

The Importance of Being Older.

Dramatis Personae

Dottore, a learned man

Aurelia, his daughter

Octavia, his daughter

Franceschina, his servant

Brighella, a con man, in love with *Franceschina*

Capitano Aligonte, a condottiere on the run, in love

Beatrice, a courtesan

Silvio, a young nobleman, *Cinzio*'s "twin"

Cinzio, a young nobleman, *Sylvio*'s "twin"

Properties

A second story balcony –optional. If used, every time *Aurelia* enters, she appears in the second story balcony.

A bandolier or a large carrying basket

Multiple babies (all babies are first introduced by *Franceschina*. Every time she enters total babies = n+1)

Two letters

Coins

Two women's outfits.

Beatrices's Establishment

Dottore and Beatrice enter

Dottore is upset that *Beatrice* doesn't see him as often anymore. *Beatrice* explains that the schedule is very tight. Most of her girls ran away to join a theater troupe, so she is too busy to see everyone. She has to prioritize regularly paying clients, and *Dottore* still owes her money.

Dottore leaves

Capitano enters

(*Capitano*'s internal monologue: *Capitano* is on the run from *Banco di Panatlone*, afraid he is wanted for debt, and will be sold to the galleys. He ran away from a battle, effectively forfeiting

a huge collateral his employer put down.) Introduces himself very exaggeratedly to *Beatrice*. She is impressed and invites him in.

Capitano and Beatrice exit

Dottore's House

Franceschina and Dottore enter

Franceschina demands money from *Dottore*, he refuses, but then gets distracted by *Franceschina's* assets and suggests that many people would pay for it (boobs!), and effectively propositions *Franceschina*. *Franceschina* thinks it's a great idea, thanks *Dottore* and leaves.

Francescina exits

Octavia enters

Octavia tells *Dottore* she wants to get married, he tells her that *Aurelia* needs to get married first, as she is older. *Octavia* wants to be older. Right now!

Dottore exits

Aurelia enters

Octavia demands that *Aurelia* switch to being a younger sister for at least a little bit. *Aurelia* refuses, they get into a fight. (very ineffectual if she is on the second story balcony)

Beatrice enters

Beatrice is looking for *Dottore* to collect. *Beatrice* tries to recruit *Octavia* to the brothel, *Octavia* is not keen on the brother, but asks *Beatrice*, who is obviously older, how to get older fast. *Beatrice* agrees to teach her.

Beatrice and Octavia exit, with Aurelia mocking Octavia.

Franceschina and Brighella enter

Franceschina flirts with *Brighella*, she has a baby she's nursing (not hers). *Franceschina* is interrupted by *Aurelia* repeatedly. (if you want to be really mean, *Aurelia* can throw stuff from the balcony) *Brighella* realizes that if he wants to get anywhere with *Franceschina*, he needs to get rid of *Aurelia* and *Octavia*, and marriage would be the easiest way to do it.

All exit

Beatrice's Establishment

Capitano and Beatrice enter

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Beatrice is kicking *Capitano* out for non payment. *Capitano* is pledging his undying love to *Beatrice*, claiming that his penniless state is temporary, and as soon as the statute of limitations runs out with his debt to the *Banco di Pantalone*, he will marry her and make her an honest woman. (he's done that many times, so she should really take him up on this offer)

Capitano exits

Beatrice goes through his belonging, and finds out a letter from the bank – *Capitano* is owed 100,000 ducats, because, though he ran away, he ran away slower than the other guy, and is, technically victorious, and is owed war spoils money.

Beatrice decides to woo *Capitano*, runs after him.

Beatrice exits

City Street

Capitano and Brighella enter

Capitano wanders into *Brighella*, and complains that he was wooing the most beautiful lady in the world, but she turned him down because he is penniless. *Brighella* advises him to marry rich as an answer to ALL his troubles. *Brighella* tells *Capitano* of *Aurelia*, who is a like a super-duper bride, awaiting a worthy suitor. *Capitano* decides he will marry *Aurelia*, so he can have money for *Beatrice*.

Capitano and Brighella exit.

Dottore's House

Franceschina and Dottore enter

Franceschina has two babies. *Dottore* is scolding *Franceschina* because babies interfere with her duties. *Franceschina* is shushing him, so he wouldn't wake the babies up.

Capitano enters

Capitano introduces himself to *Dottore*, assumes *Franceschina* is *Aurelia* and flirts with her. Informs *Dottore* that he is fine marrying her even though she is obviously not a virgin (see the babies above). *Dottore* is outraged, first because *Capitano* mistook *Franceschina* for his daughter, second because he implied his daughter is not a virgin, and third because he sees a rival for *Franceschina*'s affections, and they fight. It's a very quiet fight, so the babies don't wake up. *Capitano* is taken aback that *Dottore* is interested in his own daughter, it's kinda shocking, even though it's Venice. *Dottore* gives convoluted explanations.

All exit

Capitano enters
Aurelia enters

Capitano woos Aurelia, rather unsuccessfully.

Beatrice and Octavia enter

Beatrice tries to get attention of Capitano, Octavia is pissed that Aurelia is rejecting affections of a perfectly fine suitor, and is doing it solely to annoy her, Octavia.

Beatrice tries to distract Capitano's attention from Aurelia.

Capitano exits (runs away)

Octavia and Aurelia get into a fight, basically throwing things at each other. Octavia demands that she is now older, both try to upstage each other age-wise. Finally, Aurelia throws stuff at Octavia, who is using Beatrice as a shield.

All exit

City Street

Capitano and Brighella enter

Capitano accuses Brighella of botching everything. Brighella suggests Capitano just needs to be more exciting, and says that Aurelia must be so bored sitting in that building all her life. She needs to be entertained with music and theater. Capitano tells Brighella to go and hire entertainment. Brighella doesn't have any money. Neither does Capitano. Both decide to go and get money out of Dottore.

All exit

Octavia and Beatrice enter

Octavia is upset that she is still not older. Beatrice points out signs of aging, like wrinkles and gray hairs, which makes Octavia very happy. Octavia is upset that Aurelia rejected Capitano, but thinks that as she getting older maybe she can marry him. Beatrice tells her that Capitano is hers because clearly, she's the oldest.

Both exit

Dottore's House

Brighella, Capitano enter

They call *Dottore*

Franceschina enters, with three babies. She hands off some of the babies to *Brighella* and *Capitano* and leaves to call *Dottore*.

Franceschina exits

Franceschina enters with *Dottore* and even more babies.

Dottore and *Capitano* try to get *Franceschina*'s attention. *Brighella* is very frustrated. *Brighella* asks for money from *Dottore* to marry *Aurelia* off, saying everything is going great. *Dottore* is so distracted that he just hands *Brighella* the money, which is completely out of character.

Beatrice enters

Brighella grabs *Franceschina* and leaves.

Brighella and *Franceschina* exit

Beatrice talks with *Capitano* and *Dottore*, separately, and finds out that both really want *Franceschina*. She suggests that they need to get to know *Franceschina* better, and she will never feel at ease with pushy overbearing men. Both *Capitano* and *Dottore* come up with this brilliant idea to disguise themselves as women, to get to know *Franceschina* better. Effectively, *Beatrice*, who is pissed that they both owe her money (although less so at *Capitano*), sets them up on a date with each other.

All exit

City Street

Silvio and *Cinzio* enter

They look disheveled and argue. They were robbed by brigands. *Silvio* says they can't tell anyone because it will dishonor their house. *Cinzio* says that its better to say the truth. They are looking for *Capitano* to make sure he gets the money he's owed because *Banco di Panalone* doesn't want to pay all the accumulating interest on that huge sum.

Brighella enters

Brighella bumps into *Cinzio* and *Silvio*. *Cinzio* tries to explain to him that they were noblemen who got robbed, and they only need some money and food, and they will pay him back once they get in touch with their household.

Brighella laughs at them and gives them tips as an older con artist. He says if they want money they will have to work for it, and hires them as actors/musicians to woo *Aurelia*. To get to *Dottore*'s household, they will pretend to be noble, rich and famous actors. *Brighella* gives them lessons on how to be noble.

Explains that their job is to perform for *Aurelia*, so she will fall in love with *Capitano*, and, to make sure that *Octavia* does not interfere.

All exit

Dottore and Capitano enter

Dottore and *Capitano* are dressed as women, and each thinks that the other one is *Franceschina*. They start flirting with “*Franceschina*”, and it goes smashingly well until they discover many unladylike qualities about “*Franceschina*” and run away.

Dottore exits

Beatrice enters

Beatrice consoles shaken *Capitano*.

Capitano is appalled that *Franceschina* is really so horrible, and thinks he can still marry *Aurelia*. *Beatrice* advises against that because he could never consummate the marriage thus never making it legal and never getting the money. Because *Aurelia* doesn't exist from the waist down. At least no one has every seen anything, she is always hanging from her balcony. Which is why *Dottore* has such hard time marrying her off. When *Capitano* brings up *Octavia*, *Beatrice* recommends against it saying she looks too old.

Brighella, Sylvio, and Cinzio enter

Sylvio and *Cinzio* see the two women (*Capitano* is still wearing the outfit), assume they are *Aurelia* and *Octavia*, and try to start the musical numbers. *Beatrice* is taken aback, as she assumes, that the men have mistaken *Capitano* for one of her brothel girls, *Capitano* is taken aback that he is being serenaded, but, that just proves that *Capitano* is irresistible no matter how he is dressed.

Brighella intereferes, introduces *Sylvio* and *Cinzio*, and explains that they are musicians to perform for *Aurelia*.

It becomes clear that *Capitano* can't tell them apart, and keeps confusing them. *Sylvio* and *Cinzio* inform everyone that they are twins! *Brighella* and *Beatrice* don't have any trouble telling them apart. They all argue about it. Finally *Brighella* sends the twins away to woo *Aurelia* for *Capitano*.

Sylvio and Cinzio exit

Capitano tells *Beatrice* he needs to change before going back to *Dottore*'s house, *Beatrice* insists he looks great, and only a man really secure in his masculinity can pull off an outfit like this. This gets *Capitano* reminiscing about all kinds of outfits he pulled off.

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Capitano and Beatrice exit

Franceschina enters

Franceschina has a hamper/bandolier full of babies. *Brighella* explains to *Franceschina* that *Aurelia* is as good as married, and once *Aurelia* is married off, *Octavia* would immediately follow, and *Brighella* and *Franceschina* can get married.

Franceschina explains that it's wonderful, but her business (wet-nursing) had really taken off, so if *Brighella* could help her out with the babies, she would really appreciate it. *Brighella* ends up carrying the hamper and most babies, as he can't nurse them.

Franceschina and Brighella exit.

Dottore's House

Aurelia, Dottore, and Octavia enter

Octavia is proving to *Dottore* that she is older, and thus should rightfully get married first. *Aurelia* says that she doesn't care and doesn't even want to get married, *Dottore* says his oldest daughter needs to get married first, otherwise, if he marries off the youngest, all would think something is wrong with the oldest one.

Sylvio and Cinzio enter.

Insert musical number here.

Aurelia and *Octavia* are very much taken with the musicians. *Dottore* is not impressed because they look shabby, the "twins" are trying to salvage the situation using all the "noble manners" *Brighella* taught them. *Dottore* calls for help, saying that some riff-raff is trying to seduce his daughters.

Capitano and Beatrice enter

Capitano is still dressed as a woman, wants to save *Dottore's* daughters from the riff-raff, and challenges the twins to a duel. *Dottore* is appalled that "*Franceschina*" followed him. *Beatrice* explains that it's *Capitano*. *Dottore* realizes he has been tricked, and pays *Beatrice* the moneys he owed her so she keeps quiet about his date with *Capitano*.

He also announces that none of his daughter can marry *Capitano*, as he is "of questionable character".

Aurelia and *Octavia* don't care about the *Capitano* anymore, as they really like the twins. Again, only *Beatrice* can tell them apart.

Dottore tells them they can't marry street musicians. The twins protest that they are not street musicians, they are young nobles.

Brighella and Franceschina enter

Brighella confirms that they pretended to be young nobles when he hired them, too, and gives them points for consistency. *Brighella*, *Beatrice*, and *Franceschina* have no problems telling the twins apart. Frustrated, they point at the different color hair. *Aurelia* explains laughing, that her whole family is red black hair color blind. It's a very rare trait that only happens in very rich people.

The twins confirm that their own mother couldn't tell them apart, and had to keep a nurse on hand for that.

Cinzio produces a letter confirming who they are: they are nobles from the house of *Pantalone*, and they were tasked with finding one victorious *Capitano Aligonte* to give him his prize money, 100,000 ducats. Which *Cinzio* also gives to *Capitano*. (he hid them really well, so the robbers didn't take them). *Sylvio* wants to know where he hid them. *Cinzio* ignores him.

Aurelia wants to marry *Sylvio*.

Octavia wants to marry *Cinzio*.

They would love to marry the girls, but unfortunately, *Cinzio* is older, and has to marry first, thus it could never be. At this point *Franceschina* threatens to end them all, as being on the run would be better than this, and all agree to get married at the same time, to avoid the wrath of *Franceschina*.

Franceschina marries them all. No one seems to argue. *Beatrice* and *Capitano* and *Franceschina* and *Brighella* get married as well. *Beatrice* can't tell the twins apart anymore.

Aurelia leaves with Sylvio

Octavia leaves with Cinzio

Beatrice leaves with Capitano

Franceschina thanks *Dottore* for a great business idea. *Dottore* thinks he should go into this lucrative wet-nursing business himself, and invents baby formula potion as he exits.

Dottore exits.

Franceschina and *Brighella* decide to quit wet-nursing, as soon there will be a great opportunity for employment: telling apart rich people's kids.

All exit.

FIN

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