



# RIGOLETTO

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Rigoletto is a jester at the court of the Duke of Mantua, a cruel nobleman interested only in chasing women. The Duke and his friends enjoy Rigoletto's jokes, but they also enjoy bullying him. The one person Rigoletto truly loves is his daughter, Gilda, whom he keeps sequestered at home. Yet even Rigoletto can't protect Gilda from the Duke's lecherous advances, and when a revenge plot goes horribly awry, he ends up destroying Gilda herself—and any hope he may have had for his own happiness.

## MAIN CHARACTERS



**RIGOLETTO**

A hunchbacked  
court jester



**DUKE OF MANTUA**

A philandering nobleman



**GILDA**

Rigoletto's beautiful  
daughter



**MONTERONE**

A wealthy courtier



**SPARAFUCILE**

A shady hit man



**GUALTIER MALDÉ**

A poor student  
(actually the Duke in disguise)

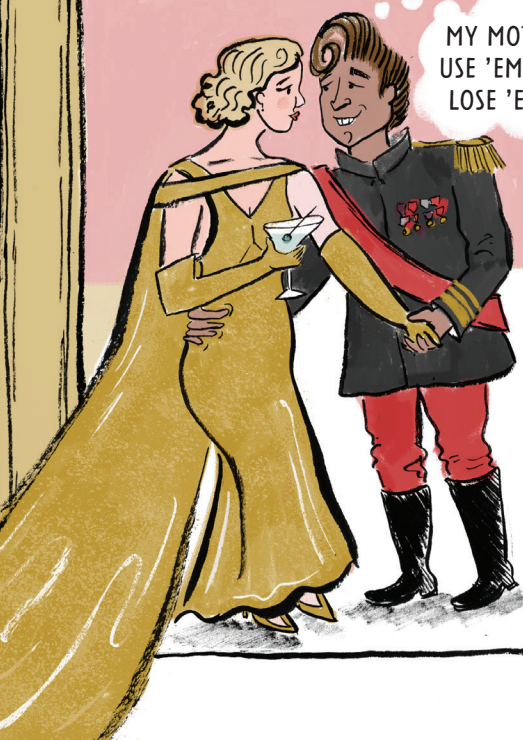
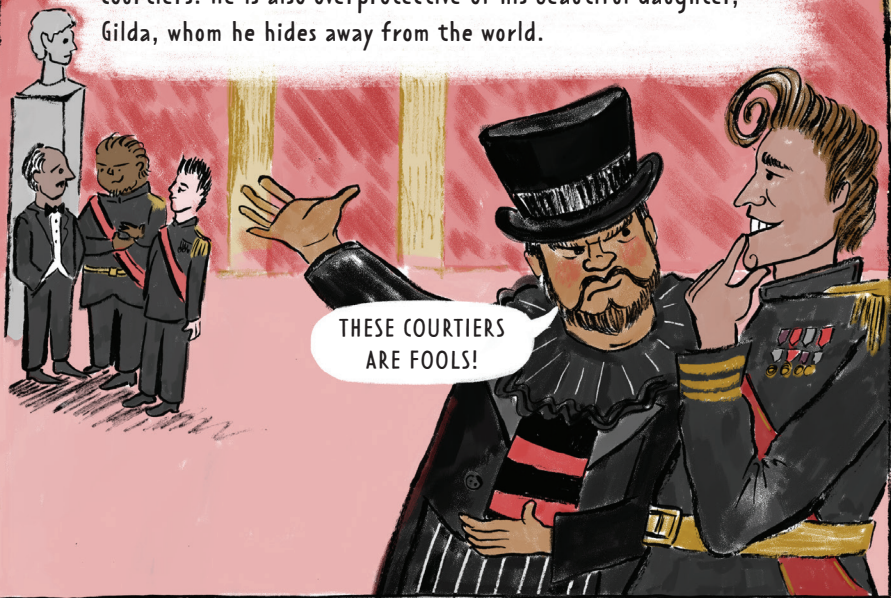


**MADDALENA**

Sparafucile's sister



**R**igoletto is the court jester for the Duke of Mantua. He makes his living as an entertainer, often by making fun of the Duke's courtiers. He is also overprotective of his beautiful daughter, Gilda, whom he hides away from the world.



The Duke of Mantua is a self-centered flirt who moves from woman to woman, and he especially enjoys taking advantage of the women at court, including Monterone's daughter.



Rigoletto makes fun of Monterone for being unable to protect his own daughter from the Duke. Furious, Monterone curses Rigoletto for mocking him and belittling his daughter's suffering. Rigoletto, a superstitious man, is shaken.



Sparafucile offers his services to Rigoletto. Rigoletto replies he might need an assassin later. He also bitterly reflects on his similarities to the hit man: Sparafucile uses weapons to kill his victims, while Rigoletto uses his words to wound them.



Rigoletto's daughter Gilda mostly stays at home. But recently she met a poor student named Gualtier Maldé at church. Not realizing that Maldé is the cruel Duke in disguise, she falls for him. The Duke, hoping to seduce her later, pretends to love her in return.

I'M LOVESTRUCK!

A cartoon illustration of a young woman with brown hair in a braid, wearing a teal top and a patterned skirt, looking up at a young man with glasses and a suit. They are holding hands and smiling. The background is filled with red hearts and swirling lines, suggesting a romantic atmosphere.

Angry at Rigoletto for always making fun of them, the courtiers decide to kidnap Gilda, who they think is Rigoletto's mistress. Rigoletto, who thinks they are kidnapping someone else, offers to assist them. They mask and blindfold him, and he unknowingly helps them kidnap his own daughter.

WHO'S LAUGHING NOW?

A cartoon illustration showing a woman in a teal top and patterned skirt being carried away by two men in black suits. One man is holding her from behind, and the other is supporting her from below. They are on a yellow ladder. In the foreground, a man in a black top hat and sunglasses is looking up at them. A speech bubble from one of the kidnappers says "WHO'S LAUGHING NOW?".



The Courtiers tell the Duke they've gotten revenge on Rigoletto by kidnapping his mistress and leaving her in the Duke's bedroom. Realizing they actually captured Gilda, the Duke rushes off to take advantage of her.



Dismayed to find Gilda missing and afraid she might be with the Duke, Rigoletto searches for his daughter. When he comes across the courtiers, he desperately reveals that Gilda is his daughter, but the courtiers refuse to help him find her.



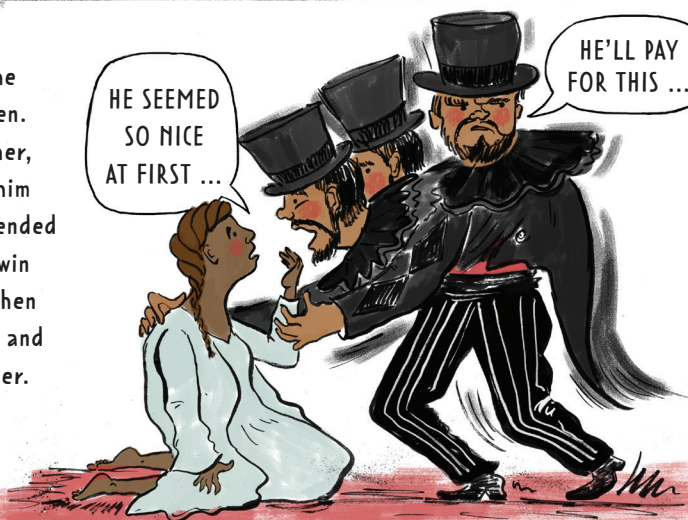
Remembering Monterone's curse,  
Rigoletto collapses in despair.



After leaving the Duke, Gilda is shaken. Alone with her father, she tearfully tells him how the Duke pretended to be a student to win her affection but then had her kidnapped and forced himself on her. Rigoletto vows to get revenge.

HE SEEMED  
SO NICE  
AT FIRST ...

HE'LL PAY  
FOR THIS ...



The Duke moves on to a new crush—Sparafucile's sister, Maddalena—but Gilda still has feelings for him. To show Gilda the Duke's true colors, Rigoletto takes her to secretly watch the Duke flirt with Maddalena.



He also takes Sparafucile up on his offer to murder the Duke.

Enjoying the Duke's attention, Maddalena asks her brother to kill Rigoletto instead. Sparafucile says he won't kill Rigoletto, but he will spare the Duke if he can give Rigoletto someone else's body. Gilda overhears and, still believing herself to be in love, misguidedly decides to sacrifice herself to save the Duke.

HE CAN KILL ME INSTEAD.



Sparafucile stabs Gilda. Then he puts her limp body in a bag and stashes it for Rigoletto. At first, Rigoletto exults in the Duke's death—until he hears his daughter's voice. Gilda weakly asks her father's forgiveness and dies in his arms. Heartbroken, Rigoletto realizes Monterone's curse has come true.