

SCENE 5

Leonardo's Studio
That afternoon (Tuesday)

Salai doesn't know what to do. He decides to tell Leonardo what has happened and ask for his help .

LEONARDO is working at his table.

(SFX CUE <Front Door Closing -Interior>)

LEONARDO

Salai ? Is that you?

(SALAI enters, deep in thought)

SALAI

Yes Master it is me..

LEONARDO

(Excited)

Look at this! It's a new design for a bridge - a portable bridge that folds up and... Salai? Whatever's the matter?

SALAI

You know how you're always telling me that one day my *romanzi* would get me in big trouble.

LEONARDO

Yes...

SALAI

Well today is that one day.

LEONARDO

Salai. Did I not warn you what would happen if you continued with this.. this foolishness with Lisa.

SALAI

It's not Lisa.

LEONARDO

(Incredulous)
Not Lisa?

SALAI

Not Lisa. - It's Aragona Orsini

LEONARDO

Aragona? Your sponsor? My God! Have you *really* been fooling around with her too.

SALAI

Yes.. but I really had little choice, she..

LEONARDO

(Angrily)
Little choice? Of course you had a choice you stupid young fool. The Orsini are not a family to be messed with.

SALAI

I couldn't refuse - I needed her money.

LEONARDO

Her money.. Was that the only reason? You know what that makes you, don't you.
So what, exactly, has happened?

SALAI

You remember the Inquisitor Bastiano. He was jailed and banished from the city many years ago. Well he's back. He blamed Aragona for ruining his life, and swore one day he would have his revenge. He's found out about us and threatens to tell her husband.

LEONARDO

Yes I remember Bastiano. So what's the problem? Ludovico Orsini would never believe a rogue like him.

SALAI

The problem is that it isn't just his word. He's been using one of the Machiavelli to spy on us. That would sow some seeds of doubt wouldn't it. Orsini's no fool - he'd have to protect his family's name.

LEONARDO

Indeed he would. So what do you plan to do about it?

SALAI

Orsini won't be back home until the weekend. Aragona insists that we have to leave the city.

LEONARDO

(Angrily)

Leave? You can't just leave!

SALAI

I don't want to - and certainly not with Aragona.

LEONARDO

And where would you go?

SALAI

We'll go to her sister's in San Miniato, it's all being arranged. Oh Master, I don't know what to do. We shall leave by the river on Friday night. I just hope by then I can come up with a better solution.

(LEONARDO puts his head in his hands)

#21 THE PAGE WILL TURN

Leonardo

[PLAY MUSIC](#)

(LEONARDO puts an affectionate arm round Salai)

LEONARDO

Oh Salai - my dear Salai. Don't despair. Haven't I always protected you. I'll see what can be done. I know Niccolò Machiavelli well.

SALAI

But what can he do?

LEONARDO

Niccolò's word is law in the Machiavelli family. If one of them is involved he can put a stop to it. Then surely Bastiano wouldn't dare do anything on his own. If need be we'll pay to have him 'warned off'. There's no time to lose, I'll go and see if I can find him.

(LEONARDO exits)

(SALAI sits with his head in his hands)

(LISA enters via the secret passage)

SALAI

Lisa! What...

LISA

It's all right. I waited till I heard Leonardo leave. Oh Salai, Salai.

SALAI

My darling. What's happened?

LISA

It's Totto - Totto Machiavelli

SALAI

Machiavelli? The misery that follows that name. What has he done to you?

LISA

He was here last night.

SALAI

Here?

LISA

Yes here. He knows about the secret passage - he was hiding behind the wall and he heard everything.

SALAI

He heard everything! Oh my God is there no end to this. What has he said?

LISA

Totto is an evil man. He has always wanted me, and now he threatens to tell Francesco about us if I don't... If I don't..

(LISA breaks down)

LISA

Oh Salai my love I am so afraid

(SALAI takes her in his arms)

SALAI

Let's just think for a moment. If it were anyone but a Machiavelli maybe we could brazen it out.

LISA

Perhaps Leonardo can help us.

SALAI

(sighs)

Well he does know the Machiavelli, but he has problems of his own right now.

(**SALAI** is pensive)

SALAI

Lisa, do you truly love me - as I love you.

LISA

Do you Salai? Love only me? Totto said that you and Aragona...

SALAI

(Defensively)

Totto said?. That man would say anything to get his evil way. Surely you can't believe I'd do that.

LISA

I'm sorry, I never doubted you, Salai.
You know I love you! How can you ask such a question?

SALAI

Then, if there is no other way, we'll have to go away - together. Leave Florence.

LISA

But what about my family! I can't just leave my family!!

SALAI

(Firmly)

Lisa. If we can't deal with Totto and he tells Francesco, you will never see your family again. This way, in time... there is a chance.

(**LISA** sobs)

#22 DIO MIO

Salai / Lisa

[PLAY MUSIC](#)

LISA

But Salai, surely there *must* be some other way - and how would we leave? We'd be discovered and followed.

SALAI

Don't worry I can arrange our safe passage down the river. We need time - just a couple of days. Meanwhile you must stall Totto, but let him think you will agree. Go, my love, before Leonardo returns. I will see what can be done.

BLACKOUT