

Trumpets and Raspberries

(1981)

by Dario Fo

*Liberated from
capitalist control
to educate the masses
by
Socialist Stories*

Characters

ANTONIO BERARDI/
GIANNI AGNELLI
LUCIA RISMONDI
ROSA MINELLI
DOCTOR/
SECRET AGENT/
GROUP LEADER
FIRST WARD ORDERLY/
FIRST SECRET AGENT
SECOND WARD ORDERLY/
SECOND SECRET AGENT
THIRD WARD ORDERLY/
THIRD SECRET AGENT
FOURTH WARD ORDERLY/
FOURTH SECRET AGENT
EXAMINING MAGISTRATE/
WAITER/
MAN WITH DISHWASHER
DUMMY
WINDOW

ACT ONE**Scene One**

The stage lights come up slowly. We find ourselves in the recovery ward of a hospital. Four hospital ORDERLIES bustle about. They are wearing operating-theatre gear – green gowns, green caps, plastic gloves and clown-like antiseptic masks. As the lights come up, the WARD ORDERLIES are bringing equipment on-stage – various bits of electronic apparatus, and two office-style chairs on castors. Everything is covered with sheets of transparent cellophane, to indicate that the place is kept scrupulously germ-free.

One of the ORDERLIES arranges a very large and conspicuous bust of a man. This is mounted on a silver pedestal, and it too is wrapped in cellophane.

From the rear of the stage, enter the DOCTOR and ROSA MINELLI.

DOCTOR: This way, please, madam... we just want you to identify the patient.

ROSA: *(Almost bumping into the bust)* Oh, that's not him.

DOCTOR: This is a statue of Agnelli.[1] Our whole Recovery Ward was funded by the Agnelli Foundation.

ROSA: I thought that was the patient!

A WARD ORDERLY offers ROSA a theatre gown to put on.

Do I have to put it on?

ORDERLY: Of course, madam.

DOCTOR: Madam, if you don't feel up to it, we could postpone it till later.

ROSA: No, no... I want to see him straight away. I'm ready...

DOCTOR: Yes indeed, he looks pretty awful, even for us, and we should be used to it. He's completely disfigured, you know.

ROSA: Disfigured? (*Starting to cry*) Oh God... Poor Antonio...

The ORDERLY slips a pair of canvas hospital overshoes onto her feet.

What are you doing? (*Speaking normally*) Ah, it's for the polishing... Are you short-staffed? Oh all right, I don't mind. Disfigured, eh? And to think, he had such a handsome face... So open and likeable... You won't believe this, Professor, but I still loved him, even if he really didn't deserve it... when you think of the way he's treated me...

DOCTOR: She's getting overwrought. Prepare me a suppository with twenty drops of Asvanol Complex...

ROSA: Don't bother, Professor... I won't need it... I've already told you... I have no feelings for him... To me, my husband... was like a stranger... I haven't seen him for months. I can cope.

DOCTOR: I believe you... but it's just a precaution you know. I don't want to risk provoking a trauma in you, but it's for the identification... Unfortunately, the law requires it. Now come along, madam, and be strong.

At a signal from the DOCTOR, a mobile stretcher-bed is wheeled on-stage. Lying on it is the body of ROSA's presumed husband, ANTONIO. In fact it is a DUMMY, which is all bandaged up and in plaster. The WARD ORDERLIES take the ends of the wires which hang down from an overhead frame, and connect them to the DUMMY's extremities. In this way, as occasion demands, he can be made to move like a large string puppet. The

DUMMY's entry is accompanied by a musical interlude.

ROSA gets up and speaks to the DUMMY.

ROSA: Oh my God, Antonio, what have they done to you?!

She faints, and is held up by the DOCTOR and one of the ORDERLIES.

DOCTOR: Come on, come on... Be brave... Breathe deeply.

ROSA: His nose... He hasn't got a nose any longer...! It's all mashed to a pulp! And he already had sinusitis! And his chin... That's gone too. Let me near him!

DOCTOR: (*To the ORDERLIES*) No, keep her away!

ROSA: They've obliterated my Antonio... There's nothing left of him... apart from his ears. Antonio, Antonio! You see? He's got two ears, but he doesn't hear me!

DOCTOR: Obviously... He's in a deep coma.

ROSA: Oh, he's lost weight. It's that girl he's taken up with, the one who stole him away from me! Do you realise, she had him going out jogging?! Just imagine, a man of his age, a worker, admittedly a skilled worker... You force him to go running in a red tracksuit with 'Parmalat' written all over the back... a pom-pom hat with 'Michelin' stamped all over it, and 'Marlboro' track shoes... By the end, he looked more like a racing Ferrari...!

DOCTOR: Hurry up with that suppository... and please prepare me a syringe with Mecardizol.

ROSA: Don't bother about the hypodermic... If it's for me, at the very least I'll end up with an abcess on my backside! And then they have the nerve to talk about crime waves and terrorism... What about Agnelli? Those bastard managers at FIAT... with Agnelli at their head! They sent him to service some generator, hanging God knows how many feet up in the air, without safety gear... One careless moment and splat! A triple somersault with no safety net!

DOCTOR: No, madam, the accident didn't happen at the Circus...[2] I mean, in the factory, at FIAT.

ROSA: Oh no? And how can you be so sure... ? Were you

DOCTOR: No, but the hospital almoner's department looked into it. They made some brief inquiries. Yesterday, your husband was absent from work all afternoon.

ROSA: But where can it have happened, then?

DOCTOR: Maybe he was knocked down by a car...: Some hit and run driver. In fact the person who handed him over to the Red Cross promptly – poof – disappeared!

ROSA: Poof was he aye? May God strike him down! May he give him a dose of St Vitus' Dance, and gonorrhoea, so that when he gets the shakes his wotsits drop off! Oh, Antonio, if you'd only stayed with me... I bet they ran you over while you were out jogging! It's all the fault of that bitch... Don't get me wrong, Professor... She's a good-looking girl, but beauty's only skin deep and any woman of 23 can take a man's fancy... She makes me laugh! You should have seen *me* at her age! I mean, I'm boasting, but when I walked down the street, shop windows just used to shatter! What a din!

DOCTOR: I can quite well believe it. After all, you're still a beautiful woman...

ROSA: I know!

DOCTOR: It's the truth... Anyway, let's get back to your husband. Now, take a good look at his hands. Do you recognise them?

ROSA: No, not now... They look like two pieces of boiled meat... But afterwards, yes, when he gets better... because he will get better, won't he Professor... promise me that he will get better...

DOCTOR: Madam... we will do everything we can... Your husband is a very strong man...

ROSA: Ah yes, he's strong, very strong! He had such energy, such good health! He would never hold back from anything. When the *Unità* festival came round, for example...[3]

DOCTOR: So. You're communists are you?

ROSA: Oh, we've been communists for generations, from father to son... it's a custom we hand down in our family ...As I was saying, the *Unità* festival, he was always there, in charge of everything: he used to put up the stalls, sell the books, and buy them too... In his Party branch too, in the discussions, he would put forward all the arguments, and then put forward the counter-arguments, as well as the self-criticism. But don't go thinking that he was a fanatical bigot... No, far from it, he was always having arguments, particularly with the leadership... even if he had accepted the Third Road to socialism... he was also prepared for the Fourth Road ring road to socialism, and the bypass of the Fifth Road... because, as Karl Marx says, 'the roads to socialism are infinite'! Of course, she was always there behind him... the bitch, egging him on! Because she's an extremist. She doesn't even have a Party card... Nothing! Not even a Socialist Party card! She's one of those intellectuals who are always trying to teach us, the working class, everything. The kind of people who are crazy about the masses, but can't stand crowds! She isn't here, is she? She isn't hiding under the bed?

Inadvertently, ROSA grabs hold of one of the strings and pulls on it. This results in the DUMMY leaping off the bed. Everyone, including the DOCTOR, rushes to rearrange it.

DOCTOR: No. Madam, what are you doing! Don't touch!

ROSA: Oh my God! What have I done? Have I broken him? Hey, I'm not the only one to blame. Why do you leave the wires hanging down like that... Why don't you put up a notice: 'Don't pull on the wires!' Oh, what a fright... I can feel the tears coming on again... *(To an ORDERLY)* Excuse me, do you have a Kleenex so that I can blow my nose...

ORDERLY: Here you are, madam...

ROSA: Poor Antonio... And how's *he* going to blow his nose now that he hasn't got one?

During this exchange, the ORDERLIES lift the DOCTOR

up, into a horizontal position. From this curious position, he begins working on the DUMMY's face with swabs and forceps.

DOCTOR: Don't worry, madam, we'll make him another nose, and he'll be able to blow it whenever he wants.

ROSA: Professor, do you always work in such an uncomfortable position? Another nose? Will you be transplanting one from a dead person? But supposing his body rejects it, and his nose comes off into his handkerchief while he's blowing it? No, no nose! I'd rather have him like this... streamlined!

DOCTOR: No, no, no transplant! You are lucky, madam: our Institute is extremely advanced in plastic surgery operations.

The ORDERLIES now hold the DOCTOR as high as they can. He spreads out his arms, like an angel.

ORDERLY: Our Chief Surgeon is one of the best in the world!

DOCTOR: It's true.

The DOCTOR is slowly returned to the ground.

ROSA: Professor, he's looking at me! Look, there with that corner of his eye peeking out from the swelling... He's seen me, he's recognised me...! I'm sure of it... Antonio, Antonio, it's me, your Rosa... As soon as I heard what happened, I forgot everything... Here I am, and I'm not bitter... In fact, to tell you the truth, Antonio, I'm actually happy that this terrible thing has happened... No, no, I didn't mean that... What I mean is that I'm happy that I, your Rosa, can still be of use to you... I still love you, you know... I don't care if you used to go jogging with her, and eat brown rice and wheatgerm...! We'll forgive and forget, we'll get everything right just as it was before... We'll bury the past.

The DUMMY emits a groan.

No, Antonio, you misheard me. I didn't say that we'd bury you! Oh what a wally I am! But his jawbone here, it's all

gone... there's just a big hole...

DOCTOR: The mandible is indeed in very poor shape...

We're going to have to replace it with a whole prosthetic apparatus...

ROSA: Prosthetic? Whole apparatus?

DOCTOR: Precisely! We rebuild it entirely, on the basis of the original bone structure: we remove the parts which are broken, and we replace them. Incidentally, you will have to supply me with some photographs. Do you have any recent ones?

At this point, enter from backstage the actor who plays the part of ANTONIO.

ANTONIO: Excuse me... Excuse me... I'm going to have to interrupt at this point, because a misunderstanding is being created.

The ACTORS on stage freeze. ANTONIO moves to the front of the stage, and addresses the audience directly. The lights go down in the operating theatre. The ACTORS exit. ANTONIO remains front-stage, and behind him, a platform is wheeled on. On it are two car seats and assorted scrap parts of motor cars. We are in a breaker's yard.

ANTONIO: In this play, I act the part of Antonio, Rosa's husband. But I am not the doner kebab that you see here on the operating table. That's someone else. So who is it? Well, in order to explain this, I'm going to have to put things in order, and go back 24 hours, to yesterday evening. So, last night, or rather at about two o'clock this morning, I, Antonio Berardi, FIAT worker, was parked in my car in a secluded spot on the outskirts of Turin. To be precise, on the road that runs along the canal bank by *Barriera di Milano*. No, I was not alone. I was with a woman... and to be honest, it was not even the woman that I'm living with at the moment, Lucia, the one that Rosa calls the 'bitch'... Now, don't go getting the wrong idea... This wasn't some kind of erotic adventure... She was a colleague from work... a shop steward. We were discussing

redundancies. She told me that the other day at FIAT, they sacked two workers for absenteeism – and then they discovered that they'd been dead for a month. Anyway, one thing led to another, and we made love, and afterwards I told Lucia about it... (*Calling off-stage*) Lucia, could you come in please...

Enter LUCIA. She goes and sits down.

...at dawn this morning, when we met in a carbreaker's yard run by a friend of mine... She didn't exactly mince her words...

LUCIA: So this is what you mean by exploring closer relations between the union leadership and the rank and file!

ANTONIO: Good God! You're a worse moraliser than my wife! You don't realise what a mess I'm in... It's a matter of life and death!

LUCIA: Life and death? I'm sorry, Antonio... Go ahead, tell me... I promise you, I won't say another word.

ANTONIO: Thank God for that.

LUCIA: Except that...

ANTONIO: Ah, Ah, Ah. Why did I get involved in all this? There I was, at peace with the world, with the shop steward... on the canal bank... having a cuddle... no mean feat in the back of a 128... when all of a sudden I see two cars tearing along, neck and neck jostling for position. I said: 'Look at those stupid lunatics, racing around at this time of night, especially on this kind of ground. They're liable to skid!' I'd hardly finished speaking, when one of the cars skidded... A terrible crash! The FIAT 132 (I knew it was a 132... It's the sort we make in our plant...) ...the 132 ended up in a mangled heap, not twenty yards away... The other one comes along, bounces off it, and ends up nose-down in the mud... I said, 'I expect they're both dead then.'

LUCIA: I can well believe it. So, what did you do?

ANTONIO: What was I supposed to do? I jumped out of my

128, just as I was, to see if I could save anyone. The car doors were jammed. I kicked them. I got them open. A cloud of smoke poured out... My God, my eyes were streaming... I was coughing... but I carried on, all the same: I dragged them out... One, two, three... They were asphyxiated. All of them, asphyxiated. I tried to pull out the fourth one. You should have seen the state of him. He was all smashed up... He was sitting next to the driver's seat. He'd smashed his face against the windscreen. Squashed flat! Flat as a 100-lire piece! All he needed was the writing round the edge: Republic of Italy...

LUCIA: Yes. All right, all right, what the hell.

ANTONIO: So, I dragged him out, dragged him out by the armpits. I was just laying him out on the grass, when suddenly Boom! The engine went up! Both of us were caught, full frontal, by the flames.

LUCIA: Oh, Christ!

ANTONIO: Well, no, not both of us... only him, actually. Because, as soon as I saw the flames, instinctively I pulled up our squashed friend and put him in front of me. You know how it is, it's instinct... One doesn't think... A spur of the moment thing!

LUCIA: So.

ANTONIO: So now he's all on fire, so I started pulling all his clothes off: his jacket, his shirt, his trousers... But he still carried on burning, because he was covered in oil which had caught fire. So I took off my jacket and wrapped it round him... to put out the flames.

LUCIA: Well, I must say, you're a dirty old man, but you've got a big heart.

ANTONIO: Yes, I've got a tiny brain and all! Because, if I'd minded my own business...

LUCIA: Speaking of your own business, what about your colleague, the shop-floor delegate... Did she delegate everything to you? Did she jut sit there and watch?

ANTONIO: No, she didn't. As soon as she saw the flames, she grabbed up her stuff, just as she was, stark naked, and ran off down the road, in her high-heel shoes... tac-tac-tac... flobber, flobber, flobber, stark naked!

LUCIA: So, she was naked, eh? And you too?

ANTONIO: No! I had my jacket on...! No trousers, but a jacket, yes... Do you mind! Let's have a bit of decency...!

LUCIA: Just a moment, Antonio, do you have any idea of who it was that you pulled out of the burning car?

ANTONIO: No. Why, do you?

LUCIA: I've a suspicion. But hasn't it even occurred to you that it wasn't just an ordinary road accident, but that it might have been... I don't know... an attempted kidnap?

ANTONIO: What do you take me for, an idiot? Obviously it occurred to me. But only afterwards! When they began shooting at me with guns!

LUCIA: Shooting at you? But who? When?

ANTONIO: For heaven's sake, listen, will you let me tell the story as it happened...

LUCIA: But...

ANTONIO: Oi! Don't keep interrupting!

LUCIA: I won't say another word.

ANTONIO: So. When I dragged Squashy out of the car, he was all on fire. I wrapped him in my jacket. I noticed that the people whom I'd dragged out who I thought were all suffocated, were starting to cough; they were coming round. So, I shouted over to them: 'Oi, stop all that coughing, and come over here, help me take your friend, your colleague, to hospital, because he's dying here.' They completely ignored me... They were going round on all fours... Just like constipated sheep. At that point, what was I supposed to do? Wait for a vet? I picked up Features and took him over to my car, the 128. I put him inside. I pulled on my trousers. I started the engine, and at that moment: Bang! Bang! Who was that? It was our suffocated

friends. They were coughing and shooting at the same time. Bastards! Good God, I'd saved their lives, and, by way of thanks, they start popping off at me!

LUCIA: What did you do?

ANTONIO: I shone my headlights in their eyes, and tried to run them over... Whoosh! They leapt out of the way... like frogs. I swerved round the other car, and you'd have thought they were dead... But no: Bang! Bang! It was like Starsky and Hutch. Like Sam Peckinpah come back to life, and it wasn't in slow motion either. I was lucky to get away with my goolies.

LUCIA: Goodness, it's sending shivers down my spine... What kind of world are we living in?!

ANTONIO: Yes, you said it! But it's not over yet... I drove into town, and got as far as Porta Susa, where there's a Red Cross ambulance parked by the roundabout.

LUCIA: That's right, that's where they park.

ANTONIO: Exactly... And I called to the stretcher bearers to come over. They turn up and start giving it a bit of that: 'Dear, oh dear, oh dear, look at the state of this one. Who did this, then, eh? What is it - factory-fresh or home-made?' I saw right away that they thought that it was me who had done it. 'Look,' I said, 'Let's just get him down to the hospital, to casualty. There'll be a policeman there. I can explain everything to him.' 'OK.' They loaded Features into the ambulance... and told me to follow them in the car. As soon as we got to the first crossroads, whoosh, I scarpered

LUCIA: But you're crazy! Why did you go and do a thing like that?

ANTONIO: Because I was afraid. All of a sudden I imagined myself in the police station, with the police interrogating me. I mean, who was ever going to believe me? Who was ever going to believe that I was on the canal bank by accident, and that I was with a girl whose name I can't even remember... At the very least they would have arrested

me, beat shit out of me...

LUCIA: You're right, it's enough to make anyone lose their head. More to the point, though, Antonio, do you know who it was that you saved?

ANTONIO: No, why? Do you?

LUCIA: Yes. It was Agnelli.

ANTONIO: Agnelli? Don't talk rubbish: Agnelli!

LUCIA: I'm not talking rubbish. They said so this morning, on television. A news flash: 'The kidnapping took place at about two o'clock this morning in Barriera di Milano.' So he *must* be your squashed friend.

ANTONIO: Agnelli?! I saved Agnelli? I took him in my arms, I wrapped him in my jacket... Me! If my workmates get to hear about this at Mirafiori,[4] they'll line me up and run me over with tractors...! They'll bang me up against a wall and... splosh! splosh! splosh!... they'll gob me to death...! Just think... with all this bronchitis that's going around! But why didn't you tell me, instead of letting me ramble on like a fool...

LUCIA: I wanted to be sure. I didn't interrupt you so as not to influence you. But what a mess! Do you realise the trouble that you've got yourself into? This'll teach you to go out whoring with female shop stewards!

ANTONIO: Obviously, it's my just reward, isn't it? 'Anyone who goes whoring with female shop stewards is punished by God, who makes him save Agnelli's life!' Get on with your story! What else did the telly have to say!

LUCIA: Well, first of all they gave the news that Agnelli had been kidnapped, and then they said that, according to statements by some of his bodyguards, the kidnappers drove up alongside the car in which Agnelli was travelling, and fired a bazooka through the rear window.

ANTONIO: A bazooka. They used a bazooka?! Obviously. Nowadays they only use bazookas... it's safer... more convenient. 'Excuse me mate. Have you got a light?' Bang!

LUCIA: The window shattered, and the shell went off inside the car, giving off a cloud of poison gas which paralysed his bodyguards.

ANTONIO: Ah, so that smoke was gas?! It's true, they were really coughing badly.

LUCIA: Then they said that when the bodyguards came to, they woke up just in time to see one of the terrorists' accomplices, 'who had clearly been parked on the embankment for some time'.

ANTONIO: Accomplice, eh! For some time! Like any self-respecting accomplice, I was parked on the embankment... 'Oi! Terrorists! I know I'm your accomplice, but do me a favour! Get a move on! I'm a bit parky because I've got no trousers on! So as to be less conspicuous.'

LUCIA: Antonio, they said that Agnelli was unconscious, and that you loaded him into a red FIAT 128 and drove off.

ANTONIO: So... I'm done for, now... I'm an accomplice! Or rather, the main organiser of the kidnap... What an idiot! You go and play the Good Samaritan, you go and save the life of bosses who gamble with your life like they were playing gin rummy. The bastards!

LUCIA: Antonio, calm down. Agreed, they're bastards, but there's no point in getting all dramatic about it. You'll see. As soon as Agnelli regains consciousness in the hospital, he'll explain that he is Gianni Agnelli, and he'll tell how you saved his life, and everything will be fine and dandy.

ANTONIO: Well that is very likely, isn't it! 'Hello. I am Gianni Agnelli... I demand to see, immediately, the trouserless engineering worker who saved my life... Where is he, I feel that I love him! I shall marry him... We'll be married... In white!' Leave it out... with the knocking that he took, it'll be a miracle if he even remembers his name when he wakes up... 'Who are you?' 'Ga, Ga, Ga, Ga!'

LUCIA: Is he really in such a state?

ANTONIO: No - *I'm* the one in the state! The ambulance men

got a good full-frontal of me, from three yards away! My picture's going to be in all the papers today... My identikit! And underneath there'll be a caption: 'Head of the terrorist organisation in Lombardy, Piedmont, and Canton Ticino!'

LUCIA: You're exaggerating, as usual. For a start, there's no identikit in the papers.

She pulls a newspaper out of her handbag and gives it to
ANTONIO.

ANTONIO: Which newspaper is that?

LUCIA: A special edition. I bought it an hour ago.

ANTONIO: Jesus – they're really quick! (*He reads*) '*Fury as Tearaway Terrorists Nab FIAT Supremo. Fifty-three groups claim responsibility... Barriera Bombing. It's the Mafia Again. President Reagan demands televised debate with Frank Sinatra... Bishop of Durham Speaks Out. See page ten... Andreotti Lashes the Bazooka Bandits. Andreotti claimed that the state will not give in to blackmail, and asked to be made managing director of two banks. He also asked for Life Senatorships for everybody involved in the P2 Freemason Scandal... Pontiff Pips Premier. His Holiness the Pope pipped the Prime Minister to the post and offered himself as hostage in Agnelli's place; together with thirteen cardinals, ten of whom are black... Play Terrorist Bingo and Win a Panda*'

LUCIA: There, you see? It's the usual mad house... But there's not a word about you, and about Agnelli in hospital. Listen, Antonio. Tomorrow you should go into work at FIAT, as if nothing had happened.

ANTONIO: You're crazy... I'm going to go down there, and say, 'Here I am'... Here I am!

LUCIA: Where?

ANTONIO: Down here... (*He points to the newspaper*) '*Factory Worker in Frazzle Mystery. Forty-year-old Antonio Berardi, skilled worker at the FIAT-Mirafiori*

plant, was admitted to hospital by persons unknown earlier this morning. His face was seriously disfigured by burns. His wife, Rosa Minelli, has been traced, thanks to documents which the victim had in his jacket... I left everything in my jacket! I left my driving licence, my Party card... my Union card... (*He stops short, and bursts out laughing*) Ha, ha, ha!

LUCA: What's so funny?

ANTONIO: Agnelli, a member of the union now! If he dies now, they'll give him a funeral with red flags! 'Rosa Minelli has been invited to attend the hospital in order to identify her husband...'

LUCIA: Hey, Antonio, Rosa's bound to identify Agnelli as you.

ANTONIO: Look, you're going to have to stop seeing my wife as some kind of mental defective. This is a trap, and I'm not falling for it.

LUCIA: What do you mean, a trap?

ANTONIO: They've written that on purpose... so that I go to the hospital, like some prize twat: 'Hello, Rosa, look, don't identify me as me, because here I am, large as life, and this fellow is somebody else.' Bang! Immediate arrest of halfwit terrorist. Why don't *you* go and take a look.

LUCIA: You're right. I'll go to the hospital and see what's going on...

ANTONIO: (*Now turns directly to the audience*) Now we can get back to the operating theatre, and pick up where we left off...

Re-enter the DOCTOR, ROSA and the WARD ORDERLIES. Exeunt ANTONIO and LUCIA.

DOCTOR: Incidentally, madam, you will have to bring me some photographs. Do you have any recent ones?

ROSA: No, Professor, I'm sorry, but since my husband left me, I haven't really been bothered with having photographs taken. I still work as a hairdresser in town...

But I've let myself go a bit, you know.

DOCTOR: But no, you misunderstand... Not photographs of you... photographs of your husband...

ROSA: Ah, yes, how stupid of me. I do have some – very fine ones. (*She pulls out from her handbag two large photographs of ANTONIO, and hands them to the DOCTOR*) Quite by chance, I happen to always carry them with me. They were taken by a friend of his who knows that I still love him... They are recent... I hope you don't mind if they're cut a little bit short on this side... (*She points to one side of the photo*) but, you see, the bitch was with him in the photo, and I can't really be expected to carry the bitch round with me in my handbag all day... from morning till night, looking at her smiling all over her face as she clings to my husband. I cut her out and hung her on the wall... with two pins in her eyes, so as... people tell me that it really does work, you know... An Indian custom... Or maybe African... Since you're a doctor, you wouldn't happen to know if she's likely to... go blind? (*Showing him the photographs*) Will they do? Look what a nice face!

DOCTOR: Yes, good, they are fairly clear... We are lucky. These will help us a lot in the projections.

ROSA: Projections?

DOCTOR: Yes. First you project the image of the patient's face, from the photograph, and then you reconstruct it around a wax skull.

ROSA: A wax skull?

DOCTOR: Exactly. First we reconstruct the bone structure, and then the whole thing is covered with skin.

ROSA: With skin? With artificial skin? Like leatherette?

DOCTOR: No, not artificial skin, real skin! His skin! We take it from here... from the buttocks...

ROSA: From his bum? You're going to put bits of bum on his face...?! Oh, Antonio, my poor Antonio, what a terrible situation...!

ROSA suddenly moves away from the patient, and inadvertently leans on a lever. This releases the central operating theatre lamp, which crashes down onto the DUMMY. General pandemonium ensues.

DOCTOR: No! Not the lever!

A musical interlude follows. As the lamp falls, enter the POLICE INSPECTOR. He approaches the DOCTOR.

INSPECTOR: A moment... Allow me... Are these recent photographs?

ROSA: Yes... Is he a surgeon?

INSPECTOR: No, I am the police inspector.

ROSA: Ah, police? And are you here to find out who did this streamlining job on my husband?

INSPECTOR: I might be.

ROSA: Well there's no point in asking him. Go and ask those bastards at FIAT. Go and ask Agnelli.

INSPECTOR: Now, madam, there's no need to bring Mr Agnelli into all this, particularly at a time like this. Who knows where the poor man is at this moment?

ROSA: Antonio, I promise you that if they ever find him, I'll go looking for him, and I'll mash his face up just like yours!

DOCTOR: Madam, is all this really necessary? I've already told you he doesn't understand...

ROSA: Oh yes he does! There's a glint in his eye...

Enter an ORDERLY with a sheet of paper in his hand. He goes over to the DOCTOR..

ORDERLY: Excuse me, Professor, there's somebody here. Says they're a relative of the patient, Antonio Berardi, and asks if it's possible to see him.

ROSA: Let's have a look... Who is this relative?

ORDERLY: I don't know. Here's the details.

ROSA: Can I see them, eh...?

DOCTOR: No, madam, please. I am the doctor here, until

proven otherwise, and it's me who decides who is to be let in. Lucia Rismondi.

ROSA: *It's the bitch!* She has the nerve to pass herself off as a relation, just because she was sleeping with my husband! The whore!

DOCTOR: Madam, calm down!

ROSA: Calm down? Why should I calm down? I'm furious! Humiliating me like this! Here I am, heartbroken, with my husband looking like a Michelin Man... all wrapped up like a packet of fish fingers, and *she* comes here just to spite me.

DOCTOR: Madam, will you stop that! I can't stand scenes! I warn you that if you don't start behaving very civilly indeed, I shall have you shown out of here, and I shall not let you come back to visit your husband for at least a month. Clear?

ROSA: (*Looking at the DOCTOR in amazement*) Just who you think you are talking to me in that arrogant tone? Use it on some patient in a coma. Not on me. I'm involved in politics, me! I've opened birth control clinics. I'm not some timid woman who lets herself be put down by people who shout! No, sir! I am the patient's wife! I can come in when I want! That's the law! My husband, after all, is in a coma! And if you have something to say about it I'll stage such a sit-in, right here and now.

INSPECTOR: Madam, listen, I am conducting investigations precisely in order to discover what has happened to your husband. It's possible that this woman might be able to give us some useful information.

ROSA: But she doesn't know anything, because she never saw anything! Anyway, she's also about to go blind, with the pins! Isn't she, Doctor?

DOCTOR: Get out! Get out!

ROSA: (*She moves off, reluctantly, but after a few steps, she faints*) Oh, God, I feel ill... Oh, my head...

DOCTOR: (*Lifting ROSA up*) Madam, please don't start

play-acting... (*They help her to sit down*) Would you pass me the smelling salts. Come on... Come on... Take a deep breath.

He forces ROSA to smell the salts.

ROSA: Cough, cough! Cough... I'm suffocating... Professor, you're mad! What is this vile stuff you're making me breathe...? Cough... There, now I really do feel ill!

DOCTOR: No, you're not ill... Come on, be good, get out of here...

ROSA: Let me get my breath. (*She breathes, very ostentatiously*) I'd like to make a self-criticism.

DOCTOR: Oh my God.

ROSA: You're right, I've behaved really badly... I've been selfish. When all's said and done, that poor girl has the right to see my husband too. If she's fallen in love, it's hardly her fault... She's so young and pretty too... She's educated. She's got a degree! She's a doctor! She could have taken up with a professor like yourself, or, if the worst came to the worst, with an Inspector, like yourself... But no... She decided to choose my husband... a man old enough to be her father... I mean any wife should feel proud, don't you think? I'm really happy... Please, Inspector, don't send me away. I would really like to meet her...

INSPECTOR: OK... OK. As long as you stay there and keep your mouth shut.

DOCTOR: Alright, Inspector, shall we ask her in?

He signals to the ORDERLIES to put a screen in front of the bed, so that LUCIA does not see the patient at once.

INSPECTOR: All right. Get her in here!

DOCTOR: Show her this way please.

Enter LUCIA. There is a moment of embarrassment and tension.

LUCIA: Mrs Berardi... Please excuse me if I... Perhaps I

shouldn't have... I know...

ROSA: Oh you were right. I'm very pleased to meet you. I'm sure he will be pleased to see you as well, although I don't suppose he will recognise you!

She embraces her formally.

LUCIA: Hasn't he regained consciousness yet?

ROSA: Yes he has... he definitely recognised me. Of course it might be more difficult with you, though, because he hasn't known you very long...

LUCIA: Are you sure that it really is him?

INSPECTOR: A moment, excuse me... Miss, would you please mind stepping over to the bed...

ROSA: Wait a moment, Inspector.

LUCIA: Inspector?

ROSA: Yes, he's here for the investigation... Don't let him rush you. Be brave... He's got nothing left... Only two ears...

LUCIA: (*Going up to the bed, and barely glancing at the DUMMY*) Oh my God, it's really horrible! It's him... It's him... (*She clings to ROSA*)

DOCTOR: Are you sure? By what do you recognise him?

ROSA: From his hands, no...?

INSPECTOR: Come along, don't lead her on!

ROSA: Who's leading her on!

LUCIA: By his ears.

INSPECTOR: By his ears?

LUCIA: Yes, because I have studied those ears inch by inch...

DOCTOR: You've studied his ears?

ROSA: What an intellectual!

LUCIA: Yes, you see... I practise acupuncture... and I've even been to China on a training course... And since Antonio suffered from sinusitis...

ROSA: Yes, yes, sinusitis... it's true... he had it really badly!

LUCIA: To cure him, I used to stick needles in his ears...

ROSA mimes sticking needles in her ears and at the same time starts running on the spot.

That's how I recognise him. As you may know, Professor, every ear has its own particular physiognomy... In fact, if you take a wax mould of the auditory pavilion, you get a shape which looks like a little foetus, which is none other than a miniature portrait of how we were in our mothers' wombs.

INSPECTOR: Like seeing a snapshot of yourself as a baby!

ROSA: A foetus in your ear!! I'll have to tell them that at the clinic!

DOCTOR: It's true! Our police forensic departments no longer use the usual fingerprint system, but take wax moulds of the auditory chambers of their suspects!

INSPECTOR: You mean every time you're arrested, wallop, a dollop of hot wax in your earhole! Incredible! You scientists are amazing! Well, that wraps it up: it's him, Antonio Berardi. Doctor, I would like to thank you for your collaboration.

LUCIA and ROSA: Don't mention it...

INSPECTOR: Let's go and have a drink.

ROSA: Well, Antonio, you've been positively identified as my very own Antonio Berardi. She's a bit of a know-it-all, isn't she Antonio... *Doctor, Doctor*, he's trying to say something...

ROSA suddenly turns away from the patient. Somehow she contrives to lose her balance. She supports herself by grabbing one of the wires hanging down. The DUMMY flies up in the air, amid scenes of general pandemonium.

Blackout
Musical interlude

Scene Two

When the lights come up again, we find ourselves in the same scene as before. The bed with the dummy on has disappeared. On stage are ROSA and the DOCTOR.

DOCTOR: Madam, this may seem a bit presumptuous, but you're going to have to give us credit for the miraculous things that we've managed to achieve. You will see... a masterpiece!

The DOUBLE is wheeled on-stage in a wheelchair pushed by three WARD ORDERLIES. His face is swathed in bandages. Everyone bustles around him, busily removing the bandages, to reveal his face.

The DOUBLE's face is encased in a kind of mask of elastic tapes. Small rings are fixed to various positions of the tapes – one on his chin, one on his nose, one on each cheek, and one on his forehead. Wires or cords are connected to each ring, and they pass through pulleys in an overhead metal or wooden frame. The other ends come down to stage level. Each ORDERLY holds one or two of these wires.

As the action unfolds, ROSA says:

ROSA: Oh, the suspense is killing me! It reminds me of a film I saw when I was a girl: 'The Living Mummy!' where they unbandaged someone just like this.. There he is... Look... It's him... It's him...!

DOCTOR: But what are you saying, madam, he's perfect!

ROSA: Oooh. Well done... You've caught him really well... Mind you, all those stitches all over his face...

DOCTOR: Yes, but they can't be helped... In a few days they will disappear, though, some of them will dissolve... and with the others, you just pull one end, and out they come.

ROSA: But if you pull on one end of the thread, won't he come undone, and won't his face fall all over the floor?

DOCTOR: Nein, nein.

ROSA: I'm sorry. You can tell, I'm so happy I'm beginning to talk rubbish again. Oh, Antonio, if you could only see yourself... You're almost better than before! Antonio, how do you feel? Tell me!

The DOUBLE doesn't move.

DOCTOR: Gently, madam, gently... He has to get used to speaking again... We must proceed gradually... You should remember that we have rebuilt his entire jawbone and palate.

ROSA: Ah yes, I suppose now he's just running in.

DOCTOR: So leave it to me. Mr Berardi, try opening your mouth, slowly, let's see if you can do it...

The DOUBLE does as he says.

Well done...

The DOUBLE's attempts to speak are assisted by the WARD ORDERLIES, and by the DOCTOR. They pull on the various wires, and through mime amplify his facial movements. This gives the impression that every movement of his mouth is brought about by operating the 'machine'.

ROSA: It's opening, it's opening!

DOCTOR: And now, try with me, repeat after me: Ahaaa...

DOUBLE: Ahaaa...

The DOCTOR and the ORDERLIES continue their mime action.

ROSA: He said Ahaaa!

DOCTOR: Please keep quiet, madam. Once again: Ahaaa...
Oooh...

ROSA: Come on, Antonio, say Oooh, as the doctor tells you!

DOUBLE: Oooh...

DOCTOR: No, no, first Ahaaa, then Oooh! Pay attention to me, not to your wife! Once again: Ahaaa... Oooh...

DOUBLE: Ahaaa... Oooh... Eheee...

ROSA: He said 'E'... all by himself! How intelligent!

DOCTOR: No, not at all! He mustn't do that! Mr Berardi, you must make only the sounds that I ask you to make!

ROSA: Alright, but if he decides he wants to go 'Eheee', don't you think that it's a bit much to stop him?

DOCTOR: Madam, you should realise that the sound 'Eheee' requires the jawbone to extend to its maximum limit, with the risk that it might come out of its mastoid socket.

ROSA: So does that mean that my Antonio, when he talks, will never be able to say 'e's'? Here, so you won't be able to say wheatgerm, then, will you?

DOCTOR: No, no, he *will* be able to say 'e's' too, but later! First he must make the intermediate sounds, like: Braaa, Brooo, Bray.

DOUBLE: Braaa... Brooo... Bray...

Repeated several times, evolving into Satchmo impersonation.

DOCTOR: There, that's just perfect! And now, say: gastric... gastropod...

DOUBLE: Gaaastric, gaasopo...

DOCTOR: No, articulate it properly: gas-tero-pod...

DOUBLE: Troppo... Gastopo... Braaa, Brooo, Bray!

DOCTOR: Silence! And now say: astronaut, concupiscence, manumission.

ROSA: But Professor, have you gone mad? What are these words that you're making him say? He's never going to say words like that... He's a worker... Make him say the words that he's going to use every day: wage packet, lay-offs,

redundancies... Astronaut? Why, we don't even know one!

DOCTOR: Listen, I'm the one who knows how to teach!
Come along, Mr Berardi: astronaut, manumission,
concupiscence.

DOUBLE: Conc... Concup... Concup... Piss off!

DOCTOR: What???!

ROSA: See, now you've upset him!

The DOUBLE gets up and goes to walk out towards the exit. ROSA tries to stop him.

I'll stop him. I'm his wife. Antonio, you can't go out...

She approaches her husband, who is walking like Frankenstein. She tries to stop him.

Antonio, stop! But look how he's walking! You must have made a mistake somewhere! Antonio, you're not a robot!

DOUBLE: Don't you start too, madam!

ROSA: Professor, did you hear? He called me madam. He's pretending he doesn't recognise me. But Antonio, dear, I'm Rosa, I'm your wife!

DOUBLE: What do you mean, wife... wife, indeed? F... F... F... Forget it!

He goes out, dragging the wires behind him. The WARD ORDERLIES follow him, trying to untangle the wires.

ROSA: Did you hear that?! Where's he going, Professor? Stop him!

DOCTOR: No, let him move about a bit, let him take a little walk. Anyway, where's he going to go? He'll go to his room. And you, madam, don't go feeling all hurt. You must understand, after all these months of tension, with one operation after another... it's natural that he's on edge. Instead, you should think about the happy outcome of this whole experiment... treatment.

ROSA: What happy outcome? I've been visiting him for months and months, and he's never even looked at me.

Then, finally, he speaks! All that comes out is Braaa, Brooo, Bray... and then he says: 'What do you mean, wife...?'

Enter the POLICE INSPECTOR.

INSPECTOR: Excuse me, Professor, did you give the prisoner... sorry, the patient permission to leave?

DOCTOR: Ja, just to go back to his room.

INSPECTOR: But he's not going back to his room. He's taken the lift down to the ground floor, to the way out.

DOCTOR: My God. Stop that man.

INSPECTOR: Already done. I've despatched two officers to persuade him to rejoin us. Only our vigilance prevented him from doing a runner.

ROSA: Doing a runner? Have you seen him walk?

INSPECTOR: Exactly... Listen, madam, would you mind stepping outside for a moment? I have something private to say to the Professor.

ROSA: Yes, yes, I'm going. People are always throwing me out. I'll go and find Antonio... I'll give him a bit of my speech therapy... I'll teach him to say: I love you, Rosa... I'm leaving the bitch... I'm coming back to you...' You can stick your astronaut up your manumission.

ROSA exits.

INSPECTOR: So, Professor, everything's sweet?

DOCTOR: Yes. We're progressing well. We're building up a basic vocabulary for him. In a couple of days he'll be speaking almost as well as you.

INSPECTOR: Magic. I'd like to start straight away putting a few simple questions to him...

DOCTOR: Yes, but only under my control.

INSPECTOR: Yes, yes, you can stay... In fact, you can give us a hand. Would you mind if I invite the Examining Magistrate in...? (*Without waiting for an answer, he calls offstage*) Your Honour, step this way.

Enter the EXAMINING MAGISTRATE.

Professor... No, you can make your own introductions. I'm very bad at names.

Enter a POLICEMAN with a portable typewriter.

This is my assistant... You know, to take down his statement.

DOCTOR: What statement? Leaving aside the fact that I still do not know what you suspect him of...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Well, for start, we have discovered that the red FIAT 128 registered in Berardi's name is the same car that the terrorists...

The INSPECTOR, standing behind the DOCTOR, signals abruptly to the EXAMINING MAGISTRATE to keep quiet.

Now then, what were you saying about the patient?

DOCTOR: But you surely can't think that the patient is ready... We must proceed gradually. It will be very difficult to get him to answer questions logically. Almost certainly, the trauma which caused his coma has flattened all his mnemonic-responsive anafracts.

INSPECTOR: Mnemonic-responsive anafracts? What does that mean?

The DOCTOR goes and stands behind the POLICEMAN, who is sitting on a wheeled office chair, and has put his typewriter on one of the pieces of theatre equipment (an encephalogram recorder) which is also on wheels. The DOCTOR, carried away with his explanation, grasps the POLICEMAN's head, and describes what's in it. Then he pushes the wheeled POLICEMAN, together with his typewriter, to centre-stage.

DOCTOR: You see, in the central-posterior part of the brain, known as the mnemechaea, there is a space which we might call the memory warehouse. In this warehouse there are thousands of relays, which, when activated, switch on a number of tapes, on which are stored memories, words,

sensations, in short, everything that has happened in our lives...

INSPECTOR: So, the trauma will have wiped all his tapes?

The INSPECTOR too manhandles the junior POLICEMAN's head.

DOCTOR: No, not all of them, but most of them... It may be that only one tiny, maybe insignificant, detail will pop up. Everything else will have been erased.

INSPECTOR: What if he just makes out that he can't remember, in order to avoid telling the truth?

The DOCTOR and the INSPECTOR in turn grapple with the POLICEMAN's head, gesticulating. By now the POLICEMAN is thoroughly terrified.

DOCTOR: No, impossible! In this first phase – which we call the phase of innocence – the patient is not capable of practising deception... because the fiction mechanism, which is the **most exposed** and ephemeral part of the brain, is always the **first to be destroyed** by any violent trauma.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: In short, (*He also tries to get his hands on the POLICEMAN's head, but the POLICEMAN ducks out of the way to prevent him*) they are no longer capable of pretending or lying. And does this happen in every case?

DOCTOR: Yes. Every case, but not in the case of politicians... For them, traumas have no effect.

INSPECTOR: Here he is... Hand built by robots.

Enter the DOUBLE, walking like a wobbly flamingo. They sit him down (centre-stage) on the wheeled office chair. When the DOUBLE enters, the POLICEMAN on wheels moves, together with his equipment, to the DOUBLE's left-hand side.

DOCTOR: Here you are, Mr Berardi, sit down here and relax... These gentlemen would like to ask you a few questions... Please, you mustn't force him. Let him freewheel...

The DOUBLE jerks his head, like a suspicious flamingo. He fixes on the POLICEMAN, eyeing him mischievously. The gag is repeated ad libitum.

INSPECTOR: Of course. Freewheel... Tell us, where were you going to in such a hurry...

DOCTOR: Try and answer, there's a good chap.

DOUBLE: Gasteronomical... gastero... Could you repeat the question, please...

INSPECTOR: Where were you running off to?

DOUBLE: Ruuunning ooofff... but I didn't waant to run off...
I oonly waaanted to gooo...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Go where?

DOUBLE: To Head Quarters...

INSPECTOR: What Head Quarters?

DOUBLE: To the Heead Quaarters... which... after... over...
there! (*With a series of gestures, he describes stairs, lifts, doorbells, automatically-opening doors*) Fruuut...
Tracht... Driing... Whoosh... Ching!

DOCTOR: No, don't strain yourself, calm down, relax...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Yes, yes, relax, calm down.
We only want to have a little chat... among friends...

INSPECTOR: And so as to help you... so that you can practise speaking.

DOUBLE: Speeking, among frieends...? Are these your frieends, Professor? (*He fixes a beady eye on the POLICEMAN like a pointer eyeing its prey*) What's he writing?

INSPECTOR: He's taking notes of what you say... so that we can monitor your progress.

DOUBLE: Ah, yes? And theen you'll leet me reead whaaat I said... and what he has written?

INSPECTOR: Certainly, and sign it...

DOUBLE: Sign? Why sign?

INSPECTOR: No reason.

DOUBLE: No, you're lying. Liar!

INSPECTOR: Cut that out.

DOUBLE: Liar!!

INSPECTOR: Let's start from what you remember... For example, what's your name?

DOUBLE: Well, everyone calls me Antonio... even the Professor... and that horrible woman... who's driving me mad... Antonioooo, Antoniooooo... Antonioooooo...!

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Your wife?

DOUBLE: My wife? Yes, she says she is my wife. But I don't remember her... because... Whoosh... Clang... Vroom... *(He starts waving his arms in vague and meaningless gestures)* Toniinoooo... Bruuuuu! Antoninoooo! Antonino-o-o-o...

DOCTOR: Now then, now then, calm down, we won't talk about your wife any more...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: We won't talk about your wife any more.

INSPECTOR: We won't talk about her any more.

DOUBLE: We won't talk about my wife any more? Promise?

INSPECTOR: What do you mean, promise?

DOUBLE: Promise!

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE and DOCTOR: Promise!

INSPECTOR: Promise.

DOUBLE: Dib, dib, dib.

INSPECTOR: Look... Now... What about the accident?

DOUBLE: *(He explodes like a madman, terrorised)* Ahaaa... Vrooom... Chugga-chugga... Bang... Kerrash... Biff... Oooooh.

DOCTOR: No, look, you're doing this all wrong. You have to deal more tactfully, give him more leeway...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: You're right. Listen, Mr Berardi, do you remember any particular details of your childhood?

DOUBLE: My childhood! Yes... When I was a child... I liked motor cars, when I was a child...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: But all little boys like motor cars...

DOUBLE: But I liked them moore! I lived in a greeeat big maaansion...

DOCTOR: In childhood memories, everything is always big.

DOUBLE: Yes. And when you're big it can be fucking enormous if you play your cards right. I remember when I was fourteen I was given a cowboy outfit.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Cowboy outfit?

DOUBLE: Yes, and I've been running it ever since. Does that mean anything to you?

POLICEMAN: (*With typewriter*) ...Cowboy outfit.

INSPECTOR: Scrub that out. Cowboy outfit.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: What do you remember about your mother and your father?

DOUBLE: My mother... I don't remember... No... Nothing... Mummy, no... At this moment, have no recollection of mother...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: You don't remember?

DOUBLE: I'm trying to remember... my mummy...

INSPECTOR: But don't strain yourself...

DOUBLE: Wait a minute, I want to remember...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: But you don't have to...

DOUBLE: I want to remember! I loved my mummy. I don't remember my mummy... I haven't got a mummy! (*He cries, heartbroken*) I've looked everywhre in my memory, but I haven't got a mummy!

He rests his head on the INSPECTOR's shoulder.

INSPECTOR: What are you doing?

DOUBLE: Won't you give me a little cuddly-wuddly... ?

INSPECTOR: Cuddly-wuddly!

DOUBLE: Just a little one...

INSPECTOR: Please, pull yourself together!

DOUBLE: Please. Peezy, weezy, weezy.

INSPECTOR: Get off me. Stuff your mummy.

DOUBLE: He said he wants to stuff my mummy!

You'd better start praying that my memory doesn't come back, because if my memory does come back and I remember who I am and who I was... then... Whiish, roar, roar! (*He becomes like King Kong*) I do remember my father, though... He always used to take me to see the cars...

INSPECTOR: Did he work at FIAT too?

DOUBLE: Eh? Work?

He slyly rests his head on the INSPECTOR's shoulder.

INSPECTOR: Pull yourself together...!

DOUBLE: Oh look – I can laugh! Ah, it does me good to talk. I feel as if I'm getting better already.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Well done, carry on.

DOUBLE: Gasteropod, astronaut... concupiscent... astronaut...

POLICEMAN: How do you spell gasteropod?

The POLICEMAN types frantically.

INSPECTOR: But what are you typing there?

The POLICEMAN breaks off momentarily, and then starts again.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Listen, would you feel up to

telling us about the accident? Without straining yourself, though.

DOUBLE: Ah... vrrr... beeee.... oonly little bits... I remember...! I was in a car... and there was another car... two cars...

INSPECTOR: There were two cars...

DOUBLE: There was a race...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: A chase... And you...?

DOUBLE: I was in the car...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Behind.

DOUBLE: Behind...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE AND INSPECTOR: The car behind. Well done!

DOUBLE: No, no... That's wrong...

INSPECTOR: What do you mean, no?

DOUBLE: I made a mistake!

INSPECTOR: The first answer is always the one that counts!

DOUBLE: Liar...

INSPECTOR: Don't let's start all that again!

DOUBLE: Liar, liar... etc.

DOCTOR: Now look, you really shouldn't put words in his mouth... *(He grabs the wheeled chair and pushes it up-stage)* I told you! Let him freewheel...

INSPECTOR: Very well, we'll let him freewheel...

He grabs the chair and hurtles it towards the audience.

DOUBLE: Yes... We're going... going fast... faster and faster... Bing, bang, bong... Crash... Smack... then... I can't remember... any more...

INSPECTOR: Try. There was a crash, a smash. What then? Blood, mangled bodies, headless torsos, smoke...

DOUBLE: Ah, yes... flames... I'm on fire...
HEELP!

INSPECTOR: What's the matter with you, calm down!

DOCTOR: I told you not to push him too far!

The DOUBLE's jaw becomes dislocated.

DOCTOR: Oh I see what's happened. Let go. Let go.

DOUBLE: Thank you very much.

DOCTOR: You're most welcome.

INSPECTOR: Not a lot to go on there Your Honour?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Indeed. We're going to have to try something else.

DOUBLE: Then I remember a voice shouting out: 'Agnelli... They're carrying away Agnelli!'

INSPECTOR: Brilliant! Write that down!

DOUBLE: Why brilliant? What does that mean? Would you care to explain to me who this Agnelli might be...? Because every now and then I have that name on my mind...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: I should think so too!

DOUBLE: What?

INSPECTOR: Never mind. Now, what does the name FIAT mean to you...?

DOUBLE: FIAT? Well, it's something almost... how can I say: like family... FIAT.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Your family?

DOUBLE: Like something that belongs to me.

DOCTOR: It's incredible how attached these FIAT workers are to their company!

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: And now, could you tell us a bit about your work...?

DOUBLE: Work?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: What work did you do at FIAT?

DOUBLE: Work?

INSPECTOR: Yes, work.

DOUBLE: At FIAT...? Work?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Work...

INSPECTOR: Work!

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Working... Labouring...

DOUBLE: Labouring... Work... Labour...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: At FIAT...

DOUBLE: Work... Labour?

INSPECTOR: Yes!

DOUBLE: These words have no meaning for me...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: (*He dictates to the
POLICEMAN with the typewriter*) Filthy little skiver.

INSPECTOR: And what about profit, production...? Do they mean anything to you?

DOUBLE: Oh yes... A lot... And restructuring... net profit... holding company... mobility of labour... summary sackings! Ha, Ha!

INSPECTOR: And the word terrorism...? What does that mean to you?

DOUBLE: It means: radical and accelerated development of the armed struggle with consequences which may be positive or negative depending on the general situation of conflictuality between the various combined interests.

INSPECTOR: Magic!

DOCTOR: Magic!

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Magic!

*The EXAMINING MAGISTRATE and the
INSPECTOR are pleased. They laugh.*

DOUBLE: Have I said the right thing?

INSPECTOR: Exactly the right thing!

DOUBLE: I don't understand what it is I've said. I would like to know what it is that I've said.

INSPECTOR: Let's proceed. Let's see if you remember any contacts, for example, with foreign groups...

DOUBLE: Yes, indeed... foreign groups... I remember...

INSPECTOR: Russians?

DOUBLE: Russians... Oh yes... Russians... Many contacts...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Very good...

DOUBLE: Was it magic? Are you pleased?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Yes, very pleased. And with Libyans?

DOUBLE: Libyans? Libya... Ah yes... I remember... I paid a special visit to Libya. Armed men in uniform coming to meet me.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: And did you talk about clandestine activities?

DOUBLE: Yes: very clandestine! Traffic...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Traffic? Traffic of arms?

DOUBLE: Yes, arms too... all kinds of arms... heavy and light...

INSPECTOR: Were you aware of why and for what purpose those arms were to be used?

DOUBLE: Water.

INSPECTOR: What?

DOUBLE: Mineral water. Not carbonated.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: What's he saying?

DOCTOR: It's simple. He's saying he's thirsty...

INSPECTOR: Wait a moment, answer my question.

DOUBLE: No, I'm thirsty... non-carbonated mineral water, cool but not iced!

DOCTOR: Wait a minute, I'll see to it. I've got a fridge here.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Alright... get him his bloody water...

DOUBLE: I hope it's not carbonated, because if I burp I'll blow the nose off!

INSPECTOR: I'll have a glass of that as well...

DOUBLE: Oh, the funnel... Doctor, do you have the funnel?

DOCTOR: Yes... yes...

He pulls a funnel out of the fridge, and hands it to the
DOUBLE.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: A funnel? What's that for?

DOUBLE: In order to drink... Otherwise I spill it all over the place... Wait while I get the tube... *(He takes the funnel and sticks it into his neck, on the right hand side)* Doctor, could you help me to screw the funnel in? Ah, no, thanks, look, I've done it myself... *(The DOCTOR pretends to pour water into a glass)* Your health! Gentlemen. *(He pours the water contained in the glass into the funnel)* Brrr... It's cold.

INSPECTOR: Excuse me, where exactly have you poured it?

DOUBLE: Ah, directly into my oesophagus...

DOCTOR: Yes, for a few more months yet he won't be able to swallow either food or liquids by mouth.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: So his food has to go through the funnel too?

DOCTOR: Yes, only food that has been mashed and puréed... Everything by neck.

DOUBLE: They purée everything for me, my starter, main course, dessert and coffee. No... not the coffee. I have special suppositories for the coffee.

INSPECTOR: Listen, would you mind if we get back to our little chat?

DOUBLE: Yes, let's begin again... You were asking me if... I remember traffic of arms... and who were they aimed for. Vaguely... I remember the word... Wing, plot, right.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE and INSPECTOR: Wing, plot, right?

DOUBLE: Wing.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Plot.

INSPECTOR: Right.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Wing.

DOUBLE: Plot. Right Wing Plot. That's right. And the word... 'destabilise'... But I didn't agree... but there was somebody... police, I think...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Police? Which police?

DOUBLE: Well, I don't remember... Maybe ours...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Italian police? Special Branch? Secret services?

DOUBLE: Very secret... Special services... One time they were on the point of exposing them... I knew about it... I was scared they'd implicate me too... Ah, now I remember the trial... Generals, ministers... then everything was exposed... and then covered up again! Whitewash.

INSPECTOR: Whitewash?

POLICEMAN: Generals... ministers... I didn't quite catch that. What was it he said before 'whitewash'...?

INSPECTOR: Don't write that down you pillock. Rub it out. Rub it all out!

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: No, not everything. Only from 'police' onwards...

DOUBLE: Ah, now, that period I remember really well, really clearly... All the big-nobs, all their names... There was even an admiral involved... a judge... a minister...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Will you stop remembering.

INSPECTOR: Do something.

DOUBLE: If I make a little effort, it'll all come back to me. I could name all five hundred of them... Now, I'll start in alphabetical order, from 'A'... The first is Andreot...[5]

the first is...

As the DOUBLE is speaking, the EXAMINING MAGISTRATE and the INSPECTOR try to interrupt him. He carries on regardless. The INSPECTOR signals to the DOCTOR, who immediately gives the DOUBLE an injection in the arm.

DOUBLE: ...Andreat... Andreottolo... (*He loses his powers of speech, and breaks down*) Oh... oh... oh...

DOCTOR: There you are, Inspector. For ten minutes now he won't be able to either speak or hear.

INSPECTOR: Thank God for that! I don't think we need to hear any more, he's a terrorist... Damned himself out of his own mouth... Can't tell a lie.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: In fact, it's almost criminal to take advantage of his honesty.

INSPECTOR: Your Honour, don't forget that these are people who shoot you in the back!

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Correct. We must never forget it! As we suspected, he was part of the gang who kidnapped Agnelli. He was done over in the rumble. Thinking he was about to snuff it, his colleagues got shot of him, bringing him here.

INSPECTOR: We're going to have to put the word about that he's turned into a poor babbling idiot, because if they suspect that we're getting him to talk, the terrorists in his group are liable to come here and do him in. Or the fellows from the secret services...

DOUBLE: I remember that...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE and INSPECTOR: Shut! Up!
The DOCTOR rushes up and gives another injection.

DOUBLE: Ah... oh... never mind!
He goes all floppy again.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: It couldn't be better if we'd arrested him red-handed... Let's whisk him away without

letting anybody know, and lock him in a total isolation cell, or even better, in a container, like the Anti-Terrorist Squad do with theirs.

INSPECTOR: Yes, the Anti-Terrorist Squad!

DOCTOR: Yes, go ahead. That'll just finish him off! He will become completely deranged, just like the Prime Minister.

DOUBLE: (*Coming round, mischievously*) Now I'll tell you all the names... that I've remembered...

INSPECTOR and EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: That's enough!

The action is repeated. The DOCTOR gives him another injection. And again the DOUBLE goes all floppy.

DOUBLE: What a hit!

DOCTOR: Listen to me – if you want him to carry on talking, leave him alone for a while. Don't show your faces for at least ten days.

INSPECTOR: But you must be joking, ten days? We can't... We're holding the key to picking up a whole gang of terrorists, finding Agnelli – maybe even alive – and you...

DOCTOR: Alright, I understand... Let's make it five days...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: No, no, two, three at most...

DOCTOR: Alright, as you think best... But then if his brain blows out, the responsibility will be yours, alright!?

INSPECTOR: Two days, and then we'll be back to interrogate him. We'll keep ten of our men here in the hospital, disguised as nurses and doctors...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: Yes. Just so as to keep an eye on him and protect him.

DOCTOR: Ten? Don't you think that's a bit many?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: No, this is the best breakthrough that we've had to date. This fellow really is a Grade A supergrass!

INSPECTOR: He talks so much that it's a pleasure to listen to

him. He's worth more than Peci, Sandolo, Fioroni and Barbone [6] put together... He's a repentant terrorist and doesn't realise it!

DOUBLE: (*He leaps to his feet like an uncoiled spring, and heads directly for the EXAMINING MAGISTRATE and the INSPECTOR*) Now I remember the name of that Minister...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE and INSPECTOR: Shut! Up!!

DOUBLE: (*He pretends to go away, but suddenly turns round again*) I'll tell you...

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE and INSPECTOR: Shut! Up!

DOUBLE: You shut up!

Blackout
Musical Interlude

ACT TWO**Scene One**

We are in a big room in ROSA's house. There is a door in each of the three walls: the right-hand door gives onto the hallway landing, the centre door leads into the bedroom, and the left-hand door leads to the kitchen.

Set: There's a table in the middle of the room. On it stands a plastic head with a wig on it. To the left stands a sideboard. Up-stage left there is a television set. Up-stage right, next to a chest of drawers, stands a free-standing coat rack.

Up against the wall on the right stands a heavy wooden armchair, with arms and castors.

Front-stage, leaning up against the right-hand wall, is a small trolley. On it stands a papier mâché bust representing a two-headed mythical Greco-Roman character. There is also a standard lamp, from which hangs a clarinet.

As the lights come up, ROSA and LUCIA enter from outside. ROSA has a shopping-bag, with her shopping. Front-stage centre we see a window. As ROSA says her first lines, she goes and flings the window open. Then, as she moves off to continue her dialogue with LUCIA, the window moves across the front of the stage and disappears into the wings stage right.

ROSA: Oh, Lucia, I am sorry. How long have you been waiting here for me?

LUCIA: Oh, about half an hour...

ROSA: Oh, good heavens... If I'd known, I'd have hurried up. Excuse the mess... I was combing a customer's wig.

ROSA shifts the wig, and puts it on the chest of drawers at the back of the stage.

LUCIA: Oh, don't worry... In fact, I'm the one who should apologise for turning up just like this. The fact is, I was very worried. I don't know what's going on with Antonio. The hospital won't let me in. They say that he's in a terribly volatile psychological state, with one crisis after another...

ROSA: It's true, unfortunately... (*She goes over to the window and flings it open*) A breath of fresh air! They only let me in to see him for five minutes, and no sooner had I gone up to him than he started shouting: 'Go away! Go away! I don't want that pest of a woman anywhere near me! Go away! Go away!'

The WINDOW exits, stage right.

LUCIA: How dreadful! But what are the doctors saying? Are they doing anything for him?

ROSA: Well, they're doing what they can. They had the idea of driving Antonio out to the FIAT-Mirafiori plant and taking him to his old work section to try and budge something in his memory. When he went into the factory, he seemed quite at home. He was going round the various sections, cool as a cucumber, almost as if he owned the place. But when they put him in front of the assembly line, and stuck a welding gun into his hand, and told him: 'Come on, Antonio, weld... You've been doing it for so many years...', it was as if his brain exploded: his eyes bulging in his head, he began shouting like a madman: 'No! I'm not doing shitty work like this!'

LUCIA barely succeeds in holding back a stifled laugh.

'Take me away from this infernal machinery!'

LUCIA: (*Trying not to burst out laughing*) Ha, ha... ha, ha...

ROSA: I mean, it's not funny, is it... What's the matter with you? Why are you laughing?

LUCIA: Excuse me... It's just a nervous reaction... To think of a man like Agnelli, I mean Antonio... reduced...

ROSA: Ah yes, it's enough to drive you mad! Ah yes, I forgot to tell you. Last Thursday they brought him home for a couple of hours.

LUCIA: Thursday? So you've seen him quite recently?

ROSA: No, I was not there. They asked me to go out, because if Antonio sees me, he has another attack. Just imagine it. They bring my husband home, and I have to go out, as if I had scabies!

LUCIA: And did you manage to find out how he reacted here?

ROSA: Yes. Indifferent. They told me that he went round the house, but didn't remember a thing... He didn't even remember his little statue over there, with the two faces, of Plutarch and Suetonius...[7] (*She goes over to the papier mâché bust, which has a movable head. She takes it and turns it, revealing the second face*) ...He was crazy about it! When he married me, he brought it as his dowry.

LUCIA: Ah, yes... he told me about it... he really had a thing about ancient history.

ROSA: Precisely... And he didn't even glance at his books... And there was I, keeping them all properly for him, all in order... I said to myself, one of these days he's going to be coming back... He's going to get tired of the Bitch... I mean, of Lucia... Well, you know, these things can happen... a man leaves his wife, takes up with another woman, then he gets tired of the other woman, and goes back to his wife... That's life. I even saw it once, in a film. A very good film! Ooh... it *was* a good film! I saw it seven times! Afterwards, she, the girlfriend, became seriously ill, and died in excruciating pain...

LUCIA *looks at her.*

Come on, I'm only joking... It's true, she did die a horrible death... But I'm joking, Lucia, I like you... You've helped me through this tragedy, you've given me a hand... Of course, at first I had it in for you... In fact I put curses on

you... Incidentally, how's your eyesight, Lucia?

LUCIA: Excellent!

ROSA: Ah, I'm glad! So it was rubbish what they told me... Just as well it was lies... because otherwise, by now you'd be going round with a guide dog... and a white stick... Oh Lucia, what terrible times these are... Antonio has erased everything... Suetonius, the furniture... the table... me!

LUCIA: Cheer up, Rosa, you'll see... Antonio will get better...

ROSA: No, Antonio won't get better... he'll never get better... I'm going to hang myself... Would you like a coffee?

LUCIA: Thank you, but only if you're making one for yourself...

ROSA: Yes, it's alright, I'll make a coffee. I'll hang myself another day. (*Looking in her shopping bag*) Where's the coffee? It's gone! I might have known it... I've only just bought it... and I forgot it at the grocer's. I'll go down and get it. This terrible business with Antonio is making me behave really strangely!

ROSA exits. LUCIA is alone. She looks around her. A moment or two passes. The telephone rings. LUCIA stands there, uncertain. Then she lifts the handset.

LUCIA: Hello, who's that? No, she has gone out... I am a friend of hers... Ah, Professor, it's you... Yes, Lucia, that's right, the teacher. How clever of you to recognise me at once... How's it going? What? Who? He's escaped...? But how did he manage that, with so many policemen around...? Incredible...! From the laundry... and the coat... his coat? I am sorry... No, he hasn't come here, I assure you, I would tell you, Doctor... Don't worry, if he turns up, I shall telephone you... Alright, yes, yes, without anyone noticing... Goodbye, Professor.

She puts down the phone. Behind her, enter ANTONIO – the real ANTONIO. He is wearing a leather coat which is coming apart at the seams. He looks pretty rough.

ANTONIO: Oh, Lucia, thank goodness I've found you!

LUCIA: Antonio... What the hell are you doing here, have you gone mad? What's come over you?

ANTONIO: And where was I supposed to stick myself? I've been round to your house, but everything was locked up.

LUCIA: Good God, why aren't you in that basement? It's such a safe spot...

ANTONIO: Yes, safe as a grave... My grave! No, enough, I can't take any more... For heaven's sake, I want to see people, talk... You come and see me every once in a blue moon...

He takes off his coat, and hangs it on the coat rack.

LUCIA: But try to understand, I can't... the police are breathing down my neck everywhere I go... I was scared of leading them to you, and you getting arrested.

ANTONIO: No way am I going back in there, I don't want to go mad!

LUCIA: Alright – but you can't stay here. It's dangerous!

ANTONIO: Why dangerous? Who's going to imagine that I'd come and hide here? I haven't been to Rosa's house in more than a year...

LUCIA: Yes, but all the same, you can't stay... Your wife will be back in a minute.

ANTONIO: Well, maybe it's better that way. I shall tell her the whole truth. It's time to put an end to all this! It's a rotten trick that we're playing on the poor woman! And I'm paying the price too... You have no idea what it's like, night after night, huddling up every night like an animal, first with those wrecked cars, and now among all the cockroaches. Yesterday, I was so desperate, that I caught twenty of them, and put them in a circle, and with me sitting in the middle, we played at being the Commission of Inquiry into the Brescia massacre. [8] I'm going mad, I tell you.

LUCIA: I know, I know it's not very funny, but be patient, don't give in... particularly not now... Just another few days, and...

ANTONIO: Lucia, Lucia, it's been months that you've been telling me to be patient: 'Let things calm down, and then we can run off with no problems... Your wife won't cause us any more bother, because she'll have a husband, even if he is a bit of a mixed-up mess. Then, in a few more weeks, people will stop talking about Agnelli.' No. Every day – it never stops, newspapers, television, the radio... everywhere I go, I see that face. It's beginning to haunt me! On television they're even making a multi-part serial about him – the Agnelli Story.

LUCIA: Alright, it's a bit of a mess. But what do you think you'll achieve by coming and telling your wife the whole truth and explaining to her that there are two Antonios? Just when she's convinced herself that the idiot Agnelli is in fact her Antonio, i.e. you... In another few days, Agnelli will be better, and they'll send him here, and they'll both of them live happily ever after!

ANTONIO: Agnelli, going to bed with my wife?!

LUCIA: Well? What? Don't tell me that you're jealous?

ANTONIO: No! Of course I'm not jealous. But the idea gets up my nose! He's screwed me all my life! He pulled the plug on me when he made me redundant. Then I save his life, and now he's going to be screwing my wife!

LUCIA: Antonio, don't be vulgar!

ANTONIO: What do you mean, vulgar! The fact is, he's a bastard! Now they'll grant him a permanent disability pension... They'll send him home to live a life of ease... in my house... and what'll he do? He'll end up with my redundancy money, my life insurance money, my pension and my clarinet no doubt. No, I'm sorry, but I'm going to explain everything.

LUCIA: Oh brilliant! That way, you'll go straight to prison for at least four years – just on suspicion alone! Do you really

think that Rosa will be able to keep her trap shut, even for two minutes?

ANTONIO: Just leave my wife out of this will you.

Enter ROSA, with her shopping bag.

ROSA: Here I am...

ROSA sees ANTONIO. She stops in her tracks, speechless. LUCIA continues, pretending not to have seen her come in.

LUCIA: Antonio... what do you mean you don't recognise me any longer?! Look at me... It's me... Lucia!

ROSA: Have they sent him home...?

LUCIA: Surely, at least you recognise her, your wife?

ROSA makes as if to approach ANTONIO.

No, Rosa, stay there, don't come too close to him...

ROSA: Don't worry... I won't come too close... You've healed up really well... Your scars don't even show...

LUCIA pushes ANTONIO over towards ROSA.

LUCIA: Go on, Antonio.

She kicks him furtively on the shins.

ROSA: Why did you kick our Antonio?!

LUCIA: Ah, well, you can't always afford half-measures with psychologically unstable people... they'll never get well! Our professor at the university always used to say: 'A punch and a kick brings a man back to his senses!' Come on, Antonio! (*She gives him another kick*) Look, see, it works! Well done... Embrace her! (*ANTONIO embraces ROSA.*) Oh God. It did work.

ROSA: He's embracing me... Oh Lord, I'm getting all emotional! I feel weak at the knees... Can I embrace him too?

LUCIA: Yes, Rosa... certainly...

ROSA: Are you sure? With both arms?

LUCIA: Yes, certainly...

ROSA timidly embraces ANTONIO. He stands stock-still, embarrassed, but at the same time moved by the situation.

ROSA: Hello... how are you feeling Antonio? Do you recognise me...? Who am I...? Who am I...?

ANTONIO: You are Rosa, you are my wife...

ROSA: His voice has come back to normal and he recognises me! Now then. Concentrate. Now who is she? Come on!

She kicks his leg, hard.

ANTONIO: Stop it! Let's not carry on with this charade! Listen, it's time you knew what's really going on.

LUCIA: Stop it, Antonio, don't be stupid!

ROSA: Give him another kick to calm him down!

She gives him another kick. LUCIA does likewise.

ANTONIO: Ouch... stop it!

ROSA: We're only doing it for your own good: a punch and a kick brings a man back to his senses.

ANTONIO: I want to tell you what happened.

LUCIA: Stop it... shut up a minute... (*The WINDOW enters, from stage right. It stops centre-stage. LUCIA goes over to it and looks down onto the road*) There's no time to lose, Antonio. You're going to have to scam.

ANTONIO: Why? What's going on?

LUCIA: I might be mistaken, but there's something strange going on down in the street. I bet it's those people from the hospital, coming to get you...

She goes to the coat rack, and takes down ANTONIO's jacket.

ROSA: Ah, so they didn't let him out, then?

LUCIA: No, he escaped. A short while before he arrived, the Doctor telephoned to know whether, by chance, he had come to hide here, in your house...

ANTONIO: It's not true, it's a pack of lies, don't believe her. She's just saying that because...

LUCIA: I promise you, listen... let's get out of here... let's go to my house, while we've still got time...

She gives him his jacket.

ANTONIO: No, I'm staying here, till I finish telling Rosa everything.

He puts his jacket on the table.

ROSA: Sit down! Bitch! With that excuse about how the people are coming to take him away... you were just trying to steal my husband again!

The door bursts open. Enter two POLICEMEN, followed by the INSPECTOR; the DOCTOR is also with them. The WINDOW exits, stage right.

INSPECTOR: Here he is! What did I tell you, Professor. I was sure that we'd find him at his wife's house.

LUCIA: I suppose you're happy now! And I'm a liar!?

ROSA: Oh, please, don't hurt him, don't frighten him, he's sick...

INSPECTOR: Who wants to frighten him? We're among friends, isn't that right, Antonio?

DOCTOR: You had us worried, you know... How are you? Your pulse rate is a bit high. What you need is a sedative...

INSPECTOR: I don't know about sedatives...! This one's playing the fool, and making us waste a lot of time! I know what our little Antonio could do with, really!

ANTONIO: But who are you... I don't even know you!

ROSA: You see? Carrying on like that, you've made him lose his memory again... To think, up to a moment ago, he recognised everybody. It was a pleasure to see...

POLICEMAN: Inspector, what shall we do, shall we put handcuffs on him?

INSPECTOR: No, it's not necessary...

DOCTOR: Give me a hand.

He goes to the table, and pulls out of his bag the necessaries

for performing an injection.

ANTONIO: Inspector, eh? Listen, I would like to tell you something... Listen, because I am going to tell you...

LUCIA: Antonio, are you mad?

ANTONIO: Shut up, you! Inspector, listen to me.

ANTONIO speaks excitedly with the INSPECTOR. He has his back to the DOCTOR. The DOCTOR comes creeping up on him, in order to give him an injection. But ANTONIO and the INSPECTOR suddenly contrive to switch positions, and the INSPECTOR ends up getting the needle in his own backside.

INSPECTOR: Aagh!

DOCTOR: Oh, excuse me. It's a sedative...

ANTONIO: Inspector, listen to me...

INSPECTOR: You are nothing but a troublemaker...! Now he's telling me again that he is Agnelli!

ROSA: Agnelli?

DOCTOR: (*Preparing a second injection*) Yes. Ever since he made that unfortunate visit to FIAT, he's got it into his head that he is Mr Agnelli!

ROSA: Oh, that's all we need!

DOCTOR: It's nothing to be alarmed at – it's the classic split personality phenomenon. Now, come along, take your trousers down...

ANTONIO: My trousers?

DOCTOR: It's for the sedative... (*He is about to perform the injection, but continues talking with ROSA*) In these past few months, when he's been confined to his bed, all in plaster, as if he was in a trap... he's been chewing over his hatred towards the person who, in his opinion, is responsible for his tragedy... in other words, Agnelli. (*Turning to one of the POLICEMEN*) Oh forget it! Just lift up his jacket... (*To ROSA*) ...and he has ended up identifying with him.

ANTONIO *once again succeeds in transposing the INSPECTOR, who receives yet another injection in the backside.*

INSPECTOR: Aaaargh!

DOCTOR: Oh, don't be such a cry baby, it's only a little prick.

At this point, the ACTORS pretend to make a slip-up on stage. The DOCTOR pretends to trip, and loses his hypodermic syringe. The ACTRESS playing ROSA looks disconcerted as she picks up the syringe. The ACTORS burst out laughing. The ACTOR playing the DOCTOR feigns embarrassment and consternation. The ACTOR playing the part of ANTONIO speaks.

ACTOR PLAYING THE PART OF ANTONIO: Well, there you are, it could have happened to anybody... particularly to real doctors! But anyway, it's my fault, because I spun him round too fast. It's my fault. Doctors, as we know, are never responsible, either in civil or in criminal law. OK, let's start again where we left off...

DOCTOR: *(He makes as if to start again, but breaks into confused laughter)* Hold his jacket up...

ANTONIO: Don't be embarrassed, Professor...

DOCTOR: You, hold his jacket up... and he has ended up identifying with him.

ROSA: Oh heavens, he's identified with him, with Agnelli, and he's getting a split personality... Like Dr Jekyll, who at the start was... and then became... and so, when he doesn't recognise me, it's because he's convinced that he is Agnelli.

DOCTOR: Ten out of ten!

The DOCTOR prepares a third injection. ANTONIO is in deep conversation with the INSPECTOR, who by now is reeling from the injections.

INSPECTOR: Excuse me, Doctor, come over here a moment. Now he's saying that he was the one who saved Agnelli. I don't know about split personalities, this one's

just trying to make idiots out of all of us!

ANTONIO takes advantage of a momentary lack of attention by the guards. He makes a dash for the door. He goes out, and locks it behind him, as he runs off. In order to escape, he has to shift one of the POLICEMEN. The POLICEMAN ends up getting the injection that was meant for ANTONIO.

POLICEMAN: Aaaargh! He's escaped!

INSPECTOR: Don't stand there like a dummy! Get after him, quick!

POLICEMAN: He's locked us in... The key was on the outside!

INSPECTOR: Well then, shoot the lock off!

ROSA: No, please, don't shoot the door down... I've got another key. Wait a minute, I'll find it...

INSPECTOR: No, there's no time... Fire! Fire! Fire!

The POLICEMEN fire – BANG BANG. From outside the door, we hear a stifled scream. A musical interlude follows, during which everyone freezes for a moment.

ROSA: Antonio! Antonio was behind that door! You've killed him...!

The door swings open. After a moment, enter the EXAMINING MAGISTRATE.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: My leg... There's a hole in my leg... Why did you shoot me?

INSPECTOR: Your Honour! What on earth were you doing behind the door?

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: I was knocking... But do you always shoot people when they knock at the door?

He falls to the floor.

INSPECTOR: Hurry up, Doctor... he's fainted... And you, could you help too?

DOCTOR: Don't worry. Amputation is my favourite.

INSPECTOR: Look, if anybody lets slip a word about this incident, I'll kill them! If it ends up in the newspapers – 'Magistrate Kneecapped by the Police...' – I'll top myself!

Exit the POLICEMEN, the INSPECTOR, the DOCTOR and LUCIA, carrying the EXAMINING MAGISTRATE. ROSA remains on stage. She is dazed and bemused by what has happened. She closes the door, and looks at the wrecked lock.

ROSA: Madness! Nobody's going to believe me if I tell them! Did you see that? Nasty habit they've got, of pulling out their guns at the slightest provocation...

The WINDOW whizzes onstage. ROSA looks through it.

Poor Antonio... Let's hope they're not going to shoot him too... Oh, God, there he is... That's him, hiding behind the bus... No, he's gone... Maybe it wasn't him... *(She goes to the table, where ANTONIO's car coat is still lying)* Oh I hope they don't take him back to that hospital because then he really will go barmy, sharing a split personality with Dr Jekyll, who's half beast and half Agnelli... Well it's the same thing really... Hey, but here's his coat... He went off without a coat... he's bound to catch cold...

ROSA takes ANTONIO's coat and goes to hang it on the coat rack. The door opens. Enter the DOUBLE. He is wearing an overcoat. His head is wrapped in a long scarf. As the DOUBLE enters, the WINDOW leaves the stage.

DOUBLE: Excuse me.

ROSA: Antonio! You've given them the slip... it's you... you got away... you made it!

DOUBLE: Maaay... I... cooome... iiii...? Is aaaaanyone in?

ROSA: Yes, no one's in... they've all gone off to take a gentleman to hospital, because he knocked at the door and they shot him in the leg... so as to open the door... and then he turned out to be an Examining Magistrate.

DOUBLE: Iiiii've... goooot... awaaaay!

ROSA: Yes, I know!

DOUBLE: Thaaat... creeetin of an Inspeeector... is convinced that I kiiidnapped myself... an autoterrorist!

ROSA: Calm down, Antonio, slow down and get your breath back... All that running that you've been doing, your scars are beginning to show again... They've all swollen up with the fright... Look how you're sweating... Are you thirsty, would you like something to drink?

DOUBLE: Yes, please, a little non-carbonated mineral water... because otherwise I'll burp, and I'll blow my nose off...

The DOUBLE takes off his coat, and goes over to the coat rack.

ROSA: OK, I'll bring it at once. (*She notices the overcoat*) But what are you doing with a coat on?

DOUBLE: It's cold!

ROSA: Did you have two overcoats?

DOUBLE: No, this one's a long jacket...

ROSA: This doubling-up of yours is beginning to be obsessive...

DOUBLE: Listen, madam, I have to tell you something... which obviously you are not aware of...

ROSA: But now you're calling me madam...?!

DOUBLE: Madam, I do not know you... I am not your husband...

ROSA: Yes, dear, calm down... sit down... Now you just drink your non-carbonated mineral water, and try not to talk nonsense...

ROSA goes into the kitchen, and after a moment returns with a bottle and a glass.

DOUBLE: But madam, I am not talking nonsense at all! I have never been so lucid and self-aware!

From the plastic bag that he has with him, the DOUBLE pulls out a funnel.

ROSA: Jesus Christ! Well, why don't you show it, and stop calling me madam!

DOUBLE: Alright, I'll stop calling you madam. Would you be so kind as to help me to screw the funnel into the tube...
(*He fiddles with the funnel*) No... it's alright, I've done it.

ROSA: The funnel? What for?

DOUBLE: So as to drink.

ROSA: You drink through your neck?

DOUBLE: Yes... I can't yet drink through my throat... until the scar tissues heal up completely on my glottis and epiglottis... Ah... it's cold! Just pour it straight out of the bottle, it's more convenient.

ROSA does as he says.

ROSA: Oh Lord, what am I seeing – my husband, with a funnel stuck in him. You look like a bloody beer barrel!

DOUBLE: And now, will you please sit down, because I want to tell you my story... the real story!

ROSA: Alright – tell me.

DOUBLE: After the accident, for months it was as if I had disappeared...

ROSA: Yes, I know...

DOUBLE: Then, that day when they took me to the assembly line at the Mirafiori plant, it was as if a bomb had exploded in my brain: 50,000 electric shock treatments all in one go! All of a sudden, I remembered who I was. That I was Agnelli, and that I didn't want anything to do with the shit and the mess and the grime. And now there I was, I... Agnelli, hooked up with a welding gun which was spitting blinding sparks all over the place, and I started trembling as if I had a 220 volt plug up my arse...

ROSA: Calm down, Antonio...

DOUBLE: I am not Antonio! I am not some stupid worker who starts trembling! I am above everything, I am! They think that I have been kidnapped... but no, I have only

been swapped! And look at me now, with this loony puppet's face! The face of one of my lineworkers... what a humiliating joke...

ROSA: Listen, Dr Jekyll... will you stop that? I've had it up to here, with all these personality changes! Either you calm down, or I'll break your leg!

She kicks him.

DOUBLE: Aaargh! Are you mad?!

We hear the sound of a police siren. Enter the WINDOW, from stage right. ROSA looks out through the window.

Is that the police?! Are they arriving?

ROSA: No, it's not them. They're not stopping. But at the same time, it's not a very clever idea for you to wait here until they *do* turn up and arrest you... Let's go up in the loft... Take your scarf, for your scars... I've got it all fixed up, you see. You can even sleep there; I set it all up so as to rent it to a student. Come on, come on, I'll show you up there. I've had a water tap put in, too. *(They exit. We hear ROSA's voice disappearing off upstairs)* Remember to watch out for the steps, they're a bit steep. Nobody knows that this room is here, because I've not yet reported it to the authorities. There you are, come in. Look, I've had electric light put in too.

Then the hall door opens, and ANTONIO the worker enters.

ANTONIO: Rosa! Are you there, Rosa? Anyone in? Well, thank goodness, they've all gone away, and let's hope that they all leave me in peace. Look how I'm sweating! I'm soaked! *(He removes his jacket and shirt, and throws them on the floor in the middle of the room)* I wonder if Rosa's got a clean jumper for me to change into.

He exits via the centre door. Enter ROSA. She stands by the door for a moment, speaking to the DOUBLE upstairs.

ROSA: Now you stay there and behave. Don't make any noise. I'll bring you some food in a moment... *(She goes*

towards the kitchen) Goodness, I'm all emotions...! I'd never have expected to get so emotional, having my husband back home! I'm all worked up. I'm really all worked up...! (*She sees his clothes thrown in the middle of the floor*) That shows how worked up I am! I didn't even notice that he'd taken his clothes off... (*She picks up his clothes*) ...and he's dumped them all here on the floor, just as he always used to... Oh, how pleased I am to have him back... how happy I am to have his nice dirty shirts to wash... and iron... and to cook for him, slaving like a skivvy... that's living for you!

ROSA exits into the kitchen. She is radiant with happiness. ANTONIO re-enters. He has put on a clean jumper. He is drying his head and arms with a towel.

ANTONIO: Rosa, are you back... are you back?

ROSA: Why are you back here? Is something wrong? Why have you come back?

ANTONIO: Ah, why, shouldn't I have come back? I suppose you'd rather I let myself be locked up like a poor sod, for the rest of my life?

ROSA: But what do you mean, 'the rest of your life...'? Just a day or two, until things sort themselves out.

ANTONIO: No. If I go inside, I'll never come out again. I could be inside for twelve years...

ROSA: Don't say silly things... You don't think I'll be keeping you up there for twelve years...

ANTONIO: Up where? What do you mean, up there? Rosa, what are you raving on about?

ROSA: (*Thinking that her husband does not remember having been upstairs*) Look, nothing is going right around here... I am beginning to lose patience. Look, if you don't get yourself sorted out, I... I am going to pour twelve pints of bromide down the hole in your neck! (*She takes the funnel and points it meaningfully at ANTONIO*) You're driving everybody nuts! First things are black, then they're white,

then you change your mind, and you don't even remember!!! Come on, up into the loft, do as I say!

ANTONIO: In the loft? Why in the loft?

ROSA: Because it's a safe hiding place!

ANTONIO: No, it's not safe at all. The loft has no way out, it's a trap. If you don't mind, I would prefer to stay over there; in the other room. (*He points towards the bedroom*) Because that leads onto the terrace, and so, if they come looking for me, I'll be able to get away over the roofs...

ROSA: You'll fall and end up in bits... and then we'll start all over again: Bruuu... braaa... bray... astronaut! astronaut! But do what you want!

ANTONIO: Rosa, who's this astronaut?

ROSA: Stop it! Do what you like. It's impossible to reason with you. I'm going to get you something to eat.

ROSA goes into the kitchen.

ANTONIO: At last you've said something intelligent. I'm starving!

He notices that there are two coats hanging on the coat rack: the one belonging to him, and the other to the DOUBLE. ROSA re-enters, bringing bread, glasses, a bottle of wine, plates, cutlery and serviettes. She goes to the table and starts to lay it.

ROSA: You're very lucky, you know. Today I prepared the stew for the whole week, with a pig's trotter...

ANTONIO: (*Lifting off the DOUBLE's overcoat*) Whose is it?

ROSA: The pig's trotter? It's ours... we'll eat it!

ANTONIO: (*He goes over to ROSA with the two coats*) I'm talking about the coat. Whose is it?

ROSA: It's yours. Whose do you expect it to be?

ANTONIO: My one is that one – so whose one is this one? The astronaut's?

ROSA: It's yours!

ANTONIO: Rosa, who is this astronaut who leaves coats all over the place?

ROSA: You can pack that in! It's yours. You had two of them, one on top of the other! Two overcoats! You were going round with two overcoats!

ANTONIO: Me? I had two overcoats, one on top of the other! I was going round with two overcoats... one on top of the other!!

ROSA: Yes, you!

ROSA picks up a chair, and is about to throw it at him.

ANTONIO addresses her extremely calmly, as if trying to deal with a raving loony.

ANTONIO: Of course. *(He points to his leather car coat)* And I suppose this was my waistcoat!

ROSA: *(Going back to the table)* So, shall I heat it up?

ANTONIO: What? The coat?

ROSA: No, the stew! You know very well I meant the stew. How are you going to eat this stew...?

ANTONIO looks at her in increasing amazement. Then thinking that ROSA has gone completely round the twist, he moves slowly to the door to make a getaway.

ROSA: No, seriously, how do you do it? How do you swallow? Do you suck it down through the funnel? Or through the tube in your neck? And how are we going to get it down... There's no way it'll go through... even if I push it, because even if I cut the meat up into little bits, it's still going to be too big... and since it mustn't touch your glottis, or your epiglottis... which, incidentally, are two words that I have never heard of... then how are you going to eat? Will you be sucking it down, or not? But then, it won't go through the tube in your neck... it won't go through!

Only now does she notice that ANTONIO is about to leave the room.

ANTONIO: Yes, carry on... you're quite right... Carry on just

like that. Perfect! When it doesn't pass via the glottis... the tube is the best way... suck it through the funnel... the funnel is designed especially for sucking... and as for me, my glottis... you know... and then also my epiglottis...

ROSA: Where are you going? This is no laughing matter... Come over here...

ANTONIO: Yes, yes... Hang on a minute. I'm going out for a moment to get my third overcoat, which I left downstairs... I had three coats, you know!

ROSA: Careful... somebody's coming... Quick, go into the bedroom...

ANTONIO scrambles into the bedroom.

I'll lock you in... I'll give it two turns of the key. (*She does as she says*) ...and you stay quiet...

ANTONIO: Yes... Who is it?

ROSA: For God's sake shut up. (*She goes to the door and peeps out*) Yes? Oh it's you... and you. (*She shuts the door again, runs to the centre door, and without re-opening it, shouts*) Don't worry, it wasn't anyone... it's next-door... I don't like him at all, a right Peeping Tom...! The minute he hears a noise, he comes out nosy parkering... I can't stand the man... I'm... I'm going to report him... I'll report him for 'unnatural curiosity'!

ROSA goes out into the kitchen. No sooner has she gone than the DOUBLE appears round the front door.

DOUBLE: Rosa, can I come in? Am I bothering you?

ROSA: Be patient for a moment! I'm dishing out the stew. I'll be there to open the door in a moment.

DOUBLE: Oh, there's no need to bother, I'll let myself in.

ROSA enters, with a saucepan brimful of stew. She stares at him, dumbfounded.

ROSA: But how did you get in?

DOUBLE: Through the door, why?

ROSA: But it was locked!

DOUBLE: No, it wasn't locked!

ROSA: How stupid of me, obviously, as I was turning the key a moment ago...

We hear the wail of a siren. The WINDOW whizzes on-stage. ROSA rushes over and looks down into the street.

There they are again... Oh no, it's an ambulance, it's not stopping...

Exit the WINDOW.

DOUBLE: The police!

ROSA: Yes, but they're not stopping... Oh, what a life this is! Sweet, I would like so much for the two of us, me and you, to sit here, nice and comfortable, and eat, but it's too dangerous. Listen, let's take the plates and the cutlery, and go into the room...

DOUBLE: Oh no, please, I can't stand it. When I'm in there, I get ghastly nightmares, like in the hospital, I want to be sick... I can't hold my food down...

ROSA: Alright, let's take a chance...

The DOUBLE sits at the table.

...but at the slightest suspicious noise, you'll have to disappear. Here you are, help yourself. (*She passes him the stewpot, and then goes over to the sideboard, where she takes two jars and brings them over to the DOUBLE*) Look, I've bought you some Cremona mustard too, and there's some green sauce...

DOUBLE: But Rosa, this is boiled beef...

ROSA: Yes?

DOUBLE and ROSA: Yes?

DOUBLE: And boiled sausage... and even a boiled pig's foot...

ROSA: Yes...?!!!

DOUBLE: Everything boiled...

ROSA is about to lose her grip on herself.

ROSA: Yes? So? Is something wrong? Changed your mind yet again?

DOUBLE: No, I really like stew... it's just that you've forgotten that my tube is very thin, and the food won't go through the funnel... particularly a sausage that size...

ROSA: We've been through this before, haven't we? I could mince it... But even then it's too big to go through that little hole!

DOUBLE: It won't go through the hole in my neck, but it will go through my nose!

ROSA: You eat stew through your nose?!

DOUBLE: Yes. In hospital they even made me suck spaghetti up through my nose... the bolognese sauce made a terrible mess... Now I'll show you a little gadget that I've brought with me from the hospital... (*From his plastic bag, he pulls out a kind of mask*) There, you see, these tubes go up into the nostrils. Here you connect the output socket from a meat mincer. I had a really good one in hospital, electric... But I forgot it in the rush.

ROSA: Oh, how stupid of me, I've got a mincing machine too, but it's one of those old ones, with the handle that you turn.
She goes over to the sideboard to get it.

DOUBLE: Let's have a look. The important thing is that the back end has to be the same diameter. Perfect! Size 12!

ROSA: Incredible! Antonio... even the colour matches!!

DOUBLE: Now I'll show you how it works. There, you see, first you put on the mask like this. Then you put the tubes up your nostrils, and then put the meat grinder here, on your head... (*He suddenly takes the mask off again*) Oh goodness, look...

ROSA: What's up, Antonio?

DOUBLE: The meat grinder grinding on my head, I feel as if my brain's being ground up... Have you got any cords?

ROSA: Cords?

DOUBLE: Yes cords. To tie me down.

ROSA: Tie you down?

DOUBLE: Yes. Otherwise I won't be able to resist the instinct to pull the tubes out of my nose.

ROSA: Well, we could try it with these straps. They're the straps I use for my suitcases...

She pulls some straps out of a drawer.

DOUBLE: Perfect! And this armchair with the arms is tailor-made. (*He arranges a couple of straps on each arm of the armchair*) And with this one, you can tie my neck back against the upright part, like this!

ROSA: Oh, it's horrible – you look as if you're in an electric chair!

DOUBLE: You said it! I *am* in the electric chair. Rosa, you're going to have to be strong. Please, Rosa, don't be swayed if, at the beginning, I plead with you to set me free. You must be strong, you must make me eat at any cost!

ROSA: Yes, indeed, at any cost! I shall be very strict. I shall make you eat everything! (*The phone rings*) Oh God, the phone... I can't answer... I'm crying... (*She answers the phone in a perfectly normal voice*) Hello, yes Professor, it's me. No, I've not seen Antonio. No, no, I assure you, he hasn't been here. I would tell you, Professor. I wouldn't say a word to the Inspector – he's so uncouth – but I would tell *you*! Please, let me know if anything happens. I'm in agony here! Goodbye.

She puts the phone down again.

DOUBLE: What did he say?

The DOUBLE has arranged the straps around the arms of the armchair.

ROSA: It was the Professor... If you ask me, he wasn't taken in. They'll be here any minute. Quick, let's take everything upstairs, into the other room...

DOUBLE: No, for heaven's sake, don't you understand – I

can't wait any longer – I'm dying of hunger! Rosa, you've got to grind some stew up my nose, or I shall go mad!

ROSA: I'll grind for you in a couple of minutes... Go on up, I'll join you. Take the bottle of wine, and the glasses.

DOUBLE: Bread, I want bread...

He makes a dive for the bread basket.

ROSA: Leave the bread alone...

DOUBLE: But without bread I won't be able to eat the stew...

ROSA: I've got grated breadcrumbs... Go on up... I'll bring the rest up, including the electric chair. (*She runs into the kitchen*) Hurry up!

DOUBLE: Alright. I'll wait for you. But you get a move on.

*The DOUBLE exits via the door leading to the hall landing.
ROSA calls out from the kitchen:*

ROSA: Just a moment, I'll turn off the gas. I've got some fruit down here. Afterwards I'll make you a fruit salad. (*She re-enters, goes over to the table, and puts the plates, cutlery and the stewpot etc. onto the archair*) Imagine, what a shame, having to mince up such a good bit of beef, as if it was meat for meatballs...

ANTONIO the worker calls from the bedroom.

ANTONIO: Rosa, can we get a move on – I'm still here, waiting!

ROSA: Don't be so impatient! What am I supposed to do? Sprout wings? I'm loading up the electric chair!

ANTONIO: Loading what? Rosa, what nonsense are you talking now?

ROSA: Hurry up and give me a hand... I can't manage it... it's too heavy...

ANTONIO: Alright. Just come and unlock the door...

ROSA: It's open! Push it and see.

ANTONIO: Don't talk rubbish, Rosa... It's locked, solid!

ROSA looks at the door, speechless. Then she goes to the bedroom door and turns the key. Re-enter ANTONIO.

Oh, at last!

ROSA looks at him, bewildered.

ROSA: Antonio, please you're going to have to explain to me how you managed to go into the bedroom, lock yourself in, and still leave the key on the outside of the door...!

ANTONIO: What did I do?

ROSA: You locked yourself in the bedroom, with two turns of the key!

ANTONIO: I did? It was you, you who locked me in with two turns of the key.

ROSA: Yes, but that was before. But then you got out!

ANTONIO: I got out?

ROSA: Yes!

ANTONIO: How?

ROSA: Through the door! How else?

ANTONIO: I came out by the door?

ROSA: Yeees!!!

ANTONIO: When?

ROSA: Before!

ANTONIO: Don't talk rubbish!

ROSA picks up a chair and makes as if to throw it at him.

ROSA: You *did* come out! You did come out!

ANTONIO: It's true! I was trying to keep it a secret from you, but obviously I failed. (*He mimes everything that follows*) I got out by using an old trick that we use at the Mirafiori factory. The foremen lock us in, so we get out by sticking our hands under the door... Of course, at first we stick them, i.e. our hands, under a stamping press... so as to squash them flat a bit... Then we stick our hands under the door, and push them through as far as the elbow... Then we

give a little twist, so as to get the knobbly bits through more easily... until we get our arms through as well, right up to the shoulder. Then we grab the key. But the key is too thick, it won't go under the door! So, we stick our heads under the door, and push... and push... and... whoops! That's how we get out. Are you happy now? They call me the Scarlet Pimpernel!

ROSA listens to him in blank amazement. As ANTONIO finishes speaking, she removes her scarf from round her neck, and wraps it round her head.

Alright? Rosa, Rosa, what are you doing, Rosa?

ROSA: I've got a headache!

ANTONIO: Well maybe if we sit down to eat, maybe it'll go...
(Without answering, ROSA goes over to the electric chair. She looks at ANTONIO, meaningfully. ANTONIO does not understand) Now you're talking.

ROSA: *(Persuasively, talking as if to a mad person)* The electric chair... come on... let's go into the bedroom, and I'll grind for you... I shall be ruthless... down to the last particle of meat...

ANTONIO: Stooooop it! You're driving me mad! It's a trick, to drive me out of my mind! Stooooop it!

ROSA: I shall do my duty! In spite of everything that's happened! Antonio, let's go in there!

ANTONIO: In where?

ROSA: Into the bedroom...!

ANTONIO: To do what?

ROSA: To eat!

ANTONIO: Nooooo!!! For months I've been eating like a wretch. Now, just once, I want to eat here, sitting down like a good Christian... A Christian, and a Marxist! Sitting down! A Marxist Christian, sitting down ...and slightly puzzled... because of what's happened in Poland! *(During this speech, ROSA slips slowly to the floor. She curls up in a heap, with her head resting on the floor, and stays there,*

silent, as if crushed) What's up now? What are you doing, Rosa...? Rosa, I know where you've been all this time... You've become a hippy, haven't you? Were you in a commune? And who was your guru? The astronaut?!

ROSA: Antonio, I am very confused...! Antonio, we must go in there, into the other room...

ANTONIO: What, like that? Crawling along the floor?

ROSA: ...because if the police arrive... (*The WINDOW zooms in. ROSA shouts at it*) ...I said 'if' the police arrive! *The WINDOW takes fright, and rushes back into the wings.*

ANTONIO: Who cares! Lock the door, and put the door chain on! (*He sits down at the table*) You know that door chain I had put in specially. And if the police want to get past that, they'll have to batter the door down.

ROSA picks herself up off the floor, and goes to lock the door with the door chain.

And while they're battering the door down, I'll be eating this wonderful stew! (*He clears the armchair off, putting the various objects on the table. He sits down, holding the stewpot*) I've said it before and I'll say it again, Rosa, that nobody in the whole world makes stew the way that you do...

ROSA: Yes, I know you've said it before.

ANTONIO: I could eat this with my eyeballs!

ROSA: And instead you're going to have to eat it with your nose!

She goes up to ANTONIO and straps his hands to the arms of the armchair.

ANTONIO: Rosa? Rosa! What are you doing? Why are you strapping me down?

ROSA: To make you eat, right?

ANTONIO: Rosa, please, afterwards we'll have time to talk, and you can tell me about all the customs in your commune. Not now, though...

ROSA: Stop it! Let's start with a nice bit of broth... just to whet your appetite... But... Antonio, how are you going to eat it?

ANTONIO: I won't eat it, I'll drink it...

ROSA: But do you want it down your neck, or are you going to suck it up through your nose...? How would you prefer it? It would be better through your neck. (*She picks up the funnel*) Let's hope I manage to find the hole...!

She sticks the funnel down his neck.

ANTONIO: You've punched a hole in my shoulderblade! Please... untie me...

ROSA ignores his pleas. She puts a strap round his neck, pulling his head back against the upright of the armchair.

Rosa, please... Rosa, it's true, I've been a louse... Rosa, I've treated you badly, I've been like a son of a bitch... I've not respected you... But you must be generous... and forgive me. I'll come back to you, Rosa! Please, let me go!

ROSA: My sweet, my sweet...

ANTONIO: Forgive me, Rosa. I love you, Rosa!

ROSA: How long have I waited to hear you say those words!

ANTONIO: Rosa...

ROSA: I love you too...!

She picks up the mask from the table, and fits it on his head. She pushes the tubes up his nose. As ANTONIO speaks, ROSA adjusts the mask to get a tight fit.

ANTONIO: Rosa, Rosa... my nostrils are all blocked up... I've got something up my nose... Rosa, I feel like an elephant... Why do you go to see those kinds of films... You know that they only give you ideas!

ROSA: Ssssh – keep quiet...!

ANTONIO: That's enough, now, Rosa... Let me go... Help! Help!!

ROSA: Antonio, don't shout like that...

ANTONIO: Heeelp!!

ROSA: Antonio, don't shout! Don't you realise that you're torturing me!

She completes the operation of fitting the machine.

ANTONIO: No, you're torturing me! Help... help...!

ANTONIO's shout transforms into the trumpeting of an elephant.

ROSA: Antonio, stop it... Antonio... Stop pretending to be an elephant... What will the neighbours say? ...Stop it!

ANTONIO carries on howling.

Shut up! (ROSA no longer knows what to do to shut him up; in desperation she shoves a serviette into his mouth)
Stop it! You must eat. Keep quiet!

ANTONIO continues howling, but slowly his howls are transformed into the sound of a steamboat siren.

Antonio, stop that! The neighbours will hear... Stop it! I won't have you being a steamboat! Oh my God, he's turned puce... Oh, how stupid of me, I've blocked up all his holes... So how's he going to breathe...? What shall I put in place of the serviette...? Ah yes, your favourite clarinet...

The clarinet is hanging from a standard lamp. ROSA picks up the whole caboodle, and puts it in front of ANTONIO.

We'll leave it hanging from the lamp, so that you can breathe, and play at the same time, if you want!

She takes the serviette out of his mouth, and inserts the clarinet's mouthpiece. ANTONIO moves the fingers of his right hand up and down the keys of the clarinet, which gives out a blues sequence of high and low notes, commenting grotesquely on the situation.

Now I can give you your broth... (She pours the broth down the funnel) Don't worry, it's not hot... I've put some grated cheese in, and a couple of drops of lemon to knock out the grease... There, that's good... swallow it down, it'll do

you good... but... but... what's this – you're doing a wee?? Oh no... it's the soup running out of your trousers... I must have missed the hole with the tube! Oh well, too bad. Let's get on to the stew. Let's start with this nice bit of rump...

ROSA takes some pieces of meat, and puts them into the meat grinder. The clarinet's wailing transforms into a desperate rock rhythm. ROSA, unperturbed, continues grinding, turning the handle of the mincer. There is a loud knocking at the door. From outside the door, the INSPECTOR shouts:

INSPECTOR: Open up! Police! Open up, or we'll knock the door down!

ROSA: There they are! I told you that they'd be back... Keep quiet, don't budge.

ANTONIO lets out a groan, through the clarinet.

Keep quiet!

With a big crash, the door bursts open, under the weight of the two POLICEMEN. ROSA continues turning the handle of the mincer, unperturbed. ANTONIO plays the clarinet with increasing desperation. The INSPECTOR and the POLICEMEN stare at the scene in amazement.

INSPECTOR: But what on earth are you doing?

ROSA: I'm feeding my husband.

INSPECTOR: With a clarinet in his mouth?

ROSA: Yes, it's the only way he'll eat! Would you mind giving me a hand? Carry on grinding up his meat... I'll go and prepare him a nice fruit salad... But don't let yourself feel sorry for him, if he asks you to unstrap him... He must eat: it's a matter of life and death!

ROSA goes into the kitchen. One of the POLICEMEN removes the clarinet from ANTONIO's mouth.

ANTONIO: Help... I've got a bit of boiled sausage up my nose... Have you got a nose-pick?

INSPECTOR: What are you babbling about?

ANTONIO: Help! Set me free! That woman's a horror! Take me away from here...

INSPECTOR: Take you away where? To prison, perhaps?

ANTONIO: To the zoo, if you like... Just get me away from here. That woman is mad! She's killing me, sausage by sausage!

INSPECTOR: Alright... we'll set you free, if you do us a little favour. You're going to tell us a few details about the Agnelli kidnap. You were there, weren't you, that evening, on the embankment?

ANTONIO: Yes, certainly I was there, on the embankment...

INSPECTOR: Very good!

ANTONIO: But I had nothing to do with the kidnap. In fact, it was me who saved Agnelli...

INSPECTOR: Give the handle a little twirl!

The POLICEMAN does as he says.

ANTONIO: No, no! Stop it! Yes, it's true... I confess! I am the head of the armed gang that kidnapped Agnelli! (*The POLICEMAN stops turning the handle*) I'll tell all... I'll spill the beans... Just set me free!

INSPECTOR: What a wonderful little machine! We ought to have a little gadget like this down at the nick!

The POLICEMEN set ANTONIO free. ROSA enters, carrying a soup tureen.

ROSA: I've made some fruit salad for you.

ANTONIO leaps from his seat and runs to seek protection among the POLICEMEN.

ANTONIO: No, no, not the fruit salad, get me out of here!

ROSA: But why did you set him free?

INSPECTOR: Don't worry, madam... we're just taking him down to HQ with us for a while... He's got a few little things to get off his chest... Now you just sit down there, eat your fruit salad, and keep your mouth shut! Let's go, let's go

ANTONIO *exits, with the POLICEMEN.*

ROSA: Oh, Antonio! Inspector, where are you taking him?
Wait, his tubes... and the meat grinder...

INSPECTOR: No thank you. We use less sophisticated
methods down at the station.

The INSPECTOR exits. ROSA is beside herself.

ROSA: Oh God. Poor Antonio, what a terrible thing to
happen! But why on earth are they taking him to the police
station...?

Enter the WINDOW. ROSA looks out of it.

Poor Antonio... There he is... they're loading him into the
wagon... Antonio... Antonioooo...

*The DOUBLE enters again, via the door, which is still wide
open.*

DOUBLE: Yes?

ROSA: He answered me! Antoniooooo!

DOUBLE: I'm here... No need to shout! Since you took so
long coming up, I came down. Now, please, hurry up with
that food... I'm dying of hunger...

ROSA: Oh God... one Antonio here, and another Antonio
there... Two Antonios...!! Your personality's completely
split in two!

*ROSA crashes to the floor. The DOUBLE wanders over to
the window and looks out.*

DOUBLE: Ah yes... One Antonio here, one Antonio there...
If I can find a third one... I'll be God!

*Blackout
Musical interlude*

Scene Two

We are still in ROSA's house. As the lights come up, there is nobody on stage. The bedroom door opens. A character appears, wearing a leather jacket full of pockets and zips. He wears a commando-style woollen beret, with motor cycle dark glasses, a knife down his boot, and a big pistol in his holster.

He sneaks along the wall, and looks under the table. He peers into the other rooms. In his hand he has a walkie-talkie, which is making noises: squeaks and whistles. He goes to the window and pulls something off. Then he goes to the coat rack and pulls off a little gadget. He goes to the hall door, opens it and signals to someone to come in.

Another character, almost identical, enters, walking on tiptoe, and followed shortly after by two others, carrying false drawers and shelves in order to disguise the sideboard in which their group leader will be hidden, with his head inside a false soup tureen.

All this is done ballet-style, to the accompaniment of waltz music. The second AGENT, assisted by his colleague, pulls the drawers out of the sideboard. The GROUP LEADER pulls out a small radio with a long aerial, and talks into it:

GROUP LEADER: Hurry up with the furniture. Hello, hello, 008½ Fellini calling HQ, do you read me? Yes, we are setting up our observation post... The woman is still upstairs, talking excitedly with a man in the loft... No, it's not her husband. He keeps calling her madam. I don't know who it is... I am waiting for them to come down...

The two AGENTS have removed the sideboard. They bring on-stage another sideboard, which has been constructed as a kind of stocks, with a big hole, through which the GROUP LEADER will put his head. On either side there are smaller holes for his hands to go through.

GROUP LEADER: Yes, I've already searched the place, I've located the hidden microphones. No, not our stuff. Must be the f...ing anti-terrorist mob... Yes, already dealt with... (*As he continues his report, he is fitted into the sideboard. In a squatting position. His head is now disguised with a soup tureen, arranged like an armoured helmet*) Watch out – they're coming down... I'm in position. Over and out!

The sideboard is returned to its original position. One AGENT climbs into the television. The others exit. At the end of this action, enter ROSA and AGNELLI.

ROSA: Ladies and gentlemen. Three days have passed since the last scene. Well if he can do it so can I. Here, do you know who he is? It's only Gianni Agnelli, living in Rosa's house. I mean, I don't mind looking after your own, but this is ridiculous. I mean he is useless around the house; he can't even change a plug. He thinks that manual labour is a Spanish waiter. And there's my Antonio in prison being kicked about by the police. They think he's a terrorist, and Agnelli won't do anything about it. He's got something cooking in that tiny brain of his and he won't tell me what it is. Anyway, back to the play... (*She continues acting, addressing AGNELLI*) In prison, getting kicked about, and it's all your fault!

ROSA goes over to the sideboard. She opens one of the drawers, and then closes it, worried.

DOUBLE: All my fault?

ROSA: Where's my cigarettes...!

She opens another drawer, into which the GROUP LEADER swiftly slips a packet of cigarettes.

DOUBLE: Calm down, please... before you say it's 'all my fault'...!

ROSA: Ah, here they are...

ROSA takes the packet, takes out a cigarette and puts the packet back in the drawer. She turns to look at AGNELLI for a moment, and the drawer shuts of its own accord, pulled in by the GROUP LEADER.

DOUBLE: I would like to know, my dear Mrs Rosa, (*He lights ROSA's cigarette with a match*) if this so very generous Antonio of yours moved so much as a finger when I was down there at the hospital, having my face rebuilt to look like his. Did he ever move so much as a finger? No, sir! He didn't give a damn! (*He lifts the lid off the soup tureen, and throws in the match. He puts the lid down again, but not before seeing the head of the GROUP LEADER*) I'm not feeling well today...! And then they say that we employers are cynical! What's this if it's not cynicism? (*He sees the television*) But excuse me, speaking of strange things... Is it normal to find a television stuck between the kitchen and the dining-room? Following you around! What channel are we...?

ROSA: Good God, what a fuss-pot you are! I must have moved it to clean up, and forgotten to put it back. Anyway, if you don't like your present face, you can always have it rebuilt just as it was before... with the money you've got...

DOUBLE: Yes, have my face rebuilt! But first of all, I would have to have all my features dismantled, back to basics... (*The chest of drawers moves*) Excuse me, is it normal in this house for drawers to move of their own accord? What is this, the commode's revenge? As I was saying... in order to rebuild my face, they're going to have to dismantle my present features, and peel me like an apple, from my chin to my forehead. And then, once they've rebuilt my skull, what are they going to cover it with, what kind of skin... since they've already stripped my backside as bare as a baboon's bum!

Enter a MAN IN OVERALLS, pushing a dishwashing machine.

MAN: Excuse me, don't mind me, does Mrs Berardi live here?

ROSA: Yes, that's me – If you don't mind my saying so, do you always come into people's houses without even knocking first?

MAN: What difference does it make? Even if I had knocked, you wouldn't have suddenly turned into someone else, would you?

ROSA: What a comedian!

MAN: Who's that gentleman? Your husband?

AGNELLI disappears off into the bedroom.

ROSA: That's my business... And what's this white thing? Your wife?

MAN: No, it's a dishwasher, for you.

ROSA: For me? A dishwasher? You're mad. I never ordered a dishwasher.

MAN: Obviously, they've given you a present!

ROSA: Me?! Who did? You can take it away with you!

MAN: All I know is that it's for you, and I'm not taking it back. Goodbye!

He exits.

ROSA: Look, you're not going to force it on me...

DOUBLE: (*From within*) What's going on now?

ROSA: They've forced a dishwasher on me!

The DOUBLE sticks his head round the door.

DOUBLE: And what's strange about that? For 80 years, we've been forcing our cars on the whole of Italy, and nobody's ever said a word.

They both exit, into the bedroom.

Musical interlude

The lid of the dishwasher opens, and another AGENT sticks his head out. The MAN IN OVERALLS comes back through the hall door, and dismantles the papier-mâché bust

of Plutarch/Suetonius. He takes the bust over to the AGENT whose head is sticking out of the dishwasher. He puts the bust over his head. The AGENT freezes, like a statue.

The GROUP LEADER, in the sideboard, takes the lid off his soup tureen, and looks over at the dishwasher, with the bust on top. Then he puts the tureen lid back on his head.

At that moment the television comes on: inside we see the face of the AGENT whom we already know. He too eyes up what's going on in the room. Then he switches off, and disappears into darkness. Enter LUCIA.

LUCIA: Rosa, Rosa, are you in?

ROSA enters.

ROSA: What's up?

LUCIA: Extraordinary news...!

ROSA: Of Antonio?

The DOUBLE also enters.

LUCIA: No, not exactly, but indirectly. Good morning, Mr Agnelli, how are you?

The furniture is suddenly startled by the word 'Agnelli'.

DOUBLE: No! Don't call me Agnelli! I've already told you, never! Just Mr Gianni!

ROSA: So, what's this extraordinary news, then?

LUCIA: It was on the radio, less than half an hour ago... and on television... Didn't you hear?

ROSA: On television?

She goes over to the TV set and switches it on. On the screen we see the SECRET AGENT, who mimes a TV announcer. He opens and shuts his mouth like a fish, but we hear no voice.

DOUBLE: No, we haven't heard anything.

ROSA: The sound never works on this damn thing!

She bangs the TV on the side. It goes dead.

DOUBLE: So anyway, what is the extraordinary news?

LUCIA: It said that Prime Minister Spadolini has received a letter from Agnelli.

ROSA: Don't be silly...

LUCIA: Yes, and another letter has been received by Minister of the Interior Rognoni...

ROSA: Well, obviously, they must be fake letters! Where's he supposed to have written them from?

LUCIA: From the Red Brigades hideout where he's being held prisoner.

ROSA: But he's here...

DOUBLE: Yes, those letters are authentic. I wrote them!

All the bits of furniture shuffle forward a few inches to where the three are sitting round the table, centre-stage.

ROSA and LUCIA: You? When?

DOUBLE: Three days ago. I wrote them, and then I went down to post them.

He goes over to the telephone, and picks up a book.

ROSA: But why? And what did you write in those letters?

DOUBLE: Just a moment, and you can read for yourselves... There you are. Pages one and two.

He hands them the book.

LUCIA: But this is a collection of Aldo Moro's letters during the kidnap...

ROSA: Yes, it's one of my books.

DOUBLE: Precisely. In fact I found it in the other room there... The idea came to me as I was thumbing through it. I copied out the letters... with a few minor alterations. Here, look, I copied word for word the letter addressed to Cossiga,[9] but instead of addressing it to Cossiga, I addressed it to Spadolini... Then I took the one to Rognoni... Rognoni was already Rognoni in Moro's[10] time... then he was Rognoni in Forlani's time... and

Rognoni is still Rognoni now... Rognoni is always Rognoni! However, first of all, I made copies of my letters. Here they are. Obviously, I signed them, with my name.

The dishwasher moves closer to the DOUBLE, so as to get a closer look at the signature. The other pieces of furniture also shuffle up. They form a little circle around AGNELLI.

DOUBLE: I don't feel very well today...

LUCIA: Rosa, what's the matter with that dishwasher... It seems to be moving of its own accord!

ROSA: It must be the vibrations from the motor...

LUCIA: But it's not switched on...

ROSA: Well switch it on, then... Maybe it'll stop.

She wheels the dishwasher back to its place. The other bits of furniture also move back into position.

LUCIA: What are you saying? It stops when you switch it on?

ROSA: But why did you send those copied letters? They'll realise immediately that they're the same as the Moro letters.

DOUBLE: Yes, of course they will... All of them, the politicians, the ministers, the journalists... But they'll pretend they haven't noticed. In fact I made one big change. I came straight to the point: I demanded an immediate exchange with political prisoners... in exchange for my life, 32 prisoners, all of them prisoners serving life sentences.

ROSA: And my Antonio?

DOUBLE: No, your husband isn't serving a life sentence... at least, not yet. And anyway, if we were to ask for him as well, it would imply that Antonio is an authentic terrorist. Let's not forget that everyone will be 100% convinced that I wrote these letters from the Red Brigades hideout where I'm being held prisoner.

ROSA: You did well not to mention Antonio... But why are you sending letters...? You're not a prisoner. What

satisfaction are you hoping to get out of this?

DOUBLE: Well, I want to find out what the government and the state think of me, what value I have, for them... I want to see whether the government, and the parties, will have the nerve to sacrifice me as they sacrificed Aldo Moro. I want to see whether, in my case too, they will reject any exchange even with a prisoner who was seriously ill... In order for me to be released, I'm asking for 32 to be set free... 32 political prisoners, all healthy in mind and limb! I've checked them one by one. And I want to see if they're going to order a blackout with the newspapers, like they did during the D'Urso kidnapping...[11] I'll go out and buy all the newspapers! Including *Peanuts* and *Teenage Romance*.

LUCIA: Excuse me, My Gianni, do you mind if I say something? This presumptuousness on your part is pretty disgusting. Just who do you think you are?

DOUBLE: I am Gianni Agnelli!! Two hundred and seventy five factories in Europe alone...! Of which four are in Poland... In Poland... with those troublesome workers...! But I sorted them out straight away! I put one of my trusted foremen in charge... a certain Mr Jaruzelski...

LUCIA: So, you're hoping to take advantage of the protection offered by your prestige and your power. You have copied Moro's letters, but it's not going to do any good.. Tomorrow, the journalists and the politicians in their turn will simply copy out the same replies that they gave at the time of Moro, when *he* asked them.

DOUBLE: That remains to be seen!

ROSA: She's absolutely right. I can see the headlines already: 'The State Must Make a Show of Strength By Sacrificing One of its Most Outstanding Citizens'...

DOUBLE: Who wrote that?

ROSA: Leo Valiani,[12] life senator, in *Corriere della Sera*... writing about Moro. From that day onwards, they now call him 'death senator'!

DOUBLE: Anyway, in the event that they do perform as you suggest, I already have my reply ready. My last will and testament!

He pulls a sheet of paper out of his pocket.

ROSA: Your will?

DOUBLE: Yes, exactly: my will. I shall read it to you. 'Dear friends, gentlemen of the government, with my death, you are all sacked! At my funeral I want nobody to be present, no government representatives, nobody from the State. I want no priest, and nobody from my family, in particular my rather stupid younger brother. I wish to be cremated. My ashes are to be taken in a helicopter, which will fly over Turin, scattering them in handfuls over the Rivalta, Spa Stura and Mirafiori factories... So that the workers, when they breathe, will cough, and will remember me. I may not remain in their hearts... but I shall remain in their lungs. For ever!'

ROSA and LUCIA spit in unison.

Enter the POLICE INSPECTOR, with his customary insolence, accompanied by a POLICEMAN.

Meanwhile, the AGENT who hid under the table, extends the table-top by a couple of feet, leaving a gap in the middle. Through this gap, the AGENT sticks his head. He takes the wig off the wig-stand on the table, and puts it on his own head, thereby turning himself into a wigstand.

INSPECTOR: Good afternoon. Not disturbing you, am I?

ROSA: No! I'm very happy to see you, Inspector, so that, at last, I can see my husband and find out how he is!

INSPECTOR: Unfortunately, your Antonio isn't too well. He's feeling a bit swollen... Partly because he keeps tripping up, and having bad falls...

ROSA: Onto your fists, eh?

LUCIA: Shut up, Rosa, don't fall for it.

INSPECTOR: And partly because he keeps drinking like a fish.

ROSA: But how can that be? He's almost teetotal!

INSPECTOR: True enough. It was only water he was drinking, with a bit of salt.

ROSA: Water and salt?

INSPECTOR: Yes, by the gallon, down a rubber tube. You should see what a guzzleguts he is!

ROSA: You rotten, horrible, stinking, pigging bastards. Torturing...

INSPECTOR: Now, language! *(He goes to lean on the table, but it suddenly shifts out of the way, moved by the AGENT underneath)* What's going on?

LUCIA: Don't pay any attention, Inspector. You must understand...

INSPECTOR: Indeed I do understand. I am very understanding, as you can see from the fact that I've taken the trouble to bring your fellow up here. Get a move on, there! *(To ROSA)* Your fellow, so that you can persuade him to tell the truth! *(He bangs his fist down twice on the table, as if to underline what he is saying. The third time, the table suddenly shifts out of the way)* What's going on here?

ROSA: I don't know, Inspector. This has been going on all day, with the furniture moving round of its own accord... It must be the vibrations from the subway...

INSPECTOR: Anyway, up until now... your husband has spun us a load of cock and bull. He even went so far as to say that you, Mrs Minelli, are the person responsible for logistical operations in the Red Brigades, and that you have got Mr Agnelli hidden here...

The DOUBLE pokes his head out of the fridge.

DOUBLE: Please, don't give me away!

INSPECTOR: Oi, you! Will you get a move on?

ROSA: My Antonio said that? About me?

LUCIA: Obviously, since they'd filled him with water, they could make him say anything they wanted!

INSPECTOR: (*Looking out of the door*) Will you get your finger out?!

POLICEMAN: We're not going to make it, Inspector. He keeps falling down, and taking us with him!

INSPECTOR: Well haul him up with a rope, then. Wait – I'll come down. You, come with me.

The INSPECTOR and the POLICEMAN leave the stage.

ROSA: They're killing him!

The DOUBLE pokes his head out again.

DOUBLE: Listen – our only way out is not to contradict him. In fact, give him as much leeway as possible. You must tell him the biggest load of nonsense you can think of... Fill him up with ridiculous stories. Otherwise he'll drown you like he did with Antonio. He's a raving loony!

ROSA: What do you mean? Tell him that, yes, I really am in charge of logistics for the Red Brigades?

DOUBLE: You must give him fibs, stories... you must give me time... We're going to spring a trap that I've set up, which will save all of us...

ROSA: But I'm incapable of telling lies...

DOUBLE: Pretend that you're a journalist from the *Sun*. Be inventive – make it all up! Look out, they're coming back.

The DOUBLE gets back into the fridge. Enter the INSPECTOR, with the POLICEMEN.

INSPECTOR: One more flight, and your husband will be here.

ROSA: Yes, and I could spit in his eye! I knew that cretin wasn't to be trusted. He's sung like a canary!

INSPECTOR: What... he's sung, has he?! So there was some truth in what the cretin said!

ROSA: Yes, too right! I'm going to talk. Talk, talk! I'll talk... and soon I'm going to repent, too. Up until yesterday, I knew where Agnelli was.

INSPECTOR: Oh yes? Where?

ROSA: In an airship, a balloon, you know, the one that advertises condoms and contraceptives over the city.

INSPECTOR: What? A contraceptive dirigible?! See here, Mrs Berardi, look me in the eye.

ROSA: Which one?

INSPECTOR: Don't try to make a fool of me, because there's a water pipe ready for you as well!

Out of the fridge, a shoe is passed to LUCIA, who then hands it on to ROSA.

ROSA: Nobody's fooling here. Just for a start, here's the first evidence.

She puts the shoe on the table.

INSPECTOR: What's that?

ROSA: Can't you see? It's a shoe. Agnelli's shoe.

INSPECTOR: Still fooling about, eh?

He takes the shoe and examines it closely.

ROSA: Not at all: size forty-four and three quarters, hand-made, by Lenzuer Brothers, London...

LUCIA: They're specially made for him!

ROSA: If you don't believe it, phone the Agnelli family and ask if it matches.

INSPECTOR: I don't need to. (*He instructs the POLICEMAN*) Call HQ.

The POLICEMAN goes over to the telephone, and lifts the receiver.

No, not on the telephone, on the radio. They've got all his details there. Check with the clothing department.

The POLICEMAN switches on a portable radio. Suddenly we see aerials sprouting from all the bits of furniture. Enter ANTONIO, accompanied by another POLICEMAN. His belly is swollen. As soon as he enters, he sprays water everywhere – even from his ears, if possible.

POLICEMAN: Hello, HQ...?

ROSA: There's the stool pigeon! We'll fix you, you rat!

LUCIA: Please, don't be so severe!

ANTONIO: But Rosa... Glug, glug...

He begins to gargle.

ROSA: Shut up, slobberer! You've ruined everything, damn traitor!

INSPECTOR: Good God! And to think that I took her for a fool.

ANTONIO: Rosa, I'm sorry, but they filled me with...
oooooh... water

With the sponge trick, he fills his mouth with water, and squirts it in the POLICEMAN's face.

INSPECTOR: Take him into the toilet! Otherwise he'll drown us all!

POLICEMAN: Inspector, HQ tell me that the make, the type and the size match... Agnelli was the only person to wear that kind of shoe in Italy. Him and the Pope.

INSPECTOR: Good God! (*He grabs the shoe*) Let's have a photo immediately...

ROSA: Oh yes, all of us together, round the shoe!

They form up in a 'family photograph' group, around the shoe. One of the POLICEMEN pulls out a flash camera. The SECRET AGENTS also jump out of their bits of furniture, and blast off with their flash cameras.

INSPECTOR: What is this? A day outing to Clacton?

ROSA: So, now will you believe that we're not talking nonsense?

INSPECTOR: Yes, true, it is evidence... but fairly, how can I say, relative.

LUCIA: What do you mean, relative?

INSPECTOR: Well, one of Agnelli's shoes does not prove that you have got Agnelli himself.

ROSA: What about two shoes?

She takes the other shoe, which the DOUBLE has passed to LUCIA, and bangs it down on the table. Once again, the SECRET AGENTS loose off with their flash cameras.

INSPECTOR: Well, yes, two shoes...

ROSA: And that's not the end of it...

She pulls a sheet of paper out of one of the shoes.

INSPECTOR: Three shoes?

ROSA: No, the original carbon copies of the letters to Spadolini and Rognoni, written in Agnelli's own hand.

She hands the sheet to the INSPECTOR.

INSPECTOR: The copies? Are you sure? Watch out, because if this is a joke, it could cost you dearly.

All the furniture comes shuffling up to the INSPECTOR and ROSA.

ROSA: It could cost you even dearer, my dear Inspector, if you don't hurry up and carry out the necessary handwriting examination.

INSPECTOR: Get a move on, run down to HQ.

POLICEMAN: Yes, I'm running.... *(He bumps into the coat rack)* Oh, excuse me!

AGENT: Don't mention it.

POLICEMAN: Wait a minute, Inspector, I've got the evening edition of two newspapers: this one's got the letter sent to Spadolini. It's an enlarged reprint.

The INSPECTOR compares the copy with the newspaper.

INSPECTOR: Well, yes, the handwriting is very clear, and it looks pretty much the same...

In order to get a better view, the furniture begins to take things to excess, climbing up on the table, leaning up against the group of POLICEMEN, forming a kind of pyramid.

But don't keep pushing!

POLICEMAN: It's not me, Inspector, it's the table, the hat stand, the TV and the sideboard!

The pieces of furniture slowly disentangle themselves from the pile, and go back to their original positions.

INSPECTOR: That ruddy subway really is playing up!

The WINDOW whizzes out from the wings, and stops in front of the group standing centre-stage.

INSPECTOR: I need a magnifying glass...

ROSA: I've got one in the drawer... (*She goes over to the sideboard, and goes to open a drawer. A hand comes out of the tureen and hands her a magnifying glass*) Ah, no, it was in the tureen! (*She hands the glass to the INSPECTOR*) There you are, it's got a little light built in, too.

The SECRET AGENT standing behind the coat rack shines a big torch on the newspaper.

INSPECTOR: Good Lord, what a powerful light! (*He examines the letter and the newspaper closely*) It looks like a pretty good forgery to me.

LUCIA: What do you mean a forgery? Who could have done it? Nobody has ever seen a single line written by Agnelli up until now. And this newspaper only came out an hour ago!

POLICEMAN: It looks pretty authentic to me too.

ROSA: Right, that'll do!

She snatches the sheet of paper from the POLICEMAN and runs off. She gives the paper to LUCIA. Everyone chases after ROSA, who disappears behind the coat rack.

All the pieces of furniture start a merry-go-round. Lights flash on and off. The music gets louder. Shouting and laughter, as at a funfair.

INSPECTOR: Stop it! My head's spinning...! (*Suddenly everything returns to normal, and the furniture returns to its initial position*) You're nicked. Talk! Where have you stashed Mr Agnelli?

ROSA: I will only talk if I'm free, and only if I have Crown

witness immunity, repentant terrorist, special category, supergrass status.

LUCIA: That's right, without immunity, you won't talk!

INSPECTOR: You'll talk or I'll blow your brains out!

ROSA: Alright, I'll talk... But only in front of an Examining Magistrate.

INSPECTOR: He's coming. I've sent for him. You know the Examining Magistrate I mean – the one who was here last time.

ROSA: Ah yes, that poor fellow whose leg you shot.

INSPECTOR: Sssh! Please!

ROSA: Alright, let's wait.

INSPECTOR: No, here nobody is waiting, understand! Because I'll kill you!

The INSPECTOR pulls out a pistol, and points it at ROSA, who hides behind the table. Everybody dives for cover. The SECRET AGENTS also disappear into their respective pieces of furniture, like snails into their shells.

ROSA: Inspector, don't shoot... I'm not a car at a roadblock! Don't shoot. Alright, I'll talk...

INSPECTOR: Oh, so you've finally come to your senses. Listen here, from now on, I'm not going to ask you questions... You're going to talk loud and long, and God help anyone who interrupts! (*Turning to the two POLICEMEN*) Incidentally, is our swollen friend still in the toilet?

POLICEMAN: Yes, sir, I locked him in...

INSPECTOR: Well done. Go and take a look at him.

Exit the POLICEMAN. He returns after a moment.

Alright, get on with it. Be precise, and keep to the point: when did you first decide to kidnap Agnelli? (*To the two POLICEMEN*) You write, and you record.

The DOUBLE begins to feed ROSA ideas from the fridge.

ROSA: The idea of kidnapping Agnelli developed at about the time when we were preparing the via Fani operation...[13]

The furniture shuffles slowly closer, so as to hear ROSA's story.

INSPECTOR: I want details, names, dates, addresses, everything!

ROSA: The story begins in early January... 1978... I was in Milan. It was a lovely day. A pale sun shone weakly through the mist that hung over the city...

INSPECTOR: Never mind the hazy sun and the mist... This is a verbal, not fucking Shakespeare...

ROSA: (*To the DOUBLE*) See, you're making a fool of me! Alright, no poetry. The strategic meeting to discuss kidnapping Agnelli took place in a... cinema!

This last phrase came out of its own accord. Spontaneously, with no prompting from the DOUBLE. The INSPECTOR is bewildered. He slowly comes over to her. The DOUBLE retreats into the fridge.

INSPECTOR: In a cinema?! A strategic meeting in a cinema?

ROSA looks towards the fridge, seeking help. She pushes her seat towards it, in an attempt to get closer. Then she gives up, and carries on, regardless. With vigour.

ROSA: Yes! The Astoria... a nice little cinema, near my house... So we have our meetings there, because of my feet... And... when they called the meeting, I was in Piazza del Duomo, with my girlfriend Caterina...

INSPECTOR: Who is Caterina?

ROSA: He's a priest...

INSPECTOR: A priest? There's a priest involved too?

LUCIA, worried by the enormity of it all, starts signalling desperately to stop it. ROSA, unperturbed, warms to her theme.

ROSA: Yes... Don Anselmo... a worker priest from

Canegrate.[14] He's infiltrated the church establishment.

INSPECTOR: And he dresses up as a woman?

ROSA: Yes. He looks great in drag. He's really elegant, with high heels, lovely perfume, and long, wavy hair.

INSPECTOR: Does he wear a wig?

ROSA: No wig. Just his own natural hair. It's very long... and when he goes back to being a priest, he gathers it in a bun, like so, and tucks it under his hat.

INSPECTOR: And his titties...? Presumably they're his own as well, presumably they're also *au naturel*?

ROSA: No, he always keeps two lightweight hand grenades in his bra: for tactical use! We call him Brother Boob Bomb.

INSPECTOR: But this is out of this world! Listen, you're not making all this up...?

ROSA: Well, all you have to do is phone the Vatican, ask for Don Anselmo... and when a woman's voice answers... Bob's your uncle!

POLICEMAN: Hello... is that the Archbishop's office?

ROSA: Oh come on, Inspector. You know very well, repentant terrorists never lie! Alright, so there we were, in the Astoria... They were showing a porn film... the story of a sex-mad police inspector, who falls in love with a transvestite, and who, in the end, turns homosexual himself... He ends up soliciting in the park... gets caught in a police round-up. They take him down to the police station, where he's beaten up by the police chief... a known sadist, who beats him almost to death. The sex-mad transvestite inspector is about to breathe his last, when the police chief is suddenly seized with passion and and shouts: 'Don't breathe your last... I love you!!' They marry, and live happily ever after. Nice story, eh?

INSPECTOR: Hmm... Continue, please!

ROSA: Yes, let's continue. So there we are, watching the film, when the doors of the cinema swing open, and who should come in but the lawyer for... Mr Big!

INSPECTOR: No!!

LUCIA: Rosa, no!

INSPECTOR: Mr Big! So he really does exist, then! Who is he?

ROSA: My friend Lucia is right, at this point I don't think I can continue... From now on, we're dealing with names, places and people who are too important... I can't go on.

INSPECTOR: Stop fooling about eh?

ROSA: No, Inspector, I am not starting tricks. Even the President of the Republic, Pertini, on 31st December 1981, when he made his New Year speech to the people of Italy, made a clear reference to terrorism and its bases... which, he said, were not in Italy, but abroad, in Europe as a whole...

INSPECTOR: Ah, yes... when he spoke about international connections...

ROSA: Yes, international. So, if the President of the Italian Republic, with all the protection that he has, and the knowledge that he has... limits himself only to a passing reference... and does not name names... he, who could... he, who knows... and you, a humble Inspector... please don't get me wrong... want to play at Don Quixote... want to risk your own life by knowing too much! Do you actually want to die? Well, if you want to die, then why should I stop you, Inspector? After everything that you've done to my family... to my husband... No, I shall tell you the names. (*To one of the POLICEMEN*) Are you ready to record this, for the 'last' time (*To the other POLICEMAN*) Are you ready to write this down for the 'last' time? (*To the INSPECTOR*) Are you ready to listen, for the 'last' time?

LUCIA: Rosa, if you're going to talk, then I'm going... I don't fancy dying.

LUCIA exits.

FIRST POLICEMAN: Excuse me, Inspector, I've got to go too...

INSPECTOR: Go where?

FIRST POLICEMAN: My shift's over, and also my wife is ill.
I have to take her to the hospital...

SECOND POLICEMAN: I've got to go too, Inspector... I've got an abcess come up on a tooth, and I've got to go and have my gum lanced...

INSPECTOR: You're a bunch of rotten cowards! The abcess is not on your gums... it's up your arses!

Exit the two POLICEMEN, followed by all the furniture.

ROSA: Inspector.. my furniture... It's moving of its own accord! Stop it... (*Shouting after the fleeing furniture*)
Come back...! Come back!

INSPECTOR: (*His hand goes to his heart*) Oh God, I feel ill... my heart...

He slumps down in a chair.

ROSA: Are you feeling ill? You see what happens when you try to find out too much? (*She runs to the hall door and shouts*) Lucia... Officers... Hurry up... the Inspector is ill!

Re-enter LUCIA, followed by the POLICEMEN.

LUCIA: What's happening?

Enter a POLICEMAN with newspapers.

POLICEMAN: Look, Guv, I've got the special editions. What's in them is unbelievable!

Slowly all the pieces of furniture come back on-stage, and line up behind the actors. The fridge opens, and out pops the DOUBLE.

DOUBLE: Pass me one too. (*The POLICEMAN passes him a newspaper*) Thank you.

POLICEMAN: Hey, but that's the prisoner, what's he doing in there?

DOUBLE: Just keeping cool... Listen, the whole Cabinet has met and issued a communiqué. Here it is, under the headline: 'Kidnap Chaos. Cabinet Caves In. Yes. In the

Moro Case, the State answered: No Exchange. This Time it Must Answer: Yes'.

ALL IN UNISON: No!

DOUBLE: No, yes. 'The prisoners asked for in exchange will be set free today.'

ALL IN UNISON: Oh no!

DOUBLE: (*Still reading*) Yes. 'We are aware that, after the 32 prisoners have been released, Agnelli's jailers might demand the release of an unlimited number of further prisoners. In order to prevent this...'

ALL IN UNISON: Well?

DOUBLE: 'The Cabinet, with the approval of the various organs of state, has decided to free all political prisoners already serving sentences.'

ALL IN UNISON: No!

DOUBLE: Yes! 'And also all prisoners awaiting trial'.

ALL IN UNISON: Evviva!

ROSA: Evviva! So my Antonio is free!!

LUCIA: Yes, everyone's free!

INSPECTOR: No, impossible, have they all gone mad?!

DOUBLE: Sorry, Inspector. 'All anti-terrorist proceedings have been dropped as well.' You can retire peacefully.

INSPECTOR: All the work that I've done, my hard work, flushed down the pan! It's disgusting! Bastard politicians!
The furniture standing behind the actors also begins to get agitated.

ROSA: Bastard politicians is right. They let Moro be killed like a lamb led to the slaughter; everyone agreed that he should be sacrificed. Be firm! And now, with Agnelli, they've done a somersault... The loathsome pigs!

LUCIA: Yes, all of them with their trousers down, giving in like crazy!

They all look at each other in amazement.

DOUBLE: You don't understand? Tell me, have you never read Karl Marx? Ah yes, of course... These days only we captains of industry study *Das Kapital*.. Especially where it says: 'The only true power is financial-economic power, in other words, holding companies, markets, banks, commodities... In other words, Capital.'

One of the POLICEMEN leaves the stage by the centre door.

And then he adds a sentence, which children should memorise and sing in the playground: 'The sacred laws of this state... the economic state... are written on watermarked paper money. So government, state and institutions are nothing other than supporting services, for the real power, which is economic power.' Supporting services... you see? So, Aldo Moro was sacrificed in order to save the respectability of the aforementioned financial state, not for the supporting services, for which nobody gives a damn! (*He moves upstage, and starts climbing up the pieces of furniture, which have been arranged like the steps of a temple*) Get it into your heads: I am the state! The capital which I represent is the state! It is my dignity that you must save, even at the cost of your own lives! How could they think of sacrificing me, in order to save the state? For I am the state!

INSPECTOR: What's he saying now? Who's he talking about? Has he gone silly in the head again? Who do you think you've turned into this time?

DOUBLE: (*Reaching the top of the pile of furniture*) I am Gianni Agnelli! And don't be fooled by my face, it's because of plastic surgery...

INSPECTOR: Listen, I'll give you plastic surgery if you don't stop...

ROSA: Calm down, Inspector, he really is Agnelli.

The POLICEMAN enters.

POLICEMAN: Inspector, in the toilet there's another Antonio, the spitting image of this one...

ROSA: Yes, only that one is my Antonio, and this one is Agnelli.

The SECRET AGENTS emerge from their various pieces of furniture. In chorus:

AGENTS: Yes, Inspector, we can assure you, we have been listening in on their conversations for quite some while.

INSPECTOR: (*Pointing to the AGENTS*) Just a minute: SISMI, SISDE, Interpol, SAS, DHSS...

GROUP LEADER: It seems that this gentleman really is Mr Agnelli, and that, by mistake, his face has been rebuilt in the image of Antonio Berardi, one of his workers. It was he who wrote the letters to the government, and posted them from this house, pretending that he was held prisoner by terrorists; it was he who organised this whole bloody shambles...

As if hypnotised, the INSPECTOR slowly climbs up the pile of furniture, approaching AGNELLI, who reaches out a hand, and with his forefinger touches the forefinger of the INSPECTOR. This is an obvious and grotesque allusion to Michelangelo's famous 'Creation' painting in the Sistine Chapel.

DOUBLE: I created you. Go forth!

The INSPECTOR comes down again, bewildered.

INSPECTOR: You're having me on! You're taking the piss?! I don't care if you are the upper reaches of the state! (*He pulls a gun out of his pocket*) I'll shoot this state in the bollocks!

CHORUS: No, stop it, you're mad! Think of what you're doing! Stop him!

Everyone tries to stop him. They manage to get hold of him. At that moment, enter the EXAMINING MAGISTRATE, on crutches.

EXAMINING MAGISTRATE: What's up? What's going on?

A shot is fired from the INSPECTOR's gun. BANG! The EXAMINING MAGISTRATE is hit in the leg.

Aaaargh! They've kneecapped my other kneecap! This is getting to be a habit!

He falls flat on his face.

Musical interlude

Blackout