

FOOL'S GOLD

Character and Scene Breakdown

Main characters

Pantalone

Hortensia- *his daughter*

Columbina – *his housekeeper*

Farfalle – *his servant*

Other servants

Dottore

His servants

Capitano

Grappa- *his servant*

Vespa

Penne- *his servant*

Concetta – *with a vendetta against Pantalone*

Ferrari – *her servant masquerading as a prince*

Assorted townsfolk and beggars

Main Scenes

Scene 1:

Pantalone offstage is very angry. A gaggle of servants enter all offering suggestions as to the cause. Pantalone enters fuming, demands to see Hortensia, his daughter.

Scene 2:

Hortensia enters. She wants to marry Vespa. Pantalone reveals this is why he is so angry. He forbids her to see him. If she does she will be disinherited. Pantalone exits.

Scene 3:

Hortensia vows to kill herself. Exits to do so, chased by all the servants.

Scene 4:

Dottore and servants enter with some strange mechanism of large see-through ball. Servants are all eager to know what it is all about. Dottore explains his machine will turn bread into gold. Servants chase Pantalone's daughter across the stage during this scene. The Experiment fails. Back to the drawing board.

Scene 5:

Mr Ferrari is being prepared by his "servant", Concetta, to seduce Pantalone's daughter and to trick Pantalone that he is a wealthy prince. He doesn't understand at first but is a fast learner. Concetta is seeking revenge on Pantalone and is using Ferrari as her means to do this.

Scene 6:

Capitano and his servant enter. They have a map and search for buried treasure. It seems to be buried in Dottore's garden. Servants chase Pantalone's daughter across the stage during this scene.

Scene 7:

Vespa is trying to write a poem whilst preparing to visit Hortensia, helped by his servant, Penne. She loves him – he is blind to this.

Scene 8:

Columbina and other servants complain about Pantalone, talk about love, talk about men. They speculate on the pros and cons of suicide. Overheard by Vespa.

Scene 9:

Pantalone overhears Concetta telling everybody about "Prince" Ferrari. Ferrari makes a big entrance for the assembled crowd. Pantalone is curious about the rich newcomer.

Scene 10:

Hortensia is desperately searching for Vespa. Finds Penne who is murderously jealous but Hortensia is oblivious.

Scene 11:

Vespa arrives, Penne leaves. Scene between him and Hortensia planning their future. Overheard by Penne.

Scene 12:

Pantalone enters pursued by Dottore and servant. Vespa hides behind Hortensia. Dottore is demanding repayment of money he loaned to Pantalone who brushes him away. Dottore and servant exit.

Scene 13:

Pantalone informs Hortensia he has someone for her to marry. Ferrari enters with Concetta. He asks Hortensia to marry him. Vespa reveals himself. He is made fun of by Pantalone. Ferrari and Concetta join in. Hortensia tries to stop them but to no effect, in fact the laughter gets worse. Penne storms in and silences everyone by telling them that they know nothing of love. She storms off. Ferrari is impressed. All leave apart from Vespa and Hortensia.

Scene 14:

Hortensia storms at Vespa- "Who was that woman?" They have a BIG argument upstage as Columbina enters to tell us about lovers, their fallings out etc. All leave.

Scene 15:

Penne enters with a bench/small ladder and a bottle of vodka. She drinks. Gets out rope and prepares to hang herself. As she readies and prepares herself to jump a succession of people enter all oblivious to her and her predicament–

- 1) Ferrari and Concetta very pleased with their plans
- 2) Columbina and other servants
- 3) Grappa, Capitano's servant who grabs a drink of the vodka
- 4) Dottore and servant planning the final stages of their experiment.
- 5) Vespa and Hortensia hide under the bench/ladder that Penne is standing on.
- 6) All re-enter

Penne finally lets rip at everyone. Silence. She exits. Comment from Columbina. All exit.

Scene 16:

Capitano and Grappa surprised by Dottore and servant in Dottore's garden. Capitano pretends he's the new gardener. Dottore swallows this – his servant is not so sure. Hortensia, pursued by servants and Columbina rush through. Columbina and Capitano meet – *fulmine*, love at first sight. Capitano speaks the words of "Smile". Columbina dragged away by other servants. Dottore and Capitano exit in opposite directions.

Scene 17:

Pantalone orders Farfalle, one of his servants to dig up his gold – obtained by underhand methods - which has been secretly buried in Dottore's garden. Overheard by Concetta.

Scene 18:

Concetta and Farfalle.

Scene 19:

Vespa and Hortensia at their wits' end: no money, no escape. They decide to kill themselves. They leave a suicide note.

Scene 19:

Dottore's servant advertises his Great Experiment. Other servants make fun of him, the Dottore and the Experiment. Columbina left alone when others leave. Will she meet Capitano again?

Scene 20 FINALE:

Dottore sets up for his Great Experiment. Capitano and Grappa arrive wanting to dig where Dottore is making his experiment. Capitano threatens Dottore, interrupted by Ferrari and Concetta, followed by Penne, then Pantalone who have arrived for the Experiment then by Hortensia and Vespa who have arrived to kill themselves. Capitano threatens everybody. His anger is only quelled by the arrival of Columbina. The Great Experiment is performed. Unknown to Dottore and Pantalone the gold is swapped for the bread. The Experiment is a success! Pantalone ties to buy Dottore's gold making machine. Ferrari falls in love with Penne. They exit reciting poetry. Capitano and Columbina exit reciting the words of "Smile". Concetta reveals that Pantalone swindled and impoverished her father. Pantalone's servant, Farfalle, supports this.

Dottore is persuaded to sell his gold making machine to Pantalone. He can only buy it if he agrees to the marriage of Hortensia and Vespa. He agrees.

Everyone enters as Pantalone tries to get the machine to work. Fade out as he labours to get the machine to work.