arlecchino gets to his feet and begins brushing himself off. Pantalone enters R. He has a goblet. He goes straight to Colombina.)

PANTALONE: Here we go. Colombina, aren't you thirsty after all that running around?

COLOMBINA: Not really.

PANTALONE: Maybe later?

(Arlecchino bends over to dust off his shoes. Colombina takes in the view.)

COLOMBINA: Definitely later.

PANTALONE: All right. I'll just leave it right here.

(He puts the goblet on the table at DC.)

ISABELLA: Father, I'm thirsty . . .

(She reaches for the goblet.)

COLOMBINA and

PANTALONE: *(quickly)* No, you're not!

VALERIA: Lelio . . .

LELIO: No, Valeria. I know my true love, at last.

ISABELLA: My Lelio!

LELIO: My Isabella!

ISABELLA and

LELIO: My Boo!

FIORINETTA: *(to Capitano)* That leaves you free, honey. It's not a word I use all that often, but . . .

FRANCESCINA: Go ahead, Valeria. Now's your chance.

VALERIA: Oh, Leandro.

LEANDRO: Oh, Valeria.

FRANCESCINA: Oh, good.

(She picks up the goblet.)

VALERIA: Francescina, isn't it wonderful?

(Francescina puts the goblet down.)

FRANCESCINA: Well, your odds were fifty-fifty.

BRIGHELLA: Speaking of odds, signor Pantalone, I thought your daughter was going to marry the Duke.

CAPITANO: And don't forget the "suitable reward."

PANTALONE: Well, what are you waiting for?

(Lelio picks up the goblet.)

LELIO: My darling, I drink to our future.

CAPITANO: Just a moment. I'll take that, if you please.

(He takes the goblet out of Lelio's hand.)

Here's to us.

LELIO: I resent that, sir.

CAPITANO: Resent what?

LELIO: You are not going to wed the woman I love!

(The Capitano puts the goblet back down.)

CAPITANO: *(blustering)* Who's going to stop me?

LELIO: I am!

(The Capitano retreats.)

CAPITANO: Just curious.

VALERIA: Leandro, would you be a dear and get me something to drink?

LEANDRO: Of course, my sweet.

FIORINETTA: Me, too, if you don't mind.

LEANDRO: My pleasure.

VALERIA: Not and ever hope to father children.

LEANDRO: I'm sorry, Fiorinetta. You'll just have to get your own.

FIORINETTA: I always do.

ISABELLA: Oh, father, is my happiness worth so little to you?

PANTALONE: No, it's worth so much to me!

ISABELLA: Isn't there anything I could do to change your mind?

PANTALONE: Nothing.

COLOMBINA: *(forcing herself to say it)* Isn't there anything I could do to change your mind?

(Pantalone picks up the goblet and offers it to her.)

PANTALONE: Have a drink.

COLOMBINA: I intend to.

PANTALONE: Yeah!

COLOMBINA: Later.

PANTALONE: Rats!

BRIGHELLA: Someone called? Why, thank you.

(He takes the goblet from Pantalone's hand.)

PANTALONE: No!

(He grabs the goblet back. This brings it within range of Leandro, who lifts it out of Pantalone's hand.)

LEANDRO: Thank you. Here, my sweet.

(He gives the goblet to Valeria, then stands behind her.)

VALERIA: This is just what I need.

(She raises the goblet. Isabella and Lelio come to them, Lelio standing behind Isabella.)

ISABELLA: Valeria, I know we never got along, but I offer now the hand of friendship.

(Valeria puts the goblet back down on the table and shakes Isabella's hand.)

All our problems are behind us, now.

(The Capitano elbows his way in.)

CAPITANO: Excuse me. I happen to have Pantalone's blessing.

LELIO: Fine. Marry Pantalone.

(A knocking at the door off L.)

PANTALONE: Coming!

(He exits L. Fiorinetta reaches for the goblet.)

COLOMBINA: You touch that goblet and I'll break every bone in your body.

(Pantalone enters L with a letter.)

PANTALONE: Francescina, there's a message for you.

(He gives her the letter. Francescina opens it and reads it.)

CAPITANO: She's going to marry me . . .

(He picks up the goblet.)

PANTALONE: Who's it from?

CAPITANO: . . . or I'm not the Duke of Beacons gate.

(He raises the goblet to his lips.)

FRANCESCINA: It's from my brother, the Duke of Beacons gate.

(The Capitano puts the goblet back down on the table.)

all: WHAT!!!

FIORINETTA: You mean, he isn't really a Duke?

FRANCESCINA: Of course not.

PANTALONE: I've been tricked!

FIORINETTA: I've been seduced!

PANTALONE: You told me you were the Duke of Beacons gate!

CAPITANO: No, I didn't. He did. It's all his fault!

(Arlecchino drops to his knees in front of Pantalone and begs.)

ARLECCHINO: Please, signore. It's just that we didn't want to be killed for begging.

PANTALONE: What nonsense is this?

ARLECCHINO: Isn't that the law?

PANTALONE: Of course not! How do you think this Guild makes its money? Who told you that?

**LELIO and
LEANDRO:** Who sold us the same sonnet?

VALERIA: Who was spreading gossip?

ISABELLA: Who tried to ruin my life?

FIORINETTA: Who is always sneaking around, plotting mischief?

ARLECCHINO: Who insulted the woman I probably love?

COLOMBINA: Who's the lowest - What did you say?

CAPITANO: Who used the greatest hero in the world as his pawn?

BRIGHELLA: Everyone's got to have a hobby.

(They all rush toward him.)

Wait! Wait! Nobody got hurt, right?

VALERIA: Well . . . right.

PANTALONE: And I still have my agreement with the real Duke of Beaconsgate.

(He displays the original letter.)

FRANCESCINA: Wrong-o, bright-eyes.

PANTALONE: What do you mean?

FRANCESCINA: On his way here, my brother spent the night at a monastery, and has decided to become a monk. He has abdicated all his lands and titles; and, as I am his nearest relative, they pass to me. I am now the Duchess of Beaconsgate. The first.

(Everyone bows.)

all: Your Grace!

FRANCESCINA: And, as marriage with your daughter is now out of the question, I declare the former agreement null and void.

(She takes the agreement from Pantalone and tears it up.)

Instead, signore Pantalone, I hereby offer you the position of exchequer of all my lands and goods . . .

PANTALONE: But that's the same . . .

FRANCESCINA: . . . on the condition that your daughter, Isabella, marry signor Lelio without delay.

(Pantalone rushes to Lelio and embraces him.)

PANTALONE: Son!

(Brighella comes to Francescina.)

BRIGHELLA: Why, Francescina, how lovely you look in this light.

(The Capitano comes to her, reading from the piece of paper he used in scene three.)

CAPITANO: Shall I compare thee to a summer's day . . .

ARLECCHINO: Not again!

CAPITANO: Shut up!

(He kicks Arlecchino.)

ARLECCHINO: That does it!

(He draws his slapstick.)

I've had it with being kicked, being insulted, and being abused! All my fault, eh? Take that! and that!

(He beats the Capitano with his slapstick.)

CAPITANO: No! No! This is be-kind-to-Captains week!

ARLECCHINO: That goes for you, too!

(He beats Brighella.)

BRIGHELLA: Is there no mercy?

ARLECCHINO: There is no mercy!

BRIGHELLA: Is there no way out?

ARLECCHINO: Yes!

(He hits Brighella again, sending him flying out L.)

You, too! All of you!

(He swings at the rest of them, clearing the stage of everyone but Colombina and himself. Looking around, satisfied, he replaces his slapstick as a Samurai would resheath his sword.)

ARLECCHINO: I'm exhausted. Is there anything to eat around here?

COLOMBINA: Not much. Just . . .

(She indicates the goblet. Arlecchino picks it up and drains it. He puts the goblet down. Nothing happens for a moment, then he begins to quiver, then tremble, then shake. His gaze falls upon Colombina, who readies herself.)

ARLECCHINO: Colombina . . .

COLOMBINA: Yes?

ARLECCHINO: Colombina!

COLOMBINA: Yes?!

ARLECCHINO: *(suddenly calm)* Where's the kitchen?

(She screams in frustration and chases him off R.)

finis ARLECCHINO AND THE CUP OF LOVE

End Notes -- Changes to Script

There are various changes made in the original script for the Golden Stag production of this play, all of them Caidan or other Kingdom references, which have been changed to Western (or other Kingdom references).

1. The 'Duke of Dreiburgen' has been changed to the 'Duke of Beaconsgate'.
2. 'Heatherwyno' was changed to 'Griffin'.
3. 'Ansteorra' was changed to 'March Crown' (based on past rainfall records).
4. 'Angels' changed to 'Esfenn'.
5. 'Atenveldt' changed to 'An Tir'.
6. 'Altavian sex goddesses' changed to 'Cynaguan sex goddesses'.
7. 'Lyondemere' changed to 'Westermark'.
8. 'Robear' was changed to 'Angus'.
9. 'Altavia' changed to 'Darkwood'.
10. 'Calafia' changed to 'Alyshia'.
11. 'Gyldenholdt' changed to 'Golden Rivers'.