

# **Figaro's Follies or the Night of Misrule**

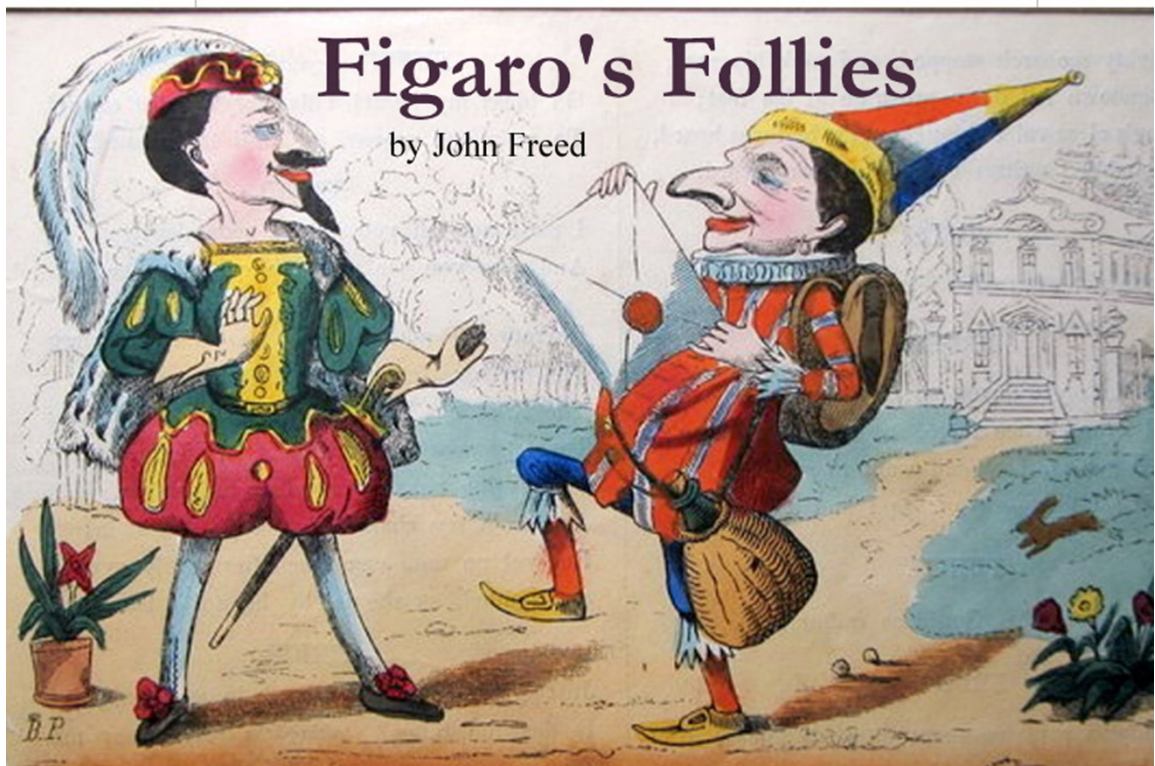
*Beaumarchais newly improved upon*

by

**John Freed (2014 - 2018)  
additional music by Jeff Dunn**

with a little help from

**Thomas Holcroft (1785)  
and Elizabeth Griffith (1776)**



**Playwright's website:**  
( <http://freed98.wix.com/johnfreedplaywright> )

**E-mail:** ([freed@brandman.edu](mailto:freed@brandman.edu))

**Mobile phone:** 503-915-4830

## **Synopsis**

### **the claim of civil liberties for all**

The audiences for "Figaro's Follies" who know Mozart's opera will find that they are in very familiar territory here and might well agree with Napoleon who said of Beaumarchais' original "Le Mariage de Figaro" – "It is the revolution already in action."

My primary goal in re-rendering this societal paradigm-shifting 1784 play is to preserve it by turning it into a much more watchable "well-made" one while retaining its main, late 18<sup>th</sup> century motifs, characters and very laughable, farcical plot elements in the David Ives' tradition.

My other goal in this translation/adaptation is to follow the advice transported across the galaxy by aliens and given to Woody Allen in *Stardust Memories* – "You want to make the world a better place? Tell funnier jokes."

**Lexi Diamond**, a Brown University / Trinity Repertory Company literary manager, commented: "On a personal note, I want to tell you how much I enjoyed reading FIGARO'S FOLLIES. I thought it was a fabulous adaptation, and that it both honored and enhanced its source material. Its cleverness and vitality made it a joy to read."

**J.E. Freed**

### **Cast of Characters:**

**Figaro, (FIGARO)** valet to the Count formerly barber to Doctor Bartolo

**Susanna, (SUSANNA)** , lady's maid to the Countess engaged to Figaro.

**Count Almaviva (COUNT)** Signore of the castle, young to middle-aged

**Countess Almaviva (COUNTESS)** lady of the house, newly married to the Count former ward of Dr. Bartolo, much younger than the Count , and possibly younger than all of the other women. Also referred to as Rosina.

**Marceline (MARCELINE)** Middle-aged housekeeper to Dr. Bartolo who lent money to Figaro on the bond of his marrying her if he defaulted, in love with Figaro. [NOTE: in panto tradition could be cast as a cross-dressing male.]

**Doctor Bartolo, (BARTOLO)** former protector of Rosina before she was the Countess seeking revenge on Figaro and the Count

**Cherubino (CHERUBINO)** post adolescent, distant nephew to the Count passionately in love with all of the women in the play, could be played either by a young man or woman as in Beaumarchais and Mozart.

**Fanchette, (FANCHETTE)** house servant, the gardener's daughter and six month's pregnant by the Count, in love with Cherubino

**Antonio (ANTONIO)** the elderly gardener father to Fanchette uncle to Susanna

**Don Guzman (GUZMAN)** [pronounced Gooseman] the malapropish magistrate also plays the priest

**Priest (PRIEST)** in a black cassock [See above]

**Act I**  
**Scene 1**

**SFX: Open with 18<sup>th</sup> Century “Le Menuet d’Espagne” which fades as the play begins --**

**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CADpGCssdJs>**

**SETTING**

*The wardrobe room of a late eighteenth century Spanish castle near Seville placed between the two bedrooms of the Count and Countess. The only furniture is a rather large chair with a sheet folded over one arm.*

*There is a side table with a brandy bottle and ornate goblets on it as well as a quill pen, ink and writing paper and a large scale deck of playing cards.*

*On pegs on one side of the room are the Countess’ mantillas and colorful parasols. On the other side are the Count's three identical cloaks fully decorated with awards and ribbons from the king.*

*Figaro enters in a harlequinesque modified livery costume carrying a yellowed hemp clothesline and his guitar. He begins singing from a score on the table.*

**FIGARO**

**SFX – DUNN guitar MUSIC #1**

Lover why art thou repining?  
Cast away thy sighs and whining

So far not so bad from a man about to disembowel his  
well preserved bachelor-hood on the altar of  
matrimony.

*(continues singing)*

Love and Laziness claim a Part,  
Both sharing my Heart.

Fie on it. That will never do. There must be a conflict  
between the two. *(thinking a bit then writing)*

Love and Laziness "**each**" claim a Part,  
Both "**contesting**" for my heart.

Much better. Now from the start. *(picking up his guitar  
and singing)*

Lover, why art thou repining?  
Cast away thy sighs and whining  
Love and Laziness "**each**" claim a Part,  
Both "**contesting**" for my heart.

I to each his Portion gave,  
No injustice can be seen,  
For though I've made one my Queen,  
To the other I am still a Slave.

Cast away thy sighs and whining,  
My dearer lover part,  
Happily embrace your loving.  
And for my laziness . . .

What should I do with the lazy part? No matter, I have more pressing business to attend to.

*He puts down the guitar,  
stretches the rope  
perpendicularly across the  
room and opens the brandy  
bottle. He takes a swig out  
of it then chooses one of the  
Countess' parasols. With the  
brandy bottle in one hand and  
the parasol in the other he  
begins a tightrope walk  
across the room carefully  
placing one foot in front of  
the other.*

**FIGARO**

. . . . Nine, ten, eleven . . .

*Susanna, enters from the door  
leading to the Countess'  
bedroom and picks out one of  
the Countess' largest  
mantillas to try on in front  
of a mirror.*

**SUSANNA**

The mirror just told me that this mantilla becomes me so. Doesn't it, Figaro?

**FIGARO**

Twenty two, twenty-three, twenty-four . . .

**SUSANNA**

Doesn't it, Figaro?

**FIGARO**

It certainly does. Thirty, thirty-one . . .

**SUSANNA**

Look at me. Admire it. It gives me such pleasure when you look at me.

**FIGARO**

The mantilla. . .?

**SUSANNA**

Good so far and what does the mantilla do?

**FIGARO**

It makes you look extraordinarily . . .

**SUSANNA**

It makes me what?

**FIGARO**

It makes you look extraordinarily . . . fat.

*Susanna takes down one of  
the parasols off the wall and  
starts poking Figaro with it.*

**FIGARO**

I meant to say extraordinarily fantastic. You better remove it before the Countess catches you.

**SUSANNA**

Not to worry. She said that I could pick one to wear at "my" wedding tomorrow. I "meant" to say "our" wedding but that doesn't seem so likely to me right now. (blows her cheeks out and waddles around) And I'm certainly not going to choose this one. The black ones are more slimming, don't you think? And maybe more appropriate to our nuptials. Have you ordered the marriage hearse yet?

*Figaro falls to his knees  
hugging her legs.*



**FIGARO**

Oh, Do not forsake me, when my heart is beating with such delight on the threshold of love's richly laden pantry.

**SUSANNA**

I'll forgive you just to stop you from poet-izing. What were you so busy about when I came in?

**FIGARO**

Measuring to see if the enormous bed down the hall, which our noble lord has so graciously promised to give us, will stand well here.

**SUSANNA**

In this chamber?

**FIGARO**

That's why I'm measuring "this" chamber.

**SUSANNA**

I won't lie in this chamber.

**FIGARO**

Why so?

**SUSANNA**

I tell you I won't lie in this chamber.

**FIGARO**

That's not a reason.

**SUSANNA**

What if I have no reason? What if I don't choose to give my reason?

**FIGARO**

So I should insult my master by refusing this honor because my wife-to-be chooses to give no reason. That is logic worthy of a wife.

**SUSANNA**

Are you or are you not my most obedient, most humble servant?

**FIGARO**

Your slave. But wherefore take exception to the most convenient room in the whole house becoming our bedroom?

**SUSANNA**

Yes, Yes it is the most "convenient."

**FIGARO**

Convenient is the word. If during the night my Lady should be taken ill, she rings, Ding Dong and crack! in three skips you are standing by her side. In the morning when my lord awakens, Ding Dong he calls, I start and pop three skips and I am there.

**SUSANNA**

Very true. And a little later that morning when my Lord has sent you on some fine errand of an hour's duration, he starts from his bed as soon as Mr. Figaro's back is turned, and Ding Dong Crack! in three convenient skips he . . .

**FIGARO**

He?

**SUSANNA**

Yes, he.

**FIGARO**

He?

**SUSANNA**

He! Do you not feel any thing?

**FIGARO**

Horns bursting through my forehead and buttons sprouting like mushrooms suddenly in my stomach. Yes, yes, it is a maddeningly convenient spot.

**SUSANNA**

Remember how liberal our Count appeared abolishing a certain ancient tradition of the manor to honor his new wife, the Countess?

**FIGARO**

Of sleeping the first night with every bride in his fiefdom to verify her virginity. I would not have married even my most desired Susanna in such a domain.

**SUSANNA**

But, Figaro, don't be fooled when the wolf puts on a sheep-skin coat.

**FIGARO**

What are you suggesting?

**SUSANNA**

Tired of stalking the wild beauties around the neighborhood, he has decided, like an invalid hunter, to shoot his penned-up game from the comfort of his porch. Thus has he returned to his castle.

**FIGARO**

And to "his" wife.

**SUSANNA**

And to "thy" wife.

*(snapping her fingers in Figaro's face)*

Let me be more direct. Our lord has secretly confided to me that renouncing his one night's "droit de seignior" was a ruse to throw you off any suspicions that he was interested in pursuing me. He even joked that when he's made ambassador you'll be elevated to "Royal Courier" and more importantly "Cuckold to the Count."

**FIGARO**

That bastard. That he would so carelessly destroy my peace of mind for a little sport.

**SUSANNA**

"A little sport?" That's not a very flattering comment about your future wife. Maybe he finds me irresistibly attractive. But did you really believe that the rich benefits he has suddenly showered down on us were your just rewards? What great fools you men of wit are. And a correction, bastards aren't allowed to become counts.

**FIGARO**

*(not listening)*

Your trick, my most noble Count, is common place. A thousand blundering boobies have art enough to filch a wife from the side of her sleeping, unsuspecting spouse. But to turn the tables on the poacher, make him pay dearly for a delicious morsel he shall never taste, infect him with the wasp stings of jealousy and fears for his own honor, to boot him about the stable  
. . . .

**SUSANNA**

Hah, now you are in your element – purses and plots.  
But let him that diggeth a pit beware lest he fall  
into it.

**SFX – the Countess' bell rings**

My Lady is awake. I must run for she has several times  
strictly charged me to be the first at her bedside.

**FIGARO**

Why the first?

**SUSANNA**

Old wives tell us that to first meet a young bride is  
lucky to a neglected wife. And I have another  
confided secret to arm you with. The Countess is  
still a virgin. She told me that the Count lost any  
passionate interest in her the instant that they were  
wed. She's about to burst like an over-ripe fruit.

**FIGARO**

Give me a kiss before you go. It will quicken my wits  
and infuse my imagination.

**SUSANNA**

But if I kiss my lover today what will my husband say  
tomorrow? There's all the kisses you shall get.

*She gives him air-kisses then  
exits into the Countess'  
room. Figaro alone walks up  
to the Count's bedroom door.*

**FIGARO**

I perceive your purposes, seigneur. So I am to become  
the ambassador's new courier, am I? But I am blind no  
longer. You will send me to London with dispatches and

Susanna's made the ambassadress of the back-stairs. I dashing hither and yon wearing myself to a skeleton for the good of my most gracious lord's family, and he laboring night and day for the increase of mine. It shall not be. Figaro, the illegitimate, defies you.

*Figaro pours the brandy into one of the crystal goblets, drinks it, then sets the glass carefully down. Slowly he nudges it off of the table to smash on the floor. He panics and quickly tries to pick up the pieces as Marceline enters trailed at a distance by Dr. Bartolo.*

**MARCELINE**

Good morrow, Mr. Bridegroom. Don't cut yourself on the glass. Here let me do it?

**FIGARO**

*(startled)*

Good morrow, Mistress Marceline. Leave it. I am surprised to see you.

**MARCELINE**

Not one of those good surprises, is it?

**FIGARO**

What! And have you also dragged the good doctor after you all the way from Seville? Is it really you my porcine friend?

**BARTOLO**

*(still out of breath)*

Yes, Knave's face.

**FIGARO**

As witty and no doubt as wise as ever. And have you come all this way to see me married?

**BARTOLO**

To see you hanged.

**FIGARO**

Most kind doctor. But who takes care of your mule? I know you have no more mercy on your beasts than you have for your patients.

*Figaro lightly tugs the hair  
over the doctor's ear.*

And who is your barber these days? You are long overdo.

**BARTOLO**

Do you hear the rogue?

**FIGARO**

Perhaps you have come to recover some stolen property – your young ward Rosina possibly. Oh, I forgot she's called Countess Almaviva here.

**BARTOLO**

How dare you.

**FIGARO**

Easily. And you gentle, Marceline, do you still wish to marry me? What, because I cannot fall in love with you would you drive me to hate you? I must attend my lord.

**SFX – the Count's bell rings**

*Figaro takes up the Count's  
clothes for the day and  
exits.*

**BARTOLO**

See how he tweaks me.

**MARCELINE**

*(taking the papers out of the case)*

Don't fret, we shall find a magistrate this very day  
and snare Senor Fox.

**ACT I**

**Scene 2**

*Susanna enters from the door  
to the Countess' room carrying  
a long blue ribbon.*

**SUSANNA**

I have forgotten what I have come in here for.

*Cherubino rushes in from the  
hallway door.*

**SUSANNA**

Youth, catch your breath. Why are you in such a hurry?

**CHERUBINO**

I have been watching in the hall these two hours to  
find you alone.

**SUSANNA**

Well, what have you to say, now that you have found  
me, alone?

**CHERUBINO**

*(amorously)*

How does my beauteous Lady Susanna?

**SUSANNA**

Very well.

**CHERUBINO**



Have you heard that the Count is going to send me home to my mamma and poppa?

**SUSANNA**

Poor Child!

**CHERUBINO**

Child, indeed. And if my godmother, your dear lady, cannot obtain my pardon, I shall soon be deprived of the pleasure of your company, my fair Susanna, and have to throw myself in the river.

**SUSANNA**

What for heaven's sake for? You are all the day toying with Fanchette, and moreover in love with my lady and then you come rushing in here with tears in your eyes and grieving for the loss of my company.

**CHERUBINO**

Fanchette is kind enough to listen to me. That is more than you do, Susanna, for all the love I bear you. And your lady is so worthy to be beloved and so beyond my station that I stammer like an ill trained parrot whenever we meet.

**SUSANNA**

Love that you bear "me"? Why you many-horned goat – you are in love with every woman you meet.

**CHERUBINO**

I am and I can't help myself. If nobody is by, I swear my love to the leaves on the trees . . . to the summer wind even. Just now I met this wonderful woman named Marceline in the hall, and I was instantly struck in the heart by the lightning in her eyes.

**SUSANNA**

*(laughing heartily)*

Marceline?

**CHERUBINO**

What's wrong with her? She is a woman.

**SUSANNA**

Figaro has told me that she is a witch. Beware she may have cast one of her love-spells on you. But tell me what did you do to infuriate the Count enough to banish you from the castle?

**CHERUBINO**

Last night he caught me in Fanchette's chamber. Be gone said he, you little . . .

**SUSANNA**

Little what?

**CHERUBINO**

He called me such a name, I cannot for shame repeat it before a lady such as yourself. He said that he would not tolerate such sinful scandal under the same roof as his most virtuous wife.

**SUSANNA**

What were you doing in Fanchette's chamber at such an hour?

**CHERUBINO**

Rehearsing her her part.

**SUSANNA**

What part?

**CHERUBINO**

Her part in the comedy that we are performing at your

wedding festivities tomorrow. She's going to play Venus, and I her lover Cupid beginning as a tableau from the Count's painting in his bedroom.

**SUSANNA**

Were you both naked then.

**CHERUBINO**

The painting required as much,

**SUSANNA**

What do you suppose brought the sanctimonious Count to Fanchette's door so late at night? And don't you dare open the Countess' private entrance.

**CHERUBINO**

This is the very doorway to the heavenly garden of earthly delights. I would gladly change my sex even to change places with you. To dress her every morning! Undress her every evening. Putting her to bed. Touching her bare shoulder to wake her! Looking at her. Speaking to her.

*Cherubino notices the ribbon in Susanna's hand and reaches for it which she pulls back but dangles in front of him.*

Is it hers?

**SUSANNA**

It is a most fortunate ribbon. It lives in the happy cap which at night enfolds the auburn ringlets of my young Countess.

**CHERUBINO**

Give it me. Nay give it me. I will have it.

**SUSANNA**

But I say that you shan't have it.

*Cherubino chases her and  
snatches the ribbon.*

**SUSANNA**

Give it back. Right now.

**CHERUBINO**

Be as angry as you want, but you shall never have it again. You should have one of my eyes rather.

**SUSANNA**

I'll call for the Count and see how long you will be holding his wife's ribbon.

**CHERUBINO**

If you do not hold your tongue, . . . I'll kiss your mouth shut.

**SUSANNA**

Kiss me? Do not come near me or you'll lose your ears along with an eye. Beg my Lady to plead for you, indeed. The Count is right to remove you from the castle before you infect every woman or girl within it.

**CHERUBINO**

Pity rather than censure me, Susanna. How can I help myself? I only ask one favor of you.

**SUSANNA**

Give me back the ribbon, and I will consider it.

**CHERUBINO**

Take this paper and show it to your Lady.

**SUSANNA**

What is it?

**CHERUBINO**

A song. I can sing what I cannot speak.

**SUSANNA**

All right but only because you are about to be tossed out of the castle at any minute.

*Cherubino hands Susanna the piece of paper and then reluctantly the ribbon after smelling it one more time.*

**SFX – a light tapping on the door**

**COUNT**

*(whispering)*

Susanna, are you alone?

*Cherubino starts to panic, but Susanna hides him first behind her skirts when the Count enters and then scoots Cherubino behind the barber's chair when the Count comes closer to her.*

**SUSANNA**

You can come in now.

**COUNT**

So ma charmand, Susanna, have I found you alone at last? But you seem frightened, my gentle dove. Of me? How can that be?

**SUSANNA**

Consider, my lord, if anybody should come and catch you here.

**COUNT**

That would be rather mal-appropriate, but it seems rather unlikely at this time of day.

*The Count approaches to kiss her on the lips, but she manages to kiss him on both cheeks in the French manner while shooing Cherubino behind the barber's chair.*

*She dodges the Count's next move to hug her by swinging him down on the barber chair with Cherubino hiding behind it.*

**SUSANNA**

I was feeling a bit faint in your arms.

**COUNT**

Sit here until you recover.

*The Count tries to get her on his lap which she resists by pretending to collapse on the floor.*

You know, Susanna, that when I am the king's ambassador, I intend to take Figaro with me paying him a ridiculously high salary. And . . . as it is your duty as his wife to follow her husband, you will sadly have to leave my wife's service and be transferred along with Figaro into mine.

**SUSANNA**

I really don't understand you, my lord, I thought your

affection for my lady was so overpowering that you took such pains to steal her from Dr. Bartolo. And to confirm your devotion to her you promised to abstain from a certain ancient privilege.

**COUNT**

For which all of the young girls are in great sorrow. Aren't they?

**SUSANNA**

I . . . I . . .

**COUNT**

Say no more, my sweet one, but promise me you will meet me this evening by the Cherry Pavilion in the garden and be certain that if you will but grant me this small favor you can not ask of me for anything that I will not grant you.

**SFX – the sound of a polite  
knocking on the hallway door**

*Alarmed the Count gets up from the chair and takes a step forward. As he does so, Cherubino sits in the chair and covers himself with the barber's sheet that is on it.*

*Susanna directs the Count to hide behind the chair itself.*

*Fanchette enters very pregnant with official looking documents in her hand – the same ones that Marceline had in the earlier scene.*

**FANCHETTE**

Cousin, pardon me. I did knock first as you always told me to do. Have you seen the Count? There are three visitors downstairs who request to meet with him as soon as possible. They gave me this note to give to him.

*The Count comes out of hiding  
as if nothing were out of the  
ordinary.*

**COUNT**

Hand it to me, girl. And go immediately to tell them that I am indisposed right now but will be down by and by.

**FANCHETTE**

Of course, my lord. My lord, exactly how long is by and by?

**COUNT**

By and by is whenever I appear.

**FANCHETTE**

Thank you, my lord, for teaching me so much. Were you two playing hide the slipper when I came in? Cherubino and I love that game. Please, please, please don't send him away. He has only been here a week, but already I cannot live without him.

**COUNT**

My child, some day you will realize that by sending him away I am saving your eternal soul. His, I fear, is far beyond salvation.

**SUSANNA**

*(aside)*

As is his own. They are birds of a feather.



**COUNT**

Deliver your message.

**FANCHETTE**

I'm so sorry. I forgot it already.

**COUNT**

Just say, "The Count will be down by and by."

**FANCHETTE**

"The Count will be down by and by."

**COUNT**

*(irritated)*

Not to me, to the visitors downstairs.

**FANCHETTE**

I shall, my Lord, faster than a mouse to its hole.  
Faster than . . .

**COUNT**

Just be gone.

*Fanchette shuffles away as  
quickly as she can given her  
present condition.*

**COUNT**

It appears, my dear one, that Figaro, your husband-to-be and my courier-to-be, is in serious jeopardy from his previous employers. They want to prosecute for the breach of a contract that he had made with the doctor's housekeeper, Marceline, and take him back to Seville.

**SUSANNA**

What are we to do?

**COUNT**

As the final authority in this region's jurisdiction,  
I have much sway with our local magistrate but  
subverting the laws of the land comes at a price.  
Which I may be willing to pay. That is if you are  
willing to contribute your share.

**SUSANNA**

*(aside)*

And I suspect I already know what collateral I  
possess.

**COUNT**

Let's negotiate a good faith deposit right now.

*The Count takes her by the  
hand, chooses an item of  
clothing from the Countess for  
Susanna to kneel on as padding  
in front of the chair and sits  
on Cherubino hiding under the  
sheet in the chair.*

**CHERUBINO**

OOOF.

**COUNT**

Cherubino! What the devil!

*Cherubino bolts out of the  
chair as well and does the  
lowest, most obsequious bow  
possible for the actor and  
holds it not saying another  
word for an uncomfortable few  
seconds.*

**CHERUBINO**

Might I rise, my lord?

**COUNT**

No, kowtow lower. It seems you have risen too often already. And so it was to receive this pretty youth that you were so desirous of being alone. And you . . . Get up, you fool.

**CHERUBINO**

Thank you, my lord.

**COUNT**

And you. Where are your manners? Forgetting all respect for your friend Figaro not to mention your godmother Countess. You're endeavoring to seduce her favorite maidservant. I, however, shall not suffer Figaro, a man whom . . . a man whom I, I esteem . . . sincerely to fall the victim of your duplicitous assault.

**SUSANNA**

I must intervene. Knowing that you were angry with him, the poor boy came running to me, begging me to solicit my lady on his behalf, in hopes she might then engage you to forgive him. He was so terrified as soon as he heard you coming that he hid himself in the chair.

**COUNT**

An unbelievable story for I sat down in that chair as soon as I came in.

**CHERUBINO**

Yes, my lord, of course you are right. But I hid behind the chair when you first came in.

**COUNT**

False again for I hid myself behind it when Fanchette entered.

**CHERUBINO**

Pardon me, my lord, but as you approached I retired under the sheet in the chair where you then sat on me.

**COUNT**

You are a most irritating changeling . . . you're there; you're here; you're everywhere. You're like a serpent slithering into every crevice. (turning to Susanna) And he has been listening to our plans.

**CHERUBINO**

Indeed I did . . . all I could . . . to not hear a word.

*Figaro enters with Fanchette.*

**FIGARO**

What have we here? Penelope and her onslaught of suitors.

**FANCHETTE**

Have you forgotten my cousin's name, Figaro? It's Susanna not Penelope.

**COUNT**

Fanchette, fetch Dr. Bartolo and his associates and bring them to my rooms as soon as possible. I feel the need of a physic.

**FANCHETTE**

*(whispering and exiting)*

I will, my lord.

**FIGARO**

Why the sad face, Cherubino? And even in the company of your beloved Fanchette.

**CHERUBINO**

It is because I shall never see her again. The Count has banished me from the castle.

**COUNT**

And yet you are still here.

**CHERUBINO**

It is because I keep my hope alive that my lord will forgive me my sins and grant me pardon. I confess my conduct has been rash, but I can assure your lordship that never the least word shall ever pass my lips about . . .

**COUNT**

Enough. Enough. Since everybody begs for him, I must grant. Instead of sending him home I shall commission him a captain in my regiment on one condition.

**FIGARO**

*(aside)*

If I were made a soldier, I would make some in this castle dance to a different tune. (to the Count) Most generous, but what is the condition?

**COUNT**

That he depart immediately for Catalonia.

**SUSANNA**

A most Solomon like decision, my lord.

**COUNT**

*(whispering to Susanna)*

You must meet me tonight at the pavilion for all to end well.

**FIGARO**

Can it be tomorrow, my lord, after our wedding?

**COUNT**

No, tonight. . . . I meant to say it must be right now. Figaro will accompany you to the stables. If I see your face again today, it is the dungeon with you. Go kiss Susanna goodbye.

**FIGARO**

Oh no. There's no occasion for kissing. He'll return in the winter. And in the meantime he may kiss me.

*Figaro gives Cherubino a mouth to mouth kiss.*

**CHERUBINO**

I must learn how to be more courteous with men.

**FIGARO**

Whoa. Your regimental scene will be changed more radically than you suppose, my boy. You won't be running upstairs and down into your ladies' chambers stealing cream and kisses and sucking oranges. Instead you must sweat and stink and build your muscles, tan your face like leather, turn your delicate hands into claws. Handle your own musket, without a Fanchette's help. Turn to the right! Wheel to the left! And march into hell for the greater glory of your king. Unless, of course, you are stopped short by a bullet.

**COUNT**

As you can see I must continue dressing.

*He heads towards his room.*

**SUSANNA**

And I to attend to my lady.

**FIGARO**

*(aside to Susanna)*

What did you whisper to the count a few moments ago?

**SUSANNA**

I can't remember. A matter of no consequence I'm sure.

**SFX – Countess' bell rings.**

**FIGARO**

I'm not so sure. But off to your mistress, my love.

*Susanna exits.*

And you, my young friend, I might be able to employ with great effect. Come, Cherubino, let us work on recasting the Count's little comedia for this evening.

**CHERUBINO**

You forget, Figaro, I've been ordered to leave the castle immediately or be clamped in irons.

**FIGARO**

That's what the Count wants for you. But if you had your liberty what would you choose for yourself?

**CHERUBINO**

Am I allowed to choose?

**FIGARO**

Stop being tedious. Do you wish to stay or no?

**CHERUBINO**

More than anything in the world.

**FIGARO**

Follow my advice and so you shall.

**CHERUBINO**

How, how?

**FIGARO**

Speak to no one, but get your riding boots and I will escort you to the stables as the Count has directed. Gallop as far as the farm. Leave the horse there and return to the castle on foot taking care that no one sees you. . . . Then hide in the root cellar.

**CHERUBINO**

I will be there waiting. What will follow?

**FIGARO**

Still nesting in my brain. But fear not I think you will enjoy the part that I write for you. Get along now.

**CHERUBINO**

(bowing deeply)

I shall humbly obey.

*Cherubino exits and Figaro  
addresses the Count's bedroom  
door.*

**FIGARO**

No, my very worthy lord and master, you have not got her yet. What did you once say to me, "Because you are a count, you fancy yourself clever." Did I really hear that right? A child could rebut your argument. And how came you to be the rich and powerful Count Almaviva? Why truly all you needed to do to attain such a lofty position in life was survive the travails



of being born. By those standards, a newly birthed kitten has achieved an equal accomplishment.

The obscurity and poverty of my birth, however, have given me a great advantage over you for they required more shrewdness and abilities for daily sustenance than are required of a king to govern his entire kingdom. And what, most noble count, are your claims to distinction, to your pompous titles and preferments and immense wealth other than this accident of birth?

*Figaro picks up an large-sized deck of 18<sup>th</sup> century playing cards first revealing the backs to the audience.*

In heaven we are equal as cards until Fate deals our hands.

*He turns over the first card. It is the king of hearts.*

Here a master,

*He snaps that card on the table. He turns over another card. It is the deuce of spades.*

There a servant. But we have yet to discover which one of us wears the trump suit. I'm willing to wager my wife that I shall win, wilt thou, my lord, hazard yours as well?

*He snaps down the deuce on top of the king taking that trick.*

I need paper and a pen  
For the next act to begin.

*He goes to the table and starts writing.*

SFX Begin French / Spanish  
18<sup>th</sup> century music –  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7p6seQJTBw)  
[v=H7p6seQJTBw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7p6seQJTBw)

**BLACKOUT**

## **ACT I**

### **Scene 3**

#### **SETTING**

*This scene opens in the Count's bedroom. Marceline and Dr. Bartolo pace back and forth. Guzman, the magistrate, is sitting on a stool acting a bit foolishly. There is a large nude painting of Venus and Cupid over the bed.*

#### **BARTOLO**

Does it not seem odd that my revenge on Figaro's betrayal is to prevent him from marrying Susanna and your revenge is to actually marry him yourself?

#### **MARCELINE**

Since you were never willing to punish me in like manner after capturing my virginity so many years ago, what other recourse do I have? Besides there is something about Figaro that makes him irresistible to me. Why else would I have been so foolish over the years to loan a wastrel like him so much money?

#### **BARTOLO**

At least you were wise enough to have him sign bonds for the repayment or else.

#### **MARCELINE**

And the "or else" is a fate worse than debt. He has to marry me. And there is no way that he can acquire so much money on such short notice. What do you think is taking the count so long?

**BARTOLO**

Don't worry we have time and the law on our side, and the Count, regardless of our prior history, has no other choice but to sustain your claim. Am I not right, Magistrate Gooseman?

**GUZMAN**

I am not a "goose" but a "Guz"-mann. But the answer to your question is that you are most unquestionably right my most horribly good doctor. With the law (*holding up the lawsuit*) and me as your advocates what hope does truth have to prevail?

*The Count enters with legal papers in his hand which he hands to the magistrate..*

**COUNT**

Setting our former disagreements aside, explain in detail what your case is against my loyal servant Figaro?

**NARRATOR:** *The scene shifts to the Countess's bedroom.*

**ACT I**

**Scene 4**

**SETTING**

*The next scene opens in the Countess's bedroom. What is unseen by the audience is that Cherubino is already hiding under the covers of her bed. The Countess and Susanna enter together arm in arm.*

**COUNTESS**

Susanna, will you please close the door? And so Cherubino was hid behind the barber's chair.

**SUSANNA**

Yes, madam.

**COUNTESS**

But how did he happen to be in your room in the first place?

**SUSANNA**

The poor boy came to beg me to prevail on you to obtain his pardon of the Count.

**COUNTESS**

Why did he not come to me directly? I should not have refused him a favor of that sort.

**SUSANNA**

Bashfulness, madam. "Oh Susanna," says he, "She is divinity itself. How noble is her manner" and so on and so forth.

**COUNTESS**

Is that all true?

**SUSANNA**

How can you doubt it, madam? You must have noted how besotted he is with you. He can barely stutter out a word in your presence.

**COUNTESS**

He is a most absent-minded card player.

**SUSANNA**

That is because he is so countess-minded. You should have seen with what enthusiasm he snatched your ribbon from me. He would not give it back until I had promised to show you his song.

*Susanna hands her the paper  
which the Countess puts on  
her night-stand.*

**COUNTESS**

Enough of this nonsense. You are making me blush. And so my lord, the Count, endeavors to seduce you.

**SUSANNA**

Oh no, indeed, madam. He does not take the trouble to seduce me; he thinks he can purchase me like a Black slave. And because I refuse him, I fear he will prevent, or somehow make conditional, my marriage with my beloved Figaro.

**COUNTESS**

Knowing personally how hard Figaro worked in acquiring me on the Count's behalf, it is quite evident that my husband is a genuinely ungrateful man.

*The Countess walks up and  
down building up an emotion.  
Hyperventilating she begins  
to remove her dress and  
loosen her corset.*

A covetous and ungrateful man. Open the window will you? I am stifled for want of air. Vows, protestations of love and tenderness are all forgotten. My love now offends him. He has not touched me since putting this ring on my finger. It's now become a noose around my neck.

My caresses, even my young breasts, seem to disgust him. Oh, I long for a man that I can give the treasures of my love to for the simple return of his love.

*Cherubino hearing her  
lamentations leaps out from  
under the covers on the bed  
dressed only in his  
underwear.*

**CHERUBINO**

I shall be he!

**COUNTESS**

Cherubino, for shame.

**SUSANNA**

What are you doing here?

**CHERUBINO**

Figaro told me that I am no man's man but my own. Free to do what I want.

**SUSANNA**

And what is it that you dare to do in my lady's bed chambers to risk your life for it?

**CHERUBINO**

I wa .. wa .. wanted to . . to say.

**SUSANNA**

What do you want to say to my beauteous lady?

**CHERUBINO**

*(now looking at Susanna)*

I wanted to say that I love her and shall love her as long as I live.

**COUNTESS**

Esteem, Cherubino.

**CHERUBINO**

Yes. That I esteem her. I meant "you" . . .

**COUNTESS**

Look at my eyes.

**CHERUBINO**

. . . as long as we both shall live.

**SUSANNA**

The boy is a gushing fountain of esteem and affection. As his punishment for invading your private chambers why don't you make him sing those verses that he wrote for you?

**COUNTESS**

For me? I thought you implied that he had written them for you.



**SUSANNA**

Which one of us did you scribble them for?

**CHERUBINO**

Ah. Ah.

**SUSANNA**

Since he can no longer speak, command him to sing, my lady.

**COUNTESS**

Please, pretty youth, I command you to serenade us.

*Susanna takes down a guitar  
from the instruments hanging  
on the wall and gives it to  
him.*

SFX DUNN guitar music #2  
for Cherubino's song –  
[https://vimeo.com/user858875](https://vimeo.com/user8588759/review/116990814/86f31585da)  
[9/review/116990814/86f31585d](https://vimeo.com/user8588759/review/116990814/86f31585da)  
a

**CHERUBINO** (singing)

To the Winds, to the Waves to the Woods I complain

Ah, well-a-day! My poor heart!

They hear not my sighs, and they heed not my pain;

Ah, well-a-day! My poor heart!

The Heavens I view with their azure bright skies;

Ah, well-a-day! My poor heart!

But heaven to me are still her bright eyes;

Ah, well-a-day! My poor heart!

To the Sun's morning splendor the poor Indian bows;

Ah, well-a-day! My poor heart!

But I dare not worship where I pay my vows;  
Ah, well-a-day! My poor heart!

The name of my goddess I engrave on each tree;  
Ah, well-a-day! My poor heart!  
'Tis I wound the bark, but Love's arrows wound me;  
Ah, well-a-day! My poor heart!

**COUNTESS**

Sweet youth, we need to help you add a verse or two to your story.

**SUSANNA**

But first you must unlock your tongue and confess  
which of our goddess-like names you hacked into that  
poor innocent tree.

**CHERUBINO**

Well . . . as on Olympus as you know there are many  
beautiful goddesses and you both reside there. . .

**SUSANNA**

*(aside to the audience)*

A cleverer answer than I expected.

**COUNTESS**

But which one will you give the golden apple?

**CHERUBINO**

To my great sorrow, my lady, I have come here without  
one.

**COUNTESS**

Never mind. Are you also sorry that you have to  
quickly run off and catch up with my husband's  
regiment?

**CHERUBINO**

It frightens me. Please, madam, can you keep me hidden here? I take up such a little space. I can sleep at the foot of your bed like your spaniel and warm your feet.

**COUNTESS**

Don't weep, my delicate youth, don't weep. (*moving closer to him.*) Come, come let me comfort you.

*She lays his head upon her breast.*

Susanna, go to the next room and bring me one of your plainest dresses. We can disguise him as your new under-maid and delay his parting hence.

**SUSANNA**

Yes, madam, I shall immediately, but first I had better lock your door to keep out any tattling servants.

*Susanna locks the countess's entrance door and exits through her door into the wardrobe.*

**COUNTESS**

Can you sing your song again to me?

*The Countess unbuttons his shirt and removes it preparing for the costume change.*

**CHERUBINO**

To the Winds, to the Waves to the Woods I complain  
Ah, well-a-day! My poor heart!  
They hear not my sighs, . . .

SFX – the sound of a jiggling then  
a loud banging on the outer bedroom  
door.

**COUNT**

*(muffled)*

Open this door.

**COUNTESS**

*(whispering to Cherubino)*

We are both ruined if he finds you here.

*The Countess impulsively  
kisses him which dazes him  
for a moment. He jumps into  
the bed to hide under the  
coversm but the Countess  
pulls him out and shoves him  
toward the closet.*

Quick into the closet.

*The Countess takes the key  
out of the door and hands it  
to him.*

And lock yourself in.

*(yelling toward the door)*

Who is it?

**COUNT**

*(still muffled)*

Who were you expecting? Open this door immediately or  
I'll break it down.

SFX – even louder pounding on  
the outer bedroom door.

**COUNTESS**

Just one minute.

*The Countess covers herself somewhat with the dress that she had just taken off. On her way to unlocking her outer bedroom door she notices Cherubino's outer clothes and stashes them under her pillow.*

**SFX – the sound of a door  
being unlocked and opened**

**COUNT**

Why is this door locked in the middle of the day?

**COUNTESS**

Because as you can see I am alone and yet to be dressed.

**COUNT**

Alone? I heard talking. Who were you talking to? And be more dignified.

*The Count hands her a robe.*

**COUNTESS**

Why, to you, of course, the door must have muted the sound.

**COUNT**

No, before I knocked. Who were you talking to? I thought I heard singing as well.

**COUNTESS**

Ah. Ah. That must have been Susanna, who I believe went off to rummage in the new room that you have so generously given her.

**COUNT**

But you seem so agitated, madam.

**COUNTESS**

That is not impossible because we were speaking of you.

**COUNT**

Of me?

**COUNTESS**

Of your indifferences, your other-wise engagements and covetous jealousies.

**COUNT**

I cannot say for indifference, my lady, and as for jealousy, you know best whether I have any cause.

**COUNTESS**

My Lord! You insult me! If I were a man, I would slap your face and challenge you to a duel in defense of your wife's honor.

*The Count holds up the letter  
that Figaro had sent him  
anonymously.*

**COUNT**

My lady there are people in this world, who are malicious enough to wish to disturb either your repose or mine. Just this afternoon, for example, I received this correspondence that a certain Thing called a Lover . . .

**COUNTESS**

Lover?!

**COUNT**

Ay or Gallant or Rogue or any other title you like better, meant to take advantage of my anticipated hunting absence and insinuate himself into my castle with the objective of plundering my wife.

**COUNTESS**

If this be so, I am surely the last to know of it for I have not felt well and have kept to my room all day.

**COUNT**

It's lucky for you then that your old protector, the good doctor Bartolo, is here today. I'm sure he knows best how to treat your indispositions.

**SFX – A scuffling noise from  
behind the closet door**

What noise is that?

**COUNTESS**

I heard no noise.

**COUNT**

No? You must be most confoundedly absent then.

**COUNTESS**

Oh, to be sure. You have made me faint from your anger.

**COUNT**

But there is somebody in your closet, madam.

**COUNTESS**

Who should it be?

**COUNT**

That's exactly what I want to know.

**COUNTESS**

A rat, possibly.

**SFX – a more intense rattling  
sound of the door**

**COUNT**

A trained rat most assuredly. Did you teach it how to use a key to lock itself in to keep from being disturbed?

**COUNTESS**

Oh I remember now, before I lay down I wanted Susanna to try on one my dresses to wear tomorrow.

**COUNT**

And there is Swiss cheese on the moon as well. You had just said that she was in her room.

**COUNTESS**

She slips so quietly into her room – my room – it is all one between us.

**COUNT**

Really, my lady, this Susanna of yours seems a most nimble, convenient kind of person.

**COUNTESS**

Really, my lord, this Susanna of yours seems to disturb your quiet exceedingly so.

**COUNT**



Very true, my lady, so much that I am determined to see her right now. Susanna, if Susanna thou art, unlock this door and show yourself. (more noise is heard in the closet) I will give you to the count of ten. One . . .

*Susanna peeks in from the other doorway, figures out the situation gets the countess' attention and slips in behind the window curtain.*

**COUNTESS**

That is enough. Would you have the girl come out half naked? Susanna, for the sake of female decency I order you to not unlock this door.

**SFX – the loudest rattling of the closet door.**

**COUNT**

Well if whoever is in there won't come out on his or her own, I will get one of the servants to force open the door. . . . (shouting) Antonio!

**COUNTESS**

Do. Do, my lord. Expose either your ridiculous jealousy or my outrageous adultery to your servants. Make yourself the laughing stock of the whole world.

**COUNT**

Madam, since you will not suffer the door to be opened by any other means will you kindly accompany me while I procure an instrument to force it myself.

**COUNTESS**

*(relieved)*

To be sure, my lord. I will enjoy the look on your face when I am vindicated.

**COUNT**

And in order that you may be fully vindicated without a speck of skepticism, I will make these doors fast.

*The Count locks the door to the other room and takes the key and locks the bedroom entrance door and takes that key as well.*

As for the Susanna in the closet, she will have the opportunity to make herself decent for our imminent return.

**COUNTESS**

This action greatly honors your nobility, my lord.

*After she gives a sign to Susanna hiding behind the curtain both the Count and the Countess exit through the bedroom door.*

**SFX – the sound of the outer bedroom door shutting and being locked.**

**SUSANNA**

Cherubino, Cherubino! Unlock the closet door. Quickly, it's Susanna.

*Cherubino comes out of the closet wearing one of the Countess' fancier dresses; Susanna takes the key from him.*

**CHERUBINO**

Oh, Susanna.

**SUSANNA**

Oh, my poor Mistress.

**CHERUBINO**

What will become of her?

**SUSANNA**

All will be well, I assure you. I'm more worried about my own marriage.

**CHERUBINO**

What will become of me?

**SUSANNA**

Don't just stand there babbling, boy. Fly!

**CHERUBINO**

The doors are all locked fast, from the outside. How can I?

**SUSANNA**

Don't ask me. Fly!

**CHERUBINO**

Here's a window open. Underneath is a bed of flowers. I'll leap out.

**SUSANNA**

You'll break your neck!

**CHERUBINO**

Better that than ruin my dear lady. Give me one kiss, Susanna.

**SUSANNA**

Was there ever seen such a young . . .

*Cherubino removes the dress,  
kisses Susanna then jumps.*

He is safe. If that boy does not make many a woman's heart ache, I know not women. And now, my greedy Count, perhaps you will learn a lesson or two as well.

*Susanna locks herself in the closet right before the entrance of the Countess and the Count with a wrecking bar. The Count verifies that both entrance doors to the bedroom are still locked.*

**COUNT**

Everything is as I left it. We now shall come to an eclairessement. Do you still persist in forcing me to break open the door? I am determined to see who is in there.

**COUNTESS**

Hold your hand. I confess that I have great love for another who is within this closet. Please show mercy for the love that you used to bear me. Dear one, please spare my door and show yourself. Our charade is at an end.

SFX – the sound of a key  
in the lock

**SUSANNA**

My lord, forgive us our little jest.

**COUNT**

But perhaps you were not alone in there.

**SUSANNA**

*(aside to the Countess)*

Fear not. He is not there. He has jumped out of the window.

**COUNTESS**

And broken his neck.

**SUSANNA**

He ran off as light and swift as a greyhound.

**COUNT**

Nobody there. Upon my soul, madam, you are a great actress. Your distress was completely believable.

**SUSANNA**

And am I not also an excellent actress, my lord?

**COUNT**

With the letter and the locked doors and your strange behavior, you can appreciate my confusion.

**SUSANNA**

Appreciate may be too strong a word, my lord.

**COUNT**

My dear Rosina.

**COUNTESS**

No, no. I am no longer that Rosina whom you loved with such affection. I am now nothing but the pathetic Countess of Almaviva. A neglected wife, not the beloved mistress.

**COUNT**

Nay, do not make my humiliation too severe or I will suspect that you two are the authors of this letter to gull me for sport.

**SUSANNA**

What letter?

**COUNT**

This one.

**SUSANNA**

The writing is in a man's hand.

*Figaro enters the bedroom.*

**FIGARO**

They told me my lady was indisposed. I ran to inquire and am very happy to find there is nothing to worry about.

**COUNT**

Very attentive, Figaro.

**FIGARO**

As she is your wife, it is my duty so to be, my lord. Come, come, my charmer, we must prepare for the wedding.

**COUNT**

Just how attentive have you been to my wife, Figaro?

**FIGARO**

As a lap dog to a lap, my lord. No less than you have been to my Susanna.

**COUNT**

You'd be better off keeping your nose away from where

it doesn't belong. Where were you an hour ago when I sent for you?

**FIGARO**

At the stables putting Cherubino on his horse and pointing him in the direction of your regiment, my lord

**COUNT**

If I did not know that you are lying, I could have read it on your face.

**FIGARO**

Indeed, my lord? Then it is my face that lies and not I.

*The gardener, Antonio, enters half drunk with a broken flower pot, a half empty bottle of stout and his daughter Fanchette.*

**ANTONIO**

My great lord, if you don't have them windows nailed shut, I won't have a nosegay fit to give your lady. They not only throw out rubbish, but just now they tossed out a man.

**COUNT**

A Man. Just as I suspected.

**ANTONIO**

In white stockings he was and missing his shirt.

**COUNT**

Where is this man?

**ANTONIO**

That's what I want to know. If chambermaids are permitted to toss men out of windows to save their reputations what hope is there for flowers and pots. Right, Fanchette? You wouldn't throw a man out of a window, would you?

**FANCHETTE**

Never have – never would.

**ANTONIO**

Good girl.

**FIGARO**

For shame, Antonio. Drunk almost blind so soon of an afternoon.

**COUNT**

What of the man?

**ANTONIO**

I followed him meself, my lord, as stumbly fast as an old man could, but somehow an unlucky false step whirled me into the garden gate and I sort of forgot my errand. As my niece, Susanna can avow I am a man of great diligence and no stranger to catching angry geese. Can I make a toast to her good fortune on the day before her wedding day?

**COUNT**

*(getting really angry)*

What of the man? Should you know this man again?

**ANTONIO**

To be sure I should, my lord. If I had seen him that is.

**COUNT**



Either speak more plainly, you old fool, or I'll send you packing.

**ANTONIO**

Send me packing? Oh no. If your lordship has not enough, enough . . to know when you have a good gardener, I know when I have a good place.

**FIGARO**

There is no occasion, my lord, for threatening my uncle-to-be. I shall solve this mystery for you. It was I who jumped out of the window into the garden.

**COUNT**

You?

**FIGARO**

C'est moi.

**COUNT**

Jump out of a two story window?

**FIGARO**

The ground was soft. I did hurt my right leg, a little. (begins to limp) just here at the ankle.

**COUNT**

But what reason had you to jump out of the window?

**ANTONIO**

Figaro, if it was you, you've grown awfully fast within the last half-hour. The man that I saw did not seem so tall by a full head and shoulders.

**FIGARO**

Does not one double one's self up when one jumps?

**ANTONIO**

It seemed he was a great deal more like my lady's godson, Cherubino.

**FIGARO**

Oh sure, Cherubino galloped all the way to the regiment and back again horse and all to leap out of this window.

**ANTONIO**

I'll swear my life on it. . . . I saw no horse leap out of that window.

**FIGARO**

There it is then. Come, Susanna, let us make preparations for the wedding.

**ANTONIO**

Well, Figaro, since it was you after all. I ought to return this paper which dropped out of your pocket as you fell.

*The Count grabs the paper out of Antonio's hands.*

**COUNT**

Ah, since it was you, you doubtless can tell us what this paper contains.

**FIGARO**

Oh my lord, I always carry such quantities of papers on my person. Here's a petition from that poor poacher whose whole family is starving while he is in your prison. I knew you had affairs much more serious on

your hands to attend to it. Here's a whole handful of bills from your tailor for your lordship's ruffles and robes that have not been paid in over a year.

*Figaro keeps glancing toward Susanna and the Countess for some clue about the contents of the letter.*

**COUNT**

*(holding the paper up)*

We know it's not those.

**COUNTESS**

*(whispering to Susanna)*

It's Cherubino's commission.

*Susanna knocks a candle off of the table. When she and Figaro stoop to pick it up, she whispers to him.*

**SUSANNA**

*(whispering)*

It's the commission.

**COUNT**

Well it appears you know nothing of the matter.

**FIGARO**

Oh Lord!

*(as if suddenly remembering)*

What a stupid fool I am! It is the officer's commission for that pathetic youth Cherubino.

**COUNT**

Then tell me how you came by it. Why did he give it to you?

**FIGARO**

To .. to .. to

**COUNT**

To what?

**FIGARO**

To get. . .

**COUNT**

To get what? It wants nothing.

*Figaro desperately looks to the Countess and Susanna for help who look over the Count's shoulder. The Countess pounds her fist over her palm as if stamping a seal.*

**FIGARO**

A rock.

**COUNT**

A rock?

*Susanna quickly mimes a seal.*

**FIGARO**

A seal on a rock . . . is customary, my lord.

**COUNT**

Stop the gibberish. It's customary to do what?

*Susanna mimes stamping the paper.*

**FIGARO**

To affix your lordship's official seal on such an important document.

*The Count closely inspects the paper.*

**COUNT**

The Devil and his Imps take you all.

*(aside to Fanchette)*

Tell the doctor, Marceline and the magistrate to meet me in the great hall at three this afternoon.

**FIGARO**

Are you going, my lord, without giving orders for our wedding?

**COUNT**

My most astute Figaro, it had slipped my mind. But there is a matter that needs to be resolved before you and Susanna can make wedding plans. We can meet at three this afternoon in the great hall to properly "adjudicate" that matter.

*The Count exits as does Fanchette and Antonio..*

**COUNTESS**

Susanna, would you come with me to pick out a dress for this evening?

*The Countess exits into the wardrobe room.*

**SUSANNA**

In one moment, my lady.

*(to Figaro)*

A seal on a rock, really?

**FIGARO**

What was Cherubino doing in the Countess' bed chamber with the two of you?

**SUSANNA**

Singing.

**FIGARO**

So I put my position with the Count in peril so that Cherubino could be safe to sing in his lady's chambers. None of this bodes well for us. I did not like the way he pronounced "properly adjudicate" just now.

**COUNTESS**

Susanna, are you coming?

**SUSANNA**

Yes, my lady. Know, my love, that I will do everything in my power to secure both our marriage and our positions.

*Susanna exits and Figaro  
addresses the audience.*

**FIGARO**

Everything. That's exactly what I fear the most. . .

Do you suppose that I am forever doomed to be the football of Fortune? Son of who knows who. Stolen, I know not how, along with this ring, which I wear always like a birthmark under my shirt. Lying and thieving excepted, I did have the innate good sense, to escape a life so base as my infernal gypsy captors led

When I was younger I had the courage of an ape. Took what I needed when I needed it and daring down the consequences. My genius, though cramped, would not be subdued, and I spent what little money I had on books and study. I stole learning from wherever I could snatch it. Plucking it out of the air tucked in the

corner of book shops.

I even had the audacity to attempt writing a comedy myself. But as I had the greater audacity to attack the favorite vice of the favorite mistress of the favorite minister, I was rewarded by being given free lodging with straw, bread and water included in one of our nation's most illustrious dungeons.

After I was released I decided on a second, safer birth in the lap of the barbering trade.

Then as fortune would have it in Seville I cut the hair of a lord who was madly in love with a beautiful young girl already spoken for. My wit procured for him what his could not and in return he now most gratefully honors me by seducing my future wife.

Who to demonstrate her great love for me, so she says, smilingly steps into his crude trap. That foolish little animal who had given me, up to now, such joy that I had never experienced before. Vanished. But have you really vanished, my sweet Susanna, or is that an illusion as well? Are husbands and wives and servants and masters as interchangeable as different hands pulling the puppets' strings?

**Curtain on Act I – INTERMISSION**

**ACT II**

**Scene 1**

**SETTING**

*Susanna is brushing the Countess' hair in her bedroom when Fanchette knocks and immediately enters.*

**FANCHETTE**

Madam, pardon my existence but Figaro told me that I was to deliver only to you personally this letter from my lord, your husband, the Count of Almaviva.

**COUNTESS**

Did you forget his Royal Ambassador to England title?

**FANCHETTE**

and royal ambassador to Finland.

**COUNTESS**

Close enough. Thank you, Fanchette, and while the doctor is here you should ask him about your condition.

**FANCHETTE**

I don't know what is wrong with me. I can't keep any food down and yet I keep getting rounder and rounder.

**SUSANNA**

Don't worry, dear cousin. It's a common ailment especially among actresses and young housemaids who work in this castle.

*Fanchette takes her leave along with a perfume bottle from the Countess' dresser.*



**COUNTESS**

Susanna, it seems that our little escapade today has produced some good results.

**SUSANNA**

How so?

**COUNTESS**

This letter from my husband in most affectionate terms pleads with me to appear around midnight to meet him in the Plum Pavilion.

He further states that I am to send my reply to him only through Fanchette, our clandestine go-between. Isn't that romantic? I blush with anticipation.

**SUSANNA**

I don't want to douse your blushes with water, but as your dearest companion I must confess that I also received such a letter from your husband earlier today arranging a secret assignation this evening in the Cherry Pavilion.

**COUNTESS**

How cruel of you. I don't believe a word you are saying.

**SUSANNA**

Do you believe this?

*Susanna holds up the pin that the Count used to fasten the letter.*

**COUNTESS**

It is one of his favorites.

**SUSANNA**

In his letter he asked me to wear it as a sign of consenting to the arrangement.

**COUNTESS**

And, of course, you will refuse for my sake.

**SUSANNA**

Or should I accept, seemingly so to be sure, and you as well and snare him in his own nets? He apparently is debauched and deluded enough to think that he can have us both -- one after the other or together as if he were breeding cattle.

**COUNTESS**

There's one obvious solution.

**SUSANNA**

What's that?

*The Countess puts the pin on Susanna. then picks up a pair of scissors.*

**COUNTESS**

Let's take the bull by the balls and snip, snip, snip. So wear this pin this afternoon in the great hall and tonight I shall dress in your clothes and you in mine and you shall go to the, the the (looking at the letter) Plum Pavilion and I to the Cherry.

**SUSANNA**

We shall out-trick that trickster.

*Susanna carefully takes the scissors from the Countess' hands and puts them aside.*

**COUNTESS**

The Count rather did look like a bull when he was going to crash down the closet doors to get at my faceless lover. But he does have a face, doesn't he, Susanna? As beautiful as any in an Italian painting. I do so pray the impending war will not mar nor harden it.

**SUSANNA**

I do believe that you are falling in love with Cherubino.

**COUNTESS**

I think not with him but definitely I love his face.

**SUSANNA**

Then get him to a portrait studio as quickly as possible and you shall have love everlasting.

**COUNTESS**

We have other business to attend to first. Bring me the clothes that you were going to wear this evening and collect some of mine. We can also make good use of these masks. Then call for Fanchette. I am writing my reply to my loving husband.

**ACT II**

**Scene 2**

*Lights fade out and then fade in on Figaro beginning to shave the Count in the dressing room's barber's chair.*

**COUNT**

Come, come. Be sincere. Tell me how much did the Countess give you for lying about jumping out of her window?

**FIGARO**

As much as your lordship gave me for helping him steal her.

**COUNT**

Why is there continually so many elements of mystery in your words?

**FIGARO**

Because the words and conduct of others is so mysterious.

**COUNT**

*(trying to put his arm over Figaro's shoulder)*  
Appearances, my dear Figaro.

**FIGARO**

*(removing the Count's arm)*  
Appearances, my dear lord, are frequently false. I, for example, am much better than I appear to be. Can the great nobility in general say as much?

SFX – the sound of polite  
knocking on the door

**FANCHETTE**

The doctor, Marceline and the magistrate . . .

**COUNT**

Let them wait.

**FIGARO**

Aye, let them wait.

**COUNT**

And do you expect to gain your cause?

**FIGARO**

With the assistance of Justice and my lord's good wishes. You respect youth too much yourself to force others to wed with age.

**COUNT**

Really, you can read my mind so easily, can you? You are aware that a judge can know no distinction of persons.

**FIGARO**

*(an aside)*

Unless there is more gold on one side of the scales than on the other, that is.

**COUNT**

Meet me in the great room in a few minutes. I need to compose my self.

*As Figaro exits the bedroom;  
Susanna arrives.*

**FIGARO**

*(whispering in passing)*

What are you doing here?

**SUSANNA**

The Countess requires the Count's smelling bottle. My lord, pardon my intrusion. Are you in ill humor?

**COUNT**

A gadfly keeps biting me. But your presence brings me relief.

**SUSANNA**

My lady has sent me for your lordship's smelling bottle. She has the vapours again and has taken to her bed.

**COUNT**

Here it is. And when she has done with it, you may return to borrow it for yourself.

**SUSANNA**

Oh no, the vapours is too noble a disease for a mere servant to aspire to.

**COUNT**

Fits may come to anyone. Love so intense as yours cannot bear much disappointment, and when Figaro marries Marceline. . .

**SUSANNA**

Suppose the worst judgment. We can pay Marceline with the portion your lordship has promised us.

**COUNT**

I promised you a portion?

**SUSANNA**

If my ears did not deceive me, I understood as much.

**COUNT**

Your recent coyness has put me into doubt . . .

**SUSANNA**

It's never too late to admit one's emotional weaknesses, my lord.

**COUNT**

What does that mean? Will you take a walk this evening in the garden by the Cherry Pavilion or not?

**SUSANNA**

Do I need to speak it? Did you not note the pin that I am wearing?

**COUNT**

No more equivocations. Let us understand one another. No pavilion – no marriage.

**SUSANNA**

And no marriage – no pavilion, my lord.

*(curtsying smartly)*

**COUNT**

Touche. A “touch” on both sides. But tell me why have you always resisted a definite response like this morning for instance.

**SUSANNA**

This morning, my lord? With Cherubino behind the chair?

**COUNT**

I had forgotten. Will you go now and tell Figaro all?

**SUSANNA**

To be sure, my lord. I always tell him all – except what is necessary to conceal.

**COUNT**

What a charming cat you are. Run quickly back to your mistress. She is waiting and may suspect us.

**SUSANNA**

I shall immediately.

**COUNT**

She absolutely entrances me! I had sworn to think no more of her, but she winds me as tightly as she pleases even now.

**FIGARO**

*(an aside)*

And she is wearing his pin. Just what I feared.

**BLACKOUT**



**ACT II**

**Scene 3**

**SETTING**

*The Great Hall scene with benches and seats set up has everyone in place for Figaro's trial. Unbeknownst to the audience Cherubino in his undershirt but with his riding boots on is secreted behind one of the curtains.*

**GUZMAN**

Let me interrogate the facts for our ignoble judge, Count Almaviva. Marceline, you are the persecutor in this case, will you expound for the Court?

**MARCELINE**

I shall be happy, Monsieur Magistrate, to explain the justice of my cause.

**GUZMAN**

First we shall examine the case verbally.

**MARCELINE**

There is a promise of marriage.

**GUZMAN**

I comprehend . . . given by you to . . .?

**MARCELINE**

No given "to" me. And a certain sum of money . . .

**GUZMAN**

which you have received.

**MARCELINE**

which I have lent.

**GUZMAN**

And it has been repaid.

**MARCELINE**

No, it has definitely not been re-paid which is why we are all here, in front of the judge, our lordship.

**GUZMAN**

I comprehend. And the defensive man, Figaro, over there will marry you as propositioned and then pay you the money he owes.

**MARCELINE**

No, no, no. He will neither marry me nor has he any money to pay me.

**GUZMAN**

Do you think that I don't comprehend you?

**MARCELINE**

Your lordship, is there anything that you can do about this imbecile?

**GUZMAN**

I take offense at that accusation, your lordship. You, yourself elevated me to the rank of "moron" not six months ago.

**COUNT**

That may have been a rash decision. Marceline, since this is a domestic case I shall direct Monsieur Gooseman to simply read your claim.

**GUZMAN**

As you command. Plaintiff Marceline – Jane – Maria – Angelica Mustacio, spinster against Figaro Anonymous. I never heard the surname of anonymous before.

**COUNT**

It means he has no father. He's a bastard.

**GUZMAN**

What profession, Figaro? It's left blank.

**FIGARO**

Gentleman.

**COUNT**

Gentleman, indeed.

**FIGARO**

All right then just put down, Possible prince.

**COUNT**

Put down "barber." And go on with it, or I'll demote you back to idiot.

**GUZMAN**

Against Figaro Anonymous, "barber." The Question before the court relates to a promise of marriage given as bond for the repayment of a debt accumulated to 2,000 escudos borrowed over a five year period by the defendant from the plaintiff.

**COUNT**

Cut to the point of contention. Read the appended promise of marriage.

**GUZMAN**

"I acknowledge to have received of Marceline Mustachio the sum of 2,000 escudos during service in the residence of Doctor Bartolo. Which sum I promise to repay to the said Marceline Mustachio, and to marry her upon termination of that service." Signed Figaro.

**COUNT**

Figaro, do you contest the validity of the bond?

**FIGARO**

Let me see that. There is in this case either fraud, error, malice or mischief for the actual words of the acknowledgment are, I promise to repay said amount "or" to marry her which is very different.

**BARTOLO**

I witnessed the document's signing. See my initials on the bottom there? And I affirm the word is "and."

**FIGARO**

And I affirm that the doctor is an inept forger. As you can see the word "or" has been scratched out and crudely written over it.

**BARTOLO**

The document must have been damaged in its transport here.

**COUNT**

I will accept that as a concession on the part of the doctor and render my decision after conferring with the magistrate.

**MARCELINE**

*(to Bartolo)*

Their whispering forebodes me no good. I suspect that Susanna has corrupted our chief judge.

**BARTOLO**

It looks devilishly like it.

**GUZMAN**

Silence in the court.

**COUNT**

The judgment of the court is that the promise of marriage is disjunctive rather than conjunctive, It is the opinion of this court that the logic of the agreement and the disparity of the two parties makes it obvious that the original word was intended to be "or" rather than "and." Therefore, Figaro is permitted to dispose of his own person.

**FIGARO**

The day's my own.

**MARCELINE**

I expected that the bias of the court would roll in Figaro's direction.

**COUNT**

But as the acknowledgment now clarified clearly states, "which sum I promise to pay said Marceline Mustachio **or** to marry her." the defendant Figaro is ordered to pay the sum of two thousand escudos to the plaintiff within the next twenty-four hours **or** marry her if the appellant still so wishes.

**FIGARO**

I'm undone.

**MARCELINE**

*(throwing her arms around Figaro)*

He is mine at last!

**BARTOLO**

And I am finally revenged.

**SUSANNA**

*(aside to the Count)*

What have you done?

**COUNT**

I've just purchased insurance for your appearance tonight. The advantage is in my court, ma chérie.

*Everyone leaves the Great Hall with the exception of Figaro who finally prevents Marceline from dragging him with her.*

**FIGARO**

The Count has check-mated me. And with the assistance of that fungus, "Gooseman."

**CHERUBINO**

*(leaping out from behind the curtain)*

All is not lost. Cherubino is here!

**FIGARO**

Stop doing that. You are the chief cause of the Count's suspicions and anger with me. I have been looking all over the castle for you.

**CHERUBINO**

Are you going to join the regiment with me?

**FIGARO**

I'll tell you what I'm going to do with you.

*Figaro takes Cherubino by the  
ear and marches him off the  
stage.*

***Curtain on Act II.***

**SFX Begin French- Spanish 18<sup>th</sup>  
century music to transition  
to next act**

### **ACT III**

#### **Scene 1**

#### **SETTING**

*The setting for the final two scenes is the castle garden, at midnight and dawn of the next day.*

*Figaro enters carrying two painting easels and two placards – one with "Cherry Pavilion" written on it and the other with "Plum Pavilion" on it. He sets each one up in front of the appropriate love pavilion and lights candles to illuminate each.*

#### **FIGARO**

In these hard times I am pressed to serve as prop master, prompter, chorus and author of this sad farce. How I wish I could change it to a merry one but never has there been an author so compromised by his actors – one actress in particular. O woman, woman, inconstant moon driven woman. But each animal is obliged to follow the instincts of its nature and it is woman's nature to betray. What while swearing this morning to remain ever faithful she is plotting to betray me before the night is past – on the very eve of our wedding. I may be a man equal to my lord, but the nocturnal spells of that enchantress woman, soon may transform me into a monster. (checking the set) There appears to be something missing.



*Figaro strikes himself  
lightly on the head and goes  
off stage to lead in  
Cherubino, by the ear.  
Figaro also is carrying a  
mask for Cherubino to wear.*

**CHERUBINO**

That hurts, Figa . . .

**FIGARO**

Quiet someone is coming.

*The Count appears double  
checking the pavilion signs;  
he enters the Cherry  
Pavilion.*

*The Countess appears dressed  
in Susanna's clothing wearing  
a mask. She stops at the  
signs and moves a candle  
closer to read them. She  
enters the Cherry Pavilion as  
well.*

**FIGARO**

Oh, my faithless Susanna. I wish I had enough gun  
powder to blow them both to hell.

**FSX – a church bell begins  
striking midnight**

*Susanna appears dressed in the  
Countess' clothes and wearing  
a mask. Both should also be  
wearing mantillas from Act I.  
She at first approaches the  
Cherry Pavilion in the dark,  
stops, reads the sign then  
changes directions toward the*

*Plum Pavilion but pauses  
before entering. She finally  
enters as the twelfth bell is  
rung.*

**FIGARO**

Beware, my Countess dove; I'm about to loose my  
falcon. Wake up, Cherubino. This is your cue. Do not  
doubt your worthiness, my boy, your costume has  
transformed you into a lord.

**CHERUBINO**

I shall not disappoint my lady.

**FIGARO**

How chivalrous of you.

*Cherubino sprints towards the  
Cherry Pavilion. Figaro has  
to run after him and re-  
direct him to the Plum  
Pavilion.*

My directorial job is done. I need to rest for  
tomorrow's final act.

*Figaro lies down to sleep  
covering himself with the  
cloak.*

***Lights fade to blackout.***

**ACT III**

**Scene 2**

**SETTING**

*The stage lights come up gradually to simulate dawn. Antonio and Fanchette enter from the open V between the two pavilions. They are dressed for a celebration. They discover Figaro still sleeping under his cloak near the topiary and wake him.*

**ANTONIO**

Awaken, Figaro. It's your wedding day.

**FIGARO**

Had you not heard about the outcome of my case?

**ANTONIO**

Everyone has heard. I can't sort it all out, but the one thing I know for certain is whichever the bride, you will be the groom.

*Marceline, Bartolo and a priest in a cassock enter.*

**MARCELINE**

*(Shouting)*

There is my husband!

*Marceline lifts Figaro off of the ground and holds him in her arms like a sack of flour.*

**BARTOLO**

And my scoundrel.

**FANCHETTE**

I wish my Cherubino was here to embrace me.

*The Count emerges from the  
Cherry Pavilion with a white  
scarf around his neck.*

**COUNT**

What is all this noise about?

**MARCELINE**

I have brought the priest to get married as quickly as possible before Figaro slips through my fingers once again.

**COUNT**

Figaro, have you now or are you likely to have by three of the clock today the requisite sum to redeem your bond?

**FIGARO**

You already know the answer to that.

**COUNT**

Well then.

*The Countess still dressed in  
Susanna's clothes and masked  
emerges from the Cherry  
Pavilion.*

**FIGARO**

What is this, my lord.

**COUNT**

We had hoped to protect your honor, but then here it is. Unbeknownst to you, Susanna had approached me recently about reversing my previous decision and exercising my rights of the seigneur of the manor to attest to her virginity in the traditional manner. And you'll be pleased to know, Figaro, that she was indeed a virgin. A most delectable one at that. You are a lucky man, my friend.

*The Count places the white scarf around her neck. While he is doing this, Susanna dressed as the Countess and also masked emerges from the other pavilion and stands there in silent witness.*

**FIGARO**

And, my lord, you'll be relieved that your wife knows what kind of husband she has married.

**COUNT**

What are you talking about?

*Cherubino enters dressed as the Count but still masked standing next to Susanna dressed as the Countess.*

And who the hell is that?

**ANTONIO**

I must give up the drink. I'm seeing two Counts..

**FANCHETTE**

So am I, father.

*The Count removes Cherubino's mask.*

**COUNT**

You. It is always you. Damn you and my dishonored wife.

*Susanna bows still in the guise of the Countess.*

**SUSANNA**

My cuckolded lord.

**COUNT**

Well , Figaro, at least I have beaten you to Susanna's maidenhead.

*Susanna now unmask.*

**SUSANNA**

I think not, my lord.

**FIGARO**

Now I am amazed.

**COUNT**

Then who is playing Susanna's part?

*The Count turns to take the mask off of the Countess.*

**COUNTESS**

The only person you should be making love to, your wife.

**ANTONIO**

*(beginning to weep)*

I'm really confused now.

**FIGARO**

My lord, I am pleased to echo your earlier announcement to the wide world that your wife has indeed been a virgin up until last evening. And I trust so has my wife.

*Figaro takes the white scarf off of the Countess and puts it around Susanna's neck.*

Appearances sometimes do hide realities, don't they, my lord. And fortunately there is a priest in attendance to hear your confession just in case you are about to be struck dead by God's righteous indignation.

**PRIEST**

These strange events may well strain even God's absolution.

**COUNT**

But Rosina's forgiveness is what I first must seek. Can you forgive me, my lady Countess? It certainly would be a most unmerited pardon.

**COUNTESS**

I shall on two conditions, my husband. First that you extend that same pardon to my godson, Cherubino, for all of his youthful transgressions and rescind his banishment from the castle.

**COUNT**

So granted him that pardon but I fear his impetuosity will some day become my undoing.

**COUNTESS**

So shall I grant mine to you. But there is another condition as well.

**COUNT**

And what is that?

**COUNTESS**

That you sing the song that first won my heart in Seville when that poor Lindor fellow was made rich only by his love for me. For truly this is the first day of our marriage.

**COUNT**

Thy will be done.

*He sings haltingly at first  
then with fuller voice.*

**SFX – DUNN guitar MUSIC #3**

Behold your lover fearful grown  
All his fond hopes are chased away  
He does adore you while yet unknown  
But now your will he dreads to obey.

In me a humble youth behold  
With me a humble lot you'll prove.  
I've neither titles, gems nor gold  
Yet am I passing rich in love.

Here poor Lindor shall chant his refrain  
At morn, at noon, at eve, at night.  
And though his vows prove all in vain  
Your beauty shall ever bless his sight.

*The Count and Countess embrace.*

**COUNT**

*(returning to himself)*

BUT I do not pardon you, Figaro, for your part in the creation of this humiliating charade. Never forget that I am your irreducible reality. Come here



Marceline . . . (to Figaro). No money — No marriage to Susanna. No money — Until-death-do-you-part marriage to Marceline.

**ANTONIO**

(to Fanchette)

I told you Figaro would be married today.

*Figaro desperately pulls a ring out from under his shirt on its chain from around his neck.*

**FIGARO**

Marceline, please have mercy on me. Pawn this ring and accept it as a down payment on what I owe. I can not live without Susanna.

**MARCELINE**

How came you by this ring?

**FIGARO**

It is my entire patrimony. I have had it from infancy.

**MARCELINE**

Doctor, do you not recognize this ring? It is the very one that you gave to me on the birth of our son, Fernando. I had this chain made so that he could wear it as a talisman against the evil spirits of the night.

**BARTOLO**

It cannot be. (to Figaro) Did you not buy this from some passing gypsy?

**FIGARO**

It is all I had when they took me and all I took with me when I escaped.

**BARTOLO**

Figaro, Fernando rather, behold thy mother.

**MARCELINE**

And there behold thy father.

**FIGARO**

He, my father? Oh Lord, what a mixture of salvation and damnation.

**MARCELINE**

Had you never felt our shared natures pleading within you to be attracted to me?

**FIGARO**

No, . . .never.

**MARCELINE**

This must have been the secret cause of my unrelenting fondness for you.

**FIGARO**

No doubt since I tried so hard to repel you. . . .  
Come to think on it maybe that was the cause of my aversion, since you appear so lovely to me now.

**MARCELINE**

Susanna, embrace thy mother. Thy mother who will love you dearly.

**SUSANNA**

Now, I am amazed. And do you consent that I shall have your Figaro free and clear?

**MARCELINE**

Willingly. Here, my son, here is your first wedding present – the promise completely satisfied.

*Marceline tears up the  
promissory note.*

**FIGARO**

My manly pride would fain make me restrain my tears  
lest they flow in spite of me. Well let them. Let  
them flow. Joys like these never come twice. Oh, my  
Susanna, Oh my family.

*Figaro embraces the Doctor,  
Marceline and Susanna who  
breaks away.*

**SUSANNA**

*(addressing the audience)*

Dear friends, we shall conclude our play on this merry  
note. Figaro brought to tears of joy is such a moment  
to long remember. Much more so than his endless  
interrogations of me about what Cherubino and I were  
doing to pass our time in the pavilion while he slept.  
We will reserve that dialogue for another play on  
another day.

But before our follies are ended this night  
Please pardon our errors and forgive any slight  
So you can clap, sing and have the chance  
To join with us in our wedding dance.

**SFX Begin the French folk  
dance music –**  
**[https://www.youtube.com/watch  
?v=7KdqLrriKm0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7KdqLrriKm0)**

**END of PLAY**



**Pierre-augustin Caron De Beaumarchais**



**Thomas Holcroft and William Godwin at Covent Garden  
theatre  
(c. 1790's)**



**EastBay Players staged reading cast for  
"Figaro's Follies"**

**(2014)**



**For information about licensing performances  
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