

**SCENE 3**

**A Hall In The Palace**

**Smeraldina, Brighella, Truffaldino**

SMERALDINA

And what's this one?

BRIGHELLA

That's the King's private chamber.

SMERALDINA

Ah! So this is it.

BRIGHELLA

Yeah, this is it. But keep it down. We're not supposed to be loitering.

SMERALDINA

Oh Brighella, I'm getting hot flashes over here.

BRIGHELLA

Sister, this is not the time or place for you to be getting hot flashes over there. This is very serious business for the both of us.

SMERALDINA

Duh. You think this is real gold?

BRIGHELLA

Smeraldina, I'm warning you. We have to get you ready to appear before the king. Come here. Cripes! What a fright you look.

SMERALDINA

Ah stuff it. You may be a cook here at court, but I know how to prepare myself. When the King sees me, he's gonna pop.

BRIGHELLA

That's what I'm afraid of. I can see myself in the kitchen for the rest of my born days. Now hear this- I know the King's taste and, believe you me, he prefers a less gaudy dish.

SMERALDINA

Gaudy?

BRIGHELLA

Yeah. He's one for style and class, not all this festoonery and embellishingation.

SMERALDINA

What a philistine you are, my dear. Keep to your kitchen matters. I'm dressed the way they like it, Mr. Briggs. I'm hot enough to fry a pound of sausages, let alone one skinny king.

BRIGHELLA

Sausages! What a vulgarian! Listen Smelly, your job is to appeal to his majesty's fancy. Look at it my way. You become queen, and I go from pots and pans to the Duke of Earl.

SMERALDINA

Don't you worry about a thing. Just leave it to me. I've been studying all the great love scenes.

BRIGHELLA

Yeah?

SMERALDINA

Yeah. "Oh Deramio, Deramio, therefore art wow Deramio". "This is certainly the driest martini a king has ever stirred for me, and speaking of dry, I'm reminded of my trip to the Sahara in '34." "Is that a scepter in your pocket, or are you just happy to see me?"

BRIGHELLA

Sure, sure that's great. But what's the use of all that if you don't know how to conduct yourself in society. Look sis, I gotta show you at least how to appear before the King. First impressions are very important.

SMERALDINA

I know how to make an impression.

BRIGHELLA

Lesson one: how to walk into a room.

SMERALDINA

I know how to walk into a room.

BRIGHELLA

I'll be the King. You be you. Now get out. Get out. Next!

SMERALDINA

Next? What is this, Horatio's butcher shop? King's always say "enter".

BRIGHELLA

They do not.

Do to. SMERALDINA

Do not. BRIGHELLA

Do to. SMERALDINA

Do not. BRIGHELLA

Do to. SMERALDINA

BRIGHELLA  
They do not! Now get out, get out, get out! Come in!

SMERALDINA  
Get out or come in? Which is it?

BRIGHELLA  
Get out and then come in. Enter! (*She jumps into his arms*) Wrong! Now get out and do it again. And remember feminine- but like a lady. Arms draped loosely at your sides. Head back. Eyes to the floor. And don't look up until he addresses you.

SMERALDINA  
Until he undresses me?

BRIGHELLA  
A-a-a-addresses you. Enter!

(*Truffaldino enters and jumps into Brighella's arms*)

SMERALDINA  
Have you gone batty, birdcatcher?

TRUFFALDINO  
Me? Ha! May one acquire as to why you're dressed like that. Is it the Peacock convention already?

SMERALDINA  
For your information, we are going to the King's private chamber for the audition....

TRUFFALDINO  
To become Queen?

SMERALDINA  
Yes, oddfellow, to become Queen.

TRUFFALDINO  
You're not serious?

SMERALDINA  
Oh we're serious. Tell him, Brighella.

BRIGHELLA  
Serious.

TRUFFALDINO  
Serious?

BRIGHELLA  
As plague.

SMERALDINA  
As a cat in heat.

TRUFFALDINO  
But, what about your engagement to me?

*(Brighella and Smeraldina both laugh and point at Truffaldino as they exit)*

**SCENE 4**  
**A Hall In The Palace**  
**Pantalone, Angela, Leander**

*(Pantalone speaks to Angela as Leander tries to get her attention)*

PANTALONE  
No one knows my dear Angela. No one knows. It is, as you know, the King's private chamber, and since private means, in all cases, well, private, it must follow that anything that goes on inside the private chamber must remain private. It would be an utter about-face in ideology to imagine that we could publicly know what is innately private. *(Seeing Leander)* Yes, my son, what can I do for you?

LEANDER  
Father, may I speak to my sister? In private.

PANTALONE

What? Oh, yes, I suppose so, but be brief my boy; I have many things to say to her myself.

LEANDER

Thank you, father.

*(Angela and Leander step to the side)*

LEANDER

Angela, I have just seen my beloved Clarissa being threatened and tormented by her father who is in a blinding rage. What can this mean?

ANGELA

Ah, Leander, everyone is tormented today. Clarissa has been selected to appear first before the King this morning in the competition for the choice of a Queen.

LEANDER

Clarissa? To take part in that competition! Oh, my heart is breaking. To have loved and lost while still so young!

ANGELA

Cheer up, my dear brother. You won't lose your Clarissa. I fear the King won't choose anyone to be his bride. And, Clarissa will remain yours.

LEANDER

Oh Angela, I live with little hope.

*(Leander Exits)*

ANGELA

Father, is there no one who knows what the King is looking for?

PANTALONE

Dear girl, 2,748 princesses and noble ladies have similarly wondered along those lines. The King received them in that chamber, asked them a few questions and sent them home again. In all my years of service, I have always found him extraordinarily wise for his age. But, in this case, I feel something is just not natural.

ANGELA

Oh father, how can I face such humiliation!

PANTALONE

Child, I went down on my knees to him, I importuned him to excuse you, I indulged in supplications, but, he wouldn't budge. You must participate in this audition, Angela, though it will only bring us shame when you are rejected.

ANGELA

I know I don't deserve a place near him,  
And simple girls should not dare aim so high.  
But, if by questioning, he looks for truth,  
Sincerity, if he looks for love...

PANTALONE

How's that? My little girl, are you in love?

ANGELA

Father, yes! I confess! I have been so brazen as to fall in love with my King. He will reject me and I will die! Not because I have been spurned by my sovereign, but because I have been turned down by the man who is my very life.

PANTALONE

Oh, my poor dear girl.

ANGELA

And, on top of all that, I'm afraid of Tartaglia. He has ambitions to make Clarissa Queen, but, worse, he has ambitions to make me his wife.

PANTALONE

What? Him? You? Tartaglia? Well that's too much. To have his eye on my daughter! That arrogant, no good...jingo!

ANGELA

Father!

PANTALONE

I'm sorry, my dear. I lost my head there for a moment. (*Aloud, to the world*) Tartaglia is very good at BINGO! We'll need to be very careful. He can be quite dangerous. But, we must prepare for your interview with the King. You're third, you know. (*He exits*)

ANGELA

Oh Cupid, you have many cares today,  
But save an arrow for a shot my way!

#### SCENE 4A

#### A Public Place

#### Cigolotti

CIGIOTTI

Isn't Angela the loveliest girl you ever laid eyes on? Come take a bow, Angela. (*Calling after her, she returns for a curtsie.*) What are you doing after the show tonight? I'm gonna be up 20 gold pieces! I guess she's busy.

Let's see if Clarissa's having any luck with her ogre, uh, I mean father.

**SCENE 5**

**Tartaglia's Chambers**

**Tartaglia & Clarissa**

TARTAGLIA

Clarissa! Come child, it is nearly the hour for your interview.

CLARISSA

Father dear, I love you, and I would like to please you, but I cannot appear before the King.

TARTAGLIA

Oh no? You will and first!

CLARISSA

Father, no!

TARTAGLIA

You will do as I say or I'll-

CLARISSA

Stop! All right, since you force me to it, I must confess. My heart is not mine to give.

TARTAGLIA

What?

CLARISSA

I am in love. My heart belongs to Leander. And it would be impossible to hide this passion from the King.

TARTAGLIA

What? Him? You? Leander? The son of Pantalone? An inferior minister? Why, that's a step down. That's a leap off a mountain down. Now you listen and listen well, you little succubus, there will be no more talk of this ridiculous love for Leander. You will obey! You will approach the King and tell him you love him and only him or you will know my wrath!

CLARISSA

But father, there is another reason. How can I compete with Angela, my dearest friend, when I know how deeply she loves the King?

TARTAGLIA

Angela? In love? With the King? *(Aside)* Oh, my poor heart. Angela, that pure angel whom I had intended to make love me by any means necessary- in love with Deramo? This cannot be. This will not be. *(Aloud)* Listen and shudder! If you do not immediately appear before the King, if you do not please him, if you mention anything about this love for Leander, and if you repeat one word of this conversation, poison is ready! Become the Queen or die!

## SCENE 6

### Outside The Palace

### Truffaldino, Smeraldina, Brighella

TRUFFALDINO

Smeraldina! Smeraldina!

SMERALDINA

Listen, one does not dally with a whistle-blowing birdcatcher when the King is waiting to marry one.

TRUFFALDINO

Now you hang on a minute, my little red breast. You said you'd marry me.

SMERALDINA

A royal command overrules all promises made in desperation.

TRUFFALDINO

But His Majesty wouldn't do that to me. He'll change his mind when I talk to him. He'd never be so unfair.

BRIGHELLA

Hey, Snuffledino, fly away home and blow your beak. You are distracting your future Queen.

TRUFFALDINO

Keep your greasy fingers out of this pie, Cookie. She's mine.

*(They struggle over her)*

SMERALDINA

Gently, gently, gentlemen. You're pulling my arms out of my sockets over here. *(To Brighella)* Give me a minute with the dumb sap. He's obviously crushed. *(To Truffaldino)* Truffaldino, we do not uncomprehend the depths of your sorrow and we will look upon you not unfavorably when we are Queen.

BRIGHELLA

I'm getting grey hairs here.



SMERALDINA

You may continue to adore us.

**SCENE 7**

**Outside The Palace**

**Truffaldino & Leander**

TRUFFALDINO

*(Singing)*

My heart is breaking.

LEANDER

*(Singing)*

I am the most unhappy man under the sun.

TRUFFALDINO

How can she do this to me?

LEANDER

How can she do this to me?

TRUFFALDINO

My heart is breaking.

LEANDER

The selfish King is taking my true love away.

TRUFFALDINO

How can I make her stay? She's always been the only one for me

LEANDER

The most unhappy man under the sun....

TRUFFALDINO

...is me

LEANDER

...is me. *(Seeing Truffaldino)* Truffaldino, what are you doing here in the middle of my song?

TRUFFALDINO

I'm drowning in self pity. What are you doing?

LEANDER

I am eloquently bemoaning the loss of my cherished Clarissa who will no doubt win the competition to become Queen causing me in return to put an end to this tragic existence of mine.

TRUFFALDINO

Oh, no need to worry, friend, Clarissa doesn't stand a chance. My sweet Smeraldina will win the competition and my heart will be torn to shreds.

LEANDER

Thank you Truffaldino, but your silly jokes won't cheer me on this dark day.

TRUFFALDINO

I'm not joking. Smeraldina just told me she's going to become Queen, and what Smeraldina wants, Smeraldina gets.

LEANDER

But how can the King choose Smeraldina over Clarissa? No, you insult me, friend.

TRUFFALDINO

Well, the truth is Clarissa can't hold a candle to Smeraldina. If your eyes weren't so full of tears, you'd see things the way they are.

LEANDER

Well, I think the King would have to be as desperate as you to choose a skunk like Smeraldina over Clarissa.

TRUFFALDINO

You mean to say that the King would have to be as sappy as you to pick a dunce like Clarissa.

LEANDER

The King marry Smeraldina? The people would revolt against such a revolting Queen.

TRUFFALDINO

The only way the King would choose Clarissa is if he needed a cure for insomnia.

LEANDER

Listen, pest, I'll really let you have it if you say one more word against Clarissa.

TRUFFALDINO

One more word against Clarissa!

LEANDER

That does it.

*(They fight)*

TRUFFALDINO

All right, all right! I can't fight anymore. You're right. The King will probably choose Clarissa. (*Aside*) And then Leander can live in misery for the rest of his life, the dullard.

LEANDER

No, no. You're right Truffaldino. The King will most likely choose Smeraldina. (*Aside*) Then Truffaldino can shrivel up from heartache, the blockhead.

TRUFFALDINO

Have no fear, the King will choose the right woman.

LEANDER

You can be certain of that, the right woman.

### SCENE 8

**The King's Private Chamber. In it is a Statue.  
Deramo & Statue (Cigolotti & Durandarte as Parrot)**

CIGOLOTTI

That's the King.

He's much better looking on the money.

The face on that statue looks familiar though. Don't you think, Durandarte?

DERAMO

Today shall be the day I choose my Queen.  
Tonight a wife shall rest her head near mine,  
Together we shall supply my throne an heir.  
And restore hope and calm throughout my realm.  
I keep convincing myself I'm doing  
The right thing by listening to my  
Most wise and faithful minister Tartag-  
Lia and once again subjecting girls  
To these accursed questions about love.  
Five years ago my heart was broken by  
The hidden lies of those princesses  
And ladies who had sworn complete and pure  
Devotion to their King. Each one a fake.

2,748. (*To the Statue*)

If not for you, my friend, who knows  
What state my Kingdom would be in right now,  
Or what despair my heart would hold upon my soul.  
You, who sees what human eyes cannot see.  
You, who I both adore and hate for truths  
You've shown to me. You, who can find a way

To laugh at all my pain and misery.  
One simple smile from you exposes those  
Who'd lie; who would deceive their King for greed.  
Oh, precious gift of the great and generous  
Magician Durandarte, once again  
Reveal deceit and false pledges to me.  
And I will pray, I'll pray with all my heart  
That one may tell the truth when swearing love  
Today, that one possess a heart that's pure,  
A gentleness of mind that could inspire  
New faith in human nature and new trust,  
So I'd not need the counsel of this bust.

Let's get to work. Tartaglia's daughter  
Is to be first. I hope she's as honest  
In love in here as he has been in Court.

#### **SCENE 8A**

#### **The King's Private Chamber.**

**Deramo, Clarissa, Statue, Guards**

DERAMO

Come in, Clarissa, and be seated.

CLARISSA

My King!

DERAMO

There's no need to feel intimidated here. Your father's great services in war and peace are well known, and his daughter should be able to speak freely and be at ease in my presence.

CLARISSA

Your Majesty, you are kind and generous, and it is out of the deepest respect for your command that I sit before you.

DERAMO

Clarissa, I have to choose a wife. Tartaglia is my most trusted Minister. It follows that you should be a fitting spouse. But first, I would like to hear that such a marriage would please you.

CLARISSA

Can there be a single girl in the world who would not welcome marrying such a glorious and virtuous King?

DERAMO

That is very nice of you to say, Clarissa. It may well be that a great number of women would welcome such a match, but are you of that number?

CLARISSA

That's a very good question, Your Majesty. But how can you think that I should be the only one out of that number to be foolish enough to not seize an opportunity like this?

DERAMO

Clarissa, you're being a bit ambiguous. Right now, I am only interested in what you think. Would you be happy if you married me?

CLARISSA

*(Aside)* Oh, I shall die of love! *(Aloud)* Truly, I would be happy, my King.

*(The Statue smiles.)*

DERAMO

You seem distressed. Perhaps you don't want to speak your mind for fear of offending me. But could it not be that your heart already belongs to another?

CLARISSA

No! No, my King. I love no one but you. *(The Statue smiles)* And I have never ever been in love before. *(The Statue smiles)*

DERAMO

Well, Clarissa, that is all I need to know. I don't want to keep you in suspense, but I must see the others before I make my decision known.

CLARISSA

*(Aside)* Oh heavens let me lose so I can remain true to my Leander!

## SCENE 8B

**The King's Private Chamber.**

**Deramo, Smeraldina, Statue, Guards**

DERAMO

*(To Statue)*

I thought perhaps you'd lost your powers, friend.  
But no, you always catch them in the end.  
You see how all these ladies make me vexed,  
And yet, I must persist with courage. Next!

SMERALDINA

Next????

DERAMO

Ah, who's this? Oh yes, Smeraldina, aren't you the sister of one of my cooks? From the country?

SMERALDINA

As you say, your majesty, as you say. I am the sister of Brighella. The younger sister. *(The statue smiles)*. We come from very distinguished line of nobles. *(The statue smiles)*. But through various misfortunes, bad investments...our circumstances got downsized a little. *(The statue smiles)* Shit happens.

DERAMO

I see, but tell me, could a noble lady such as yourself find a way to love a King like me?

SMERALDINA

Oh, cruelty, thy name is the King. No more! You torment me! I think I could your Majesty. Of course, it would take some getting used to. *(The statue smiles)*

DERAMO

Well, let's hear more. If I should choose you to be my wife, and, for example, I was killed, leaving you a widow, would that make you...upset?

SMERALDINA

Oh! Oh! Oh! The very thought of it makes me feel faint. I think I'm gonna *(Smeraldina faints- the Statue smiles)*

DERAMO

*(Going to Smeraldina)* Miss? Smeraldina?

*(Smeraldina grabs Deramo and pulls him on top of her)*

Guards!

SMERALDINA

No. I'm OK now. I think I feel better. Mmmm, much better.

DERAMO

Madam, your love may prove too much for me. Oh, one more question. Are you a maid?

SMERALDINA

Yeah! I cook. I clean. But aren't we gonna have people for that?

DERAMO

No, I mean have you ever been married?

SMERALDINA

Your Majesty! If I was damaged goods, do you think I'd have the balls to present myself as a bride to such a handsome young thing, uh, I mean King? Rest assured that, for you, I have preserved my maidenly modesty. *(The Statue laughs loudly)*

DERAMO

Thank you, Smeraldina. I can assure you that none of the women I have seen so far has provided me with so much pleasure. I shall shortly make my decision....You may go now.

SMERALDINA

But, but, my Lord. I haven't shown you everything. I got affection. I got surging. I got swelling. I got...Oh, I get it. You want to wait for the wedding night when I slip out of my wedding gown and into my birthday suit and take you on a trip to *(singing)* Heaven, I'm in Heaven...Farewell my sweet sovereign. Until the marriage bed. *(Aside)* Put a fork in him. He's done! I'm queen!

*(Smeraldina exits)*

## SCENE 8C

**The King's Private Chamber.**

**Deramo, Angela, Statue, Guards**

DERAMO

Oh, sweet companion, thanks for brightening up  
So dark a day. But how can I believe  
In women's words again. What hope have I?  
And, still, I hope. The third is Angela.  
Despite my reason and experience  
I hope.

*(Angela Enters)*

Guards! Send in -

ANGELA

I came, Your Highness,  
In full obedience to your decree,  
But whether it is just I cannot say.

DERAMO

Be seated, Angela.

ANGELA

No thank you, sir.

DERAMO

I am never unjust.

ANGELA

You are the King.

No one would be so bold to criticize  
Your bidding.

DERAMO

No one? You do not appear  
To lack that courage. But in case you have  
Some doubt. I grant complete freedom of speech  
To you. Be frank, I shall not take offense.

ANGELA

Then, let me ask you, sir: Is it justice  
To coerce poor young girls to stand before  
You in this private room? Girls who present  
Their hearts to you, and see their hearts refused;  
Girls whose humility and simple state  
Make them hope for impossible fortune,  
And then are turned away because they've failed  
To please your fickle taste. What cruel delight  
Can you receive from innocent girls' tears?  
I am not speaking for myself, but for  
The girls who've come before, and those to come.  
Heaven will avenge all the defenseless,  
Deramo, put an end to all of this.

DERAMO

*(Aside)* What art is this that makes me so enchanted?  
And look! The statue's not affected!  
Might it be true her heart's sincere? Oh heaven  
Let it be so and let her speak again!

ANGELA

Forgive me, sir. You gave me liberty  
To speak. I hope I've not abused that gift.  
If that is all, I'll take my leave of you.

DERAMO

No, Angela, stay here and say some more.  
You can't imagine how I value your  
Sincerity. But, if you knew the truth,  
You'd understand my reasons for all this.



I simply seek someone who'd love me truly.

ANGELA

And how can you be sure that, out of all  
Who've entered here, not one is capable  
Of that?

DERAMO

Believe me, I am sure. Can you?

ANGELA

Can I what?

DERAMO

Truly love me?

ANGELA

I wish I  
Could find a way to not love you, so then  
Your inevitable disdain would not  
Kill me!

DERAMO

*(Aside)* The statue is still still! But how can this  
Be possible? *(Aloud)* Is this true Angela  
And could you love me till the day I die?

ANGELA

I'd love you for eternity. Oh, stop  
Encouraging me with these questions that  
Will only make my heartbreak more impos-  
sible to bear.

DERAMO

Oh, Angela, if you  
Don't love me. If you're hiding anything  
From me, I beg you tell me now. I'm so  
In love with you that if you're lying I  
Won't want to live!

ANGELA

Please stop this torture, I  
Can stand no more! Reject me now, and end  
This trial. I can stand no more, Dera-  
mo, let me go! In pity, let me go!

*(He stops her hand)*

DERAMO

My search is ended, Angela. I've found  
The rare and noble soul I'd thought I'd not  
In this life ever find. Guards! Send for all  
My ministers! Your King has found his Queen!

ANGELA

Deramo, I'm not worthy of a King.

DERAMO

You would be worthy of a greater man  
Than I. Come, dry your eyes, and take my hand,  
You've saved a King today, and saved his land.

## SCENE 9

### The King's Chamber

All

DERAMO

Come in, all of you come in. At last I have chosen a wife. Here is your Queen.

PANTALONE

My little girl, Queen?

DERAMO

Your daughter, my good Pantalone.

TARTAGLIA

Ah! I could burst with rage!

PANTALONE

Haven't you showered me with enough kindness without raising so poor a girl to such an exalted rank?

DERAMO

I am merely raising virtue to its rightful position. Angela alone was worthy of this honor.

TARTAGLIA

AaaaHurrah! Hurrah! Long may you both reign. Your Majesty could not have chosen better. Angela, may you be v-very happy. Pantalone, my heartfelt c-congratulations.

PANTALONE

Why thank you Tartaglia.

TARTAGLIA

*(Aside)* I'll give you something to thank me for you little frog.

PANTALONE

Dear girl, never forget your humble birth and don't give in to pride...But perhaps His Majesty will allow an overjoyed father a few hours with his daughter to pass on some advice and-

DERAMO

Perhaps later, Pantalone. Angela, *(kneeling)*  
Will you accept this hand and be my wife?

ANGELA

My king, my hand, my heart, my love, my life.

*(Deramo and Angela kiss)*

TARTAGLIA

*(Aside)* My curse upon you both. I hope your tongues make you choke. *(Aloud)* But, most beloved Monarch, er, could you not now d-divulge the reason why C-Cla-, er, the other 2,750 ladies did not p-p-please you.

DERAMO

Yes, I can now tell you. Five years ago, the great magician Durandarte made me a present of two wondrous secrets, one of which is this. *(He points to the statue)* The other...I'm not revealing. This simple plaster bust possesses the faculty of divining when someone lies, and showing it by a smile. Only one woman who appeared before me spoke honestly and I chose her: Angela.

PANTALONE

How about that! And now she's a famous lady.

TARTAGLIA

So the statue laughed at Clarissa. Then my daughter is a liar. With your permission, I'm going to cut her throat!

DERAMO

Tartaglia! Clarissa is in love with another. Her only fault was in fearing to disclose that fact to me. Angela, I am so convinced that I need never doubt your love that I'm going to prove you have all my trust. Let this infernal contraption be destroyed, and, with it, all suspicion and doubt. *(Deramo destroys the bust)* A public holiday shall be declared. We will celebrate with a grand hunt in the forest of Roncislapp! Tartaglia see to it. Come Angela, and I'll show you around.

ANGELA

I come, both overjoyed and overwhelmed.

*(All exit but Pantalone and Tartaglia)*

PANTALONE

My little girl Queen! Can you believe it?

TARTAGLIA

Hardly. *(Pantalone exits)* My daughter refused! My Angela...lost! Argh! This rage, this envy, this ambition, this jealousy, this pain! I can't suppress this turmoil inside me! Ahhh! I damn them all- my daughter, the King, Pantalone, and that statue from hell! I must be careful, very careful, and I'll find the right moment for the most terrible revenge that has ever been represented on a stage. Generations of Tartaglias to come, upon hearing about it, will fall in horror on their tight asses!