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A Fine Fiasco

A Short Comedy Adapted for the Stage and Based on the Story “Blue Beard” by Charles Perrault

Part of the Series: *Commedia dell’Arte Plays for the Modern Stage*

by

Gwen Adams

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A Commedia dell'Arte Play for the Modern Stage

Based on the story "Blue Beard" by Charles Perrault

by

Gwen Adams

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First Bardstreet Edition, June 24, 2023

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A Fine Fiasco: A Short Comedy Adapted for the Stage and Based on the Story “Blue Beard” by Charles Perrault

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BACKGROUND

I believe my friends Ben and Anna Hatke introduced me to Commedia dell'Arte shortly after college. What a form of theater! What variety of spectacle! Commedia dell'Arte combines dancing, acrobatics, stock speeches and recitation, gags, improvisation, slapstick, and music to enliven the show. In his classic text *The Empty Space: A Book about the Theatre: Deadly, Holy, Rough, Immediate*, Peter Brook defines Rough Theater as “close to the people.”¹ Is there any form of theater closer to the people than Commedia dell'Arte? Rough Theater capitalizes on every gag, mistake, and chance occurrence.² As Brook writes, Rough Theater exists “unashamedly to make joy and laughter, what Tyrone Guthrie calls ‘theater of delight’ and any theatre that can truly give delight has earned its place.”³ For all its earthiness, Rough Theater pairs happily with what Brook calls Holy Theater, for example, in plays like *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, with its blend of comic situation, buffoonery, mystery, and innocence. I aimed for that same blend in *Two Commedia dell'Arte Plays for the Modern Stage*.

Commedia dell'Arte plots are simple and characters archetypal, characteristics they share with fairy-tales. One characteristic they don't always share with fairy-tales is the “happy ending” as defined by J. R. R. Tolkien. Tolkien believed an essential element of “all complete fairy-stories” was a happy ending, a moment of “sudden and miraculous grace . . . giving a fleeting glimpse of Joy, Joy beyond the walls of the world, poignant as grief.”⁴ The unexpected happy ending marks Elsie Spicer Eells' version of “The Flower of Beauty” as well as Charles Perrault's version of “Bluebeard,” which forms the basis for *A Fine Fiasco* (originally titled *The Secret Room*). By retelling these fairy-tales within the merry world of Commedia dell'Arte, I hoped to combine Rough and Holy Theater, to offer both delight and consolation in *Two Commedia dell'Arte Plays for the Modern Stage*.

I am grateful to West Lafayette and the Tippecanoe Arts Federation for an Arts Grant which enabled me to write and produce parts of *Two Commedia dell'Arte Plays for the Modern Stage* during a 2005 Summer Street Theater Festival. I am also grateful to Rev. Timothy Alkire who was pastor of St. Boniface Roman Catholic Church when I first began developing these plays with our parish young Catholic Actors Guild.

This play employs a scene division inspired by French scenes, i.e., scenes divisions are marked by character entrances (but not their exits). If this division is not helpful, the director or production can use the alternate division of “Parts” which correspond to the longer scene lengths in regular plays.

No lighting changes are necessary. The plays require minimal props and sets and lend themselves easily to street theater. Properties, stage furniture/equipment, and sets can be used or entirely pantomimed. The script gives directions for using real properties and a few pieces of stage furniture

¹ Peter Brook, *The Empty Space: A Book about the Theatre: Deadly, Holy, Rough, Immediate* (New York: Touchstone, 1996), 79.

² Brook, 80.

³ Brook, 84.

⁴ J. R. R. Tolkien, “On Fairy-Stories” in *The Tolkien Reader*, with an introduction by Peter S. Beagle (New York: Ballantine Books, 1966), 85–86.

while pantomiming other aspects of the set. Typical Commedia plays had fewer, sometimes no lines. I have tried to preserve this effect by giving ample opportunities for “business” or improvisation and lazzi (stock business which can be inserted as needed). In place of “stock speeches” I have suggested some public domain poems which could be inserted. Note: neither I, the author, nor Bardstreet, LLC can advise as to whether these poems are definitely in the public domain (see the Caution which precedes the Play.) Stage directions suggest how to incorporate these poems within the wider story. There is also ample room (indicated in the stage directions) for other elements of Commedia dell’Arte: dancing, acrobatics, gags, slapstick, and music. Commedia dell’Arte characters took various roles depending on the story in which they appeared. For example, Isabella was always a princess, damsel in distress, or main love interest. Columbina was always a clever servant. I have tried to fit the Commedia characters to the characters of the fairy-tales as traditionally as possible. As the plays developed, my Scaramuccia also developed and no longer resembles the original character. Instead, he is an older version of the sympathetic Pedrolino character, but with more social status and authority. Katarina and Perpetua are my own creation.

The Flower of Beauty is technically a one-act play with a running time of 55–65 minutes. *A Fine Fiasco* is technically a two-act full-length play with a running time of 75–85 minutes. The running time for both plays can be reduced or lengthened depending on the time given to pantomime, executing business, and incorporating music, dance, tumbling, and juggling at the suggested times or as needed. When I first directed the plays, I presented them together with an intermission between the two.

Both plays can be performed with or without intermission. Whether writing a full-length multiple-act play or a shorter “one-act” play, I always provide for an optional intermission, dividing all plays, even “one-act” plays, into two rough halves. As a director, I find the intermission indispensable. As the period where a theater group can most hope to sell refreshments or swag, intermissions can be key for recouping production expenses. Intermissions also accommodate the need for a quick break, especially with youth or family audiences. And personally, I always want an intermission so I can check in with and encourage the cast and crew before going on to the second part of the play and the big finale.

Two Commedia dell’Arte Plays for the Modern Stage are faithful to the old Commedia dell’Arte tradition while at the same time entertaining and accessible to contemporary audiences. These plays are suitable for small professional/community theater groups, touring groups, and college/university, high-school, and middle-school drama groups, to be played before youth, middle-school, high-school, college/university, family, and/or general audiences.

SYNOPSIS

Perpetua keeps nagging her daughter Isabella to marry Pantalone: he's a gold-digger with seven previous wives who died in mysterious circumstances. When Scaramuccia warns his sister against the marriage, Isabella loses her temper, and accepts Pantalone's proposal. Things seem to go well at first, but Isabella's maid Columbina grows suspicious. When Isabella discovers Pantalone's secret, he determines to destroy her. It will take guts and some clever thinking to resolve this dark comedy.

CHARACTERS, TIME, PLACE, RUNNING TIME

Characters: (6 m; 4 w; 1 m/w). With doubling/tripling: (7 overall: 4 m; 3 w). See the *Stage Guide*, Section 1 for doubling/tripling (available from Bardstreet.com).

In Order of Appearance:

ISABELLA (w): 18 years, beautiful, quick-tempered, and a daughter of PERPETUA.

PERPETUA (w): 45–60 years, ISABELLA’s nagging mother, much interested in making a lucrative marriage for her daughter.

ZANNI (m): 45–60 years, ISABELLA’s father, a lazy, indifferent, selfish character.

COLUMBINA (w): 18–30 years, ISABELLA’s clever maid, resourceful, loyal, occasionally outspoken, and strongly attracted to ARLECCHINO.

SCARAMUCCIA (m): 25–30 years, ISABELLA’s wise older brother. He is a bit melancholy.

PEDROLINO (m): 12 years, SCARAMUCCIA’s servant, in love with COLUMBINA. He is a sensitive, downtrodden, unappreciated character. He is a hero, even though he is only twelve.

ARLECCHINO (m): 18–30 years, PANTALONE’s servant. Athletic and comic, he loves to entertain and to win the admiration of a crowd, especially the ladies. He is not very thoughtful or brave. But he has a good heart and will do the right thing if push comes to shove.

KATARINA (w): 25–30 years, PANTALONE’s younger sister, someone who likes to avoid trouble, although deep down, she still has a heart, hopes, and dreams.

IL CAPITANO (m): 45–50 years, Captain of the Guard and a friend of PANTALONE’s. He is a pompous, boastful character.

IL DOTTORE (m/w): 45–50 years, a pedantic, long-winded scholar, and a friend of PANTALONE’s. Once casting is determined, the appropriate pronouns and references can be selected from available choices, he/his/him/etc., or she/her/her/etc.

PANTALONE (m): 45–50 years, a wicked wealthy gentleman, incredibly strong and overpowering in this play. He has a rakish, hateful nature. He is a rogue and a lady-killer, literally.

Time: A short time or a long time ago.

Place: Far away, in a place a little like Italy.

Act I.1–3 At the home of PERPETUA and ZANNI.

Act I.4–Act II.20 At the home of PANTALONE.

Act II.21 At the home of PERPETUA and ZANNI.

Running Time: 75–85 minutes. An intermission can be held between Act I and II.

THE PLAY

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ACT I

Part 1: At the Home of PERPETUA and ZANNI

Scene 1

(From offstage comes the noise of a terrible argument: shouting, slamming doors, and stomping feet.)

ISABELLA
(offstage)

No!

PERPETUA
(offstage)

Miserable girl!

(ISABELLA rushes in SL, followed by PERPETUA dragging ZANNI with her. COLUMBINA follows. During the following dialogue, ZANNI continually attempts to disengage himself from PERPETUA and go to sleep on the nearest surface which will hold him up.)

PERPETUA
(to the audience)

You'll back me up, won't you? Here she is: my rebellious daughter Isabella! She refuses to marry Pantalone, that eligible and handsome young bachelor.

ISABELLA

He's not handsome!

PERPETUA

Okay, okay, he's not handsome. But he's young!
(poking ZANNI)

Zanni, isn't he young?

(ZANNI gives a snore and a snort.)

PERPETUA

You heard your father!

ISABELLA

Daddy's not even awake!

PERPETUA

Don't be disrespectful! At least Pantalone is young!

ISABELLA

He's not young!

PERPETUA

Okay, okay, Pantalone's not young. But he's eligible! Zanni, isn't he eligible?

(ZANNI makes a sleepy lip-smacking noise.)

PERPETUA (cont.)

(poking ZANNI)

Tell your daughter!

ZANNI

(startled)

What? Do what your mother says.

ISABELLA

Pantalone is not eligible! He's had seven wives!

PERPETUA

Those wives are all dead.

ISABELLA

Yes, and I hear they left their money to Pantalone. How suspicious is that?

PERPETUA

So, he's seven times richer! All the better for us—

(hastily correcting herself)

I mean for you!

ISABELLA

Why do we need Pantalone's stupid old money? I thought we were rich.

PERPETUA

Not as rich as Pantalone!

ISABELLA

I don't want to disappear like the rest of his wives. He might be a murderer!

PERPETUA

That's very unlikely!

ISABELLA

But what if it's true?

PERPETUA

So, he's a murderer! We all have our faults!

ISABELLA

I'm not comfortable with marrying a man who kills his wives. I don't know: I have a thing about that.

PERPETUA

Picky! Picky! There's nothing to fear! Just make sure you don't leave any money to Pantalone.

ISABELLA

I won't!

PERPETUA

Good girl! You leave your money to us.

ISABELLA

You don't need more money! You and Daddy are rich.

PERPETUA

Let's say we're comfortable. Your father is the one who comes from wealth. We've always shared . . . but it's not my money.

(working up crocodile tears)

And I don't know if your father will see fit to take care of me . . . after he's gone.

ISABELLA

(dismissively)

Daddy will do whatever you tell him! Besides, I thought you had a legacy of your own.

PERPETUA

Just a little property, nothing to speak of. A little help from a loving daughter would be much appreciated. You don't need to leave *all* your money to us.

ISABELLA

If there's money to leave, it goes to my children!

PERPETUA

You can still leave something to your old mother, even if you have a dozen children with Pantalone!

ISABELLA

(gagging)

There won't be any children, because I am not marrying that nasty old man, no matter what you say!

PERPETUA

(to the audience)

Look at this girl! She won't listen to the dying wish of her poor old mother!

ISABELLA

You're not dying!

(PERPETUA begins to cough dramatically, attempting to collapse into the arms of ZANNI who has tiptoed to another part of the stage to try to take a nap. PERPETUA falls onto the ground. Business/lazzo. When PERPETUA realizes ZANNI has moved away, she runs after him to try to rouse him so she can collapse in his arms. She has a lot of difficulty rousing him. COLUMBINA and ISABELLA can be enlisted to help.)

PERPETUA

(speaking in bursts while trying to rouse ZANNI)

Zanni! Tell your daughter that Pantalone owns mansions! . . . Gold! . . . Jewels! . . . Money!

ISABELLA

He'll never wake up!

PERPETUA

(to ZANNI)

If Isabella doesn't marry Pantalone, she'll never have another chance!

ISABELLA

(walking away from her parents with exasperation)

This is ridiculous. I'm only eighteen!

(ZANNI appears to be sound asleep. PERPETUA despairs.)

PERPETUA

You lazy lout! You difficult daughter! Now you've made me ill. I must go lie down.

(to the audience)

Maybe you can knock some sense into my daughter's head. Tell her to do what's best for me—

(hastily correcting herself)

Her! I mean her! Do what's best for her!

(PERPETUA exits SR in a huff. Once the coast is clear, ZANNI can rise and recite William Wordsworth's "To Sleep" or a similar poem compatible with his character and the situation of the scene. Then ZANNI tiptoes out, exiting SL.)

ISABELLA

I wish people would stop telling me what to do! I can make up my own mind!

COLUMBINA

That's right, mistress! . . . If you don't mind me asking—

ISABELLA

Go ahead, Columbina.

COLUMBINA

Besides the fact that Master Pantalone is oily and ugly, a gold-digger whose wives died in mysterious circumstances, why won't you marry him?

ISABELLA

(sarcastically)

Besides that, I can't think of a thing. I guess I should marry him.

(earnestly)

Truly, Columbina, I am afraid of Pantalone. What happened to all his wives? I don't think it was a good idea for mother to advertise the huge dowry they settled on me.

COLUMBINA

It *has* attracted the interest of some very strange men.

ISABELLA

And Pantalone is the worst of all!

COLUMBINA

It's almost time to leave for Master Pantalone's house party and he's sure to propose again this week.

ISABELLA

I need to decide.

COLUMBINA

You can make a good decision, mistress.

ISABELLA

I don't know. Maybe my brother Scaramuccia will have some good advice.

Scene 2

(*SCARAMUCCIA enters SR.*)

ISABELLA

Scaramuccia—

SCARAMUCCIA

I thought I heard mother and father in here with you. Where are they? Are you ready to go?

ISABELLA

(gesturing in the affirmative)

Daddy's taking a nap somewhere and mother went to lie down.

SCARAMUCCIA

I thought they wanted to get there early! Pantalone's house is in the middle of nowhere. We need to leave now if we want to get there before dark. *Now* what's wrong with mother?

ISABELLA

We were arguing about Pantalone.

(SCARAMUCCIA raises his hands and eyes to heaven and tries to change the subject.)

SCARAMUCCIA

I need to find—

ISABELLA

I want to ask you something.

SCARAMUCCIA

Can it wait? I'm looking for Pedrolino.

ISABELLA

Again? You need a new servant. He's probably doing something for Columbina. I wish someone was that devoted to me!

COLUMBINA

Pedrolino means well . . . He's only twelve.

ISABELLA

Twelve is better than twelve hundred. That's about how old Pantalone is. About Pantalone—

SCARAMUCCIA

If you're packed, I'll send a servant to bring your bags down.

(gesturing to COLUMBINA)

Are you bringing Columbina?

ISABELLA

(putting her arm through COLUMBINA's)

I can't do without my maid!

(COLUMBINA smiles, making a self-deprecating nod or curtsy.)

ISABELLA (cont.)

There are going to be banquets and dances all week. Besides, Columbina's rescued me from a sticky mess more than once. I'll need her help if mother keeps nagging me to marry Pantalone.

SCARAMUCCIA

We don't have to go. A whole week at Pantalone's house? I'm not looking forward to it.

ISABELLA

It's mother's idea. I wish you would speak to her.

SCARAMUCCIA

Mother never listens to me. Please tell me there will be people besides Pantalone?

ISABELLA

Pantalone's younger sister, Katarina, of course—she lives there. She's pretty. And she's your age! Mother would love it if you—

SCARAMUCCIA

(gesturing "Stop!" with hands)

I'll find my own bride, thank you. Anyone else?

ISABELLA

He's invited all his friends. Il Capitano—I think you know him, he's the Captain of the Guard, and Il Dottore, professor at—

SCARAMUCCIA

Not those two! Have you ever tried talking to either of them? You *don't* talk. You listen; they filibuster. They don't care about anything except professional advancement—

ISABELLA

That's not true—

SCARAMUCCIA

You're right. Il Capitano thinks he's already achieved every success. He just wants to tell you how it all went. Il Dottore? Yes, professional advancement.

ISABELLA

Il Dottore also enjoys talking about his/her health. He/she's the one with the weak—

SCARAMUCCIA

Wonderful, we can spend the whole day hearing about his/her bowel movements. I'm wasting time, I need to go find Pedrolino.

ISABELLA
(whining)

But brother, I don't know what to do!

Scene 3

(PEDROLINO enters SL.)

PEDROLINO
(slightly out of breathe)

Sorry, master, were you looking for me?

(in a devout aside to COLUMBINA)

I carried your bags down.

ISABELLA
(pushing PEDROLINO SL)

Leave us, Pedrolino. I need to talk to your master.

SCARAMUCCIA
(pulling PEDROLINO back)

Stay right here. I need your help.

ISABELLA
(pulling PEDROLINO SL)

Go away! We are having a private conversation.

PEDROLINO
(caught between SCARAMUCCIA and ISABELLA
who push and pull him)

Mistress, I have an idea which will solve your problems.

(over his shoulder)

Columbina, you will love it!

ISABELLA

Sorry, we don't have time.

(to SCARAMMUCIA)

Just tell him what to do. Then we can finish our conversation.

SCARAMUCCIA

I want Pedrolino to get out the carriage. But I need to stand over him to make sure he does it right.

PEDROLINO

I know how to do it. I can do it myself!

SCARAMUCCIA

You're only twelve. Go get started. I'll be down in a minute.

(SCARAMUCCIA and ISABELLA drop PEDROLINO's arms. Deflated, PEDROLINO casts a glance of adoration at COLUMBINA as he exits SR.)

ISABELLA

I need your help more than Pedrolino does!

SCARAMUCCIA

(spreading his hands)

Here I am.

ISABELLA

Advise me! Should I marry Pantalone or not?

SCARAMUCCIA

You may be my baby sister, but you're not a baby anymore. Don't lay your decisions at *my* door!

ISABELLA

Come on! Help me think it through!

SCARAMUCCIA

I thought you didn't want people to nag you!

ISABELLA

I don't want mother to nag me! I want to make my own decisions!

SCARAMUCCIA

Then why are you asking me?

ISABELLA

I want to make the *right* decisions! I want to make my own decisions without anyone getting disappointed or upset and without any negative consequences. . . . What's so hard about that?

SCARAMUCCIA

(laughing and shaking his head)

I need to go help Pedrolino. If we're going, we need to go.

(SCARAMUCCIA exits SR.)

ISABELLA

Scaramuccia, wait!

(to COLUMBINA)

Rrrrrgh. I have no idea what to do.

COLUMBINA

Don't worry, mistress, there's still time . . . I wonder what Pedrolino's idea was.

ISABELLA

Who cares about stupid old Pedrolino! If he hadn't come barging in, maybe Scaramuccia would have told me what to do! What's the point of having an older brother if he refuses to give you advice?

(sighing)

Don't blame me if I'm engaged by the end of the week. Just don't blame me!

(COLUMBINA and ISABELLA exit SL. Tumbling, music, and/or juggling would be appropriate at this break to indicate the passage of time.)

Part 2: At the Home of PANTALONE, a Week Later

Scene 4

(To transition into the house of PANTALONE, the following action takes place. The director may choose to include PANTALONE or not. There is a greater buildup of tension if PANTALONE is not introduced until Scene 10. However, a director may also choose to include PANTALONE here, to highlight his personality and because it makes sense that he would be engaged with the crowd at his own house party.)

The ensemble enters the stage from various entrances. Music plays and characters enact the behaviors of a cocktail party. ARLECCHINO, COLUMBINA, and PEDROLINO walk about with appetizer trays and trays of drinks and hurry about doing party-related things. COLUMBINA keeps looking over at ARLECCHINO. PEDROLINO attempts to help COLUMBINA but keeps getting new orders from ARLECCHINO. PEDROLINO appears heartily sick of ARLECCHINO. KATARINA occasionally approaches one of the servants, checking with them or giving some order. At KATARINA's waist hangs a set of keys on a ring with a large dark key.

The other characters have some of the following interactions or similar ones. IL DOTTORE boasts to PERPETUA and ZANNI. IL CAPITANO pantomimes with his sword and appears to be recounting some of his amazing exploits to ISABELLA. ISABELLA escapes IL CAPITANO only to be cornered by IL DOTTORE who proceeds to lecture on recent health ailments, pointing out various body parts, including the elbow, tonsils, and the area of the sciatic nerve. SCARAMUCCIA and KATARINA have a brief but pleasant conversation which is interrupted by the arrival of IL CAPITANO. PERPETUA and ZANNI move toward SCARAMUCCIA. PERPETUA appears to complain. ZANNI looks about for food. ZANNI alternately dozes on the nearest shoulder of any actor and stuffs himself from the appetizer trays being passed around.

ISABELLA escapes IL DOTTORE only to be cornered by her mother PERPETUA who appears to begin nagging her. IL CAPITANO and IL DOTTORE move on to other guests, alternately boring SCARAMUCCIA, KATARINA, and ZANNI. PERPETUA occasionally attempts to draw ZANNI into her conversation with ISABELLA, but as soon as her attention is diverted, ZANNI wanders off after another appetizer tray. If PANTALONE is included, he schmoozes all the guests, particularly ISABELLA. With KATARINA, however, PANTALONE is irritable and appears to be bossing her around. KATARINA's manner around PANTALONE is frustrated and angry.

Many other interactions can be improvised between the different characters. Near the end of this transition, all characters begin to act as if it is time for some new event. PANTALONE has planned a picnic. They hurriedly take appetizers or drinks and exit in twos and threes.

ARLECCHINO, COLUMBINA, and PEDROLINO begin to tidy up. ARLECCHINO exits SL. If there are real properties to clear, COLUMBINA and PEDROLINO continue to exit and reenter SL. When the stage is fairly clear, COLUMBINA and PEDROLINO enter SL. They look around to ascertain whether there is anything left to clean and do some last tidying.)

COLUMBINA

Master Pantalone is sure trying to make a good impression. Dances, dinners, there isn't a moment to think! Pedrolino, it's wearing on me.

PEDROLINO

Poor Columbina. They keep me busy, too. If there's any way I can help—even if I have to give up eating and sleeping—

COLUMBINA

Eating and sleeping—if only I *could* eat and sleep! Pedrolino, I trust you more than anyone. You're the only one I can tell!

PEDROLINO

If you trust me, I'm the luckiest man alive.

COLUMBINA

(looking around)

Pedrolino, I am in love! Can you guess his name?

(PEDROLINO shakes his head and closes his eyes.)

COLUMBINA (cont.)

He is a servant—quiet, modest, unassuming, loyal. He would do anything for me. When I think of his gentle nature, I just want to give him a big kiss.

(PEDROLINO does not move a muscle.)

COLUMBINA (cont.)

You know who it is, don't you? . . . Pedrolino . . . my dear? . . . Why, here he comes now! It's Pantalone's servant, Arlecchino!

(PEDROLINO's eyes fly open.)

Scene 5

(ARLECCHINO enters SL.)

COLUMBINA

Hi, Arlecchino!

ARLECCHINO

Hello, beautiful! Hey Columbina, watch this!

(ARLECCHINO performs tumbling tricks or shadowboxing, anything to get COLUMBINA's attention. ARLECCHINO calls out things in between tricks, such as "I bet you've never seen anything like THIS!" or "Hey, I'm really good at THIS!" PEDROLINO wilts and fades to the side SL. Delighted, COLUMBINA claps and cheers.)

COLUMBINA

(adoring)

Oh, Arlecchino!

ARLECCHINO

I guess everything around here looks under control. Much as I'd like to see more of your pretty face, I've got some really important stuff to do for Master Pantalone. What would he do without me? I'm kind of his right hand. See you around.

(to PEDROLINO)

Hey there, kid. Here's a quarter. Stay out of trouble.

(ARLECCHINO exits SL. PEDROLINO looks after him with disgust. COLUMBINA gazes after ARLECCHINO with rapture. Turning to share the disgust with COLUMBINA, PEDROLINO sees her very different reaction, makes a wry, hopeless gesture toward the audience and heaves a big sigh.)

Scene 6

(ISABELLA enters SR.)

ISABELLA

There you are, Columbina!

COLUMBINA

I thought you were going on the picnic with Master Pantalone.

ISABELLA

I was, but Pantalone's lawyer arrived with a lot of papers. They are having a meeting in the library. And I finally have a chance to talk to you!

PEDROLINO

(aside)

Papers!

(with excitement, to ISABELLA)

Mistress, did you say Pantalone's lawyer was here? In the library?

ISABELLA

Yes, Pedrolino, and it's none of your business. Run along, I must speak with Columbina privately.

(PEDROLINO nods and hurries away, exiting SL.)

ISABELLA (cont.)

(glancing conspiratorially after PEDROLINO)

I haven't had a minute to myself! Pantalone still wants to marry me. I don't know . . . but I've had an idea!

COLUMBINA

Mistress, this might not be the best place to talk. Who left for the picnic?

ISABELLA

Nobody. We postponed the picnic till later.

COLUMBINA

Then anyone could be around. A servant, a guest, or his sister, Katarina—someone could hear us!

ISABELLA

Do you have a better idea?

COLUMBINA

The top floor of the North Wing is roped off. We could sneak up there for a quiet chat—

ISABELLA

I don't want to go up there. It's closed to visitors!

COLUMBINA

It's closed to servants, too! To everyone but Master Pantalone. Judging by the dust, even he doesn't go there very often. We could talk there without being disturbed.

ISABELLA

(making a derisive gesture)

We can talk here! Nobody's spying on us.

(COLUMBINA looks around, tiptoes SL and, with a yell, pantomimes thrusting aside a curtain, opening a door, or looking behind the backdrop.)

Scene 7

(KATARINA enters SL. At KATARINA's waist hangs a set of keys on a ring with a large dark key.)

KATARINA

(taken aback and looking sharply at COLUMBINA)

I'm looking for my brother Pantalone.

ISABELLA

I think he's in the library with his lawyer.

KATARINA

I checked there. I'll try the garden. They go there when they don't want to be overheard.

(crossing to exit SR and pausing to talk to ISABELLA)

I'm Katarina. I'm afraid we haven't been formally introduced.

ISABELLA

(flustered)

My maid's a little excited.

KATARINA

(shrugging)

Your maid? I guess that's up to Pantalone whether you bring your own staff.

ISABELLA

I couldn't do without my maid. Columbina has been with me since I was ten! She's my brains.

KATARINA

Hmm. . . . I won't offer the "welcome aboard speech" yet. Still . . . I'm glad it's working out.

Pantalone really needs someone to help keep house. I've done it for years.

(indicating the keys are her waist)

But it's time I thought about my own future.

ISABELLA

I . . . haven't made up my mind.

KATARINA

Take your time. It's both challenging and rewarding to run this house and there's opportunity for advancement.

(beginning to exit SR)

Make sure to ask Pantalone about the benefits package. And the maternity leave! It's quite generous.

(KATARINA exits SR. ISABELLA and COLUMBINA stare after KATARINA and then at each other. A beat.)

ISABELLA

That was weird.

COLUMBINA

She was eavesdropping!

ISABELLA

Stop worrying over nothing! Now listen! I want to ask some of the guests about Pantalone. If they have good things to say, I'll feel better about getting engaged. What do you think?

COLUMBINA

Mistress, I'm not sure—

ISABELLA

I'll start with Il Capitano.

(ISABELLA pulls COLUMBINA and they exit SR.)

Scene 8

(IL CAPITANO and ISABELLA enter SR. COLUMBINA follows a little behind them.)

ISABELLA

Il Capitano, you've been friends with Pantalone since childhood, right?

IL CAPITANO

Since I first began to consider a cavalry career. It's always attracted me, since I was, from birth—

ISABELLA

What was Pantalone like as a boy? Was he brave?

IL CAPITANO

Yes, although not as brave as me. As I was saying, I was born a gifted athlete—

ISABELLA

What about Pantalone?

IL CAPITANO

That's just how it is. Nature plays favorites, little girl. From the first, some of us are more agile,
(bending)
Stronger,
(flexing)
Bolder,
(parrying and thrusting with his sword)
Than the common run of babies.

ISABELLA

Were you neighbors? Did Pantalone live next door?

IL CAPITANO

Yes, he did, in a house much smaller than mine. He played at my house, naturally. I had the bigger yard and the better toys.

ISABELLA

(desperately)

Can you—

IL CAPITANO

I had a drum, a huge set of blocks, the biggest fort in the neighborhood—

ISABELLA

Tell me about Pantalone when he was younger.

IL CAPITANO

When I was younger? I—

ISABELLA

No, I said when *he* was younger—

IL CAPITANO

Where to begin? I was a precocious child. Your interest in me is flattering.

(Conversation can continue in this vein. Or the scene can continue with IL CAPITANO reciting a poem: Walt Whitman's "Are You the New Person Drawn Toward Me?" from Leaves of Grass, as part of the following dialogue before IL CAPITANO exits.)

IL CAPITANO (cont.)

Are you the new person drawn toward me?

ISABELLA

(attempting to interrupt)

No!

IL CAPITANO

(without pausing)

To begin with take warning, I am surely far different from what you suppose;
Do you suppose you will find in me your ideal?
Do you think it so easy to have me become your lover?
Do you think the friendship of me would be unalloy'd satisfaction?
Do you think I am trusty and faithful?
Do you see no further than this facade, this smooth and tolerant
manner of me?
Do you suppose yourself advancing on real ground toward a real heroic man?
Have you no thought, O dreamer, that it may be all maya, illusion?

ISABELLA

Unfortunately, yes!

IL CAPITANO

(advancing)

Then you'd be wrong. You *are* advancing on real ground toward a real heroic man!

ISABELLA

I'm not advancing!

IL CAPITANO

(advancing)

Then why are you getting closer?

(IL CAPITANO exits SL . . . finally. COLUMBINA and/or ISABELLA may shoo him off; he may be removed by a giant crook; he may try to embrace ISABELLA and in doing so, trip and fall off the stage; or he may wander off boasting to himself. COLUMBINA and ISABELLA run SL and look after the exiting IL CAPITANO.)

ISABELLA

What if he comes back?

(Horrified, COLUMBINA starts to back away, pulling ISABELLA with her.)

ISABELLA (cont.)

(shaking off COLUMBINA)

No, I said I would meet Il Dottore here.

COLUMBINA

Mistress, if you don't mind me saying so, you don't need to talk to all these friends. You can make up your own mind—

ISABELLA

Don't fuss, Columbina, here comes Il Dottore now!

Scene 9

(IL DOTTORE enters SR.)

ISABELLA

Il Dottore, how are you?

IL DOTTORE

I've been better, I've been better. My sciatica has been acting up—did I tell you my sciatica has been acting up? Well, it's been acting up. And my digestion—

ISABELLA

(hastily)

I'm sorry to hear that. Il Dottore, I can tell you're a keen judge of character.

IL DOTTORE

(smugly waving two self-deprecating hands)

Stop!

(by way of concession)

But I will say that navigating social situations—

ISABELLA

About your friendship with Pantalone: you went to school together?

IL DOTTORE

Yes, although I was in the accelerated program. In hindsight—forgive me for this desultory digression—

(suddenly)

Ouch!

(IL DOTTORE peers down at his/her body, then circles round twice, like a dog chasing its tail.)

ISABELLA

Are you alright?

IL DOTTORE

(feeling his/her lymph nodes, sciatic nerve area, and placing two fingers on his/her wrist)

I thought I felt a twinge. Now where—

ISABELLA

Columbina, bring a glass of water!

(COLUMBINA starts to exit, but IL DOTTORE waves her back.)

IL DOTTORE

It's gone. If it's more serious, it will come back. Now, as I was saying—

ISABELLA

Maybe you should rest your voice.

IL DOTTORE

Oh, it's not my voice! I never have problems talking. I could lecture for hours and hours. And hours! Taciturnity is not one of my besetting sins—Now where were we? Ah, yes—

ISABELLA

Did you and Pantalone play together?

(IL DOTTORE begins the following monologues but need not give all of them. During IL DOTTORE's recitation, ISABELLA tries to interrupt without success. The interruptions given below are suggestions; ISABELLA may attempt to interrupt by word or gesture anytime IL DOTTORE stops for breath—which isn't often. Near the end, ISABELLA begins to fall asleep.)

IL DOTTORE

That depends on your definition of play. Are you deploying the utilitarian sentimentalist term or the post-probiotic? For me, youthful play was losing myself among the incunabula, but Pantalone lacked the aptitude for such things. He is wise, but not as wise as me.

ISABELLA

I—

IL DOTTORE

Speaking of—I'm currently engaged in a fascinating authorship question with several world-renowned scholars. Did I tell you I'm currently engaged in a fascinating authorship question with several world-renowned scholars? Well, I'm currently engaged in a fascinating authorship question with several world-renowned scholars.

ISABELLA

You—

IL DOTTORE

I don't want to be prolix, but, basically, I'm compiling evidence that the original authors could not have been the original authors. This flies in the face of Professor Rodomontade's argument, if you can call it an argument! But stop, let no one accuse me of over-floccinaucinihilipilification!

ISABELLA

So—

IL DOTTORE

I was chatting with the dean and the archbishop at our most recent conference—stop me if you’ve heard this before—

ISABELLA

Sorry, I—

(During IL DOTTORE’S final speech as determined by the director, ISABELLA falls asleep and COLUMBINA tucks her in, shushing IL DOTTORE and beginning to escort him/her offstage SL. IL DOTTORE lowers his/her voice, but continues to talk, using COLUMBINA as a new audience. Anybody will do.)

IL DOTTORE

And they agree that his view is utterly exploded in light of my findings. It’s true that University Publishing House was not interested in publishing my monograph. But everybody knows their sclerotic penchant for pseudo-ontologicalism.

Besides! Now that I’m the doyen of authorship questions, Academic Press seized on the chance to publish with me. Did I tell you Academic Press had seized on the chance to publish with me? Well, they seized on the chance to publish with me. My magnum opus comes out next month. Which reminds me, I recently accepted the Distinguished Chair for the Department of Higher . . .

(IL DOTTORE finally exits SL, still talking. ISABELLA was only pretending to sleep. She “wakes up.”)

ISABELLA

I learned even less than I did with Il Capitano!

Scene 10

(SCARAMUCCIA, PERPETUA, and ZANNI enter SR.)

PERPETUA

I am in love with this house!

(going toward an imaginary window DSL and pantomiming like she is looking out)

What a view! Don’t you just love it, son?

SCARAMUCCIA

Why is this house built on a cliff? It’s like a lonely fortress.

PERPETUA

Don't be such a grumpy-pants!

(smacking ZANNI)

Zanni, tell your son, this place has beautiful views!

(ZANNI gestures sleepily and expansively toward the "views." His gesture is interrupted as PERPETUA suddenly drags him USR. PERPETUA gazes out another imaginary window.)

PERPETUA (cont.)

And this window has a child-safety gate! How thoughtful!

SCARAMUCCIA

Those are bars, mother. Iron bars. Like a prison.

PERPETUA

You don't like anything! Me, I couldn't be happier about this marriage!

ISABELLA

We're not engaged *yet*, mother.

(PERPETUA looks alarmed. She rushes over and grabs ISABELLA's arm. SCARAMUCCIA continues to walk around, looking out the windows and poking around. He does not listen to the conversation.)

PERPETUA

But where is Pantalone? You haven't had a fight, have you?

ISABELLA

No, remember?—he's meeting with his lawyer. I think they're in the garden.

PERPETUA

He should be here at your side! You'll lose his love!

ISABELLA

Mother, he's been at my side all week.

PERPETUA

I don't like this! Maybe he's found someone else. Some little blonde [or "brunette" or "redhead", etc.]—

ISABELLA

(defensively)

I'm a blonde! [or "brunette" or "redhead", etc.]

PERPETUA

(correcting the hair-color to something different than
ISABELLA's)

Some little brunette [or “blonde” or “redhead”, etc.] who's also after his money—
(correcting herself hastily)

Who's *just* after his money.

ISABELLA

Mother—

(PERPETUA grabs ZANNI's arm and drags him with her as she hurries SR.)

PERPETUA

Zanni, come on! We have to rescue our future son-in-law! True love conquers all!

(PERPETUA and ZANNI exit SR.)

SCARAMUCCIA

Why would anyone keep a whole wing of his house off-limits? Some of the rooms upstairs look like they've been shut up for ages!

(melancholy)

Ah, life. This house fills me with foreboding. Truly, this world is not our home!

(looking closer at ISABELLA)

What's wrong? You look discouraged. Is it mother?

ISABELLA

(shaking her head)

I have been trying to learn about Pantalone by speaking with his friends.

SCARAMUCCIA

Oh dear. How's that gone for you?

ISABELLA

Not well! They talk more about themselves. . . . Scaramuccia, what do you think of Pantalone?

SCARAMUCCIA

We shouldn't talk here. Pantalone could hear us.

ISABELLA

He's outside!

SCARAMUCCIA

(looking over his shoulder)

Yes, *right* outside! I keep finding him around every corner.

ISABELLA

Just tell me what you think!

SCARAMUCCIA

Why are you asking me again?

ISABELLA

When I asked Il Capitano, he told me Pantalone was brave. But not as brave as he. When I asked Il Dottore, he/she told me Pantalone was wise. But not as wise as he/she. Now I am asking you. . . . You're a good man. Is Pantalone good? I want to know if I should marry him.

SCARAMUCCIA

Do you want to?

ISABELLA

Pantalone is wealthy and has made himself very agreeable this week. Mother keeps nagging . . .

SCARAMUCCIA

But?

ISABELLA

But he is so oily!

SCARAMUCCIA

And there's the seven wives.

ISABELLA

They say each wife really did die. In a foreign country. On the honeymoon—each one! Isn't that tragic?

SCARAMUCCIA

(dryly)

He seems to be coping well.

(earnestly)

Don't worry about mother. You can't love him?

ISABELLA

No. But he's offering me the kind of life I want.

SCARAMUCCIA

(sarcastically)

He does have wealth, friends, and power. What else is there?

ISABELLA

Then you would encourage me to marry Pantalone?

SCARAMUCCIA

As strongly as would each of his seven former wives.

ISABELLA

Scaramuccia, stop making fun of me! What do you have against Pantalone? He has suffered a lot!

COLUMBINA

(in an exasperated aside to the audience, while looking offstage SL to see if PANTALONE is coming)

This is not the way to influence her! If Master Pantalone comes in now, he'll have my mistress right where he wants her. She might even say yes!

(gasping)

I think see Master Pantalone coming! I have to do something!

(COLUMBINA begins to act as if speaking for SCARAMUCCIA. ISABELLA and SCARAMUCCIA do not realize how COLUMBINA is trying to influence the conversation; they continue to direct all their lines toward each other.)

SCARAMUCCIA

There is more to life than money and a fancy house. So—

COLUMBINA

Your brother is trying to say that you should definitely marry Master Pantalone.

ISABELLA

What! Have you gone over to mother's side?

SCARAMUCCIA

I'm not advocating for Pantalone.

COLUMBINA

Because Pantalone's qualities speak for themselves. So, you have a duty to marry Pantalone.

ISABELLA

A duty?

COLUMBINA

To comfort Pantalone after a life of tragedy.

ISABELLA

Don't try to guilt me into doing what you want!

SCARAMUCCIA

(pointing to himself to deny the accusation)

I don't want you to marry Pantalone. [unspoken sense - I.E., "Mother is the one who wants you to marry Pantalone."]

ISABELLA

(misunderstanding)

I knew it! Why didn't you say so earlier?

SCARAMUCCIA

(confused)

What? I . . . just meant you don't have a duty to comfort Pantalone!

COLUMBINA

But you do have an obligation to make your mother happy.

ISABELLA

Nobody is going to make this decision for me!

SCARAMUCCIA

Me, least of all! Besides, you've already made your decision. You just want me to make you feel better about it.

ISABELLA

I have *not* made my decision! Once and for all, should I marry Pantalone or not?

COLUMBINA

(glancing desperately in the direction of
PANTALONE's approach)

He's ordering you to marry Pantalone!

SCARAMUCCIA

I think you can judge for yourself.

ISABELLA

So! You *are* against Pantalone.

(nodding her head slowly)

We'll see if he has one friend left in the world.

(Offstage SL, the voice of PANTALONE is heard.)

PANTALONE

(teasing)

I see you! I'm coming to get you!

COLUMBINA

Master Pantalone!

(SCARAMUCCIA makes an expression of disgust and begins to exit SL. ISABELLA grabs SCARAMUCCIA's arm.)

SCARAMUCCIA

I've seen enough of Pantalone—

ISABELLA

He can see you! It's too late now.

SCARAMUCCIA

I don't care what he thinks!

ISABELLA

You are going stay right here and see what happens.

SCARAMUCCIA

(stopping and staring at his sister with consternation)

Isabella, don't do anything foolish.

ISABELLA

You are not the boss of me.

Scene 11

(PANTALONE enters SL, grabbing ISABELLA's hand and kissing it. He keeps hold of her hand.)

PANTALONE

Caught you! The good Scaramuccia. The beautiful Isabella!

ISABELLA

You would not be so happy to see my brother if you'd heard our conversation.

PANTALONE

(laughing and putting his thumb and forefinger together to indicate something small)

I *did* hear the teensiest bit.

SCARAMUCCIA

I was telling Isabella about a young lady who forgot to look both ways.

ISABELLA

(with a cold glance at SCARAMUCCIA)

Pantalone, I have enjoyed myself this week like never before.

PANTALONE

You know I long to give you many more such weeks.

ISABELLA

And I would like to spend them with you.

PANTALONE

Isabella! Will you accept my hand in marriage?

ISABELLA

With gladness!

PANTALONE

Call our friends in! Ladies and gentlemen!

Scene 12

(PERPETUA, ZANNI, IL DOTTORE, and IL CAPITANO enter SR. Apparently, they were all listening with baited breath, especially PERPETUA. PEDROLINO and ARLECCHINO enter SL. A little behind them, KATARINA enters SL.)

COLUMBINA, PEDROLINO, and ARLECCHINO stand near the edge of the crowd to facilitate their move DS at the end of the scene.)

PANTALONE

I would like to announce I shall soon be taking a wife! Isabella has agreed to marry me!

(PERPETUA gives a shrieking laugh of triumph and begins to cry for joy. The laugh is so loud it wakes ZANNI up. KATARINA gasps. PANTALONE goes down on one knee before ISABELLA.)

PANTALONE (cont.)

Here is a ring!

(ISABELLA puts the ring on with delight.)

PANTALONE (cont.)

And here is a prenuptial agreement!

(PANTALONE presents the prenuptial agreement and a pen. ISABELLA appears confused and flustered.)

PANTALONE (cont.)
(indicating where to sign)

Right here, dear.

(ISABELLA signs the prenuptial agreement. PANTALONE pockets the agreement as he jumps to his feet. ISABELLA begins to hand back the pen.)

PANTALONE (cont.)
The pen is my gift. Here's to many more signatures!

(PERPETUA, ZANNI, IL DOTTORE, and IL CAPITANO gather around and congratulate the couple. COLUMBINA, PEDROLINO, and ARLECCHINO take separate positions DS. SCARAMUCCIA stands apart, shaking his head sadly. KATARINA grabs PANTALONE's arm and pulls him away from the group.)

KATARINA
(furious)
Engaged again? I thought you were interviewing Isabella for the housekeeper position!

PANTALONE
(patting KATARINA's cheek)
We don't need a housekeeper! We have you! Where are my keys? I want to file this prenuptial agreement.

KATARINA
I don't want to stay here anymore! You said you would give me a little money. I want to seek my fortune! I want to get married!

PANTALONE
Give me the keys. Nobody's interested in you!

KATARINA
(unhitching the keys from her belt and handing them over)
Nobody knows me! How can I meet anyone, stuck here keeping house for you?

PANTALONE
(examining the large dark key on the ring of keys)
I see my key hasn't changed color. Good girl. You stay out of my private office.

KATARINA
Of course, that key's still black. Who wants to go into your creepy old office?

PANTALONE
You never know. This key is a good little spy.

KATARINA

(sputtering)

You said it was over! You said you were through!

PANTALONE

What can I say, sister? I fell in love!

(moving away from KATARINA and speaking
louder, to the rest of the group)

Let us be wed as soon as possible!

(KATARINA moves DS, away from the group.)

KATARINA

(aside)

What am I going to do? I don't want any more of this!

ARLECCHINO

(aside)

If only I could get safely out of this mess.

COLUMBINA

(aside)

I must think of a plan.

(moving closer to PEDROLINO)

Pedrolino? You said you had an idea.

(Exit all.)

End of ACT I

ACT II

Part 1: At the Home of PANTALONE, the Day after the Wedding

Scene 1

(ARLECCHINO and COLUMBINA enter SR.)

COLUMBINA

That was certainly a beautiful wedding last night.

(taking a side-step closer to ARLECCHINO)

I love weddings, don't you?

ARLECCHINO

(side-stepping away from COLUMBINA)

Oh sure, nothing like true love!

COLUMBINA

(taking a side-step closer to ARLECCHINO)

You just have to find the right man.

ARLECCHINO

(side-stepping away from COLUMBINA)

And the right woman. But first you have to catch her eye.

COLUMBINA

(taking a side-step closer to ARLECCHINO)

For you, that is easy.

(ARLECCHINO tumbles, does a backflip, or performs a similar stunt.)

ARLECCHINO

This . . .

(indicating his prowess as he continues showing off)

takes a little effort!

(ARLECCHINO can improvise, explaining how he has to stretch and keep in shape to tumble.)

Scene 2

(IL CAPITANO and one of the female cast, KATARINA, or IL DOTTORE, if played by a woman, enter SR, crossing behind ARLECCHINO and COLUMBINA to USL. ARLECCHINO continues his stunts. He should have his back to them and, preferably, be upside down.)

KATARINA/IL DOTTORE

Who is that amazing fellow?

IL CAPITANO

One of the servants.

(Choose the next line based on whether KATARINA or IL DOTTORE is playing the scene.)

KATARINA

You're right.
(tilting her head to see
ARLECCHINO right way up)
It's just Arlecchino.

IL DOTTORE

I haven't seen anything so amazing since I finished a brief but prestigious postdoctoral research fellowship. That was after I had obtained my second doctoral degree. But before my third. I had just finished giving a keynote address on—

IL CAPITANO

He is athletic. But nothing I couldn't handle. I had to put him in his place my first day here. Let me tell you how it went . . .

(IL CAPITANO and KATARINA/ IL DOTTORE exit SL still talking. ARLECCHINO ends his stunts.)

ARLECCHINO

Someday, when that beautiful woman walks by, I'll be ready.

COLUMBINA

While you're waiting for her, how about killing time with little old me?

ARLECCHINO

I have to help Master Pantalone pack.

COLUMBINA

(casually)

Is he going somewhere special?

ARLECCHINO
(guardedly)

Just a business trip.

COLUMBINA
(playing up a love of gossip)

I bet he's got a pretty face in every city. Is he going to see his other wife?

ARLECCHINO

No!

COLUMBINA

Let's report him for bigamy! Where's the closest sheriff?

ARLECCHINO
(alarmed)

A hundred miles away. We're in the middle of nowhere!

COLUMBINA

I love a juicy scandal!

ARLECCHINO

Calm down! He doesn't have another wife. He just . . . needs to visit the bank.

COLUMBINA

The BANK! Is he a bank robber? This is so thrilling!

(ARLECCHINO waves his arms in denial.)

COLUMBINA (cont.)
(without pausing)

Does he get violent? Will he take hostages?

ARLECCHINO

He's not going to see another wife. Or rob the bank. Or do anything illegal!

(making a concession as an afterthought)

. . . It might be a little *shady*.

COLUMBINA

Smuggling?

ARLECCHINO
(looking around uneasily)

No! Master Pantalone is just . . . liquidating Mistress Isabella's property. It's all legal!

COLUMBINA
(feigning disappointment)

How tame.

ARLECCHINO
(aside to the audience)

So, there's no need to involve the law.

At least, not until I know what to do!

End of excerpt

Finish reading this script.

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CHARACTERS AND CASTING

Characters: (6 m; 4 w; 1 m/w)

Alphabetical List

ARLECCHINO (m)
COLUMBINA (w)
IL CAPITANO (m)
IL DOTTORE (m/w)
ISABELLA (w)
KATARINA (w)
PANTALONE (m)
PEDROLINO (m)
PERPETUA (w)
SCARAMUCCIA (m)
ZANNI (m)

In Order of Appearance

ISABELLA (w)
PERPETUA (w)
ZANNI (m)
COLUMBINA (w)
SCARAMUCCIA (m)
PEDROLINO (m)
ARLECCHINO (m)
KATARINA (w)
IL CAPITANO (m)
IL DOTTORE (m/w)
PANTALONE (m)

Male Roles

ARLECCHINO (m)
IL CAPITANO (m)
PANTALONE (m)
PEDROLINO (m)
SCARAMUCCIA (m)
ZANNI (m)

Female Roles

COLUMBINA (w)
ISABELLA (w)
KATARINA (w)
PERPETUA (w)

Roles which can be played by men or women

IL DOTTORE (m/w)

Depending on costuming and the ability to change roles quickly, doubling/tripling can be arranged as follows.

With Tripling: Minimum (4 m; 3 w)

ARLECCHINO (m)

COLUMBINA (w)

IL CAPITANO, PANTALONE, ZANNI (m)

IL DOTTORE, KATARINA, PERPETUA (w)

ISABELLA (w)

PEDROLINO (m)

SCARAMUCCIA (m)

Easier Doubling Combinations (4 m; 4 w)

ARLECCHINO (m)

COLUMBINA (w)

IL CAPITANO, SCARAMUCCIA (m)

IL DOTTORE, KATARINA (w)

ISABELLA (w)

PANTALONE, ZANNI (m)

PEDROLINO (m)

PERPETUA (w)