

SAMUEL FRENCH SAMPLE PERUSAL

This sample is an *excerpt* from a Samuel French title.

This sample is for perusal only and may not be used for performance purposes.

You may not download, print, or distribute this excerpt.

We highly recommend purchasing a copy of the title before considering for performance.

For more information about licensing or about purchasing a play or musical, please visit our website.

www.samuelfrench.com
www.samuelfrench.co.uk

Saturday Sunday Monday

by Eduardo de Filippo

English Adaptation
by Keith Waterhouse
& Willis Hall

A SAMUEL FRENCH ACTING EDITION



New York Hollywood London Toronto

SAMUELFRENCH.COM

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED

CAUTION: Professionals and amateurs are hereby warned that *SATURDAY SUNDAY MONDAY* is subject to a Licensing Fee. It is fully protected under the copyright laws of the United States of America, the British Commonwealth, including Canada, and all other countries of the Copyright Union. All rights, including professional, amateur, motion picture, recitation, lecturing, public reading, radio broadcasting, television and the rights of translation into foreign languages are strictly reserved. In its present form the play is dedicated to the reading public only.

The amateur live stage performance rights to *SATURDAY SUNDAY MONDAY* are controlled exclusively by Samuel French, Inc., and licensing arrangements and performance licenses must be secured well in advance of presentation. PLEASE NOTE that amateur Licensing Fees are set upon application in accordance with your producing circumstances. When applying for a licensing quotation and a performance license please give us the number of performances intended, dates of production, your seating capacity and admission fee. Licensing Fees are payable one week before the opening performance of the play to Samuel French, Inc., at 45 W. 25th Street, New York, NY 10010.

Licensing Fee of the required amount must be paid whether the play is presented for charity or gain and whether or not admission is charged.

Stock licensing fees quoted upon application to Samuel French, Inc.

For all other rights than those stipulated above, apply to: Samuel French, Inc.

Particular emphasis is laid on the question of amateur or professional readings, permission and terms for which must be secured in writing from Samuel French, Inc.

Copying from this book in whole or in part is strictly forbidden by law, and the right of performance is not transferable.

Whenever the play is produced the following notice must appear on all programs, printing and advertising for the play: "Produced by special arrangement with Samuel French, Inc."

Due authorship credit must be given on all programs, printing and advertising for the play.

No one shall commit or authorize any act or omission by which the copyright of, or the right to copyright, this play may be impaired.
No one shall make any changes in this play for the purpose of production.
Publication of this play does not imply availability for performance. Both amateurs and professionals considering a production are strongly advised in their own interests to apply to Samuel French, Inc., for written permission before starting rehearsals, advertising, or booking a theatre.
No part of this book may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form, by any means, now known or yet to be invented, including mechanical, electronic, photocopying, recording, videotaping, or otherwise, without the prior written permission of the publisher.

SATURDAY, SUNDAY, MONDAY by Eduardo de Filippo, was first performed in the U.S. at the Martin Beck Theatre, New York City, on November 21, 1974. The play was produced by Barry M. Brown, Fritz Holt and S. Spencer Davids by arrangement with The National Theatre of Great Britain. English adaptation by Keith Waterhouse and Willis Hall. Directed and designed by Franco Zeffrelli, lighting by Roger Morgan, original National Theatre costume designs by Raimonda Gaetani and hairstyles by Ted Azar.

CHARACTERS

THE FAMILY:

ANTONIO	.....	<i>Walter Abel</i>
ROSA	.....	<i>Sada Thompson</i>
PEPPINO	.....	<i>Eli Wallach</i>
MARIA	.....	<i>Susan Merson</i>
ROBERTO	.....	<i>William McCauley</i>
ROCCO	.....	<i>Jeff Giannone</i>
GIULIANELLA	.....	<i>Francesca Bartoccini</i>
AUNT MEME	.....	<i>Jan Miner</i>
ATTILIO	.....	<i>Amos Abrams</i>
RAFFAELE	.....	<i>Michael Vale</i>

AND:

VIRGINIA, the maid	.....	<i>Minnie Gordon Gaster</i>
FEDERICO, Giulianella's fiance	.....	<i>Gary Sandy</i>
LUIGI IANNIELLO, the accountant	..	<i>Ron Holgate</i>
ELENA, his wife	.....	<i>Nina Dova</i>
CATIELLO, the tailor	.....	<i>Michael Enserro</i>
MICHELE	.....	<i>Terry Hinz</i>
DR. CEFERCOLA	.....	<i>Sam Gray</i>

ACT ONE

Saturday

ACT TWO

Sunday

ACT THREE

Monday

TIME: The Present

PLACE: The Priore Family's Apartment in Naples

Saturday, Sunday, Monday

ACT ONE

DONNA ROSA *stands at the kitchen stove—Upstage end—stirring the soup in a pot on the Upstage burner. VIRGINIA, the maid, is slicing onions. Every so often, the girl has to wipe her eyes, but she continues bravely.*

ROSА. (*She crosses to sink, gets plate of parsley.*) Haven't you finished yet?

VIRGINIA. Nearly. Only two more.

ROSА. (*She brings plate to table.*) Hurry up— I'm waiting.

VIRGINIA. Signora, I think I've done enough already.

ROSА. Are you telling me how to make *ragu*? The more onions there are, the thicker the sauce. I'll tell you how to make *ragu*, it's all in the cooking. Slowly, over a low flame. Then the onions curl up round the meat in a black crust. When you add the white wine, the crust loosens. That makes a rich golden stock and then you mix it with the tomato sauce and that gives it that lovely dark colour. *Ragu* shouldn't only taste right, it should look right. Don't you try tell me how to make *ragu*! (*She gets scissors and string from left drawer of table.*)

VIRGINIA. At home we just fry the onions, put in the tomatoes and meat and boil it all up together.

ROSА. I am sure you do . . . And what does it taste like? Boiled meat with tomatoes and onions! My mother would have told you how to make *ragu*. "To make a *ragu*," she used to say, "takes patience." And she had some patience, my mama! Every Saturday

night she was in the kitchen— (*She picks up ladle.*) the ladle in her hand. At this very table. And nothing would make her move away from her casserole dish— if a murderer climbed in through the window she would not move. When it was half-cooked in the casserole dish, she would tip it out and finish it off in the big pot. (*She gets pot from wall above sink and returns to table.*) There was no aluminium in those days. When the sauce was ready—just at the right moment—the meat was taken out of the casserole dish and placed in the big pot— (*She lifts meat from Left chopping board, puts it on oval platter.*) carefully, like a newborn babe in its cradle. My mother knew how to make *ragu* all right! (*She goes to sink, picks up pot lid from work area Left of sink.*)

VIRGINIA. (*Politely.*) Of course, if you have a passion for cooking.

ROSA. And my father, you know what Don Antonio is like—if his Sunday *ragu* wasn't fit to be confessed and blessed, oh! The house wasn't worth living in. (*She takes lid to stove and puts it on Stage side of stove, between Downstage burners.*)

VIRGINIA. Your poor mama!

ROSA. She worshipped him. And you know why? Because he worshipped her *ragu*. (*She fans fire, Center door.*) Friends would stop her in the street. "Signora," they'd say, "What's the recipe for the *ragu* that your husband never stops talking about?" It was always, "My wife's *ragu* this" and "My wife's *ragu* that." Mama would ask him to bring his friends and their wives round to Sunday dinner. (*She fans fire, Upstage door.*) Afterwards they would say: "He's right, your husband. The *ragu's* wonderful!" And, as they went out, they would cross themselves.

VIRGINIA. It's a pity your husband hasn't much of an appetite.

ROSA. (*Stirs soup.*) Don Peppino does not show enthusiasm for food—he's above that sort of thing. If

It was just for my husband's sake I'd give him yesterday's macaroni, even on Easter Sunday—he wouldn't notice. (*She notices that VIRGINIA's face is marked by tears and that the girl is sobbing heavily. ROSA crosses Right to table.*) Is that the onion or are you really crying?

VIRGINIA. I'm really crying, Signora. (*She sits down and bursts into a fresh stream of tears.*)

ROSA. What for? What's happened to you?

VIRGINIA. It's my brother, Michele.

ROSA. What's he done?

VIRGINIA. This morning he went to get his hair cut! And they'll arrest him again and put him away in prison!

ROSA. Because a man has his hair cut he is arrested and sent to prison?

VIRGINIA. An ordinary man, no, signora! My brother, yes! (*PEPPINO wearing top coat and carrying briefcase enters Up Left as ROSA stares at VIRGINIA, perplexed. PEPPINO, ROSA's husband, is a man in late middle-age, sturdy and in good health. Unaware of the drama that is taking place, he remains near the door examining a door key closely.*) I have to bear my brother like a cross. (*She rises and goes Up Right.*)

PEPPINO. My son has a very strange sense of humour. His great joke is to leave his front door key on the hall table and take mine instead. So I go off with his key in my pocket. (*He crosses above ROSA to table.*) When I come home in the evening I spend half an hour fiddling in the keyhole. Very funny! He does it on purpose—because his key doesn't fit properly and mine does.

ROSA. (*She crosses Right above PEPPINO to VIRGINIA. In irritation.*) Excuse me, I'm trying to listen to Virginia.

PEPPINO. What's the matter?

ROSA. (*Without deigning to look at him.*) She's crying, can't you see?

PEPPINO. (*He crosses Left.*) We're not on the same wave length, are we, you and I? I can see that she's crying. I'm asking—why?

ROSA. I'm trying to find that out. (*She leads VIRGINIA to Right of table. ROSA sits above table.*) Now then, your brother has his hair cut—and then? (*She puts chopper in VIRGINIA'S hands, then ROSA cuts garlic and VIRGINIA chops onions.*)

VIRGINIA. Signora, it was a long time ago. He was in an accident. He was in the hospital, in and out, in and out, and when they finally sent him home he was not the same man.

ROSA. Well, what does the doctor say?

VIRGINIA. The doctor has said that there is nothing to be done. "He has this animal strength so like any other animal, he must find an outlet for that strength."

(PEPPINO sits in chair Left of table.)

ROSA. What sort of an outlet?

VIRGINIA. He used to push a piano up and down the road. Now it's this business of getting a hair cut. And when he gets his haircut, he's like the hammer of God.

ROSA. Virgi, I still don't understand. Stop crying and tell us.

VIRGINIA. He has the barber shave off all his hair . . . completely. And he pulls a cap down over his head.

PEPPINO. What good does that do him?

VIRGINIA. (*She crosses Left above ROSA.*) Then he goes out in the streets. When he sees a man as big as himself he stands in front of him, takes off his cap and stares him in the face. (*PEPPINO and ROSA laugh.*) Who wouldn't laugh? And Michele grabs him by both lapels with his two big hands and says, "You, what are you laughing at?" There is a fight. (*She returns Right above ROSA.*) Michele always wins. My brother can fill a hospital in less than a day.

ROSA. My God . . . and this morning he saw a barber? (*She rises puts lard into big pot. Takes pot and ladle to stove.*)

PEPPINO. God help everyone out in the streets!

VIRGINIA. Donna Rosa . . . ?

ROSA. What do you want?

VIRGINIA. If I could have tomorrow off . . . (*She crosses Left.*) he never so much as lifts a finger when he's with me.

ROSA. Virgi, tomorrow is Sunday. We have people coming to dinner.

PEPPINO. What people?

(*VIRGINIA goes back to table and puts chopped onions from board onto onion plate.*)

ROSA. "What people!" Relatives. Your daughter-in-law.

PEPPINO. *My* daughter-in-law.

ROSA. I apologize. I must remember to mind my grammar. *Our* daughter-in-law. Roberto and Maria Carolina.

PEPPINO. All right, all right!

ROSA. She telephoned this morning. "Mama, tomorrow is Sunday. Could we come to dinner with you?" That girl has never learned to cook.

PEPPINO. We go often enough to eat with them.

ROSA. (*She crosses to table.*) To eat, yes. To eat Sunday dinner, no. I know what I'm saying. Roberto would rather eat Sunday *ragu* here. (*She puts parsley on top of plate of onions that VIRGINIA is holding.*)

PEPPINO. You think Roberto thinks about tomorrow's *ragu*. He's wrapped up in his contracts and his projects. Besides, Maria Carolina is a very good cook.

ROSA. (*Pause. Not wishing to argue further.*) It isn't important—we won't talk about it any more. (*Goes to stove with plate of onions and parsley. Puts plate on Downstage end of stove.*)

VIRGINIA. (*She crosses Left to stove.*) And can I have tomorrow off, Signora?

ROSA. You want me to give you tomorrow off because you have a brother who acts like a clown? (*She crosses to table below VIRGINIA.*) I've told you that we've got company tomorrow. (*She crosses to stove with lard drippings, puts them in pot, puts empty bowl between Center and Downstage burner.*) More company. We're having Ianniello, the accountant, and his wife. (*VIRGINIA crosses to sink above ROSA. She then gets Right chopping board from table.*)

PEPPINO. (*Rises.*) I wait all week to have Sunday dinner with my family and you invite strangers to the table! (*He crosses Down Right below table to Down Right chair, takes off coat, leaves it on chair.*)

ROSA. (*She puts onions in pot.*) Strangers who have lived in the same block of flats as we have almost all of our married life! A year ago and this stranger was the best friend that you had in the world. (*She crosses to table with empty onion plate, scrapes garlic onto plate.*)

PEPPINO. It just so happens I do not like Ianniello anymore, that's all. He's a bore. And his wife. She's a bore. You have invited for dinner tomorrow not one bore, but two bores! (*Crosses to chair Right of table and sits.*)

ROSA. Look, I met her on the stairs. At four o'clock this afternoon. (*She crosses to stove with onion plate which now has garlic slivers on it. Puts garlic in pot.*) She was coming downstairs, I was going up. She had a present for me. One evening I had happened to mention to her that turquoise was my favorite color. She saw this— (*She wipes onion from chopping bag into garbage can Right of sink.*) turquoise cardigan, in my size, and she bought it for me. (*She crosses to table with empty plate. Puts it down on table. Picks up oil.*) So, she gave me the cardigan on the stairs. I was carrying the meat for tomorrow's *ragu*, I showed it to

her— (VIRGINIA stops working and watches ROSA and PEPPINO.)

PEPPINO. She told you that nobody can make a *ragu* as well as you, that the wooden ladle is like magic in your hands, she flattered you, and you jumped up and down with delight and invited them to dinner.

ROSA. (*She puts oil on table. A sudden gust of violent anger.*) And what if I was flattered? And what if I did jump up and down—that's me! And I don't have to apologise for what I do, not to you, not to anyone! Do you want to see me jump up and down now? Do you want to see me take the *ragu* in the dish, and throw it all over the floor! (*She picks up oil and crosses to stove. Adds on to pot; puts oil can rear of stove.*)

PEPPINO. And you say that I have changed over the past year. What have you become? A female jack-in-the-box. You open a lid and out jumps a she-devil. (VIRGINIA puts chopping board on floor Right of sink.)

ROSA. Open your lid, Peppino, and nothing jumps out. Unless you want to pay compliments to other people who don't deserve it. (*She stirs sauce.*)

PEPPINO. I don't know what you're talking about. (VIRGINIA wipes chopper and knife.)

ROSA. You don't know what I'm talking about.

PEPPINO. Let's not discuss it any more. This arguing. Rosa, we have three children—

ROSA. (*She crosses to table with ladle, puts ladle on table.*) Listen to that— I would never have known.

PEPPINO. Has Rocco come home yet?

ROSA. No. (*She moves Left chopping board to Center table, takes meat off platter and puts it on board.*)

PEPPINO. What's the time now?

ROSA. (*Glancing over the clock on Right wall Down-stage of ANTONIO'S table.*) It's stopped.

VIRGINIA. (*She comes to ROSA'S Left.*) It must be five—just after five.

ROSA. (*She gives ladle to VIRGINIA, who goes to stove.*)

ROSA *puts bacon on meat.*) It's getting to be a habit—leaving the shop in the hands of the salesmen and the shop assistants.

PEPPINO. Why not, as long as you trust the cashier.

ROSA. (*She punches holes in meat.*) Why not? And in the meantime the cashier has sold his little car and bought a big one.

PEPPINO. If we carry on like this, in a few months he'll be able to buy a Ferrari.

ROSA. What a business! (*She mimes putting garlic into holes in meat.*)

PEPPINO. I have given my life to that shop. I was always the first one there and the last one out. I used to pull down the shutters and lock the doors myself—and open up. (*PEPPINO crosses Down Right, gets slips from briefcase.*) These days I've been having second thoughts. I have come to the point when I don't care any more. I'm a bit like the donkey, you know, who draws the wine and drinks the water. I suppose I expected more from Rocco. He used to work well behind the counter. Rocco was a good salesman, it's not easy. It's not as easy as people think. He got on well with the customers. He could sell them anything: last year's shirt, last year's ties and send the customer away satisfied. These days he walks in there as if there was a smell under his nose. The shop is too old-fashioned for him now. The customers are too old-fashioned. I am too old-fashioned. You can't argue with him. It's an old-fashioned shop. As long as you make a sale—what's wrong with being old-fashioned? We rely upon a solid suburban clientele. (*PEPPINO sits Right of table.*) It's safe, it's sure, what's wrong with that? Rocco has set his heart on opening his own business. For the fashionable set. In the Via Calabritto. He thinks the fashionable set is just sitting there, waiting for him to open up. He could be wrong. I tell you, I'm sick of the shop.

ROSA. Is that why you leave the shop early every afternoon?

PEPPINO. Let's say it's one of many reasons.

ROSA. (*She rises, crosses to stove with meat on oval platter. Leaves platter Downstage end of stove.*) Sell the shop, close down, why bother?

PEPPINO. That is probably what I'm going to do.

ROSA. (*Turns to him.*) What?

VIRGINIA. (*She comes to Right of ROSA.*) Signora Rosa, may I have tomorrow off?

ROSA. (*She crosses to table below VIRGINIA.*) Virgi, how many times? After Mass you will come straight here.

VIRGINIA. (*She follows ROSA.*) You can't expect me to work when my mind is somewhere else.

ROSA. (*She gets garlic bowl, takes it to stove above VIRGINIA. Leaves bowl Center edge of stove.*) Virgi, you'll be here tomorrow, with your mind, or I'll dismiss you and your mind there on the spot.

VIRGINIA. (*She crosses back Left to ROSA.*) Donna Rosa, just for tomorrow only, can't I bring my brother with me?

ROSA. (*She crosses to table above VIRGINIA, gets wine. VIRGINIA follows.*) Virgi, tomorrow is Sunday and on Sunday I want to be able to rest easy in my own home. (*She crosses back to stove with wine, backing VIRGINIA Left. PEPPINO laughs unbelievably.*)

VIRGINIA. We can put him in the ironing room. When he's with me, he's like a lamb.

ROSA. Virgi, we'll talk about it tomorrow.

VIRGINIA. (*She crosses Right below table to above table.*) I'll bring him tomorrow and we'll talk about it.

(*Before ROSA can reply, Rocco enters up Left with his friend, FEDERICO. VIRGINIA takes Left chopping board with onion plate, bacon plate. Piece of lemon, piece of string to sink.*)

ROCCO. Buona sera. (*He goes over to his mother at the stove and kisses her.*)

FEDERICO. Nice to see you, Signora Rosa.

ROSA. Buona sera, Federico.

FEDERICO. (*He crosses Right to above table.*) Buona sera, Cavaliere. (*VIRGINIA takes chopping board from table to sink.*)

PEPPINO. Buona sera to you.

ROCCO. Mmmmm! Smell that! Tomorrow's *ragu* is on its way! (*He crosses below table to FEDERICO.*) Make sure that it's a good one— I've invited Federico for dinner tomorrow. Last week I ate at his place and his mother's *ragu* was superb!

FEDERICO. Grazie!

ROSA. (*She puts garlic in pot, stack's empty garlic bowl and empty lard dripping bowl and leaves them between Downstage and Center burner.*) Then he has my sympathy, tomorrow he'll have to be content with mine.

FEDERICO. I'm sure it's perfect, Signora Rosa. But I can't accept the invitation— I've already promised someone I'll be somewhere else.

ROCCO. (*He crosses Left above FEDERICO, pushes him into chair above table.*) Federico, tomorrow you'll eat here! (*To ROSA.*) He's had another fight with Giulianella.

ROSA. Why do Sundays always start to go wrong on Saturday night?

ROCCO. Giulianella's a stupid child and Federico's completely in the right.

ROSA. (*She crosses to sink.*) Rocco, don't interfere in things which don't concern you. (*She takes cup from area Left of sink, fills it with water.*)

ROCCO. (*He moves Upstage.*) I wouldn't interfere in anything. Federico's upset and all I want is for the two of them to have the chance to straighten things out.

FEDERICO. Straighten things out . . .

ROSA. (*She breaks down to FEDERICO's Right.*) Federico's always welcome, but not to straighten things out with Giulianella in front of all the family. (*She crosses Downstage of Rocco to stove with cup of water. Rocco follows ROSA. ROSA pours water into pot, puts empty cup on stack of bowls.*) Why not? Reasonably and fairly in front of impartial witnesses.

ROSA. Impartial. You've just called your sister stupid—does that make you impartial?

Rocco. Everybody knows what's wrong with Giulianella—she's stupid.

FEDERICO. Rocco, she's not . . .

ROCCO. It's not entirely her fault. It's those stupid idiots she calls her friends. Telling her that she is beautiful, putting ideas into her head, making her believe that she is something that she's not.

ROSA. (*She stirs pot at stove.*) Rocco, why don't you just keep out of it?

ROCCO. (*He takes few steps to ROSA.*) Because, mama, I happen to hold the key to the situation.

PEPPINO. It isn't the only key you happen to be holding. (*He holds out the front door key he came in with.*) Here, take this and give me back my own. I don't want to lose half an hour fiddling at the keyhole every time I come into my own home!

ROCCO. (*He crosses Right to above table.*) I didn't do it on purpose. (*He takes his key from his pocket and gives it to PEPPINO. He takes key from PEPPINO.*)

PEPPINO. It isn't the first time it has happened. (*He examines the key.*) This isn't mine either! This is the key we had made for my sister the first time she lost the last one.

(*Rocco and PEPPINO exchange keys again. ROSA takes meat off platter and hides it Upstage of pot. Holds lid in one hand while covering meat with cloth. ROSA fans fire.*)

Rocco. Then Aunt Meme must have taken yours by mistake when she went out—and I must have taken hers.

PEPPINO. (*He rises, crosses Right with papers, puts them in briefcase.*) Everybody takes everybody's else's things—nobody takes his own! Keys, matches, toothpaste, soap! There is no respect for personal property any more! (*Calls.*) Virgi! Virginia! (*Takes clock off wall. He crosses Left below table.*) When my sister comes home, would you ask her for my key and then bring it to me?

VIRGINIA. Very well.

ROSA. You could ask her yourself.

PEPPINO. And listen to her talk about her dead husband for half an hour? Thank you, no.

ROSA. It's good that she remembers him.

PEPPINO. She talked the poor man into his grave—at least let him lie there in peace now. (*He opens Upstage Left door and is about to go out.*)

ROCCO. (*He crosses to PEPPINO.*) Papa, why don't you come and see me on the Via Calabritto on Monday?

PEPPINO. Why don't I come and do what?

ROCCO. The builders have nearly finished. By the end of next week I will have the decorators in. It will soon be time to fix an opening date for the shop. I thought you might be able to give me the benefit of your advice.

PEPPINO. The shop is built, the decorating is decided on, the opening date is almost fixed—and now you think you might benefit from my advice? (*ROSA stacks platter, lard drippings bowl, garlic bowl cup.*)

ROCCO. I thought you might like to drop by and see how things are going.

PEPPINO. Thank you. I'll see how things are going when I come to the opening. (*He goes out, Up Left carrying the clock.*)

Rocco. If we stand on our own two feet we're wrong, if we have ideas of our own it is wrong, and we're wrong if we run to him all the time! (*He crosses Right above table.*) When I open the shop he won't even come. If he had his way I'd spend the rest of my life behind the counter of his museum in Rettifilo. (*Rosa stirs pots, fans fires.*) "I'll see how it goes on the opening!" He'll see how it's going in six months when everybody in Naples is coming to me. And that place of his is even more run down than it is now! (*Sits Right of table.*)

ROSA. You mind the way you speak about your father—or you'll feel my hand across your face!

Rocco. Mama—I'm grown up. I have hands too.

ROSA. (*She crosses to Left end of table.*) What was that? What did you say?

Rocco. It was only a joke.

ROSA. I don't like those kind of jokes. "Mama, I have hands too." I know you have hands. I gave you hands. (*Rocco rises and moves below table to ROSA.*) To work, as your father has worked all his life. If you are too clever for your father, you are too clever for your mother too.

Rocco. Mama, please . . .

ROSA. (*She slaps his hands.*) Take your hands, Rocco, and use them to open the door. (*She crosses Left to stove.*)

Rocco. Don't you want me to say I'm sorry?

ROSA. (*She crosses Right to table.*) Rocco, I want you to go!

Rocco. But mama . . .

ROSA. Now, get out! Or I'll hit you with a plate. (*She has snatched up several plates from the table and is holding them threateningly.*)

Rocco. Mama, this is going too far!

FEDERICO. (*He rises, grabs plates.*) Signora Rosa, Rocco didn't really mean what he said.

ROSA. Perhaps not. But Rocco knows that *I* always mean what I say. (*She crosses Left to stove. FEDERICO puts plates on table as ROSA crosses Left.*)

ROCCO. (*He crosses above table.*) Federico, it would be better for all concerned if I go.

ROSA. Better for who?

ROCCO. For me! Better for me, Mama, I am agreeing with you! Federi, do you want to stay and wait to see Giulianella?

FEDERICO. (*Rises.*) You're really going to go?

ROSA. Yes, Federi, he's really going to go! (*Rocco crosses to door.*)

FEDERICO. I'd like to wait and speak to Giulianella, if that's all right. I would just like to give her my own point of view.

ROSA. That's all right, Federi, you can wait.

ROCCO. Federi, I'll be seeing you.

FEDERICO. (*He crosses to Rocco.*) Rocco. Won't you stay and speak to Giulianella too . . . please. (*VIRGINIA starts cleaning Right end of table.*)

ROCCO. Do you think I don't know my own mother? If I stay she will hit me with that plate!

ROSA. A good thing you realise that!

ROCCO. I'll see you later. Ciao, Federi!

FEDERICO. Ciao, Rocco! (*He hangs jacket on peg Right of door. Rocco goes out Up Left. A pause, then.*)

ROSA. (*She crosses Right, sits Left of table.*) And what has Giulianella been up to this time?

FEDERICO. (*He comes Downstage.*) She wants to go on television.

VIRGINIA. Television . . . (*She stops cleaning table, leans on table to listen.*)

ROSA. (*She cuts ham.*) That's my sister-in-law to blame! Aunt Meme runs everybody's life. Television! She knows someone who knows someone who knows someone who *might* give Giulianella an audition.

FEDERICO. Why can't Aunt Meme mind her own business? (*VIRGINIA crosses up to sink.*)

ROSA. Because, poor woman, since her husband died she has had no business of her own to mind. Besides, she thinks girls of today should work, do things, occupy themselves, and she is their best example. You've no idea of that woman's energy. She drove her poor husband to his grave, always treating him for this and that, diagnosing all his illnesses. If she hadn't told him that he was suffering from them, he might never have known. And now she brings up her son in the same way.

ANTONIO. Virgi—where's Virginia? (*He enters Up Left carrying a hat, FEDERICO goes Right above table.*)

VIRGINIA. Here!

ANTONIO. It's dark in here. (*Switches light on at Right of door.*) Put a shovelful of coal in the stove.

VIRGINIA. Signora? (*ANTONIO crosses to above table.*)

ROSA. Papa, I'm trying to finish tomorrow's ragu. If I have to have you under my feet, I shall never finish tonight.

ANTONIO. Five minutes, that's all. (*To VIRGINIA.*) Put a shovelful of coal in the stove.

VIRGINIA. Signora?

ROSA. Oh, put a shovelful of coal wherever he wants one. (*To ANTONIO.*) Is that Peppino's hat? (*VIRGINIA crosses Left below table to stove.*)

ANTONIO. (*Awkwardly.*) He asked me—himself. "Give it a stretch," he asked me. Besides, I like to sit a few minutes by the fire.

FEDERICO. Don Antonio, how are you? (*VIRGINIA gets two shovels from coal bucket. Gets hot coals from Upstage burner.*)

ANTONIO. Fine, fine! How are you? (*To ROSA.*) Who is he?

FEDERICO. It's me. Federico Sirretta.

ANTONIO. (*To ROSA.*) Has he come to fix the geyser

in the bathroom? (VIRGINIA crosses Right below table with coals to Right stove.)

ROSA. Papa, he's a friend of Rocco's!

ANTONIO. There's no need to shout at me, Rosa. These days you talk to me as if you had a lemon in your mouth.

ROSA. (She rises, takes bowl of tomato puree and goes to stove, puts puree Down Center of Downstage burner.) Because you refuse to understand a single word that's said to you!

ANTONIO. (He crosses Right, puts hat on Right table. FEDERICO counters Left.) Quite right, quite right! I agree with every word you say!

ROSA. (She crosses to Up Left door.) Virgi, I need you in the dining room.

ANTONIO. Where is the fan?

VIRGINIA. (She crosses Left below table. Puts shovels back in coal bucket. Gives ANTONIO fan.) Coming.

ROSA. You'll have to excuse me, Federico.

FEDERICO. Of course, Donna Rosa.

(ROSA goes out Up Left. VIRGINIA crosses to the stove followed by ANTONIO. She gives him a straw fan and then exits Up Left.)

ANTONIO. (Aping ROSA.) "You refuse to understand a single word that is said to you." That's the way she speaks to me. (Tastes ragu sauce.) They all do. They are waiting for me to go.

FEDERICO. That's a poor way to joke, Don Antonio.

ANTONIO. It's a good joke. Because the joke is on them. Because I am not going to die. (He crosses to Up Left door.) As long as I have my health and my hands and I know how to use them . . . Pass me that hat block.

FEDERICO. (He looks at Right wall.) Which one?

ANTONIO. There—the one on the right. Not that one—the one next to it.

FEDERICO. (*Bringing the hat block from the shelf to Center table.*) Here you are.

ANTONIO. Thank you. (*Handing FEDERICO the fan.*) Would you blow a little. (*FEDERICO fans the hat block.*) There— (*Points to Right stove. FEDERICO crosses Right to stove, ANTONIO crosses Right to work table carrying hat block. Puts it on stool, puts hat on block.*) gently . . . So . . . “You refuse to understand a single word that is said to you!” Is that the way to speak to a man who has worked all his life? (*Unveiling the table.*) This table could tell some stories! (*Pointing to the hat blocks on the shelf.*) And what about those? Eh? What could they tell you of the labours of Don Antonio Piscopo!

FEDERICO. (*He ties ANTONIO's apron.*) Rocco says that you started out with nothing? Is it true?

ANTONIO. (*Fondly.*) Little Rocco takes after me. He's the only one in this family who knows what he wants.

FEDERICO. He's always talking about you.

ANTONIO. Because he's *like* me. He has his grandfather's head on his shoulders, has Rocco. A business-man's head. (*He picks up pan from bottom shelf of table and goes to sink.*) Listen, when Rocco opens his own shop in Via Calabritto, he'll surprise everybody. Like I did, when I first opened the shop in Rettifilo.

FEDERICO. Don Peppino's shop?

ANTONIO. (*Turns on water.*) The same. After ten years I had turned it into a store with two entrances with swing doors and four big glass windows. Across the four windows in curling gold letters it said: “Piscopo Antonio—Hat Maker.” Peppino worked for me then before he married my Rosa. (*He turns off water, brings pan to table.*) He was my manager and then I made him a partner and we became “Piscopo and Priore Hatmakers & Gentlemen's Outfitters,” because Peppino didn't think there was any future left in hats alone. (*Crosses to Right table. Pointing to*

shelf of hat blocks.) And that's all that is left of the business I began in Banchi Nuovi sixty years ago. And this was the same table I had then and there stands the same iron.

FEDERICO. (*He breaks Downstage.*) And all this time you have kept them as souvenirs?

ANTONIO. (*He picks up hat block and hat and puts them on his table.*) I kept them because I still use them—a man should never forget how to use his tools. If I wanted, I could always go back to hats again. (*He stretches hat, then brushes hat.*) There are men left who remember me as the best hatter in Napoli. Do you know what they used to call me? The King of the Boater.

FEDERICO. The Boater?

ANTONIO. The straw boater. (*He crosses to table with block and hat.*) In 1920 I launched the famous Piscopo Boater. (*He stretches hat again, then puts wet cloth around it.*) In 1925 I launched on the market the celebrated rag cap, which could be folded when not in use and placed in the pocket like a handkerchief.

FEDERICO. (*He follows ANTONIO.*) You were a great inventor, Don Antonio!

ANTONIO. (*Shaking his head.*) I was a fool to myself. (*He crosses to Right table, gets iron from stove and iron stand from his table.*) Men began to go about with their hats in their pockets. After a while they began to realize that they could go out without any hats at all. (*He returns to Center table.*)

FEDERICO. And that became the fashion?

ANTONIO. (*Irons hat.*) Fashions can change. Listen, I can change the fashion. I have not been well lately—but I feel I am getting better all the time, and when I do—then I shall open another shop of my own.

FEDERICO. Really?

ANTONIO. I shall launch onto the market the Jack-pot Hat.

FEDERICO. The Jackpot Hat? What does it do?

ANTONIO. It doesn't do anything. You put it on your head.

FEDERICO. What's new about that?

ANTONIO. The competition is new—with hats. Everything else in the shops today is competition: tooth-paste, cornflakes, win this, win that. I'm introducing a competition with the Jackpot Hat.

FEDERICO. (*He crosses to Left of ANTONIO.*) What do you have to do? How do I win?

ROSA. (*Off.*) Virgi, be careful—you try to carry too many and you'll break them.

(ANTONIO *crosses Right with hat block and hat.*)

FEDERICO *crosses Right, puts water pan on bottom shelf and iron and iron stand on top of table. Then he crosses to sink and leaves fan on Right on sink. FEDERICO holds Up Left.*)

ANTONIO. I'll tell you another time—if I mention it in front of my daughter she says I am going crazy. (*ROSA enters Up Left, followed by VIRGINIA who is carrying a pile of plates.*)

ROSA. (*Indicating the sink.*) Put them over there. And then you can bring down the serving dishes, the ones that are laid on the dining table.

VIRGINIA. (*She crosses to sink, leaves plates there.*) Very well.

GIULIANELLA. (*She enters Up Left carrying a shopping bag, a magazine and wears a shoulder strap bag over her shoulder. She goes to ROSA and gives her a kiss.*) Buona sera, mamma.

(*VIRGINIA exits Up Left. GIULIANELLA crosses Right to table, puts paper bag and magazine on Left end of table.*)

GIULIANELLA. Buona sera, mama. (*ROSA, grunts, by way of reply.*) It took me hours to find the right colours for dyeing that material—I had to go round every shop. I spent all of the five thousand lire that

Papa gave me yesterday. (*Pushes FEDERICO out of her way as GIULIANELLA crosses and kisses her grandfather then crosses to Left of table, sits.* AUNT MEME enters, accompanied by her son, ATTILIO, AUNT MEME is over sixty, but she carries her age well—in fact, she is inclined to ignore it. ATTILIO lives constantly under his mother's shadow—although he is thirty years old, he never ventures an opinion, or indeed a step, without first seeking his mother's advice. He stops a few paces from the door waiting for his mother to tell him what to do with the packages he is carrying.)

MEME. Buona sera, Tutti. (*Goes above table to Right of table, she puts purse, gloves and umbrella on table. ATTILIO holds inside door. They ad-lib greetings back to her.*)

ROSA. What did the doctor have to say this time, Attilio?

MEME. (*Referring to her son.*) He's not running a temperature—but he's still having trouble with his bowels. (*She sits Right of table.*)

ATTILIO. (*Slowly—emphasizing every word.*) Yes, yes, I have to wrap up well. I have to keep warm.

MEME. What are you standing there for—put them down. (*ATTILIO looks around for somewhere to lay his parcels. Puts them on the floor.*) On the table. (*ATTILIO picks up bags and crosses Right to table and puts down the packages on the Right end of the table. PEPPINO enters Up Left, carrying the clock he took out with him. MEME takes off jacket and gives it to ATTILIO.*)

PEPPINO. It should keep perfect time, I've altered the regulator. (*ATTILIO takes bottles and cotton from bag.*) Donna Meme, would you do me a great personal favour? Please? When you go out of the house would you try to make sure that you take your own key—not mine? (*PEPPINO crosses Right below table. ANTONIO puts hat behind his back.*)

MEME. Don Peppino, you were the first one to leave this morning—if there was any wrong key-taking, it

must have been you who took mine! (*Rosa puts tomato puree into pot.*)

PEPPINO. (*He hangs clock on Down Right wall.*) As always—twist everything round to suit your own argument! (*ANTONIO hangs hat on peg Right of door. Exits Up Left door wearing apron.*)

MEME. All right, if it makes you happy— I took your key. I didn't do it on purpose.

PEPPINO. (*Takes few steps Left.*) I'm not saying you did. All I'm asking is, in future, you examine the key closely before you pick it up.

MEME. Are you saying now that I've got bad eyesight?

ATTILIO. (*He goes Right to PEPPINO.*) Mamma darns my socks without having to put her glasses on. (*ROSA crosses Right to sink, gets fan, goes back to stove.*)

PEPPINO. What did the doctor tell you today?

ATTILIO. I have to take things easily— I'm suffering from— What am I suffering from, Mamma? (*He goes back to MEME.*)

MEME. Don't worry. Whatever it is, we're going to get rid of it. (*Examining the labels on the boxes and bottles, holding them at arms length in order to read them.*) A tablespoon of this after every meal; and these ones are to be swallowed every four hours through the day. (*She gives bottles to ATTILIO who puts them back in shopping bag. Everything is back in bag except cotton and vials.*) And these are your injections. Go to your room and get yourself ready. I'll be in as soon as I've boiled the water. (*She gives ATTILIO her purse.*)

ATTILIO. (*He picks up packages.*) The doctor said the injections might hurt a little.

MEME. Injections always hurt a little.

ATTILIO. (*Kisses MEME on cheek.*) Mama, try to be careful. (*He goes out Up Right with MEME's jacket, gloves, purse and two shopping bags.*)

MEME. (*To ROSA.*) Where did I put my syringes?

(She rises, takes vials, leaves cotton on table. ROSA indicates drawer Left of sink. MEME gets syringe box and white cloth, goes to Downstage end of stove.)

PEPPINO. You'll see him off like you did your husband.

MEME. My husband suffered from arterio-sclerosis . . . in addition to diabetes. Not to mention prostates. Nobody knows what I went through. I had to force every teaspoon of medicine down his throat. I had to hold him down to give him his injections. In the last months he didn't even know what he was saying. He was in his second childhood. *(ROSA gets three soup bowls and four plates. Sets them on table.)*

PEPPINO. Donna Meme, you drove him to his second childhood.

MEME. *(She crosses Right below table for cotton.)* Giulianella, did you find the right colors? *(She crosses Left back to stove, she puts cotton rear of stove, she spreads white cloth Downstage end for needles.)*

ROSA. More expense that wasn't necessary.

GIULIANELLA. No, it isn't!

ROSA. You've bought twice as much dye as you need. You've never dyed material in all your life—it isn't easy—it takes practice.

GIULIANELLA. I'm going to practice with Mariolina. That's why I bought so much.

ROSA. Go on. It's your own time you're wasting. *(She gets silverware from Right table drawer and sets it.)*

GIULIANELLA. It's always the same in this house. Anyone who wants to do something worthwhile is time-wasting.

MEME. I agree with Giulianella.

ROSA. You're the one who put all these ideas into her head in the first place.

MEME. What's wrong with her wanting to be someone?

ROSA. She's engaged to Federico—shouldn't he have some say in the matter?

MEME. She's engaged to a blockhead. And I would say that to his face if he were standing in this room!

FEDERICO. (*He comes out of corner.*) I am standing in the room, Aunt Meme. (*ROSA crosses Left to stove, gets soup, returns to table.*)

MEME. You're a blockhead! Only a blockhead would hide himself away in a corner and not say a word.

FEDERICO. Grazie!

MEME. Giulianella's the only child in the house with an ounce of intelligence.

PEPPINO. Thank you. (*ROSA dips up soup.*)

FEDERICO. (*He comes Downstage.*) What about Rocco? He is opening a new shop in Via Calabritto. (*PEPPINO goes to Right of table, sits.*)

MEME. Rocco can open a hundred shops, wherever he likes. Rocco was born ignorant, like his father. (*She fills syringe from vial.*)

PEPPINO. Who's ignorant!

MEME. You know you are ignorant. You even spell 'intelligent' with two 'g's! (*ROSA gets glasses from drain board sink. Puts them on table.*)

PEPPINO. You don't need an university degree to sell shirts, socks and ties.

MEME. Life, Peppino, does not begin and end with the retail trade.

PEPPINO. What makes you think that you know so much anyway?

MEME. (*She stands above GIULIANELLA.*) I don't. But at least I read. Books, magazines. I try to keep up with the news. Giulianella wants a career— (*To FEDERICO.*) you ought to be proud of her. (*She returns to stove. ROSA gets bread and cheese from cupboard under sink.*)

FEDERICO. (*He crosses Left above table.*) Excuse me, but I was brought up to believe that it was the man's

job to provide for his family. (*ROSA gets cheese grater from drawer Left of stove.*)

MEME. (*She crosses Right waving syringe, backs FEDERICO Right.*) "The man's job!" What you deserve is a wife who doesn't want to think. A wife who grabs the first man she sees and says to herself, "Thank heavens, I've found a blockhead for a husband who will provide for me." I am old enough to be your mother, but you and your ideas come from an age that was dead and buried when I was a girl. (*She grabs her coat from under PEPPINO on the Left chair and exits Up Right. FEDERICO follows MEME Up Right.*)

PEPPINO. (*To FEDERICO.*) You shouldn't argue with her; it only makes her worse. She knows it all and the rest of us are ignorant . . . with to 'g's. (*To ROSA.*) Where's the wine? (*ROSA points to the stove. PEPPINO rises and goes Left, above the table, to the stove. FEDERICO crosses Downstage, moves Right chair away from table. ROSA moves ham plate to the Right, she finishes cutting it into small pieces.*)

FEDERICO. Giulianella, you're going to listen to me . . . (*GIULIANELLA picks up magazine, holds it high so she can't see FEDERICO.*) and not that aunt of yours! This morning you walked off and left me standing in the street, just because I happened to say that I didn't like the idea of you going on TV. (*PEPPINO crosses to above table.*) Your brother's on my side; he agrees with me. Ask your parents—ask them if I'm right or wrong, ask them if you ought to listen to me. Giulianella, after we're married, we'll discuss everything together before we decide anything. (*ROSA tries to lower the magazine GIULIANELLA is holding.*) But the final decision must rest with me, as the man. Otherwise, what kind of a husband would I be? (*To the others.*) I'm right, aren't I?

PEPPINO. Do you mind? You're spitting in my soup. (*FEDERICO backs Right, PEPPINO sits, FEDERICO crosses Left above table.*)

FEDERICO. (*To GIULIANELLA.*) As it happens, the television business has solved itself. I've got a friend who works in the TV studios. I got him to look up the results of your test. You failed. (*Taking out a scrap of paper.*) Here's a copy. "Giulianella Priore. Unphotogenic. No perceptible talent." Read it yourself. (*He puts note on table, then backs Left. GIULIANELLA is shaken by the news but controls herself and replies with apparent calmness. GIULIANELLA puts her magazine on top of note.*)

GIULIANELLA. It was only a test. I failed. That's what tests are for—to find out whether or not one is suited to something. It's like getting engaged—that's a test to find out whether or not two people are suited to be married. (*She rises, crosses Right below table.*) Bad luck, Federico, because our test has failed. You're free to go wherever you want.

FEDERICO. You don't mean that, Giulianella!

GIULIANELLA. (*She crosses Left above table, puts dye samples and envelopes in bag.*) How long have you known me, Federico? Don't you know yet that I mean what I say? Mamma, I'm going to see Mariolina to practise dyeing the material. (*Picks up magazine, purse and jacket.*)

ROSA. Do you have to do it now?

GIULIANELLA. (*She crosses Up to door.*) I'm also going up because this room stinks of onions and it's given me a migraine. Good evening. (*Opens door a little.*)

FEDERICO. (*He crosses Up to door.*) Look at me, Giulianella, before you go! These tears in my eyes are not just because of the onions! (*GIULIANELLA goes out. Opens door wider to exit and hits FEDERICO'S nose. A pause. FEDERICO tries to pull himself together.*) Did you hear that? Arrivaderci!

ROSA. Federi, you're not going to go?

FEDERICO. A moment ago I felt like one of the family—now I feel like a total stranger.

ROSA. How do you think she feels? I know her. (*She clears GIULIANELLA'S plate, soup bowl and silverware to sink and also clears her own.*) She's walked out of the room and right away she's regretted her words. She's gone up to Mariolina's. Go up to her.

FEDERICO. She doesn't change her mind that quickly, not Giulianella. (*To PEPPINO.*) Isn't that so, Cavaliere? (*ROSA takes PEPPINO'S plate and soup bowl when he looks Right.*)

PEPPINO. Don't drag me into it. I don't want anything to do with Giulianella, or Aunt Meme.

(*FEDERICO crosses Down Left, sits below stove.*)

RAFFAELE, PEPPINO'S brother, enters. *He is carrying a Pulcinella costume. ROSA puts grater back in Right sink drawer.*)

RAFFAELE. Donna Rosa, I wonder, would you mind—just a quick runover with the iron? (*Putting the costume down on chair Left of table.*) I'll leave it here.

ROSA. (*She takes GIULIANELLA'S and her glasses to sink.*) Don Rafe, you and that Pulcinella costume! Whenever, you have a show on a Sunday I don't get a minute's peace from the Monday before—you pester my life. The red shirt, your tights, your costume has to be washed and ironed . . .

RAFFAELE. It isn't every Sunday.

ROSA. (*She crosses Left with soup pot and plate of chopped ham. Puts ham in pot.*) Thank God for that, or you'd wear my fingers to the bone!

PEPPINO. I don't know why you waste your time. (*ROSA takes empty ham plate to sink, returns to stove.*)

RAFFAELE. (*He crosses Right.*) Do you think I enjoy it? Do you think I wouldn't like to give it up—if only my colleagues at the dramatic society would let me? "Who else could do it?" They say. "Who do we have to play the part of Pulcinella?" "It's you the public come to see."

PEPPINO. Who?

RAFFAELE. Me! Who am I to argue? Do you want to hear what the critics said about me three months ago? I might have the clippings with me. Do you want to hear?

PEPPINO. No.

RAFFAELE. No?

PEPPINO. No!

RAFFAELE. No! A nice brother! (*He goes to door.*)

FEDERICO. (*He rises.*) I think it's time I was going too.

ROSA. No, Federi—you stay just a little while.

(LUIGI and ELENA IANIELLO enter as RAFFAELE opens the door wider to leave. LUIGI carries a paper shopping bag. VIRGINIA follows them in and holds in door.)

LUIGI. The great actor! The greatest Pulcinella in Napoli, everyone says so! (*ROSA wipes hands on her apron ad lib greetings.*)

RAFFAELE. No, no—the greatest in the world!

LUIGI. Buona sera!

ROSA. Buona sera, Don Luigi.

RAFFAELE. (*He brings ELENA Downstage. LUIGI crosses to ROSA after RAFFAELE and ELENA break Downstage.*) Signora Elena, you are even more beautiful today than you were yesterday—what will you be like tomorrow?

ELENA. You're always trying to flatter me!

LUIGI. (*He crosses Right above table offers his hand.*) Don Peppino—how are you?

PEPPINO. (*Coldly. Does not shake hands.*) Well. And you?

RAFFAELE. Signora Elena, would I lie to you?

ELENA. Yes!

RAFFAELE. (*He takes ELENA by the hand and seats her Left of table.*) Look at you now. You have the figure of a great actress, isn't it so? Look at us all!

Together we could form our own Neapolitan Theatre Company. Signora Elena, the starring role; Donna Rosa, the noble mother; Federico, the lover . . .

PEPPINO. (*He rises, takes wine bottle and his glass to sink.*) That's a good part for our accountant.

LUIGI. Yes, of course. (*VIRGINIA crosses to stove. Gets oil, takes it to sink.*)

RAFFAELE. And my brother, Peppino, he would play all the supporting roles. (*He gets his costumes from ELENA'S chair and puts them on Up Left chair.*)

LUIGI. We will see you tomorrow. Donna Rosa has invited us to Sunday ragu. (*PEPPINO returns to his chair and sits.*)

RAFFAELE. Then I wait impatiently for tomorrow. (*At the Up Left door.*) What?

PEPPINO. What?

RAFFAELE. What?

PEPPINO. What?

RAFFAELE. Did you speak?

PEPPINO. No.

RAFFAELE. Didn't someone ask about my rehearsal?

PEPPINO. No.

RAFFAELE. I thought you were asking about the work we were doing.

PEPPINO. No.

RAFFAELE. Do you want to know?

PEPPINO. No.

ROSA. (*Going to door.*) Buona sera. (*Pushing him out.*)

RAFFAELE. (*As he exits.*) Buona sera.

LUIGI. (*To ROSA, displaying a package he has brought with him.*) Now, try and guess what I have in here. (*To his wife. ROSA comes to LUIGI'S Left.*) And you keep out of it. No clues. Three tries.

ROSA. I have no idea.

LUIGI. Think! We were discussing Neapolitan dishes. And I mentioned this particular one. And then you

said, "I'm very fond of those, but I haven't tasted them in years."

ROSA. We talked about so many things.

ELENA. Tell her, Luigi. This is how you are—aggravating! Why should Donna Rosa have to put up with you?

LUIGI. (*He turns to PEPPINO.*) Would you like to try? (*VIRGINIA dries silverware used for soup, puts them on area Left of sink.*)

PEPPINO. Why should I have to put up with you? Besides I'm going out.

LUIGI. When you hear what I've brought, you'll want to stay at home!

ELENA. Tell them, Luigi! It's some of the calamari that Donna Rosa likes so much.

ROSA. Not the ones that you do with capers and olives?

LUIGI. (*He takes packages out of bag as he speaks of them.*) The same. The ones that make your mouth water. I've brought the capers— (*Ad lib: Ah.*) and the olives— (*Ad lib: Ah.*) and the pine nuts. (*Ad lib: Ah.*) And I'm going to cook them, everybody else—keep away. (*Taking off his jacket. Puts it on Up Center chair and puts chair to the Left end of table.*) An apron, Donna Rosa.

ROSA. (*Handing him an apron from wall Left of sink.*) Let me stand near you, I want to watch.

VIRGINIA. She wants to see that you don't make a mess of it.

LUIGI. (*Without rancour.*) You be quiet. You can be the maid.

VIRGINIA. (*Brightly.*) I am the maid. (*She gets oil and plate of garlic.*)

LUIGI. Pass me the oil then and I need three cloves of garlic and a sprig of parsley. I brought my own pot with me. (*He produces the pot from his package.*)

ROSA. A special calamari pot as well?

LUIGI. Do you know how to cook calamari without

a proper calamari pot? We went to every shop in Napoli looking for the right one. (*Puts pot on table.*) And . . . (*VIRGINIA brings sprig of parsley. He sniffs at his ingredients.*) Straight from the sea! (*Ad lib.: Oh! Oh!.*) Like putting your nose in a rockpool. (*He crosses Right to PEPPINO, thrusting the package under PEPPINO'S nose.*) Smell! (*ROSA picks up pot.*)

PEPPINO. They're fresh, I suppose.

LUIGI. Fresh? They're alive! (*He crosses Left above table, he takes the earthenware pot from ROSA and displays it all round.*) I rinsed it in sea-water and then wiped it dry—my grandmother taught me everything I know! (*He picks up the oil bottle and is about to tip some into the pot when ROSA restrains him.*)

ROSA. (*She grabs pot.*) That's earthenware. You can't put earthenware straight from the shop onto the fire. (*Taking over.*) It needs to be rubbed with garlic first, or in three days it will crack straight through. What kind of a grandmother did you have?

ELENA. (*To LUIGI.*) Who is supposed to be teaching who?

LUIGI. We are never too old to learn. (*VIRGINIA crosses to stove.*)

ELENA. (*She rises and moves Upstage.*) I think I can safely leave you to it. I shall be upstairs.

LUIGI. (*He crosses Right and sits Right of table.*) I'll be up in ten minutes, no more. I'll just keep an eye on Donna Rosa first. (*ROSA puts package back in bag.*)

ELENA. (*To ROSA.*) Are we going to mass together tomorrow?

ROSA. (*She goes to ELENA.*) I'm going to early mass. There's no need for you to get up.

ELENA. I want to see how you look in the turquoise cardigan.

ROSA. You're coming for dinner tomorrow, aren't you?

LUIGI. Of course we're coming for dinner. (*He turns*

to PEPPINO.) We've been looking forward to coming all week!

ROSA. Tomorrow, at dinner, I shall wear the cardigan.

LUIGI. I chose the cardigan, did she tell you?

ROSA. (*As if to say; what good taste.*) No!

ELENA. (*She crosses Right to LUIGI.*) I can trust him to shop for anything. He's got more patience than me. He not only buys the right things, he shops around until he finds the best price. (*VIRGINIA stirs ragu.*)

LUIGI. When it came to buying you a present, Donna Rosa, and she said, "I'd like to buy a cardigan for Donna Rosa." Ask her who remembered that you'd once said that turquoise was your favorite colour. Ask her.

PEPPINO. You.

LUIGI. Me.

PEPPINO. To talk to you is to make a record.

ROSA. (*She goes to sink.*) Because he's such a nice person? Because he remembers things about his friends? (*ELENA crosses Left, below table to Left of table.*)

LUIGI. (*He rises and goes Upstage.*) Not all my friends. But always to you, Donna Rosa. For you, I would throw myself in the flames because you are the perfect woman. (*He crosses Down to PEPPINO.*) If there is a person on this earth I envy, it is your husband . . .

ELENA. What what what . . . ?

LUIGI. Forgive me, my dear Elena. You too have many great qualities but Donna Rosa is the perfect wife. (*He goes Up Right.*)

PEPPINO. (*He goes Right, for his coat.*) Excuse me, I have to go out.

LUIGI. Are you going?

PEPPINO. I can't stand the stink of the calamari.

LUIGI. The fresh tang of the sea—you call that a stink?

PEPPINO. It's also very close in this room.

LUIGI. (*He crosses Down Right to PEPPINO.*) I was hoping to talk you into a few hands of cards—like last week. This week I'll give you four points start.

PEPPINO. My dear Accountant, you mean well, you are a nice, dear man—but there is a time for games and idle banter and this is not one of those moments. But you don't realize that. You don't realize when a man is in a mood for a joke and when he wants to be left alone.

ELENA. Forgive me, but you didn't ask to be left alone.

PEPPINO. Forgive me, Signora Elena, but I'm asking now.

ROSA. (*Embarrassed.*) Peppino!

ELENA. (*She crosses up to door.*) Then we'll go. And as for tomorrow, we'll see if your mood has changed.

ROSA. (*She crosses to ELENA.*) I'm sorry. (*LUIGI takes off apron, puts it on chair above table, puts on his jacket.*)

ELENA. Not at all. My husband always goes a little too far . . .

LUIGI. (*He crosses to ROSA.*) It's true! It is I who should apologize.

ROSA. No, no, no! He has so many worries—the shop—business worries, you know. (*ELENA opens door.*)

LUIGI. (*He crosses to above table.*) We were going anyway. The calamari can be safely left to Donna Rosa. (*He crosses to ROSA, gives her shopping bag. Goes back for calamari pot. ROSA puts bag down on floor Upstage of stove. To ROSA.*) A low flame, you understand? Over a gentle heat until they boil, and then left to simmer. (*He gives ROSA calamari pot.*)

ROSA. I'll see you out.

ELENA. No—no.

ROSA. Virgi, we'll see you tomorrow . . .

(*VIRGINIA shows the IANNIELLOS out: ROSA looks towards PEPPINO, but his back is still turned im-*

placably on her. A moment's pause, then Rosa closes door.)

FEDERICO. (*Stands.*) I really think I ought to be going too. What do you think, Donna Rosa?

ROSA. (*Out of patience.*) Federi, you must decide. We have our own affairs to worry about!

FEDERICO. (*He crosses Up Left and gets his jacket. Shaken by this brusque statement.*) I'll go.

ROSA. (*She takes white cloth, MEME Left on Downstage of stove to Left sink drawer.*) May the Madonna go with you.

FEDERICO. I won't come for dinner tomorrow. I can't eat at home either, because I've already told my mother that I'm having dinner with you. I'll go somewhere else.

ROSA. (*She takes apron from chair above table and hangs it up Left of sink.*) Do what you think is best. (*She returns to table, gets oil, takes it to stove and puts it on Downstage area.*)

FEDERICO. What do you think, Donna Rosa? Should I stand in front of the church tomorrow? And see if Giulianella speaks to me?

ROSA. A good idea. Go and stand with the other beggars, asking for pity!

FEDERICO. Buona sera. (*He goes out.*)

PEPPINO. There was no need to speak to the boy like that.

ROSA. (*She crosses to Center table.*) Listen to that! All of a sudden the Cavaliere Priore has discovered he has a kind heart. (*She takes garlic plate and parsley to sink.*) After the way you behaved to the Ianniello's a moment ago.

PEPPINO. The way I behaved! What about you, carrying on like that in front of everybody.

ROSA. What do you mean, "carrying on like that?"

PEPPINO. You know.

ROSA. (*She picks up silverware—Left of sink.*) No, I don't know.

PEPPINO. Yes you do!

ROSA. No! No, I don't! So tell me! I only know that whatever I do in this house I am doing for nothing—for nobody! (*With rising hysteria, puts silverware in Right drawer, slams it.*) Do you know what *that* means, Don Peppino? I don't want to spend my life fighting—fighting with my children, fighting with the rest of my family—I don't want to have to do that any more! (*She crosses Left to stove.*)

VIRGINIA. (*She leaves Up Left door open having returned to the kitchen earlier in this discussion, now intervenes.*) Donna Rosa . . .

ROSA. You shut up. You are not even family, to interfere! (*She crosses Right to above table.*)

MEME. (*She enters Up Right and crosses to table.*) What's happened?

ROSA. (*Slamming her open hand on the table.*) Here! Here! All my life here in this room doing everything for everybody—a slave! No thanks from anybody. (*She takes plates from table to sink.*)

PEPPINO. Nobody asked you to do it!

ROSA. Did you hear that? "Nobody asked you to do it!"

MEME. Donna Rosa, tell me what happened first?

ROSA. (*She puts plates back on table.*) What always happens? Me. Getting the meal ready for tomorrow. (*She crosses to stove.*)

PEPPINO. We just happened to upset the Ianniellos.

ROSA. (*She takes lid off ragu pot, puts it on loudly, throws spoon on stove.*) You can chop off my hands if I ever set foot in this kitchen again. My daughter cannot stand the stink of onions. My husband cannot bear the stink of calamari. (*Rosa takes off apron and throws it on Left chair.*) Well, if my kitchen is not good enough for them, why should it be good enough for me? If they cannot stand the stink of my kitchen,

they should keep out. (*She leaves the kitchen by the Up Left door. From Offstage.*) My husband—in this house he doesn't exist! He goes to his shop, his so-called business—and ruins it. (*We hear a door slam Off Right.*)

PEPPINO. Do you hear that, Amelia? (*He crosses below table to Up Left door.*) Do you hear what a viper she's become? She's given up caring. I'm the last to count in this house. It's not just the kitchen, it's the whole apartment. (*He crosses Down Right below table.*) It's not like living in a home, it's like serving a prison sentence. I'm sorry, but I am not a convict. (*He crosses to Up Left door.*) I won't be here for Sunday dinner. I'm going to the country where I can breathe fresh and clean air. Don Peppino Priore is too well known, too respected to be ridiculed. I am not going to be made to look a fool in my own house! (*He takes his hat from a peg on the wall, Left of the sink, and puts it on. It falls down over his ears.*) This is not my hat! (*He takes it off and examines it.*) It is my hat! (*He puts it on again and realizes what has happened.*) He should not be allowed to touch hats! Her father is ruining every hat I own! (*He puts hat on, moves toward the Up Left door.*)

MEME. (*She crosses to PEPPINO.*) Peppi, don't go.

PEPPINO. If I stay in tonight, Amelia, I will not be responsible for my actions. (*He goes out Up Left.*)

MEME. (*She comes to table. To VIRGINIA.*) What was all that about? (*VIRGINIA shrugs, gets cloth from sink and cleans the table with a dish cloth.*) Something's going on with the Ianniello's. You know, but you don't want to tell me.

VIRGINIA. No, Signore, I don't know.

MEME. No?

VIRGINIA. No.

MEME. No!

VIRGINIA. No.

MEME. (*Pushes VIRGINIA aside.*) Virgi, you can go.

(Goes to the stove, opens Center stove drawer.) And if nobody wants to cook tomorrow, I shall do it myself.

VIRGINIA. (Takes off gloves, puts them on sink. Takes off towel tied around her dress and hangs it on pegs Right of the door.) Buona notte, Signore.

MEME. Buona notte. (VIRGINIA exits Up Left.) God, what a household! They behave like illiterate peasants. (She crosses to the light switch, Right of the Up Left door, and turns the light off.) They don't think, they don't read . . . (She exits Up Right.)

ROSA. (She enters Up Left. Subdued. She goes to the ragu on the stove and stirs it. She crosses to the cupboard under the sink and takes out a large white bowl. She puts it on the table. She returns to the sink, gets a tray of macaroni, brings it to the table and starts to break it into the bowl.) Nobody asked me to do it . . . nobody asked me to do it . . .

CURTAIN

ACT TWO

The dining room. A large oval dining table, laid for twelve persons, takes up most of the room. Silver cutlery shines on a spotless, tablecloth. A nineteenth century chandelier hangs down from the center of the ceiling, shining as brightly as the sun which streams in through a wide balcony. The scene of gracious living would be perfectly set—were it not for an old jacket and some wrapping paper thrown across one corner of the table. ANTONIO is trying on a new suit. He has a jacket half-draped across his shoulders, and a sample of the jacket material in his hand. CATIELLO, the tailor, is sticking pins in the jacket and marking suggested alterations with tailor's chalk.

ANTONIO. If I say something is wrong with the suit, you should listen to me!

CATIELLO. I came here on a Sunday, didn't I, to give you a fitting?

ANTONIO. That has got nothing to do with it. (*He picks up sample from arm of armchair.*) I am saying that the sample of material I chose— (*Displaying it.*) this one, does not match the cloth you have made up into a suit! (*He points, CATIELLO takes sleeve from table and puts it on ANTONIO'S extended arm.*) All you say is, that you came on a Sunday to give me a fitting.

CATIELLO. If it was Christmas or Easter, or any other holiday, you know me, I would still come.

ANTONIO. And that has still got nothing to do with it.

CATIELLO. (*He pins sleeve onto jacket.*) It proves that I'm giving you what you want—my best attentions. It's what you always get. You don't think that

if you chose a sample, I would make up a suit from a different material?

ANTONIO. You *have* done. Catie, here's the sample. Is this the jacket? Yes, it's the jacket. The same weight, the same cloth—but it's a different shade!

CATIELLO. You're imagining it.

ANTONIO. I don't imagine! I am not senile! I'll throw the jacket off the balcony! (*He crosses to balcony.*)

CATIELLO. Anto', did you leave the sample in your room, on the chest of drawers, beside the window—did you?

ANTONIO. I might have done.

CATIELLO. Ah . . . that's it! The sample has been faded by the sun, that's all. I would not *make* you a suit from a different material, Don Anto', you know me well enough to know that! I have made you a suit that is a masterpiece; I have made you a suit that makes *you* look like a work of art—is it likely that I would make it from the wrong material?

ANTONIO. (*He throws sample through Down Right door.*) I want the trousers wide at the bottoms, English style.

CATIELLO. You really want me to do that?

ANTONIO. Why not?

CATIELLO. You don't think it's a little . . . snob?

ANTONIO. I am the one who is going to wear it. (*He crosses to the open balcony door and examines himself.*)

CATIELLO. There is no need to look—the jacket will be perfect. I have stitched my heart into that jacket. I'll work on the final alterations, all the rest of the day, and you shall have the suit tomorrow—who can do more, Anto'? (*ANTONIO kisses CATIELLO.*)

(*ROSA carries plates and puts them on Right end of table. VIRGINIA carries paste bowls and puts them Up Right end of table. The two women busy themselves, finishing the laying of the table. MICHELE*

positions himself just inside the door, looking around suspiciously.)

ROSA. Virgi, put those on the table, and then fetch the napkins. (*VIRGINIA exits Up Right. ROSA spots a black wrapping cloth on the table.*) That's a fine place to leave a wrapping cloth! Doesn't anybody know it's bad luck to leave a black on a table? (*ROSA scoops up the offending wrapping cloth and tosses it across arm chair.*)

ANTONIO. (*He crosses Down Left.*) I'm having a fitting.

ROSA. (*She crosses Right above table.*) It's not a fitting room. Go to your own room. (*She sets glasses from Up Center of table for the Downstage settings.*)

CATIELLO. (*He straightens out black material.*) I wanted to go to his room, Donna Rosa. He has a full-length mirror in his wardrobe. But no, Don Antonio, must come in here.

ANTONIO. The balcony's through here. I want to keep an eye out for Rocco. (*VIRGINIA returns with the napkins, she puts one at each place setting.*)

CATIELLO. Anyway, I've finished. A few minor alterations, all marked. Have a look, Signora Rosa. (*ROSA starts setting six plates Right of table.*)

ANTONIO. (*Downstage, plaintively.*) But I don't want to take it off until Rocco has seen it. He knows about fashion. "Trousers wide at the bottom," he said. "And the big lapels." I said, "At my age?" "Listen," Rocco told me, "In London the older the gentleman is the younger the suit is." (*CATIELLO takes jacket off ANTONIO. PEPPINO has entered Up Left. He has overheard ANTONIO'S final sentences, but has not understood.*)

PEPPINO. What do they do in London? (*He crosses Right above table to Down Right arm chair.*)

ANTONIO. They mind their own business. (*Back to CATIELLO.*) And that's what I want, Catiello. And so

don't go until Rocco returns. (*He picks up hat from CATIELLO's arm chair.*)

VIRGINIA. (*At Left end of table.*) It's no use waiting for Rocco, Don Anto'. He was rude to his mother yesterday.

ROSA. Again this morning he walked out of the house without saying a word.

ANTONIO. He's got a mind of his own.

ROSA. (*She sets six other plates, going Left.*) Whatever he's got, he's not allowed to sit down with us today.

ANTONIO. (*His hat in Right hand. CATIELLO tries to get it.*) But it's Sunday! (*ANTONIO puts hat in left hand. CATIELLO tries to get it.*)

ROSA. Sunday or Monday, it makes no difference. He does not come in here today.

ANTONIO. (*He holds hat in front of him.*) He came into my room this morning and he did not say anything. He didn't want to upset me. (*Gesture Right with hat.*) And he kissed me four times. (*Hat in right hand.*) Twice here and— (*Hat in left hand.*) twice here. That's two times more than usual. Because he knew he would not be eating with me today. (*CATIELLO tries to grab hat from ANTONIO's left hand. ANTONIO puts hat over his knee, tries to stretch hat and returns it to CATIELLO.*) Now I have no time, next time you come I give it a stretch. (*ROSA sets Up Left glasses. VIRGINIA exits Up Right after finishing napkins.*)

CATIELLO. (*Fearing for the safety of his hat.*) Thank you.

ROSA. (*Setting more silverware at Right end of table.*) Papa, it's time you realized: Rocco has no respect for anyone.

ANTONIO. Rocco respects me.

ROSA. He *pretends* to respect you—so that he can get what he wants from you. He came in and kissed you four times this morning? Good for Rocco! He didn't come in to see me, his mother. Not even to see if I was alive or dead!

ANTONIO. (*He crosses Right above table.*) Why should he come to see you? He comes into your kitchen and you throw him out. He doesn't come, therefore he is ingrate. I'll tell you what's wrong with you Rosa. Arrogance. You are arrogant.

PEPPINO. This is what your father thinks of you!

ANTONIO. (*He crosses Down Right to PEPPINO.*) As for you, Peppino, your fault is jealousy. You are jealous of Rocco. (*VIRGINIA enters Up Right with bread and puts it on Left end of table, puts pasta bowls on all plates.*)

PEPPINO. Jealous. A nice accusation to make to a father!

ANTONIO. Jealous. Because Rocco is cleverer than you, because he has more common sense in his little finger than you have in your entire upstairs. (*He goes Upstage. ROSA sets silverware and places glasses at each Downstage setting.*)

PEPPINO. Why should Rocco go into business on his own when the shop at Rettifilo can provide work enough for us both?

ANTONIO. (*He crosses Up Left Center.*) The shop at Rettifilo is old-fashioned.

PEPPINO. (*He rises and goes Upstage.*) Excuse me. The shop at Rettifilo was old fashioned twenty-six years ago, when you put me in charge and I told you that men cannot live by hats alone. (*ROSA sets silverware Left end of table, VIRGINIA exits Up Right.*)

ANTONIO. All right! Well now it's Rocco's turn. Let him have a chance to be his own boss, and not a shop assistant all his life. I gave him the money to open the shop, and if he needs more he can have more. The money is mine to give—remember that. I can send you all begging if I choose to, and if I do it, there'll be no regrets on my part. You hurt me and I'll hurt you. (*He crosses Right above ROSA.*)

PEPPINO. What do you mean—"hurt you?"

ANTONIO. Through Rocco. Whatever you do to Rocco you do to me. And you do it on purpose. All my life

I have worked. My shop was there before you. (*He rattles pasta bowl on plate.*) And if today you are sure of a plate of macaroni, you have me to thank for it. (*He crosses to plate.*) I warn you. Leave Rocco alone. (*He crosses Left below table.*) I'm going to my room.

ROSA. Good!

ANTONIO. If Rocco isn't sitting at that table at two o'clock, then neither is Don Antonio Piscopo. (*He marches out Down Left, triumphant.*)

PEPPINO. Does that sound like the voice of reason to you? (*He crosses Left.*)

CATIELLO. What about me? If the suit isn't ready on time, he won't pay for it. If it is ready and Rocco doesn't like it, he still won't pay. If I wait for Rocco's approval, it won't be ready on time. It's a vicious circle. You wouldn't have any idea where I might find Rocco. (*He is wrapping up the suit. ROSA sets glasses Right end of table. VIRGINIA enters with two decanters, puts one each end of table.*)

PEPPINO. Don't ask me. Ask Donna Rosa.

ROSA. Donna Rosa neither knows nor cares. Virgi, come into the kitchen. We've still got the salad to wash. (*CATIELLO picks up the suit and goes out Up Left. MICHELE enters Up Right carrying bowl of flowers. VIRGINIA picks up large tray. ROSA crosses to MICHELE, takes flowers from him and sets them Center of table.*) What are you doing in here? (*To VIRGINIA.*) Virgi?

VIRGINIA. (*To MICHELE.*) I told you to stay in the ironing room.

ROSA. I said you could bring him here, but not if he's going to follow me everywhere like a stray dog!

MICHELE. I could wash the dishes! (*VIRGINIA exits Up Right with big tray.*)

ROSA. (*Goes to MICHELE.*) You can't wash the dishes 'til we've dirtied them. I'll call you. (*ROSA*

bustles out Up Left above MICHELE. MICHELE follows ROSA Up Right.)

PEPPINO. Are you Virginia's brother?

MICHELE. I am.

PEPPINO. And is this the way you dress when you go out to—er—meet people?

MICHELE. No, this is a beret I found in this house. Your sister said I could keep it. *(Pulls a cap from his back pocket.)* Here's my hat. *(He crosses Center.)*

PEPPINO. *(He crosses Down Center.)* May I see your head?

MICHELE. *(Returns cap to pocket.)* If you want. *(He takes off his beret, revealing a completely bald head.)*

PEPPINO. My God!

MICHELE. Laugh if you like. It's your home so I won't take offense.

PEPPINO. My dear Michele, there is nothing to laugh about. For me who knows your unhappiness, who knows your trouble, there is nothing to laugh about. Tell me . . . how do I say it . . . after you air your head in front of someone, do you feel better right away?

MICHELE. If I take off my cap and the man doesn't laugh, no, I don't feel better. *(Puts beret on.)* There's no resistance.

PEPPINO. But if it does come to a fight, do you lose all control?

MICHELE. The last one was taken into the hospital. Cerebral hemorrhage, three cracked ribs and a broken nose. He had a wife and three kids. When I heard about his family I was heart-broken— *(Off Left, we hear the door bell ringing.)* but at the time that it happened—

VIRGINIA. *(She enters from Up Right and rushes across the Stage above the table.)* The Ianniello's are here already. *(She goes out Up Left.)*

PEPPINO. Naturally the Ianniello's are the first to

arrive! (*A thought occurs to him and he smiles in anticipation.*) How do you feel at this moment?

PEPPINO. Do you feel like—letting off steam?

MICHELE. Like a boiler that's about to burst! I promised my sister I wouldn't cause trouble, but inside my head there's hammer beating. Boom . . . Boom . . . Don't ask me, signore!

PEPPINO. Whatever is inside you must come out. Don't hold it in because you're in my home. There's a man here, at this moment, and I wouldn't mind in the least if you exposed your head in front of him. To be honest, I'd appreciate it. (*He pushes MICHELE off Up Right.*) You go back in the ironing room and come in here with your cap down over your ears.

MICHELE. (*As he exits Up Right.*) It would do me good. Boom! Boom!

LUIGI. (*From Off Left.*) Happy Sunday to everyone. (*Off.*) Good morning! Thank you, Virginia!

VIRGINIA. (*Off Left.*) Shall I take that?

LUIGI. (*Off.*) No, no! I bought this for Donna Rosa, I have to put it in her own hand. (*LUIGI enters, carrying a carton of ice-cream: Cassata alla Siciliana. He is followed by ELENA, AUNT MEME, VIRGINIA and ATTILIO.*) Good morning, cavaliere!

PEPPINO. (*He and LUIGI meet Up Center.*) You sound very cheerful. (*They shake hands. MEME crosses to table, puts purse and fur stole on chair.*)

LUIGI. I am always happy on Sunday. Every Monday morning I start off the week looking forward to Sunday, I am happier as day follows day. (*PEPPINO crosses Left above LUIGI to ELENA. LUIGI counter cross.*)

ELENA. You seem in a better mood today.

PEPPINO. Yes, but I'll be even better tomorrow!

ELENA. Ah! Peppino and his moods.

LUIGI. Where's Donna Rosa?

PEPPINO. (*Suddenly petulant.*) In the kitchen, so please don't disturb her. (*ELENA goes Left to ATTILIO.*)

ATTILIO *takes off his hat. Then, attempting to recover himself.*) She's cooking your ragu.

LUIGI. *My ragu?* I shall have to disturb her—but only for a moment. I want to see how the calamari have turned out. *(Then, displaying his carton.)* And I want to give her this! *Cassata alla Siciliana.* It's one of her favorites.

MEME. *(She takes off hat, crosses Right below table, pokes hat with hat pin.)* Is all that for Donna Rosa? Nothing for us?

LUIGI. *(He puts cassata table Down Center.)* Chosen especially for her—but I don't mind if she shares it with the rest of us. I remembered her saying that it was her special favorite.

PEPPINO. So today you rushed out and bought some.

LUIGI. Of course. Do *you* like *cassata*?

PEPPINO. I can take it or leave it.

LUIGI. Excuse me, I must just see if the calamari is ready. *(He exits to kitchen singing: La Donna È Mobile.)*

ATTILIO. Mama, is it all right for me to eat cassata?

MEME. All right, if you don't eat too much. Hang your jacket up in your room—you won't need it at the table. And while you're up there, I'll give you your injection.

ATTILIO. You've already given me my injection.

MEME. You haven't taken your pills yet.

ATTILIO. I don't take my pills until after I've eaten my pasta.

MEME. I know there's something I ought to do for you that I've forgotten to do.

PEPPINO. Amputate his head. *(ELENA laughs.)*

MEME. *(Unmoved.)* You can tell what day it is, my brother's in his usual Sunday mood. Very funny! Come along, Atti'. Excuse me, Signora Elena. *(She goes out Up Left carrying fur, hat and purse.)*

ATTILIO. You always tease my mother, Uncle Peppi, but my mother is very good as a doctor. She cured my

poor papa until the last minute of his life. You wouldn't have known that you had a bad liver, if mama hadn't told you from your yellow eyes. Mama reads books, you know. She reads! (*With which, ATTILIO goes out Up Left in search of his mother.*)

ELENA. (*She rises, crosses to Up Center of table.*) Poor boy—I wonder if Aunt Meme really knows what she is doing?

PEPPINO. He was almost a bright boy once. He could have helped in the shop. She never let him grow up.

ELENA. I know. She smothered him with love.

PEPPINO. Exactly.

ELENA. Don Peppino, you must not let my husband upset you. I know he goes too far at times—it's how he is. He's so passionate about friendship he becomes a bore. But there is nothing, nothing he wouldn't do for your family. He thinks . . . I've noticed this . . . he thinks you no longer like him. (*ELENA sits.*) What has he done? (*PEPPINO is about to speak—and then, changing his mind, holds his silence overwhelmed with a deep sadness. ELENA moves closer to him, in an attempt to come to a deeper understanding.*)

PEPPINO. (*Evasively.*) Nothing—I don't know—I'm in this mood—it is the weather—

ELENA. Please, if my husband has done anything at all to hurt you—then tell me what it is.

PEPPINO. What is there to tell, when you know already?

ELENA. I don't! Believe me, Don Peppino, I have not the slightest idea!

PEPPINO. Then give me your hand—(*She gives him hand.*) and we'll pretend it is not happening. (*He crosses Left above table.*)

ELENA. But I still don't know what you're talking about!

LUIGI. (*Off.*) What happened here?

VIRGINIA. (*Off Up Right.*) It must have been an accident.

FINISH READING THIS SCRIPT

Visit our website to purchase the full script or to explore other titles.

www.samuelfrench.com

www.samuelfrench.co.uk

To stay up to date on all that we are doing, follow us on social media:



*Titles for licensing are subject to availability depending on your territory.