LUDOVICO ARIOSTO

LA LENA

Characters

Corbolo servant of Flavio

Flavio a young gentleman in love with Licinia

Lena wife of Pacifico and mistress of Fazio

Fazio the father of Licinia and lover of Lena

Ilaria mother of Flavio

Pacifico husband of Lena

Isabella servant of Giuliana

Giuliana creditor and relative of Pacifico

Torbida the surveyor

Bartola creditor of Pacifico

Two manservants of the Duke and friends of Corbolo

Two bailiffs

Licinia, who plays an important role in the play, yet she is never seen on stage

[The play is set in Ferrara. In the early 16th century]
**Prologue**

When I first saw these young men here summoned, and so many beautiful women, I thought that they wanted to dance. For this reason, I wore my mask and costume. But then, when I headed into one of these rooms, and I saw so many people in various costumes who seem to be busy reciting verses and answering each other back and forth, I realized that they wanted to put on a play. I can’t help but laugh at them as they think that they are capable of doing a good job! However, since we have all ended up together in this same room, let’s be quiet and watch them and see how they do.
ACT ONE

A street in Ferrara. Centre stage: frontage of Lena’s modest dwelling. To the left of it stands a larger house belonging to Fazio; to the right another belonging to Ilaria.

SCENE ONE

[The time is shortly before sunrise. Flavio comes out from his mother’s (Ilaria’s) front door looking secretive. Corbolo, his servant, follows him a few moments later]

Corbolo, Flavio

CORBOLO
Flavio, tell me, where are you going at this time? There must be a reason why you are all dressed up so nicely.

FLAVIO
I am going over there, [pointing to Fazio’s house] because love is calling me. I want to see the eyes of such a never-before-seen beauty [lost saying these words].

CORBOLO
[Sarcastic]
And what beauty do you think you’ll be able to see in this darkness?

FLAVIO
[Serious and self composed]
I am going to see Licinia. Neither the stars, nor the sun shine like the eyes of my beloved. [Shooing Corbolo] Damn you, go and leave me alone!

CORBOLO
Actually, I will go back to bed and lay down to make up for the sleep that you have interrupted.
[Corbolo yawns as he is still tired. He is about to leave, but Flavio calls him back]

FLAVIO
Where are you going? Come here and listen to me. Corbolo, I want to reveal my secret to you. But make sure you do not tell anyone!

CORBOLO
I won’t say a word! I promise! Speak....

FLAVIO
Listen. I know that you know that I love Licinia, daughter of Fazio and that she also loves me. I also know that you have seen us talking in private many times before. [Flavio is lost...contemplating those times when he met Licinia] Now we need to find a place to meet. [Flavio winks at Corbolo as he secretly wants to meet Licinia]

Let me explain. Licinia has made friends with the wife of Pacifico, Lena, who lives close by [pointing to Lena's house]. Since she was a young girl, Lena has been like a mother to Licina, teaching her how to read, to sew, so on and so forth. They spend all day together. Now, secretly, Lena has agreed to let me meet up with Licinia and she wants to give us proof of this today.

CORBOLO

[Contemplating]
Sounds great. And so? What are we supposed to do now? Tell me, how did you manage to convince Lena, Pacifico’s wife, to help you?

FLAVIO

With money. [Signals money with fingers]. I promised her twenty five florins but the tricky part is that Lena wants her money now. I thought Giuliana would have lent me the money by now, but she hasn’t. God help me! I don’t know if Lena will let me meet Licinia without that money! What if she thinks I don’t have it?! [Flavio is desperate; cries]

CORBOLO

[Corbolo rolls his eyes and looks towards the audience as he cannot stand his master when he is so melodramatic. Corbolo consoles Flavio] Well, you don’t have it. I guess if she believes you, it will be somewhat of a miracle. [Corbolo is shocked at Lena’s behaviour] What a pig! Isn’t she ashamed to sell off the daughter of Fazio that way?

FLAVIO

[Flavio is angry at Corbolo] And who are you to judge? Lena has all the reasons in the world to do so. [Flavio lowers his voice as he is gossiping] You know that her and Fazio have hooked up A LOT. Do you know what I mean by that? [Flavio winking to Corbolo and hitting him with his arm]

CORBOLO

[Laughing sarcastically] Now that’s a miracle! Is he the first?

FLAVIO

[Corbolo still laughing loudly; Flavio has to shout louder when talking]. And may I add that ..... [pauses and then continues, as he waits for Corbolo to stop laughing] her husband, Pacifico, seems to approve...unless he’s pretending not to notice. Who knows?

[Flavia laughs uncontrollably with Corbolo but is then self composed and is suddenly irritated. He signals Corbolo to stop laughing. Both clear their throat and are now serious]
On top of everything, Fazio has promised Pacifico that he will be paying all of his debts. Uff, I’m sick of all this gossip. Do me a favour, go and buy me a few pigeons and have them roasted. Also, get some good bread and wine.

[Flavio takes money out of his pocket and hands it to Corbolo]
Come here. Here’s a florin. Leave!
[Flavio pushes Corbolo violently so he can go buy the food he ordered him to get].

CORBOLO
[After being pushed by Flavio, Corbolo returns to Flavio to ask him another question which has nothing to do with the errand he just sent him out for]
But tell me, who will give you the twenty five florins and how are you going to pay back the money you have borrowed?

FLAVIO
[Visibly irritated] I have four months to think about that. Who knows what could happen? Maybe my mother will die and leave me an inheritance? Who knows?

CORBOLO
[Astounded to hear Fazio say such a thing. Makes the sign of the cross, places both hands together in disbelief]
What kind of logic is that? And, it’s very likely that she’ll go on living - how are you going to repay the loan if your brilliant and warm idea doesn’t happen?

FLAVIO
[Irritated once more] Well...I don’t know. Let it go will you?...leave ..leave [hitting Corbolo on the head]. I can hear a door open.

CORBOLO
[Maliciously] You’d better get ready to open your purse and get your own money ready. [Saying this, he gets hit harder in the head by Flavio. Lena comes out from the doorway of her house].

SCENE TWO

Flavio, Lena, Corbolo
[Enter Lena humming a tune and singing]

FLAVIO
Good day, Lena.

LENA
Good day, Flavio. Tell me, have you settled the business?
Believe me, Lena, I wouldn’t have come to you if I didn’t have everything ready and set to go. [In a reassuring tone]

CORBOLO
Ha! I am always ready and set to go.

LENA
[She answers back aggressively while looking at Corbolo]
Get your mind out of the gutter. [Lena looks at Corbolo’s dirty pants in disgust]. I want to know if you have the money!

FLAVIO
You’ll have it soon.

LENA
You think?

FLAVIO
A friend of mine was going to give it to me yesterday, but then she said tomorrow. Don’t worry Lena, tomorrow you will have your money.

LENA
When I have the money, you can come back to see your beloved. For now, the only thing we are sure of is that you will stay outside of my house.

FLAVIO
[Begging Lena to let him into her house]
Lena, I promise you’ll get your money...come on...let me in.

LENA
[In a strict voice] I’ll believe it when I see it. Remember that, from all this, the person who stands to lose the most is me. I want money not lies.

CORBOLO
[Moves forward to defend Flavio] You’re right, Lena. But why be so mean about it - let Flavio inside!

LENA
[Shoos Corbolo from the way so she can see Flavio better. She addresses Flavio straight in the eye]
Flavio, so I should believe you just like that! I still don’t see the problem. If your friends can’t give you the money, go to the loan sharks. God knows, there are enough of them in this city who will be more than willing to help. [Lena points to Flavio’s clothes]. If you have to, sell them the clothes off your back and the hat off your head.
FLAVIO
[Is suddenly struck by an idea]
Let’s do this, Lena. Take these [referring to his clothes]. Take these clothes as my down payment.
[Flavio starts removing his clothes and handing them to Lena. Corbolo is helping Flavio take his gown off] If by tomorrow I won’t have your money, pawn them! [Flavio stops removing his clothes as he is interrupted by Lena]

LENA
[Irritated and angry]
Pawn them yourself!

FLAVIO
[Flavio decides to change plans] That is exactly what I’ll do.
[Flavio hands the clothes he managed to remove to Corbolo] Take these, Corbolo. Help me.
[Flavio starts removing the rest of his clothes and Corbolo is helping him]

CORBOLO
[Shocked]
Are you actually taking your clothes off?

FLAVIO
[Addressing Corbolo directly]
I want to do what she says! What the devil else can I do? Now I want you to go to Giuliana and ask her if she can find someone who is willing to lend me the money on the value of these clothes.

CORBOLO
[Looking at the other side as Flavio is in his underpants]
And you’re just going to walk around naked? That’s your plan?

FLAVIO
[Very angry as Corbolo is always finding negative things to say]
What else do you want me to do? You fool! Yes, naked, all day. [Showing off his underpants. Looks at Lena, to see if she is impressed by what she sees; Lena shakes her head twice and moves away disgusted]
I will go into the house.

LENA
Go in. But you have to follow my orders or else.....[Lena warns Flavio. Lena and Flavio go into Lena’s house and shut the door. Corbolo is left alone, outside of Lena’s house, with Flavio’s clothes]

SCENE THREE
Corbolo alone.
Vile woman! I would like to do something to her! [He wants to strangle her]. It’s nearly sunrise now. [It’s sunrise by now; birds chirping] I don’t think that I can go to Giuliana’s because she is never up this early. I will go to the piazza instead to get the bloody pigeons. [Exit Corbolo who heads towards the piazza from the dirt road]

ACT TWO

SCENE ONE

Fazio, Lena
[This scene takes place early in the morning as Fazio has just woken up. Lena has woken up early and she is seen leaving her house, cleaning the front porch. We can hear Fazio yawn and stretch. Fazio exits from his house and sees Lena near her house, cleaning.]

FAZIO
Good day, Lena.

LENA
[Busy cleaning]
Ah, good day, Fazio.

FAZIO
Are you always up so early?

LENA
[Sarcastic, busy cleaning and ignoring Fazio]
It’s not like you pay me so much that I can afford to wake up late.

FAZIO
[Fazio moves towards Lena and speaks to her in a sweet and gentle voice]
You know, Lena, that I have always tried to do everything for you and, whenever I can, I will always provide more for you.
LENA
[Raising her voice slightly] And so? What good do you ever do for me?

FAZIO
[Looking at the audience. He can’t believe that Lena has the courage to say something like that after all he did and still does for her]
Here she goes again! She never remembers the good.

LENA
[Angry and aggressive] What have you ever given me? Are you alluding to the fact that I live in your house without paying rent?

FAZIO
[Irritated] Forget it.

LENA
[She insists that Fazio explain himself better]
What have you ever given me? Two pieces of bread every month, some disgusting wine, what?
FAZIO
You know that I have given you more than that.

LENA
[Insisting] Like what? Come on, tell me, clothes and velvet gowns?

FAZIO
[Childish] I’m not answering you.

LENA
What? Aren’t the virtues that I teach your daughter worth anything to you?

FAZIO
[In an exaggerated voice] They are worth a good deal. I won’t deny it.

LENA
When I first came here, your daughter didn’t know how to read, use a needle or cook.
[Fazio interrupts Lena as he cannot hear anymore of this for long]

FAZIO
That’s true. But every month, I give you quite a good sum of money.
[Signals, with his fingers, that he gives her money every month]

LENA
[In an angry voice] If you had to give me twelve times as much the amount you provide me with, [referring to the money], it still wouldn’t be enough to make up for the shame you bring on me. A plague on this house in which I do not want to stay any longer! Give all this generosity to someone else if you want.

FAZIO
[Warning her]
Be careful what you say!

LENA
[Very convinced of what she is saying]
Give it away. I don’t want to listen to your nagging anymore. Give it .....[pauses then continues] to whomever pleases you!

FAZIO
[Warning her once more]
I’ll find someone who wants it.

LENA
[Reassuring Fazio once again] Sell it!
[Aside] What does he think? That I need his protection? Thank God I am still young and that I can take care of myself. [She thinks she is still young and good looking, but she’s not]

FAZIO
[Aside] Evil woman. I do not want to sell the house, but only make her believe so. I know! I’ll pretend that I’m selling the house and that someone’s already interested in it. I should find Torbida - she’ll take the measurements of the house and make this whole thing look more legitimate. [Rubbing his hands together in joy]

[Exit Fazio who goes back into his house]

SCENE TWO

Lena, alone
[Close to her house]

LENA
Oh! What a fool I was, believing Fazio’s promises. What is worse is that I married that good for nothing Pacifico. He himself never ceases to remind me: “Be nice to him dear because, knowing that he likes you, he will pay all of our debts.” Now that Flavio can’t pay up, I’ll need to figure some other way to get money. [She pauses to think and starts walking around, reasoning things out loud]
If Fazio had a wife, I would make him do to her that which Pacifico forces me to do. [She is referring to the fact that Pacifico is forcing her to flirt with men to get money. Lena pauses and thinks about her new plan]
But since he has no wife, I cannot do this [still thinking and pondering on what can be done] so I’ll see if I can turn his daughter into what I am, whatever you call that!

[Enter Corbolo who is coming back from the piazza. He enters from the dirt road while talking to himself, mumbling, tired and frustrated. Lena overhears him and will start commenting in the next scene]

SCENE THREE

Corbolo, Lena

[Lena is standing stage left and Corbolo is approaching from stage right; neither hears the other till the end]

LENA
It looks like Corbolo. Yes, it is him.

CORBOLO
[Corbolo crosses the stage slowly, repeatedly stopping to continue his story. Lena shows interest but cannot catch what he is saying]

[Aside] I left to do what Flavio asked of me. I went to the piazza and looked all over. I walked through the streets and stopped by at the butcher, asking for some pigeons...I’m exhausted now!

LENA
He is moving slowly....

CORBOLO
[Aside] And then, what do I find? A bunch of skinny pigeons - who the hell could ever make a meal of them?

LENA
Maybe he has the money? He seems to be carrying something on his left arm.

CORBOLO
[Aside] And, of course, here’s Lena.

LENA
Do you have the money, Corbolo?

CORBOLO
[In a reassuring voice]
I will have it.

LENA
I don’t like the future tense.
CORBOLO
For now, you will have to make do with these. [He hands her the pigeons, bread and wine]
Take them in the house. [Corbolo looks at Lena. From his expressions, we can notice that he likes her and Lena likes the attention]
But it seems like you don’t need these pigeons, you’ve got enough meat on you already, you should give some to these poor birds! [looking her up and down]

LENA
[Shocked] Corbolo, honestly!

CORBOLO
[Tries to grope Lena] Come on, let me feel how curvy you are for myself!

LENA
[Moving away, she warns Corbolo not to get nearer] Try it and I’ll launch you across the city. [Lena shows him her fists] Give me the money, now!

CORBOLO
You will have it in half an hour. I went to see Giuliana, but she is still in bed. Her servant asked me to put the clothes in a chest. But tell me Lena, what am I going to get for the trouble I went through up till now? We both know that it is only thanks to me that the money will be arriving.
LENA
And what do you want?

CORBOLO
[Laughing maliciously] Do you want me to tell you? I want what every other man gets!

LENA
[Confused, yet she knows what he means] I don’t understand.

CORBOLO
[Winking] I completely understand what I want.

LENA
[She understood what he meant all along] You are worse than the devil. Come on, let’s go eat. Let’s go...
[Exit Lena and Corbolo who go into Lena’s house]

ACT THREE

SCENE ONE
Enter Corbolo, alone.

CORBOLO
[Corbolo has just finished eating and he exits from Lena’s house and is out on the street]
It is too hard for me to see my master spend or, better, lose, twenty five florins. I can’t tell how he’s even going to do this. If he sells his clothes and his mother finds out, Flavio might be kicked out of her house. I need to be cunning and witty. With my talents, I’ll milk the money [imitates the milking of the cow] right out of this old cow. Here she comes [Ilaria enters from the dirt road. Corbolo sees Ilaria approaching] But I’m not quite ready for her to see me yet.

[Corbolo moves to one side and pretends that he didn’t see Ilaria come in]

**SCENA SECONDA**  
*Ilaria, Corbolo*

**CORBOLO**  
[Corbolo comes forward and starts to speak aloud, pretending not to notice Ilaria]  
I don’t know what to do, where to go, or whom to turn to.

**ILARIA**  
[Aside and interested in what Corbolo is saying] Oh! What’s wrong?

**CORBOLO**  
And what will happen to poor Flavio?

**ILARIA**  
[Aside] Oh no, something really bad must have happened!

**CORBOLO**  
When Ilaria finds out, she will rush to the house.

**ILARIA**  
[Aloud] Corbolo! [Shouts louder] Corbolo! Corbolo!

**CORBOLO**  
[Pretending he didn’t notice Ilaria come in] Who’s calling me? O, my lady!

**ILARIA**  
What’s going on?

**CORBOLO**  
Did you see Flavio?

**ILARIA**  
[Still agitated]  
No, why?  
**CORBOLO**
Early this morning...one...two...three...four...five...six [one can hear the cathedral bells signalling 6am. This is a flash back representing Corbolo’s thoughts and Corbolo points this out, upfront, while looking at the audience hoping that they agree with the fact that they heard the bells strike 6 times. It’s like a flash back; he is reliving what Flavio went through at 6am. This can also be pinpointed on stage; lights lowered, etc.) Flavio was leaving and he told me that he was heading to your house.

ILARIA
[Agitated and confused]
But why?

CORBOLO
[In an exaggerated voice]
You don’t know the danger your son is in.

ILARIA
Danger? Tell me. What happened to him?

CORBOLO
Some rascals hurt him.

ILARIA
[Very worried] Is it bad?

CORBOLO
Yes, and it will be difficult for him to get over it.

ILARIA
[Rests both of her hands on her chest and seems very worried] Oh my God. I’m going to die!
[About to faint, but Corbolo intervenes to help her and continues consoling her]

CORBOLO
He is hurt, but he has no scars.

ILARIA
[Relieved, worried, and confused] Oh, you’re killing me! Is he hurt or isn’t he? Who can understand you?
[Ilaria looking at the audience while saying these words; hoping everyone will agree with her]

CORBOLO
[Continues narrating; flashback brought in again. Lights and sound effects can be used to make this flash back more vivid and credible] Listen. Last night, Flavio was having dinner with a group of friends. When he decided to return home, suddenly, he found himself surrounded by a group of hooligans who knocked him around.
ILARIA
[Very worried, but confused] But they didn’t hurt him?
CORBOLO
He started running....[Corbolo imitates Flavio running, Ilaria is relieved] But .......[Corbolo pauses], they caught up to him [Ilaria is worried again]

ILARIA
Oh no!

CORBOLO
And then, they also took his cloak and cap. Those thieves. Rascals.....[Raises fist in anger; vowing that he will find these thieves one day]

ILARIA
[Consoled] So he wasn’t wounded?

CORBOLO
Not physically, but mentally, yes. He is so worried that if you, my lady, were to find out, you would be so disappointed. [Faking a cracked voice; Corbolo, about to cry; Ilaria starts consoling him now] We cannot waste time, we need to fix things.

ILARIA
Fix things - how?

CORBOLO
Speak to the Mayor and if need be, to the Duke himself. Ask them to come down on those thieves!

ILARIA
To the Duke? But if I have no clues, proof or witnesses?

CORBOLO
So what are we going to do [believing in his own lies]?

ILARIA
For now Flavio isn’t in danger. I’ll sew another gown and cap for him. [Exit a worried Ilaria who goes into her house]

SCENE THREE

Corbolo alone. Still on the street.

CORBOLO
Aside. A very happy Corbolo who can barely control himself. Things are happening just the way I want them to. Now I need to get hold of Flavio’s clothes that are still at Giuliana’s place and then find someone who can raise as much as he can on them. In this way, I can gain much more money!

Exit Corbolo who walks out from the dirt road. Fazio comes out of his house and heads towards Pacifico's house. Pacifico is seen coming out of his house and he meets Fazio who wants to talk to him.

SCENE FOUR

Fazio, Pacifico.

FAZIO
Good day, Pacifico.

PACIFICO
Good day, Fazio.

FAZIO
In a month’s time, you and Lena have to pack everything and leave this house. I’ve decided to sell.

PACIFICO
[Confused. Yet he accepts Fazio’s decision to sell the house]
Okay, I guess that’s your right - it is your house, after all.

FAZIO
Torbida’s on her way to do the assessment.

PACIFICO
[Insisting and agitated]
No, not today. Ask her to come tomorrow, please.

FAZIO
Can’t, nope. She’ll be here any minute.
[Fazio goes back into his house. Corbolo returns from the dirt road. Pacifico sees Corbolo]

SCENE FIVE

Pacifico, Corbolo.

PACIFICO
[Very worried and tense]
Corbolo, how will we manage to hide your master? If Fazio sees him, all hell will break loose!
CORBOLO
Don’t you have a place to hide him? A box or a disguise, something?

PACIFICO
I don’t have anything other than two small chests.

CORBOLO
Great. Let us help him out of there before Fazio and Torbida arrive.

PACIFICO
Undressed the way he is? Without any clothes?

CORBOLO
[Reassuring Pacifico] I’ll find something for him to wear. Don’t worry.

PACIFICO
Go. As soon as you’re done, come back immediately. I will wait for you in the house.
[Exit Pacifico who goes inside his house. Ilaria comes out of her house, busy cleaning]

CORBOLO
[As soon as he is about to leave to find some clothes for Flavio, Corbolo sees Ilaria approaching]
Is that Ilaria coming out of her house? Yes it is her.

SCENE SIX
Ilaria, Corbolo, Isabella.

[Meanwhile, Isabella enters from the dirt road with Flavio’s cap and gown. She starts knocking on Ilaria’s front door]

ILARIA
[Sees Isabella knock at her door]
What does that woman want?

CORBOLO
It’s Isabella.
[Aside] Oh hell. The game’s up!

ILARIA
[Curious and moves towards Isabella to see what she wants]
Who are you looking for?

ISABELLA
I’m looking for Flavio.

ILARIA
Ilaria notices that Isabella is holding Flavio’s clothes.
Oh, those look like my son’s clothes.
Ilaria is shocked to find out that Isabella (Giuliana’s servant) is holding Flavio’s cap and cloak in her arms.

CORBOLO
Corbolo is pretending to be shocked, just like Ilaria] That’s because they are! [Aside] Lies, help me! If not the whole thing is over!

ILARIA
[Perplexed] Corbolo, what’s happening?

CORBOLO
[Agitated] Nothing...I don’t know...maybe his friends played a trick on him to see if they could make him run as fast as possible.

ISABELLA
[Addressing Ilaria] My mistress Giuliana sends Favio’s clothes back and would like to inform him that her friend...

CORBOLO
[Interrupting] What friend? What are you saying?

ISABELLA
…The one who was supposed to give the money to Flavio.....

CORBOLO
[Exaggerating] Lies! Hogwash! BS!!

ISABELLA
…He had to give her the money that you, Corbolo...

CORBOLO
What are you talking about?

ISABELLA
…had to pick up today.

CORBOLO
Me?

ISABELLA
You, yes.

CORBOLO
But no, you are mistaken.
ILARIA
[Takes the clothes from Isabella and gives them to Corbolo] Corbolo, take them and return
them to Flavio. [Now addressing Isabella] Go, go, leave and tell Giuliana not to play such
jokes among friends.

ISABELLA
What jokes? I don’t think that my mistress has made...[To Corbolo] But why are you making
faces at me for, you beast? I am telling the truth...

CORBOLO
[Amazed] Making faces? Who, me?

ISABELLA
… and standing up for my mistress. If she had the money, Giuliana would have given it to
Flavio....

CORBOLO
[Making fun of Isabella]
Money? Are you dreaming? Or do you think you are talking to a bunch of drunks?

ISABELLA
Listen, Corbolo. Wasn’t it you, today, who brought these clothes to Giuliana?

CORBOLO
[Mocking Isabella. Corbolo imitates a man walking and a man riding a horse. Sounds of
someone walking and someone riding a horse can be made here]
Did I come on foot or on horse? We understand. [Laughing, yet trying to restrain himself
from doing so as Isabella is getting angrier by the minute]

ISABELLA
[Seeing Corbolo signal her from behind Ilaria. He is trying to tell her to stop talking. Ilaria
looks at both, unable to understand what is going on between the two of them]
And now you are making faces again? What do you want?

CORBOLO
[Playing stupid as if he wasn’t doing anything in the first place]
Making faces? Who, me?
ILARIA
[To Corbolo] Oh, a plague on you!

[Speaking directly to Isabella] Where did you get these clothes?

[Corbolo keeps interrupting the conversation between Ilaria and Isabella as he doesn’t want
to get caught lying to Ilaria]
CORBOLO
[Rolling up his sleeves, ready to invent the first lie he can think of. He interrupts the two once again] Let me explain....

ILARIA
[Scolding Corbolo] I want her to talk, and not you. [Addressing Isabella again] Tell me Isabella, these clothes...
[Ilaria, visibly irritated by Corbolo who keeps insisting on interrupting and explaining things. Corbolo keeps pushing the two apart. Ilaria keeps shooing Corbolo away so she can continue talking to Isabella]
Go away, leave.

ISABELLA
I will tell you the truth.

CORBOLO
[Addressing the audience]
Sure, right. That’s like asking a donkey to say the Our Father.

ISABELLA
I will speak nothing but the truth.

CORBOLO
[Very sarcastic] Let’s take our hats off. [Turning towards the audience once more, for approval] We shouldn’t hear the gospel with our hats on.

ILARIA
Cut it out, Corbolo. You are always interrupting. Isabella, you can leave now. [Isabella exits from the dirt road without even saying goodbye. Ilaria is shocked at her bad manners]
Corbolo, go into my house. Now I intend to find out the truth from you...
[Corbolo, feeling uncomfortable. He is seen following Ilaria, uneasily into her house as he might soon be caught cheating Ilaria. Pacifico comes out of his front door and is waiting for Corbolo. He finally sees Corbolo coming out of Ilaria’s house]

SCENE SEVEN
Corbolo, Pacifico
[Corbolo is seen exiting from Ilaria’s house, worried and confused as he had to lie many times to Ilaria while in her house explaining why Isabella was saying such things before]

PACIFICO
What’s taken you so long? Where are Flavio’s clothes? Let’s hurry up and get him out of the house. What are you waiting for? For Fazio to come in and see him?

CORBOLO
Try to hide him in your house, wherever you want!
PACIFICO
[He suddenly remembers something] I just remembered something. In my house I have a big barrel. Flavio can hide in it.

CORBOLO
But will he fit in it?

PACIFICO
I think so...

CORBOLO
[Relieved] Let’s ask him.

PACIFICO
[Enter Torbida from the dirt road. Pacifico notices Torbida moving slowly towards his house] Is that Torbida? Hurry up, let’s finish this.

CORBOLO
Let’s finish it.
[Exit Pacifico and Corbolo. Pacifico goes quickly into his house with Corbolo]

SCENA EIGHT
Torbida, Fazio

TORBIDA
[Torbida finally finds Fazio’s house and knocks at his door. Fazio comes out of his house and the two start talking. They head towards Pacifico’s house. They are now busy talking to each other. Torbida takes out her measuring stick. Measures, stops, measures, stops. Fazio is staring at her incompetence.]

Okay, I should be able to tell you the value of the house soon.
[Torbida, now back to work; addressing Fazio directly once more] Fazio, what else do you want me to do?

FAZIO
[Frustrated] Start measuring the house!
[Fazio shows Torbida the exact area that she needs to be measured]

TORBIDA
[Looking around and measuring] I will start here. [Torbida busy measuring the perimeters of the house] Let’s go inside now.
[Torbida and Fazio go into Pacifico’s house. Fazio has the key to Pacifico’s house. He opens the door and the two enter the house. Enter Giuliana from the dirt road]
Giuliana, alone.

GIULIANA
[To herself] Just now, in the square, I saw the Mayor sign a paper that says that all of Pacifico’s valuables are to be sequestered. Seems like he owes a lot of money to the creditors. The way I see it, when they go to his house, they will take the barrel that I have lent Pacifico. I should just take it back myself.

[Exit Giuliana, who goes into Pacifico’s house. She moves slowly towards Pacifico’s house, on tiptoes and enters it through the front door that was left slightly open by Torbida and Fazio]
ACT FOUR

SCENE ONE
Bartola
[Enter Bartola from the dirt road. Bartola is looking for Pacifico’s house, glancing at the front doors as if half-heartedly trying to identify an address and taking notes]

BARTOLA
[Hitting very hard on Pacifico’s house]
No one’s there? Open the door. It’s Bartola. I can hear the door opening. I can also hear a lot of people talking. I’ll stay here for a while. I think that they are already taking out all of Pacifico’s belongings from the house.
[Giuliana and Pacifico exit from Pacifico’s house as Bartola moves to one side. Giuliana is dragging out the barrel; Pacifico is protesting and trying to stop her]

SCENE TWO
Giuliana, Pacifico, Bartola.

GIULIANA
[Holding on tightly to the barrel and talking directly to Pacifico]
And if the barrel is mine, why won’t you let go of it?

PACIFICO
But why do you want it now? It has been in my house for the past six months!

GIULIANA
Because now they might take it away.

PACIFICO
[Pacifico cannot give the barrel to Giuliana as Flavio is hiding in it] If you take it today, you will cause me a lot of problems.....[Begging her] All I need is half an hour, please, and it will be yours. I just need time to mourn the loss...of the barrel.

GIULIANA
Oh, well, that’s not normal. And what if the bailiffs empty your house out sooner than that? Speak of the devil.
[Giuliana turns around and notices that Bartola, who now heads towards the centre of the stage, moving towards Giuliana and Pacifico, has just arrived with two sbirri. Exit Pacifico who goes back into his house scared as he doesn’t want to get involved in their argument]

SCENE THREE
Bartola, Giuliana.
[This scene takes place out on the street, in front of Pacifico’s house]

BARTOLA
[Bartola sees the barrel and wants it. She ultimately seizes the barrel]
I want this one to make up for the money that is owed to me.
[Bartola giving orders to one of the sbirri who is with her]
Seize it!

GIULIANA
[Giuliana grabs hold of the barrel and shoos the sbirro away]
No one will ever get to take that which is mine by right!

BARTOLA
Are you stopping me from taking it?

GIULIANA
[Giuliana hugging the barrel]
Yes, because this barrel is mine.

BARTOLA
[Confused; scratching her head]
How so?

GIULIANA
It just is. I’d lent it to Pacifico.
[Giuliana struggling with the second sbirro who is trying to take the barrel away from her once more] Are you still going to take it? Leave it, you rascal! If not.........[Sbirro moves away scared]

SCENE FOUR

Fazio, Giuliana, Pacifico, Bartola, Corbolo.
[Pacifico comes out of his house with Corbolo. A sbirro slips inside Pacifico’s house, through the open door. This sbirro will go in with a paper in hand, to make an inventory of the objects that need to be sequestered. Fazio comes out of Pacifico’s house]

FAZIO
What is all this noise?

GIULIANA
[Still busy arguing with Bortola and a sbirro over the barrel. A tug of war for this barrel is taking place] The barrel is mine and I want to take it back home with me.

PACIFICO
[Looking at Bartola] She’s not lying. It’s hers.

BARTOLA
That’s not true. You are trying to hide it.
FAZIO
Let me end this! Leave this barrel here. I will hang on to it for now. If within two days Giuliana confirms that it is hers, she will have it, if not....[pauses] then we’ll see.

GIULIANA and BARTOLA
[Both seem to take a while to agree with Fazio. They are so tired fighting over the barrel, that they decide to agree with Fazio]
[Together] Agreed!
CORBOLO
[Intruding]
Leave it where it was. In Pacifico’s house.

FAZIO
[Ignoring Corbolo] Come on, push it into the house.
[Fazio ignores Corbolo’s plight and signals to Corbolo and a sbirro to obey his orders and drag the barrel into Fazio’s house. Note that both Corbolo and the sbirro hate taking orders from Fazio. They grumble when asked to push the barrel into the house. The barrel is ultimately moved over to Fazio’s house and taken inside]

[Enter more sbirri who go into Pacifico’s house to help the other sbirro in Pacifico’s house compile a list of household goods that can be sold to make up for Pacifico’s debts]

PACIFICO
[Looking towards the barrel that is being dragged by a sbirro and Corbolo]
[Aside] Flavio is inside. We’re going to be caught!

[Exit Pacifico and Corbolo who go into Pacifico’s house. The sbirri leave Pacifico’s house after a while and exit the scene with just a paper on which they have taken note of Pacifico’s goods.]

SCENE FIVE

Torbida, Fazio.
[Torbida comes out of Pacifico’s house. Fazio is still outside of Pacifico’s house waiting for Torbida. They talk to each other, shake hands and Torbida leaves from the dirt road. Fazio is now preparing to go out]

TORBIDA
Bye.
[Exit Torbida from the dirt road]
FAZIO
Bye Torbida. Ahh!! Finally. Finally some peace! [Addressing the audience] What a big deal they made over that barrel!
Hey, Licinia. [Fazio calling to his daughter inside his house]
I’m going out. If someone drops by, tell him that I will be returning back to the house later on.
[Exit Fazio leaving from the dirt road. Lena comes out of her house]

**SCENE SIX**  
*Lena alone.*

LENA  
We were lucky that Flavio didn’t move when he was in that barrel. Better still, Fazio has left the house. Now we really have to work at getting him out of there as quickly as possible.  
*[Enter Corbolo who comes out of Pacifico’s house]*

**SCENE SEVEN**  
*Lena, Corbolo, Pacifico.*

LENA  
*[Noticing Corbolo as he leaves Pacifico’s house].* Corbolo, go on, go and find the clothes for Flavio so we can get him out of that barrel.

CORBOLO  
And since we still have some time left, when he does manage to get out of the barrel, see to it that Flavio meets Licinia.

LENA  
*[In a strict voice]* That’ll never happen. Not before I get my money.  
*[Exit Lena who goes into Fazio’s house]*

CORBOLO  
*[Aside on the street]* Why do I have to get blamed for the fact that my master is stuck in a barrel like a sardine? I need those twenty five florins. But where can I get them?  
*[Corbolo thinking]* Maybe I can try fooling Ilaria once more? Who knows if she will believe me now after what I did to her. What shall I do? I will...  
*[looking as if he found a solution]* do what [solution has vanished from his face]? I will say...  
*[solution back again]* Yes! I wonder if she’ll believe me. She will. Stupid woman! Here comes Pacifico.  
*[Pacifico appears at the door of his house. He opens his front door and looks out]*

PACIFICO  
Where are the clothes?

CORBOLO  
What clothes? What am I, a tailor?  
*[Pauses...then resumes talking]* Tell me, do you happen to have a weapon of any kind in your house?

PACIFICO  
*[Pacifico is perplexed as he cannot understand why Corbolo needs a weapon]* I have an old and rusty spear.

CORBOLO

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[Very happy then curious] Rusty? Then why do you keep it in your house? You ass! Alright, that’ll have to do. Show it to me.

[Exit Corbolo and Pacifico who both go into Pacifico’s house, to see the old rusty spear]

ACT FIVE

SCENE ONE
Corbolo, Pacifico, Due staffieri.
[The front door of Pacifico’s house opens and Corbolo comes out, trying to persuade Pacifico to follow him. Pacifico is armed with a spear and looks very frightened]

CORBOLO
Come out, move forward, forward. Come closer, come on? Who are you afraid of?

PACIFICO
[Petrified] The chief of police who can arrest me if he sees me walking around like this.

CORBOLO
[Reassuring Pacifico] Don’t worry. He won’t catch you. I will tell him that you are a guard, he’ll believe me. Come on. Raise your head. You look like you are about to cry. Stand up straight and confident. Try to look tough and behave like a bravo!

PACIFICO
And how does a bravo behave?

CORBOLO
Hold your spear like this, raise it towards the sky. Swing round like this. Stay here. Look grim and threatening. I can see someone arriving... [The two bailiffs/servants are approaching. Enter two servants] the two bailiffs.

[To the servants]
Good day, brothers.

BAILIFFS
Oh Corbolo, good day. Will you offer us something to drink?
CORBOLO
I was thinking of doing that [he rolls his eyes]. But before I’d like to offer you something better.

BAILIFFS
[Curious and interested in Corbolo’s proposal] What?

CORBOLO
[In a very convincing manner] Stay with me here for half an hour. I want to put you onto some stolen stuff. There’s a lot you can gain from this!

BAILIFFS
[The servants seem to be quite interested in Corbolo’s proposal] We’re listening.

CORBOLO
Yesterday, some moneylenders at Riva, bought a huge amount of cheese and they loaded it onto two carts and covered it with hay. And having paid no customs and no tax, they will soon be coming down this street. I have asked help from my neighbour [points to Pacifico, who’s flailing his spear like a mad man, trying to look tough] whom you can see over there. [When the two servants see Pacifico with the spear they are about to burst laughing] When they arrive, he can search them and find the contraband. Good idea, right? [The two servants are seen nodding in approval yet trying not to laugh at Pacifico]. Now, if you want to be part of this plan...you are more than welcome.

BAILIFFS
[Excited] The pleasure is ours.

CORBOLO
[Enthusiastic] Great. Stay here [Corbolo trying to place the two servants in the best position possible]. You, stand here [to the first servant] and be on the look out for if they see you, they will try to run away immediately. And you [to the second servant] shall stay here and guard this side. [Aside] Here’s Ilaria who’s going out. Victory is mine. [Excited more than ever] [Ilaria comes out of her house angry. Corbolo hides so Ilaria doesn’t see him. He watches from the dirt road]

SCENE TWO

Ilaria alone.

ILARIA
Oh! I have let Corbolo fool me, that trickster. [Referring to Corbolo the trickster]. If I had believed Corbolo’s words, I would have lost a lot more money. [Corbolo who comes forward. Ilaria catches sight of him]

SCENE THREE

Ilaria, Corbolo.

ILARIA
How dare you come to me? [Ilaria notices Corbolo crying] Oh, are you crying...again?

CORBOLLO
Oh sure, judge me, judge me while your son...is in danger [changes to ominous tone]!

ILARIA
[Worried and concerned for the safety of her son] In danger?

CORBOLLO
Yes, of dying, if we don’t help him immediately.

ILARIA
[Very agitated] What? Tell me, where is he?

CORBOLLO
Pacifico caught him in bed with his wife. Look at him ready to kill Flavio with that spear. [Corbolo points towards Pacifico, who is ‘busy’ holding the rusty spear in his hand while the two servants are near him, talking to him as if they are interrogating him] He called his relatives to help him. [Referring to the two servants/bailiffs waiting for the wagon full of cheese to arrive, but who are now part of Corbolo’s secret plan]

ILARIA
[Interested in knowing more. Worried] But now where is he?

CORBOLLO
[For a moment it seems like Corbolo forgot that he was referring to Flavio] Who? Flavio? There, inside Fazio’s house. These rascals [with a vague wave of the hand, pointing to the two servants] have circled him.

ILARIA
[Confused] And Fazio is also there?

CORBOLLO
No, but there is a young woman: his daughter Licinia.

ILARIA
But if Pacifico caught Flavio with his wife [pointing to Pacifico’s house], how can it be that Flavio is in Fazio’s house? [pointing to Fazio’s house] I don’t understand..... [Ilaria scratching her head as she seems to be confused]

CORBOLO
[Reassuring her] Alright. I will explain everything from the beginning....so....[interrupted by Ilaria]

ILARIA
[Eager and impatient to hear what Corbolo has to say] Come on, explain yourself.

CORBOLO
[Corbolo takes his time to explain things from the very beginning]
So....[pauses and then resumes. He just wants to make Ilaria wait for more]. Today, Flavio, thinking that Pacifico wasn’t in his house, went to Lena’s house and while they were together [winks at Ilaria who is now ashamed to hear specific information related to Flavio’s and Lena’s secret encounter] Pacifico, who was hiding God knows where, jumped on him, to kill him with the spear.

ILARIA
[Visibly shocked] Oh dear, my heart...

CORBOLO
[He is enjoying the narration of this made up story] Flavio, who was praying and begging to spare him, promised him to give him the money.

ILARIA
[Relieved] I see....but...if with money we can settle things.

CORBOLO
[Annoyed] I still haven’t finished. Let me finish.

ILARIA
[Impatient] What else is there? Continue.

CORBOLO
Flavio promised to give Pacifico the twenty five florins and he accepted. Since he needed the money, Flavio sent me to Giuliana with his clothes to get a loan. While I was going to Giuliana’s place, Flavio had to remain where he was. But now we have to help Flavio; we’re running out of time.

ILARIA
[Panicking] Why? Who will hurt him?
CORBOLO
Ah, yes! But there’s more. At a certain point, Pacifico insisted on making Flavio pay for what he did. It got so heated that I thought Pacifico was going to kill him.

ILARIA
[Very worried once again]
In the end, what happened?

CORBOLO
I don’t know. Pacifico didn’t kill him.
From what I can recall, your son managed to defend himself with a chair and he ran towards the door to escape from Pacifico’s house. I’m telling you, he managed to escape death!

ILARIA
So he’s alive?

CORBOLO
I’m not sure. But Flavio ran to Fazio’s house [Corbolo points to Fazio’s house] and I think he’s still in trouble. Pacifico is trying to find other men willing to help him. It would be wiser spending twenty five florins and end it without causing further trouble.

ILARIA
[Still not convinced of Corbolo’s story. Ilaria just remembered that Corbolo had already tried to trick her before] It’s better if I go to speak to Pacifico.

CORBOLO
No! Don’t go. Let me go. Maybe I can make him change his mind.

ILARIA
Okay, you go.

CORBOLO
Wait for me here.
[Corbolo who takes his time to go where Pacifico is standing with his spear]

SCENE FOUR

Ilaria alone.

ILARIA
I don’t think that I would cause any harm if, before talking to Pacifico, I go to Fazio. I want to find out why my son is so sought after. [Referring to the servants and Pacifico with his spear]
[Exit Ilaria who leaves from the dirt road as Fazio is at the local tavern. Now that Ilaria has left, Corbolo runs quickly towards Pacifico and calls the servants]

SCENE FIVE
Corbolo, Bailiffs, Pacifico.

CORBOLO
[To servants] My friends, you can leave. Don’t waste your time. My master, from whom those two bought the cheese, told me that they changed their minds and that they had paid all the necessary tax for purchasing the cheeses.

BAILIFFS
[Agreeing] That’s too bad, but okay. Good bye, Corbolo.
[Exit servants. Pacifico comes over to Corbolo]

PACIFICO
[Curious]
How did things go with Ilaria?

CORBOLO
[Happy] Great. I will explain everything. Ilaria will give you the twenty five florins and you will accept them. But now, get rid of that spear. Don’t waste time, put it away. [Pacifico moves the spear on the other side, without getting rid of it completely]

PACIFICO
[Moves closer to Corbolo, to listen to what he has to say]
What do you want?

CORBOLO
[Annoyed] Since you now have no reason to worry about the money, see to it that your wife lets Flavio meet Licinia before Fazio heads home.

PACIFICO
Don’t worry about Fazio. He won’t be back until midnight.
[Corbolo, with an impatient gesture, leads Pacifico into Fazio’s house. Lena’s voice is heard raised angrily inside Fazio’s house a couple of times. Finally Lena and Pacifico come out into the street. Lena crosses right and goes over to her own house. Pacifico comes up to Corbolo for further instructions]

CORBOLO
Come on...[Corbolo is now ordering Pacifico to get rid of the spear once and for all]
Let go of the spear, let’s go. Ilaria is already counting the twenty five florins to give you.
[Exit Pacifico who goes into his house. Carbolo stays outside. During the first part of the following speech, Bartola, Pacifico’s creditor, enters from the dirt road and heads toward Fazio’s front door and sees the door slightly open. She enters]

SCENE SIX
Corbolo alone.
CORBOLO
Where is she heading to? [Corbolo has unexpectedly seen Bartola appear]
[Enter Pacifico who comes out of his house]

SCENE SEVEN

Pacifico, Corbolo.

PACIFICO
[Running towards Corbolo]
Here I am, here I am.

CORBOLO
Run, Pacifico. See to it that Bartola does not see Flavio.

PACIFICO
Bartola? Damn it!

CORBOLO
Bartola yes, Bartola! [Pacifico goes into Fazio’s house, very slowly] You foul creature! I am the stupid one as I have trusted this imbecile [referring to Pacifico] who is slower than a snail!

[Exit Corbolo who goes into Ilaria’s house]

SCENE EIGHT

Ilaria, Fazio.

ILARIA
[Enter Ilaria from the dirt road]
[Aside] I went to Fazio, thinking that I could straighten things out. But, not knowing that he is so in love with Lena, as soon as I told him that Pacifico caught Flavio with Lena, he got very angry.
[Enter Fazio from the dirt road who is trembling with fury so that he can barely walk]

FAZIO
[Very irritated and angry] After all that I have done for Lena! This is how she thanks me? By betraying me?

ILARIA
[Interrupting Fazio] I beg you, Fazio. Don’t let Pacifico and his men harm my son who is in your house. Fazio didn’t mean to displease you in any way.

FAZIO

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[Even more irritated. Still thinking about what Lena did to him. Answers back angrily]
Therefore, this is why, for the past fifteen days or so, Lena was so rude to me. [The front door of Fazio’s house opens and Bartola’s voice is heard inside]

SCENE NINE

Bartola, Ilaria, Pacifico, Fazio, Lena.
[Bartola, Pacifico and Lena stage Left, Ilaria and Fazio, stage Right.
Ilaria and Fazio see and overhear Bartola, Pacifico and Lena without their knowledge]

BARTOLA
[Bartola coming out of Fazio’s house yelling the truth in the street, for everyone to hear.
Bartola has seen Licia and Flavio kissing in the house. She is followed by Pacifico]
[Addressing Pacifico who is trying to keep up with her from behind]
I saw him. You don’t need to hide him anymore.

ILARIA
[To Fazio] Ah! We’re too late! There is a lot of commotion in your house. Fazio, help me.

BARTOLA
[To Pacifico] I’m going to look for Fazio and tell him everything.

PACIFICO
[Panicking] Bartola, listen to me.

FAZIO
[Fazio is still hiding with Ilaria] What’s going on?

BARTOLA
[To Pacifico] I will tell him everything!

FAZIO
[Whispering to Ilaria] Let’s watch this whole thing unfold here.

PACIFICO
[Agitated] Bartola, stop, listen to me.
[Enter Lena who comes out of her house]

BARTOLA
[Pacifico is grabbing Bartola’s dress to stop her from leaving and revealing everything to Fazio] Leave me alone, Pacifico. Don’t think that I will stand here saying nothing.
[Ilaria and Fazio begin to move towards Fazio’s house]

LENA
[Addressing Bartola] What the devil can you ever say? Who did you see, you ugly donkey!
BARTOLA
[Bartola ignoring Lena and addressing Pacifico] I saw Licinia and a young man, the son of Ilaria...

ILARIA
[To Fazio] Lena, and not Licinia.......you mean.

BARTOLA
…embracing each other!

LENA

BARTOLA
[Sees Fazio who was hiding] Ah, Fazio, come here. I have a few things to tell you. Your daughter...

FAZIO
[Enter Fazio and everyone else is looking at him wondering why he was hiding] I heard you. Don’t shout. What? Do you want to inform the whole neighbourhood about this? [Looks at Ilaria who is next to him, addressing her directly]. Ilaria, listen to me, your son’s actions have caused me a lot of trouble. Rest assured that I will get my revenge! What lies did you make me believe about Lena and Pacifico?

ILARIA
[Not knowing what to say] I have told you whatever Corbolo told me. [Ilaria tries to see where Corbolo is. He is hiding in Ilaria’s house]

FAZIO
Ah Corbolo! [Corbolo heard everything. He quickly leaves Ilaria’s house and runs away from the dirt road] [Addressing Ilaria] This thing going on between Flavio and Licinia will not go unpunished!

ILARIA
[Desperate] I beg you. Spare Flavio, if you care at all about our friendship!

FAZIO
[Stops to think, walking around before he comes up with a viable solution] There’s only one way to resolve this. When your son marries Licinia, the dishonour that you have caused me, will be forgiven and we’ll be friends again. Otherwise... [Signalling a threat; showing her his fists. Ilaria moves away, scared] Come on, let’s go into the house. [Fazio, Ilaria and Bartola go into Fazio’s house to reach an agreement and settle the ‘business’]
SCENE TEN

Pacifico, Lena.
[Still on the street, outside the houses. Meanwhile Fazio, Ilaria and Barola leave Fazio’s house and leave from the dirt road talking; all happy]

PACIFICO
[Approaching Lena]
See Lena, your [whistling] has caused us a lot of trouble.

LENA
And who made me what I am?

PACIFICO
You.

LENA
[She can’t believe what Pacifico has just told her] Actually it’s your greed that brought us to the depths of poverty. If it weren’t for me, you would have starved! And you have the nerve to blame me?

PACIFICO
[Angry] I blame you, yes! Because certain things should be done discreetly.

LENA
[Amazed] Ha! Are you pretending to be classy or ethical?

PACIFICO
[Calmer] But how can I accept this behaviour? Selling a girl from a decent family? And then you know that we are obliged to Fazio.

LENA
[Insisting on telling the truth to Pacifico] You pretend that you didn’t already know about everything!

PACIFICO
[Moving closer to Lena. He seems to care more about Lena now than he did at the beginning of the play] Lena, but is this how you go about it? Do you think that Fazio deserves that from you?

LENA
[Shooing Pacifico who had placed his hand on her shoulder] And what the devil did I do to him?
PACIFICO
Nothing!

LENA
Nothing actually.

PACIFICO
In this way, he has benefited from all this because now Licinia will marry Flavio and Fazio loves this idea.

LENA
[Interested] Will he let her marry him?

PACIFICO
Yes! He’s already given his blessing!

LENA
[Lena is having mixed feelings about this. She is happy for Licinia, yet she feels guilty for having involved Licinia in her deceiving tricks. She answers in a cracked voice. Licinia has, after all, benifited from all of this while Lena is still back to who she was before]
I guess I’m really happy for Licinia.

PACIFICO
[Caressing her, in a gentle voice]
Listen, Ilaria told me that when Fazio found out that Pacifico saw you with Flavio, he was going to die. But when he realized it wasn’t true, he seemed very relieved. Fazio cares for you and I think that he also cares about me since I am your husband........[Pacifico pauses. He cannot really understand why Fazio needs to be so happy. Pacifico is Lena’s husband after all, so he needs to be jealous. Yes Pacifico is such a simpleton that he cannot put two and two together that easily]

LENA
[Reassured. At least she knows that she will still be loved and taken care of by Fazio. She smiles] Let him do what he wants.

PACIFICO
And I also want to add that Fazio wants to invite us for the wedding taking place between Flavio and Licina.

LENA
I will do whatever he wants. [Addressing the audience]
Now, spectators, let’s hear what you thought of our story - were you bored, or did you enjoy yourselves, eh?

THE END