

And Frank Sinatra Singing in a Fig Tree

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SYNOPSIS: Luigi sets out to woo Luisa over the twelve days of Christmas. Things do not turn out according to plan.

CAST: 2-4 (1-2 males, 1-2 females)... or more

Cast of 4: (Or more if you want to use a choir) and ... arm movements could be fun)

Optional: Noelle (female, ageless) could sing or say the first lines of each stanza

Noel (male, ageless) could sing or say the second line of each stanza

(Or you could use one singer or two female or two male)

Luisa (female, ageless – old enough to know how to cook); busy cooking; - and Italian!

Luigi (male, ageless – old enough to try to cook): wooing Luisa and yes, Italian!

Cast of 2:

Luisa (description above): would sing or say the first line of each stanza (Noelle's lines) in addition to her lines

Luigi (description above): would sing or say the second line of each stanza (Noel's lines) in addition to his lines

SETTING: No set. Begins on the first Day of Christmas (December 25) and ends on the 12th day of Christmas (Epiphany)

PROPS: You don't need a lot of props! You do need a stick planted in a pot with a photo of Frank Sinatra for the "1st Day and a covered casserole dish or covered pot for the other days. If you want to go all out, you could have a large pot for the squalling squids and a small plate for the five golden figs. For the Feasts of Seven Fishes – they can look into the audience.

COSTUMES: Contemporary. LUISA is cooking and could have a Christmas apron. You can play with LUIGI and give him a worn apron that shows he's been trying to cook and/or a baker's hat. Or they have on ugly Christmas sweaters. Or whatever tickles your fancy.

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(Lights up. If using, NOELLE and NOEL/CHOIR, they will be on either side of the stage and stay there the entire time. Maybe we hear a doorbell. Or just a knock. LUISA answers the door and there is LUIGI.)

NOELLE

On the first day of Christmas, Luigi gave to me...

NOEL

Sinatra singing in a fig tree.

LUISA

Merry Christmas, Luigi!

LUIGI

Buon Natale, Luisa! I brought you this.

LUISA

It's dead. My Christmas tree is already dead and you bring me another dead tree?

LUIGI

Fig trees don't like winter. Who knew?

LUISA

Why isn't Frankie singing? Because he's dead, too?

LUIGI

Listen. Can you hear? He's singing "The Christmas Song."

LUISA

I like Tony Bennett's version better. Grazie for the gift. Maybe I'll have leftovers for you tomorrow. I have to go. Mom and Pop are waiting for their Christmas ravioli.

(LUIGI and LUISA exit.)

NOELLE

On the second day of Christmas, Luigi gave to me....

NOEL

Two curdled doves...

(LUIGI enters with casserole. Doorbell or knock.)

LUISA (enters)

Luigi!

LUIGI

Luisa! For you.

(LUIGI opens the lid. A pair of doves in cream sauce. LUISA dips her finger in.)

LUISA

The sauce is lumpy.

LUIGI

I know. The doves curdled. It's the thought that counts, right?

LUISA

Think of something better than curdled doves. Anything else?

LUIGI

Leftover ravioli?

LUISA

Sorry. Pop ate it all. I have to do yesterday's dishes.

(THEY exit.)

NOELLE

On the third day of Christmas, Luigi gave to me...

NOEL

Three drenched hens.

(LUIGI enters. Knocks, etc. LUISA answers the door.)

LUISA

Luigi, what?

LUIGI

For you ...

LUISA

Soup?

LUIGI

Look in the bottom - three hens – all for you.

They're drenched.

LUISA

Braised in wine.

LUIGI

How many bottles?

LUISA

Three.

LUIGI

Next time, just bring the wine. Maybe... we could drink it together.

LUISA

I'll be back in a flash.

LUIGI

I said "maybe."

LUISA

(They exit.)

NOELLE

On the fourth day of Christmas, Luigi gave to me...

NOEL

Four squalling squids...

(LUIGI enters. Knocks. LUISA enters.)

(Sounds of squids squalling.... Yeah, I don't know what that sounds like either
So make it up.)

LUISA

What is that horrible noise?

LUIGI

I brought you squids.

LUISA

They're squalling.

LUIGI

I didn't have the heart to kill them.

LUISA
They have too many arms...

LUIGI
The better to hug you with....

LUISA
And those tentacles...

LUIGI
To hold you close.

LUISA
No, thank-you. I don't want any pets. Especially squalling ones.

(THEY exit.)

NOELLE
On the fifth day of Christmas, Luigi gave to me...

NOEL
Five golden figs.

(LUIGI enters. Knocks. LUISA answers.)

LUISA
Now what?

LUIGI
Five figs.

LUISA
I thought the fig tree died.

LUIGI
I bought them.

LUISA
They're brown.

LUIGI
They're gold. They just look brown because they're dried.

LUISA
I like fresh figs. From a living tree. With Tony Bennett singing.

(THEY exit.)

NOELLE

On the sixth day of Christmas, Luigi gave to me ...

NOEL

Six yeasts-a-spilling...

(LUIGI enters. Knocks. LUISA answers.)

LUISA

Now what? I work at home you know and I'm behind because of the holiday.

LUIGI

Six different yeasts proofing – one for Peasant bread, one for Panettone, one for Italian bread, one for ciabatta bread, one for focaccia and may the Italian gods have mercy on my soul – one yeast for French bread.

LUISA

They're all attached. How do I know which one is which?

LUIGI

They spilled into each other. Maybe just make one giant loaf ... of something.

LUISA

Basta! Enough! I'm sick of baking. You bake them. Come back when the six yeasts-a-spilling are loaves of bread. We'll have the bread with the three bottles of wine you promised.

(THEY exit.)

NOELLE

On the seventh day of Christmas, Luigi gave to me...

NOEL

Seven feasts of fishes....

(LUIGI enters. KNOCK. LUISA enters.)

LUISA

Luigi, give me a break. It's New Year's Eve.

LUIGI

But look out there. What do you see?

LUISA

Momma Mia! Seven tables filled with - fish?

LUIGI

It wasn't easy – but here you are for New Year's Eve – seven feasts of fishes.

LUISA

Luigi! The Feasts of Seven Fishes is for Christmas Eve! It's too late.

LUIGI

Don't you want to taste some?

LUISA

For New Year's Eve, we prepare lentil soup. It brings prosperity in the New Year.

LUIGI

What am I going to do with all that fish?

LUISA

Feed Hoboken (*or any city of your choice*). Now go. I need to sleep so I can wake up at midnight.

LUIGI

Happy...

(LUISA exits.)

New Year, Luisa...

(A downtrodden LUIGI exits.)

NOELLE

On the eighth day of Christmas, Luigi gave to me...

NOEL

Eight pignolis spinning.

(LUIGI enters. Knocks. LUISA enters.)

LUIGI

For you. Eight pignolis spinning.

LUISA

They look like Mexican jumping beans.

(One may actually jump and frighten LUISA.)

Cover them before they attack me.

LUIGI

I knew they didn't look like pine nuts. It was an after-Christmas special.

(LUIGI stands there forlorn.)

LUISA

Anything else?

LUIGI

Happy New Year?

LUISA

Happy New Year. (Awkward beat.) Anything else?

LUIGI

I ... wish ... I ... No. Nothing else.

(LUIGI exits. LUISA waits for a beat and then exits.)

NOELLE

On the ninth day of Christmas, Luigi gave to me...

NOEL

Nine radicchio rapping.

(LUIGI enters. KNOCKS. LUISA enters. We hear the sound of "rapping." Probably badly.)

LUIGI

For you! A healthy vegetable to start your New Year off right.

LUISA

Radicchio singing rap?

LUIGI

I know. I prefer opera but apparently vegetables like rap.

LUISA

Teach them Taylor Swift and then bring them back to me.

(Beat.)

Anything else? I have a minute.

I'm thinking. LUIGI

Yes? LUISA

Never mind. LUIGI

(LUIGI and LUISA exit.)

NOELLE
On the tenth day of Christmas, Luigi gave to me...

NOEL
Ten olives jiving.

(LUIGI enters. Knocks. LUISA answers.)

LUIGI
For you. Ten olives jiving.

LUISA
You do like musical foods.

LUIGI
And you – do you like music, Signorina?

LUISA
Yes. But I do prefer a dance partner that's human. Dancing with olives is loco.

LUIGI
I don't know. With a little olive oil, they sure can disco.

(LUISA being just a tad suggestive.)

LUISA
Do you like to disco.... Or do you prefer ... a slow dance...

(LUIGI is being reduced to a puddle.)

LUIGI
I ... I ... I ...

LUISA
Come back when you have an answer.

(LUISA exits.)

LUIGI

... love you.

(LUIGI exits.)

NOELLE

On the eleventh day of Christmas, Luigi gave to me ...

NOEL

Eleven scungilli congealing...

(LUIGI enters. KOCKS. LUISA answers. She is exasperated.)

LUISA

What now?

LUIGI

Eleven scungilli congealing ...

LUISA

Why do you bring me snails when you can't cook them?

LUIGI

You can teach me.

LUISA

I don't want to be your teacher. (Beat.) Anything else?

LUIGI

Would you rather I made escargots?

(LUISA exits.)

I have one more day.

(LUIGI exits.)

NOELLE

On the twelfth day of Christmas, Luigi gave to me...

NOEL

Twelve scampi scampering ...

(LUIGI enters. Knocks. LUISA answers.)

LUIGI

It's me! Luigi! With shrimp! Look at that scampi!

LUISA

They're scampering. I don't want them scampering all through my kitchen. (Beat.) Anything else?

LUIGI

It's Epiphany.

LUISA

I know.

LUIGI

There is no thirteenth day of Christmas.

LUISA

I know.

LUIGI

I thought I'd have an epiphany of my own but I can't think of anything else to do. To woo. To show you I love you.

LUISA

What did you say?

LUIGI

I thought I'd have an epiphany/

LUISA

Not the beginning. What did you say at the end. Something about love?

LUIGI

Was it, "I ... love you?"

LUISA

Again.

LUIGI

I love you.

LUISA

I've been waiting for that. Twelve days of presents – especially those presents - tell me nothing. But those three little words. They are everything.

LUIGI

What does that mean?

LUISA

I love you, too.

LUIGI

I brought some wine and bread and Tony Bennett singing and we could.... Could we?????

(LUISA takes LUIGI by the arm and drags him into her home. Door slams.)

NOELLE and NOEL

And Tony Bennett singing in a fig tree.

(You could always go through the entire song starting with “On the Twelfth Day of Christmas and move quickly – really quickly through it. Arm movements could be fun.)

END OF PLAY

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