

The Dutiful Daughter, or Omnia Amor Vincit Pecuniae Multum Adiuvat (love conquers everything, but money helps a lot)

Dramatis personae

Aurelia, daughter of *Pantalone*, a wealthy merchant residing in Constantinople
Brighella, *Pantalone*'s servant

Felicio, a young noble, *Dottore*'s son, madly in love with himself (because everyone is), and *Beatrice* (because she isn't)
Guazzetto, his trusted and competent servant, madly in love with *Franceschina*
Octavia, *Dottore*'s daughter, madly in love with idea of being madly in love
Franceschina, her servant

Beatrice, a courtesan, not madly in love with anybody, a proprietrix of the house of negotiable virtue and the abbess of the convent for young noble women

Properties

A bundle of things

A big bouquet of flowers

A men's outfit

Two long scrolls

A marriage contract

A sign that says whorehouse on one side and convent on another

Brighella and Aurelia enter

Aurelia is dragging a big bundle of things, Brighella is trying to remember where they have to go.

They are here from Constantinople, Pantalone, who is too busy to come back to Venice, sent Brighella to accompany Aurelia, who is to get married. The marriage contract uniting the families of Pantalone and Dottore was done years ago. Pantalone entrusted Brighella with the copy of the contract, the daughter, and gave him a set of explicit instructions.

Aurelia laments the facts that they had to walk, had no horse and no money, and praises Brighella for his generosity, (gave the horses to the old fellow who didn't have any, he was so clever to pretend to lose them in a game of dice, otherwise the old man would have never taken charity, gave all their money to this poor young woman, who was practically naked, etc...)

Aurelia is to stay at a convent during the wedding arrangements, Brighella gives her directions, and himself goes to Dottore's.

Both exit opposite

Beatrice and Felicio enter

Felicio confesses his love to Beatrice, Beatrice rejects Felicio, as he is just another penniless nobleman;

Beatrice exits

Felicio monologues about his doomed love and leaves

Felicio exits

Aurelia enters

Knocks on the door of what she presumes is a convent. Beatrice answers, presuming it's Felicio again, but then is very happy to see Aurelia, explains that she is the abbess of the convent, welcomes Aurelia in, tells her she knows her father, etc, makes her feel at home.

Beatrice and Aurelia exit

Franceschina and Octavia enter

Octavia daydreams about her future husband imagines how handsome, clever, awesome, etc., he will be. Franceschina shamelessly encourages her, tells her how wonderful love /sex is, but especially sex. Octavia is suspicious that Franceschina encourages her to get married so Franceschina then can get married herself (Dottore left explicit instructions!), but Franceschina assured her that it is not so.

Felicio and Guazzetto enter

Felicio asks Guazzetto about a myriad of household tasks, which are all done perfectly. Complains to Guazzetto about women.

Octavio tells Felicio, who is her older brother, that she wants to get married. Felicio answers that she can't just go and get married, she was already engaged to the son of a family friends years ago as a baby. Felicio, who is tired of this incessant marriage talk, comes up with excuses why she can't, finally saying that Dottore left him explicit instructions.

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When Guazzetto sees Franceschina he becomes a bumbling idiot and can't do anything right. Frustrated Felicio chases him off stage into the house. He runs in the wrong direction. Octavia runs after him to remind him where the house is.

Guazetto and Octavia exit

Felicio complains about his idiot servant to Franceschina.

Felicio and Franceschina exit

Brighella enters

Brighella establishes that he is at right house and knocks on the door.

Guazzetto enters.

Guazzetto establishes that Brighella is a scoundrel, and Guazzetto is a perfect and righteous servant, and does not let him in. They argue.

Felicio enters

Felicio wants to know what is all the commotion.

Brighella greets Felicio and produces the copy of the marriage contract, hints that Felicio is getting hitched. Felicio is concerned that he will have to get married, he knew about the contract, but he believes it concerns Octavia, Dottore's daughter, and not him, as she was engaged as a baby to Pantalone's son. Felicio sends Guazzetto to bring Octavia,

Guazzetto exits

Felicio asks Brighella if Pantalone's son is here to meet his bride. Brighella, who assumed that it's Pantalone's daughter getting married to Dottore's son is shocked, tries to tell Felicio that Pantalone had a daughter. Felicio mocks him and wants to know if Brighella lost Pantalone's son on the way from Constantinople. Brighella, crying, says he did, and spins the tale of the most amazing and awesome son Pantalone had, and how he got lost, and now Brighella will never forgive himself. (plus, if the contract is not fulfilled Pantalone will probably have his head).

Franceschina enters

Franceschina says that Octavia is coming momentarily, and asks all kinds of leading questions about the son, which Brighella answers, so soon the lost son becomes the god's gift to women everywhere, and Franceschina is crying with

Brighella over the loss of such a magnificent specimen.

Felicio, taken aback, sends Franceschina with Brighella to help Aurelia in a new city.

Franceschina and Brighella exit

Octavia and Guazzetto enter

Octavia overheard the conversation, and is distraught that her perfect groom is missing. Guazzetto is upset that Franceschina left with Brighella. Wants to run after her. Felicio gives him a bunch of ridiculous tasks to do and sends him off stage.

Guazzetto exits

Octavia and Felicio exit, arguing

Brighella and Franceschina enter

They knock on the door of presumed convent

Beatrice answers, Brighella knows Beatrice from his days in Venice way back when, he flips and wants to know what she is doing in a convent . Beatrice says she now runs both establishments – it saves money on rent, and helps her corner the market on virgins.

Brighella is very upset – not only he failed to set up the wedding, he also settled Pantalone's daughter in a whorehouse. And he had explicit instructions! and now he is never getting paid.

Beatrice offers to console Brighella

Beatrice and Brighella exit as

Aurelia enters

Aurelia wants to know about the commotion, wants to know why Brighella is upset. Franceschina tells her that Brighella is upset about her lost brother. Aurelia never knew she had a brother. Franceschina tells her all about him, and how he got lost (fighting the pirates? Swimming across the atlantic to the new world? Fighting in a crusade singlehandedly? Exploring mt. Vesuvius? Now Aurelia is upset about the loss of the brother she never even met before. She also feels bad about Brighella, and Franceschina tells her the only way to make Brighella feels better is for Brighella to see his lost charge one more time (he said so

himself!). Then Aurelia gets this brilliant idea that she will dress up as her long lost brother to cheer up Brighella. Franceschina totally supports that.

Franceschina and Aurelia exit

Franceschina will bring her men's clothing (If it fits, can have an additional scene with Franceschina flirting with poor Guazzetto and divesting him of Felicio's laundry or spare outfit. It will also give time for the costume change)

Franceschina and Aurelia dressed as a man enter.

Aurelia wants to know if she looks like her brother. Franceschina says, that yes, totally, and tells her all kinds of amusing anecdotes about her brother, which Aurelia eats up. (Aurelia wants to know how Franceschina knew her brother, Franceschina says everybody knew him)

Brighella enters

Brighella had been consoled by Beatrice and is now broke.

Sees Aurelia and is concerned that Beatrice corrupted her and dressed her up as a man. Aurelia explains what's going on. Brighella talks to Franceschina and decides that seeing Pantalone's lost son is making him feel better. Brighella and Franceschina decide that if Aurelia can marry Octavia, the letter of the contract will be fulfilled, and Franceschina can leave the household when Octavia marries, and Brighella will be in good graces of Pantalone again.

They convince Aurelia that that's what her father wanted.

Aurelia, who is a very dutiful daughter, will do anything to keep her father happy. And agrees to go along with the plan.

All exit

Guazzetto enters

Guazzetto has a big bouquet of flowers, he decided to woo Franceschina with flowers (he can't talk when he sees her, so he decided to take the "say it with flowers" route)

Comes to Beatrice establishment because that's where he last knew Franceschina went.

Felicio enters

Felicio assumes that the flowers are for him to give to Beatrice and takes them from Guazzetto.

Beatrice, Franceschina and Aurelia enter.

Guazzetto and Felicio start complaining to the women about their cruelty, Felicio very eloquently, Guazzetto much less so. Felicio gives Beatrice the flowers, she passes them on to Franceschina to argue better. Franceschina then passes them to Aurelia so she can get into a better fight with Guazzetto.

Beatrice and Felicio and Guazzetto and Franceschina all exit arguing.

Aurelia is left alone with the flowers.

Octavia enters

Octavia is here to argue with her brother, she is looking for him. Sees Aurelia with the flowers, assumes they are for her. Aurelia introduces herself as her own brother and gives the flowers to Octavia who is smitten. She tells Aurelia that she is her intended, but her cruel brother wouldn't let them marry. They play a love scene.

Aurelia and Octavia exit

Felicio and Guazzetto enter

Felicio and Guazzetto lament their doomed loves together. Decide the reason they are not getting anywhere is because of this spiffily dressed new guy they saw at Beatrice's. They decide to off the new guy, as he is the reason their loves are not being reciprocated. Guazzetto suggests hiring Brighella to kill off the new guy. Felicio thinks it's a great idea.

Guazzetto exits.

Octavia enters

Octavia shows Felicio the flowers. Declares that she met her true love, describes Aurelio. Felicio tells her that Aurelio (I assume that's the name, just for the sake of simplicity, but feel free to use whatever) not her true love, is a player who is after every woman in town, including Beatrice and Franceschina. In fact, he was recently seen at the whorehouse with Beatrice.

Octavia is very upset. She accuses Felicio of spreading nasty rumors, so he can prevent Octavia from getting married, so he can squander her dowry on wine and

women. Felicio didn't even know that Octavia had a dowry. Octavia lists her holdings all business like, and storms out. She will get to the bottom of it.

Octavia and Felicio exit

Guazzetto and Brighella enter

Guazzetto is hiring Brighella to kill somebody. Brighella is all for it, and is haggling up the price, until he realizes that he is being hired to kill Aurelia, and tries to backpedal out of it. Guazzetto threatens to ruin his reputation. They argue whether Guazzetto can actually blackmail Brighella, as Guazzetto is supposed to be the good one. Finally Guazzetto admits that Aurelio must die because he is standing between him and Franceschina. He had been waiting for Franceschina for years, and she can't get married before Aurelia – Dottore left explicit instructions! Brighella tells his master also left him explicit instructions, and both argue whose master is more horrible and terrifying, and whose instructions are more explicit. (They brandish the scrolls of explicit instructions, trying to one up each other).

Finally both realize that getting Aurelio married to Octavia will fulfill the letters of both explicit instructions, so Guazzetto is now on board with the plan. Guazzetto after realizing that it is Franceschina's plan, decides that Franceschina loves him. Brighella thinks it's a bit of a stretch. They argue again.

Brighella and Guazzetto exit

Octavia and Aurelia enter.

Octavia gives Aurelia the flowers back, tearfully saying they can't be together - that her brother is against their marriage, and just wants the money for himself. Aurelia is interested in money. They play a heavily financially charged love scene. Aurelia promises to do anything it takes for their love (and money) to triumph.

Octavia leaves.

Felicio enters

Felicio is enraged to find Aurelio still there, at Beatrice's establishment, and with the flowers he gave to his beloved Beatrice himself. That fickle and unfaithful Beatrice! Also, Aurelio is not even supposed to be alive, as Brighella was supposed to kill him. Apparently, Aurelio is so good, he killed Brighella. He is very upset about Beatrice's unfaithfulness, but she quickly forgives her, as, apparently, every woman in town is in love with this newcomer, who is as

charming as he is deadly (and fashionable – this is the outfit Felicio wouldn't mind wearing himself).

Felicio challenges Aurelia to a duel for Beatrice.

Aurelia understands that Brighella is dead, and is very upset that now she is all alone in a new city, with no one to look after her. And now this crazy man is trying to kill her. Aurelia tries to stall, hide behind the flowers, and sneak out.

Beatrice enters

Beatrice berates them for dueling by the convent. Felicio apologizes profusely, and professes his love for Beatrice again. She can't reciprocate because convent. Felicio wants to know then how he gets to see Beatrice then if it's a convent. Beatrice explains the double-sided sign, and flips it back and forth several times just to mess with Felicio. (Felicio behaves, but Aurelia can deck him on the convent side)

Felicio begs Beatrice to leave the sign at the whorehouse side, so he can dispatch Aurelio. Once he is dead, Beatrice will finally be free and love Felicio.

Octavia enters

Octavia wants to kill Beatrice, because Beatrice is the one standing between Octavia and her intended. Beatrice is just stringing Felicio along for his money. Once Beatrice is dead, Felicio will be free from her charms, will see the light, and let Octavia marry Aurelio.

Beatrice meanwhile, is outraged to hear that Brighella is dead, as he owes her money for consolation, and now she can't collect.

Franceschina enters

She overhears that Brighella is dead, as Aurelio killed him, and is upset, because Brighella was supposed to make sure that Aurelia can marry Octavia, and Franceschina will be free, and can get married herself, and she thought that Aurelia was on board with the plan, but apparently she is backstabbing bitch!

Octavia will defend Aurelio from Franceschina and Felicio, demanding that Franceschina stop calling her fiancé a bitch (would asshole be more appropriate?), Felicio will defend Beatrice from Octavia.

Chaos ensues.

Brighella and Guazzetto enter

All are terrified to see the ghost of Brighella.

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Guazzetto attempts to “banish” Brighella starts protecting Franceschina from the ghost. Franceschina likes being protected.

Brighella explains that he is not dead. Aurelia explains that she is a woman.

Everybody tries to make sense of the contract.

Felicio says Aurelia and Octavia can't get married, because that's not how marriages work.

Someone proposes that Felicio and Aurelia get married. Guazzetto says that they can't. His master left his explicit instructions, and Felicio is actually a long lost bastard son of Pantalone, so he can't marry Aurelia who is his half-sister, because incest. Then, Octavia has to marry Felicio. Octavia refuses to marry Felicio because he is her brother. Brighella says that Guazzetto clearly has instructions that he is not. Beatrice says the Octavia is right. Felicio is Pantalone's son, and also the son of Signora Dottore, so he is Octavia's half brother and can't marry her (signora Dottore was so open minded, we all miss her dearly).

Shocked, Felicio asked Franceschina if she is her sister. Franceschina thinks about it and says she can't rule it out. Felicio then proposes to Beatrice, “clearly, you are the only one for me, literally!” Beatrice accepts, because now he is legally acknowledged Pantalone's son, but only on the half time basis, because she still needs to run the convent. Felicio agrees and they exit.

Felicio and Beatrice exit

Enter *Royals ex machina* - will depend on what TRM's want to do.

May flip the contract over, and read the back: “For the purposes of this contract, the marriage is clearly defined as the union between an offspring of Pantalone and an offspring of Dottore. As a shitload of money is at stake, for fuck's sake, just bang somebody and get a kid. How hard can it be!?”

Aurelia and Octavia then need to get married to fulfill the letter of the contract. Because explicit instructions. And Octavia really wants to get married, and Aurelia is a very dutiful daughter.

So there is no problem with fulfilling the contract.

Aurelia and Octavia exit

Guazzetto and Franceschina leave together, very happy.

Brighella is left alone with the flowers.

(if the TRMs are still present, he may present the flowers to her Majesty)

Franceschina pokes her head in, and tells him to hurry and Brighella runs offstage.