

The alien



Marco Ciaramella

CAST:

Carlo: Husband of Sabina

Sabina: Wife of Carlo

Carmelina: Daughter of Carlo and Sabina

Concettina: Daughter of Carlo and Sabina

Peter: Friend of Carlo

Veronica: Drunkard

Robert: Friend of Carmelina and Concettina

Oliver: Suitor of Carmelina

Stan: Suitor of Concettina

Sirius: Alien or presumed such

Orion: Alien or presumed such

FIRST ACT

The scene takes place in the living room.

Carlo: I knew that there was no need to call our two daughters Carmelina and Concettina. When they introduce themselves to the boys, they run away instantly.

Sabina: And why would they do it? Don't tell me that you think today's young people are so superficial that they judge girls by name.

Carlo: Then how else do you explain it to me that no one woos them? I don't seem to have ever seen anyone frequenting this house. I'll tell you why.

Sabina: *(Interrupting him)* I'm really curious to know.

Carlo: Because they think we are foreigner.

Sabina: And what's wrong? And then times have changed, people are no longer discriminated against for this reason.

Carlo: But there is still the belief that Italians have a closed mindset and that coming home means compromising yourself.

Sabina: In this way, we are sure that they will not make fun of them.

Carlo: Or that they won't take them at all.

Sabina: You've been reproaching me with this thing for twenty years, but you know that we chose those names in memory of my two grandmothers!

Carlo: We have? You have!

Sabina: You know I had promised it to my parents and I couldn't draw back, so let's not go back to the topic anymore. Look rather how beautiful they are! *(Showing him a photo)*.

Carlo: It's not I who must look at them, but the suitors. Who knows why, instead, they all run away! If we continue at this rate, we find them old, spinsters and always on our shoulders.

Sabina: I still haven't figured out what the problem is. Do you worry because they don't find a husband or because you have to keep them?

Carlo: They both seem to me two good reasons to worry.

Sabina: So, if you really want to know, a nice young man showed up, two days ago, while you were at work.

Carlo: *(Euphoric)* Really? For which of the two?

Sabina: I don't know, he's a friend of both.

Carlo: The thing I don't like it. If he is an undecided type, we run the risk that before he has made a choice, those are old.

Sabina: Of course you are a phenomenon! A boy shows up at home and after two days you would want him to marry a daughter already, don't you think you are running a little too much?

Carlo: If that's the case, either Muhammad goes to the mountain, or it's the mountain that goes to Muhammad.

Sabina: The Middle Ages are long gone! You cannot choose the husband for your daughters. Don't you notice how retrograde you are?

Carlo: If we don't do something as soon as possible, do you know how many years we will still have to have those two slackers around?

Sabina: And what the solution would it be? Who would you have in mind to make our girls known?

Carlo: If you call them girls, you already start badly. Those are women made, ready to take flight.

Sabina: The real crux of the matter is precisely this: you see them already old, for me instead they are always young.

Carlo: Now a doubt arises: aren't you going to chase away their suitors? When that boy returns, it would be better for me to welcome him with all the honors of the house, why does he come back, right?

Sabina: So he said. However you are wrong, I have never chased anyone away, in fact I am always very kind to their friends.

Carlo: Better this way! Now, if we make a deal with this, I will finally have someone to talk to about football and motor-racing. With those two over there it is not possible to do it, when you face one of these topics, they raise their heels and go away.

Sabina: Of course! They have passions different from yours: Concettina, for example, has that of the computer and Carmelina...

Carlo: That of spending. You know, miss loves shopping! All stuff that tastes like nothing and that costs a lot.

Sabina: My grandmother said: "all tastes are tastes".

Carlo: Didn't the one who ate the chocolates with the paper say that?

Sabina: Now stop it, I think they are returning, otherwise they could hear you.

Carlo: After all, I'm just telling the truth.

Carmelina and Concettina enter the scene.

Carmelina: Hi Dad!

Concettina: Hello Mom!

Carlo: Where were you?

Carmelina: To buy shoes, do you want to see them? They are beautiful.

Carlo: It doesn't matter, I believe you on the word. *(Then, looking at the numerous envelopes)* But did you rob the shop? Did you buy them for the entire condominium?

Concettina: Don't exaggerate! We only took two pairs each.

Sabina: You did well, at least you change again.

Carlo: Why? Wasn't it enough, to change again, a pair? Now I want to see where you put them! You have occupied every space of this house. Because of you, I have to keep my underpants in the bedside drawer and the shaving foam over the bidet, as the bathroom cabinet is full of your cosmetics.

Sabina: Look at the bright side, so you have it handy.

Carlo: Too bad that I have the beard on my face!

Sabina: It will mean that we will buy another cabinet where you can put all your things.

Carlo: Better save the money. Anyway, after a few days, they would fill that too and I would be at the starting point.

The doorbell rings.

Sabina: So girls, what are you doing there stock-still? Do you want to go open?

Concettina: *(Taking her sister by the hand)* We have to go fix our shoes, dad, you go there! *(Then they leave the scene)*

Carlo: You see it? It is always the same story: it is always to the undersigned to raise his buttocks. *(Then he goes to open)*

Robert: Hi! I'm Robert Brown and I'm a friend of your daughters.

Carlo: Come in, sit down! Would you like something to drink? A coffee, a cognac?

Robert: Thank you, but I only drink water and chamomile, I'm abstainer.

Carlo: *(Reflecting out loud)* It starts badly! Okay, maybe you want to smoke?

Robert: I have never smoked in my life and I'm not going to start now.

Carlo: You do well, all health and all savings. Also because, they cost a lot! *(Alluding his daughters)*

Robert: I have no idea. I have never bought them.

Carlo: But I didn't mean cigarettes.

Robert: Why? Weren't we talking about smoking?

Carlo: Not really, however it does the same.

Sabina: Don't mind what my husband says, he's a prankster. Rather, with whom is more friend between my daughters?

Carlo: This is of little importance, provided that he chooses one.

Robert: I didn't come to choose anyone. The three of us agreed to go together for a stroll downtown, to see the shop windows.

Carlo: I would suggest, instead, to go for a nice walk outside the city, perhaps in the middle of nature. The center is a dangerous place to walk.

Robert: But in the center there is no danger.

Carlo: You don't know this yet, but trust those who have more experience than you! At first the danger is not seen, it is with the passage of time that one realizes it!

Robert: Are you alluding to the possibility of a robbery?

Carlo: I allude to the damage to the wallet.

Sabina: *(Giving her husband a dirty look)* My husband meant that he was once robbed of his wallet right in the center.

Carlo: One time? Maybe! Here it happens every day.

Sabina: It is that every day that he has the opportunity to return to those areas, the bad episode comes back to his mind.

Robert: Thanks for the advice, I will treasure it.

Carlo: Here, good! You will need a lot of that.

Robert: You can give me as many advice as you want, I will gladly accept them from those who have more experience than I do.

Carlo: Ah no! From now on it's up to you.

Sabina: *(To cut the discussion)* I go to call them, I see that they are late. *(Then she leaves the scene)*

Carlo: *(Putting a hand on the boy's shoulder)* Listen Robert, just to know, do you like sport?

Robert: Just a few disciplines.

Carlo: And tell me: football, motor-racing and boxing are to your liking?

Robert: No, I only like baseball, cricket and weight-lifting.

Carlo: It will mean that every now and then we will watch weight-lifting together, even if they don't often give it on television.

Robert: I go to the World Championships once a year, but live, I've never seen them on television.

Carlo: Ah, I understand! No TV together. But don't worry, the important thing would be that at least one...went to port.

Robert: No, I usually go by plane, no ship, I suffer from seasickness.

Sabina comes back on stage.

Sabina: They are almost ready, still a moment of patience.

Carmelina and Concettina: *(Upon entering the scene, they greet in unison)* Hello Robert!

Concettina: Sorry we kept you waiting, but we had something to do.

Carlo: Yes, fill my closets.

Sabina: Carlo meant that they were arranging my wardrobes, they are two very precise girls!

Carlo: For this you can rest assured, they have absolute precision. Especially the day of the month when I draw my salary. Oh, they don't go short of a minute.

Sabina: Yes, it's true, they are so attentive to him that they always wait for him with open arms, but not just that day, every evening.

Carmelina: Mom is right! It's you who do not notice our attention.

Carlo: I notice this too well, don't worry!

Sabina: It is better if you hurry, otherwise you are late and you do not enjoy the day.

Robert: Okay madam, then we are leaving.

Sabina: One last thing: what time do you plan to go home? I recommend: don't make it dark.

Robert: Don't worry, we'll be back before 8pm. *(While Concettina and Carmelina approach Robert, the boy tries to take Concettina under his arm. To avoid him, in that same instant, she puts on her sunglasses. Carmelina, immediately ready, takes the opportunity to replace her sister and grabs Robert's arm).*

As the three leave the scene, the girls wave goodbye.

Sabina: And then you say that I let the boys, who come to visit them, escape! Don't you notice how grumpy you are?

Carlo: Why? Would that be a boy? Can't you see he doesn't like anything?! Not only does he not take a daughter away from us, if we are not careful, we find him in charge too. And let it be clear: I don't want anyone else to keep and fill my drawers.

Sabina: He looks fine to me, polite and calm, I don't see anything strange about him.

Carlo: We have waited a long time and sincerely hoped for something better. Having a son-in-law with whom you can only talk about certain sports, which you don't even know, is not the best.

Sabina: But do you have to marry him or one of your daughters? The matter is still not clear to me, do you want company for whom? For you? Or do you want the good of the girls?

Carlo: I must like him too, otherwise I won't give my consent.

Sabina: Until a few moments ago it seemed to me that you wanted to give them to anyone. If Jack the Ripper had passed, you would have considered him too, rather than keep them around the house. Now, in front of a good boy, you make a fuss.

Carlo: Good is a big word. But if he doesn't like sports! Rather, from how you speak, I deduce that one of the two likes him, tell me which one!

Sabina: All right then! I confess: Carmelina likes him, but it's just a momentary infatuation. However, if they are roses they will bloom.

Carlo: So why doesn't he come forward? It seems to me that he doesn't care about her.

Sabina: You don't know the boys of today. They behave this way out of shyness, you also have to understand the embarrassment. After all, it was the first time he showed up in our house.

Carlo: When I came to your house for the first time, my intentions were clear, I didn't make it clear that I wanted to take your mother away!

Sabina: But those were other times and then in this case there is an additional problem.

Carlo: You justify him too much. He is shy, it's the first time he comes. Anyone who wants one of my daughters must be convinced.

Sabina: From what I understand he is. They are the girls who are not.

Carlo: You blow my head, what are you hiding from me?

Sabina: I nothing, they are the ones who do it.

Carlo: Who do they do it to?

Sabina: To Robert, of course! Follow me well: Carmelina likes Robert, but he doesn't return her.

Carlo: So what is he going around the room? Let him go and find someone elsewhere.

Sabina: That's exactly the point: the other part is always in our house. *(A moment of pause in which the two look at each other without understanding)* But isn't it clear to you yet?

Carlo: No.

Sabina: Robert likes Concettina.

Carlo: Then, that he declares himself to her.

Sabina: But she doesn't like him. She only goes out with him to do her sister a favour. And Carmelina hopes, in the meantime, to change Robert's mind.

Carlo: I knew that to place one you had to sweat, but not like this!

Sabina: Now that you understand the situation, you tell me who you wanted to introduce to one of the two, when you first mentioned that you wanted to take the mountain to Mohammed.

Carlo: I still don't know, but a very dear friend of mine should be coming soon to bring me references on a boy. Maybe, by engaging the fourth element in the fray, we solve everything.

Sabina: In this case it is good that you talk to him alone. I prefer having nothing to do with it. So I go out. *(As he opens the door to go out, a man appears and Carlo sees him)*

Carlo: Come Peter, enter!

Peter: Is it allowed? Good evening madam!

Sabina: Let's hope it is! *(After which she leaves the scene)*

Peter: Did I arrive at an inappropriate time?

Carlo: Why?

Peter: Your wife seemed angry to me.

Carlo: Absolutely! She was now at the most of euphoria, you have to see her when she is really frowning!

Peter: If so, I prefer not to.

Carlo: So, can you bring me some good news?

Peter: I asked my wife for advice and she told me that two brothers live in our building who might be right for you.

Carlo: Since you live on the other side of town, I think it might be fine. You know, I don't want to run the risk of finding them on my feet every day even when married. Also because those two do not even know how to cook a fried egg. If they were too close, I'll tell you how things would end: instead of decreasing the mouths to feed they would multiply.

Peter: So, if the distance is okay, I can tell you that these two boys are beautiful, good and two hard workers.

Carlo: By the way, what work do they do? Are they able to support their families without asking anyone for anything?

Peter: Sure! They own a very profitable business, which they have inherited a few years ago. They are two admirable boys who rolled up their sleeves after the death of their parents.

Carlo: Can't you be more specific and tell me what they do?

Peter: Let's say they are useful for disposal.

Carlo: Why? Are they ecological operators?

Peter: In a certain sense we could define them like this.

Carlo: What does it mean in a certain sense? What the hell do they do?

Peter: They are specialized in the drainage and unclogging of cesspools.

Carlo: Now I understand why they rolled up their sleeves!

Peter: Look, they earn well.

Carlo: Of this I am sure!

Peter: That is a job that knows no crisis.

Carlo: Of course! If you don't die you eat and consequently their intervention becomes indispensable. Maybe, when they show up, let's hope they've had a nice scented shower.

Peter: They are two very clean people, the only thing that stinks strongly is their truck, but they keep it parked away from our building.

Carlo: Thank God! Otherwise you would have been forced to move.

Peter: So, when do you want us to arrange this meeting?

Carlo: I would say as soon as possible. Tonight itself might be fine. Meanwhile I prepare the ground: I have to convince my wife that those two are an excellent match and so on.

Peter: Okay, I go and combine it all.

Carlo: Wait up! I'll take you to the car, so I have to go down to the cellar to get the water supplies. If I don't think about it, because of those two idlers we die of thirst! *(After which they both leave the scene)*

Robert, Carmelina and Concettina enter the scene.

Concettina: There is nobody. Who knows where mom and dad went? Anyway, I go to my room for a while, I have to go and fix it up. If dad comes back and sees that I haven't made the bed yet, he starts his usual scolding.

Robert: If you want, I come to help you.

Concettina: No! You stay here with Carmelina, I'll take care of it by myself. *(And leaves the scene with a wink at her sister)*

Carmelina: *(With a clearly coquettish attitude)* I have to tidy up the cupboard, if you want, you can help me.

Robert: I assure you I'm better at tidying up the wardrobe than moving the cans of beans and tomatoes.

Carmelina: In fact, I too can do it later. So how about going to sit on the sofa and have a chat? *(Approaching and playing with the foulard in an attempt to seduce the boy)*

Robert: *(After looking at the wrist-watch)* Wow how late it is! I hadn't realize it was time to go already. I go to say bye-bye to your sister and then take the trouble out.

Carmelina: If you care about your physical safety, I advise not to.

Robert: Why?

Carmelina: Trust me! I know her well. If there's one thing that makes her go on the rampage, it's being bothered when she starts a job. I wouldn't be surprised if she started throwing anything that comes within range in the air or against the wall.

Robert: In that case I will say bye-bye to her another time.

Robert goes to the door when Carmelina calls him back.

Carmelina: Robert, don't you forget something?

Robert: I don't think.

Carmelina: Are you leaving without saying bye-bye?

Robert: Excuse me, what a careless!

Carmelina approaches leaning towards him to give him a kiss, but Robert pretends not to notice and holds out his hand.

Robert: Bye-bye! *(After which he leaves the scene)*

Carmelina left alone she sits at the table and begins to sob, at that moment Concettina enters the scene.

Concettina: What are you doing? Are you crying?

Carmelina: That doesn't go steady with me, he wants you.

Concettina: Don't be discouraged! You will see that sooner or later you will be able to conquer him.

Carmelina: But if he only has eyes for you! As long as the three of us keep going out together, I'll never have hope.

Concettina: Here, good! Just the two of you go out, and I'll gladly stay at home too.

Carmelina: But if you don't come, that doesn't even show up.

Concettina: Then forget him! He is not the only boy on the face of the earth. I don't understand why you insist on wanting the one who doesn't want you. I'm sure if you looked around you would be spoiled for choice.

Carmelina: *(Crying out)* Which choice! I don't even have a dog that goes steady with me, everyone prefers you.

Concettina: *(Hugging her)* Come on, stop crying, you know it's not true.

Carmelina: *(Crying harder)* Yes, it's true!

Carlo (out of scene): From now on, just tap water for those two!

Concettina: *(Hearing that someone is climbing the stairs in a martial tone)* Stop it now! I seem to hear dad's voice, do you want him to see you like that?

Carlo (out of scene): In the desert I take them to lose!

Carmelina: *(Wiping her tears)* Okay, I stop.

Concettina: Now go to the kitchen! And peel an onion, so you can justify these red eyes. *(Carmelina follows her sister's advice)*

Carlo returns to the scene.

Carlo: You came home earlier than expected. Is your sister always out with that guy?

Concettina: No, she is over there in the kitchen peeling the onions.

Carlo: What saint is today that she started cooking?

Concettina: It was not a saint who pushed her to do so, but a sudden attack of hunger.

Carlo: And did she decide to eat onions?

Concettina: She told she needed to make herself an omelette.

Carlo: But if there is not even an egg in the house! If she went shopping every now and then, she would know. Anyway, why does she have to eat eggs? Will she not have to regain her strength? She wasn't alone with that boy, was she?

Concettina: What are you saying? If only she had succeeded!

Carlo: Encourage her, so we're good to go.

Concettina: My sister is a serious girl, it's just that she has a strong feeling for Robert.

Carlo: And do you like this Robert?

Concettina: Not at all, but the point is that he likes me and I don't know how to get out of this situation.

Carlo: Listen, I could have the solution: two boys will be here soon, if your sister likes one of these two, maybe she could forget about this Robert.

Concettina: But how did you know these two?

Carlo: I didn't know them, in reality I don't even know what they look like. A friend of mine told me about them, or rather his wife told him about them; it's a bit complicated, however I know we can trust. But I recommend that it remains a secret between us. It doesn't have to look like an arranged meeting.

Carmelina: *(Returning to the scene)* Hi Dad!

Carlo: How did you eat the onions? With bread? It would be good if you went to brush your teeth now.

Carmelina: Why, can you smell them?

Carlo: Yes and that's bad.

Carmelina: But I peeled one, not a dozen. Also I haven't eaten it yet, so I don't need to brush my teeth. Besides, since when does the smell of onion bother you?

Concettina: Dad is right! You never know. Sometimes a sudden visit, think if Robert came back.

Carmelina: *(Enthusiastic)* Did he call him coming?

Concettina: No, but it's better to be prepared, don't you think?

Carmelina: I immediately run to wash my hands, in fact these *(Smelling them)* do not smell. *(After which she leaves the scene)*

Carlo: Good job! I really liked you. But now you too go to your room to get ready! Don't you want to make only her look good?

Concettina: And what harm would it be? I have to think about the study, not the boys.

Carlo: One thing does not exclude the other. My daughter, love is the hub of life, it completes us.

Concettina: But I'm still young and I still have time to complete myself.

Carlo: My grandfather used to say: those who have time don't waste time. So meditate my daughter, meditate!

Concettina: Okay, so now I'll go there in contemplation, and in the meantime I fix myself up, so I'll make you happy.

Carlo: Good daughter! Follow your father's advice and you will see that you will find yourself well.

Sabina returns to the scene.

Sabina: Carlo have the little girls returned?

Carlo: If you keep calling them little girls, I'll bite you.

Sabina: So, do you want to tell me or not?

Carlo: Yes, they are over there preparing.

Sabina: Preparing for what?

Carlo: We have visitors tonight.

Sabina: Really?

Carlo: Yes, two handsome young men.

Sabina: How do you know that I invited them?

Carlo: You? I invited them.

Sabina: Actually it was me.

Carlo: Wait a moment! Who are you talking about?

Sabina: Of the two boys Veronica pointed out to me.

Carlo: Veronica who?

Sabina: The one who lives in the building opposite ours. And think about it: these two boys you told me about, live right below her.

Carlo: But that is famous because she sees double and not for the sight, but because she drinks all the time!

Sabina: You may not know, but she has completely detoxed.

Carlo: It wouldn't seem. Anyway, even if it were, can you explain to me why you turned to her?

Sabina: I met her by chance in the square and, speaking, it turned out that two bachelors and workers recently moved into her condominium. So I asked about them.

Carlo: I know because you got information from an alcoholic and also a weird one! You are tempted that those two live right in front of our house. So, if you manage to place them, they stay close to your skirts. While you were there you could make a deal with the doorman so they were even closer!

Sabina: Instead of always criticizing my choices, rather tell me who you invited and who it was to report them to you.

Carlo: A friend of mine pointed me to two good boys, who live across town.

Sabina: You say about me, but you also consider them a good match for the reason that they live far away, or am I wrong? Think instead if our daughters remained close, we could always give them advice...

Carlo: And some help. Besides, I know how it would end.

Sabina: How do we do now? If yours and mine show up together, the girls will understand that it's all combined and that we want to free ourselves from them.

Carlo: But what free us and free us! Fix is the right word.

Sabina: I don't think they would understand.

Carlo: Concettina has no suspicions. I told her that I invited these guys with the hope that at least one of them will be able to break through the heart of her sister, so as to make her forget that Robert.

Sabina: And what do we say to Carmelina?

Carlo: You take care of that! I can't think of everything myself. *(Hearing footsteps)* If it's her, invent something, I better not let her find me. *(After which he leaves the scene)*

Carmelina enters the scene.

Sabina: Carmelina, honey, come to your mom.

Carmelina: *(After getting hugged)* Thanks Mom, I really needed it. Things with Robert are not going well, but maybe he comes to visit us tonight.

Sabina: Even him?

Carmelina: Why, who else has to come?

Sabina: No one my daughter, or rather, no one who comes for you.

Carmelina: So did he declare himself to my sister? If you know speak! Is he coming to ask her in marriage tonight?

Sabina: But no, what did you understand? They come yes for her...

Carmelina: *(By interrupting her)* So is he bringing his parents too?

Sabina: No, they come alone.

Carmelina: And does Robert stay at home? Doesn't he even have the courage to face me?

Sabina: If you shut up a second I'll explain. Neither Robert comes nor any of his family, the boys I invited for your sister come to visit us.

Carmelina: For my sister? Since when does she want to meet boys?

Sabina: She pretends not to be interested, but actually she suffers from loneliness.

Carmelina: How strange! I did not notice it.

Sabina: To me, however, the thing did not escape. Perhaps it will be that the eyes of the mother can see what others do not see. As I noticed your pain for not being repaid by Robert, so I understood the discomfort that Concettina feels. *(Then, taking her by the arm)* You must know that when a person suffers, he sends signals that can range from a particular hug to an unusual facial expression...

Carmelina: In fact, first she hugged me warmly and I thought it was just to console me, but maybe she did it because she needed it too.

Sabina: Do you see that I'm right? So now you know how we behave?

Carmelina: How?

Sabina: Let's pretend nothing has happened, otherwise she will withdraw into herself again. Then we will try to get her to fraternize with these boys and, if she tries to isolate herself, we won't let her. What do you say, are you willing to help her?

Carmelina: Sure, I'd do anything for my sister. And I'll tell you more: from now on I won't leave her alone even for a minute, I want to share more with her. How foolish I was not to realize anything. I was only thinking about my problem and did not see how much she was suffering. Thanks mom, for opening my eyes! *(After which she leaves the scene).*

Sabina: *(Thinking aloud)* I wouldn't want to be wrong, but in my opinion, a big mess is going to happen.

SECOND ACT

Same scenography as the first act.

Carlo and Sabina are sitting on the sofa.

Sabina: What time do your boys arrive?

Carlo: I don't know exactly. And yours?

Someone knocks at the door.

Carlo: Finally here they are! *(Then he goes to open)* Peter, what are you doing here?

Peter: I wanted to know how the meeting had gone. Then? Did you like them?

Carlo: Ah, very much! If only they showed up.

Peter: Strange! They assured my wife that they would come.

Sabina: Since we're on the subject, could we know what these famous boys are like?

Peter: Didn't Carlo tell you anything?

Sabina: There hasn't been a chance yet, so why don't you mention something to me who recommended them?

Peter: I can tell you that they are really very coveted.

Sabina: So why are they still bachelors?

Peter: Because of stupid prejudices. *(Carlo starts gesturing to his friend to make him understand that it is better not to tell the truth)*

Sabina: Why? Are they immigrants?

Peter: No, this would no longer be a problem today. They are not well regarded because of their work. *(Carlo gets on a chair, gesturing to Peter to beat around the bush. Sabina does not notice him as she is turned towards her interlocutor)*

Sabina: Why are they delinquents?

Peter: On the contrary, they are honest workers. *(Carlo continues to make signs and in this case he makes one of approval)*

Sabina: Won't they be politicians?

Peter: I said workers!

Sabina: So, can you tell me what profession they have? *(Carlo shows his fist to his friend to make him understand that he absolutely must not tell the truth, but Peter doesn't know what to invent)*

Peter: They draw out the cesspool, that's what I said. *(Resigned, Carlo gets off the chair).*

Sabina: I understand, they are the ones who...

Peter: Yes, really them.

Sabina: *(Addressing her husband)* And you would like to give my daughters to two shovellers of sh...?

Carlo: *(Stopping her)* What's wrong with that? First of all they don't shovel it as you say, but they aspire it. Plus they make good money, so what more do you want? And then look on the bright side: in that sector there is no crisis, so there is always the scent of money.

Sabina: Provided that they don't touch them with their hands!

Carlo: Since you are so snobbish, tell us what yours do instead!

Sabina: I still don't know, but Veronica told me she would inquire and then she would come to tell me.

Carlo: If she thinks about it, we are in an iron barrel! There is only one small detail: we will first have to wait until she has drained it all.

Sabina: And do away with these jokes that only make you laugh!

Someone knocks at the door. Sabina goes to open. In the meantime, Carlo takes the opportunity to give Peter a few punches to reproach him for having been sincere, clearly not with the intention of really hurting him.

Veronica: Is it allowed? *(She enters staggering from the fumes of alcohol. She immediately goes to the clothes-stand where a raincoat, hat and scarf are hanging. Mistaking it for a person, tries to greet it)*

Sabina: Come in, we were just talking about you. *(Going to get Veronica and accompanying her towards the other two)*

Veronica: Why, what were you saying?

Carlo: We were talking about wine barrels.

Veronica: In this case, I inform you that I'm done with those.

Carlo: *(In a whisper to his friend)* Now only spirits.

Sabina: Come, this is Peter, a friend of my husband. Carlo, on the other hand, you already know him.

Veronica: Pleasure! *(Being quite tipsy, when she tries to shake Piero's hand she doesn't find it, then after seeing it) Ah! (And finally she grabs it)*

Peter: *(Perplexed)* Yes, for me too.

Veronica: *(Referring to Piero)* I didn't quite understand: who would he be?

Carlo: In a certain way one rival of yours.

Veronica: Why, is he one of the social services?

Carlo: Absolutely.

Veronica: So who is he?

Sabina: I told you, he's a friend of Carlo and he's here for the same reason you came too.

Veronica: Wasn't I enough?

Carlo: *(Turning to Sabrina)* If we listen to this madwoman, we are really in a bad way!

Veronica: What do you mean?

Sabina: We thought of an alternative in case things had got bad, that's why we asked Peter for advice too.

Veronica: I don't think he said exactly that.

Sabina: You know, at lunch today, he drank more than usual and he doesn't connect very well, so don't mind his words.

Carlo: What?

Sabina: Stop now and let me talk! Come on Veronica, you seem a bit tottering, maybe you better sit down.

Veronica: *(After sitting down)* In fact, I have labyrinthitis, which is why I can't stand up well. *(Collapsing to the right as if about to fall asleep, Peter grabs her on the fly before she can fall, also giving her a slight shake so that she can wake up)*

Carlo: If you want, I take you home right away, so you go and lie down.

Veronica: Not at all! First I want to give Sabina the information she asked me for.

Peter: But what is she saying? She is dead drunk. In those conditions, the most she could tell her is the name of the wine shop she passed through before coming here.

Veronica: *(Getting up indignantly)* Don't you dare call me alcoholic anymore! You'll be a drunkard, not me. *(Breathing in the face of Peter who waves his hand in front of her face to chase away the bad smell)* And now shut up! That I have to provide Sabina with my references.

Peter: *(Turning to Carlo)* Can you explain what this crazy woman is saying?

Carlo: Unbeknownst to me, Sabina had arranged, through this lady, a meeting with two other boys and now she has come to bring further information about it.

Peter: Of course if you give credit to a person of that type, it means that in order to place your daughters, you would be willing to give them to dogs and pigs!

Sabina: You are wrong about Veronica. She's a great signaler, she just has a little problem.

Veronica: Good, little one. *(Breathing this time in the face of Sabina who, like Peter, waves her hand in front of her face to chase away the bad smell)*

Peter: And you call it little? I'll be wrong Carlo, but I think your wife doesn't have a great sense of proportion.

Veronica: Why doesn't he stop meddling in the affairs of others and tell us where his reported people are?

Carlo: Yeah, where are they? They must have arrived by now.

Sabina: For that matter the other two too. It will turn out that they will come together. Anyway Veronica you haven't told us yet what kind these two boys are who live under your house.

Veronica: Of course, the one over there, *(Pointing to Peter)* he doesn't let me talk.

Peter: I don't let you talk? But if you haven't shut up for a second.

Veronica: Do you see? He's very drunk and doesn't realize it.

Carlo: Come on Veronica, leave Peter alone and tell us everything!

Peter: I would strangle that one, but it would be like shooting the Red Cross!

Veronica: Shut up! I have to say many things: the first is that they do a job where there is never a crisis.

Carlo: Do they too draw out the booty from cesspool?

Veronica: No, they don't draw out, they throw.

Sabina: Do they throw away the booty?

Carlo: Then they could go into partnership with the other two.

Veronica: Maybe I didn't make myself clear, they throw the dead under the ground.

Carlo: Now I understand why even this sector knows no crisis: they are gravediggers!

Sabina: After all, what's wrong with that?

Carlo: Meanwhile, before you used to make a fuss as if you were marrying two duchesses. Now even the gravediggers are perfect.

Sabina: They wouldn't be perfect, though...

Carlo: What, do they smell less than mine?

Sabina: And stop interrupting and let's hear what else Veronica has to tell us!

Veronica: Think how lucky: if any of us died, they would give us a discount.

Carlo: *(Making the horns to Veronica while everyone touches)* Tiè! Die you, bad bird of ill omen.

Veronica: Why? What did I say?

Carlo: Apart from the fact that when one dies, that they give him the discount he cannot care less and then these speeches bring bad luck.

Veronica: I didn't think you were superstitious.

Peter: *(After getting up with his hands in his pockets)* Superstitious or not, *(Making an obvious sign of conjuration that makes him move the pockets of his pants)* I'm leaving. *(Then turning to Carlo)* And tomorrow let me know how things went. See you all but one person.

Veronica: Won't it be me?

Peter: Never tell! *(After which he leaves the scene)*

Carlo: Apart from these magnificent qualities, do they have defects?

Veronica: *(Scratching her head)* Maybe they have a defect.

Sabina: Which?

Veronica: They make a lot of light.

Carlo: Why? Do they keep lighted candles at home?

Veronica: I don't know, but when I pass their door, from under the jamb *(By bending the torso forward and mimicking with one arm the light that filters from under the door and rises up. Carlo follows Veronica's movement and imitates her gesture by lowering himself too and carefully looking at Veronica's hand)* filters a very strong light.

Sabina: They will keep the television at maximum brightness.

Veronica: Then it must be faulty, because that light is bluish and green.

Carlo: Aren't they going to experiment on the dead?

Sabina: And do you think they bring the dead home?

Carlo: There are some weird people around, so why not?

Sabina: Spare us these fanciful conjectures and say it openly that the only problem for you is that they live too close to our house.

Veronica: There would be also another thing to say.

Carlo: For me, what I heard is already enough.

Sabina: For me, however, no. Come on Veronica, talk!

Veronica: They have been living in my building for a year and I must say that they are very polite, a bit taciturn, but polite.

Sabina: They will be reserved people. But this is not a defect!

Veronica: This premise was to say that, given the lack of confidence, I never had the courage to ask for some information on their diet. You must know that very strange smells come from their kitchen.

Carlo: Good heavens! Those not only bring home the dead, but they eat them as well.

Veronica: I certainly didn't want to allude to this possibility. However, what they cook remains a mystery.

Sabina: The fact that they have a different diet than ours does not make them delinquents.

Veronica: But I'd love to know where they buy food. I see them always and only coming home with black bags filled with who knows what.

Carlo: Will they dissect the corpses?

Veronica: But you are really obsessed! Those the dead only bury them.

Sabina: So what do we worry about? Why do we want to fill our heads with useless fantasies?

Veronica: However, the fact that there is no longer a cat or a stray dog in the neighborhood is no fantasy.

Carlo: If these are the best boys you know, I guess what the others are like!

Sabina: In fact, even the cat on the second floor has disappeared and it can no longer be found.

Veronica: Three of them have disappeared in my building. *(Showing four fingers of the hand. Seeing the perplexed faces of the other two, she tries again to verify that she has shown the right number and starts counting the interdigital spaces aloud. At the end she smiles pleased having reached three)*

Carlo: Do you want to insinuate what I believe?

Veronica: I cannot put my hand on the fire, but I do not deny that I fear that in that house those lovable beasts are cooked.

Carlo: In light of all these facts, it would be better if those two didn't show up.

Sabina: But what if they did?

Sabina e Carlo: *(In unison)* Poor our daughters!

Veronica: Now it's time for me to go back to my husband, I absolutely must say goodbye.

Sabina: On your way back to your apartment, take a look to see if those boys are still home and then call me.

Veronica: If I can see the numbers, I will. If I were you, though, I wouldn't worry too much.

Sabina: It's our daughters that those two have to visit, not yours.

Veronica: Also because I've never had any.

Sabina: And therefore you cannot understand.

Veronica: But I had five boys *(Showing both hands to indicate the number as before, clearly incorrect. This time, however, she gives up checking and continues the conversation)* and believe me that I too have had my share of worries.

Carlo: Five? But your husband is a sniper!

Veronica: No, my husband is an idiot, since none of the five is his.

Sabina: Veronica, what are you saying?

Veronica: The truth! That has always been cuckold and happy. He just needed that I detoxify myself and I did it my way. *(Smiling maliciously)*

Carlo: Luckily you don't also have a habit of smoking, otherwise you would have a football team by now.

Veronica: *(Turning to Carlo)* Would you be kind enough to take me by the arm and take me home? *(Breathing in his face. He too, like others before, reacts by waving his hand in front of his face)*

Sabina: No, I do that. The sixth boy would be too much for you! *(After which they both leave the scene arm in arm. As they walk to the door they walk in a zigzag way due to Veronica's staggering gait who, before crossing the threshold, does not fail to wave her hand to the clothes-stand)*

Carlo: *(Thinking aloud)* Luckily she was drunk! When she's sober she does Miss Marple down. Now I better go and prepare a bite for everyone, before the guests arrive. *(After which he leaves the scene)*

Carmelina (out of scene): Concettina wait for me, Concettina wait for me! Concettina...

Carmelina and Concettina enter the scene. Concettina suddenly stops and her sister, who is following her, bumps against her.

Concettina: You're worse than a tick tonight, you're always sticking to me. I understand you need affection, but please let me breathe!

Carmelina: *(Pushing the sister)* Don't be tough on me! I'm still your sister and you can tell me everything.

Concettina: *(Pushing her in turn)* Then you won't take it badly if I tell you to get out of the way!

Carmelina: Sure that loneliness plays tricks on you!

Concettina: You took the words out of my mouth! However, soon you will no longer follow me like a shadow.

Carmelina: Why do you say this? Did you by any chance know anything about a potential visit that we will receive tonight?

Concettina: Indirectly.

Carmelina: So did you eavesdrop?

Concettina: Maybe you did that. I heard dad say something.

Carmelina: Did you mean mom?

Concettina: But can't you even recognize your parents' voices anymore?

Carmelina: It is you who must unclog your ears.

Concettina: Don't talk to me like that! Otherwise I will no longer do you the favour of going out with you and Robert.

Carmelina: Can't you see that suffering in silence makes you sour?

Concettina: I sour? And then what should I suffer from?

Carmelina: Listen to your sister, get help! If you continue with this attitude of yours, your situation will get worse every day and you will end up being alone all your life.

Concettina: For now, it would be enough for me to be alone now, so I could do whatever I want. But then, can you know who put this nonsense in your head?

Carmelina: It was mom who told me she invited some boys to introduce you to spur you out of your shell.

Concettina: What? To me, however, dad said he invited them to try to distract you and make you forget Robert.

Carmelina: Now I understand the intentions of those two: they want to find us a husband.

Concettina: And why should they do it?

Carmelina: To get us out of the way, that's obvious.

Concettina: It is not possible. Why on earth?

Carmelina: May be mom and dad are fed up with our behavior.

Concettina: Why, what do we do wrong?

Carmelina: I think that's the point: what do we do? Nothing at all. We don't clean, we don't dust, we never offer to go shopping and we don't even help them file their bills.

Concettina: This is true! Even at this moment there is a pile of papers on the commode to be fixed which is scary!

Carmelina: Dad often asked us to take care of it, but we always pretended not to hear.

Concettina: And mom, how many times did she tell me to give the rag on the floor or if I could clean the bathroom because her back ached! And I, with one excuse or the other, never satisfied her.

Carmelina: There is no question that they love us, but maybe they are just getting old and would like to have a lighter load on their shoulders.

Concettina: In fact, by getting us out of the way, they would have fewer things to think about and the house would certainly be cleaner.

Carmelina: Not to mention the freedom to go to the bathroom when they need it. You don't know how many times I've seen my father jump around to hold it back, praying that someone would enlighten you to open as soon as possible. When you enter, before you leave, hours pass!

Concettina: You are right! I never think that he, since suffering from the prostate, can no longer hold it. Anyway you are no better than me too. I've never once seen you help mom bring home the supplies of water we keep in the cellar. You know that carrying weights is not good for his slipped disc.

Carmelina: Instead of blaming ourselves for what we haven't done so far, why don't we change the register and say what should we do?

Concettina: Good idea! Let's divide the tasks, starting now. You take care of cleaning the bathroom and I take care of the kitchen and the floors.

Carmelina: Okay! And what about the boys who have to visit us?

Concettina: What's the problem? We know them and then we tell our parents that they are not to our liking. I don't think they're going to force us to get engaged to people we don't like.

Carmelina: I like Robert. *(With a dreamy air)*

Concettina: *(She pushes her sister again to get her back down to earth)* Now you got me fed up! Stop thinking about him! Who doesn't want you doesn't deserve you.

Carmelina: I promise you I'll try and start just tonight. I want to take your advice and start looking around a bit. Who knows which among the boys who will visit us tonight... Aren't you a little curious?

Concettina: The boys have no effect on me. I have other things on my mind. I want to think about studying and career first, other than love! Anyway, now you go to get the products to clean the bathroom, instead I go to look for the mop and the rag to give on the floor.

Carmelina: Okay boss, I run! *(After which they both leave the scene)*

Carlo enters the scene.

Carlo: *(Rubbing his hands)* Very well, all ready: canapes, cans, chips and if desired, even brides!

Concettina returns to the scene.

Concettina: Dad, where is the mop?

Carlo: Why? Do you want to throw it on your sister's head?

Concettina: Don't be silly! I want to mop the ground and can't find it.

Carlo: Of course you don't know where to find it, you've never used it in your life!

Concettina: So do you tell me where you keep it or not?

Carlo: This is the point, my daughter: not where I keep it, but where we keep it. Maybe you don't know, but it's not my exclusive. I would gladly do without it.

Concettina: You are right! This is why, from now on, I want to help out.

Carlo: My dear, you don't cheat me. I know we're on "Candid Camera".

Concettina: I get it: I'm going to look for it myself.

Carlo: If you are serious, then you find it where it has always been, which is behind the lumber-room door.

Concettina: Very well, thank you. *(And leaves the scene)*

Carlo: *(Thinking aloud)* I've been calling her the mop's enemy since she's fourteen. If she looks for it now, it means she must have hit her head and very hard too.

Carmelina enters the scene (wearing an apron and kitchen gloves) with the toilet brush held on one side by the apron string.

Carmelina: Hello dad!

Carlo: *(Seeing that the girl, after entering and taking the bills, hurries to another room)* Where are you running so? Have you just entered and are you already leaving?

Carmelina: I just finished cleaning the bathroom and now I want to go and file all the bills.

Carlo: *(Thinking out loud again)* They must have fallen together.

Carmelina: Who is it that has fallen?

Carlo: Your sister.

Carmelina: *(Worried)* Did she get hurt?

Carlo: Nothing can be seen from the outside.

Carmelina: Then it's nothing serious, don't worry.

Carlo: Do you, on the other hand, feel good? Don't you have any strange symptoms?

Carmelina: I'm fine, never been better! But now I'm sorry, I'm busy. *(And leaves the scene)*

Carlo: *(Thinking aloud)* If it's a disease, let's hope it lasts a long time, even if I don't believe in it!

Sabina returns to the scene.

Sabina: What do you believe little?

Carlo: Ah, you're finally back, I thought you were going to have a drink.

Sabina: Stop talking nonsense and explain to me what you were referring to earlier.

Carlo: To the fact that your daughters are working hard to clean up the house. I like it. If this is what happens when we invite boys, it will be better to do it more often. But how did Carmelina know?

Sabina: After you spoke to Concettina, I spoke to her and asked her to give her sister a hand to help her fraternize with the guests.

Carlo: Nice strategy, good! Now they will try to give each other a hand.

Sabina: However, I don't like to deceive them. And then if they talked to each other, they would discover our lies.

Carlo: Take it easy! Everything is under control. Don't distress yourself with unnecessary paranoias. You'll see, our plan will work.

Sabina: More than ours, yours! However, if you say it's for their own good, I'll continue to second you.

Carlo: But now let's stop worrying about those two and think about these suitors. When you accompanied Veronica, did you pass in front of the gravediggers' door?

Sabina: Don't call them that, or do you know how I call yours?

Carlo: I think I imagine it, so spare me it and just tell me what you saw.

Sabina: I saw that light that Veronica was talking about too. It was not the result of her drunkenness.

Carlo: So were they still home? Then we have to wait a little longer before they come to visit us. But you, how do you explain it, this strange phenomenon? *(Imitating the gesture of the light that filters from under the door jamb)*

Sabina: Honestly, I can't explain it, but I don't deny that it has given me a great curiosity to see what those two look like.

Carlo: I, on the other hand, am more curious to see the ones Peter told me about.

Sabina: Remember that it's also about my daughters, so if I don't like them too, the deal can't be done, are we clear?

Carlo: All right! In the meantime, however, let's begin to see them, we are always in time to discard them. It seems to me that up until now we have not had anything to squander.

Sabina: But there was a suitor for Carmelina.

Carlo: And that do you call him suitor?

Sabina: Why? What would you call him?

Carlo: Idiot.

Sabina: Speak quietly! Do you hear? One of the two is coming.

Concettina enters the scene with the mop in her hand. (She wears apron and kitchen gloves)

Concettina: Hi mom, where were you? Before I was looking for you but I didn't find you.

Sabina: I had to go to accompany a person and see a light. *(Putting her hand in front of her mouth for talking too much)*

Concettina: A person? Who? And what is this light you speak of?

Sabina: I accompanied Veronica, she wasn't feeling very well, with that labyrinthitis she staggered a lot.

Concettina: Who? The one who is always drunk? Now they call the drunkenness labyrinthitis? *(Sarcastically)*

Carlo: *(Turning to Sabina)* Luckily she had stopped! Even the walls know it is a lie, only you believe it.

Concettina: Everyone knows that she is a chronic alcoholic!

Sabina: This is not true, she's stopping. You may not know it, but she is in the alcoholics anonymous.

Carlo: And how many sessions would she have attended?

Sabina: At five... six, I don't remember.

Carlo: They seem a little few to me.

Sabina: That is certainly not a problem that can be solved overnight, let's give her some time. Indeed, do you know what I tell you? Since she is a friend of mine, I have every intention of offering my support to help her get out of that tunnel.

Carlo: Listen to me, it's a lost war from the start. But haven't you figured it out yet, that she doesn't want anyone's support? Maybe a Cardenal Mendoza she would like that more.

Concettina: Stop talking about that wretch! You mom, rather explain to me the matter of the light you were talking about earlier.

Carlo: Come on, explain it! I'm just curious to hear what you have to say too. *(Addressing his wife in a sarcastic tone)*

Sabina: *(After thinking for a moment)* What do you want there is to explain? It's just that in Veronica's condominium, on the stairs, there were light blue lights that I was curious to see.

Concettina: So how are they? Are they fine?

Sabina: Honestly, I remain of the idea that traditional ones are more functional.

Concettina: Thank God! I don't like the blue light at all. But now I go back to do my things, bye-bye people! *(And leaves the scene)*

Carlo: You saved yourself in the corner.

Sabina: Of course, when you see a person on the edge of the abyss, you are really helpful...yes, but to push her and make her fall down!

Carlo: Why do you say this?

Sabina: It doesn't seem to me that you have given me a hand to get me out of the trouble I had got into, quite the opposite!

Carlo: I just have a lot of confidence in your resources. I was sure you would come out great.

Sabina: Or because you were hoping this appointment would skip. By now I know your perverse way of reasoning. You wanted to sabotage that meeting to favour your suitors, confess!

Carlo: It's no mystery that the suitors I have found have a feature that I really like.

Sabina: Are you alluding to the smell?

Carlo: Now don't start again, also because I don't think your pretenders grow lilacs. And stench for stench, we might as well see both the ones and the others.

Sabina: You say it as if you were already sure to have aces up your sleeves. Anyway, he who laughs last laughs loudest!

Carmelina enters the scene.

Carmelina: Why don't you make me laugh too?

Carlo: Unfortunately for today the jokes are over. Now I have to go to the kitchen, I have things to do. *(After which he leaves the scene)*

Sabina: How do you feel honey?

Carmelina: Don't worry mom, slowly this infatuation will pass me and I'll be better. *(Leaning the toilet brush, which Sabina promptly throws on the floor, from the table)*

Sabina: You know, it also happened to me when I was your age and I understand exactly what you are feeling, but you will see that over time things will change.

Carmelina: I know.

Sabina: Come here! *(Then she tenderly hugs her daughter to comfort her)*

After a few moments Carmelina frees herself from the embrace.

Carmelina: Mom, could I ask you a question?

Sabina: Sure love, you can ask me everything.

Carmelina: And do you promise me that you will answer truthfully?

Sabina: I would never lie to you.

Carmelina: Are Concettina and I the light of your eyes?

Sabina: What questions do you make? Of course yes, but not only mine, even those of your father.

Carmelina: And do you think we are the most precious thing in the world?

Sabina: Absolutely yes.

Carmelina: Then I have a favour to ask you.

Sabina: All that you want.

Carmelina: I would like to be with you always. Promise me we'll never be apart. *(Bursting into tears)*

Sabina: *(Taking her face in her hands)* This will never happen, unless you want to.

Carmelina: Is it a solemn promise?

Sabina: I swear it to you my daughter! And the same goes for your sister too.

Carmelina: Thanks mom! The very thought of separating from you makes me much more unhappy than I am now for my unrequited love.

Sabina: Your words fill me with joy. However, as long as I am in this house you will have nothing to fear.

Carmelina: Why? Doesn't dad think like you?

Sabina: More or less yes.

Carmelina: More or less?

Sabina: Don't worry about that, because dog that barks doesn't bite and then, are we three against one or not?

Carmelina: That's true! Now I am much more serene and do you know what I tell you? I'm going to finish doing the chores.

Sabina: Good! This is the best way to shut the mouth of that grouch who accuses you of being two slackers.

Carmelina: *(Giving mom a kiss)* I will never leave you. *(After which she leaves the scene)*

Sabina: *(Thinking aloud)* Dear husband, before handing over one of my daughters to someone, you will have to pass over my corpse!

THIRD ACT

Same scenography of the two previous acts.

Present on stage: Sabina, Carlo, Carmelina and Concettina.

Carlo: *(After hearing ring)* Who will it be at this hour? Sabina, were you expecting visitors?

Sabina: Absolutely not! What about you girls?

Carmelina: Not me.

Concettina: Me neither. But I know only one way to find it out.

Carmelina: And would that be?

Concettina: Go to open.

Since no one seems to have any intention of getting up...

Carlo: As usual it's up to me to raise my buttocks. *(After opening)* Who are you? Do you want something?

Oliver: To tell the truth we knew you were waiting for us.

Carlo: Who? We? And for what reason? *(Winking in agreement)*

Stan: Peter sent us.

Carlo: Ah, Peter! Then you are the ones for the contract...?!

Oliver: Why, do you need to make a contract to know people?

Carlo: Sure! Before proceeding with the withdrawal, you must at least know the cost.

Stan: *(Who took the hint)* Ah! The shopping, the withdrawal, the contract, I understand! And you Oliver, do you understand?

Oliver: To tell the truth, I don't.

Stan: But how not? However, before showing you all our services, we would like to introduce ourselves.

Sabina: It seems to me there is little to show, more than to aspire, what else can you ever do?

Carmelina: Let him talk mom!

Stan: Before explaining, I tell you that he is Oliver and I am Stan.

Sabina: Good to know! And the two of them *(Alluding to her daughters)* are Abbott and Costello.

Oliver: Ah, really witty! But I'm not kidding you, we are called just like the great comedians Stan Laurel and Oliver Hardy, because our parents were their great admirers.

Sabina: In that case I am Sabina, he is my husband Carlo and they are our daughters, Carmelina and Concettina. *(Without indicating which Carmelina is and which Concettina is)*

Stan: Allow me the wisecrack, maybe Abbott and Costello were far better.

Sabina: I'll pretend I didn't hear.

Stan: Excuse me, I was inappropriate. But, could I know which of the two is Carmelina and which is Concettina?

Carmelina: I am Carmelina and she is Concettina.

Carlo: What careless! Do you want to sit down? Can I offer you a coffee?

Stan: Thanks, we will gladly accept it.

Carlo: Then I'm going to prepare it for you.

Concettina: Leave dad, I'll take care of it. *(Then she goes into the kitchen)*

Carlo: *(First amazed, then proud, he turns to the boys)* Do you see what daughters I find myself? Whoever takes them makes a deal.

Sabina: And whoever doesn't take them makes two.

Carlo: But what are you saying?

Sabina: That they are a bit discontinuous.

Carlo: *(After giving his wife a dirty look)* And who isn't?! Why don't you go get the cups from the kitchen and the sugar, at least you help your daughter?

Sabina: I can help her in this room too.

Carlo: I don't think so! *(Scowling at her)*

Sabina: *(Resigned)* Okay, I'm going. *(Then she joins her daughter in the kitchen)*

Carmelina: Now that you've told us your names, why don't you tell us about the service your firm intends to offer our family?

Oliver: I'd say ours is... a... useful service.

Concettina: *(She returns, followed by her mother, carrying the tray with the cups, the coffeepot and the sugar-bowl)* The coffee is ready.

Carmelina: But specifically, what would it be? *(Pouring the coffee first to the guests, then to her father and finally to herself)*

Carlo: Maybe he tells you later! Let's drink our coffee first. *(Carlo takes a sip and immediately spits it on the ground, Carmelina begins to make faces of disappointment, Oliver coughs at the difficulty of swallowing it and Stan, given the reactions of the others, gives up even tasting it)*

Stan: We can also do it immediately, there are no problems. Let's say that we would like to propose ourselves to replace those you have turned to in the past.

Sabina: What need is there to make it so long? These two take out the shit from the cesspools.

Concettina: Ah, I understand! You propose because you offer a more competitive price than the firm that now implements this, let's call it... service.

Carlo: What, let's call it?! It is a real service and if someone did not do it, there would be real overflows and then do you know what would happen?

Sabina: *(Abruptly interrupting him)* We imagine it, so don't add anything else.

Carlo: The only thing I add is that now you and I *(Turning to Sabina)* are going to the kitchen to prepare two snacks to offer to our guests.

Sabina: Why don't you go there alone? You know the road. *(Continuing to observe the two boys)*

Carlo approaches his wife, takes her by the arm and begins to drag her to take her to the kitchen.

Carlo: Even if you don't feel like it, you make it come! *(The woman resists, but he becomes even more insistent and adds in a low voice)* If you stare at them like this and stay between the feet they will never get into confidence.

Sabina: But that's what I want.

Carlo: Now I'll take you over there and clear your head! *(Then turning to the boys)* We'll talk about the contract later. In the meantime, why don't you exchange a few words?

Carmelina: I come over there with you, so I help you.

Carlo: *(Categorical)* No, you stay there! *(After that he goes out dragging his wife out)*

Oliver: *(Addressing Carmelina)* Now that we're alone, can I ask you if you have any preferences?

Carmelina: What do you mean?

Oliver: Between him and me.

Stan: *(Turning to Concettina, before Carmelina answers)* I'd like to ask the same question to you.

Concettina: Ah, I would have my preference!

Stan: Well! And what would it be?

Concettina: That of being alone.

Oliver: *(Addressing Carmelina)* Do you think the same way too?

Carmelina: *(Who was struck by Oliver, before answering, she glances at her sister)* Half and half.

Oliver: It's a good start. And this half is aimed at me or Stan?

Concettina: Do you think this is the way to approach my sister?

Stan: I would gladly approach you, but you seem rather sour to me. Come on Carmelina, why don't you answer my brother?

Carmelina: Honestly, I prefer him of the two. *(Indicating Oliver who approaches her clasping her hand)*

Stan: *(Turning to Concettina)* I would like to do the usual thing, but I think I would risk a right.

Concettina: Not only that, even a left!

Stan: You just don't like me?

Concettina: That's not the point. I don't get duped so easily by the first one who swoops into my house.

Carmelina: What do you mean, that I'm like that instead?

Concettina: Judge it for yourself! An hour ago you agreed with me on staying with the family and then the first young man, willing to court you, was enough to push you to make a volte-face.

Carmelina: Decisions can sometimes be changed.

Concettina: But not in such a short time!

Carmelina: I am different from you, if I like something, I throw myself.

Concettina: This is true, we are very different. However it seems to me that you don't like a single thing.

Oliver: Why does she say so? Are you in love with someone else?

Carmelina: In love is a big word. Let's say I had a liking.

Concettina: But if until an hour ago you were crying for him!

Stan: This however is not good.

Carmelina: But it's not true! I didn't cry for him, I was just crying because I was peeling the onions.

Oliver: In fact, I still feel the strong smell on your skin.

Carmelina: Let's not talk about smells, otherwise I'll tell you what I feel on you!

Oliver: And yet I have washed twice.

Carmelina: Me too, but some perfumes are hard to disappear.

Concettina: Now can we cut this conversation off? Anyway, dear sister, if you like this guy go ahead, but this time I don't want to get involved, do you understand?

Oliver: Come on! You join in too and we go out in four.

Concettina: I don't even think about it!

Stan: *(Although disappointed)* As you want! It was certainly not our intention to bother you.

Concettina: And you do just fine! Because, in my case, there is no tripe for cats.

Oliver: Carmelina, when can we meet again?

Carmelina: Tomorrow would be fine for me as long as you agree.

Oliver: That's fine with me, I'll pick you up at eight and take you out to dinner, do you want?

Concettina: Good! So you get out of the way and I can study.

Oliver: Do you think it's better if we ask your father for permission?

Concettina: I could put my hand on the fire that there will be no need.

Stan: Are you really sure you don't want to change your mind?

Concettina: Sure! And now if you have nothing more to say, you can go.

Stan: Come on brother, let's go home.

Oliver: We can't leave without saying goodbye to their parents.

Concettina: Don't worry for this, I'll say you got an urgent call and had to go.

Oliver: *(He approaches Carmelina and kisses her on the cheek, then whispers to her)* So, good night, little flower.

Concettina: *(Disgusted with the scene, she interrupts the idyll)* But now the flower shop is closing, so go! *(Pushing him towards the door)*

Stan: *(With a sarcastic tone)* Well, it was a real pleasure to meet you. *(Meanwhile Oliver, on the threshold of the door, continues to send kisses to Carmelina and she does the same thing with him)* Good night! *(The two brothers leave the scene)*

Carmelina: Of course you're really grumpy! That poor boy you treated him like fish in the face.

Concettina: So I avoid misunderstandings. You, on the other hand, soon consoled yourself.

Carmelina: *(Euphoric)* But haven't you seen what a handsome boy Oliver is?

Concettina: I suspect that even if he was uglier...

Carmelina: Are you saying that it is enough for me that they breathe?

Concettina: In this case even if they don't. Since they must be used to holding their breath quite often.

Carmelina: You are really a carrion and a snob too!

Concettina: Stupid of a sister who you are! I advise you for your own good. You should be a little more standoffish. Don't you know that men love women who make themselves wanted? If you immediately fall at their feet, then they get tired quickly.

Carmelina: Even if you pull the rope too much, then you end up being alone.

Concettina: But to run after them is counterproductive. Anyway come on, come here and let's make peace.

Carmelina goes towards her sister and the two embrace each other.

Carmelina: But don't you like Stan?

Concettina: I don't think there is a man on the face of the earth who will succeed in making me totter!

Carmelina: Do you mean that if Raul Bova came to see you, you would send him away too?

Concettina: Yes, for the simple reason that now is not the right time.

Carmelina: No, for the simple reason that he is with Rocio Morales.

Concettina: So let's say for both reasons.

Carlo and Sabina enter the scene.

Carlo: Where did the boys go?

Concettina: They had an urgency and went away

Sabina: Thank God!

Carlo: However, they could at least say bye-bye.

Carmelina: They asked us to do it. Anyway, tomorrow Oliver will come to pick me up, we have an appointment.

Carlo: This is good news. And what about you? (*Turning to Concettina*) What do you tell me?

Concettina: Good night! (*And leaves the scene*)

Carlo: (*Amazed to see her go to the bedroom*) Goodnight?

Sabina: Don't you understand? She didn't like anyone, clearer than that!

Carlo: Of course she is of difficult tastes! Would she ever like one!

Sabina: She is not good-mouthed, that's all.

Carmelina: What do you mean, that I am?

Sabina: No, my darling, I certainly didn't mean that.

Carlo: But you, which one did you like of the two?

Carmelina: Oliver, he is so handsome!

Sabina: Anyway, my daughter be careful.

Carmelina: Quiet mom, we only go out for dinner, so we can know each other a little better.

Sabina: Of course you changed your mind quickly! A little while ago you always wanted to be tied to my skirts and now...

Carlo: And what have you done? Did you encourage her to stay?

Sabina: Sure! I love my little girls. (*Then she hugs her daughter*)

Carlo: Your little girls and my ruins.

Carmelina: Daddy why do you say so? Do we bother you so much?

Carlo: No bother, for God's sake. It's just that I'd like to see you settled, possibly out of here.

Carmelina: But if we were never to find a husband, what would you do? Would you turn us out of the house?

Carlo: You at least try. Better to remain in doubt about what I would do in that case.

Sabina: Don't listen to him, he's joking.

Carlo: You, in any case, get busy. But tell me: doesn't your sister want to know about Stan?

Carmelina: She nearly kicked him in the ass to throw him out of the house.

Carlo: She will remain spinster for sure.

Sabina: Better this way, at least one will keep us company.

Carmelina: You talk as if I had already announced the wedding date.

Carlo: It is not this, it is that you seem more inclined to a future engagement than Concettina is.

Carmelina: Speaking of my sister, I go to see what she's doing. *(After which she leaves the scene)*

Sabina: Listen Carlo, I really have to tell you, I don't like this way of introducing boys to our daughters.

Carlo: Can't you see it's working?

Sabina: Maybe. But I think it would be better to leave it to fate.

Carlo: Destiny, every now and then, must be given a little push.

The doorbell rings and Sabina goes to open.

Sabina: Good evening. You must be the boys we had been waiting for. *(The young people, dressed in a very eccentric way, in a silver suit, enter without saying a word. Their very strange, almost threatening, gait makes the hostess step back that let them in, but immediately afterwards she goes to take refuge next to her husband).* Come in, come in!

Carlo: What are your names? *(Receiving no answer)* Are you deaf? I asked: what are your names?

Sabina: Can't you see they're excited? *(Then, addressing the new arrivals)* So boys, can we know your names?

Sirius: Sirius.

Orion: Orion.

Sabina: You said the names of our daughters were strange, but even these are not joking.

Carlo: Did the cat eat your tongue? You can talk, we don't kill guests.

Sabina: *(In a low voice to her husband)* Perhaps it is better not to talk about cats and even less about killings, it doesn't seem the case to me.

Carlo: *(In a low voice)* Right, this is also true!

Sabina: Did Veronica send you?

Sirius: *(After a long wait)* Yes.

Carlo: *(Always in a low voice)* How do these speak? At delayed burst?

Sabina: Take a seat, I'm going to take some canapes we have prepared for you from there in the kitchen.

Orion: *(After a long wait)* You shouldn't bother to go and take them, we can go over there to eat them.

Sabina: As you prefer. Thus you will save me the trouble of going back and forth. Those six trays on the table are all for you. And there are also many drinks.

Without saying a word, the two go to the kitchen. Sirius precedes his brother who, however, tends to get distracted and slow down his pace, so he turns and beckons him with his hand to accelerate the gait. Orion obeys immediately. Carlo observing them realizes that they are walking in a really strange way. Then he goes to the door to eavesdrop. At that moment crunching beyond measure is heard.

Carlo: You really made a deal to get those two into the house! I knew we shouldn't have trusted a drunkard.

Sabina: Wait to make hasty judgments. Maybe they're even better than those two from before. They just need time to get comfortable.

Carlo: It seems to me that they got into it right away, since they went to gobble our canapes. Let's hope that after they've finished them, they don't eat us too.

Sabina: You are always the same exaggerated! And this only because it was an initiative of mine.

Carlo: Let's hope it's not the last! Haven't you seen what a look and gait they have? *(Imitating the strange gait of the two)*

Sabina: Maybe they have arthritis.

Carlo: For me, that they are not entirely wily, even a blind man would see it.

Carmelina enters the scene.

Carmelina: I think I heard the doorbell, has anyone come?

Carlo: Yes, Tom and Jerry.

Carmelina: Who?

Sabina: Don't mind your father! They're two handsome boys who just have weird names your dad doesn't remember.

Carmelina: Where are they?

Sabina: In the kitchen for refreshment.

Carlo: We hope that they fed enough.

Carmelina: Why? Did they come without having dinner?

Carlo: I don't know, but they've been in the kitchen for ten minutes and they don't seem to come back. You know, hunger is an ugly beast. Let's hope that after they don't bite us too.

Carmelina: But who did you let come to the house? Cannibals?

Sabina: (*Addressing her husband*) Do you stop talking nonsense? (*Then, turning to his daughter*) You go and call your sister and please try to be kind. After all they have come to know you.

Carmelina: But I met Oliver, I don't want an other one.

Sabina: Maybe between these two even Concettina finds one to her liking.

Carmelina: All wasted time. She is only interested in computer programs.

Sabina: In fact, her computer teacher said our daughter is a true genius. She is developing a program that, according to her teacher, will allow her to become famous all over the world.

Carmelina: It's true! At school they talk about her and her talent.

Carlo: But the computer doesn't take you to the altar, so few chatters and let's get busy.

Carmelina: If you think it's good for her.

Carlo: Yes, I think so!

Sabina: But if until a few moments ago you had doubts about those guys.

Carlo: Doubts dispelled! It's time to start the friendship operation.

Sabina: I understand from whom your daughter took for fickleness: from you.

Carmelina: Now I'm going to call Concettina, but first I want to take a peek in the kitchen to see those two.

Carlo: Don't watch them too much! It seems to me that you are already fine. I don't want you to repeat yourself!

Sabina: And leave your sister dry again.

Carmelina: I'm not that fickle! Mine is pure curiosity. (*After peeking through the door*) Of course those two are really strange! In my opinion, Concettina liquidates them in less than three minutes, however I am going to call her. Wow! They ate them all.

Sabina: The canapes?

Carmelina: Yes.

Carlo: But they were six trays!

Sabina: So the two of them "gulped down" one hundred and fifty stuffed canapes?

Carlo: Then we are safe! They will be satiated for sure.

Sabina: Let's hope they earn well, otherwise who's going to keep them?

Carmelina: But what work do they do?

Sabina: Don't say anything to your sister, but they are gravediggers.

Carmelina: Gravediggers?

Sabina: Yes, gravediggers. What's wrong with that?

Carmelina: The evil she does to us if only she senses that we want to present her these two.

Carlo: So let's try not to get into the job topic.

Sabina: What if it turned up?

Carmelina: In my opinion, before we get to talk about this, he will have already kicked them out.

Sabina: Let's hope! I too am beginning to have doubts about those guys.

Carlo: We are now in dance, so we just have to dance! We are always in time to send the orchestra away.

Carmelina: Then I'm going to call her. *(After which she leaves the scene)*

Orion and Sirius re-enter.

Carlo: Were they to your liking?

Orion: Yes.

Sirius: However, they gave us a slight thirst.

Sabina: I believe it!

Carlo: If you wish, I'll prepare others for you. I don't want you to get hungry again.

Sirius: Maybe in a while.

Carlo: As soon as you feel a slight pang of hunger again, don't hesitate, I'm going to get you something ready.

Orion: Thank you.

Sabina: So, if you don't need anything else, my husband and I have some chores to attend to, but our daughters will soon join you.

Carlo and Sabina go to the kitchen without the two replying to their previous statement. Orion and Sirius remain motionless and impassive for a few seconds at the center of the scene.

Orion: I'm still hungry.

Sirius: Me too, but we can't take advantage any further.

Orion: I'm thirsty.

Sirius: Me too, but we can't take advantage any further.

Orion: How long do we have to wait?

Sirius: About five minutes.

Orion: Otherwise are we leaving?

Sirius: If no one arrives in four minutes and fifty-six seconds, we go.

After a short while.

Orion: How much time has passed?

Sirius: One minute and thirty-two seconds.

Orion: It seemed to me more.

Sirius: It seemed to me less.

Orion: I'm getting bored.

Sirius: Not me.

Orion: Do you think it is dangerous to meet girls?

Sirius: In my opinion, no.

Orion: Do you think we did well to introduce ourselves tonight?

Sirius: In my opinion, yes.

Orion: Am I combed well?

Sirius: *(After looking at him)* No.

Orion: I had that suspicion. Can I remedy somehow?

Sirius: *(After looking at him)* In my opinion, no.

Orion: Are we interesting, intriguing and elegant?

Sirius: Only elegant.

Orion: What did you read in the thoughts of these people?

Sirius: That we are strange.

Orion: I think the same thing about them too.

Carmelina and Concettina enter the scene. As soon as Concettina sees Sirius she is struck, pushes her sister to one side and approaches him without saying a word.

Carmelina: Good evening! I am Carmelina and she is Concettina.

Sirius: I am Sirius and he is Orion. *(Insistently looking at Concettina who is literally stunned).*

Carmelina: They are beautiful names. What origins do they have?

Sirius: Very far origins. *(Without ever taking his eyes off Concettina).*

Carmelina: *(Seeing that her sister is watching Sirius as if she were in ecstasy)* Concettina *(the girl doesn't reply, so the sister tries to shake her)* oh, are you awake? Are you bewitched?

Sirius: *(Who returns the glance)* The pleasure is all mine Concettina, I too think the same thing about you and I reciprocate.

Carmelina: *(Confused)* Wait a minute! You let me understand: what do you reciprocate? That she hasn't uttered a word yet.

Orion: What does uttered mean?

Carmelina: I'll explain later. Now I have to understand something.

Concettina: *(She approaches Sirius and she holds out her hand to him, looking at him with admiration)* I am really happy to meet you.

Carmelina: *(Looking at her bewildered and worried)* Sister, what are you doing? Come away from there, don't you think you're rushing the times? That's usually my specialty.

Concettina: Maybe you were always right. I have already wasted too much time.

Carmelina: But you can recover even more calmly, don't you think? *(Trying once again to shake her)*

Concettina: No! I don't think so.

Carmelina: *(She approaches the two and tries to take her away by yanking her)* So if you really want to know, these two are gravediggers. Have you heard? They bury the dead.

Concettina: And what does it matter? Someone will have to do it. *(Turning again towards Sirius)*

Orion: We do it once each.

Carmelina: You shut up! Otherwise we reverse the roles.

Orion: What are the roles?

Carmelina: They are that I put you in the hole and then cover it up, unless you tell me what a strange spell your brother did to my sister.

Orion: What is a spell?

Carmelina: *(Thinking aloud)* Here the situation becomes complicated. I have to find a solution as soon as possible. *(Then, struck by an idea)* Concettina, now it's better if you go back to your room, you have to finish setting up your program. Do you remember that your future is at stake?

Concettina: I can do it later *(Then, she turns again towards Sirius and seems to read something in the boy's mind)* also because, right at this moment, I understood how to solve the problem that made the system go haywire. Suddenly everything seemed so clear to me. It was all so simple, how stupid!

Carmelina: You're wrong, it's all very complicated and if you don't react, here it will end badly.

Concettina: What are you babbling about? You are out of your mind!

Carmelina: That's enough! I'm going to call dad. *(After that she leaves the scene. At that moment Concettina detaches herself from Sirius, awakening from her torpor)*

Carlo, Sabina and Carmelina return to the scene.

Carmelina: Look dad, look if it's not true!

However, the situation has now changed. Everything is back to normal.

Carlo: What should I watch?

Sabina: It's true, I don't see anything abnormal either.

Carmelina: Tell him Concettina that before you were in trance!

Concettina: Actually I went to meet Sirius and I must say that I find him very interesting.

Carmelina: Do you see that she is not normal? She says she finds someone interesting.

Carlo: Maybe it's just the right time.

Sabina: However, if Carmelina says that before there was something strange in Concettina's attitude, we must believe her.

Carlo: It's just that she's not used to seeing her sister under that dress, that's all.

Carmelina: Dad, I'm sure that guy plagiarized her.

Carlo: *(After having approached the two and looked at them)* Have you plagiarized my daughter? Come on, say it! If you hurt her, I... *(however, the two approach threateningly and Carlo instantly steps backwards)*

Orion: What does it mean plagiarized?

Carmelina: Shut up and let your brother talk!

Sirius: Nobody hurt anyone. It is true that someone entered this house with bad intentions...

Carmelina: So you admit that...?

Sirius: No! I wasn't talking about myself, but about a certain Robert.

Carmelina: And how do you know him?

Sirius: This doesn't matter. However, I can say with certainty that that boy pretended to be a suitor of your sister only to take possession of the program she is making.

Carmelina: So wasn't he in love with her either?

Sirius: No. As you can see, you made a big mistake by falling in love with him. The same one you're taking right now by misjudging me.

Carmelina: Of course you know about things! However, with this speech, do you want to tell us that you have no hostile intentions towards us?

Sirius: No.

Orion: What does hostile mean?

Carmelina: Are you sure this is your brother? Unlike you, he seems rather dull-brained to me.

Orion: What does dull-brained mean?

Carmelina: That you don't grasp the concepts well.

Orion: What are the concepts?

Carmelina: It will be better if your brother explains it to you, otherwise we will make night.

Sabina: But why should they hurt us? Even if they came from another planet, and that's not necessarily the explanation for their strange way of doing things, they shouldn't necessarily be bad.

Carlo: Of course I wanted to send those two away from home, but even to another planet, it seems a bit excessive to me.

Carmelina: So, to remove any doubts, let's ask them where they come from. *(Turning to Sirius)* Are you from another world?

Sirius: This matters little. *(Then he approaches Concettina and takes her hand)* The important thing is that we can love each other.

Carlo: Anyway Concettina is really of difficult tastes. It took an extraterrestrial, or something very similar, to make her fall in love.

Carmelina: Wherever you come from, you must promise us that you will stay on earth with us. After all, there will never be shortage of work for you here.

Sirius: Whoever you think we are and from whatever galaxy you think we may come from, know that the only thing that really matters to us is to bring peace and love, as any God on this earth would teach.

Carlo: Dear son, welcome to the family!

THE END