

Doña Sirena – a passionate wealthy widow on the surface, a wily schemer underneath

She complains to her servant, Colombina, that her scheme to get money through matchmaking will be ruined because her creditors will close down her party.

Sirena: I do not trust you, you're so wilful and you always let your imagination run away with you. But let's think about what's important. What can we do in such a mess? My guests will be here soon, all of them people of standing and importance, and among them Mr Punchinello with his wife and daughter, who, for many reasons, matter more to me than all the rest. You know how some of the most noble gentlemen frequent this house, but, like me, their nobility is rather tarnished, for want of money. Mr Punchinello's daughter, with her enormous dowry, and the great inheritance she'll be left on the death of her father, would be an excellent match for any of them. Many of them are paying her court. I intervene for all of them, on account of my great friendship with Mr Punchinello and his wife. I know that whoever wins their favour will pay my good offices fulsomely, because I made each one of them sign a warranty to be on the safe side. The only means I have to win back my wealth is to be a go-between; and if, on the way, some rich businessman took a fancy to you... who knows? This house could still be what it was before! But if the insolence of those people is known tonight, if I can't have my party... It doesn't bear thinking about ... it will be the ruin of me!