

JACK & BELLA – 1

*A dressing room at the Opera House. Jack sits at a desk writing a score. Dom has been berating him for his tardiness. The door opens. Bella sticks her head in and beams at Dom, her fiancé.*

BELLA

Darling!

JACK

She's an alto! Dom, send her away, we're working!

BELLA

I'm not an alto!

JACK

Send her away, send her – not an alto? How high can you go?

BELLA

High E.

JACK

High E? High E? High E??? Couldn't be!

BELLA



JACK

Come on in!

*She does.*

You are a soprano!

*To Dom.*

And you said there was no soprano!

BELLA

I'm not a soprano!

JACK

What are you, donna?

BELLA

First of all, I am a doña.



BELLA

*Comes up to the desk where Jack is working, and crouches so that her face is on the level of his, and speaks, slowly, carefully, without taking her eyes off him, because she is a diva and wants to see how he will react to her next three words.*

Why, thank you.

*Pause. For a moment, Jack stops writing.*

JACK

You look taller on stage.

BELLA

*Stands up.*

On stage, I'm apparently the grace of God.

JACK

You're an *assoluta*.

DOM

You watch your tongue –

JACK

That's her range, an *assoluta*. Means she can hit any note from any voice, soprano, mezzo, contralto, you name it. This never happens. She's a myth.

BELLA

*She is considerably amused.*

I am a rainbow!

JACK

And you're engaged to him.

BELLA

I am.

DOM

She is.

JACK

Keep an eye on Dom around sopranos.

DOM

*In exasperation.*

Rossini!

BELLA

*Until this moment, she had no idea who she was talking to.*

Rossini?!

DOM

*Nods, like he's admitting a shameful truth.*

Rossini.

JACK

Figaro! Figaro?! Figaro.

DOM

*Sighs and does the introductions.*

Bella Colbran, my fiancée. Gioachino Rossini, my punishment.

BELLA

I thought you were a copier!

JACK

I'm flattered to be mistaken for an honest man.