

A Dog's Will or The Virgin's Game

By Ariano Suassuna

Play no. 273

Opening show:13/06/1972

Creative team

Hebrew By: Dan Almagor

Directed by: Joseh Milo

Set and Costumes by : ELI Sinai

Music by: Poldi Schatzman

Movement by: Bela Rosenblum-Reichler

Lighting: Natan Panturin

Cast

The Clown: Israel Biederman

Grillo: Shlomo Bar-Shavit

Chico: Ariel Furman

The Major: Izchak Bareket

Pater Joao: Israel Becker

The Priest: Alexander Peleg

The Bishop: Israel Rubintchik

The Monk: Benny Apollo

The Baker: Shai Danon

Baker's wife: Tova Pardo

Severino: Avraham Ronai

The Robber: Yaacov Ashkenazi

The Demon: Yitzchak Bareket

The Devil: Baruch Barkin

Manuel: Michael Warshaviak

The Holy Mother: Aviva Marks

In front of the church in a little town in N. Brazil stand two friends – Grillo, a cunning fellow who works as a baker's-boy, and Chico his naïve companion. They have come to invite the priest to the baker's wife's house. Her little dog is dying and the baker's wife believes that if the priest will administer Extreme Unction to the dog, he will be saved. But the priest knows that the Bishop is in the neighbourhood and refused to bless the dog who promptly in front of the church.

Grillo sees a way out. He tells the priest the dog was a "true Christian", and left a will before his death in which he bequeathed a good sum of money to the priest and his curate. Of course, as soon as the priest hears this he is ready to bury the dog with full Catholic ceremony – even in Latin! When the Bishop arrived and learns what has been going on, he gets very angry and threatens to de-frock the priest, but Grillo reminds hi that he too has been remembered in the dog's Will – with a good sum of money – so the Bishop takes back his threat.

Grillo send Chico out to hunt for a cat to sell to the baker's wife now that she has lost her dog. He asks Chico to insert some silve coins into the cat – and also to wear a bladder full of blood on his belly. When the baker's wife arrives he succeeds in selling her the cat which "lays" silver! While the Bishop, the priest, the baker and his wife are counting the money that the dog has bequeathed them, a tough robber – Severino – suddenly arrives, takes the money from them and starts to kill them all one after the other.

At the moment when he is about to kill Grillo, Grillo reveals that he has a mouth-organ which can work miracles! – It can bring the dead back to life. He gives him a demonstration with the help of Chico's bladder of blood. The baffled Severino decides to try the mouth-organ – to use it to call on his patron saint in heaven. He orders his henchman to shoot him and afterwards to play the mouth-organ to recurrect him. The henchman fires – but, of course, is unable to bring him back to life. Grillo and Chico seize him and stab him, but within his dying minutes he shoots. And kills Grillo. Chico is now the only one left.

At the opening of the second act everybody except Chico (who is still alive) find themselves in heaven. There they meet the Devil and ask for a fair trial, calling on Jesus of Nazareth for help. He appears to them as a negro! Grillo recruits the help of Mary, the Holy Mother, who decided to acquit most of them and to send only Grillo back to earth to give him a second chance to

make good. In the last scene Chico brings his friend's body for burial. (He is unaware that Grillo has been granted a "new life") Grillo jumps from the stretcher and tells the frightened Chico about his visit to heaven. Both of them are very happy that they now have all the money in their hands, but suddenly Chico surprises Grillo by telling him that he will give all the money to the church in return for Grillo's life. And now he must keep his promise. Grillo tries to persuade him not to give the money away, but he also remembers that only by her intervention has he come back to earth – so he has no choice. In the end, both remain as they were – extremely poor but full of life and natural-born wisdom.