

The compromise



Marco Ciaramella

CAST:

Sarah: Gabriel's wife

Gabriel: Sarah's husband

Omar: Sarah's and David's son

Frances: David's wife

David: Frances's husband

Roberta: Frances's and Gabriele's daughter

Beatrix Dobson: University professor

Ambrose: Butler

FIRST ACT

The curtain rises and the scene unwinds in the sitting-room. There is Gabriel sitting at table. He stands up, switches on the radio and begins to dance. Sarah goes in with her cell phone in her hand and, seeing her husband dancing frantically, she stops for a moment to look at him, then she switches off the radio. At the sight of his wife, he goes back to sit doing the "moonwalk". Then he starts again to work. He opens the carrying case and pulls out the papers to analyze.

Sarah: *(Starting to talk on the phone again)* We are waiting for you tonight. *(And she hangs up)* We did everything wrong from the beginning!

Gabriel: You are right! Carry on such a big lie all this time. We knew that, sooner or later, it would turn against us.

Sarah: If you remember, I was for a more drastic solution, while you and Frances were not ready.

Gabriel: I am telling you for the nth time, for me it was only an affair, nothing more. It was you who felt a deeper feeling for David, therefore you had to be more decided to ask for divorce, on the contrary you preferred that strange mediation.

Sarah: You are very wrong! I didn't nourish who knows what sentiment for David, mine was only a spite of your betrayal.

Gabriel: And did you have to choose just Frances's husband?

Sarah: Let's say that he was the first who I had within reach.

Gabriel: Or he was the one with whom you felt more relish in taking your revenge.

Sarah: Also that. At that time it seemed to me the best way to hurt you.

Gabriel: On the contrary you hurt only yourself, as you have fallen in love with him and still today you sigh for him.

Sarah: This is not true.

Gabriel: Instead I think the opposite, but put your soul in peace because he doesn't match you.

Sarah: While Frances is in love with you. Is this that you mean?

Gabriel: I feel nothing for her, mine was only an escapade.

Sarah: Ah! Get my best friend pregnant you call it a mere escapade?

Gabriel: Also you were not less, as you got pregnant from my best friend David. It seems to me that now we are quits.

Sarah: In my opinion it would be a bit necessary to review our concept of friendship!

Gabriel: I thoroughly agree with you about this!

Sarah: Sure that in those four months we made a real mess!

Gabriel: But then we reconciled and we succeeded in not making to be a burden the mistake they made.

Sarah: Even if you had to renounce the daughter you conceived with Frances and to bring up the son I had with David.

Gabriel: You don't need to remind me, I know very well, even if thirty years have passed!

Sarah: Don't you think the time has come to tell the boys the truth?

Gabriel: Absolutely not! It's better if we keep our secret. How do you think the boy would react if he discovered after all this time the truth?

Sarah: But if he came to know from his real father?

Gabriel: I don't even want to think about it.

Sarah: Or what if Roberta found out that her biological father is you?

Gabriel: And who should tell her?

Sarah: Can't you see that our sons are beginning to cast an eye on each other?

Gabriel: Are you suggesting that Roberta and Omar like each other?

Sarah: Even if tragic for us and not for them, this would be the lesser evil.

Gabriel: And what would be the worst?

Sarah: I remind you that they are doing their training in a research laboratory and they are getting ready to learn to do the analyses on the DNA.

Gabriel: And with this?

Sarah: They have been wondering for some time why she looks more like you than her father and Omar is David's exact clone.

Gabriel: (*Worried*) So, do you think, they already have suspicions?

Sarah: Not for the moment, but having within reach the right instruments, with time, they could be pushed by curiosity to look for some confirmation.

Gabriel: If I think I was the one who recommended that branch of studies to him!

Sarah: Let's hope yet that this branch doesn't fall down on our head!

Gabriel: But what could they analyze to be able to discover the truth?

Sarah: A hair is enough, and seen how many you lose, I don't think it is so difficult to recover one.

Gabriel: What Frances and David say about it?

Sarah: We will find out soon. I called the nth meeting here at me.

Gabriel: When we got married, I would have never imagined having to take decisions in four for our sons.

Sarah: If we had respected the rule established initially, this wouldn't have happened. The agreement, if you remember well, was that we would take care of Omar and they of Roberta.

Gabriel: But, then, something changed during their growth. Seeing ourselves again in the faces of our true sons pushed me and David to review that decision.

Sarah: Fate, then, completed the work by making those two fall in love.

Gabriel: I wouldn't speak of bad luck, but of punishment for our mistakes.

Sarah: Call it a bit as you want, but let's find a solution, those boys must not stay together, it's not advisable.

Gabriel: You're right! We have already made too much of transgression and confusion. It would be appropriate for this story to end here and not continue with their union. Even if, I don't think it right to make our faults weigh on them.

Sarah: So let's tell the truth about everything. It doesn't seem to me that continuing to keep silent on the identity about their true parents is very fair.

Gabriel: I'm confused, I can no longer distinguish what is right and what is wrong.

Sarah: Yet you should be accustomed to it, we have been living with this situation for years!

Gabriel: But the various and eventual, that is, that those two fell in love had not yet happened.

Sarah: It would be better for everyone if we hindered this union. We could put some tares, what do you say?

Someone knocks on the door and Sarah goes to open it. Frances and David enter. Sarah goes to sit at the table where Gabriel is placing the papers taken previously.

David: Why did you call an extraordinary meeting? What's the problem to solve? Is anyone sick?
(After which he sits between Sarah and Gabriel)

Gabriel: Yes, me. If we don't find a solution I'll definitely have a heart attack.

Frances: *(Worried, she sits down beside Gabriel)* Then go to a cardiologist immediately. I know a good one. Heart must not be underestimated. What troubles do you have? Do you happen to have tachycardia?

Sarah: In her life she underestimated everything, but not the heart. And you should know something.

Frances: But you also seem to have done the same.

Gabriel: Now don't start the old story again. We have an urgent trouble to solve.

David: Then start exposing it!

Sarah: It's soon said: I would be in favour of revealing the secrets of this strange extended family, while he is against it, what do you say?

Frances: That Gabriel is right.

Sarah: *(Standing up)* No wonder you agree with him!

Frances: But it isn't for the reason you think it is. It's just that it doesn't seem right to bring this story out after thirty years.

Sarah: Listen! Love has blossomed between Frances and Omar. If their relationship should end in a marriage, who will accompany the bride to the altar?

David: The one who has always behaved like a father, that is me. *(Sarah sits down again)*

Gabriel: Sarah fears that the boys take the DNA test.

Frances: And what reason would they have to do it? Didn't you say something that might have made them suspicious?

Sarah: Certainly not! But the similarities are too evident to continue to believe that sooner or later they don't decide to take away a little curiosity. Therefore let's spill the beans, before they find out the truth on behalf of them.

David: Have you considered the consequences?

Sarah: Whatever they are we will face them. In my opinion it's the only way for them to understand that they can't stay together.

Frances: And why can't they?

Sarah: *(Standing up vexed)* I seem to hear Gabriel speak. Now more than ever I'm convinced that you had to stay together.

Frances: It's you who came to take him back, remember?

Sarah: *(Approaching Frances)* Unfortunately yes, but it was a mistake.

David: *(Standing between the two)* To recall bygone days is useless. We all know well that we were stupid boys at the time.

Gabriel: *(Standing up)* Even if we were not so boys! *(Sarah sits down)*

David: But stupid yes.

Frances: Let fate do it. Let's not try to change the course of events.

David: And if fate led the boys to find out the truth?

Frances: We shall deny.

Sarah: And how could we deny before the evidence of a scientific result like that of the DNA test?

Frances: It seems to me that it hasn't been done yet, so why worry?

David: So let's try to keep the boys separated as long as possible.

Gabriel: And how do we do that? Do we segregate them at home until they reach their thirtieth year of age?

Frances: Also because we've always granted our daughter the greatest freedom, if now we took it away suddenly, she would certainly become suspicious.

Sarah: However, even without resorting to drastic methods, we must find a way for those two to have fewer occasions to hang out. By doing so, perhaps, they could begin to look around a bit and find someone else to turn their attention to.

Frances: Do you also have any idea how to do it?

David: Maybe I have an idea to solve this problem.

Sarah: (*Standing up*) Come on, talk!

Gabriel: Be good, now he tells us! It seems to me that you are getting a little too nervous.

Sarah: I'm not nervous, I'm only curious, that's all.

Gabriel: I know what's your that's all!

Sarah: You shut up, you are the usual rude! You and your bad habit of interrupting people while they are talking.

Gabriel: You really were the one who interrupted him, however it's the same. Please, explain us.

David: If we directly offered them the samples to be tested on? They wouldn't need to get them on their own.

Sarah: I don't think to understand.

Gabriel: He alludes to the possibility of exchanging some objects and then offering them on a silver plate.

Frances: Good boy! But where do we find the silver plates?

Sarah: It's a way of saying. It means that we should exchange some personal belongings, such as hairbrushes and so on.

Gabriel: I, however, have little to brush.

Sarah: But there will still be some hair on that war memorial! After all you are not entirely hairless!

Gabriel: Once upon a time I had Elvis's forelock.

Frances: Don't you know that bald men are considered the most charming?

Sarah: If you want to take back the charming man, do it!

Frances: How susceptible you are tonight! It was only an observation in itself.

Sarah: Even thirty years ago you said something similar and then look what happened!

Frances: Listen goody-goody, it doesn't seem to me that you've been outdone!

Sarah: Ours was only a spite.

David: Sarah is right, I've always loved you.

Frances: But you immediately threw yourself into her arms.

David: What else should I have had to do? You had run away with Gabriel.

Frances: But you didn't even try to come and get me. I was waiting for one of your deeds to retrace my steps, that you didn't do.

Gabriel: He did that, after getting another pregnant.

Sarah sits down.

Frances: It was certainly not what I would have expected.

David: Neither would I have ever thought that, of all the men in circulation, you chose just him to betray me.

Gabriel: She was with me, but she was waiting for you waiting for her and you consoled yourself with the other who didn't know I still wanted her. We all made a huge mistake, especially in the timing.

Sarah: If you men had calculated them better, now we wouldn't be here to go through these accusatory trials and it would all end in a simple mutual betrayal. On the contrary we have been scratching our heads for thirty years.

Frances: We didn't even have lice!

David: I would have preferred them by far, those with some sulfur and shampoo go away.

Gabriel: *(Sighing)* If only a bath was enough to "wash" the blame!

Sarah: I would be always in the tub.

Frances: I would also do the whirlpool.

Sarah: If you drowned, it would be even better!

Frances: You're the usual witch! *(Going towards Sarah with warlike intentions)*

David: Don't you understand she's joking?

Frances: She always jokes, even when she said she was having an abortion. And then look how it turned out.

Sarah: Why did you do it?

Frances: Unlike you, I never considered that possibility.

Sarah: Of course, you carried the fruit of your great love on your lap!

Frances: I don't talk to you today anymore. When you are nervous you always manage to bring this story back. By now we all know how things went and behaving like this is useless. We only have to think about the good of our sons and that's all.

Gabriel lights his pipe.

David: By now our life has already been widely marked, let's focus on their which is more important. *(Frances goes to get the bottle of spumante with two glasses, after which she pours a drink for herself and her husband. The two, after making the toast, drain their glass and take pleasure in having scrounged some excellent spumante)*

Sarah: Okay, you're right! *(And she sits down)*

Frances: *(Underlining it)* He is right? What was I saying instead?

(Sarah beckons to Gabriele to intervene before the two drain the whole bottle)

Gabriel: *(He takes the bottle off the table and the guests switch to the peanuts)* So, what objects do we exchange? I inform you that Omar will be back soon and it's not nice to be found to wrangle.

David: If we all agree to force fate, in my opinion, there is only one way.

Frances: We all just wouldn't agree. But my opinion doesn't count. I'm not Sarah who always says the right thing at the right time. She can do it, she is intelligent and cultured. After all it's not my fault if I don't come, like her, from a wealthy family and I haven't been able to study. But speak, I'm curious.

Gabriel: It seems to me that we are going off topic. Let's go back to the topic that interests us.

David: I didn't want to talk about it now, but, since Frances talked about wealth, I would like to discuss it for a moment.

Gabriel: Have you by chance entered the Finance Police? Do you want me to show you my tax declaration?

David: No, that doesn't interest me. But, that Roberta's current account is rising visibly, that yes. *(Sarah tries to remove the peanut tray, but Frances punches her on the hand)*

Gabriel: Why? Aren't you happy about it?

David: Absolutely not! Sooner or later she will wonder how she can dispose of so much money.

Gabriel: You will tell her that you put them there.

David: And how do I justify them? Maybe you don't remember, but I'm a simple worker, not a notary like you. So, from now on, avoid these continual deposits of money into my daughter's account.

Gabriel: I was thinking of doing good to my... your daughter, I certainly didn't want to create problems.

David: I understand your point of view and I don't blame you, but now stop it, otherwise I will be forced to tell her that I did a bank robbery to accumulate such a sum.

Frances: You did already enough when you bought the house next to yours. In this way we have seen both boys grow up. *(Sarah takes the opportunity to make the peanuts tray disappear before the two freeloaders manage to finish them)*

Gabriel: I just tried to fix my mistake.

David: Who is not guilty in this story raise a hand.

Gabriel: Let's end it with recriminations! Let's spread a pitiful veil over this whole story and you tell us how we can force fate.

David: We must act with cunning and provide them with the evidence they seek.

Frances: However, if we provide them to them, they may have doubts.

David: Not if they did the analyses.

Sarah: I understand, we exchange samples.

Frances: Which samples?

Gabriel: Those of blood, right?

David: Right.

Frances: I still don't understand.

Sarah: *(Standing up)* Either you are dumb or you are retarded! It's very simple, we have blood drawn and we make sure that the names are inverted on the test tubes.

Frances: *(Standing up)* Maybe I will also be dumb, but since you and David were intending to reveal this secret, who guarantees us that the names will really be reversed?

Gabriel: We will find a super partes person.

Frances: Who? Clark Kent?

Sarah: I throttle this... *(She approaches Frances to move from words to deeds)*

Gabriel: *(After blocking his wife)* Sara, keep your hair on! I'll explain it to her. You sit down!

Frances: If she doesn't sit down by herself, I'll throw her to the ground.

Sarah: You should just try! *(The unstoppable desire to lay hands on the other pushes them again to get closer. Husbands manage to separate them before the worst happens)*

David: Stop you two! If you believe you can reason with your hands it means that we have hit rock bottom! Please Sarah, sit down! *(Sarah obeys immediately)*

David: *(Addressing his wife)* What they wanted to tell them is that we have to find a trusted person who can help us exchange the test-tubes and then deliver them to our sons.

Frances: Now it's all clear. Did it take long?

Gabriel: We were just naive! When we decided to share the lives of our sons, we didn't think that, being together, those two, in growing up, would end up falling in love.

David: I do not deny you that I would have believed that a fraternal bond would create, certainly not a completely different kind of sympathy.

Gabriel: However, it is not that Greek tragedy that you describe.

David: None of us make it a tragedy, but it's something we don't like.

Sarah: Also because to have her like my daughter's mother-in-law, you know what satisfaction!

Frances: The thing is mutual, witch! *(Both of them try again, forcing their husbands to intervene again)*

David: Now what do we do, start over?

Gabriel: It's stronger than them, they have it in their DNA.

Frances: What?

David: To break the balls out of proportion.

Frances: It's always her who starts.

David: And you don't answer her. You'll see that if you don't give her rope, she will also stop it. *(Then, turning to Sarah)* Is it true that you stop?

Sarah: Yes, if the witch stops provoking me. *(Then she sits down)*

Gabriel: So, if the ladies are calm, we can continue.

David: But, apart from us, who else is aware of our situation?

Gabriel: Nobody.

David: Not even your parents?

Gabriel: We are not crazy! If we had told my parents, my father would have immediately disinherited me. Then, for the par condicio, we decided to do the same with her parents.

Frances: We didn't run that risk, ours don't have a penny.

David: But we still preferred not to do it, we didn't want to give them the biggest disappointment of their life.

Gabriel: In fact your motivation is much more noble than ours. We did it for the money, while you did it for the love of your loved ones.

Frances: I would have preferred to do it for the same reason as you.

David: And stop thinking always about money, you!

Frances: If we weren't in trouble, maybe I wouldn't do it!

Gabriel: This you never told me.

David: Don't listen to her, she's the usual exaggerated!

Frances: Don't listen to him! Always that damned pride of his! For this he also lost his job... the idealist!

Gabriel: What is this all about? How long have you not worked?

Frances: For six months. And this jerk doesn't want to tell anyone, especially you.

Gabriel: Come on David, tell me what happened.

David: Don't worry, you'll see that everything will work out.

Gabriel: In the meantime, I would need someone to help me in the office, would you be willing to come?

David: Sure! On condition that you don't pay me.

Frances: You see it? The trade unionist in him always comes out. And it's the same reason the place was played. When there was a need to cut redundant staff, who else could have chosen?

David: It wasn't exactly like that.

Frances: Then explain to us how it went, since I still haven't understood it !

Sarah: Of this I am not surprised.

Frances: You shut up! Now your stupid wisecracks are out of place.

Gabriel: Stop Sarah, this is a serious matter, so spare us your sarcasm!

Frances: Good boy! You tell your rich wife, that a full pocket doesn't believe an empty pocket. Now who is the dullard?

Gabriel: Let's do like this: you (*Turning to David*) come to my office anyway, then we'll see.

David: But, without obligation.

Gabriel: Ok, without obligation.

Frances: If he doesn't want to make the commitment, I could do it. If you need someone to clean the office, I volunteer.

Sarah: (*Standing up*) No, my beautiful! I don't want to find myself in the same situation of thirty years ago.

Gabriel: Maybe you forget that they must guarantee Roberta sustenance. So stop it with your stupid fantasies!

Sarah: (*Mortified*) You are right! I said a unkind thing and I promised myself to stop.

Gabriel: So it's decided, I'll wait for you tomorrow morning, I'm sure you will be useful to me both.

David: At eight o'clock we will be with you.

Gabriel: Ok, so see you tomorrow.

Frances and David greet and leave the scene.

Gabriel: I'm going to call the doctor's office to request a prescription for blood test. With that then we go to the local health authority and ask that they come to make them at home. In the meantime you think how keep Omar away from Roberta. We need to make sure he forgets about her and turns to someone else.

Sarah: I have an idea.

Gabriel: Which?

Sarah: Let me do it, meanwhile I'm going to make a phone call, then I'll explain. (*After hearing the doorbell ring*) It must be Omar, you keep him here for a few minutes, I wouldn't want him to listen to my conversation.

Gabriele: All right! Meanwhile I'm going to open. (*As soon as Omar enters the house*) Hi Omar, how did it go in the lab today?

Omar: Fine, thanks. Sorry dad, but now I have to go over there to say something to Ambrose.

Gabriel: He hasn't entered service yet, so if you want to anticipate it to me in the meantime.

Omar: I wanted to inform him that we have a guest tonight.

Gabriel: Can I know who he is?

Omar: Roberta.

Gabriel: And why would you invite her?

Omar: What questions do you do? Does she bother you? *(He takes off his jacket, puts down his backpack, takes his comb out of his pocket and, after running it through his hair, shakes his head like dogs do when they dry)*

Gabriel: Not at all, I was only asking if there was a particular reason.

Omar: It's just an informal dinner, it's not her birthday, if that's what you are referring to.

Gabriel: If that's why, I remember it well on her birthday. It's that I feared something worse.

Omar: I already find it strange that you remember her birthday perfectly, as you barely remember mine. Also I don't understand what else worse you could fear.

Gabriel: Maybe I expressed myself wrong. I just wanted to say that, if we don't inform Ambrose in time, we risk not welcoming our guest properly.

Omar: How strange! I had understood completely different. *(And he combs again shaking his head once more)*

Gabriel: Anyway, now do you know what I do? I go to my office to phone him and I ask him to come a little earlier, so that he has all the time to prepare a dinner of his. *(And he leaves the scene)*

Sarah enters the scene while Omar is getting dressed to go out again. For the nth time the boy combs and shakes his head.

Omar: Hello mom!

Sarah: Hi son! Have you been back for a long time?

Omar: No, I just got back. But now I have to go on an errand. See you later.

Sarah: Sure darling, go easy.

Omar leaves the scene and Gabriel returns.

Gabriel: My dear, I have to give you two bad news: the first is that you are too indulgent with your son, you spoil him too much, you always make him do whatever he wants and you never ask him where he goes and what he does. Every now and then a little brake wouldn't hurt.

Sarah: And the second one?

Gabriel: Tonight I invited Roberta to dinner.

Sarah: This is bad news, he's really determined on that girl.

Gabriel: It is also understandable, she is a very good tidbit.

Sarah: Do you mean your daughter is prettier than my son?

Gabriel: Do you want to discuss who is more attractive than the two?

Sarah: It seemed to me that you remarked on this fact.

Gabriel: Frances is right! You are too susceptible.

Sarah: Since you always agree with her, why don't you go back to that illiterate lout?

Gabriel: Is it ever possible that with the problem we have, you don't think about anything but putting tares?

Sarah: Then you moderate the terms! My son is gorgeous.

Gabriel: All right! He is gorgeous. Even if, for our purpose, the opposite would have been better. If at least one of them had been ugly, perhaps we would have had a better chance of separating them.

Sarah: In fact, if one of the two suddenly becomes ugly, maybe Roberta.

Gabriel: What an unsound idea this is! How do we make my Roberta look uglier? In case it would be easier with Omar.

Sarah: Maybe we should do it with both. And the fact that he invited her to dinner tonight will allow us to implement an idea that is flashing on my head.

Gabriel: I don't understand what you're alluding to. I see the wheels of your brain spinning wildly, stop them and tell me what they have come up with.

Sarah: We will make Ambrose prepare something that both of them like, but that strongly alters their breath, in that way they will stay well apart and there will be no temptations.

Gabriel: However, after a good oral hygiene, their breaths will return fresh as roses.

Sarah: Not with those quantities of garlic and onion that we will put in their dishes. Henceforth their diet will undergo a sharp change. We must insinuate in their minds the doubt that a sudden halitosis problem has arisen. This will undermine their safety, they will no longer feel so attractive and will certainly reduce their physical contacts to a minimum.

Gabriel: I like your idea! I think it can be done. Indeed, if we tell Frances and David to do the same, when they are at their dinner, that doubt will become a certainty.

Sarah: And it will make them pass the hot spirits.

Gabriel: Do you think that a little garlic will succeed?

Sarah: I don't know yet, but we have an expert who will join us shortly and can confirm it, otherwise we will use something else. *(Then she takes the bottle of spumante and, with the few drops left, they make a toast to seal the pact)*

SECOND ACT

Same scenography of the first act.

Sarah: By this time she should have already arrived, she told me she is always on time. *(After hearing the doorbell ring)* Ah, finally, here she is!

Sarah goes to open.

Sarah: Please, take a seat! Sit down on the sofa, may I offer you a coffee?

Beatrix: No, thanks, I prefer to stand. Sorry I'm late, but among all these houses I didn't understand which one was the right one.

Sarah: It is true, they all look alike, even if this is the largest. However let's come to the reason why I asked you to pass. As you can imagine it is my son.

Beatrix: I had guessed this. On the way, I wondered what the problem was and why you didn't want to explain it to me by phone. I honestly don't understand why Omar asked for your intervention and didn't contact me personally.

Sarah: In fact he is unaware of our meeting.

Beatrix: Then it doesn't seem to me that there are conditions to continue our conversation. The boy is doing a great job and that's it.

Sarah: I think so too, but I would like to know if something can still be added.

Beatrix: Are you asking me what I believe?

Sarah: I only ask if the topic Omar intends to deal with in the thesis can be slightly expanded.

Beatrix: This request is really bizarre, do you know? It is always possible to expand and I wouldn't even have anything to object, but don't you think your son should also agree?

Sarah: He must not know about my request.

Beatrix: What do you mean?

Sarah: It must seem your initiative.

Beatrix: However, I cannot understand why a mother wishes to increase her son's amount of study for no reason. Expanding the subject would entail spending even more time on books and making further experiments in the laboratory.

Sarah: That would be exactly my purpose, but please don't ask me why, it's too personal for me to reveal. However I can assure you that I would be very grateful to you and when I say a lot, I mean a lot.

Beatrix: I certainly don't care about your business, but to do what you ask me, I have to communicate this change to your son today, otherwise he will not be able to give the thesis for the established day.

Sarah: Perfect, the sooner you inform him, the better.

Beatrix: If that's all, I should go now.

Sarah: All right! Thank you very much. And rest assured that I will honor our agreement.

Beatrix: I'm counting on it, goodbye.

The professor opens the bag to take the cell phone that is ringing, dropping, without realizing it, her hair clip.

Sarah: *(Reflecting out loud)* This piece has also been put in its place. Now I'm curious to see what topic the other two will find to make Roberta stay more at home.

Ambrose opens the door and enters, as usual, with a soft step into the room. Sarah intent on reading the newspaper, does not notice his arrival.

Ambrose: Good morning madam! *(Startling her)*

Sarah: Good morning Ambrose! I have to talk to you.

Ambrose: Tell me, did something happen?

Sarah: Nothing serious, it's just that we have for dinner Roberta tonight.

Ambrose: Very well, that girl is so adorable!

Sarah: Do you find?

Ambrose: Sure, why do you have any doubts?

Sarah: Absolutely not! Is that I lose a little objectivity when I think of the antipathetic of the mother who finds herself. I really don't digest that woman.

Ambrose: Even if you didn't point it out, I had understood it.

Sarah: She is a undercultured antipathetic.

Ambrose: I thought she was a historical family friend, what happened suddenly?

Sarah: It happened that I would like to get rid of her, instead I am forced to deal with her.

Ambrose: Because your children like each other.

Sarah: Did you notice it too? Then it is really evident! I was hoping I was wrong, but if you also have this feeling, then it is just as I feared.

Ambrose: Why are you so worried? Now they have their beautiful age and it is right that they settle down, otherwise their sons will call them grandparents.

Sarah: Do not even mention this possibility as a joke, I feel bad at the mere thought!

Ambrose: But they are the normal events of life.

Sarah: In this case they would be slightly abnormal.

Ambrose: Why? I don't understand.

Sarah: Forget it, it would be too complicated to explain and you wouldn't like to know, I can guarantee it!

Ambrose: As you like. However, when I arrived, it seemed to me that you should talk to me about something. Did he just have to tell me we were going to have a guest for dinner or whatever?

Sarah: You are right! How careless, I almost forgot about it! I wanted to point out that for dinner I would have a particular menu in mind.

Ambrose: Tell me!

Sarah: I would say to cook tripe with Venetian liver and side dish beans with onion. Then I would prepare *(Ambrose gestures with his hand to speak more slowly to give him time to write it all down)* some garlic bruschetta and finally some seasoned cheese.

Ambrose: I would say that you chose a very chic and particularly suitable menu to ward off vampires! I could also recommend some Gorgonzola, just to increase the stench that will be felt in this house?!

Sarah: Good boy! I hadn't thought of that, maybe we add some beets.

Ambrose: But those as well as being very bitter they leave stains on the teeth. Of course you have a nice way of treating your guests!

Sarah: Do they stain your teeth? I would say it is perfect! Indeed, we also add some liquorice at the end of the meal.

Ambrose: Maybe instead of coffee?

Sarah: Why not? After all, this menu is certainly not more extravagant than the one they offer at the Chinese restaurant.

Ambrose: No offense, but this is your very personal judgement. I happened to go to eat at the Chinese restaurant and I assure you that the menu is far better than the one you have in mind tonight. There is something you are planning that you are not telling me. Maybe, if you let me know, I could help you.

Sarah: I just decided that!

Ambrose: All right! I will carry out your orders without objecting.

Sarah: I'm sorry! I didn't want to be so abrupt. Actually I have something in mind. My intent would be to dissuade those two from dating. If Roberta found a menu like the one I just showed you, every time she stays for dinner with us, sooner or later she would start to find some excuse for not accepting Omar's invitations anymore. If those two stopped being together, they would have occasion to see other people too. Therefore, no engagement, no mother-in-law!

Ambrose: Now it's clearer. Even if, underneath, I'm sure it boils something else in the pot.

Sarah: That would be better if you started boiling it yourself! Perhaps with tripe, so that the scent begins to expand at home.

Ambrose: Okay, I provide! Indeed I will also cook the broccoli in order to complete the work.

Sarah: Good, you are a genius!

Ambrose: Then I'm going to get what it takes.

Ambrose leaves the scene to go shopping.

Sarah: This is also settled! *(After hearing it ring)* And now who is it? Let's check. *(Goes to open)* And what are you doing here? Aren't you old enough not to have to be accompanied by your parents yet?

Frances, David and Roberta enter the scene.

David: Why do you say that? So, was there a misunderstanding?

Frances: But look at this! First she invites us to dinner and then she take back the word.

Sarah: I didn't take anything back, the invitation was only for Roberta.

David: Truly Omar said that we should come too.

Roberta: It's true madam! You may not know, at first he had invited only me, but then he decided to extend the invitation to them too.

Sarah: And why?

Roberta: It is a surprise, but we will tell you when we are all present.

Sarah: Oh mom, I feel bad!

David: *(Supporting her)* What have you? Sit down, otherwise you fall.

Frances: And what do you want it to be! In that case it will be enough to raise her!

Roberta: Mom, how rude you are!

Frances: It was just a joke, love. We do it often, don't we Sara?

Sarah: In fact those are never lacking.

Frances: Do you see, that's all right? It's only a game between friends.

Roberta: Maybe, but I seemed to feel a hint of malice.

Sarah: No, it's only love that grows.

Roberta: You have a strange way, though, to make it grow!

Gabriel enters the scene.

Gabriel: *(Hugging the girl)* Hello Roberta! How are you?

Roberta: Fine thanks. Excuse me Gabriel, but weren't you aware that the invitation had also been extended to my parents?

Gabriel: Yes, Omar warned me half an hour ago, but I didn't have time to communicate it to Sarah. However don't worry, I phoned Ambrose so that he would do the shopping for everyone.

Roberta: Thank God! I feared that Omar had forgotten to warn you. He sometimes has his head in the clouds and forgets things.

Sarah: Maybe!

Roberta: What do you mean?

Sarah: No... I was saying... maybe... tonight he came soon! He always comes late.

Roberta: But if when we leave the laboratory he immediately comes home. At least that's what he says to me.

Sarah: You know how men are made! They have their little secrets. Where he goes it is not possible to know, not even to us that are parents.

Roberta: I don't understand why he should lie to me. Even today he told me he would come home immediately.

Gabriel: And if he said it, then we believe it! In fact, do you know what you should do? Go to meet him, so you will remove all doubts.

Roberta: Good idea! *(And leaves the scene)*

The four sit down.

Frances: It is useless for you to try to sow discord, my daughter doesn't fall for it!

Sarah: Anyway I have to try, wasn't this our common goal? You seemed to agree too.

David: And we still are. In addition we also brought our hair brushes.

Gabriel: Then I go to get ours, so we exchange them.

Gabriel gets up and leaves the scene. Sarah then approaches Frances.

Sarah: Have you come up with a way to keep Roberta away from Omar?

Frances: Yes, we have decided that I will be seriously ill.

Sarah: God willing!

Frances: If you do so, I will stop telling you.

David: Please Sarah, don't start as usual!

Sarah: Go on, I'm interested.

Frances: The idea is to pretend to be sick and in need of continuous care, in order to force Roberta to stay at home to look after me.

Sarah: All in all, it doesn't seem bad to me as an idea. Clearly it must have come to David.

David: Yes, it came to me, but the substance doesn't change.

Frances: I had proposed to persuade her professor to have her thesis reviewed, so as to further engage her in the study, but to David it seemed such a stupid idea that we opted for the other solution.

Sarah: In fact, it was not so intelligent.

Frances: What did you think about instead?

Sarah: We haven't yet found a brilliant idea and therefore we are still meditating. Being able to count on the help of a butler, we certainly cannot exploit the expedient of the disease, so we must come up with something else.

Frances: But give yourselves a move as soon as possible, otherwise we run the risk of Omar coming to keep Roberta company at our house and then it will have been completely useless.

Gabriel enters the scene again.

Gabriel: Here are our hair brushes, take them and give us yours. *(After making the exchange)* Did I miss something? What were you talking about when I entered?

Frances: The fact that you have to find a way to keep Omar at home as soon as possible.

Gabriel: You don't have to worry about that, we've already solved it, Sarah thought about it.

Frances: But if she just told us that you have yet to decide.

Gabriel: *(Looking at his wife)* Didn't you say it was all right?

Sarah: Yes, I solved it, but, for the moment, I can't tell you.

Gabriel: Why, is it a state secret? If you tell me too, I could adjust myself accordingly.

Frances: Right, we too.

Sarah: You too what?

Gabriel: Why you want to be so mysterious, I don't understand it!

Sarah: *(Standing up)* Alright then! I had Omar's car tampered with. In this way he will be forced to take it to the mechanic who, at my request, will take three months to repair it. In doing so, since Roberta doesn't have a car, they will have no way of being overwhelmed by sudden passion when they go out. Indeed, in all probability they will not come out at all!

While Sarah and Gabriel discuss, Frances and David take the opportunity to scrounge coffee.

Gabriel: Good! So then he takes mine and consume there. What idea is this? *(Frances and David laugh at hearing the absurd idea of Sarah)*

Sarah: I will have also yours tampered with.

Gabriel: I don't like this solution at all. Immediately call the mechanic and tell him that the deal has been canceled! *(The other two continue to laugh)*

Sarah: Ok, I will!

Gabriel: Thank goodness we talked about it!

Frances: And it was a bad idea mine!

Sarah: You think for yourself! *(And she sits down)*

Gabriel: *(Sitting down)* Have you finished arguing? Then I inform you that tomorrow morning at eight the male nurse of the local health authority will come to collect blood at home. I'm sure that by waving him a nice fee he will do anything we ask him.

Frances: However we don't have the prescription.

Gabriel: Don't worry, I thought of everything. I called the doctor's office both for us and for you.

Frances: And didn't they make a fuss?

Gabriel: I called twice. The first in my name and the second I passed myself off as David. That stupid of the doctor's assistant didn't notice anything. In doing so I requested the prescriptions for all four. Then I sent my secretary to pick them up and make an appointment for tomorrow.

David: Then we will be on time.

Frances: At what time?

Sarah: At eight o'clock, I told you two minutes ago. But maybe it is too much, to pretend that that tiny brain can memorize information for so long.

Frances: I will also be absent-minded, but at least I don't have stupid ideas like yours. *(And she starts taking the chocolates from the tray to put them in her husband's pocket and also in her bag)*

Sarah: Listen... *(In the meantime Omar and Roberta enter)* I'll tell you later.

As soon as he enters Omar notes on the floor the clip lost by the professor, without saying a word he picks it up and puts it in his pocket. Then he combs his hair and, as usual, shakes his head. Then he takes his fiancée by the hand to go to his room.

Omar: We go over there to study. Call us when dinner is ready. However hold on tight, because we have an announcement to make.

Roberta: It will be a real surprise for everyone. *(This time it is she who takes the comb in Omar's pocket to comb him, then puts it back in his pocket. He immediately shakes his head and both leave the scene)*

Omar and Roberta go to the bedroom. In the meantime Ambrose returns. The four having started to talk to each other to try to understand what the boys meant to say, don't notice the arrival of the butler.

Ambrose: Good evening to all the gentlemen present! *(Startling those present who respond in chorus)*

Sarah, Frances, David and Gabriel: Good evening Ambrose!

Ambrose: *(Turning to Sara)* I found everything, do you want to check?

Frances immediately goes to look about inside the shopping bags, but Sarah stops her giving her a dirty look.

Sarah: It doesn't matter, it is better if you start cooking immediately, so we anticipate dinner.

Ambrose: Okay madam, I'm going right away. *(And he leaves the scene)*

Frances: I would need the butler too.

Sarah: My dear, fate intended it this way!

Frances: Just because I agreed to let him go, otherwise we would find ourselves in inverted parts, and then it would be me laughing.

Sarah: *(She approaches Frances and puts her hand on her shoulder for a moment)* C'est la vie!

Frances: I warmly recommend you to take it off.

Sarah: Otherwise what do you do, you go away and don't stay for dinner?

Frances: Worse, I stay and binge.

Sarah: On this I have serious doubts!

David: Don't you think it's time to stop? Eventually Roberta and Omar will hear you too.

Gabriel: *(Turned to David)* Maybe we would have done better to download these two, we would certainly had less problems.

Sarah: If you had downloaded us, you would have seen them with binoculars. *(Sarah and Frances simultaneously mimic with arched hands the deeds of those who wear binoculars to their faces, showing that they think it for the first time in the same way)*

Gabriel: The way to see them grow there would be, assured you.

Sarah: So why didn't you do it?

Gabriel: Because it is right that those who make mistakes pay.

THIRD ACT

Same scenography of the two previous acts.

Sarah, Gabriel, David, Francesca, Omar and Roberta are sitting at table and have just finished eating.

Frances: I have the breath heavier than a seven-month-old baby elephant, but I really liked it.

Sarah: You are the fineness made person!

Frances: But if I said that everything was nauseating, wasn't it worse?

Sarah: I wouldn't have believed you, since you practically ate it all.

Frances: Of course, Omar and Roberta ate like two little birds and not finishing food is not good manners.

Sarah: Is it much more gobbling it all up?

Frances: Instead of worrying about me, ask rather why they have touched almost nothing.

Sarah: Guys, was there something wrong?

Omar: Practically everything. Starting from the strong smell that all dishes emanated. Do you think it is the right menu to offer when there are guests?

Sarah: Look, I have chosen all natural foods.

Omar: And then it is also natural that we don't eat them.

Frances: I think they didn't like licorice in place of coffee.

Sarah: You, on the other hand, yes, you have finished it all.

Frances: I like it, I had never done this experiment after a meal, but I think I will steal your idea.

David: Don't offend Sarah, but I would have preferred the classic coffee.

Sarah: Then I tell Ambrose to prepare it for you.

Gabriel: Make me prepare one too.

Frances: What do you guys do, do you join?

Sarah: I deduce that you too will not abstain.

Frances: I want to savour the contrast of licorice with coffee.

Roberta: Who knows what a delight!

Frances: Before judging you have to try.

Roberta: Go ahead as well, I don't take it.

Omar: Me neither.

Sarah rings the bell to call the butler. Ambrose looks out the door.

Ambrose: Tell me madam.

Sarah: Ambrose, prepare four coffees.

Ambrose: With or without stink? *(Sarah refuses to answer him and gestures for him to go away)*

Gabriel: Son, you seem strange to me, what's wrong?

Omar: Nothing, it's just that my professor phoned me and told me that it would be appropriate to make extensions to the thesis. This is equivalent to saying other hours of study and above all other hours in the laboratory to perform additional experiments.

Sarah: What kind of experiment?

Omar: For one in particular I thought of using you as guinea pigs. Do you see these sticks? *(Showing them)* Now I will pass them on your tongue and then put them in these containers. *(Showing test tubes)*

Frances: For what reason?

Omar: I have to extract the DNA from the saliva of each of you and then make a report that I will attach to my thesis.

Frances: How come did she ask you only now? Couldn't she tell you earlier? I would protest.

Gabriel: I would refuse! In fact, do you know what I tell you? Don't do this experiment!

Omar: I can't refuse! If the professor says that the thesis is more complete with that report, I have to do it.

Sarah: He is right! He can't refuse.

Frances: Who knows from who has been pressured for this additional research!

Sarah: The teaching staff is strange.

Frances: Not just the teaching staff.

Sarah: What would you say?

Frances: Without proof I can't say anything, but a doubt came to me.

Omar: What are you talking about?

Sarah: About nothing, you know that there is always a strange misunderstanding between us.

Omar: Then open your mouth and start collaborating.

Gabriel: Why don't you just do it to women?

Omar: What strange request is this?

David: It's not so strange, if you make two, you save time.

Omar: No, the professor was categorical, she told me to extract it out of four individuals, so who better than you? Do I have to go looking for strangers when there is absolutely no need?

Sarah: If he needs four, let's go along with him.

One by one the four open their mouths allowing Omar to pass the cotton swabs on each one's tongue, however the two men are much more reluctant. After placing each stick in its tube...

David: Don't you run the risk of confusing them?

Omar: Don't worry, as you can see, I had already written the name of you on the test tube in which I inserted them. *(Indicating the label affixed to the test tube)*

Gabriel: Now where do you put them?

Omar: In my room.

Gabriel: Yes, but where?

Omar: Why are you so interested in knowing?

Gabriel: I just wanted to make sure you put them in a safe place, since they are important.

Omar: They are not so important, if you lost them, it would be enough to repeat everything.

Gabriel: However I'll go and bring them to your room and put them in the drawer of the bedside table. My son, don't be offended, but sometimes you are a little clumsy and I would not be surprised if you made them fall to the ground.

Omar: It wouldn't be a big damage anyway, you know how many test tubes I have in my backpack?! It would only be bad to take a saliva sample again.

Gabriel: But if those glass containers, falling, fell into a thousand pieces, then we would have to put up with the screams of Ambrose, who today cleaned his house as when the priest comes to give holy water.

Omar: If you really insist... *(Handing the test tubes to the father)*

Gabriel: Anyway, if they fell to me, are you sure to have others?

Omar: Yes, I told you, however, if you put them in your pocket, why should they fall?

Gabriel: You know, by now I'm a certain age, I could stumble.

Roberta: Then let me take care of it.

Gabriel: The guests in our house are sacred. Stay comfortable!

Roberta: As you like.

Gabriel: *(After taking the four test tubes)* Then it's decided, I'm going to take them there so we also have more space on the table to drink our coffee.

Frances: Do I accompany you?

Sarah: Don't worry, he finds the way even on his own.

Gabriel: It would be good if you all came with me, not just her.

Frances: Why? *(Sitting)*

David: Because it is better not to argue.

Gabriel: While we wait for the coffee to be ready, I'll show you something.

All four leave the scene, leaving Omar and Roberta alone.

Roberta: When do we tell them?

Omar: As soon as they come back.

Roberta: How will they take it?

Omar: I don't know, we'll see.

Roberta: It will be a real shock.

Omar: They had to expect it sooner or later. Silence, they are coming back.

The two couples re-enter followed by Ambrose who brings the tray with the four coffees.

Ambrose: Vampires would also like this good coffee. *(Sarah glares at him and waves him out)*

Roberta: While you drink coffee, we are going check the mail on the computer. When we return, however, we must speak.

Sarah: Why don't we talk right away and you go do your convenience later?

Omar: No, first we have to check something.

Frances: Okay, but hurry up!

Roberta and Omar leave the scene.

David: Are you sure you have inverted the right sticks?

Frances: Certainly he is sure!

Sarah: Look that he has the language to answer.

Gabriel: Stop bickering once and for all! They might hear you, these walls are thin.

David: We have endured all these years and now that we should be united we get caught up in old rusts.

Gabriel: With that exchange we are in place.

David: So it is also useless tomorrow to have our blood drawn.

Frances: Also because after a dinner like this, only God knows how values would be!

Sarah: Since you have named Him, pray that he can make you become a little bit slier. Although for that it would take a real miracle.

Frances: I won't be a fox, but you are hard of hearing! Our men are telling us to stop and you keep provoking me.

Sarah: You are the one who insists on dinner, that was a tactic that you should have put into practice too.

Frances: Which tactic? That of raising glycemia?

David: Sara's intent was to discourage Roberta from accepting any invitations to dinner from Omar. If we had done the same, Omar would probably have preferred not to come to dinner anymore.

Frances: Why? I gladly see him.

Sarah: But is this really so or she does it on purpose?

Gabriel: Sure you see him gladly! As I gladly see Roberta, but in this way those two would frequent each other less and maybe they would move away a bit.

Frances: Ah, for that! I thought this strange dinner was a way of telling us not to come back even us.

Sarah: In fact, the message would extend to you too, not just your daughter.

Frances: If you continue I will knock you down, but with a hook.

David: You are just incorrigible! Five minutes have passed since Gabriel said our sons can hear everything and what do you do?

Frances: It is she who attacks me.

Sarah: I would gladly attach you yes, but to the wall.

Roberta and Omar come in and everyone pretends to get along.

Omar: We seemed to hear excited souls, what were you discussing?

Gabriel: Nothing important! Where to go on vacation this summer. We tried to find a fair compromise that would please everyone.

Roberta: What we wanted to tell you, however, is very important.

Sarah: Come on, talk!

Omar: You will become grandparents.

Ambrose looks out the door and reiterates the concept.

Ambrose: You will become grandparents!!!

Gabriel, Sarah, David and Frances: *(In chorus)* What?!

Omar: Aren't you happy?

Sarah: *(With sarcasm)* A lot!

Frances: We are on cloud nine!

Gabriel: But how did this happen?

Omar: Do I have to make you a drawing?

Gabriel: I didn't mean that. It is that you could be careful. I remind you that you haven't yet graduated and finishing your studies before starting a family might have been wiser.

Frances: *(Goes to hug her daughter)* My baby!

David: Your little girl is almost thirty years old! Daughter, it is right that you begin to have your own life, but you could wait a little longer for such a step.

Gabriel: It is true, what hurry was there?

Roberta: So aren't you happy either?!

Sarah: I would say that this news was really a bolt from the blue.

Omar: In life there are many upsetting things that we are forced to accept and this will not be the first, nor... the last.

David: I agree, it would be time to accept them.

Gabriel: And it would be also time to think about marriage and all the appurtenances: bonbonnières, restaurant and honeymoon.

Sarah: Why, is it mandatory that they marry? In today's times it is no longer so necessary.

Omar: Mom, what are you saying? Do you want me to live away from my son? If we don't get married, sooner or later, our paths may divide.

Sarah: And this is not necessarily a bad thing.

Roberta: Don't you like me as a daughter-in-law?

Sarah: No Roberta, I like you a lot, it's the situation that is...

Omar: Mom, explain yourself once and for all! What situation are you talking about? About the fact that you will find them as parents-in-law? Aren't they your closest friends? So why are you talking about situations?

Sarah: *(Looking at the others who are shaking their heads)* It's just that I wasn't expecting this piece of news, I started talking nonsense, that's all.

Roberta: And you mom, don't you have to explain something to me?

Frances: Of course not.

Roberta: Not even why my hairbrush is in the bathroom of this house?

Frances: Yours?

Sarah: She doesn't even recognize her hair brush from her daughter's, what do you want to expect from someone like that?

Frances: But yours doesn't have a red handle?

Roberta: *(By removing the hair brush in question from the pocket)* It doesn't seem to me that this has a black handle! *(And gives it to her mother)*

Frances: Wow! I messed up, *(Then, trying to justify herself because everyone is giving her a dirty look)* but it is simple to explain, I was convinced that I took mine and I brought it here.

Roberta: To do what?

Frances: What speeches, to comb my hair!

Roberta: But if you only comb your hair in the morning when you get up! In fact, you even forget to do it and you leave the house that look like a porcupine. This is an excuse that doesn't hold up, find a more convincing one.

Frances beseechs the other three with a glance to come to her rescue. Gabriel promptly intervenes.

Gabriel: I asked her to bring it, I had in my mind to make a game.

Omar: This is new, I have never seen anyone play games with hair brushes.

Gabriel: We thought of making a musical game and simulating the microphone with that. *(Taking the hair brush from Frances's hand and holding it as if it were a microphone)*

Omar: And maybe you sang "The barber of Seville" too, dad please.

Roberta: You have always cultivated your friendship while not bearing each other, which is somewhat strange. Normal people, when they are not temperamentally compatible, stop dating, you instead, undeterred, you continued, therefore you must have had a valid reason.

Gabriel: They *(Pointing to the women)* bicker, but then make peace, that's why we never closed the bridges.

Roberta: Too many unexplained events happen in these families. For example, what is happening to my checking account?

David: What does that have to do now? I'm responsible for increasing your funds.

Roberta: You, in order to be able to pay such figures, you should have just done a robbery. In addition, my banking friend described the person making the payments to me. And I'm sorry dad, but he doesn't correspond in the least to your description, while he looks a lot like someone else in this room. Now I ask myself: what reason would that someone have for being so philanthropic with me?

David: *(Addressed to Gabriel)* I told you to stop!

Gabriel: What do you say? I'm not the one to deposit money, you are wrong!

Roberta: Too bad that the description that the cashier gave me corresponds in all respects to you, then do you want to explain to me?

Sarah: There is little to explain, David was in financial difficulty and Gabriel, being his best friend, decided to help him.

Roberta: By depositing money into my account? Pretty bizarre choice!

Omar: And you mom should tell me why you asked the professor to make me broaden my thesis?

Frances: I knew it was you! And then I would be the fool!

Sarah: *(Standing up)* I told her to shut up, but go trust the professors!

Omar: In fact she didn't say anything to me, you were the one who confirmed it to me right now. I had only one suspicion that you have now strengthened. Before I found the clip on the ground with which the professor often collects her hair.

Sarah: And who says it's hers?

Omar: That is not a simple hair accessory, but a very ancient object that has belonged to her family for generations, here's who tells me.

Sarah: And did you suspect me just for that?

Omar: If you had told me about her visit, I would have had no reason, but you have been silent as a fish.

Sarah: Didn't you think I may not have had the time?

Omar: It doesn't seem to me that you had so many things to do! I remind you that the butler prepared the dinner. This story stinks me, I don't believe at all that professor Dobson called me to advise me, what you know well, on her own initiative. Come on mom, confess!

Sarah: Okay! It was me asking her to give you that suggestion.

Omar: For what reason?

Sarah: To keep you more at home with us.

Omar: It was enough that you talked to me.

Roberta: *(Extracting from another pocket a sheet of paper folded in four)* Do you know what we printed a few minutes ago?

Frances: No honey, tell us! *(Standing up)*

Roberta: The DNA test result we did over a month ago. We had obtained the samples in unsuspected times. We first connected with the lab and read the results. Do you know what they say?

David: That we must be ashamed.

Gabriel: We thought we were doing the right thing.

Frances: If you hadn't found out...

Sarah: Everything could go on like this.

Roberta: And would it have been fair to us?

Gabriel: We just wanted to try and save our marriages, but above all we have found this compromise to continue to see you both grow.

David: Forgive us, we are monsters.

Frances: *(She sits down and starts crying)* Who would have guessed that it would all end like this?! Now we will lose what we have fought for with so many sacrifices.

Sarah: *(Sitting down)* In this she is right, it has been really hard to put up with each other all this time.

David: And only not to lose our most precious asset: you two.

Gabriel: *(Standing up)* If we hadn't found this compromise, I would not have been able to see grow my little girl and he his. This is exactly how things are Roberta: I am your father.

David: *(Standing up)* And I Omar am yours.

Moment of absolute silence.

Roberta: Do you know what?

Sarah: *(Crying)* Yes, we know: you hate us and you will never forgive us.

Roberta: No, tomorrow's weather forecast is printed on this sheet.

Frances: A second trap. My dear, our children are far smarter than their parents, whoever they are.

Omar: Actually is the third one, even the news that Roberta is expecting a baby was a staging to force you to tell the truth. The fact that you have finally been sincere honors you, even if it doesn't cancel the gravity of your actions.

Frances: Can you ever forgive us?

Roberta: It depends.

Sarah: From what? We are willing to do whatever you ask us.

Omar: Really everything?

Gabriel: *(Sitting down)* Everything.

David: *(Sitting down)* You can count on it!

Omar: So, let's start by saying that we will all live together. But you mom won't have to attack Frances with stupid allusions. You David, even if you are my biological parent, I will continue to call you like this, you will have to work, without making a fuss, for my father, who will always remain him. You Frances will help with the housework Ambrose, who is beginning to be old, clearly helped by my mother.

Gabriel: And me?

Omar: I left you last because I reserved special treatment for you.

Gabriel: Thank God!

Omar: Wait to say it! You will have to tell the whole truth to your father that, knowing him, he will disinherit you instantly and will devote his enormous patrimony to some charity. At that point I will intervene to recommend one. Indeed I will try to convince him to donate a substantial sum even before his death.

Gabriel: *(Standing up)* Of course you decided to go down heavy! Out of curiosity, what will those who should have been mine and, later, your money be destined to?

Omar: To promote scientific research in the field of stem cells. Recent studies have shown that the transplantation of these cells can represent a valid therapy to cure very serious pathologies.

Gabriel: Son, I'm really proud to be your father! If this is your will, we accept it and I think I speak for everyone.

The rest of the quartet members nod their head in approval.

David: *(Standing up)* Take away one last curiosity, how long have you had suspicions?

Omar: Blood feels its blood, doesn't it Roberta?

Roberta: We had the first doubts as children. Then growing up they increased. The looks and the ways you touched us were eloquent. Clearly we did not have the certainty, that you gave us today.

Omar: It seemed bleak to learn the truth from a laboratory test.

Gabriel: And you thought of an ingenious way to extort it from us.

Omar: I would say that having parents as true masters of the art of the lie, it was not that difficult.

David: If it weren't tragic I would have a laugh.

Roberta: Dad, it is not tragic if something good for all humanity comes out of a lie.

THE END