

The Deceived¹

(An Arts Competition in 5 Acts)

By the Academy of the Intronati of Siena²

(Translated and Edited by:

Laura Giannetti & Guido Ruggiero,

~~Gleefully Mutilated~~ Adapted by

Aldith Angharad St. George, Hirsch von Henford, and Rose de Le Mans³)

CHARACTERS:

GHERARDO⁴: an old man

VIRGINIO: an old man

CLEMENZIA: a *balia*⁵

LELIA: a young girl

SPELA: GHERARDO's servant

SCATIZZA: VIRGINIO's servant

FLAMMINIO: a lover

PASQUELLA: GHERARDO's maid

ISABELLA: a young girl

CRIVELLO: FLAMMINIO's servant

The PEDANT

FABRIZIO: a young man, son of VIRGINIO

STRAGUALCIA: FABRIZIO's servant

AGIATO: an innkeeper

FRULLA: an innkeeper

The SCHOLAR⁶

CAMEO APPEARANCE: Jest Kingdom A&S Minister⁷

¹ The Italian title of this play is *Gl'ingannati*. First performed on 12 February 1532 during carnival season.

² Like most Renaissance academies, the Intronati (Dazed) of Siena were an aristocratic group of literati, humanists, and intellectuals. Theoretically modeled on ancient academies of learning, the group played a significant role in the upper-class intellectual and festive life of the time, often sponsoring and performing comedies. Although there have been various attempts to identify a singular author for this comedy within the academy, the declaration in the Prologue that it was a joint effort remains the best attribution we have. See the discussion of the name in the introductory essay.

³ Founding members of *The Golden Stag Players*, who feel a special kinship with our ancestors, who called themselves "Dazed" (see footnote 3 above ...).

⁴ Pronunciation Guides at the end of the script ... provided by Ariane Helou (SCA: Vittoria Aureli).

⁵ I.e., wetnurse.

⁶ Added by *The Golden Stag Players* for their modifications to the script – See "Prologue"...

⁷ See final act ...

Prologue

PROLOGUE [*Enters from backstage, SCHOLAR delivers 'documentation' to Laurels in the audience*]: Greetings! As you all know, the Kingdom's Golden Pomposity contest this year includes a Performing Arts competition. Lord Galateus of Asia Minor spent a lot of time researching the play "Gl'ingannati", or "The Deceived", first performed by the Intronati of Siena, February 12, 1532, during carnival season. Because the Golden Stag Players are BIG arts supporters, we agreed to assist Lord Galateus and present this play to you as his entry. The original play began with its own prologue ...

[PROLOGUE *turns away from audience, "prepares", turns back to audience ... during which time SCHOLAR⁸ sets up a chair down stage right, so he can watch the play from the best vantage, face plants into hand ... he is obviously chomping at the bit to come onstage and explain ... something to the audience*]

PROLOGUE: Whatever beauty there is in the world today is without doubt here in Siena, and whatever beauty there is in Siena is present in this hall. How do you imagine men could come here to marvel at scenes or comedies, or to listen to or watch what we do or say, with you beautiful women here before them?

[SCHOLAR *stands and upstages* PROLOGUE.]

SCHOLAR: Um, excuse me ... The Intronati had earlier made fun of the coldness of the women of Siena in a ceremony that included a sacrificial bonfire of gifts from their mistresses and the reciting of misogynistic poetry. This ceremony was celebrated on the 6th of January, and is called the Night of the Befana. The sense of this passage in the prologue suggests the nature of the festival itself which focused on driving out or burning an old evil woman, The Befana. We call this festival "12th Night". The Intronati used this prologue as a way to mock-apologize to the beautiful women of Siena for the insult given them.

PROLOGUE: Shall I go on?

SCHOLAR: Oh yes, go right ahead ... [SCHOLAR *returns to his chair and sits.*]

PROLOGUE: Now that I think about it, don't expect any explanation of the plot. You will learn, above all else, two things: how important good fortune and the right moment are in love, and how important patience accompanied by good advice is. But I see two old men coming out on stage, so I will leave, unhappy to leave your beauty. I ... shall cope!

⁸ The character of the Scholar starts out ... a little sheepish, as he interferes in the performance. As the play progresses, he gets more bold, and more frustrating to the actors. By the end of the show, when the actors "mug" him, it's out of sheer annoyance at the character ... The actors will slip into tableau during his explanations, except that the further into the play, the easier it is for them to slip out of tableau and start making annoyed gestures behind his back, etc.

Act I

Scene I

GHERARDO and VIRGINIO

GHERARDO: Virginio, if you want to make me happy, let's arrange this holy matrimony quickly and get me out of this hopeless mess. If something is holding you back, don't worry. It wouldn't be any problem for me to spend another ten scudi, especially if we could move this up a month to satisfy my eagerness. The older one gets the less time one has to lose.

VIRGINIO: Gherardo, if it was in my power to give you my daughter today, I would. But I lost virtually everything in the sack of Rome - including Fabrizio, my beloved son. Still, thank God, I have enough left that I hope I can pay to dress and marry my daughter without having to ask for help. As long as the girl agrees, she's yours, for as you know, a merchant needs to keep his promises.

GHERARDO: Unfortunately, these days the promises of merchants are more upheld in words than in deeds. But you aren't like the others, I'm sure. Still, seeing myself put off day after day makes me worry that something is wrong. And knowing how forceful you are, I know that when you want to, you can make your daughter do what you want.

VIRGINIO: You know that I had to go to Bologna to close a deal that I had with Messer Buonaparte Ghisilieri and the Cavalier da Casio. I was living alone in my country home and didn't want to leave my daughter in the hands of the female servants there, so I sent her to the convent of San Crescenzo to stay with Sister Camilla, her aunt. She's still there, because I only returned last night, as you know. I'll send a servant to have them send her home.

GHERARDO: Are you sure she's in the convent and not somewhere else?

VIRGINIO: Why shouldn't she be there? Where else do you think she would be?

GHERARDO: Well, I've been there several times on business of my own, and I've asked to see her but without success. And certain sisters have told me that she's not there.

VIRGINIO: That's because those good sisters want her to become a nun in order to get what little remains of my wealth after I die. But their plan won't work, for I'm not so old that I can't still father a couple of sons when I take a wife.

GHERARDO: Us, old? Why, I can tell you that I feel as strong and hard as I did when I was twenty-five, especially in the morning before I pee. Even if I have this white beard, between my legs I'm still as green as Boccaccio! And I defy any of these pansy-boys who prance around Modena trying to act tough with their hat feathers standing up stiff in the Guelph style, with their swords at their thigh, with their daggers hanging behind their ass, with their silk tassels – I defy them to outdo me at anything, except perhaps running.

VIRGINIO: You've a great heart, even if I don't know how you'll hold up.

GHERARDO: You just ask Lelia how it held up after her first night with me!

VIRGINIO: In God's name, take it easy with her! She's still young, and it's not good to be too forceful in the beginning.

GHERARDO: How old is she?

VIRGINIO: When we were prisoners of those swine, the Germans, during the sack of Rome, she was thirteen.

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: Since the sack of Rome took place in 1527, that means that in 1532, when the action of the comedy took place, Lelia would be 18 – not particularly young by Renaissance standard for upper-class brides. [*sits*]

GHERARDO: That's perfect for me. I don't want a wife who's too young or too old. I have the most beautiful clothes, the most beautiful jewels, the most beautiful necklaces, and the most beautiful accouterments for a woman of any man in Modena.

VIRGINIO: Excellent! I'm satisfied for her well-being and yours. As far as the dowry's concerned, we'll stick to our agreement.

GHERARDO: Do you think I would change my mind? Goodbye.

VIRGINIO: Good day to you. [GHERARDO *leaves*; CLEMENZIA *enters*] Ah, here's her *balia* now. I'll send her to bring Lelia home. That will save me the trouble.

SCENE II

CLEMENZIA and VIRGINIO

CLEMENZIA: [*To herself*] I wonder what to make of the fact that all my hens were so excited this morning. They made so much noise that it was as if they wanted to throw the house into confusion, or else make me rich with their eggs. Something strange is going to happen to me today; they never make such a commotion unless there's bad news or something goes wrong.

VIRGINIO: What are you doing, talking to yourself?

CLEMENZIA: I was saying that I didn't know what to make of the fact that a pretty kitty that disappeared fifteen days ago turned up this morning. And then she caught a mouse in my dark room, and while playing with it, she upset a flask of Trebbiano wine that the preacher of the Church of Saint Francis had given me for doing his wash.

VIRGINIO: This is a sign that there'll be a wedding. But you wanted me to give you another flask of wine, right?

CLEMENZIA: Of course.

VIRGINIO: See, I do know how to read signs! But where's Lelia, your nursling?

CLEMENZIA: Oh, the poor child, it would've been better if she'd never been born!

VIRGINIO: Why?

CLEMENZIA: You ask why? Isn't that Gherardo Foiani going around saying that she's his wife and that everything's arranged?

VIRGINIO: He's telling the truth. Why not? Don't you think it's good that she'll be set up in an honorable house with a rich man, well furnished with all the goods one could ask for and without anyone else in the house, so she won't have to fight with a mother-in-law, a daughter-in-law, or a sister-in-law? And he'll treat her like a daughter.

CLEMENZIA: That's the problem: young girls want to be treated like wives, not daughters. They want men who sweep them off their feet, bite them, lay into them first from one side and then the other, not someone who treats them like a daughter.

VIRGINIO: You think all women are like you, and you know that I know you well enough! But she's not like that – even if Gherardo is more than ready to treat her as a wife.

CLEMENZIA: How? Why, he's already well over fifty!

VIRGINIO: What does that matter? I'm almost that old, and you know I'm still capable of giving you a good ride, right?

CLEMENZIA: Oh my, there are few men your equal! But if I thought that you would really give her to him, I'd drown her first.

VIRGINIO: Clemenzia, I lost everything. Now I have to make do as best I can. If one day Fabrizio were to be found and I'd given everything away for her dowry, he'd die of hunger. This way I can marry her to Gherardo with the proviso that if Fabrizio doesn't turn up within four years, she'll have a dowry of one thousand florins. If he does, she'll get only two hundred from me, and Gherardo will make up the rest.

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: Gherardo would not just be factiously crediting Lelia with a thousand florin dowry that would remain in his hands; she would automatically regain her dowry if he should die before she did. As a result, her financial security after his death would not be contingent on his willingness to share his family's wealth with her via his will. Such dowry agreements were often used to provide financial security for women when they married, especially when there was a great age discrepancy between partners. Some Renaissance city-states were less assertive than others in protecting the dower rights of widows. [*sits*]

CLEMENZIA: Poor child! [*Aside*] I know that if she did as I wish she would ...

VIRGINIO: What's she up to? How long has it been since you saw her?

CLEMENZIA: More than fifteen days. I wanted to visit her today.

VIRGINIO: I think those sisters want to make her a nun, and I'm afraid that as usual they've tried to put a bug in her ear. Go to the convent and tell them I want her to return home. [*VIRGINIO exits.*]

SCENE III

LELIA (dressed as a boy) and CLEMENZIA

LELIA: [*Aside*] Leaving the house alone at this hour requires real courage when one considers the evil ways of the rowdy young men of Modena! But I'm here because I love that fickle and cruel Flamminio. And to make matters worse, I help him in his pursuit of another woman. But what am I to do now? My father has returned, Flamminio

has come to live in the city, and I can't stay here without being recognized. So I'm out at this hour to ask the advice of my *balia*. But first I want to see if she recognizes me in this get-up!

CLEMENZIA: Who is this young showoff cutting back and forth in front of me in the street this morning? [To LELIA] What are you up to, you little pansy, tripping me up? Get lost! What are you doing?

LELIA: God give you a good day, Lady Sponger.

CLEMENZIA: Save your "good days" for someone you ought to have said good night to.

LELIA: Even if I did say good night to someone else, I want to say good day to you, if you'll let me.

CLEMENZIA: [Aside] I'm certain I know this kid, but I don't know from where, even though it seems like I've seen his face a thousand times. [To LELIA] Tell me, boy, where do you know me from, and why are you so nosey about my affairs? Lower that cape a bit so I can see your face better.

LELIA: [Pulling back her cape] Now do you recognize me?

CLEMENZIA: Is that *you*, Lelia? Oh, my life is ruined! What a disaster! Yes, it's *you*! Good heavens! What does this mean, my dear child?

LELIA: Be quiet. You're acting like a madwoman. If you keep shouting, I'll leave.

CLEMENZIA: Have you become a woman of the world, a whore?

LELIA: Yes, I'm of the world. How many women have you seen from outside the world? As far as I'm concerned, I don't remember ever being outside the world.

CLEMENZIA: Is this the honor you owe to your father, your house, yourself, and to me who nursed you? Come along, now, I don't want you to be seen out here in these clothes.

LELIA: Am I perhaps the first woman who ever dressed like this? I've seen hundreds in Rome. And in Modena there are plenty of women who go about their business every night dressed like this.

CLEMENZIA: They're wicked women!

LELIA: Oh well, among so many wicked women isn't there room for one good one?

CLEMENZIA: Why are you running around like this? Tell me.

LELIA: You know that after my father lost everything, our poverty forced us to return to our home here in Modena to escape our evil fortunes. It so happened that at that time, Flamminio Carandini became a close friend of my father. Visiting our house, he made me aware of how much he was taken with me with many signs of love, sighs, longing gazes, and glances, so that although I'd never been in love before, I fell for him so completely that to see him was my only desire.

CLEMENZIA: I knew all this already.

LELIA: When all the soldiers finally left Rome, my father wanted to go back to see if he could learn anything about my brother. When we returned to Modena, I was more than ever in love with Flamminio, assuming that he would love me as he did before.

CLEMENZIA: Silly little girl! How many men of Modena do you know who'd be able to love a woman a whole year rather than deceiving first one for a while and then another?

LELIA: When I found him, in fact, he was committed heart and soul to winning the love of Isabella, the daughter of Gherardo Foiani, who not only is very beautiful but also is his only heir, if that old madman doesn't decide to marry and have other children.

CLEMENZIA: Gherardo believes that his marriage with you is all arranged, and he's going around saying that your father has given his word. But all this still doesn't explain why you're running around dressed like a man or why you've left the convent.

LELIA: It seemed to me that I could reveal my love to Sister Amabile de'Cortesi. Taking pity on me, she worked day and night to get Flamminio to come to the convent to talk with her. I heard him lamenting the death of a young boy in his service and he said that if he could find another boy like that, he would be the happiest person in the world. I immediately decided that I wanted to see if I could become that lucky boy. So as soon as he left, I broached the subject with Sister Amabile. She agreed with me and showed me how I should act, giving me some clothes that she had recently made for herself. So one morning early, I left the convent in these clothes, and the minute Flamminio saw me he asked me very courteously where I was from.

CLEMENZIA: Didn't you die of shame on the spot?

LELIA: I answered him earnestly that I was a Roman seeking my fortune because of my poverty. Then he said that if I was agreeable he would gladly take me on and that he would treat me well and as a gentleman.

CLEMENZIA: Listening to you, I wish I'd never been born! What good did you see in such craziness?

LELIA: What good? Does it seem to you a small thing for a woman in love to be able to see her lord all the time, to speak with him, touch him, hear his secrets, meet his friends and discuss things with him, and be sure that if she's not enjoying him, at least no one else is?

CLEMENZIA: These are the ways of a foolish child. They don't accomplish anything beyond adding wood to the fire. But how do you serve him?

LELIA: At the table, in the bedroom. And I know that he's been so pleased with me in these fifteen days that if I'd been wearing my regular dress, I would feel truly blessed!

CLEMENZIA: What will people say when they learn about this, you naughty little girl?

LELIA: Who's going to say anything, if you don't tell? Now, this is what I want you to do, because I've learned that my father returned last night, and I imagine he'll send for me: see to it that for four or five days he doesn't.

CLEMENZIA: Why?

LELIA: Flamminio, as I told you earlier, is in love with Isabella Foiani, and often, very often, he sends me to her with letters and messages. She, however, has fallen madly in love with me thinking that I'm a man and gives me the sweetest caresses ever. Meanwhile, I'm pretending that I don't want to be her lover unless she makes Flamminio forget about her. I've already brought matters to a head, and I'm hoping that in the next three or four days everything will come together and he'll leave her.

CLEMENZIA: I'm afraid that your father has already asked me to get you. You shouldn't be seen like this. And if you don't do as I say, I'll tell your father everything.

LELIA: If you do, you'll be responsible for me going where neither of you will ever see me again. Do as I ask, please! [*Seeing GHERARDO coming out of his house*] I hear Flamminio calling me. [*Calling as if to FLAMMINIO*] My lord! [*To CLEMENZIA*] Wait for me an hour from now at your house; I'll meet you there. And you should know that if you want to find me, you should ask for Fabio degli Alberini, which is the name I've taken. Don't forget. [*Calling as if to FLAMMINIO*] I'm coming, sir! [*To CLEMENZIA*] Goodbye. [*LELIA exits*]

CLEMENZIA: My goodness, she saw Gherardo, who's headed this way, and she's disappeared. What am I to do now? I can't tell her father, and I can't let her stay here like this. I'll keep quiet until we speak again.

SCENE IV

GHERARDO, SPELA, and CLEMENZIA

GHERARDO: If Virginio keeps his promise, I'm going to be giving myself the best time of any man in Modena. What do you think, Spela? Wouldn't that be something?

SPELA: I think it would be much better if you gave something to your nephews, who need it, or to me, since I've served you so long that I've worn the soles off my shoes. I'm afraid that this wife will send you over the edge or give you a set of – ... actually, I'm sure of it.

GHERARDO: You'll see that she'll be well paid by me.

SPELA: I believe you. While other men would satisfy her with good hard coin, you'll pay her with tiny little halfpennies!

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: Coins poured into a purse were seen as a metaphor for sexual intercourse, the intercourse being all the more satisfying if the coins were large and of good metal. [*sits*]

GHERARDO: [*As CLEMENZIA approaches*] Here's her *balia*. Be quiet, while I cleverly ask her how Lelia is.

CLEMENZIA: [*Aside*] What a handsome lily fresh from the garden that Gherardo is to want a wife so young! Who would ever think it was a good idea to hand that poor child over to this wheezing old geezer? By the holy cross, I'd suffocate her before I'd let her be given to that run-down, moldy, drooling, rancid snotnose. [*To GHERARDO*] God give you a good day and a good morning, Gherardo. You look like a little cherub this morning.

GHERARDO: And may God give you a hundred thousand and more ducats.

SPELA: [*Aside*] Those would be better given to me.

GHERARDO: Oh, Spela, how happy I'd be if I were Clemenzia!

SPELA: Because you would've gotten to try a bunch of husbands rather than just the one wife you've had? Or are you trying to say something else?

CLEMENZIA: And according to you, just how many husbands have I tried, Spela? May God have the flies skin you alive! Are you jealous that you weren't one of them?

SPELA: Sure, by God! But I don't know if I could have handled all the pleasure!

GHERARDO: Shut up, you idiot. I wasn't saying that at all.

SPELA: What were you saying, then?

GHERARDO: I meant that if I were she, I would so often have hugged, kissed, and held to my breast my sweet Lelia, made of sugar, of gold, of milk, of roses, and so much else that I'm at a loss for words.

SPELA: Oh, oh, my master, let's go indoors! Get going! Hurry up!

GHERARDO: What?

SPELA: I'm certain that you have a fever and that you're very sick.

GHERARDO: How can you tell?

SPELA: How? Can't you see that you're out of your mind, raving, frenzied, and that you don't know what you're saying?

GHERARDO: It's love that makes me act like that, right, Clemenzia? *Omnia vincit amor!*

SPELA: *[Aside]* Right! What a beautiful Neapolitan saying! *Facetis manum [to actors, claps hands ...]* everybody: it's never been said before.

GHERARDO: Oh, Clemenzia, I want to hug and kiss you a thousand times!

CLEMENZIA: Watch out! I've no desire to be kissed by an old man.

GHERARDO: Do I seem to you that old?

SPELA: *[Aside]* What do you think? At least my master's eyes haven't fallen out of his mouth yet – oops, I mean his teeth.

CLEMENZIA: Well, now that I take a better look at you, I can say that you aren't as old as you seem.

GHERARDO: Tell Lelia that. And listen, if you put in a good word for me with her, I'll give you a veil.

SPELA: *[Aside]* Wow, the big spender! And what will you give me?

CLEMENZIA: If you were as much in the graces of the duke of Ferrara as you are in the graces of Lelia, how lucky you would be! Yes, of course! But who are you kidding? If you really loved her, you wouldn't be doing this to her or trying to ruin her life.

GHERARDO: What do you mean, ruin her life? I'm trying to give her a good life, not ruin it.

CLEMENZIA: With God's grace, let's hope that's the case! I'll tell her everything. But do you realize that she'd prefer to see you dressed differently? Now you look like an old goat.

GHERARDO: I have the finest clothes of any man in Modena. Still, I'm grateful for your advice, and she'll soon find that I have a different look. But where will I be able to see her when she returns from the convent?

CLEMENZIA: At the Bazzovara gate. I'm going to get her right now.

GHERARDO: Why don't you let me come with you? We could talk as we walk.

CLEMENZIA: No, no. What would people say?

GHERARDO: Go on now, Clemenzia! Goodbye. [CLEMENZIA *leaves*] Come along now, Spela, I want to refashion myself. I've decided to dress myself more stylishly to please my wife.

SPELA: This is going to end badly.

GHERARDO: Why?

SPELA: Because you're already beginning to do things her way. She's going to wear the pants in the family.

GHERARDO: Go to the shop of Marco, the perfume maker, and buy me a jar of musk. I'm ready to lead the life of a lover.

SPELA: Where's the money?

GHERARDO: Here, take this bolognino. And be quick about it. I'm going home. [*Exeunt*]

Act II

SCENE I

LELIA (dressed as a boy) and FLAMMINIO

FLAMMINIO: It's very disheartening that after all this time you still haven't been able to win a kind word for me from that cruel and ungrateful Isabella. But please tell me again, Fabio, what she said to you last night when you took her my letter.

LELIA: I've already told you twenty times.

FLAMMINIO: Well, tell me again. What's it to you?

LELIA: What's it to me? It makes me sad to see you so downcast, and I worry that her replies will make you unhappy with me.

FLAMMINIO: Don't worry, my dear Fabio. I love you like a brother, and I know that you love me, so you can be sure I'll never let you down. But what did she say?

LELIA: As I told you already: that the greatest pleasure you could give her in the whole world would be to leave her alone and stop thinking about her because she's fallen in love with someone else; and that she can't stand the sight of you anymore and you're wasting your time courting her, because when all is said and done, you're going to find yourself empty-handed.

FLAMMINIO: Did it seem to you that she really meant it, or is she upset with me about something? I'm prepared to court her until the day I die. What do you think, Fabio? Don't you agree?

LELIA: I don't, sir.

FLAMMINIO: Why not?

LELIA: Because if I were in your shoes, I'd want her to be happy with my courtship. Take my advice, Master: drop her and find someone else who loves you. Tell me, haven't you ever loved another who appreciated your attentions here in Modena?

FLAMMINIO: Of course. There was one among the others called Lelia. She's reputed to be the most beautiful, wise, and well-mannered young woman in these parts – I should point her out to you someday.

LELIA: Master, turnabout is fair play. You have ignored someone who loves you; it's only fair that now you are being ignored.

FLAMMINIO: What are you trying to say?

LELIA: If that poor young woman was your first love and she continues to love you more than ever, why have you abandoned her to run after another?

FLAMMINIO: You're still a boy, Fabio, and you don't understand the power of love. Look, I'm forced to love and adore this new woman, and I can't think about anyone else. So go talk to her again and see if you can wheedle out of her why she's so upset with me that she doesn't want to see me.

LELIA: You're wasting your time.

FLAMMINIO: I'm willing to waste this time.

LELIA: You're not going to accomplish anything.

FLAMMINIO: Go on, do as I ask.

LELIA: As soon as the moment is right, I'll give it my best shot.

FLAMMINIO: Fabio, if you can do it, I'll be very pleased with you! *[Walks off towards the cathedral]*

LELIA: *[Aside]* We split up just in time, because here comes Pasquella looking for me.

SCENE II

PASQUELLA and LELIA (dressed as a boy)

PASQUELLA: *[Alone]* I don't believe there's a greater pain or hassle in the whole world for someone like me than to serve a young girl in love. Recently she's fallen so madly in love and become so lathered up that she can't find any peace, day or night. She's always scratching between her legs, stroking her thighs, or running up onto the porch or over to the window or running down the stairs or up the stairs. She just can't seem to stop; it's as if she had quicksilver in her feet.

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: This description of a young woman madly in love uses the language of contemporary love spells, which called for the victims to find no peace day or night until they gave in to their passion. The behavior reported for Isabella is exactly the behavior some spells were supposed to induce. [*sits*]

PASQUELLA: It would be better, however, if only she'd decided to fall in love with someone of worth, someone mature, a man who would know how to take care of his business and scratch her itch. But she's all caught up with a fancy boy who looks like he would have trouble buttoning up his pants without help. And all day long she sends me to find this lover-boy, as if I didn't have any work to do around the house. Can his master really think that he's acting on his behalf? [*Noting LELIA*] But this is certainly him coming along now. What luck! [*To LELIA*] Fabio, God give you a good day. My dear boy, I was looking for you.

LELIA: And may God give you a thousand scudi, my dear Pasquella. What's your pretty mistress up to?

PASQUELLA: What do you think she's doing? She's crying, she's all upset, she's a mess because you haven't visited her yet this morning.

LELIA: Does she want me to get there before the sun comes up?

PASQUELLA: I imagine she'd like to have you stay the whole night, I'm afraid.

LELIA: Well, I have other things to do. I have to serve my master.

PASQUELLA: Well, I'm sure your master would feel that you were serving him in coming here, right? But wait, are you perhaps sleeping with him?

LELIA: I wish to God he liked me that much!

PASQUELLA: Oh my! But wouldn't you rather sleep with Isabella?

LELIA: Not me.

PASQUELLA: What? You're not serious!

LELIA: I wish I weren't!

PASQUELLA: Hmm. Well, let's change the subject. My mistress told me to ask you to come visit her right away because her father isn't at home and she needs to speak with you about something important.

LELIA: Tell her that she's just wasting her time if she doesn't get rid of Flamminio first. She knows that I'd be ruined otherwise.

PASQUELLA: Come tell her yourself.

LELIA: I said no. Can't you understand?

PASQUELLA: In good faith and in all honesty I'll tell you, Fabio, you're too arrogant. Remember that you're just a young dandy, and you don't really understand how lucky you are. But this fascination with you isn't going to last forever, you know. You're going to grow a beard, your cheeks aren't going to remain so fresh, your lips so red. You won't always be so sought after by everyone – no, sir.

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: As a good-looking young boy without a beard, Lelia/Fabio would have been attractive to both men and women in the sexual world of the Renaissance. The description of Fabio matches the Renaissance stereotype of the younger partner in male/male relationships and also reflects the fascination with androgyny – often associated with young males-during the period. This fascination seems to have been seen as a refined taste, and lower-class characters in these comedies often express their preference for "real" men or more manly youths. [*sits*]

PASQUELLA: Then you'll realize what a fool you've been, and you'll regret what you missed when it's too late. Tell me, how many men do you think there are in this city who'd be delighted if Isabella even smiled at them?

LELIA: Well, why doesn't she smile at one of them, then, and leave me alone? I'm not interested.

PASQUELLA: My God! It's obvious that these youngsters today don't have enough good sense to get by.

LELIA: Come on, Pasquella! Don't keep preaching at me, you'll only make it worse.

PASQUELLA: Stuck up, stuck up, you're going to miss being so stuck up when you grow up! Come on, my dear, sweet Fabio, my soul! Come, for goodness sake, quickly. If you don't, she'll just send me out again to find you because she won't believe I've talked with you.

LELIA: Fine. Relax! I'll come, Pasquella. I was just kidding.

PASQUELLA: When, my sweet?

LELIA: Soon enough. Now get lost.

PASQUELLA: I'll be waiting for you at the door, all right? [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III

FLAMMINIO, CRIVELLO, and SCATIZZA

[*Enter FLAMMINIO and CRIVELLO*]

FLAMMINIO: You haven't gone to look for Fabio, and he hasn't returned. I don't know what to make of his delay.

CRIVELLO: I was going, and then you called me back. Is that my fault?

FLAMMINIO: Well, go now, and if he's at Isabella's, wait for him outside and when he comes out send him here immediately.

CRIVELLO: Well, how can I tell if he's there or not? Do you want me to ask her if he's there?

FLAMMINIO: What an ass! Do you think that would be a good idea? It's clear that I don't have anyone to serve me who's worth a fig besides Fabio. God help me reward him as he deserves!

CRIVELLO: What do you want me to say? I say yes, of course. Fabio is good. Fabio is handsome. Fabio serves well. Fabio with you, Fabio with your girl. Fabio is everything, Fabio does everything. But ...

FLAMMINIO: But what?

CRIVELLO: He may not be entirely the right stuff.

FLAMMINIO: What are you suggesting with this "stuff" thing?

CRIVELLO: That you can't always trust him. Look, he's a foreigner, and one day he could carry off your stuff.

FLAMMINIO: I wish I had as much faith in you others as I have in him! [SCATIZZA *enters*] Here's Scatizza, ask him if he's seen Fabio. I'll be at the Porrini bank. [*He leaves*]

CRIVELLO: Hello, Scatizza. Have you seen Fabio?

SCATIZZA: Who? Your boy with the right stuff? That little bastard! You can have him.

CRIVELLO: Where are you headed?

SCATIZZA: To find my old boss.

CRIVELLO: He left just a moment ago.

SCATIZZA: Where did he go?

CRIVELLO: That way. Come on, and we'll catch up with him. Hurry up! I have a funny story to tell you about what happened to me with my Caterina – the best story ever! [CRIVELLO *and* SCATIZZA *exit*.]

SCENE IV

SPELA, alone

SPELA [*Enters*]: Could there be a worse thing in the world than to serve a master who's crazy? Gherardo sent me to buy musk. When I told the apothecary that I had only one bolognino, he insisted that I had forgotten what Gherardo wanted and suggested that maybe he had asked for a jar of unguent for mange instead, since that's what he really needs. Then he insisted that Gherardo wouldn't know what to do with musk. So I began to explain Gherardo's mad love so that he would believe me, and he, along with several other young fellows who were there, almost died laughing. He even wanted me to take him a jar of asafetida, so I left with their laughter ringing in my ears. Now if my master wants that musk, he'll have to give me more money. [SPELA *exits*]

SCENE V

CRIVELLO, SCATIZZA, LELIA (dressed as a boy), and ISABELLA

CRIVELLO: So that's it. And if you want to come, I'll do everything to find a girl for you too.

SCATIZZA: See what you can do, and I promise you that if you find me a cute serving girl, we'll have a great time together. I have the keys to the granary, to the wine cellar, to the pantry, to the wood, and if you get me an easy lay, I'll make sure we live the life of lords. In the end you can be sure our masters won't make us rich in any other way.

CRIVELLO: Wait a second, Gherardo's door is opening. Let's hide over here for a bit.

LELIA: All right, Isabella! But don't forget what you promised.

ISABELLA: And don't forget to come see me. Listen to me a second.

CRIVELLO: *[To SCATIZZA, unheard and unseen by LELIA and ISABELLA]* If I were in the place of that pansy, I know my master wouldn't be able to forgive me.

ISABELLA: Do you see anyone out in the street?

LELIA: Not a living soul.

ISABELLA: Listen, just a word.

CRIVELLO: They're very close together.

ISABELLA: I would like ... come a little closer.

SCATIZZA: Get closer yet, you animal!

ISABELLA: Oh, I'd like you to come back after dinner when my father will be away.

LELIA: All right. But when my master passes by, be sure to shut the window in his face and run off.

ISABELLA: If I don't, you needn't love me anymore. *[She touches LELIA]*

SCATIZZA: Where the devil does she have her hands?

CRIVELLO: Oh, my poor master! But that's it, of course, I've got it now!

LELIA: Goodbye.

ISABELLA: Wait a second. Do you really want to leave?

SCATIZZA: Go ahead, kiss her. May you get the pox!

CRIVELLO: She's afraid to be seen.

LELIA: Go on, now. Go back in the house.

ISABELLA: I want one favor from you.

LELIA: What?

ISABELLA: Come this way a little more into the doorway. *[She tries to kiss LELIA]*

SCATIZZA: The deed is all but done!

ISABELLA: *[As LELIA pulls away]* Oh, you're so difficult!

LELIA: We'll be seen. *[ISABELLA grabs LELIA and kisses her]*

CRIVELLO: I'll tell you right out, I would rather have seen that kiss than earn a hundred scudi.

SCATIZZA: I saw it, but I would rather have had it!

CRIVELLO: That's what faith in such trash will get you! It serves him right. No wonder the little fraud has been encouraging my master to forget this love!

SCATIZZA: Everyone looks after good old number one. And in the end, all women are the same.

LELIA: It's late, and I must find my master. Goodbye.

ISABELLA: Wait a second. *[She kisses LELIA again]*

CRIVELLO: Wow! And now it's two! May he dry up and go limp!

SCATIZZA: My God, I've got a leg so hard it seems ready to explode!

LELIA: Close the door, now. Goodbye.

ISABELLA: I'm totally yours.

LELIA: And I'm yours. *[ISABELLA goes in, closing the door, and LELIA walks slowly away soliloquizing, unheard by CRIVELLO and SCATIZZA]* On the one hand I'm having the best time ever playing with this woman who believes I'm a man. On the other, I want to get out of this muddle and am not sure how. It's clear that she's already at the kissing stage, and who knows what will happen the next time we're together? And if she discovers my disguise, I'll lose everything. I need to find Clemenzia and see what she suggests. *[Looking offstage]* But here comes Flamminio.

CRIVELLO: Scatizza, my master told me that he would meet me at the Porrini bank. I want to give him the good news. But if he doesn't believe me, you must support me.

SCATIZZA: You can count on me. Still, if it were up to me, I'd keep quiet and hold this knife to Fabio's throat so he'd be forced to do whatever you wish.

CRIVELLO: No, I want to get him. He has ruined me.

SCATIZZA: It's up to you. *[He and CRIVELLO leave in the opposite direction from where FLAMMINIO enters; inside the house, ISABELLA slams the shutters closed as FLAMMINIO passes by the window]*

SCENE VI

FLAMMINIO and LELIA (dressed as a boy)

FLAMMINIO: *[Aside]* Can I be so madly in love and think so little of myself that I want to love and serve a woman who despises me, who tortures me, who doesn't give a damn about me, who doesn't even want to give me the pleasure of a glance? *[To LELIA]* Well, what have you accomplished?

LELIA: Nothing.

FLAMMINIO: Why didn't you talk with her?

LELIA: She didn't even want to listen to me. If you want my advice, I'd suggest you find another game. She seems absolutely determined never to do anything that would please you.

FLAMMINIO: Well, even if God said it, He would be wrong. Yet do you know that just now, when I was walking by her house, the minute she saw me she ran from the window with such distaste and anger-almost as if she had seen something horrible or frightening?

LELIA: Forget her, I say. Is it possible that in this entire city there isn't some other woman who merits your love as much as she does? Haven't you ever been attracted to another woman?

FLAMMINIO: I wish it weren't true! But I'm afraid that that might be the root of all my problems, because I loved with all my heart that Lelia. And I'm afraid that Isabella may think I'm still in love with her, and that's why she doesn't want to see me. But I'll convince her that I don't love Lelia anymore – in fact, that I hate her and can't stand even to hear her name. And I'll promise her absolutely never to go near Lelia again. I want you to tell her this clearly.

LELIA: Oh dear!

FLAMMINIO: What's wrong? You seem about to faint. How do you feel?

LELIA: Oh dear! My heart.

FLAMMINIO: How long have you had this? Lean on me a moment. Does your body ache?

LELIA: No, sir.

FLAMMINIO: Is your stomach upset?

LELIA: It's my heart that hurts.

FLAMMINIO: Mine too, and perhaps even more than yours. But you've lost your color. Go on home and put some hot towels on your chest and have your back rubbed; maybe that will do the trick. I'll be back soon, and if you need it, I'll send for the doctor to take your pulse and see what's wrong with you. Give me your arm for a moment. You're freezing! ... That's better. Fabio, go on home now and warm your feet. I'll be there shortly. Tell the others to set the table. *[He leaves]*

LELIA: *[Walking off]* O poor wretch! Now you have heard with your own ears from the mouth of this ungrateful Flamminio just how much he loves you! Why waste any more time serving this cruel man? I'll go find Clemenzia. Together we'll plan what to do with my life. *[She runs off]*.

SCENE VII

CRIVELLO and FLAMMINIO

CRIVELLO: And if it isn't true, you can have me hung by the neck if cutting my tongue out isn't enough. That's what happened.

FLAMMINIO: How did you see them, then?

CRIVELLO: With my eyes. Do you think that I saw them with my elbows?

FLAMMINIO: And he kissed her?

CRIVELLO: I don't know if she kissed him or he her, but I believe they kissed each other.

FLAMMINIO: Did they each put their faces so close together that they could kiss?

CRIVELLO: Their faces no, but their lips yes.

FLAMMINIO: Aha! Can two people bring their lips close without doing the same with their faces?

CRIVELLO: All right, I suppose if people had their mouths in their ears or in the back of their necks it would be possible, maybe, but given where they are now, you're right.

FLAMMINIO: Look, you'd better have seen things clearly, because later you can't say, "Well, it seemed to me." This is a very serious thing that you're saying.

FLAMMINIO: How did you see it?

CRIVELLO: Looking, with my eyes wide open, and as I was there to look, I really didn't have anything else to do but see.

FLAMMINIO: Now I understand why the rogue encouraged me to leave her – so that he could have her for himself! I won't deserve to be called a man if I don't launch a vendetta against him that will stand for all time as an example to servants who betray their masters. I know that you're not trustworthy and that you must hate his guts, so you're saying this to get me to get rid of him. But in the name of God whom I hold dear, I'll make you tell the truth or kill you! Tell me! Did you really see it?

CRIVELLO: Yes, sir. But I forgot: I have a witness.

FLAMMINIO: Who is it?

CRIVELLO: Scatizza, Virginio's servant.

FLAMMINIO: He saw them too?

CRIVELLO: Just like me.

FLAMMINIO: And if he doesn't confirm what you said?

CRIVELLO: Kill me.

FLAMMINIO: I will.

CRIVELLO: And if he confirms it?

FLAMMINIO: I'll have to kill two people.

CRIVELLO: Oh, my God, why?

FLAMMINIO: Not you two; Isabella and Fabio.

CRIVELLO: And then you should burn down that house with Pasquella and everyone in it.

FLAMMINIO: Let's find Scatizza. If I don't pay them as they deserve ... if I don't make people talk ... if the whole city doesn't see ... I'll have such a great revenge! ... That traitor! That's what trust gets you.

Act III

SCENE I

The PEDANT, FABRIZIO, and STRAGUALCIA

PEDANT: This city seems completely changed since I was last here. [To FABRIZIO] Do you recognize anything?

FABRIZIO: It's like I've never seen it before.

PEDANT: That makes sense. After all, you left when you were so young that it's no wonder. Wait, I recognize this street. That's the palace of the Rangoni, over there's the Grand Canal, and that church you see there at the head of the street is the cathedral. Have you ever heard the saying "Were you ever the pussy of Modena" or "You think you're the pussy of Modena"?

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: A proverbial way of saying "You're full of yourself" or "You're putting on airs" based on a statue of a naked woman with her legs spread over the door of the cathedral displaying her genitals in a manner that Renaissance viewers took to be prideful. It was reportedly an ancient fertility symbol. [*sits*]

FABRIZIO: A thousand times.

PEDANT: See that statue above the door of the cathedral?

FABRIZIO: That one?

PEDANT: That's it.

FABRIZIO: Wow! That's a scream!

PEDANT: Now you understand.

FABRIZIO: I really have the feeling, Professor, that this place is going to bring me good things.

STRAGUALCIA: And it's going to bring me even better things, because I smell the sweet perfume that comes from a roast, and it's making me die of hunger.

PEDANT: Oh! Don't you know what Cato said? "*Pugna pro patria.*" *Hoc, in summa*, there is not a sweeter thing than one's fatherland.

STRAGUALCIA: I believe that Trebbiano wine is much sweeter, Tutor. Boy, could I use a cup of that now! My back's broken from carrying this baggage.

PEDANT: These streets seem newly paved. When I was here before they were all dirty and muddy.

STRAGUALCIA: Are we going to stand around and count the cobblestones? Let's get going! Let's hurry up and find a place where we can eat, that's what I want.

PEDANT: *Landundum animus est in patinis*

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: Translation: "For some time his soul has been among the dishes." [*sits*]

STRAGUALCIA: Tutor, why don't you carry this baggage yourself for a bit? My lips are so parched with thirst that I can barely talk.

FABRIZIO: I'm glad that I really like this place, even at first sight. What about you, Stragualcia?

STRAGUALCIA: It seems like heaven to me: here too one doesn't eat or drink. Let's get going and not waste any more time looking at the place. We can look at it at our leisure after we eat. I know that as far as I'm concerned I'm not going to leave the kitchen. Whoever wants to wander around can do so. Now let's find a place to stay.

PEDANT: You're in a great rush.

STRAGUALCIA: A pox on you! Here I am dying of hunger, and I haven't had a thing to eat this morning besides that half a hen that you left me on the boat.

FABRIZIO: Whom can we find to show us to my father's house?

PEDANT: Actually, it seems to me that first we should find a place to stay at an inn and rest a bit there. Then we can look for him at our leisure.

FABRIZIO: I like that idea. These seem to be inns.

SCENE II

AGIATO, FRULLA, the PEDANT, FABRIZIO, and STRAGUALCIA

AGIATO: Oh, kind sirs! This is the inn for you, if you want lodging. Come to the Mirror, to the Mirror!

FRULLA: Oh, you're most welcome here! I've been your host other times. Don't you remember your Frulla? Come in here, where all the people of your quality put up.

AGIATO: Come stay with me. You'll have good rooms, a good fire, excellent beds, freshly washed sheets, and you'll not lack for anything.

FRULLA: I'll give you the best wine in Lombardy, big fat birds, sausages like this, pigeons, large chickens, and whatever you ask for. And you'll really enjoy everything.

STRAGUALCIA: This is what I want most of all.

PEDANT: And you, what do you say?

AGIATO: I'll give you sweetbreads, mortadella, wine from the mountains, and above all you'll enjoy fine, delicate things.

FRULLA: I'll give you lots of food, and you can forget delicate things. If you stay with me I'll treat you like lords, and you can pay me as you wish. At the Mirror, however, you'll pay for everything, even the candles. You decide.

STRAGUALCIA: Master, let's stay here, it's clearly better.

AGIATO: See who has more fine things.

STRAGUALCIA: Enough of these fine things, fine things, fine things. I want just one thing, to fill my whole body, and you can keep your fine things, as far as I'm concerned. Too many fine things are fine for the Florentines.

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: Florentines were the traditional enemies of the people of Siena. [*sits*]

AGIATO: They all stay with me.

FRULLA: They used to stay with you, but over the last three years they've all come over to my sign.

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: Since this comedy was set in 1532, Frulla's comment suggests that Florentines have been staying under the sign of the Fool (or the Joker/Trickster) since 1529, when Florence fell again under the control of the Medici family. The anti-Florentine sentiment would not have been lost on a Sienese audience. [*sits*]

AGIATO: Young man, put that baggage down here, for I see that it's tiring you out.

STRAGUALCIA: Don't worry about that, I've no desire to lighten the load on my shoulders until I'm sure I'm going to load up my belly.

FRULLA: Would a couple of fat capons do the trick? Bring the bag over here, and these are all yours.

STRAGUALCIA: Well, why not! But they'll only be an appetizer!

AGIATO: Look at this prosciutto! Doesn't it look like crimson silk?

PEDANT: That's not bad.

FRULLA: Who knows about wine?

STRAGUALCIA: Me, me! Why, I know more than the French.

FRULLA: See if you like this, then. If not, I can give you at least ten others.

STRAGUALCIA: Frulla, for my money you are a much better innkeeper than he is. He's got it backwards: he shows you something that will make you want to drink before he lets you see whether the wine is any good. [*Tasting the wine*] Oh, Master, this is good. Go ahead, take the bag.

PEDANT: Wait a moment. You, what do you have to say?

AGIATO: I say that gentlemen don't worry about stuffing their stomachs with a lot of food but rather eat small helpings of food that is fine and delicate.

STRAGUALCIA: He must be running a hospital or an inn for the ill.

FRULLA: I'm amazed at you gentlemen. When there is plenty of food, a man may eat as much or as little as he likes, which is not the case when there is little. Moreover, when a man begins to eat, his appetite grows and he needs to fill up with bread.

STRAGUALCIA: "You are wiser than the law" as they say. I've never met a man who understands my needs better than you. Let's go, because I think I love you.

FRULLA: Go on into the kitchen, brother, and take a look around.

PEDANT: *Omnis repletio mala, panis autem pessima.*

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: Translation: “Every excess in food is bad, but too much bread is the worst thing.” [*sits*]

STRAGUALCIA: Learned fool! One of these days I'll rearrange your teeth, if I live long enough. [*He enters the JOKER*]

AGIATO: Come with me, gentlemen, for it's not a prudent thing to stand around outside in the cold.

FABRIZIO: Oh, come now, we're not that fine and delicate!

FRULLA: Listen, my lords, that inn, the Mirror, used to be the best inn in Lombardy. But ever since I opened the Joker, he's lucky if ten people stay there in a year. And my inn is better known than any other in the whole world. Lots of Frenchmen come here, and all the Germans who come through town.

AGIATO: You're lying. The Germans go to the Pig.

FABRIZIO: The duke of Malfi, where does he stay?

AGIATO: Sometimes with me, sometimes with him, sometimes at the Sword, sometimes at the Love, depending on what he wants.

PEDANT: Where do the Romans stay? Because we have come from Rome.

AGIATO: With me.

FRULLA: That's a lie. You won't find one who has stayed there all year. It's true that some old cardinals out of habit have stayed there, but all the new ones belong at the Joker.

STRAGUALCIA: [*Coming out if the JOKER*] I won't leave this place unless I'm dragged out. The others can go where they like. Master, there are so many big pots around the fire, so many soups, so many savories, so many sauces, such great spits of roasted pigeon, partridge, thrush, and goat, capons, boiled meats, roasts, and wonderful macaroni, lasagna, pies - if he were getting ready for carnival or the entire court of Rome, he would still have enough to satisfy everyone.

FRULLA: Did you try the wine?

STRAGUALCIA: And what wine!

PEDANT: *Variorum ciborum commistio pessima generat digestionem.*

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: Translation: “Mixing various foods is terrible for the digestion.” [*sits.*]

STRAGUALCIA: *Bus asinorum, buorum castronorum, tatte, battate, pecoronibus!*

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: Translation: “Asshole of asses, castrated oxen, beating, beaten, in the name of the muttonhead!” [*sits.*]

STRAGUALCIA: What the devil are you up to? May you catch the pox, you and all the other pedants in the world! You're a scoundrel, as far as I'm concerned. Let's stay here, Master.

AGIATO: All the doctors, judges, friars, and learned men come to my inn.

FRULLA: And I'll tell you that there hardly passes a day that someone doesn't leave the Mirror to come and stay with me.

FABRIZIO: Tutor, what should we do?

PEDANT: *Etiam atque etiam cogitandum.*

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: Translation: "This is a matter for much thought." [*sits.*]

STRAGUALCIA: Body of mine, it's time to fatten up. For once I'm going to eat my fill and really pig out.

PEDANT: I am thinking, Fabrizio, that we are rather low on funds.

STRAGUALCIA: Tutor, inside there I saw the innkeeper's young son, handsome as an angel.

PEDANT: Come on, then! Let's stay at the Joker. In any case, your father, if we find him, will pay the innkeeper.

STRAGUALCIA: [*Aside*] I thought that bit about the boy would be just the bait to catch that old bird! I've already had three glasses of wine, although I'm claiming only one. And I'm not going to leave the kitchen until I've tasted everything. Then I'll have a nap by that good fire. And to hell with anyone who wants to hold back!

AGIATO: Watch out, Frulla. You've cheated me once too often, and one of these days we're going to have it out once and for all.

FRULLA: Whenever you like. I'm ready and waiting. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE III

VIRGINIO and CLEMENZIA

VIRGINIO: Is this the way you've taught her to behave? I've worked so hard to overcome my evil fortune, and for this? To see my patrimony without heirs; to see my house ruined; to see my daughter a whore; to be unable to show my face in public; to be pointed out by children in the streets; to be held up as a warning by the old; to be put in a comedy by the Golden Stag Players; and to be made the subject of the gossip of every woman in this city? But I imagine it doesn't really matter, because everyone knows everything already. Actually, I'm certain, for if even one woman knows it, in three hours the whole kingdom knows it. I'm a disgraced father, a miserable and sad old man who has lived too long! What can I do?

CLEMENZIA: You'd be better off making less noise so you can concentrate on making sure she returns home before the whole town finds out. But I think Sister Blabbermouth is as full of hot air as is the idea that Lelia is really running around town dressed as a man! Be sure that the nuns aren't just saying this because they hope you'll make her a nun and leave everything to the convent.

VIRGINIO: How could she be lying? She even told me that Lelia is a servant of a Modenese gentleman and that he hasn't realized she's a woman.

CLEMENZIA: Anything is possible, but me, I can't believe it.

VIRGINIO: I have to say it, because my honor's on the line. Actually, I created the problem myself by giving the girl to you to bring up even though I knew what you were.

CLEMENZIA: Virginio, enough of such talk. If I've been a sinner, it's because you made me one. You know very well that before you, there was no one but my husband. And young girls need to be treated differently than you have treated Lelia. Aren't you ashamed to be trying to marry her off to a croaking old fool who could be her grandfather?

VIRGINIO: What do you have against old men, you slut? They're a thousand times better than young ones.

CLEMENZIA: You've lost your senses, and that's why everyone is deceiving you and telling you such foolish gossip.

VIRGINIO: I've been told how she's dressed, so I'm going to find her, and when I do there'll be hell to pay.

CLEMENZIA: Do as you please. For myself, I'm off; no sense preaching to the deaf. These men! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV

PASQUELLA and FABRIZIO

PASQUELLA: My goodness, here he is. I was afraid I was going to have to search the whole city for him. Fabio, how good to see you! I was looking for you, so you've saved me the time and effort of finding you. My dear, my mistress wants you to come to see her right now about something of importance to you and her - I don't know what.

FABRIZIO: Who is your mistress?

PASQUELLA: You know very well who she is, you. My goodness, you two make a fine couple!

FABRIZIO: Actually, we're not a couple! But if she wants to couple, I'm ready.

PASQUELLA: I mean that you two aren't very quick. I'd like to be still young like you and able to enjoy such a feast! And I know that if I were you, I'd have already put aside my suspicions and scruples. But you'll get down to it soon enough, right?

FABRIZIO: Please, madam! You don't know me. You've mistaken me for someone else, so leave me alone.

PASQUELLA: Oh, don't get me wrong, dear Fabio, I'm saying this to help you out.

FABRIZIO: I haven't gotten anything wrong. But my name isn't Fabio, and I'm not who you think.

PASQUELLA: Well, you two will have to work things out to your own satisfaction. But you know, there are very few young women her equal in wealth or beauty in this city. And I'd rather see you get down to it instead of running back and forth all the time, giving others reason to talk without gaining anything for yourself and with little honor for her.

FABRIZIO: [*Aside*] What's all this about? I don't understand. Either she's mad or she has mistaken me for someone else. But I want to see where she's leading me. [*To PASQUELLA*] Let's go.

PASQUELLA: Oh! I think I hear people in the house. Wait here a bit until I see if Isabella is alone. I'll call you if no one's there. [*She enters the house*]

FABRIZIO: I want to see how this story ends. Maybe this woman is the servant of some courtesan and she thinks she'll get some money out of me. If that's the case, she's mistaken. One of us will be deceived, and it won't be me. [*FABRIZIO hides.*]

SCENE V

GHERARDO, VIRGINIO, and PASQUELLA

GHERARDO: Please forgive me, but if that's what's happened, I'm going to turn her down. I'm afraid that your daughter did this because she didn't want me, and worse yet I'm convinced that she did it because she has had other lovers.

VIRGINIO: Don't think that, Gherardo. Do you think I would have told you any of this if that were the case? Please don't ruin our arrangements.

GHERARDO: Virginio, I had the most honorable wife who ever lived in this city, and I have a young daughter who's a pure dove. How can you ask me to take into my home a woman who has fled from her father and goes from house to house like a whore dressed as a man? Don't you understand that if I do that I won't be able to marry my daughter off?

VIRGINIO: After a few days no one will be talking about it anymore. What does it really matter? And no one else besides us knows about it.

GHERARDO: How long has she been gone?

VIRGINIO: Since yesterday or this morning.

[*PASQUELLA enters*]

GHERARDO: [*Aside to VIRGINIO*] Quiet! [*To PASQUELLA*] What are you doing here, Pasquella? What is Isabella doing?

PASQUELLA: What do you think? She's busy praying before her little altar.

GHERARDO: May she be blessed! I have a daughter who's always praying. Who could ask for more?

PASQUELLA: Oh, you've described her perfectly. She goes without meat every day that God requires it, and she says her prayers like a little saint.

GHERARDO: She's just like her blessed mother.

PASQUELLA: Exactly. Oh, the good that wretched woman did! She punished herself more and wore more hair-shirts than anyone else in recent history, and she made charity her life; and if it weren't for her love of you there wouldn't have been a friar, priest, or poor man who came to her door who wouldn't have received everything she had to offer.

VIRGINIO: Now those were good deeds!

PASQUELLA: Her daughter is even more like that than she was.

GHERARDO: God willing.

VIRGINIO: [*Seeing FABRIZIO, who comes out of hiding*] Oh, Gherardo, Gherardo! Here's the person we were talking about! Oh, unhappy father that I am. She may hide or run, now that she's seen me. Grab her!

GHERARDO: Be sure you're not making a mistake. Maybe it's not her.

VIRGINIO: Who wouldn't know her? Don't I see all the signs that Sister Blabbermouth told me to look for?

PASQUELLA: [*Aside*] Things are looking bad. I'm afraid I'm in trouble. [*Exits ...*]

SCENE VI

VIRGINIO, GHERARDO, and FABRIZIO

VIRGINIO: [*To FABRIZIO*] Good day, young lady. Is this any way for a young lady to dress? Is this the way you honor your family? Is this the happiness you give to this poor old man? If only I'd been dead when I fathered you! It seems that the only reason you were born was to dishonor me and bury me alive! Oh, Gherardo! What do you think of your bride? Do you think she is bringing honor to us?

GHERARDO: I wouldn't say so. My bride, hardly!

VIRGINIO: Tramp! Disgrace! It would serve you right if this man didn't want you as his wife any longer and no one else would take you! But he won't hold your foolishness against you; he wants to have you.

GHERARDO: Not so fast!

VIRGINIO: [*Pointing to GHERARDO's house*] Get in that house over there, you disgrace! It's clear that the milk your mother gave you the day that I sired you was damned.

FABRIZIO: Old man, don't you have sons, relatives, or friends in this city who can take care of you?

VIRGINIO: What a reply! What are you talking about?

FABRIZIO: Well, in view of your need of a doctor, I'm amazed that they've let you out of the house. In any other city they'd keep someone like you tied down.

GHERARDO: [*Aside*] She really is pretty. If there's no other problem than what one can see, I'll take her.

VIRGINIO: Well, then, why did you run off from your father and the place where I sent you?

FABRIZIO: You never sent me anywhere that I know, but I was forced to leave.

VIRGINIO: Forced, eh? Who forced you?

FABRIZIO: The Spaniards.

VIRGINIO: And now where have you come from?

FABRIZIO: From the military camp.

GHERARDO: *[Aside]* If that's how it is, the marriage is off!

VIRGINIO: You're ruined!

FABRIZIO: And you too, old man!

VIRGINIO: Gherardo, please put her in your house so that she won't be seen in this state.

GHERARDO: I will not. Send her to your own house!

VIRGINIO: Listen a second. *[He and GHERARDO move off to talk privately]* This way you'll be sure she won't run off.

GHERARDO: I'll tell you the truth, on the one hand I think I will, on the other I think I won't. Perhaps you could question her a little more closely.

VIRGINIO: *[To FABRIZIO]* Come here.

FABRIZIO: What do you want, old man?

VIRGINIO: You still have the nerve to speak? Tell me, who is your father, eh?

FABRIZIO: I'll tell you: Virginio Bellenzini.

VIRGINIO: I wish to God it weren't true! You're going to make me die before my time.

FABRIZIO: An old man of sixty dying before his time? Everyone should live so long! Why, you can go ahead and die anytime you like; you seem to have lived too long already.

GHERARDO: *[To FABRIZIO]* Enough of such talk, my little daughter, my dear sister. You shouldn't talk that way to your father.

FABRIZIO: That's it - the madmen are joining ranks. Both of them seem to be suffering from the same delusion. *[Laughing]*

VIRGINIO: How can you still laugh?

VIRGINIO: Let's try to lure her into the house with kindness and then lock her up with your daughter in her room.

GHERARDO: All right, let's try.

VIRGINIO: *[Coming back with GHERARDO to speak with FABRIZIO]* Look here, my daughter, I don't want to stay angry with you. I'll forgive everything if you'll try to be good.

FABRIZIO: Thank you, sir.

GHERARDO: Now that's the way good daughters behave.

FABRIZIO: *[Aside]* Now the other one's cooked.

GHERARDO: Look here, it's not honorable to be seen talking out here dressed up like that. Come into the house. Pasquella, open the door!

VIRGINIO: Go in, my daughter.

FABRIZIO: I'm certainly not going to do that.

GHERARDO: Why not?

FABRIZIO: Because I don't like entering the houses of strangers.

GHERARDO: Her manners show through.

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: Reading the word from the original *abito* as "manners" makes this a positive comment, but reading it as "dress" has the opposite effect: Gherardo believes that Fabrizio is Lelia dressed as a man, and so her dress shows that she is bad (though perhaps sexually exciting in a man's clothing). [*sits.*]

VIRGINIO: [*To FABRIZIO*] I only want to have a word with you.

FABRIZIO: You can have it out here.

GHERARDO: No, out here is not the place! This house is yours because you're going to be my wife.

FABRIZIO: What wife? Why, you old bugg-- ... you humbugger!

GHERARDO: Your father has betrothed you to me.

FABRIZIO: What are you thinking? Do you think I'm one of those pansy boys that you can ... eh?

VIRGINIO: [*To GHERARDO*] Come on! Don't get her all upset. [*To FABRIZIO*] Listen, my child. I don't want to do anything that you don't want.

FABRIZIO: Look, old man, you're mistaken about me.

VIRGINIO: Just a few words inside.

FABRIZIO: [*Going in the house*] As many as you like. Do you think I'm afraid of you?

VIRGINIO: Gherardo, now that you have her inside let's have her locked up with your daughter in her room until we can send for her clothes.

GHERARDO: As you wish, Virginio. Pasquella, bring the key to Isabella's room and call Isabella. [*Exeunt all*]

Act IV

SCENE I

GHERARDO, VIRGINIO, and the PEDANT

GHERARDO: As far as the dowry is concerned, what we agreed to is agreed to. I'll give her the dowry you asked for, and you'll add a thousand florins if you don't find your son.

VIRGINIO: That's fine.

PEDANT: [*Aside as he approaches GHERARDO and VIRGINIO*] If I'm not mistaken, I've seen this gentleman before. But I don't remember where.

VIRGINIO: [*To the PEDANT*] What are you staring at, my good man?

GHERARDO: Let him stare at whatever he wishes. He seems to be a stranger here, and as you know, in other places they don't even think twice about staring at anyone they want to.

PEDANT: Tell me, do you know a Messer Virginio Bellenzini who lives in this city?

VIRGINIO: Yes, I know him. But what do you want with him?

PEDANT: You are clearly he. *Salvete, patronorum optime!*

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: Translation: "Greetings, O finest of masters!" [*sits*]

VIRGINIO: Could you possibly be Messer Pietro de'Pagliaricci, my son's tutor?

PEDANT: Yes, it is I.

VIRGINIO: [*Beginning to weep*] Oh, my son! Alas! What news do you have of him? Where did you leave him? Where did he die? Why did you wait so long to contact me? Did those traitors, those dogs kill him? My poor son! He was the only good I had in the world. O my dear Professor, tell me immediately, please!

PEDANT: Oh, don't cry, Master. Why are you crying?

VIRGINIO: Shouldn't I cry for such a sweet son? So wise, so learned, so well brought up! And those traitors, they've taken him away from me, killed him.

PEDANT: May God keep you both well, you and him. Your son is alive and well.

GHERARDO: [*Aside*] I'm the loser, if this is true. I'm out a thousand florins.

VIRGINIO: Alive and well? If that were true, he would be with you now.

GHERARDO: Virginio, do you know this fellow well? Could this be some kind of trick?

PEDANT: *Parcius ista viris, tamen obiicienda memento.*

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: Translation: "Go easy with the personal insults, remember that they will be repaid in time" (from Virgil's *Eclogues*, III, 7). [*sits*]

VIRGINIO: Explain, Professor.

PEDANT: Your son was taken prisoner by a certain Captain Orteca during the sack of Rome.

GHERARDO: [*Aside*] Oh boy, now the story begins.

PEDANT: And because the captain captured him along with two others, he decided to trick them by secretly sending your son and me to Siena.

GHERARDO: [*Aside to VIRGINIO*] You understand that this is the way he intends to get his hands on your money.

VIRGINIO: *[To the PEDANT]* Go on.

PEDANT: Then the Spaniard took us with him on campaign in Correggio, where he was killed. After that the court took control of his property, and we were freed.

VIRGINIO: Where is my son, then?

PEDANT: If you promise me some refreshment, *quia omnis labor optat praemium*.

SCHOLAR *[stands]*: Translation: "As every labor deserves its reward." *[sits]*

VIRGINIO: I'll promise you anything you want. Where is he?

PEDANT: At the inn of the Joker.

GHERARDO: *[Aside]* It's done: the thousand ducats are played and lost. But what does it matter to me? As long as I have Lelia, I'm fine. I'm rich enough as it is.

VIRGINIO: Let's go, Professor. I can't wait to see him and embrace him and kiss him and hold him in my arms!

PEDANT: Master, oh, *quanto mutatus ab illo!*

SCHOLAR *[stands]*: Translation: "How the times have changed him." *[sits]*

PEDANT: He's no longer a child to hold in your arms. You wouldn't recognize him. He's grown up, and I'm sure he won't recognize you either, what with how much you've changed. And Lelia, how is she?

VIRGINIO: Well. She's all grown up and rounded out.

SCHOLAR: *[stands]* The word from the original, *Crossa*, which, as Gherardo's reply indicates ...

GERHARDO: Which I haven't delivered yet!

SCHOLAR: ... sorry, sorry ... can mean "pregnant" as well as "filled out" or "large". *[sits]*

GHERARDO: *[DIRTY LOOK AT SCHOLAR]* Rounded out? You mean she's pregnant? *[Back in character]* If that's the case, you can keep her! I don't want her.

VIRGINIO: Oh no! Oh no! I mean she's become a grown, shapely woman. Oh, Tutor, I haven't embraced you yet. *[He takes the PEDANT in his arms and kisses him on both cheeks]*

PEDANT: Master, not that I want to brag, but the things I have done for your son – I could tell you! And in turn there was never a thing I asked of him that he didn't do immediately.

VIRGINIO: How did his studies go?

PEDANT: He didn't lose any time, *ut licuit per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum*. *[Annoyed, looks at scholar]* Here it comes ...

SCHOLAR *[stands]*: Translation: "Accomplishing everything he could, given the travails and dangers." *[sits]*

VIRGINIO: Call him out here, but don't tell him anything. I want to see if he recognizes me.

PEDANT: He left the inn a little while ago. Let's see if he has returned.

SCENE II

The PEDANT, STRAGUALCIA, VIRGINIO, and GHERARDO

PEDANT: Stragualcia! Oh, Stragualcia! Has Fabrizio returned?

STRAGUALCIA: Not yet.

PEDANT: Come here. Say something to my old master. This is Messer Virginio.

STRAGUALCIA: [*Giving VIRGINIO his hand*] O magnificent Master, you are just in time to pay the innkeeper. Welcome!

PEDANT: This man was a good servant to your son.

STRAGUALCIA: Are you suggesting that I won't be in the future?

PEDANT: No.

VIRGINIO: You are most welcome, my son! I think I ought to reward all those who have given my son such support.

STRAGUALCIA: Get me a job as a servant with this innkeeper, who's the greatest guy in the world and the best supplied and the wisest and the one who best understands a traveler's needs of any innkeeper I've ever met. As far as I'm concerned, this is paradise.

GHERARDO: He has an excellent reputation as a host.

VIRGINIO: Have you eaten?

STRAGUALCIA: A little.

VIRGINIO: What have you had?

STRAGUALCIA: A couple of partridges, six thrushes, a capon, a bit of veal, and only two tankards of wine.

VIRGINIO: Frulla, give him what he wants and leave the bill to me.

PEDANT: Now are you happy?

STRAGUALCIA: [*With a Spanish accent*] Let me kiss your hands. This is the way masters should be! Tutor, you're too cheap and want everything for yourself. How many people have told you that? Frulla, bring these gentlemen something to drink.

PEDANT: That's not necessary.

STRAGUALCIA: I know you'll drink. I'll pay. It's no big deal. Some sweet-breads, a slice of salami ... won't you have some? Tutor, come on, have something to drink.

PEDANT: All right, to make peace with you.

STRAGUALCIA: Oh, he's good, Master. You should love the Tutor, for he loves your son more than his own eyes.

VIRGINIO: May God reward him!

STRAGUALCIA: First it's your turn, then God's. *[To GHERARDO]* And you, sir, have some wine.

GHERARDO: I really shouldn't. *[Accepts a glass of wine and takes a sip]*

STRAGUALCIA: Please, come on in until Fabrizio returns, and then, since dinner is all ready, let's eat here this evening.

PEDANT: That's not a bad idea.

GHERARDO: I'll leave you, as I have a little matter to take care of at home.

VIRGINIO: Be careful that she doesn't get away.

GHERARDO: That's exactly why I'm going home.

VIRGINIO: She's all yours, now. Take care of things as you see fit. As far as I'm concerned, you can do as you please. *[He and the others go into the inn as GHERARDO heads towards his house]*

GHERARDO: *[Alone]* In the end one can't have everything. Patience! *[Looking offstage]* But if I'm seeing clearly, that's Lelia, who has somehow escaped! That silly servant girl has let her get away!

SCENE III

LELIA (dressed as a boy), CLEMENZIA, and GHERARDO

LELIA: *[As GHERARDO approaches, unseen]* Don't you think, Clemenzia, that Fortune enjoys toying with me?

CLEMENZIA: Relax and leave it to me. I'll find some way to make it all work out for you. But go and change those clothes before you're seen like that.

GHERARDO: *[Aside]* I want both to greet her and to find out how she escaped. *[To CLEMENZIA and LELIA]* May God make you happy, Clemenzia, and you too, Lelia, my sweet bride. Who let you out? The maid, was it? I'm glad you went to your *balia's* house, but to be seen in these clothes isn't very honorable for me or for you.

LELIA: *[To GHERARDO]* Who are you speaking to? What Lelia? I'm not Lelia.

GHERARDO: Oh! Didn't your father and I lock you up with my daughter Isabella a few minutes ago, and didn't you admit that you were Lelia? And do you think I wouldn't recognize my own wife? Go and change those clothes.

LELIA: *[As she enters CLEMENZIA'S house]* You're crazy if you think I'd want a husband!

CLEMENZIA: You go home too, my dear Gherardo. All women are a bit strange, some in one way, some in another.

GHERARDO: How did she get out of my house? I had locked her up with Isabella.

CLEMENZIA: You're deceiving yourself! She's been with me the whole day. And in a playful moment she decided to put on these clothes and asked me if they suited her, as young girls sometimes do.

GHERARDO: Are you trying to kid me? I'm telling you, we put her in my house with Isabella!

CLEMENZIA: Where are you coming from now, then?

GHERARDO: From the inn of the Joker, where I went with Virginio.

CLEMENZIA: Did you drink anything?

GHERARDO: Just a sip.

CLEMENZIA: Well, go and sleep it off. You clearly need to.

GHERARDO: Let me speak with Lelia a bit before I leave. I have some good news for her.

CLEMENZIA: What?

GHERARDO: Her brother has returned safe and sound, and her father is waiting for him at the inn.

CLEMENZIA: If it's true, I'll give you a kiss.

GHERARDO: How beautiful happiness is! But as far as the kiss is concerned, I would prefer to give it to Lelia.

CLEMENZIA: I'm going to run and tell her.

GHERARDO: And I'm going to give hell to that imbecile who let her escape! [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE IV

PASQUELLA, alone

PASQUELLA: Oh dear! I had such a scare that I've run out of the house. [*To the audience*] Ladies, you won't believe what's happened if I don't tell you. So I will tell you, but not those dirty-minded men, who would just laugh. Those two old muttonheaded dolts were absolutely convinced that that young man was a woman, and they locked him up with my mistress, Isabella, in her bedroom and gave me the key. After a while I decided to go in to see what was up, and I found them hugging and kissing! So I decided to find out whether it was a man or a woman. My mistress had the person down on the bed, and she called me to help her while she held his hands. And he was letting her win, so I opened the front of his clothes, and all of a sudden I felt something slap my hand, and I wasn't sure whether it was a large pestle or a big stick or that other thing. But whatever it was, it was in great shape. And when I saw how big it was, I took off, sisters, and locked the door behind me! And I can tell you that as far as I'm concerned, I have no intention of going back in there alone. And if one of you ladies doesn't believe me and wants to see for herself, I'll lend her the key.

SCENE V

GHERARDO and PASQUELLA

GHERARDO: Pasquella, why did you let Lelia escape? Didn't I tell you not to let her out?

PASQUELLA: What do you mean, escape? Isn't she in the room?

GHERARDO: God damn you!

PASQUELLA: I know she's there, I'm sure of it!

GHERARDO: And I know she isn't there, because I just left her in the house of her *balia*, Clemenzia.

PASQUELLA: Why, I just left her in the bedroom on her knees running through her Our Fathers with Isabella.

GHERARDO: Maybe she got back before me.

PASQUELLA: I tell you, she never left. The room has been locked the whole time.

GHERARDO: Where's the key?

PASQUELLA: Right here.

GHERARDO: Give it to me. And if she's not there, I'll break your neck!

PASQUELLA: And if she is there, will you give me a blouse?

GHERARDO: All right.

PASQUELLA: Let me open the door.

GHERARDO: *[Leaving with the key]* No, I want to open it myself. You'd find some excuse.

PASQUELLA: Oh my! I hope he doesn't find them still going at it. But it's been a while since I left them.

SCENE VI

FLAMMINIO, PASQUELLA, and GHERARDO

FLAMMINIO: *[Entering]* Pasquella, how long ago did my Fabio leave?

PASQUELLA: Why?

FLAMMINIO: Because he's a traitor, and I'm going to punish him. And because Isabella has left me for him, she'll get what she deserves, too. Oh, what a fine thing - for a noblewoman to fall in love with a mere serving boy!

PASQUELLA: Oh, don't get all worked up! The caresses she gave him, she gave as a sign of her love for you.

FLAMMINIO: You can tell her that one day she'll be sorry. And you can tell him that when I find him, I plan to cut off his lips and ears and cut out one of his eyes and give them all to her on a plate. That way she can kiss them as much as she likes! *[He leaves in a rage]*

GHERARDO: *[Entering in a rage]* Oh, my God! Is this what things have come to? This is it, then? I'm ruined! That traitor Virginio! That dirty traitor! He's made an ass of me. Oh, God! What can I do?

PASQUELLA: What's wrong, Master?

GHERARDO: What's wrong? Who is that man with my daughter?

PASQUELLA: Oh, don't you know? Isn't it Virginio's baby girl?

GHERARDO: Baby girl, eh? A baby girl that will make my daughter have babies of her own! Oh, how I'm suffering!

PASQUELLA: My, don't say such things! What's wrong? Isn't it Lelia?

GHERARDO: I'm telling you, that's a man in there.

PASQUELLA: What? That can't be true. You can't be right!

GHERARDO: I saw him with my own eyes.

PASQUELLA: How?

GHERARDO: On top of my daughter, alas!

PASQUELLA: Are you sure it was a man?

GHERARDO: Yes. I tell you, I opened the door suddenly and there he was with only his doublet on, and he didn't have time to cover himself.

PASQUELLA: You're sure you saw everything? Look, maybe it was a woman!

GHERARDO: I tell you, it was a man, and he was well enough endowed to make two men.

PASQUELLA: What did Isabella say?

GHERARDO: What do you think she said? That I should be ashamed, maybe?

PASQUELLA: Why don't you let that young man go? What do you want to do with him?

GHERARDO: What can I do? Haul him before the courts and have him punished.

PASQUELLA: But maybe he'll escape.

GHERARDO: Impossible. I locked him back in. But there's Virginio. Just the man I'm looking for. *[Exeunt.]*

SCENE VII

PEDANT, VIRGINIO, and GHERARDO

PEDANT: I'm really surprised that he still hasn't returned to the inn. I don't know what to say.

GHERARDO: *[Entering]* Good day to you, Virginio. Is this the way to treat a friend? Who did you think you were fooling with? Did you think I would accept this? I'd like to –

VIRGINIO: *[Interrupting]* Why are you upset with me, Gherardo? I wasn't the one who wanted to become your relative; you've been nagging me about this for a year.

GHERARDO: Why, you have some nerve acting as if I was the one in the wrong! Dirty traitor, fraud, crook, swindler! But the courts will learn everything.

VIRGINIO: Gherardo, such language is not fitting for one of your station and even less so to use with me.

GHERARDO: Thief!

VIRGINIO: Forger!

GHERARDO: You're lying. Just wait ...

VIRGINIO: I'm waiting.

PEDANT: *[Restraining GHERARDO, who approaches VIRGINIO threateningly]* Ah, my good man, why this madness?

GHERARDO: Let me go!

VIRGINIO: Who do you think you're dealing with? Give me back my daughter.

GHERARDO: I'll cut both your throats! *[He runs into his house]*

PEDANT: *[Seeing GHERARDO coming out of his house with a pike]* Ah, ah, good sir! Let's not get started with weapons! No weapons!

GHERARDO: Get out of my way!

PEDANT: What is the problem?

GHERARDO: This traitor has ruined me.

[VIRGINIO flees]

PEDANT: In God's name, please tell me what's wrong.

GHERARDO: Let's go into my house and I'll explain, since that traitor has fled. Aren't you his son's tutor? Weren't you at the inn with us?

PEDANT: Yes.

GHERARDO: Come in.

PEDANT: With faith in your word.

GHERARDO: Oh, you can count on that! *[Exeunt.]*

Act V

SCENE I

VIRGINIO (with a large shield and a mail shirt), STRAGUALCIA, SCATIZZA
(with a small round shield), several of VIRGINIO 's servants
(with various makeshift weapons), GHERARDO, the PEDANT, and FABRIZIO

VIRGINIO: All of you, come with me. Stragualcia, you too.

STRAGUALCIA: With weapons or without? I don't have any weapons.

VIRGINIO: Get some from the inn. [STRAGUALCIA *goes into the inn*]

SCATIZZA: You know, Master, with a large shield like that you should have a lance.

VIRGINIO: I don't need a lance. This is enough for me.

SCATIZZA: This small round shield would be more noble, since you're wearing a mail shirt.

VIRGINIO: No, this covers me better. Oh! This muttonhead seems to think he's caught me trying to swindle him somehow. And I'm afraid he may have killed my poor daughter.

STRAGUALCIA: [*Coming out of the inn with a roast on a spit and a bottle of wine*] This is a fine weapon, Master. I'm going to run this spit through him like a woodcock!

SCATIZZA: Oh! But what are you going to do with the roast?

STRAGUALCIA: I have military experience, and I know that the first thing you need to do is be sure you have field rations.

VIRGINIO: The door is open. They may have set some kind of ambush.

PEDANT: [*Coming out of the house and speaking to GHERARDO, who remains inside*] Leave this to me, and I'll make peace for you, Messer Gherardo.

STRAGUALCIA: Look at that, Master. It's the Tutor, and it seems that he has mutinied and gone over to the enemy. You can't count on his type to stay loyal! Do you want me to start with him, running him through so that I can say "one down"?

PEDANT: Messer Virginio, my master, why are you armed?

VIRGINIO: What has happened to my daughter? Hand her over. I want to take her home. And have you found Fabrizio?

PEDANT: He's here inside. And he has taken a very beautiful bride, with your permission.

VIRGINIO: A wife, eh? And who would that be?

STRAGUALCIA: [*Aside*] That was quick. This is rich, rich!

PEDANT: The beautiful and well-mannered daughter of Gherardo.

VIRGINIO: Oh! The same Gherardo who just now wanted to kill me?

PEDANT: *Rem omnem a principia audies.*

SCHOLAR [*stands*]: Translation: "You will hear the whole story from the beginning." [*sits*]

PEDANT: Come on into the house, and you'll hear the whole story. Come on out, Messer Gherardo.

GHERARDO: [*Coming out of the house*] Oh, Virginio, this is the strangest case ever! Come in.

STRAGUALCIA: [*Aside*] Should I run him through? But his meat is hardly worth roasting.

GHERARDO: Have your men put down their weapons. This is a matter for laughter.

VIRGINIO: Can I trust you?

PEDANT: Yes, certainly, on my word.

VIRGINIO: All right, go on home everyone! And put down your weapons.

PEDANT: Fabrizio, come out and meet your father. [*FABRIZIO comes out*]

FABRIZIO: O my father, I've searched so long for you!

VIRGINIO: O my dear son, I've cried so long for you!

GHERARDO: Come in, come in, and you'll hear the whole story.

SCENE II

CRIVELLO, FLAMMINIO, and CLEMENZIA

CRIVELLO: I saw him with these eyes and I heard him with these ears in the house of Clemenzia.

FLAMMINIO: Let's go. If I find him ...

CRIVELLO: You'll ruin everything. Be patient, and wait until he comes out.

FLAMMINIO: Not even God could give me enough patience. [*Knocks fiercely at the door*]

CLEMENZIA: Who's there?

FLAMMINIO: A friend of yours. Come down to the door.

CLEMENZIA: Oh! What do you want, Messer Flamminio?

FLAMMINIO: Open the door and I'll tell you.

FLAMMINIO: [*To CRIVELLO*] As soon as she opens the door, go in and see if he's there, then call me.

CRIVELLO: Leave it to me.

CLEMENZIA: [*Opening the door*] What do you want, Signor Flamminio?

FLAMMINIO: What's my boy doing in your house?

CLEMENZIA: What boy? [*Blocking CRIVELLO as he tries to push past her into the house*] And you, Crivello, where are you going, you rascal? Do you think you can enter my house by force?

FLAMMINIO: Clemenzia, by the holy, inviolate, sacred body, if you don't hand over that ...

CLEMENZIA: This must be some madness induced by love. Calm down, Flamminio, cool down a bit.

FLAMMINIO: Enough! Make him come down here *now*.

CLEMENZIA: Oh, calm down, for God's sake! You know, if I were young and you liked me, I wouldn't give you the time of day. By the way, how's Isabella?

FLAMMINIO: I wish she were cut into pieces!

CLEMENZIA: Really! Well, you young colts deserve every setback, because you are the most ungrateful people in the whole world.

FLAMMINIO: You can't say that about me. Every other accusation might fit, but to be called ungrateful, no. There's not a man alive who dislikes such behavior more.

CLEMENZIA: I'm not talking about you. But there was once here in this city a young girl who, realizing that she was admired by a knight – one of your peers here in Modena – fell so in love with him that she lost sight of everything else.

FLAMMINIO: Lucky man! Happy man! I certainly couldn't say as much for myself.

CLEMENZIA: It so happened that her father sent this poor girl, so in love, away from Modena. Fearing that her lover would forget her, she cried so much that it was a wonder to see. And in fact he immediately found another girl, as if she had never existed.

FLAMMINIO: I'd say that such a man should be called a traitor, not a knight.

CLEMENZIA: Listen, it gets worse. When the young girl returned after several months, she found that her lover loved another who didn't love him. Abandoning her house and her father and putting her honor at risk, she decided to serve him. So she dressed herself as a young manservant and took a job with her lover as his servant.

FLAMMINIO: I would rather be this lucky lover than the lord of Milan.

CLEMENZIA: Do you want to hear the rest? This lover of hers, not recognizing her, used her as his go-between with his new love. And to make him happy, this poor girl did everything he asked.

FLAMMINIO: Oh, what a virtuous woman! What constant love! This love could serve as a lesson for future centuries. Why can't I be so lucky?

CLEMENZIA: Well, you wouldn't give up Isabella for such a love anyway.

FLAMMINIO: Why, I'd almost be willing to say I'd give up Christ for someone like that. Please, Clemenzia, tell me who this woman is.

CLEMENZIA: I'd be glad to. But first I want you to tell me, on your oath as a gentleman, what you would do with such a poor girl if such a thing happened to you. Would you kick her out when you learned what she'd done? Would you kill her, or would you judge her worthy of some reward?

FLAMMINIO: I swear in the name of the power of the sun that you see in the sky, and with the proviso that I be banned forever from the company of my peers, gentlemen and knights, that I would take her as my wife – even if she were ugly; even if she were poor; even if she were of low birth; even over the daughter of the duke of Ferrara.

CLEMENZIA: That's a big oath. Are you ready to stand by it?

FLAMMINIO: Yes, I'm saying it, and yes, I would do it.

CLEMENZIA: [*Turning to CRIVELLO*] You're a witness.

CRIVELLO: I heard him, and I know he would do it.

CLEMENZIA: Now I want to introduce you to this woman and to this knight. Fabio, oh, Fabio! Come down here. Your master is looking for you.

SCENE III

PASQUELLA, CLEMENZIA, FLAMMINIO,
LELIA (dressed as a woman), and CRIVELLO

CLEMENZIA: This, Messer Flamminio, is your Fabio. Take a good look. This same girl is that young woman I told you about, so loyal and so true to her love. And you, you are that young man who thought so little of the love of his mistress. Now keep your word, or I'll take you before the courts as someone who has broken his pledge.

FLAMMINIO: I don't believe there's ever been a more perfect deception than this one. How could I have been so blind that I never recognized her?

CRIVELLO: I was more blind than anyone. I looked at her closely a thousand times and never realized. I'll be damned!

PASQUELLA: [*Interrupting*] Clemenzia, Virginio told me to tell you to come to our house right now because he has married off Fabrizio, his son who returned today. And he needs you to put the house in order, because, as you know, he has no other woman.

CLEMENZIA: What wife? Whom did he marry him to?

PASQUELLA: Isabella.

FLAMMINIO: Who? Isabella, the daughter of Gherardo Foiani, your master, or another Isabella?

PASQUELLA: Another? No, it's her. Flamminio, it's like they say: "Some people have all the luck."

FLAMMINIO: You're sure it's true?

PASQUELLA: Absolutely. I was there for the whole thing. I saw him give her the ring, and then they embraced, they kissed, and they rejoiced. And even before he gave her the ring she gave him ... well, let's just say, I'm sure.

FLAMMINIO: How long ago did this happen?

PASQUELLA: Now, just now. Then they sent me running here to tell Clemenzia and to bring her back.

CLEMENZIA: Tell them I'll be there shortly. Go on, now.

LELIA: *[Aside]* O God, You've made things come together so well! I'm dying of happiness.

PASQUELLA: Don't take too long, I've so much to do that I'm all in a dither! I need to go now to buy some makeup. Oh! I forgot to ask if Lelia's here, because Gherardo has agreed to marry her.

CLEMENZIA: You know very well that she's here. Do you really want to see her married to that poor old excuse for a man, your master? He ought to be ashamed of himself!

PASQUELLA: You don't really know my master. Why, if you knew how manly he can be, you wouldn't talk about him like that.

CLEMENZIA: Sure, sure, I believe you. I bet you've tested his manliness.

PASQUELLA: Just like you with your master. Anyway, I'm off.

FLAMMINIO: She's to be married to Gherardo?

CLEMENZIA: Yes, woe is me! Isn't this poor girl unlucky?

FLAMMINIO: But he has already lived his life.

SCHOLAR *[stands]*: A succinct statement of the generational conflict that runs through this and many other Renaissance comedies. Old men have wealth and power, and young men are waiting to take their places as husbands, lovers, and heads of households. With upper-class males being labeled youths until they married and nor marrying until their late twenties or early thirties, and then having to compete with older, richer men, such conflict was ubiquitous in life and literature. *[sits]*

FLAMMINIO: Look, Clemenzia, I believe that it's clearly the will of God that she not be wasted like this, for He has taken pity on her virtue and on my poor soul And so, lady Lelia, if you're willing, I don't want any other wife but you, and I swear to you as a knight that if you won't marry me, I'll never marry another.

LELIA: Flamminio, you are my lord. You know exactly what I did and why, and so you know that I've never had any other desire but this.

FLAMMINIO: Clemenzia, I don't want to wait any longer and take the chance that something unforeseen might ruin this good fortune. I want to marry her now if she's willing.

LELIA: I'm most willing.

CRIVELLO: Oh, thank God! And you, my master, Lord Flamminio, are you willing? By the way, you should know that I'm a notary. And if you don't believe me, here's my diploma. *[Actors are getting ready to kill the scholar at this point ...]*

SCHOLAR: [*stands*] It is unlikely that a servant would be a notary (a quite lucrative and prestigious profession), and equally unlikely that he would be carrying his diploma with him. But before the Council of Trent defined more tightly the legal requirements for a marriage, all that was required to form a legally binding marriage was an exchange of consent. Thus, even if Crivello wasn't a notary, by formerly securing the consent of both Flamminio and Lelia he was in fact marrying them. Crivello's timely claim may also be a sendup of the unlikely coincidences that tie up the loose ends in most Renaissance comedies. [*sits*]

FLAMMINIO: I'm very willing and as happy as I've ever been in my life.

CRIVELLO: Give each other your hands in marriage, and then you can go to bed. Oh! But I forgot to tell you that you should kiss her! [*They kiss*]

CLEMENZIA: Here's what I think we should do now. You two stay here in my house while I go tell Virginio everything and break the bad news to Gherardo. [*Exeunt.*]

SCENE V

VIRGINIO, CLEMEZIA, and STRAGUALCIA

VIRGINIO: I'm so happy to have found my son that I'm satisfied with everything.

CLEMENZIA: It was all the will of God. It certainly has turned out better than if you had married your daughter off to that broken-down Gherardo. But let me go into the house to see how things are going. I left the newlyweds all alone and very, very close. [*She goes in and after a moment calls*] Come in, come in. Everything's fine. [*VIRGINIO follows her; STRAGUALCIA stops in the doorway*]

[*Enter the Arts Minister, from the audience (center), walks up to the stage ...*]

ARTS MINISTER: Um, guys? Wait, um ... folks? [*Stops stage center*]

[*The whole TROUPE comes on stage ... SCHOLAR stands and comes to the AM*]

ARTS MINISTER [*to the SCHOLAR*]: I am so sorry that I didn't get to you sooner, but Their Majesties decided to call for peerage meetings, and we had to cancel the competition.

ACTORS [*all look to SCHOLAR, pointing, making gestures, coming toward him ...*]: YOU!

ONE ACTOR: You deceived us, you jerk!

SCHOLAR: Wait! Woah! WAIT!

[*ACTORS drag him off stage center (backward through door ...), ARTS MINISTER slips off-stage and watches, ...exit all but STRAGUALCIA.*]

STRAGUALCIA: Um, okay [*looks backstage, back to audience, comes downstage and talks directly to them – during this speech, from backstage, we hear sounds of “ow!” “whack” “OW!”, etc. – the troupe is obviously beating up the SCHOLAR*]... Spectators, don't wait for them to come back out of the house, because that will make a long story even longer. If you want to come to dinner with us, I'll be waiting for you at the Joker. And bring along some money, because no one's treating. But if you don't want to come – and it looks to me like that's the case - be happy and enjoy yourselves. And how about some applause? [*He enters the JOKER*]

Pronunciation Guide

By Ariane Helou (SCA: Vittoria Aureli)

General Note: all "r"s are flipped and trilled, as in Spanish. (*This goes for both Italian and Latin.*)

Character and other NAMES:

GHERARDO : Geh-RAHR-doh (hard "g")

SPELA: SPEH-lah

SCATIZZA: skah-TEE-tzah

STAGUALCIA: strah-GWAHL-chah ("ch" as in "chalk")

AGIATO: ah-JAH-toh ("j" as in "judge")

Messer Buonaparte Ghisilieri: meh-SER bwoh-nah-PAR-teh gee-zee-LYEH-ree (hard "g," "ly" as in the middle of "failure")

Foiani: foh-YAH-nee

Marchesana: mar-keh-SAH-nah

Amabile de'Cortesi: ah-MAH-bee-leh deh-kor-TEH-zee

Guicciardino: gwee-char-DEE-noh

Modena: MOH-deh-nah

de'Pagliaricci: deh-pah-lyah-REE-chee

Latin

(the following is Renaissance Italian, not classical, pronunciation)

Omnia vincit amor: OM-nee-ah VEEN-cheet AH-mor

Facetis manum: fah-CHEH-tees MAH-noom

Pugna pro patria: POO-nyah proh PAH-tree-ah

Hoc, in summa: Hok een SOO-mah

Landundum animus est in patinis: lahn-DOON-doom AH-nee-moos est een PAH-tee-nees

Omnis repletio mala, panis autem pessima: OM-nees reh-PLUH-tzee-oh PAH-nees OW-tem PES-see-mah

Variorum ciborum commistio pessima generat digestionem: VAH-ree-oh-room chee-boh-room koh-MEE-stee-oh PES-see-mah GEH-neh-raht dee-ges-tee-OH-nem

Bus asinorum, buorum castronorum, tatte, battate, pecoronibus: boos ah-see-NOH-room boo-OH-room kahs-stroh-NOH-room TAH-the bah-TAH-teh peh-koh-ROH-nee-boos

Etiam atque etiam cogitandum: EH-tee-am AHT-kweh EH-tee-am KOH-gee-tahn-doom

sine causa: SEE-neh KOW-sah

Salvete, patronorum optime: SAHL-veh-teh pah-troh-NOH-room OP-tee-meh

Parcius ista viris, tamen obiicienda memento: PAR-chee-oos EES-tah VEE-rees TAH-men ob-ee-chee-EHN-dah meh-MEN-toh

per usque millies: per OOS-kweh MEE-lee-ehs

quia omnis labor optat praemium: KWEE-ah OM-nees LAH-bor OP-taht PREH-mee-oom

Absit: AB-seet

quanto mutatus ab illo: KWAHN-toh MOO-tah-toos ab EEL-oh

ut licuit per varios casus, per tot discrimina rerum: oot LEE-koo-eet per VAH-ree-ohs KAH-soos per toht dees-KREE-mee-nah REH-room

Rem omnem a principia audies: rem OM-nem ah preen-CHEE-pee-ah OW-dehs