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Cast of Characters

AMORIO

LEANDER

THE PRIEST

FLAUTINO*

ISABELLA

MOTHER*

**Flautino and Mother are to be played by the same actor.*

Production Notes

As you may find it difficult to deal with the Flautino/Mother characters being played by the same actor and onstage at the same time, here is a method found useful at the staged reading of the play at the 2005 International Thespian Festival (directed by Mark D. Kaufmann): Mother wore a veil. Whenever it was time for Flautino to speak, he would simply take off the veil and become Flautino. You may use this method or one of your own.

BROKEN BUT NOT TORN

A COMMEDIA PIECE

by Asher Frankfurt

Scene 1

Amorio's return

(Setting: Italian town's square. There is a small chapel and an outside market.)

(At Rise: FLAUTINO and LEANDER are in the market.)

FLAUTINO. This is to be the best of weddings, sir!

(LEANDER glares at FLAUTINO and then rolls his eyes.)

LEANDER. I want two rose patches in *this* corner and I want two rose patches in *this* corner. Be positive they are red roses. The last time I ordered roses, you sent for the wrong color!

FLAUTINO. Yes, master. Bread roses.

LEANDER. No, not bread roses. *Red* roses.

FLAUTINO. Ah, yes, sir. *Red* roses.

LEANDER. Set a *table* with bread over there and another table with cheese over there.

FLAUTINO. Yes, master. Bread and cheese. *(Beat.)* Master, you seem disappointed in your marriage.

LEANDER. *I* personally dread this occasion.

FLAUTINO. Why, sir?

LEANDER. Flautino, you do not understand. Marriage is meant for love. For commitment. I do not love this woman, and I certainly do not wish to commit to her. *(Beat.)* Something is on your mind. Tell me.

FLAUTINO. Master, I know I seem out of line, but my mind seems always to ponder the truth of your brother.

LEANDER. My brother? What of him? Has someone told you something!?

FLAUTINO. No, sir. I swear no one has mentioned a word of him. Though, some days ago, I saw you reading a note. I noticed the note was by Amorio's hand.

LEANDER. It is not your place to speak of such a thing.

FLAUTINO. You are right, sir. I am deeply sorry.

LEANDER. But, because I admire your curiosity, I will tell you the truth. My brother, Amorio, stole from...Isabella's mother. (FLAUTINO *gasps.*) Isabella's mother has made friends with the nobles. With her tremendous amount of power in this town, she had declared that Amorio may either stay in town, but lose three fingers, (*Both men eek at the audience.*) or leave and never return. Consequently, Amorio left.

FLAUTINO. What exactly did he steal from Isabella's mother?

LEANDER. Her necklace. You were the one who told me all of this Flautino.

FLAUTINO. Ah, right, sir. (*Beat.*) Do you suppose Amorio wanted to wear it?

LEANDER. Wear what?

FLAUTINO. Isabella's mother's necklace—

LEANDER. I don't know! The fact of the matter is, Amorio was banished from town.

FLAUTINO. I am sorry sir. Truly.

LEANDER. Are you sure no one has said something to you about my brother?

FLAUTINO. I swear, sir. Not a word.

LEANDER. Fair enough. But, if you are lying to me, tell me now or I will have your tongue! I vow to know every rumor of my brother!

FLAUTINO. Well...

(LEANDER *grabs* FLAUTINO *by his ear.*)

LEANDER. What have you heard?! Spit it out, you!

FLAUTINO. I hear Amorio is planning to sneak in through the gates! For your wedding! The people of this town believe Amorio will return to attend your marriage. I am concerned, master. For his safety and for yours!

LEANDER. *(Releasing FLAUTINO:)* Very well, then.

FLAUTINO. Is this word the truth, sir? Is Amorio truly planning to sneak back into town?

LEANDER. In Amorio's note, the one you saw me reading, he did mention returning to town secretly. I certainly hope he doesn't. You see, in return for my marriage with Isabella, Isabella's mother will allow Amorio to return to town and be forgiven of his thievery. If he were to sneak back into town, it could conflict with the deal I have made with Isabella's mother. And Flautino, do make sure this conversation is between you and I *only*.

FLAUTINO. I vow to hold my tongue, master.

(FLAUTINO raises his arm to grab his tongue, but LEANDER stops him.)

LEANDER. I shall stay out late this evening incase Amorio should sneak back into town. Return to my house and tell everyone in the household that I am fishing at the pond.

FLAUTINO. Might I suggest you tell them that you are selling at the market?

LEANDER. Very well, then. I am selling at—

FLAUTINO. No, sir. Washing at the bath houses would be more believable.

LEANDER. Then tell them I am bathing at the—

FLAUTINO. No, sir! Even better! Praying at the church!

LEANDER. Yes. Praying at the—

FLAUTINO. Or, sir—

LEANDER. Oh hush! *(Beat.)* If Amorio does, in fact, sneak back into town, no one may know of his presence. Not a single soul! Understood?

FLAUTINO. Yes, master. Most definitely. And good luck, sir.

(LEANDER crosses to the market and sits at a table, waiting to meet AMORIO. AMORIO enters, walking backwards in caution and unaware of LEANDER. LEANDER rises and turns. BOOM! The two men clash and jump back, prepared to fight.)

AMORIO. Leander? Is that you?

LEANDER. Amorio!?

AMORIO. Leander!

(Both run and hug.)

AMORIO. I thought you were a guard!

LEANDER. Oh, brother, it has been so long! What is the world like outside of these walls?

AMORIO. I shall tell you every detail once I fill my stomach.

(AMORIO starts to exit, but LEANDER stops him.)

LEANDER. Brother, it is not safe! I have sent Flautino—

AMORIO. Flautino!? Where is that old bum!?

LEANDER. I have sent him to prepare your quarters.

AMORIO. Oh, Leander, home at last! I must see everybody, I must!

LEANDER. Not for some time, brother. You must wait until you have been forgotten. Everyone is very suspicious about your return. They believe you might come for my wedding.

AMORIO. WEDDING!?

LEANDER. Oh...you have not heard. Her mother demands the marriage.

AMORIO. DEMANDS IT!?

LEANDER. Yes. Her mother and her politics.

AMORIO. POLITICS!?!—

LEANDER. Oh, put a hole in it!...a sock—you know what I mean!

AMORIO. Brother, likewise I have not told you! Before the Priest sent me away, I fell in love with the most amazing woman of all. She vowed never to love another man while I was away! We are to be married as well! *(Trails off.)* She told me she would wait for my return. She loves me. I am everything to her!

LEANDER. *(Aside:)* I can see the outside world has not changed him. *(Beat.)* Amorio, we must put you into hiding at once. I have made a strict pact with Isabella's mother so your crimes may be forgotten—

(AMORIO looks out into the audience [presumably the town] and spots his lady.)

AMORIO. Brother, I see my lady in the distance! *(To ISABELLA:)* My love! Cross the courtyard and come to me! *(To LEANDER:)* I am sorry, brother. I wrote to her this morning, asking her to meet me. Go. Wait in the house for me. Make certain the streets are clear for my return. I shall meet you within the hour.

LEANDER. Amorio, do not be a fool! Be certain she does not tell anyone of your arrival!

AMORIO. Yes, yes...

(LEANDER exits. Enter ISABELLA.)

ISABELLA. My love!

(ISABELLA runs to AMORIO. The two hug.)

ISABELLA. Oh, Amorio! It has been so long! I received your note this morning.

AMORIO. *(Aside:)* She received my note.

ISABELLA. I crept through my house and climbed out of my window this evening...all to see you!

AMORIO. Oh, Isabella! I rejoice at last! Life outside of these walls has been the hardest without you. Isabella, I know this will seem sudden, but I must ask you something. Will you be my wife?

ISABELLA. Oh Amorio! (*Beat.*) I would be, but...

AMORIO. Yes, yes...go on.

ISABELLA. Amorio, I—

AMORIO. I knew you would say yes!

(AMORIO picks up ISABELLA and spirals her, placing her back on the ground.)

Oh my love! This is the greatest day of my life! We are to be married at once! I must go and tell Leander!

ISABELLA. LEANDER!? How do you know LEANDER!?

AMORIO. He is my *brother*, of course!

ISABELLA. Your brother!? Amorio! (*Sobbing:*) I must tell you something! I cannot—

AMORIO. Shhh...it is all right my love. I must depart. I love you, Isabella. We are to be married!

(AMORIO exits.)

ISABELLA. (*To audience while sobbing:*) Oh no, no, NO! This is not possible! I am forced by my mother to marry this gentleman, Leander. But, I do not love Leander and I do believe he feels the same about me. I love Amorio! Truly! And now Amorio has set a marriage between us. Am I to be married twice? If only Amorio would have let me speak! If only I could have told him I am *already* to be married. The most haunting of all...the two are brothers. (*Sobbing:*) What will mother do? Amorio, my love. If only you were not in such a rush to marry. My heart... (*Starts to recover.*) ...my heart...is broken...but not torn. I shall do everything in my power to appease both sides. I... (*She breaks down sobbing again.*)

(Lights fade. End of scene.)

Scene 2
Isabella and the priest

(Setting: The stage remains the same as before, though this scene occurs primarily in the chapel. The chapel has a desk and chair for THE PRIEST.)

(At Rise. ISABELLA enters. THE PRIEST is sleeping, snoring at his desk.)

ISABELLA. Father.

THE PRIEST. Hm?

ISABELLA. Father.

THE PRIEST. Hm?

ISABELLA. Father!

THE PRIEST. Hm—

ISABELLA. Oh, father, wake up!

(THE PRIEST awakens with a sudden “Hm? What!? Who!? What!?”)

It is sunrise already!

THE PRIEST. Who are you?

ISABELLA. It is me, Father. Isabella.

THE PRIEST. Isabella!?

ISABELLA. Shhh! If my mother knew I was not in my bedroom, she would have me hanged!

THE PRIEST. HANGED!? We must tell the law at once and notify them of thi—

ISABELLA. No Father! Wake up! *(She slaps him.)* Come to your senses. I only meant it in words!

(THE PRIEST shakes his head, waking up.)

THE PRIEST. You’re right. I’m sorry, my child. What has brought you to me?

ISABELLA. I am in a cleft, father. A deep wedge.

THE PRIEST. A CLEFT!?! OF ROCK!?

ISABELLA. No, Father. I am in trouble. But you must swear to me that this word is between you and me only. You mustn't tell a soul.

THE PRIEST. I swear on the good book—

(THE PRIEST lifts up a book entitled, "The Good Book.")

—and to almighty God himself I will not tell a soul.

ISABELLA. Well, Father, as you know, I am to marry Leander.

THE PRIEST. Oh, yes, how exciting!

ISABELLA. Though, you also know my mother is forcing me into the marriage for Leander's money. I do not truly love Leander.

THE PRIEST. What!?

ISABELLA. *I do not love Leander.* And, before Leander asked for my hand in marriage, I had already promised my finger to another man.

THE PRIEST. Only your finger!?

(ISABELLA glares at THE PRIEST.)

Well, who!?

ISABELLA. Amorio.

THE PRIEST. AMORIO!?!? The thief who stole from *your mother!?!?*

ISABELLA. Yes, yes. I know father but—

THE PRIEST. Isabella, you cannot marry Amorio! He is a mischievous young man. The very man who stole your mother's necklace! Not to say that he is Leander's *very own* brother! And aside from Amorio's criminal state—

ISABELLA. He is not a criminal!

THE PRIEST. Nevertheless. A relationship with Amorio simply could not work.

ISABELLA. But I love Amorio!

THE PRIEST. Need I remind you again that Amorio is Leander's brother AND that he stole from your mother?

ISABELLA. (*Bratty:*) Perhaps I DO need you to remind me once more.

(*THE PRIEST is confused.*)

THE PRIEST. Amorio is Leander's brother—

ISABELLA. Oh, Father, I did not mean it.

THE PRIEST. And do remember: Amorio has been banished. How do you plan to marry a man who does not even live in this town?

ISABELLA. But Amorio has returned!

THE PRIEST. Returned?

ISABELLA. Yes.

THE PRIEST. Returned!?

ISABELLA. Yes!

THE PRIEST. RETURNED!?

ISABELLA. Yes!

THE PRIEST. How do you mean?

ISABELLA. Amorio. He has returned to town. He plans to marry me.

THE PRIEST. Do you mean to tell me that you, in fact, have no love for Leander? And that you plan to marry his brother, Amorio, whom you *do* truly love? And your mother—

ISABELLA. Oh, my mother...

THE PRIEST. Your situation is beyond my control, my child. Two men are set to marry you. They are brothers. You love one dearly, but you are being, as I see it, *forced* by your mother to marry the other. (*Pause.*) Have you considered becoming a nun?

ISABELLA. Oh, Father!

THE PRIEST. What is so troubling about Leander? He is a fine man.

ISABELLA. I do not love Leander! I love Amorio!

THE PRIEST. I do not believe I can be of much service. How would you like me to act upon this, anyway?

ISABELLA. I was hoping you may cancel the marriage between Leander and me. We both have no feelings for one other. It would not be a marriage of true love.

THE PRIEST. Isabella, I cannot do that. *You* must convince *your mother* to do such an act. She is in control of your wedding not me. I simply conduct the marriage, not decide it.

ISABELLA. Well then refuse! Refuse to marry us!

THE PRIEST. Isabella, I could not do such a thing.

(ISABELLA sobs.)

Go home, my child. If you truly want Amorio's hand in marriage, you will confront your mother about it.

ISABELLA. Oh, Father! Worst of all, Amorio is coming to *you* to collect a marriage statement for the two of us.

THE PRIEST. Well I will not give him one! At least, not until the problem is solved. *(Aside:)* And I *know* Amorio's tricks—I shall not fall for them!

ISABELLA. Father, Amorio will come to you for the marriage certificate regardless. When he does arrive, I beg of you, do not tell him I am to marry Leander!

THE PRIEST. Go, my child. Amorio shall not hear a word from me, and on the contrary, he will not receive a marriage certificate to marry you. And I vow to not tell a soul of your situation. You have my word and my bond.

ISABELLA. Thank you, Father.

(As soon as ISABELLA exits, THE PRIEST throws his arms up.)

THE PRIEST. I should've been a lawyer!

(AMORIO enters with a beard and in a traveler's disguise. He pulls down the beard briefly.)

AMORIO. *(Aside:)* Father will have heard the rumors of my arrival. I must deceive him to prevent any delays in my marriage with Isabella.

(AMORIO pulls the beard back up.)

(Aside:) I look like a bum!

(AMORIO crosses to THE PRIEST. He tries to speak but his fake beard muffles his speech. THE PRIEST is unable to understand him.)

THE PRIEST. Huh!?

(AMORIO blatantly pulls the beard all the way down.)

AMORIO. Father, I am here to collect a marriage certificate. Me lady and I wish to get married.

(THE PRIEST turns his head and glares at AMORIO as if he has been caught in the act.)

THE PRIEST. Here. *(Handing AMORIO a piece of paper and feather pen:)* Fill out one of these, and sign your name at the bottom.

(THE PRIEST is clueless.)

Do you have any witnesses?

AMORIO. I did not kill anyone, Father!

THE PRIEST. No, bum, for your wedding!

AMORIO. Oh, no, sir. No witnesses.

THE PRIEST. So you wish only for my consent to marriage?

AMORIO. Yes, Father.

THE PRIEST. Very well then, fill out the form.

(AMORIO fills the form and hands it back to THE PRIEST.)

THE PRIEST. Well done. Now you shall have your wedding at the second rooster crow tomorrow.

AMORIO. Are there no times available before the second rooster call?

THE PRIEST. I am marrying a young lad and his lady before then. I am afraid no time is available.

AMORIO. Does this young lad go by the name of Leander?

THE PRIEST. Why yes!

AMORIO. Oh, Leander! Fine fellow! I shall come to his wedding and have my marriage directly afterwards. I am sure he will be pleased to see me there!

THE PRIEST. Yes, yes. Let me put this in writing first. (*Writes:*) All right, finished and done. Tell me, what is your name? I can barely make it out on this sheet.

AMORIO. My name?

THE PRIEST. Yes, your name.

AMORIO. My name!?

THE PRIEST. That is precisely what I am asking.

AMORIO. Well I don't see why *my name* is necessary.

THE PRIEST. Well whose name am I to say when I validate your marriage? And what of your bride's name? It is not written down.

AMORIO. Father, I shall tell you the whole-hearted truth.

(A great pause is held as a moment of truth is revealed.)

I am not who you think I am. *I* truly, honestly, am your *son!*

(THE PRIEST gasps loudly and then slumps over dead in his chair. AMORIO walks to THE PRIEST and puts his hand on THE PRIEST's shoulder.)

AMORIO. Fath—

THE PRIEST. (*Surprise awakening:*) But...but...how can it be?

AMORIO. Oh, it can be. It *can* be, Father.

THE PRIEST. (*Crying:*) Do you mean “Father” as in my being a priest? (*Smiles more.*) Or “father” as in, your father.

AMORIO. Father as in...my father!

(*THE PRIEST runs to AMORIO and hugs him.*)

THE PRIEST. I knew I had a son! Finally found at once! Oh, my son, you do not know how happy I am! I have finally found you! Son, why are you dressed so? Surely you work!

AMORIO. Oh, Father, I do. This is just a disguise to travel. You see, I’m not from this town.

THE PRIEST. Oh I know, I know! Trust me, my son, I know the story! Before I entered the ministry, I was deeply in love with a woman. We had two children. You and your sister. And just then, the church asked me to join. I had always been a man of the church, so I was obliged to. Unfortunately, your mother could not take care of both infants, and you were separated from her. Oh, son, surely you know the whereabouts of your mother?

AMORIO. No, Father, I don’t. Remember, we were separated, as you said. We were separated because she was unable to take care of both me and my sister.

THE PRIEST. Ah, right.

AMORIO. Father, I must depart now. My work calls to me.

THE PRIEST. Wait! Your name! Son, I do not even know your name!

AMORIO. My name is...Amorio.

THE PRIEST. Amooooorio? Strong name. Honest name. I like it. We once had a lad in this town by the name of Amorio. He was an evil young man, Amorio. It is nice to have a *new, better* Amorio in these streets.

AMORIO. Yes, Father. It is nice. I must depart. (*Starts to exit.*)

THE PRIEST. And your missus?

AMORIO. (*Stops.*) What of her?

THE PRIEST. Her name. What is her name?

AMORIO. Isabell...Isabell. Yes, Isabell. Not Isabella. Isabell.

THE PRIEST. Oh. Isabell. Well I shan't keep you any longer. Good-bye, son! I shall see you in morrow's morning! *(Beat.)* Wait. Wait there, you!

(AMORIO stops in his tracks, afraid he has been caught.)

Give your father one more hug before your wedding! A family hug!

(Relentlessly, the two hug. AMORIO exits.)

THE PRIEST. *(To himself:)* What a coincidence! Leander is to marry an Isabella! Just one syllable different!

(THE PRIEST exits. End of scene.)

Scene 3 **Isabella and her mother**

(Setting: Town square.)

(At Rise: MOTHER marches onstage, followed by ISABELLA.)

MOTHER. We have discussed this matter already, Isabella! Leander is a brilliant man! A flammabiskwatic man! He is a war hero. He has many friends in other countries. *Rich* friends in other countries.

ISABELLA. Money? I must marry him for money?

MOTHER. He is a fine man, Isabella. I am doing this for your sake. And because I have the power. I have a lot of power in this town!

ISABELLA. This is not, right, mother! I do not love Leander. You must allow me to choose the man *I* want to marry!

MOTHER. Are you with another person? Are you paroozing with a man *other* than Leander!?

ISABELLA. My father would have allowed me to pick my own love!

MOTHER. You do not know your father! You've never even met him. You didn't love him as I loved him! *(Beat.)* The only regret I

have towards being of any relation to Leander is the fact that his brother, Amorio, is a thief!

ISABELLA. Amorio is not a thief!

MOTHER. Do not say that name while there are people around!

(They look around at the empty stage.)

ISABELLA. But he did not steal your necklace mother! I swear to you.

MOTHER. Regardless of Amorio, you must still marry Leander.

ISABELLA. And what if I refuse to marry Leander? What if I run away!? Then what!?

MOTHER. You wouldn't do such a thing.

ISABELLA. Yes I would!

MOTHER. Well what are you waiting for?!

(ISABELLA breaks down sobbing.)

ISABELLA. But I *do not* love him!

MOTHER. You will marry Leander! And you will marry him *tomorrow!*

ISABELLA. It isn't fair!

(ISABELLA turns her back to her mother.)

MOTHER. *(To herself:)* Thank God I believe in miracles!

(MOTHER exits.)

ISABELLA. Mother. I would like to say just one thing.

(LEANDER enters to find ISABELLA talking to herself.)

I do not love Leander, and I know for certain he feels the same of me.

LEANDER. You are right.

(ISABELLA turns to find LEANDER.)

ISABELLA. What are *you* doing here?

LEANDER. What are *YOU* doing here?

ISABELLA. I was talking with my mother.

LEANDER. Really?

ISABELLA. I do not love you! Why are you agreeing to marry me if you claim not to love me!?

LEANDER. You see, I've made a deal with your mother. If I marry you, she will allow Amorio to return to town and his crimes will be forgotten. So it is not for you. It is for my brother, Amorio.

ISABELLA. But—Amorio—

(ISABELLA breaks down sobbing and exits. AMORIO enters with FLAUTINO.)

LEANDER. The wedding, Amorio! It is tomorrow!

AMORIO. I am sorry, brother. Truly.

LEANDER. Oh how I wish it was not so.

AMORIO. Who is this mystery lady you wish to give your hand in marriage to?

LEANDER. I cannot even say her name! You must wait until tomorrow. You are, in fact, attending my wedding, correct? I do not intend to be alone on the most dreadful day of my life.

AMORIO. Indeed, brother, indeed! *(Beat.)* Leander, if I told you something with which you would never on any occasion agree with, would you—

(LEANDER stops.)

LEANDER. What have you done this time?

AMORIO. Oh no, it is nothing bad.

LEANDER. Tell me.

AMORIO. I fooled the Priest into giving me a marriage certificate.

LEANDER. Amorio, do you simply wish to be noticed!? You cannot afford to be seen in this town!

AMORIO. Oh no, Leander, it was magnificent! I had him fooled for a minister! He should be a... *finister!*

(Both start laughing and then stop, realizing the joke has no meaning, look at each, other, look at the audience, and then continue.)

AMORIO. As I was saying, were you aware he *actually* has a missing son. No longer is that so! For now *I* am his missing son—

LEANDER. Do you realize what you have done?

AMORIO. Oh, Lea—

LEANDER. Amorio, you will return and tell the Priest this instant!

AMORIO. No! I will not, Leander! I am being cautious with my identity. I am not being reckless. I am careful!

(LEANDER has a take to the audience.)

FLAUTINO. Master, shall I plan two weddings? Another for your brother?

LEANDER. Well yes. I suppose there is nothing I may do to change Amorio's mind. *(Beat.)* Amorio, when is *your* marriage to take place?

AMORIO. Well, as you are being married tomorrow, and as we *are* brothers, I found it valuably necessary to plan our weddings one right after the other.

LEANDER. AMORIO!!!

AMORIO. We are in fact brothers! You mustn't forget that, Leander!

LEANDER. This is not happening! Amorio! I have worked out a scheme for you to be relieved of your banishment and you are ruining it!

AMORIO. I was banished for a crime I did not commit.

LEANDER. I give up! Fine! Get married right after me! *I give up!*

(LEANDER exits.)

AMORIO. *(Smiling and relieved; to himself:)* I shall show him tomorrow! *(To LEANDER:)* Ciao, brother! *(To FLAUTINO:)* Brilliant! I am brilliant!

FLAUTINO. Yes, sir, brilliant!

AMORIO. Flautino, do you think they'll make a book about me one day? Or perhaps a play, I've always wanted to see a play of my life performed on the stage!

(He looks down and at the audience. He walks around the stage, realizing this is, in fact, a play about his life, shrugs his shoulders, returns to his place, and continues.)

FLAUTINO. Sir, may I ask what formal dinner you wish to have the evening of your wedding?

AMORIO. Give me a pig, and some bread and some wine.

FLAUTINO. Well done, sir! I shall prepare your requests!

(FLAUTINO exits. ISABELLA enters.)

AMORIO. Isabella!

ISABELLA. Amorio!

(She runs to him and throws her arms around him.)

Oh, Amorio, I dread tomorrow!

AMORIO. Dread? Why?

ISABELLA. Because I am getting mar—well, because, my mother is planning something for me.

AMORIO. Isabella, forget your mother's plans. I have a surprise just for you!

ISABELLA. A surprise! What is it! Tell me!

AMORIO. The night of my return, when you met me in front of this wall, we promised to be married. And...I have done it!

ISABELLA. Done what!?

AMORIO. We are to be married, Isabella!

ISABELLA. But how!? Surely the Priest knows about you!

AMORIO. My ways, my ways! I simply fooled the man! Do not worry, Isabella, it will go as planned. Tomorrow, my brother Leander is to be married. And following his wedding, we are to be married! Everything will go as ordered and we will be the happiest couplet in all Italy! I must leave, now, my love! But do not worry. We will be married! I love you Isabella!

AMORIO exits.

ISABELLA. *(Sobbing:)* I love Amorio! I do, I love him with all my heart! And I wish with all my heart to marry him! But not like this! Not like this! My life is truly over! The Lord only knows the ending to this disaster! What am I to do? The wedding is tomorrow! And my mother! Oh, my mother! *(Sobs.)*

(The MOTHER's voice [FLAUTINO's voice] calls from the distance, "Isabella! Return to your mother or so help me God—")

Coming, mother! *(Back to audience:)* Oh! What am I to do!?

(She exits, sobbing like a baby. Lights fade out.)

Scene 4 **The Wedding**

(Setting: The town's square. Wedding decorations line the set, and a large cross is set.)

(At Rise: The lights open with FLAUTINO carrying his clipboard and feather pen, writing notes as he examines the chapel and sneezing repetitively while sniffing his runny nose.)

FLAUTINO. *(Mumbling to himself:)* Six guests, fourteen...two cheese sandwiches...chairs upside down...check.

(AMORIO enters wearing a veil.)

FLAUTINO. Sir, do you by any chance have a handkerchief? I have an awfully runny nose this morning. *(Spotting AMORIO's veil:)* Oh, thank you.

(Before AMORIO can stop him, FLAUTINO has taken the veil and blown his nose on it.)

FLAUTINO. Thank you, sir. Very kind of you to offer your veil to me.

(FLAUTINO notices it is AMORIO.)

Amorio!? Sir!?

AMORIO. Where!?

FLAUTINO. No, sir! It is you! Amorio! Oh, I am terribly sorry of the veil, sir. If I had known it was you—you—what are *you* doing here, sir? You cannot be seen in this town!

AMORIO. Do not worry, Flautino. I have come to attend my brother's wedding.

FLAUTINO. But your disguise. I have ruined it!

AMORIO. I know! May the lord punish you for it! But do not worry. I will find a different camouflage!

(AMORIO exits.)

FLAUTINO. *(Looking up:)* Lord have mercy.

(FLAUTINO exits. Backstage, FLAUTINO should be changing clothes to Mother's wardrobe. LEANDER, MOTHER, ISABELLA, and THE PRIEST enter in wedding assembly as wedding music is played.)

THE PRIEST. To the many, many people who have joined us in this festive occasion.

(THE PRIEST looks around, realizing only three others are there.)

Well, to those that *are* here: We are gathered here today to witness the marriage of these two dear, dear children of God. As some of you are aware, I once had a wife, a long time ago. Our marriage never lasted more than a year before we were separated. I became a minister, and I am uncertain as to where she is right now. I can say, however, that those were the most joyous times of my life. Marriage.

(The MOTHER snores aloud.)

She gave birth to twins, a boy and a girl. My son, I am happy to say, I have come to meet yesterday, eighteen years later. You see, marriage is a time of happiness, together, husband, and wife. Enjoy these times, my children. By the power vested in me and the Catholic Church, I now pronounce you man and—

(THE PRIEST is interrupted by AMORIO's entrance. AMORIO has changed clothing. He is now in the traveler's disguise. He tries to speak, but is once again muffled by the beard. He pulls the beard all the way down.)

AMORIO. Has the wedding already begun!?

LEANDER. *(Whispering:)* AMORIO! Leave at once!

THE PRIEST. Amorio!? Where!? *(Spots AMORIO:)* Amorio, my son! This is my son!

MOTHER. His son!? Amorio!? Where!?

THE PRIEST. Son, come here, come here!

(THE PRIEST gives AMORIO a big hug.)

LEANDER. Amorio, leave!

THE PRIEST. *(To LEANDER:)* You know my son?

LEANDER. Oh, I'm sorry sir, I must have been thinking—

MOTHER. It is him. Amooooorio!

(The MOTHER pulls off AMORIO's beard and disguise. Everyone gasps.)

THE PRIEST. This is not possible! Not *Leander's* brother Amorio. This is a different, much...better Amorio! This is my son! Amorio!

LEANDER. Apparently not, Father.

THE PRIEST. But, but, but—

AMORIO. Oh, he's right, sir! Isabella and I were in love much before this engagement. I tricked you into granting me a marriage certificate so I may marry Isabella.

LEANDER. What!? What did you say!?

AMORIO. I said that Isabella and I were in love much before this engagement—wait a minute—Leander—Isabella. You two are— (*In shock.*)

LEANDER. To be married!? Yes! I am just as much surprise as you!

LEANDER & AMORIO. This has been your secret lover all along?

LEANDER & AMORIO. Yes.

LEANDER & AMORIO. I thought you—

LEANDER. For goodness sakes, man, let me speak! (*Beat.*) I never expected *you* two to be in love! This is absurd! Amorio, I swear—wait...what am I speaking? I do not wish for my marriage to take place! (*Pause.*) Amorio, I give you full consent to marry this woman! Father...continue.

THE PRIEST. By the power vested in me and the Catholic Church I now pronounce you man and—

MOTHER. I do not consent! Amooooorio...it has been some time since I have seen you ...that brother of Leaaaaander. You stole my necklace! You're the one! You have sneaked back into the city, haven't you! I heard you were planning to sneak back into town!

AMORIO. Rumors—

MOTHER. Rumors shkroomers! You know what you did to me! You stole my necklace! And there is no way in heaven or earth I will give you my daughter's hand in marriage! Not to a thief, a scum as yourself!

(*ISABELLA begins to cry.*)

Oh don't cry, you! Get a hold of yourself! Oh I knew it! The minute I had chosen to keep you instead of your brother, I knew I would regret it for the rest of my life! Oh, Frederiko why did you leave me with this pitiful—

THE PRIEST. What did you just say!?

MOTHER. I said—

THE PRIEST. It is me, my love...Frederiko!

MOTHER. Frederiko? My long lost Frederiko!?

THE PRIEST. It has been so long!

(The two hug.)

MOTHER. And...this *(Gesturing towards AMORIO:)* ...this is our son?

THE PRIEST. No, no. Mr. Amorio, the brother of Leander, has taken it to himself to play me for a fool! Which, I can honestly say, I am! *(Pause.)* Not.

MOTHER. Well, then *who* is our son? A family is not a family with the child missing! I will conduct a thorough search within the town's official documents and find our son!

(MOTHER exits. All are completely silent. Then THE PRIEST says loudly, in the element of surprise:)

THE PRIEST. OH! Now I know who my one dear love is, I know who my daughter is! Isabella!

(THE PRIEST hugs ISABELLA.)

ISABELLA. Well, father—

THE PRIEST. Do you mean “Father” as in my being a priest? *(Smiles more.)* Or “father” as in, your father.

ISABELLA. Father as in...my father!

(The two hug again. Enter MOTHER, running onstage with a sheet of paper.)

MOTHER. I have found it! I have found the document! I know who our son is!

ALL. Who!?

MOTHER. Well, I never actually looked at the document.

ALL. Look at it!

MOTHER. What? The document?

ALL. YES!

MOTHER. Oh!

(MOTHER reads the document.)

Our son is...Laaavender.

(Everyone is confused. "What?" "Lavender?" "Who's that?" AMORIO crosses to MOTHER and looks at the document. He whispers to MOTHER, correcting her.)

AMORIO. No, no. Here, there's a smudge on the paper. It's...L-e-ander.

MOTHER. LEANDER!?

ALL. Leander!?

LEANDER. Me!?

(MOTHER gasps, ISABELLA gasps, LEANDER gasps.)

MOTHER. How can this be!?

AMORIO. Oh it can be...it *can* be!

MOTHER. I am in shock!

AMORIO. I was suspicious this entire play—

ALL. *(To AMORIO:)* Be quiet!

LEANDER. Well Amorio and I aren't really brothers. We were both orphans at the orphanage. I never knew my parents. He never knew his. We became best friends as soon as we met and declared each other brothers from then on. *(To THE PRIEST:)* So it is true, Father. I am your son.

THE PRIEST. *(Starting to cry:)* Do you mean "Father" as in my being a priest? *(Smiles more.)* Or "father" as in, your father?

LEANDER. Both!

(THE PRIEST and LEANDER hug. The MOTHER starts to cry and joins in on the bear hug.)

LEANDER. *(To AMORIO:)* I loved you as a brother, even though I always knew we weren't! *(Back to everyone:)* I now know why the love between Isabella and I was most certainly odd! She is my sister!

ALL. Sister!? Ugh!

THE PRIEST. What do we do about this marriage!? Surely you cannot marry your sister!

MOTHER. We must find a new groom at once!

(All silent. AMORIO begins to whistle and kick the ground with “boredom.” Obviously, he is trying to be noticed.)

THE PRIEST. Amorio, you say you and Isabella are in love?

ISABELLA & AMORIO. Yes!

MOTHER. No! I will not allow a bum...a criminal...a *necklace stealer*...to marry my daughter!

AMORIO. But it isn't true! I did not steal your necklace! I do not even know how those rumors—

MOTHER. I have had it with your lies!

(FLAUTINO “enters.”)

FLAUTINO. Master Amorio, the wedding is to begin shortly, so I advise—

(AMORIO gestures out to the wedding guests.)

—aghhhhh! What!? Who!? How!?

AMORIO. Do not worry. It is under control.

MOTHER. *(To AMORIO:)* This servant was the informer of your crime! He was the one who told me.

AMORIO. Flautino!?

MOTHER. Who is Flautino?

(Silence as everyone is oblivious to MOTHER and FLAUTINO being the same person.)

Whatever his name may be, it was this servant who told me of your crime, Amorio.

AMORIO. Flautino told you!? And what did he say?

MOTHER. Well, I shall let you ask him yourself!

THIS PLAY IS NOT OVER!

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