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The Marriage of Figaro



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Mozart's

The Marriage of Figaro

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Edited by Burton D. Fisher

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“Opera to me comes before anything else...”

-Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

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a Prelude.....
to OPERA CLASSICS LIBRARY's
The Marriage of Figaro

The Marriage of Figaro has proven to be one of the greatest masterpieces of comedy with music. Mozart's musical characterizations are ingenious; his melodies are enormously faithful to character and situation, contain charm, a perfection of form, and an utter spontaneity. Moreover, the music sparkles with all the wit and gaiety of Beaumarchais's humorous work, and certainly, much praise must be conceded to Lorenzo da Ponte's shrewdly contrived libretto.

OPERA CLASSICS LIBRARY explores the greatness and magic of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*. The *Commentary and Analysis* offers pertinent biographical information about Mozart, his mind-set at the time of the opera's composition, the genesis of the opera, its premiere and performance history, and insightful story and character analysis.

The text also contains a *Brief Story Synopsis*, *Principal Characters in The Marriage of Figaro*, and a *Story Narrative with Music Highlight Examples*, the latter containing original music transcriptions that are interspersed appropriately within the story's dramatic exposition. In addition, the text includes a *Discography*, *Videography*, and a *Dictionary of Opera and Musical Terms*.

The *Libretto* for *The Marriage of Figaro* has been newly translated by the Opera Journeys staff with specific emphasis on retaining a literal translation, but also with the objective to provide a faithful translation in modern and contemporary English; in this way, the substance of the drama becomes more intelligible. To enhance educational and study objectives, the *Libretto* also contains music highlight examples interspersed within the drama.

The opera art form is the sum of many artistic expressions: theatrical drama, music, scenery, poetry, dance, acting and gesture. In opera, it is the composer who is the dramatist, using the emotive power of his music to express intense, human conflicts. Words evoke thought, but music provokes feelings; opera's sublime fusion of words, music and all the theatrical arts provides powerful theater, an impact on one's sensibilities that can reach into the very depths of the human soul.

Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, certainly a crown jewel of his glorious operatic and musical inventions, remains a masterpiece of the lyric theater, a tribute to the art form as well as to its ingenious composer.

Burton D. Fisher

Editor

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The Marriage of Figaro

(“Le Nozze di Figaro”)

Opera in Italian opera in four acts

Music

by

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart

Libretto by Lorenzo da Ponte, after

La Folle Journée ou Le Mariage de Figaro,

(“The Crazy Day, or The Marriage of Figaro”) 1784,

a play by Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais

Premiere:

Burgtheater, Vienna

May 1786

Commentary and Analysis

Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart — 1756 to 1791 — was born in Salzburg, Austria. His life-span was brief, but his musical achievements were phenomenal and monumental, establishing him as one of the most important and inspired composers in Western history: music seemed to gush forth from his soul like fresh water from a spring. With his early death at the age of thirty-five, one can only dream of the musical treasures that might have materialized from his music pen.

Along with such masters as Johann Sebastian Bach and Ludwig van Beethoven, Mozart is one of those three “immortals” of classical music. Superlatives about Mozart are inexhaustible: Tchaikovsky called him “the music Christ”; Haydn, a contemporary who revered and idolized him, claimed he was the best composer he ever knew; Schubert wept over “the impressions of a brighter and better life he had imprinted on our souls”; Schumann wrote that there were some things in the world about which nothing could be said: much of Shakespeare, pages of Beethoven, and Mozart’s last symphony, the forty-first.

Richard Wagner, who exalted the power of the orchestra in his music dramas, assessed Mozart’s symphonies: “He seemed to breathe into his instruments the passionate tones of the human voice ... and thus raised the capacity of orchestral music for expressing the emotions to a height where it could represent the whole unsatisfied yearning of the heart.”

Although Mozart’s career was short, his musical output was tremendous by any standard: among his more than 600 works are forty-one symphonies, twenty-seven piano concertos, more than thirty string quartets, many acclaimed quintets, world-famous violin and flute concertos, momentous piano and violin sonatas, and, of course, a substantial legacy of sensational operas.

Mozart’s father, Leopold, an eminent musician and composer in his own right, became the teacher and inspiration to his exceptionally talented and incredibly gifted prodigy child. The young Mozart quickly demonstrated a thorough command of the technical resources of musical composition: at age three he was able to play tunes he heard on the harpsichord; at age four he began composing his own music; at age six he gave his first public concert; by age twelve he had written ten symphonies, a cantata, and an opera; and at age thirteen he toured Italy, where in Rome, he astonished the music world by writing out the full score of a complex religious composition after one hearing.

Mozart’s musical style and the late eighteenth-century Classical era are virtually synonymous: their goal was to conform to specific standards and forms, to be succinct, clear, and well balanced, but at the same time, develop musical ideas to a point of emotionally satisfying fullness. As that quintessential Classicist, Mozart’s music has become universally extolled, an outpouring of memorable graceful melody combined with formal, contrapuntal ingenuity.

Mozart said: “Opera to me comes before everything else.” He composed operas in all of the existing genres and traditions: the Italian opera seria and opera buffa, and the German singspiel. During Mozart’s time, the Italians set the international standards for opera: Italian was the universal language of music and opera, and Italian opera was what Mozart’s Austrian audiences and most of the rest of Europe wanted most. Therefore, even though Mozart was an Austrian, his country part of the German Holy Roman Empire, most of Mozart’s operas were written in Italian.

Opera seria defines the style of serious Italian operas in which subjects and themes dealt primarily with mythology, history, and Greek tragedy. In this genre, the music drama usually portrayed an heroic or tragic conflict typically involving a moral dilemma, such as love vs. duty, and usually resolved happily with due reward for rectitude, loyalty, and unselfishness. Mozart's most renowned opere serie are *Idomeneo* (1781), and his last opera, *La Clemenza di Tito* ("The Clemency of Titus") (1791), the latter commissioned to celebrate the coronation in Prague of the Emperor Leopold II as King of Bohemia.

Opera buffa had its roots in the Italian commedia dell'arte, a theatrical convention that evolved during the Renaissance when strolling street players used satire, irony, and parody to ridicule every aspect of their society and its institutions; they characterized humorous or hypocritical situations involving cunning servants, scheming doctors, and duped masters.

Most of the characters in Beaumarchais' original "Figaro trilogy," the literary basis for Rossini's *The Barber of Seville* and Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*, have antecedents in the commedia dell'arte: Figaro is loosely based on the commedia dell'arte character of Harlequin, an athletic, graceful, cunning valet and ladies' man who claimed noble birth. Likewise, Dr. Bartolo is inspired by the character Pantalone, a character that prides himself on being an expert on many subjects, but ultimately becomes a victim of his arrogance and vanity. The Marcellina character in *Marriage* is the only character not based on commedia dell'arte: she is that old rapacious spinster inspired by characters from classic Roman comedies.

Opera buffa had its first popular incarnation in Giovanni Pergolesi's *La Serva Padrona* (1733) ("The Maid as Mistress), a work with only three characters, but a quintessential model of the genre, in which lively and catchy tunes underscore the antics of a servant tricking an old bachelor into marriage.

Art shapes and reflects its times. During the late eighteenth century, opera buffa provided a convenient theatrical vehicle in which the ideals of democracy could be expressed in art: opera buffa became an operatic incarnation of political populism. In the opera seria, the aristocracy identified, and even became flattered by its pompous exalted personalities, gods, and heroes, but opera buffa's satire and humor provided the wherewithal to examine social injustices and the frustrations of society's lower classes.

Opera buffa became synonymous with the spirit of the Enlightenment and the Classical era of music, and was enthusiastically championed by such renowned progressives as Rousseau; its music was intrinsically more natural, and its melodies were more elegant and emotionally restrained.

Mozart delighted in portraying themes dealing with ideas inspired by the Enlightenment: he lived and composed during the social upheavals and ideological transitions of the late eighteenth century that would lead to the French Revolution and the demise of the ancien régime. In particular, *The Marriage of Figaro*, an opera buffa, contains all of the era's social and political overtones: it portrays servants who are cleverer than their selfish, unscrupulous, and arrogant masters. Napoleon would later conclude that *Marriage*, both the Mozart and source Beaumarchais play, represented the "Revolution in action."

Mozart's opere buffe range from his youthful works, *La Finta Semplici* (1768) and *La Finta Giardiniera* (1775), to his monumental opera buffa classics that he composed with the renowned librettist, Lorenzo da Ponte: *The Marriage of Figaro* ("Le Nozze di Figaro") (1786) described by both composer and librettist as a "commedia per musica" ("comedy with music"); *Don Giovanni*, (1787), technically an opera buffa but designated a "dramma giocoso" ("humorous drama" or "playful play"), essentially a combination of both the opera buffa and

opera seria genres; and *Così fan tutte* (1789) (“Thus do all women behave”), another blend of the opera seria with the opera buffa for which nothing could be more praiseful than the musicologist William Mann’s conclusion that *Così fan tutte* contains “the most captivating music ever composed.”

Mozart also composed operas in the German singspiel genre, a style very similar to Italian opera buffa: generally comic opera containing spoken dialogue instead of accompanied recitative. Mozart’s most popular German singspiel operas are: *Die Zauberflöte* (1791) (“The Magic Flute”) and *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (1782) (“The Abduction from the Seraglio”)

Mozart composed over 18 operas, among them: *Bastien and Bastienne* (1768); *La Finta Semplice* (1768); *Mitridate, Rè di Ponto* (1770); *Ascanio in Alba* (1771); *Il Sogno di Scipione* (1772); *Lucio Silla* (1772); *La Finta Giardiniera* (1774); *Idomeneo, Rè di Creta* (1781); *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (1782); *Der Schauspieldirektor* (1786); *Le Nozze di Figaro, (The Marriage of Figaro)* (1786); *Don Giovanni* (1787); *Così fan tutte* (1790); *Die Zauberflöte* (The Magic Flute) (1791); *La Clemenza di Tito* (1791).

The Marriage of Figaro has sometimes been called the perfect opera buffa: the most inspired Mozart opera because of the comic effectiveness of its underlying political and social implications.

In opera, words are intensified, or realized, by the emotive power of music. Opera is concerned with the emotions and behavior of humanity, and Mozart certainly understood his fellow human beings, ingeniously translating his incredible human insight through his musical language.

As such, Mozart became the first, if not the greatest master of musical characterization and musical portraiture. Like Shakespeare, he ingeniously translated “dramatic truth”: his musical characterizations portray a complex panorama of universal humanity; emotions and passions that bare the souls of his characters truthfully, although Mozart rarely suggests any puritanical judgment or moralization of his characters’ behavior and actions, prompting Beethoven to lament that in *Don Giovanni* and *Marriage*, Mozart had squandered his genius on immoral and licentious subjects.

Nevertheless, it is that spotlight on the individual that makes Mozart a bridge between eighteenth and nineteenth century operas. The opera seria portrayed abstract emotion, the dramatic form often imitating ancient Greek theater, in which an individual’s passions and dramatic situations would generally transfer to the chorus for narration, commentary, or summation.

Mozart was anticipating the transition from the Classical to the Romantic era that was to begin soon after his death, his music truthfully expressing and capturing his character’s sentiments and feelings. He was therefore the first composer to perceive clearly the vast possibilities of the operatic form as a means of musically creating characterization: in his operas, great and small persons move, think, and breathe on the human level, his musical characterizations providing extraordinary and insightful portrayals of real and complex humanity in their conduct and character. It is in the interaction between those characters themselves, particularly in ensembles that are almost symphonic in grandeur, which become moments in which an individual character’s emotions, passions, feelings, and reactions stand out in high relief.

Mozart’s characters have captivated and become treasures to their opera audiences for over two-hundred years: *Don Giovanni*’s Donna Anna, Donna Elvira, Zerlina, Masetto,

Leporello, and Don Giovanni himself; *The Marriage of Figaro*'s Count and Countess, Cherubino, Susanna, and Figaro. All of these Mozartian characters are profoundly human: they act with passion, yet they retain that special Mozartian dignity as well as sentiment.

In the end, like Shakespeare, Mozart's characterizations have become timeless representations of humanity, great as well as flawed, but as contemporary in the twenty-first century as they were in the later part of the eighteenth century, even though costumes may have changed.

Mozart became a magician in developing and inventing various techniques within his unique musical language to portray, communicate, and truthfully mirror the human condition. He expresses human qualities not only through distinguishing melody, but also through the specific essence of certain key signatures, as well as through rhythm, tempo, pitch, and even through accent and speech inflection.

As an example, Mozart used certain musical keys that inherently convey particular moods and effects: often G major is the key for rustic life and the common people; and A major the seductive key for sensuous love scenes. In *Don Giovanni*, D minor appears solemnly in the Overture and its final scene: Mozart's key for " Sturm und Drang" (storm and stress). When characters are in trouble, they sing in keys far removed from the home key, but as they get out of trouble, they return to that home key, reducing the tension.

In both *Don Giovanni* and *The Marriage of Figaro*, social classes clash on the stage with sentiment and insight: musical characterizations range from underdogs to demigods, but when Mozart deals with peasants and the lower classes, he is subtle, compassionate, and loving; the heroes are those Figaros, Susannas, and Zerlinas, bright characters who occupy the lower stations whom he ennobles with poignant music that expresses their complex personal emotions, feelings, hope, sadness, envy, passion, revenge, and eternal love.

Mozart's theatrical genius was his ability to express truly human qualities through his music, endowing his character creations with a universal and sublime uniqueness: in the end, achieving an incomparable immortality for himself as well as his character creations.

The commission for *The Marriage of Figaro* was received from Mozart's faithful patron, Emperor Joseph II of Austria. In 1786, its premiere year, there were triumphant productions in both Vienna and Prague, even though the aristocracy deemed Mozart's libretto as having emanated from the depths of vulgarity. Nevertheless, Prague was not directly under the control of the imperial Hapsburgs, and, therefore, censorship and restriction of underlying elements of its story was limited, if nonexistent.

Mozart chose Lorenzo da Ponte as his librettist: that peripatetic scholar and entrepreneur, and erstwhile crony of the notorious Casanova de Seingalt, reputedly his assistant for selected sections of the later *Don Giovanni* libretto.

Da Ponte led a picaresque life, and was always involved in scandals and intrigues; at one time he was banished from Venice, and forced to leave England under threat of imprisonment because of financial difficulties. In 1805 he came to the United States where he taught Italian at Columbia University and introduced the Italian classics to America. In 1825, he became an opera impresario and may have been the first to present Italian opera in the United States.

Da Ponte was the librettist for three Mozart operas: *The Marriage of Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Così fan tutte*.

Pierre Augustin Caron de Beaumarchais (1732-1799) was the son of a clockmaker. Initially, he followed in his father's footsteps and was subsequently appointed clockmaker and watchmaker to the court of Louis XV. He was also a musician and composer, a self-taught student of guitar, flute, and harp, and eventually became the harp teacher to the King's daughters. Beaumarchais married the widow of a court official in 1756: now elevated to a nobleman, he took the name Beaumarchais and bought the office of secretary to the king.

In 1763, France was still seeking revenge for its loss of Canada and was observing with great interest the development of the American "resistance movement." The French government offered covert aid to the American rebels, but they were determined to keep France out of the war until a more opportune moment. In 1776, a fictitious company was set up under the direction of Beaumarchais to funnel military supplies and arms to the rebellious American colonies.

Nevertheless, Beaumarchais' fame rests on his literary achievements: the comedic theatrical trilogy, which includes *Le Barbier de Séville, ou La Précaution Inutile* (1775) ("The Barber of Seville, or the Useless Precaution"), *Le Mariage de Figaro, ou La Folle Journée* (1784) ("The Marriage of Figaro, or the Crazy Day"), and the final installment, *L'Autre Tartuffe, ou La Mère Coupable* (1792) ("The Guilty Mother").

The plays represent a heroic output, sometimes referred to as "The Figaro trilogy," or the "Almaviva trilogy." They represent an historical canvas of late eighteenth century society, their overflowing social and political complications summing up an era: they became the essential personification of the forthcoming French Revolution, which they not only reflect, but even consciously or unconsciously set into motion.

The plays satirized the French ruling class and aristocracy, and reflected the growing lower class dissatisfaction with the nobility in the years preceding the French Revolution. Both Beaumarchais' *Le Barbier de Séville* and *Le Mariage de Figaro* were caustic satires of prevailing social and political conditions, which flattered the lower classes, and castigated the upper class nobility. The ancien régime was portrayed in declining grandeur and impending doom, prompting Napoleon to later comment after the historical fact, that they truly represented the "revolution already in action."

Beaumarchais knits together a cast of thinly disguised heroes, lower class characters who survive through imagination and wit: none is more admirable than the colorful Figaro — Beaumarchais himself — who is a master of sabotage and intrigue, and a clever and enterprising "man for all seasons": the factotum, or jack-of-all-trades, whose savvy and ingenuity serves as the symbol of class revolt against the aristocracy. Figaro's antagonists are all members of the upper classes, real villains and tormentors who are in continuous conflict with one another.

In Beaumarchais, Figaro expresses the soul of the forthcoming revolution in his witty and highhanded attitude toward his aristocratic master, Count Almaviva: "What have you done to earn so many honors? You have taken the trouble to be born, that's all."

Beaumarchais originally wrote *Le Barbier de Séville* as an opera libretto for the Opéra-Comique, but it was banned, the King briefly imprisoning Beaumarchais for his blasphemous writings. But the King had to accede to public pressure and release him, and in an ironic twist, agreed to a gala performance of *Le Barber de Seville* at Versailles, his wife, Marie-Antoinette, portraying Rosine, and the future Charles X, portraying Figaro.

Le Mariage de Figaro, Beaumarchais' second installment of the trilogy, was such a triumph that it ran for eighty-six consecutive performances.

Beaumarchais achieved literary immortality through the da Ponte-Mozart opera, *The Marriage of Figaro*, and later Rossini's opera, *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, ("The Barber of Seville") (1816). Although each one of Beaumarchais's plays ends in a marriage, not everyone lives happily ever after: each play seems to resolve darker than the one before. In Beaumarchais's final installment, *L'Autre Tartuffe, ou La Mère Coupable* ("The Guilty Mother") (1792), the Countess Almaviva has a child by Cherubino. One is tempted to speculate how Mozart would have treated that darker episode with his music, but the play appeared one year after Mozart's death.

The two Figaro operas, Mozart's *Marriage* and Rossini's *Barber*, are appropriate companions. The later Rossini work has none of the deep and tender sentiment that underlies so much of Mozart's music, but from a comic viewpoint, Rossini's work inherently deals with a more humorous phase of the entire trilogy: the intrinsic humor and vivacity inherent in the Count's adventures with Figaro while they outwit Dr. Bartolo and carry off the mischievous Rosina.

In contrast, *Marriage's* story depicts the Count after his marriage: his intrigues, suspicions, and philandering. In Rossini's *Barber*, the youthful and impetuous characters have an elemental freshness, but in Mozart, they have matured, become domesticated, and certainly have transcended youthful innocence. Nevertheless, these two operas are "marriages made in operatic heaven."

Beaumarchais' trilogy addresses despicable aspects of human character that were the very focus of Enlightenment idealism, its undercurrents sparking the French Revolution itself.

The engines that drive the plots of *The Marriage of Figaro* — and *Don Giovanni* — are the moral foibles and peccadilloes of aristocratic men: Count Almaviva and Don Giovanni are the nobility, who can almost be perceived as criminals by modern standards; men who are unstable, wildly libidinous, and consider themselves above moral law. Both works focus on seduction; seduction that ends in hapless failure.

The Marriage of Figaro has proven to be a monumental tribute to Mozart's genius in musical characterization: it is considered one of the greatest masterpieces of comedy in music because its music is enormously faithful to character and situation: music containing charm, a perfection of form, and an utter spontaneity. Moreover, the music sparkles with all the wit and gaiety of Beaumarchais' humorous work, and certainly, only praise can be granted to da Ponte's shrewdly contrived libretto.

The social and political conflicts in the *Marriage* blend into a highly sophisticated battle of the sexes. The story takes place three years after the *Barber* story: the Count has become a predatory philanderer, the entire action revolving around the Count's obsession to seduce Susanna before her marriage to Figaro, even though he has abandoned his right of "droit du seigneur." Figaro and Susanna are determined to marry before the Count can force the issue.

Nevertheless, in these plays, the lower classes refuse to be victimized: through their wiles, wit, determination, decency and love — and a little bit of luck — they can tip the scales against upper class arrogance and power. Although these characters represent articulate harbingers of revolution, da Ponte removed what he considered politically offensive in Beaumarchais; but Mozart replaced them with his music.

In presenting these social injustices, the underlying implication is that social hierarchies are accidents of fortune rather than reflections of native worth: these themes are clearly woven into both the literary as well as the musical fabric of *Marriage*.

The opera's two main female characters, Susanna and the Countess, are brilliantly contrasting characterizations: diverse femininity, like Donna Anna, Donna Elvira, and Zerlina in the later *Don Giovanni*.

Susanna is indeed the heroine of the story: she is multidimensional and complex, and possesses a high degree of instinctive intelligence. Like her "Columbine" forebears from the commedia dell'arte, and even Rosina from Beaumarchais's *Barbier*, she is a spirited character; sharp-witted, spunky and wily, and far from a soubrette, or the archetypal cunning and scheming servant. She radiates with assuredness and omniscience, whether in her conversations with the Countess, or in the third act when she fights off becoming victimized by the lascivious Count: her sense of honor dominates her actions, and she proves to be the one character in the opera that is capable of sorting out everybody's troubles as well as her own.

Susanna becomes the master of irony in the magnificent comic finale of Act II after she emerges from the closet, commenting with feigned disingenuousness and masterful irony: "What is this excitement about. A drawn sword? To kill the page? After all, it's only me!"

From the very beginning, Susanna demonstrates her intuitive intelligence and insight, making sure Figaro directs his attention to her wedding hat, and certainly, opening his eyes to the Count's ulterior motives in placing their room so close to his quarters. But it is in the last act, when Mozart provides her with that lovely, subdued, and sensuous aria, "Deh viene non tardar," that she overwhelms Figaro with her display of profound feeling, Mozart's music expressing intense tenderness and emotion. Susanna's "Deh viene non tardar" is a magnificent moment in the opera: action and time stop as she dreams of a sublimely happy future, her freedom with her new husband, although Figaro believes that she is betraying him.

The Countess is the other great female character in the *Marriage*, wounded and prone to melancholy, but always exuding a profound spiritual and moral presence. Her dignity has been pitifully injured by the Count, but she never at anytime considers staining his honor by vengefully taking a lover. Subconsciously, she understands, but consciously she will not accept her husband's philandering: a man seemingly bored by his wife; who in today's terms, would be considered the classic victim of a massive mid-life crisis.

Mozart gave the Countess two great arias, both poignantly expressing resignation, but with profound dignity: "Dove sono" and "Porgi amor"; da Ponte's words are heartfelt expressions of a truly noble and aristocratic woman, but it is the emotive power of Mozart's music that reflects her true feelings and genuine pathos.

The finale of Act II is perhaps one of Mozart's most monumental musical inventions and designs, an episode of some 150 pages of score without parallel in opera; its 20 minute length virtually making it a play itself. Mozart continuously uses a variety of key changes to alter the mood and provide surprise upon surprise. Eventually, eight characters appear on stage, the ensemble building steadily, but never with a false climax or inconsistent or artificial stroke.

The Act II finale sequence demonstrates the complexity of the opera's essence: misunderstandings. Who is in the Countess's closet? (Is it Cherubino as both the Count and

Countess presume?) What are the contents of the dropped paper? (Figaro has to be primed to know that it is Cherubino's commission.) Who arranged for a nocturnal rendezvous? (The Count is obsessed to know who wrote the letter presumably written by the Countess to her secret lover.)

The ensemble is inaugurated when the Count, convinced that Cherubino is having an affair with the Countess and is hiding in the closet, begins to break down the closet door. The only two characters on stage, the Count and the Countess, begin an acrimonious exchange: the Count erupts in rage, becomes overbearing, and intolerably aggressive; the Countess becomes flustered in her attempt to reason with him and persuade him of her innocence, but she compounds the situation by admitting that Cherubino is indeed in the closet — and only half dressed.

The first surprise — to both the Count and Countess — is the emergence of Susanna, not Cherubino, from the closet. Out of necessity, and recognizing a misunderstanding, the Count calms down and begs his wife's forgiveness.

With Figaro's arrival, the ensemble builds to four characters. The Count, suspicious and confused, decides to question his wily valet, instinctively condemning him for being involved in the anonymous note he received. And then the group becomes a quintet when the gardener Antonio arrives to announce that someone jumped out the window and ruined his flower bed.

The comic confusion augments and reaches a climax with the entrance of Don Basilio, Dr Bartolo, and Marcellina, the latter arriving to claim that Figaro must marry her as payment for his debt to her.

In this ensemble, all eight characters are on stage singing individually, and also in ensemble. Through Mozart's genius, the ensemble fuses like a symphony, the music creating a new drama of sensibilities and underlying subtleties and truths which transcend the libretto. Mozart emphatically highlights each surprise and revelation with a change in key, rhythm, and tempo. As such, one feels and senses the shock, nevertheless, the sequence maintains its delicacy and playfulness, always hinting that new revelations lie beyond what is known.

No one before Mozart had attempted such a long, uninterrupted piece of operatic music. Mozart proved that he was incredibly innovative: composers in the eighteenth century traditionally wrote short numbers, all strung together with recitatives or spoken dialogues. But in this second-act finale, with its seven musical numbers all welded as one unit, Mozart established the precursor for the next phase of operatic development that would arise in the nineteenth century, reaching its peak with choral and ensembles by Verdi and Wagner: the final extinction of separate musical numbers joined by action-bearing recitative, and the beginning or the continuity of text and music that would evolve into music drama.

The engine that drives the *Marriage* story concerns an entire series of crises which come about as a result of misunderstandings: mistakes and presumptions made from vaguely seen events, or overheard conversations not clearly understood. The characters are continually acting and reacting to their senses: they see and hear things from which they make presumptions, but are never sure, and as a result, crises develop and envelop the characters.

Susanna overheard the Count condemning the Countess for infidelity; the Count overheard Susanna proclaiming victory in Marcellina's suit against Figaro; Figaro believed he caught his new wife, Susanna, with the Count. Conversations and misunderstandings

drive the plot to its conclusion: Cherubino overheard the Count pressuring Susanna amorously; the Count overheard Basilio spread scandalous rumors about the Countess; the Count believed he has caught Figaro with the Countess.

Until the opera's conclusion, the end of a "Crazy Day," each character suffers because of misjudgments, believing a truth when it is not a truth, but only the result of a vague visual or aural perception. The opera's finale is 15 minutes long and is devoted to the weaving and unweaving of the story's comical complications and mistaken identities. Beaumarchais was a master technician in injecting these plot motivators into his play. But Mozart provides the emotive power of the musical language to invent incredibly descriptive music to comment on the characters' inner feelings and sensibilities during these crises.

In the *Marriage*, eyes and ears become the instruments of illusion and delusion. But illusion and delusion oppose reality and truth, the ultimate source of knowledge. At the conclusion of this masterpiece, knowledge is achieved; the imagined world becomes the real world, and unfounded perceptions and misunderstandings become reality and truth.

The Marriage of Figaro reflects the true soul of its times. It was the twilight of the Enlightenment, when humanity's craving for freedom and social justice would soon be engraved into Western history by events such as the storming of the Bastille and the French Revolution. Beaumarchais penned a search for universal truth in his "Figaro" plays that da Ponte transformed into an opera libretto, and Mozart scored with incredibly truthful musical inventions: music, like its literary foundations, that thunders for social reform and equality; a lasting testament to freedom, humanity's greatest aspiration.

The Marriage of Figaro

Principal Characters in *The Marriage of Figaro*

Brief Story Synopsis

Story Narrative with Music Highlight Examples

Principal Characters in The Marriage of Figaro

Count Almaviva	Baritone
Countess Almaviva	Soprano
Figaro, the Count's valet	Baritone
Susanna, lady-in-waiting to the Countess, betrothed to Figaro	Soprano
Cherubino, a young page	Soprano
Dr. Bartolo, a physician	Bass
Marcellina, Dr. Bartolo's housekeeper	Contralto
Don Basilio, music master	Bass
Antonio, a gardener, Susanna's uncle	Bass
Barbarina, Antonio's daughter	Soprano
Don Curzio, a lawyer	Tenor

TIME: 18th century

PLACE: Count Almaviva's chateau
in the countryside near Seville

Brief Story Synopsis

In the first episode of the trilogy, *The Barber of Seville* story, Count Almaviva courted Rosina, luring her from the jealous guardianship of Dr. Bartolo through a series of subterfuges, intrigues, and adventures, all engineered by Figaro, Seville's illustrious barber, factotum, and jack-of-all-trades.

In the second episode, *The Marriage of Figaro*, Count Almaviva is married to Rosina: she is now the Countess Almaviva; Figaro is the Count's valet, the additional reward he received for his services during the course of the plot of *The Barber of Seville*; and Dr. Bartolo has become the "doctor of the house." Dr. Bartolo seethes with revenge against Figaro for having outwitted him, which enabled the Count to marry Rosina. Together with the housekeeper, Marcellina, who also harbors resentment toward Figaro, both conspire for vengeance against Figaro.

The noble Count Almaviva of *The Barber of Seville* story has become a philanderer with amorous designs on Figaro's bride-to-be, Susanna, the Countess's maid.

The Marriage of Figaro story deals with eighteenth century social struggles between lower class servants and their aristocratic masters, the intrigues in their relationships complicated by sex, rivalries, jealousies, and revenge.

Story Narrative with Music Highlight Examples

Overture:

The Overture to *The Marriage of Figaro* captures the spirit of the opera: its themes are specific to the Overture and do not appear elsewhere in the opera.

In the Overture, Mozart's music suggests the story's underlying ironies and satire: it contains bubbling and delightful music that conveys rollicking good humor, as well as subtle suggestions of the story's intrigues and skullduggery.

Act I: A room assigned to Figaro and Susanna.

Figaro and his bride-to-be, Susanna, are making last minute preparations for their wedding. The Count has assigned them to new quarters, and presented them with the gift of a new bed. Figaro is preoccupied with measuring if the bed will fit in the room, while Susanna tries on a hat and veil she has made, planning to wear it at her wedding: with its traditional wreath of orange blossoms, it is known as "le chapeau de mariage." Susanna becomes petulant after her vain attempts to get Figaro to take interest in her hat. Finally, Figaro turns his attention to Susanna and acknowledges her hat.

Intuitively, Susanna has become suspicious of the Count's sudden "generosity" in providing them with a room so close to his own quarters. At the same time, she becomes exasperated by Figaro's unsuspecting complacency and his failure to realize that the proximity of their rooms may indeed be an intentional ploy on the part of the lustful Count. Susanna awakens Figaro: she suspects that the Count does not really want her close to her mistress, the Countess, but rather, he wants her conveniently located so that he could invent an errand to dispense with Figaro, and then have her at his mercy.

Their master has become a philanderer: rather than seek licentious amusement away from home, he has decided that he has many opportunities for amorous adventure right in his own chateau. Susanna has heard from Don Basilio that the Count has intentions of reinstating the "droit du seigneur," or "ius primae noctis," the old custom of "the feudal right of the lord," the tradition by which the lord of the manor, in compensation for the loss of one of his female servants through marriage, had the right to deflower his feudal dependent before the husband took possession. Nevertheless, Susanna has become the Count's intended victim, and with his customary despicable arrogance, he intends to achieve with consent from Susanna the right he ceded by law.


Upon hearing Susanna's revelation, Figaro expresses indignation, unable to comprehend the Count's betrayal of him after he provided his unstinting help and friendship during the Count's courting of Rosina. Figaro becomes alarmed, now convinced that if the Count succeeds in becoming the ambassador to London, he will send him off as a courier in order to have Susanna at his mercy.

Figaro decides that he must outwit his master, and with his customary confidence, he concludes that the Count will never be able to match his ingenuity. In his aria, "Se vuol ballare, Signor Contino" ("If you want to dance my little Count"), Figaro sums up the underlying conflict and tension within the entire opera story: the lower classes need for cunning to survive the abuses of the aristocracy's power. Susanna is confident she can control the lascivious Count, but Figaro seems to be apprehensive, even somewhat jealous.

“Se vuol ballare, signor Contino”

Allegretto

FIGARO



Se vuol bal - la - re, sig - nor Con - ti - no,
If you want to dance my little Count,

In a moment of need, Figaro had borrowed money from Marcellina, Dr. Bartolo’s housekeeper, however, lacking collateral, he promised to marry her if he did not reimburse her. Marcellina arrives to demand repayment from Figaro, and with the encouragement and assistance of Dr. Bartolo, intends to legally force Figaro to repay her. Likewise, Dr. Bartolo seeks revenge against Figaro because of his trickery in helping the Count lure Rosina from him. Bartolo is further gratified by the prospect of ridding himself of the now extremely unattractive Marcellina, who, during an affair many years earlier, bore Dr. Bartolo an illegitimate son.

Marcellina and Dr. Bartolo unite, impassioned accomplices in their conspiracy against Figaro: Dr. Bartolo concludes that his hour of revenge against “that rascal Figaro” may have come at last, and expresses his excitement in the traditional grand buffo style, his patter aria, “La vendetta, oh, la vendetta!” (“Vengeance, oh vengeance!”)

When Susanna reappears, Marcellina provokes her into a rivalry for Figaro by planting seeds of jealousy. The two women argue with mock courtesies, sarcasm, and feigned sincerity and politeness: Marcellina refers to Susanna with spite and disdain, calling her “the Count’s beautiful Susanna.” Likewise, Susanna uses her wedding dress as a metaphor for ageing, comparing it to the old Marcellina, who duly explodes after recognizing the insult to her advancing age.

Cherubino, the Countess’s page, arrives, an adolescent whose pulse races uncontrollably because of his youthful passion for all womankind: his hyperactive hormones seem to place the ubiquitous page in all of the wrong places at the wrong time. Cherubino suffers from youthful erotic awakenings, falling in love with any woman in sight, and always the wrong woman.


Yesterday, in particular, Cherubino aroused the Count’s anger when he was discovered in a rendezvous with Barbarina, the gardener Antonio’s daughter. After the Count’s angry warning, Cherubino fears his master’s fury, and the consequence that he would be sent away. Cherubino begs Susanna to intercede with her mistress, the Countess, that she might dissuade the Count’s agitation.

However, true to his uncontrollable passions, the young Cherubino reveals to Susanna that he has fallen deeply in love with no less a personage than the Countess herself. He seizes a ribbon from Susanna which belongs to the Countess. He becomes ecstatic and inspired, and delivers a *canzonetta* he has just written for the Countess that expresses his erotic ecstasies and passions, sensibilities that he cannot understand and confuse him.

“Non so piu cosa son, cosa faccio”

Allegro vivace

CHERUBINO



Non so più co-sa son, co-sa fac - cio,
I don't know what it is, or what I'm doing,

Suddenly, the Count appears in the new quarters of Susanna and Figaro. Cherubino, fearing the Count, particularly because he should not be in Susanna's quarters at all, hastily conceals himself behind a chair. The Count, believing he is alone with Susanna, announces that he may receive an ambassadorship to London, and suggests to Susanna that his appointment would provide a magnificent opportunity for them to develop a relationship: of course, the unsuspecting Count's amorous advances are overheard by the hiding Cherubino.

Footsteps are heard approaching: Cherubino emerges from behind the chair and sits in the chair; Susanna covers him with her bridal dress. The Count likewise hides to avoid being seen in a potentially scandalous situation: he hides himself behind the same chair Cherubino has just left.

The new guest is Don Basilio, the chateau's gossiping music master and ingenious fabricator of intrigues. He proceeds to make malicious — yet accurate — insinuations about Cherubino's rapturous flirtations and amorous behavior toward the Countess. The Count, from hiding, overhears Basilio's blasphemous accusations about his wife, and emerges from behind the chair, erupting into a heated rage, and demanding details and an explanation from Basilio.

In fear, Basilio retracts his accusations, excusing them as mere "suspicion." Nevertheless, the Count's jealousy has been aroused against the young page that has now become a thorn to his amorous pursuits. Just yesterday he discovered Cherubino hiding under a table in Barbarina's room; he was obviously chagrined that Cherubino's presence thwarted his own amorous advances toward Barbarina. The Count insists that he will take action and expel Cherubino from the chateau.

The Count describes how he drew away the table cloth and discovered Cherubino hiding under the table. As he demonstrates the event, he sweeps aside Susanna's dress from the chair, and in shock, surprise, and exasperation, he finds Cherubino again in a compromising situation for the second time in a mere few days. The Count expresses indignation; Susanna expresses horror; and Don Basilio erupts into malicious delight and laughter.

The Count becomes furious as he concludes that Cherubino and Susanna are having a clandestine affair. He is also chagrined: Cherubino has overheard his failed attempts to seduce Susanna, and the lad seems to have had more success with Susanna than he himself. However, the situation presents an opportunity for the Count to avenge his cunning valet, so he sends Basilio to fetch Figaro so he can reveal his betrothed's "infidelities."

Figaro arrives with a group of peasants, all ironically singing praises to their magnanimous master: the man of virtue who abolished the ancient aristocratic privilege of "droit du seigneur." Figaro, not realizing the situation's irony, requests that at the wedding the Count place the wedding veil on Susanna's head to symbolize the bride's innocence.

The Count becomes totally consumed by his problem with the omnipresent Cherubino. Susanna suggests that he forgive the innocent and naïve lad. But the Count has a sudden inspiration: a plan to rid himself completely of Cherubino. He accedes to Susanna's request and pardons Cherubino, but in return, he announces that the boy will receive an officer's commission in his Seville regiment. Elated by the impending resolution of his problem with Cherubino, the Count departs, joined by the malicious Don Basilio.

Cherubino shakes in dreaded fear as Figaro taunts him, painting a vivid picture of the glories and terrors of military life: now, instead of flirtation and tender love-making, Cherubino's military life will be comprised of weary drills and marching.

“Non più andrai farfallone amoroso”

Vivace
FIGARO

The musical notation is a single staff in bass clef with a common time signature (C). It begins with a whole rest, followed by a quarter note G, a quarter note A, a quarter note B, a quarter note C, a quarter note D, and a quarter note E. The lyrics are written below the staff: *Non più andrai, farfallon - e a - mo - ro - so,* and **No more romantic escapades,**

Figaro exults at the idea of Cherubino’s imminent departure: like the Count, his life will certainly be sweeter without the menacing presence of this impetuous lad.

Act II: The Countess’s apartment.

The Countess, alone with her thoughts, meditates about her happy past, and her unhappy present. She deeply loves her husband, but she has slowly realized that she is not the only woman in his life. Touchingly and expressively, the Countess vents her distressed feelings, praying for relief from her grief, and ultimately, that her husband’s affections will return.

“Porgi amor, qualche ristoro”

Larghetto
COUNTESS

The musical notation is a single staff in treble clef with a 3/4 time signature. It begins with a quarter note G, a quarter note A, a quarter note B, a quarter note C, a quarter note D, and a quarter note E. The lyrics are written below the staff: *Por - gi a - mor,* *qualche ri - sto - ro,* and **Return my love, restore my love,**

The despairing Countess joins with Susanna and Figaro to invent a scheme that will thwart the Count’s amorous adventures. They decide to launch a plot to outwit him by exposing his infidelities, ridicule and embarrass him, and teach him a lesson. If they can make him jealous, he will then be persuaded to change his ways, return to his wife as a faithful husband, and reawaken his love for the Countess.

Their intrigue involves having the Count discover an anonymous letter revealing that the Countess has made a rendezvous with a secret “lover.” The resourceful Figaro will arrange to have Don Basilio deliver the letter to the Count. At the same time, Susanna will arrange a clandestine rendezvous with the Count, however, Cherubino will be in her place, dressed in her clothes: after Figaro frightened Cherubino with his description of military life, Cherubino will do anything to postpone his entry into the army.

Cherubino arrives, delighted and excited to see the Countess before his departure. Susanna persuades him to entertain the Countess with the song he wrote for her. The promising young composer and songwriter sings a “romance,” which complements the Countess on her insight into the intrigues of love and romance.

“Voi che sapete che cosa è amor”

Andante

CHERUBINO

The musical notation is for a single line of music in G major, 2/4 time, marked Andante. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of the following notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4-A4 (beamed eighth notes), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (half). The lyrics are written below the notes.

Voi, che sa - pe - te che co - sa è amor,
 You know well the stirrings of love,

The Countess notices that Cherubino's commission lacks the official seal. Susanna proceeds to dress Cherubino in woman's clothes for the masquerade, becoming frustrated by the impetuous youth, who keeps turning to look at the Countess.

“Venite inginocchiatevi”

Allegretto

SUSANNA

The musical notation is for a single line of music in G major, 2/4 time, marked Allegretto. It begins with a treble clef and a key signature of one sharp (F#). The melody consists of the following notes: G4 (quarter), A4 (quarter), B4 (quarter), C5 (quarter), B4-A4 (beamed eighth notes), G4 (quarter), F#4 (quarter), E4 (quarter), D4 (quarter), C4 (half). The lyrics are written below the notes.

Ve - nite in - gi - noc - chia - tevi,
 Come and kneel before me.

Just as Cherubino's disguise is completed, the Count is heard angrily knocking at the door. Cherubino, fearing another encounter with the Count, immediately hides in an adjoining closet. The Count is raging: Basilio gave him the Countess's letter inviting her lover to rendezvous, and he has returned precipitately from the hunt in order to confront her with her infidelity. He finds the Countess's door locked — an unprecedented action — and his suspicions become further aroused.

The door is opened, and the Count immediately presents his wife with the letter and accuses her of infidelity. Noises are heard from an adjoining room — Cherubino, of course — which further arouses the Count's suspicions. Nervously, the Countess tries to deter the Count, excusing the noises as those from her maid Susanna, who is in the room dressing. But the jealous Count fears a scandal and the ridicule of a cuckolded husband, demands that Susanna — if it is indeed Susana — emerge from the room.

The Count desperately tries to open the door, but he is unsuccessful. He decides that he needs tools to break down the door; he insists that the Countess leave with him to fetch the tools. Both depart, in effect, locking both Susanna and Cherubino inside. Afterwards, Susanna fetches the frightened Cherubino, who insists that he leave before the Count returns. With no other exit available, he escapes by jumping through an open window, his jump witnessed by Antonio, the gardener, who becomes puzzled and disconcerted in his state of drunkenness.

Now alone, Susanna hides herself in the adjoining closet. The Count and Countess return. As the Count tries to forcibly open the door, the Countess becomes anxious and nervous, unaware that Cherubino has escaped and that Susanna has replaced him. She decides that her only alternative is to confess to her husband that it is indeed the young Cherubino in the closet; at the same time, she tries to persuade the Count that Cherubino is merely an innocent young lad not worthy of his anger.

But the Count is inflamed with rage, overcome by blind jealousy after he saw the Countess's letter to her lover. He ignores the Countess's anxious pleading to placate him, convinced that her secret lover hides in the closet.

After the door is forcibly opened, the Count stands with drawn sword and orders the Countess's lover to emerge from the closet. Susanna calmly emerges, the picture of wide-eyed innocence. The Count stands in shock and surprise: the Countess is equally stunned, but relieved that a seemingly insoluble dilemma has been resolved.

Susanna's emergence from the closet has confirmed the Countess's original story: it was indeed Susanna dressing in the closet. The Countess excuses her "confession," claiming that it was only a ruse to inflame the Count; she knew all the time that it was Susanna in the room. The Count is humiliated, but still refuses to believe that Susanna was alone in the dressing room. While the Count momentarily leaves the room, Susanna tells the Countess not to worry, since Cherubino has escaped through the window.

The Count returns, confused and embarrassed because his suspicions have been proven to be unfounded. He becomes penitent, asks forgiveness for his behavior, and confirms his love for the Countess. When he addresses the Countess as Rosina, she suddenly becomes angry and reminds him of his neglect and indifference toward her: "Crudele, più quella non sono!" ("You have been so cruel!")

Nevertheless, the Count remains puzzled: he wants an explanation of Bartolo's anonymous letter, and still suspects that somehow it was indeed Cherubino hiding in her dressing room. The Countess explains that it was all part of a harmless joke perpetrated by Figaro to tease the Count. The Count begs her forgiveness again, and this time, she grants it.

Figaro arrives, excitedly announcing — albeit for the second time — that the musicians have assembled, and all the arrangements are now in place for their wedding to proceed. However, Figaro has arrived at an inopportune moment, and the wary and suspicious Count seizes his chance to ask Figaro about the Countess's infamous letter, inquiring if he knows anything about it. Figaro, the ultimate prevaricator, vigorously denies any knowledge of it; after whispered explanations from Susanna and the Countess, his memory becomes sharpened and he admits that he was the writer of the letter.

The situation becomes even more confounded when the inebriated gardener Antonio arrives, angrily complaining that someone jumped out of the window of the Countess's room, trampled on his flowers, and broke a flower pot. Figaro quickly admits that he was the culprit, showing them the injury to his leg from the fall.

After Figaro's admission, Antonio presents a paper that fell from Figaro's pocket: it is Cherubino's officer's commission. The Count senses chicanery. He grabs the paper, asks Figaro to identify it. The Countess recognizes it and tells Susanna that it is Cherubino's commission. Susanna in turn whispers the fact to Figaro; now prompted by the women, Figaro tells the Count that the paper is Cherubino's commission.

The Count asks Figaro why he had the commission in his possession, and again, the Countess prompts the answer through Susanna's subtle whispers. With great confidence, Figaro vindicates himself, announcing that Cherubino gave him the commission to secure its missing seal.

Figaro now faces a more serious crisis. Dr. Bartolo, Marcellina, and the malicious Don Basilio burst in and demand justice: Figaro must make good on his promise to repay Marcellina's

loan to him; if he cannot, he is legally bound to marry Marcellina, as he had promised. The Count becomes ecstatic: if his wily valet marries Marcellina, there will no longer be any obstacle in his pursuit of Susanna.

The Count will act as magistrate to adjudicate Marcellina's claim: it will be a biased decision that will enable him to settle accounts with his valet.

The Count again postpones the marriage between Figaro and Susanna until all the complications between servants and masters have been resolved:

Act III: A large hall in Count Almaviva's chateau.

Count Almaviva eagerly seals Cherubino's army commission, thus ridding himself of this youthful rival for his wife's affections, as well as those of other women in his chateau. He remains puzzled and suspicious about the strange events that have taken place recently, and refuses to accept or believe Figaro's explanation. He still wonders: Who jumped from the Countess's room? Who is the Countess's lover? Who wrote the anonymous letter?

Susanna appears before the Count to launch the Countess's intrigue to embarrass her husband and teach him a lesson. Susanna agrees to meet the Count in the garden in the evening right after her wedding; however, the Count is unaware that he will be romancing his own wife, dressed in Susanna's clothes. Nevertheless, the Count is ecstatic about his tryst with Susanna, his revenge against the wily Figaro.

As Susanna departs, she meets Figaro, who is on his way to hear Marcellina's suit against him adjudicated. She tells Figaro that she has the money to pay Marcellina. (Neither Figaro nor the Count know that Susanna borrowed money from the Countess to pay back Marcellina.)

The Count has overheard their conversation and Figaro's apparent victory and explodes in rage. He condemns his valet, "Vedrò, mentr'io sospiro" ("And so my servant enjoys pleasure that I am denied"), the frustrated Count concluding that his servant Figaro was born to torment him and laugh at his misfortune.

With the Count presiding at his court, the stuttering lawyer, Don Curzio, tells Figaro that he is obliged to either repay Marcellina's loan, or marry her. Figaro creates one of his most brilliant subterfuges, claiming that he is of noble birth, and therefore cannot marry without the consent of his parents; however, he is ignorant of his parentage, and does not know where they are.

Figaro displays a branded spatula mark on his arm that identifies him. Marcellina recognizes the mark and announces that Figaro is her long-lost son: the fruit of an early love affair between Marcellina and Dr. Bartolo. The Count rages impotently as Figaro and his newfound parents reunite and embrace.

Susanna arrives, money in hand to settle Figaro's debts. She witnesses the celebration: Marcellina kissing Figaro, which she completely misunderstands; she erupts into a jealous rage and proceeds to box Figaro on his ears before he can explain his unexpected reversal of fortune.

Dr. Bartolo agrees to marry Marcellina. Figaro is heaped with gifts: Marcellina gives her long-lost son his promissory note as his wedding present; Dr. Bartolo, ironically Figaro's

newfound father, hands him purses of money. Susanna embraces her future parents-in-law, and all signs point to the celebration of a double wedding; finally, there seems to be no further obstacle to the marriage of Figaro and Susanna.

Cherubino tells Barbarina that he has not gone Seville as ordered, but remained at the chateau so he can attend the wedding festivities: in the disguise of a peasant girl.

The Countess is deeply concerned how her husband will react to their intrigue, in which she will exchange clothes with Susanna. (The original scheme to disguise Cherubino as Susanna was dropped because of Cherubino's imminent military assignment.)

She deeply loves the Count and must punish him for his philandering, but she deplors the fact that she must seek the help of her servants to win back her husband's affections.

Tenderly, the brokenhearted Countess recalls her former happiness and bliss, clinging to the hope of reinspiring the Count's devotion to her. Yet, she is not bitter and bears no malice toward the Count, although he has obviously been unfaithful since their wedding day.

"Dove sono i bei momenti"

Andantino
COUNTESS

Do - ve so - no i bei mo - men - ti
Where are those beautiful moments from the past

Susanna scribes a letter dictated by the Countess, which fixes the exact time and place for the evening rendezvous: the Count is to meet Susanna in the garden "under the pines where the gentle zephyrs blow." (Of course, the Count will be meeting the Countess dressed in Susanna's clothes.) The letter is sealed with a brooch pin and requests that the Count return the brooch pin as confirmation of his understanding and agreement to the appointment.

Before the wedding ceremony, village peasant girls present flowers to the Countess; they are accompanied by Figaro, Cherubino, who is disguised as a peasant girl, Barbarina, Dr. Bartolo, and the Count. The gardener Antonio, holding Cherubino's hat, notices that one of the girls in the group is Cherubino in disguise, and proceeds to place the hat on his head. Barbarina, deeply in love with Cherubino, comes to his rescue: in a somewhat embarrassing declaration, she reminds the Count of the many times he hugged and kissed her, promising that he would grant her any wish. She tells the Count that her wish is to marry Cherubino. The Count reacts to this unexpected development by wondering whether demons have taken control of his destiny.

The Count again becomes consumed by his suspicions, and asks Figaro who it was who jumped from the Countess's window the other morning. Musicians begin to play the wedding march, inadvertently breaking the momentary tension; it is the signal for the long-awaited wedding of Figaro and Susanna.

The Count presides over the double wedding ceremony of Susanna and Figaro and Marcellina and Dr. Bartolo. The Count mutters words of revenge against Figaro while placing

the wedding veil on Susanna; she slips him a note that invites him to meet her in the garden that evening.

Figaro, unaware of the Countess's new scheme, watches the Count open the note, in the process, pricking his finger on the brooch pin. Figaro rightly suspects that a clandestine love intrigue is afoot, but he does not imagine that his beloved Susanna is involved. The Count, in anticipation of his rendezvous, hurriedly concludes the ceremony, promising further celebrations that evening.

Act IV: The garden of the chateau.

The Count gives the note and its confirming brooch pin to Barbarina, the messenger. To her consternation and distress, she inadvertently drops the pin and loses it. Figaro appears. While he helps the unsuspecting Barbarina search for the pin, she disingenuously reveals that the note planned a rendezvous with the Count and Susanna.

Figaro was not privy to this new phase of the Countess's intrigue. He jumps to the conclusion that his new bride is faithless and intends to yield to the Count that evening. Inflamed with passions of jealousy and betrayal, Figaro invites his new parents, Dr. Bartolo and Marcellina, to join him and witness his new wife's betrayal.

Marcellina defends the constancy of women, refusing to believe that Susanna would deceive Figaro. Nevertheless, Figaro believes he has become a cuckold and warns all men to open their eyes to the fickleness of women.

“Aprite un po' quegl'occhi, uomini incauti a schiocchi”

Moderato

FIGARO



A-pri - te un po' quegl'occhi, uomini incauti a schiocchi,
Men, open your eyes to this foolishness,

Susanna and the Countess arrive, each wearing the other's clothes. Figaro hides himself in the expectation of catching Susanna and the Count *in flagrante*.

Marcellina has told Susanna that Figaro suspects her fidelity and is spying nearby. She decides to teach him a lesson for his mistrust by addressing a poignant song to her supposed lover, her yearning for a night of love. Figaro's passions are aroused; he hears, but does not see her in the dark, unaware that he is the object of her amorous reflections.

“Deh viene, non tardar, o gioja bella”

Andante

SUSANNA



Deh vie - ni, non tar - dar, o gio - ja bel - la,
Come, don't be late, my heart's delight,

The dark garden becomes a scene of confusion and mistaken identities.

Cherubino begins to romance Susanna (the Countess in Susanna's clothes). The Count steps between them; in the dark and confusion he mistakenly receives a kiss from Cherubino. The enraged Count aims a blow to Cherubino's ears, but instead, catches the hovering Figaro. All disappear and leave the Count alone with the woman he believes to be Susanna, pleading for her love and embraces, little knowing that the woman he is attempting to romance is his own wife.

Figaro finds the Countess (Susanna in the Countess's clothes) and suggests that they go together to catch the Count with Susanna. But the Countess (Susanna) inadvertently fails to disguise her voice and gives herself away. Figaro intuitively grasps the situation, his jealousy instantly evaporating. But Figaro wants revenge; he makes theatrical declarations of passionate love to the Countess (Susanna), which, in turn, infuriates Susanna and rouses her jealousy: she proceeds to rain blows on him. But their argument ends with the newlywed's first loving reconciliation.

The Count becomes irate when he sees Figaro and a woman he believes to be his wife engaged in impassioned amour. But the Count has more important priorities, and he leaves the scene en route for his rendezvous with Susanna.

The Countess reappears, dressed in her own clothes, and unravels the chaos and confusion. The charade is ended, but she has opened the Count's eyes by catching him *in flagrante* with his own wife. The Count realizes that he has been outwitted, and that there is nothing he can do but acknowledge his folly with as good grace as he can muster. He begs for the Countess's forgiveness, which she lovingly grants.

All the crises seem to have been resolved and reconciled: there is cause for celebration as all the lovers are reunited.

Beaumarchais' "Crazy Day" ends, saved for posterity by Mozart's unerring musical characterizations.

THE MARRIAGE OF FIGARO

Libretto

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OVERTURE

Presto



Presto



ACT I

*A partly-furnished room, with a large chair in the center.
Figaro measures the floor while Susanna tries on a hat before a mirror.*

FIGARO:

Cinque... dieci... venti... trenta...
trentasei...quarantatre

SUSANNA:

Ora si ch'io son contenta;
sembra fatto inver per me.
Guarda un po', mio caro Figaro,
guarda adesso il mio cappello.

FIGARO:

Si mio core, or è più bello,
sembra fatto inver per te.

SUSANNA e FIGARO:

Ah, il mattino alle nozze vicino
quanto è dolce al (mio/tuo) tenero sposo.

SUSANNA:

Questo bel cappellino vezzoso
che Susanna ella stessa si fe!

Cosa stai misurando, caro il mio Figaretto?

FIGARO:

Io guardo se quel letto che ci destina il Conte
farà buona figura in questo loco.

FIGARO: (*measuring*)

Five...ten...twenty...thirty...
thirty-six...forty-three.

SUSANNA: (*looking in the mirror*)

Now I indeed feel content.
It seems like it is made for me.
Look at me, my dear Figaro,
Look at this hat of mine right now.

FIGARO:

Yes my love, it is very pretty.
It seems like it was truly made for you.

SUSANNA and FIGARO:

Oh, your/my tender love is so welcome on this
wedding morning.

SUSANNA:

I made this pretty and charming little hat
all by myself!

What are you measuring, my dear little Figaro?

FIGARO:

I'm checking whether that bed the Count
ordered for us will fit well here.

SUSANNA:

E in questa stanza?

FIGARO:

Certo: a noi la cede generoso il padrone.

SUSANNA:

Io per me te la dono.

FIGARO:

E la ragione?

SUSANNA:

La ragione l'ho qui.

FIGARO:

Io non capisco perchè tanto ti spiace la più comoda stanza del palazzo.

SUSANNA:

Perch'io son la Susanna, e tu sei pazzo.

FIGARO:

Grazie; non tanti elogi! Guarda un poco se potriasi star meglio in altro loco.

FIGARO:

Se a caso madama la notte ti chiama, din din; in due passi da quella puoi gir. Vien poi l'occasione che vuolmi il padrone, don, don; in tre salti lo vado a servir.

SUSANNA:

Così se il mattino il caro Contino, din din; e ti manda tre miglia lontan, don don; a mia porta il diavol lo porta, ed ecco in tre salti....

FIGARO:

Susanna, pian, pian.

SUSANNA:

Ascolta

FIGARO:

Fa presto.

SUSANNA:

Se udir brami il resto, discaccia i sospetti che torto mi fan.

SUSANNA:

In this room?

FIGARO:

Certainly! Our generous master gave it to us.

SUSANNA:

I don't like his gift.

FIGARO:

For what reason?

SUSANNA: (*touching her forehead*)

I have the reason here.

FIGARO:

I don't understand why you're unhappy with the most convenient room in the palace?

SUSANNA:

Because I am Susanna, and you are crazy.

FIGARO:

Thanks for the compliments!
See if you can find a better place for it.

FIGARO:

If Madame should call you in the evening — ding, ding — you can be there in two steps. If the occasion arises that the master calls me — don, don — I can be at his service in three jumps.

SUSANNA: (*ironically*)

If in the morning the dear Count commands you three miles away, the devil appears at my door, and then in three jumps....

FIGARO:

Susanna, softly, softly.

SUSANNA:

Listen.

FIGARO:

Hurry.

SUSANNA:

If you want to hear the rest, drive away your suspicions for they hurt me.

FIGARO:

Udir bramo il resto, i dubbi, i sospetti
gelare mi fan.

SUSANNA:

Or bene; ascolta, e taci!

FIGARO:

Parla: che c'è di nuovo?

SUSANNA:

Il signor Conte, stanco di andar cacciando le
straniere bellezze forestiere, vuole ancor nel
castello ritentar la sua sorte, né già di sua
consorte, bada bene, appetito gli viene

FIGARO:

E di chi dunque?

SUSANNA:

Della tua Susanetta.

FIGARO:

Di te?

SUSANNA:

Di me medesima. E tu credevi, che fosse la mia
dote metto del tuo bel viso?

FIGARO:

Me n'ero lusingato.

FIGARO:

Chi suona! La Contessa?

SUSANNA:

Addio, addio, Figaro bello.

FIGARO:

Coraggio, mio tesoro.

SUSANNA:

E tu, cervello.

FIGARO:

I want to hear the rest. These doubts and
suspicious make my blood chill.

SUSANNA:

Well listen and be quiet!

FIGARO:

Then speak. What's the matter?

SUSANNA:

The Count has tired of chasing foreign beauties,
and he again wants to try his chances in the castle.
He's already tired of his wife, and his appetite is
for other women.

FIGARO:

And who is it then?

SUSANNA:

Your dear little Susanna.

FIGARO:

You?

SUSANNA:

Me! And you thought that my charms were
only for your eyes?

FIGARO:

I've flattered myself.

(a bell rings)

FIGARO:

Who rings, the Countess?

SUSANNA:

Farewell, farewell, handsome Figaro.

FIGARO:

Courage my treasure.

SUSANNA:

And you use your head!

Susanna kisses Figaro, and then she departs.

FIGARO:

Bravo, signor padrone! Ora incomincio
a capir il mistero, e a veder schietto
tutto il vostro progetto: a Londra è vero?

FIGARO:

Bravo, my lord! Now I begin to understand the
mystery, and I clearly see all of your schemes.
Really, to London?

Voi ministro, io corriero, e la Susanna secreta
ambasciatrice.

Non sarà, non sarà. Figaro il dice.

You'll be a minister, I a messenger, and Susanna
a secret ambassador.

It won't happen. Figaro says so.

Allegretto

FIGARO



Se vuol ballare Signor Contino,
il chitarrino le suonerò.

Se vuol venire nella mia scuola
la capriola le insegnerò.

Saprò, ma piano, meglio ogni arcano
dissimulando scoprir potrò!

L'arte schermendo, l'arte adoprando,
di qua pungendo, di là scherzando,
tutte le macchine rovescerò.

If you want to dance, Mr. Count,
my guitar will accompany you.

If you want to learn how to play tricks, come
to my school.

Little by little, I'll learn and discover your
every mystery and intrigue!

And when I know, I become the master of
self-protection, the art of ingenuity, fighting
here, and joking there.

Se vuol ballare Signor Contino,
il chitarrino le suonerò.

If you want to dance, my Count,
my guitar will accompany you.

Figaro departs.

Dr. Bartolo enters with Marcellina, who holds a contract in her hand.

BARTOLO:

Ed aspettaste il giorno fissato a le sue nozze
per parlarmi di questo?

BARTOLO:

And you waited until their wedding day to tell
me about this?

MARCELLINA:

Io non mi perdo, dottor mio, di coraggio:
per romper de' sponsali più avanzati di
questo. Bastò spesso un pretesto, ed egli ha meco,
oltre questo contratto, certi impegni, so io, basta,
convien la Susanna atterrir.

MARCELLINA:

My dear doctor, I did not lose my courage to
break off the match earlier. He has other
agreements with me, so a mere pretext would
be enough.
Summon Susanna and terrify her.

Convien con arte impuntigliarli a rifiutar il
Conte. Egli per vendicarsi prenderà il mio
partito, e Figaro così fia mio marito.

Insist that she subtly refuse the Count. The
Count will take my side, seek revenge, and
Figaro will become my husband.

MARCELLINA:

Brava! Questo è giudizio!
Con quegli occhi modesti, con quell'aria
pietosa, e poi....

SUSANNA:

Meglio è partir.

MARCELLINA:

Che cara sposa!

MARCELLINA:

Wonderful! That is sensible!
With those modest eyes, with that merciful
look, and then....

SUSANNA:

I had better go.

MARCELLINA:

What a charming bride!

With irony, both watch each other to see who will leave first.

Via resti servita, Madama brillante.

Do go first, grand lady.

SUSANNA:

Non sono sì ardita, madama piccante.

SUSANNA: (*reverently*)

I'm not so bold, zesty lady.

MARCELLINA:

No, prima a lei tocca.

MARCELLINA:

No, you go first.

SUSANNA:

No, no, tocca a lei.

SUSANNA:

No, no, first you.

SUSANNA e MARCELLINA:

Io so i dover miei, non fo inciviltà.

SUSANNA and MARCELLINA:

I know good breeding and I'm never uncivil.

MARCELLINA:

La sposa novella!
Del Conte la bella!
I meriti, il posto.
Per Bacco! Precipito se ancor resto quà.

MARCELLINA:

This new bride!
The Count's choice!
The worth, the station.
By Bacchus, I'll lose if I stay here.

SUSANNA:

La dama d'onore!
Di Spagna l'amore!
Stimabile età!
Sibilla decrepita,
da rider mi fa!

SUSANNA:

The lady of honor!
The love of Spain!
Respectable age!
Decrepit stutterer,
who makes me laugh!

Marcellina departs.

SUSANNA:

Va' là, vecchia pedante,
dottoressa arrogante,
perché hai letti due libri
e seccata madama in gioventù.

SUSANNA:

Go along, old pedant,
arrogant know-it-all.
Just because you read two books you pretend to
be a mature woman.

Cherubino enters.

CHERUBINO:

Susanetta, sei tu?

CHERUBINO:

Is that you, little Susanna?

SUSANNA:

Son io, cosa volete?

SUSANNA:

It's me. What do you want?

CHERUBINO:

Ah, cor mio, che accidente!

CHERUBINO:

Oh, dear one! What an accident!

SUSANNA:

Cor vostro! Cosa avvenne?

SUSANNA:

Sweetheart, what has happened?

CHERUBINO:

Il Conte ieri perché trovommi sol con
Barbarina, il congedo mi diede;
e se la Contessina, la mia bella comare,
grazia non m'intercede, io vado via,
io non ti vedo più, Susanna mia!

CHERUBINO:

Yesterday the Count found me alone with
Barbarina and dismissed me. If the Countess, my
beautiful godmother, is not kind and doesn't
intercede for me, I'll have to go away and
never see you again, my Susanna!

SUSANNA:

Non vedete più me! Bravo!
Ma dunque non più per la Contessa
secretamente il vostro cor sospira?

SUSANNA:

You won't see me any more! Great!
But you also won't be able to secretly pine for
the Countess?

CHERUBINO:

Ah, che troppo rispetto ella m'ispira!
Felice te, che puoi vederla quando vuoi,
che la vesti il mattino, che la sera la spogli, che
le metti gli spilloni, i merletti.

CHERUBINO: (*sighing*)

Oh, she inspires so much respect from me!
You are fortunate because you can see her
whenever you want: dress her in the
morning, undress her in the evening,,
place her garments, needles, lace.
Tell me what you have there?

Cos'hai lì? Dimmi un poco.

SUSANNA:

Ah, il vago nastro della notturna cuffia
di comare si bella.

SUSANNA:

Oh, it's the ribbon belonging to your beautiful
godmother's nightcap.

CHERUBINO:

Deh, dammelo sorella, dammelo per pietà!

CHERUBINO:

Oh, for mercy's sake, give it to me!
(*snatches the ribbon from Susanna*)

SUSANNA:

Presto quel nastro!

SUSANNA:

Give me back that ribbon!

CHERUBINO:

O caro, o bello, o fortunato nastro!
Io non te'l renderò che colla vita!

CHERUBINO: (*admiring the ribbon*)

Oh dear, oh beautiful, oh fortunate ribbon!
In my lifetime I won't return it to you!

SUSANNA:

Cos'è quest'insolenza?

SUSANNA:

What is this impudence?

CHERUBINO:

Eh via, sta cheta! In ricompensa poi questa mia canzonetta io ti vo' dare.

SUSANNA:

E che ne debbo fare?

CHERUBINO:

Leggila alla padrona, leggila tu medesima; leggila a Barbarina, a Marcellina; leggila ad ogni donna del palazzo!

SUSANNA:

Povero Cherubin, siete voi pazzo!

CHERUBINO:

Come now, don't be so angry! In exchange, I want to give you my little song.

SUSANNA:

And what am I to do with it?

CHERUBINO:

Read it to my lady, read it to yourself, read it to Barbarina, to Marcellina, read it to every women in the palace!

SUSANNA:

Poor Cherubino, you have gone mad?

Allegro vivace**CHERUBINO****CHERUBINO:**

Non so più cosa son, cosa faccio, or di foco, ora sono di ghiaccio, ogni donna cangiar di colore, ogni donna mi fa palpitar.

Solo ai nomi d'amor, di diletto, mi si turba, mi s'altera il petto e a parlare mi sforza d'amore un desio ch'io non posso spiegar.

Parlo d'amor vegliando, parlo d'amor sognando, all'acque, all'ombre, ai monti, ai fiori, all'erbe, ai fonti, all'eco, all'aria, ai venti, che il suon de' vani accenti portano via con sé. E se non ho chi mi oda, parlo d'amor con me.

CHERUBINO:

I no longer know who I am, or what I do. I'm all fire, then I'm all ice. Every woman makes me blush. Every woman makes me throb.

It is merely the mention of love, of delight, that disturbs me and unsettles my heart. The power of love has become a desire that I can't explain.

I speak of love while awake, I speak of love while I sleep, to water, to shadows, to mountains, to flowers, to herbs, to fountains, to the echo, to the air, to the wind. The sounds of my hopeless laments carry me away. And if no one hears me, I speak of love to myself.

The Count is heard coming.

SUSANNA:

Taci, vien gente, il Conte! Oh, me meschina!

SUSANNA:

Quiet, someone's coming. It's the Count. He shouldn't find you here!

In fear, Cherubino hides behind a chair.

IL CONTE:

Susanna, mi sembri agitata e confusa.

SUSANNA:

Signor, io chiedo scusa,
ma, se mai, qui sorpresa,..
per carità. Partite!

IL CONTE:

Un momento, e ti lascio, odi.

SUSANNA:

Non odo nulla.

IL CONTE:

Due parole. Tu sai che ambasciatore a Londra
il re mi dichiarò; di condur meco
Figaro destinaì.

SUSANNA:

Signor, se osassi...

IL CONTE:

Parla, parla, mia cara, e con quell dritto
ch'oggi prendi su me finché tu vivi
chiedi, imponi, prescrivi.

SUSANNA:

Lasciatemi signor; dritti non prendo,
non ne vo', non ne intendo.
Oh me infelice!

IL CONTE:

Ah no, Susanna, io ti vo' far felice!
Tu ben sai quanto io t'amo: a te Basilio
tutto già disse.
Or senti, se per pochi momenti meco in giardin
sull'imbrunir del giorno.
Ah, per questo favore io pagherei.

BASILIO:

È uscito poco fa.

IL CONTE:

Chi parla?

SUSANNA:

Oh Dei!

IL CONTE:

Esci, e alcun non entri.

COUNT:

Susanna, you seem agitated and confused.

SUSANNA:

Sir. I beg your pardon.
But I'm just so surprised.
For mercy's sake, go!

COUNT: *(sits on the chair)*

One moment and then I'll leave. Listen.

SUSANNA:

I will hear nothing.

COUNT:

Just two words. You know that the King has
named me ambassador to London.
I intend to take Figaro with me.

SUSANNA:

Sir, I beg you...

COUNT:

Talk to me, my dear. With the power that you
now have over me, you can ask, order, or
command anything.

SUSANNA:

Leave me, sir. I have no rights, nor wish or
propose any.
Oh I'm so unhappy!

COUNT:

No, Susanna. I want to make you happy!
You know well how much I love you. Basilio
has already told you.
Then listen, meet me tonight in the garden.
You know I'd pay for that favor.

BASILIO: *(from outside)*

He not been gone for long.

COUNT:

Who speaks?

SUSANNA:

Oh Gods!

COUNT:

Go, and don't let anyone in.

SUSANNA:

Ch'io vi lasci qui solo?

SUSANNA:

That I'll leave you here alone?

BASILIO:

Da madama ei sarà, vado a cercarlo.

BASILIO:

Perhaps he is with my Lady. I'll go look for him.

IL CONTE:

Qui dietro mi porrò.

COUNT: (*pointing to the chair*)

I'll put myself behind this chair.

SUSANNA:

Non vi celate.

SUSANNA:

Don't hide.

IL CONTE:

Taci, e cerca ch'ei parta.

COUNT:

Quiet. Try to get rid of him.

SUSANNA:

Oimè! Che fate?

SUSANNA:

Oh my, what are you doing?

The Count conceals himself behind the large chair. Susanna places herself resourcefully before him, making signs to Cherubino to move. Cherubino avoids the Count by crawling around the chair.

BASILIO:

Susanna, il ciel vi salvi. Avreste a caso veduto il Conte?

BASILIO: (*from outside*)

Susanna, heavens save you. Have you by any chance seen the Count?

SUSANNA:E cosa deve far meco il Conte?
Animo, uscite.**SUSANNA:** (*annoyed*)And what would the Count be doing with me?
Get out, mindless one.**IL CONTE:**

Chi parla?

COUNT:

Who's speaking?

SUSANNA:

O Dei!

SUSANNA:

Oh heavens!

IL CONTE:

Esci, ed alcun non entri.

COUNT:

You go. Don't let him come in.

SUSANNA:

Ch'io vi lasci qui solo?

SUSANNA:

And leave you here alone?

BASILIO:

Da madama sarà, vado a cercarlo.

BASILIO:

With my lady perhaps? I'll ask Susanna.

IL CONTE:

Qui dietro mi porrò.

COUNT:

I'll hide behind the chair.

SUSANNA:

Non vi celate.

SUSANNA:

No don't hide.

IL CONTE:

Taci, e cerca, ch'ei parta.

COUNT:

Quiet, and don't let him come in.

SUSANNA:

Ohime! Che fate!

SUSANNA:

Oh my! What should I do!

*As the Count hides behind the chair, Cherubino scrambles around and sits in it.
Susanna covers him with a dress. Basilio enters.*

BASILIO:

Susanna, il ciel vi salvi! Avreste caso veduto il Conte?

BASILIO:

Susanna, peace be with you! Have you seen the Count?

SUSANNA:

E cosa deve far meco il Conte? Animo, uscite.

SUSANNA:

What should I know about the Count?
Pray, go away.

BASILIO:

Aspetate, sentite, Figaro di lui cerca.

BASILIO:

Wait, listen. Figaro is looking for him.

SUSANNA:

(Oh Cielo! Ei cerca chi, dopo voi, più l'odia.)

SUSANNA:

(Oh Heavens! He'll find the man who hates him most right here.)

IL CONTE:

(Vediam come mi serve.)

COUNT:

(Let's see how she serves me?)

BASILIO:

Io non ho mai nella moral sentito, ch'uno ch'ami la moglie odiii il marito. Per dir che il Conte v'ama.....

BASILIO:

I've never heard in the moral code that one who loves the wife hates the husband.
To say that the Count loves you.....

SUSANNA:

Sortite, vil ministro dell'altrui sfrenatezza: Io non ho d'uopo della vostra morale, del Conte, del suo amor.

SUSANNA:

You vile minister. How dare you make those suggestions! I refuse to talk about the Count's passions and desires.

BASILIO:

Non c'è alcun male.
Ha ciascun i suoi gusti: io mi credea che preferir dovrete per amante, come fan tutte quante, un signor liberal, prudente, e saggio, a un giovinastro, a un paggio.

BASILIO:

There's no harm done. It's a matter of taste.
Yet I would imagine that you're like any other woman, and would choose for your lover a man who is rich, noble and quite discreet, instead of yielding to a page.

SUSANNA:

A Cherubino!

SUSANNA:

To Cherubino!

BASILIO:

A Cherubino! A Cherubino d'amore ch'oggi sul far del giorno passeggiava qui d'intorno, per entrar.

BASILIO:

Yes Cherubino! The love-child who hovers about here every morning, and passes in and out.

SUSANNA:

Uom maligno, un impostura è questa.

BASILIO:

È un maligno con voi chi ha gli occhi in testa?
 E quella canzonetta?
 Ditemi in confidenza; io sono amico,
 ed altrui nulla dico;
 è per voi, per madama?

SUSANNA:

(Chi diavol gliel'ha detto?)

BASILIO:

A proposito, figlia, instruitelo meglio; egli la
 guarda a tavola sì spesso, e con tale
 immodestia, che se il Conte s'accorge che su
 tal punto sapete, egli è una bestia.

SUSANNA:

Scellerato! E perché andate voi
 tai menzogne spargendo?

BASILIO:

Io? Che ingiustizia! Quel che compro io vendo,
 a quel che tutti dicono io non aggiungo un pelo.

IL CONTE:

Come, che dicono tutti?

BASILIO:

Oh bella!

SUSANNA:

Oh cielo!

SUSANNA:

Wicked man. This is slander.

BASILIO:

Is it wicked for one to have eyes in one's head?
 And that song?
 Tell me in confidence. I'm a friend and I speak
 truths.
 Was it for you, or was it for Madame?

SUSANNA:

(Who was the devil who told this to him?)

BASILIO:

By the way, my dear, tell Cherubino to be more
 careful. He gloats at Madame with such
 impudence, that if the Count would notice, you
 well know, he'll become a savage.

SUSANNA:

You scoundrel! Why do you go about
 spreading such lies?

BASILIO:

I? What injustice! I only say what I see, and
 add not one iota to what everybody says.

COUNT: *(rises but troubled)*

What! What are they all saying!

BASILIO: *(aside)*

Oh beautiful one!

SUSANNA: *(aside)*

Oh Heavens!

*The Count emerges from behind the chair.***IL CONTE:**

Cosa sento! Tosto andate,
 e scacciate il seduttore.

BASILIO:

(In qual punto son qui giunto!)
 Perdonate, oh mio signor.

SUSANNA:

Che ruina, me meschina,
 son oppressa dal dolor.

COUNT: *(to Basilio)*

What do I hear? Go quickly and chase the
 seductor away.

BASILIO:

(What a time to have arrived!)
 Pardon me, my lord.

SUSANNA: *(staggering)*

What a disaster! What wretchedness!
 I'm overwhelmed by grief.

BASILIO ed IL CONTE:

Ah già svien la poverina!
Come, oh Dio, le batte il cor!

BASILIO:

Pian pianin su questo seggio.

SUSANNA:

Dove sono?
Cosa veggio!
Che insolenza, andate fuor!

BASILIO:

Siamo qui per aiutarvi,
e sicuro il vostro onor.

IL CONTE:

Siamo qui per aiutarti,
non turbarti, oh mio tesor.

BASILIO:

Ah, del paggio quel che ho detto
era solo un mio sospetto.

SUSANNA:

È un'insidia, una perfidia,
non credete all'impostor.

IL CONTE:

Parta, parta il damerino!

SUSANNA e BASILIO:

Poverino!

IL CONTE:

Poverino!
Ma da me sorpreso ancor.

SUSANNA e BASILIO:

Come! Che!

IL CONTE:

Da tua cugina l'uscio ier trovai rinchiuso;
picchio, m'apre Barbarina paurosa fuor
dell'uso. Io dal muso insospettito, guardo, cerco
in ogni sito, ed alzando pian pianino il tappetto al
tavolino vedo il paggio.

BASILIO and COUNT:

Ah, the poor creature is almost fainting!
Oh God, how her heart beats!

BASILIO: (*trying to seat Susanna*)

Easy, easy, sit down on this chair.

SUSANNA:

Where am I?
What do I see?
What impertinence! Go away!

BASILIO:

We're here to help you,
and secure your honor.

COUNT:

We're here to help you,
don't be disturbed, my treasure.

BASILIO: (*to the Count*)

What I said about the page was only my
suspicion.

SUSANNA:

And a scandalous lie!
Don't believe him. He's a faker.

COUNT:

Let the dandy depart!

SUSANNA and BASILIO:

The poor little one!

COUNT:

The poor little one!
But yet more surprises for me.

SUSANNA and BASILIO:

How? What?

COUNT:

The door was shut at your cousin's. I knocked,
and Barbarina opened the door, appearing
quite frightened. Because of her suspicion I
searched all over. Then I lifted the cloth from
the table, and I find the page hiding.

*As the Count describes his experience, he lifts the gown that covers the chair,
and to his surprise, he discovers Cherubino.*

Ah! cosa veggio?

Oh! What do I see?

SUSANNA:
(Ah! Crude stelle!)

SUSANNA:
(Oh! Cruel stars!)

BASILIO:
(Ah! Meglio ancora!)

BASILIO:
(Oh! How delightful!)

IL CONTE:
Onestissima signora!
Or capisco come va!

COUNT: *(to Susanna)*
Most virtuous lady!
Now I understand how things go!

SUSANNA:
(Accader non può di peggio,
giusti Dei! Che mai sarà!)

SUSANNA:
(Nothing worse could have happened!
Gods! What will happen?)

BASILIO:
Così fan tutte le belle; non c'è alcuna novità!

BASILIO:
All the beautiful women do the same;
there's nothing else new!

IL CONTE:
Basilio, in traccia tosto di Figaro volate:
io vo' ch'ei veda.

COUNT: *(pointing to Cherubino)*
Basilio. Hurry quickly and get Figaro. I want
him to see this for himself.

SUSANNA:
Ed io che senta; andate!

SUSANNA:
And I want him to hear, so get going!

IL CONTE:
Restate: che baldanza! E quale scusa
se la colpa è evidente?

COUNT: *(to Susanna)*
You stay! What assurance and what excuse can
you make if the guilt is evident?

SUSANNA:
Non ha d'uopo di scusa un'innocente.

SUSANNA:
Innocence needs no excuse.

IL CONTE:
Ma costui quando venne?

COUNT:
When did he come here to be with you?

SUSANNA:
Egli era meco quando voi qui giungeste, e mi
chiedea d'impegnar la padrona a intercedergli
grazia. Il vostro arrivo in scompiglio lo pose,
ed allor in quel loco si nascose.

SUSANNA:
He was with me when you arrived, and was
begging me to intercede with Madame for her
compassion. Your arrival scared him, and then
he decided to hide himself.

IL CONTE:
Ma s'io stesso m'assisi quando in camera entrai!

COUNT: *(to Cherubino)*
You were already in the room when I arrived?

CHERUBINO:
Ed allor di dietro io mi celai.

CHERUBINO:
And then I hid myself behind the chair.

IL CONTE:

E quando io là mi posi?

COUNT: (*pointing*)

And when I hid myself there?

CHERUBINO:

Allor io pian mi volsi, e qui m'ascosi.

CHERUBINO:

Then I quietly turned and hid myself.

IL CONTE:

Oh ciel, dunque ha sentito tutto quello ch'io ti dicea!

COUNT: (*to Susanna*)

Oh Heavens. Then you heard everything that I was saying!

CHERUBINO:

Feci per non sentir quanto potea.

CHERUBINO:

I made believe that I heard nothing.

IL CONTE:

Ah perfidia!

COUNT:

Treachery!

BASILIO:

Frenatevi: vien gente!

BASILIO:

Hurry, people are coming!

IL CONTE:

E voi restate qui, picciol serpente!

COUNT: (*to Cherubino*)

And you stay here, little serpent!

Peasants enter, followed by Figaro.

CORO:

Giovani liete, fiori spargete
davanti al nobile nostro signor.
Il suo gran core vi serba intatto
d'un più bel fiore l'almo candor.

CHORUS:

Happy youngsters, spread flowers before our
noble lord.
His gracious heart and sincerity has preserved
virtue.

IL CONTE:

Cos'è questa commedia?

COUNT: (*to Figaro*)

What is this show all about?

FIGARO:

(Eccoci in danza: secondami cor mio.)

FIGARO: (*whispering to Susanna*)

(We're beginning, play up to me, my love.)

SUSANNA:

(Non ci ho speranza.)

SUSANNA:

(There's no hope.)

FIGARO:

Signor, non sdegnate questo del nostro affetto
meritato tributo: or che aboliste
un diritto sì ingrato a chi ben ama.

FIGARO:

Sir, don't scorn our deserved and worthy
tribute to you. You abolished a right that you
held very dear.

IL CONTE:

Quel diritto or non v'è più; cosa si brama?

COUNT:

That privilege is abolished, so what else do you
want?

FIGARO:

Della vostra saggezza il primo frutto
oggi noi coglierem: le nostre nozze
si son già stabilite. Or a voi tocca
costei che un vostro dono
illibata serbò, coprir di questa,
simbolo d'onestà, candida vesta.

IL CONTE:

(Diabolica astuzia! Ma fingere convien.)
Son grato, amici, ad un senso sì onesto!
Ma non merto per questo né tributi, né lodi; e
un dritto ingiusto ne' miei feudi abolendo, a
natura, al dover lor dritti io rendo.

TUTTI:

Evviva, evviva, evviva!

SUSANNA:

Che virtù!

FIGARO:

Che giustizia!

IL CONTE:

A voi prometto compier la cerimonia:
chiedo sol breve indugio; io voglio in faccia
de' miei più fidi, e con più ricca pompa
rendervi appien felici.
(Marcellina si trovi.)
Andate, amici.

CORO:

Giovani liete, fiori spargete
davanti al nobile nostro signor.
Il suo gran core vi serba intatto
d'un più bel fiore l'almo candor.

FIGARO, SUSANNA e BASILIO:

Evviva!

The peasants depart.

FIGARO:

E voi non applaudite?

SUSANNA:

È afflitto poveretto! Perché il padron lo scaccia
dal castello!

FIGARO:

Ah, in un giorno sì bello!

FIGARO:

I'm the first happy bridegroom to receive the
benefit of your decree. Susanna and I are to be
married this very day, so by your gift, I will
receive her as a virtuous bride, and it would
please me if you would place the symbol of
virtue upon her head.

COUNT:

(Clever plotting! I won't be deceived.)
Friends, I am grateful for your loyal devotion!
But it was only my duty to reform these abuses,
and I deserve no praise for having abolished
what offended both virtue and nature.

ALL:

Hail the lord!

SUSANNA:

Noble words!

FIGARO:

What justice!

COUNT: (to Figaro and Susanna)

I promise to perform the ceremony for you
later. It will be a public ceremony with all the
proper pomp and circumstance.

(aside)

(We must find Marcellina.)

Let's go, friends.

CHORUS:

Happy youngsters, spread flowers before our
noble lord.

His gracious heart and sincerity has preserved
virtue.

FIGARO, SUSANNA, BASILIO:

Hail!

FIGARO: (to the sad Cherubino)

And why don't you applaud?

SUSANNA:

He is grieved because the Count turned him
out of the castle.

FIGARO:

On such a happy day!

SUSANNA:

In un giorno di nozze!

SUSANNA:

On a wedding day!

FIGARO:

Quando ognun v'ammira!

FIGARO:

When every one admires you!

CHERUBINO:

Perdono, mio signor.

CHERUBINO: (*kneeling to the Count*)

Pardon me my lord.

IL CONTE:

No! meritate.

COUNT:

You don't deserve it

SUSANNA:

Egli è ancora fanciullo!

SUSANNA:

He's just a mere child.

IL CONTE:

Men di quel che tu credi.

COUNT:

Not so young as you think.

CHERUBINO:

È ver, manca; ma dal mio labbro alfine...

CHERUBINO:

It is true I erred, but I will never mention...

IL CONTE:

Ben ben; io vi perdono. Anzi farò di più; vacante è un posto d'uffizial nel reggimento mio; io scelgo voi; partite tosto: addio.

COUNT:

Well, well. I pardon you. But I'll do even more for you. There is an official post vacant in my regiment. I appoint you there. Leave immediately. Farewell.

The Count tries to leave but is stopped by Figaro and Susanna.

SUSANNA e FIGARO:

Ah, fin domani sol.

SUSANNA and FIGARO:

But let him leave tomorrow.

IL CONTE:

No, parta tosto.

COUNT:

No, he leaves right now.

CHERUBINO:

A ubbidirvi, signor, son già disposto.

CHERUBINO:

I am ready to obey you, my lord.

IL CONTE:

Via, per l'ultima volta la Susanna abbracciate. (Inaspettato è il colpo.)

COUNT: (*ironically*)

Go. Susanna will embrace you for the last time. (The blow indeed surprised them.)

The Count departs.

FIGARO:

Ehì, capitano, a me pure la mano; io vo' parlarti pria che tu parta. Addio, picciolo Cherubino; come cangia in un punto il tuo destino.

FIGARO:

Hey, captain, let's shake hands. I want to speak to you before you leave. Farewell, little Cherubino, how quickly your destiny has changed.

Vivace
FIGARO



Non più andrai, far - fallon - e a - mo - ro - so,

Non più andrai, farfallone amoroso,
notte e giorno d'intorno girando;
delle belle turbando il riposo
Narcisetto, Adoncino d'amor.

You'll no longer be fluttering around night and
day like an amorous butterfly troubling all the
sleeping beauties, little Narcissus, little loving
Adonis.

Non più avrai questi bei pennacchini,
quel cappello leggero e galante,
quella chioma, quell'aria brillante,
quel vermiglio donnesco color.

You'll no longer have those pretty feathers,
that light and gallant hat, that head of hair, that
sparkling air, and those rosy cheeks.

Tra guerrieri, poffar Bacco!
Gran mustacchi, stretto sacco.
Schioppo in spalla, sciabla al fianco,
collo dritto, muso franco, un gran casco, o un gran
turbante, molto onor, poco contante!

Among soldiers, by Jupiter, you'll have a large
mustache, bushy whiskers, and a short tunic:
on your shoulders a gun, a sword at your side,
and a big helmet and large turban. Much honor
but little money.

Ed invece del fandango,
una marcia per il fango.
Per montagne, per valloni,
con le nevi e i sollioni.

Instead of the fandango, a nice march through
mud, climbing mountains, crossing valleys,
now through the snow, and then in the heat.

Al concerto di tromboni,
di bombarde, di cannoni,
che le palle in tutti i tuoni all'orecchio fan
fischiar. Cherubino alla vittoria:
alla gloria militar.

You'll hear many sounds in your ears: bugles,
explosions, cannons, and shells hissing and
whizzing by.
Cherubino, rush to victory and a soldier's
glory.

END ACT I

ACT II

The Countess's sumptuous and opulent bedroom.

Larghetto
COUNTESS



LA CONTESSA:

Porgi, amor,
qualche ristoro al mio duolo,
a' miei sospir.
O mi rendi il mio tesoro,
o mi lascia almen morir.

COUNTESS:

Cupid, love,
give me consolation,
to my pain and sorrows.
Restore my treasured love,
or if not, at least leave me to die.

Susanna enters carrying a dress.

LA CONTESSA:

Vieni, cara Susanna, finiscimi l'istoria!

COUNTESS:

Come dear Susanna, finish the story!

SUSANNA:

È già finita.

SUSANNA:

It is already finished.

LA CONTESSA:

Dunque volle sedurti?

COUNTESS:

Then he wanted to seduce you?

SUSANNA:

Oh, il signor Conte non fa tai complimenti
colle donne mie pari;
egli venne a contratto di danari.

SUSANNA:

Oh, the Count doesn't give such compliments
to women of my status; with us he offers
money.

LA CONTESSA:

Ah, il crudel più non m'ama!

COUNTESS:

Oh, that cruel man no longer loves me!

SUSANNA:

E come poi è geloso di voi?

SUSANNA:

Then why is he so jealous of you?

LA CONTESSA:

Come lo sono i moderni mariti: per sistema
infedeli, per genio capricciosi, e per orgoglio
poi tutti gelosi.
Ma se Figaro t'ama, ei sol potria...

COUNTESS:

All modern husbands are that way.
They're unfaithful and fickle on principle, but
their pride causes them to be jealous.
But if Figaro loves you, you may be certain...

FIGARO:

La la la....

FIGARO: (*enters singing*)

La la la....

SUSANNA:

Eccolo: vieni, amico.
Madama impaziente.

FIGARO:

A voi non tocca stare in pena per questo.
Alfin di che si tratta?
Al signor Conte piace la sposa mia,
indi segretamente ricuperar vorria il diritto
feudale. Possibile è la cosa, e naturale.

LA CONTESSA:

Possibil?

SUSANNA:

Naturale?

FIGARO:

Naturalissima. E se Susanna vuol
possibilissima.

SUSANNA:

Finiscila una volta.

FIGARO:

Ho già finito.
Quindi prese il partito di sceglier me corriero,
e la Susanna consiglia segreta d'ambasciata.
E perch'ella ostinata ognor rifiuta il diploma
d'onor ch'ei le destina minaccia di protegger
Marcellina.
Questo è tutto l'affare.

SUSANNA:

Ed hai coraggio di trattar scherzando
un negozio sì serio?

FIGARO:

Non vi basta che scherzando io ci pensi?

Ecco il progetto:

per Basilio un biglietto io gli fi capitar che
l'avvertisca di certo appuntamento che per
l'ora del ballo a un amante voi deste.

LA CONTESSA:

O ciel! Che sento!
Ad un uom sì geloso?

SUSANNA:

Here he is. (*and then to Figaro*)
Come, Madame is quite anxious.

FIGARO: (*to the Countess*)

Don't be so uneasy about this.
What are we really dealing with?
The Count secretly admires my intended wife,
and his possible reason is that he wants to
restore his feudal rights. That may be the
reason, and it's natural.

COUNTESS:

Possible?

SUSANNA:

Natural?

FIGARO:

Perfectly natural. And if Susanna is willing,
very possible.

SUSANNA:

Stop talking like that.

FIGARO:

I'm already finished.
That's why he decided to take me to London as
a courier, and Susanna as "confidential attaché"
to the embassy. And because she is persistently
obstinate and refuses the diplomatic honor, he's
created a menace for me and protects
Marcellina. That's the whole story.

SUSANNA:

And you have the audacity to treat such a
serious matter as a joke?

FIGARO:

Aren't you thankful that I do treat it lightly?

Here's my plan:

I'll use Basilio to take an anonymous letter to
the Count that advises him that the Countess
has made an appointment to meet her secret
lover at the ball.

COUNTESS:

Oh heavens! What am I hearing?
And to a man who is so jealous?

FIGARO:

Ancora meglio!
Così potrem più presto imbarazzarlo,
confonderlo, imbrogliarlo, rovesciargli i
progetti, empierlo di sospetti, e porgli in testa
che la moderna festa ch'ei di fare a me tenta
altri a lui faccia; onde qua perda il tempo, ivi
la traccia. Così quasi ex abrupto, e senza
ch'abbia fatto per frastonarci alcun disegno
vien l'ora delle nozze, e in faccia a lei non fia,
ch'osi d'opporci ai voti miei.

SUSANNA:

È ver, ma in di lui vece s'opporrà Marcellina.

FIGARO:

Aspetta! Al Conte farai subito dir, che verso
sera attendati in giardino,
il picciol Cherubino per mio consiglio non
ancora partito da femmina vestito,
faremo che in sua vece ivi sen vada.
Questa è l'unica strada onde monsù sorpreso da
madama sia costretto a far poi quel che si brama.

LA CONTESSA:

Che ti par?

SUSANNA:

Non c'è mal.

LA CONTESSA:

Nel nostro caso....

SUSANNA:

Quand'egli è persuaso....e dove è il tempo?

FIGARO:

Il Conte è alla caccia; e per qualch'ora
non sarà di ritorno; io vado e tosto
Cherubino vi mando; lascio a voi
la cura di vestirlo.

LA CONTESSA:

E poi?

FIGARO:

E poi....
Se vuol ballare signor Contino, il chitarrino le
suonerò.

FIGARO:

So much the better!
Then we can embarrass him more quickly,
confound him, embroil him, overturn his
plans, fill him with suspicions, and put in his
mind that we can both play the same intrigues.
We'll make him waste the entire day searching
for the culprit, and suddenly, before he can
interfere with our plan, it will be time for us to
be married, and his opposition would be useless.

SUSANNA:

Perhaps, but you're not counting on
Marcellina opposing the wedding..

FIGARO:

Wait! Let the Count know that toward evening
the Countess will meet little Cherubino in the
garden, and that his departure was delayed on
my advisement. We'll dress him as a woman in
female clothes. This is the only way to get
Madame to catch the Count red-handed, and
then we can make him do what we want.

COUNTESS: (to Susanna)

What do you think?

SUSANNA:

Not too bad.

COUNTESS:

In our situation....

SUSANNA:

When he's persuaded....and when do we do it?

FIGARO:

The Count is hunting and it will be some time
before he returns. I'll go and get Cherubino,
and send him here so you can dress him.

COUNTESS:

And then?

FIGARO:

And then....
If you want to dance, my Count,
my guitar will accompany you.

Figaro exits

LA CONTESSA:

Quanto duolmi, Susanna, che questo giovin-otto
abbia del Conte le stravaganze udite!
Ah tu non sai! Ma per qual causa mai Da me
stessa ei non venne?
Dov'è la canzonetta?

SUSANNA:

Eccola: appunto facciam che ce la canti.
Zitto, vien gente! È desso.

Avanti, avanti, signor ufficiale.

CHERUBINO:

Ah, non chiamarmi con nome sì fatale!
Ei mi rammenta che abbandonar degg'io
comare tanto buona.

SUSANNA:

E tanto bella!

CHERUBINO:

Ah sì, certo!

SUSANNA:

Ah sì, certo! Ipocritone!
Via presto la canzone che stamane a me deste a
madama cantate.

LA CONTESSA:

Chi n'è l'autor?

SUSANNA:

Guardate: egli ha due braccia di rossor sulla
faccia.

LA CONTESSA

Prendi la mia chitarra, e l'accompagna.

CHERUBINO:

Io sono sì tremante, ma se madama vuole.

SUSANNA:

Lo vuole, sì, lo vuol. Manco parole.

COUNTESS:

Susanna, I'm not happy that this young boy has
heard the Count's foolishness!
Oh, why did he go to you and not come to me?
Where is the little song he wrote?

SUSANNA:

Here it is. Let's make him sing it.
Quiet, someone's coming! It's him.
(Cherubino enters)
Come in, come in, gallant officer.

CHERUBINO:

Oh, don't call me by that awful title!
It reminds me that I must part from my kind and
gentle godmother.

SUSANNA:

And so beautiful!

CHERUBINO: (sighing)

Oh, yes, certainly!

SUSANNA: (mimicking him)

Oh, yes, certainly! Hypocrite!
Quickly, sing the song to Madame that you
gave me this morning.

COUNTESS:

Who wrote the song?

SUSANNA: (pointing to Cherubino)

Look! His cheeks are red and he's blushing all
over.

COUNTESS:

Take my guitar and accompany him.

CHERUBINO:

I'm trembling all over, but if Madame wishes.

SUSANNA:

She indeed wishes it, so keep your word.

Andante
CHERUBINO

Voi, che sa - pe - te che co - sa è amor,

CHERUBINO:

Voi che sapete che cosa è amor,
donne, vedete s'io l'ho nel cor.
Quello ch'io provo vi ridirò,
è per me nuovo, capir nol so.
Sento un affetto pien di desir,
ch'ora è diletto, ch'ora è martir.
Gelo e poi sento l'alma avvampar,
e in un momento torno a gelar.
Ricerco un bene fuori di me,
non so chi'l tiene, non so cos'è.

Sospiro e gemo senza voler,
palpito e tremo senza saper.
Non trovo pace notte né di,
Eppur mi piace languir così.

LA CONTESSA:

Bravo! Che bella voce! Io non sapea
che cantaste sì bene.

SUSANNA:

Oh, in verità egli fa tutto ben quello ch'ei fa.
Presto a noi, bel soldato;
Figaro v'informò....

CHERUBINO:

Tutto mi disse.

SUSANNA:

Lasciatemi veder. Andrà benissimo!
Siam d'uguale statura. Giù quel manto.

LA CONTESSA:

Che fai?

SUSANNA:

Niente paura.

LA CONTESSA:

E se qualcuno entrasse?

SUSANNA:

Entri, che mal facciamo?
La porta chiuderò.
Ma come poi acconciargli i cappelli?

LA CONTESSA:

Una mia cuffia prendi nel gabinetto.
Presto!

CHERUBINO:

You indeed know what love is.
Look ladies, if I have it in my heart.
I'll tell you what I feel.
It's all new to me. I don't understand it.
I feel a passion that is full of desire,
at times I feel torment, at times delight.
And then I feel frozen, then on fire.
and in an instant, frozen again.
I seek happiness from another,
I don't know who has it, or what it is.

I sigh and suffer without knowing.
I throb and tremble without knowing why.
I find no peace night or day,
Yet I am pleased to languish this way.

COUNTESS:

Great! What a beautiful voice! I didn't know
he could sing so well.

SUSANNA:

Oh, Indeed, everything he does he does well.
Come here, gallant soldier.
Figaro told you....

CHERUBINO:

He told me everything.

SUSANNA: (*measuring Cherubino*)

Let me see. It will be fine!
We're the same height. Take off your coat.

COUNTESS:

What are you doing?

SUSANNA:

Don't be afraid.

COUNTESS:

And what if someone comes?

SUSANNA:

Let them, what are we doing wrong?
I'll close the door. (*locks the door*)
But how should we arrange his hair?

COUNTESS:

Take one of my bonnets from the cabinet.
Hurry!

*While Susanna goes to a cabinet to get a bonnet,
Cherubino approaches the Countess and shows her his commission.*

Che carta è quella?

What is this paper?

CHERUBINO:

La patente.

CHERUBINO:

The commission.

LA CONTESSA:

Che sollecita gente!

COUNTESS:

What urgency!

CHERUBINO:

L'ebbi or da Basilio.

CHERUBINO:

I just received it from Basilio.

The Countess notices a ribbon tied on Cherubino's arm.

LA CONTESSA:

Dalla fretta obliato hanno il sigillo.

COUNTESS:

In their haste they forgot the seal.

SUSANNA:

Il sigillo di che?

SUSANNA:

What seal?

LA CONTESSA:

Della patente.

COUNTESS:

For the commission.

SUSANNA:

Cospetto! Che premura!
Ecco la cuffia.

SUSANNA:

Indeed! What haste!
Here is the bonnet.

LA CONTESSA:

Spicciati: va bene!
Miserabili noi, se il Conte viene.

COUNTESS:

Do be quick! It seems to be fine!
We're in trouble if the Count should come.

Allegretto
SUSANNA



SUSANNA:

Venite, inginocchiatevi, restate fermo lì.

SUSANNA: (dressing Cherubino)

Come, kneel down, and stay still.

Pian piano, or via, giratevi:
bravo, va ben così.

Very gently turn around.
Great! That's good.

(Cherubino looks toward the Countess)

La faccia ora volgetemi!
Olà, quegli occhi a me!

Turn your face to me!
Hey, yours eyes to me!

Drittissimo: guardatemi.
Madama qui non è.

Look right into my face.
Madame is not here.

Restate fermo, or via,
giratevi, bravo!
Più alto quel colletto,
quel ciglio un po' più basso,
le mani sotto il petto,
vedremo poscia il passo,
quando sarete in piè.

Mirate il bricconcello!
Mirate quanto è bello!
Che furba guardatura!
Che vezzo, che figura!
Se l'amano le femmine
han certo il lor perché.

LA CONTESSA:
Quante buffonerie!

SUSANNA:
Ma se ne sono io medesima gelosa; chi,
serpentello, volete tralasciar d'esser si bello?

LA CONTESSA:
Finiam le ragazzate; or quelle maniche
oltre il gomito gli alza, onde più agiatamente
l'abito gli si adattì.

SUSANNA:
Ecco.

LA CONTESSA:
Più indietro.
Così.

The Countess reads the commission and notices that the seal is missing.

Che nastro è quello?

SUSANNA:
È quel ch'esso involommi.

LA CONTESSA:
E questo sangue?

CHERUBINO:
Quel sangue io non so come, poco pria
sdruciolando in un sasso la pelle io mi
graffiai e la piaga col nastro io mi fasciai.

SUSANNA:
Mostrate! Non è mal; cospetto! Ha il braccio più
candido del mio! Qualche ragazza.

Stay still here, or go,
turn to me, great!
Your neck higher,
and cast down those wicked eyes,
hands under your chest,
when you stand up
we'll see how you walk.

Look at the rascal!
Look how handsome he is!
What cunning glances he has!
What charm, what a figure!
If women love him,
they certainly have good reason.

COUNTESS:
What clowning!

SUSANNA:
I'm afraid I'm going to be jealous myself. You
little devil, how dare you be so handsome?

COUNTESS:
Let's stop being ridiculous.
Tuck up those sleeves above the elbow so that
the dress won't agitate him so much.

SUSANNA:
There.

COUNTESS:
Farther back.
Like so.

What is that ribbon?

SUSANNA:
He stole it from me.

COUNTESS:
And it's bloodstained?

CHERUBINO:
I don't know how that blood got there.
A little earlier I slipped on a rock. The stone cut
me and I tied the cut with the ribbon.

SUSANNA:
Show me! It's not bad! His arm is whiter than
mine, white like a lady's arm.

LA CONTESSA:

E seguì a far la pazza?
Va nel mio gabinetto, e prendi un poco
d'inglese taffetà, ch'è sullo scrigno.

In quanto al nastro, inver, per il colore
mi spiacea di privarmene.

SUSANNA:

Tenete, e da legargli il braccio?

LA CONTESSA:

Un altro nastro prendi insieme col mio vestito.

CHERUBINO:

Ah, più presto m'avria quello guarito!

LA CONTESSA:

Perché? Questo è migliore!

CHERUBINO:

Allor che un nastro legò la chioma ovver toccò
la pelle d'oggetto...

LA CONTESSA:

Forastiero, è buon per le ferite, non è vero?
Guardate qualità ch'io non sapea!

CHERUBINO:

Madama scherza, ed io frattanto parto.

LA CONTESSA:

Poverin! Che sventurata!

CHERUBINO:

Oh, me infelice?

LA CONTESSA:

Or piange.

CHERUBINO:

Oh ciel! Perché morir non lice!
Forse vicino all'ultimo momento
questa bocca oseria!

LA CONTESSA:

Siete saggio, cos'è questa follia!

Chi picchia alla mia porta?

COUNTESS:

Why do I follow this craziness?
Go to my cabinets and get a bit of English
adhesive plaster that's on the jewel box.
(Susanna leaves quickly)
About that ribbon, I'll keep it. It's a color that
suits me.

SUSANNA: (returning)

Should I tie it on his arm?

COUNTESS:

Take another piece of ribbon from my dress.

CHERUBINO:

DO it quickly so I can heal!

COUNTESS:

Why? This is better!

CHERUBINO:

I have a feeling that if a ribbon has touched
the hair of someone...

COUNTESS:

If it's from a stranger it's good for the wound.
Right? I've never realized it was of such quality!

CHERUBINO:

Madame mocks me, and I must leave.

COUNTESS:

Poor one! How unfortunate!

CHERUBINO:

Oh, how can I bear it?

COUNTESS:

Then cry.

CHERUBINO:

Oh heavens! I'd like to die now!
Perhaps at the last moment, I might kiss that
mouth!

COUNTESS:

What nonsense you are speaking!

(a knocking at the door)

Who knocks at the door?

IL CONTE:

Perché è chiusa?

COUNT: *(from outside)*

Why is the door closed?

LA CONTESSA:

Il mio sposo! Oh Dei! Son morta!
Voi qui, senza mantello! In quello stato,
un ricevuto foglio, la sua gran gelosia!

COUNTESS:

My husband! Oh Gods! I'm finished!
You here, and undressed! In that condition, a
letter received, his great jealousy!

IL CONTE:

Cosa indugiate?

COUNT:

Why do you delay?

LA CONTESSA:

Son sola, ah sì, son sola.

COUNTESS:

I'm alone, yes, alone.

IL CONTE:

E a chi parlate?

COUNT:

Then who were you speaking with?

LA CONTESSA:

A voi, certo, a voi stesso.

COUNTESS:

To you...certainly to you alone.

CHERUBINO:

Dopo quel ch'è successo, il suo furore,
non trovo altro consiglio!

CHERUBINO:

After what has happened, and his anger,
there's only one thing to do!

Cherubino runs to the closet and closes the door behind him.

LA CONTESSA:

Ah, mi difenda il cielo in tal periglio!

COUNTESS: *(take the key)*

Oh heaven help me in such danger!

The Countess unlocks the door and admits the Count.

IL CONTE:

Che novità! Non fu mai vostra usanza
di rinchiudervi in stanza.

COUNT:

What's the idea! You never used to lock
yourself in your room!

LA CONTESSA:

È ver; ma io, io stava qui mettendo.

COUNTESS:

True, but I, I was trying.

IL CONTE:

Via, mettendo...

COUNT:

You were trying...

LA CONTESSA:

Certe robe; era meco la Susanna,
che in sua camera è andata.

COUNTESS:

Certain clothes. Susanna was here with me but
has gone to her room.

IL CONTE:

Ad ogni modo voi non siete tranquilla.

COUNT:

In any sense you're not relaxed.

Guardate questo foglio.

(The Count shows her a letter)

Look at this paper.

LA CONTESSA:
(Numi! È il foglio che Figaro gli scrisse!)

COUNTESS: (*aside*)
(Gods! It's the letter Figaro wrote to him!)

A noise is heard from the closet where Cherubino hides.

IL CONTE:
Cos'è codesto strepito?
In gabinetto qualche cosa è caduta.

COUNT:
What is that noise?
Something fell down in the closet.

LA CONTESSA:
Io non intesi niente.

COUNTESS:
I didn't hear anything.

IL CONTE:
Convien che abbiate i gran pensieri in mente.

COUNT:
It is clear that you must have many things on
your mind.

LA CONTESSA:
Di che?

COUNTESS:
About what?

IL CONTE:
Là v'è qualchuno.

COUNT: (*becoming suspicious*)
Somebody is in there.

LA CONTESSA:
Chi volete che sia?

COUNTESS:
Who do you think it is?

IL CONTE:
Lo chiedo a voi; io vengo in questo punto.

COUNT:
I ask you. I just arrived here.

LA CONTESSA:
Ah sì, Susanna, appunto.

COUNTESS:
Oh, yes, it's Susanna, of course.

IL CONTE:
Che passò, mi diceste, alla sua stanza!

COUNT:
You just told me Susanna went to her room!

LA CONTESSA:
Alla sua stanza, o qui, non vidi bene.

COUNTESS:
To her room, or here. I didn't see well.

IL CONTE:
Susanna, e donde viene che siete sì turbata?

COUNT:
Susanna, so why are you so disturbed now?

LA CONTESSA:
Per la mia cameriera?

COUNTESS:
For my maid?

IL CONTE:
Io non so nulla; ma turbata senz'altro.

COUNT:
I know nothing, but undoubtedly you're upset.

LA CONTESSA:
Ah, questa serve più che non turba me turba
voi stesso.

COUNTESS:
Oh, that maid upsets me more than ever, and
she disturbs you also.

IL CONTE:

È vero, è vero, e lo vedrete adesso.

COUNT:

It's true, and you'll see now.

(The Count goes toward the closet)

IL CONTE:

Susanna, or via, sortite, sortite, io così vo'.

COUNT:

Susanna, come out now, come out. I order you.

LA CONTESSA:

Fermatevi! Sentite!
Sortire ella non può.

COUNTESS:

Stay there! Hear me!
Susanna cannot come out.

SUSANNA:

(Cos'è codesta lite?
Il paggio dove andò?)

SUSANNA:

(What does this mean?
Where did the page go?)

(The Count searches the alcove)

IL CONTE:

E chi vietarlo or osa?

COUNT:

And who can forbid or dare me now?

LA CONTESSA:

Lo vieta l'onestà. Un abito da sposa
provando ella si sta.

COUNTESS:

Modesty prevents it. She's trying on her
wedding dress.

IL CONTE:

(Chiarissima è la cosa: l'amante qui sarà.)

COUNT:

(It is clear to me that her lover is in there.)

LA CONTESSA:

(Bruttissima è la cosa, chi sa cosa sarà.)

COUNTESS:

(This is horrible. How will it end?)

SUSANNA:

(Capisco qualche cosa, veggiamo come va.)

SUSANNA:

(I understand only a little. Let's see how this
will work out.)

IL CONTE:

Dunque parlate almeno. Susanna, se qui siete.

COUNT:

Susanna, if you're in the room, at least speak.

LA CONTESSA:

Nemmen, nemmen, nemmeno,
io v'ordino: tacete.

COUNTESS:

Never, never, never, I command you to be
quiet.

(Susanna hides herself in the alcove.)

IL CONTE:

Consorte mia, giudizio, un scandalo, un
disordine, schiviam per carità!

COUNT:

Be prudent, my wife, and let's avoid a scandal
or a messy quarrel!

SUSANNA:

Oh cielo, un precipizio, un scandalo, un
disordine, qui certo nascerà.

SUSANNA:

At this point, a scandal or messy quarrel, will
certainly erupt.

LA CONTESSA:

Consorte mio, giudizio, un scandalo, un disordine, schiviam per carità!

IL CONTE:

Dunque voi non aprite?

LA CONTESSA:

E perché degg'io le mie camere aprir?

IL CONTE:

Ebben, lasciate, l'aprirem senza chiavi. Ehi? Gente?

LA CONTESSA:

Come? Porreste a repentaglio d'una dama l'onore?

IL CONTE:

È vero, io sbaglio. Posso senza rumore, senza scandalo alcun di nostra gente andar io stesso a prender l'occorrente. Attendete pur qui, ma perché in tutto sia il mio dubbio distrutto anco le porte io prima chiuderò.

LA CONTESSA:

(Che imprudenza!)

IL CONTE:

Voi la condiscendenza di venir meco avrete. Madama, eccovi il braccio, andiamo.

LA CONTESSA:

Andiamo.

IL CONTE:

Susanna starà qui finché torniamo.

COUNTESS:

Be prudent, my husband, and let's avoid a messy quarrel!

COUNT:

Then you're not opening the door?

COUNTESS:

And why must I open my rooms?

COUNT:

Then, leave me. I'll open them without keys. Who's in there? A person?

COUNTESS: (restraining him)

What? Would you jeopardize the honor of a woman of rank?

COUNT:

It's true. I'm wrong. I can do it without scandal in front of the servants. I'll go myself and fetch the tools to do it.

It would be better if you wait here to avoid any intrigue. I'm going to lock every door in the room.

COUNTESS: (aside)

(What impudence!)

COUNT:

You will have the discretion to come with me Madame. Here is my arm. Let's go.

COUNTESS:

Let' go.

COUNT:

Susanna will be here until we return.

*After the Count and Countess leave,
Susanna rushes from the alcove to the closet door.*

SUSANNA:

Aprite, presto, aprite; aprite, è la Susanna. Sortite, via sortite, andate via di qua.

SUSANNA: (to Cherubino)

Open, open quickly. Open, it's Susanna. Come out, come out, get away from here.

CHERUBINO:

Oimè, che scena orribile!
Che gran fatalità!

CHERUBINO:

Oh my, what a horrible predicament!
What an awful fate!

SUSANNA:

Partite, non tardate di qua, di là.

SUSANNA e CHERUBINO:

Le porte son serrate, che mai, che mai sarà?

CHERUBINO:

Qui perdersi non giova.

SUSANNA:

V'uccide se vi trova.

CHERUBINO:

Veggiamo un po' qui fuori. Dà proprio nel giardino.

SUSANNA:

Fermate, Cherubino!

Fermate per pietà!

SUSANNA:

Tropp'alto per un salto, fermate per pietà!

CHERUBINO:

Lasciami, pria di nuocerle nel fuoco volerei.
Abbraccio te per lei.
addio, così si fa.

SUSANNA:

Leave. Don't delay. This way, that way.

SUSANNA and CHERUBINO:

The doors are locked. What shall we do?

CHERUBINO:

I'm finished if I stay here.

SUSANNA:

He'll kill you if he finds you here.

CHERUBINO: (*looks out the window*)

Then I'll use the window. It looks right into the garden. (*Cherubino prepares to jump*)

SUSANNA:

Stop! Cherubino!

Stop for heaven's sake!

SUSANNA:

Stop, it's too high for you to jump.

CHERUBINO:

Leave me alone. I would fly into the fire before hurting her. I embrace you for her.
(*kisses Susanna*) Farewell, this is the way to do it.

Cherubino jumps from the window as Susanna looks after him.

SUSANNA:

Oh, guarda il demonietto! Come fugge!

È già un miglio lontano.

Ma non perdiamoci invano.

Entriam nel gabinetto.

venga poi lo smargiasso, io qui l'aspetto.

SUSANNA:

Oh, look at the little devil! How he flees!

He's already a mile away.

But we haven't lost each other in vain.

I'll enter the closet, wait for them,

and let the fury come.

*Susanna enters the closet and closes the door behind her.
The Count and Countess return. The Count holds an iron bar
to break open the closet door. He searches the room suspiciously.*

IL CONTE:

Tutto è come il lasciai; volete dunque aprir voi stessa, o deggio.

LA CONTESSA:

Ahimé, fermate; e ascoltatemi un poco.

Mi credete capace di mancar al dover?

COUNT:

Every thing is as when I left. Will you then open the door yourself, or must I.

COUNTESS:

Stop and listen to me. Do you think that I am capable of being unfaithful?

IL CONTE:

Come vi piace. Entro quel gabinetto
chi v'è chiuso vedrò.

LA CONTESSA:

Sì, lo vedrete, ma uditemi tranquillo.

IL CONTE:

Non è dunque Susanna?

LA CONTESSA:

No, ma invece è un oggetto,
che ragion di sospetto
non vi deve lasciar: per questa sera
una burla innocente di far si disponeva, ed io
vi giuro che l'onor, l'onestà.

IL CONTE:

Chi è dunque! Dite, l'ucciderò.

LA CONTESSA:

Sentite!
(Ah, non ho cor!)

IL CONTE:

Parlate.

LA CONTESSA:

È un fanciullo.

IL CONTE:

Un fanciul!

LA CONTESSA:

Sì, Cherubino.

IL CONTE:

(E mi farà il destino ritrovar questo paggio in
ogni loco!)

Come? Non è partito? Scellerati!
Ecco i dubbi spiegati, ecco l'imbroglio,
ecco il raggio, onde m'avverte il foglio.

COUNT:

As you please. I intend to see who is hiding in
that closet.

COUNTESS:

Yes, you shall, but hear me calmly.

COUNT:

Then it is not Susanna?

COUNTESS:

No, someone else is in there, one whose
intentions are harmless, and whom you have no
right to suspect. I was preparing some harmless
entertainment for this evening's amusement,
and I swear I have done nothing wrong.

COUNT:

Who is it? Tell me and I'll kill him.

COUNTESS:

Listen!
(I can't speak!)

COUNT:

Speak.

COUNTESS:

He is a mere child.

COUNT:

A child!

COUNTESS:

Yes, Cherubino.

COUNT:

(Why do my unlucky stars make me find this
page everywhere?)

What? He hasn't left? Scoundrels!
Now my suspicions are verified, and now I
understand that anonymous letter.

Raging, the Count goes towards the closet.

Allegro
COUNT



E - sci o mai, garzon mal - na - to, scia - gu - ra - to, non tardar!

IL CONTE:

Esci omai, garzon malnato,
sciagurato, non tardar.

LA CONTESSA:

Ah! Signore, quel furore, per lui fammi il cor
tremar.

IL CONTE:

E d'opporvi ancor osate?

LA CONTESSA:

No, sentite.

IL CONTE:

Via parlate.

LA CONTESSA:

Giuro al ciel ch'ogni sospetto,
e lo stato in che il trovate.
Sciolto il collo! Nudo il petto!

IL CONTE:

Sciolto il collo!
Nudo il petto! Seguitate!

LA CONTESSA:

Per vestir femminee spoglie.

IL CONTE:

Ah! Comprendo, indegna moglie,
mi vo' tosto vendicar.

LA CONTESSA:

Mi fa torto quel trasporto, m'oltraggiate a
dubitar.

IL CONTE:

Qua la chiave!

LA CONTESSA:

Egli è innocente. Voi sapete.

IL CONTE:

Non so niente! Va lontan dagl'occhi miei!
Un'infida, un'empia sei, e mi cerchi
d'infamar.

COUNT:

Come out now, uncouth lad, scoundrel, and
don't delay.

COUNTESS:

Sir, your rage makes me tremble for him!

COUNT:

Why do you still dare to interfere?

COUNTESS:

No, listen.

COUNT:

Then tell me.

COUNTESS:

I swear by Heaven that he is innocent, even
though you'll find him in shirt sleeves and
bear chested!

COUNT:

In his shirt sleeves!
Bear chested! Let's go then!

COUNTESS:

It was all to dress him as a lady.

COUNT:

Yes, I now understand, unfaithful wife.
I will take revenge immediately.

(takes the crow in a rage.)

COUNTESS:

Your passion wrongs me, and you offend me
by your doubts.

COUNT:

Give me the key!

COUNTESS: *(hands him the key)*

He is innocent. You know.

COUNT:

I know nothing. Go far from my sight. You are
a faithless and false woman, and you seek to
dishonor me.

The Count enters the closet.

LA CONTESSA:

Vado, sì, ma....

COUNTESS:

I'll go, but....

IL CONTE:

Non ascolto.

COUNT:

I will not listen to you.

LA CONTESSA:

Non son rea.

COUNTESS:

I am guiltless.

IL CONTE:

Vel leggo in volto!

Mora, mora, e più non sia, ria cagion del mio penar.

COUNT:

I read it in your face!

Let him die, and no longer be the cause of all my sufferings.

LA CONTESSA:

Ah! La cieca gelosia qualche eccesso gli fa far.

COUNTESS:

His blind, excessive jealousy will provoke a catastrophe.

The Count draws his sword, and opens the door. The Countess, overwhelmed by fear, covers her eyes. Susanna stands at the doorway with a grave and ironical air.

IL CONTE:

Susanna!

COUNT:

Susanna!

LA CONTESSA:

Susanna!

COUNTESS:

Susanna!

SUSANNA:

Signore! Cos'è quel stupore?

Il brando prendete, il paggio uccidete!

Quel paggio malnato, vedetelo qua.

SUSANNA:

Sir! Why such astonishment?

You take up your sword to kill the page, and you see the traitor before you.

IL CONTE:

(Che scola! La testa girando mi va.)

COUNT:

(What can this mean? I'm baffled and confused.)

LA CONTESSA:

(Che storia è mai questa, Susanna v'è là.)

COUNTESS:

(What is this, Susanna there.)

SUSANNA:

(Confusa han la testa, non san come va.)

SUSANNA:

(Their heads are confused, and they don't know what is going on.)

IL CONTE:

Sei sola?

COUNT:

Are you alone?

SUSANNA:

Guardate, qui ascoso sarà.

SUSANNA:

Look inside and find what you can.

IL CONTE:

Guardiamo, qui ascoso sarà.

COUNT:

Let's look, and find what we can.

LA CONTESSA:

Susanna, son morta, il fiato mi manca.

COUNTESS:

Susanna, I tremble and I am faint.

SUSANNA:

Più lieta, più franca, in salvo è di già.

SUSANNA: (*pointing to the window*)

Be more cheerful, the boy is safe.

The Count emerges from the closet.

IL CONTE:

Che sbaglio mai presi! Appena lo credo; se a torto v'offesi perdono vi chiedo; ma far burla simile è poi crudeltà.

COUNT: (*addresses the Countess*)

What a mistake I made! I can hardly believe it! If I have wronged you. I beg your forgiveness, But such foolish jokes indeed are too cruel.

LA CONTESSA e SUSANNA:

Le vostre follie non mertan pietà.

COUNTESS and SUSANNA::

Your follies deserve no mercy at all.

IL CONTE:

Io v'amo.

COUNT:

I love you.

LA CONTESSA:

Nol dite!

COUNTESS:

You're not truthful!

IL CONTE:

Vel giuro.

COUNT:

I swear it.

COUNTESS:

Mentite. Son l'empia, l'infida che ognora v'inganna.

COUNTESS:

Deceiver! I am an honorable woman who has never deceived you.

IL CONTE:

Quell'ira, Susanna, m'aita a calmar.

COUNT:

Susanna, help me to appease her anger!

SUSANNA:

Così si condanna chi può sospettar.

SUSANNA:

One capable of such suspicion, must be punished accordingly.

LA CONTESSA:

Adunque la fede d'un'anima amante si fiera mercede doveva sperar?

COUNTESS:

What has been my reward for years of faithful devotion?

SUSANNA:

Signora!

SUSANNA:

Madam!

IL CONTE:

Rosina!

COUNT:

Rosina!

LA CONTESSA:

Crudele! Più quella non sono; ma il misero oggetto del vostro abbandono che avete diletto di far disperar.

COUNTESS:

Cruel husband! I will no longer be the unfortunate object of your contempt, your delight that drives me to despair.

IL CONTE:

Confuso, pentito, son troppo punito,
abbiate pietà.

SUSANNA:

Confuso, pentito, è troppo punito,
abbiate pietà.

LA CONTESSA:

Soffrir sì gran torto quest'alma non sa.

IL CONTE:

Ma il paggio rinchiuso?

LA CONTESSA:

Fu sol per provarvi.

IL CONTE:

Ma i tremiti, i palpiti?

LA CONTESSA:

Fu sol per burlarvi.

IL CONTE:

Ma un foglio sì barbaro?

LA CONTESSA e SUSANNA:

Di Figaro è il foglio, e a voi per Basilio.

IL CONTE:

Ah perfidi! Lo voglio.

LA CONTESSA e SUSANNA:

Perdono non merta chi agli altri nol da.

IL CONTE:

Ebben, se vi piace comune è la pace;
Rosina inflessibile con me non sarà.

LA CONTESSA:

Ah quanto, Susanna, son dolce di core!
Di donne al furore chi più crederà?

In a gesture of reconciliation, the Countess offers her band to the Count.

SUSANNA:

Cogl'uomin, signora, girate, volgete,
vedrete che ognora si cade poi là.

COUNT:

I am confused and penitent. Have mercy, it is
too much punishment.

SUSANNA:

I am confused and penitent. Have mercy, it is
too much punishment.

COUNTESS:

My soul can not bear such great insults.

COUNT:

The page wasn't there?

COUNTESS:

It was only to test you.

COUNT:

But your trembling and anxiety?

COUNTESS:

It was to just to make some fun.

(the Count shows the letter.)

COUNT:

But what did this cruel letter mean?

COUNTESS and SUSANNA:

The writer was Figaro, and Basilio the bearer.

COUNT:

I'll punish the scoundrels.

COUNTESS and SUSANNA:

He is undeserving of pardon, something he
will not grant to others.

COUNT:

Well then, if you like, we'll make peace.
Rosina will not be uncompromising with me.

COUNTESS:

Oh Susanna, how gentle my heart is!
Who can believe women's anger?

SUSANNA:

Madame, these men who turn and wiggle all
the same.

IL CONTE:

Guardatemi!

COUNT:

Look at me!

LA CONTESSA:

Ingrato!

COUNTESS:

Ungrateful man!

IL CONTE:

Ho torto, e mi pento.

COUNT:

I erred, and I repent.

IL CONTE, LA CONTESSA, SUSANNA:

Da questo momento quest'alma a conoscermi/
conoscerla/conoscervi
apprender potrà.

COUNT, COUNTESS, SUSANNA:

This soul
will now learn to know (her/me/ you) quite
well.

Figaro arrives.

FIGARO:

Signori, di fuori son già i suonatori.
Le trombe sentite, i pifferi udite, tra canti, tra
balli de' nostri vassalli
corriamo, voliamo le nozze a compir.

FIGARO:

The musicians have already arrived.
Hear the trumpets and the pipers, and the
dancing and singing. Let's hurry and
celebrate the wedding.

As Figaro begins to leave, the Count stops him.

IL CONTE:

Pian piano, men fretta.

COUNT:

Gently, gently, not so fast.

FIGARO:

La turba m'aspetta.

FIGARO:

The people expect me.

IL CONTE:

Un dubbio toglietemi in pria di partir.

COUNT:

Before you go, rid me of a doubt.

LA CONTESSA, SUSANNA, FIGARO:

(La cosa è scabrosa; com'ha da finir!)

COUNTESS, SUSANNA, FIGARO:

(It is a rough point; how is it to end?)

IL CONTE:

(Con arte le carte convien qui scoprir.)

COUNT:

(I must play my cards skilfully.)

The Count shows Figaro the letter.

Conoscete, signor Figaro, questo foglio chi
vergò?

Do you know, Mr. Figaro, who wrote this
letter?

FIGARO:

No! conosco.

FIGARO:

I do not.

LA CONTESSA, IL CONTE, SUSANNA:

No! conosci?

COUNTESS, COUNT, SUSANNA:

You do not?

FIGARO:

No, no, no!

FIGARO:

I don't know.

SUSANNA:

E nol desti a Don Basilio.

LA CONTESSA:

Per recarlo....

IL CONTE:

Tu c'intendi.

FIGARO:

Oibò, oibò.

SUSANNA:

E non sai del damerino

LA CONTESSA:

Che stasera nel giardino...

IL CONTE:

Già capisci?

FIGARO:

Io non lo so.

IL CONTE:

Cerchi invan difesa e scusa, il tuo ceffo già t'accusa, vedo ben che vuoi mentir.

FIGARO:

Mente il ceffo, io già non mento.

LA CONTESSA e SUSANNA:

Il talento aguzzi invano palesato abbiām l'arcano, non v'è nulla da ridir.

IL CONTE:

Che rispondi?

FIGARO:

Niente, niente.

IL CONTE:

Dunque accordi?

FIGARO:

Non accordo.

LA CONTESSA e SUSANNA:

Eh via, chetati, balordo, la burletta ha da finir.

SUSANNA:

Didn't you give it to Don Basilio?

COUNTESS:

To deliver....

COUNT:

You don't understand.

FIGARO:

Not I, no, no.

SUSANNA:

And about the rendezvous.

COUNTESS:

For this evening in the garden...

COUNT:

Do you know now?

FIGARO:

I know nothing.

COUNT:

Your defence and excuses are hopeless. Your face accuses you, and I see that you lie.

FIGARO:

My face lies, but not I.

COUNTESS and SUSANNA:

It is in vain for you to sharpen your wit; we have discovered the secret; there is nothing to repeat.

COUNT:

What do you answer?

FIGARO:

Nothing, nothing.

COUNT:

Then you agree?

FIGARO:

I do not agree.

COUNTESS and SUSANNA:

Come, mad fellow, you must finish the farce.

FIGARO:

Per finirla lietamente e all'usanza teatrale
un'azion matrimoniale le faremo ora seguir.

LA CONTESSA, SUSANNA, FIGARO:

Deh signor, nol contrastate, consolate i lor/
miei desir.

IL CONTE:

(Marcellina, Marcellina!
Quanto tardi a comparir!)

FIGARO:

To finish it joyfully according to theatrical
custom, we shall have a wedding
entertainment to follow now.

COUNTESS, SUSANNA, FIGARO:

Pray, sir, do not oppose it. Grant the wishes
and console me/them.

COUNT:

(Marcellina, Marcellina!
How long you have delayed!)

The gardener Antonio enters, half drunk, and carrying a broken flower pot.

ANTONIO:

Ah! Signor! Signor!.

IL CONTE:

Cosa è stato?

ANTONIO:

Che insolenza! Chi'l fece? Chi fu?

**IL COUNT, LA CONTESSA,
SUSANNA, FIGARO:**

Cosa dici, cos'hai, cosa è nato?

ANTONIO:

Ascoltate!

**LA CONTESSA, COUNT, SUSANNA, e
FIGARO:**

Via, parla, di', su.

ANTONIO:

Dal balcone che guarda in giardino
mille cose ogni di gittar veggio,
e poc' anzi, può darsi di peggio,
vidi un uom, signor mio, gittar giù.

IL CONTE:

Dal balcone?

ANTONIO:

Vedete i garofani!

IL CONTE:

In giardino?

ANTONIO:

Oh! My lord! My lord!

COUNT:

What is the matter?

ANTONIO:

What impudence! What happened? Who was it?

**COUNT, COUNTESS, SUSANNA,
FIGARO:**

What is this all about? What happened?

ANTONIO:

Listen to me!

**COUNTESS, COUNT, FIGARO and
SUSANNA:**

Come, speak out.

ANTONIO: (to the Count.)

Every day they throw down rubbish from the
balcony into the garden. But a little while ago,
it was worse: I saw a man throw himself out.

COUNT:

From the balcony?

ANTONIO: (showing the vase)

See the pink carnations!.

COUNT:

In the garden?

SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA:

(Figaro, all'erta.)

IL CONTE:

Cosa sento?

SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA, FIGARO:

Costui ci sconcerta, quel briaco che viene far qui?

IL CONTE:

Dunque un uom! Ma dov'è, dov'è gito?

ANTONIO:

Ratto, ratto, il birbone è fuggito, e ad un tratto di vista m'uscì.

SUSANNA:

Sai che il paggio.

FIGARO:

So tutto, lo vidi.

Ah, ah, ah!

IL CONTE:

Taci là.

ANTONIO:

Cosa ridi?

FIGARO:

Tu sei cotto dal sorger del di.

IL CONTE:

Or ripetimi, un uom dal balcone.

ANTONIO:

Dal balcone.

IL CONTE:

In giardino.

ANTONIO:

In giardino.

SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA, FIGARO:

Ma, signore, se in lui parla il vino!

SUSANNA, COUNTESS:

(whispering to Figaro)

(Now, Figaro, you must be sharp.)

COUNT:

What do I hear?

SUSANNA, COUNTESS, FIGARO:

This is disconcerting. Who let this drunk in here?

COUNT: *(to Antonio)*

Then a man! But where has he gone?

ANTONIO:

The scoundrel ran away full speed, and I immediately lost sight of him.

SUSANNA: *(whispering to Figaro)*

You know that it was the page.

FIGARO: *(whispering to Susanna)*

I know all, I saw him.

Ha, ha, ha!

COUNT:

Be quiet over there.

ANTONIO: *(to Figaro)*

Why do you laugh?

FIGARO:

Because you're drunk all day.

COUNT: *(to Antonio)*

Now repeat it, a man from the balcony.

ANTONIO:

From the balcony.

COUNT:

In the garden.

ANTONIO:

In the garden.

SUSANNA, COUNTESS, FIGARO:

But, sir, it is the wine that speaks in him!

IL CONTE:

Segui pure, né in volto il vedesti?

ANTONIO:

No, nol vidi.

SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA:

(Olá, Figaro, ascolta!)

FIGARO:

Via, piangione, sta zitto una volta,
per tre soldi far tanto tumulto!

Giacché il fatto non può star occulto,
sono io stesso saltato di lì.

IL CONTE:

Chi? Voi stesso?

SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA:

Che testa! Che ingegno!

FIGARO:

Che stupor!

ANTONIO:

Chi? Voi stesso?

IL CONTE:

Già creder nol posso.

ANTONIO:

Come mai diventaste sì grosso?
Dopo il salto non foste così.

FIGARO:

A chi salta succede così.

ANTONIO:

Chi'l direbbe.

SUSANNA e LA CONTESSA:

Ed insiste quel pazzo!

IL CONTE:

Tu che dici?

ANTONIO:

A me parve il ragazzo.

IL CONTE:

Cherubin!

COUNT: *(to Antonio)*

Go on. Did you see his face?

ANTONIO:

No I did not.

SUSANNA, COUNTESS:

(Listen Figaro, and be sharp!)

FIGARO: *(to Antonio, pointing to the flowers)*

Come, crying booby, hold your tongue.
To make such a noise for threepence!

Since it can no longer hide it, I was the one
who jumped down from there.

COUNT:

Who? It was you?

SUSANNA, COUNTESS:

(What a head! How clever!)

FIGARO: *(to the Count)*

Why wonder?

ANTONIO: *(to Figaro)*

Who? It was you?

COUNT:

I can not believe it.

ANTONIO: *(to Figaro)*

You've grown quite a bit since your fall?
I would swear you were just half the size.

FIGARO:

It happens that was to people who jump.

ANTONIO:

Who would have thought it?

SUSANNA, COUNTESS:

And that idiot still insists!

COUNT: *(to Antonio)*

What did you say?

ANTONIO:

I thought it was the boy.

COUNT:

Cherubino!

SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA:

Maledetto!

FIGARO:

Esso appunto da Siviglia a cavallo qui giunto,
da Siviglia ov'ei forse sarà.

ANTONIO:

Questo no, questo no, che il cavallo
io non vidi saltare di là.

IL CONTE:

Che pazienza! Finiam questo ballo!

SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA:

(Come mai, giusto ciel, finirà?)

IL CONTE:

Dunque tu?.

FIGARO:

Saltai giù.

IL CONTE:

Ma perché?

FIGARO:

Il timor.

IL CONTE:

Che timor?

FIGARO:

Là rinchiuso aspettando quel caro visetto,
tippe tappe, un sussurro fuor d'uso.
voi gridaste, lo scritto biglietto,
saltai giù dal terrore confuso,
e stravolto m'ho un nervo del pie'!

ANTONIO:

Vostre dunque saran queste carte
che perdeste.

IL CONTE:

Olà, porgile a me.

FIGARO:

Sono in trappola.

SUSANNA e LA CONTESSA:

(Figaro, all'erta.)

SUSANNA, COUNTESS:

Curse him!

FIGARO:

Of course. He just returned today from Seville
on horseback.

ANTONIO:

Not so, not so, for I didn't see the horse jump
down.

COUNT:

What patience! Let us finish this inquiry!

SUSANNA, COUNTESS:

(Good heavens! How will it end?)

COUNT: (to Figaro)

So it was you?

FIGARO:

I jumped down.

COUNT:

Why then?

FIGARO:

Fear.

COUNT:

What fear?

FIGARO:

I was waiting in there for Susanna, when I
heard a babel of voices. Your voice was angry,
and I thought about this letter. So I jumped
from this window in terror, and twisted my
foot in the fall.

ANTONIO:

Then these papers are that were dropped are
yours.

COUNT:

Here! Give them to me.

FIGARO: (to the Countess and Susanna)

I am caught in a trap.

SUSANNA, COUNTESS:

(Figaro, be on the alert!)

IL CONTE:

Dite un po', questo foglio cos'è?

COUNT:

Tell me a little what the paper is about?
(showing it him at a distance.)

FIGARO:

Tosto, tosto, n'ho tanti, aspettate!

FIGARO:

Just a moment, and I'll tell you.

Figaro takes many papers out of his pocket and examines them.

ANTONIO:

Sarà forse il sommario de' debiti.

ANTONIO:

Perhaps it is a list of his debts.

FIGARO:

No, la lista degl'osti.

FIGARO:

No, a list of your wine shops.

IL CONTE:

Parlate.
E tu lascialo; e parti.

COUNT: *(to Figaro)*

Speak!
(to Antonio) And you can leave now.

SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA e FIGARO:

Lascialo. (Lasciami) e parti.

SUSANNA, COUNTESS, FIGARO:

Leave him (me) and go.

ANTONIO:

Parto, sì, ma se torno a trovarvi.

ANTONIO:

I'll go, yes, but if I find you again

FIGARO:

Vanne, vanne, non temo di te.

FIGARO:

Go, go, I do not fear you.

Antonio exits. The Count displays the paper to everyone.

IL CONTE:

Dunque.

COUNT:

Well then.

LA CONTESSA:

(O ciel! La patente del paggio!)

COUNTESS: *(aside to Susanna)*

(Oh heavens! The page's commission!)

SUSANNA:

Giusti Dei, la patente!

SUSANNA: *(aside to Figaro)*

Oh heavens, the commission!

IL CONTE:

Coraggio!

COUNT: *(to Figaro)*

Cheer up.

FIGARO:

O che testa! Questa è la patente che poc'anzi
il fanciullo mi diè.

FIGARO:

Oh what a head! That is the commission which
the boy gave me a while ago.

IL CONTE:

Per che fare?

COUNT:

What for?

FIGARO:

Vi manca....

FIGARO:

It needed....

IL CONTE:

Vi manca?

COUNT:

It needed?

LA CONTESSA:

(Il suggello.)

COUNTESS: (*aside to Susanna*)

(The seal.)

SUSANNA:

(Il suggello.)

SUSANNA: (*aside to Figaro*)

(The seal.)

IL CONTE:

Rispondi.

COUNT:

Answer.

FIGARO:

È l'usanza...

FIGARO:

Well, it's usual...

IL CONTE:

Su via, ti confondi?

COUNT:

Come on, answer me quickly?

FIGARO:

È l'usanza di porvi il suggello.

FIGARO:

It is usual to seal a commission.

IL CONTE:

(Questo birbo mi toglie il cervello, tutto, tutto è un mistero per me.)

COUNT: (*tearing up the paper*)

(This rascal is too much for my patience. All of this is a mystery to me.)

SUSANNA e LA CONTESSA:

(Se mi salvo da questa tempesta più non avvi naufragio per me.)

SUSANNA, COUNTESS:

(If I save myself from this storm, I shall never fear a shipwreck!)

FIGARO:

(Sbuffa invano e la terra calpesta; poverino ne sa men di me.)

FIGARO:

(You can bluster and rage all you want, but I know more than you do.)

Marcellina, Bartolo and Basilio enter excitedly.

MARCELLINA, BASILIO, BARTOLO:

Voi signor, che giusto siete ci dovete ascoltar.

MARCELLINA, BASILIO, BARTOLO:

Just lord, you must hear us now.

IL CONTE:

(Son venuti a vendicarmi io mi sento a consolar.)

COUNT:

(They've come to avenge me, and I feel myself comforted!)

SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA, FIGARO:

(Son venuti a sconcertarmi qual rimedio ritrovar?)

SUSANNA, COUNTESS, FIGARO:

They are come to put me out; what remedy can I find!

FIGARO:

Son tre stolidi, tre pazzi, cosa mai vengono a far?

FIGARO: (*to the Count*)

These three stupid, mad ones, what have they come here for?

IL CONTE:

Pian pianin, senza schiamazzi dica ognun quel che gli par.

MARCELLINA:

Un impegno nuziale ha costui con me contratto, e pretendo che il contratto deva meco effettuâr.

SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA, FIGARO:

Come! Come!

IL CONTE:

Olà, silenzio! Io son qui per giudicar.

BARTOLO:

Io da lei scelto avvocato vengo a far le sue difese, le legittime pretese, io qui vengo a palesar.

SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA, FIGARO:

È un birbante!

IL CONTE:

Olà, silenzio! Io son qui per giudicar.

BASILIO:

Io, com' uom al mondo cognito vengo qui per testimonio del promesso matrimonio con prestanza di danar.

SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA, FIGARO:

Son tre matti.

IL CONTE:

Olà, silenzio! Lo vedremo, il contratto leggeremo, tutto in ordin deve andar.

SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA e FIGARO:

Son confusa/o, son stordita/o, disperata/o, sbalordita/o. Certo un diavol dell' inferno qui li ha fatti capitar.

MARCELLINA, BASILIO, BARTOLO, IL CONTE:

Che bel colpo! Che bel caso!

È cresciuto a tutti il naso, qualche nume a noi propizio qui ci/li ha fatti capitar.

COUNT:

Softly and gently, and without confusion, let everyone speak his peace.

MARCELLINA: (*pointing to Figaro*)

This man signed a marriage contract with me, and I appeal to you to make him fulfill his contract.

SUSANNA, COUNTESS, FIGARO:

What's this! What's this!

COUNT:

Be silent, I'm the judge here.

BARTOLO:

I appear for this lady as her counsel in this action, demanding performance of the contract, and damages in full.

SUSANNA, COUNTESS, FIGARO:

He's a scoundrel!

COUNT:

Be silent, I'm the judge here.

BASILIO:

I bear witness that the plaintiff lent him money on the condition that if he could not repay her, he agreed to marry her.

SUSANNA, COUNTESS, FIGARO:

The three of them are crazy.

COUNT:

No more! The contract shall be read, and I myself will discover the truth.

SUSANNA, COUNTESS, FIGARO:

I am confused, I am astonished, in despair and confounded! Certainly the infernal devil has sent them here.

MARCELLINA, BARTOLO, BASILIO, COUNT:

What a fine blow! What a fine case!

It has raised our esteem! It was Providence that brought us all here.

ACT III

A large hall in the Count's palace. The Count paces to and fro, reflecting his skepticism and suspicion about recent events.

IL CONTE:

Che imbarazzo è mai questo!
Un foglio anonimo. la cameriera in gabinetto chiusa, la padrona confusa un uom che salta dal balcone in giardino, un altro appresso che dice esser quel desso.

Non so cosa pensar? Potrebbe forse qualcun de' miei vassalli? A simil razza è comune l'ardir, ma la Contessa. Ah, che un dubbio l'offende. Ella rispetta troppo sé stessa, e l'onor mio, l'onore. Dove diamin l'ha posto umano errore!

COUNT:

What a perplexing situation!
An anonymous letter, the maid locked in the closet, my lady embarrassed, a man jumps from the balcony into the garden, and another who says that he was the one.

What could it all mean? Could it have been one of my vassals? There's no limit to what they will dare. But the Countess. No I won't insult her. She has too high a sense of her dignity, and mine as well! I must admit that human nature is frail.

The Countess looks in, and then brings in Susanna.

LA CONTESSA:

Via, fatti core: digli che ti attenda in giardino.

The Countess withdraws, leaving the Count and Susanna alone.

IL CONTE:

Saprò se Cherubino era giunto a Siviglia. A tale oggetto ho mandato Basilio.

SUSANNA:

Oh cielo! E Figaro?

LA CONTESSA:

A lui non dei dir nulla: in vece tua voglio andarci io medesma.

IL CONTE:

Avanti sera dovrebbe ritornar.

SUSANNA:

Oh Dio! Non oso.

LA CONTESSA:

Pensa, ch'è in tua mano il mio riposo.

IL CONTE:

E Susanna? Chi sa ch'ella tradito abbia il segreto mio, oh, se ha parlato, gli fo sposar la vecchia.

COUNTESS: (aside to Susanna)

Come, take courage, tell him to wait for you in the garden.

COUNT: (still in deep thought)

I shall know if Cherubino had arrived at Seville. For that purpose I sent Basilio.

SUSANNA: (to the Countess)

:O gods! And Figaro?

COUNTESS:

Don't say a word to him! I'll keep the appointment myself.

COUNT:

Basilio will return before evening.

SUSANNA:

Oh God! I don't dare.

COUNTESS:

Remember, all my happiness depends on it.

COUNT:

And Susanna? Who knows whether she has betrayed my secret. If she has spoken, I'll make the old woman marry Figaro.

SUSANNA:

(Marcellina!) Signor!.

IL CONTE:

Cosa bramate?

SUSANNA:

Mi par che siete in collera!

IL CONTE:

Volete qualche cosa?

SUSANNA:

Signor, la vostra sposa ha i soliti vapori,
e vi chiede il fiaschetto degli odori.

IL CONTE:

Prendete.

SUSANNA:

Or vel riporto.

IL CONTE:

Ah no, potete ritenerlo per voi.

SUSANNA:

Per me? Questi non son mali da donne triviali.

IL CONTE:

Un'amante, che perde il caro sposo
sul punto d'ottenerlo.

SUSANNA:

Pagando Marcellina colla dote che voi mi
prometteste.

IL CONTE:

Ch'io vi promisi, quando?

SUSANNA:

Credea d'averlo inteso.

IL CONTE:

Sì, se voluto aveste intendermi voi stessa.

SUSANNA:

È mio dovere, e quel di Sua Eccellenza il mio
volere.

SUSANNA: (*coming forward*)

(Marcellina) Sir!

COUNT:

What do you want?

SUSANNA:

You seem to be angry!

COUNT:

Do you want something?

SUSANNA:

Your lady sent me because she's suffering from
the vapors, and wants tomorrow your .

COUNT:

Take it.

SUSANNA:

I'll bring it back soon.

COUNT:

Oh! no, you can keep it for yourself.

SUSANNA:

For me? Women in my position don't have
those ailments.

COUNT:

Not even a lover who loses her bridegroom just
before the wedding?

SUSANNA:

We'll pay Marcellina with the dowry that you
promised me.

COUNT:

That I promised you? When?

SUSANNA:

I thought I understood it that way.

COUNT:

Yes, if you would agree to my intentions.

SUSANNA:

It is my duty, and your lordship's pleasure is
my wish.

Andante
COUNT

Cru - del! Perchè fi - no - ra far - mi languir co - si?

IL CONTE:

Crudel! Perché finora farmi languir così?

COUNT:

Cruel one! Why did you make me languish like this until now?

SUSANNA:

Signor, la donna ognora empo ha dir di sì.

SUSANNA:

My lord, a woman always has time to say yes.

IL CONTE:

Dunque, in giardin verrai?

COUNT:

Then you will come to the garden?

SUSANNA:

Se piace a voi, verrò.

SUSANNA:

If it pleases you, I will come.

IL CONTE:

E non mi mancherai?

COUNT:

And you will not disappoint me?

SUSANNA:

No, non vi mancherò.

SUSANNA:

No, I will not disappoint you.

IL CONTE:

Mi sento dal contento pieno di gioia il cor.

COUNT:

I feel my heart delighted, and filled with joy.

SUSANNA:

Scusatemi se mento, voi che intendete amor.

SUSANNA:

If I do not deceive him, he'll only try again.

IL CONTE:

E perché fosti meco stamattina sì austera?

COUNT:

Tell me why you treated me so severely this morning?

SUSANNA:

Col paggio ch'ivi c'era?

SUSANNA:

With the page listening?

IL CONTE:

Ed a Basilio che per me ti parlò?

COUNT:

And Basilio, who spoke to you for me?

SUSANNA:

Ma qual bisogno abbiam noi, che un Basilio?

SUSANNA:

What need do we have for a man like Basilio?

IL CONTE:

È vero, è vero, e mi prometti poi se tu manchi, oh cor mio.

Ma la Contessa attenderà il fiaschetto.

COUNT:

You're right, my dear one, but promise me you won't disappoint me.

But my lady waits for the bottle.

SUSANNA:

Eh, fu un pretesto. Parlato io non avrei senza di questo.

IL CONTE:

Carissima!

SUSANNA:

Vien gente.

IL CONTE:

(È mia senz'altro.)

SUSANNA:

(Forbitevi la bocca, oh signor scaltro.)

SUSANNA:

Oh, that was only a pretext for me to be able to speak with you.

COUNT: (*taking Susanna's hand*)

My dearest!

SUSANNA:

Someone's coming.

COUNT: (*aside*)

(Now I'm sure she's mine.)

SUSANNA: (*aside*)

(You think that you're more cunning than me.)

Figaro enters.

FIGARO:

Ehì, Susanna, ove vai?

SUSANNA:

Taci, senza avvocato hai già vinta la causa.

FIGARO:

Cos'è nato?

FIGARO:

Hey, Susanna, where are you?

SUSANNA:

Quiet. You've won your case without an attorney.

FIGARO:

What has happened?

Susanna and Figaro depart.

IL CONTE:

Hai già vinta la causa! Cosa sento!
In qual laccio io cadea? Perfidi!

Io voglio di tal modo punirvi, a piacer mio la sentenza sarà.

Ma s'ei pagasse la vecchia pretendente?

Pagarla! In qual maniera!

E poi v'è Antonio, che a un incognito Figaro ricusa di dare una nipote in matrimonio.

Coltivando l'orgoglio di questo mentecatto, tutto giova a un raggiro, il colpo è fatto.

Vedrò mentre io sospiro, felice un servo mio!

E un ben ch'invan desio, ei posseder dovrà?

Vedrò per man d'amore unita a un vile oggetto chi in me destò un affetto che per me poi non ha?

COUNT: (*after overhearing them*)

You have already won your case! What do I hear? What trap did I fall into? Traitors!

I will punish you unmercifully with a sentence that pleases me.

But what if he paid off the old pretender?

He paid her! In what way!

Besides there's Antonio who will refuse to give his niece in marriage to the unknown Figaro.

Cultivating the pride of this dolt, all is in my favor, and the blow is struck by my trickery.

I will behold my happy servant while I sigh?

And are my passions in vain. Is he to possess my treasure? Shall I see joined by love an unworthy object who has raised my passion but feels nothing for me?

Ah no, lasciarti in pace, non vo' questo contento, tu non nascesti, audace, per dare a me tormento, e forse ancor per ridere di mia infelicità.

Già la speranza sola delle vendette mie quest'anima consola, e giubilar mi fa.

Oh no! I will not be content to leave you in peace. You audacious man. You were not born to give me torment, and afterwards, laugh at my misfortune.

Already the mere hope of my revenge consoles my soul and fills me with joy.

Enter Figaro, Marcellina, Don Curzio, and Bartolo.

DON CURZIO:

È decisa la lite. O pagarla, o sposarla, ora ammutite.

DON CURZIO: (*stuttering*)

It has been decided that he must pay her or marry her.

MARCELLINA:

Io respiro.

MARCELLINA:

Now I'm happy.

FIGARO:

Ed io moro.

FIGARO:

And I am wretched.

MARCELLINA:

(Alfin sposa io sarò d'un uom ch'adoro.)

MARCELLINA:

(At last I'll marry the one I adore.)

FIGARO:

Eccellenza m'appello.

FIGARO:

My lord, I appeal.

IL CONTE:

È giusta la sentenza; o pagar, o sposar, bravo Don Curzio.

COUNT:

The sentence is just; pay or marry. Well done, Don Curzio.

DON CURZIO:

Bontà di sua Eccellenza.

DON CURZIO:

Your Excellency is kind.

BARTOLO:

Che superba sentenza!

BARTOLO:

What superb judgment!

FIGARO:

In che superba?

FIGARO:

In what way superb?

BARTOLO:

Siam tutti vendicati.

BARTOLO:

We are all avenged.

FIGARO:

Io non la sposerò.

FIGARO:

I won't marry her.

BARTOLO:

La sposerai.

BARTOLO:

You will marry her.

DON CURZIO:

O pagarla, o sposarla. Lei t'ha prestati due mille pezzi duri.

DON CURZIO:

Pay her or marry her. She loaned you two thousand crowns.

FIGARO:

Son gentiluomo, e senza l'assenso de' miei nobili parenti.

IL CONTE:

Dove sono? Chi sono?

FIGARO:

Lasciate ancor cercarli; dopo dieci anni io spero di trovarli.

BARTOLO:

Qualche bambin trovato?

FIGARO:

No, perduto, dottor, anzi rubato.

IL CONTE:

Come?

MARCELLINA:

Cosa?

BARTOLO:

La prova?

DON CURZIO:

Il testimonio?

FIGARO:

L'oro, le gemme, e i ricamati panni, che ne' più teneri anni mi ritrovano addosso i masnadieri, sono gl'indizi veri di mia nascita illustre, e sopra tutto questo al mio braccio impresso geroglifico.

FIGARO:

I am a gentleman, and without the consent of my noble relatives

COUNT:

Where am I? Who am I?

FIGARO:

I wish someone would find them. I've spent ten years searching for them.

BARTOLO:

You were found on the doorstep?

FIGARO:

Not lost, Doctor, rather stolen.

COUNT:

How?

MARCELLINA:

What?

BARTOLO:

Where's proof?

DON CURZIO:

Witnesses?

FIGARO:

The gold, jewels, embroidered clothes, which in my infancy the robbers found upon me, are the true signs of my noble birth, and particularly this hieroglyph printed on my arm.

Figaro turns up his sleeve and show the mark to everyone.

MARCELLINA:

Una spatola impressa al braccio destro?

FIGARO:

E a voi chi'l disse?

MARCELLINA:

Oh Dio, è egli.

FIGARO:

È ver son io.

DON CURZIO, IL CONTE, BARTOLO:

Chi?

MARCELLINA:

A spatula printed on your right arm?

FIGARO:

Who told you about it?

MARCELLINA:

Oh God, it is him.

FIGARO:

It is true what I am.

DON CURZIO, COUNT, BARTOLO:

Who?

MARCELLINA:

Raffaello!

BARTOLO:

E i ladri ti rapir.

FIGARO:

Presso un castello.

BARTOLO:

Ecco tua madre.

FIGARO:

Balia.

BARTOLO:

No, tua madre.

IL CONTE e DON CURZIO:

Sua madre!

FIGARO:

Cosa sento!

MARCELLINA:

Ecco tuo padre!

Riconosci in questo amplesso
una madre, amato figlio!

FIGARO:

Padre mio, fate lo stesso, non mi fate più
arrossir.

BARTOLO:

Resistenza la coscienza far non lascia al tuo desir.

DON CURZIO:

Ei suo padre, ella sua madre, l'imeneo non può
seguir.

IL CONTE:

Son smarrito, son stordito, meglio è assai di
qua partir.

MARCELLINA e BARTOLO:

Figlio amato!

FIGARO:

Parenti amati!

MARCELLINA:

Raffaello!

BARTOLO:

And stolen by robbers.

FIGARO:

Near a castle.

BARTOLO: (*pointing to Marcellina*)

Behold your mother.

FIGARO:

Nurse.

BARTOLO:

No, your mother.

COUNT and DON CURZIO:

His mother!

FIGARO:

What do I hear!

MARCELLINA: (*pointing to Bartolo*)

Here is your father.

(*Marcellina embraces Figaro*)

With this embrace, beloved son, recognize
your mother!

FIGARO: (*to Bartolo*)

My father, do the same. Don't make me blush
any longer.

BARTOLO: (*embracing Figaro*)

Conscience does not let me oppose your wish.

DON CURZIO: (*to the Count*)

He is the father, and she the mother.
The contract must be voided.

COUNT:

I am surprised, I am astonished. It would be
much better for me to leave here.

MARCELLINA and BARTOLO:

Beloved son!

FIGARO:

Beloved parents!

As the Count tries to depart, Susanna enters with a purse of money and stops him.

SUSANNA:

Alto, alto, signor Conte,
mille doppie son qui pronte,
a pagar vengo per Figaro,
ed a porlo in libertà.

SUSANNA:

Stop, stop, my lord, a thousand pistols are at the ready here.
I have come to pay for Figaro,
and to restore his liberty.

IL CONTE e DON CURZIO:

Non sappiamo com'è la cosa, osservate un poco là!

COUNT, DON CURZIO:

We do not know your business, but look at them over there!.

They point to Figaro who is embracing Marcellina.

SUSANNA:

Già d'accordo ei colla sposa; giusti Dei, che infedeltà!

SUSANNA:

Already agreed with that bride! Just Gods, what infidelity!

Susanna is about to leave, but Figaro stops her.

Lascia iniquo!

Leave me, villain!

FIGARO:

No, t'arresta! Senti, oh cara!

FIGARO:

No, stay and hear me, my love!

SUSANNA:

Senti questa!

SUSANNA: (boxes his ears)

Hear this one!

MARCELLINA, BARTOLO, FIGARO:

È un effetto di buon core, tutto amore è quel che fa.

MARCELLINA, BARTOLO, FIGARO:

Here's resounding of a good heart, and proof of passion.

IL CONTE:

Fremo, smanio dal furore, il destino a me la fa.

COUNT:

I fret, I rave with fury because fate is playing a trick on me.

DON CURZIO:

Freme e smania dal furore, il destino gliela fa.

DON CURZIO:

He frets, he raves with fury because fate is playing a trick on him.

SUSANNA:

Fremo, smanio dal furore, una vecchia a me la fa.

SUSANNA:

I fret, I rave with fury because fate is playing a trick on me.

MARCELLINA:

Lo sdegno calmate, mia cara figliuola, sua madre abbracciate che or vostra sarà.

MARCELLINA: (to Susanna)

Calm your anger, my dear daughter. His mother embraces you and will also be yours.

SUSANNA:

Sua madre?

SUSANNA:

His mother?

BARTOLO, IL CONTE, DON CURZIO, MARCELLINA:

Sua madre!

BARTOLO, COUNT, DON CURZIO, MARCELLINA:

His mother!

SUSANNA:
Tua madre?

SUSANNA: *(to Figaro)*
Your mother?

FIGARO:
E quello è mio padre che a te lo dirà.

FIGARO: *(pointing to Bartolo)*
This man will tell you he is my father.

SUSANNA:
Suo padre?

SUSANNA:
You father?

**BARTOLO, IL CONTE, DON CURZIO,
MARCELLINA:**
Suo padre!

**BARTOLO, COUNT, DON CURZIO,
MARCELLINA:**
His father!

SUSANNA:
Tuo padre?

SUSANNA: *(to Figaro)*
Your father?

FIGARO:
E quella è mia madre che a te lo dirà.

FIGARO:
And this one told you she is my mother.

All proceed to embrace each other.

**SUSANNA, MARCELLINA, BARTOLO,
FIGARO:**
Al dolce contento di questo momento,
quest'anima appena resister or sa.

**SUSANNA, MARCELLINA, BARTOLO,
FIGARO:**
The soul can hardly sustain the sweet
contentment of this moment.

IL CONTE, DON CURZIO:
Al fiero tormento di questo momento,
quell'quest'anima appena resister or sa.

COUNT, DON CURZIO:
My/his soul can hardly sustain the cruel
torment of this fatal moment.

The Count and Don Curzio depart.

MARCELLINA:
Eccovi, oh caro amico, il dolce frutto
dell'antico amor nostro.

MARCELLINA: *(to Bartolo)*
Take this, dear friend, the sweet fruits of our
old love.

BARTOLO:
Or non parliamo di fatti sì rimoti, egli è mio
figlio, mia consorte voi siete; e le nozze farem
quando volete.

BARTOLO:
Let's not talk about old episodes. He is my
son, and you are my consort. We'll marry
whenever you want.

MARCELLINA:
Oggi, e doppie saranno.

Prendi, questo è il biglietto del danar che a me
devi, ed è tua dote.

MARCELLINA:
Today, a double wedding
(She gives the contract papers to Figaro)
Take this wedding present. It is the contract for
the money you owe me.

SUSANNA:
Prendi ancor questa borsa.

SUSANNA:
Take this purse too.

BARTOLO:

E questa ancora.

FIGARO:

Bravi, gittate pur ch'io piglio ognora.

SUSANNA:

Voliamo ad informar d'ogni avventura
madama e nostro zio.

Chi al par di me contenta!

FIGARO, BARTOLO, MARCELLINA:

Io!

TUTTI:

E schiatti il signor Conte al gusto mio.

BARTOLO:

And this one also.

FIGARO:

Well done! I'll take whatever you throw me.

SUSANNA: (to Figaro)

Let's rush to inform Madame and our uncle of
all that has happened.

Who can be as happy as I?

FIGARO, BARTOLO, MARCELLINA:

I am!

ALL:

And enlighten the Count of my happiness!

All leave happily.

Barbarina is pulling Cherubino by the hand.

BARBARINA:

Andiam, andiam, bel paggio, in casa mia
tutte ritroverai le più belle ragazze del castello,
di tutte sarai tu certo il più bello.

CHERUBINO:

Ah, se il Conte mi trova, misero me, tu sai che
partito ei mi crede per Siviglia.

BARBARINA:

O ve' che meraviglia, e se ti trova
non sarà cosa nuova.

Odi! Vogliamo vestirti come noi:
tutte insiem andrem poi
a presentar de' fiori a madamina;
fidati, oh Cherubin, di Barbarina.

BARBARINA:

Come, my handsome page. In my house you'll
find all the prettiest girls of the castle, but
you'll be the most beautiful.

CHERUBINO:

Oh, if the Count finds me, I am finished! You
know he thinks I've gone to Seville.

BARBARINA:

How marvelous. If he finds you it won't be the
first time.

Listen! We want to dress you like one of us,
and then we'll go to present some flowers to
my lady. Cherubino, trust Barbarina.

(Both exit.)

LA CONTESSA:

E Susanna non vien! Sono ansiosa
di saper come il Conte accolse la proposta.
Alquanto ardito il progetto mi par, e ad uno
sposo sì vivace, e geloso!

COUNTESS: (alone)

And Susanna hasn't come yet! I am anxious to
know how the Count received the proposal.
The plan seems to me a bold one for a
husband so quick and jealous.

Ma che mal c'è? Cangiando i miei vestiti con quelli di Susanna, e i suoi co' miei al favor della notte.

Oh cielo, a quale umil stato fatale io son ridotta da un consorte crudel, che dopo avermi con un misto inaudito d'infedeltà, di gelosia, di sdegni, prima amata, indi offesa, e alfin tradita, fammi or cercar da una mia serva aita!

But what harm is it in exchanging my clothes with Susanna, and she wearing my evening dress?

Oh Heavens! My cruel husband has humiliated me with an unheard-of mixture of infidelity, jealousy, and anger. First love, then offense, and finally betrayal. And I am now compelled to employ the assistance of my servant!

Andantino
COUNTESS



Dove sono i bei momenti di dolcezza e di piacer, dove andaro i giuramenti di quel labbro menzogner? Perché mai se in pianti e in pene per me tutto si cangiò, la memoria di quel bene dal mio sen non trapassò?

Ah! Se almen la mia costanza nel languire amando ognor, mi portasse una speranza di cangiar l'ingrato cor.

Where are those charming moments of sweetness and peace? Where have those promises gone from those deceitful lips? Why has my poor heart changed to sorrow and pain from the beautiful memories I recall?

If only my constancy in loving, and my suffering and pain could at least afford me a hope to change that ungrateful heart.

The Countess exits.

The Count and Antonio enter. Antonio holds Cherubino's regimental hat.

ANTONIO:

Io vi dico, signor, che Cherubino è ancora nel castello, e vedete per prova il suo cappello.

IL CONTE:

Ma come, se a quest'ora esser giunto a Siviglia egli dovuta.

ANTONIO:

Scusate, oggi Siviglia è a casa mia, là vestissi da donna, e là lasciati ha gl'altri abiti suoi.

IL CONTE:

Perfidi!

ANTONIO:

Andiam, e li vedrete voi.

ANTONIO:

I tell you, sir, that Cherubino is still in the castle, and, as proof, here is his hat.

COUNT:

How can he still be here when by this time he ought to have arrived at Seville?

ANTONIO:

Pardon me, but today Seville is in my house. He's dressed as a female and has left his own clothes in my house.

COUNT:

Deceivers!

ANTONIO:

Let us go, and you'll see them yourself.

After the Count and Antonio exit, the Countess and Susanna appear.

LA CONTESSA:

Cosa mi narri, e che ne disse il Conte?

COUNTESS:

And what did the Count say about it?

SUSANNA:

Gli si leggeva in fronte il dispetto e la rabbia.

SUSANNA:

One could read on his face that he was vexed and enraged.

LA CONTESSA:

Piano, che meglio o lo porremo in gabbia.
Dov'è l'appuntamento che tu gli proponesti?

COUNTESS:

Gently, it'll be easier now to catch him.
Where did you propose to meet him?

SUSANNA:

In giardino.

SUSANNA:

In the garden.

LA CONTESSA:

Fissiamgli un loco. Scrivi.

COUNTESS:

Let's fix a spot. Write

SUSANNA:

Ch'io scriva, ma signora.

SUSANNA:

I write, but madam

LA CONTESSA:

Eh, scrivi dico; e tutto io prendo su me stessa:
"Canzonetta sull'aria."

COUNTESS:

Come, write what I say, and I take full responsibility: "Song of the Zephyr."

SUSANNA:

"Sull'aria..."

SUSANNA: (*writing*)

"of the Zephyr."

LA CONTESSA:

"Che soave zeffiretto..."

COUNTESS:

"How gentle the zephyr..."

SUSANNA:

"Zeffiretto..."

SUSANNA:

"Zephyr..."

LA CONTESSA:

"Questa sera spirerà..."

COUNTESS:

"The night will inspire..."

SUSANNA:

"Questa sera spirerà..."

SUSANNA:

"The night will inspire..."

LA CONTESSA:

"Sotto i pini del boschetto."

COUNTESS:

"Under the pine groves."

SUSANNA:

"Sotto i pini..."

SUSANNA:

"Under the pines..."

LA CONTESSA:

"Sotto i pini del boschetto."

COUNTESS:

"Under the pine groves."

SUSANNA:

"Sotto i pini...del boschetto..."

SUSANNA:

"Under the pines...groves..."

LA CONTESSA:

Ei già il resto capirà.

COUNTESS:

Certainly, he'll understand the remainder.

SUSANNA:

Certo, certo il capirà.

Piegato è il foglio. Or come si sigilla?

SUSANNA:

Certainly, certainly he'll understand.

It is folded. Now how is it to be sealed?

LA CONTESSA:

Ecco, prendi una spilla:

Servirà di sigillo.

Attendi, scrivi sul reverso del foglio,

"Rimandate il sigillo."

COUNTESS:

Here, we'll use a pin.

That will serve as a seal.

One moment, write on the back of the letter,

"Send the seal back as an answer."

SUSANNA:

È più bizzarro di quel della patente.

SUSANNA:

He won't forget it like he forgot the seal on the commission.

LA CONTESSA:

Presto nascondi, io sento venir gente.

COUNTESS:

Put it away now. I hear people coming.

*Barbarina and peasant girls enter. Cherubino is among them dressed as a peasant girl.
All carry bunches of flowers.*

CONTADINELLE:

Ricevete, oh padroncina,
queste rose e questi fior,
che abbiam colti stamattina
per mostrarvi il nostro amor.

PEASANT GIRLS:

Noble lady, to show our love,
we offer these roses
and these flowers
that we have gathered this morning.

Siamo tante contadine,
e siam tutte poverine,
ma quel poco che rechiamo
ve lo diamo di buon cor.

We are simple peasants,
and we are all very poor,
but the little that we bring,
we give with a good heart.

BARBARINA:

Queste sono, madama,
le ragazze del loco
che il poco ch'han vi vengono ad offrire,
e vi chiedono perdon del loro ardire.

BARBARINA:

Madame, these are girls from the village.
We hope that you will not refuse these
flowers, for they are all that we can offer
you.

LA CONTESSA:

Oh brave, vi ringrazio.

COUNTESS:

I thank you for your kindness.

SUSANNA:

Come sono vezzose.

SUSANNA:

They are so charming.

LA CONTESSA:

E chi è, narratemi, quell'amabil fanciulla
ch'ha l'aria sì modesta?

COUNTESS: (*pointing to Cherubino*)

Tell me, who is that shy and modest girl
over there?

BARBARINA:

Ell'è mia cugina, e per le nozze è venuta ier sera.

LA CONTESSA:

Onoriamo la bella forestiera,
venite qui, datemi i vostri fiori.
Come arrossi. Susanna, e non ti pare
che somigli ad alcuno?

SUSANNA:

Al naturale.

BARBARINA:

She is one of my cousins. She arrived last night to stay with us for the wedding.

COUNTESS:

Then we ought to honor the pretty guest. Come here. Give me your flowers.
How she blushes! Susanna, doesn't she resemble someone?

SUSANNA:

The very image.

The Count enters, followed by Antonio.

Antonio pulls off Cherubino's head-dress and puts on his soldier's hat.

ANTONIO:

Ehi! Cospettaccio! È questi l'uffiziale.

ANTONIO:

Hey! Caught you at last, gallant captain.

LA CONTESSA:

Oh stelle!

COUNTESS:

Oh, heavens!

SUSANNA:

(Malandrino!)

SUSANNA:

(Little rascal!)

IL CONTE:

Ebben, madama!

COUNT:

Well, Madame!

LA CONTESSA:

Io sono, oh signor mio, irritata e sorpresa al par di voi.

COUNTESS:

I must inform your lordship that I am just as surprised as you are.

IL CONTE:

Ma stamane?

COUNT:

But this morning?

LA CONTESSA:

Stamane. Per l'odierna festa volevam travestirlo al modo stesso, che l'han vestito adesso.

COUNTESS:

This morning, I admit we intended to dress him in girl's clothes in order to make some fun this evening.

IL CONTE:

E perché non partiste?

COUNT: (to Cherubino)

And why haven't you left?

CHERUBINO:

Signor!

CHERUBINO:

Sir!

IL CONTE:

Saprò punire la sua ubbidienza.

COUNT:

I know how to punish your disobedience.

BARBARINA:

Eccellenza, Eccellenza, voi mi dite sì spesso qual volta m'abbracciate, e mi bacciate: Barbarina, se m'ami, ti darò quel che brami.

IL CONTE:

Io dissi questo?

BARBARINA:

Voi. Or datemi , padrone, in sposo Cherubino, e v'amerò, com'amo il mio gattino.

LA CONTESSA:

Ebbene: or tocca a voi.

ANTONIO:

Brava figliuola, hai buon maestro, che ti fa scuola.

IL CONTE:

(Non so qual uom, qual demone, qual Dio rivolga tutto quanto a torto mio.)

FIGARO:

Signor, se trattenete tutte queste ragazze, addio feste, addio danza.

IL CONTE:

E che, vorresti ballar col piè stravolto?

FIGARO:

Eh, non mi duol più molto. Andiam, belle fanciulle.

LA CONTESSA:

(Come si caverà dall'imbarazzo?)

SUSANNA:

(Lasciate fare a lui.)

IL CONTE:

Per buona sorte i vasi eran di creta.

FIGARO:

Senza fallo. Andiamo dunque, andiamo.

ANTONIO:

E intanto a cavallo di galoppo a Siviglia andava il paggio.

BARBARINA:

Please your lordship. You often said to me when you visited me, "Barbarina, if you love me I'll give you anything that you ask for"

COUNT:

I said that?

BARBARINA:

Oh yes your lordship. Now if you give me Cherubino for a husband, I'll love you like my little kitten.

COUNTESS: (to the Count)

Well. I think it's your turn.

ANTONIO:

Great, little girl, you've had a good teacher for your lessons.

COUNT: (aside)

(Is it a plot of man, or demon, or God that makes everything go wrong.)

(Enter Figaro.)

FIGARO:

Sir, if you keep these girls waiting, we'll have no party and no dancing.

COUNT: (ironically)

Dancing with your sprained foot?

FIGARO:

Oh, it doesn't give me much pain now. Come, my pretty girls.

COUNTESS: (aside to Susanna)

(How will he get through this problem?)

SUSANNA:

(Leave everything to him.)

COUNT:

Luckily the pots were made of clay.

FIGARO:

Without doubt. Let us go then, let us go.

ANTONIO:

And in the meantime, the page was galloping off to Seville.

FIGARO:

Di galoppo, o di passo, buon viaggio.
Venite, oh belle giovani.

IL CONTE:

E a te la sua patente era in tasca rimasta.

FIGARO:

Certamente, che razza di domande!

ANTONIO:

Via, non gli far più motti, ei non t'intende.
Ed ecco chi pretende che sia un bugiardo il
mio signor nipote.

FIGARO:

Cherubino?

ANTONIO:

Or ci sei.

FIGARO

Che diamin canta?

IL CONTE:

Non canta, no, ma dice ch'egli saltò stamane
sui garofani.

FIGARO:

Ei lo dice! Sarà se ho saltato io, si può dare
ch'anch'esso abbia fatto lo stesso.

IL CONTE:

Anch'esso?

FIGARO:

Perché no?
Io non impugno mai quel che non so.
Ecco la marcia, andiamo;
ai vostri posti, oh belle, ai vostri posti.
Susanna, dammi il braccio.

SUSANNA:

Eccolo!

FIGARO:

Gallop or on foot, good journey.
Come, my pretty damsels.

COUNT:

And he left the commission in your pocket.

FIGARO:

Certainly, I can't understand why you ask!

ANTONIO: *(to Susanna)*

No good your making signals. He cannot read
them. Here is a person who maintains that my
future nephew is a liar.

FIGARO:

Cherubino?

ANTONIO:

That's him.

FIGARO: *(to the Count)*

And what does he say?

COUNT:

That this morning it was he who jumped down
from the window on to the flower pots.

FIGARO:

He said that! If I could jump, he is lighter
and could certainly do the same.

COUNT:

You both jumped?

FIGARO:

Why not?
I wouldn't call him a liar.
Here is the march, let us go;
take your places, my beauties.
Susanna, give me your arm.

SUSANNA:

Here it is.

All exit except the Count and Countess.

IL CONTE:

Temerari.

COUNT:

This is shameless.

LA CONTESSA:

Io son di ghiaccio!

COUNTESS:

I am frozen!

IL CONTE:

Contessa!

COUNT:

Countess!

LA CONTESSA:

Or non parliamo. Ecco qui le due nozze,
riceverle dobbiamo, alfin si tratta d'una vostra
protetta.
Seggiamo.

COUNTESS:

Let us not speak now. There are two weddings,
and we must receive them. Bear in mind that it
is a protege of yours that is in question. Be
seated.

IL CONTE:

Seggiamo (e meditem vendetta).

COUNT:

Let us sit down (and think of revenge!)

The Count and Countess are seated. The wedding procession begins: two young girls bear Susanna's bridal hat and veil. Antonio leads Susanna before the Count; she kneels and receives the veil from him. Figaro leads Marcellina before the Countess.

The two wedding couples are seated facing the Count and Countess.

DUE DONNE:

Amanti costanti,
seguaci d'onor,
cantate, lodate
sì saggio signor.
A un dritto cedendo,
che oltraggia, che offende,
ei caste vi rende
ai vostri amator.

TWO YOUNG GIRLS:

You constant lovers,
who follow honor,
Do sing, do praise
such a good lord.
He ceded a right,
that was insulting and degrading,
and returns chastity
to lovers.

TUTTI:

Cantiamo, lodiamo sì saggio signor!

ALL:

Let us sing, let us praise so good a lord,

Susanna, while kneeling before the Count, gives him a letter. The Count opens the letter and pricks his finger with the pin that sealed the letter.

IL CONTE:

Eh già, la solita usanza, le donne ficcan gli
aghi in ogni loco. Ah, ah, capisco il gioco.

COUNT:

(It is the usual custom, women thrust pins
everywhere.) Oh, now I understand the
trick! (*He looks for the pin*)

FIGARO:

Un biglietto amoroso che gli diè nel passar
qualche galante, ed era sigillato d'una spilla,
ond'ei si punse il dito,

FIGARO: (aside)

A love letter? Some lover's friend gave it to
him in passing, and it was sealed with a pin,
which pricked his finger.

Il Narciso or la cerca; oh, che stordito!

The Adonis is now looking for it. Oh, what
a foolish fellow!

The Count reads the letter; kisses it, finds the pin and puts it on his coat.

IL CONTE:

Andate, amici! E sia per questa sera
disposto l'apparato nuziale
colla più ricca pompa; io vo' che sia
magnifica la feste, e canti e fuochi,
e gran cena, e gran ballo, e ognuno impari
com'io tratto color, che a me son cari.

CORO

Amanti costanti,
seguaci d'onor,
cantate, lodate
si saggio signor.
A un dritto cedendo,
che oltraggia, che offende,
ei caste vi rende
ai vostri amator.
Cantiamo, lodiamo
si saggio signor!

COUNT:

Go, friends! And let the nuptial preparations
be ready for tonight, with the richest pomp,
magnificent entertainment, singing, fireworks,
a great dinner, and a grand ball. Let all learn
how I treat those who are dear to me.

CHORUS:

You constant lovers,
who follow honor,
Do sing, do praise
such a good lord.
Who gives up a right,
insulting, degrading,
and return chastely
to your lovers.
We sing and praise
our good lord!

All depart

ACT IV

It is night in a garden leading to the Castle.

Barbarina enters with a lantern. She searches for something on the ground.

BARBARINA:

L'ho perduta, me meschina,
ah, chi sa dove sarà?
Non la trovo. E mia cugina,
e il padron cosa dirà?

BARBARINA: *(searching)*

I have lost it, how dreadful.
Oh, who knows where it is?
What will I say to my poor cousin and my
master?

Figaro and Marcellina enter.

FIGARO:

Barbarina, cos'hai?

FIGARO:

Barbarina, what is the matter?

BARBARINA:

L'ho perduta, cugino.

BARBARINA:

I have lost it, cousin.

FIGARO:

Cosa?

FIGARO:

What?

MARCELLINA:

Cosa?

BARBARINA:

La spilla, che a me diede il padrone
per recar a Susanna.

FIGARO:

A Susanna la spilla?
E così, tenerella, il mestiero già sai,
di far tutto sì ben quel che tu fai?

BARBARINA:

Cos'è, vai meco in collera?

FIGARO:

E non vedi ch'io scherzo?

MARCELLINA:

What?

BARBARINA:

The pin my master gave me to return to
Susanna.

FIGARO:

A pin to Susanna? So already at your age
you've begun to go running other people's
errands?

BARBARINA:

But why are you so angry?

FIGARO:

Can't you see I was just kidding?

*Figaro searches the ground. Then he takes a pin from Marcellina
and gives it to Barbarina.*

Osserva. Questa è la spilla che il Conte
da recare ti diede alla Susanna, e servia di
sigillo a un bigliettotino; vedi s'io sono istrutto.

BARBARINA:

E perché il chiedi a me quando sai tutto?

FIGARO:

Avea gusto d'udir come il padrone ti die' la
commissione.

BARBARINA:

Che miracoli! "Tieni, fanciulla, reca questa
spilla alla bella Susanna, e dille: Questo
è il sigillo de' pini."

FIGARO:

Ah, ah, de' pini!

BARBARINA:

È ver ch'ei mi soggiunse: "Guarda che alcun
non veda." Ma tu già tacerai.

FIGARO:

Sicuramente.

BARBARINA:

A te già niente preme.

Look. This is the pin the Count gave you to
give back to Susanna, and it was used to seal a
letter. You see how instructive I am.

BARBARINA:

If you know everything, why do you ask me?

FIGARO:

I would like you to tell me why his lordship sent
you on this errand.

BARBARINA:

He just said to me, "Here Barbarina, take this
pin and give it to your cousin Susanna, and tell
her: 'This is the seal of the pinewood.'"

FIGARO:

Oh, the pinewood!

BARBARINA:

But he told me, "Be careful no one sees you."
But you have seen me.

FIGARO:

You can trust me.

BARBARINA:

There's no harm done if you know.

FIGARO:

Oh niente, niente.

BARBARINA:

Addio, mio bel cugino;
vò da Susanna, e poi da Cherubino.

FIGARO:

Madre!

MARCELLINA:

Figlio!

FIGARO:

Son morto!

MARCELLINA:

Calmati, figlio mio.

FIGARO:

Son morto, dico.

MARCELLINA:

Flemma, flemma, e poi flemma! Il fatto è serio;
e pensarci convien, ma pensa un poco che
ancor non sai di chi prenda gioco.

FIGARO:

Ah, quella spilla, oh madre, è quella stessa che
poc'anzi ei raccolse.

MARCELLINA:

È ver, ma questo al più ti porge un dritto
di stare in guardia, e vivere in sospetto.
Ma non sai, se in effetto.

FIGARO:

All'erta dunque: il loco del congresso
so dov'è stabilito.

MARCELLINA:

Dove vai figlio mio?

FIGARO:

A vendicar tutti i mariti: addio.

FIGARO:

Of course not.

BARBARINA:

Adieu, my handsome cousin. I'll go to
Susanna, and then to Cherubino.
(Barbarina exits.)

FIGARO:

Mother!

MARCELLINA:

Son!

FIGARO:

I am finished!

MARCELLINA:

Be calm, my son.

FIGARO:

I tell you I'm finished.

MARCELLINA:

Patience, patience, always patience! The
problem is serious and requires careful
thought. Now to begin with, you don't know
who's going to be the victim.

FIGARO:

Oh, that pin is the very same pin which not
long ago he picked up.

MARCELLINA:

True, but this gives only gives you, at most,
cause to be upon your guard and to be
suspicious. You're still uncertain.

FIGARO:

Then, I must be alert. I do know where the
meeting place is.

MARCELLINA:

Where are you going, son?

FIGARO:

To avenge all husbands. Farewell!

Figaro departs.

MARCELLINA:

Presto avvertiam Susanna:
io la credo innocente: quella faccia,
quell'aria di modestia, è caso ancora
ch'ella non fosse, ah quando il cor non ciurma
personale interesse, ogni donna è portata alla
difesa del suo povero sesso,
da questi uomini ingrati a torto oppresso.

Il capro e la capretta
son sempre in amistà,
l'agnello all'agnelletta
la guerra mai non fa.
Le più feroci belve
per selve e per campagne
lascian le lor compagne
in pace e libertà.
Sol noi povere femmine
che tanto amiam questi uomini,
trattate siam dai perfidi
ognor con crudeltà!

MARCELLINA:

I must quickly warn Susanna because I believe
she is innocent; that face and
modest air are reasons enough.
I have no reason to be jealous anymore. Surely
all women ought to protect each other. It is our
duty because we so maltreated by our
husbands and lovers.

The goat and the billy-goat are always
companions.
With the lamb and the lambkin
the battle never ends.
The most ferocious beasts
in the fields and the forests,
grant their partners
peace and freedom to live.
Only the poor women
who love these men so much,
are treated with treachery
and always with cruelty.

Marcellina exits

*A Garden. There are pines surrounding two Pavilions.
Barberina, Figaro, Bartolo, Basilio and some ruffians enter:*

BARBARINA:

Nel padiglione a manca: ei così disse:
è questo, è questo, e poi se non venisse!

Oh ve' che brava gente! A stento darmi
un arancio, una pera, e una ciambella.
"Per chi madamigella?
Oh, per qualcun, signori:
già lo sappiamo: ebbene!"
il padron l'odia, ed io gli voglio bene,
però costummi un bacio, e cosa importa,
forse qualcun me'l renderà.

Son morta!

FIGARO:

È Barbarina chi va là?

BASILIO:

Son quelli che invitasti a venir.

BARBARINA:

I think he said the pavilion on the left. It must be
this one, but what if he doesn't come?

These people are so awful! I could hardly get
them to give me an orange or a biscuit: "Who is
it for?
Oh, it's for a friend
Well, we thought as much!"
His lordship hates him, and I love him. I paid a
kiss for this, but what does it matter. Perhaps
someone will pay it back.

(She sees Figaro and then leaves)
Oh mercy!

FIGARO:

Is that Barbarina over there?

BASILIO:

We are the men you invited to come.

BARTOLO:

Che brutto ceffò! Sembri un conspirator. Che diamin sono quegli infausti apparati?

FIGARO:

Lo vedrete tra poco. In questo loco celebrerem la festa della mia sposa onesta e del feudal signor.

BASILIO:

(Ah, buono, buono, capisco come egli è, accordati si son senza di me.)

FIGARO:

Voi da questi contorni non vi scostate; intanto io vado a dar certi ordini, e torno in pochi istanti.
A un fischio mio correte tutti quanti.

BASILIO:

Ha i diavoli nel corpo.

BARTOLO:

Ma cosa nacque?

BASILIO:

Nulla. Susanna piace al Conte; ella d'accordo gli die' un appuntamento che a Figaro non piace.

BARTOLO:

E che, dunque dovria soffrirlo in pace?

BASILIO:

Quel che soffrono tanti ei soffrir non potrebbe? E poi sentite, che guadagno può far? Nel mondo, amico, l'accozzarla co' grandi fu pericolo ognora:
dan novanta per cento e han vinto ancora.

In quegli'anni, in cui val poco la mal pratica ragion,
ebbi anch'io lo stesso foco,
fui quel pazzo ch'or non son.
Che col tempo e coi perigli,
donna flemma capitò;
e i capricci, ed i puntigli
della testa mi cavò.

BARTOLO: *(to Figaro)*

What an ugly face! You look like a conspirator. (Who are those devilish looking ones?)

FIGARO:

You'll see very shortly. You are invited to witness the ancient privilege of the lord of the manor granted by my virtuous wife.

BASILIO:

(Oh, great! I understand they have agreed without me.)

FIGARO: *(to the ruffians)*

Do not go far from here. Meanwhile I'll make certain arrangements, and I'll be back in a moment.
When I whistle all of you run!
(Figaro leaves.)

BASILIO:

He's possessed by the devil.

BARTOLO:

But what is it that has deranged him?

BASILIO:

Nothing. Susanna likes the Count. She is consenting to a meeting that Figaro does not like.

BARTOLO:

Is he supposed to bear it peacefully?

BASILIO:

Many a man has likewise suffered, so why should he object? And consider what he can gain? In this world it was always dangerous to oppose the great; they give very little and always win.

When I was young and inexperienced, I used emotion rather than reason.
I too had the same great fire;
I was a madman, but no more.
Time has brought me an understanding of the wiles and caprices of women,
and in my mind, I have overcome their stubbornness.

Presso un piccolo abituro
seco lei mi trasse un giorno,
e togliendo giù dal muro
del pacifico soggiorno
una pella di somaro,
prendi disse, oh figlio caro,
poi disparve, e mi lasciò.

Mentre ancor tacito
guardo quel dono,
il ciel s'annuvola
rimbomba il tuono,
mista alla grandine
scroscia la piovra,
ecco le membra
coprir mi giova
col manto d'asino
che mi donò.

Finisce il turbine,
nè fo due passi
che fiera orribile
dianzi a me fassi;
già già mi tocca
l'ingorda bocca,
già di difendermi
speme non ho.

Ma il finto ignobile
del mio vestito
tolse alla belva
sì l'appetito,
che disprezzandomi
si rinselvò.
Così conoscere
mi fè la sorte,
ch'onte, pericoli,
vergogna, e morte
col cuoio d'asino
fuggir si può.

All depart, and then Figaro appears..

FIGARO:

Tutto è disposto: l'ora dovrebbe esser vicina; io sento gente. È dessa, non è alcun, buia è la notte, ed io comincio omai, a fare il scimunito mestiero di marito.

Ingrata! Nel momento della mia cerimonia ei godeva leggendo, e nel vederlo io rideva di me, senza saperlo.

One day she took me to
a humble dwelling place,
And then from the wall of the peaceful abode she
took down
the skin of an old ass;
take this, said, dear son,
and then she left me and disappeared.

While I quieted down,
I looked at the gift.
The clouds came on,
and I heard the roar of thunder,
and hail and rain
poured all around.
I therefore found it good
to cover myself
with the mantle of the
ass she gave me.

The storm ceased.
I went on a little;
I saw a wild beast
rushing toward me;
I saw his mouth
and his voracious looks.
Any hopes to defend
myself were futile.

But the humble scent
of my clothes,
cured the appetite
of the beast,
who despised me,
but ran into the woods.
Thus I learned
about my fate:
that disgrace, danger,
shame, and death,
may be avoided
with the skin of an ass.

FIGARO:

All is prepared: the hour ought to be near. I hear someone. It's her. No, it is no one. The night is full and I begin now to play the silly role of a husband!

Ungrateful woman! At the ceremony, he was enjoying what he read, and I saw him and laughed without knowing why!

Oh Susanna, Susanna, quanta pena mi costi,
 con quell'ingenua faccia, con quegli occhi
 innocenti, chi creduto l'avria?
 Ah, che il fidarsi a donna è ognor follia.

O Susanna! Susanna! What anguish you have
 cost me, with your air of sincerity and those
 innocent eyes. Who could have believed it? -
 Trusting a woman is a great folly!

Moderato
FIGARO



Aprite un po' quegl'occhi,
 uomini incauti e sciocchi,
 guardate queste femmine,
 guardate cosa son!

Open your eyes a little,
 imprudent and foolish men;
 look at these women,
 and see what they really are!

Queste chiamate Dee
 dagli ingannati sensi
 a cui tributa incensi
 la debole ragion.

These are called goddesses
 by those whose senses are deceived,
 and who raise altars to them
 by the weakness of their reason.

Son streghe che incantano
 per farci penar,
 sirene che cantano
 per farci affogar,
 civette che allettano
 per trarci le piume,
 comete che brillano
 per toglierci il lume;
 son rose spinose,
 son volpi vezzose,
 son orse benigne,
 colombe maligne,
 maestre d'inganni,
 amiche d'affanni
 che fingono, mentono.

They are witches that bewitch,
 to put us to torment;
 sirens who sing
 but to drown us;
 owls who ensnare us
 to pick our feathers;
 comets which shine
 to dazzle and blind us;
 they are roses full of thorns,
 they are beautiful foxes;
 they are kind bears,
 wicked doves;
 skillful in fraud,
 creatures of sorrow,
 who pretend and lie.

Amore non senton,
 non senton pietà,
 no, no, no, no!
 Il resto nol dico,
 già ognun lo sa!

They feel neither love
 nor pity.
 No, no, no!
 I need say no more,
 for every one knows it!

*The Countess and Susanna enter, disguised in each other's clothes.
 Marcellina and Figaro are seen walking about.*

SUSANNA:
 Signora, ella mi disse che Figaro verravvi.

SUSANNA:
 Madam, you told me that Figaro would come.

MARCELLINA:

Anzi è venuto. Abbassa un po' la voce.

MARCELLINA:

He is here. Speak softly.

SUSANNA:

Dunque, un ci ascolta, e l'altro dee venir a cercarmi, incominciam.

SUSANNA:

Then one hears us, and the other comes to seek me. Let's begin.

MARCELLINA:

Io voglio qui celarmi.

MARCELLINA:

I will conceal myself here.

SUSANNA:

Madama, voi tremate; avreste freddo?

SUSANNA: *(to the Countess)*

Madame, you tremble; are you cold?

LA CONTESSA:

Parmi umida la notte; io mi ritiro.

COUNTESS:

I think it is a damp night: I'm leaving.

*Figaro appears.***FIGARO:***(Eccoci della crisi al grande istante.)***FIGARO:**

We are now at the great critical moment!

*Figaro strolls around, withdraws, and the immediately reappears.***SUSANNA:**

Io sotto questi piante, se madama il permette, resto prendere il fresco una mezz'ora.

SUSANNA:

If your ladyship allows me, I prefer to stay here and take in the fresh air of the pine trees.

FIGARO:

Il fresco! Il fresco!

FIGARO:

The air, among the pinetrees!

LA CONTESSA:

Restaci in buon'ora.

COUNTESS: *(from hiding)*

We'll rest an hour.

SUSANNA:Il birbo è in sentinella.
Divertiamci anche noi,
diamogli la mercè de' dubbi suoi.**SUSANNA:**That rascal is on the watch.
We'll also create a diversion, and pay him for
daring to suspect me.Giunse alfin il momento
che godrò senz'affanno
in braccio all'idol mio.
Timide cure, uscite dal mio petto,
a turbar non venite il mio diletto!At last the moment has come
that I shall have pleasure without sorrow in the
arms of my beloved.
Timid apprehensions, begone from my breast,
and do not disturb my happiness!Oh, come par che all'amoroso foco
l'amenità del loco,
la terra e il ciel risponda,
come la notte i furti miei seconda!Oh, how there is such an amorous spirit here;
the earth and the sky respond to my amorous
wishes! How the night favors my secret love!

CHERUBINO:

Susanetta! Non risponde?
Colla mano il volto asconde,
or la burlo, in verità.

LA CONTESSA:

Arditello, sfacciatiello,
ite presto via di qua!

CHERUBINO:

Smorfiosa, maliziosa,
io già so perché sei qua!

CHERUBINO: *(to the Countess)*

Dear Susanna? She doesn't answer.
I'll indeed catch her now.
(Cherubino kisses her hand.)

COUNTESS:

This is shameless, impudent fellow, get away
from here immediately.

CHERUBINO:

So shy, and just to tease me.
I know why you are here!

The Count and Figaro appear.

IL CONTE:

Ecco qui la mia Susanna!

SUSANNA e FIGARO:

Ecco qui l'uccellatore.

CHERUBINO

Non far meco la tiranna!

SUSANNA, IL CONTE, FIGARO:

Ah, nel sen mi batte il core!
Un altr'uom con lei sta; alla voce è quegli il
paggio.

LA CONTESSA:

Via partite, o chiamo gente!

CHERUBINO:

Dammi un bacio, o non fai niente.

LA CONTESSA:

Anche un bacio, che coraggio!

CHERUBINO:

E perché far io non posso,
quel che il Conte ognor farà?

**SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA, IL CONTE,
FIGARO:**

Temerario!

CHERUBINO:

Oh ve', che smorfie!
Sai ch'io fui dietro il sofà.

COUNT:

There she is, my Susanna!

SUSANNA and FIGARO:

Here's the amorous pursuer.

CHERUBINO: *(to the Countess)*

Don't be so hard on me!

SUSANNA, COUNT, FIGARO:

Look how the heart beats!
There's another man. By the sound of his
voice, it is the page.

COUNTESS:

Go, or I'll call for help!

CHERUBINO:

Give me a kiss, or do nothing.

COUNTESS:

Again a kiss. What impertinence!

CHERUBINO:

And why do you refuse what the Count gets
every day?

**SUSANNA, COUNTESS, COUNT,
FIGARO:**

What effrontery!

CHERUBINO:

Oh why are you so prudish! You know I was
behind the sofa.

**SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA, IL CONTE,
FIGARO:**

Se il ribaldo ancor sta saldo la faccenda
guasterà.

CHERUBINO:

Prendi intanto!

The Count steps between them, and receives the kiss from Cherubino.

LA CONTESSA, CHERUBINO:

Oh cielo, il Conte!

**SUSANNA, COUNTESS, COUNT,
FIGARO:**

If he remains here, he'll spoil our little game.

CHERUBINO: (*about to kiss her*)

Take a kiss then!

COUNTESS, CHERUBINO:

Oh heavens, the Count!

The Count, attempts to box Cherubino's ears, but he leaves quickly, and Figaro is hit instead.

FIGARO:

Vo' veder cosa fan là.

FIGARO:

I must see what's going on.

IL CONTE:

Perché voi nol ripetete, ricevete questo qua!

COUNT:

I will teach you better manners, so that you'll
finally be gone from here.

FIGARO, SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA:

Ah, ci ho/ha fatto un bel guadagno
colla mia/sua curiosità!

FIGARO, SUSANNA, COUNTESS:

That's his reward. He was rash to interfere!

IL CONTE:

Ah, ci ha fatto un bel guadagno
colla sua temerità!

COUNT:

That's his rewarded. He was rash to interfere!

FIGARO e SUSANNA:

Partito è alfin l'audace, accostati ben
mio!

FIGARO and SUSANNA:

Thank goodness he's departed. Come closer to
me!

LA CONTESSA:

Giacché così vi piace,
eccomi qui signor.

COUNTESS:

I am here my lord.
What would please you?

FIGARO:

Che compiacente femmina!
Che sposa di buon cor!

FIGARO:

What obliging women!
What a good-hearted woman!

IL CONTE:

Porgimi la mania!

COUNT:

Give me your hand!

LA CONTESSA:

Io ve la dò.

COUNTESS:

My hand is yours.

IL CONTE:

Carina!

COUNT:

My dearest!

FIGARO:

Carina!

FIGARO:

My dearest!

IL CONTE:

Che dita tenerelle, che delicata pelle,
mi pizzica, mi stuzzica, m'empie d'un nuovo
ardor.

SUSANNA, LA CONTESSA, FIGARO:

La cieca prevenzione delude la ragione
inganna i sensi ognor.

IL CONTE:

Oltre la dote, oh cara, ricevi anco un brillante
che a te porge un amante
in pegno del suo amor.

LA CONTESSA:

Tutto Susanna piglia dal suo benefattor.

SUSANNA, IL CONTE, FIGARO:

Va tutto a meraviglia, ma il meglio manca
ancor.

LA CONTESSA:

Signor, d'acese fiaccole io veggio il balenar.

IL CONTE:

Entriam, mia bella Venere, andiamoci a celar!

SUSANNA, FIGARO:

Mariti scimuniti, venite ad imparar!

LA CONTESSA:

Al buio, signor mio?

IL CONTE:

È quello che vogl'io.
Tu sai che là per leggere io non desio d'entrar.

SUSANNA e LA CONTESSA:

I furbi sono in trappola, comincia ben l'affar.

FIGARO:

La perfida lo seguita, è vano il dubitar.

IL CONTE:

Chi passa?

FIGARO:

Passa gente!

LA CONTESSA:

È Figaro; men vò!

COUNT:

How soft your hand, and what delicate hair; it
stings me, arouses me, and fills me with new
ardor.

SUSANNA, COUNTESS, FIGARO:

Amorous passion deludes reason and deceives
all senses.

COUNT:

You have received a dowry, but let me give
you this ring as a token of my eternal love.

COUNTESS:

Susanna takes everything from her benefactor.

SUSANNA, COUNT, FIGARO:

Our plot is marvelous, but it must proceed
faster.

COUNTESS: (to the Count)

My lord, I see torchlight approaching in the
distance.

COUNT:

Let's enter here and hide, my beautiful Venus!

SUSANNA, FIGARO:

Here's a lesson for idiotic husbands to learn.

COUNTESS:

Isn't it dark, my lord?

COUNT:

That's what I want.
You know that I'm not going in there to read.

SUSANNA, COUNTESS:

Both our men are in the trap. The work goes well.

FIGARO:

I followed the betrayer, it is vain to doubt.

COUNT:

Who is there?

FIGARO:

People pass!

COUNTESS:

It is Figaro. I think I'll leave.

IL CONTE:

Andate; io poi verrò.

COUNT:

Let's go.

The Countess goes in to one Pavillion door, the Count into the other.

FIGARO:

Tutto è tranquillo e placido;
entrò la bella Venere;
col vago Marte a prendere
nuovo Vulcan del secolo
in rete la potrò.

FIGARO:

It is quiet and tranquil here.
The fair Venus has gone,
with her beloved Mars.
As a Vulcan of these times,
I'll catch her in my net.
(Susanna enters.)

SUSANNA:

Ehi, Figaro, tacete.

SUSANNA:

Hey Figaro, be quiet.

FIGARO:

(Oh, questa è la Contessa.)
A tempo qui giungete, vedrete là voi stessa, il
Conte, e la mia sposa,
di propria man la cosa toccar io vi farò.

FIGARO:

(Oh, it is the Countess.)
You've come at the right time. You yourself
will see the Count and my bride. I'll convince
you with your own eyes.

SUSANNA:

Parlate un po' più basso, di qua non muovo il
passo, ma vendicar mi vò.

SUSANNA:

Speak softer/ will not take a step,
but wish to be avenged.

FIGARO:

(Susanna!) Vendicarsi?

FIGARO:

(Susanna!) Avenged?

SUSANNA:

Sì.

SUSANNA:

Yes.

FIGARO:

Come potria farsi?

FIGARO:

How can you do that?

SUSANNA:

(L'iniquo io vo' sorprendere,
poi so quel che farò.)

SUSANNA:

(I will surprise the villain; then I know what I
will do.)

FIGARO:

(La volpe vuol sorprendermi,
e secondarla vò.)
Ah se madama il vuole!

FIGARO:

(The fox wants to surprise me, and I will
assist.)
Whatever Madame wishes!

SUSANNA:

Su via, manco parole.

SUSANNA:

So now, no talking.

FIGARO:

Eccomi a' vostri piedi, ho pieno il cor di foco,
esaminate il loco, pensate al traditor.

FIGARO:

Here at your feet my heart is afire, think how
you were betrayed.

SUSANNA:

(Come la man mi pizzica, che smania, che furor!)

FIGARO:

(Come il polmon mi s'altera, che smania, che calor!)

SUSANNA:

E senz'alcun affetto?

FIGARO:

Supplicavi il dispetto. Non perdiam tempo invano, datemi un po' la mano.

SUSANNA:

Servitevi, signor.

FIGARO:

Che schiaffo!

SUSANNA:

Che schiaffo, e questo, e questo, e ancora questo, e questo, e poi quest'altro.

FIGARO:

Non batter così presto.

SUSANNA:

E questo, signor scaltro, e questo, e poi quest'altro ancor.

FIGARO:

O schiaffi graziosissimi, oh, mio felice amor.

SUSANNA:

Impara, impara, oh perfido, a fare il seduttore.

FIGARO:

Pace, pace, mio dolce tesoro, io conobbi la voce che adoro e che impressa ognor serbo nel cor.

SUSANNA:

La mia voce?

FIGARO:

La voce che adoro.

SUSANNA e FIGARO:

Pace, pace, mio dolce tesoro, pace, pace, mio tenero amor.

SUSANNA:

(How my hand urges me, what frenzy, what rage!)

FIGARO:

How my breath in raised, what frenzy, what heat!

SUSANNA:

And without some adoration?

FIGARO:

I am disposed to supplicate myself. Let's not lose time in vain. Give me your hand.

SUSANNA:

Take it, my lord.

FIGARO: (*Susanna slaps him*)

What a slap!

SUSANNA:

What a slap, and this, and this, and another, and another.

FIGARO:

Stop hitting me.

SUSANNA:

And this, Mr. smart one, and this, and another.

FIGARO:

Oh gracious beating, oh, my happy love.

SUSANNA:

Oh betrayer, learn, learn the fate of a seductor.

FIGARO:

Peace, peace, my sweet treasure. I recognized your voice, the voice I adore that is etched in my heart.

SUSANNA:

My voice?

FIGARO:

The voice I adore.

SUSANNA, FIGARO:

Peace, peace, my tender love. Peace, peace, my tender love.

The Count enters.

IL CONTE:

Non la trovo e girai tutto il bosco.

COUNT:

I can't find her and I've looked all over.

SUSANNA, FIGARO:

(Questi è il Conte, alla voce il conosco.)

SUSANNA, FIGARO:

It is the Count. I recognize his voice.)

IL CONTE:

Ehi, Susanna, sei sorda.sei muta?

COUNT:

Here, Susanna, are you deaf or dumb?

SUSANNA

Bella, bella! Non l'ha conosciuta.

SUSANNA:

Beautiful! He didn't recognize her.

FIGARO:

Chi?

FIGARO:

Who?

SUSANNA:

Madama!

SUSANNA:

Madame!

FIGARO:

Madama?

FIGARO:

Madame?

SUSANNA:

Madama!

La commedia, idol mio, terminiamo,
consoliamo il bizzarro amator!

SUSANNA:

Madame!

My dear, the play ends. Let's console the
bizarre lover!

FIGARO:

Sì, madama, voi siete il ben mio!

FIGARO: (*kneels before Susanna*)

Yes, noble lady, be mine!

IL CONTE:

La mia sposa! Ah, senz'arme son io.

COUNT:

My wife! Oh, and I am unarmed.

FIGARO:

Un ristoro al mio cor concedete.

FIGARO:

Agree to come back to my heart.

SUSANNA:

Io son qui, faccio quel che volete.

SUSANNA:

I am yours, do what you want.

IL CONTE:

Ah, ribaldi!

COUNT:

Traitors!

SUSANNA e FIGARO:

Ah, corriamo, mio bene, e le pene compensi il
piacer.

SUSANNA, FIGARO:

Let's hasten, and make up for the pains of the
past.

As Susanna and Figaro try to leave, the Count seizes Figaro.

IL CONTE:

Gente, gente, all'armi, all'armi!

COUNT:

Men, bring arms!

FIGARO:

Il padrone!

IL CONTE:

Gente, gente, aiuto, aiuto!

FIGARO:

Son perduto!

BASILIO, CURZIO, BARTOLO,

ANTONIO:

Cosa avvenne?

IL CONTE:

Il scellerato m'ha tradito, m'ha infamato
e con chi state a veder!

BASILIO, CURZIO, BARTOLO,

ANTONIO:

Son stordito, son sbalordito, non mi par che
ciò sia ver!

FIGARO:

Son storditi, son sbalorditi, oh che scena, che
piacer!

IL CONTE:

Invan resistete, uscite, madama,
il premio or avrete di vostra onestà!

FIGARO:

His lordship!

COUNT:

Men, men, help, help!

FIGARO:

I'm finished!

BASILIO, CURZIO, BARTOLO,

ANTONIO:

What's happening?

COUNT:

The scoundrel has betrayed me, and you shall
soon see with whom!

BASILIO, CURZIO, BARTOLO,

ANTONIO:

I'm astounded, confounded, it just can't be!

FIGARO:

I'm astounded, confounded, and what a
pleasant scene.

COUNT:

To resist is in vain. Come out Madame, and
receive the reward for your honesty!

In succession, Cherubino, Barbarina and Marcellina exit the Pavillion.

Il paggio!

The page!

ANTONIO:

Mia figlia!

ANTONIO:

My daughter!

FIGARO:

Mia madre!

FIGARO:

My mother!

BASILIO, ANTONIO e FIGARO:

Madama!

BASILIO, ANTONIO, FIGARO:

Madame!

IL CONTE:

Scoperta è la trama, la perfida è qua.

COUNT:

The plot is discovered, and here's the traitor.

SUSANNA:

Perdono! Perdono!

SUSANNA:

Forgive me! Forgive me!

IL CONTE:

No, no, non sperarlo.

FIGARO:

Perdono! Perdono!

IL CONTE:

No, no, non vo' darlo!

**BARTOLO, CHERUBINO,
MARCELLINA, BASILIO,
ANTONIO, SUSANNA e FIGARO:**

Perdono! Perdono!

IL CONTE:

No, no, no!

LA CONTESSA:

Almeno io per loro perdono otterrò.

BASILIO, IL CONTE e ANTONIO:

Oh cielo, che veggio!

Deliro! Vaneggio!

Che creder non so?

IL CONTE:

Contessa, perdono!

LA CONTESSA:

Più docile io sono, e dico di sì.

TUTTI

Ah, tutti contenti saremo così.

Questo giorno di tormenti,
di capricci, e di follia,
in contenti e in allegria
solo amor può terminar.

Spusi, amici, al ballo, al gioco,
alle mine date foco!

Ed al suon di lieta marcia
corriam tutti a festeggiar!

COUNT:

No, no, I renounce you.

FIGARO:

Forgive her! Forgive her!

COUNT:

No, no, I won't do it!

**BARTOLO, CHERUBINO,
MARCELLINA, BASILIO,
ANTONIO, SUSANNA e FIGARO:**

Forgive her! Forgive her!

COUNT;

No, no, no!

COUNTESS:

I will then intercede for their forgiveness.

BASILIO, COUNT, ANTONIO:

Oh heavens! What do I see!

A vision! A delusion!

I don't believe what I see?

COUNT:

Countess, forgive me!

COUNTESS:

I forgive you again. I can't say no to you.

ALL:

And so we are all content.

This tumultuous day
of caprices and folly,
and full of joy,
can only end with love.

Spouses, friends, to the ball, to fun,
and to the fires of passion!

Let's march to the happy beat and the sounds
of celebration!

END of OPERA

Discography

- 1934 Henderson (Count); Rautawaara Countess); Mildmay (Susanna); Domgraf-Fassbaender (Figaro); Helletsgrüber (Cherubino); Willis (Marcellina); Nash (Basilio); Tajo (Bartolo); Radford (Barbarina); Glyndebourne Festival Chorus and Orchestra; Busch (Conductor)
- 1938 Ahlrmayer (Count); Teschemacher (Countess); Cebotari (Susanna); Schöffler (Figaro); Kolniak (Cherubino); Waldenau (Marcellina); Vessely (Basilio); Böhme (Bartolo); Frank (Barbarina); Stuttgart Radio Chorus and Orchestra; Böhm (Conductor)
- 1940 Brownlee (Count); Rethberg (Countess); Albanese (Susanna); Pinza (Figaro); Jarmila-Novotna (Cherubino); Petina (Marcellina); De Paolis (Basilio); Baccaloni (Bartolo); Farell (Barbarina); Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra; Panizza (Conductor)
- 1950 London (Count); Schwartzkopf (Countess); Seefried (Susanna); Kunz (Figaro); Jurinac (Cherubino); Höngen (Marcellina); Majkut (Basilio); Rus (Bartolo); Schwaiger (Barbarina); Vienna State Opera Orchestra and Chorus; Karajan (Conductor)
- 1951 Bruscantini (Count); Gatti (Countess); Noni (Susanna); Tajo (Figaro); Gardino (Cherubino); Truccato-Pace (Marcellina); Mercuriali (Basilio); Corena (Bartolo); Sciutti (Barbarina); Milan Radio Chorus and Orchestra; Previtali (Conductor)
- 1953 Schöffler (Count); Schwartzkopf (Countess); Seefried (Susanna); Kunz (Figaro); Gueden (Cherubino); Wagner (Marcellina); Klein (Basilio); Koréh (Bartolo); Maikl (Barbarina); Vienna State Opera Chorus/Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra; Furtwängler (Conductor)
- 1954 Petri (Count); Schwartzkopf (Countess); Seefried (Susanna); Panerai (Figaro); Jurinac (Cherubino); Villa (Marcellina); Pirino (Basilio); Maionica (Bartolo); Adani (Barbarina); La Scala Chorus and Orchestra; Karajan (Conductor)
- 1955 Poell (Count); Della Casa (Countess); Gueden (Susanna); Siepi (Figaro); Danco (Cherubino); Rössli-Majdan (Marcellina); Dickie (Basilio); Corena (Bartolo); Felbermayer (Barbarina); Vienna State Opera Chorus/Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra; Kleiber (Conductor)
- 1955 Calabreses (Count); Jurinac (Countess); Sciutti (Susanna); Bruscantini (Figaro); Stevens (Cherubino); Sinclair (Marcellina); Cuénod (Basilio); Wallace (Basilio); Sinclair (Barbarina); Glyndebourne Festival Chorus and Orchestra; Gui (Conductor)
- 1955 Rehfuss (Count); Stich-Randall (Countess); Streich (Susanna); Panerai (Figaro); Lorengar (Cherubino); Gayraud (Marcellina); Cuénod (Basilio); Cortis (Bartolo); Ignal (Barbarina); Aix-en-Provence Festival Chorus/Paris Conservatoire Orchestra; Rosbaud (Conductor)

- 1956 Schöffler (Count); Jurinac (Countess); Streich (Susanna); Berry (Figaro); Ludwig (Cherubino); Malaniuk (Marcellina); Majkut (Basilio); Czerwenka (Bartolo); Vienna State Opera Chorus and Orchestra; Böhm (Conductor)
- 1959 London (Count); Della Casa (Countess); Peters (Susanna); Tozzi (Figaro); Elias (Cherubino); Warfield (Marcellina); Carelli (Basilio); Corena (Bartolo); Felbermayer (Barbarina); Vienna State Opera Chorus and Orchestra; Leinsdorf (Conductor)
- 1959 Wächter (Count); Schwartzkopf (Countess); Moffo (Susanna); Taddei (Figaro); Cossotto (Cherubino); Gatta (Maarcellina); Ercolani (Basilio); Vinco (Bartolo); Fusco (Barbarina); Philharmonia Chorus and Orchestra; Giulini (Conductor)
- 1960 Fischer-Dieskau (Count); Stader (Countess); Seefried (Susanna); Capecchi (Figaro); Töpfer (Cherubino); Benningsen (Marcellina); Kuen (Basilio); Sardi (Bartolo); Schwaiger (Barbarina); Berlin RIAS Chorus/Berlin Radio State Orchestra; Fricsay (Conductor)
- 1964 (in German) Prey (Count); Gueden (Countess); Rothenberger (Susanna); Berry (Figaro); Mathis (Cherubino); Burmeister (Marcellina); Schreier (Basilio); Ollendorf (Bartolo); Rönisch (Barbarina); Dresden State Opera Chorus and Orchestra; Suitner (Conductor)
- 1967 Fischer-Dieskau (Count); Janowitz (Countess); Mathis (Susanna); Prey (Figaro); Troyanos (Cherubino); Johnson (Marcellina); Wohlfahrt (Basilio); Lagger (Bartolo); Vogel (Barbarina); German Opera Chorus and Orchestra; Böhm (Conductor)
- 1970 Wixell (Count); Norman (Countess); Freni (Susanna); Ganzarolli (Figaro); Minton (Cherubino); Casula (Marcellina); Tear (Basilio); Grant (Bartolo); Watson (Barbarina); BBC Chorus and Orchestra; Davis (Conductor)
- 1970 Bacquier (Count); Söderström (Countess); Grist (Susanna); Evans (Figaro); Berganza (Cherubino); Burmeister (Marcellina); Hollweg (Basilio); Langdon (Bartolo); Price (Barbarina); Alldis Choir/New Philharmonia Orchestra; Klempner (Conductor)
- 1976 Fischer-Dieskau (Count); Harper (Countess); Blegen (Susanna); Evans (Figaro); Berganza (Cherubino); Finnilä (Marcellina); Fryatt (Basilio); McCue (Bartolo); Gale (Barbarina); Alldis Choir/English Chamber Orchestra; Barenboim (Conductor)
- 1979 Krause (Count); Tomova-Sintow (Countess); Cortubas (Susanna); Van Dam (Figaro); Von Stade (Cherubino); Berbié (Marcellina); Zednik (Basilio); Bastin (Bartolo); Barboux (Barbarina); Vienna State Opera Chorus and Orchestra; Karajan (Conductor)

- 1981 Allen (Count); Te Kanawa (Countess); Popp (Susanna); Ramey (Figaro); Von Stade (Cherubino); Berbié (Marcellina); Tear (Basilio); Moll (Bartolo); Kenny (Barbarina); London Opera Chorus/London Philharmonic Orchestra; Solti (Conductor)
- 1986 Raimondi (Count); Popp (Countess); Hendricks (Susanna); Van Dam (Figaro); Baltsa (Cherubino); Palmer (Marcellina); Baldin (Basilio); Lloyd (Bartolo); Pope (Barbarina); Ambrosian Opera Chorus/Academy St. Martin in the Fields Orchestra; Marriner (Conductor)
- 1987 Hynninen (Count); M. Price (Countess); Battle (Susanna); Allen (Figaro); Murray (Cherubino); Nicolesco (Marcellina); Ramirez (Basilio); Rydl (Bartolo); Pace (Barbarina); Vienna State Opera Chorus and Orchestra; Muti (Conductor)
- 1988 Stilwell (Count); Lott (Countess); Rolandi (Susanna); Desderi (Figaro); Esham (Cherubino); Mason (Marcellina); Benelli (Basilio); Korn (Bartolo); Dawson (Barbarina); Glyndebourne Chorus/London Philharmonic Orchestra; Haitink (Conductor)
- 1988 Hagegard (Count); Augér (Countess); Bonney (Susanna); Salomaa (Figaro); Nafè (Cherubino); Jones (Marcellina); Giminez (Basilio); Feller (Bartolo); Argenta (Barbarina); Drottningholm Court Theater Chorus and Orchestra; Östman (Conductor)
- 1990 Hampson (Count); Te Kanawa (Countess); Upshaw (Susanna); Furlanetto (Figaro); Von Otter (Cherubino); Troyanos (Marcellina); Laciura (Basilio); Plishka (Bartolo); Grant (Barbarina); Metropolitan Opera Chorus and Orchestra; Levine (Conductor)
- 1991 Schmidt (Count); Cuberli (Countess); Rodgers (Susanna); Tomlinson (Figaro); Bartoli (Cherubino); Pancella (Marcellina); Clark (Basilio); Von Kannen (Bartolo); Leidland (Barbarina); RIAS Chamber Chorus/Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra; Barenboim (Conductor)
- 1991 Furlanetto (Count); Varady (Countess); Donath (Susanna); Titus (Figaro); Schmiede (Cherubino); Kallisch (Marcellina); Zednik (Basilio); Nimsgern (Bartolo); Kertesi (Barbarina); Bavarian Radio Chorus and Symphony Orchestra; Davis (Conductor)
- 1993 Gilfry (Count); Martinpelto (Countess); Stephen (Cherubino); Terfel (Figaro); English Baroque Soloists; Gardiner (Conductor)
- 1994 Schmidt (Count); Fleming (Countess); Hagley (Susanna); Finley (Figaro); Todorovich (Cherubino); Willhouse (Marcellina); Tear (Basilio); Röhr (Bartolo); Gritton (Barbarina); London Philharmonic; Haitink (Conductor)
- 1999 Treckel (Count); Magee (Countess); Röschmann (Susanna); Pape (Figaro); Risley (Cherubino); Staatskapelle, Berlin; Barenboim (Conductor)

2004 van Rensburg (Count); Gens (Countess); Regazzo (Figaro);
Kirchschlager (Cherubino); McLaughlin (Marcellina);
Concerto Köln; Jacobs (Conductor)

Videography

DG Video and DVD (1976)

Fischer-Dieskau (Count); Te Kanawa (Countess); Freni (Susanna);
Prey (Figaro); Ewing (Cherubino); Begg (Marcellina);
Van Kesteren (Basilio); Montarsolo (Bartolo); Perry (Barbarina);
Vienna Philharmonic Orchestra;
Böhm (Conductor)
A film by Jean-Pierre Ponnelle

Archiv Video and DVD (1993)

Gilfry (Count); Martinpelto (Countess); Hagley (Susanna); Terfel (Figaro);
Stephen (Cherubino); McCulloch (Marcellina); Egerton (Basilio);
Feller (Bartolo); Backes (Barbarina); Clarkson (Antonio);
Monteverdi Choir/English Baroque Orchestra;
Thamin (Director);
Mille (Video Director);
Gardiner (Conductor)

SONY VHS

Raimondi (Count); Studer (Countess); McLaughlin (Susanna); Gallo (Figaro);
Sima (Cherubino); Lilowa (Marcellina); Zednik (Basilio); Mazzola (Bartolo);
Tannenbergerova (Barbarina); Gatti (Antonio); Kasemann (Curzio);
Vienna State Opera Chorus and Orchestra;
Miller (Director)
Large (Video Director)
Abbado (Conductor)

Phillips

Wahlgreen (Count); Lindenstrand (Countess); Resick (Susanna);
Samuelsson (Figaro); Biel (Cherubino); Mang-Habashi (Marcellina);
Lilliequist (Basilio); Saedén (Bartolo); Larsson (Barbarina);
Drottningholm Court Theatre Chorus and Orchestra;
Järvefelt (Director);
Olofsson (Video Director);
Östman (Conductor)

Warner DVD (1994)

Schmidt (Count); Fleming (Countess); Finley (Figaro); Hagley (Susanna);
Glyndebourne Festival/London Philharmonic
Haitink (Conductor)

Kultur/DVD

Tezier (Count); Watson (Countess); Furlanetto (Figaro); Szymtka (Susanna);
National Orchestre de Lyon;
Olmi (Conductor)

DICTIONARY OF OPERA AND MUSICAL TERMS

Accelerando - Play the music faster, but gradually.

Adagio - At slow or gliding tempo, not as slow as Largo, but not as fast as Andante.

Agitato - Restless or agitated.

Allegro - At a brisk or lively tempo, faster than Andante but not as fast as Presto.

Andante - A moderately slow, easy-going tempo.

Appoggiatura - An extra or embellishing note preceding a main melodic note or tone. Usually written as a note of smaller size, it shares the time value of the main note.

Arabesque - Flourishes or fancy patterns usually applying to vocal virtuosity.

Aria - A solo song usually structured in a formal pattern. Arias generally convey reflective and introspective thoughts rather than descriptive action.

Arietta - A shortened form of aria.

Arioso - A musical passage or composition having a mixture of free recitative and metrical song.

Arpeggio - Producing the tones of a chord in succession but not simultaneously.

Atonal - Music that is not anchored in traditional musical tonality; it uses the chromatic scale impartially, does not use the diatonic scale and has no keynote or tonal center.

Ballad Opera - 18th century English opera consisting of spoken dialogue and music derived from popular ballad and folksong sources. The most famous is *The Beggar's Opera* which was a satire of the Italian opera seria.

Bar - A vertical line across the staff that divides the music into units.

Baritone - A male singing voice ranging between the bass and tenor.

Baroque - A style of artistic expression prevalent in the 17th century that is marked generally by the use of complex forms, bold ornamentation, and florid decoration. The Baroque period extends from approximately 1600 to 1750 and includes the works of the original creators of modern opera, the Camerata, as well as the later works by Bach and Handel.

Bass - The lowest male voices, usually divided into categories such as:

Basso buffo - A bass voice that specializes in comic roles like Dr. Bartolo in Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*.

Basso cantante - A bass voice that demonstrates melodic singing quality rather than comic or tragic: King Philip in Verdi's *Don Carlos*.

Basso profondo - the deepest, most profound, or most dramatic of bass voices: Sarastro in Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

Bel canto - Literally "beautiful singing." It originated in Italian opera of the 17th and 18th centuries and stressed beautiful tones produced with ease, clarity, purity, evenness, together with an agile vocal technique and virtuosity. Bel canto flourished in the first half of the 19th century in the works of Rossini, Bellini, and Donizetti.

Cabaletta - Typically a lively bravura extension of an aria or duet that creates a climax. The term is derived from the Italian word "cavallo," or horse: it metaphorically describes a horse galloping to the finish line.

Cadenza - A flourish or brilliant part of an aria commonly inserted just before a finale.

Camerata - A gathering of Florentine writers and musicians between 1590 and 1600 who attempted to recreate what they believed was the ancient Greek theatrical synthesis of drama, music, and stage spectacle; their experimentation led to the creation of the early structural forms of modern opera.

Cantabile - An expression indication urging the singer to sing sweetly.

Cantata - A choral piece generally containing Scriptural narrative texts: Bach Cantatas.

Cantilena - A lyrical melodic line meant to be played or sung "cantabile," or with sweetness and expression.

Canzone - A short, lyrical operatic song usually containing no narrative association with the drama but rather simply reflecting the character's state of mind: Cherubino's "Voi che sapete" in Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*. Shorter versions are called canzonettas.

Castrato - A young male singer who was surgically castrated to retain his treble voice.

Cavatina - A short aria popular in the 18th century without the da capo repeat section.

Classical Period - The period between the Baroque and Romantic periods. The Classical period is generally considered to have begun with the birth of Mozart (1756) and ended with Beethoven's death (1830). Stylistically, the music of the period stressed clarity, precision, and rigid structural forms.

Coda - A trailer or tailpiece added on by the composer after the music's natural conclusion.

Coloratura - Literally colored: it refers to a soprano singing in the bel canto tradition with great agility, virtuosity, embellishments and ornamentation: Joan Sutherland singing in Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

Commedia dell'arte - A popular form of dramatic presentation originating in Renaissance Italy in which highly stylized characters were involved in comic plots involving mistaken identities and misunderstandings. The standard characters were Harlequin and Colombine: The "play within a play" in Leoncavallo's *I Pagliacci*.

Comprimario - A singer portraying secondary character roles such as confidantes, servants, and messengers.

Continuo - A bass part (as for a keyboard or stringed instrument) that was used especially in baroque ensemble music; it consists of a succession of bass notes with figures that indicate the required chords. Also called *figured bass*, *thoroughbass*.

Contralto - The lowest female voice derived from "contra" against, and "alto" voice, a voice between the tenor and mezzo-soprano.

Countertenor, or male alto vocal range - A high male voice generally singing within the female high soprano ranges.

Counterpoint - The combination of one or more independent melodies added into a single harmonic texture in which each retains its linear character: polyphony. The most sophisticated form of counterpoint is the fugue form in which up to 6 to 8 voices are combined, each providing a variation on the basic theme but each retaining its relation to the whole.

Crescendo - A gradual increase in the volume of a musical passage.

Da capo - Literally "from the top": repeat. Early 17th century da capo arias were in the form of A B A, the last A section repeating the first A section.

Deus ex machina - Literally “god out of a machine.” A dramatic technique in which a person or thing appears or is introduced suddenly and unexpectedly; it provides a contrived solution to an apparently insoluble dramatic difficulty.

Diatonic - Relating to a major or minor musical scale that comprises intervals of five whole steps and two half steps.

Diminuendo - Gradually getting softer, the opposite of crescendo.

Dissonance - A mingling of discordant sounds that do not harmonize within the diatonic scale.

Diva - Literally a “goddess”; generally refers to a female opera star who either possesses, or pretends to possess, great rank.

Dominant - The fifth tone of the diatonic scale: in the key of C, the dominant is G.

Dramma giocoso - Literally meaning amusing, or lighthearted. Like tragicomedy it represents an opera whose story combines both serious and comic elements: Mozart’s *Don Giovanni*.

Falsetto - Literally a lighter or “false” voice; an artificially produced high singing voice that extends above the range of the full voice.

Fioritura - Literally “flower”; a flowering ornamentation or embellishment of the vocal line within an aria.

Forte, Fortissimo - Forte (*f*) means loud; mezzo forte (*mf*) is fairly loud; fortissimo (*ff*) even louder, and additional *fff*’s indicate greater degrees of loudness.

Glissando - A rapid sliding up or down the scale.

Grand Opera - An opera in which there is no spoken dialogue and the entire text is set to music, frequently treating serious and dramatic subjects. Grand Opera flourished in France in the 19th century (Meyerbeer) and most notably by Verdi (*Aida*): the genre is epic in scale and combines spectacle, large choruses, scenery, and huge orchestras.

Heldentenor - A tenor with a powerful dramatic voice who possesses brilliant top notes and vocal stamina. Heldentenors are well suited to heroic (Wagnerian) roles: Lauritz Melchior in Wagner’s *Tristan und Isolde*.

Imbroglia - Literally “Intrigue”; an operatic scene with chaos and confusion and appropriate diverse melodies and rhythms.

Largo or larghetto - Largo indicates a very slow tempo; Larghetto is slightly faster than Largo.

Legato - Literally “tied”; therefore, successive tones that are connected smoothly. Opposing Legato would be Marcato (strongly accented and punctuated) and Staccato (short and aggressive).

Leitmotif - A short musical passage attached to a person, thing, feeling, or idea that provides associations when it recurs or is recalled.

Libretto - Literally “little book”; the text of an opera. On Broadway, the text of songs is called “lyrics” but the spoken text in the play is called the “book.”

Lied - A German song; the plural is “lieder.” Originally German art songs of the 19th century.

Light opera, or operetta - Operas that contain comic elements but light romantic plots: Johann Strauss’s *Die Fledermaus*.

Maestro - From the Italian “master”: a term of respect to conductors, composers, directors, and great musicians.

Melodrama - Words spoken over music. Melodrama appears in Beethoven’s *Fidelio* but flourished during the late 19th century in the operas of Massenet (*Manon*). Melodrama should not be confused with melodrama when it describes a work that is characterized by extravagant theatricality and by the predominance of plot and physical action over characterization.

Mezza voce - Literally “medium voice,” or singing with medium or half volume; it is generally intended as a vocal means to intensify emotion.

Mezzo-soprano - A woman’s voice with a range between that of the soprano and contralto.

Molto - Very. Molto agitato means very agitated.

Obbligato - An elaborate accompaniment to a solo or principal melody that is usually played by a single instrument.

Octave - A musical interval embracing eight diatonic degrees: therefore, from C to C is an octave.

Opera - Literally “a work”; a dramatic or comic play combining music.

Opera buffa - Italian comic opera that flourished during the bel canto era. Buffo characters were usually basses singing patter songs: Dr. Bartolo in Rossini’s *The Barber of Seville*, and Dr. Dulcamara in Donizetti’s *The Elixir of Love*.

Opéra comique - A French opera characterized by spoken dialogue interspersed between the arias and ensemble numbers, as opposed to Grand Opera in which there is no spoken dialogue.

Operetta, or light opera - Operas that contain comic elements but tend to be more romantic: Strauss’s *Die Fledermaus*, Offenbach’s *La Périchole*, and Lehar’s *The Merry Widow*. In operettas, there is usually much spoken dialogue, dancing, practical jokes, and mistaken identities.

Oratorio - A lengthy choral work, usually of a religious or philosophical nature and consisting chiefly of recitatives, arias, and choruses but in deference to its content, performed without action or scenery: Handel’s *Messiah*.

Ornamentation - Extra embellishing notes—appoggiaturas, trills, roulades, or cadenzas—that enhance a melodic line.

Overture - The orchestral introduction to a musical dramatic work that frequently incorporates musical themes within the work.

Parlando - Literally “speaking”; the imitation of speech while singing, or singing that is almost speaking over the music. It is usually short and with minimal orchestral accompaniment.

Patter - Words rapidly and quickly delivered. Figaro’s Largo in Rossini’s *The Barber of Seville* is a patter song.

Pentatonic - A five-note scale, like the black notes within an octave on the piano.

Piano - Soft volume.

Pitch - The property of a musical tone that is determined by the frequency of the waves producing it.

Pizzicato - A passage played by plucking the strings instead of stroking the string with the bow.

Polyphony - Literally “many voices.” A style of musical composition in which two or more independent melodies are juxtaposed in harmony; counterpoint.

Polytonal - The use of several tonal schemes simultaneously.

Portamento - A continuous gliding movement from one tone to another.

Prelude - An orchestral introduction to an act or the whole opera. An Overture can appear only at the beginning of an opera.

Presto, Prestissimo - Very fast and vigorous.

Prima Donna - The female star of an opera cast. Although the term was initially used to differentiate between the dramatic and vocal importance of a singer, today it generally describes the personality of a singer rather than her importance in the particular opera.

Prologue - A piece sung before the curtain goes up on the opera proper: Tonio’s Prologue in Leoncavallo’s *I Pagliacci*.

Quaver - An eighth note.

Range - The divisions of the voice: soprano, mezzo-soprano, contralto, tenor, baritone, and bass.

Recitative - A formal device that advances the plot. It is usually a rhythmically free vocal style that imitates the natural inflections of speech; it represents the dialogue and narrative in operas and oratorios. Secco recitative is accompanied by harpsichord and sometimes with cello or continuo instruments and *accompagnato* indicates that the recitative is accompanied by the orchestra.

Ritornello - A short recurrent instrumental passage between elements of a vocal composition.

Romanza - A solo song that is usually sentimental; it is usually shorter and less complex than an aria and rarely deals with terror, rage, and anger.

Romantic Period - The period generally beginning with the raiding of the Bastille (1789) and the last revolutions and uprisings in Europe (1848). Romanticists generally

found inspiration in nature and man. Beethoven's *Fidelio* (1805) is considered the first Romantic opera, followed by the works of Verdi and Wagner.

Roulade - A florid vocal embellishment sung to one syllable.

Rubato - Literally "robbed"; it is a fluctuation of tempo within a musical phrase, often against a rhythmically steady accompaniment.

Secco - The accompaniment for recitative played by the harpsichord and sometimes continuo instruments.

Semitone - A half-step, the smallest distance between two notes. In the key of C, the notes are E and F, and B and C.

Serial music - Music based on a series of tones in a chosen pattern without regard for traditional tonality.

Sforzando - Sudden loudness and force; it must stick out from the texture and provide a shock.

Singspiel - Early German musical drama employing spoken dialogue between songs: Mozart's *The Magic Flute*.

Soprano - The highest range of the female voice ranging from lyric (light and graceful quality) to dramatic (fuller and heavier in tone).

Sotto voce - Literally "below the voice"; sung softly between a whisper and a quiet conversational tone.

Soubrette - A soprano who sings supporting roles in comic opera: Adele in Strauss's *Die Fledermaus*, or Despina in Mozart's *Così fan tutte*.

Spinto - From the Italian "spingere" (to push); a soprano having lyric vocal qualities who "pushes" the voice to achieve heavier dramatic qualities.

Sprechstimme - Literally "speak voice." The singer half sings a note and half speaks; the declamation sounds like speaking but the duration of pitch makes it seem almost like singing.

Staccato - Short, clipped, rapid articulation; the opposite of the caressing effects of legato.

Stretto - A concluding passage performed in a quicker tempo to create a musical climax.

Strophe - Music repeated for each verse of an aria.

Syncopation - Shifting the beat forward or back from its usual place in the bar; it is a temporary displacement of the regular metrical accent in music caused typically by stressing the weak beat.

Supernumerary - A “super”; a performer with a non-singing role: “Spear-carrier.”

Tempo - Time, or speed. The ranges are Largo for very slow to Presto for very fast.

Tenor - Highest natural male voice.

Tessitura - The general range of a melody or voice part; but specifically, the part of the register in which most of the tones of a melody or voice part lie.

Tonality - The organization of all the tones and harmonies of a piece of music in relation to a tonic (the first tone of its scale).

Tone Poem - An orchestral piece with a program; a script.

Tonic - The keynote of the key in which a piece is written. C is the tonic of C major.

Trill - Two adjacent notes rapidly and repeatedly alternated.

Tutti - All together.

Twelve tone - The 12 chromatic tones of the octave placed in a chosen fixed order and constituting with some permitted permutations and derivations the melodic and harmonic material of a serial musical piece. Each note of the chromatic scale is used as part of the melody before any other note gets repeated.

Verismo - Literally “truth”; the artistic use of contemporary everyday material in preference to the heroic or legendary in opera. A movement from the late 19th century: *Carmen*.

Vibrato - A “vibration”; a slightly tremulous effect imparted to vocal or instrumental tone for added warmth and expressiveness by slight and rapid variations in pitch.

