

**BIZET**

**DOCTOR MIRACLE**

*Opera Comique in one act*

English Version by Donald Pippin

**CAST OF CHARACTERS**

**THE MAYOR OF PADUA**

**LAURETTE, his very lovely daughter**

**VERONICA, his (second) wife**

**PASQUIN/SILVIO. Laurette's persevering and resourceful suitor**

*Scene: a large room with a window overlooking the street and a dining room table.*

**LAURETTE**                      **Who in the name of heaven  
Is making such a din?  
The hour barely seven  
And there he goes again –  
Some lunatic, to my dismay,  
Outside below since break of day.**

**MAYOR & VERONICA**      **How long are we to suffer  
This volley of abuse?  
But I detect a lover  
At large and on the loose.  
A persevering lover  
At large and on the loose.  
A sneaky lover  
At large and on the loose.**

**MAYOR & VERONICA**      **In powerful crescendo  
His passion is conveyed.  
Here underneath your window  
He comes to serenade.  
Some Romeo, some so and so,  
Calls up from down below.**

**LAURETTE**                    **In powerful crescendo  
What message is conveyed?  
This noise beneath my window  
I call no serenade.  
No Romeo, some so and so,  
Is calling up from down below.**

**TRIO**                            **Some moronic bloke  
Plotting to provoke  
Decent honest folk  
With an unwanted joke.**

**LAURETTE**                    **Over here! From the window maybe  
We can identify the booby.**

**MAYOR**                        **Oh, no you don't!  
Aha! I'm on to you!**

**VERONICA**                    **Your prearranged maneuvers we see through.**

**MAYOR**                        **Yes! With a lover you're in cahoots,  
But beware feasting on forbidden fruits.  
Daughter, daughter, be not swayed  
By his enticing serenade.**

**LAURETTE**                    **That? That you call a serenade?  
Sarcastic and satirical,  
You surely speak in jest.  
A love song so unlyrical  
Can hardly meet the test.  
So unrefined, so out of tune.  
A tomcat howling at the moon.**

**MAYOR**                        **A lover, not a howling cat,  
That scheming soldier, I've no doubt.  
But luckily. we've found you out.**

**LAURETTE**                    **O Lord have mercy!  
O father, father!  
Not a lover! No, not that!**

**VERONICA**                    **Suppose you tell us  
What draws you to that open window.**



**LAURETTE & VERONICA**

**Too bad for poor Papa!  
He took a tumble,  
Now back, ha ha,  
A bit more humble.**

**Too bad for poor Papa!  
The noble hunter!  
He's drawn a blank  
And made a blunder.  
While searching for a soldier  
He's found a mountebank.**

**I have to laugh, ha ha ha ha ha!  
Poor dear Papa, humiliated.  
His pride, I fear, now much deflated,  
For which we have to thank  
This roving mountebank,  
This mountebank.**

**I fear the noble hunter  
Has made a mighty blunder.  
Ha ha ha ha, poor dear Papa,  
Humiliated!  
His pride, I fear, now much deflated.**

**Papa has drawn a blank.  
While searching for a soldier  
He's found a roving mountebank.  
No eager lover,  
But a roving mountebank.  
*(the mayor returns, crestfallen)***

**LAURETTE**

**You see, you scolded me unfairly.  
Your only child,  
Grossly charged and then reviled!  
No, no! This treatment I did not deserve.**

**MAYOR**

**Simply consider it down payment  
For when you deserve it later on.**

**VERONICA, also going to the window**

**For the fete the peddlers all come flocking.**

One of many, here since break of dawn,  
On his placard, what product is he hawking?  
Someone tell me what it's all about;  
These aging eyes can't make it out.  
My dear, you read it.

**LAURETTE**

*(spoken)*

Let me see ... let me see ...  
Here's what it says:

“Doctor Miracle has the cure  
For every human ailment new and old,  
Including many still unknown.  
No diseases can withstand  
The touch of his accomplished hand,  
The medicines created and sold  
By him and him alone.”

**TRIO**

Too bad for poor Papa, *etc.*

**DIALOGUE:**

**MAYOR:** All right, all right, I was wrong. Everybody make mistakes now and then. It was a mountebank out there, not some scheming loover. But his so-called music is no less obnoxious. I'll go tell this charlatan, this Doctor Miracle, that he can peddle his goods somewhere else. *(stopping)* By the way, if a new servant shows up while I am gone, tell him to wait. I'll be right back.

**LAURETTE:** A new servant? ...

**MAYOR:** Yes, my dear girl, you heard me. Someone to replace that rogue I caught sneaking letters to you from Captain Silvio. *(the music of the charlatan starts up again, louder than ever)* Ah, that quack! That public nuisance! He'll sell no bill of goods to me! *(he runs out)*

**VERONICA:** Now that your father is out of earshot, Laurette, I can say what I've been wanting to say. It's a step-mother's duty. I fail to understand your passion for soldiers.

**LAURETTE:** You mean my passion for *one* soldier. But it's so obvious! Army officers are the sweetest of all men, and Captain Silvio is the sweetest of all officers.

**VERONICA:** Really, Laurette, grow up! You seem to have your heart set upon a husband who marries you on Monday and on Tuesday he's shipped away to God knows where. As you know, my first husband, my *late* first husband, was a soldier.

**LAURETTE:** Yes, but ... but there's more to it ...

## **2. ROMANZA: LAURETTE**

**Am I to say no to desire?  
Snuff out the molten embers glowing?  
When love sets the bosom on fire,  
Who can control its coming or going?  
Oh, who can control its coming or going?**

**I only know, this man I love,  
We fit together hand in glove.  
Apart, my life feels all but over;  
With his return, I soon recover.**

**It's not in his words alone I find  
Beauty of soul and strength of mind.  
To a smile like his, so warm and tender,  
How can I help but cry surrender? Ah!**

**Am I to say no to desire?  
Snuff out the molten embers glowing?  
When love sets the bosom on fire,  
Who can control its coming or going?  
Oh, who can control its coming or going?**

## **DIALOGUE:**

**LAURETTE:** I can't imagine why you are so set against Captain Silvio. I have heard him say at least a hundred times that you were the most attractive woman he has ever met.

**VERONICA:** I never said that he was not charming. And highly intelligent. In fact, speaking for myself, I would say go ahead. Marry him. But your father is adamant.

**LAURETTE:** And unreasonable. What about my cousin Penelope? She married an officer and I've never heard a word of regret.

**VERONICA:** A different case altogether. An officer in the town militia.

**LAURETTE:** No, no, no! An officer in the dragoons.

**VERONICA:** No, my dear. A major in the militia.

**LAURETTE:** I beg your pardon! But you are mistaken.

**VERONICA:** I ought to know. I am her aunt.

**LAURETTE:** And I her cousin.

**MAYOR:** (*returning*) Well, I managed to get rid of him. Veronica, my sweet, I want you to get ready to ...

**LAURETTE:** I got it from Penelope herself.

**MAYOR:** Veronica, my sweet, you must get ready ...

**VERONICA:** Then you must have misunderstood.

**LAURETTE:** If he were in the militia, how come he was ordered to leave for Florence?

**VERONICA:** Pay attention, child. Your father is trying to say something. (*to the Mayor*) You were about to say? ...

**MAYOR:** That I wanted you to get ready to ...

**VERONICA:** He wasn't *ordered* to leave. He went to Florence simply for his own pleasure.

**MAYOR:** Veronica!

**VERONICA:** Of course, dear, I'm listening. (*to Laurette*) And you can hold your tongue for one minute.

**MAYOR:** Thank you. I want you to get ready to receive ...

**LAURETTE:** How do you explain his uniform?

**MAYOR:** To hell with his uniform! Will you listen or won't you?

**VERONICA:** There you go again, interrupting your father.

**LAURETTE:** I'm sorry. Were you saying something?

**MAYOR:** You must immediately prepare ...

**LAURETTE:** It was blue with red stripes, which *means* ...

**MAYOR:** Laurette! (*continuing*) ... to interview a new serv ...

**VERONICA:** Blue with *yellow* stripes! Militia!

**MAYOR:** Veronica! (*continuing*) ... a new servant that Doctor ...

**VERONICA:** And furthermore, miss, when talking with your stepmother, it is rude to insist upon having the last word. Rude and unladylike.

**MAYOR:** You can go to the devil, both of you!

**VERONICA:** (*to Laurette*) You see how you've made him angry?

**MAYOR:** (*to Veronica*) And you're no better than she is!

**LAURETTE:** I still maintain they are *red*. Dragoons!

**MAYOR:** Not again! (*With great satisfaction he pushes Laurette into a closet on the right and locks the door.*)

**VERONICA:** And I say *yellow*!

**MAYOR:** These women! Wind them up and they never stop talking. (*He locks Veronica inside a closet on the left.*) Inside! There you can jabber to yourself to your heart's content. I shall now finish my sentence. (*gravely*) I want you, Veronica, to be ready to interview a new servant recommended to me by my good friend Julep. The poor devil is waiting in the hallway. Come in, young man. Don't be shy. I have taken care of the women. They are both locked up!

**PASQUIN:** (*entering, a patch over one eye*) At your service, sir.

**MAYOR:** (Hm ... strapping young fellow ... perhaps a bit primitive, but that may be all to the good.) Step forward, let's have a look at you. What happened to your eye?

**PASQUIN:** Oh, I got into a little discussion with one of the dragoons and that's what he gave me. In return, I gave him thirteen smashed ribs and a few broken teeth.

**MAYOR:** Well done. How did it start?

**PASQUIN:** No special reason, but I don't need reasons. Never could stand the sight of a soldier. I go crazy and start slugging.

**MAYOR:** Admirable! (I can't wait to introduce him to Captain Silvio.) But aside from smashing ribs and breaking teeth, what else can you do?

**PASQUIN:** Versatility is my middle name.

### 3. COUPLETS: PASQUIN

Whether it's up or down the stairs,  
Maybe some go fast, but I go faster.  
Good at shoe mending and repairs;  
As chef or chauffeur, meet the master.

I wield a wicked carving knife;  
At cards trust me to draw the joker.  
A fading fire I bring to life  
With but the prodding of a poker.

A plain and simple guy,  
I'm worth at least a try.  
Uncouth but not unpleasant,  
And free at present.  
Simple minded but sober,  
I'm free at present.

My whims should come as no surprise.  
Though otherwise I'm sheer perfection,  
When people say step right this way  
I take the opposite direction.

My list of skills goes on and on,  
The talents needed for this position.  
For I know all that can be known,  
Plus a good deal in addition.

Outspoken, unafraid,  
I call a spade a spade.  
In short, a man to treasure  
And now at leisure.  
Ready, willing and able,  
And now at leisure.

#### DIALOGUE:

**MAYOR:** Well, well. A man of many talents. But it is your honesty and candor that count most with me. I need someone I can rely on. For instance, what would you do if while under my employ you were offered a bribe?

**PASQUIN:** A pretty little bribe? No, no, sir, I'm not ready to get married.

**MAYOR:** I'm talking about money. Suppose someone – a soldier, for example – offered you a handsome sum, or even a trifling sum, to get inside the house for access to my daughter ...

**PASQUIN:** A soldier! He'd never get past me. While I'm guarding the door you can be absolutely sure that he will not be in the house. If he makes a move, I make a move. If he raises a fist, I raise a fist.

**MAYOR:** Just what I wanted to hear. You understand me perfectly. So let me introduce you to my wife and to my daughter. (*opening the door for Veronica*) Veronica, my sweet, come out and meet our new servant.

**VERONICA:** Shutting me up inside a closet! A disgrace! But I know my rights. My second husband, my *late* second husband, was a lawyer.

**MAYOR:** Laurette, step out.

**LAURETTE:** I can prove that they were *red*. Penelope showed me his portrait, in *uniform* ...

**VERONICA:** Hardly conclusive ... I still maintain ...

**MAYOR:** Silence! Both of you! Pasquin, I present my wife and daughter.

**PASQUIN,** *with an exaggerated bow to Veronica* Ah, Mademoiselle ...

**MAYOR:** No, no, young man. This is my daughter, over here.

**PASQUIN:** I beg your pardon, miss. (*looking back at Veronica*) Couldn't tell which was which.

**LAURETTE:** (The idiot!)

**VERONICA:** (Hold on to this man!)

**MAYOR:** So now, Pasquin, let's see what you can do. A voice inside tells me it is time for lunch. Laurette, show him how we like the table set.

**LAURETTE:** Yes, father. Come along, Pasquin. We start with the plates.

**MAYOR:** Lots of energy. I like that. Hey, watch out! Look where you've going. My best china! That *was* my best china!

**LAURETTE:** Clumsy fool!

**VERONICA,** (*to her husband*) It was *your* fault, dear, for standing in his way.

**PASQUIN:** Here you are, sir. I've picked up all the pieces. Nothing lost.

**MAYOR:** Next time try to be more careful. But I'm hungrier than ever. What have we got for lunch?

**VERONICA:** What about an omelet? Eggs are in the kitchen.

**MAYOR:** Just the thing! An omelet! My favorite dish. Pasquin, here's your chance to show off.

**VERONICA:** Come along. I'll show you where the kitchen is.

**MAYOR:** And please, be gentler with the eggs than you were with my china!  
(*Pasquin leaves with Veronica*) Well, on the whole, I'm quite satisfied with my new acquisition.

**LAURETTE:** Then I would say that you are easily pleased. Really! A clumsy roughneck with only one eye.

**MAYOR:** Yes, but that one eye will keep close watch over you.

**LAURETTE:** In other words, you've hired him to spy on me.

**MAYOR:** Exactly! And if Captain Silvio starts making mischief again, he is going to collide with an immovable obstacle.

**LAURETTE:** But father, why? Why are you so opposed to the man I adore?

**MAYOR:** Because I know what's good for you. I want you to marry a man of maturity.

**LAURETTE:** A man of senility you mean.

**MAYOR:** Signor Bellino is not that old. Still, delay would not be advisable, I expect it to be settled by tomorrow.

**LAURETTE:** (Then I shall have to act tonight!)

**MAYOR:** (Why are daughters so difficult? She used to be so docile. Let's not argue. I smell lunch! (*Veronica and Pasquin return*))

#### 4. QUARTET

**PASQUIN:** Make way for the omelet!  
**VERONICA:** A glorious omelet!  
**MAYOR:** Make way, make way for the omelet!  
**LAURETTE:** The earth-shaking omelet!  
**PASQUIN:** My own special omelet!  
**VERONICA:** His own special omelet, *etc.*  
**PASQUIN:** My own omelet made for you,  
Showing off what I can do.

Creamy, golden brown,  
Soft as eiderdown.  
Sunlight from the South  
Melting in the mouth!

**LAURETTE & VERONICA:**  
Light but packed with flavor  
Made for us to savor.

**MAYOR:** With a golden omelet on a silver platter,  
What do petty clashes and collisions matter?

*(The same words are taken up by all in turn, with a few small variations)*

**PASQUIN:** I've proudly presented  
Eggs and butter well blended,  
Then adding some cream,  
The result: supreme!

**OTHERS:** Eggs and butter well blended,  
He's proudly presented  
And placed on a platter  
For utter delight.

Elegant and splendid,  
Eggs blended with butter,  
Placed upon a platter,  
Matter for delight.

**Make way for the omelet!**

*(Again, much repetition, with small variations to accommodate changing rhythms)*

**MAYOR:**                   **Let us not delay. Come along!**  
**The table awaits.**

*(They all sit down at the table on which Pasquin solemnly places the platter)*

**I have just one complaint:**  
**Bigger would be better.**  
**Ah, but never mind.**  
**Pass the plates!**

*(As he is on the verge of taking his first bite, he pauses, lifts his plate and bursts into song)*

**Here I've all you could ask of life,**  
**A home with its comforts,**  
**Money to spare.**  
**Lovely daughter and faithful wife.**  
**Though I count my blessings day and night,**  
**No felicity can compare**  
**With a hearty appetite.**

**There's no reward**  
**So fair, so fine.**  
**No, no!**  
**None, none can match that gift divine.**

**An egg so creamy.**  
**Still hot and steamy,**  
**As fine a dish**  
**As one could wish.**

**And if these eggs were given voice,**  
**They'd cry aloud, "O friends, rejoice!"**  
**These eggs would cry,**  
**"We only aim to satisfy!**  
**We're made just for you!"**

**VERONICA:**                   **Instead of singing, have a heart;**  
**We are starved and want to start.**

**MAYOR:**                   **I, too, am starved and want to start.**



**With their sweet perfume!**

**Sheer joy as well  
To see and smell,  
Oh, so delectable!**

**Vilified and slandered!  
Eggs not up to standard?  
How the color glows!  
Treat for eye and nose.  
How the sweet perfume  
Permeates the room!**

**Color, odor oh so pleasing!  
Surely you are only teasing.**

**THE THREE:**                   **This desecration, this abomination  
Calls for explanation.**

**PASQUIN:**                   **Your consternation, your exasperation  
Calls for explanation.**

**DIALOGUE:**

**MAYOR:** Out with it, you idiot! ... What have you done with these eggs?

**PASQUIN:** A chef never gives out his secrets ...

**MAYOR:** Thank God! Heaven help us if the word got around! Well, here goes!  
*(he sits down again at the table)*

**VERONICA:** You're not going to eat it?

**LAURETTE:** I wouldn't touch it.

**VERONICA:** Nor I.

**MAYOR:** Better a bad omelet than slow starvation. Pasquin, some wine,  
please, to wash it down. *(Pasquin hands him his glass. His eyes on Laurette,  
he pours the wine onto the table)* Stop! I didn't tell you to give me a bath.  
For heaven's sake, watch what you're doing!

**PASQUIN:** It will dry out.

**MAYOR:** *(enraged)* It will dry out! I should hope ... eventually. I'll have to take

a long walk in the sunshine. You, too, Veronica. I'm afraid I may need it for other reasons as well. That omelet ... I'm beginning to have regrets. Let's be off.

**LAURETTE:** Let me go with you.

**MAYOR:** Oh, no! Out in the open, where Captain Silvio can tag along? You will stay right here with Pasquin. True, he smashes plates, he ruins omelets, he has his own peculiar style of pouring wine. But let's do him justice: he is the ideal person to leave with a headstrong girl in love, and he will not take his eyes off you for a second. Do you hear that, Pasquin? I'm leaving my daughter here under your watch.

**PASQUIN:** Certainly, sir. Couldn't be in safer hands.

**LAURETTE:** *(aside)* Pasquin! My jailer!

**MAYOR:** *(to Veronica)* Come along, dear. Let's go. *(they leave together)*

**LAURETTE:** What a charming tete-a-tete!

## 5. DUO: LAURETTE & PASQUIN/SILVIO

**LAURETTE:** *(with scathing irony)*

Because they've granted me the pleasure  
Of time alone with you at leisure,  
Allow me for a while to admire  
With bated breath and fascination  
Your charm and wit, your brilliant conversation,  
Your poise, a model of manly grace,  
Your spark that sets my soul on fire.

**PASQUIN:** Ah, how well you put the case.

**LAURETTE:** But my God What an ugly face!

**PASQUIN:** Though few would call me pretty.  
There is a girl here in this very city  
Head over heels in love with me.  
She tries to resist. Alas, no use!

**LAURETTE:** Every gander has a goose.

**PASQUIN:** There you are wrong! The girl is charming,  
Beyond compare,  
Wise and fair.

**LAURETTE:** Who might this unlikely lady be?

**PASQUIN:** The Mayor's one and only child.

**LAURETTE:** Meaning me! Are you mad?

**PASQUIN:** Slow down a bit, for surely  
You judge me prematurely.

Be reconciled!  
Look a little closer:  
Yours for good or ill,  
A lover, be it noted,  
Faithful and devoted.

For good or ill,  
A lover ever faithful.  
Am I so ugly still?

**LAURETTE:** Yes, beyond redeeming!

**PASQUIN:** Why so inhumane?  
I beg you, look again.

**LAURETTE:** Ah! Could I be dreaming?  
Silvio, it's you!  
My handsome, brilliant captain!  
I should have known  
You'd find me on your own.

**BOTH:** Love will find its way,  
Oppose it though you may.  
Immune to harm  
While arm in arm,  
We brave the road ahead.

The call of love so clear,  
As one, we persevere,  
Beyond despair,  
A life to share  
And no more tears to shed.

Though long separated,  
Our goal is in sight.  
Never again to part,

**I love you will all my heart.**

**With you, with you!  
We fly from here.  
The coast is clear!**

*(As he lifts her gently in his arms like a child, the Mayor enters)*

**No. 6 TRIO: LAURETTE, SILVIO, MAYOR**

**SILVIO: Lord! Your father!**

**LAURETTE: Lord! My father!**

**MAYOR: Just in time I've returned.**

**LAURETTE: Now what happens?**

**LAURETTE & SILVIO: What to do? What to say?**

**MAYOR: How bizarre!  
Can I trust my own eyes?**

**LAURETTE & SILVIO: We are caught by surprise.**

**EACH IN TURN: Ah! Oh! Bah!**

**MAYOR: My daughter I observe  
In the arms of a servant.**

**SILVIO: Uh ...uh ... Sir, your daughter was unwell,  
Close to collapse, calling for aid.**

**MAYOR: Bosh! I can tell when I'm betrayed.  
I'll hear of no excuse.  
A bounder I can recognize.  
(Ah, that face I have seen before.)  
Your eye is back in use?  
Let me look again, up close.  
(Yes, those features ring a bell.)  
Aha! That wretched captain!**

**You take me for a dunce,  
But leave my house at once.  
You slinky, slimy lout.**

**Go before I throw you out!  
Be off before I throw you out.**

**You suppose me a dunce,  
But I say leave at once.  
Rest assured, nevermore  
Will you darken my door.**

**LAURETTE & SILVIO: Why in such a furore  
Do you show him (me) the door?  
You've no reason as yet  
To be cross and upset.  
You can rant, you can roar,  
Your tirade we'll ignore.  
Why so cross and upset?**

**DIALOGUE:**

**LAURETTE:** *(weeping)* **Why don't you just kill me and get it over with?**

**MAYOR:** **I've a better idea. I am ordering the Duke to close down the army post.**

**LAURETTE:** **How can you be so cruel? You will soon be grieving over your daughter's early demise.**

**MAYOR:** **And I thought Julep was my friend! It was he that led me to believe that this supposed Pasquin was a simple, honest rustic. You can't trust anybody nowadays. Tomorrow, my girl, I'll see you safely confined inside the walls of a convent.**

**LAURETTE:** **If I can't have Silvio, nothing else matters.**

**MAYOR:** **Your request will be granted. Who can you trust nowadays?**  
*(Veronica returns)* **Ah, my dear! I've much to tell you.**

**VERONICA:** **You'd better first read this letter. It's addressed to you.**

**MAYOR:** **As if I were in the mood for letters! Who brought it?**

**VERONICA:** **A soldier.**

**MAYOR:** **A soldier! After we've burnt it to a crisp he can have his letter back.**

**VERONICA:** **If you're not going to read it, I shall. "Your Excellency, revenge is sweet."**

**MAYOR: He's telling *me*?**

*(Veronica gives a shriek and falls in a faint onto a chair. Laurette snatches the letter from her hand, takes a look at it and does likewise)*

**MAYOR: What is this?** *(He takes the letter that Laurette let fall from her hands)*  
**"... revenge is sweet ..."** *(He also gives a shriek and falls into a third chair)*

**VERONICA:** *(coming to)* **My poor, dear husband!**

**LAURETTE:** **My poor, dear father!**

**MAYOR: Oh dear, dear me! No mistake, here it is in black and white;: "Thwarted every step of the way in my hopes pertaining to your daughter, I am forced to take action. A hard hearted, merciless, subhuman father like you does not deserve to live. This very morning it was my honor and pleasure to slip into your omelet a fatal dose of poison."**

**VERONICA & LAURETTE: Poison!**

**MAYOR:** *(continuing to read)* **"It is pointless to seek for a remedy. By now you are well beyond the reach of science."** *(after a pause)* **No wonder it tasted so peculiar.**

**VERONICA: One smell was enough for me – thank goodness!**

**MAYOR:** *(suddenly excited)* **Why do you just stand there? Run for a doctor! Help!**

**VERONICA:** *(very calmly)* **But my dear, you saw what it said, "You are beyond the reach of science." What you need is not a doctor, but a lawyer. We want to be quite certain that your will is in order.**

**MAYOR:** *(shouting at the top of his lungs)* **To hell with the will! I want a doctor! A doctor!**

**VERONICA: Ah, your voice already gone. Barely a whisper, barely a croak.**

**MAYOR:** *(whispering)* **Yes, yes ... I can see it printed on my gravestone: "Here lies the former Mayor of Padua." *(The mountebank's music is heard from offstage.)* That music! The last trump!**

**LAURETTE: Nonsense, father. It's only the mountebank that you succeeded in driving away, the one who calls himself Doctor Mireacle.**

**MAYOR: A miracle, that's what I need! I want him back! Call him this minute.**

**VERONICA:** Now, dear, let's not get excited. There is an excellent, *bonified* doctor in the neighborhood. We can send for him tomorrow, assuming that you are still with us.

**MAYOR:** Veronica! Call that mountebank, that Doctor Miracle. Have him come immediately, on horseback if necessary. He can name his price.

**LAURETTE:** *(from the window)* I've already given him the signal. He's on his way up.

**MAYOR:** And my entire fortune goes to *him* if he can get me out of this alive.

*(Doctor Miracle enters wearing a black cloak and a high pointed hat, with a long beard and large spectacles)*

**VERONICA:** Doctor, here is the patient, and beloved Mayor ...

**MAYOR:** Who orders you to save his life!

**MIRACLE:** *(feeling his pulse)* **Poisonatus!**

**MAYOR:** I give up! He's talking Latin.

**VERONICA:** A language in which I am fluent. My third husband, my *late* third husband, was a pharmacist.

**MAYOR:** Then for heaven's sake, translate! What did he say?

**VERONICA:** **Poisonatus!** If I interpret the participle correctly – it can be used variously – he said that you have been poisoned.

**MAYOR:** Brilliant! I could have told him that myself.

**MIRACLE:** *Poisonatus per poisonem innocentem in seipso, sed graven in omeletta.*

**VERONICA:** Ah, here it becomes a bit more complex. A poison innocuous in itself – *innocentum*, scholars insist on the hard “c”, *innokentum* -- but fatal if served in an omelet.

**MAYOR:** In an omelet! Aha! He's put his finger on the problem. But what's to be done about it?

**MIRACLE:** *Mors imminens.*

**MAYOR:** *(stunned)* **Death imminent!**

**VERONICA:** *(aside, cheerfully)* (My late fourth husband, Mayor of Padua!)

**MAYOR:** But you've been advertising a remedy that cures everything!

**MIRACLE:** *Remedium costat cinque centa millia ducatos.*

**VERONICA:** Good Lord, the remedy costs five hundred thousand ducats!  
(I'd give him five hundred thousand ropes to hang himself with.)

**MAYOR:** Assassin! As if I were in any condition to haggle over money!

**VERONICA:** My love, you mustn't let him take advantage of you. Stand up for your principles. Better to die than let him get away with murder.

**MIRACLE:** *(gazing at Laurette)* *Moribundus est paterfamilias?*

**MAYOR:** What is he saying?

**VERONICA:** Oh, nothing important. Just asking if you are a father. Yes, Doctor Miracle, you see his daughter right here. You may well suppose that I am her sister, but alas! I am soon to be his widow.

**MIRACLE:** *Pulcherissima!*

**VERONICA:** He says that Veronica is gorgeous.

**MIRACLE:** *Moribundum gueribo.*

**VERONICA:** He can cure you.

**MIRACLE:** *Si ...*

**VERONICA:** If ...

**MIRACLE:** *Si mihi filiam accordat in matrimonium.*

**VERONICA:** If you will allow him to marry your daughter.

**MAYOR:** Is that all? The answer is yes! I recover my health and have a doctor permanently on hand to keep a watchful eye. The best of all possible worlds!

**No. 7: QUARTET FINALE**

**MAYOR:** My dear child, you know what is required;  
Wed this man, not the one I abhor so.  
Your happiness is much to be desired,  
But my own life is even more so.  
Alas! My life is even more so.

**VERONICA:** *(to Laurette)* To the other man you've made a vow ...

**MAYOR:** But that is not the issue now.

**VERONICA:** To him your heart and hand belong.  
You have sworn to love Captain Silvio,  
And him alone.

**MAYOR:** Will you shut up and hold your tongue?  
A daughter should be glad to seize  
The opportunity  
To save a father's life.

**LAURETTE:** I beg you, father, on my knees!  
Do remember when you, too, were young.  
Into my heart you plunge a knife  
By forcing me to be his wife.

**VERONICA:** Although to you she owes her life,  
You ask of her too great a price.  
A brave but painful sacrifice  
If forced to be now a grudging wife.

**MIRACLE:** I'll breathe more freely, and more at ease  
When she is mine before too long.  
I see an end to stress and strife  
When I can call her my loving wife.

**MAYOR:** A daughter should be glad to seize  
The chance to save her father's life.  
It may entail some strain and strife,  
But she'll become a model wife.

A loving daughter should be eager ...

**LAURETTE:** I have no choice  
But to offer you my hand.  
I am resigned to what the fates demand.

**My father's life, no less, now on the line.**

**MAYOR:** **Then hurry up! Or I shall miss the boat.**

**VERONICA:** **Your consent you first must sign.**

**MAYOR:** **Of course, of course! No time to lose.  
And now, the antidote!**

**MIRACLE:** *(spoken)* **Your prescription, sir. Better read it aloud.**

**MAYOR:** *(also spoken)* **Hm! So he speaks a Christian language after all!  
*(reading)* "Sir, upon reading this prescription you will be instantly cured,  
with the compliments of your affectionate son-in-law, Captain Silvio, a  
poor cook, but an excellent and devoted husband, eager to make amends."**

**The nerve! The unmitigated gall!  
I was not poisoned after all.  
Your perfidy I shall repay:  
My daughter's hand is not for you,  
No, not for you!**

**VERONICA:** **Lord! The unmitigated gall!  
Not poisoned after all.  
Lord! Lord!**

**LAURETTE:** **Dear father, put aside  
Your anger and dismay.  
No grudge on this wedding day.  
And to our love, the miracle of love,  
Now yield the right of way.  
Forgive, forgive!**

**SILVIO:** **Now yield to love the right of way.  
Forgive, forgive!**

**MAYOR:** *(to Veronica)* **I appeal to you.  
What shall I do?**

**VERONICA:** **What's done is done, no harm was meant,  
So go along.  
Accept what you cannot prevent.**

**LAURETTE:** *(to audience)*

**You people out there, listen well!  
Our play we conclude with a moral  
With which few among us would quarrel;  
True love in the end will prevail.  
Doctor Miracle's ever on call.**

**TUTTI:**

**You kindly people, listen well!  
Our play we conclude with a moral  
Beyond dispute or quarrel.  
True love in the end will prevail.  
Doctor Miracle's ever on call.  
The doctor's ever there on call!**

**THE END**