

MASKS

A play in two acts

by
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Cast of Characters

STAGEHAND #1 (any age or gender)

STAGEHAND #2 (any age or gender)

PIERETTE, who plays Pierrot (early twenties)

RUFFINA, who plays La Vecchia (middle-aged)

SCARAMOUCHE, her husband, who plays Capitano Spavento (middle-aged)

LAVINIA, an innamorata (early twenties)

SYLVIA, another innamorata (early twenties)

FLAVIO, the innamorato (early twenties)

RODERIGO, who plays Doctor Bungalo (late middle-aged)

CARLO, who plays Arlecchino (late twenties)

ISABELLA, who plays Colombina (early 30s)

GIULIO, her husband, who plays Pantalone (early 30s)

LOLA, the costume mistress (late twenties)

ONSTAGE AUDIENCE (6-12 TOTAL): (Mixed genders and ages - one must be a young girl of about 18-22).

TOTALS = 6 Female; 5 Male; 2 Either; 6-12 extras (1 must be young female)

Act 1

At rise is a stage in a transitory condition; there are a couple of elements of a set under construction - a flat, painted to resemble a brick wall with a small window and even smaller balcony in it, is on Stage Right; another similar flat with canvas hanging down one side, exposing part of the wooden frame is on Stage Left; a couple of bare, unpainted platforms with benches on them at the rear, where the on-stage "audience" sits; an unfinished tree frames the up left "exit," but otherwise the stage is bare. The whole set represents a scene in a renaissance European village with houses on either side of the street.

As the curtain opens the stage is dark, and the applause of the on-stage audience can be heard, mixed with their laughter. Throughout the ensuing scene, they laugh and applaud often. Carlo, costumed and masked as Arlecchino; Pierette, costumed, capped, and masked as Pierrot; Isabella, costumed and masked as Colombina; Ruffina, standing at a slight distance from the others, costumed and masked as La Vecchia; and Giulio, costumed and masked as Pantalone are discovered. Carlo is about to whack Pierette in the behind with his slapstick.

ISABELLA

(to Carlo)

Now honey-bunch, don't hurt the poor dumb lad.

CARLO

My darling Colombina, not only did he steal my sausages; he tried to steal you away from me, too.

ISABELLA

How sweet. Is my dearest Arlecchino jealous?

CARLO

Ha! No, but I'll have my revenge.

ISABELLA

How? Would you beat the poor boy?

CARLO

Yes! I'll teach him to try and steal my ladylove.

PIERETTE

(Note: Whenever she plays
Pierrot, Pierette tries to
move and sound like a man)

I don't need lessons.

CARLO

That does it!

*Carlo whacks Pierette in the rear with
the slapstick. Pierette tumbles in a
forward roll across the stage, landing
in a seated position.*

GIULIO

Arlecchino, must I remind you to control your temper.

CARLO

Pardon, master Pantalone, but Doctor Bungalo's fresh young
servant here, Pierrot, was taking liberties with my girl
friend.

GIULIO

What does that matter to me? As long as he doesn't try to
steal my money, I don't really care. But you, my lowly
servant, you must behave yourself or you will be out in the
streets on your bum, begging for a living.

ISABELLA

Master Pantalone, I shall take your naughty servant away and
strive to reform him. Meanwhile, your young ward awaits you
in the orchard.

GIULIO

Ah, yes, my sweet Lavinia. Thank you, Colombina, for
reminding me. I must wed by noon today if I am not to lose my
inheritance. And what better choice for a bride than my
already wealthy, and quite pulchritudinous ward Lavinia!

ISABELLA

(Aside)

This dirty old miser will soon discover how sour his "sweet
Lavinia" can be when she is crossed!

(To Carlo)

Come my love, let's you and I get something to eat and
discuss your cute, but naughty temper.

CARLO

An excellent idea. I'm hungry enough to eat the moon.

ISABELLA

(Aside, to Carlo only)

And while we're gone, let us help dear Lavinia prepare to wed her true love, Flavio, while this old miser isn't looking.

Carlo & Isabella exit. Pierette stands up, holding her rear end.

PIERETTE

I think I won't follow them.

GIULIO

Pierrot, run to your master, Dr. Bungalo, and tell him to come to my house to perform the long awaited ceremony. I am ready to be married to my luscious, young, and wealthy ward Lavinia now.

PIERETTE

Post haste.

Pierette exits. Meanwhile, two stagehands enter just off to stage right and look at the stage left house. They pantomime a discussion about the hanging canvas and leave quietly during the following scene.

RUFFINA

(Stepping forward, behind Giulio, and speaking in an old woman's voice)

Oh, Pantalone, yoo-hoo.

GIULIO

Uh-oh!

The on-stage audience laughs

GIULIO (cont'd)

(With his back to Ruffina)

He's not in.

RUFFINA

He's not in?

Giulio keeps moving away from Ruffina, keeping his back to her throughout

GIULIO

No, he's not.

RUFFINA

Oh, well, where is he?

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He ... moved away. GIULIO
 He moved away? RUFFINA
 Far away. GIULIO
 Far away? RUFFINA
 Far, far away. GIULIO
 Where to? RUFFINA
 Uh, ... Timbuktu. GIULIO
 I know where that is. I will find you ... Uh, him. RUFFINA
 He's not there any more. He's moved farther away. GIULIO
 Where to? RUFFINA
 Um, ... Tajikistan. GIULIO
 I know where that is. RUFFINA
 He's not there any longer, either. He moved from there. GIULIO
 Where to? RUFFINA
 Kalamazoo? GIULIO
 Oh, Kalamazoo. RUFFINA
 Zoo, zoo, zoo. GIULIO
 I'll be his girl in Kalamazoo. RUFFINA

GIULIO
You know where that is, too?

RUFFINA
I have family there.

GIULIO
But ... he's not there any longer.

RUFFINA
Oh, really.

GIULIO
Really and truly.

RUFFINA
Well, where can he be?

GIULIO
Tahiti.

RUFFINA
Tahiti?

GIULIO
Yup, Tahiti.

RUFFINA
Tee hee, hee. I've been there, too.

GIULIO
Impossible.

RUFFINA
Why, impossible?

GIULIO
They only allow beautiful women in Tahiti.

Audience laughs, "oohs," and generally reacts to the insult.

RUFFINA
Once I was a beautiful woman.

GIULIO
What happened?

RUFFINA
Time.

GIULIO
It must have been a very *long* time.

Audience laughs.

RUFFINA

Not so long that I lost my mind along with my looks, dear Pantalone. You can't fool me. I'd know you anywhere.

GIULIO

I'm not Pantalone.

RUFFINA

You can't deny it.

GIULIO

I can try.

Audience laughs.

RUFFINA

Try all you like; I'm still the sweetheart for you.

GIULIO

Impossible.

RUFFINA

Quite possible.

GIULIO

Improbable.

RUFFINA

Very probable.

GIULIO

Unlikely.

RUFFINA

Most definitely.

GIULIO

Not until hell freezes over.

RUFFINA

Brrr, it's cold.

GIULIO

Not until lead turns to gold.

RUFFINA

No problem; my father was an alchemist.

GIULIO

Not until you become good-looking.

RUFFINA
Beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

GIULIO
I can't see a thing.

Audience laughs

RUFFINA
You need to look beneath the surface.

GIULIO
(finally turning to face her)
Oh, try to make me blind, will you!

RUFFINA
Kiss me, my love.

GIULIO
Egad!

Audience laughs. Giulio moves towards Ruffina.

GIULIO (cont'd)
I see there's no escape from your clutches. Okay, close your eyes and pucker up.

RUFFINA
Okay.

She closes her eyes, purses her lips, and points them towards Giulio.

GIULIO
Are your eyes closed?

RUFFINA
(Speaking with some difficulty through her puckered lips)
Yup.

GIULIO
Tightly closed?

RUFFINA
I can't see a thing.

GIULIO
(moving away from her)
Good. Now hold it. Don't move. Be patient; your kiss is on its way.

RUFFINA

I'm ready and waiting, my beloved. Send it this way.

GIULIO

Oh, it *is* on its way.

(Aside)

From very *far* away!

Audience laughs

GIULIO (cont'd)

Now will I *sneak* away. I must prepare for my marriage to my young, rich, and shapely ward, Lavinia. Better do that before this revolting old beast opens her eyes.

Giulio quietly and quickly tiptoes off.

RUFFINA

(Through her puckered lips)

I'm ready, dear.

(Pause)

I'm ready and waiting... Dearest? ... Pantalone? ... Kiss me, my darling.

Ruffina waits in vain, then opens her eyes and slowly looks around.

RUFFINA (cont'd)

Well, that was a nasty trick. But no matter. There are many ways to conquer a reluctant lover. I shall win him over soon. Oh, but who is this coming? They mustn't see me until I am ready to wed my dearest, wealthy Pantalone.

Ruffina exits. Enter Roderigo costumed and masked as Dr. Bungalo talking to Pierette who is looking down despondently at the ground and rubbing her backside. Isabella enters, watching them, during their conversation.

RODERIGO

Young man, let that be a lesson to you.

PIERETTE

Yes, ma'am.

RODERIGO

Sir!

PIERETTE

You can just call me by my name.

RODERIGO

Silence.

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PIERETTE

No, not 'silence'. It's 'Pierrot'. My name is Pierrot, not Silence, remember? Pierrot, Your ever faithful and competent servant. That's me.

RODERIGO

I meant you must *be* silent!

PIERETTE

Oh.

*Pierette puts her hands over her mouth.
Audience laughs as she steps aside.*

RODERIGO

Where is the lucky couple?

*Carlo brings on Lavinia and Flavio,
costumed as the innamorati (Note: the
innamorati do not wear masks). They wait
beside Isabella as Carlo approaches
Roderigo.*

CARLO

Doctor ... Blowhard, ... I presume?

RODERIGO

No, that's not my name.

CARLO

Sorry. Doctor ... Birdbrain, then?

RODERIGO

No, you insulated fool! I am Doctor Bungalo ... Doctor Bung-a-lo!

CARLO

Ah, please forgive me, Dr. Bump-a-log, but I am here on a mission of love.

RODERIGO

Ah, really. You've come to the right man. I - Dr. *Bungalo* - am not only a speculist in such matters, but I am also a noted republic, having the power to perform marriages and to sign, seal, and deliver happy couples to one another.

CARLO

Good; I have just such a couple with me.

RODERIGO

(Noticing Lavinia and Flavio)

Ah, and who are these detractive competitors?

CARLO

Uh ... yeah, sure ... whatever ... this is my ... uh ... niece ..., yes, my niece ... and her betrothed. They are ready for you to pronounce them husband and wife. Here is the marriage contract, ready for your signature.

Carlo reveals a scroll from under his costume. He rolls it out; it's very long with a large ribbon attached to a seal at the bottom.

RODERIGO

All I need to see are their signatures.

Carlo searches everywhere on the paper but the bottom; he starts to get tangled up in it. Pierette steps in and shows him the signatures.

CARLO

Thanks. Now go away.

Pierette steps back

CARLO (cont'd)

(to Roderigo)

Here they are.

RODERIGO

Good.

He turns to Lavinia and Flavio who have been waiting patiently.

RODERIGO (cont'd)

Step forthward and kneel ye afore me!

Lavinia and Flavio move downstage of Roderigo and face each other.

RODERIGO (cont'd)

(Reading their names from the contract with some difficulty)

Do you, Flavio take Lavinia to be your blushing bride and promise to be faithful and true for all your life to come.

FLAVIO

Yes, I do.

RODERIGO

Do you, Lavinia take Flavio to be your grinning groom and promise to be wrathful and true for all your life to come.

Yes, I do.

LAVINIA

Who are the witnesses.

RODERIGO

I am.

ISABELLA

I am.

PIERETTE

Me, too.

CARLO

RODERIGO

Then by the Pax Vobiscum ad Nostrum Proboscis settled on me by the Duke of Earldom, I now pronounce you ball and chain. Sine Die. You may kiss the broad.

As they kiss, Giulio, as Pantalone, comes rushing in out of breath.

GIULIO

Stop!

(Pause)

What's going on here.

ISABELLA

Looks like a wedding to me.

GIULIO

No! She is supposed to marry me.

ISABELLA

Oops!

CARLO

Oops!

GIULIO (cont'd)

Oops!?

CARLO

It looks like you're too late, old man

Giulio glares at Carlo.

CARLO (cont'd)

... Uh, ... I mean, it looks like they're already married, my lord.

ISABELLA

Yup, the wedding is over. She's already taken.

CARLO

(To Giulio)

Looks like you've been taken too, your honor.

GIULIO

(seeing Pierette)

You! You were supposed to prevent this and bring the doctor to me.

PIERETTE

One tiny mistake.

The on-stage audience bursts into laughter.

FLAVIO

Face it old man, you're just not her type, but I am.

A pretty girl in the onstage audience laughs, is stared at by others in the "audience," and then blushes. Flavio tries to ignore this.

LAVINIA

It was quite presumptuous of you to assume that I would marry a conceited old miser like you, wasn't it?

GIULIO

But I must find a bride by noon today, or I will lose all my inheritance!

Ruffina re-enters and steps up behind Giulio.

RUFFINA

Yoo-hoo. Here I am my angel.

She puts her arms around him from behind; he struggles, but he can't get free.

GIULIO

Ugh! My heart! I'm having palpitations.

RUFFINA

It must be love.

RODERIGO

(Quickly)

Pax Vobiscum! I now pronounce you ball and chain.

Laughter from the onstage audience.

GIULIO

But ... What!? ... You can't... I mean ... but ... we never said "I do."

A minor detail.
 RODERIGO

The onstage audience laughs again.

GIULIO
 We don't have a notarized contract.

RUFFINA
 I have it under my cloak.

GIULIO
 I never signed it!

RODERIGO
 A mere impetu-mint which you may remediate later. Your marriage, however, is unshakable, irrevocable, and final.

Giulio resigns himself to the situation as Sylvia, costumed as the second innamorata, rushes in hand in hand with Scaramouche, costumed and masked as Capitano Spavento.

GIULIO
 Oh, dear! Well, at least now that I'm married, I can keep my gold ... even if I have to live with this beast!

SYLVIA
 Oh, Doctor Bungalo, while you're in the marrying mood.....

RODERIGO
 Take two aspirin and see me in the morning. Three marriages in one day is too much even for me. Now everyone, go home and never reveal a word of what has perspired here this evening. Go, ... go, ... go! ... Shoo. ... Beat it. ... Fugato prestissimo! ... Scarper! ... Scat! ... **BE GONE!!**

The others finally realize that Roderigo is dismissing the whole company. Giulio is dragged off Stage Right into his house by Ruffina, moaning. Flavio and Lavinia exit hand in hand. Roderigo goes left into his house. The others remain in their places.

SYLVIA
 Just think, my love, tomorrow we'll be wed.

SCARAMOUCHE
 What? Never. This is no fate for a soldier of fortune.

SYLVIA

But don't you love me?

SCARAMOUCHE

(Directly to the audience)

Love? Why a soldier like me must remain free to love all the women who desire him. And there are many ... many ... many young ladies who desire ... me!

SYLVIA

(suddenly shrewish, stomping her foot and grabbing his ear)

Don't you start that again. You will marry me tomorrow morning or else!

SCARAMOUCHE

(cowering and in pain)

Ouch! Yes, dear. Whatever you say.

Sylvia smiles as she leads him off by the ear. Carlo and Pierette both look at each other from opposite sides of the stage. They then turn to look at Isabella. She notices them, looking back and forth at them both. Then she starts to walk off, flirting with both.

PIERETTE

Mine!

CARLO

Mine!

They chase after Isabella off stage. The onstage audience laughs and applauds. Then all the characters of the Commedia come back on stage and bow to the on-stage audience. Scaramouche removes his hat and moves among the audience with his hat in his hand. Some members of the audience put a few coins in his hat; some put in paper money. Some ignore him and walk off.

AUDIENCE MEMBER

(To Scaramouche as he puts money in the hat)

Great show.

ANOTHER AUDIENCE MEMBER

That Pierrot was so weird.

A THIRD AUDIENCE MEMBER.

Yeah, but he's funny!

Other audience members can be heard muttering a variety of comments like, "That wasn't too bad," "I've seen better," "What crappy scenery," "We gotta pay for this?," "Let's get something to eat," and "Good idea; I'm hungry." Eventually the on-stage audience filters out. Ruffina removes her mask and turns to the others. She speaks to several members of the troupe as they also remove their masks.

SCARAMOUCHE

(Looking sadly in the hat)

Thank you.

RUFFINA

Nice work everybody. Good show, everyone. Isabella, great as usual.

ISABELLA

Thanks, Ruffi.

RUFFINA

Flavio, very nice work today.

FLAVIO

Thanks.

RUFFINA

Giulio, nice bit with the money bags in act one. Let's see if we can work it into *The Neighborly Fathers* for tomorrow's performance, too.

GIULIO

Sure, Ruffi, piece o' cake. I can do it right after the crying scene with Carlo in the beginning of the second act.

Pierette re-enters without her mask.

RUFFINA

Good.

(turning to Carlo; severely)

Carlo!

CARLO

Yes, I know, I know. I actually hit our little Pierette with the slapstick. Sorry.

(Looking at Flavio)

My timing's off.

Flavio stares back at him. Carlo turns to Pierette

Sorry, kid. CARLO (cont'd)

That's okay. It didn't hurt. PIERETTE

No, no; no excuses. It's not the first time, Carlo. Be careful. RUFFINA

I will; I will. CARLO
(turning to Sylvia)
C'mon sis.

Carlo and Sylvia exits.

Ruffi? How'd we do? Did you count the house. ISABELLA

Not yet. My husband's probably counting the money now. RUFFINA

Looked rather thin out there today. ISABELLA

It's early in the season, dear. Don't worry. RUFFINA

I'm not worried; I just like to eat. ISABELLA

Things will get better. RUFFINA
(Not really convinced herself)

Sure they will. ISABELLA
(exiting)

Ruffina calls off stage as Isabella and Giulio exit.

Lola! RUFFINA

Hey, Lavinia, you want to ... get something to eat? FLAVIO
(to Lavinia)

Forget it! LAVINIA
(Shooting a disgusted look in Flavio's direction)

Lavinia turns her back on Flavio and exits; he shrugs his shoulders and exits in the opposite direction. Pierette addresses Scaramouche and Ruffina.

PIERETTE

Was it really okay?

SCARAMOUCHE

My dear child, it was grand.

RUFFINA

Absolutely fine. You have your father's touch.

PIERETTE

But did I really come across as a man?

SCARAMOUCHE

Definitely. The audience couldn't have thought otherwise. It's been a long time since we've had a Pierrot on our stage. It was hard to lose him ... Almost as hard for me as it must have been for you. It's nice to have him back ... and to have you in his place.

Ruffina glances quietly at Scaramouche and smiles. Lola enters.

RUFFINA

(to Pierette)

Go, relax, child. You've earned a good rest, and later, after rehearsal, we'll have a fine supper together and talk about tomorrow.

LOLA

What is it, Ruffi?

Pierette exits

RUFFINA

We're performing *The Neighborly Fathers* tomorrow afternoon. Do the costumes need any work?

LOLA

Let's see ... Dr. Bungalo's costume needs a minor touch or two. And Sylvia's wedding dress is a mess. But it's easy; I can get everything ready for tomorrow.

RUFFINA

Good. Do me a favor and let everyone know that we'll rehearse in about twenty minutes.

LOLA

Sure.

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Lola exits

RUFFINA

(To Scaramouche)

You don't look too happy, dear.

SCARAMOUCHE

The house was small.

RUFFINA

Yes, it was. And I think not very generous.

SCARAMOUCHE

Well, no, not very. We just about broke even.

RUFFINA

That's something anyway.

SCARAMOUCHE

Sure, it's better than I thought at first. We'll be alright. Tomorrow should be better.

RUFFINA

(doubtfully)

I suppose so. Saturday's are usually better.

Enter Stagehands 1 and 2

SCARAMOUCHE

Absolutely. We should make a lot more tomorrow.

RUFFINA

(to stagehands)

There you are. That wall is falling apart again.

STAGEHAND 1

I know. We saw it; we came to fix it.

STAGEHAND 2

It won't happen again.

RUFFINA

I hope not.

(To Scaramouche)

Come on, let's get something to eat before the rehearsal starts.

Ruffina and Scaramouche exit.

STAGEHAND 1

Go bring the ladder over here.

STAGEHAND 2

Sure.

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Stagehand 2 goes behind the flat SR and retrieves a small ladder. He brings it to the flat SL. Stagehand 1 climbs a couple of steps up, and examines the exposed flat.

STAGEHAND 1

This is really annoying. I thought you fixed this.

STAGEHAND 2

So did I.

STAGEHAND 1

You're such a clod.

STAGEHAND 2

Oh, thanks! Listen, it ain't my fault if the walls are so old they can't stand up on their own.

STAGEHAND 1

Hey, we gotta work with what we got.

Pierette enters, carrying a towel. She is no longer in her Pierrot costume, but in exercise clothing. While the stagehands work, she practices rolls and falls. The stagehands continue working as they speak.

STAGEHAND 2

She's pretty good, isn't she?

STAGEHAND 1

Just like her father.

STAGEHAND 2

Well, not *that* good! He was the best of the best. Not a better Pierrot anywhere in the world.

STAGEHAND 1

That's true. He started this company, you know. Him, Ruffi, and Scaramouche. But this one sure is his daughter, alright, and the apple doesn't fall far from the tree. Give her a couple of years; you'll see. She'll be just as good as her old man.

STAGEHAND 2

I don't know about that. He was one of a kind. She's good, but ...

Pierette stops her practice and addresses the stagehands.

PIERETTE

Are you talking to me?

STAGEHAND 1

Not me.

STAGEHAND 2

No, not at all.

PIERETTE (cont'd)

Oh.

She moves off to an out of the way corner to exercise. Enter Isabella, now out of the Colombina costume and Lola, who has an armful of costumes and a sewing kit. They are oblivious of the Stagehands and don't see Pierette at first.

ISABELLA

I'm telling you, Carlo is going to be pissed. Flavio's an idiot.

LOLA

(Working on costumes throughout)

Serves him right if he gets his face broken. He shouldn't mess with Carlo's sister. That's one hot-tempered family.

ISABELLA

Sylvia should know better. Everybody knows Flavio's a skirt chaser.

Pierette stops her exercises and listens. She becomes gradually more concerned and disturbed as the conversation continues.

STAGEHAND 2

You know, I'm hungry.

STAGEHAND 1

Really? So am I. C'mon, we've got time. Let's eat; we can come back and finish this later.

The stagehands exit.

LOLA

(half smiling)

Well, he's good at it. He can be quite charming ... until you really get to know him. Now he's even after Lavinia.

ISABELLA

His "charm" didn't fool me. You know he pulled his line on me, too, don't you?

LOLA

You gotta be joking! Doesn't he know that you're married?

ISABELLA

Sure, he knows. He doesn't care. There isn't a single principled bone in his whole body. He's a worm and only cares about one thing.

LOLA

Yeah, and we all know what that is, don't we?

ISABELLA

You've got that right.

LOLA

Men!

ISABELLA

Men!

Lola notices Pierette, who is very near tears.

LOLA

Hey, kid, what's the matter with you?

PIERETTE

Me, nothing; nothing.

ISABELLA

(Somewhat surprised and flustered)

Pierette? I didn't see you.

LOLA

Why are you looking so upset, Pierette?

PIERETTE

Upset? No, I'm fine.

LOLA

No you're not; you're practically crying. What's the matter?

ISABELLA

Leave her alone, Lola.

LOLA

Why? What did I do?

ISABELLA

Nothing.

LOLA

You still miss your dad, don't you? Poor kid; it's only been ... what? ... six months since he died? Not a very long time.

PIERETTE

No, that's not it.

LOLA

Well, then, what? It can't be that old anxiety about playing your dad's role, can it? Because you were great today, kid; I know, I watched. You're a fine Pierrot ... so ... what's the problem?

PIERETTE

Nothing. I'm just fine; really.

LOLA

No, you're not. Look at you. What's bothering you. Is it me? Did I say something?

ISABELLA

It's not you.

LOLA

What do you mean it's not me? How would you know? What's going on?

PIERETTE

It's nothing. Really. I'm fine.

LOLA

You're not fine; you're crying about something. Is it something I said? Something I did?

PIERETTE

No. It's nothing. Really. Forget it.

ISABELLA

I told you that it isn't you, Lola. Leave it alone. It's nothing that you said, nothing that you did, not about you at all.

LOLA

But how could you ... ? You know what's wrong!

Pierette looks at Lola; then at Isabella

ISABELLA

Well ... yes.
(Pause)

PIERETTE

You *know*?!

ISABELLA

Yes, I know... Of course I know.

PIERETTE

How? How could you know? Nobody knows ... not anybody.

LOLA

So there *is* something bothering you.

PIERETTE

You can't know!

ISABELLA

I do know. I can see it.

PIERETTE

You can see it?

LOLA

See? ... What?!

ISABELLA

(To Lola)

It's not for me to tell. But ... I thought that everybody could see it.

PIERETTE

Oh God.

ISABELLA

But it's not for me to tell anybody, so I won't.

PIERETTE

Thank you.

LOLA

Oh come on. You can tell me. I'll keep quiet. Won't you tell me what's bothering you?

PIERETTE

It's nothing ... only ...

(to Isabella)

I can't believe you know. I haven't told anyone. I thought I kept it to myself. How could you possibly ... ?

ISABELLA

I can see it in your face, lamb, and I can hear it in your voice, too.

PIERETTE

You can? When? How?

ISABELLA

Whenever ...

She stops herself at first but then decides to go on.

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ISABELLA (cont'd)
Well, you know, whenever you're ...

PIERETTE
(Finishing Isabella's thought)
Around him.
(Pause)

ISABELLA
(Looking from Pierette to Lola
and back)
Well, ... yes.

PIERETTE
Oh God.

ISABELLA
You can't help it. Love makes us all go crazy; that's all
there is to it. It's not your fault if you get all soft and
weak around the face and shaky in your voice when you're near
him.

LOLA
Near who? I had no idea you were interested in anyone. Who is
he, anyway?

PIERETTE
(trying to ignore Lola)
My God, does he know? I'll die if he knows.

ISABELLA
Are you kidding?! Him! He's too full of himself to know
anything. He wouldn't know if you put a fifty foot tall sign
in front of his face.

LOLA
Whose face?!

PIERETTE
Please, you can't tell him. I'll die if he finds out.

ISABELLA
Don't worry; I wouldn't tell him. What good would it do? He's
too shallow and self-centered, the little ... !

PIERETTE
Please, don't.

ISABELLA
I'm sorry, but it's true. You've got to know that he's not
worth it. I don't understand what any of you see in that
nasty little playboy. You're worth a hundred times more than
him.

LOLA

Oh, no! You can't mean ... not ... Flavio!? Why that lousy two-timing creep. That filthy little scab. You're crying over him?

PIERETTE

Please don't say anything. Please!

LOLA

I won't; don't worry, but I'd like to kick him where it would do the most damage. I don't believe he's flirting with you, too.

PIERETTE

Me, too! No, not me, too. Why, has he been flirting with you?

LOLA

Oh, more than that, sweetie. We were supposed to be an item, if you know what I mean. That is, until I caught him with Sy... ... with another item! The louse. What's he done to you?

PIERETTE

Nothing. Just ... Nothing at all!

LOLA

That snake! He didn't pull that "You're my soul mate" line on you, did he? Or the "It's like I've known you all my life" routine? The rat. I'll wring his nasty little neck!

PIERETTE

He didn't pull anything on me. You don't get it. I'm the one girl he hasn't hit on!

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