

DANTINO'S

Written by
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CAST OF CHARACTERS (IN ORDER OF APPEARANCE):

PANTALONE: 60s, Male - Ruffiana's ex-husband

ARLECHINO: 30s, Male - Pantalone's new servant

AURIELA: 19, Female - Pantalone's daughter, Ruffiana's former step-daughter

COLUMBINA: 30s, Female - Pantalone's ex-servant, Ruffiana's new servant

LEANDRO: 18, Male - Pantalone and Ruffiana's son

RUFFIANA: 50s, Female - Pantalone's ex-wife

LAVINIA: 19, Female - Ruffiana's daughter, Pantalone's former step-daughter

DANTINO: 60s, Male - Billionaire owner of Dantino's Corporation

ANGELO: 19, Male - Dantino's son

FABRIZIO: 20s, Male - Lavinia's love, someone of color

SILVIO: 20s, Male - Auriela's love, a Jew

TIME, PLACE AND SET REQUIREMENTS:

The time is now. The setting of the play takes place entirely in the upper middle class home of Pantalone.

SYNOPSIS:

This modern take on an age-old physical comedy style follows what happens when Commedia Dell'Arte characters find themselves embroiled in the hot-button issue of gay marriage.

Two women, Auriela and Lavinia, find themselves the love interest of the son of wealthy businessman, Mr. Dantino.

Fearing they might get chosen and forced to marry Dantino's son, the two young women are forced to lie and say that they are already married to each other.

They do this because neither woman has any interest in Angelo, the billionaire's son. Both women, in fact, are in love with two other men. This, much to the dismay of the women's respective parents. Auriela and Lavinia are hoping their lie will force Angelo to look for love elsewhere, so the young ladies can be free to marry the men they truly love.

Unfortunately, the lie only strengthens Dantino's resolve to have his son choose which ever woman he wants. So he uses his money and political influence to propose a law that makes it illegal for two people of the same sex to wed. Once the proposition goes into effect, the women's "marriage" will be null and one of the women will be forced to marry the billionaire's son.

The proposition unfortunately unleashes a cavalcade of complications not only for the young lovers, but for all the characters in the play, ultimately making what should be simple, nearly impossible: to be allowed to marry the person you love.

Though the play is not a musical, it does have a few songs. Rough demos of the music can be heard by copying and pasting the following link into your browser.

LINK TO SONGS IN DANTINO'S:

<https://soundcloud.com/oded-gross/sets/dantinos-rough-demos>

LOGLINE:

This modern take on an age-old physical comedy style follows what happens when Commedia Dell'Arte characters find themselves embroiled in the hot-button issue of gay marriage.

ACT 1.

AURIELA and SILVIO sit in one corner... loving each other... while LAVINIA and FABRIZIO sit in another... doing the same. ANGELO appears center stage with a guitar. He starts to sing.

ANGELO

(Singing)

IS IT NAÏVE THAT THEY
BELIEVE THAT LOVE CAN
OVERCOME EACH OBSTACLE
THAT COMES ACROSS THEIR WAY

TRUE THERE'S TIMES WHEN
THEIR FAITH'S BROKEN
DURING TIMES LIKE THOSE THEY KNOW
THE PERFECT WORDS TO SAY

AURIELA, SILVIO, LAVINIA,
FABRIZIO

(Singing)

DON'T FORGET
ROMEO AND JULIET
WHEN YOU FEEL BLUE
REMEMBER THEY WERE ONCE LIKE YOU
SO FILLED WITH DOUBT
BUT THEN IT ALL WORKED OUT
CAUSE TRUE LOVE CONQUERS ALL

AURIELA AND LAVINIA

HEATHCLIFF AND CATHERINE
WERE CRAZY IN LOVE

SILVIO AND FABRIZIO

THAT'S WHY THEY ENDED UP
SO HAPPY AND SO GAY

AURIELA AND LAVINIA

AND HAVE YOU EVER READ GREAT GATSBY

SILVIO AND FABRIZIO

HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE YET

AURIELA AND LAVINIA

WELL, IT ENDS IN THE SAME WAY

AURIELA, SILVIO, LAVINIA,
FABRIZIO

AND DON'T YOU DARE FORGET
ROMEO AND JULIET
WHEN YOU FEEL BLUE
REMEMBER THEY WERE ONCE LIKE YOU
SO FILLED WITH DOUBT
BUT THEN IT ALL WORKED OUT
CAUSE TRUE LOVE CONQUERS ALL

ANGELO

SO THEY'RE JUST WORRY FREE
FROM HEARTBREAK OR MISERY
CAUSE TRUE LOVE WILL WORK, YA SEE
LIKE ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

AND ALTHOUGH THEY HAVEN'T READ
THESE BOOKS TO THE VERY END

AURIELA, SILVIO, LAVINIA,
FABRIZIO

I DON'T FEEL I'D EVER READ
SOMETHING THAT WOULD SUPERSEDE
THIS VERY SIMPLE CREED
TRUE LOVE CONQUERS ALL
LIKE TRISTAN AND ISOLDE

AND DON'T FORGET
ROMEO AND JULIET
REMEMBER WHEN
THINGS LOOKED PRETTY BAD FOR THEM

ANGELO

BUT THEY WERE WED
AND TOGETHER IN THE END

AURIELA, SILVIO, LAVINIA,
FABRIZIO

THAT'S JUST HOW IT ALWAYS WORKS
ONE OF ALL THE MANY PERKS
CAUSE NOTHING EVER STOPS TRUE –

The doorbell rings. The music stops abruptly. The young couples and Angelo all disappear, as we enter:

THE HOME OF PANTALONE

Across the room PANTALONE enters excitedly. He looks at himself once in the mirror then goes to answer the door.

ARLECHINO Enters.

PANTALONE

Who are you? (Disappointed)

ARLECHINO

(Taken aback)
“Who are you?” That’s a rude way to answer the door.

PANTALONE
I don’t care. What do you want? I don’t tolerate solicitors.

ARLECHINO
I am not a solicitor.

PANTALONE
Take your cookies elsewhere.

ARLECHINO
Do I look like I’m selling cookies?

PANTALONE
You look like you’re selling something.

ARLECHINO
It’s certainly not cookies. I’m starving! If I had any cookies, I’d eat them myself.

PANTALONE
What do you want?

ARLECHINO
Well since you mentioned it, now all I can think about is cookies.

PANTALONE
There are no cookies here. Leave now!

ARLECHINO
You surprise me, sir.

PANTALONE
Nevertheless, if that’s all you want-

ARLECHINO

It's not all I want. I'd like to speak with your master.

PANTALONE

Speak with my master?

ARLECHINO

Yes. Not as sweet as cookies but not as bitter as you, no doubt. Fetch him for me, won't you?

PANTALONE

Fetch him? Why?

ARLECHINO

If for no other reason than to tell him how rudely you treat his guests.

PANTALONE

I assure you, he won't care.

ARLECHINO

You know I've been waiting outside this door for nearly 8 minutes? Are you supposed to keep a guest waiting?

PANTALONE

I only heard the bell just now.

ARLECHINO

I only rang it just now, but a good servant should hear the bell before it's rung.

PANTALONE

That's impossible.

ARLECHINO

Not impossible. Not for a good servant of which you clearly are not. I can see why your master wants to replace you.

PANTALONE

Replace me?

ARLECHINO

Yes. Word on the street is he's looking for a new servant. The old servant is always the last to know.

PANTALONE

And you think you would be a suitable replacement?

ARLECHINO

Without question! Why? What do you think?

PANTALONE

I think that's two questions. I'm not so sure you have what it takes.

ARLECHINO

You insult me, sir...vant. I have what it takes, alright! I'm quick, obedient-

PANTALONE

Respectful?

ARLECHINO

You bet your wrinkled, old rump, I am.

PANTALONE

The master of the house is particular when it comes to hiring his help.

ARLECHINO

Obviously not.

PANTALONE

He has very high standards when it comes to his servants.

ARLECHINO

Clearly he doesn't.

PANTALONE

The servant must be a fair representation of the master himself!

ARLECHINO

Unless he's old and ugly, I'm not sure why he hired you!

PANTALONE

I am the master of this house!

ARLECHINO

Here is my resume!

Arlechino hands Pantalone his resume.

ARLECHINO (CONT'D)

Perhaps I can have a glass of water before we begin the interview.

Pantalone tears up the resume.

PANTALONE

You insolent buffoon. I don't want your resume and I certainly don't want to interview you. You've prattled on enough.

ARLECHINO

What about the water? All that prattling has made me a wee parched.

PANTALONE

I ought to beat you soundly for your effrontery.

ARLECHINO

Only my master may beat me soundly, so when do I start?

PANTALONE

Get out!

ARLECHINO

Come now, sir. It was an honest mistake. You answered the door, I therefore thought you were the servant of this house.

PANTALONE

You called me old and ugly.

ARLECHINO

As a servant you are old and ugly. But as a master, you're perfect.

PANTALONE

Get out! I don't have time for this nonsense. I have very important visitors coming today.

ARLECHINO

And you're going to answer the door yourself? Without a servant? What kind of impression does that make?

PANTALONE

I realize it's not ideal.

ARLECHINO

Not the way you treat the guests.

PANTALONE

I'd sooner that than you working here.

ARLECHINO

I needn't work here long. Hire me for the day. I am merely passing through your town. I have no intention of staying.

PANTALONE

If you have no intention of staying, why are you looking for a job?

ARLECHINO

I am headed back to the small village where I'm from and I don't want to show up there empty-handed. I'm returning at the request of my lady.

PANTALONE

You have a lady?

ARLECHINO

A servant woman, yes.

(Entranced)

She's beautiful. Intelligent. Just thinking of her makes... me... want... cookies.

PANTALONE

What?

ARLECHINO

(Hearing what he just said)

What? Great! Now look what you've done! All I can think of is cookies, when I should be thinking of love.

PANTALONE

I find it hard to believe that anyone would love you.

Arlechino pulls out a letter.

ARLECHINO

Well someone does! It's all right here in black and white. She wrote this letter sending for me, saying she can't live without me and declaring her undying passion and adoration.

PANTALONE

This letter is still sealed.

ARLECHINO

At least, that's what I think it says.

PANTALONE

Why am I wasting my time with you?

ARLECHINO

Because you see I am motivated by the purest of intentions.

PANTALONE

Love?

ARLECHINO

(Agreeing)

Right! Thank you. I was about to say cookies.

PANTALONE

The last thing I need right now is someone motivated by love.

AURIELA enters.

AURIELA

Hello daddy.

PANTALONE

Auriela! Look how beautiful you are.

AURIELA

You said to look my best.

PANTALONE

Yes. We have a very important guest coming today.

AURIELA

(Re: Arlechino)

Is this he?

PANTALONE

No! Hardly. This is a very unimportant guest.

ARLECHINO

But a guest none the less. Certainly that warrants a cookie.

AURIELA

Daddy, you didn't offer him a cookie?

PANTALONE

I certainly did not! He called me old and ugly.

AURIELA

At least he didn't mention your weight.

PANTALONE

True. What?

(Then)

This intolerable buffoon wants me to give him a job.

ARLECHINO

Only for the day.

AURIELA

I don't see the harm in hiring him for the day. What could possibly go wrong?

PANTALONE

He's an idiot! Everything can go wrong.

AURIELA

That's a very pessimistic attitude. I like to stay optimistic.

PANTALONE

His brain is half-empty.

AURIELA

I think it's half-full.

(Then, to Arlechino)

Now tell me, what did you say your name was?

ARLECHINO

I didn't. It's Arlechino.

AURIELA

Why do you only want to work here for a day, Arlechino?

ARLECHINO

I'm on my way home and just need to make a few dollars so I can arrive there in style. I'm trying to impress a woman. A servant, like myself. I haven't seen her in 10 years but every Friday I would send her a telegram telling her how I feel. She finally sent word back by way of this letter, clearly suggesting she wants me to return because she feels the same way.

AURIELA

How romantic.

PANTALONE

He doesn't know that's what the letter suggests. He hasn't even opened it to see what's inside.

AURIELA

Oh father, do you know nothing about love?

PANTALONE

No, but I know plenty about envelopes.

AURIELA

Love is like... being home. A home within whose walls are free of judgment and expectation. Where lives only acceptance and understanding.

PANTALONE

I have trouble understanding why he hasn't opened the letter.

AURIELA

Sight, father, is only one of five senses that can identify a woman's feelings. I bet he can hear the beating of her heart through that envelope. Smell the passion inside. Why he can probably put the letter to his lips and taste how she feels.

Arlechino tastes the envelope.

ARLECHINO

My God, you're right.

AURIELA

How does she feel?

ARLECHINO

She feels like cookies.

AURIELA

(To Pantalone)

See?

PANTALONE

I don't see and neither does he because he hasn't opened the letter!

ARLECHINO

You want me to open the letter?

PANTALONE

Yes!

He opens the envelope and takes out the letter.

ARLECHINO

Fine! I've opened the letter!

PANTALONE

What does it say?

ARLECHINO

I... have... no idea. I don't know how to read.

PANTALONE

Oh my word!

Pantalone throws his hands up in frustration.

ARLECHINO

(To Auriela)

That's why I never opened the letter. I didn't see the point.

AURIELA

I understand.

PANTALONE

I don't need this imbecile here. I can open the door and welcome our visitors just fine.

ARLECHINO

I don't think you can.

PANTALONE

I'd prove it to you but I don't want you here when they come.

ARLECHINO

They're here now.

The bell rings.

ARLECHINO (CONT'D)

(To Auriela)

A good servant hears the bell before it's rung.

AURIELA

Daddy, you should really hire this man.

PANTALONE

(To Arlechino)

Good! I'll show you how to treat a guest. Watch and learn!

He opens the door.

PANTALONE (CONT'D)

(To the person on the other side of the door)

You! I told you I never wanted to see you again, you disloyal snake in the grass!

He slams the door shut.

ARLECHINO

(To Auriela)

I think I'm overqualified for this job.