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Dramatic Publishing

Scapino!



**a long way off from Molière
by Frank Dunlop and Jim Dale**



THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY

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This comic madness, inspired by Moliere's "Les Fourberies de Scapin," is set now in Naples and it begins with a song made up from the menu at an Italian restaurant!

"If you miss it, you will be crazy," wrote the critic of the N. Y. Times, "and if you let your kids miss it, you will be simply inhuman."

While this playbook contains the complete text, we invite you to consider an extraordinary production playbook that we also publish. It's filled with action photographs, illustrations, illuminating interviews with most of the creative talent on this show, and opposite each page of script, there's a diagrammed stage chart showing every move in the acclaimed Frank Dunlop/Young Vic production. While more expensive, the complete book is so rich in useful and fascinating information for producing this play and for studying the comedic arts of the theatre, that we urge you to consider it.

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The Frank Dunlop Young Vic Production of

scapino!

a long way off from Molière

by Frank Dunlop and Jim Dale

THE  **YOUNG VIC**
 **THE DRAMATIC PUBLISHING COMPANY**

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(SCAPINO)

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SCAPINO!

For Ten Men and Four Women

C H A R A C T E R S

OTTAVIO . . . *son of the wealthy merchant, Argante*
SYLVESTRO *Ottavio's guardian*
SCAPINO . . . *friend of Sylvestro, Leandro's guardian*
GIACINTA *in love with Ottavio*
ARGANTE *father of Ottavio*
GERONTE *father of Leandro*
LEANDRO *friend of Ottavio, son of Geronte*
CARLO *a bum*
ZERBINETTA *a gypsy*
NURSE *of Giacinta*
HEADWAITER
TWO HARASSED WAITERS (One singing)
ONE WAITRESS (Lives in cafe)

TIME: *The present.*

PLACE: *The seaport of Naples, a cafe bar at the side of the dock.*

What People Are Saying...

“Excellent—a crowd pleaser. The material was both challenging and understandable for high school kids. We had a blast and ended up with a very tight production.”

*Shon Denby,
DeKalb School of the Arts,
Atlanta, Ga.*

“The first act can be slow but the second act is hilarious. The scene where Geronte hides in a sack while Scapino pretends to be pirates, soldiers, etc., is laugh-out-loud funny. I’m not a big fan of audience participation, but here it was great fun!”

*Norman McPhee,
Racine Theater Guild,
Racine, Wis.*

“Excellent play for high schools. It allows for lots of creativity on part of director and cast. It is fast moving and funny.”

*Stan Strickler,
Stark County High School,
Toulon, Ill.*

PRODUCTION NOTES

THE SETTING:

The Italian commedia at its most basic needed nothing more than a couple of boards raised on trestles, with perhaps a blanket thrown over some poles to form a backdrop. A true son of its ancient father, SCAPINO can also get along with the bare essentials -- the simpler the better. Not that anyone has to stage SCAPINO with splintery old boards, sawhorses, and a moldy blanket. Not at all! SCAPINO can and should be visual fun for the audience's eyes. But it doesn't have to be complicated.

The setting of the play is a dockside cafe in Naples, and the main elements on stage are the cafe with its balconies L and R, sidewalk, ramps and a jetty (the forestage). Upstage of the jetty is a bit of the (imaginary) sea, where the boat is located. The sea, of course, is the Bay of Naples.

The stage chart shown here (page 90) is of the set designed by Carl Toms for the Broadway production. However, this is offered only as a starting point for your imagination; if you can think of something different, easier or better, don't be afraid to try. The main thing about the set is that it shouldn't be too pretty or too decorative. The important thing is the feeling of the Mediterranean, blue skies and hot sun.

Any attempt at scene-painting should be avoided, especially if the people involved are not very adept at it. It would be better to indicate the Mediterranean sky with a large blue flat and the sun with a large yellow one. The water on stage is not real -- it is represented by a blue ground-cloth. The boat is real, however, as are the gaudy decorations. These

touches of reality can convince the audience of the basic intense reality of the play, even though some parts of the action may be almost unreal.

PROPERTIES:

GENERAL PROPERTIES:

Three round tables (one with umbrella), each with two or three chairs; jukebox with records, bench, small rowboat, coil of rope, garbage can, broom (with rubber crutch tip on handle) in boat; rope hanging down left side of balcony R; large barrel.

Assorted crates, barrels, boxes, baskets, cans, etc. Optional decorations: posters, strings of onion or garlic, Chianti bottles, colored lights, clotheslines with clothes, netting, etc. as desired to dress the stage. When the play opens, there are three tablecloths hung over the balcony railing at L.

PERSONAL PROPERTIES:

Part One

WAITRESS: Five coins, checked tablecloth, wine carafe and glasses.

CARLO: Bicycle, bottle opener, glass of Coke, bottle of Coke; shoeshine kit with rag, brush, polish; old-fashioned telephone (without cord).

WAITER 1: Broom, handlebars of bicycle; napkin with spoon and fork; plate of spaghetti.

WAITER 2: Broom, bicycle wheel, bicycle seat; rolls in basket.

HEADWAITER: Menu, order pad and pencil, bill on plate, coin, napkin.

SCAPINO: Guitar, sausage (artificial).

SYLVESTRO: Chocolate bar in pocket, two bottles of Coke and two glasses, money, bicycle chain.

ARGANTE: Cane, wallet containing money.

GERONTE: Umbrella, key, money in wallet.

LEANDRO: Sunglasses.

Intermission

WAITRESS: Five coins, hero sandwich.

Part Two

NURSE: Handkerchief in handbag.

HEADWAITER: Piece of chalk.

WAITER 1: Large sack containing sausage (artificial).

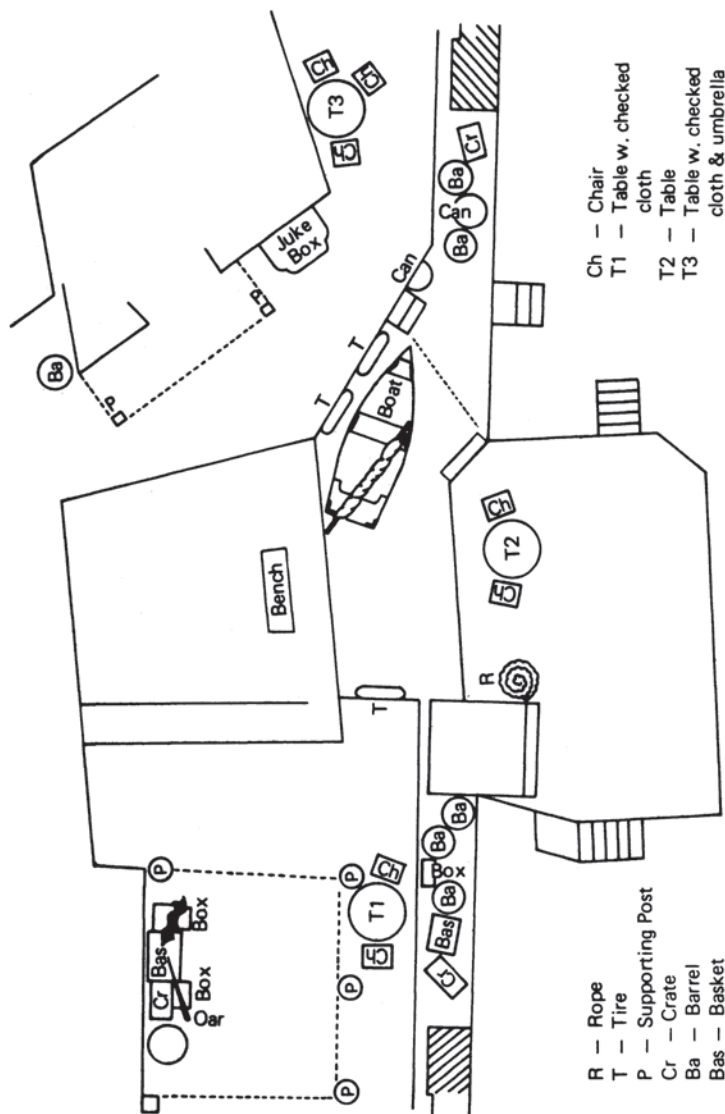
CARLO: Ice cream box with neck strap (cones, ice cream balls and dixie cup of ice cream), ice cream scoop.

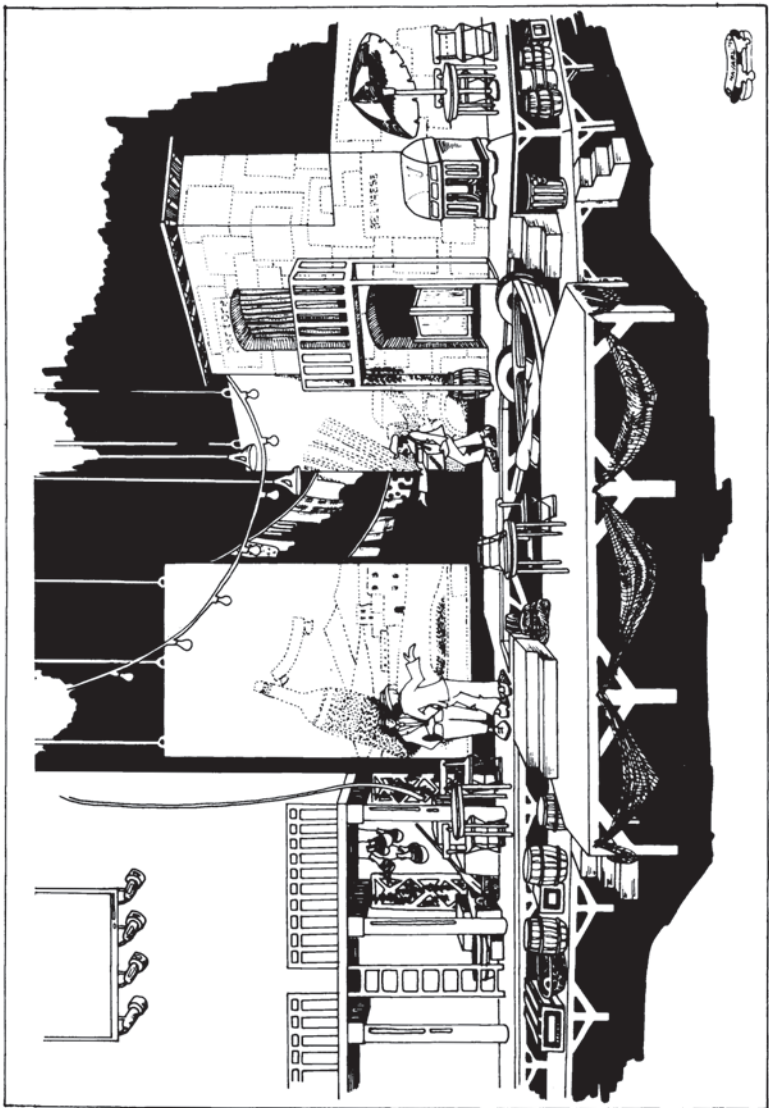
SCAPINO: Guitar; bandage on head (end of play).

LEANDRO: Bottle of chianti.

ZERBINETTA. Bracelet.

Note: If any spaghetti or Coke is spilled on the stage, it must be swept or mopped up as soon as possible, in order to prevent accidents. Also, the fork and knife must not be so loosely wrapped that they might slip out of the napkin during the throwing.





part one

No house curtain is used. The stage is preset (see Production Notes, pages 87-88) and the curtain opened fifteen minutes before the show begins.

(WAITRESS enters from cafe, yawning; puts five coins in jukebox, and selects songs. Jukebox does not begin so she kicks and slaps it. Music begins on slap. WAITRESS does warm-up exercises to music and exits into cafe. CARLO enters theatre from stage L and talks to audience in mock Italian. He climbs over barrels and boxes at LC and starts to cross R. WAITRESS enters cafe balcony and picks up three tablecloths (L to R) from railing. CARLO is C as he and WAITRESS on balcony exchange nasty glances. Seagulls are heard. WAITRESS exits as CARLO enters audience from stairs at stage RC, talking to audience in mock Italian. Guitar solo of song "Minestrone Macaroni" is heard from inside cafe. Three WAITERS enter from cafe, jukebox stops, first hummed measures of "Minestrone Macaroni" is heard. HEADWAITER supervises setting up of cafe from UC. WAITER 1 crosses to R table, places broom against table, crosses to DC table and sets chairs. WAITER 2 crosses to L table, sets chairs and sweeps area in front of cafe. SCAPINO enters cafe balcony playing second measure of "Minestrone Macaroni." Seagulls

fade. WAITRESS enters with tablecloths from cafe. She crosses to L table and leaves tablecloth. SCAPINO on cafe balcony and backstage singers begin singing "Minestrone Macaroni." They continue singing during the ensuing action.

MINISTRONE MACARONI

Pollo All Americana,
Scampi Fritti in Brodo
Pasta Bolognese,
Pate Mayonnaise,
Capuchino Espresso

Minestrone Macaroni,
Ravioli Aux Crevette,
Caramella In Padella,
Avocado Vinaigrette.

Scallopina Valdostana
Bistecca Con Risotto,
Pasta Bolognese
Pate Mayonnaise
Da Un Buon Appetito.

Minestrone Macaroni,
Ravioli Aux Crevette,
Caramella In Padella,
Avocado Vinaigrette.

WAITRESS crosses to R table and leaves tablecloth. WAITER 1 finishes setting chairs at downstage table. He starts to get broom, sees CARLO entering from R and chases him into audience, yelling in mock Italian. WAITRESS shakes out third tablecloth, crosses to downstage

table as WAITER 1 crosses to table R, passing her on bridge. He fixes chairs and begins sweeping stage R area. WAITRESS places tablecloth on downstage table. CARLO enters stage, sits at downstage table in right chair and pinches her bottom. At first she doesn't react, then as he persists she slaps him and begins to cross upstage. CARLO pulls tablecloth over him like a blanket and goes to sleep. WAITRESS sees him, screams at him in mock Italian, grabs tablecloth, pulls him out of chair and throws him down stairs. He yells at her in mock Italian and then begins talking to audience. WAITRESS fixes tablecloth at table, crosses to R table and, with back to audience, fixes tablecloth. CARLO sneaks up behind her, looks up her skirt, looks to audience and looks up her skirt again. WAITRESS starts to cross to L. CARLO climbs on mainstage and exits R. WAITER 1 throws broom to HEADWAITER, goes down on knee and makes a pass at WAITRESS as she pushes him out of her way. At this point, lyrics end, and melody of "Minestrone Macaroni" is hummed.

HEADWAITER throws his broom to WAITER 2 and makes a pass at WAITRESS as she pushes him out of the way. As WAITRESS crosses toward table L, WAITER 2 throws both brooms to HEADWAITER and falls on his knee and makes pass at WAITRESS. She slaps his face, straightens tablecloth, and exits L. HEADWAITER throws both brooms to WAITER 1 and all WAITERS cross to exit into cafe. HEADWAITER exits through cafe doors, and bicycle horn is heard off R. WAITER 1 and WAITER 2 see CARLO approaching cafe from R on a bicycle. They run to cafe and

open doors as CARLO rides through doors and into cafe, followed by the WAITERS. A loud crash is heard from inside cafe followed by much hubbub and confusion.

CARLO is thrown out of cafe by the seat of his pants and back of his neck by WAITER 1. WAITER 1 re-enters cafe as WAITER 2 exits cafe and throws a bicycle wheel at CARLO. WAITER 2 enters cafe as WAITER 1 exits cafe and throws handlebars at CARLO. WAITER 1 enters cafe as WAITER 2 exits cafe and throws bicycle seat at CARLO. WAITER 2 enters cafe as WAITER 1 throws SYLVESTRO out of cafe, who then falls on his knees next to CARLO. CARLO whispers to SYLVESTRO as WAITER 1 enters cafe. SYLVESTRO stands and runs DR to meet OTTAVIO, who has entered from the R aisle and is mounting the steps to the forestage. SYLVESTRO grabs him and says, "Your father is back." Meanwhile CARLO has picked up the three bicycle parts and exits R. Yelling an Italian expletive, OTTAVIO runs on stage to in front of bench at C, and turns.)

OTTAVIO. I'm lost, I'm ruined, what am I to do?
Sad news to an enamored heart! My world is
crumbling around me. Disaster after disaster.
You've just heard, Sylvestro, that my father is
back.

SYLVESTRO. Your father is back.

OTTAVIO. His boat docked this very morning.

SYLVESTRO (sitting at downstage table, in right
chair). This very morning.

OTTAVIO (moving a bit toward R). And that he's
come back determined to marry me off.

SYLVESTRO. To marry you off.

OTTAVIO. To a daughter of Signor Geronte.

SYLVESTRO. Of Signor Geronte.

OTTAVIO (down to bridge). And the daughter is already on her way back from Marseilles to do the deed.

SYLVESTRO. To do the deed.

OTTAVIO. And this news was sent by my uncle.

SYLVESTRO. By your uncle.

OTTAVIO (crossing below SYLVESTRO toward left chair). To whom my father sent it in a letter.

SYLVESTRO. In a letter.

OTTAVIO. And my uncle knows all we've been up to.

SYLVESTRO. All we've been up to.

OTTAVIO (placing hat on table and sitting). Oh, for heaven's sake, say something instead of parroting everything I say. (Hits table.)

SYLVESTRO. Parroting every -- (Hits hat instead of table.) -- what more can I say? (Fixing hat.) You've remembered everything, spot on.

OTTAVIO. Well, at least give me some advice.

Tell me how I can get out of this terrible mess.

SYLVESTRO (an Italian expletive: "Oi Mama Leone"). I'm just as much in the mess as you are. I could do with a bit of advice myself.

OTTAVIO. I'm ruined by this rotten return.

SYLVESTRO. The ruin's mutual.

OTTAVIO (standing and moving R). When my father finds out, I can see a thunderstorm of violent recriminations pouring on me. (SCAPINO exits cafe balcony.)

SYLVESTRO. Recriminations pouring are nothing. It's me what'll have to suffer most. I can see a thunderstorm of belts on the ear bursting on me.

OTTAVIO. Oh, God, how can I get out of this terrible mess!

SYLVESTRO. You should have thought of that before you got into it.

OTTAVIO (crossing bridge). It's not the time now to say "I told you so." What can I do? (Now he jumps across the water to SYLVESTRO.)

SYLVESTRO. I don't know.

OTTAVIO. What can I do? What can I do? (Grabs SYLVESTRO by neck and nearly pushes him into sea.)

SYLVESTRO. I can't swim.

(Enter SCAPINO from cafe.)

SCAPINO. How now, Signor Ottavio?

SYLVESTRO (pulling away from OTTAVIO). Scapino!

SCAPINO (crossing toward bridge). Hey! Hey!

What's the matter? What's wrong with you?

Something seems to be wrong . . . you look a little disturbed.

OTTAVIO (crossing bridge). Oh, my dear Scapino, I'm ruined. I'm going mad. I'm the unhappiest man in the whole world.

SCAPINO. Really? How's that?

OTTAVIO. You mean to say you haven't heard what's happened to me?

SCAPINO. No.

OTTAVIO (grabbing him by sleeve). My father and Signor Geronte are back, and they're determined to marry me off.

SCAPINO. Well, what's so horrible in that?

OTTAVIO (clutching sleeve). Oh, if only you knew the cause of my trouble.

SCAPINO. There, there, just you tell me everything.

You know I'm always willing to listen when a young fellow's in trouble.

OTTAVIO (pulling SCAPINO downstage). Oh, Scapino, if you can devise any means to get me out of this terrible mess that I'm in -- (Kneeling.) -- I'll be indebted to you for the rest of my life.

SCAPINO. Well, there's not much I can't do once I've set my mind on it. The good Lord has blessed me with quite a genius for clever ideas and inspired inventions, which the less talented, in their jealousies, call deceits and trickery. (Moves toward SYLVESTRO.) But without a shadow of a doubt, there's never been another fellow to measure up to me -- (Lifting chocolate bar from SYLVESTRO's pocket.) -- when it comes down to a little bit of fiddling or making a slight adjustment in a tight situation. Chocolate? (Offering chocolate to SYLVESTRO and then, going DC, to audience.) There's no one with a better reputation at the job, but talent and hard work just aren't appreciated these days. (Goes up to chair earlier vacated by OTTAVIO.) Since my affairs got a little troubled, I've given the whole thing up.

OTTAVIO (on the bridge). What affairs and what troubles, Scapino?

SCAPINO. Oh, I had a little contretemps with the law.

OTTAVIO. With the law?

SCAPINO (sitting). Yes, we didn't quite agree on a certain matter.

SYLVESTRO. They didn't quite agree. (Sits.)

SCAPINO. You know they treated me very badly, and I was so struck by the ingratitude of my fellow men I decided I would never lift up another finger from that day on to help anybody. But I'm always willing to listen.

OTTAVIO. You know, Scapino, that two months ago Signor Geronte and my father set sail together on a business trip in which both their interests were concerned.

SCAPINO. Quite.

OTTAVIO (moving toward table). And that Leandro

and myself were left by our fathers, myself in the care of Sylvestro -- (Hitting SYLVESTRO on the back.) -- and Leandro under your supervision. SCAPINO. And I've done my job very conscientiously. SYLVESTRO (standing). So have I. . . .

OTTAVIO (pushing SYLVESTRO back into chair).

Some time afterwards Leandro met a young gypsy girl and fell madly in love with her.

SCAPINO (laughing). Quite.

OTTAVIO (going back across the bridge). As we're great friends he took me straight away into his confidence and we went together to see the girl. Well, I thought she was quite pretty, but not as pretty as he thought I would. He spoke about nothing but her, day in, day out; hardly a moment went by that he didn't boast to me about her beauty, her charm, her wit, her every word. In fact, he got quite annoyed with me because I wasn't as lovesick as he was.

SCAPINO. Look . . . look . . . look . . . I don't quite see where all this is leading up to.

OTTAVIO (after a slight pause). One day . . .

SCAPINO. Ah!

OTTAVIO. When I was going with him to visit his obsession, we heard in a little house on a by-street, the sound of sobbing mixed with a great many tears. We asked what was going on.

SCAPINO. Yes, well, you would, wouldn't you? (To audience.) You'd say "What was going on?" Wouldn't you?

OTTAVIO. A woman passing by told us two foreign women lived there in terrible conditions.

SCAPINO. Well, what next?

OTTAVIO (mimes dragging LEANDRO). Curiosity made me drag Leandro to see what was the matter. (Goes to bench as he mimes entering room.) We went into a little room where we saw

an old woman dying . . . (SCAPINO and SYLVESTRO "Ah.") . . . a nurse crying . . . (SCAPINO and SYLVESTRO "Ah.") . . . and a young girl dissolved in tears, the most beautiful, the most exquisite that was ever seen.

SCAPINO. Ah-ha. Oi-oi.

OTTAVIO. Any other girl would have looked wretched in the state she was, wearing nothing . . .

SCAPINO and SYLVESTRO (double take). Eh . . .

OTTAVIO. . . . but rags, hair falling disheveled about her shoulders, but even in that state she glittered like a thousand stars. (SYLVESTRO gets up, starts across the bridge.)

SCAPINO. Yes, I'm beginning to get the point, yessssss. . . .

OTTAVIO. If you'd seen her, Scapino, in the state I had found her, you would have found her devastating.

SCAPINO. I don't doubt it. And without seeing her I realize she must have that certain . . .

(SYLVESTRO and SCAPINO: "Whoops.") . . . something. (SYLVESTRO has now crossed L and disappeared into the cafe.)

OTTAVIO. Her tears weren't those ugly tears which make a face red and swollen. (Moves a few steps toward R.) She cried in the prettiest way imaginable, and her misery was the most beautiful misery in the world.

SCAPINO. Yes. . . . Obviously.

(SYLVESTRO comes from the cafe with two Cokes and glasses and returns to the table as OTTAVIO continues.)

OTTAVIO. Sobbing . . . (Kneels.) . . . she threw herself on her knees beside the dying woman, and called her "Mother."

SYLVESTRO. Eh. (Stopping momentarily by OTTAVIO.)

OTTAVIO. Everyone felt tears come into their eyes to see such love and affection. (SYLVESTRO, now at table, turns bottles over into glasses.)

SCAPINO. Very moving indeed, and I suppose that one lot of love and affection sort of gave birth to another.

OTTAVIO. Scapino, a stone wall would have loved her.

SCAPINO. Quite.

(SYLVESTRO, realizing the Coke bottles are unopened, runs and hands them to OTTAVIO and runs back to SCAPINO. In frustration, OTTAVIO tries to take bottle top off with his teeth and then with his shoe. He then uses Coke bottles as binoculars. He looks to cafe and slowly turns R, looking through "binoculars." CARLO enters from R, walks to OTTAVIO, observing the activity, and stops in front of him as OTTAVIO sees CARLO through "binoculars." CARLO takes bottle opener from pocket, shows it to OTTAVIO, who gives him one of the bottles. CARLO opens the bottle, puts top in OTTAVIO's hand /OTTAVIO is listening to SYLVESTRO/ and begins exit toward cafe. OTTAVIO extends his bottle for a toast, CARLO stops, clinks bottles and exits through cafe drinking Coke. OTTAVIO tries to drink his Coke and realizes the cap is still on.)

SYLVESTRO. Now look, if you don't cut the story short we'll be listening here till tomorrow. Now I'll finish it in two words. His heart burst into flames. He couldn't live without the girl. He's never off the doorstep. His visits to comfort the

unhappy girl make him more of a lodger than a visitor. The nurse forbids him the house. Irresistible force. (SYLVESTRO and SCAPINO: "Immovable object.") He begs, he grovels, he argues. Not a hope. For though the girl is without money and friends, she comes from a good family, and unless he marries her, he's got to keep his hands off her.

(SYLVESTRO moves R, then up across the bridge, turning back again as he continues his speech.) Passion feeds on obstacles. He wracks his brain, ponders, reasons, debates and then makes up his mind, and he's been a married man for the last three days. Now add to that the unexpected return of his father; add to that the other marriage his father's arranged with Signor Geronte's daughter, that's the daughter of a second wife Geronte married at Marseilles. (OTTAVIO comes beside SYLVESTRO, who is now standing on the bridge.)

OTTAVIO (handing Coke back to SYLVESTRO). And worse than all this, add the poverty in which my poor, lovely wife now lives and my inability, penniless as I am, to help her. (Sits on rope.)

SYLVESTRO. There.

SCAPINO (standing, crossing to OTTAVIO). Is that all? Do you know the pair of you seem bowled over by nothing. I mean, what on earth are you worried for? (Goes up on bridge.) Aren't you ashamed to be panicked by such a little thing? What the devil, you've been to the Actor's Studio, and you can't stir your brain to some little stratagem, some little wheeze to put things right. (Now in front of bench.) Do you know I was no bigger than that, when I was clearing up matters a thousand times more complicated. Oh, if only my legal mix-up had not made me