

Ricardo scratched his head and picked up the loaf of freshly baked bread sitting on the table. Bringing it to his nose, he inhaled deeply, and exclaimed “è meraviglioso!” (It is wonderful!)

Isabella cast her eyes down to the table and gingerly plucked a sprig of grapes from the bowl next to her, eating slowly, silently, without speaking. After a moment she asked Ricardo in a voice clear as a bell: “Seniore, come stanno i tuoi figli?” (Sir, how are your children?)

Grigori, sitting farther down the table, yawned and gestured for more wine. Isabella noticed his frock appeared frayed all the way down the underarm, so badly that threads were hanging off, and there were holes in the armpit. ‘That poor gentleman cannot even afford a new frock’, she thought. Ricardo replied that his children were charming at times and naughty at others, to which Isabella smiled and said “Ho fatto un sogno in cui mi sono svegliata come una ricca ereditiera” (“I had a dream that I woke up as a rich heiress”).