

It Is So (If You Think So!)

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Character Descriptions

Laudisi (40s-50s): Man or woman. Energetic, insightful, and witty with a touch of elegance. Questions how everyone sees the truth.

Amalia Agazzi (mid 30s-40s): Self-important due to her husband's position as a government official. Still, she knows deep down that she could go on her own and be successful if things change.

Councilman Agazzi (mid 30s-50s): Government official. Unkempt. Authoritarian with a bad temper. Wears glasses.

Dina Agazzi (late teens-20s): Their daughter. Outspoken. Lively and charming. Acts like she knows things better than her parents.

Signora Sirelli (20s-30s): Pretentious. Over-dressed. Spry. Very curious. Rude to her husband.

Signor Sirelli (30s-40s): Pretentious. Over-dressed. Has a large personality. Wears squeaky shoes.

Signora Cini (50s-60s): Passive-aggressive. Foolish. Takes pleasure in the misfortune of others through an air of innocence.

Signora Frola (60s-70s): Neatly dressed. Modest. Kind. Just a lovely older lady. Wears a smile that softens the pain in her eyes.

Signor Ponza (30s-40s): Intense. Serious. Sinister. Dressed all in black.

Signora Nenni (50s-60s): Awkward with affectation. Full of greedy curiosity. But guarded.

Inspector Centuri (30s-60s): Man or woman. Officious. Wants to do the right thing.

Mayor (50s-60s): Man or woman. Friendly. Affable. A politician.

Signora Ponza (20s-30s): The wife of Signor Ponza. Mysterious. Wears a veil. Dressed in black.

Side 1 – For Laudisi and other male roles

[looking in a mirror seeing his/her reflection]

Ah, so there you are, again!

Now, tell me, which of the two of us is crazy? [*points at the mirror*]

Yes, well, I know. I say: “It’s you” and you point right back at me with *your* finger.

Well, why not just agree that each of us knows the other fairly well by this time, okay?

The issue here is that others don’t see you the same way I do. So, what’s to be done? What’s to become of you then, my old friend?

Standing here in front of you I see myself and touch myself. But you? What do you become? For the others? A ghost? A shadow? An illusion?

Yes, an illusion! But do you see all these crazy people who pay no attention to their own illusion, the one they carry around with them day and night?

And what do they do?

They run around like fools, chasing other people’s illusions, fully convinced that it’s something quite different from theirs, which they think is fixed in the eyes of everyone.

It’s not fixed. It’s a mask. It’s a naked mask.

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Side 2 – For Laudisi and other male roles

Facts! What can you learn from *facts*?

You're the ones who need records, archives, certificates...but I find them completely useless.

Because for me, the truth lies not in documents but in the minds of those two people. Which we can't penetrate. Aside from a few clues they might choose to hand out to us.

They both say the other is mad. So, one of them must be. But which one is it?

Which one?

You don't know, do you?

No one knows.

And it isn't because the evidence has been destroyed. And certainly, a document might help you to know...what? Exactly?

What can you or I know about anyone else? Who they are...what they're like...what they do...and why they do it?

And how can you expect anyone to believe what someone tells them, when what they tell them, comes from their point of view?

This is the truth. Their truth. According to them. As they see it.

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Side 3 – For Dina, Amalia, Sirelli and other men and women roles

But the man rented an apartment: for his mother-in-law, in our building, right next door – to us.

And when we went over to say hello to *her*, she did not invite us in. We extended the courtesy. To make her feel welcome, to make her feel at home.

And I know what you're thinking: we were courteous because we're curious. Well, that's natural, don't you think?

I mean, listen, he comes here, and not only rents an apartment next door, but then rents *another* apartment on the top floor of an old tenement building on the edge of town next to the market. And we have seen it. And not just us – the whole town has been looking at it too.

There's a courtyard that is dark as a bottomless pit. It's a creepy place. And it has a balcony on the top floor with iron railings like a prison. There, you can see so many strings connected to hanging baskets.

And it's there where he keeps his wife. Behind those iron railings. And it's here, next to us, where he keeps his mother-in-law, away from her daughter. Both kept apart by this monster of a man.

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Side 4 – For Amalia and other female roles

Clearly, when a girl marries, she will leave her mother, and go live with her husband – even in another town. That’s normal.

But, when her poor mother follows them, because she can’t live without her daughter, now doesn’t that strike you as odd, especially when she is forced to live on the other side of town, where she doesn’t get to see her daughter?

And you might be thinking: “Maybe they don’t get along.”

Noooo, that’s not it. They’re always together – not the mother and daughter – but the mother and the son-in-law. And that’s why people are talking. Because he comes every night, to keep her company.

She’s not ill. That’s’ clear enough: because she leaves her apartment, alone, when he’s gone, and she goes out to see her daughter across town. And she’s not allowed to go upstairs. She can only talk to her – from the courtyard.

The old lady goes into the courtyard and pulls a string that rings a bell. Then out comes the daughter, standing from that high balcony in the sky, the sun shining brightly behind her, and the mother talks to her. But she can’t really see her daughter because the sun gets in her eyes.

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Side 5 – For Signora Frola

Oh, please, no, do not mistrust my son-in-law. He is a very good man. I cannot tell you *how* good he is. He is tender and kind to me. How can I make you understand the love he has for my daughter? It would have been impossible to find a better husband for her.

It is not he who forbids my daughter from calling on me. Or from us having physical contact with each other. He hasn't denied us anything. We are the ones who have set the rules. It's all our own decision. We have done this *for* him. And we are happy. My daughter and I are both very, very happy.

But you see, he is under a spell. Or an illness. He is overwhelmed by love to the point where it casts a force around him like a circle. And this force, this magic circle, extends and surrounds his wife, and she cannot leave. And no one else can enter.

If I broke into this world he has created would that make me selfish? Perhaps. But no, I must respect it – and let it be. And take comfort in their happiness.

I still get to see her each day. And we exchange letters, so we can chat and gossip and laugh. It's enough. It's enough for me.

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Side 6 – For Signor Ponza

I knew you had to be confused. That's why I've come here.

I'm afraid the poor woman is in an awful state. She's unwell. Some would say insane. She has been insane for years.

She seems normal, at first glance, but trust me, she is mad. Her madness is contained in her belief – her sincere belief – that I don't wish her to see her daughter.

Her daughter! *What daughter?* Her daughter is dead!

She died four years ago. I was completely devastated, but the poor woman, she lost her mind.

So, I had to go on living. I married my present wife a couple years ago. She is my second wife. And Signora Frola thinks she's her daughter.

Needless to say, I am terribly embarrassed by all of this, because the poor woman was confined to an asylum for so long, and then then one day she saw me with my second wife and thought she was looking at her daughter.

If you speak to her she seems quite sane...