The Light in the Piazza

book by
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music and lyrics by
ADAM GUETTEL

directed by
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Lincoln Center Theater
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ACT ONE

(OVERTURE)

I.i. Piazza Signoria

(Florence, 1953, summer. Margaret Johnson – an elegant, self-possessed, practical and attractive woman in middle age – views her daughter Clara – 26, looks and acts younger, carrying a sketchpad – across the piazza.)

CLARA
Mother? What happened here?

MARGARET (to the audience)
What did happen here? I played a tricky game in a foreign country? ... What did I do?

CLARA
Mother?

MARGARET
What happened? Wellll, let’s see ...

(She consults her Baedeker)
(STATUES AND STORIES)

MARGARET
ON A CENTRAL SQUARE
IN A CITY OF THE SUN
ROSE A PALACE

IT WAS HIGH AND HANDSOME
GLEAMING LIKE THE CROWN OF A KING

CLARA
Where would that be? Where is that?

MARGARET
IN THE TOWER
A WARNING BELL WOULD RING?

CLARA
WHAT KIND OF WARNING

MARGARET
FOR A FIRE OR RIVER OVERFLOWING

CLARA
OH!

MARGARET
FIRENZE
ON A CENTRAL SQUARE
THE BEGINNING OF A KINGDOM REPUBLIC

CLARA
WAS THERE A KING WAS THERE A QUEEN?
MARGARET
THERE WERE PRINCES, PAINTERS,
NOBLEMEN OF LOGIC AND ART

CLARA
FIRENZE!

MARGARET
LEONARDO –

CLARA
LEONARDO –

MARGARET
MICHELANGELO, THE START

CLARA
That's a completely naked statue.

MARGARET
'TWAS A DAWNING DAY UNFURLING

CLARA
FROM THE HEART

(Italian phrases.)

CLARA
THE PAINTING OF THE WORLD WE KNOW

MARGARET/CLARA
THE WORLD WE KNOW
ON A CENTRAL SQUARE

MARGARET
IN A CITY MADE OF STATUES AND STORIES

CLARA
GO ON AND TELL ME WHAT THEY MEAN
MARGARET
IT IGNITED THERE
LIKE A BEACON COMING OUT OF THE DARK
YOU CAN FEEL IT

CLARA
YOU CAN FEEL IT

MARGARET
YOU CAN FOLLOW

CLARA
YOU CAN FOLLOW

MARGARET
THE SPARK

CLARA
WE’RE ON VACATION!

MARGARET
FROM AN AGE TO AN AGE

CLARA
FROM AN AGE TO AN AGE

MARGARET
IN FIRENZE

CLARA
IN FIRENZE

MARGARET
IN FIRENZE

CLARA
IN FIRENZE

MARGARET
THE SPARK, THE WORLD

CLARA
THE PAINTING OF THE WORLD
MARGARET & CLARA
IT STARTED THEN AND THERE
AND HERE WE ARE
IT'S A NEW OLD WORLD TO ME
IT'S A NEW OLD WORLD AND
WE ARE HERE

ALL
(Italian phrases.)

(Music continues under:)
MARGARET
Your father and I took our honeymoon here before the war.

CLARA
Really?

MARGARET
And this is my first time back. I think it’s my favorite place on earth ...

CLARA
I can see why.

MARGARET
The openness? The light? ... And what else? ... *(looks at the Baedeker)* From her site on the great route from upper Italy to Rome, she commanded the passage on the Arno"—they call cities she here. I bet you didn’t know that...

CLARA
I bet she’d lose her bet.

MARGARET
Thanks to her great success in war and industry ... *(wool, silk, furs)*... Florence became one of the foremost trading centers in all of Europe. In fact, the gold Florina became widely recognized as the European form of currency.

CLARA *(out of the blue, impulsive and excited)*
We’re here!
(Rest of STATUES AND STORIES)

CLARA
ON A CENTRAL SQUARE

MARGARET
IN A CITY MADE OF STATUES AND STORIES
IT IGNITED THERE
LIKE A BEACON COMING OUT OF THE DARK

ALL
(Italian phrases.)

CLARA
YOU CAN FEEL IT

MARGARET
YOU CAN FEEL IT

CLARA
YOU CAN FOLLOW

MARGARET
YOU CAN FOLLOW

CLARA
YOU CAN FEEL IT

MARGARET
YOU CAN FEEL IT

CLARA
YOU CAN FOLLOW

MARGARET
YOU CAN FOLLOW
THE SPARK

CLARA
WE'RE ON VACATION

(4/12/05)
MARGARET
WE'RE ON VACATION

ALL
AH...

CLARA
IN FIRENZE

MARGARET
IN FIRENZE

FRANCA
Fattene una camminata!

GIUSEPPE
Ho detto che stavo giocando à carte.

FRANCA
Tieni troppe puttane!
Non voglio andare fuori.

SIGNOR
Stai lavorando oggi?

GIUSEPPE
Cinque minuti.

SIGNOR
Cinque minuti!

MARGARET
THE SPARK THE WORLD

MARGARET/CLARA
IT STARTED THEN AND THERE...
AND HERE WE ARE
IT'S A NEW OLD WORLD TO ME
IT'S A NEW OLD WORLD AND
WE ARE FINALLY HERE

CLARA
THE PAINTING OF THE WORLD

ALL
AHs

OHs
AHs
(In the square, behind her, comes Fabrizio Naccarelli – well dressed, a little slick, perhaps, also dazzlingly handsome, twenty. He spots Clara and watches her for a moment)

MARGARET
Ah, what else, what else, what else... (looks at the tour guide book) Oh, this is interesting: a man was, well, it isn’t a very happy thought, but a man was burned to death right over there, a monk. Andiamo... Here’s the plaque.

CLARA
Oh?

(Clara reaches out to touch the plaque and recoils as if her hand has been severely burned.)

MARGARET
What’s wrong?

CLARA
It’s still hot. Why was he burned to death?

MARGARET
Well, I’ll tell you why, even though you love to torture me like that... (checks Baedeker) Heeee was a preacher who told them they were wicked for playing dice and musical instruments and reading certain books – sounds like a Baptist – and they didn’t like him for it.

CLARA
I wouldn’t either.

MARGARET
People were apt to be very cruel in those days. But they must feel sorry for it, because they’re still talking about it all these years later. All right now, don’t wander off.

CLARA
I won’t.

(Clara moves to the far corner of the square, Margaret engrossed in her reading. Clara leans into a breeze, looking off. When a sudden breeze steals the hat from Clara’s head; it rises up and away, in slow motion, and she turns to chase it. The hat continues to elude her, skittering further along the ground. And, as if an unseen hand were manipulating it all, Fabrizio reaches down and picks up the hat. Clara looks up to meet his eyes.)
Everything stops. Then in a sweet, vaguely foolish and formal manner, Fabrizio bows slightly and sings:

FABRIZIO
FABRIZIO NACCARELLI.

CLARA
CLARA.

MARGARET
Clara! Clara, I said don’t run off ...(rises, moves toward them, realizes what has happened) Oh. Grazie, grazie very much. (takes Clara’s hand) Here we go, love.

(Fabrizio sees Clara’s sketchpad. His English is almost non-existent.)

FABRIZIO
You make this? Mi dispiace. Il suo nome? Non parlo English.¹

MARGARET
Not to worry, no problema.

CLARA
Thank you.

FABRIZIO
Oh, you, my, you so very welcome. (to Margaret) Miss? Signora?

CLARA
This is my mother, Margaret Johnson.

FABRIZIO
Johnson, come Van Johnson?!²

CLARA
Yes!

FABRIZIO
You are – relatives?

¹ I’m sorry. Your name? I speak no English.
² Like Van Johnson?
MARGARET
No, no.

FABRIZIO
Oh.

MARGARET
Unfortunately, oops we have an appointment, I’m sorry to have to—

CLARA
What appointment?

FABRIZIO
Please, if you like, mi – Il mio, yes, shop, in Piazza della Repubblica -- How
do you say – Beeg square. If I may, please arrive my shop? Oh my English--

MARGARET
Why they think any of us will ever fall for this.

FABRIZIO
Via Strozzi, Otto – Capisce?

CLARA
Yes.

FABRIZIO
Guanti, cravatte – Everything for the gentlemens. Not for you but for your
husbands.

CLARA
I don’t have any husbands.

FABRIZIO
Signorina, ah, forgive me.

MARGARET
Oh brother. I’m afraid – We’ll very much try to stop by your shop domani.

---

1 Understand?
2 Gloves, hats.
FABRIZIO
Yes, tomorrow.

CLARA
Tomorrow then.

FABRIZIO
My pleasure.

CLARA
We’re staying, mother, what’s the name of the hotel? The Hotel – ?

MARGARET
Clara, honestly, I have to go to the bathroom, if you must know, thank god he doesn’t speak English.

FABRIZIO
Bathrooms? Are – yes, in café, li.\(^5\)

MARGARET
Oh yes, thank you, mille grazie.

CLARA
The Grant!

MARGARET
Clara!

CLARA
Grant Hotel.

FABRIZIO
Si, si, the Grand.

CLARA
Grand.

MARGARET
Clara

FABRIZIO
The friend of me is open the door for you suitcase.

\(^5\) There.
CLARA
Really? That’s amazing. (confidentially) A monk was burned to death right over here. Now is that any way to treat the clergy?

MARGARET (to the audience)
Anyone meeting Clara for the first time usually finds this incredible, but ... Well, Clara is not ... She’s not quite as she seems. She’s very young for her age. Is ... And, oh, I have managed in many tactful ways over the years to explain her and her situation to young men without wounding them. But ... well, none of that should be necessary here, one would certainly hope. Never mind. (turns to Clara and Fabrizio) Come, darling. Grazie again, ciao.

CLARA
Grazie.

(Fabrizio moves off.)

CLARA
Did you see that?

MARGARET
Yes, I’ve seen it before.

CLARA
A hat do that?

MARGARET
No, not that.

CLARA
What did you mean?

MARGARET
No, nothing, come, there’s a lot to see if we want to get it all in.

(They disappear.)
I.ii. The Uffizi.

(An English Tour Guide appears, followed by a small group.)

TOUR GUIDE
Uffizi, of course, means office. The collection was bequeathed to the People of Florence by Anna Maria Lodovico, the last of the Medicis.

Here we see a late work by Fra Filippo Lippi, a monk, famous for his misconduct. He painted his Madonnas to look like the nuns he slept with, including the one who eloped with him and gave him a son. When his escapades brought him to financial ruin, he turned to forgery and extortion. (gestures to the painting) “Madonna with Angels.” Now over here we see...

(Margaret and Clara enter. The Tour Guide continues under them)

MARGARET
Now this is called the Michelangelo room. Oh, look at this angel. The way he’s pointing like that? He, or she, is telling Mary she’s going to have a baby and God is the daddy. “The Annunciation” by Ghirlandaio? No, that’s Leonardo.

CLARA (overlapping)
It’s almost noon. We said we’d meet him.

MARGARET
Oh, let’s listen to what she has to say.

CLARA
I told him I would be there.
MARGARET
I don’t think we’ll have time to go to his shop today, darling, don’t you want to—?

CLARA
I want to.

MARGARET
We can’t always have what we want, Clara.

CLARA
We seem to be having what you want.

MARGARET
We’re extremely contrary today.

CLARA
You treat me like an infant sometimes. Maybe you’re the contrary one.

MARGARET
Clara. I told him we might come. Because I don’t think we should make friends with him.

CLARA
Why?

MARGARET
Because—he has his own life here and we have to go back home eventually.

CLARA
I could write him.

MARGARET
Remember how hard it was to leave Ronnie to come here?

CLARA
Ronnie is a dog, Fabrizio’s a boy.

MARGARET
Uh-huh. I thought you’d be happy to get away for once. And things are often hard.
CLARA
Mom.

MARGARET
We can see about all that later! Now shh! You’re being rude. And this is interesting.

(Margaret joins the tour group. Clara’s gaze wanders to the naked torso of a male with genitals intact. She wanders up to the statue, stares intently at the headless man’s penis, then touches it before looking out at us.)
(THE BEAUTY IS)

CLARA
THES ARE VERY POPULAR IN ITALY.
IT'S THE LAND OF NAKED MARBLE BOYS ...
SOMETHING WE DON'T SEE A LOT IN WINSTON SALEM
THAT'S THE LAND OF CORDUROYS

I'M JUST A SOMEONE IN AN OLD MUSEUM
FAR AWAY FROM HOME AS SOMEONE CAN GO
AND THE BEAUTY IS I STILL MEET PEOPLE I KNOW
HELLO

THIS IS WANTING SOMETHING
THIS IS REACHING FOR IT
THIS IS WISHING THAT A MOMENT WOULD ARRIVE
THIS IS TAKING CHANCES
THIS IS ALMOST TOUCHING
WHAT THE BEAUTY IS

I DON'T UNDERSTAND A WORD THEY'RE SAYING
I'M AS DIFFERENT HERE AS DIFFERENT CAN BE
BUT THE BEAUTY IS I STILL MEET PEOPLE LIKE ME

EVERYONE'S A MOTHER HERE IN ITALY
EVERYONE'S A FATHER OR A SON
I THINK IF I HAD A CHILD
I WOULD TAKE SUCH CARE OF HER
THEN I WOULDN'T FEEL LIKE ONE

I'VE HARDLY MET A SINGLE SOUL
BUT I AM NOT ALONE
I FEEL KNOWN
THIS IS WANTING SOMETHING
THIS IS PRAYING FOR IT
THIS IS HOLDING BREATH AND KEEPING FINGERS CROSSED
THIS IS COUNTING BLESSINGS
THIS IS WONDERING WHEN
I'LL SEE THAT BOY AGAIN
I'VE GOT A FEELING
HE'S JUST A SOMEONE TOO
AND THE BEAUTY IS
WHEN YOU REALIZE
WHEN YOU REALIZE
SOMEONE COULD BE LOOKING FOR A SOMEONE ...
LIKE YOU

(Over the last of this, Fabrizio has appeared, observing Clara from between the paintings.)

FABRIZIO
Ah! Clara!

CLARA
Fabrizio!

FABRIZIO
Il destino. (having practiced this phrase, the correct inflection, vowels, etc.)
How, how good to see you, Clara.

CLARA
Oh–

MARGARET (same time)
Hello.

FABRIZIO
Anche Lei, Signora.

CLARA
It is so good to see you!

FABRIZIO
How, coincidenza, no? Sì?

MARGARET
No, sì.

FABRIZIO
Uhh, tell me, Clara, are you – Momento, prego, mi scusi. Tell me, Clara,
Tell me, Clara, Signora, are you free for lunch?
MARGARET
I'm sorry, we have plans.

FABRIZIO
Oh, wonderful, may I suggest a café for us?

MARGARET
I said we have other plans, I'm sorry.

CLARA
What plans?

FABRIZIO
Ah, yes, si, I am sorry--

MARGARET
Ciao, Fabrizio.

CLARA
Ciao! We'll come by your shop!

(As Clara and Margaret move off, Fabrizio remains, and now we are inside:}
I.iii(a). THE NACCARELLI'S

(Fabrizio sighs; he is in real, constant, worsening and unassuageable pain, the pain of love; his father, SIGNOR NACCARELLI, sits and reads the newspaper, not responding to the agony of his child.)

FABRIZIO
IL MONDO ERA VUOTO
LEombre LO RIEMPIVAN
LA LUCE NON PARIVA MAI

[The world was empty
Filled with shadow
The light never arrived]

CLARA, LA LUCE NELLA PIAZZA
CLARA, MIA LUCE, MIO COR
ORA CHE SONO SVEGLIO
ALL'OMBRA NON VO TORNAR

Clara, the light in the piazza
Clara, my light, my heart
Now that I am awake
I won't go back to shadow]

NON SAPEVO DI SENTIRMI SOLO
PRIVO DEL SENSO DELLA VITA

I never felt myself to be lonely
Missing the essence of being alive
But that's how it was]

ERA COSI

CLARA
CLARA
CLARA, MIA LUCE, MIO COR

L'ESSENZA CHE MI MANCAVA,
SEI TU
LA TUA LUCE M'INONDA
MA LEI NON PUO AMARMI
NON COSI
O CLARA
NON AMERA UN RAGAZZINO
NON PUO AMARE UN RAGAZZINO
DIO
PAPÀ

[The essence I was missing
is you
Your light fills me (inundates me)
But she won't love me
Not like I am
She won't love a little boy
She cannot love a little boy

DORMIVO
IO NON SAPEVO D'ESSER SOLO
SOLO NEL BUO
NON ERO VIVO
NON C'ERA CLARA
MA ORA LA TUA LUCE M'INONDA

I was sleeping
I didn't know I was alone
Alone in the dark obscurity
Not even alive
There was no Clara
But now your light fills me
(GIUSEPPE enters with a tie.)

GIUSEPPE
Papà, l'hai ordinate tutte queste? [did you order these?]

SIGNOR
Si

GIUSEPPE
(to Fabrizio) Ciao, Romeo.

FABRIZIO
Devo sembrare più come un uomo di successo, più importante, più, più... più come Van Johnson!

[have to look successful, more important, more more...more like Van Johnson?]

SIGNOR & GIUSEPPE
Van Johnson??

FABRIZIO
Si, Van Johnson!

SIGNOR
Vuoi assomigliare à Van Johnson?
Baudelaire vuol essere Fred Astaire.
No! È troppo tardi.

[You want to look like Van Johnson? Baudelaire wants to be Fred Astaire No! Too late.]

GIUSEPPE
Sì, troppo tardi.

[Yes, too late.]

SIGNOR
Resteraì un bohémien.

[You will remain a bohemian.]

GIUSEPPE
Bohémien.

SIGNOR
Ho finito di lavorare per oggi. [I am through working for the day.]

GIUSEPPE
Ha finito.

[He’s through.]

FABRIZIO
Aiutami, Papà! [Help me, Papa!]

SIGNOR
Magari domani. [Tomorrow maybe.]
FABRIZIO
No, non può essere domani, dev’essere
Adesso!

MA LEI NON PUÒ AMARMI
NON COSÌ

O CLARA
NON AMERÀ UN RAGAZZINO
NON PUÒ AMARE UN RAGAZZINO

DIO!
PAPÀ!
CLARA
CLARA
CLARA, MIA LUCE, MIO COR

L'ESSENZA CHE MI MANCAVA,
SEI TU
SEI TU
CLARA
CLARA
CLARA, MIA LUCE, MIO COR

L'ESSENZA CHE MI MANCAVA,
SEI TU
SEI TU
CLARA
CLARA
CLARA, MIA LUCE, MIO COR

[No, it can’t be tomorrow, it has to be now]

[But she won’t love me
Not like I am]

She won’t love a little boy
She cannot love a little boy

Clara, my light, my heart

The essence I was missing
is you

Clara, my light, my heart

The essence I was missing
is you
SOLO NEL BUIO
NON ERO VIVO
O DIO DATEMI MIA CLARA
O PADRE LA SUA LUCE

I was alone in the dark obscurity
Not even alive
Oh God, Give me my Clara
Oh Father, her light

(We've had so many modulations by this point that SIGNOR can't take it any more. In protestation, over FABRIZIO'S last note, he agrees to help.)

SIGNOR
O, Madonna mia.
OK, Van Johnson.

(Fabrizio sings)

FABRIZIO
M'INONDA

fills me]
I.iii.(b) Tie Shop Trio

SIGNOR
Sei pronto? [Are you ready?]

FABRIZIO
Pronto. [Ready]

SIGNOR
Abbottenati! [Button!]

GIUSEPPE
In bocca al lupo. [Good Luck (idiomatic expression)]

SIGNOR
Va bene. [Good]

SIGNOR
È Così. Guarda. [What rubbish. Like so. Watch.]
Vai sopra, gira intorno, passa dentro, tira giù. [Turn around, put through, go over, pull down]

GIUSEPPE
Ecco, che dici? Prova la mia giacca. [Here, what do you say? Try on my jacket]

FABRIZIO
Allora, che dite? [So, what do you say/think?]

GIUSEPPE
Ahi ahi ahi ahi ahi...
Giuseppe has the idea for a dance lesson:

GIUSEPPE
D’accordo, sono una bellissima ragazza americana. [All right, I’m a beautiful girl. A beautiful American girl.]

Ehi, tu! [Hey, you!]

Smettila di agitarti di qua e di là. Le mani qui. Non troppo vicino. Segui... [Stop moving about. Hands here. Not too close. Follow (this)]

Giuseppe makes Fabrizio try it alone or do the step again with him:

Fallo tu, dai. [Lit: You do it, come on, but it’s like “okay, you do it” to my ear]

GIUSEPPE
È una causa persa. [It’s a lost case]

Guarda. [watch]
Prova tu. [You try]

Headshake; Giuseppe does complicated riff:

FABRIZIO
NO no no no no no. [No way.]

GIUSEPPE
Stupido, etc. [stupid, etc.]

SIGNOR
Dai, pulcino, vieni con me... [All right, little one/chick, come with me.]

GIUSEPPE
Ciao, Van Johnson.
I.iv. The Duomo

(Fabrizio approaches his father who is meeting with a Priest. When he sees Margaret and Clara entering, looking up into the dome, he hides, flowers behind his back.)

MARGARET
Isn’t that something? ... Look up there at that big old Duomo. You wouldn’t want to trip up there, would you? That’s a long way down.

CLARA
Olly, olly oxen free!

Priest
Shh!

(Fabrizio appears, pretending to be a tourist. Margaret is the first to see him.)

FABRIZIO
Clara!

CLARA
Fabrizio!

FABRIZIO
Veramente⁶, it is destiny!

(Then, to show that he is teasing them, he produces the bouquet of flowers for Clara.)

FABRIZIO
For you signorina.

CLARA
They’re beautiful. Mother, look!

MARGARET
Well, look what the cat dragged in.

FABRIZIO
Signora.

⁶ In truth
CLARA
Milione di grazie!\(^7\)

FABRIZIO
Milione!

CLARA
Sono cosa bella.\(^8\)

FABRIZIO
Belli, non bella.

CLARA
Belli.

*(Margaret firmly positions herself between Clara and Fabrizio, about to put a final end to this farce when Signor Naccarelli walks by, and Fabrizio sees him.)*

FABRIZIO
Papà! Papà! Che fai qui?\(^9\) Signora, Signorina Johnson, my father, Signor Naccarelli.

SIGNOR
How do you do?

MARGARET
Hello.

FABRIZIO
He speaks English, not like me.

CLARA
Your English is wonderful!

---

\(^{7}\) A million thank you’s!
\(^{8}\) They’re so beautiful.
\(^{9}\) What are you doing here?
SIGNOR
Such a coincidence. May I take you perhaps for an aperitivo, Signora?

MARGARET
Oh, it’s a little early in the day.

SIGNOR
Certamente. Perhaps you and your daughter will join us later then for a passeggiata. In the Piazzale Michelangelo. Sunset. Everybody come there.

CLARA
We’d love to, tante grazie! ¹⁰

MARGARET
Well … yes, grazie, I hope we can –

CLARA
We’ll be there, waiting.

SIGNOR
Five o’clock then.

MARGARET
If we can.

CLARA
We can!

SIGNOR
Till then.

(He bows as he and his son begin to move off.)

MARGARET
Clara – I … Ciao.

FABRIZIO
Ciao. Five o’clock.

¹⁰ Thank you so much!
CLARA
Yes. Ciao.

FABRIZIO
Ciao.

CLARA
Ciao!

FABRIZIO
Ciao.

CLARA
Ciao!

FABRIZIO
Five O’clock.

(They laugh as Fabrizio disappears; Clara stands, watching him go. Margaret turns to us:)

MARGARET
You have no idea what it does to me to see her happy like this. But I have to tell them the truth. It cannot continue. I can’t allow it. Oh, why isn’t Roy here? You cannot say no to these people. And they seem too slick, don’t they? A father and son team? (To Clara) Come, darling, I think we need to put our feet up back at the hotel.

CLARA
Okay. Then we’re going to meet them, five o’clock.

(The Priest Enters as they exit, severely startling Clara)

MARGARET
It’s all right, darling. He works here.
I.v. Piazzale Michelangelo

(Sunset. Franca is helping Fabrizio with his English.)

FRANCA
Clara ...

FABRIZIO
Clara ...

FRANCA
Such a beautiful blouse.

FABRIZIO
Such beautiful blouse.

FRANCA
Bene. Clara.

FABRIZIO
Clara.

FRANCA
Have you had an enjoyable afternoon?

FABRIZIO
Have you had enjoyably after — ?

FRANCA
Più musicale, facile\textsuperscript{11}. Have you had an enjoyable afternoon?

FABRIZIO
Come si dice, “La sua pelle e come il latte”\textsuperscript{12}?

FRANCA
No no no.

\textsuperscript{11} More musical, easy.
\textsuperscript{12} How do I say, “Your skin is like milk!”
FABRIZIO
Si! Your milk –?

FRANCA
No milk. Non glielo dire prima di conoscerla.

FABRIZIO
Your milk …?

FRANCA
Nothing having to do with milk. No. Milk.

(Giuseppe breezes by; he is with a woman; when he sees Franca, he tells the woman to leave.)

GIUSEPPE
Ah Franca! Buongiorno! Bellissima. Come stai? 13

FABRIZIO
Have you had enjoyable afternoon?

FRANCA
Bravo!

GIUSEPPE
Si Bravo! Cameriere! Vino rosso.

WAITER
Si.

GIUSEPPE
Grazie.

FRANCA
You must know, Clara …

FABRIZIO
You must know, Clara …

FRANCA
… someday I too …

FABRIZIO
… someday I too …

FRANCA
… will come home …

13 Good day. How are you doing?
FABRIZIO
... will come home ...

FRANCA
... after a night spent with another woman ...

FABRIZIO
Più piano! ¹⁴

FRANCA
And you will have to wonder if I ever loved you.

(She exits. Giuseppe chases after her with:)

GIUSEPPE
Non prendere tutto così sul serio!

FRANCA
No!

GIUSEPPE
Perché non ridi? Perché si deve litigare? Ridi!, gioca!, aspetta!¹⁵ (to Fabrizio) Ciao, (to Franca) Franca!

FABRIZIO
Clara!

CLARA
Buon giorno.

FABRIZIO
Ah. Such ... beautiful frock!

CLARA
Thank you.

(Neither knows what to say.)

CLARA
You cut yourself shaving.

FABRIZIO
Yes?

¹⁴ Slow down!
¹⁵ Don’t take everything so seriously! Enjoy what we have! Franca! Why can’t you laugh? Why must we fight? Laugh, play, wait!
CLARA
Do you like to shave?

FABRIZIO
Oh ... Yes? I ... Yes?

(She lifts her hair, shows him behind her ear.)

CLARA
Look, a scar!

FABRIZIO
Oh, no, ma sono belli. Your hair is beautiful.

CLARA
No, no, not my hair. The scar. Scar. How do you say in Italiano?

FABRIZIO
Bella.

CLARA
No. How do you say scar?

FABRIZIO
Cicatrice.

CLARA
Cicatrice.

(Pause.)

FABRIZIO
Si, bene. Come si dice in Inglese?

(He points to her headband.)

CLARA
Plastic headband.

FABRIZIO
Plastic headband.
CLARA
Bene!

(Another awkward pause.)

FABRIZIO
Yes. Your milllllk. You – mother?

CLARA
Over there. Li.

FABRIZIO
Bene.

(To Margaret as they walk past)

Signora.

(He ushers her away from Margaret and Signor who are walking side by side; Clara nervously checks back toward her mother throughout.)

MARGARET
Your son seems to have the mysterious ability to know where we are going, before we know! I’m wondering if he is a spy of some sort.

SIGNOR
A spy!

MARGARET
Or has one at the hotel?

SIGNOR
Well, I cannot say.

(Margaret gathers up her courage.)

MARGARET
Signor –

SIGNOR (at exactly the same time)
Florence is to your liking?

MARGARET
Oh yes. So much history.
SIGNOR
In Florence we have too much history. In America you are so free — oh, it is wonderful. Here — *(notices Margaret’s concern about Clara)* They are fine, I’m sure.

MARGARET
Well — Actually —

SIGNOR
Here, if we move a stone in the street —

MARGARET
Oh yes.

SIGNOR
Who comes? Committees, officials. "You cannot change it. It’s history!"

MARGARET
Yes, well —

SIGNOR
And even if you say, "But it has just this minute fallen on my foot," they show you no pity.

MARGARET
May I, I’m sorry to interrupt you.

SIGNOR
No, no, go on, I am the one who must apologize.

MARGARET
No, not at all. You speak very good English.

SIGNOR
No, but once it was better. I have known many Americans during the war, done certain small things for them in, how do you say, liaison during the occupation. I find the Americans very simpatici.

*(He shines his warmth on her.)*
MARGARET
Well ...

(They slip once more from view, and we are back with Clara and Fabrizio, once more both of them tongue-tied.)

CLARA
(To Old Man)
Hello.

How old are you?

(To Fabrizio)
Where is everybody going?

FABRIZIO
Vuoi fare una passeggiata con me?

CLARA
Cosa?

FABRIZIO
Do you want to make ... to walking, to walking with me ... on the road ... in a circle?

CLARA
Si.

FABRIZIO
Bene!
(PASSEGGIATA)

COME WITH ME
WALK WITH ME
WALKING IN MY CITY
UNA PASSEGGIATA
YOU AND I

SEE THE FACES
FROM THE DAY TIME
TALKING IN THE EVENING
SEE THE CHURCHES SHINING
SEE THE SKY

NOW IS
I AM
HAPPINESS
NEVER
I AM
UNHAPPINESS
NOW IS I AM HAPPINESS
WITH YOU

COME WITH ME
WALK WITH ME IN THE PLACE THAT I KNOW
LA PASSEGGIATA

NOW IS
I AM
HAPPINESS
NEVER
I AM
UNHAPPINESS
NOW IS I AM HAPPINESS WITH YOU

WALK WITH ME IN THE PLACE THAT I KNOW
LA PASSEGGIATA

(Margaret and Signor re-appear. Both couples are encircling the square in slow, comfortable gaits. Signor helps Margaret up a step or around someone passing.)
MARGARET
Grazie.

SIGNOR
Ah, you speak Italian.

MARGARET
Hardly. Signor Naccarelli?

SIGNOR
Yes? You have a charming accent.

MARGARET
Oh, I do?

SIGNOR
Yes? But go on.

MARGARET
It's ... it's about Clara.

SIGNOR
She seems quite lovely to me. Like her mother.

(Pause. Margaret is caught off guard.)

SIGNOR
You were saying?

(They move off once again as Clara and Fabrizio re-appear.)
FABRIZIO
YOUR MILK ... YOUR MILK IS ... Eh.

CLARA
My milk is what? What milk?

FABRIZIO
NOT MILK, IS LIKE MILK.

CLARA
LIKE SNOW?

FABRIZIO
EH SÌ, BUT NO
I KNOW SNOW
NON É SNOW ...
IS ...
(touches the back of her hand)
HERE. COME SI DICE?
HERE?
(touches her neck)
AND HERE?
(touches her cheek)
AND ALSO HERE ...

CLARA
MY SKIN!

FABRIZIO
YOUR SKIN IS LIKE MILK!

I AM WORK HERE
IN THE TIE SHOP
NEXT TO ARNO RIVER
EVEN THOUGH I KNOW IS NOT BIG SIZE
SEE PALAZZI
ON THE HILLTOP
MAYBE ONE DAY LIVE THERE
MAYBE IF I SELL TOO MANY TIES!
... AH ...
NOW IS I AM HAPPINESS WITH YOU
WALK WITH ME IN THE PLACE THAT I LIVE FROM A CHILD
THE Place THAT I KNOW
LA PASSEGGIATA
I.vi (a). The Naccarelli living room.

(Fabrizio, Signor and Signora Naccarelli, Franca, and two servants are preparing for the arrival of guests. Giuseppe breezes in late.)

GIUSEPPE
Buona sera. Scusami del ritardo. Avevo un piccolo affare.  

SIGNOR
Si. Possiamo immaginare tutti quale piccolo affare avevi.  

FRANCA
Tieni giù le mani. Da ora in poi, non ti conosco più.  

(Doorbell. Everyone runs around, putting the final touches on everything, as one of the servants goes to answer the door. Margaret and Clara enter.)

FABRIZIO
Signora Johnson, Clara, my mother, Signora Naccarelli.

SIGNORA
Piacere.

MARGARET
How do you do? (Signora kisses her) Oops!

FABRIZIO
You remember my father.

CLARA
Oh yes, Buon giorno.

SIGNOR (same time)
Buon giorno. Welcome.

MARGARET
Hello.

FABRIZIO
My brother, Giuseppe.

---

16 Sorry I’m late. I had a small affair I needed to attend to.
17 Yes, we can all imagine what small affair you were attending to.
18 Keep your hands to yourself. From now on I don’t even know you.
GIUSEPPE
How do you do?

MARGARET
Pleasure.

(Clara also holds out her hand to be kissed. The Naccarelli's all find this utterly charming. Margaret notices this.)

FABRIZIO
And his wife, Franca.

FRANCA
Hello, how are you?

MARGARET
Very well, thank you, nice to meet you.

CLARA (referring to the apartment)
O, che ... che gorgioso!

SIGNOR
Grazie.

(The entire Naccarelli family reacts favorably to Clara's impulsive praise of their apartment.)

CLARA
Prego!

(In a suspended moment while everyone is waiting to see who will do what next, a momentary freeze allows Margaret to turn out:)

MARGARET
How I have managed to allow this to drag on even another few days. Ah!!!

(Everyone releases into:)

FABRIZIO
Here, you should sit --
SIGNOR
No, no, no dia alla Signora Johnson la sedia col cuscino. 19

MARGARET
What a beautiful –

SIGNOR
Please, Signora.

MARGARET
Oh.

SIGNOR
Sorry, you were saying.

MARGARET
Clara is right, what a beautiful apartment --

FRANCA (same time as Margaret, interrupting her)
Clara, let me show you the apartment, the paintings, would you like that?

CLARA
Oh, yes, thank you.

FABRIZIO
Yes, let her show you the paintings.

MARGARET
Yes, you’ll enjoy that --

SIGNOR (same time, cutting her off)
They are worthless. I’m sorry, you were saying.

MARGARET
Well, while they’re out --

GIUSEPPE (same time, cutting her off)
Zucchero? 20

---

19 No, no, no, give Margaret the chair with the cushions.
20 Sugar?
MARGARET
No, thank you. While they’re –

GIUSEPPE (again cutting her off)
Latte?

MARGARET
Oh, yes, a little, grazie.

GIUSEPPE
Prego.  

MARGARET
I would like to take advantage … of –

GIUSEPPE
Papà?

SIGNOR
È la terza volta che la interrompi.  

GIUSEPPE
Mi dispiace. Scusi tanto.  

SIGNOR
Zitto! 

(Small pause.)

MARGARET
If I could j –

SIGNOR (same time, cutting her off)
There is always one child who can do nothing right, have you noticed this?

\[21 \text{ You’re welcome.} \\
22 \text{ That’s the third time you’ve interrupted the woman.} \\
23 \text{ I’m sorry, so sorry} \\
24 \text{ Button it! (Shut up.)} \]
MARGARET
Well, I ... No, I only have the one.

SIGNOR
This one is the older but he lacks, how do you say maturità.

MARGARET
Maturity.

(Not comprehending, Giuseppe is nodding cheerfully in agreement.)

SIGNOR
Maturity. Si.

GIUSEPPE
Si.

SIGNOR
If only his wife would give him a son, he would learn, ma ...

MARGARET
Well, I’m sure you’re right.

SIGNOR
She is charming, your daughter.
I.vi (b) A hallway

(Franca and Clara are looking at the paintings, strolling.)

FRANCA
Very handsome, your new fellow. You and I are very much alike, I think. You and Fabrizio.

CLARA
Like you and Giuseppe.

FRANCA
You see? Two pairs of lovers. Oh –

(THE JOY YOU FEEL.)

HOW TRULY HAPPY YOU MUST BE
YOU ARE THE FIRST TO SET HIM ON HIS KNEE
YOU'RE THE ENVY OF SO MANY GIRLS
AND YOU ARE THE MOST BEAUTIFUL
SO FAR

THE GENTLE JANGLE OF HIS VOICE
NO OTHER SOUND
NO SMILE
NO FACE
NO CHOICE
AND THE JOY I KNOW YOU FEEL
THIS IS SOMETHING I REMEMBER WELL, MY DEAR

AND ON YOUR FIRST ANNIVERSARY
IN THE PIAZZA WHERE YOU MET
AT FIRST IT'S, IT'S ONLY A GLANCE
AND THEN HIS EYES WILL SET
UPON A GIRL WHO'S PRETTIER AND YOUNGER THAN YOU
WHAT TO DO?

ENJOY IT
YOU ARE FREE
YOU HAVE TIME TO SPARE
THE BASSINETTE IS EMPTY
THE NURSERY IS BARE
YOU CAN SPEND HIS MONEY
THEN THERE IS NO MONEY

You can take a lover. But …

HE’S THE ONE YOU LOVE
HE’S THE ONE YOU LOVE
ISN’T HE?

THOUGH TRULY HAPPY, YOU MUST BEWARE
FOR HAPPINESS CAN ALSO SCAR
FOR SO LIKE ME YOU ARE
YOU ARE …
BEWARE.

CLARA
Thank you.
I.vi(c) The tea party

(Immediately after.)

SIGNOR
My son Fabrizio, he can think of little else but Clara. It will be a sad day for him when you go away.

MARGARET
Oh, yes – of course, but –

SIGNOR
How nice to think that you would not go at all, but would spend many months in Firenze, perhaps take a small villa.

MARGARET
Oh, well, no –

SIGNOR
Many outsiders do. They never wish to leave.

MARGARET
I have unfortunately many responsibilities at home – my house, husband.

SIGNOR
What does Signor Johnson do?

MARGARET
He owns part interest in a cigarette company.

SIGNOR
Ah. Pall Mall?

MARGARET
No.

SIGNOR
Raleigh?

MARGARET
No.
SIGNOR
Camel.

MARGARET
No, Signor –

SIGNOR
Winston?

MARGARET
No, no, Signor Naccarelli. I should really tell you about ... all this. The two of them.

SIGNOR
Yes. It is so sudden.

MARGARET
Yes. Si è vero, è vero.

SIGNOR
Brava!

SIGNORA
Brava! Bella!

(This accompanied by applause from the others.)

MARGARET
Well, I'm, I'm trying, though, to speak about –

SIGNOR
You are not trying, you are doing, you must be a very fast learner.

MARGARET
No, no, yes, well, I mean, on another subject.

SIGNOR
Yes. Another subject.
MARGARET
Clara and Fabrizio

SIGNORA
Si!

MARGARET
Yes, I fear …

SIGNOR
We, too, are fearful.

(to his wife, sotto voce)
Anche lei è molto prudente, i giovani vanno troppo in fretta.  

SIGNORA
Se deve andare in porto, meglio procedere con calma.  

SIGNOR
Yes, everything must proceed more slowly.

MARGARET
Well, that’s just – that’s just it. Clara –

(She takes a big breath, prepared to tell her secret. Signora jumps in on this:)

SIGNORA
Che brava ragazza, è così innocente!  

MARGARET
Si. But. Clara is not necessarily like most American girls, she has …

SIGNOR
Clara non è come le altre ragazze Americane.  

SIGNORA
Bene! È una ragazza all ’antica … Ben educata.  

---

25 She is also very careful, young people go too fast [she says.]
26 If they to arrive safely to port, they must proceed cautiously.
27 What a nice girl, so innocent!
28 Clara is not like other American girls.
29 Good. She’s more traditional, from a good family.
SIGNOR
My wife respects this.

MARGARET
I have something I must tell you.

SIGNOR
Yes, we –

MARGARET
You must, please, do hear me out now.

SIGNOR
By all means.

(Pause. Margaret struggles to tell these lovely people her secret.)

MARGARET
Clara is...Clara ... is a special child.

(Fabrizio is beaming down at her. She reaches out her hand to him, he takes it, pats it affectionately. Margaret looks from face to face: How in the world can she hurt these peoples' feelings?)

MARGARET
That's all. That's all.

(Everyone is overjoyed.)

SIGNOR
This is eccellente. So much of what we hear and read about American women, young women, is not what we would consider to be necessarily the right kind of woman for our son.

MARGARET
Yes.

SIGNOR
And we very much respect your caution. The human heart is mysterious and sometimes also dangerous. Lucky Strike?
(Clara rushes into the room, followed by Franca. Both Margaret and Fabrizio instantly see that Clara is upset. Margaret rises gently from her chair as Fabrizio goes up to Clara. All but Fabrizio and Clara now freeze for:)

FABRIZIO
Are you all right? ... What's the matter?

CLARA
Look at me?

FABRIZIO
Yes, che bella.

CLARA
Just look at me?

FABRIZIO
Of course. Shhh, shhh. You are fine. (sotto voce) I have to see you alone. (handing Clara a note with handwritten instructions) Meet me here near the hotel tonight at midnight. You can get away?

CLARA
Si.

FABRIZIO
Si.

(Maybe unfreezes, and turns out.)

MARGARET (to us)
Something happened, something in the other room confused her ... The truth is, that's my job, to calm her when she's like that. To know when and how to ... But ... well ... apparently ...

(Slowly she sits back down, and then everyone unfreezes.)

SIGNORA
GIUSEPPE
Dai, Mamma.

SIGNORA
Fabrizio e bravo. Giuseppe, no.

GIUSEPPE
Su, Mamma. Per piacere.

SIGNORA

SIGNOR
We have wondered if perhaps Clara does not wish to leave Firenze.

MARGARET
It is clear she doesn’t. But –

SIGNORA
Capisce? 30

SIGNOR
My wife thinks they might be happy together here ... Always.

SIGNORA
Si?

(Margaret stands, they all stand, too. She shakes Signor Naccarelli’s hand.)

MARGARET
Slowly.

SIGNOR
Ah...!
I.vii. Margaret’s hotel room

(She is on the phone with Roy, dressed in golf attire, back in Winston-Salem.)

ROY
Hello? Hello? ... Is – Is someone there?

MARGARET (her voice hushed, overlapping, out of sync)
Roy, it’s Margaret. Roy!

ROY
It didn’t ring.

MARGARET
What?

ROY
It didn’t ring. The phone.

MARGARET
There’s, there’s a delay ... Hello?

ROY
I’m here.

MARGARET
Oh, okay.

ROY
Good to hear from you. How is it?

MARGARET
Oh, wonderful.

ROY
You have to speak up.

MARGARET
Clara’s sleeping, I don’t want to wake her.
ROY
Did you go to our monastery?

MARGARET
Oh, not yet. I want to.

ROY
Uh-huh.

MARGARET
Very much. But, oh, I wanted to tell you, we’ve met some very nice people, Florentines, from Florence.

ROY (knowing full well what Florentines means)
Yes.

MARGARET
Oh, sorry, this delay. Their names are Naccarelli, they have a son about Clara’s age.

ROY
Uh-huh.

MARGARET
I know.

ROY
Well, yes, you don’t want anybody getting the wrong idea, that’s all.

MARGARET
I know, I know it. It’s just I meant it’s nice to meet some ... nice people.

ROY
Uh-huh, well, I don’t know you know how nice they really are in so short a time.

MARGARET
They’re Italian, Roy, they’re nice people they all are, very friendly people.
ROY
Well, you know what's best. Listen, honey, I've got a dinner appointment
with Harbison or --

MARGARET
Oh, sorry. I miss you!

ROY
Miss you too.

(Kissing noises.)

MARGARET
Roy?!!

ROY
Yes?

MARGARET
I ... mean it, I do. Miss you.

ROY
I assumed you meant it.

MARGARET
I know, it's just — it's hard to be back here without you. The war? ... when
we were apart? ...

ROY
Uh-huh?

MARGARET
When we had to be, that is, and Clara was ... first --

ROY
Yes.

MARGARET
I keep thinking of us then, you know, forced apart ... and now ...
ROY
I know.

MARGARET
I know, I know you couldn’t get away, it isn’t that, it’s not that I don’t understand, I don’t … know what I’m saying, do you?

ROY
Know what you’re saying?

MARGARET
No, I don’t … I don’t know, I’m sorry …

ROY
Well, I really should –

MARGARET
Wait, don’t hang up!

ROY
What is it? I shouldn’t keep Harbison waiting too long, he is chairman of the board.

MARGARET
I’m sorry.

ROY
That’s all right. But somebody’s got to pay for this trip, unless you want to dip into your savings? What is it?

MARGARET
Nothing.

ROY
You’re sure?

MARGARET
Don’t be late.

ROY
Margaret, put an end to that. Whatever’s going on over there. You hear? Now you take care.
MARGARET
You, too.

(But he has already hung up.)
(DIVIDING DAY)

DASHING AS THE DAY WE MET
ONLY THERE IS SOMETHING I DON'T RECOGNIZE
THOUGH I CANNOT NAME IT YET
I KNOW IT

BEAUTIFUL IS WHAT YOU ARE
ONLY SOMEHOW WEARING A FRIGHTENING DISGUISE
I CAN SEE THE WINTER IN YOUR EYES NOW
TELLING ME:

"THANK YOU
WE'RE DONE HERE
NOT MUCH TO SAY
WE ARE TOGETHER
BUT I HAVE HAD DIVIDING DAY"

SO WHEN ... WHEN WAS THIS DAY
WAS IT ON THE CHURCHSTEP
SUDDENLY YOU'RE OUT OF LOVE
DOES IT GO CREEPING SLOWLY
WHEN WAS YOUR DIVIDING DAY?

I CAN SEE THE WINTER IN YOUR EYES NOW
TELLING ME:
"MARGARET
WE DID IT
YOU CURTSIED, I BOWED
WE ARE TOGETHER
BUT NO MORE LOVE
NO MORE LOVE ALLOWED"
WHEN WAS DIVIDING DAY?
WAS IT ON THE CHURCHSTEP?
DID IT HAPPEN RIGHT AWAY?
WERE YOU LYING NEXT TO ME
HIDING WHAT YOU COULDN'T SAY?
HOW COULD I HAVE GUESSED?
WAS MY CHEEK UPON YOUR CHEST
AN OCEAN AWAY?
WHEN WAS
WHEN WAS
WHEN WAS DIVIDING DAY?

MARGARET
Clara? ... Clara?

(She looks into Clara's room; she is not there. As she runs off, Margaret makes a gutteral sound of her frustration.)
On the Street

FABRIZIO
After lobby, after fountain, go to Arno making left, and left again to
Tornabouni. All along and then you see museo.

(Clara is reading the directions Fabrizio gave her.)

(HYSTERIA)

CLARA
AFTER LOBBY, AFTER FOUNTAIN,
GO TO ARNO MAKING LEFT AND LEFT AGAIN TO TORNA
ALL ALONG AND THEN YOU SEE MUSEO
Right!
AFTER LOBBY, AFTER FOUNTAIN,
GO TO ARNO MAKING LEFT AND LEFT AGAIN TO TORNA
ALL ALONG AND THEN YOU SEE MUSEO MUSEO
I WAIT FOR YOU IN COURTYARD OF MUSEO
WHICH IS LOOKING LIKE A GARDEN
Ciao
FABRIZIO!
Ha!

MAN #1
Buona Sera.

CLARA
That was a silly thing to do, Clara. Crap. I memorized it. Concentrate,
Clara.

CLARA
LA LA LA LA
LA LA LA LA
LA LA LA LA LA LA LA

MAN#2
Ciao. Ti sei perduta? Mia Cara.
CLARA
Ciao. Ciao, cara...cara...That means dear. That means dear, sort of.
Oh, dear. Oh, crap. I know where I am!

PROSTITUTE
Do you look for the Medici Palace?

CLARA
No, thank you. Sono felice. I am fine.

MUSEO

CLARA / FABRIZIO
LA LA LA
LA LA LA
LA LA LA LA
LA LA
LA LA LA
LA LA
LA LA
LA LA

CLARA
Fabrizio Naccarelli! Fabrizio Naccarelli! He’s waiting for me! He’s waiting for me!

Clara Johnson, 142 East Lake Street, Clara Johnson, 142 East Lake Street.

MARGARET
Clara? It’s alright, It’s alright, I’m here. I’m her mother, madre, bene, va bene, grazie.

(LULLABY)

(Margaret will walk Clara back to the hotel room.)

LITTLE CLARA, LITTLE CLARA
NO MORE CRYING
MAMA HERE NOW
BABY CLARA, BABY CLARA
HMM.
LITTLE CLARA, LITTLE CLARA
I.ix. The hotel room

MARGARET
Clara, where were you going?

CLARA
I was going to get ice cream.

MARGARET
You know we don’t tell each other stories. Now I want you to lie down and go to sleep. And don’t you worry about a thing, you’re safe now. I’ll be near by.

THERE’S A MOON ON A HILL
AND A HIDDEN STREAM
A LAGOON AND A RED HORIZON DREAM
SILHOUETTE SET AWAY FROM TIME
FOREVER.
THERE’S A VALLEY BEYOND A SETTING SUN
WHERE WATERS SHINE AND HORSES RUN ... HMMMM...

(Clara is asleep.)

It’s always so difficult ... Roy and I don’t even discuss it anymore, it’s just a fact of life, like the weather ... When Clara was ten, we rented a Shetland pony for her birthday party, and ... the pony kicked ... her...

The doctors told us that she would her mental and emotional capacities would not develop normally, and, but her body would continue to develop, so ... If the Naccarelli’s find out, she’ll be smashed up for good.
We have to get out of here.
First thing.
Oh, it’s for nights like this that hotel bars were specifically developed.

(Margaret exits.)
I.x. Clara’s hotel room

(Fabrizio arrives at the door. He knocks, and Clara answers.)

FABRIZIO
Clara!

CLARA
Fabrizio!

FABRIZIO
I wait for you, what happened to you?

CLARA
I … My mother … I …

FABRIZIO
She is here?

CLARA
No, come in, sit!

FABRIZIO
No.

CLARA
Entra.\(^{31}\)

FABRIZIO
I think you have gone, I am afraid …

CLARA
Don’t be, come—

FABRIZIO
No, you are alone, I should not.

\(^{31}\) Come in.
CLARA
Insisto. I want you to. She won't mind.

FABRIZIO
I think you have decide – Non sono adatto per te.

CLARA
Not good enough? Of course you are.

FABRIZIO
I think [maybe] you have meet someone better.

CLARA
No.

FABRIZIO
I don't know, how do I know ... It is ... I think ... impossible for me to say what I feel. I am so tiresome to talk, to say what I ... I don't know how to –

CLARA
I always understand.

FABRIZIO
If I could say in Italiano it would be best....

CLARA
Then do, then say ...

FABRIZIO
No.
(SAY IT SOMEHOW)

CLARA
WHY DON’T YOU TRACE IT ON MY HAND?
OR MAKE A SONG.
DO ANYTHING!
SAY IT SOMEHOW.
I WILL UNDERSTAND.
I KNOW YOU.
YOU ARE GOOD

FABRIZIO
THE SOUND INSIDE YOU - THIS I KNOW
IT’S LIKE A MELODY, LIKE THERE YOU GO, JUST NOW!
SAY IT SOMEHOW.
SOMEHOW YOU CAN SHOW ME.

BOTH
SAY IT SOMEHOW ANYWAY YOU CAN.
YOU KNOW ME.
YOU ARE GOOD.
OH YOU ARE GOOD.
YOU ARE GOOD TO ME.
I KNOW THE SOUND OF TOUCH ME.
I THINK I HEAR THE SOUND OF WRAP YOUR ARMS AROUND ME
AH...
SHOUT AND DANCE IN RINGS!

CLARA
OR SAY IT SILENTLY.

FABRIZIO
TELL ME THINGS!

BOTH
AH, WE’LL PLAY A GAME.
YOU TRACE IT ON MY SKIN.
DO IT ANYWAY BUT LET’S BEGIN
DO IT SOMEHOW.
SOMEHOW YOU CAN SHOW ME.
I KNOW THAT YOU KNOW ME.
AH...

CLARA
Will you marry me?

FABRIZIO
No, no, no. It must be mine to ask it.

CLARA
Ask it then.

FABRIZIO
I wish to be the one to decide!

CLARA
Decide. Decide!

FABRIZIO
Will you – ?

CLARA
Yes!

FABRIZIO
– marry me?

CLARA
Yes, yes yes!

BOTH
YOU ARE GOOD TO ME.
I KNOW THE SOUND OF TOUCH ME.
I THINK I HEAR THE SOUND OF WRAP YOUR ARMS AROUND ME.
AH...
TELL ME THINGS!
AH...

(Fabrizio leads Clara to the bed. She removes his jacket as he lowers to the bed. Margaret is seen arriving back at the room. She walks in on the two of them. End of Act One.)
ACT TWO

II.i. Rome. Ruins.

(A day or two later. A lone tourist ambles about as Margaret, guidebook in hand, leads the way, indicating obelisks, unseen temples; Clara follows, listless, inattentive. She no longer carries a sketchpad and has lost all interest in the look of anything and everything.)

MARGARET
Darling, Rome is where Julius Caesar was stabbed to death – right here in the Forum...Some people like Rome more than Florence. I thought you would really like it here, I thought you could use a change of scenery-

CLARA
He asked me to marry him and I said yes. It's wrong to leave without saying goodbye. Don't you understand?

(Pause.)

MARGARET
Look at the light, the way it hits the caves up there, do you see? It's like a miracle! Wouldn't that make a good drawing?

(Clara climbs on a Pedestal of Ruins)

MARGARET
Did you leave your sketch pad? (No Response.) Well, I'll be over here, I want to see this Temple.

(An agonized wail from Fabrizio which brings us into:)
II.i The Naccarelli home

(Same time as last scene. Fabrizio, Giuseppe, Signor and Signora are all there. Fabrizio is in despair, and his father and brother attempt to cajole and reason him out of his self-dramatizing, self-flaggelating state.)

(AIUTAMI)

FABRIZIO
Clara!
Aiutami! Aiutami
Abbi Pietà! Abbi Pietà! Che sciagurato! Son perduto! Oh, Signore!
OH, CHE GUAI!
CHE COSA HO FATTO!
OH SIGNORE SALVAMI!
DOV’ERA LA MIA TESTA?
L’HO PERDUTA, LA MI’AMOR!

GIUSEPPE
AIUTAMI! AIUTAMI!

GIUSEPPE & FABRIZIO
OH, CHE GUAI!
CHE COSA HO FATTO?
OH SIGNORE SALVAMI!
DOV’ERA LA MIA TESTA?
L’HO PERDUTA, IL MIO AMOR!

GIUSEPPE & FABRIZIO
PER UN BACIO! PER UN BACIO!
CHE COSA HO FATTO
PIETÀ DI ME!
CHE COSA HO FATTO?
MI SON BUTTATO

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
PICCOLINO
POVERETTO!

GIUSEPPE & FABRIZIO
IN UNA CATASTROFE!

GIUSEPPE/FABRIZIO/FRANCA
IN UNA CATASTROFE

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
TUTTO PASSERÀ

GIUSEPPE/FABRIZIO/FRANCA/SIGNOR
AIUTAMI! AIUTAMI! AIUTAMI! AIUTAMI!
SIGNORA NACCARELLI
Aiutami means "Help me" in Italian. I don’t speak English, but I have to tell you what’s going on.

FABRIZIO HE THINKS HE WANTS TO DIE.
HE THINKS HE RUINED EVERYTHING.
HIS FATHER SAYS THAT THIS WILL PASS.
GIUSEPPE ASKS WAS SHE AS SWEET AS SHE LOOKS,
AND FRANCA ALSO WANTS TO KNOW,
IN HER OWN SPECIAL WAY.
Here is what I know, what I do.
I LET THEM BOIL AND SIMMER AND STEW
AND I DON’T REVEAL MYSELF.
IF THERE ARE SUSPICIONS I ENCOURAGE THEM.
IF THERE ARE RAGES I SAY “LOUDER PLEASE! LOUDER!
DOES FATHER CHEAT ON MOTHER?
She suspects!
DOES FATHER KNOW THAT SHE SUSPECTS?
He suspects!
RISK IS EVERYTHING!
Without risk there is no drama.
Without drama there is no “Aiutami”
Without asking for help—
NO LOVE! NO LOVE!
So...
GIVE ME SUSPICION
THAT’S GOOD
GIVE ME TEARS

GIUSEPPE & FRANCA
OOOH. AAAH...

SIGNORA NACCARELLI
YES!
SO GIVE ME SHOUTING
THAT’S RIGHT
PASSION!
PASSION!

FABRIZIO
SALVAMI!
DOV’ERA LA MIA TESTA?
L’HO PERDUTA,
IL MIO AMOR!

FRAN & FABR.
PER UN BACIO!
PER UN BACIO!
CHE COSA HO FATTO?

SNRA.
BRAVA!
BRAVA!

GIUS. & SGNR.
PICCOLINO!
POVERETTO!
FRAN & FABR.  
Pietà di me!
Cosa ho fatto?
Mi son buttato
In una catastrofe

SNRA.  
Braviissima!
Aiutami!

GIUS. & SGNR.  
Tutto passerà!

ALL FIVE  
Aiutami! Aiutami! Aiutami! Aiutami!

SIGNORA NACCARELLI  
Think about it.
II.iii  Rome. Ruins.

(Clara knocks and digs at the pedestal with her shoe as her mother reads from her guidebook.)

MARGARET
Darling, listen to this. Please stop that, that’s illegal. “The Triumphal Arch of Septimius [she could pronounce it “Septimnymious”] Severus was erected in A.D. 203 in honor of the Roman emperor, recently victorious over the Parthians –” Please, Clara, I asked you to stop, just imagine what that must have been like, a gold colored chariot with the sunlight hitting it, right up there, casting shadows and riding off into the sky with six horses? Clara? Are you listening to me at all? I thought you’d be interested in all the things your father and I did when we were here. I thought this was going to be you and me.

(Clara continues to ignore her mother, knocking at the pedestal more.)

MARGARET
All right, let’s go back to the hotel.

CLARA
No. I don’t want to go back to the hotel.

MARGARET
What do you want to do?

CLARA
No. I don’t want to do what you want me to do.

MARGARET
Well, darling, that’s too bad –

CLARA
Always.

MARGARET
That’s only because you don’t always know how to take care of yourself.

CLARA
But I do.
MARGARET
You don’t know what you need and I’m sorry to have to say it.

CLARA
You’re not. You’re not sorry at all. Look at you, you’re happy.

MARGARET
Stop this now, how could you even think that?

CLARA
Because you are! You’re happy to be the one who knows everything I need and has the final word. It’s clear.

MARGARET
I am not!

CLARA
I don’t care what you are, honestly, mother.

MARGARET
You cannot marry Fabrizio, and you won’t say another word.

CLARA
Stop me.

MARGARET
All right now, Clara.

CLARA
You ignore what I say, what I want. You make things up the way you want them. You lie about things.

MARGARET
I do not.

CLARA
Yes! To everyone! How we all love one another. Daddy doesn’t love you! Look in his eyes for once. Look at yourself in the mirror!
(Margaret slaps Clara, then gasps, filled at once with regret. Clara does not move.)

(THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA.)

CLARA
I DON'T SEE A MIRACLE
SHINING FROM THE SKY
I'M NO GOOD AT STATUES AND STORIES
I TRY
THAT'S NOT WHAT I THINK ABOUT
THAT'S NOT WHAT I SEE
I KNOW WHAT THE SUNLIGHT CAN BE

THE LIGHT ... THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA...

TINY SWEET
AND THEN IT GROWS
AND THEN IT FILLS THE AIR
WHO KNOWS WHAT YOU CALL IT
I DON'T CARE
OUT OF SOMEWHERE I HAVE SOMETHING I HAVE NEVER HAD
AND SAD IS HAPPY
THAT'S ALL I SEE

THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA
THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA

IT'S RUSHING UP
IT'S POURING OUT
IT'S FLYING THROUGH THE AIR
ALL THROUGH THE AIR
WHO KNOWS WHAT YOU CALL IT
BUT IT'S THERE
IT IS THERE

ALL I SEE IS
ALL I WANT IS TEARING FROM INSIDE
I SEE IT
NOW I SEE IT EVERYWHERE
IT'S EVERYWHERE
IT'S EVERYTHING AND EVERYWHERE
FABRIZIO
THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA ...
MY LOVE

(Clara exits. Margaret turns to us:)

MARGARET
If I call Roy now, I'll have to tell him the truth, and I have no idea what that is, not at this moment, I do not. I'm tired of fighting; I'm tired of being the only one here who always says "No" to her even though, if, if it is in her best interest. Maybe ... Maybe I don't need to be the one to decide. Maybe she has grown. She speaks Italian now. If I call Roy, he'll be on a plane, and not only will everything in Italy seem designed to annoy him, he'll spoil everything. He won't mean to, but he will. And my dream for Clara - (correcting herself) Clara's dream - for Clara will lie in little pieces all around us. (Small beat.) You know: I think there are still a great deal of wonders left to be seen in Florence.
II. iv. Florence

(The next evening. Margaret and Signor Naccarelli at a café.)

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
Clearly they wish to marry.

MARGARET
Yes.

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
You husband will of course come here for the ceremony?

MARGARET (treading water)
Heeeeeeremmm ... hopes very much to be able to attend, but there do seem to be some extreme difficulties in his work right now--

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
Difficulties?

MARGARET
Yes, (yet again) heeeeeeerreeeee is ... becoming the Senior Vice President.

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
Ah. We should all suffer such difficulties.

MARGARET
Yes.

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
How does your husband feel about all this?

MARGARET
Heeeeeerreeee...has written to me, suggesting a five thousand dollar dowry for the children upon wedding. (to us:) It will have to be my money, but so what, it's mine!

(She turns back to Naccarelli.)
SIGNOR NACCARELLI
Clara, of course, must convert to Catholicism.

MARGARET
Yes. Of course.

(Instantly, a lay teacher is instructing Clara; she learns Latin catechism's and holds a rosary. We are now inside:)
II.v. The Naccarelli home

(The next day. A priest is instructing Clara in the Latin catechism; she learns prayers and holds a rosary; Fabrizio sits beside her, holding her hand. As she and the Priest sing the Latin verses, Signor, Signora, Franca and Margaret are all drawn from separate parts of the apartment.)

(OCTET)

PRIEST
ET QUATENUS MASCULINUM ET FEMININAM SESE MUTUO COMPLENT

CLARA
ET QUATENUS MASCULINUS

PRIEST
NO. ET QUATENUS MASCULINUM

CLARA
ET QUATENUS MASCULINUM

PRIEST
SÌ! BENE.
ECCO.

BOTH
ET QUATENUS MASCULINUM
ET FEMININAM SESE MUTUO COMPLENT

SIGNORA
Shhh...

CLARA AND PRIEST
UNITAS DUORUM

SIGNORA
You can almost hear what everyone's feeling.
SIGNOR AND FRANCA
THE SHOCK OF WINTER
OR COMING ON OF SPRING

FRANCA
NEW SPRING
SUSPENDED SUMMER NIGHTS,
THE INNER FLIGHTS
THAT ONLY FALL CAN BRING.

SIGNOR, SIGNORA AND FRANCA
I AM SUDDENLY ALIVE!
I WOULD SAIL ACROSS THE WORLD
FOR JUST THE COLOR OF YOUR EYES.

FABRIZIO, FRANCA, SIGNOR AND SIGNORA
YOU APPEAR... APPEAR TO ME

PRIEST
ALLIIS, ALLIIS...

CLARA
OLLY OLLY OXEN FREE!

PRIEST
Che a detto?

CLARA
Sorry.

FABRIZIO
Oh, Clara.

MARGARET
THE REAPPEARING
EVERY NOW AND THEN

CLARA AND PRIEST
UNAM CARNEM
VIR ET MULIER
SIMUL CREATI, CREATI

CLARA AND PRIEST
VOLITI SUNT A DEO
UT ALLIIS PRO ALIO

CLARA AND PRIEST
ALLIIS PRO ALIO

SIGNOR, SIGNORA, FRANCA
HMMM.....
CLARA AND PRIEST
OS EX OSSIBUS MEIS
ET CARO DE CARNE MEA

FABR., FRAN., SIGN., SNRA., MARG.
AND THEN
THE DIVING UNDERNEATH
THE DIVING DOWN
AND SURFACING AGAIN

CLARA
THE DIVING UNDERNEATH
THE DIVING DOWN
AND SURFACING AGAIN

GIUSEPPE
Buongiorno!

SNRA., FRAN., MARG., FABR., SIGN.
I AM SUDDENLY ALONE HMM... VITAM HUMANAM

SNRA., SIGN., MARG.,
FABR., FRAN., GIUS.
I WOULD SAIL ACROSS THE WORLD
TO KNOW THE HARBOR OF YOUR ARMS.

CLARA AND PRIEST
NON EST BONUM ESSE HOMINEM SOLUM

ALL
YOU APPEAR...
APPEAR TO ME.

(Giuseppe tries to approach Franca and she spits words back at him.)

FRANCA
Non voglio i fiori! Dove sei stato, dove sei stato?! Perché non prendo
un’amante anch’io? Lavati le mani, almeno, maiale. Ah, Fabrizio, guarda
come sei bello! Mmmm, baciami.

(Franca kisses Fabrizio on the lips provocatively, to infuriate Giuseppe.)

ECCO!"^{33}

---

^{33} I don’t want flowers! Where have you been, where have you been?! Why don’t I take a lover too? Wash your hands at least, you pig! Oh, Fabrizio, look how handsome! Mmmm, kiss me. THERE!
CLARA
MULIER QUAM DEUS EXCOSTA EFFORMAT
DE VIRO SUBLATA QUAMQUE
IPSE AD VIRUM ADDUXIT,
ADMIRATIONIS EX PARTE VIRI PROVOCAT CLAMOREM,
AMORIS ET COMMUNIONIS EXCLAMATIONEM.
HEY!

(Clara has seen Franca kiss Fabrizio; she explodes with:)
(CLARA'S TIRADE)

MARGARET
Clara?

CLARA
YOU STOP!
YOU STOP RIGHT NOW!
YOU MOVE! YOU MOVE AWAY FROM HIM!
OH...I SEE YOU STEALING

MARGARET
Darling, you--

CLARA
YOU! YOU'RE A THIEF!
YOU'RE A ROTTEN THIEF!
YOU WANT TO STEAL HIM AWAY FROM ME!

MARGARET
Franca's merely'--

CLARA
YOU STAND OVER THERE!

MARGARET
He's her brother.

CLARA
HE IS MINE! HE'LL ALWAYS BE MINE!

MARGARET
Clara, you mustn't speak to Franca that way, she's [family now]--

CLARA
NO!
I WILL!
SHE CAN'T!
HE'S MINE!
YOU'RE NOT IN CHARGE OF ME!
WHY? BECAUSE I SAY SO!
MARGARET
Please don't--

CLARA
NO!
YOU SAW!
AND I KNOW YOU SAW
HER KISS HIM LIKE HE KISSES ME!
(to everyone else)
GO AHEAD AND STARE!
JESUS THIS IS SO UNFAIR!

FABRIZIO
She's joking.

CLARA (to Fabrizio)
JOKING? I'M NOT JOKING!
YOU LOVE ME...
YOU LOVE ME...
WHY WERE YOU JUST SITTING?
SITTING THERE!

CLARA (to Franca and Giuseppe)
NOW, HERE IS YOUR HUSBAND.
HERE IS YOUR WIFE.
YOU SHOULD BE STANDING SIDE BY SIDE.
DON'T YOU HAVE A HOUSE?
WHERE ARE YOUR BABIES!
THERE'S A WAY TO BEHAVE.
THERE'S A NICE WAY TO BEHAVE!
IT'S WHAT NICE PEOPLE DO AND THAT'S HOW IT SHOULD BE!
THAT'S HOW PEOPLE MEET AND FALL IN LOVE AND HOW IT
SHOULD BE
FOREVER!
YOU GO NEAR HIM ONE MORE TIME
YOU'RE DEAD!

(Clara throws a glass of wine in Franca's face; some gasp, others stand. Silence.)
CLARA
I apologize.

(Margaret gives Franca a napkin to wipe her face.)

FRANCA
No, she is right. Right to fight for him. Please, everyone. Giuseppe and I are so happy for you both-- Clara, Fabrizio. We should all fight for our love. I should-- I would fight for Giuseppe.

GIUSEPPE
Cosa?

FRANCA
And he would fight...Yes. (Toasts) Agli innamorati!

ALL
Agli innamorati!

SIGNORA NACCARELLI
Alla bellezza della vita!

ALL
Alla bellezza della vita!

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
To the beauty of life!

(Signor Naccarelli kisses Clara on both cheeks and then playfully/forcefully slaps Fabrizio on the cheek)
II. vi Church

(The wedding rehearsal. Later that afternoon. The priest instructs everyone in their duties, positioning them all in Italian, and Signor translates for Clara and Margaret.

PRIEST
La dama d'onore va qui.

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
The matron of honor goes here.

PRIEST
La testimone va qui.

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
And the, how you say, first man? -

MARGARET
Best man.

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
Best man, here.

PRIEST
Lo sposo e sposa vengono all' altare come abbiamo discusso ... 

SIGNOR NACCARELLI (over and interspersed with the Priest's words)
The bride, the groom ... who will come up the aisle, as we discussed ...

PRIEST
... e se verrà scambieranno il 'si'...

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
... The vows will be exchanged ...

CLARA
Where is the ring?

MARGARET
This is the rehearsal, darling.
CLARA
The what?

MARGARET
Tomorrow is the ring.

(OCTET Part II)

ALL EIGHT
THE SHOCK OF WINTER,
THE COMING ON OF SPRING.
THAT MELTING AIR
THE SUN GONE RED
AN EMPTY BED
A SCENT, A SOUND, A GESTURE TRIGGERING
I AM SUDDENLY ALIVE!
I AM SUDDENLY ALONE,
KNOWING I WILL BE ALONE TILL I CAN BE ALONE WITH YOU
THAT IS WHAT YOU DO
YOU APPEAR, YOU APPEAR.

PRIEST
Quando sarà finita la cerimonia uscite a destra.

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
When the ceremony ends, we should all file out to the right.

PRIEST
Ecco i moduli da compilare.

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
And here are the forms for you both - Clara, Fabrizio ...

(Signora pats the Signor as if he has just swum the English channel, so great was his translating for the Priest)

SIGNORA NACCARELLI
Che brav’ uomo!
SIGNOR NACCARELLI
In Firenze, one must always complete out a form. Here you cannot even become a corpse without first completing out a form. It is, how you say,

SIGNOR & MARGARET (overlapping)
Bureaucracy.

SIGNOR
Si.

MARGARET
(To Clara, pointing.) Citizenship: U.S. Your age.

CLARA
I know.

(Signor looks over Clara's shoulder at the forms)

MARGARET
Is everything all right?

(Signor turns to his family, nearly inaudible, sans music:)

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
Andiamo a casa.

SIGNORA NACCARELLI
Perché?

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
Non ci sarà nessun matrimonio. Non chiedetemi niente. Su, andiamo a casa.¹⁶

FABRIZIO
Ma perché?¹⁷

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
Perché lo dico io. E non fatemi più domande. ¹⁸

FABRIZIO
Ma che cosa gli diremo? ¹⁹

¹⁶ We are going home, there will be no wedding. Do not ask me anything, we are going home

¹⁷ But why?

¹⁸ Because I say so, ask me no questions.

¹⁹ What do we tell them?
SIGNOR NACCARELLI
Non gli diciamo niente. Assolutamente niente.

FABRIZIO
Ma Papà! Non possiamo non far nulla!

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
Diremo loro che ho dimenticato un appuntamento molto importante.

(Signor turns on his heels and walks out of the church.
The priest murmurs something, shrugs. Signora weeps, turns, rushes off after her husband.)

MARGARET
What's the matter?

FABRIZIO (red-faced, unable to look directly at Clara)
My father - forget - remember the appointments.

MARGARET
Appointments?

FABRIZIO
Tomorrow. Domani. Mi dispiace. I speak with him. It will be ... Everything - Perfecto.

(He runs out of the church.)

MARGARET
What happened?

(Giuseppe and Franca each feign ignorance - or perhaps they do not understand.)

MARGARET
Something ... ? Should ... ?

(Pause)
GIUSEPPE
Mi dispiace ...

MARGARET
What happened?

FRANCA
I'm so sorry.

(They move off, leaving Margaret and Clara alone. The priest remains; they look to him. He shrugs and shuffles off.)

MARGARET
It's all right, darling, they just forgot something.

CLARA
Something is wrong.

MARGARET
No, no, I'm sure it's nothing. Oh.

CLARA
Something is wrong with me.

MARGARET
Of course not.

CLARA
Yes. He couldn't look me in the eye. None of them could! It's happened before! Why? Why won't they look at me?

MARGARET
Shh. (She comforts and embraces Clara. Then, to us:) No one with a dream should come to Italy, no matter how dead and buried you think it is, Italy, this is where Italy will get you. You forget. It's all happening again, I am doing it again, I've done it, the same as that day, ... Clara and her friends were leading the pony around in the back yard, I was there, and the phone rang, I ran to get it, and then, I heard, I turned, the pony kicked ... her
(THE BEAUTY IS Reprise)
HERE ...
SHE FELL ...
IT SEEMED TO TAKE FOREVER FOR HER TO FALL.
YOU KNOW IN THOSE MOMENTS
WHEN MOMENTOUS THINGS HAPPEN.
SO SLOWLY...
I REACH
LIKE THESE PAINTINGS IN THE OLD TRADITION.
THERE'S A FIGURE REACHING OUT IN THEM LIKE SO.
AND TO ME IT IS THE MOST FAMILIAR TABLEAU
I KNOW.

SO MUCH WANTING SOMETHING...
SO MUCH REACHING FOR IT...
SO MUCH WISHING JUST TO HAVE ONE MOMENT BACK.
SO MUCH BEING PATIENT...
SO MUCH BLIND ACCEPTANCE
I KNOW,
NO, I DON'T KNOW.

A MOTHER HERE IN ITALY...
A MOTHER HERE ALONE
I THOUGHT IF I HAD A CHILD
I WOULD TAKE SUCH CARE OF HER!
SO MUCH REACHING FOR IT
SO MUCH HOLDING BREATH AND KEEPING FINGERS CROSSED.
WATCHING OVER MY,
MY LITTLE LOST
CLARA!

IF I COULD,
THEN I WOULD PAINT IT OVER.

I WOULD BE THERE AND I WOULDN'T TURN AWAY.
IF I ONLY HAD A CHANCE TO NOT TURN AWAY.

AND THE BEAUTY IS
AND THE BEAUTY IS
THE BEAUTY IS

I know what I have to do.
II.vii. The Naccarelli tie shop

(Signor Naccarelli is looking at receipts; Giuseppe enters with tie boxes and puts them on the counter. They share a look but say nothing. Giuseppe exits with the receipt folder, as Margaret walks into the shop.)

MARGARET
Buona sera.

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
Ah.

MARGARET
Come va, il signore?

(Pause)

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
I saw today. Why did you not tell me? What can you be thinking of?

MARGARET
I thought it wouldn't matter. I thought -

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
It is too much. I saw her writing on the papers.

MARGARET
Well her ... writing has always looked childlike, I know, it's deplorable, but...

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
If she were twelve years old it would be better than this.

MARGARET
I know. (Pause) You can't imagine how often I tried to tell you.

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
But she is not twelve years old.

MARGARET
Even that first - tea at your home. Earlier, I tried to tell you ... It's always ...
I'm sorry.
SIGNOR NACCARELLI
I saw her write her age on the papers. Two, three years, where there is love, where there is agreement, I say it is all right. But no, it is too much.

MARGARET
It?

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
It is to make the fantastic.

MARGARET
What is?

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
You must have understood! My son Fabrizio is twenty years old, no more. With my own two eyes I see she write twenty-six. Six years difference! It cannot be.

MARGARET
Oh.

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
In that moment I ask myself, What must I say, what can I do? It will be too late. What to do? I make the excuse, an appointment. I see this in the American cinema. It was not true. I have lied. I tell you frankly.

MARGARET
They seemed so much the same age to me, so happy.

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
It cannot be. I pass an afternoon of torment, an inferno. As I am a man, as I am a Florentine, as I am a father, as I long for my son's happiness, as ...

MARGARET
In America we have seen many many happy marriages with an even greater difference. Clara - she has been very carefully brought up. She had a long illness some years ago. To me she seemed even younger than Fabrizio.

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
What is this illness? How am I to know that she is cured of it?
MARGARET
You see her; she is as healthy as she seems. Don't you realize they are in love? Whatever their ages, they are both young. This is a deep thing, a true thing. To try to stop what is between them now--

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
Try to stop?! My dear lady, I will stop whatever I wish to stop.

MARGARET
Fabrizio-

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
Si, Fabrizio, so now you think of someone else. He will try to kill himself, as I once did, it is only to grow up. No. Non è possibile. It can not be. Will not.

(Pause.)

MARGARET
This is all too bad, because I ... received a letter today from Signor Johnson, and instead of five thousand dollars, he wants to make Clara and Fabrizio a present of fifteen thousand dollars.

SIGNOR NACCARELLI (a beat before)
So now you will write and explain everything and that this wedding cannot be.

(Pause.)

MARGARET
Yes, of course.

(Longer pause.)

MARGARET
Can we ... take a walk? Una passeggiata? ... Together?

(Beat. Signor looks at his wristwatch.)

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
I have lived long enough, I think, to close my own shop when I like.
MARGARET
Yes, good for you!

(He closes up the shop; they step outside)
II.viii. Florentine Street

(Immediately after. Signor and Margaret stroll as Fabrizio and Clara did earlier. But now it is dark out.)

(LET'S WALK)

SIGNOR
I LOOK AT HIM AND THAT WAS ME
THE BLINDNESS AND THE ENERGY
I WANT TO SAY
HERE, COME THIS WAY

MARGARET
WHEN WE ARE AT A CERTAIN AGE
WE ALMOST FALL ON PURPOSE
FALL WITH ALL OUR MIGHT
AND THEN IT IS ALRIGHT
BUT WHAT DO I KNOW
OF THE ROAD TO BE TAKEN FOR HAPPINESS

SIGNOR
LET'S WALK

MARGARET
LET'S WALK

SIGNOR
LET'S WALK

MARGARET
LET'S WALK

SIGNOR
LET'S WALK

MARGARET
LET'S SEE

MARGARET AND SIGNOR
THE REST WILL BE
AH...
AND AFTER THAT
WE MIGHT AS WELL WALK

MARGARET
WHEN I WAS YOUNGER I WAS SHE
THE INNOCENCE THE FANTASY
BUT IT'S OKAY
THAT GOES AWAY

SIGNOR
THAT'S HOW I WAS THE WAY THEY ARE
THE WAY THEY LOVE TO WORRY SO
ALL THROUGH THE NIGHT
WHEN EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT

MARGARET
AH...

BOTH
BUT WHAT CAN WE SAY
THEY ARE MADE OF TOMORROW AND YESTERDAY

LET'S WALK
LET'S WALK
IT'S TRUE
LET'S SEE
LET'S WALK BEYOND OUR VANITY

NO ONE KNOWS
WE ONLY GUESS
JUST A LEAP FOR HAPPINESS
FOR HAPPINESS
HAPPINESS

SIGNOR
YOU NEVER KNOW
WE MIGHT AS WELL WALK

MARGARET
WE MIGHT AS WELL WALK
WE MIGHT AS WELL

BOTH
WALK

(Beat. Simply, as if they had been negotiating a settlement rather than strolling and passing the time with idle chat:)

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
As my mother used to say: "Non é dato a noi di sapere tutto. It is not given for us to know everything.

MARGARET
Ah. My father used to say, "There is no survey of the facts like time."

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
Yes. (Pause) Meaning?

MARGARET
Here we are: my hotel.

SIGNOR NACCARELLI
Tomorrow then? At the church?

MARGARET
Tomorrow.

(He leans in and kisses her on the lips. Then, as he crosses away, her hand goes to her face as if to wipe his kiss away as we fade to:)
II.ix. Hotel room

(Very late that night. Margaret is on the phone with Roy, who is home in America.)

MARGARET
Roy, listen to me.

ROY
I can't hear you, Margaret.

MARGARET
I don't want to wake her, that's all. She's getting married.

ROY
Who's getting married?

MARGARET
I'm letting Clara marry Fabrizio.

ROY
I'm getting on a plane. Right now.

MARGARET
They will, no, they'll be on their honeymoon.

ROY
You've been drinking, what have you been drinking?

MARGARET
The family loves her just as she is! They are well-bred and well-off-

(Clara appears in the shadows; she has been trying on her wedding dress. She listens to her mother through.)

ROY
Clara cannot be trusted with the responsibility of a family.

MARGARET
I'm not asking you, Roy, I'm telling you.
ROY
She cannot, do they know?

MARGARET
It doesn't matter to me whether they know or not, they love her.

ROY
She's a handicapped person, Margaret, Jesus, I thought we were through with this.

MARGARET
Just because she isn't normal, Roy, doesn't mean she's consigned to a life of loneliness. She mustn't be made to accept less from life just because she isn't like you or me.

(Clarə slips away into the shadows leaving the hotel.)

ROY
If she has a baby, she'll drop it, she'll lose it!

MARGARET
She'll be living with the grandmother. Who's going to take care of her when we're gone, Roy?

ROY (overlapping, having to start twice)
If they don't know – If they don't know, and they find out, they could institute legal action, do you think she'll survive the shock of that?

MARGARET
You haven't been here, honey, you haven't seen: she's blossoming. Maybe the doctors were wrong about how much she can develop.

ROY
Wrong?

MARGARET
Yes! Why can't we hope for once instead of dreading everything.

ROY
I'm calling a taxi and I'm getting on a plane. Right now!
MARGARET
Please don't.

ROY
This is lunacy!

MARGARET
They have something precious, the two of them, a deep well of feeling, something we never had.

ROY
I thought we did.

(Short pause.)

MARGARET
Well ... I'm sorry.

ROY
What are you sorry for?

MARGARET
Us.

ROY
...Listen to reason. Please.

MARGARET
No.

ROY
What?

MARGARET
I said no, Roy. Reason is what's wrong with us.

ROY
Reason is...

MARGARET
Don't come here, we won't be here.
ROY
Why? What?

MARGARET
We'll be gone.

ROY
Gone where?

MARGARET
I love you.

ROY
Gone where? Hello?

MARGARET
Clara? Darling?
II.x The Church

(Clara finds Fabrizio before the wedding has taken place.)

FABRIZIO
Teso mio.

CLARA
I came to say addio.

FABRIZIO
Addio?

CLARA
You cannot marry me.

FABRIZIO
Of course I can, Papà was being foolish.

CLARA
It isn't that.

FABRIZIO
What? What then?

CLARA
Something is wrong.

FABRIZIO
What?

CLARA
I don't know. Something is very wrong, and I'm sorry. I would fix it if I could, knew how. I can't. You must not love me, I'm sorry.

FABRIZIO
I am not sorry.

CLARA
You should be.

FABRIZIO
No.

CLARA
Yes. You will be disappointed in me.
FABRIZIO
How would I be disappointed?

CLARA
You just don't see me.

(LOVE TO ME)

FABRIZIO
THE DAY WE MEET
THE WAY YOU LEAN AGAINST THE WIND
AND DO NOT KNOW THAT YOU ARE BEAUTIFUL
OR THAT ANYONE IS WATCHING YOU
THIS IS WHAT I SEE

AND I NOTICE HOW YOU HUNGER FOR SURPRISE
AND DO NOT THINK THAT YOU ARE TALL ENOUGH
LIKE YOU'RE STANDING ON A MOUNTAIN SIDE ALONE
THIS IS WHAT I SEE

OHHHHHHHHHH.
OHHHHHHHHH, YOU'RE NOT ALONE.

NOW, I SEE AS I HAVE NEVER SEEN BEFORE
SINCE THAT MOMENT IN THE SQUARE
WHEN YOUR HAT IS CARRIED IN THE AIR
JUST SO YOU CAN CHASE IT
JUST SO I CAN BE THERE

THIS IS HOW I KNOW
THIS IS WHAT I SEE
THIS IS LOVE TO ME ...
II.xi. The Wedding

(Margaret and Clara.)

CLARA
I can't leave you.

MARGARET
Yes, yes you can.

(FABLE)

YOU CAN LOOK, IN THE FOREST
FOR A SECRET FIELD
FOR A GOLDEN ARROW
FOR A PRINCE TO APPEAR
FOR A FABLE OF LOVE THAT WILL LAST FOREVER

YOU CAN LOOK IN THE RUINS
FOR A WISHING WELL
FOR A MAGIC APPLE
FOR A CHARIOTEER
FOR A FABLE OF LOVE THAT WILL CARRY YOU

TO A MOON ON A HILL TO A HIDDEN STREAM
A LAGOON AND A RED HORIZON DREAM
SILHOUETTE SET AWAY FROM TIME FOREVER
TO A VALLEY BEYOND THE SETTING SUN
WHERE WATERS SHINE AND HORSES RUN
WHERE THERE'S A MAN WHO LOOKS FOR YOU

BUT WHILE YOU LOOK YOU ARE CHANGING, TURNING
YOU'RE A WELL OF WISHES
YOU'RE A FALLEN APPLE
NO!
NO!
LOVE'S A FAKE,
LOVE'S A FABLE,
JUST A PAINTING ON A CEILING
JUST A CHILDREN'S FAIRY TALE
STILL YOU WANT TO LOOK
AND LOOK AND LOOK AND LOOK AND LOOK
AND LOOK AND LOOK AND LOOK AND LOOK

FOR THE EYES ON A BRIDGE IN A POURING RAIN
NOT THE EYES, BUT THE PART YOU CAN'T EXPLAIN
FOR THE ARMS YOU COULD FALL INTO FOREVER
FOR THE JOY THAT YOU THOUGHT YOU'D NEVER KNOW
FOR, HERE AT LAST
AWAY YOU GO
TO A MAN WHO LOOKS FOR YOU.

IF YOU FIND IN THE WORLD
IN THE WIDE WIDE WORLD
THAT SOMEONE SEES
THAT SOMEONE KNOWS YOU
LOVE!
LOVE!
LOVE, IF YOU CAN, OH MY CLARA,
LOVE IF YOU CAN AND BE LOVED...
MAY IT LAST FOREVER.
Clara...
THE LIGHT IN THE PIAZZA.

(Margaret joins the wedding party as we fade. End of Act Two.)